

[ Czechoslovakia-USSR: Czechoslovak leaders still are not reconciled to full submission to Moscow's demands.

The communiqué issued after yesterday's presidium meeting indicated that Prague intends to salvage what it can while talking about the concessions it may make to the Russians. The statement thus suggests that the Czechoslovaks will make the immediate policy changes that Moscow desires in areas of personnel, ideology, propaganda, censorship, and centralization of the economy. It partially contradicts itself, however, by emphasizing that the Czechoslovaks will continue many of Dubcek's liberal policies, and that there will be no purge at the top level of the party. Prague also intends to proceed with federalization of the country, even though some Soviet officials--including special envoy Kuznetsov--have reportedly cautioned against it.

Although the statement did not precisely say what measures the Czechoslovaks intend to take, the presidium promised to submit a list of "tasks"--presumably reflecting Soviet desires--to the party central committee, probably next week. The vague language of the communiqué will make it difficult for Moscow to fathom exactly where the Czechoslovaks are going. It will be clear to the Soviets, however, that the Prague leadership is still collectively defiant, in the sense that it will not abandon the concept of a uniquely Czechoslovak way to socialism.

The nature of one main Czechoslovak concession, however, became evident when Deputy Premier Hamouz reportedly led a 15-member Czechoslovak Government delegation to Moscow yesterday to negotiate a status-of-forces agreement. Such an agreement would presumably provide the basis for an indefinite Soviet occupation. [redacted] the occupation forces would be composed of about 100,000 ]

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[troops.   
the reduction of the present occupation force to this figure may be completed by late October.

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Slovak party chief Husak, who went to Moscow with Dubcek last week, reported yesterday to his party presidium. After approving the report, the presidium took immediate steps to impose new controls on Slovak information media. The party directive ordered an increase in the amount of time and space devoted to propaganda and to political indoctrination in the press, radio, and television.

The Soviet ambassador in Prague met with the Czechoslovak minister of justice on 7 October, possibly to discuss the termination of another phase of Dubcek's liberalization--the rehabilitation of former political prisoners. The Russians will surely prevent the reopening of any more trials that would again expose Moscow's role in the bloody purges of the Stalinist era.

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