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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Directorate of Intelligence  
24 August 1968



## INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Czechoslovakia  
(As of 1200 EDT)

1. Talks between the Czechoslovak delegation in Moscow and Soviet representatives resumed this morning. Western news services reported that preparations for the departure of the Czechoslovaks had been made, then suddenly cancelled.

2. According to a Czechoslovak radio station, Deputy Premier Husak, who is in Moscow, stated this morning that Dubcek "is to resume his functions in the next few days." Husak allegedly requested that the Slovak party congress be postponed until he, Dubcek, and the others return from Moscow.

3. Another Radio Czechoslovakia broadcast claimed that President Svoboda regarded the negotiations to date as being "constructive" with a prospect for a mutually acceptable solution. Svoboda allegedly demanded the release of those Czechoslovak officials who had been interned. The Soviets reportedly received Svoboda's remarks with "understanding."

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4. Although there may be no connection, Radio Czechoslovakia earlier reported that presidium member Spacek and secretariat member Cisar are free and "well" in Czechoslovakia.

5. Pravda's castigation of the "illegal" Czechoslovak Party Congress published on 23 August includes a blacklist of more than a dozen of its participants. Cisar is especially cited for his anti-party activity, along with Sik and Silhan, who is currently the acting party first secretary. Husak's remarks and the absence of Dubcek's name from the list has led to speculation that Moscow is prepared to work with Dubcek to achieve a compromise. As late as 22 August, the Soviet press had been criticizing Dubcek by name. Also missing from the blacklist were such well-known figures as Smrkovsky and Cernik, who--along with Dubcek--presumably were not in Prague at the time of the Congress. Cernik reportedly is in Moscow.

6. The article also attempted to put the best face possible on at least one aspect of the activities of Foreign Minister Hajek, who may address the UN Security Council later today. Hajek is credited with describing as unrealistic a scheme calling for Czechoslovak "neutrality" and withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. Pravda adds that even Silhan confirmed that such a formula did not have the support of the Congress.

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7. The Soviet government paper Izvestia today attacked Rumanian leader Ceausescu by name for aiding the Czechoslovak "counter-revolution" through his speeches. The criticism is the first time that the Soviets have attacked Ceausescu by name recently, and is probably an attempt to silence Bucharest while serious bargaining is taking place in Moscow.

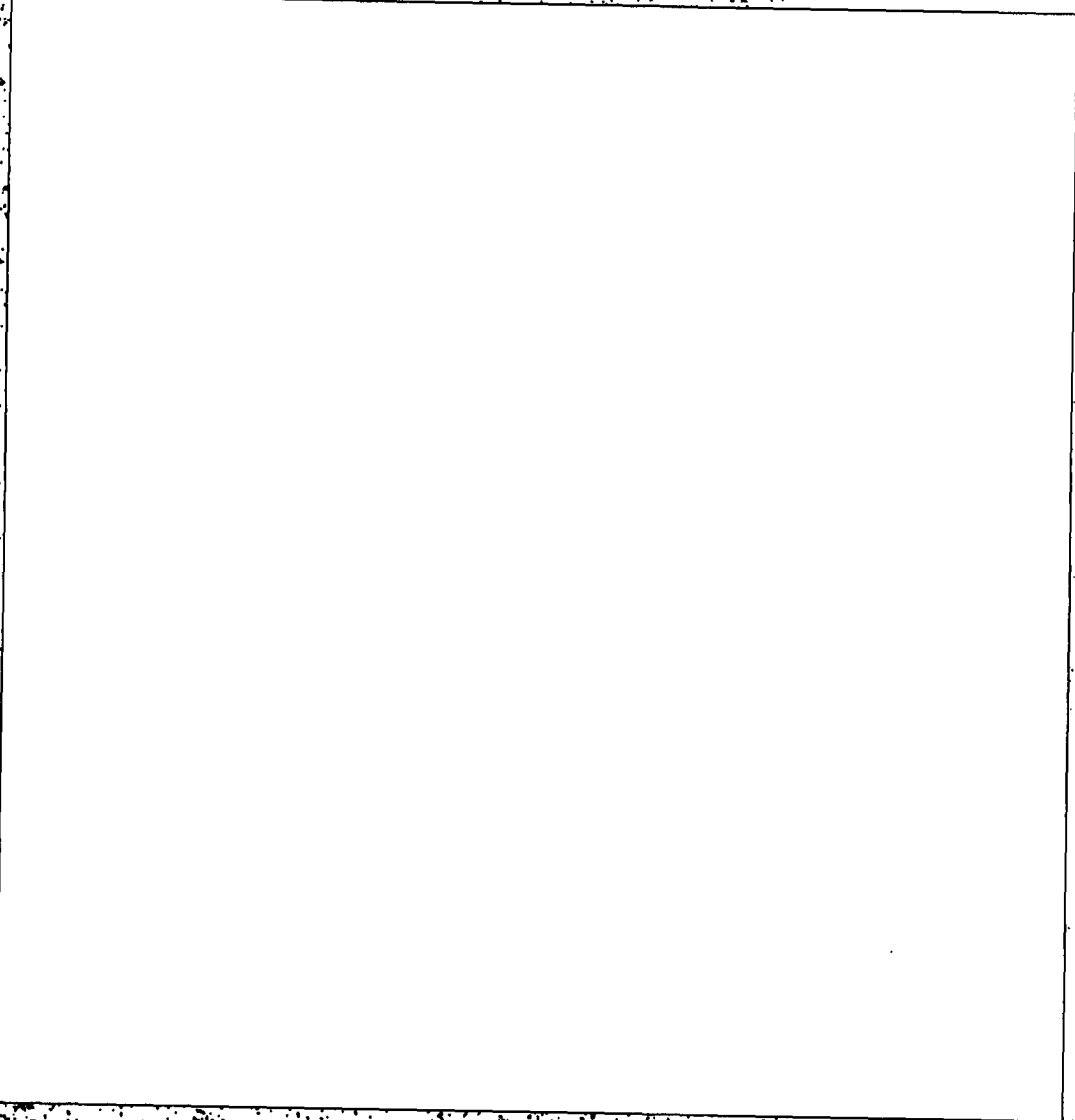
8. Rumania, however, appears to be less apprehensive of a Soviet invasion. US Embassy officers did not detect any "sign of real disquiet" among Rumanian officials at various Rumanian liberation day celebrations on 23 August. Deputy Premier and Executive Committee member of the Rumanian Communist Party Birladeanu told the US ambassador in Bucharest that the danger of an invasion is receding with every passing day. He attributed reports of a Soviet troop build-up on the Rumanian border to Soviet maneuvers related to the Czechoslovak situation, and stated flatly that Rumania's borders with Hungary and Bulgaria are open. There is no hard evidence to confirm rumors of troop movements in Hungary, Bulgaria and the USSR toward Rumanian borders. The official Rumanian news agency on 24 August denied Western reports that part of the Rumanian army was to be mobilized.

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9. The US air attache in Budapest reported no evidence of a buildup of troops in southeastern Hungary near the Rumanian or Yugoslav borders during a trip on 23 August. He saw no indications of an alert or any sign of any troop movements. He described Soviet and Hungarian military road traffic as being below normal.



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12. Hungarian press coverage of Czechoslovak developments continues to lean heavily on Soviet press comment. Several papers, however, surveyed both communist and non-communist foreign press reactions to the crisis, including Yugoslav President Tito's expression of "great disturbance and bitterness." The Hungarians have not yet jammed Hungarian language VOA or RFE broadcasts.

13. The US Embassy in Sofia reports wide but muted Bulgarian disapproval of the invasion and of Bulgaria's participation. The crisis has increased tension between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, which has been clearly signalled by the recent reopening of the Macedonian dispute in major press organs. According to Bulgarian civil air officials, the Bulgarians violated Yugoslav airspace by flying troops across Yugoslavia to Hungary.

Late Item

A western news agency has reported that the Soviet-Czechoslovak talks have ended, and that Svoboda, Dubcek and Cernik will fly back to Prague "shortly."

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