

November 27, 1961

**Cable from the Foreign Ministry, 'Notice regarding
the Appropriate Response to the Czechoslovak
Premier's Attack on Our Party'**

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Summary:

The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs weighs how to respond to Czechoslovak criticisms of Mao Zedong's cult of personality following the 20th Congress of the CPSU.

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[...]

Notice regarding the Appropriate Response to the Czechoslovak Premier's Attack on Our Party

To the Chinese Embassy in Czechoslovakia, the office of the charges d'affaires, the Geneva delegation, the Laos cultural and economic delegation, the office of the liaison in Kaesong, and the offices of international and external affairs in all provinces, cities, and autonomous regions:

On 24 November [1961], the international edition of Rudé právo ran a speech published by committee member of the Czechoslovak Politburo and Czechoslovak Premier [Viliam] Široký, delivered at the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia's (KSČ) Central Committee Plenum, in which he attacked the CCP by name for "not agreeing to firmly criticize personality cult. In their own country they have not taken any steps to criticize the results of personality cult. Quite the opposite: after the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, their personality cult deepened once again. They have not expended any diligence toward the recovery of Leninist standards in the lives of their party and country; they do not agree with the verdicts of the 20th Congress."

Regarding this issue, the CCP Central Committee is going over how best to respond to the KSČ. For the moment, all international personnel, as well as domestic personnel in contact with foreign guests, should, when coming into contact with Czech personnel in the course of your interactions with foreigners, make specific reference to individuals and actively express the following to your interlocutor:

"Široký's speech was a malicious slander before the world against our party, our leader Chairman Mao, and the people of our country. It crudely violated Moscow's declarations and statements, as well as the standards of relations between fraternal parties and states. It seriously undermined the international communist movement and the socialist infantry, and did extreme harm to the friendship between the peoples of Czechoslovakia and China. This has had the effect of saddening their friends and quickening the spirits of their adversaries."

We greet these facts with extreme displeasure. We must use plain language to briefly explain our position, to lift the veil, since we cannot get too entangled with them.

In conversation, be sure to differentiate between the upper and lower levels. Toward the KSČ Central Committee, the responsible members of the Czech government, and the Czech delegations, express resentment and protest. Toward lower level personnel, emphasize the presentation of facts and discussions of reason; struggle for them to empathize with us. If this topic comes up in your interactions with personnel from other fraternal parties and states, we should still follow the feeling of the above directions in our conversations. Non-party leftist personages from capitalist states, if they bring up this topic, can be plainly told the facts and our points of view. As for the incitements and provocations of reactionary constituents, one should resolutely fight back.

Forward any relevant perspectives to the Department at your convenience.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
27 November 1961

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