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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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2. Vaclav Nosek, Minister of the Interior

a. Nosek's weakness is well known. He is not a naive politician, but he has many weaknesses, the principal one being that he spent all six years of his wartime exile in London instead of Moscow. In committee meetings of Parliament in 1946 and 1947 he spoke warmly of the character of the people of London and of the London Police, at a time when the Czech Police were being criticized. These words were noted and have not been forgotten. By the beginning of 1948 he no longer carried any weight, and it is now said of him in jest that he no longer has the power to send anybody to prison or get anybody out of it. He attends Government sessions, as is his duty, but does not speak there except to recommend measures in his own ministry very briefly.

b. The Ministry of the Interior is actually conducted by a group of persons, of whom Jindrich Vesely, who is formally subordinate to General Janda and to Nosek, has the greatest authority. He is the highest authority in all matters pertaining to the Ministry of the Interior and is in absolute control of the Secret Police. During the time of "Special Emergency", i. e. after the death of Dr. E. Benes, Vesely created a special new Police Corps of 1,200 men for the purpose of guarding and also watching the Ministers and other prominent politicians. After the escape of Dr. Zenkl the bodyguards of Ministers were changed every few days and the posts guarding their living quarters every few hours. In the intelligence section of Vesely's office is a certain Major Bedrich Pokorny. Source, who knows him personally, describes him as a common assassin who has imprisoned and frequently deported unwanted people. Nosek is frequently informed of important events (the decision of which theoretically rests with him) only several days after they have happened.

3. Dr. Jaromir Dolansky, Minister of Finance

Dr. Dolansky seems to belong to Gottwald's group, like Nosek. Source has known him from childhood and went to school with him. Dolansky has been a Communist since 1922 and spent six years in a concentration camp during the war. He is a serious worker in economic problems and sees Communism from an idealistic point of view. Fischl, who was appointed (at Slansky's instigation) to assist him on 1 January 1948, actually wields the real authority in the Ministry. Dolansky has been hard put to it to hold his own, and lately he has even given support to some of Slansky's wilder suggestions. It is possible that in case of a reshuffling of the Government, Dolansky will be replaced by Fischl. Dolansky, who underwent political schooling in Moscow before the war, formally belongs to the inner staff of the Party, but he is by no means in the innermost circle. He is in poor health and is tired, and source believes that he would like to relinquish his position if he can do so decently and quietly.

4. Dr. Vlado Clementis, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dr. Vlado Clementis still belonged to Gottwald's group a few months ago, but since that time he has turned to the Cominformists, leaving the so-called right wing of the Party for good, and is now cultivating Slansky's friendship. He, of course, was the dominant personality in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs even when he was still Secretary of State in the Ministry under Masaryk. He is diligent and clever and is a good speaker. However, source considers him demagogic and completely unscrupulous. He is enormously ambitious and likes to surround himself with great luxury.

This document is hereby regraded to CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the letter of 16 October 1978 from the Director of Central Intelligence to the Archivist of the United States.  
Next Review Date: 2008

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5. Julius Duris, Minister of Agriculture

Duris was more of an anarchist than a Communist before the war. He is described as having the manners of a Hungarian country gentleman. At the elections in 1946 he is credited with gaining much of the farm vote for the Party by promising to the small farmers and those without land of their own the land of the big landowners. He repeated this promise at hundreds of public meetings and in Parliament. He supported the idea of private landownership (for small farmers) and even got a paragraph dealing with it included in the constitution. However, the verdict of the Cominform against Tito and his agricultural policy came as a great blow to Duris, who became the subject of similar criticisms from Moscow. Dr. Kotatko, a leading figure in the Ministry, left the office to become chairman of the agricultural cooperatives, the so-called "Kolchozy". Duris went to Moscow to defend himself, but even after this his position remained shaken. It is completely up to Slansky whether and how long Duris will remain in office.

6. Viliam Siroky

Siroky, leader of the Slovak Communists, has been drawing closer to Gottwald's group since last summer. He is known to be opposed to terrorism and is considered a humane and decent person. Whereas in Bohemia and Moravia about 50,000 people lost their jobs as a result of the February coup, few were affected in Slovakia, and even people who were shown to be Lettrich's followers got off with punitive transfers to other towns. It is considered likely that Siroky, in spite of his membership in the Cominform, will presently be replaced by some more radical personality.

7. Zdenek Fierlinger, Deputy Prime Minister

Immediately after the coup, as soon as Fierlinger had slavishly completed his mission, his influence began to decline rapidly. Now he has been deserted by both Communists and (former) Social Democrats. He is completely without influence, as he is well aware, and even his former direct connection with Moscow has been cut.

8. Dr. Jaromir John

Dr. John, a friend of Fierlinger, was promised a higher position by Cepicka before the coup. He hoped to become Minister of Foreign Trade or of Industry but today is still Chairman of Parliament. In October 1948 he expressed his disgust to a friend over the position of Parliament, which has become a superfluous institution. John appears at ceremonies and is allowed to do such things as making a speech at the grave of Dr. Benes or introducing important bills in Parliament. He is very ambitious and able, but has no opportunity to prove himself at present. Although he had promised his friends before the coup that he would put up all possible resistance, he continually changed his political line after the end of 1947 and tried to adapt himself to the new course set by the Communists. Even in April, 1948, he was still able to talk of the absolute necessity of maintaining human and democratic rights, but today he is a willing and servile tool of the Communist Party. Since he is very clever and elastic, however, source would not be surprised if he were to intrigue against the regime at some future date if he thought this would be advantageous to himself and that the outcome was assured.

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