

C S - AUSTRIA EXTENDS MILITARY SERVICE

VIENNA, SEPT 10, REUTER - THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT TODAY EXTENDED MILITARY SERVICE FOR CONSCRIPTS NOW SERVING IN THE ARMY BY ONE MONTH.

THE MOVE, DECIDED AT A CABINET MEETING TODAY, AFFECTS SOME 11,000 MEN DUE TO END THEIR NINE-MONTH COMPULSORY SERVICE ON SUNDAY, DEFENCE MINISTRY OFFICIALS SAID.

A COMMUNIQUE ON THE MEETING SAID THE DEFENCE MINISTER, DR GEORG PRADER, HAD PROPOSED THE EXTENSION "TO GUARANTEE THE AUSTRIAN FEDERAL ARMY'S FULL READINESS FOR ACTION IN VIEW OF THE PRESENT SITUATION....."

THE AUSTRIAN ARMY IS STILL IN A STATE OF ALERT, PROCLAIMED AFTER THE WARSAW PACT INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA THREE WEEKS AGO.

ALTHOUGH TODAY'S DECISION PROVIDES FOR CONSCRIPTS TO BE OFFICIALLY DISCHARGED ON OCTOBER 27, THE ACTUAL EXTENSION ONLY COVERS ONE MONTH SINCE THEY ARE GRANTED A TWO-WEEK HOLIDAY PRECEDING THEIR RETURN TO CIVILIAN LIFE.

ASB/HI 1910/68

