

"FRANCE NOUEVELLE" RECALLED THE PRAVDA ATTACK ON "THE LEGALLY ELECTED LEADERSHIP OF THE (CZECHOSLOVAK) PARTY WHICH HAD CLAIMED THAT A MINORITY HEADED BY DUBCEK HAD DECIDED NOT TO APPLY THE BRATISLAVA AGREEMENT, ALTHOUGH THE MAJORITY SUPPORTED THEM. "IF THIS IS REALLY THE WAY IT WAS," THE FRENCH PARTY PAPER SAID, "WHY WAS THE WILL OF THE MAJORITY UNABLE TO PREVAIL? NO ONE BREATHE A WORD."

"FRANCE NOUEVELLE" ALSO ASKED, "WAS IT POSSIBLE TO APPLY ALL THE DECISIONS OF BRATISLAVA IN SO SHORT A TIME?" IT RECALLED THAT THE CZECHOSLOVAK LEADERS HAD ALREADY CALLED FOR AN END TO STREET DEMONSTRATIONS, BACKED THE PEOPLES MILITIA AND TAKEN STEPS TO PERSUADE THE PRESS TO SHOW MORE RESERVE.

"IN ALL THESE CONDITIONS COMBINED, OUR SURPRISE WAS PAINFUL, IN THE FACE OF THE ARMED INTERVENTION WHICH NOTHING JUSTIFIES, ALL THE MORE SO SINCE IT WAS CARRIED OUT WITHOUT THE ASSENT OF OTHER FRATERNAL PARTIES NOR EVEN AN ADVANCE INGRMATION TOUR PARTY.

"IT DID NOT RESPOND TO THE APPEAL OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK LEADERS . THE NAMES AND TITLES OF THOSE WHO TASS SAID HAD CALLED FOR IT URGENTLY HAVE NEVER BEEN PUBLICLY RELEASED. ON THE CONTRARY , THIS INTERVENTION HAS BEEN REJECTED BY ALL THE LEGITIMATE AUTHORITIES OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK PARTY AND STATE.

"IT IS A SERIOUS ERROR AND WE SAY SO FRANKLY AND PUBLICLY..."
JON/E 2115/68 AUG 29/CR+,