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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

# Intelligence Information Cable

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271553Z

CITE [REDACTED]

DIST 27 MARCH 1968

COUNTRY: CZECHOSLOVAKIA

DOI : [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] POLITICAL EVENTS AND PERSONNEL CHANGES  
IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

ACQ : [REDACTED]

SOURCE : [REDACTED]

SUMMARY: [REDACTED]

IMPRESSED BY THE IMPACT OF THE "PEACEFUL REVOLUTION" ON

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THE CZECH PEOPLE. BOTH WORKERS AND INTELLECTUALS  
SUPPORT DUBCEK, WHO, HOWEVER, FACES DIFFICULTIES WITH  
ENTRENCHED HARD-LINERS IN PARTY AND GOVERNMENT POSTS.  
DUBCEK PLANS TO ORGANIZE A GROUND-SWELL OF SUPPORT FROM  
THE BASIC PARTY ORGANIZATIONS TO FORCE THESE HARD-LINERS  
TO COOPERATE. EVENTUALLY HE HOPES TO ELIMINATE THEM BY  
DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS. HE WILL DELAY CONVENING A PARTY  
CONGRESS UNTIL HE CAN COUNT ON SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO  
PUT THROUGH HIS POLICIES. [REDACTED]

ADDITIONAL<sup>s, 2a</sup> CHANGES EXPECTED IN THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT  
APPARATUS AND COMMENTED ON THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE SOVIET  
UNION VIS-A-VIS THE NEW CZECHOSLOVAK LINE.

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END OF SUMMARY.

1. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] GREATLY IMPRESSED BY THE NEW SITUATION  
IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND PARTICULARLY IN PRAGUE. THE PEOPLE  
HAD AWAKENED FROM INDIFFERENCE AND PASSIVITY AND WERE  
AGAIN TAKING AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN POLITICS AND PARTICIPATING  
IN POLITICAL EVENTS. [REDACTED] STRONG

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IMPRESSION THAT THE CZECH COMMUNIST PARTY (KSC) UNDER ITS NEW LEADERSHIP WAS CREATING A NEW TYPE OF SOCIALISM "WHICH SHOULD BE DEMOCRATIC, LIBERAL AND DECENT. SUCH A CHANGE HAS NOT OCCURRED IN YUGOSLAVIA, HUNGARY OR ROMANIA AND IS REMOTE FROM ANYTHING IN THE USSR TODAY."

2. THERE IS GREAT HOPE IN THE KSC LEADERSHIP THAT THE "PEACEFUL REVOLUTION" WILL SUCCEED BECAUSE IT IS SUPPORTED BY BOTH WORKERS AND INTELLECTUALS. THE INITIATIVE CERTAINLY CAME FROM THE INTELLECTUALS BUT, TO THE SURPRISE OF THE <sup>3, 22</sup> ~~HARD-LINERS~~ LED BY ANTONIN NOVOTNY, THE WORKERS IN THE FACTORIES HAD ALSO SUPPORTED THE NEW REVOL. NOVOTNY TRIED TO SET THE WORKERS AGAINST THE INTELLIGENTIA BUT WHEN THE WORKERS FAILED TO SUPPORT HIM HE WAS ISOLATED AND IT ~~WAS~~ ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL HE HAD TO GO.

3. [REDACTED] THE NEW PARTY LEADERSHIP FACES GREAT DIFFICULTIES BECAUSE MOST OF THE PARTY APPARATUS AND MANY GOVERNMENTAL POSTS ARE STILL STAFFED BY PARTY FUNCTIONARIES WHO OWE THEIR JOBS TO PARTY LOYALTY RATHER THAN ABILITY. MOST OF THESE PEOPLE SEE THEIR JOBS THREATENED AND THEREFORE OPPOSE THE NEW PARTY LINE. SINCE

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THE NEW PARTY LEADERS WANT TO PROCEED IN A DEMOCRATIC FASHION, THEY CANNOT SUMMARILY DISMISS THESE FUNCTIONARIES. THEY ARE THEREFORE SIMPLY BIDDING THEIR TIME AND HAVE PUT OFF SUMMONING A PARTY CONGRESS UNTIL THE POSITON OF THE NEW GROUP HAS STABLIZED. THE NEW LEADERSHIP IS CONFIDENT OF EVENTUAL VICTORY, HOWEVER, BECAUSE IT BELIEVES IT CAN COUNT ON THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE.

4. REGARDING THE SITUATION IN THE KSC PRESIDIUUM WHEN DUBCEK WAS ELECTED FIRST SECRETARY, [REDACTED] THE DEFEAT OF NOVOTNY BECAME POSSIBLE ONLY AFTER THE PRESIDIUUM HAD BEEN ENLARGED BY ADDING FOUR MEMBERS. THE INCREASED MEMBERSHIP OF THE PRESIDIUUM HAD BEEN PRESENTED TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AS NECESSARY "TO REPRESENT ALL SECTORS OF POLITICAL LIFE" AND HAD BEEN ACCEPTED AS LOGICAL, HOWEVER, THIS HAD BEEN DUBCEK'S TACTIC TO OBTAIN A MAJORITY OF THE VOTES.

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5. THE SITUATION IN THE PRESENT CENTRAL COMMITTEE IS ALSO A PROBLEM TO THE NEW PARTY LEADERSHIP. MANY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS WERE NOT ELECTED DEMOCRATICALLY BUT APPOINTED AFTER NOMINATION BY THE PARTY APPARATUS

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(REGIONAL SECRETARIATS AND CENTRAL SECRETARIAT). MANY OF THESE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS FEAR THAT THEY WILL LOSE THEIR POSITIONS UNDER THE NEW LEADERSHIP AND THEREFORE ARE IN OPPOSITION. DUBCEK INTENDS TO FORCE THESE INDIVIDUALS TO VOTE FOR HIS POLICIES BY HOLDING A SERIES OF MEETINGS AT THE LOWER PARTY ORGANIZATION LEVEL. HE IS CERTAIN OF HIS STRENGTH HERE AND WHEN THE LOWER PARTY ORGANIZATIONS EXPRESS THEIR POSITION IN THE FORM OF RESOLUTIONS SUPPORTING DUBCEK THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS WILL HAVE TO REGARD THESE AS DIRECTIVES FROM THE PEOPLE THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO REPRESENT.

6. A SIMILAR PROCEDURE WILL SUBSEQUENTLY BE PREPARED AT A LATER DATE FOR CHOOSING REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE PARTY CONGRESS. THE DELEGATES TO THE CONGRESS WILL BE ELECTED IN A DEMOCRATIC MANNER AND THESE WILL THEN ELECT THE MEMBERS OF THE NEW CENTRAL COMMITTEE.

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7. [REDACTED] THERE WOULD BE MANY MORE IMPORTANT PERSONNEL CHANGES IN BOTH THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT APPARATUS. A GENERAL REORGANIZATION OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IS EXPECTED WITH THE SLOVAKS BEING GIVEN CONSIDERABLY MORE AUTONOMY THAN PREVIOUSLY. IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, VACLAV DAVID, WILL BE REPLACED EITHER BY OTOKAR KLICKA, FORMER DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER AND PRESENT AMBASSADOR TO CAIRO, OR DR. JIRI HAJEK, PRESENT MINISTER OF EDUCATION. THERE IS ALSO SPECULATION THAT PRIME MINISTER JOZEF LENART WILL BE REPLACED BY HIS DEPUTY, OLDRICH CERNIK. THE FACT THAT CERNIK RECENTLY WENT TO MOSCOW FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH KOSYGIN SEEN AS AN INDICATION THAT HE WILL BE THE FUTURE PRIME MINISTER.

8. ANOTHER IMPORTANT QUESTION IS THE ROLE TO BE PLAYED BY DR. OTA SIK, THE LEADING CZECH ECONOMIST WHO PREPARED THE PROGRAM FOR ECONOMIC REORGANIZATION. HIS PROGRAM CREATED MANY PROBLEMS AND WAS STRONGLY OPPOSED BY THE NOVOTNY GROUP. EVEN TODAY THE "SIK PLAN" IS CONSIDERED BY MANY PARTY OFFICIALS AS GOING TOO FAR TOO FAST. IT IS ALSO BELIEVED THAT MOSCOW DOES NOT FULLY AGREE WITH THIS NEW

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ECONOMIC PROGRAM. SIK WAS EXPECTED TO BECOME DEPUTY  
PRIME MINISTER IN CHARGE OF ECONOMIC PLANNING AND THE ENTIRE  
ECONOMIC SECTOR. HIS FUTURE APPOINTMENT CAN BE VIEWED  
AS AN INDICATION OF HOW FAR THE NEW REGIME IS WILLING TO GO  
OR CAN GO IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC LIBERALISM.

9. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] THE USSR HAD CONCENTRATED  
ITS TROOPS ON THE CZECH-EAST GERMAN BORDER IN CASE OF  
EMERGENCY DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS." [REDACTED]  
DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS VIEW THE RECENT EVENTS  
IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA FAVORABLY. REGARDING THE COMMUNIST  
SUMMIT MEETING IN DRESDEN, EAST GERMANY, ON 23 MARCH 1968,

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[REDACTED] THE SITUATION IN THE CSSR WAS THE MAIN  
TOPIC OF DISCUSSION. [REDACTED] THE SOVIETS PUT A  
LIMIT ON HOW FAR DUBCEK COULD GO. [REDACTED] MOSCOW

[REDACTED] THE MAIN OBSTACLE TO A REAL DEMOCRATIZATION AND  
LIBERALIZATION OF THE SOCIALIST REGIME, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] IF THE NEW LEADERSHIP IN PRAGUE PROCEEDS  
CAREFULLY AND STEP-BY-STEP GOOD PROGRESS CAN BE MADE [REDACTED]

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10. [REDACTED] THERE WAS NO ANTI-SOCIALIST OR ANTI-SOVIET MOVEMENT INVOLVED IN THE NEW POLITICAL EVOLUTION IN THE CSSR. [REDACTED] ONLY A STRONG MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIZATION AND LIBERALIZATION OF THE SYSTEM [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] IN VIEW OF ITS GEOGRAPHIC SITUATION AND ITS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY IMPORTANCE TO THE USSR AND THE SOVIET BLOC, THE CSSR CANNOT START AN ANTI-SOCIALIST OR ANTI-SOVIET POLICY. THE USSR WOULD NOT ALLOW THIS. THIS IS THE MAIN LINE WHICH THE NEW REGIME MUST FOLLOW AND [REDACTED] THE NEW LEADERSHIP KNOWS THIS VERY WELL. [REDACTED] DID NOT CONSIDER DUBCEK AS SOMEONE WILLING TO START AN ANTI-SOVIET LINE.

11. REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF MORE INDEPENDENCE FROM THE USSR FOR THE CSSR [REDACTED] THIS WILL REQUIRE LOTS OF TIME AND IT WOULD BE WRONG TO START SUCH A POLICY RIGHT NOW. NO DOUBT THE CSSR NEEDS MORE INDEPENDENCE AND MOST OF THE PEOPLE SYMPATHIZE WITH THE WEST, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] THE FIRST THING THE PEOPLE WANT IS MORE DEMOCRACY AND LIBERTY. THE OTHER

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PROBLEMS CAN BE FACED LATER AND WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION WILL BECOME FAVORABLE FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. FOR THE TIME BEING WE MUST BE SATISFIED WITH SMALL CHANGES FOR THE BETTER.

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