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## CZECHOSLOVAKS STILL HAVING PROBLEMS WITH "NORMALIZATION"

The Dubcek leadership continues to have problems at home amid signs that the Soviets are less than satisfied with the slow progress toward "normalization."

Defense Minister Dzur's week-long familiarization visit to the Soviet Union lacked tangible results. On his return, however, Dzur hinted that Czechoslovakia might strengthen its armed forces as an earnest of its intention to improve relations with the USSR and others in the Warsaw Pact.

Last week, Czechoslovak party secretary for mass media Josef Kempny went to Moscow and Soviet politburo member Pelshe arrived in Prague. Kempny's visit could result in new restrictions on Prague's still outspoken press, radio, and television. Pelshe can be expected to argue the need for strong party discipline.

The Czechoslovak trade union congress, which opened on 4 March, is expected to call for a broadening of the restricted, post-invasion version of last spring's reform program. This would be a clear warning to Czechoslovak leaders that further concessions to the Soviets at the expense of domestic reforms will be resisted. In his opening speech, trade union chief Polacek said that the trade unions would support the Communist Party, but emphasized that they would play a more independent role rather than shrink to "second-class status" solely to satisfy

party policy. The Dubcek leadership faces the danger that the trade unions might try to usurp the party's role as defender of the nations' rights and liberties.

The dissident Czechoslovak writers' union refused to send a delegation to a meeting of Soviet bloc writers that opened on 5 March in Budapest. The Czechoslovak writers want an apology from their Soviet counterparts for their attacks on a Czechoslovak writers' union president now in exile.

The government has activated a civilian-dominated State Defense Council in an effort to increase its control over the defense apparatus. Dubcek, who will head the nine-member council, probably will try to use it to curb the influence of pro-Soviet elements in the Ministry of Defense--whether successfully or not remains to be seen. Since the invasion, a number of pro-Soviet military officers have been installed in key positions and--with the assistance of Russian advisers--are said to be seeking control of the ministry.

In addition, progressive journalists have warned that it is an "open secret" that the hard liners have made considerable inroads in the secret police, and that the progressives in the Interior Ministry are now on the defensive. The conservatives, moreover, reportedly have also made substantial inroads into the People's Militia, the paramilitary force of the Czechoslovak Communist Party.

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