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CZECHOSLOVAKS RESIST NEW SOVIET PRESSURES TO CAPITULATE

Despite new Soviet pressures, Czechoslovak leaders continued to procrastinate concerning Moscow's demands that they implement the August agreement.

Party leader Dubcek, Premier Cernik, and Slovak party chief Husak received a cold reception in Moscow during their summit conference with Brezhnev, Kosygin and Podgorny on 3-4 October. The communiqué issued at the end of the talks showed that the Russians are dissatisfied with the pace and scope of Czechoslovak compliance with the Moscow agreement of 26 August. The communiqué makes clear that Moscow is determined to compel the Czechoslovaks to act according to its wishes, and will force Prague to make concessions.

During the talks, Prague leaders agreed to at least one major concession, to negotiate a treaty that will provide a basis for the indefinite Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. The agreement calls for the "temporary" stationing of an unspecified number of Soviet troops on Czechoslovak soil. "Other troops"--presumably those not included in the occupation force--will be withdrawn in "stages."

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about 100,000 troops will remain.

Deputy Premier Hamouz led a 15-member Czechoslovak Government delegation to Moscow on 8 October to negotiate the status-of-forces agreement. It is possible that

President Svoboda also accompanied this delegation since, he, as an old general, might feel that his presence was necessary during such vital negotiations. He may also have wanted to make one last attempt to convince the Soviets to dilute their demands or face a new leadership crisis in Prague.

While in Moscow, Dubcek and company apparently also were pressured to make immediate policy changes that will water down Dubcek's liberalization program--particularly in the areas of party-controlled personnel appointments, ideology, propaganda, censorship, and centralization of the economy. Of these, Prague now seems most ready to impose stricter controls on the news media.

Despite Soviet pressures Czechoslovak leaders are not yet reconciled to full submission to all of these demands. On 8 October the presidium issued a communiqué suggesting that Prague intends to salvage what it can while talking about the concessions it may make to the Soviets. Moreover, the statement stressed that Prague will continue as many as possible of Dubcek's liberal policies, and that there will be no purge at the top level of the party or government.

Prague also intends to proceed with federalization of the country on 28 October

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More specific indications of Prague's intentions may come to light when the central committee convenes, probably next week, to consider a list of "tasks"--presumably reflecting Soviet desires--which Dubcek and his colleagues will submit for approval.

The Slovak Communist party after hearing party chief Husak's report on the trip to Moscow, took immediate steps to impose new controls on Slovak information media. The party ordered an increase in the amount of time and space allotted to propaganda and to political indoctrination in the press, radio, and television.

In addition, the Soviet ambassador in Prague met with the Czechoslovak minister of justice on 7 October, possibly to discuss terminating another phase of Dubcek's liberalization--the rehabilitation of former political prisoners. The Russians will clearly try to prevent the re-opening of any more trials that would expose Moscow's role in the bloody purges of the Stalinist era.

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[redacted] the Soviets are demanding three training areas as well as numerous housing facilities which were to be made available by 10 October. [redacted]

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