

MUN 56 12 MAR 68

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FM WALTER INFO COLLINS COOK DIAMOND LYON REYMAN KINGSLEY

OPD HIGHLIGHTS NO 36

12/1841.

CZECHOSLOVAK DEVELOPMENTS DURING PAST 24 HOURS YIELDED TWO NEW
POINTS OF EMPHASIS.

1. SECURITY APPARATUS

UNTIL NOW, THE QUESTION OF SUBJECTING THE SECURITY APPARATUS
TO MORE EFFECTIVE CONTROL AND AVOIDING CONCENTRATION OF POWER WHICH
LED TO ITS MISUSE HAD BEEN RAISED GENERALLY, IN PARTICULAR
BY ZDENEK MLYNAR. NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME IT IS SAID WHAT
SPECIFICALLY THE NEW LEADERSHIP INTENDS TO DO IN THIS FIELD.
MICHAL PECHO, SLOVAK PARTY CC SECRETARY WHO ADVANCED TO THE
POST VACATED BY BILAK, REVEALED THAT THE PARTY'S ACTION
PROGRAM DRAFT WILL PROPOSE SPLITTING OF SECURITY APPARATUS
INTO TWO PARTS. ONE WILL BE THE STATE SECURITY TO SERVE
MAINLY "COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE" NEEDS; THE OTHER
(IN SIZE ONE WOULD ASSUME THE LARGER PART) WILL BECOME
REGULAR POLICE ORGANS SUBORDINATED TO THE NATIONAL COMMITTEES.

IN THIS CONNECTION, THE INTERIOR MINISTRY STATEMENT ON
HANDLING OF STUDENT DEMONSTRATION ASSUMES ADDED SIGNIFICANCE.
PROBABLY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN COMMUNIST HISTORY, AN INTERIOR
MINISTRY APOLOGIZES TO DEMONSTRATORS FOR "INAPPROPRIATELY
HARSH ACTIONS" AND "IMPERMISSIBLE RETALIATION" AGAINST THEM.
(THE TIMING OF THIS STATEMENT IS IN ITSELF INTERESTING: IT COMES
WHEN WARSAW STUDENTS ARE TASTING SIMILAR ACTIONS AND
RETALIATION. THE KIND OF COVERAGE CS MEDIA ARE GIVING WARSAW
STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND THE FREQUENT STATEMENTS THAT CS
LIBERALIZATION POLICY WILL BE OR SHOULD BECOME A MODEL FOR
OTHER "SOCIALIST COUNTRIES" SUGGESTS THAT ISSUANCE OF THIS
APOLOGY AT PRESENT MOMENT MAY NOT BE WHOLLY ACCIDENTAL.) MINISTRY
ALSO GRANTED STUDENT DEMAND THAT POLICE OFFICERS WILL
HENCEFORTH WEAR NUMBERED BADGES, AND ANNOUNCED DISCIPLINARY
ACTION AGAINST SEVEN POLICEMEN AS WELL AS COMPENSATION FOR
STUDENT VICTIMS. IN WHAT MAY BE AN UNINTENDED ALLUSION TO
POLISH POLICE ACTIONS OF TODAY, PRAGUE INTERIOR MINISTRY SAYS
POLICE ACTED AGAINST STUDENTS UNDER THE THEN PREVAILING
POLITICAL LINE WHICH HAS NOW CHANGED.

NEVERTHELESS, FROM EASTERN SLOVAKIA THERE CAME FURTHER
CRITICISM OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. REGIONAL POLICE
HEADQUARTERS THERE ADOPTED A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR
MINISTRY TO ADOPT PUBLIC STAND ON PAST LAWLESSNESS AND NEED
FOR REHABILITATIONS. THE SEJNA AFFAIR MAY ALSO ADD WEIGHT
TO CRITICISMS OF INTERIOR MINISTER KUDRNA.

2. DISTRICT CONFERENCES OF THE PARTY

SIXTY-SEVEN SUCH CONFERENCES WERE HELD OVER PAST WEEKEND,
MAKING UP OVER HALF OF ALL DISTRICTS (THEY ARE PRELIMINARY
TO REGIONAL PARTY CONFERENCES). INFORMATION AVAILABLE SO
FAR INDICATES ACCURACY OF TANJUG DESCRIPTION OF THESE
MEETINGS AS "TURBULENT...CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE PROGRESSIVE

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AND CONSERVATIVE FORCES". ACCORDING TO TANJUG, CONSERVATIVES
RIGGED SOME MEETINGS BY HOLDING ELECTION BEFORE DISCUSSION;
CZECHOSLOVAK MEDIA STRESS FREQUENCY OF SECRET BALLOTING FOR
OFFICIALS (IMPLYING THAT THIS HAS OFTEN LED TO UPSETTING THE
PROPOSED SLATE) AND THOSE MEETINGS WHERE PROGRESSIVES HAVE
PREVAILED. IT IS NOT YET POSSIBLE TO ASSESS THE OVERALL
RESULT OR MAKE A COUNT. SCATTERED REPORTS INDICATE STRONG
CONSERVATIVE TENDENCIES IN TACHOV, PLZEN-NORTH, OLOMOUC, AND
VYSKOV (THE LATTER TWO IN MORAVIA); PRO-DUBCEK FORCES APPEAR
TO HOLD THE UPPER HAND IN PISEK, STRAKONICE (BOHEMIA),
HODONIN, KYJOV (MORAVIA), MARTIN, HUMENNE (SLOVAKIA). IN
BENESOV, A CONSERVATIVE WAVE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DEFEATED
BY SMRKOVSKY WHO ADDRESSED CONFERENCE; A SIMILAR DEVELOPMENT
OCCURED IN THE INDUSTRIAL NORTH BOHEMIAN DISTRICT OF CHOMUTOV WHERE
SIK WAS THE SPEAKER. THE MEETING WAS THE ONLY ONE TO BE
HELD OVER INTO THE THIRD DAY ON ACCOUNT OF HAVING VOTED
UNLIMITED DISCUSSION.

THE RESOLUTION OF THE PRAGUE CITY APPARATUS WHICH SHOWED
STRONG CONSERVATIVE BIAS IS NOW UNDER ATTACK FROM A NUMBER
OF QUARTERS. MARTIN VACULIK, THE PRAGUE PARTY CHIEF WHO HAD
SIDED WITH NOVOTNY, APPARENTLY HAD A ROLE IN THIS EVIDENT
EFFORT TO PRE-EMPT PRAGUE PARTY SUPPORT FOR THE NOVOTNY
FORCES. AT LEAST THREE PRAGUE DISTRICT PARTY COMMITTEES
(TANJUG REPORTS ALL SIX) REJECTED THIS RESOLUTION. PRAGUE
NEWSPAPER VECERNI PRAHA DESCRIBED IT AS "DOUBLE-DEALING" AND
VACULIK HIMSELF TRIED TO WEASEL OUT IN AN INTERVIEW ON PRAGUE
RADIO (REPORTED SUBSTANTIVELY CORRECTLY BY SCHWARZ IN NYT).
VACULIK WAS REALLY PRESSED BY THE INTERVIEWER, CORNERED INTO
ADMITTING PAST SUPPORT OF NOVOTNY, DEFENDING GOLDSTUCKER
AND SUGGESTING THE POSSIBILITY THAT A NEW MEETING MAY
"CORRECT" THE RESOLUTION. VACULIK ALSO REVEALED THAT
"SOME OLD COMRADES" HAVE DISTRIBUTED ACROSS THE COUNTRY A
"TRACT" EXPRESSING "ALMOST CHINESE VIEWS."

INTENSITY OF CONTEST BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS IS SUGGESTED ALSO
BY SMRKOVSKY STATEMENT THAT HE DAILY ADDRESSES MEETINGS OF
SOME "FOUR TO FIVE HUNDRED FUNCTIONARIES". ON THE OTHER HAND,
PRESIDIUM MEMBERS KOLDER, VACULIK, AND RIGO APPEAR
PROGRESSIVELY MORE IDENTIFIED WITH THE CONSERVATIVE FACTION.

END MSG