

CN 123

X13 C/S 1ST ADD - GOLLAN SAYS "TRAGIC ERROR" (CN 122) XXX THEM

"IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT BOTH THE WARSAW LETTER AND THE CZECH REPLY PRECEDED THE CIERNA AND BRATISLAVA MEETINGS, AND THESE MEETINGS HAD A POSITIVE OUTCOME, WE MUST ASK WHETHER ANYTHING NEW AND DECISIVE HAPPENED IN THE 17 DAYS FOLLOWING BRATISLAVA, WHICH NECESSITATED MILITARY INTERVENTION.

"THE PRAVDA ARTICLE SPEAKS OF A MINORITY OF THE PRESIDIUM OPOSING THE FULFILMENT OF THE BRATISLAVE AGREEMENT, WHILE A MAJORITY SUPPORTED IT.

"IF THAT WAS THE CASE WHY DID NOT THE VIEWS OF THE MAJORITY PREVAIL?

"SOME STEPS WERE IN FACT TAKEN AFTER BRATISLAVA IN CONNECTION WITH THE INTERNAL SITUATION.

"THESE INCLUDED THE PRESIDIUM STATEMENT THAT DISRUPTIVE DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE STREETS SHOULD CEASE, A CLEAR DECLARATION THAT THE ARMED PEOPLES MILITIA WOULD BE MAINTAINED AS ESSENTIAL TO THE DEFENCE OF SOCIALISM, AND MEASURES TO PERSUADE EDITORS TO ACT MORE RESPONSIBLY.

"THEY WERE ALREADY COMMITTED TO DEALING WITH THE QUESTION OF THE LAW ON POLITICAL PARTIES WITHIN THE NATIONAL FRONT AFTER THE CONGRESS ON SEPTEMBER 9.

"ONE CAN ARGUE THAT THESE STEPS WERE INSUFFICIENT, OR THAT THE CZECHOSLOVAK PARTY WAS NOT DOING ENOUGH TO COMBAT POLITICALLY THE ANTI-SOCIALIST FORCES IN THE COUNTRY.

"BUT THIS WAS NO REASON FOR MILITARY MEASURES. THERE COULD HAVE BEEN A DEMAND FOR A RECALL OF THE BRATISLAVA MEETING OR OTHER COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY LEADERSHIP, OR AN EXPRESSION OF CONCERN IN OTHER WAYS.

"THE REAL SUBSTANCE OF THE PRAVDA LETTER IS THAT BECAUSE OF THE URGENT AND SERIOUS DANGER OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION CZECHOSLOVAK PARTY LEADERS AND STATESMEN CALLED FOR URGENT ASSISTANCE TO THE FRATERNAL CZECHOSLOVAK PEOPLE, INCLUDING ASSISTANCE WITH ARMED FORCES.

"BUT IF THIS WAS SO, WHY HAVE NO NAMES OF THOSE MAKING THE APPEAL BE ANNOUNCED?

"IF IT WAS A MAJORITY (AS IS IMPLIED IN THE STATEMENT THAT COMRADE DUBCEK HEADED A MINORITY GROUP) WHY WAS NO OFFICIAL DECISION TAKEN AND NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT MADE EITHER BY THE PRESIDIUM OR THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN BOUND BY MAJORITY DECISIONS?

"INDEED SUCH STATEMENTS AS HAVE COME FROM CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT AND PARTY SOURCES COMPLETELY CONTRADICT THESE CLAIMS.

(MORE) BG/HI 1536/68 1/15