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[ USSR-Czechoslovakia: (Information of 2300 EDT)

Soviet forces and their Warsaw Pact allies have gained control of most of the major Czechoslovak urban centers without encountering any resistance from the Czechoslovak military forces.

The swift and well-coordinated advance by the intervening forces resulted in the seizure of the Czech capital with a suddenness that left the Czech leaders with virtually no alternative but to accept the fait accompli.

There is still no reliable estimate of the number of Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces which are occupying Czechoslovakia but it has been reported that one Soviet airborne division and one Soviet motorized rifle division as well as other smaller units are in Prague. It is likely that most, if not all, of the units which were moved into position near the Czechoslovak border--as many as 20 divisions--are involved.

In contrast to their determined military intervention, the Soviets seem to be acting cautiously in what may be an effort to minimize the political impact of their action. Moscow may have in mind working with the present Czechoslovak party presidium rather than replacing it completely. Czechoslovak leaders reportedly met the morning of 21 August with unidentified Soviets in Prague, presumably to discuss changes in the party and government leadership. Moscow later in the day categorically rejected rumors circulating in Czechoslovakia that it has any intention to bring back Novotny as the leader. Another meeting reportedly is scheduled for this morning at the Soviet Embassy. Elsewhere in Czechoslovakia, the behavior of the Russian forces has reportedly been generally correct.

Ambassador Beam in Prague has pointed out that the Soviet effort to put as good a face as possible ]

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[ on the intervention and the failure to produce "their" regime quickly may create a sticky situation for the USSR.

One of the first Soviet targets on entering Czechoslovakia was apprehension of the most liberal of the Czechoslovak leaders. During the day, at least eight were taken into custody, including party chief Dubcek, Prime Minister Cernik, party secretary Cisar, and National Assembly chairman Smrkovsky. At the same time, however, the Soviets did not attempt to prevent the leading organs of the regime from convening.

The Soviets also refrained from any immediate concerted effort to close down Czech communications media. Czechoslovak papers reportedly continued to print unmolested yesterday, distributing their editions free. By late last night, however, Czech radio stations were being closed down, and only one, "Radio Free Czechoslovakia," is still on the air.

Despite the fact that Czech military units were not ordered to resist the intervention and the population was ordered to remain calm, there was sporadic and spontaneous civil resistance reported in several areas.

Prague announced yesterday that six citizens had been killed and 47 wounded in a clash with "occupation troops" in northwestern Czechoslovakia. In the eastern part of the country ten persons were reported killed and others wounded, including some Soviet soldiers. In still another clash, two Soviet vehicles were reportedly set afire by Molotov cocktails. There are also reliable reports of scattered fighting in Prague and of Soviet tanks firing point blank into several buildings including Prague Radio. ]

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[ The population also reacted with a one-minute nationwide work stoppage, and all buses and street-cars in Prague reportedly ceased their runs by mid-afternoon. Although the Czech regime has held out the prospect of a general strike only as a last resort, a spontaneous national work stoppage may be a more real possibility.

Eastern European participants have echoed the Soviet rationale for the intervention. The first Polish announcement justified the intervention as being in response to a request by the Czechoslovak "party and government leadership." The underlying argument in the Polish statement, however, seems to reflect an unwillingness to accept changes in another Eastern European country which could possibly affect the stability of pro-Soviet regimes. Gomulka may also feel constrained to cooperate with the Soviets in the interests of assuring his own survival in the bitter internal Polish party struggle.

In an address to a joint session of the party and government and mass organizations, Rumanian leader Ceausescu on 21 August expressed full solidarity with the Czechoslovak people and the Czechoslovak Communist Party and harshly condemned the USSR's "unjustified" intervention. A statement by Tito was softer in tone, probably a reflection of his concern that unrest might be sparked in Yugoslavia.

Access to West Berlin has thus far been unimpeded. The rapid transit system between the two parts of the city was closed for approximately 45 minutes early on 21 August by the East Germans, allegedly because of a "power failure." East German border patrols along the Wall were doubled. [redacted] (Map) ]

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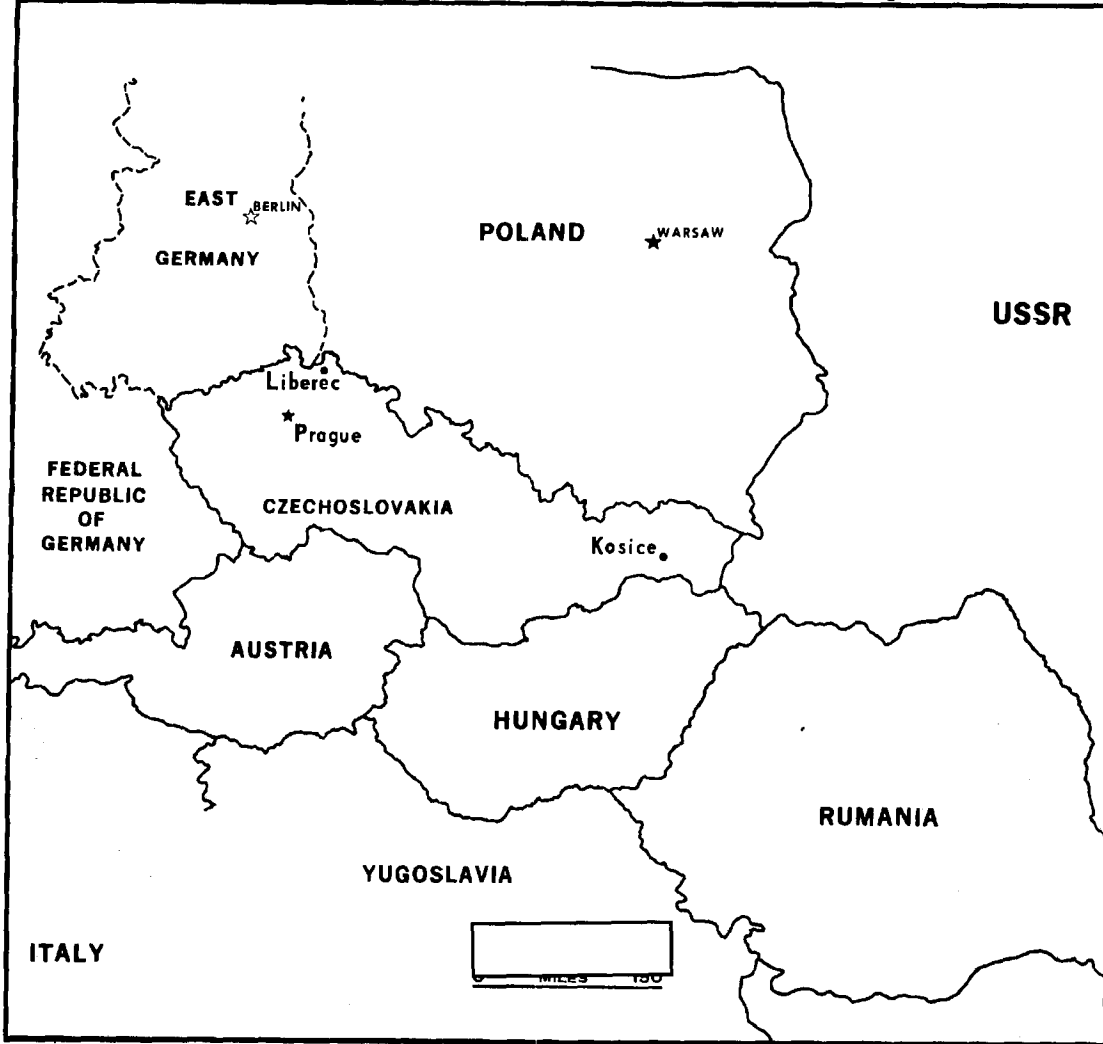
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**Clashes Between Czechoslovak Civilians and Soviet Troops, 21 August**



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