

U. S. Note to Czechoslovakia On Killing of German Policeman

Following is the text of a note sent by the American Embassy at Prague to the Czechoslovak Foreign Office on July 17 concerning the killing of a German policeman at the frontier of the United States zone of Germany on July 3:

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Foreign Office of Czechoslovakia and has the honor to refer to the Embassy's note No. 653 of June 19, 1951¹ concerning two violations of the U. S. zone of Germany by members of the Czechoslovak armed forces.

The Czechoslovak Government's attention is now called to another and even more serious violation of the United States zone of Germany, a violation resulting in death of a German Customs policeman.

At about 1:50 a.m. on July 3, 1951, an unidentified person tried to cross from Czechoslovakia into Germany in the vicinity of Gruenteg Bridge between Hohenberg and Sommerhau. When stopped by a German Customs patrol on the road inside German territory which parallels the frontier, the illegal border crosser fired a shot at the German patrol but missed and then fled back to Czechoslovakia. Immediately a fusillade of shots was fired at the German Customs patrol from the Czechoslovak side apparently to provide cover for the illegal border crosser. These shots were fired by two or three different persons. George Nirschl, German Customs policeman who formed part of the patrol, was killed on German territory by one of these shots. The bullet was subsequently recovered and identified as having been fired from a Czechoslovak machine pistol.

The American Government requests that an immediate investigation be made by the appropriate Czechoslovak authorities to determine the person or persons guilty of this violation of the U. S. zone of Germany. It also requests that a prompt report be made to this Embassy, pending receipt of which the American Government reserves all rights in the premises including the right to claim compensation on behalf of the German Customs policeman who was killed.

The Foreign Ministry is reminded that it has made no reply to the Embassy's request for information as to the results of an investigation by the Czechoslovak authorities of two previous border violations by Czechoslovak personnel described in the Embassy's note of June 19, 1951, and that no reply has been received to its request for assurances that steps have been taken by the pertinent Czechoslovak authorities to prevent such violations in the future. The Embassy further reminds the Ministry that it expects the Czechoslovak Government to show the same diligence in dealing with reports

¹ BULLETIN of July 2, 1951, p. 12.

of violations by Czechoslovak personnel of the U. S. zone of Germany as the American authorities have consistently shown with respect to representations made by the Czechoslovak Government.