

COPY

Memorandum

June 17, 1950

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TO : DTRAPID

FROM : HTADDER

SUBJECT: INTEGRAL, Czech publication in Bad Reichenhall

1. Subject publication is the central organ of a Czecho-slovak exile movement, generally known as the group of General Lev Prchala, former Commander of the Eastern Czechoslovak Army Group in 1938. After the Munich agreement, General Prchala, who was a popular figure in Eastern Slovakia and exercised practically uncontrolled power in Ruthenia, joint with his strong Army group the Polish Forces and fought with them after the outbreak of the German war in 1939. Despite a gallant performance of himself and his troupe, Prchala had to save the rest of his Army together with the scattered remainders of the Polish Armed Force and fled to Roumania, where he was given temporary asylum. From there, Prchala has later arrived in Western Europe where he spent the rest of World War II.

2. Though always politically close to the extreme right, represented in pre-war Czechoslovakia by World War I hero, Gen. Rudolf Gajda and his negligible fascist splinter group, Prchala has enjoyed a high reputation as a qualified army commander and his wholesale defection in 1938 was one of the most powerful morale boosters for the population of Nazi-threatened Czechoslovakia as well as for the beginning efforts of self-exiled President Dr. Benes. Soon after his arrival in London, however, Prchala's political views clashed violently with those of Dr. Benes and his surroundings, thus placing Prchala first into formal opposition, later into ruthless fight against everything conceived under the sponsorship of the later Czechoslovak Government in Exile.

3. It is interesting to state that Prchala and a very small group of right-wingers in the Czech exile movement during World War II has violently opposed any approach and cooperation with the Soviet-Western honeymoon reached its peak. For this intolerant attitude, Prchala became a burden to the Czech exile movement and simultaneously a growing nuisance to the official policy of the West in the years since 1941.

4. Retired from official policy and considered a black sheep by the returning exile Government, Prchala and a small group of

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his faithful (Dr. Jiri Bertl and two or three other individuals) refused to return home and established himself in permanent exile, manifesting in this way his elementary opposition to the Czech Government's cooperation with Soviet Russia. It was often guessed wherefrom the group got financial support, as there is no evidence about Prchala's lucrative activity in business. It was rumored that he has received some support from rightist elements in Great Britain and was in steady contact with the former boss of the Bata-works, US-blacklisted-Jan A. Bata, residing in South America and striving to regain his economic positions, lost in favor of his nephew after Bata's exposure for large-scale cooperation with the Nazi regime.

5. After February, 1948, the Prchala movement became politically active among Czech refugees in Germany and Austria and tried to get followers in camps by distributing food parcels from unknown sources and encouraging the Czech-Slovakian feud, posing as supporters of full Slovakian autonomy within a framework of a federalist Czechoslovakia. The political program of the movement, is however, very vague. It could be approximately described as a blend of fascist and rightist-democratic elements with a special emphasis on complete negation of all existing Czech political parties and movements both at home and in exile.

6. The negative attitude of Prchala's movement, called officially Svobodni Cestl Krigaci (Free Czech Crusaders) has had a most unfavorable effect on the masses of Czech exiles. Though cooperation with Slovak separatist groups and some kind of mutual support with the Catholic groups - without official support from the Vatican - seems evident, Prchala has not succeeded in recruiting considerable support in DP camps and among free living exiles. It is generally felt that the movement tries to fight against existing political groups in exile in order to monopolize political influence among Czech DPs by suggesting that all other parties and individuals are guilty of cooperation with Communism. Although Prchala has a point here and is right when claiming that he alone consequently fought the Benes-sponsored concept of peaceful cooperation with the USSR, this argument is at present not attractive enough and it seems as if the Prchala people would have lost all contact with Czech political realities by their ten year exile in the West.

7. Besides the INTEGRAL, the Prchala movement edits another monthly mimeographed pamphlet, called PRUPLAV (Channel) and published in Murnau. The editorial and political level of both these papers is very low.

8. The spokesmen of the Prchala movement in Germany all together are very controversial characters of unknown background

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and dubious goals. Most of them write under aliases and little is known about them among the DP Czechoslovak public. The editor in chief of INTEGRAL is Martin Rott-Mazal, Bad Reichenhall. PRUPLAV is edited by an editorial circle without names given.

9. The prestige of the Prchala movement in Germany, if any, has been heavily burdened by the fact that Communist agents from Czechoslovakia are mostly posing as right-wing radicals and join the Prchala groups while operating in DP camps for better cover. In Murnau, for instance, two very suspicious characters by names of Reska (fmu) and Peklo (fmu) are working as Prchala's border-crossing agents into the CSR. Both of them are suspected of being double-agents and their background exposes them both as former German cooperators (Peklo was a supervisor in a concentration camp) and as Communist affiliated individuals (one brother of Reska is a prominent State Police member in Gottwaldov, formerly Zlin). Individuals of such a type are not exceptions in the Prchala camp, the extreme radicalism of this group being a welcome field for the work of Communist agitators among DPs and a useful cover for agents and spies infiltrated from Czechoslovakia to work in Germany.

10. As far as military information is concerned, the Prchala group undoubtedly attracts attention of radical young soldiers among DPs, especially for the excellent military record of General Prchala himself. It is reported that an intelligence group working under his orders is operating from Murnau under the command of Staff Captain Oplt (fmu) and Lieutenant Cap (fmu), who are said to maintain good intelligence contacts with Moravian military installations and units.

Military men around General Prchala were further in active cooperation with the Zemla group, which attracted attention of respective authorities through rumors about its planned armed coup in Czechoslovakia a year ago. Zemla himself was however not a member of this movement.

11. It can be said in conclusion that Prchala has an excellent military record and a clean political record as far as cooperation with the USSR is concerned. He is, however, himself absolutely politically illiterate and most of his cooperators are men of bad reputation and unreliable purposes. Although information and specific intelligence material supplied by individual groups within this movement may be valuable, the building up of an overt cooperation with Prchala's movement would be politically harmful. It can hardly be expected that Prchala himself could later find a way for constructive cooperation with other Czechoslovak exile groups and parties, nor that he would be able to exercise considerable influence upon the rank and file among Czechoslovak political exiles.

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