

August 1968

CHRONOLOGY OF CZECHOSLOVAK EVENTSJanuary - August, 1968

- January 5: Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee plenum decides to separate the functions of party First Secretary and President of the Republic, "in accordance with the process of democratisation which has begun". Antonin Novotny, while retaining the Presidency, resigns as First Secretary and is succeeded by Alexander Dubcek, previously First Secretary of the Slovak Communist Party. The Soviet party General Secretary, Leonid Brezhnev, sends a message of congratulations to Dubcek.
- January 29-30: Dubcek visits Soviet Union. The communiqué at the end of the visit announces "full identity of views on all questions discussed".
- February 22: At a meeting to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia, Dubcek promises the "widest possible democratisation", rehabilitation of the political victims of the Stalinist era and correction of past mistakes.
- February 28: Prague journalists demand genuine freedom of the Press.
- February 29: First issue of Literarni Listy, a new weekly journal of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union, appears in Prague.
- March 5: Czechoslovak Party Presidium transfers responsibility for ideology from the conservative, Jiri Hendrych, to the reformer, Josef Spacek.
- March 10: Anniversaries of birth of Tomas Masaryk, first Czechoslovak President, and the death of his son Jan Masaryk, a former Foreign Minister, commemorated in Prague.

COPY LIBRARY

- March 16: Dubcek, in a speech at Brno, reaffirms that the alliance with the Soviet Union remains the basis of Czechoslovak foreign policy.
- March 23: Meeting in Dresden of Bulgarian, Czechoslovak, East German, Hungarian, Polish and Soviet party leaders.
- March 29: Brezhnev, at Moscow party conference, warns of dangers of "imperialist" subversion of Communist countries.
- April 1: At resumed meeting of the Czechoslovak party Central Committee Dubcek says: "We must continue to build up our army and improve it according to Socialist principles; as a defensive barrier against the enemy outside, the imperialist aggressors. We must build it up as a firm link in the alliance of the armies of the Warsaw Treaty".
- April 3: Resignation of Czechoslovak Minister of Defence, General Bohumir Lomsky.
- April 4: New Presidium of Czechoslovak Communist Party elected.
- April 6: Oldrich Cernik succeeds Jozef Lenart as Prime Minister.
- April 8: New Cabinet announced.
- April 9: Czechoslovak Party's Action Programme published. Its objects are to provide a basis for genuine popular support for the Communist Party, by carrying out democratic reforms, including an increase in the functions of the National Assembly, equal rights for Czechs and Slovaks, freedom of speech and the Press, and judicial reforms, including the complete rehabilitation of all victims of injustice in the 1950's.
- April 9-10: Soviet Central Committee plenum approves campaign of vigilance against "political and ideological subversion" aimed at Communist countries.

- May 6: Polish Government protests to Czechoslovakia about "anti-Polish campaign".
- New Czechoslovak Ambassador to Moscow, Vladimir Koucky, presents credentials; President Podgorny refers to "anti-Socialist" elements in Czechoslovakia.
- May 6 - 8: Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Jiri Hajek, visits Soviet Union.
- May 7: Soviet news agency, Tass, denies allegations of Soviet implication in Jan Masaryk's death.
- Czech trade union newspaper, Prace, takes up Epishev remarks, saying it is "unbelievable" that Soviet Central Committee would consider military intervention.
- Luigi Longo, Secretary General of Italian Communist Party, at Press conference in Prague following visit to Czechoslovakia, praises the Czechoslovak leaders "for the courage with which they are striving to build a modern, youthful, open system of Socialism accessible to all democratic forces.
- "The PCI from the beginning welcomes the process of democratisation which has given encouragement to Italian Communists and to Communist Parties in those capitalist countries where the Socialist movement is advanced".
- May 8: Soviet Army delegation, led by Marshal Konev, arrives in Prague for Czechoslovak National Day celebrations.
- Meeting in Moscow of leaders of Soviet, Polish, East German, Hungarian and Bulgarian parties. Silesian party First Secretary, Gierek, speaks at Czechoslovak-Polish Friendship rally. Resolution adopted by the rally says: "Socialism is unthinkable without democracy, which can be implemented fully only in Socialism. This is why we come out for the democratisation process initiated by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia".

- April 12: Soviet party newspaper, Pravda, reports that at Czechoslovak plenum warnings had been given on "anti-Socialist" elements, under guise of "democratisation" and "liberalisation", were attempting to belittle the rôle of the party, advocating a return to the "Czechoslovakia of Masaryk and Benes".
- April 17: Pravda carries shortened report of Czechoslovak Action Programme.
- April 22: Moscow City First Secretary, Viktor Grishin, denounces Western "bridge-building" to Eastern Europe as "ideological sabotage".
- April 24: Announcing in the National Assembly the programme of Czechoslovak Government, Prime Minister Cernik says: "As long as NATO exists, we shall contribute to the strengthening of the Warsaw Treaty, we shall strive to make the Czechoslovak People's Army a firm link of this alliance, and we shall develop greater initiative toward the intensification of the work of its joint command. The government will ensure the needs of defence in harmony with the possibilities of our State".
- April 26: Czechoslovak-Bulgarian Treaty of Friendship Co-operation and Mutual Assistance renewed.
- April 30: Pravda carries account of Czechoslovak provincial party meetings, quoting fears expressed by conservatives of consequences of lifting of Press and TV censorship and expressing anxiety over subversive attacks against the Action Programme.
- May 4 - 5: Dubcek visits Soviet Union.
- May 5 - 6: The Paris Le Monde quotes Soviet General Epishev as having said the Red Army was ready to do its duty and answer appeal from "faithful" Czechoslovak Communists for help in "safeguarding Socialism".

- May 9: Reports of closure of Czechoslovak-Polish frontier and of Soviet troop movements in Poland.
- May 11: Article in Soviet Government newspaper, Izvestiya, entitled: "The leading force in the building of Communism" condemns attempts to undermine the unity of Communist countries under the slogans of liberalisation and democratisation, and re-affirms Communist Party's leading role.
- May 14: Article in newspaper, Sovetskaya Rossiya, attacks President Masaryk.
- May 15: Statement by Chairman of the Czechoslovak National Assembly, Josef Smrkovsky, on Dubcek's visit to Moscow, says: "We must understand the fears of the Soviet Union which has in mind not only Czechoslovakia but the security of the whole Socialist camp. Even so, the Soviet comrades declared that they do not want to, and will not, interfere in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs".
- Soviet trade union newspaper, Trud, criticised Prace article by L. Sohov, entitled: "Marx and Our Times", for opposing concepts of dictatorship of the proletariat and democracy.
- May 17: Czechoslovak party organ, Rude Pravo, prints rejoinder to May 14 Sovetskaya Rossiya article on Masaryk.
- May 17 - 22: Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Grechko, and General Epishev visit Czechoslovakia.
- May 22: Czechoslovak Defence Minister, Lt.-Gen. Martin Dzur, denies reports that stationing of Soviet and Polish troops on Czechoslovakia's western borders was demanded by Grechko.
- May 17 - 25: Soviet Prime Minister, Mr. Kosygin, visits Czechoslovakia for cure and consultations.
- May 18: Czechoslovak protest to East Germany about article in Berliner Zeitung of May 9 alleging US and West German military units in Czechoslovakia.

- May 19: Czechoslovak news agency, CTK, reports denial by Gen. Epishev of Le Monde report on possible Soviet Army assistance to loyal Communists.
- May 23: Czechoslovak reply to Polish Note of May 6 about "anti-Polish campaign".
- May 24: Announcement in Prague that Warsaw Pact command staff exercises will take place in Czechoslovakia in June.
- May 30: Novotny dismissed from the Party Central Committee and suspended from party membership.
- June 1: Czechoslovak Central Committee decides to convene an extraordinary party congress on September 9.
- June 2: Indian Communist (pro-Soviet) Party newspaper, New Age, voices support for Czechoslovakia, saying "The new leadership of CPCz can count on our support and sympathy in the difficult and complicated tasks it has undertaken. One cannot, however, be unmindful of the machinations of the anti-Socialist forces both within the country and from outside or of the pressures of certain alien trends including the revisionist variety".
- June 3 - 15: Czechoslovak National Assembly delegation, led by Smrkovsky, visits Soviet Union.
- June 4: Dubcek, addressing meeting of party activists at Brno, says: "Anti-party and anti-Communist tendencies exist ... what do we mean by the anti-Communist danger? The danger arises from tendencies to weaken our relations with the Soviet Union. Our whole policy is based on our relations with the Soviet Union - our foreign policy, our economic policy".
- June 6: Czechoslovak Defence Ministry denies New York Times report, reproduced by Lidova Demokracie, that Soviet military officials approved the issuing of a passport to General Sejna.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

- June 7: The CPCz Secretariat and the Secretariat of the National Front reject proposal for the re-establishment of Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party.
- June 10: Czechoslovak President, General Ludvik Svoboda, visiting Military Academy at Brno, says: "The firm and invincible friendship and alliance with the Soviet Union is the guarantee of our security and independence. The importance of this alliance and of all commitments Czechoslovakia has undertaken as one of the Warsaw Pact countries is unambiguous".
- Soviet protest to Czechoslovakia at publication by Lidova Demokracie of New York Times report concerning the issuing of passport to Gen. Sejna.
- June 12: Soviet-Czechoslovak economic agreement signed.
- June 13: Literarni Listy publishes article commemorating execution of Imre Nagy.
- June 13 - 15: Dubcek and Cernik visit Hungary to sign a Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Aid.
- June 14: Pravda article by Academician Konstantinov criticises speech by Cestmir Cisar, a Czechoslovak Party Secretary, for questioning Leninist doctrine.
- June 15: Proclamation of the Czechoslovak National Front says: "Any propagation of Fascism, chauvinism, nationalism, racialism, any anti-Communist and anti-Soviet propaganda is absolutely inconsistent with the policy of the National Front".
- June 16: Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Aid between Hungary and Czechoslovakia signed in Budapest.
- June 17: Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Jiri Hajek, goes to East Germany for a two-day visit. He says his talks with his East German counterpart, Otto Winzer, had taken place in a "friendly and cordial atmosphere".

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

- June 17: Smrkovsky and the Vice-Chairman of the National Assembly, Josef Zednik, give interviews on the visit by the National Assembly delegation to the Soviet Union. Zednik stresses his conviction that the Soviet Union had no intention of interfering with Czechoslovak internal affairs. The highest Soviet officials had confirmed this, he says.
- June 18: Warsaw Pact commander, Marshal Yakubovsky, arrives in Prague to take charge of manoeuvres.
- June 19: Warsaw Pact "command staff exercises" in Czechoslovakia and Poland begin.
- June 22: Party Secretary Cisar replies in Rudé Pravo to the criticisms of him in Pravda on June 14.
- June 23: Prof. Edward Goldstücker, Chairman of the Writers' Union, announces in Rudé Pravo receipt of an anonymous anti-Semitic letter.
- June 24: At opening of five-day plenary session of National Assembly in Prague, Smrkovsky says that the discussions between the Czechoslovak and Soviet parliamentary delegations had resulted in a relationship of "mutual confidence".
- Assembly endorses constitutional law on the preparation for a federative arrangement of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.
- June 26: Assembly passes law abolishing advance censorship.
- June 27: Prague newspapers, Prace, Mlada Fronta and Semedelske Noviny, publish the manifesto: "2,000 Words", by the writer, Ludvik Vaculik, demanding an acceleration of the democratisation process and calling on workers to demand the departure of those who had abused their power. The manifesto is criticised the same day by Dubcek and the party Presidium.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

- June 29: The manifesto is denounced as "counter-revolutionary" in the National Assembly by a member, Major-General Samuel Kodaj.
- June 30: Warsaw Pact exercises end.
- July 2: Unlike their Soviet counterparts, Czechoslovak Army journalists, including the Rudé Pravo representative, who is an army officer, are not admitted to the evaluation meeting at the end of the exercises.
- July 3: At friendship meeting in Kremlin during visit of Hungarian delegation led by Kadar, Brezhnev says that the Soviet Union cannot be indifferent to the building of Socialism in other Socialist countries, and refers to Hungarian 1956 uprising.
- Czechoslovak party Presidium criticises article on Imre Nagy in Literarni Listy of June 13 as "inopportune and tactless".
- July 4: Prague newspaper, Vecerni Praha, reports that leaflets attacking "progressive representatives" of the Communist Party have been found in street.
- July 5: Smrkovsky, in an article entitled "1,000 Words", says that he "sees the main danger in the forces which have not relinquished hopes of restoring the pre-January régime" but criticises the "2,000 Words" manifesto for "political romanticism", while admitting the "honourable intentions" of its authors.
- Rudé Pravo condemns leaflets with anti-Semitic content attacking members of the leadership.
- July 8 - 10: Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Jiri Hajek, visits Bulgaria.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

- July 9: Bill granting every Czechoslovak citizen right to obtain a passport without restrictions passed by National Assembly.
- General Dzur, Minister of National Defence, announces that 35 per cent of the troops in the Warsaw Pact exercises have returned to their permanent garrisons.
- Major-General Kodaj, who denounced "2,000 Words" as counter-revolutionary, announces that he is to give up all his party and government functions.
- July 10: Czechoslovak General Vaclav Prchlik announces that a "new situation" had developed since the original official statement that the troops in the Warsaw Pact exercise would be withdrawn immediately on July 2.
- The Soviet Literaturnaya Gazeta attacks "2,000 Words".
- Czech National Council, with Cestmir Cisar as chairman, set up as a provisional counterpart to the Slovak National Council during the federation negotiations.
- July 11: Article in Pravda attacks "2,000 Words" and compares the situation with that in Hungary in 1956. Prague Radio broadcasts rejoinder deploring attempts to "spread among the inadequately informed public the false belief about the dangers threatening Czechoslovak Socialism".
- July 12: Joint communiqué on Warsaw Pact exercises.
- Soviet Defence Ministry organ, Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star), denies that Warsaw Pact exercises were intended to force Soviet strategic concepts on the allies.
- July 13: Withdrawal begins of troops who took part in exercises.
- Yugoslav news agency, Tanyug, quotes President Tito as expressing disbelief that there could "exist in the USSR people so short-sighted as to resort to a policy of force" over Czechoslovakia.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

July 13:

The East German party newspaper, Neues Deutschland, attacks "2,000 Words" and Czechoslovak developments in article entitled: "The Strategy of Imperialism and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic".

Kosygin, at Press conference in Stockholm, expresses confidence that Czechoslovak party will not surrender its leading rôle and recommends correspondents to read the assessment of events in Czechoslovakia in Pravda of July 11.

Letter of Czechoslovak Army, declaring support for the party, handed to military attachés of other Warsaw Pact countries and Yugoslavia.

July 14 - 15:

Bulgarian, East German, Hungarian, Polish and Soviet leaders meet in Warsaw to discuss Czechoslovak developments. Czechoslovakia was "invited but declined to attend on the ground that bilateral discussions would be better". Meeting sends letter to the Czechoslovak party saying that the signatories are "deeply disturbed" by events in Czechoslovakia.

July 14:

Polish party newspaper, Trybuna Ludu, criticises "reactionary forces, supported by centres of imperialist subversion" for their "offensive" against Communism in Czechoslovakia.

July 15:

Rumanian Head of State and party leader, Nicolae Ceaușescu, in a speech at Galați, and the party organ, Scinteia, express confidence in the Czechoslovak party and its leadership.

Gen. Prchlik deploras the convening of the Warsaw meeting and points out that no part of the Warsaw Pact allows one party to the treaty to station troops in the territory of another without the latter's consent.

Yugoslav Federal Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee expresses full support for Czechoslovakia.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

July 16:

Retrial of Rudolf Barak, former Minister of the Interior, who was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment for "misappropriation of State funds" in November, 1962. Sentence was quashed.

Czechoslovak Minister of Defence, General Dzur, writing in Rudé Pravo, recommends reform of Warsaw Pact command.

July 17:

Czechoslovak Presidium issues reply to Warsaw letter refuting its allegations.

CPSU Central Committee approves Soviet policy at Warsaw meeting and letter.

Neues Deutschland adduces "illuminating details" of "massive" West German intervention in Czechoslovakia.

July 18:

Dubcek broadcasts to the nation, thanking citizens for their support and reaffirming that "we have no alternative but to complete the profound democratic and Socialist changes in our life, together with the people".

The French Communist Party newspaper, L'Humanité, announces that Waldeck Rochet, the party's General Secretary, had talks with Soviet party leaders on July 14 and 16, and returned to Paris on the following day.

The Bulgarian party newspaper, Rabotnichesko Delo, in a leading article headed "The counter-revolution should be routed", alleges "disorganisation of the State and entire party life" in Czechoslovakia.

July 19:

Pravda claims that on July 12 Czechoslovak security forces found a secret cache of American arms near the West German border.

Dubcek, addressing Central Committee plenum, reaffirms adhesion to the Action Programme. All speakers express agreement with the Presidium.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

July 19 - 20: Waldeck Rochet visits Prague.

July 19: Marshal Yakubovsky leaves Prague by air.

Tass announces Soviet proposal for meeting between Soviet Politburo and Czechoslovak Presidium on July 22 or 23 in Moscow, Kiev or Lvov.

Pravda claims that documents are in Soviet hands describing a NATO and CIA plot to subvert the East European countries, particularly Czechoslovakia and East Germany.

Hungarian party newspaper, Népszabadság, says that Hungarian sympathy for Czechoslovakia remains unchanged but has been overtaken by concern that her "Socialist achievements are imperilled".

Scînteia carries full texts of the joint Warsaw letter and the Czechoslovaks reply.

Marshal Grechko cuts short visit to Algeria and returns to Moscow.

July 20: Hungarian news agency, MTI, publishes summary of the Czechoslovak Presidium's reply to the Warsaw letter. But this step is not followed by any of the other countries which met in Warsaw.

Prague Radio announces Soviet Politburo's invitation to Czechoslovak Presidium to meet for bilateral talks.

The Rumanian party organ, Scînteia, carries article entitled "Full Confidence in the Czechoslovak People, in its Communist Party", expressing "serious alarm" at "tendencies towards interference from outside" which could only damage the international Communist movement.

July 21: President Svoboda, in a speech at Javoruna, reaffirms loyalty to the Warsaw Pact.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

July 21:

Krasnaya Zvezda and Rabotnichesko Delo report that more than one arms cache has been found in Czechoslovakia.

The Belgrade newspaper, Politika, compares Czechoslovakia's situation to that of Yugoslavia in 1948.

Pravda publishes despatch from its correspondent in Bonn, suggesting that West German subversive agents were entering Czechoslovakia in large numbers, disguised as tourists, and that the Czechoslovak border guards did not search even the boots of their cars.

July 22:

CTK reports the official Prague view that the hiding of the arms was a provocation to dramatise the situation. Prace notes that the weapons were hidden inexpertly and conspicuously.

Agreement reached on meeting between Soviet Politburo and Czechoslovak Presidium, on Czechoslovak soil.

East German Government welcomes Warsaw letter to Czechoslovak Central Committee.

Pravda editorial on Czechoslovak view of Warsaw letter.

Prague Radio, broadcasting in English, says: "After the publication of both letters (the Warsaw letter and the Czechoslovak reply) virtually everybody in the country expressed support for and agreement with the stand taken by the leaders of the country's Communist Party.... Public opinion has promoted him (Dubcek) overnight from the position of First Secretary of the Communist Party to that of First Secretary of the nation".

July 23:

General Karel Peprny, Commander of the Czechoslovak Border Guards, states that Czechoslovakia is perfectly able to defend her borders.

COPY LIBRARY

July 23:

Krasnaya Zvezda attacks General Prchlik for his Press conference of July 15.

British Communist Party General Secretary, John Gollan, in an interview with Prague Radio's London correspondent, expresses solidarity with Czechoslovakia.

Izvestia accuses Czechoslovak Minister of the Interior, Josef Pavel, of having been responsible for the conviction of innocent persons in the early days of the Communist régime.

Izvestia announces Soviet exercises on the western frontiers of the Soviet Union.

Announcement in the communiqué on the Presidium meeting of agreement to hold bilateral Soviet-Czechoslovak talks on Czechoslovak territory. Pravda announces that "in consideration of the wishes of the Czechoslovak Presidium, the Soviet Politburo has given its agreement to the holding of a bilateral meeting on the territory of Czechoslovakia, having in mind that the full membership of the Soviet Politburo and the Czechoslovak Presidium should take part".

COPY LIBRARY

July 24:

Konstantinov publishes new attack on Cisar in Pravda.

July 25:

Abolition of State Administration Department of the Czechoslovak Central Committee and return of its head, Gen. Prchlik, to the army.

Pravda article accuses certain Czechoslovak party leaders of conniving at the activity of "Right-wing anti-Socialist revisionist forces".

July 26:

Pravda article expresses fears that Czechoslovakia is moving towards the restoration of a "bourgeois régime" and attacks Deputy Prime Minister, Professor Ota Sik.

Berliner Zeitung article denounces West German aid for "creeping counter-revolution" in Czechoslovakia.

July 26:

Polish Army newspaper, Zolnierz Wolnosci, denounces danger to "Socialism" in Czechoslovakia created by "external imperialist forces, internal forces of reaction and revisionist forces actively co-operating with them".

Dubcek reaffirms Presidium unanimity.

July 27:

Professor Sik, writing in Rudé Pravo, recalls Brezhnev's refusal to support the "old guard of discredited politicians" in December and reaffirms the view that the Communist Party's leading rôle should rest not on repressive force but on the conviction of ideas.

CTK publishes official statement criticising Gen. Prchlik's statement of July 15.

July 28:

Bulgarian frontier authorities refuse admission to 50 young Czechoslovaks planning to take part in World Youth Festival.

Professor Sik, writing in Rudé Pravo demands a public correction of statements in Pravda article of July 26.

Marshal Grechko's Order of the Day on Soviet Navy Day refers to "imperialist attempts to force a breach in the Socialist system and change the balance of power in their favour".

July 29:

Talks between Czechoslovak Presidium and the Soviet Politburo open at Cierna nad Tisou, near Czechoslovak-Soviet border.

Pravda publishes article stressing Czechoslovak economic indebtedness to and dependence on the Soviet Union.

COPY LIBRARY

July 29

Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior issues 35-page "list of secret facts" to chief editors and publishers of Czechoslovak newspapers, periodicals and other mass media.

Hungarian daily newspaper, Magyar Hirlap, states that "the tragic experience of Hungary has not been taken into consideration in Czechoslovakia".

July 30

Pravda leader says: "We cannot remain indifferent to attacks by revisionists on Marxism-Leninism as a unitary international doctrine, attacks which have recently become stronger".

Article in Zycie Warszawy quoted by PAP discusses "the satisfaction of the anti-Communist experts in the West German Press" about the situation in Czechoslovakia.

Neues Deutschland publishes full-page article headed "Overcome Mistakes so as to strengthen the Socialist worker-peasant power", stating that the "profound disquiet" expressed in the Warsaw letter is becoming "daily more justified as the result of growing activity by hostile forces".

Rabotnichesko Delo, quoted by BTA, says that "the threat to Socialism in Czechoslovakia, that fraternal country, is getting greater every day".

Rudé Pravo, quoted by CTK, describes "the idea that relations between Communist parties can be successfully solved by methods of propagandistic, political or military pressure" as a "dangerous illusion".

Belgrade Politika Express publishes the results of a public opinion poll on Czechoslovakia under the heading "Support for Prague with heart and mind".

July 31

Scînteia, in an article entitled "The road to strengthening the unity of the Socialist countries" says: "The Communists, all working people in our country, follow with a feeling of sympathy the renewal and transformations in the friendly country (Czechoslovakia)."

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

July 31

Magyar Hirlap in a leader by its editor, István Darvasi, says that the main danger to Socialism in Czechoslovakia comes from the Right.

August 1

Pravda, for the first time since the crisis started, publishes no attacks on Czechoslovakia.

A short joint communiqué issued on the conclusion of the Cierna talks speaks of the "atmosphere of frankness, sincerity and mutual understanding" in which the talks had been conducted and announced that the Czechoslovak leaders would meet the signatories of the Warsaw letter (Bulgaria, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the Soviet Union) in Bratislava on August 3.

President Svoboda, in a broadcast on the Cierna talks, says: "We shall not depart from the path on which we have set out. We shall continue to go forward on it consistently. I am deeply convinced that anyone wishing to misuse this path of ours against Socialism, against the policy of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, against the interests of the Republic and the alliance with the Soviet Union, has no hope of success.... We met with full understanding on the part of the leading representatives of the Soviet Union who assured us of their support in the implementation of ... the Action Programme of our party".

Smrkovsky tells a large crowd in the Old Town Square, Prague, that the Czechoslovak delegation had "succeeded in securing the sympathy of the Soviet comrades for our internal affairs. Our internal affairs will not be the subject of discussion at the Bratislava meeting". He adds that none of the members of the Czechoslovak delegation had anything to be ashamed of.

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

August 2

Dubcek, in a broadcast, thanks the people for their "wise and circumspect attitude" and assures them: "You can be completely satisfied with the results and the spirit of the negotiations.... We kept our promise to you". At the same time he stresses the need to maintain a "prudent and statesmanlike attitude", adding: "There must be no misuse of spontaneous ... meetings for the expression of anti-Socialist and anti-Soviet sentiments.... All of us, and also our friends abroad, must see to it that we seek ways, patiently and calmly, of strengthening our co-operation.... By so doing we shall create favourable conditions for the 14th congress of our party".

August 3

Participants in Bratislava meeting issue a Declaration that they had discussed the international situation and the "struggle against imperialism". "Consolidation and protection of the gains of Socialism", the declaration continues, "is a common internationalist duty of all Socialist countries". This was possible only by "consolidating the leading rôle of the working class and its vanguard, the Communist Parties". The Communist Parties would deepen their co-operation "on the basis of the principle of equality, respect for sovereignty and national independence, territorial integrity, fraternal mutual assistance and solidarity".

The statement reaffirms support for Comecon and the Warsaw Pact, and hostility to the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel.

Dubcek, after the signing ceremony, says: "We achieved what we had promised and we did a good job".

Smrkovsky, assures the crowd: "Everything has turned out all right.... Normal life resumes as from to-morrow".

COPY LBJ LIBRARY

August 3

Kadar, on his return home from Bratislava, says:
"It is a very great thing that it has been possible
partly to clear up the misunderstandings and
differences".

Prague Radio and CTK announce that the last Soviet
troops have left Czechoslovak territory.

August 4

Dubcek, in a television broadcast, gives an assurance
that no secret agreement was reached at either Cierna
or Bratislava, and says that the meetings had opened
up new scope for the revival process in Czechoslovakia.

August 5

Pravda editorial describes the Bratislava talks as an
important step along the road of consolidating the
unity of the "Socialist" countries, and as a crushing
blow to imperialist plans to sow discord.

Trybuna Ludu expresses satisfaction with the
Bratislava talks, calling the declaration a "momentous
document of the international Communist movement".

Rabotnicesko Delo acclaims the Bratislava document
as of "enormous importance for the triumph of Socialism
in the world and for strengthening the unity of the
Socialist community and the international Communist
movement".

COPY LBJ LIBRARY