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6.2(d)

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA: The Next Domino

*Czechoslovakia's hardline regime has been badly shaken by developments in East Germany and Bulgaria, and its demise is probably only a matter of time and circumstance.*

6.2(d)

There is evidence that the ruling elite is demoralized.

3.3(b)(1)

party General Secretary Jakes tried to tender his resignation last Wednesday at a secret presidium meeting convened to discuss East German developments.

3.3(b)(1)
6.2(d)

Dissent is also beginning to creep into the power structure. Vasil Mohorita, head of the official Socialist Youth Union and member of the party Central Committee's Secretariat, has publicly criticized the slow pace of domestic change and argued for a more open youth organization that would permit more diversity of opinion.

6.2(d)

**Comment:** The attempt to resign by Jakes probably reflects his recognition that he and his allies cannot cope with the reforms sweeping the region. The regime's demoralization has been reinforced by Bulgarian leader Zhivkov's abrupt departure from power, leaving Czechoslovakia and Romania the only Warsaw Pact states that have failed to join the reform process.
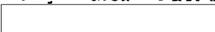
6.2(d)

If they can persuade a disheartened Jakes to stay on, Prague's hardliners can cling to power for the next several months because internal party opposition and social pressures for change remain unfocused. Jakes and his allies, however, probably cannot cling to power beyond the party congress scheduled for next May—they almost certainly would step aside in favor of younger party leaders at that point.

6.2(d)

Change could occur more rapidly if moderate forces within the party begin to take their cue from events in surrounding countries or if popular political activism expands significantly beyond the roughly 10.000 people who have been willing to take to the streets in recent demonstrations. Leadership changes could be set in motion as early as next month at the Central Committee plenum set for 9-10 December; there have been rumors some members of the old guard will step down.

6.2(d)