

February 17, 1970

**Protocol of the Conversations Between Comrade
Todor Zhivkov - First Secretary of the Central
Committee of the BKP and Chairman of the Council
of Ministers of the PRB, and Comrade Gustav Husak
- First Secretary of the Central Committee of the
KSČ**

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Summary:

The protocol summarizes the discussions between Todor Zhivkov, representing Bulgaria, and Gustav Husak, representing Czechoslovakia, during Zhivkov's visit to Prague in February 1970. The talks addressed internal party and economic developments in both countries, focusing on consolidating socialist principles and addressing challenges like economic planning and international relations. The leaders emphasized enhancing bilateral cooperation through economic specialization and cultural exchange and reaffirmed their commitment to Marxism-Leninism and solidarity with the Soviet Union. The visit reinforced their shared vision for strengthening socialist unity and addressing international challenges collaboratively. This document summary was generated by an artificial intelligence language model and was reviewed by a Wilson Center staff member.

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PROTOCOL

of the conversations between comrade TODOR ZHIVKOV - first secretary of the Central Committee of the BKP and chairman of the Council of Ministers of the PRB, and comrade GUSTAV HUSAK - first secretary of the Central Committee of the KSČ
February 17 and 18, 1970 - Prague

FIRST SESSION

February 17, 1970

/11 a.m./

Comrades also took part in the conversations:

From the Bulgarian side: Boris Velchev - member of the Politburo and secretary of the Central Committee of the BKP [Bulgarian Communist Party], Lachezar Avramov - candidate member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the BKP, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Trade of the PRB [People's Republic of Bulgaria], Grisha Filipov - member of the Central Committee of the BKP and first deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee, Georgi Bogdanov - member of the Central Committee of the BKP, head of the Second Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRB, Vladimir Videnov - member of the Central Committee of the BKP, ambassador of the PRB in Czechoslovakia.

From the Czechoslovak side: Lubomir Strougal - member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the KSČ and Chairman of the Government of the ČSSR, Vasil Bilak - member of the Presidium and Secretary of the Central Committee of the KSČ, František Hamouz - member of the Central Committee of the KSČ, Deputy Chairman of the Government, Miloslav Hruškovič - Deputy Chairman

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of the government, Pavel Auersperg - member of the Central Committee of the KSČ, head of the department of the Central Committee of the KSČ, Jaroslav Molek - adviser at the Secretariat of the First Secretary, Miroslav Holub - head of the Second Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovakian SSR, Václav David - member of the Central Committee of the Cheka and ambassador of the ČSSR in the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

GUSTAV HUSAK: Dear comrade Zhivkov, dear Bulgarian comrades, allow me on behalf of the Central Committee of our party to welcome you in connection with your friendly visit to Czechoslovakia and to the capital of our country, Prague.

For us the visits of comrade Zhivkov and all Bulgarian comrades are extremely important, as they are proof of the further deepening of our sincere friendship and fraternal ties. We are deeply convinced that this visit of Comrade Zhivkov will contribute even more to deepening the friendship between our two countries.

Once again I welcome you, dear Bulgarian comrades, welcome to Czechoslovakia.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Thank you.

GUSTAV HUSAK: How should we proceed?

TODOR ZHIVKOV: In our country, it is customary for the hosts to speak first.

GUSTAV HUSAK: We agree. As previously agreed, in our talks we will discuss three types of issues.

1. Mutual information about the situation in our parties and countries.

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2. About the relations between Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia.

3. Exchange of views on some international -problems affecting us.

First of all, I would like to provide you, Comrade Zhivkov and the other comrades with information about the state of our party and country. I assume that you are informed about the situation in our country, so I will touch on some of the main issues.

The efforts of the party and the state leadership are aimed at overall consolidation in the party and in society.

The mistakes in our party and in the construction of socialist -society, which were

made for many years, brought us in 1968-1969 to an extremely difficult situation in the party, in public organizations, in the economy, in all sectors of our life. Since the April Plenum of the Central Committee /1969/ we have focused our attention on restoring the unity of the Party on Marxist-Leninist principles. All this takes place in a very hard struggle with opportunist and anti-socialist forces. From one plenum to another, we set ourselves specific tasks in connection with this struggle. At the plenum of the Central Committee at the end of January this year we found that we had won the political struggle with the right-wing anti-socialist forces. Conditions have already been created for solving -the main economic problems.

This struggle had to start from the key positions and organs of the party. They had to leave the Central Committee

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more than 60 members and candidate members. We co-opted new honest comrades and assigned them party work. We can say that today the Central Committee, based on Marxist-Leninist principles, is unanimous on all major issues. In the same way, we had to fight in the district organs of the party. Most of the district secretaries were replaced. There have also been changes in the offices and plenums of neighborhood committees and organizations. We can already say that these organs of the party and a large part of them faithfully follow and carry out the party line. This process is gradually entering the primary party organizations as well. For now, that's where our biggest difficulties and problems are. Therefore, the last plenum of the Central Committee decided to conduct a broad political campaign, which will take a lot of party energy, in connection with the change of party cadres.

We set ourselves two main tasks:

First, to unite all party members on a Marxist basis.

Second, to purge the party of the people it does not need, who cannot be in it and do not agree with its line - right-wing elements, anti-socialist forces, demoralized people, etc. So for a few months, we -assume until the summer, our efforts will be focused on having honest conversations with every party member. Considering that the party has about 1,600,000 members and that we want to talk quite honestly and sincerely about these issues with each one,

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you can imagine what a huge and extremely delicate political task has been assigned to our party. We prepare it -well both organizationally and politically. We will follow the progress of this political campaign. Our goal is for the Czechoslovak Communist Party as a whole to become ideologically unified, combative and capable of conducting various actions. After the completion of the campaign, we will start preparations for the 14th regular party congress. We believe that it will be possible to hold the congress in 1971. For the time being, we do not set exact dates and deadlines, since we have before us this campaign of which I spoke, and, at the same time, time is needed for better preparations for the congress.

If we summarize the work we have done in the last 9-10 months inside the party, we can say that the results are very positive. We currently have a broad party asset across sectors to assist us. The right-wing forces lost the base on which they had built and united. They are not capable of conducting an action that could deceive the population, they feel defeated. But we don't live under the illusion that there isn't a lot of chaos and a lot of confusion left in people's heads. We have a heavy and difficult political task ahead of us for many years.

In the work of our party, we also place the issue of proletarian internationalism extremely high. We used the results of the Moscow Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties, directed attention to the creation of

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cooperation with all communist parties, and also to convince -our people of the necessity of this cooperation.

This year we want to take advantage of two dates - the 100th anniversary of the birth of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and the 25th anniversary of the liberation -of Czechoslovakia from the Red Army - to educate our population in the spirit of internationalism.

We do not want to overestimate the results we have achieved, but we can still say

that many things have changed in our country during this past period. Now the majority of the population accepts our alliance with the Soviet Union, with Bulgaria, with the other socialist countries as the only possibility for our future existence and development.

Another important area in which enormous damage was mainly done in 1968-1969 was the position of the Communist Party in our society. The former leadership of the party did not benefit in its work from the party's leading role in such areas as the mass media, trade unions, youth organizations, women's organizations, even in the state apparatus. In practice, the party ceased to play a role and exert influence in such a broad area as the economy. That is why we had to restore the Party's influence in all these sectors from the very beginning.

Although we are not satisfied with what has been achieved, and that we can speak of certain shortcomings in some of these areas, today we can say that radio, television and the press are carrying out the line that the Central Committee indicates. They can't

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be used against the party line, against Leninism.

Our trade union movement was extremely affected by the right-wing opportunist movement. The right-wing forces wanted and sought to create a strike force against the party out of the trade unions. Through a number of personnel and political measures, we managed to achieve a turnaround in the work of the trade union movement. Currently, the governing trade union bodies follow the party policy and support the party both politically and economically. Very great deficiencies exist in grassroots organizations in factories and other workplaces. Although there are no such trends as there were a year ago, when they organized strikes, held anti-party, anti-party conferences, and issued mass appeals, we cannot say that the main grassroots trade union organizations in the factories have been purged of right-wing elements. Therefore, they do not fulfill their basic duties.

To this we direct the attention now of all communists and workers. This was the meaning and purpose that led us to make changes recently in the leadership of the trade unions. There is still the problem of integration, as the unions split into more than 30 Czech and 30 Slovak unions. There are two national headquarters and one federal one. At the same time, trade unions appear to be a very difficult organization to manage. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out a serious integration.

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The situation in the youth organization is similar, since in 1968 it actually disintegrated. A large number of different youth unions emerged, many of which came under the influence of right-wing forces. After many months of patient and difficult work, both the federal and national leaderships of the youth organizations fell into good hands. The issue of integration into a common union of the socialist youth in Czechoslovakia is becoming more and more ripe. In all probability, within a month such a union will be formed, and during the year a unified voluntary organization of the youth will be created, recognizing the leading role of the party and its program. We believe that the young generation should be dealt with patiently because in 1968-1969 they were severely damaged by the right-wing elements. Administrative pressure in the future would not do us much good. Perhaps you know what the situation was like in our higher education institutions a year ago, where the right-wing student union organized strikes, protest actions, and demonstrations in the streets. Now a new union of students is being built, which will be a constituent part of the unified youth organization. The important thing is that there is calm in higher education institutions, academic work is going on normally. So far, at least, we haven't found any problems there. We want to deal more widely with the problems of the youth, of the young generation in general. Finding a little more time, we will consider the issue of the youth movement at some of the upcoming meetings of the Central Committee. For us, this issue is even more important because the average age of our party members is very

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high and in the last 10 years few young people have joined the party. In the villages we have primary organizations where the average age varies between 50 and 60

years. Therefore, the entry of young people, the infusion of young blood into the party is an extremely important task for us.

Much work is required to restore the leading role of the party in the administrative bodies of the state. The right-wing forces also damaged such important bodies as the army, State Security and the state apparatus. Therefore, we had to make staff changes from the highest to the lowest positions. We had to change the leadership of the Federal Parliament of the country, we changed almost the entire federal government. The change in the system of people's councils - regional, district and local - has not yet been completed.

I will not talk in detail about the measures taken in relation -to State Security and the army. We had to clean up and control the entire state system again, strengthen and strengthen the leading role of the party here as well.

At the beginning of 1969, we introduced a federal system of the state. In recent weeks, we took stock of the one-year operation of this system both in the Czech, so in the Slovak bodies, in the presidiums and in the central committees of the two parties. Our conclusion is that the basic ideas of the federal arrangement are right and good. We want to keep them in the future. We believe that this is a Leninist resolution of the national question in our country. At the same time, some shortcomings in the work of the federal authorities also appeared. First of all,

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the leadership role of central federal authorities was underutilized. That is why we took measures to strengthen the central state leadership, especially in the economy. We will make small changes in the constitutional federal system, but in practice the unified central leadership will become even more important.

After the regular XIV Congress, we want to hold regular elections for all leading state bodies in the country so that they are legitimate elected bodies.

The third area in which we have an extraordinary number of difficulties -is the economy. The roots of the economic difficulties in Czechoslovakia are multifaceted and date back 10 years or more. A number of issues are not resolved, some are partially resolved. In 1968-1969, the planning system actually completely collapsed and our entire economy collapsed. The law of the market began to act chaotically, although there was a state-wide direction in the economy. Enterprises and factories did not perceive and implement what was given as a basis. An opportunity for speculation was opened not only by private individuals, but also by entire enterprises both inside and outside the country . One of the negative consequences of this development was the very dangerous inflationary trends. Last year, the control over prices and wages was dismissed. The same happened with capital investments. As a result, the income of the population increased by 44 billion kroner /about 22%/ during these five years, and the production

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was barely holding on to its normal level. As a result, an extremely difficult situation was created in the supply of basic products to the population.

After the April Plenum of the party /1969/ we started to strengthen the influence of the party in the economy as well. The first measures were taken to stop this chaotic development of our economy. Measures were also taken regarding prices, wages, capital investments, and foreign trade. We began to prepare the plan for 1970. The comrades from Bulgaria and other socialist countries, where the economy has been developing according to plan for years, can imagine with what difficulties we were able to draw up the plan for 1970. I do not want to talk in detail in this case either. The Central Committee returned again to the planning management of the entire economy in the country. The plan that we put forward is not perfect and it does not lack flaws, but it is mainly aimed at solving the main problems - increasing production, labor productivity, stopping inflationary trends and, above all, at fully supplying the population. All this we did with great difficulty, as the governing system in the economy was greatly affected and decayed by the right-wing elements. At the end of last year and the beginning of this year, we felt very great difficulties due to the lack of electricity, fuel and many factories could not work for a long time. There are difficulties in terms of raw materials, in terms of state and labor discipline, in terms of

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of everything related to such a crisis in the economy. We strive and desire in 1970 to achieve economic and political consolidation so that we can carry out the next five-year plan, which we are beginning to prepare under relatively normal conditions.

A management system for the Czechoslovak economy is being developed. Many personnel changes await us in this area, both in the economic and political leadership. We can say that the majority of the broad masses of the people support this aspiration of ours. There is a fairly good movement to take pledges in factories and especially in such difficult places as mining, energy, some sectors of industry. The volunteer brigades on Saturday and Sunday helped us a lot. But this is still the beginning, this year we have hard work ahead of us in the field of the whole economy.

We were late in preparing the five-year plan. Although the rest of the socialist countries have not yet finished developing their five-year plans, we are even worse off, because as a result of this great two-year chaos, our bodies have to develop and reach only the basic figures. In a number of places, a general inventory of what we have, what we need and what we need to plan for will be necessary. These are difficulties in foreign trade and everywhere. We are therefore extremely interested -in the proper progress and execution of the plan for 1970, so that it may constitute a solid basis upon which we shall further develop during the next five years.

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This situation prevents the wider implementation of the decisions of the May meeting of the CMEA, where we agreed on a higher degree of specialization and cooperation. We in Czechoslovakia not only welcome and wish for this trend, but consider it our future development, our perspective, the only reasonable and possible resolution of the issues. However, we are held back by the situation we are in. Our economic negotiations with the Soviet Union, the GDR, Hungary, Poland and other countries are proceeding with great difficulty. Our comrades who work in the field of planning, of foreign trade, at present -cannot yet give forecasts for our five-year plan. Despite the enormous pressure we are doing, they want a few more months to work out these issues. This is about our economy.

In order not to speak twice, I would like to say a few words about Czechoslovak-Bulgarian relations. The leadership of our party considers that we have succeeded in fully restoring -the traditional ties between our parties and our peoples and that there are no obstacles from our side to continue cooperation in all sectors. We have not yet done what we believe needs to be done in the fields of propaganda, culture, science, etc. Probably in this direction there are many shortcomings on our side as well, why we don't have enough time to think about them.

We will be very pleased if, at this meeting of ours, we come up with a concrete proposal to strengthen the fraternal

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cooperation between our countries. Discussion of economic -issues on our side is much slower for the reasons I outlined a moment ago. We are very pleased that, at least in terms of cars, we have achieved something concrete.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: This is a success.

GUSTAV HUSAK: Cheers for this one success.

Now the commission is meeting in Sofia to discuss other -issues as well. It will be necessary for the Czechoslovak-Bulgarian commission -to meet more often and work more intensively. We assume that in the course of three or four months, when we complete the preparations for the five-year plan, we will be able to find a way out of the remaining issues that have been put up for discussion by the Bulgarian and Czechoslovak sides.

This is my information about the situation in Czechoslovakia. We may then return to some international problems.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Thank you. How do we proceed next?

GUSTAV HUSAK: Can you inform us what successes there are in Bulgaria, what has been achieved.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: With pleasure. You said "successes". We also have weaknesses. We would like to inform you about the weaknesses and difficulties as well.

Let me first of all, on behalf of our Central Committee, the Politburo, the Government and the members of our delegation, welcome you and express our great gratitude for the invitation you extended to us to visit Czechoslovakia.

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the further development of our relations. We are also glad that we are the first to visit Czechoslovakia since your January Plenum.

GUSTAV HUSAK: Now at least this visit will be in a slightly calmer atmosphere.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I don't think it is necessary to express our admiration -and satisfaction with your January plenum, since you yourself understand that such a plenum cannot fail to please us.

I will briefly inform you about what we live with in Bulgaria, what we are fighting against and what results are there in our work.

I'll start with the economy. In recent years, we have been making great efforts to raise the profitability of our economy, especially since negative trends in its development have been noticed during the current fifth five-year plan.

What are these negative trends?

Quantitative growth in the development of the economy does not correspond to profitability and qualitative indicators. We have made great efforts with the national economic plan for this year to give a decisive lead to qualitative indicators, to profitability in the development of the economy. I will bring you the most important indicators. For many years in our country, the rate of growth of the public product was ahead of the rate of growth of the national income. Now we have set a reverse trend. This year the pace

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of the growth rate of national income is outpacing the growth rate of the social product. In addition, the growth of national income is achieved one hundred percent as a result of the social productivity of labor. Capital investments this year are less than last year, however, we will introduce basic funds for a hundred and more million leva as a result of the more rational use of capital -investments based on concentration.

I cite only these three indicators, as they are synthetic indicators and show our efforts to increase -the profitability of the economy. This year, in the development of our economy, some disadvantages are also noticeable. The growth of the industrial program compared to what was achieved in previous years is lower. In recent years, this growth has averaged around 12-14% per year, and now we have fallen to 8 - 8 and something percent.

GUSTAV HUSAK: That is not so little.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: For our conditions, this is a step back. We attributed this to insufficient raw materials, especially industrial raw materials, and the two drought years. And this was adopted by the Central Committee and the National Assembly. However, we then tried to analyze in depth the reasons for the low rates -of development. It turned out that our assessment was not quite accurate. Many important, fundamental questions regarding the development of the economy must be resolved. Some must be decided on a fundamentally new basis. And that's what we've done now.

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I want to briefly inform you about the tasks we are now solving. A comprehensive examination of the raw material balance in Bulgaria and the use of raw materials showed that we treat raw materials largely uneconomically. I won't dwell on this issue in detail, but the fact that we tackled this issue gave us the opportunity to increase the rates from 8.3% to 12.2% for the month of January, and on average to 10-11% annually. So we're down to what we've had in past years.

The next issue that we believe is holding back the development of our economy and the sharp increase in its profitability concerns the modern scientific and technological revolution. We have dealt many times with the scientific and technological revolution

with a view to making wider use of technical progress. In the past, we even held two plenums on this issue, but in our opinion, this did not lead to fundamental changes in the implementation of achievements and technical progress in Bulgaria. We came to the conclusion that in our country it was underestimated that the modern scientific and technical revolution is connected with bringing the management and production -of a modern dynamic system to automation. It refers to complex automation, cybernetization and complex cybernetization based on electronification. We are now engaged in wide front with this question. We understand that this is not the end of the modern scientific and technical revolution. But in our opinion, this is the main direction. Now we are bringing 230 sites in the country to the new management system, of which 80-90 are factories and associations. At the same time, we are developing a single

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information cybernetic system for the country. You know that this problem is connected with many issues, with the training of personnel, with the development of means of automation, electronics, etc. Of course, we do not intend to solve this issue ourselves, but on the basis of specialization and cooperation with the fraternal socialist countries and, above all, with the Soviet Union. However, we have taken up its development extensively.

The next question is about agriculture. We merged TKZS [Трудово кооперативно земеделско стопанство, Labour Cooperative Agricultural Farm] 11 years ago with the aim of concentrating in the field of agricultural production. We used to have the largest agricultural enterprises in the world. A cooperative farm had an average of 45-50,000 decares /4.5-5 thousand hectares/. Then the Soviet Union carried out consolidation -and now they have holdings of 6000 hectares on average. This enabled us to rapidly develop and strengthen agriculture. You know that our agriculture is developing well. However, if we look more directly at the results, we see that in recent years it has started to stagnate. Various explanations - drought, crop failure, etc. But this is not the main reason. The main reason is that the advantage it had with the consolidation of TKZS has already been exhausted or almost exhausted. If we want to create the conditions for a new boom in agriculture, we must move towards further concentration. And we are now starting the creation of agro-industrial complexes. What are these complexes and why do we call them agrarian-industrial? Because with them it is possible to transition

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entirely to industrial technology in agriculture, to completely close the production cycle. I will give you an example of Tolbuhinski District. Eleven agro-industrial complexes are now being created there. An agrarian-industrial complex - this is an entire former neighborhood, and sometimes more than the neighborhood. Large brigades for complex mechanization are created there. They will gradually increase in -size. By 1975, one brigade would cultivate 5,000 hectares. Tolbukhin district is a grain region, and therefore the brigades will be larger. A center for chemicalization, even a scientific research -center, etc. is being created. Of course, we are taking a cautious approach, at this stage we are keeping TKZS in the complex. It has a council that coordinates and directs the work of the entire complex. It has 80% of capital investments with a view to solving the main issues related to the concentration and cheapening of production. Now the cost of one kilogram of wheat is 9-10-12 cents. With the construction and development of the complexes, one kilogram will become 3-4 cents.

I will not go into detail, I just want to underline -that we have come to the conclusion that we must look for new solutions in the field of agriculture. And that's what we're aiming for.

The next issue that holds back our development is planning. In our country, the question of whether it should be planned or not is not up for discussion. The plan is the basis for the development of our society. Without a plan, a socialist economy, a socialist society cannot develop. We had no other opinion.

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We're also about forecasting. However, we believe that the main drawback of our plan, which holds back the development of the economy, is the system of planning

from year to year, the so-called -system of dynamics.

What is this system of dynamics? This means old proportions and old tempos bring into the new period and to continue subjectivism in planning. That is why we are now moving decisively towards modeling in agricultural planning, modeling based on a comprehensive study of a given production sector. This gives us the opportunity -to reveal the structure-determining and structurally-important productions, to solve the issue of efficiency and a number of other problems that cannot be solved with the current way of planning. I will give you just one example. For us, tobacco production is very important. We have an annual export of tobacco and tobacco products for 250 million leva. Last year, we had a loss of 12 million leva from exports and domestic consumption. Planning the old way will improve the situation, but we have developed a model that is not perfect, we have charged a new committee to look at it and refine it. But even this model, which has now been developed, gives, by 1973-1975, a gradual accumulation of 95 million leva (profit). This cannot in any case be revealed with current planning methods. Therefore, we want to form our next five-year plan after working out at least 200 models of such industries and sectors that are crucial for the development of our economy. Of course we develop them

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in several variants. One option is based on investment quotas for the next five-year period and for individual ministries, associations and industries. Another option is optimal, which will require and more capital investment. And we will then assess where to increase capital investments and where to decrease them.

The next issue that bound our development is the current mechanism of the new system. Of course, we don't have such passions as you had. We have endeavored to keep a close eye on these matters. However, we believe that a fundamental correction should be made in our system.

What is it about? In our mechanism, the decisive factor was profit - not the only one, but it had a decisive influence. We will strive to increase profit because profit determines -the profitability of the economy. But the profit cannot be a universal indicator of the profitability of the economy, because it can be achieved in many other ways - by lowering the planned indicators, by the assortment, etc. But the way profit is formed in our country, we cannot consistently protect the general state and public interests, we cannot consistently maintain self-sufficiency in enterprises and associations. That is why we are now developing a new mechanism based on a normative system. We think this is the main thing. The regulatory system begins with the design work and ends with the final product. For us, this issue is not only economic, it is a political, ideological, etc. It will

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gave the opportunity to educate millions of people in our spirit in the process of production, to feel that it is their property.

Simultaneously with the concentration of production, we will also conduct a concentration of research work. By the way, already 7-8 years ago, we correctly aimed and built scientific research units where the production is. But now we will strengthen this country and complete the concentration of research work directly in production with a view to the research units taking full responsibility for the technological and technical level of production.

Another issue we are dealing with is the issue of discipline. With us it stands in a different aspect, unlike with you. We put this question in a broad aspect - strengthening of state, planning, technological and labor discipline. We are preparing a document on this.

The issue of personnel training in our country is very important. We held a plenum on the education system. We are now preparing its reform.

Discussing the issues related to the development of our economy, we still come across major weaknesses in terms of socialist economic integration in the CMEA. We are a small country and our participation in the socialist division of labor is very important to us, and perhaps that is why we are impatient. What was achieved after the special session of

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CMEA, worry us. Things are going very slowly. This creates difficulties for all socialist countries. If we take the data on the rates of economic development, we will see that in recent years they have been falling in all socialist countries. Obviously, this cannot be explained by international development alone. In our opinion, it is mainly due to the fact that we do not comprehensively and consistently solve the issues of our socialist integration. If we do not go towards creating large industrial economic complexes in our countries, we will not be able to achieve -modern economic integration. What kind of integration will he achieve if we continue as it is now - to negotiate on separate machines, on separate productions. The socialist system makes it possible to build powerful economic complexes that capitalists cannot dream of. We don't imagine it will happen so quickly, but we have to start in some areas, such as electronics, where we are lagging and already are. Now it is being worked on, but where it is said - pick it up. If, for example, in agriculture we do not coordinate -scientific research work, production work, we, the socialist countries, will lag behind in this regard. And this is in all areas. These questions are big, I'm just touching on them. So much for our economic development.

We strive to improve leadership in all areas of our lives. Last year, we carried out a reorganization of the bodies of the Council of Ministers in the spirit of the decisions of the July Plenum. We have carried out restructuring in public organizations

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trade unions, Komsomol. The Patriotic Front is a mass organization -in which the majority of the active part of the population is a member.

In order to clarify what the character of the reconstruction consists of, I will dwell on the work in the Komsomol. The Komsomol was turned into a bureaucratic organization that was not interesting for the youth and created great difficulties. We went to a rather bold decision. We transferred many state-public functions to the Komsomol Central Committee and its -local bodies and organizations. It can be said that the Komsomol is now filled with content, it has great rights. We created a state-public body under the Council of Ministers to coordinate the work among the youth. There are such bodies in the people's councils, but there are difficulties in the work among the youth - a big issue in your country, and in our country, and everywhere. We believe that for 3 years we have overcome the pattern and narrowing of the functions and work of the Komsomol. The important thing is that we are moving forward and the work is improving and there are conditions to improve. The Komsomol is directly related to sports. You could say that it essentially commands it. We have other bodies, but the Komsomol is down where mass sports are. The Komsomol also deals with pre-war training. It has the right to criticize the state bodies that have obligations to the youth. We also gave state functions to the Women's Committee.

Our party is united. International developments, what is happening in the international communist movement, "left" and right opportunism affect certain circles, certain people, but this is not a particular problem for us

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and we do not consider that we should hold any action. These issues -are clarified, there are individual cases of expulsion from the party.

Comrades, all this does not mean that there are no difficulties in our country. There are difficulties. What do they consist of, where do they come from? Apart from our weak work, there are difficulties in the fact that 80% of Bulgaria's national income is formed by imports and exports, by trade. We are a small country and in order to be able to develop successfully, we must carry out economic cooperation on a broad front, above all with the fraternal socialist countries. The problems are already big here. Comrade Husak talks about raw materials. Our economy is literally exhausted in the development of industrial raw materials. But there is nothing we can do, we cannot get them entirely from the socialist countries, mainly from the Soviet Union. Because nature has offended us a lot, we exploit iron ore with 30% and below 30% metal content and various other components that make the technology of obtaining metal difficult and expensive. We exploit the lowest calorific coal in the world. There is no other country that exploits coal with 1000-1200 calories. This is chernozem. We don't have coke. We found in Spain. Spain saved socialism!

In order to be able to export, we need to produce high quality products. And the production of high-quality -products is connected with constant modernization of production. These are some of the difficulties.

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We are preparing a party congress. According to the Statute, it should be held towards the end of the year. In connection with the congress, we are preparing a program and a new constitution. I don't know if we will be able to prepare both the program and the constitution, but we will try.

Let me briefly touch on our relationship. I fully agree with the assessment of Comrade Husak, that our traditional friendship and friendship have been restored again. I share his thought that there are no longer any reasons to further develop our cooperation on a broad front in the field of economy, in the field of culture, and along party lines, etc. Recently, especially this year, we exchanged many different delegations, including along party lines. We highly value the conversations we had during the visit of Comrade Husak in Bulgaria. The further development of our relations already depends on the activity of the relevant competent authorities, there are no other reasons.

Indeed, works in the field of economics are being held back. I don't know if they will be able to move anytime soon if we don't do something at this level. During the fourth five-year period and the beginning of the fifth five-year period - until 1965 and after 1965 - in general, our economic cooperation and trade proceeded -at a great pace. Now they have started to fall, especially lately.

We have the following proposal: to assign the Bulgarian-Czechoslovak Economic Committee to solve the issues of our economic cooperation within a double

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increase in trade until 1975. Now trade is 750 million rubles. We can go to 1 billion and 400 million - 1 billion and 500 million rubles. This is completely possible. But for this it is necessary to go to a new principle, to a new basis of cooperation and specialization, of integration, as we agreed on at the special session of the CMEA.

What do we actually offer?

From what you specialize in and export, above all, to the Soviet Union, let us also buy. This will enable you to go towards optimal seriality. And you to buy what we specialize in. I mean mechanical engineering and chemistry. It is not profitable for you or for us, except for the Soviet Union, to manufacture thousands of chemical products. We consider this offer to be realistic at this stage. This is what we did with the GDR. We agreed with Comrade Ulbricht to double the trade. There are difficulties in the specific implementation, but we are removing them.

I agree with the agreement that will now be signed for the cars. There are at least 20 such productions on which we can agree. Your group negotiates on the following principle: we'll give you this, you'll give us -something else. In this way, it will be difficult for us to go towards the expansion of trade. We need to deepen cooperation and specialization. Czechoslovakia was in second place in terms of trade with Bulgaria among other socialist countries. We value our economic cooperation with Czechoslovakia very much.

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Maybe this is not a big problem for you, but it is a big problem for us. Czechoslovakia is now in third place. We would like to return again to the second place in our cooperation.

We want once again to renew our invitation to your party-government delegation, as they say, at a high level, to visit our country at a time convenient for you, also to come to Bulgaria on vacation. We will try to create all the conditions for you to have a good rest.

Thanks for your attention.

We can stop now and -talk about some questions of the international situation in the afternoon.

GUSTAV HUSAK: Yes, during the afternoon talks we could talk -about these issues.

/1:05 p.m./

[end p. 28]

SECOND SESSION

/3:30 p.m.s/ February 17, 1970

GUSTAV HUSAK: As we agreed, at this meeting I will be informed -about some international problems. From our side, Comrade Bilak will make this information.

VASIL BILAK: You know that not only -our internal situation, but also our external situation was fundamentally disturbed. Two main questions arose and remain before the party:

1. To lead our country out of the international communist isolation.
2. To normalize our relations with all communist -and labor parties and countries.

We decided to link the lifting of international isolation -with the preparation of the conference in Moscow. Some fraternal parties, both in the West and in the East, wanted to frustrate the convening of the council through the Czechoslovak question. We decided that we needed to make changes before going to the Moscow meeting. If Dubček was the leader of our delegation, we would have created a number of difficulties at the meeting.

I won't dwell on our attitude to the Moscow conference, you know what kind of participation our delegation took.

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Secondly, in parallel with the preparations for the Moscow Conference, we had the question of normalizing our relations with the socialist countries along party and state lines, and also with the communist parties of the capitalist countries.

Thanks to the initiative of Comrade Husak, we can say today that our relations with the socialist countries have been restored and normalized. At the January Plenum, we reported that our relations with the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, GDR, Poland, Mongolia and Hungary had been normalized. Today, there are no issues that can divide us. The attitude with the Romanian party is a little different. We have differences with the Romanian comrades on the issue of China, on the issue of the Middle East. They were very supportive of Dubček, they did not inform the communists in Romania about the situation in our country. In a word - they are treated too officially. We sent there a new ambassador who wanted to make information about the plenum, but they did not accept it. Last year we exchanged two delegations of the Central Committee and the Control Commission, but the situation did not improve. We look at this calmly and are looking for a way to activate our relationship with them.

On relations with Yugoslavia. In 1968 they showed great sympathy for the movement in Czechoslovakia. They supported the so-called government-in-exile of Ota Šik. They show no sympathy for the recent changes, even this unsettles them. We strive to overcome these differences. We also replaced the two ambassadors who were there because they were on the right. The Yugoslavs were affected by this change. Recently, they have been saying that they do not want to be greater Czechoslovaks than the Czechoslovaks themselves. We do not exchange delegations with them. We were having a conversation

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with their delegation to the Congress of the French Communist Party. They promise to improve their relations with us.

We don't have any state, transport, or commercial ties with Albania. We try, but they rudely reject everything. They insult the current leadership.

We have very good relations with Vietnam. They are sympathetic to our leadership. We satisfy all their requests, we help with everything.

We have a significant improvement in relations with the Korean Party. Kim Il Sung has sent a personal letter. We do holiday exchanges.

Our relations with Cuba are more special. There are special views, but we do not aggravate relations. We strive to send youths for the cane campaign, to maintain normal relations. They think we are less revolutionaries and more traders. However,

we strive to fully satisfy their requests.

Our relations with China are more special. They do not want any ties along party lines, they do not recognize our party as revolutionary. For them, we are opportunists, revisionists. On a state level, we have diplomatic relations, we trade, but at the level that was earlier. They try to interfere even here in our work. They organize actions. Last week there were separate demonstrations among foreign students who were supporters of Maoism.

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We have good relations with the French Communist Party. They have changed their opinion, they are helping the current leadership, they want to help, and we are on the same page on all issues.

Our opinions are different with the Greek political immigrants. Of them, we have about 2,000 members. After the creation of the second central -committee in the work of the Greek political emigrants in Romania and in our country, a big split occurred. A large part of them went to the side of the right during the events in our country, they allow anti-Soviet manifestations. Koligiannis has around 850 members. They are healthy and support the current -management. Our Central Committee supports the Koligiannis group. The Italian comrades openly criticize us and accuse us -of interfering in the work of the Greek Communist Party.

The differences with the Swedish /left/, Norwegian and Finnish -communist parties do not worry us. Essentially, their differences are not with us, but with the international communist movement.

We must note that there are differences between us and the Italian Communists. While they had great sympathy for the previous leadership, they have not said a single good word about the current one. They attack the politics of the party and above all the first secretary. An article was written in their theoretical journal by Berioni. We want them to send a delegation at whatever level they want, to see what positions our leadership stands on, and not to refer to information from our emigrants. At the Congress of the French Communist Party, we spoke to the Italian representatives, saying that they should not create joy for the bourgeois press. They promised to inform their management. They said they were happy with the conversations we had with them.

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We cannot talk to the Communists of the English Communist Party.

We had several meetings with the Spanish comrades, including Ibárruri. She had a comparatively more correct view. According to them, it would have been better if we had shot a few communists to prove that the situation was serious, and then the Warsaw Pact troops had advanced. Perhaps this is their understanding of fighting. With much of their management I had -useful and friendly conversations. They say that the Spanish leadership slipped up on Garodi's theory. With the consent of the Spanish Communists, we restored trade relations with Spain.

With the communists of the Latin American countries, with the exception of the Dominican Republic, we have good relations.

We had and still have good relations with the Japanese communists. We have our own problems with West Germany.

We have not had regular relations with the Communist Party of West Germany for 25 years. We are not clear on the question of who represents the communists in Germany - Max Reimann or the new party. We thought that Reimann represented the Communist Party, and the new party was just an addition. On the state line, we act as we agreed in Moscow. Our agreement with them must expire, and politically, we are in no hurry.

There is a very important internal matter for us after the events of August. This is the question of our so-called communist emigration. In 1948, the bourgeoisie fled, and now communists fled, even members of the Central Committee, such as Ota Šik and others.

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Some have returned, and others we think will not return. Out of a total of about 50,000 escaped citizens, about 10,000 are members of the party. From January 1st

until now, everyone was supposed to return, but very few have. 1,200 party members have already been expelled because they are in the service of anti-communism. They are mainly in Paris, London, Vienna and Rome. They are preparing to publish "literary lists", support Aragon, Garodi. It turned out that right-wing opportunism merged with Maoism in an anti-Soviet position. In the face of our new emigration, the French bourgeoisie has a serious helper and is using it against the French Communist Party. We are aware that we have to take seriously measures and that we have a complex and difficult job ahead of us. Some of our embassy staff will remain. This empowers the right to resist.

This is about our relations with the fraternal communist and labor parties.

In conclusion, we want to say that we are implementing and will implement the decisions of the Moscow Conference and all other decisions we have taken.

Our policy and line regarding the Middle East is clear. We support the proposal to convene a European Security Council.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: If I may, I would like to say a few words about the information in the morning, made by Comrade Husak, as well as the current one, made -by Comrade Bilak. We are deeply satisfied with what is happening in your party and country. And if asked, we'll say your line is perfectly correct. With great satisfaction

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we read the report of Comrade Husak at the January Plenum. It is to some extent a program document.

We informed our Central Committee and all communists about your last plenum. I can state that in our person you will have a sincere friend and supporter in the conduct of this line.

I will touch briefly on some issues that Comrade Bilak affected.

The Soviet Union is our double liberator. But we are connected not only by this age-old friendship. Thirteen years ago, our Central Committee discussed and adopted a line of continuous economic, political and ideological rapprochement with the Soviet Union, with the CPSU. And we run this line. If we decide to change it, we will be overthrown.

Our relations with Poland, GDR and Hungary are good. Romanians are very active in establishing contacts and cooperation. Our economic cooperation is generally developing. Our conversations with them at a higher level are more of a discussion because they are stepping back from class positions.

Our relations with Yugoslavia are more strained than between you, and that is because of the so-called Macedonian question, which has become historic. At a meeting with Tito, we agreed / the so-called "Zhivkov-Tito or Tito-Zhivkov" agreement / on the issue of Macedonia. I told them that according to the data of all historians - Turkish, Serbian, Bulgarian, even according to a special Carnegie survey - there were 1.2 million Bulgarians in Vardar Macedonia before the Second World War. I asked them where these Bulgarians were. They are silent. Also, in Macedonia now enemy Number 1 is the one who

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says he is Bulgarian. I told them that we have nothing against the formation -of a Macedonian nation, but not on an anti-Bulgarian basis and that those who say they are Bulgarians should not be persecuted. Second, not to claim the so-called Pirin Macedonia, which is part of Blagoevgrad District. When we left them free to write whatever they wanted, only 0.4% wrote Macedonians, and all the rest Bulgarians. We agreed with Tito to discuss this issue in scientific journals, but they are not honoring this agreement. After the August events, they started writing against us again. They write - we are silent. At the center, in our opinion, is the American intelligence that wants to scold us. Tito wants to meet. We agree. Recently they have been campaigning again, but this is a weakness of their revisionist, opportunistic course. We think there is no reason not to regulate our relations unless the Americans force them to do so.

Relations with Albania and the Albanian Communist Party are the same as yours. With Korea, with Vietnam - also.

They are good with Cuba, even they say very good. Maybe because we have about 1,000 specialists there and the Cubans are very happy with them. I twice wanted to go, but got sick, but this year I will try to be healthy to go. It's definitely July.

Our relations with China are like yours.

Comrades from the Italian Communist Party -want contacts. We received Galluzzi. They want to get out of the isolation that has been created around them. However, it is felt that they want to establish a center outside the Soviet Union. Of course we can't

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let's agree with that. As for the British Communist Party, John Gollan is against us. This was evident even at the Moscow meeting.

For the Greek Communist Party. We support the supporters of Grozos-Koligiannis. In our country, Greek political immigrants are united because they are members of our party and do not have such disagreements. We are concerned about the situation in their country. We give them all the help we can, we even risk it as a country. But they are not well inside.

A few words about the Balkans. Our relations with Turkey are good. It even sounds absurd, but they are better than Yugoslavia -and Albania, where the leadership is communist. The Justice Party maintains good contacts with the BZNS [Български земеделски народен съюз, Bulgarian Agrarian National Union], their intellectuals - with the Patriotic Front. Turkish senators for life and ruling circles have respected the successes of our country. In a private conversation, Demirel himself told me: "Your method of industrialization is comparatively better, and in agriculture you are 50 years ahead." But Turkey is a member of NATO and our relations cannot be any different than with a member of NATO.

Our relations with Greece are cold. The junta makes statements that it will respect the 12 concluded agreements , and so far they are respecting them. Trade is going well.

In our relations with the FRG, we are guided by the collectively developed -line. We are further away and have no territorial issues with them. They don't have to give to us, we have to give to them. We are waiting and we'll wait.

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I want to end by saying that the situation is difficult, but last year we achieved great success. This is the result of our collective work and, above all, the correct policy of the CPSU and the countries participating in the Warsaw Pact. These successes are successes for the international communist movement. The collective discussion of the main political, economic, and other questions is a sure guarantee of our future success.

GUSTAV HUSAK: I want to assure you that there is complete unity in the leadership -of our party now. At the plenary session, it was decided to come up with a comprehensive report on all the issues and then make the changes. The Central Committee has adopted this course of action, and after the changes made there are no forces which can alter this line.

If in 1968-1969 Czechoslovakia was the weak link in the socialist camp, now it is not such a link. Czechoslovakia deservedly took its place.

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THIRD SESSION

February 18, 1970 /3 p.m./

GUSTAV HUSAK: We are very satisfied with the visit to the factory that we did together. There were other plants that wanted you to visit, but we left it up to the GC [???] Not clear at all what this abbreviation means] to decide which plant to go to. Indeed, the Tatra plant is old, but it works well. We will have to make some changes.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I also want to emphasize that we are satisfied with this meeting at

the plant. I had a meeting with comrades from the "Georgi Dimitrov" factory. I got a more immediate impression of the work and conditions in the cotton mills. Comrade Avramov reported that the negotiations went very well. Cooperation in the automotive industry, which will amount to 150 million rubles, is a great achievement. What is the main thing? The main thing is that we cooperate, integrate -and specialize.

I think that it is not necessary to sign the communique, but to agree with the members of the two delegations and it can be published tomorrow.

Once again, thank you for the invitation to come here. It is clear to us how much effort you are making to deal with the consequences of the counter-revolution. And in our country, after the April 1956 Plenum, the petty-bourgeois element began to manifest itself. But we quickly reorganized ourselves, even reduced the criticism of the past, and

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intensified the fight against anti-Soviet sentiments. And it cost us a lot of work to win over the vacillating both inside and outside the party. In our country, they failed to break the working class. This happened among the intelligentsia and among a part of the cadres. There was a danger of breaking the unity. So we fully understand your difficulties now.

GUSTAV HUSAK: The depth of the decay can be judged by the fact that in about a year and a half, the trade unions, the youth -organization and the state apparatus were destroyed, and no control was exercised by the leadership, not to mention the fact that the healthy forces had to almost 8 months to collect illegally. Some comrades even thought of founding a new party. All this had an impact on the economy. Now we were able to recover activity, but what remained in people's minds will be difficult to overcome. At the Georgi Dimitrov plant, for example, we were able to change the party committee only in September. The situation among the intelligentsia is serious. We haven't even dissolved the party committee of cinematography. The situation among the youth is difficult, but we are taking measures to improve it.

Thank you for the frank friendly conversation and help.

/ 4 p.m./

Prepared / protocol:

/ M. Dalekova /

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COMMUNIQUE

ON THE VISIT OF COMRADE TODOR ZHIVKOV TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA

At the invitation of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and the first secretary of the Central Committee of the KSČ, Comrade Gustav Husak, from February 17 to 19 this year the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Comrade Todor Zhivkov visited Prague in response to the visit of Comrade Gustav Husak in Sofia at the end of July 1969.

During the friendly meetings between Gustav Husak and Todor Zhivkov, negotiations also took place, in which comrades Boris Velchev - member of the Politburo and secretary of the Central Committee of the BKP, Lachezar Avramov - candidate member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the BKP took part. Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Trade of the PRB, Grisha Filipov - Member of the Central Committee of the BKP and First Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Committee, Georgi Bogdanov - Member of the Central Committee of the BKP, Head of the Second Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRB, Vladimir Videnov - member of the Central Committee of the BKP, ambassador of the PRB in Czechoslovakia.

From Czechoslovak side participated Comrades Lubomir Štrougal - member of the

Presidium of the Central Committee of the KSČ and Chairman of the Government of the ČSSR, Vasil Bilak - member of the Presidium and Secretary of the Central Committee of the KSČ, František Hamouz - member of the Central Committee of the KSČ, Deputy Chairman of the Government, Miloslav Hruškovič - Deputy Chairman of the government, Pavel Auersperg - member of the Central Committee of the KSČ, head of a department in the Central Committee of the KSČ,

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Jaroslav Molek - advisor at the Secretariat of the First Secretary, Miroslav Holub - head of the Second Department at the Ministry -of Foreign Affairs of the ČSSR, Václav David - member of the Central Committee of the KSČ and ambassador of the ČSSR to the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

Comrade Todor Zhivkov was received by the president of the ČSSR, Comrade Ludvík Svoboda, with whom he had a cordial, friendly conversation. During his visit to Czechoslovakia, Comrade Todor Zhivkov met with the workers of the ČKD - Smíchov plant in Prague, where he got to know the nature of production. On the initiative -of the party and trade union organization, a friendly discussion took place at the plant, at which Comrade Todor Zhivkov gave a positive assessment of the labor achievements of the Czechoslovak working class and conveyed to the factory team and all the workers from the ČSSR a hearty greeting from the workers in Bulgaria. The conversation took place in a friendly atmosphere.

During the talks, comrades Husak and Zhivkov informed each other about the internal situation in the two fraternal -parties and countries, about the results and upcoming tasks in the construction of the socialist society in the PRB and Czechoslovakia, exchanged thoughts about the current state and further development of the Bulgarian Czechoslovak relations and cooperation.

They found that there are favorable conditions for further successful development of economic cooperation, which can be realized primarily through specialization and cooperation. This cooperation should first of all be concentrated in the field of mechanical engineering and the chemical industry, as well as in other industrial branches, the development of which is of interest to both countries. An example of such cooperation is the agreement on cooperation in the production of heavy-duty vehicles, signed on February 18, 1970.

It was established that the exchange of goods between the ČSSR and the PRB is mutually beneficial and increases annually. In the future

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the two countries intend to increase trade on the basis of specialization and cooperation in production and the coordination of investment construction in both countries, especially in the industries with the most favorable conditions.

In the field of scientific and technical cooperation, the interest of the countries will focus on the development -of joint scientific research programs. For this purpose, the two countries will discuss the possibility of establishing joint scientific research institutes.

Comrades Gustav Husak and Todor Zhivkov also discussed current issues of the international situation and the international -communist movement. They appreciated the importance of the meeting of the party and government leaders of the seven socialist countries on December 3 and 4, 1969 in Moscow and emphasized that the two parties and countries will continue to make efforts to convene a pan-European conference on security issues and the cooperation between all the countries in Europe.

They confirmed the opinion that the German Democratic -Republic should receive international legal recognition and that in solving international and European questions it should take its due equal position with other European countries.

Unreserved solidarity with the struggle of the Vietnamese people against American aggression was expressed. Israel's growing aggressiveness was condemned and support was expressed for the just struggle of the Arab peoples.

The two fraternal parties once again emphasized the correctness -of the conclusions of the Moscow Conference of the Communist and Workers' Parties in 1969. The results of this conference were a success for the international communist and labor

movement. A firm determination was expressed to consistently implement its decisions, which both parties consider to be their international duty.

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In the unity and fighting solidarity between the socialist countries, loyalty to Marxism-Leninism, proletarian internationalism, and sincere friendship with the Soviet Union, both parties see the guarantee for the successful construction of socialism, for the independence and prosperity of both countries, for their protection from the advances of imperialism. The initiatives and coordinated actions of the socialist -countries contribute to solving the problems in Europe and the world.

Comrades Gustav Husak and Todor Zhivkov, on behalf of the communist parties in both countries, stated that Czechoslovakia -and Bulgaria are unwaveringly determined to strengthen the fraternal union between the two countries, to contribute in every way to strengthening the unity and cohesion of the world socialist system and to the development of its power.

The conversations took place in a very cordial, friendly manner, and they showed a complete unity of opinion on all the discussed -issues. The course and results of the negotiations significantly contributed to the further development of all-round cooperation between the ČSSR and the PRB and the two fraternal parties in the interest of the common cause of socialism and peace.

On behalf of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist -Party and the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria Comrade Todor Zhivkov invited the party-government delegation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic to visit the People's Republic of Bulgaria. The invitation was accepted with pleasure.

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