

Czechoslovakia-USSR: Official silence shrouds the top level Soviet-Czechoslovak meeting.

Neither side has acknowledged that the meeting is under way and so far no evidence is available that it has in fact begun. All members of the Soviet politburo have been out of sight since 22 July, however, and the Czechoslovak presidium dropped out of public view on 23 July. Czechoslovak sources have generally hinted that the meeting has not yet begun, but this may be an attempt at concealment. Moscow probably insisted on tight security precautions, and this time the Czechoslovaks appear to be complying.

The news media of both countries are still exchanging verbal blows. Radio Moscow has ridiculed US denials of intervention in the Czechoslovak situation, and repeated earlier allegations that the US, in concert with West Germany, is seeking to split the Communist countries.

A Czechoslovak party spokesman admitted yesterday that some Soviet units remain in Czechoslovakia. He added, according to one press account, that they "will remain until a communiqué is published." The Czechoslovak military attaché in Poland told his American counterpart on 23 July that some 5,000 to 6,000 troops remained.

No further details on the extent and activity of the USSR's large rear-services exercise have been received.

With the exception of East Germany, no Eastern European country appears to favor Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia. The Yugoslav counselor in Warsaw reports that the Polish leadership is adamantly opposed to military intervention, while the Turkish foreign minister has said that visiting Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter told him that the Hungarian Government opposes armed intervention in Czechoslovakia.

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