

LONDON AUGUST 28--(RFE SPECIAL/WELLS)--  
VADILLEN VASEV, MINISTER-COUNSELLOR AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN LONDON, LAST NIGHT TOLD BRITISH TELEVISION AUDIENCES THAT THE WARSAW PACT POWERS INVADED CZECHOSLOVAKIA BECAUSE "CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY POWER HAD ACQUIRED POSITIONS" IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA WHICH ENABLED THEM TO CHALLENGE THE SECURITY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND ITS WARSAW PACT "ALLIES."

BUT VASEV'S DEFENSE OF THE SOVIET ACTION DURING A BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION TV INTERVIEW WAS FLATLY DENIED MOMENTS LATER BY CZECHOSLOVAK WRITER JIRI MUCHA AND MILAN GLOZAR, PRESS SPOKESMAN AT THE CZECHOSLOVAK EMBASSY IN LONDON.

MUCHA SAID THE SOVIET CASE WAS INDEFENSIBLE AND THAT BY THE INVASION, THE SOVIET UNION HAD LOST ITS "ONE SERIOUS FRIEND IN CENTRAL EUROPE."

"I THINK RUSSIA MUST KNOW THAT THE TRADITIONAL ATTITUDE OF THE POLES AND THE HUNGARIANS WAS NOT THE SAME AS THAT OF THE CZECHS," MUCHA SAID. "THE SOVIET UNION HAD ONLY ONE REAL FRIEND AND THAT WAS CZECHOSLOVAKIA. IF SOVIET RUSSIA WAS READY TO SACRIFICE THIS FRIENDSHIP FOR THE SAKE OF SOME POLITICIANS WHO MISLED THEM INTO TAKING THIS ACTION, THEY ARE REAPING THE FRUIT OF THIS ACTION."

VASEV CLAIMED THAT THE SOVIETS AND THEIR ALLIES REALIZED BEFORE THE INVASION "THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAD TAKEN A DANGEROUS TURN, DANGEROUS FOR THE COHERENCE AND UNITY OF THE WARSAW PACT AND FOR THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE CZECHOSLOVAK PEOPLE AND FRATERNAL COUNTRIES WITH WHICH IT IS UNITED, AND I MUST SAY, POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS FOR EUROPEAN SECURITY AND THE PEACE OF EUROPE."

HE SAID "NO REASONABLE OBSERVER COULD FIND A SINGLE WORD OF CRITICISM" IN THE SOVIET PRESS OF ANY REFORMS TAKEN SINCE JANUARY BY THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY AND THAT THE MAIN THING BOTHERING THE "FRATERNAL COUNTRIES" DURING MONTHS OF DISCUSSION WAS THE DANGER TO CZECHOSLOVAK AND WARSAW PACT SECURITY CAUSED BY THE ALLEGED "COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY ELEMENTS."

VASEV ALSO DENIED THAT CZECHOSLOVAK LEADER ALEXANDER DUBCEK HAD BEEN CALLED A FASCIST BY THE SOVIET PRESS AND SAID HIS NAME HAD ONLY BEEN MENTIONED ONCE IN CRITICISM.

(MORE) EH/A 1359/68