

SECRET

Czechoslovakia: The party leadership probably will make new concessions to Moscow, and lose more popular support in the process.

At its plenum opening today, the central committee will consider a document drafted by the Dubcek leadership which calls for steps to conform more closely to Moscow's interpretation of "normalization."

Prague has already made major moves in this direction. Immediately prior to the plenum, the leadership restricted foreign travel, expelled some foreign correspondents, sternly warned against further anti-Soviet demonstrations, and suspended some leading publications critical of the Soviets.

The party's suspension of its own magazine, Politika, suggests that a majority of the party presidium is becoming more susceptible to Moscow's pressures, and may be reluctant to continue to support major aspects of Dubcek's liberalization program.

Furthermore, there are indications that conservatives may be about to gain a large measure of control over Czechoslovak mass media. According to an unconfirmed press report, Karel Hoffmann, former telecommunications minister who cooperated with the Soviets during and after the intervention, is slated to become director of the government information office, which censors the press, radio, and television. Two pro-Soviet hard-liners reportedly will also be designated directors of Czechoslovak radio and television.

The plenum may also announce some changes in the top leadership. Liberal party presidium members and party secretaries Mlynar and Spacek are said to be disillusioned by concessions to the Russians, and at least Mlynar's resignation may be presented to the meeting. Party conservatives are expected to make a strong bid to have their representatives included in the leadership.

(continued)

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Central Intelligence Bulletin

4

SECRET

Czechoslovak young people, concerned over the outcome of the plenum, have threatened to demonstrate throughout the country if the decisions taken by the central committee are "too favorable" to the pro-Soviet conservatives. Student leaders already are planning to strike and hold new street demonstrations on 17 November even though Dubcek and other top leaders have warned that any disturbances will be put down with force.

[Some Czechoslovak troops are in a high state of readiness to help control disorder/

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[Redacted]

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The Czechoslovak Army is being reduced by 20,000 troops,

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[Redacted] the reduction would involve only support personnel and would not affect the number of tactical units. A reduction in the size of the 195,000-man armed forces was reportedly planned by the Czechoslovak Government prior to the intervention by Warsaw Pact forces, but the size of the cut planned then is not known. [Redacted]

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