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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

General Country Situation

For the past two years the situation in Czechoslovakia has been notable for its flux and controversy. However, the instability which was evident in 1963 and which extended to the highest levels of leadership, has given way to a situation in which the leadership appears to be more stable and confident. With his re-election to the Presidency in November 1964, Novotny seems to have consolidated his position in the regime. The gradual but cautious internal political and cultural liberalization begun in 1963, partly in response to the pressures exerted by various dissatisfied elements, has continued. It is also evident, however, that the Communist leadership does not intend to permit intellectual dissidence to get out of hand. In addition to intellectual ferment, the major problems which confront the regime are the continued unsatisfactory state of the economy and the pervasive apathy of the population. In an effort to overcome the economic difficulties, the leadership has committed itself to a bold program of economic reform, which, when implemented, would create a kind of socialist market economy. Czechoslovakia continues to give strong support to Soviet foreign policy positions, including those in the Sino-Soviet dispute and the German problem.

U.S. Objectives: To strengthen those influences which favor the adoption by Czechoslovakia of national and independent economic and political policies in support of the true interests of the Czechoslovak people; to promote freer and broader contacts between Czechoslovakia and the West; to counter Czechoslovak efforts in support of Soviet political and economic penetration in the less developed areas.

Suggested Qualifications for the Chief of Mission:  
Tact, discretion and sound judgment; forcefulness and vigor; a stable temperament; professional diplomatic competence, preferably with a good background in Eastern European affairs. A knowledge of Czech, German or Russian is useful.

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**By WV, NARA Date 10-30-88**

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