

Czech Leaders Blamed In Anti-Soviet Violence

Soviet Barracks Also Hit

Smrkovsky Singled Out

By Dan Morgan

PRAGUE, March 31 (WP).—The powerful Czechoslovak Interior Ministry revealed today that anti-Soviet demonstrators celebrating their country's 4-to-3 ice hockey victory over Russia Friday in Stockholm not only damaged the Soviet Aeroflot airline building in Prague but also Russian barracks outside the capital.

The report was issued in the form of a condemnation of the acts.

The Interior Ministry condemnation, which implicated "provocateurs, offenders and criminal elements" for their anti-Soviet "hysteria and vandalism," was considerably more severe than one issued over the weekend by the Czechoslovak government.

Its publication, along with a virulent attack in the Soviet party newspaper Pravda charging the Prague leadership with irresponsibility in tolerating the incidents, was a blow to those Czech party and government officials who have detected growing Soviet readiness to support the present regime and try for a broader understanding.

Given this background of support for Alexander Dubcek and his regime in the last three weeks, the Soviet party reaction was puzzling to observers here and seemingly in contradiction to what seemed to be a desire by some Soviet elements to play down the Friday incidents.

Usually reliable informants said that the Soviet ambassador here issued a formal government protest Saturday to Premier Oldrich Cernik. But this protest has neither been published in Czechoslovakia nor in the Soviet government newspaper Izvestia today.

Mild Protest

Informants said that the protest was considerably milder than what appeared in Pravda, although it was said to have warned that Moscow held the Czechoslovak authorities responsible and that if necessary Soviet troops would be used to protect Soviet property.

The warning was clearly geared to the possibility that a similar massive demonstration might occur if Czechoslovakia had won the world ice hockey championship match against the Swedish team yesterday in Stockholm. But the Czechoslovaks lost, 1-0, and the city was quiet.

Friday's demonstrations brought tens of thousands of jubilant fans into the downtown city streets.

The tendency by the Czechoslovak government, aside from the Interior Ministry, and of the Soviet government press to play down the incident was taken by observers here to indicate a desire in some Moscow circles to avoid a new and ugly confrontation over Czechoslovakia that would focus world attention there once again, just when the Kremlin is trying to

By Bernard Gwertzman

MOSCOW, March 31 (NYT).—The Soviet Union today sharply criticized Czechoslovak leaders for continuing to allow liberal forces to spread "nationalist and anti-Soviet slander."

An article in Pravda, the Communist party newspaper, was ostensibly a complaint against the sacking Friday night in Prague of Aeroflot and Intourist offices following the second victory by the Czechoslovak ice hockey team over the Russians in the world championships at Stockholm.

One of the chief targets was Josef Smrkovsky, former head of the National Assembly, who was cited as "among the participants in the anti-Soviet manifestation" on Friday night.

The article, distributed in full by Tass, the official press agency, was viewed by diplomats here as a pointed reminder to the Czechoslovaks that Moscow is not satisfied with the way they are carrying out the "normalization" demanded after last August's Soviet-led invasion.

Stricter Control

There is no accurate definition of "normalization" but it is regarded as a return to stricter party control in Czechoslovakia for all phases of life and unquestioned loyalty to Moscow in foreign affairs.

The article said "the recent days have shown that the right-wing, anti-socialist forces once again seek to aggravate the situation in Czechoslovakia."

Pravda made a comparison between Friday's demonstrations and the suicide by fire of student Jan Palach in January which led to widespread anti-Soviet demonstrations.

"Right-wing revisionists, counter-revolutionary elements in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, with the support of Western reactionaries made use of the student Jan Palach's self-immolation which they themselves pushed him into," Pravda said.

"They are now trying unscrupulously to use the world ice hockey championships in their anti-socialist and anti-Soviet aims," the article said.

Press Accused

It asserted that many organs of the press, radio and television "started stirring passions of the public long before the beginning of the championship in Stockholm. All the information media were obviously used to fan chauvinistic psychosis in the country," Pravda said.

It named Prace, The Reporter, Mlada Fronta, Zemedelske Noviny and Svobodne Slovo, publications which have been criticized often by the Soviet Union but which still publish relatively freely despite the invasion and presence of some 75,000 to 100,000 troops in Czechoslovakia.

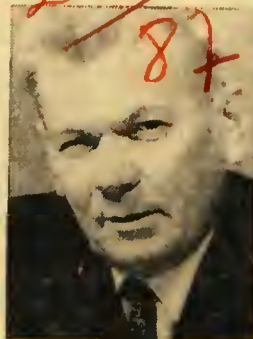
Pravda noted that following the first Czechoslovak hockey victory on March 22, "thousands of people, mainly youths in a heat of nationalist passion, went to Wenceslas Square. Again anti-socialist and anti-Soviet slogans appeared on the walls of houses."

Leaders Blamed

"It is surprising that the leaders of the Communist party of Czechoslovakia and the Czechoslovak authorities did not take any measures at that time against these unhealthy and dangerous phenomena," Pravda said.

"It is not an accident that the right-wing forces succeeded in using the success of the Czechoslovak hockey players in the second game with the Soviet team as a pretext for new political provocations," it said.

The article said that exaltation after victory is understandable, "but the provocations staged in Prague (Continued on Page 2, Col. 2)



Josef Smrkovsky

AP.

placate world Communist parties about the invasion and stress socialist solidarity in respect to the Chinese threat.

The Pravda attack particularly singled out an old favorite target of the Kremlin, Josef Smrkovsky, chairman of the National Assembly, for alleged involvement in the Friday incidents.

Blame Press, Radio, TV

The press, radio and television were also blamed for whipping up nationalist emotions.

Tonight the Presidium of the National Assembly issued a statement in defense of Mr. Smrkovsky, noting that he had been at a meeting and that his limousine was only drawn into the downtown area by huge jams of traffic converging on the area after the victory.

The stage is again set for a repeat of the January showdown in which the Russians failed to strip the liberal Mr. Smrkovsky of his positions in the top leadership. At that time he was saved by massive support in the Czechoslovak trade unions.

The Interior Ministry report made no mention of Mr. Smrkovsky's alleged presence at the demonstrations, but it said that demonstrators had done one million crowns (\$130,000) damage to the Aeroflot building and that there had been "gross violations of public order" elsewhere.

At the Soviet garrison town of Mlada Boleslav, 30 miles from Prague, "some windows were broken in barracks and Soviet representa-

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Czech Leaders Assailed by Russians

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these days have nothing in common with sport. They are organized nationalistic manifestations, prepared in advance and pursuing definite political aims."

Pravda said the Aeroflot and Intourist offices were ransacked by "a mob of hooligans" that was provoked by "sinister right-wing propaganda."

It concluded with a veiled warning saying that "there is no doubt that the Communists and all the honest people of Czechoslovakia will correctly assess these hostile provocations and will not let the anti-socialist forces poison the consciousness of the people with nationalist and anti-Soviet slander."

It called for the "real implementation" of the November Communist party plenum in Czechoslovakia which was regarded as a compromise session that set out to resolve differences with Moscow without cutting back completely on freedoms gained before the invasion.

Pravda took no note of a statement by Czechoslovak authorities on Saturday that deplored the ransacking of the Aeroflot office and apologized to the Soviet government.

In the past two months, many high-ranking Czechoslovak officials have visited Moscow, and Soviet leaders have gone to Czechoslovakia. It has been reported that the Soviet side has complained constantly about the failure by the Czechoslovak Communist party to put effective restraints on its press. Soviet party Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev was reported to have told some Czechoslovak leaders that the Soviet troops would not be pulled out until this was done and the situation thus "normalized."