

X/13 CS - ORIENTAL CONGRESS CANCELLED

MUNICH, AUG 24 (GND/MACDONALD)- THE 20TH CONGRESS OF CHINESE STUDIES, WHICH WAS TO HAVE OPENED IN PRAGUE NEXT MONDAY, HAS BEEN CANCELLED.

A STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE IN PRAGUE SAID THAT THE CANCELLATION WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF "THE INVASION OF OUR COUNTRY BY THE USSR."

THE STATEMENT WAS BROUGHT TO THE WEST TODAY BY PROFESSOR JAMES I. CRUMP OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, WHO ARRIVED IN PRAGUE A WEEK AGO TO ATTEND THE CONGRESS.

FOUR HUNDRED ORIENTAL SCHOLARS FROM MANY COUNTRIES IN EAST AND WEST WERE TO HAVE TAKEN PART. THEY INCLUDED DELEGATES FROM THE SOVIET UNION, YUGOSLAVIA, HUNGARY AND RUMANIA AS WELL AS FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA ITSELF.

THE STATEMENT SAID: "WE DEEPLY REGRET THAT THE INVASION OF OUR COUNTRY BY THE USSR AND THE CLOSING OF OUR BORDERS, BOTH EAST AND WEST, HAVE FORCED US TO CANCEL THE CONFERENCE, FROM WHICH WE HAD EXPECTED SO MANY CONCRETE SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL RESULTS.

"THIS IS A BLOW TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF CULTURE IN THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES WHICH WE COULD SCARECLY HAVE EXPECTED FROM OUR SOVIET ALLIES AND OUR FRATERNAL SOCIALIST STATES.

"OUR APOLOGIES ARE HEREWITH OFFERED FOR THE DELAY IN INFORMING YOU ABOUT THIS CANCELLATION, BUT THE PRESENCE OF THE RUSSIAN TROOPS AROUND THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES PREVENTED EARLY DELIVERY OF DUPLICATE LISTS OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES FOR MAILING."

THE CONGRESS IS HELD ANNUALLY IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

JON/L/CR

1710/68 *AB*