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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

50X1 Attitudes Toward Communism

1. [REDACTED] at least 90% of the population was opposed to the Communist government. Police controls were so severe and punishment for remarks against the government so heavy that nearly everyone was obliged to suppress his true feelings. About the only thing [REDACTED] as an expression of opposition to the régime was the willingness of the peasants to neglect upkeep of farm buildings and the tendency of people in general to do careless and slovenly work. [REDACTED] did not think there was any significant difference in attitudes of Slovaks and Czechs to the régime. Indeed, [REDACTED] one could no longer speak of a Slovak question. Slovaks and Czechs were both equally disgusted with Communism.
2. In reply to a question on the religious situation, he said that the churches were nearly holding their own. They were being persecuted somewhat, but he thought that this fact caused many people who were anti-Communists to rally to the churches more strongly than they would have done otherwise.
3. [REDACTED] the peasants were the segment of the population which was most likely to remain unaffected by Communism. [REDACTED] did not think that the peasants would ever be converted to Communism. The intelligentsia had also stood up well against Communist indoctrination. There were few Communist fanatics among the intelligentsia. Communist economic teaching might have caused some intellectuals to accept the economic and social arguments for a considerable measure of socialism; but, because of the intolerant,

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1

- 2 -

undemocratic, and tyrannical methods of the Communists, such intellectuals were more likely to become anti-Communist Social Democrats than pro-Communists.

Attitudes Toward the USSR and the Soviets

4. There were no Soviet agriculture officials in Brno. Ten or 12 Soviet agricultural experts in a visiting delegation were shown around a model state farm, one of the best in Moravia, at Pohorelice u Brna (N 48-59, E 16-31) in 1952. This was the only visit to Moravia of Soviet agricultural experts [redacted] several other students from the Agricultural Institute had been sent to the farm to help greet the Soviets and show them about the farm. The Soviets acted as if they already knew everything and the Czechs knew nothing.
5. [redacted] hardly anyone in Czechoslovakia believed the Soviet claims of technical superiority. The notorious unwillingness of the Soviets to allow outsiders to travel freely in the USSR was often cited by the Czechs as proof that Communism had been an economic and political failure in the Soviet Union as in Czechoslovakia. People jokingly said, "I'll believe in Communism as soon as I can travel to Moscow myself".
6. At the Agricultural Institute in Brno in 1952, [redacted] non-Communist students asked one of their professors whether or not it might be possible for them to spend their third year summer vacation doing agricultural work in the Soviet Union, on an exchange basis with Soviet students who might be invited to come to Czechoslovakia. The professor, a non-Communist named Vladimir Frantek, made inquiries and informed the students that such an arrangement was not possible. The students spoke no more of their proposal thereafter, as the word soon got around that one or two of the Party fanatics among the students were making assiduous inquiries as to who thought of the scheme in the first place, his real motive, and so on.

Attitudes Toward International Affairs

7. [redacted] most people in Czechoslovakia likewise believed, that a war between America and the Soviet Union was inevitable, but might not come for some time. The Soviet Union would not start the war because America was stronger and because the Satellites were unreliable. Since America would also not start the war, it would probably break out by accident in the Far East or elsewhere. Though few people in Czechoslovakia were convinced supporters of the régime, it was fairly widely believed that perhaps the Communists were doing better in winning support in the poor countries. [redacted] the Communists might be gaining support among the peasantry in Poland, where it was assumed that conditions had formerly been very bad and were perhaps better now, or at least no worse, than they had been in past years.
8. People in Czechoslovakia thought that Titoism was perhaps possible in the other Satellites but was out of the question in Czechoslovakia. There was, however, some speculation that Cepicka might like to be a Tito. [redacted] the rumor that Cepicka, the Minister of Defense, might replace either the prime minister or the president. Cepicka was thought to have quarrelled with Zapotocky and to have lost influence since Gottwald's death. Nevertheless, neither Cepicka, nor Zapotocky, nor anyone else could ever be a Tito in Czechoslovakia, because the Soviet Union would occupy the country, if necessary, rather than lose the uranium ore in Czechoslovakia. The average Czechoslovak took it for granted that his

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

50X1

- 3 -

country was one of the principal sources of uranium for the USSR and that, consequently, there was nothing anyone in Czechoslovakia could do to eliminate Communist rule in the country.

9. There was still some fear and mistrust of the Germans, but Communist propaganda about the dangers of West German rearmament had not made anyone in Czechoslovakia less hostile to Communist rule. Communist propaganda on the subject was generally disbelieved. Many Czechs listened to West German radio broadcasts, however; and occasional items about the activities of the Sudeten Germans in West Germany sometimes aroused apprehension. This concern was offset to a considerable degree by the comforting reflection that conditions in Czechoslovakia were in general so poor that few Sudeten Germans would wish to return.
10. The United States was still the country on which most Czechoslovaks relied for help. The Czech Communists argued that many Americans were Communists, and were opposed to their government. They cited speeches of Senator McCarthy to prove that there were indeed many Communists in the United States, but hardly anyone in Czechoslovakia took such Communist propaganda seriously.

Foreign Radio Broadcasts

11. [redacted] listened to the BBC or to RFE for half an hour every evening between six and seven o'clock. He rarely listened to VOA because he was accustomed to the BBC and RFE broadcasts, and because their times of transmission were most convenient for him. He had never heard the VOA agricultural broadcast. He listened to the newson Prague Radio, but never tuned in Radio Moscow. He kept himself informed on the international situation by listening to foreign broadcasts and by reading between the lines in the Communist press. He had no comment to make on the content of Western broadcasts beyond the remark that BBC news broadcasts were completely dependable and that RFE would have a stronger reputation for accuracy and reliability if it would make more admissions of occasional Western shortcomings in its treatment of the news. He added, however, that he realized that it was not always feasible or relevant to include such information in programs devoted to particular domestic Czechoslovak topics, as was frequently the case with the broadcasts of RFE.

12. [redacted] jamming was bad but that it was always possible for someone who wanted to tune in a foreign station broadcasting in Czech to do so. There were many people who had no interest at all in news broadcasts of anything other than the results of the latest football games. He could not estimate how large the Western radio audience or the VOA audience was, but he was certain that there were at least as many people who listened to foreign broadcasts as there were who followed the general world and political news broadcasts on Radio Prague.

Western Leaflet Operations

13. The first Western leaflet [redacted] ever saw was the Hunger Crown in July 1953. A farm worker at Kyjov (N 49-01, E 17-07) in Moravia found one of the crowns in the fields [redacted]. After both had read it, they tore it up lest it be found on their persons. In July and August 1954, an acquaintance [redacted] found three copies of No. 16 of the "News of Free Europe" which had fallen in a garden at a village in the Sternberk area in northern Moravia. Later, in the same village, a neighbor found a few copies of No. 17 of the same news leaflet series [redacted]. A great many leaflets fell in the town, but [redacted] did not have any

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 4 -

close friends there, and so did not know what happened to most of the leaflets. In the summer of 1954, a student friend [redacted] showed [redacted] one of the "Ten Point" leaflets which had fallen at Podivin (N 48-50, E 16-51), southern Moravia.

14. [redacted] most people read the leaflets and destroyed them. He thought that the only people who turned the leaflets in to the police were those who picked up the leaflets in the company of other people. He never heard of anyone mailing the leaflets to the Communist authorities or putting the "Ten Demands" in the ballot boxes.

15. In September 1954, a member of the border guards at Tachov (N 49-48, E 12-38), western Bohemia, [redacted] the border guard soldiers had instructions to try to shoot down the leaflet balloons. The soldier had never heard of any balloons brought down in this way. [redacted] no other knowledge of action taken to prevent circulation of the leaflets.

16. [redacted] practically everyone in Czechoslovakia had heard of the leaflets, but he thought that people who did not visit the countryside or work in the fields were less likely to have seen the leaflets. In short, the leaflets were better suited to reach people in the country than town dwellers. Nevertheless, the campaign was a generally effective weapon in maintaining opposition to the régime.

17. [redacted] though nearly everyone approved of the leaflet campaigns, two or three peasants he spoke to were slightly critical of the wording of some of the leaflets. They said that, while they approved of the leaflets, advice to refuse to meet delivery quotas was unrealistic and impractical. They would gladly withhold the deliveries if they could, but they, themselves, did not see how they could do so without being punished. A farmer who did not meet his quotas would not receive fertilizer, seed, and so on. He also could not sell the grain on the free market or to other peasants without running great risk of denunciation as a kulak.

[redacted] the writers of the leaflets sometimes appeared to be a bit misinformed. One of the leaflets had spoken of hunger in Czechoslovakia. There was less food in Czechoslovakia than in the West, but he was sure it was not correct to speak of hunger in Czechoslovakia. [redacted] did not think that the figure "ten" had become a well known popular symbol.

18. Apart from the above remarks of some peasants, [redacted] had heard no criticisms of the leaflet operation, and was not aware of any occupational or age differentiation in attitudes toward this operation. He was confident that the operation was generally welcomed, and believed that it should be repeated periodically. His own view was that the leaflets should and could serve a more educational purpose in giving accurate information on the cost of living abroad. How much wheat must a farmer in western Europe or the United States produce to pay for a pair of boots or for a tractor? What was the weekly consumption per capita of meat in other countries? How did old-age pensions and health insurance in the United States and western Europe compare with social security provisions in Czechoslovakia? Such were questions to which everyone wanted accurate answers.

19. [redacted] did not mean that the West should always insist that its standard of living was higher than in eastern Europe. People already knew this was true. They did not believe the Communist propaganda that there was already an economic crisis in the West. What they felt they needed [redacted] were facts to equip them to see through Communist propaganda now and in the future. This meant that they needed dependable facts about difficulties as well as accomplishments in the West.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

Developments in Higher Education

- 50X1:0. [redacted] in the 1953 class of about 60 in the agronomy
50X1 faculty of the Agricultural Institute in Brno, about six or seven
students were perhaps convinced Communists, another 10 were oppor-
tunists who pretended to be convinced, and the remaining two thirds
of the students could more or less definitely be classed as anti-
Communists. The class had consisted of about 80 students in 1949,
but 20 had been expelled in August and September 1952, on the grounds
that they were of kulak origin.
- 50X1
21. [redacted] in the fall of 1954, a number of the students
not allowed to graduate in 1953 were probably permitted to return
to school. The authorities were now trying very hard to raise
agricultural output and perhaps for this reason had lowered the
political requirements for university attendance. Another reason
for the easing of the political requirements was that some schools
were having trouble finding sufficient qualified students to fill
the classes. Source was told by a friend that, in August 1954, only
about 35 students had applied for admission to the 100 vacancies in
the class which would enter the Animal Husbandry Faculty in Brno
that fall. By the time classes began, sufficient students were
probably found. [redacted] this as evidence of a growing
unwillingness of young people to make the financial sacrifices
involved in university attendance when they had no prospect of
adequate financial reward. A competent worker earned about 1,100
crowns a month. An engineer who had studied four years at a uni-
versity, at much of his own expense, was usually paid from 1,300
to 1,400 crowns. In the source's opinion, this differential was so
small that many young people had no desire to go to a university.
- 50X1
22. The quality of university instruction was quite good. The faculty
at Brno, for example, consisted mostly of non-Communists who taught
their subjects objectively. Denunciations of professors by students,
and vice versa, were infrequent. [redacted] once, at the
end of 1952, three students with reputations as fanatical Communists
were observed taking notes on what the teacher, one Professor
Frantisek Lom, had been saying about comparison of the operations
of capitalism and socialism. The students in that class were
apparently not expected to take notes on such matters and did not
usually do so. When the professor saw the three students writing
down his remarks, he at once assumed that they were doing so to
be able to document a complaint to the school authorities about his
handling of the subject. He at once threw down his book in anger
and stomped out of the room, declaring that he would not continue
while these students were in his class. The next day, however, the
professor returned to the class, and so did the three fanatics. The
whole matter was apparently tacitly dropped.
- 50X1
50X1
23. In the four years from 1949 to 1953, no faculty members of the
Agricultural Institute in Brno were discharged, but one professor,
Ottavians Farsky, was compelled to retire in 1951 even though he
was still in good health and other faculty members older than he
were allowed to continue teaching. [redacted] Professor
Farsky, a strongly pro-Western-minded professor of forestry with an
international reputation, was punished for his known anti-Communist
political views. In general, however, [redacted] the
Communists were reluctant to fire non-Communist professors because
of the difficulty of finding professionally qualified replacements.
- 50X1
50X1
24. In selecting students for the school year 1953-54, for both gymnasium
and university levels, previous scholastic ratings of an applicant
were taken into consideration, in addition to his political background.
Heretofore, school year 1952-53 for example, selections were based
solely on the political background of the applicant and his family.
This apparent change of policy resulted from the fact that the many
poor students accepted in previous years could not measure up to the
educational standards they were expected to attain. [redacted]

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