

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]

NLJ.141.013.007/29

39

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: SEP 2004

10

SC #11698/68

EO 12958 3.3(b) (1) > 25Yrs
(S)

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
22 August 1968

Handwritten:
8-22-68
6:50 p

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Czechoslovakia
(As of 1800 EDT)

1. Moscow has still not been able to put together a new Czechoslovak government that it is willing to publicize to the Czechoslovak people and the world. In a chance sidewalk encounter [redacted]

[redacted] indi-
cated that it was his understanding that the "new government" was one formed around Drahomir Kolder and Alois Indra, and he said he thought that it would "not be accepted by the great majority of citizens."

2. An Embassy officer has seen posters around Prague identifying those who are allegedly collaborating with the occupation forces. The most prominent names are Kolder, Indra, Josef Lenart, Vasil Bilak and Frantisek Barbirek-- which suggests that these individuals may form the nucleus of the puppet regime. The last two named have denied they are collaborators and affirmed their loyalty to Dubcek. The continuing wave of mass support for the Dubcek

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]

~~SECRET~~

leadership suggests that if the Soviets install an unpopular repressive occupation regime, it will very likely provoke active resistance on the part of the population.

3. The Czechoslovak party congress which was held today resulted in a ringing declaration of loyalty to the Dubcek regime. The Congress threatened to call a general strike "for an unlimited time" unless negotiations on the withdrawal of occupation forces and the release of arrested Czechoslovak leaders begin within 24 hours. The strike is currently timed for noon on 23 August. The Congress called upon all communists and patriots to work for the end of the occupation, denied that any competent civil or party organ had requested intervention, and read out of the party those members who "in this difficult time have not proved themselves." The number of delegates present, given earlier as about 950, has increased to 1,069, enabling the gathering legally to conduct party affairs.

4. A meeting of the Bratislava city committee of the Slovak communist party also has pledged support to the Dubcek regime and has called for a special Slovak party congress. The Bratislava meeting included delegates unable to attend the Czechoslovak party congress.

5. Crowds were reported milling around the streets of Prague this afternoon and early evening. The signs of

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~ []

"no collaboration", "death to the collaborators" and "infamy on traitors" clearly reflect the mood of the population. A "very large, quiet and moving" demonstration in the main square of Prague ended peacefully about 1500 Prague time (1000 EDT), according to eyewitness accounts to the US Embassy. Another demonstration reportedly was planned for 1700 (1200 EDT). During the day sporadic shooting has been reported in Prague.

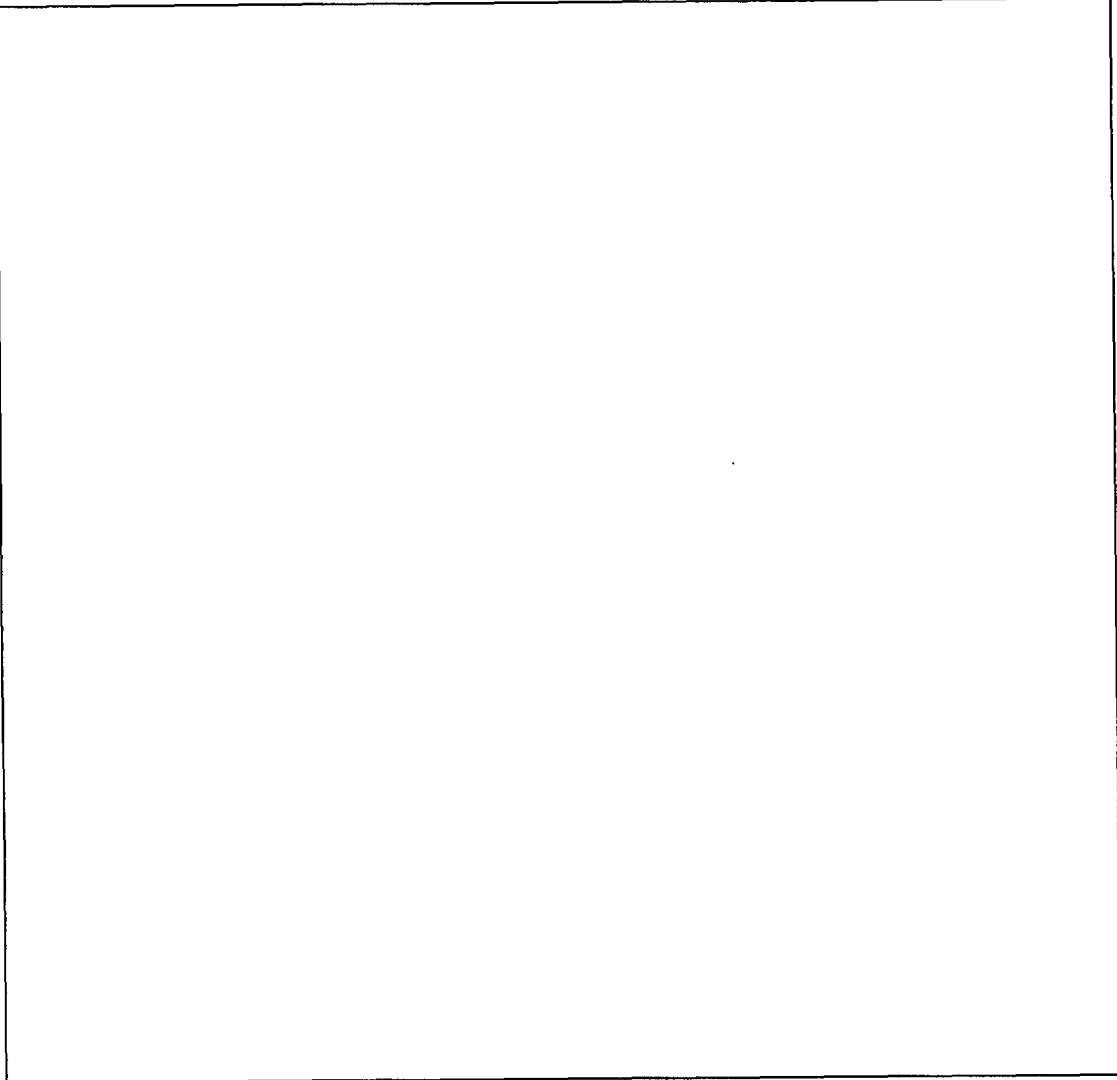
6. "Radio Czechoslovakia" has warned the population that an "interventionist" version of the main party daily, Rude Pravo, was about to be published. The editor of the publication was identified as Jiri Franek, a dogmatist who served as chief of the Party Secretariat press section during the Stalinist era in the CSSR.

7. Elements of the Czechoslovak Army appear to be growing increasingly restive. A station calling itself Radio Czechoslovakia this morning broadcast a statement by the staff of the Czechoslovak Central Military District in which it told President Svoboda it is indignant over the fact that it has to look on inactively while its garrisons are being occupied. It said that if "constitutional officials," including Dubcek, are not released it expects an order directing the Czechoslovak Army to protect them.

[]

~~SECRET~~ []

~~SECRET~~ []



11. Soviet forces in Czechoslovakia, and perhaps the other East European forces as well, may be under the direct command of Army General Ivan Pavlovsky, commander-in-chief of Soviet Ground Forces. Prague radio has identified a General Pavlovsky in this position, and Czechoslovak

~~SECRET~~ []

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

12. There is still no information on the whereabouts or activities of any members of the Soviet politburo. Moscow has made no public reference to the reported CPSU Central Committee plenum on 20 August, and the Embassy has been unable to confirm the report. The Embassy reports that "man-in-the-street" reaction in Moscow has been mostly puzzled or incredulous, rather than indignant or excited. Isolated passers-by have variously expressed regret, relief that the Soviet Union had moved in the nick of time against "revanchists," and satisfaction that "we are not alone this time"--apparently a reference to the 1956 intervention in Hungary. US and British broadcasts to the Soviet Union were jammed again today.

13. The US Embassy in Prague is arranging the evacuation of US citizens. One group left Prague this morning in 65 automobiles for the West German border. The Embassy estimated that as many as 800 US citizens might be on a special train to Austria which was scheduled to leave at 1900 Prague time. All Pan American operations into Prague have been suspended until further notice.

Late Items

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]

[redacted]

B. The Rumanians are exhibiting nervousness over the threat of a possible invasion by the Soviets. Rumanian embassy officials in Bonn have expressed such fears to the West German foreign office and to the US Embassy there. Party and state chief Ceausescu on 22 August reportedly stated that "we are now in a state of full mobilization."

[redacted]

Rumania. There is no hard evidence, however, of Soviet military activity oriented toward Rumania. [redacted]

-6-

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]