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TENSION EASES AS OCCUPATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA CONTINUES

Moscow has reduced somewhat the more blatant signs of its presence in Czechoslovakia and has toned down its press attacks on Czechoslovak leaders. Although this suggests that the Soviets are relatively satisfied with the present conduct of the Dubcek-Svoboda leadership, Pravda and other authoritative newspapers warned throughout the week that a "counterrevolutionary" threat remained and that the situation in Czechoslovakia had not "normalized." As long as Moscow continues to insist that this is the situation, no substantial reduction of the massive military presence can be expected.

In its press and in an extensive series of diplomatic justifications of the invasion, Moscow has almost entirely dropped the fig leaf it used in the first days--that it had been invited in by unspecified Czechoslovak leaders. Now, Moscow claims that it moved to head off an "imperialist" plot which, under the guise of "bridge-building," aimed at disrupting the socialist world. This line has the advantage of carrying a warning to the other Eastern European countries that they too must be wary of improving relations with the West.

Premier Cernik early this week reportedly expressed the view that the situation in Czech-

oslovakia was still uncertain. It apparently remained unclear to him just how much the USSR intended to restrict the government's freedom of action. By week's end, this ambiguity still seemed to exist in Czechoslovak minds.

The Czechoslovaks, past masters at passive resistance, have apparently chosen to accommodate themselves to the USSR's demands as slowly and ineffectually as possible. Some even seem to be of a mind to test the limits of acceptable comradely behavior. Lidova Demokracie, the People's Party paper, summarized the situation by pointing to the vicious circle argument that the Soviet troops will not leave until the situation normalizes and the situation will not normalize until the troops leave.

Party leader Dubcek continued his quest for national acquiescence in the Moscow agreement. In addresses to the central committee on 31 August--with its preintervention composition--he and President Svoboda indicated that the country's liberalization would be severely curtailed. Dubcek also said that he considered void the party congress held during the first week of the invasion.

At the central committee meeting, action was taken to

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enlarge that body and also its presidium. The changes resulted in both bodies retaining a progressive majority, although political labels may now be somewhat meaningless. Several pro-Soviet conservatives were dropped from the presidium. In a separate but related action, Interior Minister Pavel, a strong Dubcek supporter, resigned, probably because of his difficulties with the Russian security forces. His replacement, Jan Pelnar, seems to be something of an opportunist.

During the week, the Russians gradually turned back control of various key buildings, such as party central committee headquarters, to the Czechoslovaks. Other ministries, such as interior and defense, remained in Soviet hands.

The occupying forces have also begun to return control of radio, TV, and the press to the Czechoslovaks. The Russian experiment in producing occupation newspapers was short-lived because of a public boycott. Reportedly the Czechoslovaks quickly perceived that at least one paper had been put together and printed in East Germany. Subsequently, the Czechoslovak regime's new censorship bureau issued broad guidelines that no "negative information and comment" concerning Moscow and its allies, or critical comment on the party police, worker's militia, or army will be tolerated.

Although there have been reports that the USSR has a list of 40,000 people to be deported, it does not seem to have acted on it. Premier Cernik has reported that the government knew of only five persons--high-ranking security officials--who have been arrested.

It is too early to put a price tag on the disruption to the Czechoslovak economy, but one estimate places the cost for the first ten days at about \$25 million per day. The interruption of transportation produced the greatest strain on the economy, interfering with food supplies to the population, supplies of materials to industry and agriculture, and foreign trade. The Czechoslovak economy may require as long as two years to recover from these economic dislocations.

One anticipated effect will be to tie Czechoslovakia's external economic relations more closely than ever to the USSR and other Communist nations. Pravda on 2 September warned the Czechoslovaks against seeking hard-currency credits in the West and pointed out the advantages to Czechoslovakia of its relations with CEMA. Economic negotiations reportedly will be held in Moscow the second week in September.

Rumania and Yugoslavia continued during the week to show fear that they might be the next target of a Soviet invasion.

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Rumanian leader Ceausescu, having previously made it clear in typical rhetoric that Rumania would forcibly resist foreign armies, then soft-pedaled his remarks in the face of continued Soviet pressure tactics. This "soft response" followed, however, a Rumanian party resolution condemning the Czechoslovak invasion and reasserting the right of national sovereignty. Ceausescu thereby apparently hoped to preclude any future Soviet assertions that dissatisfied Rumanian officials had called in Soviet troops.

On the internal scene, Ceausescu acted to prepare the Rumanian population psychologically for any eventuality, including invasion. He and other high-level party officials made speeches in different sections of the country, carefully chosen so that each speaker, by reason of experience or by ethnic background, could make the maximum impact in uniting the traditionally Russophobic population behind the regime.

Despite pressure from Moscow and some Eastern European countries that it moderate its position, Yugoslavia continues to push its highly critical view of the occupation. The Belgrade lead-

ership, nevertheless, is plainly concerned by its inability to get a clear reading of Soviet intentions.

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Yugoslav-Bulgarian relations have taken a decided turn for the worse and the bitterly contested, nationalistic Macedonian issue has been revived in a vicious polemical exchange. President Tito may take advantage of the situation to move against hard-line remnants in Yugoslavia whom he believes are capable of collusion with the USSR.

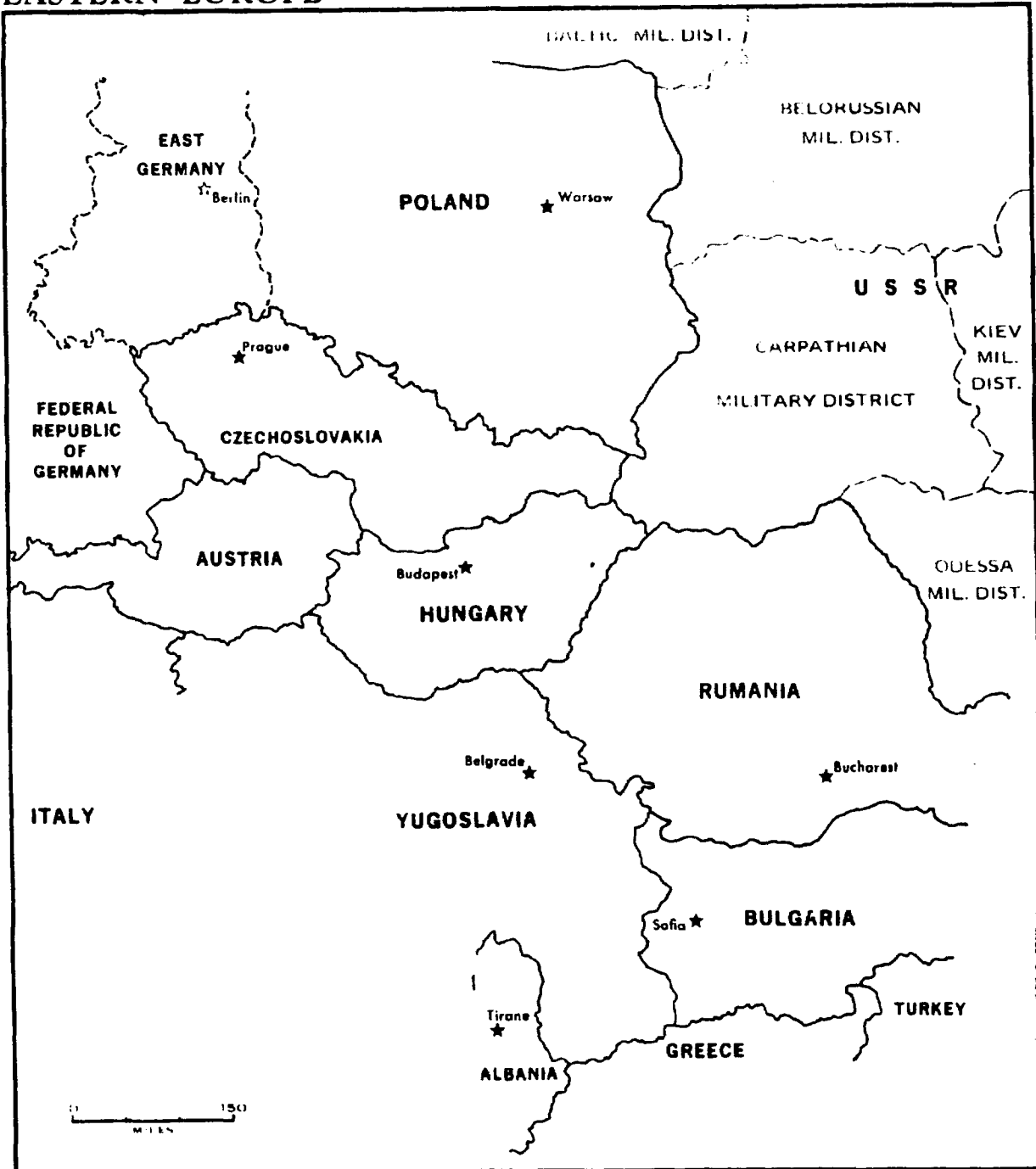
There has been little change in the status of the occupation troops in Czechoslovakia. US attachés in the USSR, Hungary, and Bulgaria reported they could find no evidence of a Soviet build-up along the Rumanian borders in these countries.

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