

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

• PRIORITY

Intelligence Information Cable

IN 76928

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CITE

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DIST 23 AUGUST 1968

COUNTRY: USSR/CZECHOSLOVAKIA/FINLAND

DOI: [REDACTED] 25X1C 2

SUBJECT: CENTER PARTY VIEWS ON FINNISH DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN RELATION
IMPLICATIONS CAUSED BY THE SOVIET INTERVENTION IN CZECH-
OSLOVAKIA.

PADA: [REDACTED] 25X1A

SOURCE: [REDACTED]

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SUMMARY: THE CENTER PARTY LEADERSHIP BELIEVES THE CZECH CRISIS HAS
PLACED THE FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY IN A FRIGHTFUL DILEMMA. UNLESS
THEY DISAVOW THE SOVIET INTERVENTION IN A "TITO-LIKE" STANCE THE
1968 FALL COMMUNAL ELECTIONS WILL BE CATASTROPHIC FOR THEM. IF THEY
DO, SOVIET RETALIATION AGAINST THEIR SPLIT PARTY COULD THREATEN THE
CURRENT BALANCE OF POWER IN THE FCP. NEVERTHELESS, THE FCP MAY BE

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By iss, NARA, Date 12-20-01

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FORCED TO DISAVOW FIRMLY THE SOVIET ACTION TO PRESERVE ITS ELECTORAL BASE WHICH IS ALREADY EXPERIENCING DEFECTIONS. THERE IS FEAR BY THE CENTER PARTY LEADERSHIP AND BY PRIME MINISTER KOIVISTO THAT FINNO-SOVIET RELATIONS RISK DETERIORATION IF FINNISH DEMONSTRATIONS CONTINUE TO ESCALATE IN ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST THE USSR. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CENTER PARTY LEADERSHIP HAS INFORMALLY DISCUSSED THE DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN IMPLICATIONS OF THE SOVIET ACTION AGAINST CZECHOSLOVAKIA. DOMESTICALLY, THE FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY (FCP) IS IN A FRIGHTFUL DILEMMA. THE REACTION OF THE FINNISH PEOPLE TO THE SOVIET ACTION HAS BEEN MUCH STRONGER THAN INITIALLY EXPECTED. ALREADY TWO COMMUNIST CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION IN NORTH FINLAND IN THE FALL COMMUNAL ELECTIONS HAVE COME TO THE CENTER PARTY WITH THE OFFER TO ABANDON THE COMMUNISTS AND RUN UNDER THE CENTER PARTY BANNER. A CANDIDACY FOR THEM CANNOT BE ARRANGED BUT A "PLACE" FOR THEM IN THE PARTY LOCALLY WILL BE WORKED OUT AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR SIMILAR DEFECTIONS WILL BE MADE. THE COMMUNIST DILEMMA IS THIS: ABSOLUTE CATASTROPHE IN THE COMMUNAL ELECTIONS UNLESS THEY DISAVOW THE SOVIET ACTION IN ALMOST A "TITO-LIKE" STANCE. IF THEY DO THIS THEY FACE THE RETALIATION AND REACTION OF THE SOVIET UNION WHICH COULD TEAR THE PARTY APART. NEVERTHELESS, THE FCP MAY BE FORCED TO TAKE A VERY STRONG STAND AGAINST

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THE INTERVENTION TO THE POINT OF ALIENATING THE SOVIETS. THEY HAVE ALREADY CANCELED THE MASSIVE AND THOROUGHLY PLANNED 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FCP AFTER THE INITIAL DAY OF THE THREE DAYS PLANNED. AFTER THE MOOD OF THE DEMONSTRATIONS IN FINLAND ON 21 AND 22 AUGUST THEY HAD TO DO IT. PART OF THE 25 AUGUST AGENDA WAS AN ANTI-US VIETNAM RALLY; IF THE FCP WENT THROUGH WITH THIS THEY WOULD RISK "RED SATURDAY" BECOMING "BLOODY SUNDAY."

2. EVEN IF THE FCP DOES DETACH ITSELF FROM THE SOVIET MOVE, THE CENTER PARTY IS READY FOR THE SUBTLE EXPLOITATION OF THIS THEME IN NORTH FINLAND: "WE ARE NOT CONTESTING WHETHER FINNISH COMMUNISM HAS ABANDONED STALINISM AND TOTALITARIAN METHODS OR NOT; WE ONLY ASK, WHAT IF THEY HAVE? WOULD THEY BE ABLE TO KEEP AND EXERCISE THESE IDEALS IN A COMMUNIST WORLD?"

25X1A 3. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THE FCP HAS PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED THAT AT A POLITBURO MEETING ON THE MORNING OF 23 AUGUST IT WAS DECIDED FESTIVAL EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR THE 23 AUGUST OPENING DAY SHOULD GO ON AS PLANNED BUT THAT THE 24-25 AUGUST FESTIVITIES SHOULD BE CANCELED AS A RESULT OF THE CZECH SITUATION. THE POLITBURO HAS CALLED THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE INTO A SPECIAL SESSION FOR 25 AUGUST TO DISCUSS THE CZECH SITUATION FURTHER. ON THE AFTERNOON OF 23 AUGUST PARTY

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CHAIRMAN AARNE SAARINEN MET WITH FINNISH PRIME MINISTER MAUNO KOIVISTO FOR DISCUSSION ON WHAT IS YET UNKNOWN. THE ABOVE DEVELOPMENT WAS PRECEDED BY TWO DAYS OF SPORADIC DEMONSTRATIONS IN FRONT OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY AND OTHER AREAS IN HELSINKI. NUMEROUS INCIDENTS OF VANDALISM IN CONNECTION WITH FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY SIGNS AND DISPLAYS FOR ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS HAVE ALSO BEEN REPORTED. WINDOWS OF THE COMMUNIST DAILY "KANSAN UUTiset" OFFICE WERE STONED THE EVENING OF 22 AUGUST. THE CZECH CRISIS IS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT FOR THE FINNISH COMMUNIST PARTY, WHICH HAS BEEN PLAGUED SINCE KHRUSHCHEV'S FALL BY A STRUGGLE BETWEEN ORTHODOX STALINIST AND LIBERAL ELEMENTS. DESPITE A SLIGHTLY AMBIGUOUS BUT BASICALLY NEGATIVE STAND MADE BY THE POLITBURO ON THE OCCUPATION, TWO FCP DISTRICTS DOMINATED BY STALINISTS ISSUED THEIR OWN STATEMENT SUPPORTING THE WARSAW PACT IN ITS ATTEMPT TO "SAVE SOCIALISM IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA." IF THE FCP PARTY LEADERSHIP TAKES A TITO-LIKE STAND, CPSU SUPPORT TO THE OLD GUARD ELEMENTS IN THE FCP WHICH APPLAUD THE SOVIET MOVE COULD THREATEN THE GROWING LIBERAL DOMINATION OF THE PARTY.)

4. THE INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE CZECH CRISIS ARE LESS ENCOURAGING. ASIDE FROM EUROPEAN SECURITY IN GENERAL, WHICH HAS BEEN STRUCK A BLOW, THERE IS CONCERN BY THE CENTER PARTY LEADERSHIP

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THAT FENNO-SOVIET RELATIONS MAY DETERIORATE SERIOUSLY IF FINLAND IS NOT ABLE TO CONTROL THE ANTI-SOVIET ABUSE WHICH IS INCREASINGLY CHARACTERIZING THE FINNISH DEMONSTRATIONS ON THE CZECH CRISIS. THIS HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH PRIME MINISTER KOIVISTO AND HE VERY MUCH SHARES THIS CONCERN. PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS ARE ONE THING (AND EVEN HERE THE POSTERS ARE ABUSIVE TOWARDS THE SOVIETS) BUT THE INCREASING VIOLENT TREND IS DISCONCERTING. BOTTLES, FIRECRACKERS, AND OTHER OBJECTS ARE BEING THROWN AND ON 23 AUGUST THE POLICE HAVE CONFISCATED DYNAMITE WHICH WAS PLANNED FOR USE ON 24-25 AUGUST. THIS TREND IS DEPLORABLE AND LEAVES FINLAND VULNERABLE TO SOVIET ACCUSATIONS THAT FINLAND HARBORS REACTIONARY AND ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE FINNISH REACTION AS EXPRESSED IN DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST THE VIETNAM WAR HAS BEEN EXTREMELY MILD. IF THE TREND TOWARD VIOLENCE GETS OUT OF HAND (WHICH MANY FEAR, INCLUDING KOIVISTO), THE FINNISH AUTHORITIES, AS A MATTER OF FOREIGN POLICY NECESSITY, WILL BE FORCED TO CRACK DOWN HARD; FINLAND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO AFFORD OVERT MANIFESTATIONS OF VIOLENCE DIRECTED AGAINST THE USSR.

5. [REDACTED] DISSEM: STATE. [REDACTED]

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