

CN 80

C/S - PRAGUE REPLY TO WARSAW LETTER (W/CN 68)

MUNICH, AUGUST 21 (CNR) -- THE CZECHOSLOVAK REPLY TO THE WARSAW LETTER WAS A POINT-BY-POINT, REBUTTAL AND A FIRM DECLARATION THAT IT WAS DETERMINED TO CONTINUE ON ITS PRESENT COURSE.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK PRESIDUM DECLARED THAT IT WOULD PROCEED WITH THE COUNTRY'S LIBERALIZATION AND WOULD ALLOW THE CZECHOSLOVAK PRESS TO REMAIN FREE.

IT SAID THAT "ANY SIGN OF A RETURN TO THESE METHODS (OF THE PAST) WOULD AROUSE THE RESISTANCE OF THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE PARTY MEMBERS, WORKERS, COOPERATIVE FARMERS AND INTELLIGENTSIA."

IT SAID THE NO DOUBT SINCERELY-MEANT ADVICE OF THE PARTIES WHICH MET IN WARSAW HAD NOT RPT NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE GREATLY-COMPLICATED NATURE OF THE DYNAMIC SOCIAL MOVEMENT IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

THE PRESIDUM SAID THAT SUCH MOVES AS INTRODUCING FREE SPEECH AND A FREE PRESS - "WHAT USED TO BE CIRCULATED IN THE FORM OF A WHISPERING PROPAGANDA MAY NOW BE VENTILATED IN PUBLIC" - HAD LED TO AN INCREASE IN THE AUTHORITY OF THE PARTY.

THE MAIN DANGER TO THIS AUTHORITY WOULD BE "ALL PRESSURES WHICH ATTEND TO FORCE UPON THE PARTY ANOTHER PROCEDURE."

THE PARTY, THE DECLARATION SAID, COULD NOT COMPEL ITS AUTHORITY UT MUST CONSTANTLY ACQUIRE IT BY ACTIONS.

THE PRESIDUM CALLED FOR BILATERAL ENGOTIATIONS WITH ITS ALLIES - NEGOTIATIONS SUBSEQUENTLY CARRIED OOUT ONLY WITH THE SOVIETS, EAST GERMANS, YUGOSLAVS AND RUMANIANS. IT CRITICIZED THE FACT THAT THE WARSAW MEETING HAD BEEN CONVENED TO DISCUSS CZECHOSLOVAKIA WITHOUT CZECHOSLOVAK PARTICIPATION.

THE DECLARATION SAID THE ORIGINS OF HE SITUATION COULD BE FOUND IN THE YEARS PRECEDING THE JANUARY PLENUM. IT MADE A STRONG ATTACK ON THE POLICIES OF FORMER PREISDENT AND PARTY LEADER ANTONIN NOVOTNY.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA COULD NOT RPT NOT BE ASSERTED THROUGH THE OLD, AUTHORITATIVE METHODS, IT SAID.

BG/APM 0949/68

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