

INFORMATION

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Friday, Sept. 6, 1968

1:30 p. m.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MR. PRESIDENT:

Herewith a Czech Military Attache explains why (para. 8) he believes we have not seen the end of trouble in Czechoslovakia.

There is a ring of authenticity in this report and assessment.

*W. Carl* Rostow

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ attachment

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6

NLI 97-162

By *isa*, NARA Date 9-8-97

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

LHM

34a

TO : IOP - Mr. Ryan

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DATE: August 30, 1968

FROM : IOP/C - Robert A. Bauer RB

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6

NLJ 97-190

By us, NARA Date 8-25-97

SUBJECT: Czech Military and Air Attache on the Situation in his Country

Three weeks ago, my wife (born in Prague and Czech speaking) and I met at a social function the then newly arrived Czech Military and Air Attache, Col. Miroslav Dvorak and his wife. Mrs. Dvorak does not speak English well and asked my wife whether she could help her register her daughter at the Americanization School, Prospect Place, in the District.

This was done this morning and afterwards Mrs. Dvorak invited my wife for coffee at her apartment where she was joined by the Colonel. He then proceeded to volunteer the following information to my wife:

1. The Russians had a government set up to step in and take over upon the entrance of the occupation troops. In view of the Czech resistance this government never dared to take over. Half of the collaborators stayed in Moscow, the other half are under heavy Russian guard in the country home of former President Novotny.
2. The Soviets now know clearly that they were misled in their estimate of the internal situation. The prime instigator of the aggression was Ulbricht, who is frightened by the spread of the liberal tendencies in the East European countries.
3. One of the greatest provocations to the Prague population was the opening of the headquarters of the East German occupation authorities in the former Petschek Bank, which gained infamy as the Gestapo headquarters during the Nazi occupation.
4. The Russian soldiers were visibly stunned by the resistance they met. Polish units have been spread all over the country into secluded areas to avoid fraternization with the local population.
5. Dubeck shows an injury on his forehead. The official explanation, greatly doubted, is that he bumped against a door. The editor-in-chief of RUDE PRAVO suffered a nervous breakdown and is in a Prague hospital.
6. All Czech diplomats and foreign correspondents have been advised by their government that they can indefinitely postpone their home leave or other planned visits home. All borders are closed to all foreigners.



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

PRESERVATION COPY

COPY LIBRARY

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 2 -

7. He doubts that the Russians will invade Romania or Yugoslavia in view of the Czech experience. At the same time he is convinced that the liberalization movement simply cannot be stopped and will also in the long run make headway in the USSR.

8. He is exceedingly pessimistic about the immediate future. The Czech leaders proclaim continuously, "they must take measures" of a "temporary nature". This means that liberalization will resume one day and the Russians cannot tolerate this. Also, violent student acts can be expected any moment. Many newspaper editors have already chosen jobs in factories rather than to publish censored newspapers. This will leave Prague with a maximum of two newspapers. He is afraid that an explosion is inevitable and will lead to the harshest reprisals. Typical for the defiant attitude of the Prague government is its request to the occupying powers for immediate negotiations on the exact dates of troop withdrawals and reparation payment for damages suffered by Czech citizens.

The Colonel and his wife expressed the wish to have us alone for dinner in two weeks.

IAS - Mr. Littell  
IOS - Mr. McNichol

IOP/C:RABauer:sgx3813

PRESERVATION COPY

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CCPY LES LIBRAR