

**Information on the events of January 17, 1989 and the reactions of Communists and the public to the activities of the hostile forces**

**[Extract]**

Adherents of the so-called independent initiatives (Charter 77, Children of Bohemia, Independent Peace Association) continued on Tuesday, January 17, 1989, to disrupt the peace and public order in the center of Prague and to intensify the pressure on the state organs.

On the basis of experience of the provocational activities carried out on January 16, 1989 in the afternoon and evening hours on Wenceslas Square, increased SNB commitment was organized, and measures taken to carry out a rapid intervention by the security units.

At 15:30 in the upper part of Wenceslas Square, clumps of mostly young people began to gather, standing on the sidewalk and in the median zone. The assembly gradually grew into a provocational memorial event for Jan Palach. The number of participants grew to about 300, and traffic was blocked on the sidewalk and in the road. At 16:15 the citizens were called upon by the security service to leave the area. At the same time the identification was checked of persons who did not obey the summons. These measures were accompanied by whistling and cries of “phooey, freedom, release the political prisoners, release Havel”. At 16:40 a security unit was deployed which, after repeated summons, cleared the area using moderate measures. By 17:30 calm and public order was restored to Wenceslas Square.

During the intervention tram and individual traffic was halted. In view of the situation, at 18:15 the order was given to withdraw the security units. During the completion of this withdrawal, in the pedestrian zone and lower part of Wenceslas Square there began to gather a crowd of about 700 persons, who began in an unorganized manner to move into the upper part of the square. Therefore the security units were again committed, which prevented the advance of the crowd, and with the use of water cannons and moderate measures pushed the crowd into the adjacent streets, where it was gradually dispersed. The most active provocateurs were taken to the MO VB [Municipal Department of Public Security], or removed by bus to various places outside of Prague (Mníšek pod Brdy, Dobříš, Kostelec nad Černými Lesy, Velké Popovice, and Benešov). At 19:15 calm and public order had been restored again. At 20:45 normal traffic was resumed on Wenceslas Square, as well as tram and individual transportation.

During the intervention by the security units on Vodičkova Street shortly after 18:30 an unknown youth (only a description was obtained) threw at the advancing security unit from the passage Světozor an object, which exploded upon impact. Despite the marked intensity of

the explosion, there were no injuries or damage. Further investigation will be carried out by the MO [Municipal Department] of the VB Prague.

During the course of the measures undertaken, the presence was discovered on Wenceslas Square of employee Norman of the USA embassy in Prague. He was not permitted contact with the participants in the provocation. The identification was checked of 25 persons, 13 persons were detained, and 72 persons were taken outside of Prague. These were mostly persons from Prague of up to 25 years of age. Of the detained, 5 were released after an interview. [...]