

LONDON, AUGUST 23--(RFE SPECIAL/HOOD)--AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER JOHN GORTON ANNOUNCED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AT CANBERRA YESTERDAY THAT THE RUSSIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES THERE HAD BEEN ASKED TO CONVEY TO THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT THE ""DISTRESS, CONCERN AND REVULSION"" OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE AT THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

THE OFFICE OF THE AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER (EMBASSY) IN LONDON, ANNOUNCING THIS TODAY, SAID GORTON REPORTED THAT THE RUSSIAN ENVOY HAD TOLD HIM THURSDAY THAT SOVIET FORCES HAD GONE IN AT THE REQUEST OF CZECHOSLOVAK OFFICIALS, BUT THE AUSTRALIAN PREMIER HAD REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THIS AND REFERRED TO STATEMENTS BY THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT OVER PRAGUE RADIO.

AUSTRALIAN MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS PAUL HASLUCK INTRODUCED A MOTION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN CANBERRA THURSDAY CONDEMNING THE RUSSIAN ACTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

THE OFFICE OF THE AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER (EMBASSY) IN LONDON, REPORTING THIS TODAY, SAID THE MOTION CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF THE RUSSIAN FORCES FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIAN SOIL WAS SECONDED BY THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, GOUGH WHITLAM.

MOVING THE MOTION, HASLUCK SAID IT WAS NOW CLEAR THAT THE INVASION BY THE SOVIET UNION WAS NOT RPT NOT AT THE REQUEST OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA. HE SAID ONE OF THE WORST FEATURES OF WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS ""THIS UNHAPPY SITUATION"" WAS THAT IT WAS A SETBACK TO THE HOPES FOR A GREATER DETENTE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST.

THE ACTION OF THE SOVIET UNION SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN PROMOTED BY FEAR--FEAR OF THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS LIBERALISM AND RELAXATION AMONG THEIR OWN PEOPLE AND, NOT LEAST, AMONG THE YOUTH. HASLUCK SAID THE SOVIET UNION HAD DONE SERIOUS DAMAGE TO ITSELF.

AUSTRALIA WOULD WORK WITH OTHERS TO TRY TO BRING ABOUT THE IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF THE INADING FORCES. THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HOPED THIS WOULD BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT A PUPPET GOVERNMENT BEING LEFT IN ITS WAKE.

SUPPORTING THE MOTION, WHITLAM RECALLED THAT THE LABOR PARTY HAD ALREADY CARRIED A MOTION DEPLORING OUTSIDE PRESSURE AGAINST THE CZECHOSLOVAK REFORMS. "

A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE BORN IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA BUT NOW LIVING IN CANBERRA HAVE BEGUN A SEVEN-DAY PROTEST VIGIL OUTSIDE THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY THERE, THE OFFICE OF THE AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER (EMBASSY) REPORTED.

THE 15 MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN, CARRYING PLACARDS ""FREEDOM WILL PREVAIL"" WERE TURNED BACK FROM THE EMBASSY GATES BY POLICE AND TOLD TO REMAIN ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE ROAD.

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