

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. Preparations are being made in the Czechoslovak Communist Party Presidium for the reduction of governmental control along the lines of the recent changes in Hungary. A government proclamation of these changes has been prepared since 8 July 1953, and its release is expected daily.
2. This reduction of control is expected to involve a shakeup of the government, and Czechoslovak Communist Party leaders are apprehensive concerning their respective fates. Prime Minister Villem Siroky is to be replaced by Professor Jan Mukarovsky, President of Charles University in Prague, and the latter will prepare elections which will be held in the fall of 1953. However, Emanuel Slechts, Minister of Building Industry, and Josef Flejhar, Minister of Health, in addition to Mukarovsky are also under consideration for the position of Prime Minister.
3. The Party is concerned over its declining power, and is frantically seeking remedie for the situation. The first measure to be undertaken will be the restoration of the trade unions to a leading power position in the State.

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SECRET**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

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-2-

4. Deputy Prime Minister Antonin Novotný now has position and power equivalent to that formerly held by Rudolf Slanský. The Central Secretariat of the Party again has the veto power.
5. A delegation composed of President Antonin Zapotecký, Prime Minister Vilian Široký, and Deputy Prime Ministers Antonin Novotný and Rudolf Šrámek visited Moscow secretly in May 1959.
6. Deputy Prime Minister Karel Bacilek and Minister of State General Jan Hruska are considered to have been Beria men.
7. Since 20 July 1959, Valerian Aleksandrovich Zerin, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, and Aleksandr Yefremovich Bogomolov, Soviet Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, have been attending conferences at Kenoviste Castle, near Prague, with President Antonin Zapotecký and other Czech government leaders. Changes in government composition and internal policies along the lines of the recent Hungarian changes were the subjects under discussion.

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