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ACTION ARA 16

INFO RSR 01, EUR 15, USIE 00, CIAE 00, DODE 00, GPM 04, H 02, INR 07, L 03,

NSAE 00, NSC 10, P 04, RSC 01, SP 02, SS 25, AID 28, PC 15, SAH 02,

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P 222303Z AUG 68

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4664

UNCLAS PANAMA 4419

JOINT EMBASSY/USIS MESSAGE

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION TO INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA-AUG 22

REF: PANAMA 4411

1. PANAMA NEWSPAPERS CARRIED EXTENSIVE ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND PHOTOS, WITH EDITORIAL CONDEMNATION OF INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA.
2. RADIO STATIONS, HOWEVER, REFLECTED FASTER REACTING CAPABILITY BY DIVIDING THEIR MAJOR NEWS COVERAGE BETWEEN INVASION AND ARRIVAL OF POPE IN COLOMBIA. CHANNEL 4-TV, SUPPORTER OF ROBLES ADMINISTRATION, CARRIED BRIEF EDITORIAL CONDEMNATION ON MID-DAY NEWSCAST.
3. INFLUENTIAL EVENING EL PANAMA AMERICA OF ARIAS GROUP TUESDAY EDITORIALY WARNED INVASION "CONSTITUTES AN ACT OF AGGRESSION THAT WILL BE LOOKED DOWN UPON BY THE FREE WORLD."
4. MORNING TABLOID CRITICA OF ARIAS GROUP WEDNESDAY DEVOTED FRONT PAGE TO UPI PHOTO SHOWING CZECH YOUTHS IN PRAGUE CARRYING NATION'S FLAG PAST BURNING SOVIET TANK. BANNER HEADLINES REPORT: "SHOOTING INTENSIFIES IN PRAGUE" AND "CZECHS STAGGER UNDER RED BOOT."
5. MORNING EL MUNDO, OWNED BY UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE FOR

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PRESIDENT, SAMUDIO, DEVOTED NEARLY ALL FRONT PAGE TO UPI REPORTS AND PHOTOS OF CZECHS SEATED IN PATH OF SOVIET TANKS, AND OUSTED CZECH LEADERS. EDITORIALY EL MUNDO VIEWED THE RUSSIAN-LED INVASION AS ILLUSTRATION OF GUATEMALAN JUAN JOSE AREVALO'S ANTI-IMPERIALISTIC FABLE OF SHARK AND SARDINE. RUSSIA, US AND RED CHINA WERE IDENTIFIED AS SHARKS.

6. LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA EDITORIALIZED ABOUT POPE'S VISIT ALTHOUGH IT CARRIED SEVERAL AP REPORTS ABOUT INVASION ON FRONT PAGE.

7. NOONTIME EXPRESO GAVE OVER BACK PAGE TO INVASION AND EDITORIALY LIKENED INVASION TO "AFFRONT AGAINST THE CONSCIENCE OF ALL FREE MEN ON EARTH..."

DOWNNS

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