

X/13 CURT -- FINN CP LEADERS STILL AT VERBAL ODDS ON INVASION

HELSINKI, SEPT 2 -- (RFE SPECIAL/RIDALA) -- FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY SECRETARY-GENERAL VILLE PESSI, PRO-SOVIET, AND PARTY CHAIRMAN AARNE SAARINEN, ANTI-INVASION, CONTINUE TO DIFFER SOMEWHAT ON THE CZECHOSLOVAK SITUATION, ACCORDING TO QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO THEM IN THE OFFICIAL FINNISH CP DAILY, KANSAN UUTISET.

SAARINEN SAID HE REGRETTED THAT THE REFORMATION OF SOCIALISM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAD MET WITH SUCH GREAT DIFFICULTIES WHILE PESSI WAS GLAD THE SITUATION "HAS BEEN NORMALIZED".

AT THE SAME TIME, THE USUALLY PRO-SOVIET JUSTICE MINISTER AARRE SIMONEN HAS NOW COME OUT WITH A STATEMENT PUTTING HIMSELF BACK IN THE MOSCOW CAMP AFTER HAVING CRITICIZED THE INVASION ONE WEEK AGO.

SIMONEN IS HEAD OF THE FAR-LEFT SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC UNION (SIMONITES). HE SPOKE SATURDAY IN EASTERN FINLAND AND SAID THAT "THE DELICATE GEO-POLITICAL POSITION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AS WELL AS THE GREAT STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE (OF IT) FOR THE ENTIRE WARSAW PACT AND OF COURSE THE SOVIET UNION, HAS OFTEN BEEN FORGOTTEN. HERE IN FINLAND, THESE FACTORS HAVE NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY PRESENTED."

SIMONEN SAID FURTHER, AS QUOTED IN KANSAN UUTISET TODAY, THAT THERE "ARE KNOWN" TO HAVE BEEN "CONCRETE PLANS BY WEST GERMANY AND OTHER NATO COUNTRIES TO CHANGE THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA."

JUST ONE WEEKEND AGO, SIMONEN HAD SAID IN A PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT "THOSE WITHIN THE FINNISH LABOR UNIONS HAVE TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING THE NECESSITY OF THE OCCUPATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA. IF WE WHO CONSIDER OURSELVES SINCERE AND RELIABLE FRIENDS OF THE SOVIET UNION DO NOT OPENLY EXPRESS OUR OPPOSITION VIEW WITH REGARD TO THE RESTRICTION OF FREEDOM OF PEOPLE AND WITH REGARD TO ACTIVITIES BASED ON VIOLENCE, WE RENDER A DISSERVICE TO THE CAUSE OF FINNISH-SOVIET RELATIONS."

MEANTIME, THE FINNISH CP DAILY KANSAN UUTISET YESTERDAY CARRIED COMMENTS BY FINN CP SECRETARY-GENERAL VILLE PESSI IN AN INTERVIEW HE GAVE TO PRAVDA, IN WHICH PESSI WAS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE MOSCOW AGREEMENT.

PESSI SAID IN PRAVDA "IT IS VERY IMPORTANT, NOT ONLY FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE CZECHS AND SLOVAKS THEMSELVES BUT OF THE PEOPLES OF OTHER COUNTRIES AS WELL, THAT THE SITUATION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAS BEEN NORMALIZED."

"IT IS TO BE HOPED," PESSI CONTINUED, "THAT THE CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY AND POLITICAL ORGANS OF THE COUNTRY WILL BE ABLE TO CHECK THE REACTIONARY FORCES WHO AGAIN ARE TRYING TO CREATE DISORDER AND DISCONTENT AND TO SECURE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES."

PESSI'S FIRST REACTION TO THE INVASION HAD BEEN A "WAIT AND SEE UNTIL ALL THE FACTS ARE KNOWN" STATEMENT. HE NEVER CONDEMNED THE INVASION.