

Czechoslovak Secret Police (StB) Memorandum, “Information on the Security Situation and Further Tasks in the Struggle Against the Internal Enemy” in the Period Preceding

21 August 1989

Information

On the security situation and further tasks in the struggle against the internal enemy

In the period from the end of July to the present day, information has established increased activity of the internal and external enemy in the preparations of provocative and confrontational acts on the occasion of the anniversary of 21 August 1968. The evident goal is to compromise the leading position on the events of 21 August years ago and the politics of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and through a public demonstration of [the enemy's] own strength to manifest themselves as an essential socio-political factor. The enemy's actions demonstrate increasingly pronounced tendencies toward a transition from criticism to political activity aimed against the principles of a socialist state. The actions of the 20-21 August should, according to the expectations of the adversary, accelerate the fall and development of events in the country with the aim of achieving their purpose.

One of the chief means of fulfilling [the opposition's] plan is the campaign centered around the pamphlet “A Few Sentences,” which is being spread over the territory of the entire country and which 16,500 citizens are supposed to have signed. 1 The activity of the adversary necessitated undertaking extensive measures. Legal proceedings were taken against the criminal act of sedition according to paragraph 100 of the criminal code. With the agreement of the municipal prosecutor in Prague, house searches of the main organizers S. DEVATY, A. VONDRA, J. URBAN and J. KRIZAN were conducted.2 It was proven that Vaclav Havel was the chief organizer and author of the pamphlets. Documentation was obtained on the criminal activity of the main organizers of the enemy campaign. Prosecution of these individuals can be successfully carried out only in the event that all of the organizers, including Vaclav HAVEL, about whom there is also incriminating material, be tried. It is necessary to consider the leveling of accusations and imprisonment through the perspective of the developing security situation and decide whether to proceed to trial immediately on the 21 August 1989. Measures taken against the distributors confirm that in most cases these individuals do not have any ties to the organizers and that they gather signatures at the instigation of Western media (RADIO FREE EUROPE, VOICE OF AMERICA).

Measures were undertaken on the entire territory of the CSSR with respect to the distribution of pamphlets and preparation for anti-socialist actions. In total 211 interrogations were carried out, 10 people were charged with crimes according to paragraph 100 of the criminal code, 76 people were charged with felonies according to paragraph 6 of law #150/69 Sb., 13 were charged with misdemeanors, and 15 were given a warning.

An analogous action, which was supposed to intensify the atmosphere and bring about a split in the ranks of the CPCz, was in the form of a letter from the leadership of the so-called RENEWAL (*OBRODA*) to all members of the party. The plan of the

antagonist was nipped in the bud and its spread was successfully stopped. The original letter along with copying equipment was confiscated and house searches of main organizers M. HAJKA, V. SILHAN and V. KOLMISTR were conducted after the opening criminal prosecutions for the criminal act of dishonoring the Republic and its representatives. A warning was given to all those named by the municipal prosecutor in Prague.³

On the territory of the Slovak Socialist Republic (SSR), CARNOGURSKY, KUSY, SELECKY, PONIKA and MANAK in particular are perpetrating enemy acts, consisting of organizing anti-social appearances, instigating citizens to participate in them, and distribution of materials abroad for enemy purposes, where they are used in anti-Czechoslovak campaigns. Criminal prosecution for crimes of sedition, specifically injuring the interests of the Republic abroad, was initiated by an investigator of the SNB (National Security Force) on 14 August 1989, and the above-mentioned individuals were indicted. A proposal was brought forth for the imprisonment of CARNOGURSKY and KUSY. This measure was approved by the general prosecutor of the SSR. 4

Within the framework of the preparations for the August gathering, the so-called Independent Peaceful Coalition began to organize a so-called silent march in pedestrian zones daily, starting on 1 August 1989. Several dozen people are participating in these marches, and their numbers increase daily. Besides provoking the state powers, the antagonist wants to activate the public, confirm his own ability to act and disclose eventual counter-measures.

The fundamental issue in the activity of the opponent is the preparation for public appearances on 20-21 August, 1989. As the result of security measures carried out (for example, prevention of a meeting of the Coordinating Committee of Independent Initiatives—*OBRODA*, HOS, CH-77, NMS, Ecological Section of CH-77 5 —on 2/2, during which forms of protest and the publication of a common declaration were supposed to be discussed; prevention of a meeting of the members of an HOS branch in Prague 4, during which the concrete events for the anniversary in August were supposed to be discussed; impairment of the public acts of NMS, etc.), the opponents' opinions about the character of these acts significantly differ and are divided. From the marginal (demonstrations on Wenceslas Square with a clash with police—asserted for example by the speaker of Charter-77 HRADLIK) through the “re-strained” to the opinion not to hold any public events (for example Jan Urban advises instead to concentrate on the establishment of independent committees and penetrate into enterprises and territories). A group of former communists united in the so-called RENEWAL [group] who refuse to take part in eventual public appearances, likewise endorses this last opinion, under the influence of under-taken measures.

At the present time, the “silent march” variation of demonstrating in the pedestrian zone in Prague on 20- 21 August 1989, dominates in the enemy camp. CH-77 together with other initiatives are inclined toward this.

Analogous acts are to take place in other towns, such as Brno, Plzen, Tabor, Usti nad Labem, Litomence, Olomouc, Chomutov, Hradec Kralove, Zilin, Bratislava and Kostice. It is possible to envision provocative demonstrations also in other parts of the Republic. We are dealing with the tactics of an opponent who does not call directly for open enemy manifestations, but tries to create the appearance of a peaceful gathering of citizens. The opponent is counting on the creation of a tense situation during a greater

gathering of people, which will then easily lead to a demonstration of spontaneous protest against the politics of the CPCz.

Several other forms of provocative acts are also being assessed, such as the distribution of the declaration by Charter 77 and [the laying of] flowers to honor the memory of those who fell at the embassy of the USSR in Prague, the laying of a bouquet on 20 August at the statue of St. Wenceslas, the laying of flowers where Czech citizens died during the Warsaw Pact army invasion, the hoisting of a red flag on Pradedá in Jeseníky 6 and the ringing of the bells of St. Tomas in Brno.

The internationalization of the acts of the internal enemy and the cooperation with its counterparts from PLR (People's Republic of Poland) and MLR (People's Republic of Hungary) is clearly increasing, and is constantly acquiring more concrete shapes, from instruction and consultation to organizing common concrete acts. From the experience of MICHNIK 7, BUJAK and others' impact on the representatives of opposing forces during their stay in the CSSR in the beginning of August 1989, measures will be taken to prevent their announced arrival in CSSR and the prevention of their participation in provocative acts. Analogous measures are also being taken against the representatives of Hungarian opposition groups. Polish Solidarity is preparing provocative acts on the borders with the CSSR in support of acts in the CSSR.

In recent times the danger of the impact of the so-called Democratic Initiative (MANDLER and co.) is growing, and unlike CH-77, is principally oriented towards penetrating into working-class youth and into the country-side in order to try and create so-called alternative organizations.

The so-called Czechoslovak Helsinki Committee sent a letter to the Prime Minister and the general prosecutor of the CSSR on 12 August 1989, in which it completely [and] unequivocally accused the government of the CSSR and the Ministry of the Interior of trying to incite a confrontation with citizens demanding democratic renewal. They allege that for example the campaign against the appeal "A Few Sentences" developed into a direct "criminalization" of this legal petitional act.

They further accuse the organs of state power of trying to fabricate proof of a connection between a group of saboteurs who commit arson in northern Bohemia and "independent initiatives," of which there supposedly is no proof. Hitherto investigations unequivocally prove, through witness statements and house searches, a connection between one of the main defendants Jan GREGOR and representatives UHL 8 and CIBULKA of CH-77. Witnesses have proven that GREGOR also visited the representative of CH-77 Vaclav BENDA 9 many times in Prague. In his established correspondence GREGOR expresses his resolve to fight by any means against the rising socialist leadership and the CPCz, and his decision to influence youth in this spirit. Despite the defendants' denial of the charges against them and their refusal to testify, there is further proof of their criminal act of sabotage, especially concerning the four main defendants.

From the contents of the above-mentioned letter it is evident that it is the endeavor of anti-socialist forces to shift the blame for the confrontational nature of the acts and for the eventual decisive intervention of the power apparatus against them, onto the Czechoslovak departments Public Security (VB) and Peoples' Militia (LM).¹⁰ Through this they wish to show the "illegitimacy" of the present leadership of the CSSR on the August platform and to create an atmosphere which they expect will result in the

resignation of the political and state leadership and in the installment of “temporary state organs.” The foremost exponents of illegal structures have decided to establish the so-called Czechoslovak civic forum for coordination and [to create a] unified plan of action, as a guarantee for the “creation of a democratic and legal state.” Proposals are being prepared detailing the nature of the activity of a “united” opposition aimed at the factual assumption of power, in which they anticipate the dissolution of the Federal Assembly and the establishment in its place of a “temporary legislative assembly” which will prepare and negotiate a new constitution for the CSSR. According to the expectations of the antagonist, a new government would subsequently be created, which would consequently realize their idea of a legal state. Parallel to this a plan is being worked out to create a new “independent youth union,” in which independent unions would be brought together, for example university youth, working youth, etc.

A set of complex measures in preventive and repressive areas is being carried out to frustrate the plans and goals of the opponent.

Technical measures were carried out to prevent the communication of news abroad by telephone by known informers of the editorial staff of Radio Free Europe and Voice of America. All meetings of the so-called initiatives are being stopped with the aim of not allowing them to unite.

In order to strengthen the effectiveness of security measures carried out on the territory of the CSSR, the FMZV [Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs]11 took steps toward the prevention of the arrival of visa-holding foreigners who are presumed to partake in enemy activities and for the prevention of the arrival of individuals with enemy intentions from ZSS [Socialist Countries] (specifically from Poland and Hungary). On the border crossings measures [are being implemented] to prevent the arrival of known exponents of Solidarity and the so-called independent initiative from Hungary, who have come to the CSSR in the past.

In the area of counter-propaganda, materials are being distributed which document the enemy activity of the main organizers, in order to discredit them to the public-at-large.

The chief exponents of the so-called independent initiatives and known individuals from the enemy environment will be under the control of the organs of the SNB [National Security Force] so that they will not be able to participate in enemy activities.

The course of action of the security organs in collaboration with the LM [People’s Militia] in the event of organized antisocial appearances is being elaborated in several variations.

In the event that the so-called “silent march” takes place, documents will be checked and individuals actively participating in the organization of the SNB [National Security Force] will be summoned. If petitions, verbal attacks or spontaneous declarations of opposition against the party and state leadership and the police of the CSSR should come to pass, security units will be called in to force out and disperse the crowd from the area.

If, despite these measures, a massive antisocial demonstration takes place, disciplinary powers will be brought in to carry out necessary decisive intervention and restore peace and order through the use of technical equipment.

The Emergency Regiment VB CSR [Public Security of the Czech Socialist Republic] (1,200 informers and 400 members of the permanent establishment) and the Emergency Department VB SSR [Public Security of the Slovak Socialist Republic] in Bratislava (565 informers and 190 members of the permanent establishment) are the decisive force of the SNB to be dispatched in the event of mass anti-social gatherings in Prague. The technical equipment of these organizations includes armored carriers, water-cannons and other emergency instruments.

Emergency units of the VB are being created and prepared according to the possibilities and needs of any given section in every SNB organization at the county and district level. Within the framework of the CSR, the leaders of KS SNB (including the administration of SNB Prague) have at their disposal school emergency departments which function as their reserves to be brought in as a compact unit. All the mentioned emergency units are thoroughly prepared to perform tasks and their preparedness is good. During their preparation they collaborated with the units of the LM in their exercises.

From the Border Guards a reserve of 720 soldiers from the basic service and career soldiers with the necessary technology has been created, of these 460 members of the Border Guards are intended for Prague.

In individual counties and districts, [possible] locations for anticipated mass anti-social gatherings are being identified and intervention plans are being practiced there.

Extraordinary attention in the preparation for the protection of law and order is devoted to the capital, Prague. Mass anti-social gatherings are anticipated specifically within the confines of Wenceslas Square, Peace Square, Old Town Square, on Letna [plain], Stromovka [park] and Kampa [island]. Intervention actions are practiced in these locations, but forces are ready to strike in other places as well.

The operational staff of the FMV [Federal Interior Ministry] was created for the leadership and coordination of security measures. The responsibility for the preparation and completion of tasks to protect the peace from attempts to stage anti-social gatherings has been to the responsible deputies of MV ZP CSR and SSR. Emphasis was placed on the universal preparedness of the security forces and technologies, preparations of individual variations and placement and leadership.

The head of the administration of LM CSSR announced extraordinary measures for the days of 17-22 August 1989. The focus of the tasks lies in the acquisition of information and assurance of uninterrupted activity in the factories. Heightened attention is being given to the protection of stockpiles of weapons and ammunition.

Regional LM staffs have cooperated with SNB organizations and are prepared for combined security patrols during the above-mentioned period and incorporation into security units with forces and equipment determined in the plans for cooperation.

For the capital Prague, 10 troops will be prepared specifically on bases destined for the local SNB administrations, and 1 LM company for MS VB Prague. In addition to this, 300 members of the LM will be prepared as reserves.

The chief of the General Staff of the MNO [Ministry of National Defense] released a "guideline" for securing the tasks in which he ordered the troops to prepare and detail forces and equipment for the SNB in the calculations determined in the agreement between the FMV and CSLA [Czechoslovak People's Army] before the redeployment of the army.

The third degree of extraordinary security measures [which has been] announced [MBO],¹² does not yet presuppose the deployment of forces and equipment of the — SLA. Their usage is possible only under higher degrees of MBO. Under the fourth degree, MBO soldiers are brought in for combined patrols and part of the technology is used. Under the fifth degree of the MBO, the guarding of designated objects is added and the CSLA arranges the planned security forces and special technology, which will be brought in during the sixth degree (MBO). The law #40/ 74 Sb. makes it possible for CSLA troops to be brought in, according to which the minister of the interior of the CSSR has the authority to enlist the members of the CSLA to fulfill the tasks of the SNB after an agreement with the minister of national defense.

The detailed technology of the CSLA include trucks, connecting appliances, armored transports for infantry and water canons.

For the capital Prague, 2,300 soldiers of the basic service and career soldiers with the necessary technology [already] have been prepared for service in the combined security patrols and the security units. Furthermore a regiment of tanks of the minister of national defense is prepared to serve as a reserve (1,160 members of the CSLA with necessary technology).

Conclusion:

It has been proven that the internal and external enemy considers the anniversary of 21 August as an opportunity to confront the state powers and to discredit the present leadership of the party and the state.

The western media provides the necessary framework for this. They try to draw a picture in the public's mind of a deepening crisis in our society which, according to their prognosis, should result in its end, and, at the latest by next year's end, develop into a struggle for political power, the removal of the CPCz from the leading role in society and a complete dismantling of the principles of socialism.

They clearly, at the same time, count on developments in neighboring socialist countries, especially in Poland and Hungary to influence the minds of our people. They concentrate primarily on the support and propagation of the activity of illegal organizations and their members, and simultaneously strive to prove that the party is not able to lead the society and secure its progress any longer.

The activity of internal and external enemies is aimed at bringing about the legalization of the operation of opposing groups and their assertion as real political powers in the societies, which, following the Polish model forced the state leadership to a round-table dialogue. At the same time one must not underestimate the influence and long-term plans of the Roman Catholic Church. Its political ambition was explicitly expressed by Cardinal Tomasek in an open letter to the government functionaries and citizens of the CSSR.

The existence and activity of illegal organizations and the prolonged and increasing influence of the western media, especially the broadcast stations RADIO FREE EUROPE and VOICE OF AMERICA, impacts in a negative way on a segment of our population. Cases of anonymous threats addressed to functionaries of party and state organs and the National Front organization, of disrespect for the SNB, CSLA and LM, and of verbal attacks on their members are on the rise.

With regard to these realities it is impossible to rule out the possibility that during the so-called silent demonstration on the 20-21 August 1989, an atmosphere will be created among the participants that could grow into an open display of enmity toward the state and the party as a start of a series of further acts planned during the course of this year and the beginning of the next, aimed at destabilizing the society.

This is the reason for the preparation of necessary security measures for the frustration of their confrontational plans.

[Source: A. Lorenc et al., T8/91 vol. XIX., envelope 1, #79-84 (also vol. XXI, #2242-2247). Published in Organizace a Řízení, Represe v CSSR: Operacní Stáby Generála Lorence 1988-1989, Edice Dokumentů Vol. 4/II (Úřad Dokumentace a Vyšetřování Zločinu Komunismu 1998). Translated for CWIHP by Caroline Kovtun.]