

X/13 C/S - BOFFA DEFENDS ITALIAN CP STAND ON CZECHOSLOVAKIA

ROME, SEPT. 10.--(RFE SPECIAL/ROBERTIELLO).-- ITALYS LEADING COMMUNIST JOURNALIST, GIUSEPPE BOFFA, TODAY DEFENDED HIS PARTYS STANCE OF "DISSENSION" AND "REPROVAL" REGARDING THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

IN THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER, LUNITA, BOFFA SAID THAT THIS STANCE WAS CONTINUING TO PROVOKE "VERY STRONG" REACTIONS IN ITALY AND ABROAD.

HE DENIED CHARGES BY UNNAMED CRITICS THAT THE ITALIAN POSITION WAS "EMOTIONAL " OR "HASTY."

BOFFA SAID IN HIS 1,500 -WORD ARTICLE THAT THIS YEAR THERE HAD BEEN NOT RPT NOT ONE ITALIAN COMMUNIST CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING AT WHICH SYMPATHY HAD NOT RPT NOT BEEN EXPRESSED FOR THE NEW COURSE IN PRAGUE.

"IF THE ARMED INTERVENTION," HE SAID, "CAUGHT US PARTIALLY BY SURPRISE, BECAUSE WE BELIEVED IT INCONCEIVABLE AND, AT ANY RATE, AVERTED AFTER BRATISLAVA, THE CRISIS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THE OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES WAS PLAYED OUT UNDER OUR EYES."

BOFFA SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN SAID THAT THE NEW COURSE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA WOULD BE EXCLUSIVELY A PHENOMENON OF THE INTELLECTUALS.

"AT FIRST IT WAS IN FACT THEY," HE ADDED, "WHO APPEARED INEVITABLY IN THE LIMELIGHT, SINCE THEY HAD MORE FACILITY AND MEANS TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES, (BUT RECENTLY) THE MOVEMENT HAD SEEN THE WORKING CLASS ALSO COME ON STAGE.'."

BG/HE *npt* 1250/68 *4*