

September 26, 1946

**Speech to Czechoslovak Communist Party members
by an unidentified Czechoslovak Communist Party
member**

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Summary:

This speech was given by a Czechoslovak Communist Party member to his comrades; it outlines the general Czechoslovak stance on border disputes, expelling Hungarians and Germans, domestic policies and workers' wages.

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Czech

Contents:

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...wanted in his report at today's central ...several international political questions
....sense and background of the clamor about the menacing danger of a new world war. Luckily, however, most competent comrade Stalin rid us of this detailed part of my report. He gave a very clear answer to these questions in his last interview, made public today. We can satisfactorily state that the answers of comrade Stalin are so clear and I presume that you have read it and it is the confirmation of our original position, the position of our party on this important question. We can surely recall how several months ago, when we were discussing in the central committee the international situation in detail, we concluded at that time that the current speeches about the danger of a third world war, the threat of the atomic bomb and similar things are basically nothing but extortionist maneuvers by the western powers, and that through this account they want to deprive the Soviet Union of its victory and also deprive the nations which participated in the last world war of the fruit of their victory over Naziism, over fascism and over the world reaction. It is understandable that the leading power of world imperialism, i.e., the United States, cannot be completely content with the result of this world war, especially when this result signifies the strengthening of the Soviet Union's positions on the one hand, and the strengthening of the working peoples' positions in many other countries on the other hand. We can surely remember that before the war, I believe it was during the XXIII congress of the VKS (b), comrade Stalin prophesied that if the imperialists should touch the war, then at the end of the war they will not be able to count all the countries in their control, and this actually is the case. If we see today that the Soviet Union emerged from the war un... [top of next page missing]...the origin was nothing else than the platform of the Soviet Union and if one takes Hungary as well, then in Hungary the influence of the international imperialism is weakened, so that we see on one side the strength and well-roundedness of the positions of the Soviet Union and next to it the position of the states which, some more and others less, definitively ceased to be the instrument of the imperialists in the intrigues against the Soviet Union. It is no wonder, comrades, that many sirs in the west are not pleased with this! If we look at the Far East, we see that the position of the Soviet Union, especially in China, has been significantly strengthened after the defeat of Japanese imperialism. It also did not happen in the Far East, as in the majority of imperia-[top of next page missing]... the defense of the workers' movement, the representatives of the new people's regimes of working people, we are the bearers of quiet, rest, order and peace. For this it is necessary for us to not heed the words of destruction and not lose our cool and authority, as comrade Stalin says: there is no reason here to let ourselves get intentionally infected by unrest. And it is very understandable, comrades, that after such a horrible war as the last world war was, nations cannot but yearn for peace, and our position and directives are so predetermined that our victory is being followed not only by the nations of the countries in which the people are now applying a new regime, but also...[top of next page missing]...:from Poland. In the light of what we now see at the conference, we comprehend that if it were not for our wise, farsighted and for our country a very meritorious step, we would have the same problem with the Germans as the Hungarians. We can therefore conclude that the liquidation of the German minority is going forward at a good pace; if the numbers which the settlement offices are giving us are correct, then we still have about half a million Germans in the republic, so that the removal will be finished according to the program, if not sooner. Only the replacement of the Germans in various work positions is now becoming a new important problem for us. [last sentence is illegible and the top of the next page is missing]...during every opportunity to emphasize the humanitarian reasons of his position toward our demand for the removal of the Hungarians. We know that it is hypocrisy that the humanity and all the human rights which these people feigning at the Paris conference do not say anything when their direct interests are being discussed. They do not want to be deprived of the

possibility to interfere in the internal political terms not only in Hungary but in Central Europe in general. Finally our demand is supported by the Soviet Union a trump card in the hands of the English, which they do not want to relinquish. It is not the question of human rights that plays a role, but the questions of power, the question of retaining the possibility to intervene in the affairs of Central Europe. So the...[top of next page missing]...so that in the event that we received the minority, we could continue negotiating the matter and [illegible verb], so that the matter would remain open for further negotiations between the participating parties. We will further see how well we can negotiate with the Hungarians outside of the peace conference, under the direct pressure of the Soviet Union, which is actually occupying Hungary. At every step you see how it was wise of Stalin that he "struck while the iron is hot" and rid us of the Germans in Postupim, how it is now hard what regards the Hungarians and other "friends." We must count on this, and in the event that we not succeed to compel the Hungarians to retreat even with the support of the Soviet Union, we will have to solve the problem of the Hungarian...[top of next page missing] ... they are willing to meet us halfway in this direction, when we allow for a revision of the borders at Tesinsko. They even said that they will give us an even bigger territory, that they will be magnanimous, that for every centimeter which we give them in Tesinsko, they will give us three in Ratibofsko. For them the question of Tesinsko is of the utmost importance. To this we answered that Tesinsko is a momentous question for us. We offered them an exchange of population. We proved that they need more work force and that this method could solve the border question and both sides would be accommodated. The Poles did not want to agree to our proposal and the question remained open....[top of next page missing] ...with our visit to Moscow they put to us the question of what we mean to do in order to improve the relationship between Czechoslovakia and Poland quickly before the negotiations on Germany at the peace conference. We laid out our positions there. The Soviet Union, Stalin and Molotov fully agreed with us, as long as our position on the Tesinsko question was concerned. They explained, however, the attitude of Poland, their internal problems, that the reaction takes advantage of every matter against the government, so that it does not have a free hand. In the end we agreed upon our original proposal, that we will not leave things aside and that we would make a clean slate of one issue. This is in the knowledge of our alliance against possible German aggression. It should have been carried out in such a way that we would have signed a similar treaty to the one we have with Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, also with the Poles under the condition that we would tell one another, that we will agree on the remaining issues within two years. This was our original position toward the Poles when we could not reach an agreement. And that was when the Soviet Union proposed a solution that was satisfactory for us. On the basis of this we discussed the matter in the government and we drafted a resolution for this to be negotiated with Poland. As for our part, we worked out a proposal for a treaty of alliance, with a similar content as with the one with Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Our representatives in Paris came into contact with the Polish representatives who are at the peace conference. The Poles originally agreed with Moscow's proposal for such a treaty, under the condition that the other matters...[top of next page missing]...that we will agree as we will agree, we retreated from the position and demanded that we first of all agree in what way we will solve these question. The negotiations with the Poles have reached a dead end. We met them halfway and told them: good, although it is not in the spirit of the Moscow negotiations, we will agree to on some sort of protocol which would be acceptable to us. But they were not satisfied and they insist on their terms, they demand in particular that we practically commit not to hold internationally a minority number against them. If we on one side refuse the Hungarians this, we cannot agree to this with the Poles. All the more, when the Soviet Union did not demand anything of the sort in the Ukrainian question. The matter of negotiating with the Poles chagrins me more than the matter with the Hungarians. If we were to make a clean slate with Poland, it would be easier during the settlement of the Hungarian matter. Meanwhile the Poles insist upon their terms and refer to the domestic situation, they are before elections and it could help the reaction. We must count on these facts and it is true that our Moscow comrades are our biggest defenders at the peace conference.

We must count on the fact that these questions will have an impact on our domestic political conditions. Our partners are already preparing to take advantage of the international political difficulties that our republic has. You see this in allusions in the presses, in particular those of the People's and National Socialist parties, that they are especially happy that we are unsuccessful, and if these difficulties cross over to the domestic political situation, they will use them in a narrow partisan way against us and our government, as long as it is represented by our party. This was also manifested in the so-called political delegation which we sent to Paris and where it acted in such a way as if it were its aim to apologize for our republic (Chadova) and also to gather material in order to slander the communists and the Soviet Union by claiming that they did not help us, that we, as communists, voted with the Soviet Union and thus made us stand on the other side cut off from the western powers and we remain alone.

We are not scared of this political campaign. I am convinced that my position and the plan of the Soviet Union we will fully defend to the nation and that the efforts of our partners will in the end be in vain. We must, however, be aware of the fact that even after the Paris conference many international political problems will remain for us and that our party will be faced with great momentous decision-making and finding answers to these questions. And here we will have to decide with which radical method we will solve both these matters, it will require a far-reaching resolution behind which the party will stand. Otherwise, we have proceeded correctly in these issues. Because of our domestic political conditions and keeping in mind our interests, I think that we cannot have to feel any remorse or doubts. This, comrades, what concerns the peace conference and foreign politics.

Now I want to mention the problems of our domestic politics. Four months have elapsed since the May elections. Tomorrow the 26th it will be four months. As you know, it took another six months after the election before a new government was created. The central committee was informed in detail of this phase. On the whole I think that we can say that our tactics during the creation of a new government were correct, were proved right and showed themselves to be...[last word illegible and top of next page missing]...the people.

The second task at hand during the creation of the new government was the establishment of a governmental program. We knew that it would be a battle to implement the program, which is supposed to be the basis of the government's activity for the next two years, and it will be necessary to decide in battle. Two important points stand before our government.

The first is a two-year plan and the second a new constitution.

We can conclude that some of our partners' circles until the last minute with various means tried to make it difficult to create a truly influential and realistic and substantial governmental program. Shortly before the session of the Central National Assembly, where the program of the government was supposed to be unveiled, they wanted to try to throw sticks at our feet. They did not want to allow for a new government, headed by the communists, to come before the National Assembly with a comprehensive program which would be equal to the Kosice program. They wanted it to not find a response and go away. Much depended on how the new government presented itself. Our friends wanted us to present ourselves in the worst possible way and they came with a program which was the same as the program of Fierlinger's second government. It was necessary to have shrewd maneuvers and preparedness in order to force them against a wall and I can conclude again that we succeeded. You recall that we said at the last meeting still before the elections that one of the big political tasks will be to get the two year plan and the whole program of the new government to be as popular as the Kosice program, for it to be a whip in our hands with which we could goad our partners, the cement which would hold together all the forces. For it to become as popular at least as the Kosice program. I think that today

after a period of over two and a half months after the declaration of this program, we can say that this important task was very successfully fulfilled and that today the two year plan, and the constructive program of our government is at the very least just as popular as the Kosice governmental program, so if we set aside this stage of our domestic political development, we can be completely satisfied. We succeeded in the most important-to set up a program for two years f work for our government.

Now the battle for the implementation of our governmental program stands in the foreground, in particular the realization of the two-year plan. We also think, as far as the government is concerned, we should strike while the iron is hot for the passage of the governmental program, for it to be worked out in all possible details in order to become binding. Today these tasks have significantly advanced and I would like to emphasize here, that our national economic committee and our national economic workers deserve not insignificant credit for this. We are doing new things here, we are first learning, we cannot copy what is in the Soviet Union when we plan because we have to contend with different elements. So we are experimenting. In as much as the merits of all experts can be overlooked, who are the strength and main lever for this work, they drag the other experts from the other parties in tow, they are so much more deeply rooted in this that during the further definition so much was done that in the next few months we can sell this matter to the National Assembly. This is one aspect of the things relating to the battle for the implementation of the two-year plan.

The other side of the battle for the implementation of the two year plan is in our entire public life and national economy. We can declare today that the problem of preparations and realization is not only an idle figure on paper, but it has real suppositions and footing, which should be further built upon for the two-year plan. I point again to my expose in parliament and I can conclude that these material prerequisites for the two-year plan have also continued to ameliorate satisfactorily. Esteemed comrades, let us examine just the agricultural production: we have on the whole overcome the particular problems of agricultural production, despite the fact that precisely in agriculture the problem of work force was worse than before in these months. It is true that good weather helped us and through all this even the total yield of our agricultural work contributed to the point that we can now speak of a rise in the yield. During recent weeks in the border regions we are having a sharper crisis in connection with the removal of the Germans. This is temporary and I think that the production will be significantly more active than we assumed with the expected good yield of potatoes and sugar beets. Also, the industrial yield is getting better. We are going forward in this direction. We were frightened of coal calamities. Even though we are not out of the woods, especially for the most difficult winter months, the development of our production is, on the whole, good. Industrial production in other sectors is also on the rise and thus we have more a positive prediction for the two-year plan, which is the program of the government, to be successful. We see, even though there is something unhealthy here, that our national industry is becoming profitable. As for consumer goods, we see that the nationalized businesses are functioning without deficits and with more significant gross gains. It is natural that the matters of the profitability of heavy industry-mining, metallurgy et. al.- are much more troublesome, and we have not yet been able to quickly fix them. There are also the panic cries of our friends, (who screamed that the work of the nationalized companies is unprofitable) is demagoguery and is only done with transparent intent. Our heavy industry is working much cheaper than before the war.

Anyone who can work and works, will get work. And here we see that even less is being paid from the wages than these wages show, which are regularly exceeded. If we consider that we raised women's wages, that we raised the wages of the lowest paid categories, if we consider it all we can say that the general standard of our people is improving. And affairs here are not otherwise than in they are in all the capitalist countries today without the differences that existed after the war, we are witnesses to this everywhere. That expensiveness rose sharply...[top of next page missing] ... relatively succeed in maintaining the standard of living in balance. We must see this as a great success of our policies and it is proof of how now, even

though we are not working at full capacity, the result of nationalization is beneficial, as far as the division of the national income and production is concerned.

The total national income is lower than in 1938. Our generated expenses, even if we look at them administratively in the state apparatus, are higher than they were and in spite of this it is relatively being kept at a balanced standard of living of the broad masses. This means that what before and elsewhere in capitalist countries went into the pockets of the big capitalists, today is being put to the good of the working masses. If, however, comrades, if it is naturally so, how is it possible and why are there now again more insults, why is there more unrest, nervousness and uncertainty in our entire public and it influences the moods of the people inside. I could, comrades, state a whole series of reasons and it would be later shown that in places individual cases are being generalized. Many times what people are complaining about is not the most important and crucial, and what is decisive and serious is forgotten. I want to somehow greatly simplify, I see this growth of complaints as the result of the deliberate work of our reaction, which, as I have already said, has an interest in spreading nervousness, unrest and discontent, and for this it uses all possible and impossible pretexts, [illegible word] grievances, etc.

We must be aware that the reaction's circles are pointing to these changes deliberately, that they are focusing in particular on making the masses nervous and agitated and thus they are slowing the masses' further constructive elan. Look, comrades, at several such things. Statistics show that we raised the working person's average income more than triple.

Because of such an average salary, there are naturally such variations that we in the first place raised the salary of manual laborers, who were the worst paid, and the workers who were better off before the war are now worse off. And this is generalized and prevented today. We raised the salary of roughly hundreds of thousands people who were badly paid, and we did not raise it for tens of thousands, or at least not as we would have wished, and this is not seen.

The salaries of directors of national enterprises are becoming a problem—a storm in a glass of water. Before such a general director made many many millions compared to which the pay of a minister was mere pocket money, everyone was silent. Today we want to take advantage of technical intelligence, attract it to us and use their capabilities for our constructive program, we are improving the standard of living of the widest strata, so that they could calmly devote themselves to their work, and we are met with screams and those same people who considered it natural and lawful when a general director or a counsel has a higher pay. While it is true that we seized banks and big businesses from the capitalists, we took the million salaries away from the capitalists who were managing them and we are giving the money to the technical intelligence, which wants to go with us, so it does not have to worry about living well. We will thus save many millions for the national economy. In spite of this, there are still complaints about directors' pays. It is clear where they are coming from and who has an interest in it. Let us take the question of the work force. On one hand they call for the removal of the Germans, and when they are removed they say: who caused the work force shortage in agriculture? On another hand the apparatus is weighed down by the shortage, but when it reaches out, they shout: take such complaints about the conditions to the border regions. What is sure is that here and there one finds a phenomenon, and when one looks at it, one finds justified grievances. The craftsmen, farmers, the poor, the farm hands before the war could not even dream to have naturally such things as were given to those who went there, that we could not give them land, a house with a key and carpet, totally finished. And so you have it even with the black market. Here it is reproached why the party, why the government did not go against the black market. But, comrades, it is forgotten that we took from the capitalists their meaning, and if there is a black market today, it is the bankrupted stratum of declassé elements, which no longer has any influence in our country. It is forgotten that all the talk around the black market is stupid

demagoguery. There is a proposal to create labor camps, but believe me, this is stupid demagoguery. We will kill the black market when there will be enough of everything and for little money, when the national industry will be producing cheaply. But that the profiteers are spending thousands, they make us out to be the culprits, if it were not the same elsewhere, as if it were our fault. But this, however, is not the decisive factor. Whether you examine it from one or the other end, there are no real reasons for the mass discontent with the regime and if there are, they are brought about individually in certain lone phenomena and cases, which it is not in our power to eliminate. These are cases, which are not generalized and are also often repeated and described by our people as the most important. It is necessary for everyone to understand who has a vested interest in this, who brings all this about, who has a stake in this, to spread such unrest. Otherwise, some discontent and complaints naturally have their justification.

This is the clear real reason for some unrest in our public. As long as it is also referred to in the party, it has a response. This is certainly because the party is a party of a million, it is not removed from the masses, it is connected to them by thousands and thousands of joints and threads. As for the appearance of a certain discontent, I think that it has on one side a praiseworthy reason, and at that it is the concern of good communists, old and young, for the party to not deceive, for the party to not meet a dead-end, for it to not sell itself. This is praiseworthy and understandable, as long as criticism inside the party stems and originates from this than it is justified and healthy. And on the other side we must be aware that now a certain intra-party phenomenon is a big part of a petty bourgeoisie grown wild, for it comes from unappeased notions of how the party will suppress it. I am convinced that it is nothing serious. Since the beginning we have expected that a party of millions, which under the conditions of a formal democracy stands at the helm of the state with its other partners, would have to contend with some friction. This understandably is not in itself a reason to get upset. It is necessary to take care that the so-called left petty bourgeoisie wild element composed of many Trotskyists not force us off the right path of the wide National Front, the path of a responsible ruling party. To be able to distinguish between healthy criticism and the root of these efforts. I would like to end again with a reference to Stalin. We have surely read in the papers the report of comrade Stalin's conversation with a delegation of English Laborists. It is the conversation in which comrade Stalin talked about various paths toward socialism. I do not know how much of the conversation is true to the extent that it was reproduced by our presses, but the proof that there was such a conversation with Stalin can be that I also had a similar conversation with Stalin during my last visit to Moscow. Comrade Stalin then said that as experience showed as classical Marxism Leninism teaches, there does not exist only one path through the Soviets and the dictatorship of the proletariat, but there can be in certain situations also another way. And comrade Stalin said: especially now after the defeat of Hitler's Germany after the second world war, which on the one hand cost so many lives, but on the other hand exposed the ruling class in so many countries, increased the self-confidence of many national masses. Many possibilities and paths toward a socialist movement have been revealed due to such historic opportunities. For example he introduced Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Poland, and expressly introduced our country as well, saying that a special path toward socialism is possible there, which does not necessarily have to go through the soviet system and through the dictatorship of the proletariat, but can travel different paths, as is now...[last line illegible]...comrade Stalin explicitly named Czechoslovakia. And this, comrades, is a great satisfaction for our correct line, as we took it in Moscow and after the first day after our liberation. I do not want to repeat again and describe the path we have taken up to now. We implemented nationalization, we implemented reform of the public administration, these two main measures penetrated into the conscience of the masses and the nation, it is no longer possible to uproot these things and turn back. This is an idea which was preserved and is becoming a material force. What was our party strength? The fact that we were able to concentrate on the most important, that we did not let ourselves dissipate in all possible directions, and that we always knew what we had to do. Look at how many times we went through a time of nervousness for several months, when our enemies began to go crazy and carry on, just as they are doing now. Even before the

5th of May, before the elections, many comrades walked around with a heavy heart. We will naturally have yet many difficulties with the fulfillment of the governmental program. There will be work force problems, total exhaustion, problems with the organization of our economy, stemming from sabotage in all of our sectors, subjective difficulties with our partners having reactionary fits and making our work harder for us. This will not transpire without a fight. We must tell ourselves that just as we went through the hardest time and our strength was always shown in the end, we will do this anew. There is a two-year plan, a good constitution, there is the solidarity of the National Front, ideological unity, political clarity, the efficiency of our party and the tenacity of our own policies. This is what comrade Stalin tells us in order for us to be able to orient ourselves in every situation. This is what he was talking about when he said that there exists also another path toward socialism. We have already traveled down this path a little way, we have already learned to walk on it, and we will continue on this path more firmly and resolutely and we will not let ourselves be disturbed.