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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
25 August 1968

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Czechoslovakia
(As of 0800 EDT)

1. The Czechoslovak-Soviet negotiations in Moscow will

"probably" end today,

An AFP report from Moscow states that East German, Polish, Hungarian, and Bulgarian leaders were expected in Moscow today for another "summit" conference with the Soviets and Czechoslovaks. A Soviet spokesman said this morning that he had no knowledge of such meeting. The Moscow correspondent of the Yugoslav Politika reported last night that the Prague-Moscow talks were on the verge of a compromise that would result in the release of all arrested Czechoslovak officials and a resumption of normal Czechoslovak party and government activity. The agreement is said to call for the withdrawal of some foreign troops, but presumably

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entails the continued stationing of some of them on Czechoslovakia's western borders.

2. The Soviet occupation has completely paralyzed the normal day-to-day work of communications, banking, gasoline distribution, press, radio and television, as well as the work of the government, parliament and the president's office, according to a report published by the Prague Municipal Statistics Office. The report also states that about 20 persons died and 300 were injured during the first four days of the occupation. Although property, building and road damage cannot yet be estimated, the report concludes that the national economy is suffering a daily loss to the tune of 65 million crowns (c. \$9 million).

3. Loyalist radio stations in Czechoslovakia yesterday broadcast reports indicating a hardening attitude on the part of the commanders of the occupation forces. In Slany, the local Soviet commander threatened to obliterate the town unless swastikas were washed off tanks and other vehicles under his command. The television station at Klinovec was reportedly destroyed by tank fire. After the curfew went into effect, occupation troops in Prague fired without warning on everything that moved, including municipal police. At 0400 this morning a broadcast in the name of the presidium denied TASS charges concerning the discovery of new arms caches. The presidium said that arms allegedly found in one of these caches, are to be put on display by the Soviets and that the Czechoslovak Army

-2-
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and the People's Militia should "avoid at all costs any activity which could serve as a pretext and could lead to great losses."

4. Approximately 200 KGB agents--most of whom speak good Czech and Slovak and carry papers identifying them as employees of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Interior--arrived in Prague yesterday, according to Radio Czechoslovakia. Several busloads of them arrived in Bratislava this morning. The Soviet secret police are apparently attempting to round up pro-Dubcek interior ministry officials who are in contact with and being protected by interior minister Pavel. The radio also reported that the authors of the "2000 Words," a document drafted by Prague's liberal intellectuals supporting the country's "democratization," were being arrested.

5. As Russian experts continued to try to locate the various clandestine radio stations operating in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet authorities reportedly had a similar problem crop up in their own backyard. According to Reuters, a clandestine Russian-language radio station, identifying itself as "Radio Svoboda" (a play on President Svoboda's name which means "freedom" in Russian) was heard for a few minutes in Moscow.

6. Travelers arriving in Bonn from East Germany report that demonstrations against the Soviet intervention have taken place in several cities in the GDR. On 23 August, some 30 persons applauded members of the Czechoslovak Embassy staff as they entered the building. Police reportedly

-3-

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"asked" this group to disperse, but did not use force. Three East Berliners were arrested, however, for signing a petition protesting the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Police in Erfurt reportedly dispersed a "relatively large group" of young demonstrators.

7. Pravda this morning gives the first hint from a Soviet source of morale problems among the troops in Czechoslovakia. Although the editorial commended the occupation forces for maintaining ideological discipline in the face of "slander, provocations and direct subversion," the editorial's emphasis on the exceptional importance of political indoctrination of the armed forces at this time suggests that there is some concern that the units in Czechoslovakia may be exposed to the political ideas circulating there. Western press reports of a continuing build-up in Czechoslovakia suggests that there may be a rotation plan designed to prevent any units from remaining too long on Czech soil.

8. The tone of the USSR's central press on 24 August reveals that there is a certain degree of disappointment in Moscow that all is not going as hoped. Despite the distortions in the Soviet coverage of the Czechoslovak crisis, it is becoming increasingly obvious to the Soviet population that the invasion was not greeted with open arms. The front pages of all the central papers on 24 August feature pictures of President Svoboda's arrival in Moscow

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-4-

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on the preceding day. The smiles on the faces of Brezhnev and Podgorny stood in sharp contrast to the expressions of grim determination worn by Kosygin and Svoboda. The accompanying announcement said only that the talks began in a "frank, comradely atmosphere." Moscow has since added that Svoboda's visit to Moscow has provoked "an excess of rage and fury among the reactionaries," wording that suggests that Soviet propagandists are already preparing the basis for depicting the settlement the two sides are expected to reach today as a victory for "progressive forces" over the threat of counterrevolution in Czechoslovakia.

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12. Ceausescu and Tito met yesterday in Vrsac, on the Rumanian-Yugoslav border. The communique issued afterwards gives no details on what was discussed. In the meantime, the Soviets and the Hungarians have leveled bitter attacks on Ceausescu for "joining the imperialist chorus," and Moscow has taken a potshot at Yugoslavia's pro-Dubcek statement in the UN, which condemned the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia. Ceausescu received Soviet Ambassador Rasov earlier today at the latter's request, for a session which undoubtedly heard some hard words exchanged.

13. It was previously reported that Ambassador Bean intended to allow American correspondents to use Embassy telex facilities. The Embassy reports that this has not yet been necessary, since other facilities are still available.

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