

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
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Mr. Sharp: I left Cabinet in order to come here to make a statement that was agreed upon this morning, which I would now like to read to you.

(Mr. Sharp then read statement attached)

Mr. Western: What is your information with respect to this position of the Czechoslovak Government? Have the members been rounded up, are they still functioning, what is the situation?

Mr. Sharp: Well, we have various reports, none of which is very conclusive. It seems fairly clear that Czechoslovakia has been occupied. We have received from the Chargé of the Czech Embassy here statements made by the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia which were issued on Wednesday, today, and both of these of course affirm the legality of the government of Czechoslovakia under Mr. Dubcek and President Svoboda. Now we know no more than that. We haven't had any reports from Czechoslovakia that would indicate whether those people are still in office. As you may have noticed the Soviet Government claims that they entered Czechoslovakia at the invitation of leading members of the Czechoslovak Government.

Mr. Collister: Ambassador Shpedko visited your office and Mr. Hellyer this morning. Can you tell us the purpose of this visit and how he explained this situation?

Mr. Sharp: He met Mr. Hellyer. As you may have noticed, the Soviet Ambassadors around the world have called on Heads of Governments. They called on the President of the United States,