



August 8, 1968

**Attaché Note from Prague on Events in
Czechoslovakia from 28 July to 5 August 1968**

Citation:

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Summary:

Memorandum from Chief of General Staff II General Oliwa to Chief of General Staff and Deputy Minister of National Defense, General Chocha. General Oliwa is sending a note from the Military Attaché in Prague assessing the events in Czechoslovakia from 28 July to 5 August 1968. The status of the party and public opinion on the party in Czechoslovakia is highlighted throughout.

Original Language:

Polish

Contents:

Translation - English

CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE Comrade Major General B. CHOCHAI attach for the Comrade General a note sent by the Military Attaché in Prague referring to an assessment of events in the CSSR between 28.07 and 5.08.1968. Attachment 2 on 4 sheets Nr. DM 03031 - addressee only HEAD OF DEPARTMENT II GENERAL STAFF [handwritten signature] Brigadier General W. OLIWA SERVICE NOTE Regarding an assessment of the events in the CSSR between 28.07 and 5.08.1968 The following two events have defined the political situation in the CSSR :

□- four days of talks between the leadership of the CPSU and the Czechoslovak Communist Party in Cierna; □- the meeting of the 6 communist and workers' parties in Bratislava. □ Just like last week the Czechoslovak people have expressed their full support for the leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, which was evident from reports on radio and television and in the press. A campaign to gather signatures of support for the leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and the Government has assumed the character of a nationwide plebiscite and around 4 million have been collected. There has been a considerable change in the mass media demonstrating prudence and moderation in issuing political opinions and commentaries in the polemics with fraternal parties. No irresponsible attacks on either the CSSR's internal or foreign policies have been noted. The one incident was a television report on August 2, in which the German Democratic Republic's attitude towards Czechoslovakia, evident in the German press and in special programs broadcast by GDR radio in Czech, was attacked sharply and ironically. □ During the past week the leaders of the CSSR, including President Svoboda, A. Dubcek twice, as well as Smrkovsky and Oisarz [?], have appeared several times on the radio and on television. The statements were delivered in a calm and balanced manner and presented the current situation, they called for calm and prudence as well as informing the people in an open manner about the progress and aim of the negotiations, and about the full implementation of the Party's program. It is fair to say that these appearances have produced an appropriate result, as can be seen in the creation of a 'special fund for the republic', the spontaneous setting of production targets, as well as the donation of sums of money and gold to the National Bank. Similarly, the Czechoslovak people's attitude, especially in Prague, towards the party and national leadership has indicated an enormous amount of support for and acceptance of their actions which was, for instance, seen during the Czechoslovak Communist Party's return from Cierna to Prague as well as at rallies of citizens on the Old Town Square in Prague on the 2nd and 5th of this month. □ It is worth pointing out that last week prices of various essential products, including food, were raised and that this was greeted by the population calmly and with full understanding. Reports from production facilities and production co-operatives (harvests) show that planned targets have been fully met. □ The first session of the Czech National Council, at which it passed its own agenda and took a decision about the country's federal structure, has also provoked a similarly positive reaction amongst the people. It should be pointed out that while some extreme views have appeared, represented mainly by certain groups of young people, they have not found widespread support amongst the Czechoslovak people. □ At the present moment, on the basis of isolated statements, it is difficult to give a full assessment of the Czechoslovak people's reaction to the outcome of the talks in Cierna and Bratislava. □ One should assume that only the current week will bring some commentary and assessment of these meetings. □ No military facts worthy of mention have been noted this past week. This is partly due to the holiday season of which both officers and men are widely taking advantage. According to the observations and assessments of the Attaché's office, divisional HQs are conducting exercises (in training areas) in accordance with earlier plans. No indications of the Army having raised its state of readiness or moving have been confirmed. The external discipline of the officers and men has been confirmed. A growing number of officers in uniform have been seen walking outside the area of their quarters. *Translated thanks to a generous contribution from John A. Adams and the John A. Adams Center for Military History and Strategic Analysis at the Virginia Military Institute.*