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USSR-Czechoslovakia: (Information as of 2300 EDT)

The situation in Prague, where martial law was declared last night, was generally quiet as attention focused on the negotiations in Moscow.

There were, however, unconfirmed press reports of fighting last night in the vicinity of the American Embassy and rumors spread that recently arrived Soviet security police, aided by collaborating Czechoslovaks, were planning massive roundups and arrests before dawn.

As the talks in Moscow between the Soviet leaders and the Czechoslovak delegation led by President Svoboda move into their second day there are a few signs that Moscow, anxious to see a new "legitimate" regime installed in Prague, is willing to offer some concessions. TASS reportedly described yesterday's discussions as having taken place in a "frank and comradely atmosphere," suggesting that although serious differences remain to be worked out, the Soviet approach is one of negotiation rather than dictation.

The Soviets still appear intent upon working through Svoboda to obtain a government acceptable to the Kremlin. Although the Soviets' list of "revisionist traitors" to the cause of socialism has grown to the point where it now includes party boss Dubcek as well as several of the leading Czechoslovak liberals, Moscow has consistently refrained from attacking Svoboda. Since his arrival in Moscow, Svoboda has not only been accorded red carpet treatment--a guard of honor, an artillery salute, and a slow ride to the Kremlin with Soviet leaders Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny in an open limousine along streets lined with cheering crowds--but has also been described by Soviet commentators as "an outstanding statesman and military leader." The attention to Svoboda stands in sharp contrast to that]

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[accorded the six other members of the delegation, which includes both liberals and conservatives, who are merely listed as accompanying Prague's chief of state.

There has been no substantial change in the military situation in Czechoslovakia in the past 24 hours. The US military attaché in Prague reported on 22 August that there are 30,000 occupation troops and 600 tanks in the capital. He reported that the city is occupied by one Soviet tank division, one Soviet motorized rifle division, and one slightly understrength Soviet airborne division. Several Polish and Bulgarian units of battalion size are also in the city. Hradec Kralove 60 miles east of Prague, is reportedly occupied by elements of a Polish tank division and a Polish mechanized division. The attaché said that estimates of 150,000 occupation troops are "not unrealistic."

According to clandestine Czechoslovak broadcasts, the extraordinary 14th Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, convened on the evening of 22 August, adjourned yesterday in protest against the occupation. The radio said that the congress will remain adjourned until those leaders currently being held by the occupying forces had been released and allowed to resume their political activities. The congress reportedly elected a new temporary slate of leaders headed by Zdenek Silhan, an economist and a leading exponent of economic reform who hitherto has held no major post in the party. Silhan will serve as acting first secretary pending Dubcek's return.

Meanwhile, reports from Bratislava indicate that, despite demands for its immediate convocation, the Congress of the Slovak Party will open, as scheduled, on 26 August. The congress presumably will meet without its leadership inasmuch as Soviet authorities in Bratislava last night reportedly arrested the entire presidium of the Slovak Party.]

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[Izvestia yesterday reportedly gave the Soviet people their first hint that the majority of the Czechoslovak people oppose the invasion by the Warsaw Pact forces. Its Prague correspondent is said to have reported that most of the Czechoslovaks with whom he had talked were opposed to the occupation. Meanwhile, other Soviet media continue to portray the Czechoslovaks as recognizing that the intervention was timely and necessary. When any sort of resistance by the Czechoslovaks is mentioned by the Soviet media it is portrayed as the action of an insignificant minority, one willingly or unwillingly collaborating with the "imperialists." Thus far, the Soviet media have not referred, in any manner, to the highly successful general strike conducted at noon yesterday in Prague. (Map on page 4)]

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