

CN 90

C/S -- THE TROOPS FADE AWAY

PRAGUE, SEP 3 (UPI)- SOVIET OCCUPATION FORCES APPEAR TO HAVE MOVED AWAY FROM CZECH TOWNS AND VILLAGES, MELTING INTO DEEP PINE FORESTS AND SECLUDED VALLEYS.

ONLY IN THE CZECHOSLOVAK CAPITAL WERE LARGE NUMBERS OF TROOPS, TANKS AND ARMORED CARS STILL IN EVIDENCE TODAY BUT EVEN IN PRAGUE, THE AMOUNT OF MILITARY VEHICLES PARKED ON THE STREETS HAS BEEN NOTICEABLY REDUCED OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS.

IN A 500-KILOMETER TOUR FROM PRAGUE TO THE WEST AND EAST GERMAN BORDERS, WESTERN NEWSMEN MONDAY SAW ONLY A TRIO OF RUSSIAN JEEPS ONE ARMORED CAR A CONVOY OF EIGHT SOVIET ARMY FUEL TANKERS AND TWO COMMUNICATIONS VEHICLES.

ON THE MAIN HIGHWAY FROM PRAGUE TO KARLOVY VARY THERE WAS SCARCELY A SINGLE RUSSIAN ARMY VEHICLE IN THE AFTERNOON. BUT AFTER NIGHTFALL, TWO UNATTENDED TANK-TRANSPORTERS WITH TANKS ON BOARD WERE LEFT AT THE ROADSIDE.

IN THE TOWNS AND VILLAGES A SMALL GROUP OF RUSSIAN SOLDIERS COULD OCCASIONALLY BE SEEN WALKING WITH SOME LOCAL GIRLS OR TALKING TO THE LOCAL PEOPLE.

THERE WAS NO SIGN WHATSOEVER OF THE EAST GERMAN TROOPS WHO MOVED INTO NORTHERN CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN THE AUG 21 INVASION.

(MORE) BG/U/1510/68

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