

CN 32

X/13 CURT -- SOVIET HYDROFOIL DEAL SNAGGED IN BELGIUM

BRUSSELS, AUG 29 (RFE SPECIAL/DYBVIK) -- NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN AN ANTWERP, BELGIUM, FIRM AND THE SOVIET UNION FOR THE PURCHASES OF A SOVIET-BUILT HYDROFOIL BOAT HAVE RUN INTO A SNAG.

THE BIG CRAFT -- THE "KOMETA" -- WHICH HAS BEEN ON A DEMONSTRATION TOUR OF WESTERN EUROPE, LAST NIGHT WAS HIGH AND DRY IN ANTWERP AND UNDER A PROTECTIVE BELGIAN POLICE GUARD, FOLLOWING A BOYCOTT PROMPTED BY ANTI-SOVIET REACTION IN BELGIUM FOLLOWING THE OCCUPATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

A LAVISH RECEPTION, WHICH WAS SCHEDULED TO BE GIVEN ABOARD THE HYDROFOIL BY THE SOVIET INTOURIST AGENCY, HAS BEEN CANCELLED. MOST GUESTS RETURNED THEIR INVITATIONS.

AN ANTWERP COMPANY WHICH OPERATES BOAT TRIPS ALONG THE SCHELDE RIVER HAD BEEN NEGOTIATING PURCHASE OF THE "KOMETA." THE TALKS HAVE NOW BEEN BROKEN OFF.

PENDING PURCHASE OF THE CRAFT, THE ANTWERP COMPANY HAD ADVERTISED A SERIES OF DAY EXCURSIONS ABOARD THE "KOMETA" ON THE SCHELDT RIVER LEAVING FROM ANTWERP, BUT THE EXCURSIONS HAVE NOW BEEN CANCELLED.

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