

June 28, 1945

**Record of I. V. Stalin's Conversation with Prime
Minister of Czechoslovakia Z. Fierlinger and Deputy
Foreign Minister V. Clementis**

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Summary:

Stalin and Fierlinger discuss the issues of Transcarpathian Ukraine, tobacco in Czechoslovakia, American troops in Czechoslovakia, the Teshin Region, and the development of the Czechoslovak army.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Record of I. V. Stalin's Conversation with Prime Minister
of Czechoslovakia Z. Fierlinger and
Deputy Foreign Minister V. Clementis
on the Issues of the Transcarpathian Ukraine, the Teshin Region,
and the Trophy Property

Moscow June 28, 1945

Secret

V. M. Molotov and V. A. Zorin were present at the conversation

I. V. Stalin asks what questions are of interest to Mr. Fierlinger.

Fierlinger responds that the Czechoslovak government has a number of questions, and proposes to begin the discussion with the issue of the Treaty on the Transcarpathian Ukraine. Fierlinger informs Stalin that the text of the treaty is almost agreed upon, and that they are talking now only about some of the articles of the Protocol to the Treaty.

I. V. Stalin asks whether it is convenient for the Czechoslovak government to sign the Treaty now, and adds, "We are not trying to rush you. Do as you consider necessary in this case."

Fierlinger responds that the Czechoslovak government finds this moment appropriate for signing of this treaty, and therefore, introduced the treaty for signing itself.

The text of the Treaty and the Protocol is being read.

During the reading of Paragraph 2 of the Protocol, V. M. Molotov proposes to determine that the granting of citizenship should be done according to the legislation that exists in each country on this issue. For instance, in the USSR, if the husband is granted citizenship, it does not automatically confer citizenship on the wife, while under the Czechoslovak laws the wife automatically assumes husband's citizenship.

Fierlinger agrees with this suggestion, and proposes to formulate Paragraph 2 accordingly.

After reading Paragraph 3, Fierlinger notes that the financial issues involved in the transfer of the Transcarpathian Ukraine should probably be specified later. Now the Czechoslovak government cannot name an exact sum, which would be required to reimburse the expenses of individual citizens who would have to leave their property in the territory of the Transcarpathian Ukraine, when they move to Czechoslovakia. Therefore, Fierlinger proposes to formulate a general statement on mutual reimbursement of the expenses incurred during the relocation of citizens on the part of the Government of the Czechoslovak Republic, and the USSR, and on subsequent mutual payments between those governments in the 18 months after the ratification of the Treaty.

I. V. Stalin and V. M. Molotov agree with this proposal. They propose to edit the drafts of the Treaty and the protocol in the final version, and if possible, to prepare them for the signing by June 29.

Fierlinger then says that the Czechoslovak Government would also be interested in the issue of trophies in Czechoslovakia. He notes that in spite of the categorical statement by Marshal Konev to the effect that plants and other trophies would not be moved out of Czechoslovakia now, and that there would be a corresponding agreement on this issue with the Czechoslovak government, the Czechgov [Czechoslovak Government] has information about the instances of removal of equipment from some enterprises and about removal of stockpiles of sugar and other food products. Fierlinger asks to solve this problem taking into account the interests of the economic life in Czechoslovakia

I. V. Stalin says that this issue would be settled and that we do not intend to remove plants and equipment from Czechoslovakia, with the exception of a very small portion of it, about which we would negotiate with the Czechoslovak government.

I. V. Stalin suggests that some local commandants and other lower military officials

allow themselves some liberty in deciding those issues on the spot. However, the systems of commandants will be abolished in Czechoslovakia on July 5, and commandants will only remain at railway stations to ensure normal railroad communications for military supplies. Storehouses, since the military authorities have not taken them, should remain under the control of the Czechoslovak Government. I. V. Stalin suggests that they should contact Marshal Konev directly regarding all issues of trophies and all actions of our troops in Czechoslovakia, and recommends that the Czechoslovak Government send a permanent representative (one or several) to Konev's Headquarters.

Fierlinger agrees with this proposal and says that the Czechoslovak Government will gladly send such a representative. Then Fierlinger asks to resolve the issue of tobacco still remaining in Czechoslovakia, which the population urgently needs, and about the banks, which the Soviet trophy authorities classify as trophies, but which, essentially, contain only Czechoslovak currency in cash, and some amounts of German currency, which, naturally, could only be as well as burned. Fierlinger asks Stalin to look into the issue of those banks that are considered German, and to take into account that the Germans never invested anything in those banks, and that they solely used the Czechoslovak capital.

I. V. Stalin says that they would be able to reach an agreement with the Czechoslovak Government on the issue of tobacco, and that it would probably agree to share the tobacco with the Red Army. He proposes to investigate the situation with the banks separately. V. M. Molotov says that there are a number of proposals on that issue, and that those would be considered in the nearest future.

I. V. Stalin adds that the Czechoslovak Government should be more decisive in regard to big enterprises, especially those that were captured by the Germans, and in particular, recommends that the government should take the Vitkovits plants under its control.

Fierlinger says that that is exactly what the Czechoslovak Government intends to do.

To I. V. Stalin's question whether the Americans plan to leave Czechoslovakia, Fierlinger responds that the Americans postponed the withdrawal of their troops and are asking when the Soviet troops are going to be withdrawn.

I. V. Stalin informs Fierlinger that the number of Soviet troops will be reduced to three times less than the current strength, and that they would take positions predominantly along the borders. He recommends that the Czechoslovak Government should raise the issue of the U.S. troop withdrawal with the Americans.

Klememis informs Stalin that the note to the Americans on this issue is already on its way, but that the Czechoslovak Government will use the occasion of the withdrawal of the large portion of the Soviet troops in order to once again demand that the Americans withdraw their troops.

Fierlinger then asks what to do with the eviction of Germans and Hungarians from Czechoslovakia.

I. V. Stalin says: "We are not going to hinder your actions. Drive them away. Let them experience what it means to be ruled by others."

Fierlinger asks Stalin to give instructions to the Soviet military to help in this eviction of the Germans and the Hungarians.

I. V. Stalin asks, "Do our military interfere with it?"

Fierlinger says that they do not hamper it, but they would like to receive some active assistance.

Then I. V. Stalin asks Fierlinger if they were able to resolve the contested territorial issues with the Poles amiably.

Fierlinger responds that it was not possible because the Poles would like to split the Teshin region, which no Czechoslovak government would be able to accept.

To I. V. Stalin's question, "Does it mean that no compromise is possible on this issue?"-Fierlinger responds that the Teshin region is a very important part of the Czechoslovak territory, and the Czechoslovak government cannot make any concessions on this issue.

I. V. Stalin notes that in such a case the Poles most probably will not make

concessions on any of the other territorial issues, in particular-in the Kladsco region.
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Poles will probably be persistent because we have promised this territory to them.
Fierlinger responds that the Poles have received too much territory, and they will not be able to digest it.

I. V. Stalin reiterates the Soviet Government's position regarding the fraternal resolution of contested issues, and says that in cases where such resolution is not achieved, we would have to discuss those issues at the peace conference.

Then Fierlinger asks if they could count on arming the remaining six divisions of the Czechoslovak Army with the help of the Soviet Government, as it was agreed to do during the last visit of the President.

I. V. Stalin says that we will give arms and ammunition to the Czechoslovak Army.

Fierlinger expresses gratitude on behalf of the Czechoslovak Government

In conclusion, Fierlinger presents a gift from the President-a brass statue of Jan Zhizhka.

I. V. Stalin asks him to pass his thanks to the President

Recorded by V. Zorin