

July 24, 1968

**P. Shelest Reports on a Meeting Between Ukrainian
and Slovak Party Officials**

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Summary:

Petro Shelest reports to the CC CPSU on a meeting between Cde. V. G. Dykusev and a secretary of the KSC's East Slovakia regional committee, Cde. Jaromír Hetteš. Cde. J. Koscelanský, who usually appears on behalf of the Slovaks, was on vacation.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

C P S U C C

The Transcarpathian Oblast party committee reported to the UkrCP CC that on 16 July a meeting along the border took place between the second secretary of the oblast party committee, Cde. V. G. Dykusharov, and a secretary of the KSC's East Slovakia regional committee, Cde. Jaromír Hetteš, who is the acting leader of the regional committee while Cde. J. Koscelanský is on vacation. Cde. Hetteš's request for the meeting was motivated by a need to discuss the agenda for an upcoming visit of a delegation of party workers from the East Slovakia region to Transcarpathia.

Also taking part in the meeting were the head of the financial department of the KSC's East Slovakia regional committee, Cde. J. Vislocký, the first secretary of the KSC's Michalovce district committee, Cde. A. Pirc, the head of the financial department of the Transcarpathian Oblast party committee, Cde. P. M. Honcharyk, and the first secretary of the UkrCP's Uzhhorod district committee, Cde. H. I. Shman'ko.

During the meeting the Slovak comrades spoke about the current situation in the CSSR and, in particular, about the situation in the East Slovakia region.

The KSC regional committee secretary, Cde. Hetteš, was inclined to play down the danger arising from the situation in the country. When Cde. Hetteš was not present, the first secretary of the KSC's Michalovce district committee, Cde. Pirc, and the head of the financial department of the KSC regional committee, Cde. Vislocký, disagreed with Cde. Hetteš's views and said that a very alarming situation is emerging that might have all sorts of unpleasant consequences.

During the discussion, the comrades emphasized that they are alarmed by the fact that the KSC CC has not informed party organizations about the content of the letters that came in from the fraternal parties. They reported that in connection with this, at Cde. Hetteš's initiative, a session of the presidium of the KSC's East Slovakian regional committee took place on the night of 15 July, where they discussed this and other matters pertaining to the situation in Czechoslovakia and relations with the Soviet Union. Cde. Hetteš reported that he had asked every member of the presidium to offer his opinion about these matters. All of those who spoke, with the exception of the chairman of the regional national committee, Cde. Gabriška, emphasized the necessity for the KSC CC to strengthen friendship with the Soviet Union. In particular, Cde. Hetteš said that "Czechoslovakia is the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union is Czechoslovakia." Cde. Gabriška did not make any definite comment about this, but merely said evasively that he shares everyone else's view.

During the meeting, the Slovak comrades reported that the protocol of this session of the KSC regional committee, with a demand for the KSC CC to carry out a firmer and more precise line in strengthening friendship with the Soviet Union as well as a demand for the leadership of the party and government to go to Moscow for negotiations, is being sent to Prague via a secretary of the KSC regional committee, Cde. Bobonko. Cde. Bobonko is supposed to meet personally with Cde. A. Dubcek to convey this protocol to him and to inform him about the views of the KSC East Slovakia regional committee.

During the meeting at the border, the Slovak comrades expressed their views about a number of personnel questions. For example, Cde. Vislocký expressed his fear that Cde. V. Bilak might not be reelected first secretary of the Slovak Communist Party CC at the upcoming KSS Congress. He reported that Cde. V. Bilak is viewed negatively by the first secretary of the KSC's East Slovakian regional committee, Cde. J. Koscelanský, and more recently by the first secretary of the KSC's Central Slovakia regional committee, Cde. Tažký. The secretary of the Slovak Communist Party CC who is

responsible for ideological affairs also has an unfavorable opinion of Cde. V. Bilak. The Slovak comrades reported during our meeting that at the dinner after the regional party conference, Cde. J. Koscelanský had said it was abnormal for a Ukrainian to be in control of the Slovak nation and for a Gypsie (he was referring here to Cde. E. Rigo-a member of the KSC CC Presidium and chairman of the party committee of the East Slovakian metallurgical combine) to be representing the East Slovakian region. Cde. Vislocký indicated that possible candidates for the post of KSS CC first secretary include J. Zrak, the first secretary of the KSC's Bratislava municipal committee, and an academician named Pavlík.

The Slovak comrades reaffirmed the view they had expressed earlier that there is no unity in the KSC CC leadership. They had an unfavorable opinion of Cdes. J. Smrkovský, F. Kriegel, and O. Šik. Cdes. Hetteš and Vislocký also spoke negatively about the ideology secretary in the KSC's East Slovakian regional committee, Cde. Olexa, who describes the Soviet comrades as "dogmatists."

Cde. Vislocký reported that the regional committee of the State Security organs apparently had received a ciphered message from Prague instructing them to monitor the deployment and movements of Soviet troops along the Soviet-Czechoslovak border.

Cde. Hetteš requested that we inform the leadership of our party that, in his view, it is counterproductive to engage in open polemics in the press, as was done with the article by F. Konstantinov published in "Pravda."

With regard to the "2,000 Words" appeal, Cde. Hetteš said that he condemns the part of it that is of a clearly counterrevolutionary nature. But he said that 80 percent of the document has been taken more or less verbatim from the KSC Action Program, whereas only about 20 percent is counterrevolutionary and deserving of condemnation. During the conversation, he also asserted that it was impossible to lump the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia together with the Communist parties of the GDR, Hungary, and Romania, since these countries took part in the war against the Soviet Union. The Slovak comrades mentioned that a week ago at the Soviet-Hungarian border in the vicinity of Komárno, Cdes. A. Dubcek and O. Cerník met with the head of the Hungarian government, Cde. E. Fok. At this meeting, the Czechoslovak comrades seemed to be hoping that the Hungarian comrades would support them at the forthcoming conference in Warsaw. After this meeting, Cdes. A. Dubcek and O. Cerník traveled to Košice, where they also invited Cde. L. Svoboda for a brief vacation in the Tatras. At the KSC East Slovakian regional committee headquarters, the three of them held a prolonged discussion. Cde. Vislocký reported that at lunch after the discussion, Cdes. A. Dubcek and O. Cerník insisted that they would rather be put into prison or become manual laborers than to retreat from the course proclaimed by the January plenum of the KSC CC.

Reported for informational purposes.

CC SECRETARY, CP OF UKRAINE
P. SHELEST

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