

November 3, 1989

Czechoslovakia: Restiveness Growing□□□

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Summary:

An analysis of the Czechoslovak regime's decline amidst National Front movements for a multiparty system.

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English

Contents:

Original Scan

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~~Top Secret~~



6.2(d)

-> **CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Restiveness Growing**

Cracks are beginning to appear in the Czechoslovak regime's monolithic facade. Prague's crackdown on the protest last Saturday provoked a rare display of dissent from the Communist youth daily, which characterized the demonstrators as peaceful. The head of the traditionally subservient Socialist Party had publicly rebuked regime authorities earlier for suppressing demonstrations.

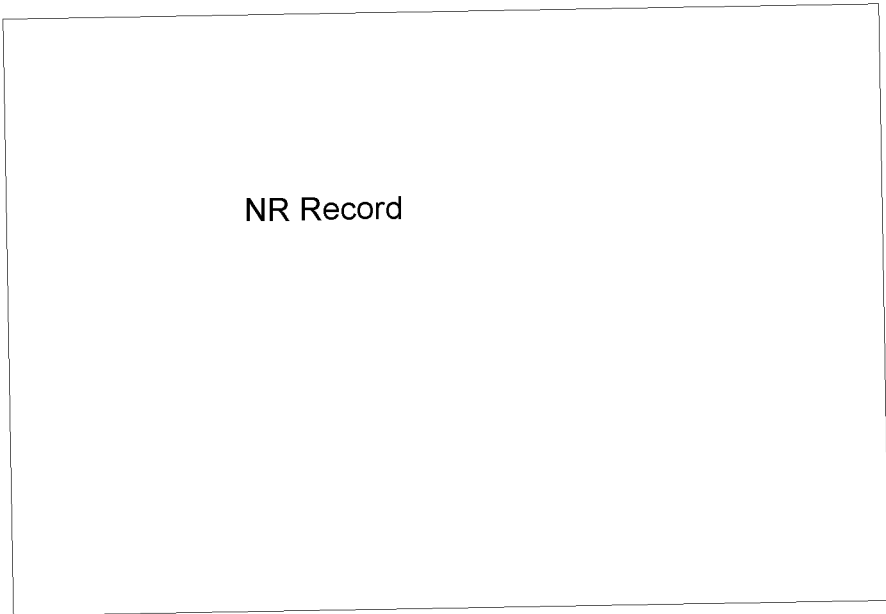
[redacted] his party will seek real independence. Some rank-and-file Socialists have adopted a more ambitious program, including support for a constitutional amendment mandating an "open" multiparty system. Last month, 70 regional representatives of the Czechoslovak People's Party demanded their leaders resign, accusing them of blocking positive changes.

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6.2(d)

Comment: The usually docile National Front parties have almost certainly surprised the regime with their signs of independence. Despite its talk of democratization, Prague probably expected them to remain subordinate as Communist-controlled vehicles for winning over public opinion. On its own, this show of unrest will not threaten the regime of Communist leader Milos Jakes, but it risks encouraging more open demands for change from a disgruntled public and probably will further unnerve a leadership acutely aware of its unpopularity.

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