

CZECHS GIVE DATA ON JORDAN'S DEATH

U.S. Gets Report in Case of
Jewish Refugee Official

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 6—The Czechoslovak Government has given the United States a further report on the circumstances surrounding the mysterious death in Prague last August of Charels H. Jordan, a prominent figure in Jewish refugee aid efforts.

The report leaves unanswered the key questions asked since his disappearance: Was he killed and, if so, by whom?

United States officials took the new report as evidence that the Czechoslovak Government was continuing an investigation in which clues have come to light from places as far afield as Switzerland and Belgium.

These officials said that the Czechs had labeled their report an interim report and that they had given every indication that further information would be provided as it was collected. The United States is continuing to press for answers to the questions that remain unresolved.

Mr. Jordan, who was 59 years old, was the executive vice chairman of the American Joint Distribution Committee. He was one of the most well-known and energetic organizers of relief to Jewish refugees in Eastern Europe.

Body Found in River

He disappeared in Prague last Aug. 16. His body was found in the Vltava River four days later.

The Czech report states formally that he died of suffocation from drowning and that there were no signs of "major trauma" on his body that would suggest a violent assault previous to death.

He is said to have died between 11 P.M. and midnight on the 16th, and his body is said to have fallen into the river from a certain point on the First of May Bridge in downtown Prague.

This was ascertained, the Czechs said, by lengthy tests of river currents using a dummy of Mr. Jordan's size and weight. Pictures of the scene and drawings of the river currents are attached to the

report, which was handed over to the United States Embassy in Prague.

A preliminary reading of the report, which has not yet been translated into English, indicate that the possibility is not excluded that he was hit by a sandbag or some other similar object. Such an attack would not leave a noticeable mark on the body.

The United States Government is formally insisting that it is the Czech Government's responsibility to investigate all possible leads in the case. Private inquiries have also been carried out, however, by the Joint Distribution Committee and other interested groups.

Suicide Ruled Out

Suicide has been ruled out by persons in this country and abroad who knew Mr. Jordan closely. The suspicion persists that he was murdered, but there is wide disagreement about what persons or groups might have been involved.

Reliable sources have related the experience of a Belgian scientist invited to a Communist East European country — not Czechoslovakia — shortly after Mr. Jordan's death. After his return to Belgium, the scientist, a Jew, said that he had been followed constantly during his visit.

When he complained to the authorities of the country, he was quietly told that he was being followed for his own protection so that, as he later related the conversation, "Soviet agents will not do to you what they did to Jordan."

That is one persistent belief among Mr. Jordan's associates — that he was killed by representatives of the Soviet security police, the K.G.B.

Another rumor in Prague is that his death was the work of Arab agents, settling some grievance resulting from his far-flung efforts to assist Jews in distress.

A further twist came Dec. 10, when a Swiss pathologist retained by the Joint Distribution Committee to conduct an autopsy was found dead in a snowy forest near Zurich.

The pathologist, Prof. Ernst Hardmeier, was found frozen to death several hundred yards from his locked automobile. He was 63 years old. Swiss police said that there was no evidence to link Dr. Hardmeier's death with his participation in the Jordan case. But it is known that he had not completed the examination of minor evidence relating to the case.

United States officials have informally suggested that the Czech investigators might want to look into the Hardmeier death. There is no information here that they have done so.