

CN 299

X/4 C/S -- SVOBODA MESSAGE SAYS DUBCEK IN ON PREPARATORY TALKS
(REPLACES CN 283)

MUNICH, AUG 24 (CMD)-- A MESSAGE SENT TO THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT BY PRESIDENT LUDVIK SVOBODA TODAY SAID THAT PARTY LEADER ALEXANDER DUBCEK, PREMIER OLDŘICH ČERNÍK AND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CHAIRMAN JOSEF SMRKOVSÝ ARE PARTICIPATING IN PREPARATIONS FOR FURTHER TALKS WITH THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP IN MOSCOW.

THE MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ALSO SAID THAT HIS DELEGATION CONSIDERED IT "ESSENTIAL" THAT DUBCEK, ČERNÍK AND SMRKOVSÝ PARTICIPATE "IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS."

SVOBODA'S MESSAGE, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT WAS BROADCAST TONIGHT BY FREE RADIO CZECHOSLOVAKIA ONE.

THE MESSAGE ALSO SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE PREPARATORY TALKS NOW BEING HELD WITH DUBCEK, ČERNÍK AND SMRKOVSÝ, THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP WERE BEING PROLONGED.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOLLOWED BY SEVERAL HOURS A TASS STATEMENT THAT THE TALKS BETWEEN THE CZECHOSLOVAK AND SOVIET DELEGATIONS WOULD BE CONTINUED TOMORROW.

TASS HAS FAILED SO FAR TO GIVE THE FULL COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATIONS TO THE TALKS, BEYOND STATING THAT PRESIDENT SVOBODA WAS HEADING THE CZECHOSLOVAK SIDE.

(RADIO FREE CZECHOSLOVAKIA ONE/M, AUG 24, 2243)

JH/JM/Ü /*et* 2400/68/3