

CN 93

X/13 C/S - AUSTRIAN COMMUNIST REPORT FROM PRAGUE

VIENNA, AUG 31 (RFE SPECIAL/KOSTRBA -- REPORTS CITING AN ATTITUDE AGAINST "OCCUPATION AND SUPPRESSION OF FREEDOM OF PRESS" WAS NOTED BY AUSTRIAN COMMUNIST PARTY CENTRAL ORGAN "VOLKSSTIMME" SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT FROM PRAGUE.

THE REPORT, FRONT-PAGED IN THE COMMUNIST DAILY SATURDAY ISSUE, STRESSED THAT CZECHOSLOVAK JOURNALISTS HAVE TO WRITE UNDER PEN-NAMES AND LIVE PRACTICALLY UNDERGROUND.

REFERRING TO EXTENSIVE TALKS WITH NEWSMEN FROM PRAGUE "PRACE", THE "VOLKSSTIMME" SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT REPORTED ON WHAT HE CALLED "A SELF-IMPOSED CENSORSHIP OBSERVED BY ALL CZECHOSLOVAK JOURNALISTS IN ORDER NOT TO PROVOKE THE OCCUPYING POWERS".

THE "PRACE" JOURNALISTS ASKED THE "VOLKSSTIMME" CORRESPONDENT, TO WARN ALL WESTERN COMMUNIST PARTIES NOT TO HARBOUR ANY ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE NORMALIZATION OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK SITUATION".

"THE BITTER TRUTH IS THAT THE MOSCOW AGREEMENT HAD GUARANTEED SOVIET NON-INTERFERENCE IN CZECHOSLOVAK AFFAIRS BUT THE PRACTICE IS VERY FAR FROM IT, ESPECIALLY AS FAR AS THE CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY IS CONCERNED. PARTY WORK MUST BE CARRIED OUT HALF-ILLEGALLY, THE PRACE JOURNALISTS TOLD THEIR COMMUNIST COLLEAGUE FROM VIENNA".

ACCORDING TO THE "VOLKSSTIMME" REPORT, THE EDITORIAL OFFICES OF MOST NEWSPAPERS, THE RADIO AND TELEVISION BUILDING, THE WRITERS UNION PREMISES AS WELL AS THE JOURNALISTS' CLUB IN PRAGUE ARE STILL OCCUPIED BY THE SOVIETS.

(MORE) WD/AN 1553/68