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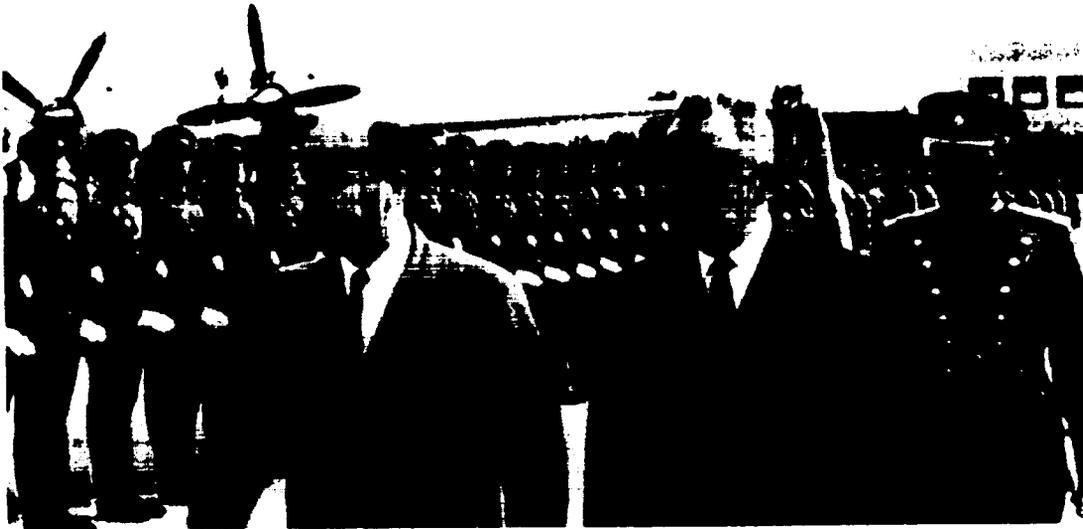
OUTSTANDING PRAGUE-MOSCOW PROBLEMS REMAIN UNSETTLED

Both Prague and Moscow have implied that the situation in Czechoslovakia is tending toward "normalization," but the outstanding problems between them are far from settled.

Premier Cernik visited Moscow on 10 September and met with Brezhnev, Kosygin, and Podgorny. Upon his return to Prague, Cernik indicated that a high-level Czechoslovak delegation would soon go to Moscow to negotiate the withdrawal of occupation troops. According to press reports, Dubcek will lead such an entourage to the Soviet capital this weekend. If the trip takes place, Dubcek and the Russians will probably discuss leadership changes to be made at the 14th Czechoslovak party congress, which may be held as early as December.

Most Czechoslovak leaders have urged full submission to the Moscow agreement, but have nevertheless described the Soviet-imposed restrictions as "temporary" and have promised that as many as possible of Dubcek's liberal reforms will be implemented. After its meeting on 17 September, however, the Czechoslovak party presidium still appeared to be divided on how far it had to go to satisfy the occupiers.

The Soviets, for their part, have approved the trend of developments in Prague as a start in the right direction, but they are not yet satisfied with the Czechoslovak version of "normalization." Moscow has reiterated that "counterrevolutionaries" are still at work and that some



Czechoslovak Premier Cernik arrives in Moscow on 10 September for the second time in less than three weeks. This time he was received with honors by Soviet Premier Kosygin; the last time he was under arrest.

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personnel changes in the government and mass media are necessary. The Soviet press has called for punishment of those opposing the occupation.

Soviet troubleshooter Kuznetsov reportedly has been scanning the Czechoslovak hierarchy for a leader who will be more responsive than Dubcek to Soviet demands. Slovak party chief Husak, who is receiving favorable comment in the Warsaw Pact countries' media, is frequently reported to be the most acceptable alternative to the Russians. Husak may be receptive to Soviet approaches, although his position is far from clear. In two recent speeches, he has implicitly criticized Dubcek by suggesting that his leadership underestimated the growth of "antisocialist forces" in the country prior to the intervention. Husak, however, does not appear to have wide support among the Czechoslovaks for any such change. Czechoslovak mass media have been portraying Dubcek as a "popular hero," apparently hoping to convince Moscow as well as domestic waverers that replacing him might generate serious popular reaction and make matters worse.

The Czechoslovak National Assembly has legalized restrictions on individual rights of assembly and association, as well as temporary censorship provisions that will remain in effect until a new press law can be formulated. It remains to be seen, however, how effective these measures are, and to what extent they will be en-

forced. Four days after the laws were enacted, journalists were still criticizing the Warsaw Five by "writing between the lines."

Prague has shown some irritation over the failure of the occupation powers to keep their promise of noninterference in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs. In addition to forthright press criticism in the official party daily, the Czechoslovak Government has formally protested such meddling by the Warsaw Five. The Czechoslovaks are also irked by the continued existence in Prague of the Soviet-sponsored Radio Vltava, which continues its biased commentary on the country's domestic affairs.

The Soviets appear willing to allow Prague some domestic reforms. The Czechoslovaks are continuing to promote tourism, are proceeding with measures designed to deal with housing and social problems, and are completing the basic steps toward federalization of the country by 28 October, the 50th anniversary of the founding of the first republic.

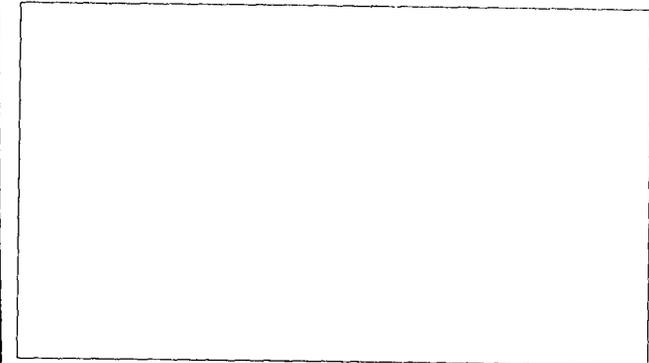
For the first time since the invasion, Prague officials are beginning to talk about foreign policy, saying that they will attempt to maintain relations with all countries on as normal a basis as possible. A Foreign Ministry spokesman has said to US Ambassador Beam that US-Czechoslovak relations should be resumed "as they had previously existed," and that the Czechoslovak Government intends to

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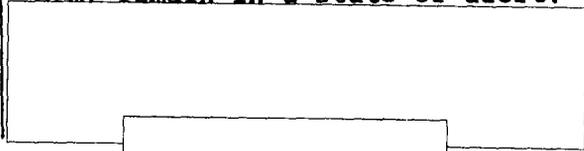
stand up for its rights in dealing with all countries, including the US.

The US military attaché in Prague reported on 16 September that most of the 7,500 Soviet troops that gathered at Prague's Ruzyne Airport last week were gone. These troops may have been airlifted back to the USSR in small units. There also were tenuous indications that some of the Soviets units moved into Czechoslovakia from East Germany will be replaced by troops from the western USSR which are now in the East German - Czechoslovak border area.



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Elements of the Yugoslav Army remain in a state of alert.



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