

August 24, 1968

Report on the Polish Second Army division taking part in Operation Danube

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Summary:

Report states there are no problems with the morale and political state of soldiers and officers of the Second Army, though the soldiers have faced open hostility from Czech citizens. Overall relations between Czech Army and Polish divisions are negative.

Original Language:

Polish

Contents:

Translation - English

REPORT From Polish Second Army taking part in an operation code-name 'Danube' 24.08, 18:00 hours

There are no concerns about the emotional-political condition of the officers and men of Second Army. While the first days of our forces' incursion onto Czechoslovak territory were marked by a number of hostile acts, such as in the town of Bruntal where men of the 9th Tank Regiment were showered with stones and a driver, Private Trmosak had sand poured into his eyes causing him to have an accident involving bodily injury. On 10th Armored Division's line of march we were met by many hostile slogans such as 'Down with Gomulka', 'Death to Warsaw', 'Occupiers', 'Fascists' and so on. In the towns of Palice and Czeslaw the civil and party authorities categorically refuse to allow us to set up garrison HQs. In a great many localities a number of barricades and various other obstacles have been constructed. From 23.08. symptoms of certain slight and slow changes in the attitude towards our troops have been appearing. Some of the population is beginning to show fewer signs of hostility towards our troops. In several villages near Hradec Králové the local population in conversations with the troops has shown a more correct attitude than hitherto. Instances of greater co-operation with Polish garrison HQs and military units are more frequently observed. This is probably caused by the loyal attitude of the local authorities who are having an effect on the area population in the spirit of the requests made by our units. In our forces' operational area we have hitherto seen a generally passive attitude on the part of the peasantry towards events. The workers, and especially the intelligentsia, show great activity. It appears that these symptoms of a softening of attitude among part of the population have been caused by our troops' exemplary behavior and our commanders' decisive actions. Some of the representatives of the local civil authorities in conversations with representatives from Polish units have made very positive comments about our troops' attitude, their political level and their polite behavior. In general the attitude of soldiers and party leaders in Czechoslovak Army units towards our forces is negative. There are a great many signs that the CPA is inspiring and instigating acts of provocation directed against our forces. Evidence of this are inter alia the following facts:

- the army making radio stations available to hostile elements in order to operate against Polish units;
- the continual presence of CPA officers in party committees, where they have not hitherto been encountered;
- the Czechoslovak Army using its own transport to bring in groups of agitators trying to influence our soldiers;
- the distribution by officers and men of leaflets and their production on military sites;
- the defense of radio stations by the Czechoslovak Army.

We continue to observe a series of arrogant and hostile statements made by officers and men of the CPA. Political officers in particular excel at this. During meetings with delegations from both armies the Czechs regularly emphasize that we should leave their territory as speedily as possible, that they are loyal to President Svoboda and that they will follow his orders.

In the town of Jaromer, during the columns' advance, groups of CPA officers and men spat at the passing vehicles, then a group of officers stopped a column and attempted to blackmail its commander by threatening that if the column continued to advance, they would start to throw children under the vehicles' wheels. In the same town the assistant regimental commander for political affairs of a tank regiment stationed there stated that if Polish Army units attempted to enter the barracks, then they would open fire. In the same barracks the soldiers held a rally whose tone was unfriendly towards us. Units of Western Military District have adopted an exceptionally hostile attitude towards our forces. Units of Central Military District are less active in this regard.

After occupying their designated areas, units of our divisions began to set up garrison HQs. In 11th Armored Division's area 10 HQs have already been established and 6 in 10th Armored Division's area. After conversations conducted with representatives of the local civil authorities the garrison HQs were allocated housing and in many towns co-operation began. There are, however, places such as Halice and Czeslaw in which representatives of the local authorities stated that they wanted no Polish HQs and that they were capable of maintaining law and order on their own. In those places where our HQs are operating, contacts are developing between them and the local authorities. In a number of places such as Switavy, Miletin, Havlíckuv Brod representatives of the local security authorities and the police have expressed an interest in close co-operation with the Polish HQs. Our civilian party teams, sent by the Polish United Workers' Party regional committees in Katowice and Wroclaw, will commence political activities alongside the established garrison HQs. A group of political officers, sent by the Polish Army's Main Political Department, has been assigned today to party activities alongside the established

garrison HQs. During the period covered by this report the following actions have been taken: 1. Today an operations group from Second Army's Political Department has replaced the command post in the Hradec Králové area and has begun its work. 2. A group of experts from Polish Radio's Wroclaw station has been brought in to start up the radio transmitting station at Hradec Králové. 3. Materials prepared by the Polish Army's Main Political Department in the Czech language have been distributed to all units of Polish Second Army with a view to their distribution amongst the civilian population. 4. At his own request the chairman of the local National Council in Hradec Králové will be received today by General Sawczuk at 18:00 hours. General Sawczuk will present in person details of this conversation. DEPUTY COMMANDER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS POLISH SECOND ARMY Brigadier General Wlodzimierz SAWCZUK
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