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Czechoslovakia-USSR: Leaders of the two countries appear to have resolved very little during their talks in Moscow on 4 and 5 May.

The joint communiqué suggests, however, that once again the Soviets have accepted Czechoslovak assurances that Prague's alliance with Moscow will remain fundamentally unaltered. The two sides were said to have expressed a desire to expand friendly relations on all levels.

There is no sign, however, that the conflicting viewpoints on "Communist unity" were reconciled. Indeed, the press polemics between the Czechoslovaks and the Poles which went on while the Moscow talks were in progress suggest that this gap may continue to widen.

The communiqué also suggests that there was only agreement to disagree on a number of other issues important to both sides. For example, "frank ...views were exchanged" on the roles played by the two Communist parties in their own countries. The Soviets have expressed concern that Czechoslovak Communists might share power with other political forces, or lose it altogether.

The Czechs appear to have gained no firm commitment on economic aid from the Soviets. Matters of "economic cooperation," according to the communiqué, would be referred to experts for examination. There have been reports that the Czechs went to Moscow seeking a large credit, or at least the possibility of Soviet payment for Czechoslovak goods in hard currency.

Earlier both sides had denied that Moscow had cut off grain shipments to Czechoslovakia as a form of pressure, but some evidence is available that there may have been a slowdown.

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Although the issue was not mentioned in the communiqué, Czechoslovakia's participation in Warsaw Pact maneuvers scheduled for this year also may have been a worrisome question, at least in Prague. On 3 May, Czechoslovak Defense Minister Dzur denied a Western press report that Prague had refused to let a pact exercise be held on its territory. Dzur said that "staff exercises," presumably a joint command post exercise, would indeed be held in Czechoslovakia this year. Seemingly concerned about the effect of this announcement on the population, he implied, however, that large numbers of pact troops would not be deployed into Czechoslovakia.

Party Chief Dubcek reportedly is scheduled to report today on his trip to the Czechoslovak public.



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