

Czechoslovakia-USSR: The Czechoslovak delegation headed by Premier Cernik returned prematurely to Prague from Moscow yesterday after only seven hours of talks.

The communiqué indicates that Cernik discussed the Moscow agreement with Brezhnev, Kosygin, and Podgorny. A bilateral economic pact, calling for the Soviets to supply natural gas "for many years" and for the construction of another gas pipeline, was signed. Brief announcements of the meeting added that agreement was reached on "other economic issues." There was no apparent agreement, however, on reparations for damages caused by the occupation, or on a Soviet hard-currency credit for Czechoslovakia.

Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov also returned to Prague yesterday, probably for additional talks with Dubcek and Svoboda.

National Assembly President Smrkovsky told a steelworkers' rally that the country must fulfill every detail of the Moscow agreement. In the same speech, however, Smrkovsky said that the Dubcek leadership would continue to push internal reform, and stressed that there would be no persecution of intellectuals. In this connection Czechoslovak media have launched a campaign aimed at enticing "tens of thousands" of Czechs and Slovaks to return home from foreign countries, especially those in the West. Half an hour has been set aside each day for broadcasts to these persons.

The Czechoslovak Government met to discuss implementation of some of the liberal reforms Dubcek proposed last April. The cabinet approved a bill which calls for the continued subordination of all political groups to the Communist-controlled National Front. It does not exclude the addition of new political organizations to the National Front. The government also discussed reforms designed to deal with construction and social problems.

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while Prague will proceed as far as possible with domestic reforms, it will now have to assume a stiff posture in political and economic relations with West Germany. Emphasizing that Prague still wanted improved relations with Bonn, [redacted] a new "diplomatic offensive" against the West Germans by the Warsaw Pact countries was forthcoming, and that Bonn should realize that any attacks by the Czechoslovak media will not have originated with the Dubcek regime.

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There have been no significant changes in the status and disposition of Soviet ground and air forces in Czechoslovakia during the past 24 hours. [redacted]

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