

October 25, 1989

Czechoslovak Ministry of Interior Memorandum, 'The Security Situation in the CSSR in the Period Before 28 October'

Citation:

"Czechoslovak Ministry of Interior Memorandum, 'The Security Situation in the CSSR in the Period Before 28 October'", October 25, 1989, Wilson Center Digital Archive, A. Lorenc et al., T8/91 vol. XIX., envelope 1, #79- 84 (also vol. XXI, #2242-2247). Published in Czech in Organizace a ůízení, Represe v ĚSSR: Operaèní Štáby Generála Lorence 1988-1989, Edice Dokumentù Vol. 4/II (Úřad Dokumentace a Vyšetøování Zloèinù Komunistu 1998). Translated for CWIHP by Caroline Kovtun
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/117220>

Summary:

The Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior reports on anti- government activity. Anti-socialist forces in Hungary are collaborating with those in Czechoslovakia. A demonstration on 28 October, 1989 is anticipated in Prague. Security measures have been taken in an attempt to prevent these groups from meeting, propagandizing, and organizing the demonstration.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Czech

Contents:

Translation - English

Supplement #1 to #OV-00138/S-89

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Copy #: 24

Number of pages: 6

The Security Situation in the CSSR in the period before 28 October

Characteristic of the developments of the security situation in the CSSR are the increasing tendencies of the internal enemy to bring out anti-socialist moods in the public by means of anonymous letters and flyers, particularly in Bohemia, in connection with the 71st anniversary of the CSR. The organizers wish to ensure the widest participation of citizens (most of all youth) in prepared provocative gatherings during which the celebration of 28 October will be used to glorify T. G. Masaryk and the bourgeois state.

The evidence for this lies in the continuing distribution of anonymous letters in high schools in which authors summon the people to the "dignified celebration of 28 October" and give prominence to the work of T. G. Masaryk. Letters are gradually being distributed on the majority of the territory of the CSR. In northern, western, southern and eastern Bohemia and Prague flyers of the coordinating board of the so-called Movement for Civic Freedom (HOS) and the Czechoslovak Democratic Initiatives (CSDI) are being circulated. They call for participation in the "celebrations" on 28 October for example in Chomutov (on K. Gottwald Square), in Plzen (on the Square of the Republic), in Karlovy Vary (at the main post office), in Sušice (at the monument to T.G.M.), in Rumburk (in the park of the Rumburk Revolt) and in Cervený Kostelec (in the park at the square). The organizers of the acts sent letters to the National Committees in Sušice, Nachod and Chomutov with a request for permission for a "ceremonial gathering," referring to article 28 of the constitution of the CSSR. The "Declaration of the Charter 77 on 28 October", signed by its speakers and Havel, is being distributed at the same time (this has been proven, for example, in Kladno).

[\[1\]](#)

On 18 October R. Battek and L. Lis introduced in the name of the illegal organizations CSDI, HOS and Renewal a "communication on the event of a public gathering" in the ONV in Praha 7. In it they inform [people] that on 28 October at 3:00 p.m. they are arranging a "ceremonial gathering of their members and followers for the anniversary of the origin the CSR" on the Letná plain. After the commencement -Capek's "Prayer for Truth" will be recited, followed by the "ceremonial address" and finally the national anthem will be sung. Afterwards, when the stations Radio Free Europe (from 23 October 1989) and Voice of America (from 24 October 1989) were broadcasting announcements of the event the "independent gathering" on the anniversary of the origin of the CSR on Wenceslas Square in Prague from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., they revoked their announcement for alleged technical difficulties connected with such a public gathering under the "given social situation."

The exponents of illegal organizations in Brno M. Jelinek (HOS and TGM Society member), J. Meznik (prepared for the function of speaker of CH-77) and D. Slavik (TGM Society member) are developing an analogous action. They sent a letter to the department of internal affairs of the MNV in Brno, in which they announce that they intend to call a public gathering in front of the Janacek theater in Brno on 28 October. Serving not only as a reminder of the anniversary of the origin of the CSR, the gathering is also supposed to vote on a resolution which would change the name of the Place of Peace to Masaryk Place and to begin preparations for the erection of a monument to T.G. Masaryk.

Even the activist Milan Vlk of the illegal group Peace Club of J. Lennon called on his fellow activists for a "silent demonstrations" in Decin on 28 October. He is simultaneously organizing the distribution of a protest petition against the imprisonment of "political prisoners."

The plans of the anti-socialist forces from Hungary- the Hungarian Democratic Forum which is in contact with CSDI since last year-to take part in the "celebrations" of 28 October have been proven. On this day they plan to effectuate a meeting of the "Commission for Hungarian-Czechoslovak Cooperation" (established on 26 August 1989 in Prague by representatives of both organizations), which will devote itself to questions of Czechoslovak-Hungarian "reconciliation and cooperation."

An anti-Czechoslovak activity aimed at discrediting the CSSR for the disrespect of the plans of the CSCE is the conclusion of an informal agreement between Hungarian television and the American television company ABC. At its core is their collaboration during the reporting of the actions of the so-called independent initiatives in Prague on various opportune occasions. The first act of collaboration of both television companies is supposed to be the participation in the anticipated demonstration on 28 October 1989, in Prague.

The leadership of the Hungarian Federation of Young Citizens (FIDESZ) is pushing its members to "help" the Czechoslovak independent initiatives on 28 October during the organization of a gathering of citizens in Prague and other cities. During a meeting of FIDESZ on 16 October, it was decided to send their members to Prague as tourists in the same number as on 21 August of this year. A group of about 12 people is supposed to be created which would join up with several prominent representatives of "Charter-77." They plan to organize a swift and conspiratorial courier service between Prague and Budapest to secure prompt information about the course of the "celebrations" for Hungarian media. Analogous activity should be anticipated from anti-socialist forces in Poland.

In relation to the up-coming anniversary of the origin of the CSR and the internal enemies' preparations of its misuse, even the staffs of foreign broadcast stations are being reinforced. The arrivals of other categorized individuals are being registered, for example employees of Swedish, French and West German television, journalists from Great Britain, USA, Austria, West Germany and others, with intent to gain information on the anticipated anti-social gatherings in CSSR in connection to the 28 October anniversary.

In the above-mentioned period two American television companies CBS NEWS and NBC NEWS will be working in Prague. They want to capture the events around 28 October and inform the American public about the "troubles" in CSSR with the aim of presenting them as the continuation of the disintegration of the eastern bloc and the unwillingness of the Czechoslovak leadership to agree to a dialog with the opposition. They also plan to interview the representatives of illegal structures. The West German television company ZDF has identical plans.

Through effected security measures, a meeting of the delegates of the so-called independent initiatives (Renewal, Movement for Civic Freedom, Czechoslovak Democratic Initiatives and NMS) on 12 October was successfully impeded. The meeting was supposed to prepare a common declaration of illegal organizations on the 28 October anniversary. During the measures for the prevention of a nation-wide meeting of CSDI activists on 14 October 1989, a declaration drawn up by the illegal "T. G. Masaryk Association" and "DTSV - the southern Czech group of the CSDI" for the 28 Oct. anniversary was uncovered.

Furthermore, in order to prevent the enemy's ability to plan acts before the 71st anniversary of the CSR, security measures were carried out to:

- prevent a meeting of the leadership of the so-called Organization of Eastern Czech Opposition, whereby the founding of a regional organization of the "CS public organization" as a basis for a new opposition party was to have been discussed,

- prevented the plenary session of the "CS Helsinki organization" (CSHV) in Prague,
- impeded the meeting of more than 50 people from the Southern Czech region inclined to various illegal groups,
- prevented the mass distribution of the flyers "HOS Manifesto" (five distributors were prosecuted with respect to this),
- prevented the arrival into CSSR of Polish nationals connected with the so-called Polish-Czechoslovak Solidarity - J. Janas, W. Maziarski, Jasinski and Borusewitz on 19 October,
- impeded the protest gathering of "young radicals" from so-called independent groups against the issue of a new 100-crown bill with a portrait of Klement Gottwald in the pedestrian zone in Prague on 25 October 1989, and assured peace and order in this area. The gathering was filmed by the television crews of ARD and ZDF.

In the effected security measures, in total 43 exponents of illegal organizations were detained and brought in, several of them repeatedly. Out of this number 23 individuals were given a warning by the organs of the SNB, 3 were given a warning by the head of HS KR and 5 a warning by the investigative organs of the StB.

In cooperation with the prosecutor's office warnings will also be given to other main organizers of enemy acts and activists of illegal organizations (planned for 23 people). In the period directly before the anniversary these individuals will be under the control of the organs of the SNB with the aim of preventing their participation and contribution in the organization and coordination of confrontational acts.

For the prevention of wider distribution of flyers and the recurrence of anti-socialist signs, an operational investigation will be organized and the output of disciplinary services will be strengthened.

In the future any meetings of the so-called independent initiatives will be stopped to prevent their unification. In order to prevent the transmission of tendentious reports by telephone, technical measures will be carried out against the known informers of the editorial board of RFE and VA.[\[2\]](#)

Necessary measures will be taken to prevent the participation of known organizers and participants of anti-Czechoslovak campaigns in the West, active members of anti-socialist movements and groups from socialist countries in acts prepared by Czechoslovak illegal organizations. In view of the anticipated arrival of a larger number of these individuals, they will be searched at the border crossings and will not be admitted onto our territory. The individuals who, despite the measures, penetrate onto the Czechoslovak territory with intent to participate in enemy acts, will have their stay shortened by administrative means. In the event that the individuals' participation in anti-social acts in the CSSR is proven, charges will be brought against them in accordance with valid Czechoslovak laws.

In cooperation with Czechoslovak media, particularly those operating nation-wide, evidence of their resolute offensive propagandist influence is prepared with intent to discourage adherents and those sympathizing with illegal organizations from engaging in anti-socialist acts.

In the event of a so-called "silent march" papers will be checked and actively participating individuals will be brought in to SNB departments. If it should come to petitions, verbal attacks or spontaneous demonstrations of opposition to the party

and state leadership and politics of the CPCz, disciplinary units will be called in to drive the crowd out of the area and disperse it.

If despite the effected measures it should come to a mass anti-social gathering, disciplinary forces will be called in to carry out necessary decisive intervention and to restore order through technical means.^[3]

^[1] Adam Michnik-A founder of the Polish dissident group KOR (the Worker's Defense Committee) in 1976, a lecturer at the "Flying University" and advisor to Solidarity trade union during the 1980s, Michnik was frequently imprisoned (1981-84 and 1985-86). A negotiator for Solidarity at the Roundtable talks with the Polish government in 1989, Michnik served in the first non-communist Sejm (1989-91) and co-founded one of the first free Polish newspapers Gazeta Wyborcza.

^[2] By "technical measures" is meant disconnection of phone service.

^[3] Conclusions from the meeting of the operational staff of the FMV from 25 October 1989 and accompanying information "The Security Situation in the CSSR in the period before 28 October" were again sent out to the interested parties by teleprinter.