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Czechoslovakia: Government leaders in Prague have reassured Moscow of their "permanent cooperation," but at the same time expressed determination to continue their reforms.



PRIME MINISTER ČERNÍK

At a press conference on 14 May, Premier Černík emphasized Czechoslovakia's ties to the Soviet Union and the other "socialist" states. Alluding to outside pressures, he said: "It is polemics, rather than pressure. Perhaps there will be pressure later on, we do not know. There could be, for example, pressures on our oil or on our iron ore. But we are going to go ahead and do what we must do and we will wait and see." As far as is known, Czechoslovak news media have not reported these remarks.

The Soviet press continues to attack Czechoslovak liberals but has yet to criticize any of Prague's new leaders. Moscow's trade union newspaper, Trud, on 15 May protested a Czechoslovak philosopher's having been permitted to deny the leading role of the party in Prague's official trade union paper. It compared his views to those of "our enemies." On the same day the Soviet writers' union daily criticized Czechoslovakia's most famous playwright on essentially the same grounds.

The restricted nature of Moscow's press attacks suggests that the Soviets may be waiting further results of their pressure campaign before making new moves against Czechoslovakia. [redacted]

[redacted] (Photo)

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