

CN 77

X/13 C/S -- ARAGON MAINTAINS HIS POSITION

PARIS SEP 5 (RFE SPECIAL/EDWARDS)-- NOVELIST LOUIS ARAGON, MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY NOW UNDER ATTACK IN THE SOVIET PRESS, SAID LAST NIGHT THAT HE MAINTAINED HIS VIEWPOINT ON THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

HE TOLD THE PARIS DAILY "FRANCE SOIR" HE WAS "STICKING" TO WHAT HE SAID.

ARAGON, HIS RUSSIAN-BORN NOVELIST WIFE ELSA TRIOLET AND OTHER LEFTIST FRENCH WRITERS HAD PUBLISHED A STATEMENT LAST WEEK, IN THEIR CAPACITY AS MEMBERS OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL WRITERS COMMITTEE PRAISING "THE COURAGEOUS STRUGGLE (OF THE CZECHOSLOVAKS) AGAINST THE INVADER. AND AGAINST ALL ATTEMPTS TO DEPRIVE THEIR COUNTRY OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN ALL ITS FORMS." THE STATEMENT CALLED FOR "THE IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF THE OCCUPATION TROOPS".

ARAGON'S SIGNATURE ON THIS STATEMENT DREW AN ATTACK FROM THE MOSCOW "LITERARY GAZETTE", ACCUSING ARAGON OF "SACRILEGE" AND "POLITICAL MYOPIA".

RFES PARIS CORRESPONDENT SAYS THAT NOT ONLY DOES ARAGON STAND BY HIS STATEMENT, BUT THE FRENCH PARTY HAS CLEARLY INDICATED THAT IT STANDS BY ARAGON. A BRIEF NOTE IN TODAY'S "L'HUMANITE" SAYS THAT THE MOSCOW PAPER HAD "VIOLENTLY ATTACKED OUR COMRADE ARAGON" AND "WE CAN ONLY LEAVE ENTIRE RESPONSIBILITY (FOR THIS ATTACK) UP TO THE LITERARY GAZETTE".

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