

Information

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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Friday, July 26, 1968

Mr. President:

Here is the CIA Intelligence report
on the Czechoslovakian situation.

— as of 4 p.m.

Walt Rostow

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Friday, July 26, 1968

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CIA INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Czechoslovakia as of 4:00 P.M. EDT

See file

Czechoslovak party leader Dubcek has assured the country's populace today that he does not intend to cave in to Soviet pressure and will retain his freedom of action with Moscow. Addressing a delegation of factory workers, he reportedly said he did not intend to push the differences with Moscow to an open break, but added "we know what we want." He also said that the Czechoslovak presidium is unanimous in its attitude toward the proposed talks with the Soviets.

Prague has taken some steps apparently intended to be half-way responsive to Soviet demands, but also continues to assert its determination to continue its reforms. The party presidium yesterday abolished the central committee's department for military and security affairs, an act which had the effect of removing Lt. Gen. Prchlik, who had become a Soviet bogeyman, from his important position as head of this department.

The setting up by the Czechoslovak government of advisory councils for radio and television can also be viewed as a conciliatory step toward Moscow. Although the members of the councils will not be censors per se, the creation of the councils suggests that without actually re-imposing censorship, the Dubcek regime is partially responding to the Soviet demand that it control the news media.

Prague provided further evidence today that it will not bow precipitately to Soviet pressure. The party daily Rude Pravo in effect rebutted the Pravda article of 25 July which linked the Czechoslovak and the Red Chinese "heresies." The Rude Pravo article stressed that the autonomy of each party is indispensable and that "the demand for independence... is not at variance with international solidarity."

Moscow is still denouncing certain Czechoslovak party leaders. Pravda adds the name of Vice-Premier Ota Sik to the growing list of identified "revisionists."

Most of the Soviet leaders continue to be out of public view, but three pollsters members -- Premier Kosygin, President Podgorny, and First Deputy Premier Polyansky -- were officially reported in Moscow yesterday or today.

~~SECRET~~



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Substantial elements of possibly three Soviet divisions which moved south from the Berlin area on 24-25 July are apparently now located in restricted areas approximately 75 miles south of Berlin.

[redacted]

There has been no additional information from any source concerning the announced large rear services exercise in the western USSR. Nor have there been indications that the large scale air defense exercise, announced by Moscow on 24 July, has started.

No unusual activity has been observed in the Czechoslovak Armed Forces.

[redacted]

~~SECRET~~ [redacted]