

C/S - THE STRIKE SCENE (1900 INTRO)

MUNICH, AUG 23 (CNR/AGENCIES/RFE SPECIAL) - CZECHOSLOVAKS STAGED A CLAMOROUS BUT UNEVENTFUL GENERAL STRIKE FOR ONE HOUR TODAY UNDER THE SLOGAN: "OCCUPIERS GO HOME."

ACTIVITY STOPPED COLD IN PRAGUE AT 1200 MT IN A DIN OF FACTORY SIRENS, CAR HORNS, CHURCH BELLS -- EVEN TOY TRUMPETS AND BURGLAR ALARMS.

CLANDESTINE RADIOS REPORTED SIMILAR WORK STOPPAGES IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. THEY SAID BLACK FLAGS FLEW ALL OVER SLOVAKIA AND CZECHOSLOVAK FLAGS DROPPED TO HALF-STAFF.

THE RADIOS HAD REPEATEDLY ADVERTISED YESTERDAY'S CALL FOR A PROTEST STRIKE BY THE 14TH COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS, AND PRAGUE YOUTHS HAD POSTED NOTICES TELLING PEOPLE TO "LEAVE THE OCCUPIERS ALONE IN THE STREETS."

A UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT IN PRAGUE CALLED THE RESPONSE "AMAZING."

"THE ENTIRE CITY STOPPED," HE SAID. "NOT A BUS, TROLLEY OR VEHICLE MOVED. A FEW PEOPLE CONTINUED WALKING, BUT MOST STOPPED IN THEIR TRACKS."

BETWEEN 5,000 AND 10,000 PEOPLE WERE IN WENCESLAS SQUARE WHEN THE HORNS BEGAN BLARING. ALL BUT A HANDFUL PROMPTLY DISPERSED, AS THEY HAD BEEN ADVISED BY CLANDESTINE RADIOS.

IN THE CENTER OF THE CITY, WHERE THOUSANDS STOOD IN DOORWAYS CHANGING: "DUBCEK, DUBCEK!", A SOVIET ARMORED CAR RACED ALONG A STREET FIRING INTO THE AIR.

INDIVIDUAL SOVIET TROOPS ALSO FIRED WARNING SHOTS, BUT NO RPT NO VIOLENCE WAS REPORTED.

(MORE) BG/FOS/E 1908/68

/RT

19