

CN 300

X/13 C/S -- FINN GOVERNMENT DEPLORES INVASION DEVELOPMENT

HELSINKI, AUG 21 -- (RFE SPECIAL/RIDALA) -- THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT THIS AFTERNOON SAID IT "DEPLORED" THE FACT THAT IT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO SETTLE CZECHOSLOVAK-WARSAW PACT DIFFERENCES BY NEGOTIATIONS.

IN A STATEMENT, THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT URHO KEKKONEN SAID:

"FINLAND DEPLORES THAT IT HAS NOT BEEN POSSIBLE TO REMOVE BY NEGOTIATIONS THE CONTROVERSIES THAT HAVE RISEN AMONG SOME EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THE GOVERNMENT IS FOLLOWING THE SITUATION CLOSELY AND TAKES TOWARD IT AN ATTITUDE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TRADITIONAL FINNISH POLICY OF NEUTRALITY. THE GOVERNMENT UPHOLDS THE PRINCIPLE THAT INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES SHOULD BE SOLVED PEACEFULLY BY NEGOTIATIONS AND SHOULD AVOID INCREASING INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS."

FOREIGN MINISTER AHTI KARJALAINEN ALSO ISSUED A STATEMENT IN WHICH HE SAID FINLAND HAS BEEN CLOSELY WATCHING THE CZECHOSLOVAK SITUATION.

HE SAID "WE HOPE THAT PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT IN EUROPE WILL CONTINUE, AND WE CONSISTENTLY MAINTAIN OUR FOREIGN POLICY WHICH IS AIMED AT PROMOTING PEACE IN GENERAL AND IS BASED ON NEUTRALITY AND A DESIRE TO REMAIN ON GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES, BUT IN PARTICULAR WITH OUR NEIGHBORS."

JON/U/RT 1917/68

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