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THE DRESDEN SUMMIT CONFERENCE

Last weekend's Communist summit conference in Dresden probably did little to still the concern which recent developments in Czechoslovakia have aroused in Eastern Europe. The final communiqué's expression of confidence in the Czech party and working class can hardly be taken at face value. The Czech press has described the conference as a "confrontation" between Prague and its Warsaw Pact allies.

The meeting, arranged in evident haste and attempted secrecy, was attended by the top party and government leaders of the USSR, East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary, in addition to the Czechs. The only major absentee among the attending bloc leaders was Bulgarian party chief Zhivkov, who was in Turkey. Zhivkov probably was not pressed to break off his trip, which represented a high point in Bulgaria's effort to bring about a rapprochement with its neighbor.

It is not clear whether the Rumanians were not invited or whether they elected not to attend. In the past, they have denounced examination of the internal affairs of another party "intervention."

The Czechs have since stated that the meeting was called by several parties, presumably the Soviets, East Germans, and Poles, those who have been most concerned about developments in Czechoslovakia. The East Germans have in fact been openly critical. The "mutual exchange" of information

which the communiqué refers to seems to have been one-sided, with the Czechs doing most of the talking.

Czech leader Dubcek reported upon his return to Prague that he had explained to the conference the proposed "democratization" program of the Czech party as well as its economic plans. The stated intention of the Czechs to broaden economic contacts with the West probably had already aroused some alarm in Moscow and Pankow, despite Czech professions of continued loyalty to the eastern alliance.

The Czechs signed the final communiqué, but it is certain that they did so with considerable reluctance. Czech press reports have since made it clear that relations with West Germany was one of the main points at issue. The communiqué repeated the usual denunciation of West German "neonazism," but the Czechs have also hinted that West Germany is the most likely source of loans needed to bolster the ailing Czech economy.

The communiqué stated that economic cooperation within the Pact would be strengthened and that an economic summit conference would be called in the near future. The communiqué also referred to practical measures in the "nearest future" to bolster the Warsaw Pact. Dubcek has said these would deal with the command structure of the Pact. The Soviets undoubtedly will attempt to strengthen existing multilateral ties to restrict Czechoslovak political and economic freedom of action. ~~(SECRET)~~

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