

July 8, 1968

**Political Report No.12 from the Embassy of the
Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Peking**

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Summary:

Account addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding gradual normalization of communications and relations with China, including conclusions and recommendations for future policy like removal of limits on free movement by the Chinese representative office in Prague.

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Embassy of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic
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Peking, July 8, 1968

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
3rd Territorial section

[Stamps:] S e c r e t

P r a g u e By courier

Political report no. 12
In line with a point of the work plan II/16
Prepared: K. Ondryáš

Report on two-party contacts CSSR-CPR in the first half of 1968

Hand-in-hand with certain consolidation of internal situation in China, in the spirit of Chinese theory of "vinoviteho [translator's note: gradual?] development, the first half of 1968 was marked by the Chinese government's somewhat livelier engagement in foreign political activities, first of all toward developing countries. In contrast to last year's hot summer in Peking and the actions of "red diplomacy" [the first six months of this year] saw some normalization of relations between the Chinese authorities and foreign representative offices in Peking. This was demonstrated, for example, during huge demonstration in support of American blacks [and] French workers and students, when this year we haven't witnessed pogrom-like actions like last year, including in relations to the representative office of France, despite the seriously tense atmosphere. There continues vociferous propaganda campaign resulting in certain worsening and narrowing of Chinese-Soviet relations and [similar?] political position of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs toward other countries of the Socialist system. Concrete results of this policy included the departure of a Soviet commercial delegation from Peking without signing this year's agreement on commercial exchanges.

In this environment, there was also a change in the attitude of Chinese local officials in their working contacts with the CSSR representative office. Judging by the Chinese press coverage of the developments in Czechoslovakia, to which [this press] last year paid considerable attention, the liberating process of our [CSSR Communist] party is seen as a deepening of revisionism and return to a capitalistic system. This is despite the Chinese party's conflicting switch to the terminology of the Western press by claiming that [CSSR] "Stalinists" are fighting against the "revisionists." CPR however gives a far greater importance to our attempts at revival of our own independent foreign policy and to problems [the rest of the sentence is illegible].

In contrast with the summer of last year, there has been a substantial change in the working contacts of Chinese officials with our representative office. Formerly, their business-like tone was reserved for discussions of subjects of their interest, such as mutual trade, or aid to Vietnam. But gradually, they have used similar [neutral] language for other subjects and stopped making the crude, insulting attacks [that used to be typical] of their communications [with us] and even with the SSSR. This year, neither [CSSR] nor [CPR] side made an official protest against the other, and [Chinese officials] have been more ready to engage in discussions on broader themes. These included the internal development in China, although the Chinese echoed the editorials in [the official daily] Renmin ribao [People's Daily]. In this respect, there undoubtedly are of significance the words of the [Chinese] deputy

minister of foreign affairs, who in a conversation with our Ambassador Comrade Křístka said that: "We want to work well with your representative office", and the assurance of Čchen-Iho [sic] that "our cooperation as before can continue, and what [tasks] have not been carried out can be completed by your new ambassador."

It can be said that gradual normalization of Chinese relations with CSSR representative office depends on the overall CPR position toward all representative offices in Peking including, to some degree, of SSSR. {[Bot] CSSR's independent stance in foreign affairs, including our developing position toward SSSR, is welcomed by the CPR authorities.

Mutual contacts in individual areas

Even in this half of the year there was no mutual contact regarding the [CSSR Communist] party line, which the Chinese call "revisionist". Political contacts at the highest level were limited to an exchange of New Year's wishes and Zhou Enlai's best wishes on the 9th of May. For the first time, the Chinese did not, as they had done for years, show a movie. This year they took the same stand toward the Hungarian People's Republic. When it came to participation in events honoring national holidays, the Chinese delegation that visited our representative office was bigger than the delegation that attended the Hungarian ceremony, but both delegations were of the same rank as of their most senior host. Relatively substantially bigger number of Chinese officials attended our showing of the movie "20th anniversary of the February" (of the Communist coup in CSSR). The highest-ranking guest was deputy section chief of the CPR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Chinese participants totaled about 30% of those who were invited.

Official Chinese press in the last six months only reported in five tiny stories the arrival and departure of [our] commercial delegation, the signing of the commercial agreement, celebration of our state holiday by the representative office, and the departure of [our] ambassador. One of the reports described an example of how "Czechoslovak people love Mao". This sort of official coverage was given to all representative offices except for SSSR, Albanian Peoples Republic and Vietnam Democratic Republic. But unofficial Chinese press was more interested in news about CSSR, and frequently gave foreign agencies' reports almost a full page.

Overall the mutual contacts with Chinese officials (on subjects of trade) were minimal and practically limited to the CPR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chinese militia (registering and deregistering, discussions about who to invite to our activities - celebration of February, 9th May, departure of Ambassador Comrade Křístka, turning over or receiving documents etc. Although we requested them in time, the Chinese did not allow any meetings except with the Ministry or Foreign Affairs and MZO, which can be explained by the general situation and the Chinese "revolutionary leap". Working relations with the Chinese officials were essentially correct and businesslike.

In their official calls to say good-bye to Ambassador Comrade Křístek, the Chinese even showed some effort to create a friendly atmosphere. Correct and businesslike attitude also characterized contacts of consular nature and negotiations about aid to Vietnam. Our requests for meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were responded to in one-to-three days. What continues is the requirement of [prior] explanation of the reasons for the requested meeting, which is also done by the Chinese. Our requests for travel permits (practically only to Tianjin) were approved in one to three days and without any special delays.

There have been no contacts of cultural nature except for the invitation for several cultural representatives to participate in our events. [The invitations] were accepted only at low levels. Responding to the instructions from our center to make contacts

with cultural institutions, Ambassador Comrade Křístek discussed this possibility with his Chinese counterparts in his calls to say good-bye. An employee of [our] representative office requested on June 26 DP of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to facilitate such contacts. Even following our repeated requests we received the same answer: that we will be informed as soon as DP receives a word when such visit can take place.

In the area of contacts of commercial nature in the last half a year it was possible to note increased interest on the part of the Chinese in smooth fulfillment of our business agreement as well as in additional broadening of the scope of the exchanges of goods. Employees of Chinese MZO, [and] of agencies for export and import, are making an effort to meet our requests, and whenever we ask for a meeting, we get a positive response within two days. In fact, the Chinese are frequently inviting us for a meeting. The negotiations are basically correct and to the point. Employees in our commercial section are practically in daily contact with their Chinese counterparts. The increasing Chinese interest [in commercial exchanges] is also shown in the growing number of [contacts initiated by] their trade agencies. At the conclusion of their stay in China, our aviation technicians were invited by the Chinese side to the performance of the so-called Peking revolutionary opera celebrating the 47th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. Cooperation with [illegible initial: VTS?] is, due to its limited size, neglected. Existing commitments are being carried out. Next negotiation regarding VTS [sic] will take place this fall in Peking.

A chapter for itself is contacts of our representative office with the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' section of diplomatic services. It has to be noted that the dismissal of a Chinese cleaning person because of low working morale took place without a problem and our representative office was assigned a new Chinese employee who so far has performed well. Also the behavior of Chinese employees of our office is better than it used to be. [Illegible initial] [acted] promptly (requested at 11 a.m., the spray was provided the same afternoon) in providing a spray for the protection of our trees against insects. The speedy fulfillment of our request can be due to the Chinese desire to prevent the insects from spreading to other trees [in that part of town.] On the other hand, requesting services in which the Chinese are not interested is like throwing {hard} peas against the wall (for example, request for the repair of the air-conditioning system, for completing the already paid-for repairs of apartments, etc.) But it cannot be excluded that the reason for these faults is lack of skilled workers or special equipment.

Negative experiences of our representative office included postponement of the school trip of our children to Tianjin, and the detention of a group of our citizens visiting a memorial in Peking (see our previous detained report). In both cases the stated "reason" was taking pictures, and the main actors were "revolutionary masses." We don't assume that both incidents were orchestrated at the request of Chinese authorities, or that they were intentionally aimed at our representative office and its employees. Most likely they were the product of general atmosphere and "spy mania".

Conclusions and suggestions.

1/ Considering the contemporary situation in China and the Communist Party leadership of foreign affairs, there is no outlook for the resumption of mutual political contacts at higher levels. But the experience so far suggests that the Chinese side is gradually becoming more receptive to business-like contacts not only of commercial nature. From hints on the Chinese side it can be surmised that that eventually, it would be possible to normalize contacts in other areas of international relations. That, however, presumes initiatives from our side that could reveal the degree of Chinese readiness [for additional contacts] while creating conditions on our side for [such normalization] to take place.

2/ We recommend that -- unless it has been done already -- as the first step toward this goal we announce the removal of the limits on free movement by employees of the Chinese representative office in Prague. At the same time, we should reconsider our position on the time limits set for living in Prague and other parts of CSSR, as we have suggested previously (regarding Chinese students and so forth).

3/ As another step to create a more amenable atmosphere for the arrival of our new ambassador, it would be fitting to remove the insulting signs on the walls of our representative office in Peking[.] The Chinese side, as represented by the deputy section chief of MZV, twice -- although in a respectful way -- rejected our request for the removal of the inappropriate signs while hinting that it should be done by ourselves[.] In view of the French precedent and Chinese [fear] of "losing the face", it cannot be expected that their position would change. We are therefore asking our Center for approval of our dropping the subject and have the wall cleaning be done at our expense. [Illegible initials] will of course in line with local custom first work out a cost estimate that we would formally present to the Chinese side and, without invectives, ask for its payment. An alternate solution would be to remove the remnant of the signs on the walls of the Chinese representative office in Prague, and ask for reciprocity by the Chinese side in Peking[.] However, we do not promise a positive outcome even though the Chinese representative office [in Prague] would welcome our action. For your information, the walls of the following representative offices remain pasted and painted over with [insulting] signs: SSSR, Hungary, Bulgaria, [illegible initials]. Most of these walls, especially of the representative offices of SSSR, Bulgaria and Hungary, because of the type of their surface were covered with posters rather than painted signs, so that they can be [cleaned] by tearing the posters off the wall and destroying them. On the white walls of CSSR's representative office, the signs were painted in black and continue to be legible. The socialist countries have so far taken no initiative to get rid of the signs, but we believe that the clear legibility of the scurrilous signs on our walls and the pending arrival of a new ambassador are more important reasons for [cleaning the walls] than [doing nothing] to show solidarity with other representative offices.

4/ After cleaning our walls we intend to put hang back on them the outdoor propaganda vitrines, in which case we will need to ensure a regular shipment of appropriate materials showing life in CSSR.

5/ Separate from realizing points 2, 3 and 4 we intend during this or next month organize a social activity with a movie presentation for the employees of the [Chinese] territorial section including the deputy section chief of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Based on earlier experience, we should broaden the invitation to include contacts in cultural, scientific and sports areas.

6/ Business section [OBO?] employees will continue inviting their Chinese counterparts to lunches and dinners, and together with the representative office will work out a proposal for making effective use of the prepared exhibit of [illegible initials] for social contacts with their Chinese counterparts, including MZV.

7/ We recommend that the Center urgently work out our position when in an event the Chinese launch attacks on SSSR and it is our duty to walk out together with the Soviet and other participants. It is to be expected that because of the presence of President Nyerere the CPR representatives will avoid insults and curses, but that their unfair criticism of SSSR will prompt the diplomats of the Soviet and other representative offices in Peking to walk out. We are assuming that we should follow the example of our representatives in the United Nations and other international bodies who do not join a walkout unless the criticism of the Soviet representatives becomes crude and insulting.

Charge d'affaires ad interim
[Illegible stamp and signature]

Attachment to no. 0173/68

Overview of mutual activities by the CSSR representative office in Peking and its Chinese counterparts in the first half of 1968

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1/5 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrade Javúrek negotiates with VHSZ aid to Vietnam □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
1/12 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrade Nový requests from the transport office a driver's permit. Approved □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
1/22 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrades Kocman and Javúrek deal with VHSZ about aid to Vietnam □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
1/24 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrades Kocman and Javúrek deal with VHSZ about aid to Vietnam □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
1/26 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrade Javúrek discusses with VHSZ preparation of protocol and its signing □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
1/27 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrades Křístek, Kocman and Javúrek participate in the signing of a protocol on preparations to aid Vietnam □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
2/3 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrades Kocman and [illegible name] discuss with VHSZ aid to Vietnam □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
2/7 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrade Křístek visited Tianjin, toured the town, and visited an anchored German ship. □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
2/10 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrades Čejka and Ondryáš delivered to DP MZV an invitation to the presentation of a movie celebrating February (20th anniversary) □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
2/20 □□□ □□□ □□□
CSSR representative office presents a movie celebrating the 20th anniversary [of Communist coup d'etat]. Attending are 20 Chinese, the highest-ranking guest is deputy section chief in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. □□□ □□
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2/27 □□□ □□□ □□□
Comrades Čejka and Čuda are invited to the CPR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to accept a proclamation by the Chinese government. □□□ □□
□□□ □□□
3/2 □□□ □□□ □□□
[CSSR] representative office returned the proclamation (which included an attack on SSSR) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs □□□ □□

□□□ □□□

3/4 □□□ □□□ □□□

The representative office turned over to the Ministry of Transport and Health letters from Comrade A. Michálek, editor of Rudé Právo and member of the Czechoslovak Committee for the Defense of Peace. [The letters] express his thanks for the model care given to him by the Chinese side when he became sick in a train on the way from Peking to Hanoi. □□□ □□

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3/10 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrades Křístek, Burgr and Čuda visited Tianjin and toured the town. □□□ □□

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3/12 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrades Kocman and Javůrek deal with VHSZ about aid to Vietnam □□□ □□

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3/14 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrade Čuda visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to present a request [sentence is unfinished.] □□□ □□

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3/5 □□□ □□□ □□□

Deputy MZO CPR Li Čchiang [sic] organized a cocktail party in a Peking hotel for the Czechoslovak commercial delegation led by Deputy Minister MZO Comrade Honusek. For the representative office were present the head and employees of OBO. □□□ □□

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3/16 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrades Kocman and Čuda departed for Manzhouli to hand over [a shipment] of aid to Vietnam □□□ □□

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3/25 □□□ □□□ □□□

Ambassador Comrade Křístek organized cocktails at the conclusion of negotiations by the CSSR commercial delegation led by Deputy CSSR Minister MZO Comrade Honusek. The Chinese side was represented by Deputy MZO CPR Li Čchiang and 10 other officials. □□□ □□

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4/3 □□□ □□□ □□□

At his own request, Ambassador Comrade Křístek was received by Deputy MZV Lo Kuajepo [sic], whom [the comrade Ambassador] personally informed about the election of Comrade Svoboda the president of CSSR. □□□ □□

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4/4 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrade Javůrek arranges through DP MZV airline tickets to Prague for Ambassador Comrade Křístek. The Chinese airline [first] refused to arrange the tickets, claiming the request was made too late. □□□ □□

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4/16 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrades Čejka and Ondryáš go to CPR MZV to accept note refusing Chinese participation in the 23rd Geological congress in CSSR. □□□ □□

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4/16 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrades Čejka and Ondryáš visit CPR MZV to negotiate invitations for Chinese guests to the ceremony celebrating 9th May [end of WWII in Europe?] □□□ □□

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4/27 □□□ □□□ □□□

The head of SAR [Syrian Arab Republic] representative office, as the doyen of the

diplomatic corps, announced Chinese decision that in the first half of this year it will not conduct an excursion for the diplomats because of the “revolutionary leap” [of Mao Zedong]. □□□ □□

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5/3 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrades Ondryáš and Šíma went to the CPR MZV to deliver invitations to the celebration of 9th May □□□ □□

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5/7 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrade Čejka visit the Institute of epidemiology to complete his prescribed vaccinations □□□ □□

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5/9 □□□ □□□ □□□

Celebration of CSSR state holiday, the highest-ranking participant is Deputy MZV Qiao Guanhua. □□□ □□

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5/8 [sic] □□□ □□□ □□□

Trip of our schoolchildren by bus to Tianjin. The visit was held up for about two hours by so-called “Chinese revolutionary masses” claiming that the excursion lacked a permission to take photographs. □□□ □□

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5/17 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrade Ondryáš requested driver’s license from the transportation office. His request was granted. □□□ □□

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5/20 □□□ □□□ □□□

SSDS sprayed trees around our representative office against insects the same day we requested it. □□□ □□

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5/26 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrades Šíma and Chlupatý held up for 6 hours while walking in town by the so-called “revolutionary masses” □□□ □□

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5/29 □□□ □□□ □□□

DP MZV is informed about the recall of Comrade Ambassador Křístek from China. □□□ □□

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5/30 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrade Čejka handed over to DP MZV list of Chinese representatives that Comrade Ambassador Křístek plans to call upon before his departure from China. □□□ □□

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6/7 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrade Ambassador Křístek carried out the protocol-required call to say good-bye to the deputy section chief of the territorial department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Li Lien-čchinga [sic]. □□□ □□

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6/7 □□□ □□□ □□□

Territorial department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed the CSSR representative office about the possibility of shipping the luggage of former lecturer Skalická. □□□ □□

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6/11 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrade Javůrek negotiates with VHSZ preparation of a transport to Vietnam. □□□ □□

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6/11 □□□ □□□ □□□

Commercial section of [CSSR] representative office organized dinner for Chinese partners (the highest-ranking attendee was the first deputy of the general director of Technical import and 10 Chinese aviation technicians). □□□ □□

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6/13 □□□ □□□ □□□

Ambassador Comrade Křístek requested DP MZV for an agreement to accredit his successor. □□□ □□

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6/14 □□□ □□□ □□□

Ambassador Comrade Křístek carried out the protocol-required good-by call on Deputy MZO Li Čchianga [sic] □□□ □□

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6/15 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrades Ondryáš and Novák left for Manzhouli to turn over an [aid] shipment for Vietnam □□□ □□

□□□ □□□

6/21 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrade Čejka discusses with DP MZV credentials for the new ambassador. □□□ □□

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6/22 □□□ □□□ □□□

Comrade Ondryáš negotiates the invitations for Chinese guests for a goodbye cocktails honoring Ambassador Comrade Křístek. At the same time, he is asking help of DP MZV for arranging visits by a member of the representative office to several cultural institutions. □□□ □□

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6/24 □□□ □□□ □□□

Ambassador Comrade Křístek carried out the protocol-required good-by call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs Chen Yi and his deputy Qiao Guanhua. □□□ □□

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6/26 □□□ □□□ □□□

The CSSR representative office gives a cocktail party for the departing Ambassador Comrade Křístek. The highest-ranking Chinese attendee is deputy section chief and DP MZV. □□□ □□

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6/27 □□□ □□□ □□□

Saying good-by at the railroad station to departing Ambassador Comrade Křístek. Present is also deputy of the leading DP and an employee of the territorial section of MZV □□□ □□