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~~Top Secret~~**CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Party Under the Gun**

The Czechoslovak Communist Party's crisis deepened throughout the weekend as members demanded sweeping leadership and policy changes. An emergency session of the Central Committee met last night; seven new Presidium members were added, and Prague party boss Stepan, Trade Union boss Zavadil, and hardliner Jozef Lenart were removed from their posts. General Secretary Urbanek has called for an extraordinary party congress for 26 January. [redacted]

Comment: The swift ouster of Stepan, Zavadil, and Lenart underscores the growing power of the newly founded Civic Forum, which had demanded their removal. Angered by the results of the Central Committee's session on Friday—which removed some hardliners but retained others—and responding to popular pressure, party members apparently forced the leadership to convene another emergency session yesterday to carry out additional changes. An extraordinary congress would enable party reformers to sweep the old guard from the Central Committee and to install reform-minded leaders. Civic Forum, however, almost certainly will continue to call for mass demonstrations—a two-hour general strike called for today is ensured of widespread support—until the party formally repudiates its monopoly on political power. [redacted]

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Czechoslovakia: Sweeping Leadership Changes

The extraordinary session of the Communist Party Central Committee late last night responded to continuing public demands by ousting more members of the old guard and installing new, mostly younger faces in the Presidium. Two new members—youth unions chief Mohorita and Writers Union chairman Valek—are moderates who support dialogue with the people. Two women, workers in industry, have been added and presumably will bring workers and women's views to top party decisionmaking. The smaller Secretariat now consists of seven secretaries and two members; five are holdovers. Responsibilities have not been spelled out, except for General Secretary Urbanek.

Urbanek has satisfied one of the demonstrators' demands—removal of the leaders who came to power in the aftermath of the 1968 Soviet-led invasion. But he and his new team must now cope with the remaining demands, including those for radical reforms, free elections, and an end to the party's leading role; it is doubtful that this Presidium will be a strong force. At best it will take new members time to become familiar with their jobs and to learn to deal effectively with a rapidly changing political climate and an increasingly vocal populace. At worst, many of the new faces will not last past the party congress in January.

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