THE SITUATION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA
(AS OF 4:00 P.M. EDT)

1. MOSCOW PLAINLY TIMED TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF A
MASSIVE MILITARY EXERCISE ALONG THE WESTERN FRONTIER OF
THE USSR TO BACK UP THE SOVIET POLITBURO AS IT PREPARED
FOR ITS CONFRONTATION WITH THE CZECHOSLOVAKS.

2. THE MILITARY EXERCISE WAS DESCRIBED AS A REAR
SERVICES EXERCISE, TO TAKE PLACE IN MOST OF THE WESTERN
USSR, INCLUDING THE CARPATHIAN MILITARY DISTRICT ADJACENT
TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA. IT IS TO CONCLUDE ON 10 AUGUST. AT
LEAST ONE OTHER SUCH LARGE REAR SERVICES EXERCISE HAS BEEN
HELD AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR, IN JULY 1961.

4. SOME SOVIET TROOPS REMAIN IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA BUT
THE WITHDRAWAL IS CONTINUING. ALTHOUGH SOVIET ELEMENTS
ARE STILL LOCATED IN THE OLOMOUC-OSTRAVA AREA OF CENTRAL
CZECHOSLOVAKIA, THERE ARE TENOUS INDICATIONS THAT SOME
OF THE TROOPS WHICH WERE LOCATED THERE HAVE MOVED TOWARD
THE USSR AND ARE, NOW NEAR THE CZECHOSLOVAK-USSR BORDER.

5. THE BRIEF NOTICE ON THE EXERCISE WAS FEATURED ON
THE FRONT PAGE OF TODAY'S IZVESTIA, ALONG WITH AN ANNOUNCE-
MENT OF THE POLITBURO'S DECISION TO MEET WITH THE CZECHO-
SLAV LEADERSHIP ON CZECHOSLOVAK SOIL. UPI QUOTES A
"SOVIET SOURCE" AS SAYING THAT THE POLITBURO HAS ALREADY
DEPARTED MOSCOW BUT THIS IS UNCONFIRMED. NO SOVIET VIP
AIRCRAFT FLIGHTS WERE DETECTED TODAY, BUT THE LEADERSHIP
MAY MAKE THIS TRIP BY TRAIN. NEITHER MOSCOW NOR PRAGUE
HAS OFFICIALLY INDICATED THAT A TIME FOR THE MEETING HAS
BEEN SET.

6. SOVIET PROPAGANDISTS AGAIN STEPPED UP THEIR AT-
TACKS AGAINST PRAGUE, TODAY DENOUNCING TWO LEADING FIGURES
IN THE DUBCEK REGIME, THE FIRST TO BE SINGLED OUT BY NAME
SINCE PRAVDA CASTIGATED CZECHOSLOVAK PARTY SECRETARY CISAR
IN MAY. THE SOVIET MILITARY JOURNAL RED STAR BELABORED
MAJOR GENERAL FRCHLIK, THE CZECHOSLOVAK PARTY OFFICIAL IN
CHARGE OF DEFENSE AND SECURITY AFFAIRS, FOR HIS WELL-PUB-
LICIZED CRITICISM OF THE WARSAW PACT COMMAND STRUCTURE IN
A PRESS CONFERENCE A WEEK AGO. IZVESTIA, SOMewhat IN-
DIRECTLY, LEVELED AN ATTACK AT THE CZECHOSLOVAK MINISTER
OF THE INTERIOR, JOSEF PAVEL. THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT PAPER
REPRINTED AN UNSIGNED LETTER WHICH HAD APPEARED IN A BUL-
GARIAN NEWSPAPER, CHARGING PAVEL WITH COMPLICITY IN THE PURGE
TRIALS OF THE 1950'S.
PRAGUE AS YET TO ACKNOWLEDGE OFFICIALLY THAT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA WILL TAKE PLACE BETWEEN THE ENTIRE RULING BODIES OF THE CPSU AND THE CZECHOSLOVAK PARTY. LAST NIGHT PRESIDIUM MEMBER JOSEF SMRKOVSKY INFORMED JOURNALISTS AT A DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION THAT ONLY SIX MEMBERS FROM BOTH SIDES WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSIONS. SMRKOVSKY'S STATEMENT MAY NOT REPRESENT THE FINAL VIEWS OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP, BUT IT PROBABLY DOES REFLECT WHAT DUBCEK CONSIDERS DESIREABLE. THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR IN PRAGUE CONFIRMED THAT THE TIME, PLACE AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETING ARE STILL BEING DISCUSSED.

8. CZECHOSLOVAK OFFICIALS APPARENTLY VIEWED THE INITIAL TASS STATEMENT ON THE MEETING AS A SIGN THAT MOSCOW WAS EASING ITS PRESSURE. THAT "ONE ROUND IS OVER, BUT WE MUST REMAIN VIGILANT." PRAGUE HAS YET TO COMMENT ON TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE EXERCISE IN THE SOVIET UNION.

GP-1
700