

Minister of the Interior  
of the ČSSR

Prague, January 25, 1989

File no.: OV-O16/A-89

S E C R E T

Appendices : 25/475

Esteemed Comrade,

I herewith attach the prescribed number of copies of the material “Information on the anti-social activities of anti-socialist elements on January 15 – 22, 1989, in Prague and in Všetaty, Mělník district., and on the security measures taken to secure calm and public order”.

The material is intended for discussion by the government of the ČSSR.

*signature*

[František Kincl]

Comrade  
Ladislav Adamec  
Premier Minister of the ČSSR  
Prague

*Discussed by the government of the ČSSR  
on January 26, 1989.*

## **Information**

### **on the anti-social activities of anti-socialist elements on January 15 – 22, 1989, in Prague and in Všetaty, Mělník district, and on the course of the security measures taken to secure calm and public order**

The anti-state activities of anti-socialist elements on January 15 – 22, 1989, were preceded on their side by preparatory activities (informing and inviting representatives of the foreign news media, flyers, formulation of specific demands and slogans, statements by speakers from Charter 77). These events were accompanied by a campaign on the Western radio stations, especially the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and the BBC. In their reports aimed at the ČSSR they informed listeners of the preparation for the events and their results, and called on the “nation to show initiative”.

The initiative in organizing the public anti-social activities to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the self-immolation of Jan Palach on January 15, 1989, on Wenceslas Square in Prague was taken up by the so-called preliminary coordination committee of the Independent Peace Association (IPA). Its activities were supported by followers of the other so-called independent initiatives (CHARTER 77 and Children of Bohemia).

In view of the broad publicity given to these activities especially by radio stations Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, the BBC, and others, the organizers of the unauthorized assembly, representatives of the independent initiatives, were taken into custody on January 15, 1989, at 13:45. They were brought for questioning to the departments of the VB [Public Security] and after interrogation in accordance with Law no. 40/1974 they were gradually released by 21:30. They included for example R. BATTĚK, L. LIS, E. KANTŮRKOVÁ, P. PLACÁK, V. MALÝ, T. HRADÍLEK, and A STANKOVIČ; 25 individuals altogether.

[...]

The time at which the events of January 19, 1989, culminated was determined in advance by the organizers. For example, flyers found at the faculties of journalism, arts, education, and law of Charles University, besides inviting participants to Wenceslas Square, also gave the time of 17:00. At that time those in attendance included among others: R. NORMAN, 1<sup>st</sup> secretary of the political section of the Embassy of the USA in the CSSR, S. MROZEK, cultural attaché of the Embassy of France in the CSSR, J. NAEGELE, Voice of America correspondent, and personnel from West Germany's ARD.

At 16:40 the area around the statue of St. Wenceslas was completely full; the sidewalks were becoming full on both sides of Wenceslas Square up to the level of Opletalova and Krakovská Streets. At 17:00 the people who had previously been standing on the sidewalks surged toward the center of the square and formed a crowd of 2000 – 2500 persons. Several dozen of them began to whistle, and shouts rang out of “freedom, freedom”, “Czechs come here”, etc., which attracted more persons to the upper part of the square. At that time traffic was partially blocked. The crowd continued to chant slogans such as “let go of the government”, “give us back Dubček”, “Jakeš out”, “Štěpán out”, “free elections”. All were accompanied by whistles and applause.

At 17:25 the security units intervened, surprising the crowd, which fled toward the lower part of the square. They were prevented in this by a coordinated intervention by the People’s Militia.

By 18:15 the calm and public order had been restored to Wenceslas Square. By 18:50 the entire area and the adjacent streets were cleared.

During the course of the security measures on January 19, 1989, a total of 281 persons were detained, of whom 23 are being processed for criminal activities, 80 for misdemeanors, and 30 for violations.

On January 20, 1989, at around 16:55 in the upper part of Wenceslas Square 750 people gathered, mainly on the sidewalks. The assembly progressively grew into a provocational activity which disrupted traffic on the sidewalks and in the road.

After repeated calls to leave the area, many of the citizens left Wenceslas Square. The remaining crowd was pushed into the central part of Wenceslas Square and was gradually dispersed. By 18:30 public order had been restored to the entire area of Wenceslas Square.

On January 21, 1989, security measures were taken on Wenceslas Square in the context of the expected anti-social activities. During the operation the area was calm. Only in the upper part of Wenceslas Square prior to 17:00 were the movements of some individuals detected, who left the area after identification checks by members of the SNB [National Security Corps] and subsequent warning.

In the context of the planned activity by the “independent structures” security measures were also taken on January 21, 1989, in the village of Všetaty, Mělník district.

After 08:00 the first activists and the participants of the planned demonstration began to arrive in the above-named village. During the course of the morning these were mainly persons from outside of Prague, especially from the North Bohemia region, who attempted to

get to the site of the demonstration by all possible means (train, personal auto, on foot across the fields, etc.).

Prior to 12:00 a personal auto of the Embassy of Great Britain arrived in Všetaty carrying Patrician Holland and Damian Tooda. The 1<sup>st</sup> secretaries of the embassies of Denmark, Canada, and the USA in Prague also arrived. Besides the diplomats, television crews also arrived from ARD, ORF, correspondents from the agencies AFP, AP, and Reuters, all with valid accreditation.

As part of the measures, traffic safety and security operations were carried out by VB and StB [State Security] forces in Prague 9 and other approaches to Všetaty in the region of Central Bohemia.

Altogether 5 filtration points were set up, through which 449 persons were identity checked throughout the course of the day until the evening hours. 227 persons were sent back; another 222 persons who refused to change their minds about continuing to Všetaty were taken for questioning. 34 persons were interrogated according to Art. 19, Law no. 40/1974.

Among the detained were the entire leadership of the “Democratic Initiative” led by E. MANDLER, B. DOLEŽAL, and M. LITOMISKÝ. Also brought in for questioning were Ján ČARNOGURSKÝ of Bratislava, activists from the “Independent Peace Association” L. VYDRA, R. ZEMAN, M. ŠMÍD, L. MAYER, and others.

R. ZEMAN was discovered to be in possession of petitions directed against the measures taken by the state organs during the past week, for which signatures were to be gathered at the demonstration. The petitions were addressed to the President of the Republic, the Federal Assembly, the Office of the Premier Minister, and the federal Ministry of the Interior.

Participants in the demonstration stopped arriving around 18:30. These were mostly persons from the ages of 15 – 35 years old.

During the course of the measures there was one case of assault on a public official, committed by L. Marks and P. Hejdánková. Marks faces criminal prosecution.

Besides the above events, the following occurred in the Mělník district on January 21, 1989: during the morning hours the District Command of the National Security Corps in Mělník received an anonymous tip that in Všetaty there “will be a little fire”. At 07:35 there was a fire in a barn in Byšice, about 5 km from Všetaty, which was finally contained during the afternoon hours. Damage of 100 thousand crowns was done to stockpiled straw; damaged to buildings, etc. have not yet been calculated. A connection to the events in Všetaty cannot be ruled out.

On Sunday, January 22, 1989, there were no disruptions of calm and public order in the area of Všetaty or in the capital city of Prague.

Provocational acts by anti-socialist elements in Prague were accompanied by numerous anonymous telephone calls to line 158, to the secretariat of the District Department of the CPCz, and to the workplaces and residences of citizens in various places in the CSSR, especially in Prague. The persons calling threatened to carry out terrorist acts directed against officials of the CPCz, members of the SNB, and citizens who have publicly condemned the actions of the anti-socialist elements. Threats were also made to carry out destruction on workplaces and public buildings. At the District Committee of the CPCz in Šumperk five windows of the assembly hall were broken by rocks. In Prague and in the districts of Jičín and Rokycany graffiti was found defaming the CPCz and SNB.

During the intervention by the security forces on 20 January 1989 a 7.65 mm ČZ pistol was found in a refuse basket below the statue of St. Wenceslas.

During the course of the security measures carried out from January 15 to 22, 1989, a total of 2021 persons were identity checked, and the number of persons detained and taken in for questioning reached 851. During the same period 76 criminal acts were reported and 127 misdemeanors. The national committees were informed of 91 violations.

The events in Prague on January 15 – 21, 1989, were the climax of the process of a transition by the anti-socialist elements from hidden forms of subversive activities to open acts of confrontation which began in August 1988. These were planned, timed, coordinated acts supported by enemy forces from abroad. Their course and aims must be judged in the context of the conference of the signatories of the Helsinki Accords currently taking place in Vienna, and the development of the situation in other socialist countries, for example the People's Republic of Poland and the People's Republic of Hungary.

It has been confirmed that the adversaries chose the center of Prague for a public confrontation deliberately, with the aim of attaining the widest possible publicity and the impression of a mass phenomenon given that the area is frequented by citizens and visitors to Prague. At the same time they created the conditions for easing the access of personnel from the Western news media, who were to document the so-called violation of human rights in the CSSR and discredit the CSSR in the eyes of world opinion.

The decrease in activity by the anti-socialist elements was contributed to by the charges filed for suspected commission of criminal acts against V. HAVEL and Charter 77 spokespersons D. NĚMCOVÁ and A. VONDRA. These measures have produced serious

concerns among the members of the individual anti-socialist groups over the real possibility of criminal prosecution, and their activity has temporarily declined. Likewise the thorough measures taken by the SNB, especially the decisive intervention of the security units in cooperation with members of the People's Militia on January 19, 1989, had a positive effect during subsequent days. The mass news media also played a positive role during that time.

As a result of the unified steps taken by the organs of state power and administration, the anti-socialist elements have temporarily retreated to the sidelines, and await further developments. It is evident that they are re-evaluating the situation and tactics for their future steps.

In the near future provocative activities disturbing the calm and public order can be expected to continue.

On January 19, 1989, the District National Committee in Prague 2 received an "Announcement of a Public Assembly" which is being organized by the so-called "Independent Peace Initiative – Initiative for the Demilitarization of Society" on náměstí Míru in Prague 2, for January 28, 1989, at 15:00, as "a public discussion on the problems associated with compulsory military service".

As in the case of Jan PALACH it can be expected that attempts will be made to remind the public of the suicide of Jan ZAJÍC (25.2.1969) with public provocations.