

CN 15

C/S -- MASS MEDIA COVERAGE OF INITIAL CZECHOSLOVAKIAN EVENTS

P-12 NEW YORK, AUGUST 22 (RFE SPECIAL/SHELTON) -- IN ADDITION TO PRESS COVERAGE, THE AMERICAN MASS MEDIA COVERED THE INITIAL EVENTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA LATE TUESDAY NIGHT (8/20)

THE COLUMBIA BROADCASTING SYSTEM INCLUDED FIRST WORD OF EVENTS IN PRAGUE AS PART OF ITS SCHEDULED LIVE PICK-UP OF THE EVENING SESSION OF THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM COMMITTEE IN WASHINGTON.

THE PROGRAM ENABLED THE VIEWER TO SEE THE DRAMA OF SECRETARY OF STATE DEAN RUSK BEING ADVISED THAT SOVIET TROOPS HAD CROSSED THE BORDER OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, A DEVELOPMENT THAT PROMPTED HIM TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY FOR THE WHITE HOUSE. THE WORD OF THE INVASION WAS HANDED TO RUSK JUST AFTER HE ENDED HIS SPEECH. HE EXPRESSED REGRET THAT THE PRAGUE DEVELOPMENTS DICTATED HIS IMMEDIATE RETURN TO HIS DUTIES.;

ROGER MUDD, REPRESENTING CBS AT THE HEARING, QUICKLY RELAYED AVAILABLE DETAILS FROM PRAGUE, AND CHARLES KURALT IN NEW YORK LATER ADDED INFORMATION.

THE NATIONAL BROADCASTING COMPANY AND THE AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANIES BELATEDLY CAME ALIVE WITH BRIEF BULLETINS INSERTED IN THEIR REGULAR ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULES.

IN ADDITION THE NEW YORK EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION STATION, WNDT, DEVOTED FULL COVERAGE TO ALL THE EVENTS. IN THE HALF-HOUR OR SO BETWEEN RECEIPT OF THE FIRST BULLETIN FROM RADIO PRAGUE AND THE OPENING OF ITS REGULAR 10:00 PM (3 A.M. MT) NEWS BROADCAST THE STATION BROUGHT TOGETHER FOUR SPECIALISTS FOR COMMENTARY.

THE SPECIALISTS WERE: DR. SAUL PADOVER, PROFESSOR OF POLITICS AT THE NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH IN NEW YORK CITY; DR. JAMES CONNOR, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY; LEO CHERNE, A COLUMNIST AND CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF FREEDOM HOUSE, AND HARRY SCHWARTZ, COLUMNIST FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WITHOUT ATTEMPT TO DWELL UNDULY ON THE INITIAL SHORT BULLETINS FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA, THE PANEL, UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF MITCHELL KRAUSE, PROVIDED A COLLOQUY ON THE ISSUES AND THE BACKGROUND OF THE DEVELOPMENTS. IN ADDITION THE MEN DISCUSSED THE PROBLEMS FOR BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA, THE POSTURE OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE ISSUE AND POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS.

IN ADDITION THERE WAS RADIO COVERAGE, WHICH INCLUDED THE ALL-NEWS STATION IN NEW YORK WITH MINUTE BY MINUTE DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY OCCURRED AND THE OTHER STATIONS GIVING SUMMARIES OF EVENTS IN THEIR REGULAR NEWSCASTS,

MOST OF THE STATIONS, HOWEVER, BROKE IN WITH THE INITIAL WORD OF THE EVENTS AND BROUGHT THE LISTENER UP-TO-DATE ON OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS.

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