

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

CLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6  
NLJ/KAC 99-212  
By cbm, NARA, Date 12-4-01

July 16, 1968

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. W.W. ROSTOW

SUBJECT: The Situation in Czechoslovakia - Tuesday, July 16 - 10:00 A.M.

Yesterday evening a Soviet plane flew to Prague, remained an hour and a quarter on the ground, and went on to Moscow. While there is speculation in the Intelligence Community that it may have carried Brezhnev, it is more likely that it carried someone like General Yakubovsky or perhaps the bearer of the letter from the Five who met in Warsaw to the Czechoslovak Central Committee. L'Unita has published a report that the Five may now go to Prague to confront the Czechs -- but this is entirely unconfirmed.

AFP has published a report that Party Secretary and ideologue Cisar is going to Moscow. On the basis of this, some of our Intelligence people speculate that it was he on the Czech plane which flew to Moscow yesterday.

Prchlik, who heads the Party office which oversees the military forces (and who is close to Dubcek), told the press yesterday there is nothing in the Warsaw Pact which allows troops to remain in a member country without permission, that there should not be cliques or rump meetings in the Pact, and that the general staff should be reorganized and the Supreme Command rotated among the members. This last is a position the Romanians have been taking for sometime. Prchlik could be crowding his luck. This may also be a prelude to more vigorous efforts by the Czechs to take their case before world opinion.

Foreign Minister Hajek has praised the Hungarians and Romanians for their sympathetic point of view towards the Czechs. The Romanians and Yugoslavs have made public statements supporting the Czechs. Reportedly, French and Italian party delegations plan to go to Moscow, and Prchlik referred to the sympathetic views of the French and Italians in his remarks to the press yesterday.

At least a few troop movements appear to have been carried out last night,

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34(b)(1)

Nothing has been heard from Dubcek in public in the last day or two.

We have just had reliable indications the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party is being convened in Moscow. Brezhnev will probably explain Czech developments and the conclusions and decisions reached at Warsaw.

The attached cable, which has just come in, is worth reading.

Attachment  
a/s

Nathaniel Davis

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