



DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*

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**[** South Vietnam: Ground fighting remained at a low level on 8-9 February with several hit-and-run terrorist raids reported.

Enemy sapper teams, however, continued their terrorist efforts in Saigon and the Communists shelled a number of allied positions around the country with mortars and rockets.

Six American civilians employed by an aviation electronics firm under contract to the US Army were bushwhacked about 17 miles east of Saigon. In Saigon, Communist sappers hit another Civil Self-Defense office, wounding two civilians with grenades. These installations have been hit several times in recent days.

Elsewhere in the city, a cart carrying plastic explosives blew up near a US officers' billet in Cholon. South Vietnamese police have reported finding a cache of arms and ammunition near the Phu Tho race track, a traditional stamping ground for Viet Cong terrorists. The police also report capturing a Viet Cong suicide squad which had planned to attack the airfield at Tan Son Nhut.

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East Germany - Berlin: The new restrictions Pankow imposed on travel to Berlin by West German officials will have little practical effect on the meeting there on 5 March of the West German Federal Assembly.

The East Germans announced on 8 February that members and staffs of the West German Federal Assembly will not be permitted to travel through East Germany to Berlin. Pankow also banned travel by members of the Bundestag defense committee and all members of the armed forces, and the transport of the Federal Assembly's working materials. The ban comes into force on 15 February and remains in effect until further notice.

The ban on travel by members of the defense committee and Bundeswehr appears to be gratuitous. Bonn has already decided not to hold defense committee meetings in Berlin, and Allied restrictions prohibit travel to Berlin by uniformed members of the West German armed forces.

Two days before announcing the ban, the East Germans sent a note to the West German foreign office registering their "strongest protest" concerning the meeting. They warned that Bonn would be held responsible for all consequences, which remain unspecified.

There have been no indications that Moscow will sanction any East German harassment in the air corridors which West German officials usually use. The East German action doubtless was coordinated with Moscow. Ulbricht has been in the Soviet Union since mid-January, and Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov visited East Berlin last week to meet with other high-level East German officials.

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The East Germans presumably assume that they do not risk serious retaliation for imposing the new travel restrictions. In itself, the ban does not seem to presage any tougher moves, but the East Germans have a variety of options for further actions before the Federal Assembly meeting. [REDACTED]

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Czechoslovakia: Premier Cernik's press conference remarks on 7 February suggest that the Czechoslovaks are proceeding with plans to put together a "revised" reform program.

In terms reminiscent of Czechoslovakia's pre-invasion period of liberalization, Cernik said the regime would attempt to make socialism attractive to the people. He stated that the government intends to promulgate laws permitting, within certain limits, freedom of speech, expression, and assembly and association. The government also intends to continue its work on economic reforms and the problems emanating from the country's newly implemented federalization.

The Dubcek leadership frequently has announced its intention of keeping the "positive features" of the original action reform program. These reforms, however, probably will be cloaked in limitations and restrictions that will render them acceptable to the Soviets.

The Russians probably have told the Czechoslovaks that they can implement some of the reforms after they eliminate "extremist" elements and prove that they are in complete control of the domestic situation. Moscow especially wants Prague to curb those ultraprogressives who attempt to stir up anti-Soviet demonstrations, and who continue to criticize the Russians and the Czechoslovak conservatives in the mass media.

Meanwhile, Czechoslovak progressives appear to have won at best a temporary victory in their efforts to prevent a full-scale clampdown on the media. According to several sources of the US Embassy in Prague, the pro-Soviet conservatives have been expecting a purge in the press, radio, and television, but only

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a relatively minor reshuffling of personnel has materialized. Party Secretary Vasil Bilak, a hard-liner who visited East Berlin between 6-8 February, is said to have asked the East Germans to persuade their Warsaw Pact allies to wage a new pressure campaign against progressive Czechoslovak writers and editors. [REDACTED]

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Israel-Lebanon: Israeli officials [redacted] publicly continue to express concern over an alleged buildup of Arab terrorists in southern Lebanon. [redacted] apparently in the hope that their warning of retaliation in the event of terrorist attacks will be passed on to Beirut. The Lebanese Government maintains that it is doing its best to block the terrorists coming in from Syria and Jordan, but because of the difficult terrain, claims it would take considerably more forces than it has to clean them out. [redacted]

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Egypt-USSR: Some 300 Soviet engineering corps personnel reportedly arrived in Egypt in early December 1968 to build defenses for the Aswan Dam and an alert system on the Red Sea coast. Their arrival is in line with a remark reportedly made by the Soviet ambassador to Egypt to the effect that the Aswan Dam was "the apple of the Soviet eye" and that the Russians meant to protect it. The ambassador's statement followed the Israeli helicopter-borne commando raid on two bridges and a power station on the upper Nile on 31 October. [redacted]

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