

C/S -- 1ST ADD NEW PARTY LEADERSHIP (CN 51) XX WORK

EARLY TODAY "RADIO FREE CZECHOSLOVAKIA ON" WARNED THAT DELIBERATELY DISTORTED REPORTS WERE BEING DISSEMINATED AMONG JOURNALISTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA BY "PROVOCATEURS."

THE RADIO CITED REPORTS BY SOME SO-CALLED "FREE" RADIOS LATE LAST NIGHT AND EARLY TODAY THAT PRESIDENT SVOBODA HAD BEEN DETAINED AND WOULD BE SENT TO THE SOVIET UNION. THE RADIO SAID THAT THE HEAD OF THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE, DR. LADISLAV NOVAK, HAD DENIED THESE REPORTS. HE SAID SVOBODA WAS STILL AT HRADCANY CASTLE.

THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN A VIRTUAL PRISONER SINCE THE INVASION WITH THE CASTLE SURROUNDED BY SOVIET TANKS.

THE WHEREABOUTS OF ALEXANDER DUBCEK AND OTHERS ARRESTED WITH HIM REMAINED UNKNOWN.

RADIO FREE PRAGUE SAID EARLY LAST NIGHT THAT WITNESSES RECOGNIZED PREMIER CERNIK AND OTHERS WHEN THEY WERE BEING DRIVEN TO PRAGUE AIRPORT YESTERDAY. THE RADIO SAID THEY WERE FLOWN TO AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION.

IN MOSCOW, LATER, THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY AND THE CZECHOSLOVAK EMBASSY SAID THAT THEY HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF REPORTS THAT DUBCEK, CERNIK AND SMRKOVSKY HAD BEEN FLOWN TO MOSCOW

ANOTHER SOVIET STATEMENT DURING THE NIGHT CAME FROM TASS, THIS SAID THAT HOSTILE ELEMENTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA WERE "COMMITTING GRAVE CRIMES."

ADDING THAT THE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY "REMAINED NORMAL ON THE WHOLE" THE TASS STATEMENT SAID THAT THESE PEOPLE HAD ARRESTED THE EDITOR IN CHIEF OF RUDE PRAVO, SVESTKA, AND HAD PRINTED A SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE NEWSPAPER. TASS SAID THAT SOVIET TROOPS HAD FREED SVESTKA.

RADIO PRAGUE BROADCASTING FROM PRAGUE YESTERDAY SAID THAT RUDE PRAVO HAD BEEN TAKEN OVER BY OCCUPATION FORCES AND A NEW EDITORIAL BOARD APPOINTED.

TASS ALSO SAID THAT COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY LEAFLETS WERE BEING PRINTED, INCENDIARY POSTERS HAD BEEN PASTED UP AND CARS WITH LOUD-SPEAKERS TRANSMITTING CLANDESTINE RADIO BROADCASTS HAD APPEARED ON THE STREETS.

(MORE) BMCG/U wD 0608/68