

Czechoslovakia: The Dubcek regime may soon begin to give a more nationalist turn to the country's foreign policy.

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[redacted] previously expected that the government would wait about a year before striking out on new foreign policy paths, now believe that it will embark on a more flexible course in the next few months. The regime's preoccupation with domestic problems, however, and its dependence on the USSR for raw materials, markets, and defense will limit its foreign options.

Certain small shifts in Czechoslovakia's attitudes toward its Communist neighbors and the West already have become evident. For example, the failure of the Czechoslovak delegation at the recent conference of Communist parties in Budapest fully to endorse the Soviet position was, [redacted] a studied effort to preserve room for future maneuver.

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[redacted] only the strong urgings of the Poles, East Germans, and Russians brought the Czechoslovaks to support the Russian call for an international Communist meeting later this year.

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In a recent example of thawing toward the West, the Czechoslovaks have made known that they now regard cooperation with such bodies as the UN Economic Commission for Europe as essential. They believe, however, that they cannot afford politically to move too rapidly toward better relations with individual Western states, especially the US. [redacted]

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