

CN 232

X-13/ CS --- PARIS AMBASSADOR TO FOREIGN MINISTRY THIS AFTERNOON

PARIS AUG. 22 (RFE SPECIAL/AFP-OVADIA) --- CZECHOSLOVAKIA AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE, DR VILEM PITHART, WILL MEET WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTRY THIS AFTERNOON, ACCORDING TO A SPOKESMAN FOR THE QUAI DORSAY.

THE AMBASSADOR, WHO MADE A DRAMATIC ESCAPE FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA EARLY YESTERDAY MORNING, INDICATED IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FRENCH NEWS AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE, THAT HE WOULD LIKE THE QUAI DORSAY TO ARRANGE A MEETING FOR HIM WITH PRESIDENT DE GAULLE.

SPOKESMAN FOR THE MINISTRY SAID THE OBJECT OF DR. PITHART'S VISIT THIS AFTERNOON TO SECRETARY GENERAL HERVE ALPHAND, HAD NOT BEEN ANNOUNCED IN ADVANCE.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK EMBASSY FLAG WAS FLYING AT HALF-MAST THIS MORNING WHEN DR PITHART RECEIVED THE AFP-JOURNALIST FOR THE INTERVIEW.

"IN THE NAME OF THE LEGAL GOVERNMENT OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA", DR PITHART TOLD AFP, "I WANT TO THANK THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT AND THE ENTIRE FRENCH POPULATION FOR HAVING EXPRESSED PROFOUND SYMPATHY WITH MY COUNTRY.

THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE WAS RECEIVING "UNNUMERABLE MESSAGES AND TELEGRAMS OF SYMPATHY FROM ALL OVER FRANCE." HE SAID THAT ALL FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY CELLS HAVE SENT MESSAGES OF SUPPORT TO THE EMBASSY.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK EMBASSY STAFF ANNOUNCED UNCHANGED SUPPORT OF THE LEGAL AUTHORITIES IN PRAGUE.

(MORE) T/HI/RT 1610/68