



The Reports from Prague

Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c. 14 June 1618
From Prague, the 2nd ditto [June]

The [members of the] States [of Bohemia] have departed from here, due to Pentecost, towards their estates, but they will soon return; in the meantime, the gentlemen of the city govern here. This morning an edict was published by the States, presented by three lords, three knights and three commoners, that the Jesuits must depart this instance from Prague, and from all other cities of the Kingdom of Bohemia, and that a guard will be assembled to surround their college. The States are also recruiting many soldiers, both cavalry and infantry, and they urge the incorporated lands [of Bohemia] to follow the previously made accord, and to fulfil their promise of assistance. They are also ensuring that the [Bohemian] crown at Karlstein is protected well. Many councillors and other people who have met with officers [from the army] have offered several thousand florins as a loan to recruit troops, as has the foremost general, who offered 100,000 florins. The Catholic States have now bound themselves to the Evangelical [Reformed] States, and have decided to live with one another in peace, and help observe His Majesty's letter. In the whole kingdom every fifth man has been called up, so that 150,000 men are now on the move. There is also a demand from Silesia to assemble a force of 1,000 cavalymen and a regiment of infantry within four weeks. Meanwhile Doctor Panzon, the man who gave the orders against the States, has been captured. Similarly, the secretary Michna, who has laboured most intensively against the States, has had all his goods and credit confiscated, amounting to some 130,000 florins, but he has managed to evade arrest, together with Father Collorat, a Jesuit. There was also found amongst his possessions 100 bound white sheets, which had been sealed by the Emperor's secret seal. Lord Slabata, who pleaded for mercy, has confessed that he was persuaded to do all that he was accused of by the Jesuits, and that he no longer desires to hold any office. Gentleman Smysanski, who is currently in Vienna, has written to all the States, asking for mercy as well. The Elector of Saxony sent a postman to the lords protectors here, but he was thrown off [his horse] two miles from here, and all letters were torn apart.

Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c. 22 June 1618
From Prague, the 9th ditto [June]

From Bratislava there was reported on the 5th of this month that the coronation in Hungary was not yet finalised, and that the Bohemians are complicating many matters, because the States [of Bohemia] desire that their complaints first be resolved before discussing other affairs of state. From Vienna there is news that the Emperor will soon issue an order of recruitment, and the colonel Bucheym, Count Dampier, Don Balthazar and others expect briefs from the Spanish ambassador, from whom they have requested 300,000 guilders. To assist the same, Lord Crain, acting as Imperial commissary, has arrived here and presented himself to the secretariat of the land's office, and met with the foremost general Wallenstein and Lord Poppen, and questioned them on order of His Majesty what reason they have for engaging in the procedures at the land's office, an issue raised by the States, and they answered that the formal justification of the same affairs will soon shine a light on everything. On the night of the 7th, the Jesuits all departed [from Prague] and presented to the gentlemen of the States the keys to their college and the inventory of their possessions. The reasons for their expulsion have been proclaimed throughout the land and printed, and the text can be found affixed on all streets. It is expected that the Archduke Maximilian and Cardinal van Diderichsteen will arrive here soon. The Elector of Saxony is also presumed to have recruited many soldiers for the defence of Bohemia, similarly to the States of Silesia, Moravia and Austria.

Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c. 15 November 1618
From Prague, the 28th ditto [October]

There are reports from Vienna that the States of Austria have held an assembly in great numbers, and that their formal complaints concerning religious and other matters have been discussed once again, and that they have now decided to withdraw the same demands (after pressing for them unsuccessfully for nine years), given that King Ferdinand had given them an audience which raised their hopes substantially, and that he had promised to argue their affairs before the Emperor, which gave the States much satisfaction. What concerns our affairs here [in Bohemia] is that His Majesty has offered to the Elector of Saxony a suspension in the fighting, but as has become clear from his letters to the States of Bohemia, under this armistice, the Bohemians would have to lay down their arms first, and thereby place themselves at the mercy of His Majesty, which is most suspicious to the States, and therefore they wish not to enter into any such terms, and have become much more resolved to pursue their cause with determination, and no longer subject themselves to any man's authority. Due to this some of the gentlemen [of the States] travelled to the army to discuss with the general there how the enemy could be expelled from their lands. Meanwhile both armies went at each other, and in a skirmish some 400 of the Emperor's army was left dead on the field. It is also understood that the army of Count Dampier has retired from Pelhřimov, where he initially meant to winter, towards Polná, on the



frontiers of Moravia. The Count of Mansfeld continues the siege of Pilsen, and has already lost more than 500 men there.

Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c. 23 November 1618
From Prague, the 4th ditto [November]

The Silesian soldiers will soon arrive at our [Bohemian] army, bringing nine pieces of ordnance with them. The Imperial army has moved towards Moravia, and we will soon discover what the Moravians have decided at their Landtag, and whether they will march as well. And there is news from our army that the enemy made a sortie from the city of Pilsen four days ago just after midnight, and that we lost sixteen men to that raid. Yesterday a mine was sprung [at the same city], as well as 95 shots from our bombards, without receiving any return fire, and now we are working day and night to shoot a breach in the city wall, while many grenades and other fireworks are also thrown into the city, which do much damage, so it is hoped that the city might come into our hands any day, despite the fact that those inside have resolved to give their lives for it. The day before yesterday someone from the privy council of the Elector Palatine arrived here [Prague] to inspect the army, which he would visit tomorrow, but there is the assumption that he has come here on other business. Yesterday there also arrived here some captains and engineers from the Netherlands, who have brought letters of recommendation for the States of Bohemia.

Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c. 30 November 1618
From Prague, the 12th ditto [November]

Three days ago there was sent from here [Prague] to our army before Pilsen two large pieces of ordnance, together with 400 cannonballs and several tons of gunpowder. Once again several commissaries were also sent over [to the army], to urge those of Pilsen to treat with them, promising that no harm would come to them if they chose to surrender. Although these conditions seemed attractive to them, as soon as the representative of the States [of Bohemia] returned, the military commander of the city urged the magistrates of the city to remember their oath, reinforcing their resolve with letters from the Emperor, which caused them again to reject the offer, and not to surrender, which led the Count of Mansfeld to order the renewed bombardment of the city. The Silesian soldiers arrived at our army on the 6th of this month, bringing with them all pieces of ordnance from Brunów, after the abbot there had placed them on the city walls.

Translated from the Dutch by Arthur der Weduwen.