

October 29, 1956

KGB Chief Serov, Report

Citation:

"KGB Chief Serov, Report", October 29, 1956, Wilson Center Digital Archive, TsKhSD, F. 89, Per. 45, Dok. 11; translated by Johanna Granville. Published in CWIHP Bulletin 5, pp. 31-32. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/111091>

Summary:

KGB Chief Serov details the violence and resistance in Hungary. He writes that armed groups are executing communists and are actively planning to seek out and kill employees of the state security organs. Serov expresses concern over the dismissal of state employees and the decision by other state employees to leave work.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

KGB Chief Serov, Report, 29 October 1956 Send to CC CPSUA. Mikoyan M. Suslov 29.X-1956 To Comrade MIKOYAN, A.I. To Comrade SUSLOV, M.A. I am reporting about the situation according to the circumstances on 29 October. 1. There were negotiations during the night with the groups fighting in the region round the Corwin theater, Zsigmund street, Sen Square and Moscow Square to surrender their weapons. Toward evening agreement was reached. Some small armed groups that had come to Budapest from other cities were identified. The Soviet military command is taking action to liquidate them. 2. According to information from the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs], on 27-28 October in several cities prisoners were freed from prisons, including criminals, around 8,000 people in all. Some of these prisoners are armed with weapons taken from the security guards. The ammunition was obtained by attacking military depots. After the government declaration was made on the radio about amnesty to students who participated in the demonstration, the armed groups started to lay down their weapons. 3. The situation in several cities can be characterized in the following way: the population is stimulated against the communists. In several regions the armed people search in the apartments of communists and shoot them down. In the factory town of Csepel (near Budapest) there were 18 communists killed. When in buses travelling between cities, the bandits do checks and prominent communists are taken out and shot. In the town of Debrecen the regional committee went underground, contacted the military unit and asked for support. This data is confirmed by telegrams that arrived at the Council of Ministers from the leaders of the "revolutionary committees." The workers' council in Miskolc suggested that the employees of the security organs lay down their weapons and go away. Three employees, including the Deputy Director of the department, Mayor Gati, would not comply with the demands. The employees of the security organs were all hanged as a group. In the town of Keskemet, a crowd decided to punish a communist in the square. The commander of the Hungarian military unit went up in an airplane and with a machine gun dispersed the crowd. The commander of the Hungarian troops stationed in the town of Győr alerted a regiment in order to restore order in the city. When order was restored he moved to the neighboring city with the same objective. When he returned to Dier, he had to restore order once again. 4. In connection with the decision of the government to abolish the state security organs, the morale of the operative staff declined. On the evening, 28.X [28 October], the MVD held a meeting. [Ferenc] Munnich called the anti-government demonstration "a meeting of workers for the satisfaction of their justified demands." Fascist elements joined this movement and tried to use it for the overthrow of the government. He said the employees of the security organs honestly did their duty in the struggle with the hostile elements. Then he informed them that an extraordinary court would be organized, whereby those responsible for hanging communists and attacking government and social institutions would be tried. After this meeting morale declined drastically. Several employees left work and never came back. In the city a leaflet appeared of names of the "revolutionary committee of students" with a summons to kill the employees of the security organs. The police on duty are stimulating this mood, declaring that there are traitors in the security organs, and they are angry that the employees of the security organs have started to wear police uniforms. The Dep[uty]. Minister of Internal Affairs Hars came to our adviser, wept, and stated that the employees of the security organs are considered traitors, and the insurgents are considered revolutionaries. He conversed with Comrade Kadar on this issue. However, he did not get a comforting answer. The leader of the internal troops of the MVD Orban told our adviser that he will collect the officers and will break through to the USSR. The former deputy of the MVD Dekan stated that the provocateurs are arranging the massacre of the employees of the security organs and their families. The bandits are ascertaining the addresses of the employees. Dekan intends to create a brigade composed of the employees and with weapons advance to the Soviet border. If they don't get that far, then they will fight underground as partisans and beat the enemies. The employees of the central apparatus stopped work and went home, declaring that they are undisciplined and do not have the right to meet with the agency. On the periphery the security organs also stopped working, since the local powers dismissed them. The regional administration in the city of Sobolcs (40 employees) left for Rumania. The employees of the Debrecen regional administration went to the Soviet border in the region of Uzhgorod and asked the border guards to let them into the USSR. On the border with Czechoslovakia a large group of employees have gathered, waiting for a permit to enter that country. In connection

with the situation created in the MVD in the evening, I intend to call a meeting with Munnich to elucidate his opinion in relation to the further sojourn of our employees, in the light of the dispersal of the security organs and the further coordination of our work.SEROV29.X.56