

X/13 CS-- GDR PAPER: TROOPS READY WELL AHEAD OF INVASION

BERLIN, AUG. 30 (RFE SPECIAL/WULFF) -- A REPORT IN THE LATEST ISSUE OF EAST GERMANY'S OFFICIAL ARMY WEEKLY, "VOLKSARMEE," TODAY INDICATED THAT THE EAST GERMAN TROOPS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAD BEEN MOVED FROM THEIR GARRISONS TO ASSEMBLY AREAS NEAR THE EAST-GERMAN- CZECHOSLOVAK BORDER SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE AUG. 21.

VOLKSARMEE GAVE AN EXTENSIVE REPORT OF "THE HOURS BETWEEN 1800 (ON AUG. 20) AND 0600 (ON AUG. 21)" AND SAID WHEN THE TROOPS MOVED FROM THE "SMALL VILLAGE OF C. (INITIAL CCC) WHICH HAD BECOME A SECOND HOME FOR MANY OF THE SOLDIERS, THE INHABITANTS GATHERED TO SEE THE SOLDIERS OFF. FLOWERS WERE FLYING...CIGARETTES AND FRUIT WAS HANDED TO THEM AND THE PEOPLE SAID GOOD BY, GOOD LUCK AND GOOD HEALTH, BOYS."

THE REPORT DID NOT RPT NOT MENTION WHETHER THE INHABITANTS OF THE VILLAGE KNEW WHERE THE SOLDIERS WERE GOING.

WHEN THE TROOPS HAD ARRIVED AT "P." (INITIAL PPP) AN ELDERLY MAN HAD TOLD THE SOLDIERS "WHAT I WANTED TO TELL YOU -- DO YOUR JOB WELL. WE DO NOT WANT ANOTHER WAR AND YOU SOLDIERS CAN DO A LOT THAT IT DOES NOT HAPPEN AGAIN. THATS WHY THE PEOPLE HERE STAYED UP AND WAVED TO YOU," HE SAID, ACCORDING TO VOLKSARMEE.

IN THIS AND IN OTHER REPORTS VOLKSARMEE CARRIED QUOTES FROM SOLDIERS WHO DEMONSTRATED "THEIR REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT."

THE COMMANDER OF ONE OF THE UNITS REPORTED THAT HIS SOLDIERS HAD DECLARED IN A STATEMENT ON AUG. 21 THAT "WE ARE READY TO CARRY OUT ANY ORDER OF OUR PARTY AND STATE LEADERSHIP CONSCIENTIOUSLY AND UNCONTRADICTED," VOLKSARMEE SAID.

IN A FRONT-PAGE REPORT HEADED BY A PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING EAST GERMAN SOLDIERS SITTING ON A MILITARY VEHICLE, LISTENING TO A TRANSISTOR RADIO, VOLKSARMEE SAID "A VICTORY OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA WOULD HAVE LED TO WAR WITHOUT FAIL. AS TRAGIC AS THE EVENTS AT THIS HOUR MAY BE, WHEN THE COMRADES, TAKING A BREATHER, SIT ON THEIR FIGHTING CARS, THEY ARE YET FILLED WITH A FEELING OF SATISFACTION."

THE ARMY WEEKLY QUOTED SEVERAL SOLDIERS AS SAYING THAT THE EVENTS ON AUG. 21 HAD PROMPTED THEM TO APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SED (THE EAST GERMAN COMMUNIST PARTY). "FOR SOME TIME I HAVE CONSIDERED APPLYING FOR MEMBERSHIP," ONE SOLDIER WAS QUOTED, "AND THE CLEAR AND UNMISTAKEABLE LANGUAGE OF PARTY AND STATE AND ITS MEASURES TO AID THE CSSR, WHICH HAVE DEEPLY IMPRESSED ME, WERE THE LAST IMPULSE."

VOLKSARMEE DEVOTED SEVERAL PAGES TO REPORTS IN CONNECTION WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA, SOME OF THEM CARRYING HEADLINES LIKE "BUNDESWEHR RADIO BATTALION AT THE CZECHOSLOVAK BORDER -- AIRBORNE RANGERS AT THE PSYCHO-WAR FRONT," AND "BONN FACES DEBRIS OF A POLICY FAILURE."

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