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Czechoslovakia

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Czechoslovakia

CONTENTS

*This chapter supersedes the political coverage
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A. Introduction	1
B. Structure and functioning of the government	5
1. Constitutional developments	5
2. Legislative and executive functions	8
a. Central government	8
(1) Legislature	9
(2) Presidency	11
(3) Cabinet	12
b. Czech and Slovak national government	12
c. Local government	13
3. Judicial system	13

SECRET

	<i>Page</i>		<i>Page</i>
C. Political dynamics	15	E. Threats to government stability	38
1. Assessment of the reform era	15	1. Discontent and dissidence	39
2. The Communist regime	17	2. Subversion	40
a. Background	17	F. Maintenance of internal security	41
b. The Dubcek era	18	1. Police	41
c. Husak and the return to normalcy	21	2. Countersubversive and counterinsurgency measures and capabilities	43
3. Communist Party organization and membership	24	G. Selected bibliography	43
a. Central organs	24	1. General works	44
b. Regional and local levels	26	2. The pre-1948 period	44
c. Membership	26	3. The Stalinist era and after	44
4. Mass organizations and other parties	27	4. The Dubcek era and the 1968 crisis	44
5. Exile groups	28	Chronology	46
6. Electoral procedures	29	Glossary	51
D. National policies	30		
1. Domestic	31		
2. Foreign	34		
a. Relations with the Communist world	35		
b. Relations with developed non- Communist states	36		
c. Relations with developing countries	38		

FIGURES

	<i>Page</i>		<i>Page</i>
Fig. 1 Territorial changes (<i>map</i>)	2	Fig. 8 Former First Secretary Alexander Dubcek (<i>photo</i>)	19
Fig. 2 National Assembly voting on federalization law (<i>photo</i>)	7	Fig. 9 Invasion by the Warsaw Pact countries (<i>photo</i>)	20
Fig. 3 President Svoboda signing federalization law (<i>photo</i>)	7	Fig. 10 Organization of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (<i>chart</i>)	25
Fig. 4 Organization of government (<i>chart</i>)	10	Fig. 11 Leadership of Communist Party (<i>chart</i>)	26
Fig. 5 President Ludvik Svoboda (<i>photo</i>)	11	Fig. 12 Minister of Foreign Affairs Bohuslav Chnoupek (<i>photo</i>)	35
Fig. 6 Premier Lubomir Strougal (<i>photo</i>)	12	Fig. 13 River patrol (<i>photo</i>)	43
Fig. 7 General Secretary Gustav Husak (<i>photo</i>)	16		

Government and Politics

A. Introduction (C)

When on the night of 20 August 1968 the Soviet-led military invasion of Czechoslovakia terminated Prague's 8-month experiment with "socialism with a human face," it did more than forcibly reinstate Soviet dominance in the formulation of Czechoslovak national policies. It also once again turned the Czechoslovak people away from their sporadic flirtation with political idealism, and forced them to retreat into that blend of political apathy, passive resistance, and pragmatic materialism which historically has been the more common national characteristic. As a result, the forced return to orthodoxy that has been dubbed "normalization" by the Communist regime of Gustav Husak has brought about a degree of political stability and renewed Soviet trust in the loyalty of its Czechoslovak ally. Nevertheless, the legacy of the 1968 experiment and its strangulation by Moscow continues to plague the country, whose current rulers have had to concentrate attention on the material well-being of the people to elicit a degree of acceptance from them.

Since 1968, therefore, the political, social, cultural, and economic development of the country has reverted to a mold that has been historically more common than the brief periods of true self-determination. Indeed, the central theme of the histories of the Czech and Slovak peoples has been the struggle to maintain their cultural and national identities in the face of successive periods of domination by their neighbors. Victimized by geography and their relatively small numbers, the Czechs and Slovaks have repeatedly found themselves the pawns of European expansionist powers—in modern times the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Nazi Germany, and, most recently, the U.S.S.R.

The geographic proximity that led to their political domination by other Europeans kept the Czechs, and to a lesser degree the Slovaks, within the sphere of an essentially Western cultural and social development, an evolution consistent with the Greco-Roman roots of both societies. Prior to 1918, however, the Czechs and the Slovaks pursued their respective national identities

largely independently of each other. This historic individuality inevitably troubled the unity of Czechoslovakia. While the Czechs were developing their cultural and social traditions during 300 years of Germanic rule, the neighboring Slovaks were being molded by feudal Hungarian overlordship and customs. By the 20th century the Czechs and Slovaks had developed disparate cultural attributes and political modalities that were to prove as influential as the shared ethnic and linguistic characteristics in shaping the Czechoslovak polity.

The independent First Republic of Czechoslovakia lasted only from 1918 to 1938, its existence being assured only as long as British and French support appeared certain. The country's fate was sealed, however, when the Western powers, unprepared to risk war, chose a policy of appeasement at the Munich Conference in September 1938 and agreed to the cession of the Czechoslovak Sudetenland to Nazi Germany. In March 1939 German troops occupied the remaining areas of Bohemia and Moravia, which became a protectorate of the Reich; Slovakia was established as a German-sponsored autonomous state. Extensive border areas in southern Slovakia were seized by Hungary, which also acquired the easternmost province of Czechoslovakia, Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia (Carpatho-Ukraine). Poland annexed the city and surrounding area of Tesin (Cieszyn).

The restoration of an independent Czechoslovakia was an avowed objective of the World War II allied victors. The country, however, emerged from the war with four-fifths of its territory occupied by forces of the Soviet Union, the dominant military power in a Europe that was still without a security system. Despite the 1943 Soviet-Czechoslovak treaty of mutual assistance which recognized the pre-Munich frontiers of Czechoslovakia, the U.S.S.R. annexed Ruthenia in 1945. The territorial changes that have occurred in Czechoslovakia since 1938 are shown in Figure 1.

The lack of opposition to the ceding of Ruthenia, a section inhabited almost entirely by ethnic Ukrainians, perhaps reflects the failure of Czecho-

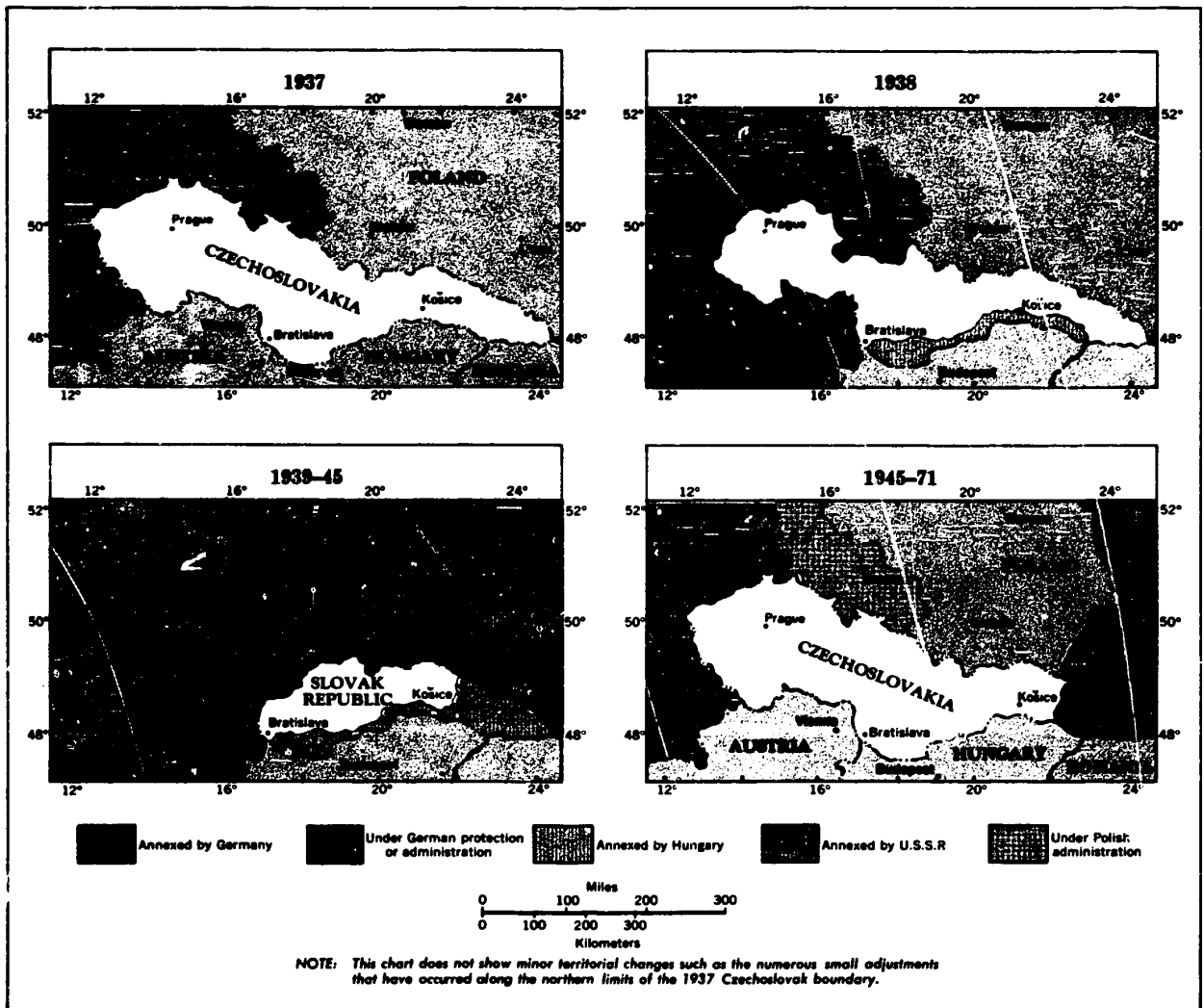


FIGURE 1. Territorial changes in Czechoslovakia, 1937-1973 (U/OU)

slovakia, a model of Western democracy during the interwar years, to regain a strong sense of national purpose after World War II. It is perhaps representative, too, of the atmosphere in which the country succumbed in 1948 to a bloodless Communist coup and, over the following decade, developed into a model Soviet satellite, docile and unquestioning in its loyalty to Moscow.

The country's high degree of economic development, its proximity and strategic importance to the U.S.S.R., and its vulnerable liberal political system were among the factors which made Czechoslovakia an attractive target for postwar Soviet expansionism.

From 1945 to the coup in 1948, the leaders of major non-Communist political factions pursued conciliatory tactics toward the Communists, with whom they formed a coalition government. This first postwar government, its confidence in the Western powers impaired by the memory of Munich, committed itself to internal policies favored by the Communists and to a foreign policy line sympathetic to Soviet interests. The Soviet Union at this time was still greatly admired by most Czechoslovaks because of its role in the war and the fact that in 1938 it had been the only power to declare its support of Czechoslovakia. In addition, many Czechoslovak leaders had a utopian vision of

Czechoslovakia's serving as a "bridge between East and West." They lulled the nation into a false sense of security and tolerated the activities of domestic Communists and Soviet agents who were already preparing for an eventual takeover.

The Czechoslovak experiment with the popular-front government formed in 1946 was viewed with considerable optimism by some Western leaders, who were prepared to believe that the Communists were sincere in their professed desire to cooperate with the democratic parties in a multiparty government. The subsequent Communist coup came as a harsh awakening to the West and dashed hopes for constructive cooperation with Communists in the international political arena.

The Czechoslovak Communists had carefully prepared the groundwork for their seizure of power. In particular, they were able legally to place party members in key government positions. Other postwar developments also had contributed to setting the stage for this event. The Soviet occupation authorities not only actively supported the Communists in efforts to extend their political influence and organization but also sought to obstruct in numerous ways the rebuilding of the non-Communist political organizations shattered by the war. Thus, Soviet influence, the pliant attitudes of Czechoslovakia's first postwar government, the party's legal status during the interwar period, and its role in the anti-Nazi underground all contributed to Communist strength. In the last free national elections held in May 1946, the Communists gained 38% of the vote. By 1948 the party's popularity had diminished considerably, but by then it was well entrenched in the government, the trade unions, and other public organizations. Moreover, many non-Communist political leaders naively supposed they could combat the Communist threat by democratic means. In February 1948, 12 non-Communist cabinet ministers attempted to hasten new national elections by resigning from the cabinet in protest against Communist manipulation of the police. The Communists, however, seized the initiative by activating "action committees" which effectively took over every governmental office, nationalized enterprise, and public organization. President Benes, who vacillated in the governmental crisis, accepted the government's resignation and a new, virtually all-Communist cabinet was formed.

After 1948, organized opposition to the Czechoslovak Communist Party—from either the non-Communist political parties or underground activity—was eliminated. The party quickly consolidated its position as the "leading force" in

shaping national life, and concentrated all power in the hands of a few top party leaders. The Czechoslovak regimes of Gottwald, Zapotocky, and Novotny remained in power by employing all the techniques at the disposal of a modern totalitarian state—intimidation and terror, propaganda, and regulation of the political, economic, and cultural life of the people. In contrast to most of the Communist-ruled countries of Eastern Europe, the death of Stalin in 1953 did not lead to a relaxation of the tight grip the Czechoslovak regime held on almost every aspect of national life. The defeatism of the people, the relatively high standard of living, and the economic concessions granted by the regime all contributed to delaying pressures for liberalization.

In July 1960 the Communist regime proclaimed Czechoslovakia a "socialist state," the second in the world after the U.S.S.R., and renamed the country the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. At the same time the Communists wrote a new "socialist" constitution and made far-reaching administrative changes. These changes called, *inter alia*, for the country to complete the "construction of a mature socialist society" by 1965, at which time it was supposed to begin the transition into a "Communist society." To the sophisticated, urban Czechs, memories of democracy, and even of the relatively benign Austrian hegemony, made the Communist dictatorship increasingly difficult to endure. The ill feeling which the Slovaks had toward the Czechs and toward Czech domination of the central government created further problems on the domestic scene.

By late 1962, economic failure exacerbated by political discord encouraged liberal forces inside and outside the Communist Party to demand the liberalization or de-Stalinization which had begun many years earlier in the U.S.S.R. and some other Eastern European Communist countries. After considerable pressure, the regime of Antonin Novotny was forced to modify its policies and permit a gradual "thaw."

But even limited liberalization had adverse effects on the party. It permitted, for example, the feud between party liberals and conservatives to be brought into the open. Meanwhile, deep-seated differences within the Communist leadership, long just below the surface, were being aired publicly, often impeding the formulation or implementation of effective policies needed to deal with a number of urgent economic and social problems. Inertia seemed to grip the leadership, and this in turn led to crippling confusion and the interparty crisis of the final months of 1967.

Aware of Novotny's vulnerability, Slovak officials led by Alexander Dubcek criticized in the Central Committee the party boss and his ineffective, Czech-dominated administration. Other party leaders, including Czechs who sought a change in leadership, soon joined in these personal attacks on the previously sacrosanct Novotny. He was replaced as First Secretary by Dubcek in January 1968.

Dubcek and his colleagues won popular approval after they announced a comprehensive reform program—the so-called Action Program published in April 1968. Dubcek's proposed "democratization" called for ending the Communist Party's tight control of society. The program guaranteed personal rights and liberties, including freedom of speech, assembly, and the right to travel, work, and—in some cases—reside abroad permanently. Lifting the party's heavy hand from the process of government, the program directed the National Assembly to assume its rightful role as the "supreme organ of state power." In sum, the Czechoslovak Communist Party was given the task of "humanizing" socialism by making it responsive to basic democratic processes.

From the beginning, however, the new leaders in Prague and their "political experiment" were confronted with significant opposition, both foreign and domestic. The Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries saw in the reform program the seeds of a disintegration of the Czechoslovak Communist system which could have dire effects on the political, economic, and even military integrity of the bloc. At the same time, conservative Czechoslovak Communists were concerned over both the ideological "deviation" of Dubcek's programs and their own political positions should he succeed. As foreign pressures on Dubcek to modify his program mounted, most of the competing interest groups within Czechoslovak society closed ranks to forge a strong bond of anti-Soviet nationalism between the liberal party leaders and the ordinary people.

Domestic solidarity, however, could not deter the fateful Soviet decision. On the night of 20-21 August 1968, approximately 300,000 troops, predominantly from the Soviet Union but including forces from East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary, occupied Prague and the other major urban areas. There was no organized military resistance, and casualties were extremely light, despite sporadic gunfire and attempts by some Czechoslovak citizens to sabotage the movements of the invading troops. Key Czechoslovak leaders, including Dubcek, were taken to Moscow, where they were held captive during "negotiations" between 23 and 26 August.

During and immediately following the invasion, Czechoslovak national unity and loyalty to the Dubcek leadership reached unparalleled heights. The Soviets had mistakenly assumed that they could install a collaborationist regime within hours after the intervention, but these plans had to be changed when the Soviets realized that an abrupt ouster of the Dubcek leadership could result in an uprising similar to that in Hungary in 1956. Dubcek and the other top officials returned to Prague, and the Czechoslovak leadership remained intact.

Nevertheless, the Soviets launched a campaign to deprive Dubcek of support within Czechoslovakia. Their primary tactic was to undermine the Dubcek leadership by forcing it to comply with Soviet demands. Meanwhile, a "shadow" leadership dominated by "realists," including Slovak Party boss Gustav Husak, gradually emerged. The newly ascendant group called for accommodation with Moscow as the only possible course, while attempting to curry popular favor by implementing those remnants of Dubcek's reform program that did not conflict with Soviet objectives. As the leading spokesman for "realism" and "normalization" of relations with Soviet Union, Husak won the party's nomination as Dubcek's successor and in April 1969 was named First Secretary (now called General Secretary).

When Husak assumed power, he faced a faltering economy and a thoroughly disordered society. Although most Czechoslovaks looked with distaste on what they viewed as Husak's opportunistic willingness to do Moscow's bidding, they reluctantly agreed that he was the least odious of the available alternatives. Although Husak managed to inject a degree of restraint into the "normalization" process, as time went on the bulk of Dubcek's reforms were dismantled: censorship was reinstated, the party's control over all segments of the government and society was restored, freedom of travel to the West was sharply curtailed, and the various special interest groups that had sprung up under Dubcek were either disbanded or reoriented to serve the purposes of the party. Moreover, the party was subjected to a massive purge. Of the 1.7 million party members when Husak came in, some 300,000 were stricken from the rolls and another 200,000 resigned in disgust. In the end, the individuals who were in the forefront of the Dubcek reform movement were removed from positions of power and ostracized. Dubcek, for example, was assigned to run a motor pool for the Slovak Forestry Administration.

Nevertheless, Husak's "normalization" program has not included the administrative and police practices prevalent during the early days of the Novotny regime. Husak, himself a victim of a purge of so-called Slovak "bourgeois nationalists" in the early 1950's, successfully opposed putting the reformers on trial, at least not for their activities prior to the invasion. His success in deflecting the more severe reprisals advocated by the party's ultraconservatives, however, has led to squabbling among the leadership. The question of how to deal with the leading figures of the reform era remains a major point of contention 5 years after the events of 1968. While one faction apparently feels that the time has come to use selectively the talents of the Dubcek reformers in economic affairs and cultural efforts, the ultraconservatives voice paranoid concern over the continued danger posed by these "rightist opportunists."

Husak seems to favor a policy of "differentiation." He would separate the ex-reformers into an irredeemable "hard core" responsible for the events of 1968, and "honest Communists" who were merely duped and who can return to the mainstream of Czechoslovak life by recanting. Although most of the country's technical experts appear to have reached a *modus vivendi* with the regime, most creative artists and other intellectuals have resisted all the regime's blandishments and have boycotted the party-controlled cultural organizations. As a result, the country has become a cultural wasteland. Within the party, Husak has repeatedly counseled patience in dealing with the intellectuals, and in 1973 there were some signs that a less oppressive cultural policy might eventually be instituted.

Husak has taken a well-publicized interest in popular welfare. More and better consumer goods are available, and for the most part, the populace has responded by grudgingly granting qualified acceptance to the Husak regime. Even more important, Husak has been accepted by the Soviets. Soviet party chief Brezhnev made it clear during his visit to Prague in February 1973 that Husak had passed the performance test, ending speculation that his stewardship over the party would be temporary and that he would be replaced by a more reliable conservative.

In spite of all this, the Czechoslovak regime's claims to domestic "normalization"—i.e., that the "Prague Spring" has been obliterated—are a sham. Internal repression, though hidden behind an aura of material prosperity, is harsher than it was in 1967, and leaders of the reform are in exile, in jail, or at least out of the way. Neither their erstwhile supporters nor their

opponents who are now in power can forget the impact of the reformers. Indeed, current policies are what they are in large part because the reformers once held sway and because they continue to influence, even if negatively, the thinking of the leadership.

Although Prague has become more active in the field of foreign relations since late 1972, its activities in the field clearly remain circumscribed by the necessity to conform to the wishes of the Soviet Union. Indeed, Czechoslovakia is the loudest proponent of the "coordinated socialist foreign policy" that Moscow has called for from its allies. The Husak regime, however, will do what it can to utilize the openings created by the Soviet policy of detente to seek further recognition of its legitimacy.

On the other hand, the potentially corrosive impact of detente will perhaps be felt more in Prague than elsewhere in Eastern Europe. It should be noted that Moscow's rationale for the 1968 invasion was in large part to counter the danger stemming from Dubcek's inability to resist the alleged subversive influence of Western ideas. Husak inherited this rationale, but it now appears as if he may have to contend with much the same Western influence as a matter of policy, treading a tightrope between the impact the West will have on popular expectations and the demands of Soviet-imposed discipline. His success in this, as in all his other goals, is by no means a foregone conclusion.

B. Structure and functioning of the government (C)

1. Constitutional developments

The present "socialist" constitution of Czechoslovakia was promulgated on 11 July 1960, replacing the one adopted in 1948. A new constitution, which would have codified the reforms of the Dubcek regime's "democratization" program, was in the process of formulation in 1968. It became a casualty of the August invasion, however, and is now a dead letter. By early 1974 the Communist leadership had given no indication that a new constitution was being considered.

The 1960 constitution changed the name of the country from Czechoslovak Republic to Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and accorded the nation the distinction of being the second to achieve the status of a "socialist state," after the U.S.S.R. The constitution is important not only as a legal document but also as a reflection of political and social changes imposed since the Communist accession to power in 1948. Like constitutions of all countries ruled by Communist

regimes, it is primarily an outline guide for the transition of the nation to "mature socialism." Only secondarily is it a charter setting forth the structure and operations of the government apparatus and the rights and duties of citizens. The programmatic character of the document suggests that the Communist Party, then under First Secretary Antonin Novotny, planned to issue a new constitution when the leadership decided that the nation was prepared for the final transition to a Communist society. This temporary aspect of the 1960 constitution further distinguishes it—in common with other Soviet bloc constitutions—from most Western democratic basic laws with their seeming assurances of perpetuity.

Emphasis on the "socialist" character of the state is the salient characteristic of the 1960 constitution. It proclaims the affiliation of the nation to the bloc of socialist and Communist nations, a first for a Soviet bloc constitution. The Communist Party's monopoly of power is explicitly confirmed, as is the doctrine of "democratic centralism." The Czechoslovak Communist Party, which had shaped the lives of the population and the development of the country without any formal constitutional sanction since 1948, received constitutional status as the "vanguard of the working class" and the "leading force in the community and the state." The 1960 constitution, like that of 1948, makes no mention of the four existing puppet political parties, but it clearly spells out the influential role of the Communist-controlled mass organizations, particularly the trade unions.

Although the constitution of 1960 is patterned after the constitution of the U.S.S.R., especially with regard to the socioeconomic rights of citizens, the regime retained almost all aspects of the governmental structure of the 1948 constitution, which in turn had embodied certain features of the democratic Czechoslovak constitution of 1920. Both postwar constitutions retained a seemingly powerful office of President of the Republic, creating an impression of juridical conformity with the form of the popular First Republic. The retention of a nominally powerful president as the chief executive officer of the government as well as head of state distinguishes the Czechoslovak constitution from those of most other Eastern European Communist countries where the chairman of a multimember state council has the generally ceremonial role of head of state but virtually no executive functions. The Czechoslovak Communists thus sought to benefit from the strong attachment of the population to the democratic forms of the former republic by observing them in name, if not in substance.

The reincorporation of certain administrative mechanisms outlined in the earlier constitutions notwithstanding, the present document gives legality to an unabashedly totalitarian system. There are, indeed, clauses reaffirming the principles of popular sovereignty, democratic government, and civil liberties, but they have little significance because of the absence of meaningful implementing laws or decrees, and, most significantly, of adequate provisions for checks and balances. Unlike Western democratic constitutions, the Czechoslovak document places no limits on the arbitrary powers of the government. The classical concept of individual liberty was replaced by a new rubric of "collective freedom." Greater emphasis throughout is placed on the "equality" rather than on the "freedoms" of the individual. Furthermore, economic rights and duties are stressed more than those of a political nature.

Under the 1960 constitution, the concept of private property was eliminated and replaced by a more restrictive concept of "personal property," essentially limited to articles of private and domestic consumption, family houses, and savings acquired by "honest work." (It should be noted, however, that this provision has not inhibited the material acquisitiveness of the Czechoslovak people; the present Husak regime has in fact encouraged this tendency as a means of diverting popular energies from political to material goals.) The earlier constitution had allowed for small business enterprises and agricultural holdings but, because such prerogatives conflicted with party aims, they were progressively ignored. The extension of state control over virtually all businesses and the collectivization of farms were among the main features of the development toward "socialism" after 1948.

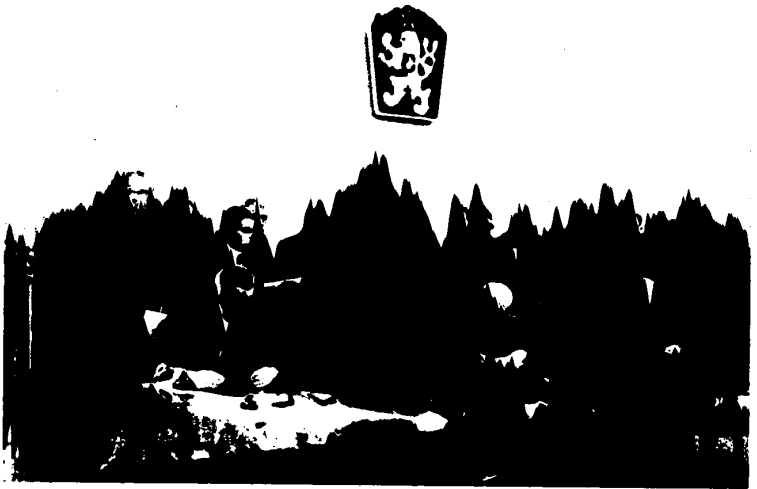
Like its predecessor, the 1960 charter proclaimed a "unitary state of two fraternal (Slavic) nations possessing equal rights, the Czechs and the Slovaks." Both documents provided for local administration to be under the authority of national committees "accountable to the people," although the 1960 constitution alone specifically provided for popular elections.

Touching on the basic relationship of the Czech and Slovak people, one important reform envisaged in the stillborn 1968 constitutional draft, the federalization of the country into two separate Czech and Slovak republics, did survive the invasion and was enacted into law on 28 October 1968, the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic. This law of federalization went into effect on 1 January 1969 (Figures 2 and 3).

FIGURE 2. Czechoslovak National Assembly voting on the federalization law, 27 October 1968 (U/OU)



FIGURE 3. President Ludvik Svoboda signing the constitutional law declaring Czechoslovakia a federal republic, 30 October 1968 (U/OU)



Federalization was the culmination of a Slovak drive, begun in 1968, to attain constitutional equality with the numerically superior Czechs. Slovak dissatisfaction over traditional Czech domination of the national administration dates from the founding of the republic in 1918. Various legislative concessions were made by both democratic and Communist regimes to grant the Slovaks a semiautonomous status, but none provided the Slovaks with meaningful control of their domestic affairs. During the belated de-Stalinization movement of the early 1960's, the Slovaks focused their energies on gaining a greater

share in the central government, but remained discontented with the concessions wrung from Prague.

By 1967 Slovak officials were able to take advantage of Novotny's rapidly deteriorating political position and launched a renewed campaign for national autonomy. Slovak nationalism played a key role in the collapse of the Novotny regime and was an important platform of the successor Dubcek government, which committed itself to a new Czech-Slovak federation.

As Slovak party boss under the Dubcek regime, Gustav Husak in 1968 was named deputy premier in charge of the "great Slovak dream"—federalization of

the country. He enjoyed a measure of popular support in Slovakia, and worked diligently against Czech opposition to engineer a meaningful federal program. The effort seemed doomed to defeat, but, ironically, was revived by the invasion, which gave Husak considerable leverage in asserting Slovak claims because it was widely believed the Soviets were opposed to them. Even after the federalization law was passed and partly implemented, however, the uncertain vacillation between strong central authority and federalism continued. When Husak became First Secretary, in April 1969, he felt obliged to dismantle some of the federal alterations in the government structure already put into effect. A multitude of problems had been encountered in transferring legislative and executive powers from the central government to the separate republics. The diminished authority of Prague threatened to disrupt the social and political administration of the country; Husak's efforts to assert absolute control were commensurately compromised. As a result, federalization became a serious liability to a government whose first obligation was to reestablish political stability throughout the country. The regime gradually transferred much of the regional authority back to national government institutions, and in December 1970 the Federal Assembly amended the federalization law to once again permit essential direction from Prague.

This trend toward recentralization in practice while retaining the outward institutional forms of federalization has continued through 1973, and includes the effective reimposition of central controls over mass organizations, such as the trade unions, by means of newly created coordinating executive organs on the federal level.

The public's assessment of the constitution is realistic; given the fact of the Communist Party's monopoly of power, the Czechoslovak Government is one of men, not laws. In this context, no written document, even if it contained legal constraints on governmental power—which the Czechoslovak constitution does not—can be viewed as providing a genuine recourse to the citizenry against an abuse of power by their rulers.

2. Legislative and executive functions

a. Central government

Although separate legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government are delineated in the constitution, no actual separation of powers has existed under the Communists. Until for the period of Dubcek's incumbency, there were constant efforts to

concentrate as much power as possible in the hands of a few Communist leaders. The legislative body, the National Assembly, was in practice a tool of the executive branch. In turn, many leaders of the executive branch often simultaneously held leadership positions in the Communist Party. This interrelationship between party and government leadership was personified by Antonin Novotny, who functioned as both First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and as President of the Republic between 1957 and January 1968. The numerous interlocking party and government positions enabled the party hierarchy easily to dominate the state apparatus.

In 1968 the Dubcek leadership initiated an extensive reorganization of the government, which eventually would have been spelled out in a new constitution. The new plan separated and defined executive, legislative, and judicial responsibilities, and provided for the effective delegation of powers by the party, which would then withdraw from its ubiquitous role in the governmental process. In particular, no longer would leading party officials have been permitted to assume top positions in the governmental hierarchy.

The only major constitutional reform to survive the downfall of the Dubcek regime was the federalization of the country. Approved by the U.S.S.R., the federal law invested in the Czech and Slovak republics much of the executive power previously held by the central government, and provided for equal representation between the two nations in all remaining central government bodies. The premiers of the Czech and Slovak national governments automatically became deputy premiers of the federal government. Enforcement powers for laws enacted by individual republics as well as many federal laws were given to the separate republics. Areas limited solely to federal jurisdiction were foreign policy, national defense, and "materiel reserves" (strategic resources). Executive functions under joint jurisdiction of the federal and two national governments included finance, prices, agriculture, transportation, communications, labor, internal security, and the mass media. In addition to the federal budget, each of the national governments was empowered to draw up its own budget.

Legislative powers, on the other hand, were left largely in the hands of the federal government, but both national administrations were given veto power in the federal legislature in such important matters as the federal budget, the distribution of revenues between the federation and national states, taxation, police affairs, and information media. Regional legislation was envisaged concerning civil and penal law, education, and conservation.

The federalization law was a hastily drafted document and when promulgated was far from complete, causing considerable administrative confusion and leading to disputes between Czechs and Slovaks, each fearful that the other was getting undue advantage. The composition and responsibilities of the bicameral Federal Assembly—featuring a coequal Chamber of Nations, alongside the traditional Chamber of the People—was an early issue, as was the yet untested division of powers between federal and national governments. The abolition of 16 federal ministries and their replacement by federal “committees” posed serious staffing problems, particularly among the Slovaks who had fewer qualified officials. There were inadequate national organizations in both the Czech lands and Slovakia. Moreover, the Czechs and Slovaks were to implement federalization at different speeds, when tandem cooperation was vital to the program’s success.

When Gustav Husak took over as party First Secretary in April 1969, it was his purpose quickly to reinstate strict centralized control of the country as the only possible course in the face of military occupation and the threat of a serious confrontation between the populace and Soviet troops. Federalization—in terms of the political and administrative separateness initially envisaged—proved incompatible with Husak’s new policy of “realism,” and he has subsequently whittled away most regional authority, placing the federal government and both national administrations under tight party control. In June 1970 a special party commission was set up to review and propose changes in the federalization law. The commission’s recommendations resulted in the enactment of additional legislation in December 1970 which further reduced the regional autonomy of Czech and Slovak authorities in economic and administrative matters. Figure 4 depicts the federal arrangement, as amended.

(i) *Legislature*—The bicameral legislature, known as the Federal Assembly, consists of a Chamber of the People (the former National Assembly), and a Chamber of Nations. The Chamber of the People consists of 200 deputies elected on a proportional basis. The Chamber of Nations consists of 75 Czech and 75 Slovak representatives elected by the respective national legislatures, the popularly elected Czech and Slovak National Councils. Legislation must be approved by both chambers to become laws of the land.

The Federal Assembly is governed by a Chairman, a First Vice Chairman, and a 40-member Presidium

which consists of 20 deputies from the Chamber of the People, and 10 Czechs and 10 Slovaks from the Chamber of Nations. The Chairman and First Vice Chairman are elected in joint session of the assembly, and must alternate between Czech and Slovak. Dalibor Hanes, a Slovak and pro-Husak moderate, replaced Alexander Dubcek as Chairman of the Federal Assembly on 15 October 1969—the latter’s last significant post. In December 1971, Hanes himself was replaced by Alois Indra, a Czech and one of the most conservative, pro-Soviet members of the Communist Party’s policymaking Presidium. Hanes remained a member of the Federal Assembly’s Presidium, however, receiving the additional post of Chairman of the Chamber of Nations. Vaclav David, who served as Foreign Minister from 1953 to 1958 and is a sycophant of the Soviets, was named Chairman of the Chamber of the People.

The Federal Assembly Presidium carries out the duties of the Federal Assembly when the latter is not in session. It cannot, however, elect a President of the Republic, make a decision on peace or war, adopt the federal budget, or pass on a vote of confidence asked by the government. The Presidium issues decrees which become invalid unless approved by the next session of the Federal Assembly.

This reshuffling of the legislative leadership followed the first national elections since the 1968 invasion, held on 26-27 November 1971. The elections scheduled for November 1968 clearly had to be scrubbed in view of the unsettled political and constitutional conditions. The 1971 elections were held in a traditional, closely controlled manner in an atmosphere of intimidation and some antiregime pamphleteering by dissident intellectuals.

During the Novotny era, regular sessions of the National Assembly were largely devoted to approving legislative measures submitted by the President’s cabinet. Parliamentary committees met outside the regular sessions to discuss legislation, to hear reports, and to draft recommendations. To expedite the implementation of measures, a parliamentary presidium—consisting of 30 deputies selected by the party and elected by the assembly—sat year round and approved measures on a “temporary” basis. In this manner, the government could proceed in its course without waiting for the formal approval of the whole assembly in regular session.

Beginning in 1963, the Novotny regime responded to demands for more rational, democratic government by granting the National Assembly greater responsibilities in policy and legislative matters as well as greater control over governmental ministries. The

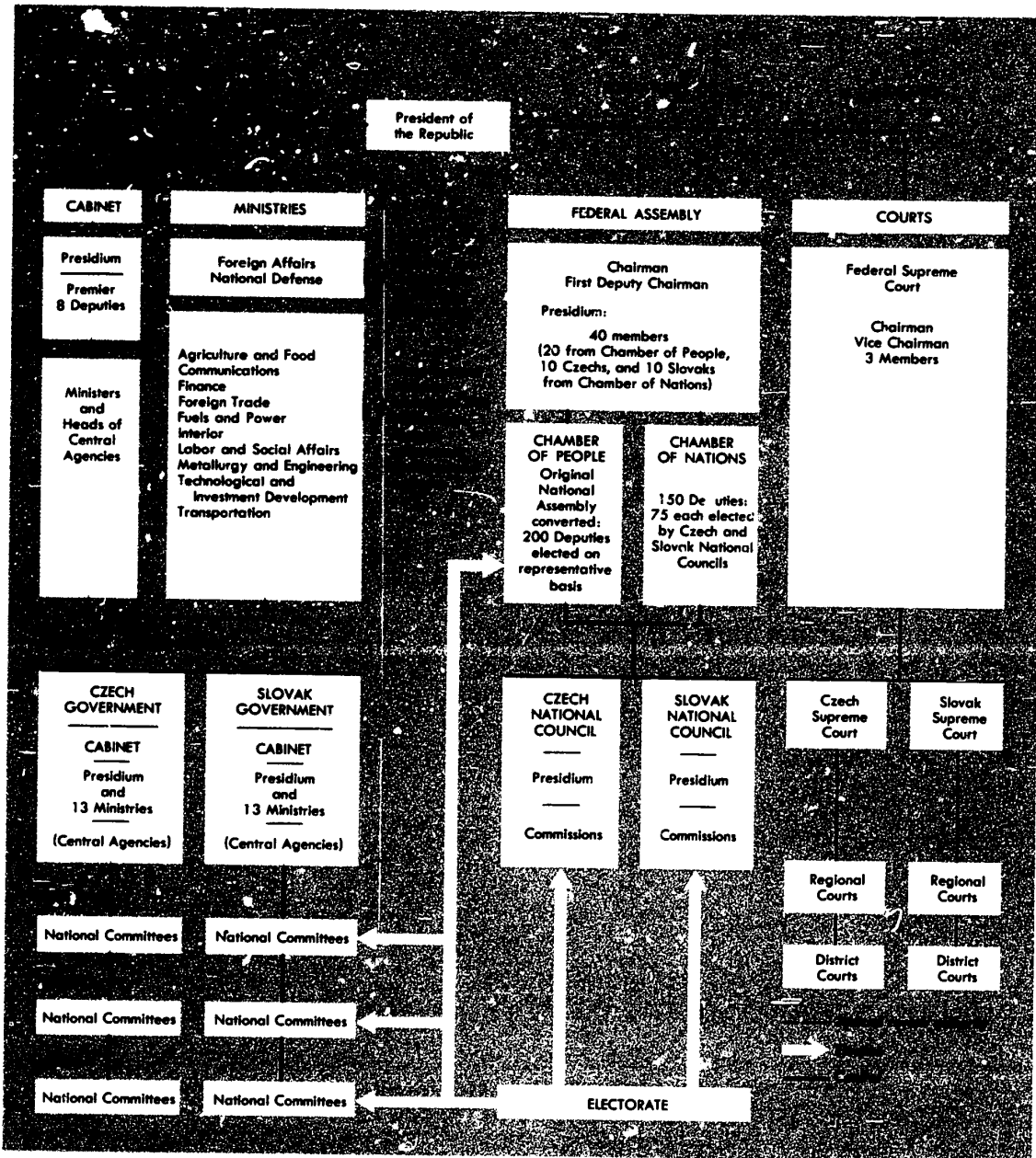


FIGURE 4. Organization of government, 1973 (U/OU)

regime largely offset these reforms, however, by increasing the role of the party in initiating and guiding legislation. The Party Central Committee established commissions to direct policy implementation in the realms of ideology, the economy, standard of living, law, and agriculture. These commissions, chaired by members of the party hierarchy, were responsible only to the Party Central Committee and the Party Presidium; they had the power to dictate to the governmental ministries concerned as well as to the National Assembly and its committees. In addition, there was a party organization parallel to, if not actually in, almost every government component to insure continuous party control.

Dubcek's Action Program directed the National Assembly to assume its constitutional role as the "supreme organ of state power" and to "really decide on laws and important political questions." Party organs were no longer to do the work of state bodies, thus removing the party's omnipresence in governmental affairs. These reforms were abandoned in the wake of the invasion.

Under the Husak regime, the Federal Assembly has again been subjugated to the pre-Dubcek system of party controls. Senior members of the Communist Party, including Husak himself, now sit on the Federal Assembly Presidium. Legislative initiative again rests with Party Central Committee commissions and departments.

(2) *Presidency*—In contrast to the constitutions of most other Communist countries, the Czechoslovak document provides for the position of a President of the Republic exercising real executive functions. This holdover from the 1920 constitution is in large part explained by the prestige originally attached to the office by the popularity of the first "President-Liberator," Tomas G. Masaryk. Under the 1960 constitution, which was tailored to fit party boss Novotny, the President is assigned executive functions as Chief of State, Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, and representative of the state in all international dealings. He also exercises powers such as the appointment and recall of the Premier, cabinet members, all ranking government officials, and diplomatic representatives. While Novotny exercised these theoretical constitutional powers, his real authority as President flowed from his paramount role as Communist Party First Secretary. The President is elected by a three-fifths majority of the Federal Assembly sitting in joint session. His term of office is 5 years.

It was the intention of the Dubcek government to divest the Presidency of the nearly limitless powers

formerly associated with the office, while retaining its ceremonial eminence. Ludvik Svoboda, who replaced Novotny as Chief of State in May 1968, was elected with the tacit understanding that he would be an interim, rubberstamp President (Figure 5). His widespread popularity based on his wartime exploits, along with his courage in standing up to the Soviets before and after the invasion, also served the interests of the Husak regime, which had no other figure with which the public could identify. Svoboda's image has subsequently been tarnished, however, because of his close association with the Husak regime and almost total acquiescence to Soviet demands. Some dissidents, in fact, have blamed the aged (78 in 1973) general for having begun the postinvasion "dialog" with the Soviets, and thus allegedly compromising if not negating the possibility of active resistance to the occupation.

As the expiration of Svoboda's 5-year term (on 30 March 1973) came closer, a great deal of speculation emerged concerning his successor, and the impact this would have on the political configuration of the party leadership itself. Though in failing health—mainly senility—and anxious to step aside, Svoboda was reelected to the Presidency. Indeed, as a consistent supporter of party chief Husak's political line, Svoboda reportedly was persuaded by Husak himself to accept the post to prevent a reshuffling of the hierarchy in favor of the hardline elements over Husak's moderate/conservative supporters.

Given Svoboda's ill-health and advanced age, the regime realizes the problem of presidential succession and its impact has been only postponed. One consideration bearing on the selection of the next President will be his nationality; no Slovak has ever held that post and many may think that after Svoboda



FIGURE 5. President of the Republic Ludvik Svoboda (C)

the time will be right. Unless the regime decides in due course to combine the top party position and the Presidency—a proposition that is widely considered as unlikely in view of Novotny's adverse record under this arrangement prior to 1968—the next President is likely to be a Czech assuming that Husak retains the top party slot. Some Czechoslovaks, however, foresee a time when Husak will be dispensable enough to be "kicked upstairs" into the Presidency.

Although filling the office of a chief of state in a Communist country is normally a matter of small significance, both the unusual prerogatives of the Czechoslovak Presidency and Svoboda's ill-health will give this question continuing political and constitutional significance. With this in mind, some reports have suggested that the regime will seek a constitutional amendment abolishing the Presidency and establishing a collective executive on the model of the U.S.S.R. and some other East European regimes. It is unlikely, however, that the Czechoslovaks would lightly abandon the traditional office of President of the Republic unless a major political impasse developed in the selection of Svoboda's successor.

(3) *Cabinet*—Under the federal system the powers of the cabinet (Council of Ministers) were to be sharply curtailed. Sole federal jurisdiction was to be limited to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and National Defense. All others were supposed to be reorganized to serve as coordinating agencies between federal and national governments. Each such changed ministry would then be assigned a state secretary as a Czech or Slovak counterpart to the minister. The existing 21 ministries were to be reduced to seven, with the abolished ministries being replaced by seven federal committees, each with equal Czech and Slovak representation. Like the five reorganized ministries, the committees were to be responsive to their respective counterparts in the Czech and Slovak governments. These changes were short-lived, however. As part of Husak's program to recentralize economic planning, the cabinet system was again overhauled in December 1970. All federal committees were restructured into federal ministries, which now total 12. The old Ministry of Planning was replaced by a State Planning Commission, which is responsible for overall national planning. The office of state secretary, designed to give the Slovaks equal representation in the federal ministries, was also abolished. The names and the role of the federal ministries in early 1974 are given in Figure 4.

All cabinet members, including the Premier are appointed by the President of the Republic; their tenure is subject to resignation or presidential recall.



FIGURE 6. Czechoslovak Premier Lubomir Strougal (C)

The present Premier, Lubomir Strougal (Figure 6), succeeded Oldrich Cernik in January 1970. The appointment of Strougal, then head of the powerful Czech Party Bureau and a potential rival to Husak, was engineered by Husak to strengthen his own position.

The federal cabinet at the beginning of 1974 consisted of a total of 24 members. In addition to the Premier, there were 8 deputy premiers, 12 heads of ministries, and 3 ministers heading cabinet-level central agencies (the People's Control Committee, the State Planning Commission, and the State Price Bureau).¹ All 24 members belonged to the Communist Party.

b. Czech and Slovak national government

Under federalization, the governments of the individual Czech and Slovak Socialist Republics were organized parallel to the federal structure. Each of the two republics thus has its own Premier heading a cabinet which, in turn, directs the activities of local government organs, i.e., the national committees existing at the regional, district, and community levels within the respective republics.

The Czech and Slovak National Councils are the legislative organs representing the "national sovereignty and individuality" of the respective republics. While their legislative powers are limited to regional matters, the National Councils provide the individual republics with considerably more autonomy than they previously had. The councils are empowered to implement, at the national republic level, laws passed by the Federal Assembly and to

¹For a current listing of cabinet posts and key governmental officials, consult *Chiefs of State and Cabinet Members of Foreign Governments*, published monthly by the Directorate of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency.

"approve" international treaties whose implementation requires regional legislation. The councils are also invested with the nominal power of appointment over regional judiciaries. Subordinate to the councils are a number of commissions which coordinate legislative activity in such fields as health, education, and transportation.

Although the Czech National Council was an innovation of the federalization plan, the Slovak National Council had been established as early as 1960, in deference to Slovak pressure for "autonomy." Before 1969, its legislative powers were limited to minor administrative matters, and all initiatives were subject to veto by the National Assembly.

As implemented by the 1969 federalization scheme, the National Councils are bodies whose members are popularly elected for 4-year terms. The Czech National Council has 200 representatives, the Slovak, 150. Deputies may not be prosecuted for criminal or political activity without the consent of their council. Each council elects its own presidium, which performs the functions of the main body when it is not in session. The presidiums are empowered to appoint and remove national republic government officials, including the national premiers.

c. Local government

Local administration in Czechoslovakia is conducted by a system of national committees which exist on the regional (*kraj*), district (*okres*) and community levels. The committees are constitutionally responsible, under the jurisdiction of the respective national governments, for the regulation of economic, cultural, educational, security, and civic services. Corresponding to the country's administrative breakdown, there are 11 national committees with regional status, 118 with district status, and about 11,000 local committees.

Members of the national committees are popularly elected for 4-year terms in the same manner and at the same time as members of both of the National Councils and of the Federal Assembly. Each committee is run by an executive council, which varies in size depending on the area of jurisdiction. The function of the committee system is to closely supervise the activities of the individual citizen and to act as an administrative transmission belt from the national ministerial level to the local level. The committees are charged with implementing governmental directives in virtually all social and economic spheres, including local transportation, sanitation, public order, community services, cultural activities, and the administration of local judicial organizations.

Autonomous administration of economic enterprises of local importance is an important function of the committees. The national committees to a degree serve as ombudsmen for citizens' complaints, although this role varies widely among the localities and depends on the character of the officials involved. The Communists have claimed that the committees have contributed to Czechoslovakia's "democratic" system by directly involving the population in executive functions on the local level. Although the committees are constitutionally "accountable to the people," their elections and programs are closely managed and supervised by the central government. Moreover, it is the party organization at each level of local government that is the real locus of power.

Prior to federalization, the national committees were directly subordinate to the central government. They are now responsible to the respective national governments. As part of its economic decentralization program, the Dubcek regime declared the regional national committees "superfluous" and in June 1968 abolished the Slovak regional committees. Abolition of the Czech regional committees was precluded by the invasion. Reversing this process, the Husak regime in December 1970 reverted to the "three-tier" (*kraj*, *okres*, communal) national committee system throughout the country by reinstating the three Slovak regional committees.

3. Judicial system

The constitution of 1960 amply demonstrates the Communists' basic philosophy with respect to the role of the judiciary by charging it first with the protection of the "socialist state"—its social order—and then with the rights and "true interests" of the citizen. Loyalty to the political system is thus given priority over the protection of basic human rights. In addition, the constitution restricts the independence of the lower courts which had existed in the prewar democracy and were theoretically preserved in the 1948 constitution. The traditional three systems of courts—criminal, civil, and military—were through the early 1950's integrated into a single system. The Supreme Court, itself under firm central party control, came to supervise closely the work of the four lower courts: regional, district, local people's courts, and military. The local people's courts, which in 1961 succeeded the once ubiquitous "comrade" courts, and whose function was to relieve higher courts of cases involving work discipline and minor breaches of "socialist order," were abolished in 1970. The structure and subordination of the court system is shown in Figure 4.

The reform movement of 1968 set in motion a full-scale review of the judicial system with the intent of once more separating the judiciary from political control. Because of a combination of influences—the continuing pressures for reforms from the judiciary itself, the need of the Husak regime to align the judicial system along federal lines, and the need to come to grips with the numerous legal problems following the invasion—substantial changes were enacted in December 1969. The powers and duties of the courts were specified in much greater detail, emphasizing the administrative separation of the judiciary from the government. The new laws explicitly confirmed the independence of judges, binding them only to the “legal order” of the state. Many of the reforms were administrative, designed to increase the efficiency of the court system.

Under federalization, the Supreme Court of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is the highest judicial organ in the country. It has the power of judicial review over the Supreme Courts (established in 1970) of the Czech and Slovak Republics, which in turn exercise review authority over the *kraj* and *okres* courts. Judges of the Supreme Court of Czechoslovakia are elected to 10-year terms by the Federal Assembly on the nomination of the National Front (an “umbrella” political mass organization encompassing all political parties but firmly controlled by the Communists). Members of the national supreme courts are elected, also for 10-year terms, by their respective National Councils.

The regional court systems employ both professional and lay judges who theoretically have equal status. The constant turnover of the lay judges and their ignorance of legal procedures have decreased the courts’ effectiveness, and the use of laymen is declining. Professional judges are now elected by National Councils of the Czech and Slovak Republics on the nomination of the National Front for 10-year terms, a regime compromise with jurists who demanded permanent appointments. Lay judges are elected for 4 years by *kraj* or *okres* national committees. Judges can be recalled or prosecuted only by the action, or with the consent, of the organ electing them. The Czech and Slovak ministers of justice supervise the administrative aspects of the regional judicial systems, including financing and assignment of clerical personnel. They also supervise the legal training and professional examinations of judges and determine their salaries.

The military judicial system is under federal jurisdiction, with no direct participation by regional Czech and Slovak judicial authorities. The

administration of military justice comes under the jurisdiction of the federal Minister of National Defense, who acts through the ministry’s Military Courts Administration. The authority of the regional Czech and Slovak ministers of justice in criminal law affecting military personnel is limited to initiating judicial complaints. Judicial review of the military courts is exercised by the federal Supreme Court. There are two levels of military courts—military district courts and “higher” military courts which exercise jurisdiction in all criminal matters involving members of the armed forces. These courts consist of both professional and lay judges who serve only while they themselves are members of the military. The military district and “higher” courts are constituted and dissolved by the President of the Republic. Commanding officers exercise judicial authority in criminal cases involving 500 korunas or less, in accordance with the military Manual of Discipline.

The federal Prosecutor General, and under him the two national prosecutors general, are responsible for the “observance of the laws and other legal regulations by ministries and other organs of state administration, national committees, courts, economic and other organizations, and individual citizens.” The federal Prosecutor General is appointed and recalled by the Federal Assembly, while the national prosecutors general are appointed and recalled by the presidiums of their respective National Councils. The prosecutors general operate through subordinate regional and district public prosecutors.

From 1948 to 1968 the application of public, civil, and criminal law generally failed to respect the legal rights enumerated in the 1948 and 1960 constitutions. Criminal administrative law, in many cases, was enforced directly by the secret police without even a facade of court proceedings. Criminal cases requiring court action also were largely determined by state prosecutors, who gave judges orders on the basis of police evidence. De-Stalinization—particularly with its emphasis on rectification of past “miscarriages” of justice—brought some liberalization to the court system after 1962. Party chief Novotny ordered periodic token amnesties of political prisoners but the judiciary remained tightly controlled by the Communist Party until his fall in January 1968.

The liberal judiciary that briefly emerged under Dubcek soon came under severe attack by the Husak regime for its “inadequate protection” of the socialist state. Because of the difficulty of finding “qualified” judges, the conservative retransformation of the judiciary began slowly, but by mid-1970 it had commenced in earnest. Most of the judges on the

federal Supreme Court were removed and politically conservative judges were appointed to succeed them. Under a hardline minister of justice, numerous judges within the Czech judiciary were replaced. Efforts have since been made to fill hundreds of vacant judgeships, and to speed up prosecutions, which fell behind in 1968-69.

Husak had long publicly pledged that there would be no return to the harsh repressive judicial practices of the Stalinist era, and that punitive political trials would not be held. His determination on this score, however, was slowly whittled away by pressure from party extremists as well as by the sometimes audacious political dissent by some of the ousted reformers of 1968. In 1972 a number of trials were held with many former reformers in the dock, although they were technically charged only with antistate political activity since the 1968 invasion.

The pressures that led to the trials also contributed to significant and harsh amendments to the legal codes enacted by the Federal Assembly in April 1973. The changes affected the codes of 1961, as amended in 1965, and put on the books some provisions which were even harsher than those of the Novotny era. For example, military courts were given jurisdiction over civilians in a wide range of generally ill-defined crimes involving "state secrets." The amended codes also virtually eliminated the hard-won rights of the defense with respect to its participation in the investigative process and access to evidence. Moreover, the search-and-seizure powers of the police (though long exercised in practice) were expanded and written into law. Finally, most criminal sentences were increased, and provisions were made for *ex post facto* increase in sentences already being served if the inmate refused to cooperate. Refusal to undertake overtime work (which may total as much as 280 hours a year) or refusal to eat, i.e., engaging in a hunger strike, is now punishable by as much as 1 year added to the inmate's original sentence.

C. Political dynamics

Political life in Czechoslovakia is, by virtue of popular alienation from the regime, even more insulated from domestic issues than is the case in neighboring East European countries; it consists essentially of factional party infighting, with virtually all serious candidates for positions of authority angling for support from the ultimate arbiter, the Soviet Union. A leadership capable of instilling a sense of national purpose has been conspicuously lacking since the Soviet-led invasion in 1968 and the ouster of the

Dubcek government. Governmental instability has been aggravated by the economic problems facing the nation. The events of the past several years have demoralized the Czechoslovaks who, for the most part, appear to have "given up." The popular esteem enjoyed by the political leaders is in inverse proportion to the degree of their commitment to Moscow, the *sine qua non* for an assured future for an aspiring politician. (U/OU)

Knowing that little can change without the approval of Moscow, the Czechoslovak people ignore the maneuverings of the party except inasmuch as this results in policies that could affect the national welfare of the population. By 1973, the Husak regime appeared fairly secure and stable in having obtained Soviet endorsement of its "normalization" policies, and having gained a modicum of popular acceptance if not support. (U/OU)

The regime, however, continues to be faced with a paradox. While the leaders wish to engage popular energies in support of the party's program—particularly in the economic area—they realize that government stability depends on the continued political apathy of the masses. Instilling the lost sense of national purpose thus conflicts with the regime's sense of self-preservation, a conflict that is unlikely to be soon resolved. Meanwhile, most Czechoslovaks now pursue material well-being as a substitute for their repressed political impulses. (U/OU)

1. Assessment of the reform era (C)

The reform movement which brought Alexander Dubcek to power in 1968 convulsed the Czechoslovak Communist Party by reevaluating the theory and the practice of unitary party control of the state. Beginning in 1967 as a reaction to the inadequacies of the Novotny leadership, the movement rapidly evolved into a revolt against the traditional Soviet model of party-government-citizen relations. It was essentially a palace revolution led by senior, dedicated Communists, and supported in differing degrees by a wide range of party members. The thrust toward reform then, not unexpectedly, elicited the enthusiastic support of the citizenry as a whole. As the first effort by any ruling European Communist party to question its monopoly on power, the initiative set a precedent that, from the Soviet point of view, threatened to trigger the dissolution of Communist hegemony in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, the reform era was accompanied by a maximum of fanfare and publicity, which, with its anti-Soviet thrust, further aroused the hostility of Moscow and other conservative Communist regimes.

After the experiment was abruptly checked in August 1968 by the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations, it became Gustav Husak's task to reestablish the party's control over the entire government and social structure and thus to reassure the U.S.S.R. that Czechoslovakia no longer constituted a threat to its domain. This Husak has done. The Husak "counterreformation" has not, however, been a reversion to the authoritarian style of Novotny which held scant regard for popular needs or desires. Husak has emerged as a "moderate" with a new and distinct understanding of the structure and the governing authority of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. He has committed himself, insofar as possible, to base party rule ultimately on popular cooperation, despite the odds against this inherent in the popular mood. By 1973, there were increasing indications that the regime was ready, as political conditions allow, to look anew at some of the reforms of the 1968 era—particularly in the economic sphere—with a view to implementing them in modified form. Yet each such hopeful sign appears balanced by countervailing repressive moves. Moreover, the advent of detente in Europe has intensified this conflict between the need for economic reinvigoration, if not reform, and the need for political control in order to counter the potentially corrosive effect of Western influence.

To a large extent the course of the Husak regime since 1969 has been influenced by the interplay of pro-Soviet party extremists on one end of the spectrum and the disruptive though relatively benign political activity of liberal dissidents on the other. Husak's desire for political peace as a precondition for some degree of relaxation, cautious reform and, ultimately, popular support has thus been inhibited by the need to counter both liberal dissidence and ultraconservative pressure for even more draconic measures. By alternately moving against both extremes, he may have wished to strengthen his fundamental position as a moderate/conservative. Yet to many Czechoslovaks he has only succeeded in appearing to yield to conflicting pressures and, on balance, to be compromising his principles to Soviet desires.

It is difficult to determine how many of Husak's "counterreforms" have been the result of Soviet pressures and how many have resulted from his own initiative. Once his "normalization" campaign had succeeded—basically the reestablishment of party control domestically and reaffirmation of Czechoslovak allegiance to the Soviet Union—Husak appears to have been free to chart his own course so long as it was consistent with Moscow's foreign policy

objectives. Close Soviet supervision continues, and all important issues, such as economic planning, have stayed closely in step with Soviet purposes. By early 1973, however, Moscow was clearly content to let Husak deal with his own domestic problems and endorsed his assertion that the process of "normalization" had been completed.

Gustav Husak (Figure 7) has unquestionably put his personal stamp on Czechoslovakia. He is highly intelligent and dynamic, and effectively holds the reins of power. He is the first intellectual since Lenin to head a ruling European Communist party. His reputation as a competent political tactician stems largely from his role in establishing the Slovak state. An ardent Slovak nationalist, he was prominent in the anti-Nazi Slovak uprising in 1944, and emerged from the war a major Slovak political figure. Husak became embroiled in the power struggle following the Communist coup in 1948 that ushered in Czechoslovakia's Stalinist era. Accused of "bourgeois nationalism," he was expelled from the party; in 1954 he was tried on trumped-up charges of treason, sabotage, and espionage, and was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was released in 1960, but avoided becoming politically active in the Novotny regime, for which he held no sympathy. Although he apparently played a minor role in the 1967 drive to unseat Novotny, he was picked up by Dubcek in early 1968 to mastermind the Slovak drive for federalization.

During the first two decades of Communist rule, Husak refined a sense of political "realism" which, by his own evaluation, governs his formulation of current policies. His dealings with both the Germans and the Soviets during the war years, his political caution



FIGURE 7. General Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party Gustav Husak (C)

during the waning years of the Novotny regime and during the reform era, his reversal on the issue of federalization, and his cooperative attitude toward the Soviet Union all indicate an ability to weigh carefully the pros and cons of a given course of action. Influenced no doubt by his own long incarceration, Husak also seems to have little stomach for oppression and terror despite a willingness to use harsh measures in order to avoid being exposed to political pressure by the ultraconservative elements in the party. His interest in federalization also indicated a willingness to treat with moderation traditionally troublesome problems such as Czech-Slovak rivalries and the church, as long as neither threatened to undermine Communist control.

Husak's success in his attempt to pursue a course somewhat akin to the reformist but politically correct program of Hungarian party leader Kadar is by no means assured. Husak is caught in the crossfire between those who still fear and wish to suppress everything reminiscent of the 1968 reform era, and those advocates of reform who will accept only a wholesale revival of the Dubcek program. In between are those elements which, like Husak himself, see that nothing can come of such continual sniping, proclaim 1968 to be "history," and ardently wish that moderate forward movement would replace the stagnant hostility which has to a large extent sapped the energy of the regime and maintained the wide gulf between it and the people. There were signs in 1973 that this might be accomplished, but these signs were still inconclusive.

2. The Communist regime (C)

a. Background

The introduction of Communist rule in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 effectively terminated the popular democratic parliamentary form of government which had first been introduced in 1918. Non-Communist political parties were either disbanded, or merged with or reduced to mere puppets of the ruling Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSC).

The Communist Party, four puppet parties, and various mass organizations were molded into a unified mass organization, the National Front, dominated by the Communists, which presented a single list of approved candidates at election time. While giving some attention to the maintenance of a democratic facade, the Communist Party influenced all facets of national and social life, much on the pattern of its prototype in the U.S.S.R. Gradually the party became the dominant force through coercion and terror, which

reached its zenith during the bloody anti-Titoist trials in the late 1940's and early 1950's. The regime at the same time moved quietly to tighten its grip on the educational institutions, the church, and the information media.

Virtually all outlets of cultural and political expression eventually came under Communist control. Trade unions became a mere transmission belt for the imposition of labor discipline and the party's economic directives. In order to facilitate indoctrination and control of the population, the Communists created such mass organizations as the Communist Youth Union and various athletic, and friendship societies. Although choice was permitted theoretically, membership in these organizations was, for the most part, compulsory.

From 1953, when Antonin Novotny became Party First Secretary, until 1960, the Czechoslovak regime was one of the most stable in Eastern Europe. After Stalin's death in 1953, the regime successfully suppressed pressures toward liberalization. Unlike its Polish and Hungarian counterparts, the Novotny regime maintained a tight grip on the country and was able to prevent the serious unrest which broke out in neighboring Communist states. Although there were forces in Czechoslovak society that retained some vitality during the years of repression, they were devoid of the massive popular support which elsewhere in the Soviet orbit was successfully pressing indigenous regimes toward varying degrees of de-Stalinization.

It was not until the 12th Party Congress in December 1962 that reform elements in the Party Central Committee, possibly with veiled Soviet support, gained enough influence to push through a resolution favoring at least some tentative steps toward liberalization. The regime began this campaign by calling for a review of the purge trials and executions of Communists between 1949 and 1954.

At about the same time that the party began to loosen its grip somewhat, the once prosperous Czechoslovak economy, damaged by misdirected Communist management in the 1950's, began to decline precipitously. In 1963 shortages and industrial stagnation triggered widespread popular discontent. Criticism of the economy led to a wider call for reform. Debates on virtually every aspect of the party's political and social policy became commonplace, and an overall deterioration in party discipline ensued.

Growing dissatisfaction among other sectors of the society contributed to the malaise. The intellectuals—emulating their counterparts in Poland and Hungary in the mid-1950's—were particularly active in pushing

for an easing of restrictions on creativity in many aspects of the intellectual and cultural life of the nation. The Slovaks commenced a bold drive to regain some degree of autonomy and to rectify past injustices perpetrated by the central government. Stimulated to greater efforts, the liberal faction among the Communists began to exercise genuine influence in party affairs.

In many instances, the demands of the Czech and Slovak party liberals initially coincided. In time, however, traditional Czech-Slovak animosities reemerged as a crucial problem, and combined with a growing popular awareness and involvement to add to the instability. By late 1963, Novotny himself appeared in danger of being toppled.

By early 1964, however, Novotny seemed to have decided on tactics that would enable him to restore order and reconsolidate his power. One significant compromise was his decision in 1966 to bring into the party a number of younger, more liberal members to offset the influence of the dogmatists who were hindering economic reforms. The newcomers, who comprised half of the Central Committee, quickly became discouraged with Novotny's dilatory approach toward reform and considered him an impediment to meaningful liberalization. The intensification of differences between the liberals and conservatives in the party became so acute that by mid-1967 a stalemate in leadership resulted. A number of serious problems, notably the continuing decline in the economic growth rate, could no longer be concealed or rationalized.

The regime's problems were significantly heightened by its inability to control or to achieve rapport with the intellectual community. Czechoslovak youth also contributed to the pressures for change and became a force which the regime could not ignore. During demonstrations in October and November 1967 protesting poor living conditions in their Prague dormitories, students were badly mishandled by the police. This, and a number of other political misadventures in which the regime was culpable, served to magnify intraparty confusion.

When the Central Committee met in a plenary session in October 1967, Novotny's position was in serious jeopardy. Encouraged by his apparent vulnerability, Slovak leaders launched a bold and personal attack against him, suggesting that it was time for collective leadership and that the next President ought to be a Slovak. Novotny was able to postpone discussion of the leadership question until December, but throughout the period he continued to lose support at all levels of the party.

Soviet apprehensions about events in Czechoslovakia became apparent in the final weeks of 1967. Several delegations from the U.S.S.R. visited Prague in late November and early December to sign bilateral agreements and to assess the state of the economy and the extent of unrest among intellectuals and youth. Soviet party chief Brezhnev, at the urging of Novotny and the Soviet Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, made a sudden visit to Prague on 8-9 December to discuss the situation in the party leadership, but reportedly refused to be drawn into the quarrel on the ground that it was an internal matter. Although the Soviets had previously sought in various ways to bolster Novotny's position, it was obvious that Brezhnev, at this point, was more interested in stability than in Novotny's personal fortunes. Regardless of the circumspect role played by Brezhnev, many Czechoslovaks resented his presence and regarded it as unwarranted interference in Czechoslovak affairs.

The Central Committee met in a heated but inconclusive session between 19 and 21 December, during which Novotny attempted to intimidate his adversaries by threatening to use the army against them. Some of Novotny's close associates attempted a military coup which was foiled by an alert general. When the Central Committee sessions were resumed in January, Novotny was ousted as the Party First Secretary and was replaced by Dubcek. Novotny still retained the Presidency, however, as well as his seat on the Party Central Committee and its Presidium.

After a succession of political setbacks, the fate of the Novotny regime was sealed in February 1968, when Czechoslovak Army General Jan Sejna defected to the United States. Because of Sejna's close relations with Novotny, the defection caused a sensation and led to allegations of Sejna's corruption and participation in military coup plotting on Novotny's behalf. There were widespread demands from within the party for Novotny's retirement from political life. Novotny refused to step down despite Dubcek's urging, but in March was forced from the Presidency and the Party Presidium.

b. The Dubcek era

Alexander Dubcek (Figure 8) and his colleagues rapidly attained popularity once they had launched their comprehensive reform program in April 1968. This Action Program was clearly designed to synthesize communism with basic democratic principles and promised profound changes in virtually every sector of Czechoslovak society. To many Czechoslovak Communists whose naive idealism was dashed by the years of Stalinist oppression, Dubcek



FIGURE 8. Alexander Dubcek—the happy face of socialism, 1968 May Day parade (U/OU)

symbolized that synthesis of socialism and humanism which many of them erroneously believed would ensue after the 1948 coup. In one sense, therefore, 1968 seemed to wipe clean the Stalinist slate and begin anew. This factor contributed to the tremendous release of political energy that characterized the Dubcek era.

Despite inadequate time for thorough preparation and a bitter behind-the-scenes struggle waged by the conservatives, the Action Program was well underway by early summer of 1968. In quickly freeing the mass media and making substantial personnel changes in government and party organs, the program strengthened Dubcek's popular and party position. His appointments were designed to appeal to the broadest possible range of the party membership and population. He concentrated on replacing the old guard conservative ideologists with younger technical experts anxious to implement sweeping economic and political reforms. Dubcek also sought to strengthen the representation of particular interest groups such as farmers, intellectuals, and national minorities.

Inevitably, frictions between interest groups emerged. Conservatives, both inside and outside the party, opposed Dubcek's changes for ideological reasons and for fear of losing their positions. Progressives began to urge immediate and more sweeping reform measures. Czechs and Slovaks engaged in a debate over the steps required to federalize the government structure and the varying interpretations of the idea of "equality."

But once the Soviet Union in the summer of 1968 intensified its pressure on Dubcek to modify his reform program, competing interest groups began to unify around the leadership on the basis of patriotism. As the pressures increased, popular attitudes became increasingly hostile toward the Soviet Union and forged a strong bond between the liberal party leaders and the people. Dubcek, President Svoboda, and other leaders became national heroes after standing up to the Soviets during the confrontation between the Czechoslovak Party Presidium and the Soviet Party Politburo in July 1968 at Cierna nad Tisou² near the Soviet border. A subsequent meeting between Czechoslovak and Soviet leaders in Bratislava seemed publicly amiable, but in fact may have represented Dubcek's last chance to moderate his course.

Dubcek either failed to recognize or ignored the warnings. In response, the Soviet leadership, already distrustful of Dubcek's reforms and fearful that they would eventually lead to Czechoslovakia's withdrawal from the socialist camp, disrupt the political and economic unity of the Warsaw Pact nations, and infect the other East European countries and the U.S.S.R. itself, ordered Soviet troops and Warsaw Pact forces from Hungary, Poland, East Germany, and Bulgaria into Czechoslovakia on the night 20-21 August 1968 (Figure 9).

The ability of the Dubcek leadership to remain in power for some 8 months after the entry of Soviet troops can be attributed to the unprecedented wave of national unity that the invasion precipitated. It even propelled a number of prominent conservatives, who opposed the reform program, into the Dubcek camp. The immediate aim of the Soviet Union was political stability and, after failing to install a puppet regime, the Soviets realized that if the Czechoslovak leadership were deposed by force, the result might be open rebellion. The Soviet leaders decided to let the Dubcek regime remain in power but at the expense of the reform programs which were to be drastically curtailed. Moscow reasoned that Dubcek could eventually be reduced to a puppet or his popular support could be eroded to the point where he could be removed without creating a stir.

The ground swell of public support for the government enabled the Dubcek leadership initially to weather enormous Soviet pressures, including the infamous "inquisition" of Dubcek, Premier Cernik, and others in Moscow from 23 to 26 August, which included physical maltreatment, as well as threats of

²For the diacritics on place names, see the list of names on the apron of the Summary Map and the map itself in the Country Profile chapter.



FIGURE 9. Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia, August 1968 (C)

dismemberment of the republic and the establishment of an occupation government. The Soviets in the ensuing months, not totally insensitive to world criticism and reluctant to engage in full-scale repression, were vulnerable to political blackmail on the part of the Czechoslovak population itself. Anti-Soviet demonstrations in October and November threatened to burst into full-scale rioting, and in late December over 1 million workers threatened

nationwide demonstrations and strikes if any of the top reformist leaders were ousted from their posts.

With such critical political issues at stake, however, the Czechoslovak leadership inevitably divided again over what courses of action to take. Dubcek came under fire from many of his liberal supporters who claimed he was going too far in satisfying Soviet demands, which were spelled out in the "Moscow protocol" of October 1968. Moderates joined the

liberals who attacked him for bowing to Soviet desires. Both felt that he was permitting the conservatives to enhance their political positions. The conservatives, for their part, pressed Dubcek to move faster to satisfy Soviet demands. Rivalry between Czech and Slovak leaders sharpened over the imminent implementation of the federalization program, with the Czechs fearful of losing their traditional prerogatives and the Slovaks complaining that they would still be dominated by the more numerous Czechs on the basis of "majority rule."

Czechoslovak leaders also disagreed over the status-of-forces agreement which they felt constrained to sign with the Soviets in October in Prague. Although the pact called for the removal of the bulk of the Soviet occupation troops by mid-December 1968—an actual reduction to about 60,000—it also gave a semblance of legality to the "temporary" stationing of Soviet troops in the country. In sum, the Soviet hope to erode Dubcek's popular support seemed to be working.

By late December, the Dubcek leadership had begun to lose some of its drive as a result of indecision and the competing demands of the various factions. The liberals were attempting to save the remnants of the reform program while the "realists" or the centrists were trying to reconcile the demands of the population with those of the Soviet Union. The pro-Soviet conservatives, meanwhile, were seeking to develop an opposition bloc in the Central Committee as a springboard to power. At the same time, Soviet officials were making a concerted effort to expand their contacts with Czechoslovaks at all levels of the party and government, hoping to persuade middle and lower level officials to support the conservative cause. Dubcek's political position had rapidly deteriorated by early 1969, enabling the Soviets to seek out a more amenable successor. In April of that year Dubcek was forced to step aside in favor of Gustav Husak.

c. Husak and the return to normalcy

Gustav Husak's rise to power began with his assignment, in April 1968, to lead the Slovak fight for federalization. The campaign led to heated disputes with the Czech leaders and, although the Slovaks seemed headed for defeat on the issue, Husak reemerged as an influential national political figure.

Husak made his mark with the Soviets immediately following the invasion. He was a member of President Svoboda's delegation to Moscow to negotiate the release of Dubcek and the other leaders who had been taken prisoner. During the talks, Husak argued

cogently and forcefully; he apparently impressed his Soviet counterparts who began a dialog with him that has continued to the present.

Husak had also established a record acceptable to the Soviets and most of his party colleagues on the reform programs. While he championed federalization and many of the "democratic" reforms that went with it, he had been critical of several "incorrect views" incorporated in the Action Program.

Husak's increasing influence at home won him election to the Presidium and Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party during the "illegal" 14th Party Congress conducted secretly in the shadow of Soviet guns on 22 August. Following his return to Czechoslovakia from Moscow, Husak dominated the "extraordinary" Slovak Party Congress 26-29 August and was elected First Secretary of the Slovak Communist Party.

Shortly thereafter Husak delineated his policy of "realism" and became the foremost spokesman for "normalization"—broad compliance with Moscow's demands—as the only possible course in the face of military occupation and the threat of violent repression. Husak's apparent transformation from a nationalist to an uncompromising supporter of "normalization" appears to have been entirely pragmatic. His stress on the bilateral character of the Moscow Agreement suggests that he believed the Soviets would make no significant concessions to Prague until their demands had been met.

The strong leadership exercised by Husak in the aftermath of the invasion—Dubcek appears to have relied heavily on him—and his dialog with numerous Russian visitors led to widespread speculation as early as September 1968 that he was being groomed as Dubcek's successor. Gradually, Husak achieved greater prominence while Dubcek faded into the background. The anti-Soviet rioting triggered by Czechoslovakia's ice hockey victory over the Soviet Union in March 1969 embroiled the Czechoslovak leadership in its most serious crisis after the invasion. The Russians apparently demanded Dubcek's ouster and the installation of new leaders who could exercise effective control over the population. Husak was instrumental in organizing a new regime whose members were more acceptable to the Soviets. Husak was subsequently nominated for the post of party chief by Dubcek, and he received the overwhelming support—often for conflicting reasons—of the members of the Central Committee on 17 April 1969.

Moscow's role in Husak's ascendancy is not entirely clear, but the Soviet leaders appear to have accepted him on the basis of his strength in Prague and their

belief that his Slovak "nationalism" and his authoritarianism would work to their advantage. The Russians may also have believed that, if necessary, it would be a relatively simple matter to replace the cautious and pragmatic Husak who did not command the intense loyalty and support of most Czechoslovaks.

Husak was immediately preoccupied with establishing his own authority in the party, a delicate task in view of the bitter conflict between the liberal, centrist, and conservative factions. A struggle soon began between Husak and party conservatives for control. There were substantial numbers of conservatives in the party hierarchy, including Lubomir Strougal, Vasil Bilak, and Alois Indra who, although opposed to the course the 1968 reform program had taken and to a large degree victimized by it, were able to retain a precarious hold on their positions until the invasion. Subsequently supported by the Soviets, who were anxiously seeking a new Czechoslovak leadership, the conservatives gained a new lease on life. Immediately following Husak's ascendancy, conservative leaders began voicing opposition to Husak's relatively restrained policies.

It was clear from Husak's speeches that he held little sympathy for many of the conservatives' demands, such as a wholesale purge of the party and political trials. His tenuous domestic position, however, and his need to convince the Soviets that he was the proper man to head the country's "normalization" program depended on a modicum of conservative support. To hold conservative criticism to a minimum he was forced to grant them numerous concessions. Many of Dubcek's reforms were slowed or reversed. Increasing numbers of conservative and dogmatic hardliners began finding their way into important party and government positions. The press emerged as a battleground between Husak supporters and the dogmatists over key issues, such as how energetically to purge the Dubcek reformers.

As the first anniversary of the Soviet invasion approached, however, it became clear that a major test of Husak's ability to maintain domestic stability was approaching. Antiregime and anti-Soviet incidents increased, generating a volatile atmosphere in the country. Moscow manifested considerable uneasiness over the situation, and made thinly veiled threats of military intervention if Czechoslovak security forces were unable to maintain order. The Soviets' failure openly to support Husak heightened popular fears that they were seeking a more repressive regime. Continuing economic difficulties, highlighted by worsening morale in the factories, contributed to the general malaise.

Large-scale demonstrations occurred following the first anniversary of the invasion. The regime prevented extensive violence, however, by tight security measures which included emergency security legislation, massive preventive arrests, and, occasionally, brutal police tactics. Husak's willingness to use force earned him much-needed Soviet approval, conveyed through an appreciative Soviet press and a belated Order of Lenin award for his wartime efforts in Slovakia.

Nevertheless, the demonstrations were embarrassing to the regime and it left Husak little choice but to launch a nationwide purge of liberals, which he had previously eschewed. During a Central Committee plenum in September, Husak announced that the purge would affect the party, government, and social organizations with emphasis on local party organizations. He stopped short of justifying the invasion despite the urgings of the conservatives, but his remarks pleased Moscow, because they were a quantum leap from his previous ambivalence. It was at the September plenum that Dubcek lost his remaining official positions in the Party Presidium and his chairmanship of the Federal Assembly.

The Czechoslovak Central Committee plenum scheduled for January 1970 was expected to be a major test for Husak in the leadership struggle. After it was over, however, in terms of personnel appointments and party policies, it was clear that neither Husak nor the conservatives could achieve more than a standoff. Within the top party organs, Husak clearly held his own. The three remaining liberals in the Presidium, Oldrich Cernik, Karel Polacek, and Stefan Sadovsky, were removed, as was expected. Whatever ground Husak may have been compelled to yield as a result of these appointments was more than regained by the transfer of Lubomir Strougal from Czech party boss to federal Premier, thus removing Strougal from his political base in the party. In addition, Husak named moderates to head the Czech and Slovak party organizations, respectively.

Perhaps the most threatening development at the January plenum was the appointment of a predominantly hardline commission to implement the party membership card exchange program. This program was designed to purge the party membership of liberals but, if carried to the extremes the hardliners were demanding, threatened to erode Husak's support.

The dogmatists, motivated in part by the Soviets, sought a drastically reduced membership, leaving a small, highly centralized and disciplined elite to rule without the encumbrances of an unwieldy party structure and membership. Some of them demanded

the ouster of all who had any connection with the Dubcek regime or who had objected to the Soviet invasion. Willingness to approve of the invasion became the touchstone of a member's "reliability."

As the purge progressed, it became clear that the dogmatists would be unable to prevail. Most of the local party commissions conducting the reliability interviews refused to utilize the heavily slanted criteria presented by the hardline commissioners in Prague. In some instances, the interviews turned into fiascos, with more aggressive party members either refusing to cooperate or launching counterattacks on the commission member. Many members simply resigned in disgust, while others cajoled their interviewers into renewing party cards.

The result of the purge was a decided victory for Husak. Some 300,000 party members were ousted which, in addition to the 200,000 believed to have resigned prior to the purge, left a membership of about 1,200,000. The bulk of those removed were liberals who had supported the Dubcek reform program and who had refused to recant their sins and follow the new party line. The intellectual group was the hardest hit by the purge, followed by officials of the central government, especially those in positions that called for dealing with foreigners, because such posts were now judged to be "sensitive."

By the summer of 1970 Husak evidenced a growing confidence in his ability to head off conservative pressures and to guide the party as he saw fit. The party simultaneously published a preliminary interpretation of Dubcek's role in the reform movement, describing him not as the principal villain behind the liberalization process but as the dupe of "antisocialist forces." Dubcek's tenure was depicted as an aberration, brought on by an overemphasis in late 1967 on party unity when the true exercise of Leninist criteria would have resulted in the selection of a more qualified and forceful man. Party spokesmen, nevertheless, have consistently defended Novotny's removal as a legitimate move toward correcting the numerous problems that faced the country.

This theme was developed further in December 1970 when the Central Committee approved the regime's official definition of the "lessons"³ to be learned from the Dubcek and late Novotny periods. The document, published in early 1971, is intended to serve as a model and warning to other Communist regimes faced with potential reformist pressures.

³Full title—"Lessons Drawn from the Crisis Development in the Party and Society after the 13th Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia."

The uneventful second anniversary of the invasion in August 1970 was touted by the regime as proof that "normalization" had been a success, and Husak seemed to be confident enough of his own position to call for convocation in May 1971 of the long-delayed Party Congress.

The 14th Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, held in Prague on 25-29 May, formally marked the end of one phase of Czechoslovak history and the beginning of another. The congress outwardly held out little hope for early relaxation, moderation, and national reconciliation. There was in fact little solace to be gleaned from congress proceedings for purged Communist reformers and the non-Communist population. Several changes in the amended party statutes (such as the abolition of the Czech Party Bureau) had the effect of eroding still further what little remained of federalization and of tying the Czechoslovak party closer to its Soviet model. The overall effect of the amendments, moreover, strengthened central party control and discipline over the membership.

The Soviet rationale for the invasion—an act of "selfless international assistance" intended to save socialism in Czechoslovakia and carried out in response to the "appeals" of leading Czechoslovak party-state officials—was enshrined as party dogma. Husak, who is on record as initially opposing the invasion, expressed his gratitude and thanked Brezhnev for his role in it. Husak's reversal, dictated apparently by political expediency, merely contributed to the atmosphere at the congress, which glorified all things Soviet. The few personnel changes that took place in the party hierarchy seemingly strengthened the pro-Soviet, hardline cast of the Presidium—at the expense of the more moderate position generally associated with Husak.

On balance, the congress stressed the collective character of party authority and underscored the fact that Husak would continue to pay for his preeminence with fundamental compromises with his conservative colleagues. Although a show of cohesiveness and unity was apparent—factionalism was in fact formally proscribed by fiat—Husak was not permitted by the Soviets to have a leadership constellation of his own choosing even if he were otherwise able to do so.

Since the congress Husak has secured his position both with the Soviets and his internal critics. He obtained wholesale endorsement of his course—and the Order of Lenin—from Brezhnev when the latter visited Prague in February 1973, the 25th anniversary of the Communist coup. Internally, his position as first among equals is unchallenged, although it apparently

serves Soviet purposes to maintain a potential for criticism by proxy. In short, while Husak seems secure from attack by the hardliners, he has not been allowed to remove them from the leadership.

Vasil Bilak, who was accused of collaboration in August 1968, has long been regarded as a Soviet favorite and a man posing the most easily discernible threat to Husak. Bilak is a member of the Presidium and is the Party Secretary in charge of international relations, although there have been reports that he has, perhaps coincident to the transfer of Indra to the largely ceremonial position of head of parliament, assumed a greater role in the formulation of domestic policies. In late February 1972 rumors circulated in Prague that Husak had made a secret trip to Moscow to complain about Bilak's domestic activities and that Bilak, in turn, was summoned by Brezhnev for disciplining. On 19 April Bilak publicly disclaimed any differences between himself and Husak and gave high praise to the party leader, lending credibility to the rumors. In view of Husak's reputation as a master tactician and of the acrimony which has existed between the two men for years, Husak can be expected to keep a particularly close watch over Bilak's activities.

It is generally conceded, even by Husak's bitter critics, that in intellect and ability he far exceeds other members of the Czechoslovak leadership. He appears thus far to have prevented any single Czechoslovak leader from seriously challenging his position. While there have been rumors of ultraconservative plots to unseat him, the Soviets—who retain the final say on who should rule in Czechoslovakia—would hardly permit his ouster at this time, if only because they would not want a leadership struggle in Prague which could affect Soviet policies of detente. Husak has given Brezhnev a stable, if sullen, Czechoslovakia, which has in many respects resumed its role of "model satellite." Should Husak falter or become a liability, however, Moscow would undoubtedly replace him.

3. Communist Party organization and membership (S)

As part of its goal of democratization, the Dubcek regime in 1968 launched a comprehensive review of the organization, structure, and delegation of responsibilities among the organs of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSC). The most important of the pending changes was the division of the party into two separate but equal components: the Czech Communist Party and the Slovak Communist Party. This division was to have paralleled the federalization of the government. Few of the proposed party reforms

survived the invasion, however, and today federalization of the party is a dead letter.

The basic rules governing the organization of the party in 1973, together with its functions and membership requirements, are contained in the party statutes adopted at the 14th Party Congress in May 1971. Among the statutory changes introduced at the 14th Congress was the change in name for the top party position from First Secretary to Secretary General, and the lengthened interval between congresses from 4 to 5 years. In both instances the KSC clearly followed the Soviet model.

Like other Communist parties, the KSC is theoretically guided by the principle of democratic centralism. The main theoretical elements of democratic centralism include election of all party leaders, strict party discipline, the accountability of higher party bodies to lower bodies, the indisputable and compulsory nature of decisions once made, and the subjection of the minority to the majority.

Husak has clearly concentrated political power in the KSC top leadership. Nevertheless, the repeated turnover of personnel and changes in policy since 1968 have left unclear important aspects of its day-to-day management and working relationships among the top leaders and party organs. Husak clearly dominates policymaking, but it is difficult to assess the degree of support he enjoys among the hierarchy or the extent to which he has delegated administrative responsibilities to his colleagues in the Secretariat and Presidium. The public image of party unity that KSC leaders evinced during the 14th Party Congress does not hide the fact that now dormant ideological and personal differences could have a significant effect on party administration.

Subordinate to the national party is the Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS) which serves as a transmission belt for promulgating directives of the KSC throughout the respective regional, district, and local party organs in Slovakia. The Central Committee Bureau for the conduct of party work in the Czech Lands (Czech party bureau), established in November 1968 as a stopgap measure pending the outcome of party federalization plans, was dropped at the 14th Party Congress. The organizational hierarchy of the Communist party system in Czechoslovakia is shown in Figure 10.

a. Central organs

The KSC Party Congress, which now convenes every 5 years, is in theory the supreme organ of the party. In practice, however, the congress has merely served to ratify the policies fixed by the top leadership.

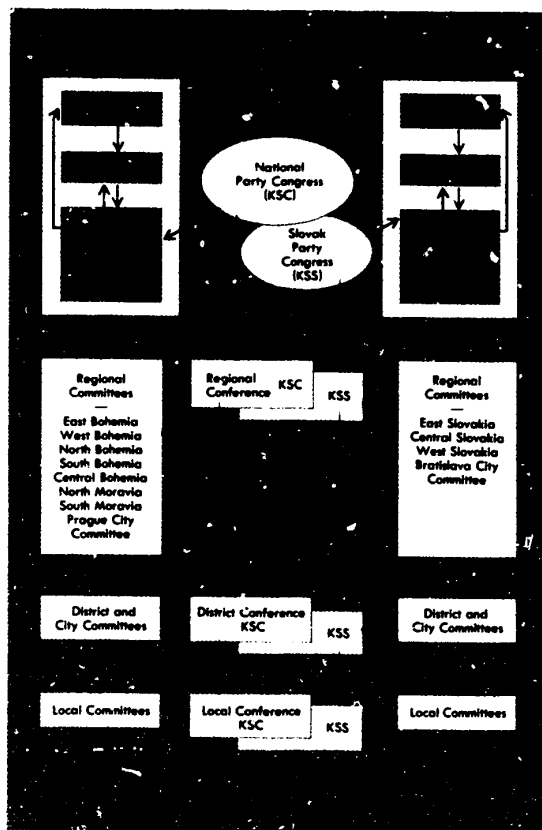


FIGURE 10. Organization of the Czechoslovak Communist Party apparatus (C)

As a collective body, the congress elects the Central Committee, hears the reports from the various party committees, and reaffirms general party policy. An extraordinary congress may be called by a vote of one-third of the members of the Central Committee.

The Central Committee has the assigned task of directing the work of the party between congresses and of organizing and supervising the executive agencies of the KSC, including its own 11 administrative departments. It promulgates directives on the implementation of party policies. It also appoints chief editors of the party's central press and maintains central funds. The Central Committee is comprised primarily of technicians and "apparatchiki" (plant managers, party functionaries, and bureaucrats). The size of the Central Committee varies, often reflecting the needs and policies of the party leadership. The 14th Party Congress elected 115 members and 45 candidate members. Candidate members normally attend plenary sessions but do not have the right to vote. Party statutes require the Central Committee to

hold plenary sessions at least once every 4 months and to report on its work to the lower party organs. In exercising party supervision of government programs the Central Committee operates through 11 departments:

- Agriculture
- Economy
- Education, Science, and Culture
- Elected State Organizations
- Ideology
- Industry, Transportation, and Communications
- Internal Affairs
- Organization and Politics
- Press, Radio, and Television
- Social Organizations
- State Administration

The ruling body of the KSC is the Presidium, a group of 11 members and 2 nonvoting candidate members who determine the policies and tactics of the party. The Presidium exercises authority over the Central Committee, which formally "elects" it. In actuality, the composition of the Presidium is determined by the Party General Secretary, or, as in more recent years, by the Presidium itself. The Presidium is not enjoined to report its activities to any other party or state body, including the Central Committee. Moreover, there is no direct electoral relationship, even theoretically, between the rank-and-file and the Presidium.

The Secretariat is the administrative arm of the Presidium and the only other party body with considerable authority. Its activity, however, is restricted to the implementation of policies and is subject to review by the Presidium. Nevertheless, its powers, which embrace the direction of day-to-day party work in all spheres, are very extensive. The leadership of the KSC as of 1973 is shown in Figure 11.

The Secretariat is headed by the Party General Secretary, who presides over and directs the work of the six additional secretaries and two other members of the Secretariat. Collectively, they supervise the work of the secretaries on the lower party levels. Separately, they keep a careful check on the activities and attitudes of government and public agencies operating in their assigned fields of interest.

Under Novotny, the predominant force in the party leadership was a handful of doctrinaire party politicians, who were primarily specialists interested in gaining and wielding power rather than in developing expertise in functional areas such as government, international relations, or economics. This model was abruptly abolished by Dubcek who installed leaders with technical qualifications to cope with the country's major economic and social problems. The

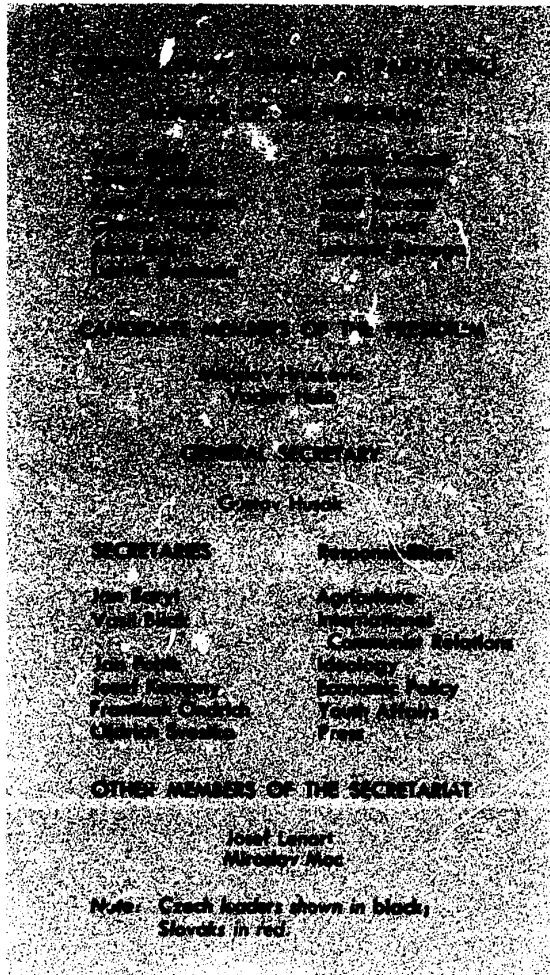


FIGURE 11. Leadership of the Communist Party (C)

leadership that has developed under Husak is basically a combination of politically influential conservatives and more moderate men that agree with most of Husak's policies. A majority of the members of the Secretariat and Presidium may still be considered technical experts and administrators, however, suggesting that Husak continues to stress technical competence and party expertise over pure power politics.

b. Regional and local levels

In 1968 the party organization in the Czech lands was divided into five Bohemian regions, two Moravian regions, and a Prague city region. To the existing three Slovak regions was added the Bratislava city region.

The evolution of party administration on the intermediate level has paralleled that of the national level. Thus, just as the Party Congress is the representative body of the national party, conferences of the regional, district, and basic party organs serve their respective levels. Similarly, regional and local committees and secretariats serve as counterparts to the national Central Committee and Secretariat. All organizations are responsible to the party's central apparatus, in consonance with the principle of democratic centralism. The lowest level of the party is referred to as the basic party organization, which has a minimum of five members but otherwise varies widely in size. In 1973 there were over 30,000 such basic party organizations.

The basic party organization, which is found in schools, industry, agriculture, the armed forces, and the government apparatus, has a number of functions. It disseminates propaganda and promotes organizational work with the people and the local press for fulfillment of party resolutions, and mobilizes workers and employees in factories and offices to prevent waste, fulfill economic plans, and strengthen state and local discipline.

c. Membership

The Czechoslovak Communist Party, unlike most other Eastern European parties, has traditionally been a "mass" party, designed to incorporate representatives of all age groups and major segments of Czechoslovak society. Having been legal prior to World War II, the party had a core of several hundred thousand upon which to build following the end of Nazi rule in the country. Because of the KSC's traditional legitimacy and its anti-Nazi record, the membership rose sharply following the war. When the Communists came to power in 1948, the membership soared to 2.5 million, 19% of the total population of the country. Party membership has since fluctuated due to periodic purges and membership drives, but it has remained the largest in proportion to the population of all ruling Communist parties, including that of the U.S.S.R. In 1962 the leadership decided to hold party rolls to about 1.5 million, or approximately one out of every six adults. By 1968, when liberalization of the party was well along, the membership had swelled to nearly 1.7 million, where it remained until the fall of Dubcek.

Following the 1968 invasion, some 200,000 members—mostly disaffected intellectuals and youth—resigned from the party; added to this loss are some 300,000 who were dropped in the 1970 purge. The membership in 1971 was approximately 1.2

million, the lowest figure since 1948. In May 1973 this figure grew to only 1.25 million, despite the fact that more than 92,000 new candidates were admitted. This indicates that the net gain in party membership during the 1971-73 period was almost matched by the number of purged, resigned, or otherwise dropped members.

Membership is technically open to all citizens over 18 years of age. Under Novotny, membership was dependent upon numerous qualitative requirements regarding each applicant's social background and political views. As a result, the rank and file have normally been conservative in outlook and, until the late 1960's, disinclined to regard the party as a vehicle for social or political innovation. The average age is high, due to the large numbers who joined immediately after World War II. Many members have joined the party for opportunistic reasons—personal or professional ambition, desire for political protection, travel abroad, or even professional survival. In 1971 candidate membership, in effect a 2-year probationary period, was established to enable the regime to screen its members more carefully.

Below the top levels, the KSC membership has never displayed marked ideological fervor. Except for the period of Nazi occupation, the party has been a legal political movement; it enjoyed a measure of success in free electoral competition with other parties, having at times during the interwar period polled as much as 10% of the total vote.

Most of the party members who survived the purge have not proved to be the militant "vanguard" of society that the regime sought. Whatever loyalty to the new regime the bulk of the rank and file has developed has been diluted by the post-1968 organizational disruptions that seriously affected the party's local effectiveness.

In view of these disruptions, data on the social composition of the party are sparse. In 1971 workers constituted only 25% of the membership, and another 20% consisted of retired people. The average age of the membership in 1971 was 49 years, a slight increase over the previous year. In mid-1973, the regime claimed that 40% of party members "were working in factories and on farms," a figure undoubtedly inflated to include administrative staffs. Other devices to give the illusion of a rising percentage of workers in the party include the use of statistical categories such as "workers and former workers," who together were said to constitute 68% of the party in 1973.

The party's efforts to reestablish its "proletarian" basis by increasing the proportion of industrial workers on the party rolls have had limited success. The Husak

regime, both for ideological and practical reasons, largely spared the workers during its purge of the membership rolls, in spite of the large number that had rallied to the Dubcek banner. Many workers, however, disgruntled over the reversal of liberalization policies, resigned from the party.

The regime is also paying particular attention to recruiting young people and the technical intelligentsia. The skills and assistance of this latter group, consisting mostly of professionals such as scientists and economists, are indispensable if the regime is to deal effectively with the country's numerous economic troubles. The regime has acknowledged having considerable difficulty in recruitment, however, and this is not likely to change unless the party relaxes its restraints on initiative and constructive criticism.

Nor does the regime appear to be improving the balance between Slovak and Czech membership. Prior to 1968, Slovaks comprised only about 12% of the total membership of the party, although they formed 28% of the population of the country. No reliable data on the ratio of Czechs and Slovaks within the party as a whole have been available since the invasion. Within the party leadership, however, the Slovaks enjoy representation more than consistent with their proportion of the total population, with four of 11 members in the Presidium and three of seven in the Secretariat, including General Secretary Husak.

Little is known about party finances. According to party statutes, income is derived from membership dues, revenues of party enterprises, and "other" sources. The party purports to be financed by monthly membership dues which are roughly 1% to 4% of each member's net monthly wages, depending on the income bracket.

4. Mass organizations and other parties (C)

As in other Eastern European countries, the Czechoslovak Communist Party has from the beginning of its rule employed a number of political and sociopolitical mass organizations to extend its control and influence over the population. The purpose of the mass organizations has been to reach all segments of society and activities and organizations, particularly those which were carryovers from the democratic era and could not be disbanded or neutralized in any other way. Under the total domination of the Communist Party, these mass organizations are designed to channel the political and social energies of the population into pursuits which either further party goals or which at least are politically harmless. Virtually every Czechoslovak

citizen is involved in some way in the elaborate network of political, economic, and cultural mass organizations.

The most important of these organizations have been the Czechoslovak National Front (NF), the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement (ROH), and the Czechoslovak Youth Union (succeeded in 1970 by the Socialist Youth Union—SSM). The National Front is politically the most influential organization in Czechoslovakia aside from the Communist Party, on whose behalf the Front is charged with mobilizing the energies of both the Communist and the non-Communist members of society through control of all other political and social organizations. In short, it is an umbrella organization, encompassing all political parties and most major specialized mass organizations, dominated by the Communist Party, and designed to assure the Communist monopoly of power. The National Front supervises national and local elections and serves as the party's vehicle for appointing or nominating candidates to the Federal Assembly and other government organs. In 1969 the Front took on a liaison role with the military for coordinating civil defense and paramilitary training. Dubcek sought to reorganize the National Front, enabling it to supervise the activities of its constituent organs free of interference by the Communist Party. Husak has reaffirmed the traditional role of the National Front and, by having himself elected chairman, has restored party supervision of its activities.

There are four theoretically non-Communist political parties in Czechoslovakia—the Czechoslovak Socialist Party, the Czechoslovak People's Party, the Slovak Revival Party, and the Slovak Freedom Party. The regime has permitted these parties to survive 22 years of Communist rule primarily to enhance the facade of a multiparty democracy, as well as to provide Czechoslovaks who in conscience cannot become Communist Party members with a vehicle for permissible political activity. These parties are totally subservient to the Communist Party, however, and offer no challenge to its authority.

It is testimony to the democratic political impulses of the Czechoslovaks that the minor parties energetically sought to increase their influence in 1968 prior to the invasion. Encouraged by the concessions granted by the Dubcek regime, such as lifting restrictions on recruiting and publishing, the smaller parties openly stressed the importance of non-Communist political organizations and even challenged the "leading role" of the Communist Party. Membership in the parties swelled, with the Czechoslovak People's Party and the Czechoslovak Socialist Party reporting an increase of more than 50%

to 40,000 and 16,000, respectively. Since the advent of the Husak regime, however, the non-Communist parties have taken their cue from the purge conducted by the Communist Party, expelling the liberals from their own ranks and proclaiming loyalty to the program of the National Front, that is, to the Communists' program. As a result, these parties have resumed their marginal existence on the periphery of national political life.

5. Exile groups (C)

Prior to 1968 Czech and Slovak exile groups domiciled in the West consisted almost entirely of anti-Communist intellectuals or former politicians who either chose a life of intellectual freedom or were forced by threat of reprisals to remain outside the country. Loosely organized, such groups have limited their activities to antiregime propaganda and have posed no significant challenge to the Communist regime in Prague, although their condemnations occasionally have been troublesome for the leadership. The Dubcek regime had sought to woo some of the emigres back to Czechoslovakia by promising full rehabilitation and remuneration for losses suffered when they left the country. This process was abruptly halted by the Soviet-led invasion of 1968, however.

The invasion resulted in a new exodus of refugees, many of whom were fearful of retribution for having supported the reform movement. The large majority have remained in Western Europe and for the most part have avoided involvement in political activity. Some of the leading intellectuals behind the liberalization movement, such as former TV director Jiri Pelikan, economist Ota Sik, and literary critic Antonin Licim, have expressed interest in trying to bring together the exiles for the purpose of continuing the struggle for reform in Czechoslovakia. Pelikan, from his residence in Rome, has spearheaded an exile periodical, *Listy* (Papers). Unlike earlier emigree groups, the post-1968 refugees consider themselves dedicated Communists who wish to reform the party's leadership rather than to end Communist rule. As a result, the regime has been much more sensitive to their activities, especially inasmuch as they have contributed to keeping alive the resentment within many major Western European Communist parties toward the Soviet crushing of the Dubcek experiment.

Gustav Husak has made a considerable effort to persuade the postinvasion emigres to return by reducing their fear of punitive measures. Immediately after coming to power, the Husak regime declared an amnesty which expired in October 1969. Few of those who returned appear to have been arrested or

otherwise penalized. However, those who chose to remain in the West—over 50,000, by the government's count—had their apartments and private property confiscated.

In late 1970 the authorities in Prague sought to blackmail the exiles living abroad by advising them that they would be prosecuted *in absentia* for illegally leaving the country and that the "defense costs" incurred as a result of these proceedings would be collected from relatives living in Czechoslovakia if payment was not forthcoming from abroad. Following worldwide criticism, Husak personally terminated the practice as "impractical." The regime's "differentiating" attitude toward Czechoslovak citizens living abroad was underlined in December 1970 by President Svoboda's cordial New Year's greeting to emigres who maintained their "warm attitude" toward socialist Czechoslovakia.

Another amnesty, commemorating the 25th anniversary of Communist rule, was proclaimed by Svoboda in February 1973. Under this edict, emigres who have not engaged in "sedition, jeopardizing state secrets, or causing damage to Czechoslovak interests abroad" could return home forgiven for their "illegal emigration" providing they did so by the end of 1973. That the amnesty excluded the regime's most prominent gadflies abroad was made clear by an official press comment stating that "it may be inferred that the amnesty does not apply to several score intellectuals and former officials of the Czechoslovak Communist Party because of whom the Czechoslovak leadership has encountered fresh difficulties in its relations with some Western Communist parties."

6. Electoral procedures (C)

Czechoslovakia has had extensive experience with free elections dating back to the relatively liberal system under the Austrian Empire and the scrupulous practice of democratic governments during the interwar period. Despite a generation of Communist rule, these democratic traditions are still cherished by the large majority of Czechoslovaks.

In line with the practice in other Eastern European countries where the Communists had gained power, the Czechoslovak party revised the electoral procedures to assure victory at the polls. There may have been non-Communist leaders in Czechoslovakia who hoped that the party—which had won a 38% plurality in the last free national election in 1946—might have been influenced by Czechoslovakia's democratic traditions and that it would be restrained in its exercise of power, but the restrictions the party imposed in 1948 were as rigid as any in the

Communist world. The new procedures severely restricted political activity and made it virtually impossible for an individual to stand freely for office, nominate opposition candidates, or campaign on his own initiative.

According to the electoral laws implementing constitutional provisions, the nomination of all political officials was the province only of the political parties and organizations represented in the Communist-dominated National Front. In practice, the National Front put forward only one name for each post to be filled. Thus, the periodic election campaigns were meaningless, reflecting only the extent of Communist Party control over the electoral process. Devices such as semicompulsory "manifest voting" (voting without the secrecy of the booth) and the appointment of party members as election officers gave the Communists control of both the balloting and the counting of votes. These practices, coupled with propaganda and various methods of coercion, insured the success of the specially selected candidates. "Negative" votes generally consist of blank ballots being cast as a symbol of disapproval.

Under the Dubcek regime, far-reaching changes were proposed in the electoral law, mainly in the direction of liberalizing and restricting the role of the Communist Party in the nominating process, in ensuring the secrecy of the ballot, and guaranteeing an honest count. These proposals, as well as the national elections that were scheduled by Dubcek for November 1968 were scuttled by the invasion.

Three years later, the incumbent Husak regime felt sufficiently secure to hold general elections, the first such balloting in Czechoslovakia since June 1964. Husak and other regime spokesmen viewed the elections of 26-27 November 1971 as the culmination of the political consolidation process; the elections, in fact, served to legitimize the Husak regime's hold over the legislature and government executive organs in the same manner that the 14th Party Congress held the preceding May had done for Husak's hold over the Communist hierarchy.

The elections were carried out in much the same manner as those of 1964. The "campaign" was broken down into four phases. First, candidates were nominated by the Communist Party, social organizations, or individual citizens who presented the names to the National Front. The National Front then selected the candidates according to their political and social qualifications as determined by the party, and registered the names on official election lists. Election "programs"—political platforms that the candidates were required to follow—were then drawn up at the

respective electoral levels under party supervision. This phase also included public hearing, at which each candidate committed himself to the program and answered citizens' questions. Finally, the voter "approved" the official slate at the poll.

Although the elections were patently rigged, the regime went all out to cloak them with an aura of democratic respectability. According to the tortured official philosophy, it is the voter's participation in the preelection process and his willingness to convince himself of the candidate's proper political caliber that gives the elections their "democratic" character. Indeed, it is the duty of the citizen, not merely his right, to countersign the slate, thus transforming what otherwise would be an official appointment into an "election."

The regime hailed the results of the 1971 elections as a measure of popular support for its policies. It claimed that 99.8% of the 10.3 million eligible voters supported the single slate, constituting a "crushing defeat" for the regime's opponents, both in Czechoslovakia and abroad. In reality, there appeared to be a politically significant, albeit limited, popular response to a dissident (and naturally illegal) pamphleteering campaign calling on the population to boycott the elections. Some Czechoslovak Communist exiles later claimed that as much as one-quarter of the eligible voters either boycotted the elections or expressed their opposition by crossing off the names of all candidates on the ballot. The atmosphere of intimidation surrounding the elections, the much evident police presence at all voting places, and the subsequent reported arrests of dissidents charged with antielection incitement, bore out the public conviction that the elections were a poorly concealed sham.

D. National policies (C)

For a few brief months in 1968, the Czechoslovak Communist Party, under the leadership of Alexander Dubcek, initiated a sociopolitical program that if carried out would have profoundly affected virtually every sector of national life. Embodied in an Action Program, these new principles called for far-ranging policy changes which would have had the effect of "democratizing" communism. If it had been successful, the Dubcek "experiment" might have led to the emergence of a third type of Communist system which would parallel neither the Soviet nor the Yugoslav models and which might have eventually carried Czechoslovakia out of the socialist camp. His short tenure in office, however, during which his

energies were largely directed to coping with enormous pressures from the Soviets and his domestic critics, did not permit Dubcek to implement many of his proposed reforms.

It has been Gustav Husak's task to establish a government system unencumbered by the atrophy that characterized the Novotny regime while avoiding the more extreme innovations of the Dubcek leadership. Fully conscious of the economic and social problems facing Czechoslovakia, Husak has tried to evolve a program that incorporates some of the necessary reforms proposed under Dubcek, but reforms that do not threaten Moscow's suzerainty over Eastern Europe. Thus, he has had to begin with a thorough and time-consuming housecleaning of the liberal elements in his country who were responsible for Czechoslovakia's "deviation" from the Moscow-approved line. To the extent that the deviation affected foreign affairs, which above all mirror Prague's intentions toward its socialist allies, the housecleaning has been particularly thorough. Husak has virtually surrendered, at least for the time being, sovereignty in molding Czechoslovakia's international posture, and has committed his country to accepting Soviet control of its foreign affairs. Within this framework, Czechoslovakia in 1973 was making strenuous efforts to reestablish its credentials in the international arena, primarily by seeking to improve its relations with the West, especially the United States.

Domestically, Husak has steadily enhanced his authority, and has resisted placing the government in the hands of extremist elements who advocate a return to the repressive and discredited methods of the Novotny regime. Since coming to power, Husak has earned the reputation of a shrewd practitioner of political gamesmanship. He has displayed his ability to recognize the limits of his personal power, to judge the proper moment for compromise, and to reverse himself for the sake of political expediency. His timely warnings in mid-1968 that the reform movement should not overreach itself, his about-face since the invasion on such crucial issues as federalization and the "invitation" thesis justifying Soviet intervention in 1968, and even his servitude to the men in the Kremlin are all the mark of a pragmatic, if opportunistic, man.

Husak's shrewd policies of satisfying the material wants of the population and portraying himself publicly as a moderate wishing to do the best for his people so long as they cooperate by not raising Moscow's ire have served him well in dividing his internal critics. Indeed, this basic principle of his

policy line has tended to appeal, if subconsciously, to the petit bourgeois impulses of much of the population, especially the Czechs, whose national character places great store on public order, political caution, general inconspicuousness of one's public image, and material welfare. These qualities, by contrast, are disdained by the generally intellectual elements who under Dubcek succeeded briefly in firing the latent idealism of the people, and who now have once again been relegated to the political dustbin. More than this, however, Husak has gradually succeeded in portraying the sporadic attempts of the reformers to resist "normalization" and keep the 1968 spirit alive as counterproductive to the interests of the general public. In this way he has managed to some extent to revive the people's tendency to blame idealistic intellectuals for the country's fate, and to turn to those whose program is portrayed as being true to the "common sense realism" traditionally considered the highest virtue by much of the population. Implicitly, Husak thus points at himself and his policies as embodying this virtue, with his critics, on both sides of the political spectrum, as disrupters of a course which has historically enabled the Czechoslovak people to survive "hard times."

What mix of self-delusion, apathy, resignation, and lingering hope makes up the public's willingness to accept—though not support—Husak's line is a moot question. The majority of the people clearly do not believe that there is any chance for meaningful opposition to the current situation, and their national temperament makes them look askance at what they regard as quixotic gestures by an enfeebled intellectual minority. Given this popular posture, Husak indeed appears to many as the ultimate practitioner of "Schweikism," that typical willingness by Czechoslovaks to conserve their energy through sycophancy to superior power, while awaiting more propitious circumstances for asserting their interests.

I. Domestic

For the first 18 months of his tenure, Husak was preoccupied with establishing his own legitimacy as party leader, and he had little opportunity to plan, much less implement, domestic policies. It was not until the autumn of 1970 that Husak appeared confident that his remedial efforts to stabilize the political situation within the Communist Party and in the country had proceeded to the point where he could commit the party's full energies to constructive domestic programs. Those administrative decisions that had been taken were piecemeal and generally of a

negative character, resulting for the most part from the displacement of liberal administrators and functionaries by conservatives who often were left to determine their own course of action free of centralized coordination. The common denominator of the regime's activities seems to have been the silencing of reformers, which it regarded as a prerequisite to drawing up its own agenda.

Husak did, however, provide a broad outline of his plans in June 1970. Addressing the Central Committee's plenary session, he reviewed the party's progress in reversing the "deviations" of the liberalization program and traced what he considered to be the party's future tasks. He emphasized that the party's first priority, following the defeat of the "rightwing," was to reeducate the population into accepting the leading role of the party in the country's affairs and to convince the public that only through dedicated cooperation with the party could the country's problems be solved.

Tactically, this effort was to entail the full use of the communications media, particularly party periodicals. By early 1971, all important media posts had been filled with party men. A system of party schooling, concentrating on Marxist-Leninist ideology and "social awareness" was instituted, and party functionaries were appointed on the basis of their initiative in promoting party policies. Party members and the public alike have since been subjected to a prolonged hard-sell campaign incorporating these and other methods, but it seems to have barely dented the well-tempered cynicism of the Czechoslovaks.

The regime's propaganda campaign has been essentially a carrot and stick approach, described by Husak as a policy of "differentiation." On the one hand, the party has offered leniency to those who in effect recognized that the hopes kindled in 1968 were not to be fulfilled and were willing to accept the reality of the existing situation and cooperate. On the other hand, those who persisted in criticizing the regime and pressed for unacceptable reforms have been firmly dealt with.

Husak has not tolerated public demonstrations of discontent. Embarrassed by the massive demonstrations in August 1969, which threatened to induce further Soviet intervention, Husak ordered harsh security measures, including mass arrests of potential troublemakers and brutal tactics by the police to disperse crowds. The quiet passage of the invasion anniversaries since then has been viewed as an important success by the regime, which has put great stock in the reversion by the people to their traditional sense of public order and discipline.

The party under Husak took quick steps to regain close control of governmental and mass organizations. It replaced Dubcek's appointees to the cabinet ministries and to the top posts of the Federal Assembly with people responsible to party diktat. The legislature is again rubberstamping party decisions. Although the facade of federalization has been maintained, primarily to mollify Slovak nationalism, all important governmental decisions are made on the federal level. The actual implementation of national policies, however, as well as local administration, is generally in the hands of regional government hierarchies staffed by trusted bureaucrats. By 1970 the principal mass organizations, the National Front, the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement, and the Socialist Youth Union had again been fully subordinated to party supervision.

Reversing the Dubcek program to free the judiciary from political control, the Husak leadership has emphasized the judiciary's dual responsibility to enforce the party's "leading role" in society and to firmly implement the law. Liberal judges, including the entire federal Supreme Court, have been replaced with conservatives. While the regime has attempted to avoid the widespread use of police and judicial terror so commonplace under Novotny, Czechoslovak intellectuals charge that in those instances where the party feels its control to be particularly challenged, the authorities have been nearly as brutal as during the Stalinist era. Although these charges have not been verified, the tough new penal code and code of criminal procedure passed in early 1973 bespeaks the regime's determination to severely circumscribe the limits of permissible dissent.

This policy of alternating periods of repression and relaxation is aimed particularly at the intellectuals, and in some ways exemplifies the often seemingly contradictory facets of Husak's domestic policy moves. As early as 1970 Husak embarked on a campaign to make peace with the intellectual community, without whose support, he acknowledged, his goal of "reconciliation" could not succeed. With the purge of the more outspoken liberals completed, the regime sought to revitalize the country's cultural activity. Artists and literary figures who did not flee the country permanently or harm the "interests of the state" were granted an "amnesty" for their activities during 1968 and were encouraged to resume their cultural efforts. New publishing guidelines were drawn up favoring literary creativity, but proscribing any anti-Socialist works.

By late 1971, when the sham national elections gave new impetus to dissident activity by intellectuals, it

was once again the stick rather than the carrot that seemed to dominate relations between the regime and the cultural community. This culminated in a wave of trials in mid-1972 when more than 50 dissident intellectuals were sentenced, some to relatively long prison terms. Though the trials seemed to generate little attention among the Czechoslovak public, exile intellectuals viewed them as clear reprisals against some of the leading lights of the 1968 reformist era. Nevertheless, the charges against the defendants were a compendium of illegal acts postdating the invasion, and thus technically in line with Husak's promise that no punitive action would be taken against any person for his activities during the Dubcek era.

By 1973, the pendulum appeared to have swung again, this time toward a less oppressive cultural policy. Husak's own intellectual status was underscored, and new reports were circulated claiming his consistent counsel within the party for patience in dealing with the intellectuals. This reflects Husak's policy of "differentiation," which separates the ex-reformers into an irredeemable "hard core," responsible for the events of 1968, and "honest Communists" who were merely duped and who can return to the mainstream of Czechoslovak life by recanting. Although most of the country's technical experts appear to have reached a *modus vivendi* with the regime, most creative artists and other intellectuals have resisted all the regime's blandishments and have boycotted the party-controlled cultural organizations. As a result, the country has become a cultural wasteland. Husak's policy preference for patient persuasion as opposed to oppression, is unlikely to become wholly applicable so long as dissident activity continues and is viewed by Husak's more conservative colleagues as a threat to wider domestic and foreign policy goals as well as to intraparty stability.

One of the most profound disappointments for the Czechoslovak population has been the reversal of the educational reforms initiated by Dubcek. In 1968 the traditional Communist educational system, which subordinated free thought to ideological indoctrination, seemed destined to end. In the liberal arts and sciences, in the universities and secondary schools, students and teachers alike had clamored for an easing of party controls over education, and for the open pursuit of knowledge and free exchange of ideas. Intellectual capacity was thought to have triumphed over political obscurity. Students wanted more autonomy in choosing their courses of study. Contacts with Western educators and methods were avidly sought.

Such expectations were shattered by the invasion. The regime has since ousted the professors and

administrators who advocated liberalization of the educational system and has made it emphatically clear that employment in the system depends primarily on subservience to party orders. Teachers are supervised to insure that they give proper emphasis to political indoctrination. Exchange programs with Soviet pedagogical institutions are again emphasized. Czechoslovak students are herded into the party-dominated Socialist Youth Union to insure their compliance with regime policies.

This rigid approach has made it more difficult to find solutions to the urgent problems confronting the entire educational system. The quality of teachers has remained low in spite of government efforts to improve their training, nor are the professional qualifications of university graduates expected to improve significantly. Since 1971, there have been some signs that the regime would gradually imbue the educational system with some flexibility, if only to obtain the qualified professionals that the country needs to replace those who have gone voluntarily or been forced into exile or domestic isolation. The signs of such a course, however, have been almost as checkered and contradictory as those characterizing the regime's approach to the intellectual community.

The Husak regime has shown little sympathy for the religious aspirations of the people—both among the Roman Catholic majority and the strong Protestant minority—and has deflated much of the hope inspired by Dubcek that a more compatible church-state relationship would be established. The more outspoken liberal priests and pastors have been expelled from office, while restrictions on religious education have been reimposed. The party has abolished the reformist clerical organization that was set up under Dubcek and has organized its own puppet organization to keep tabs on religious activities. Government propagandists have attacked the Christian churches on ideological grounds, expounding on the virtues of atheism. Apparently realizing that a compromise must eventually be made with the Roman Catholic Church, however, the regime in October 1970 opened exploratory talks with the Vatican—the first since 1963. Agreement has been reached for the naming of bishops to long-vacant sees, but a meaningful accommodation that could lead to some form of Prague-Vatican relations seems distant. Indeed, the Holy See's general efforts to improve the situation of the Catholic Church in East Europe as a whole are reportedly making the least headway in Prague.

Husak's most urgent and complicated domestic problem remains the one that plagued his

predecessors—the need to reduce the waste and obsolescence that had accompanied the forced growth of the economy, and to make output more responsive to consumers' needs and to the foreign market. The economic policy of the Czechoslovak Communist Party is again based on classic Marxist precepts: planned production based on state ownership of the means of production. It was the failure of such economic plans, including a severe recession in the early 1960's, that led to Novotny's political demise. Recognizing the need for drastic economic liberalization, Dubcek tried to innovate, but his "revolutionary approach" did little for the economy. In fact, inflationary pressures rose, and the foreign trade deficit grew. Husak has dealt with these problems, but he has still to show that he can make the economy work better, given the bad habits of Czechoslovak managers and workers and political restraints that narrowly restrict what he can do.

Husak has successfully carried out two major economic tasks he set for himself—placing the economy under stronger central control and increasing the supply of consumer goods. The leadership, however, does seem to be debating the introduction of some mild reforms during the Sixth Five Year Plan (1976-80).

Stability, not change, has been the watchword. Husak's first act was to strengthen control over planning and direction in the economy. Inflationary pressures forced him to raise retail prices, halt planned wage increases, and cut back new investment projects. Inflation was brought under control by the end of 1970. At this point Husak unveiled a new Five Year Plan (1971-75), which turned out to be the most conservative among the bloc countries, and the most closely attuned to Soviet desires. The plan basically called for a renewed stress on heavy industry, closer cooperation with the U.S.S.R. and other Communist countries, and increased attention to the immediate needs of the consumer.

A number of significant steps have been taken in pursuit of improved consumer welfare. The diet, already one of the best in Eastern Europe, has been steadily improved through increased output of milk and meat and imports of previously scarce fruits and vegetables. The supply of consumer durables has steadily increased, and while still far short of Western standards, Czechoslovakia is the only East European country that has no waiting list to buy a car. In 1972, when the domestic supply of consumer goods was threatened by a spending spree by East German tourists, Prague acted quickly, placing strict quotas on purchases by the tourists. Finally, Husak's regime has

greatly stepped up the pace of housing construction since the beginning of the plan period.

There was evidence throughout 1973 that reforms in wages, prices, and managerial techniques were being debated. For one thing, the Czechoslovaks are paying a good deal of attention to Hungary's liberal economic reform program, the so-called New Economic Mechanism. Within the past year, every major domestic economic periodical has discussed one or another aspect of the Hungarian reforms. The Party Central Committee has also approved a new system for selecting top-level managers, and an experimental wage system, tying wages to productivity, is being tried in a few industries. Heavily backed by Premier Strougal, this system is likely to be introduced more generally in the next Five Year Plan. The political rationale for such economic reforms in Czechoslovakia would presumably be that similar reforms were approved by the 13th Party Congress in 1966 and that "revisionists" like Ota Sik, Dubcek's chief economic theoretician, deviated from the guidelines. In any case, really sweeping changes are not likely, and any reform that is enacted will be kept under strong party control.

2. Foreign

For over a decade after the Communist takeover in 1948, Czechoslovakia was Moscow's model satellite and consistently pledged its steadfast loyalty to the Soviet Union. The Czechoslovak Communists' subservience to Moscow stemmed from both the ideological affinity between the two Communist parties and from the belief that Soviet military power provided security against a renascent Germany. Popular disillusionment with the West over the abandonment of Czechoslovakia to Nazi Germany in 1938 and the fact that most of Czechoslovakia was liberated by Soviet troops in 1945 played into Communist hands in the early postwar years. Czechoslovakia was a signatory to the Warsaw Pact in 1955 and, in the name of "mutual cooperation," structured its economy to meet Soviet requirements and those of the Council for Economic Mutual Assistance (CEMA)—the Soviet bloc economic organization, created in 1949. Czechoslovakia also played a leading role in expounding bloc policies in various international forums.

Popular disenchantment with communism came early after the 1948 coup, mainly from the bloody purge trials of the early 1950's. The leadership's close political relationship with Moscow, however, was not jarred until the de-Stalinization campaign, launched by Khrushchev at the Soviet Party's 20th Congress in

1956. Czechoslovak party leaders, notably First Secretary Novotny, had acquired their positions of power through close association with the Stalinist leadership in Moscow and were loathe to divorce themselves from the pro-Soviet policies and orthodox style of leadership upon which their power had rested.

Nevertheless, by 1963 domestic pressures for economic and political reform, abetted by the general "de-Russification" among Eastern European countries then going on, had risen to the point where Novotny was forced to initiate his own belated de-Stalinization campaign. Responding to the Czechoslovaks' growing awareness of their own national interests, the Novotny regime became less inclined to follow unquestioningly the Soviet lead on even minor issues of domestic and foreign policy. It was not until 1968, however, that Czechoslovak foreign policies challenged Soviet interest beyond limits acceptable to Moscow. Indeed, Dubcek's domestic reform that threatened the Communist Party's monopoly of power was only partly the reason for Moscow's decision to terminate the "Prague Spring" by force. Equally if not more important were clear signs that Dubcek was permitting the country to wrest itself free of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe, possibly to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, and, ultimately, assume a form of "neutralism" that was freely discussed in Prague in the late summer of 1968.

Following the invasion, foreign policy was most immediately affected. Indeed, after August 1968 and until late 1972, Czechoslovak foreign policy did not exist except as a function of Soviet diplomatic interests. By early 1973, however, the Husak regime's success in domestic "normalization" coupled to overall Soviet policies of detente in Europe, had produced signs that Moscow was permitting the Czechoslovak regime to play a more active international role in support of Soviet goals, as well as to enhance Prague's own legitimacy in the world arena. While the basic elements of Czechoslovak foreign policy continue to be made in Moscow, the factor of self-interest is increasingly evident in the conduct of Czechoslovakia's diplomacy.

Despite these small signs of a limited increase in Prague's room for maneuver, the Soviet tether remains short. Foreign Minister Bohuslav Chnoupek (Figure 12) is a confirmed and capable hardliner. Chnoupek publicly criticized Dubcek's reforms in early 1968, and after the invasion, as director of Czechoslovak Radio, turned it into the most dogmatic medium in the country. He subsequently served as ambassador to Moscow until his appointment as foreign minister. Chnoupek shares management of foreign affairs with



FIGURE 12. Bohuslav Choupek, Minister of Foreign Affairs (C)

two other officials: Vasil Bilak, party secretary in charge of foreign relations, and Pavel Auersperg, head of the Central Committee's Department of International Affairs. All three men are conservatives and thoroughly loyal to Soviet interests.

a. Relations with the Communist world

The changing atmosphere of the 1960's brought shifts in Czechoslovakia's relations with other Communist countries, permitting an exchange of ideas which in turn had a liberalizing effect on Czechoslovak policies. To demonstrate flexibility, Party First Secretary Novotny began as early as 1963 to woo Yugoslavia and to indicate an interest in certain political and economic reforms initiated by the Yugoslavs, which had been frowned upon by Moscow. Even though much of this maneuvering was for the sake of improving Novotny's image at home, relations with Yugoslavia began to grow more friendly during the early and mid-1960's.

The heightened nationalism and "democratization" exhibited by the Czechoslovak Government in the mid-1960's, and the resultant tensions with the Soviet Union, led to a closer identity of interests with Romania, which had become the maverick of the Soviet bloc. The Novotny regime stopped well short of the independent "posturing" of Romania, however, and chose not to antagonize Moscow by appearing to sympathize with the Bucharest regime's more independent stance. Under Novotny, Czechoslovakia also drew closer to Poland and Hungary. Novotny seemed particularly conscious of the Hungarian

regime's success in gaining popular support without sacrificing discipline or public order.

With orthodox "Stalinist" East Germany, however, relations began to deteriorate after 1963 as Pankow became openly hostile to Prague's liberalization and reform movement. No East European leader felt more threatened by Czechoslovakia's liberalization movement than Walter Ulbricht. It may have been his voice, in the marked absence of reassurances from Prague, that in August 1968 tipped the scales in favor of invasion.

The more nationalistic regime of Alexander Dubcek reasserted the right to formulate positions on "fundamental questions of international policy" that reflected the country's own national interests. The new leaders in Prague stressed that the main role of foreign policy was to "assist the process" toward a "truly democratic socialism." They were hoping to revitalize Czechoslovak foreign policy by attaining a more meaningful "equality" among their Soviet bloc allies, by assuming a greater and more influential role in bloc activities, and by expanding their political, economic, and cultural contacts with non-Communist countries.

During the early months of Dubcek's leadership, several of Czechoslovakia's allies were sympathetic to Prague's emphasis on national interests. Friendship treaties with Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania were renewed, indicating that relations were still normal. By the summer of 1968, however, all of Czechoslovakia's allies had been taken aback by the sweeping nature of the Dubcek reforms. The Communist states, including Romania, looked with grave concern upon Dubcek's deliberate reduction of the authority of the Communist Party, which they feared might spark demands for a similar movement in their own countries. Dubcek's innovative approach to foreign policy also began to cause anxiety. In July 1968 the Czechoslovaks for the first time took a position on a vital international issue at variance with that of their Communist allies; they refused to back East German efforts, supported by the Soviets, to hinder access to West Berlin. Although Prague was eventually pressured into supporting the Soviet view of the situation, the incident underlined the growing divergence between Prague's stand on certain foreign policy issues and that of its allies.

By the time of the invasion, most of Czechoslovakia's allies were faced with the tough decision of how to react to Czechoslovakia's reform program. Romania especially appeared to be in a quandary, supporting in principle Dubcek's insistence on "self-determination" as the basic ingredient of foreign policy. Romanian President Ceausescu, who was

probably unaware of the impending invasion, visited Prague the week before it took place. This development, along with other apparent manifestations of Prague's growing "alliance" with Romania and Yugoslavia in 1968 may have contributed to the Soviet's decision to invade. Hungary, which had reacted coolly to Dubcek's more adventuresome reforms, showed sympathy for the overall program. Both Hungary and Poland initially opposed the idea of Soviet military intervention to halt the "counter-revolution" in Prague but eventually were compelled to participate.

One of Husak's first decisions after the Soviet-led invasion was to accept the necessity of subordinating Czechoslovak foreign policy to Moscow. He apparently felt that only by alleviating Moscow's concern over Czechoslovakia's reliability in the Warsaw Pact could he gain control of domestic matters. The Soviets, initially wary of Husak, eventually gave him their official endorsement when he and other top Czechoslovak leaders visited Moscow in October 1969.

The most significant manifestation of Prague's subordination to Moscow in foreign matters was the signing in May 1970 of the new Soviet-Czechoslovak Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance. This 20-year treaty endorsed the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine which asserts Moscow's right to intervene in any country where Communist rule is threatened, and implicitly legitimized the invasion of Czechoslovakia. The treaty also implicitly obligated Czechoslovakia to assist the Soviet Union in case of a military confrontation with Communist China.

A determining element of Czechoslovak-Soviet relations is the presence of Soviet occupation troops in Czechoslovakia. As part of a concerted Soviet effort to lend a semblance of legality to the occupation, the Czechoslovak Government was forced to sign a status-of-forces agreement with the U.S.S.R. in October 1968. The pact called for the withdrawal of the bulk of the Soviet forces then occupying the country, and within 2 months the number of troops had been reduced to the 55,000-60,000 level. Under the agreement, an unspecified number of troops are to remain in the country "temporarily" but are not to interfere in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs. The Soviets also agreed to bear their own maintenance costs, to compensate Prague for material damage inflicted by their armed units, and to permit crimes committed by their troops to be prosecuted according to Czechoslovak laws.

Prague has shown some initiative in improving its relations with its East European neighbors. Husak's

task was a formidable one in that his accession to power was received with considerable uncertainty by all Communist leaders. To the Romanians and Yugoslavs he personified the Soviet occupation, which to them was anathema. To the East Germans, Husak represented a political regime well short of the archconservative one they had hoped to see in Prague. The Hungarians were not long in coming out in favor of Husak and, like the Poles, preferred his leadership over a more Stalinist regime that could have strengthened conservative party elements in their own countries. In December 1969, after Hungarian party leader Kadar visited Prague to assess the situation for himself, the Husak regime stated explicitly that it had studied the Hungarian "solution" since the 1956 uprising and would adopt those measures applicable to Czechoslovakia.

By the end of 1970 the other Warsaw Pact countries had largely fallen in behind the Soviets in the latter's acceptance of the political *status quo* in Prague. Husak's middle-of-the-road domestic policies and his demonstrated ability to maintain public order and the authority of the Communist Party had convinced his allies that Czechoslovakia no longer posed a threat, whether liberal or conservative, to their own nationalist interests. In addition, Husak had edged increasingly closer toward accepting the "fraternal aid" of the five invasion powers, finally thanking them for the action at the 14th Party Congress in May 1972. In October 1973, Husak himself finally visited Yugoslavia, and Federal Assembly chairman Indra made an official trip to Romania. By thus burying the hatchet with Eastern Europe's two maverick regimes who had vocally opposed the 1968 invasion, Prague demonstrated its fully regained diplomatic credentials in the area.

b. Relations with developed non-Communist states

Improved relations with the West, primarily for economic reasons, were sought even by the Novotny regime, but became a central feature of Dubcek's program in its early stages. Czechoslovak industry required modernization, and this could be financed only by selling more products in the West. In addition, Western technology and credits were essential if there were to be an easing of the economic stranglehold on the Czechoslovak economy which had been brought about by its compulsory integration with the economies of the other Communist countries, notably that of the U.S.S.R.

The Czechoslovaks' primary target for expanded trade was Western Europe, particularly West

Germany, the United Kingdom, and France. Improved economic relations with these countries, however, depended on an improved political atmosphere, which motivated Czechoslovak leaders to make substantial effort, to eliminate old political grievances. By the mid-1960's, the Czechoslovak Communists for the first time sought rapprochement with their Western neighbors, and initiated a program of personal VIP visits, commercial contacts, and tourism. But practical economic results of such efforts were slow in coming, principally because Czechoslovak manufactured goods could not compete in Western markets because of their inferior quality.

Formal negotiations between the Czechoslovaks and the West Germans progressed most rapidly and, in spite of Soviet and East German opposition, an agreement calling for expanded trade and an exchange of trade missions was signed in August 1967. Prague managed to sidestep two extremely contentious issues with Bonn—the Berlin problem and the Munich Agreement—to bring about the agreement.

Although the Husak regime has sought to maintain the momentum in its economic relations with Bonn—a 5-year trade pact was signed in December 1970—political progress in negotiating a good-will treaty similar to those concluded by West Germany with the U.S.S.R. and Poland, was slow. After the Bonn-Warsaw treaty was ratified in May 1972 and West German-Czechoslovak negotiations became the next order of business in *Ostpolitik*, Prague stood firm in its traditional demand that Bonn declare the 1938 Munich Agreement void *ab initio* (from the beginning). Bonn held that this was impossible to do for a multitude of technical reasons involving mainly the legal status of Sudeten Germans and Czechoslovak demands for reparations. A solution to this impasse was not found until May 1973, when—probably as a result of Soviet pressure—Prague backed off from its *ab initio* formula and accepted, in effect, Bonn's standing offer to declare the Munich Agreement "no longer valid."

The draft treaty was initialled in June during Choupek's visit to Bonn, and the way seemed clear to a formal signing by Chancellor Brandt in Prague and a subsequent establishment of diplomatic relations. At the last moment, however, issues involving the right of Bonn's diplomatic establishment in Prague to represent West Berlin institutions once again became an obstacle, forcing Brandt to postpone his trip to Prague. Backed by Moscow in its intransigence on the Berlin issue, and joined by Hungary and Bulgaria, whose own treaty negotiations with West Germany became stalled, the Husak regime refused to budge. In

early November 1973, however, following high-level Soviet-West German talks in Moscow, Prague once again reversed itself on Soviet "advice," the Berlin issue was sidestepped, and the treaty was signed on 11 December.

Relations with France have also improved measurably, although the Prague-Paris rapprochement was largely an adjunct of de Gaulle's own efforts to strengthen French ties with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. As early as 1967 Czechoslovakia and France signed a long-term trade protocol and a broadened cultural agreement. The trade agreement was renewed in February 1970. In recent years both Paris and Prague reached a measure of agreement on a number of international issues, such as East-West detente and European security.

The Czechoslovaks have also called for an end to their often testy relations with Austria, which Prague feels has violated its neutral status through anti-Czechoslovak propaganda and "collusion" with the NATO powers. In 1970 Vienna reduced its radiobroadcasts directed to Czechoslovakia, but warmer relations have not become a reality. Continued local disputes, primarily caused by border incidents, seem to preclude an early improvement.

Czechoslovakia's relations with the United States had warmed considerably in the 1960's from the low point of the cold war days. Nevertheless, progress in developing a productive dialog was slow, primarily because of the diametrically opposing viewpoints of the two countries on major international issues. The Vietnam war was Prague's main point of contention and was the subject of strident anti-U.S. propaganda. The Czechoslovaks take the United States to task on other issues, notably the alleged U.S. "role" in the Middle East conflict and, until Soviet detente policies muted this theme, U.S. "responsibility" for inciting the arms race. Purely bilateral irritants have also marred U.S.-Czechoslovak relations. The Czechoslovak Government has been unable to obtain the release of 18.4 metric tons of Nazi-looted gold (worth US\$20 million at the time), held by the Tripartite (United States-United Kingdom-France) Gold Commission at U.S. insistence. Release of the gold has been contingent upon reaching a satisfactory agreement which would provide compensation for U.S. citizens whose property has been nationalized by Czechoslovakia.

A major development in Czechoslovakia's relations with the United States was the visit of Secretary of State Rogers to Prague in early July 1973 and the signing at that time of a consular convention. In September, the two nations began talks aimed at

settling outstanding financial claims, one of the major roadblocks to improved bilateral relations.

The two countries have been more successful in expanding economic and cultural relations. Czechoslovak trade with the United States has been increasing, but educational and cultural exchanges have declined from their high point in 1968-69. Scientific cooperation, which the Czechoslovaks particularly value, has also grown. In 1969 the two countries concluded a civil air agreement.

Although Prague has become more active in the field of foreign relations in 1972-73, its activities clearly remain circumscribed. Indeed, Czechoslovakia is the loudest proponent of a "coordinated socialist foreign policy," a main ingredient in Moscow's efforts to maintain discipline in Eastern Europe. The Husak regime, however, will do what it can to utilize the openings created by the Soviet policy of detente to seek further recognition of its legitimacy.

On the other hand, the potentially corrosive impact of detente will perhaps be felt more in Prague than elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Husak cannot escape the paradox that Moscow's rationale for the 1968 invasion was to counter the danger stemming from Dubcek's inability to resist the alleged subversive influence of Western ideas. Husak inherited this rationale, but it now looks as if he may have to contend with much the same Western influence as a matter of course, treading a tightrope between the impact the West will have on popular expectations and the demands of Soviet-imposed discipline. His success in this is by no means a foregone conclusion.

c. Relations with developing countries

Czechoslovakia has traditionally played an important role in aid to lesser developed areas. Of the Communist countries, Czechoslovakia is second only to the U.S.S.R. in the total amount of aid devoted to the developing countries, and in aid per capita it has fairly consistently been first. Arms aid has been an important part of this program, although in the past Czechoslovak military assistance usually reflected Soviet motives. Since the mid-1950's, substantial Czechoslovak military assistance has gone to Egypt and other Arab states in the Middle East. Africa has been the other principal area of Czechoslovak arms sales. In 1965 Prague tightened its credit demands and began requiring short-term, hard currency payments from recipient countries.

Czechoslovakia has invariably been among the first of the Soviet bloc countries to extend diplomatic recognition to newly independent, formerly colonial nations, and has concluded economic and cultural

agreements with these and other developing countries, particularly in Africa and Latin America. The agreements usually provide for Czechoslovak technical assistance in the construction of industrial establishments and for the exchange of machinery, consumer goods, and arms for foodstuffs and raw materials. Cultural agreements concentrate on the exchanges of such official cultural delegations as would best expose foreign leaders to evidence of Czechoslovakia's domestic achievements and concomitantly support bloc propaganda objectives. In 1961 the regime established in Prague a university for foreign students. Czechoslovakia is also a leading Eastern European country in providing scholarships and training for students from less developed nations.

This interest in strengthening ties with the developing nations has not proven overly successful from several points of view. Many of the nations aided by Czechoslovakia are dissatisfied with the slowness of Czechoslovak aid and criticize the quality of the manufactured goods. They often resent the attempts by Czechoslovakia to exploit this aid for political and propaganda purposes. At home, the Czechoslovak populace resents this politically motivated largesse, claiming that it serves Soviet rather than Czechoslovak interests. Domestic shortages are blamed to some extent on the commitment to the developing nations. Sporadic incidents of racial prejudice against non-Caucasian foreign students attending Czech and Slovak schools are a continuing source of official embarrassment.

E. Threats to government stability

The Soviet armed intervention in 1968 to put down a highly popular reformist regime introduced several fundamental destabilizing factors into the Czechoslovak polity that had not existed even during the harshest period of the Stalin era in the early 1950's. The Czechoslovaks, who previously had been one of the few nations in Eastern Europe with no history of direct Russian or Soviet oppression, now have experienced Soviet power first hand. As the only people in the area who had no foreign military forces stationed on their territory after 1945, the Czechoslovaks consider the presence of Soviet units in their country since 1968 as a more direct symbol of subjugation than do the people of other East European states where the Soviet presence continued long after World War II, in some cases persisting to this day. Further, the Husak regime came to power and remains in power only with the most undisguised reliance on Soviet political support and potential

military threat. As such, the regime appears a throwback to an earlier period in East European-Soviet relations. In other countries, the gradual process of political selection has produced new ruling elites that no longer bear the onus of having been directly installed by Moscow. Finally, Husak must rule over the one people in Eastern Europe who have a deeply rooted democratic tradition, and who tend to be highly educated and politically sophisticated regardless of social class. (U/OU)

While these factors would tend to introduce formidable destabilizing strains into the society, there are major countervailing factors that tend to balance if not outweigh them. Foremost is the Czech national characteristic of caution, innate sense of law and order, fear of violence, and basic unwillingness to persist championing a cause against unfavorable odds. This is most evident in the middle class which is more numerous in Czechoslovakia than in any other East European country except East Germany. Moreover, these attitudes are reinforced by the traditionally high living standards and consequent materialistic impulses of the majority. These impulses in fact, have been used by the Husak regime, which has, in the view of many dissident intellectuals, bribed the population away from subversive activity and into political apathy by supplying it with more consumer goods. Finally, there also exists a tendency toward "scapegoat-ism," the particular need to blame certain elements in the society for past failures, that tends to divide the nation against itself and facilitates foreign overrule. As a result, some of the intellectual proponents of the 1968 reform period find themselves not only persecuted by the regime, but also ostracized by the people, who—perhaps not always consciously—blame them for both the 1968 "debacle" and for the subsequent prolonged suppression. The sum effect of these factors has been not to eliminate isolated acts of active resistance or the much more prevalent passive resistance, but to make both at most an embarrassment rather than a danger to the regime. (U/OU)

1. Discontent and dissidence (C)

The varied activities which the Communists are inclined to regard as subversive have usually represented a desire to bring about reforms rather than to overthrow the existing system. These protest activities have only occasionally resulted in rioting or individual acts of violence.

The popular dissidence that reached a peak in Czechoslovakia in the 1960's has been silenced by the military occupation but is no less extant than it was in 1967. Under Antonin Novotny, nearly every section of

Czechoslovak society developed a deep-seated contempt for the Communists' heavyhanded methods of running the country, a contempt that even began to extend to Dubcek when the people felt his retreat from the Action Program was an unnecessary capitulation to the Soviets. Likewise, the Czechoslovaks have amply demonstrated their dislike of the Husak leadership, which openly acknowledges the difficulty it faces in gaining the popular support necessary to generate a renewed sense of national purpose.

Perhaps the most effective opposition group, prior to 1968, was the country's intellectual community. Non-Communists as well as disaffected or liberal Communist intellectuals united after 1962 in a bold campaign which forced significant cabinet changes in 1963 and compelled the party to reexamine many aspects of its policies. Speeches at the fourth congress of the Czechoslovak Writers Union in June 1967 intensified the intraparty crisis that eventually led to Novotny's fall.

Another social group critical of Czechoslovakia's internal political development has been the Slovak minority. Except for the short-lived Dubcek regime, under which the Slovaks gained considerable political power, the Communists have been no more successful in coping with Slovak demands for autonomy than their democratic predecessors. More outspoken and impulsive than the Czechs, the Slovaks were in the forefront of the campaign to liberalize and reduce party control. In questions concerning Slovakia—its voice in national matters, its share in the approved "histories" of the country, and its claim to Communist and non-Communist heroes—the Slovaks consistently defied the party until it granted at least partial satisfaction of their demands. Slovak dissension—like that of the small Hungarian, Gypsy, German, Ukrainian, and Polish minorities—was a constant irritant to the Communists and erupted occasionally in public demonstrations or interethnic clashes which belied Communist claims of having solved minority problems.

A third element of society that has caused considerable trouble to the Communists is the youth. During the two decades in which they have been in control, the Communists have failed to mold the country's youth into a dynamic social group responsive to the regime. Years of Communist indoctrination and isolation have not won over the young people, but rather have caused young workers, students, and farmers to resist, and eventually attack, the regime's policies. Czechoslovak youth, who have shared many of the grievances of their elders, have additionally had many of their own. Topping the list

is a rigid educational system, made insipid and sterile through political discrimination and indoctrination. The restrictions placed on travel to the West have contributed to the malaise. In their own country, even Communist youth have been disillusioned by the harsh differences between socialist theory and socialist reality, and disturbed by seeing the "socialist revolution betrayed" by the Communist regime.

The youth have been more daring than their elders in demonstrating their dissatisfaction, being in the forefront of most active protests both before and after the 1968 reform era. They took advantage of regime-approved demonstrations such as those protesting U.S. "aggression" in Vietnam and the U.S.S. *Pueblo* affair to harass the Novotny regime. Czechoslovak young people have also been responsible for numerous riots, vandalism, work absenteeism, and "hooliganism representing acts of defiance to the Soviet occupation." In some cases the sons and daughters of pro-Communist working-class parents and of high-ranking regime officials have been among the more vocal dissidents.

Neither the peasantry nor the "favored" industrial workers have been satisfied with conditions in Czechoslovakia under the Communists. Passive resistance and chronic discontent in rural areas have been important factors in the failure of Czechoslovak agricultural production to meet planned goals. The most striking examples of opposition to Communist agricultural policies have come about because of the widespread refusal of young people to enter farming and the almost negligible recruitment of Communist Party members in the rural areas.

Industrial workers have also expressed dissatisfaction with their position, but they have lacked organization. Nevertheless, they have managed to demonstrate their opposition to the regime and its policies by a variety of means including slowdowns, absenteeism, evasion of regulations, poor quality or erratic production, willful negligence, theft, vandalism, and occasional strikes and demonstrations. Skilled workers who had once regarded communism as a more militant form of social democracy became disillusioned with the political repression and the nonfulfillment of promises of rapid improvement in their living conditions. Unskilled workers, once the firmest supporters of the Communists, have from time to time suffered great economic hardships and have resented the regime's economic policies such as "labor competition," the system of wage differentials, and rewards for "exemplary" work.

Economic crimes have also been a manifestation of popular dissatisfaction. Widespread smuggling,

currency speculation, and theft, involving both employees and management, have vexed the regime, leading to periodic disciplinary campaigns.

Virtually all these manifestations of discontent, in general abeyance during the period of Dubcek's leadership, were renewed after Husak took office. The new regime was fully aware of the potential dissident threat, however, and moved quickly to quell demonstrations and other forms of active protest. The quiet passing of the second and subsequent anniversaries of the invasion, in contrast to the violence that accompanied the first, was adequate testimony to the efficiency of the regime's tough police tactics. Occasional roundups of potential troublemakers and prosecutions of "lawbreakers" still occur, but by 1973 overt public dissent was limited almost entirely to catcalls at pro-Soviet movies, political jokes, poor sales of party newspapers, and, as always, malingering.

A strong indicator of the limitations placed on Husak's power has been the shelving of his "reconciliation" campaign. His attempt to strike a bargain with those members of the deposed liberal community who had not violated law by overt acts of defiance was a key element in his early political program and the major issue setting him apart from the conservatives. "Reconciliation" involved exonerating the thousands of Czechoslovaks who had supported the reform movement in exchange for their atonement and future cooperation with the party. The failure of "reconciliation" resulted just as much from the refusal of the party conservatives to actually put it into practice as it did from the refusal of the liberals, mostly intellectuals, to be bribed with jobs and social status. Where the more practical Husak could envision a tactical alliance with the liberals for the sake of "normalization," the conservatives could not. Conservative party members considered it beyond the pale to seek rapprochement with their countrymen who so recently had turned on them.

2. Subversion (S)

No sustained, organized subversion has been known to exist in contemporary Czechoslovakia. The initiatives taken by Dubcek in 1968 were intended to reform the country's leadership and policies by working within the ruling Communist Party, and involved no unconstitutional movement to overthrow either the government or the constitution. The innovations introduced by the Dubcek leadership were bound to alter the methods by which the government operated, but at no time was the Communist system of government challenged from without.

Both before and after the brief period of Dubcek's rule, however, it has been the practice of Communist regimes to seize on instances of illegal dissident activity to allege a subversive threat. This has been done at various times for propaganda purposes, to support vigilance campaigns, to exploit for foreign or domestic policy purposes, or as a pretext for preventive action against political opponents both in and outside the party.

Armed resistance against the Communist regime—what little there has been—has been centered in the mountainous northeastern corner of Slovakia, which borders on the U.S.S.R. and Poland. Between 1950 and 1956, bands of Poles, Slovaks, and Ukrainian "partisans" moved freely across the frontiers, engaging in sporadic acts of sabotage and armed clashes with the police; they were subject to periodic mop-up operations. Most of these resistance groups were eliminated or disbanded, although the regime in subsequent years occasionally voiced concern over renewed guerrilla activity. Other resistance groups, organized from remnants of prewar Czechoslovak political parties, were active along the Moravian-Polish frontier. But their opposition was confined largely to circulating antiregime tracts, and only infrequently did they resort to violence. Most of these groups ultimately became subservient to the Communists, although some reportedly attempted to maintain contact with "revisionist" elements within the lower levels of the Communist Party apparatus.

Between 1948 and 1968 there were individuals or groups in nearly all sections of the country who were tried for subversive activities such as sabotage, dissemination of antistate literature, and rioting. In 1963, for instance, an antiregime demonstration during the May Day festivities in Prague was attributed to a group of youths belonging to an organization called the "Lone Star." Some underground organizations, such as a student group called the "White Rose" and several loosely organized workers' groups in Bohemia, circulated anti-Communist literature in schools and factories.

The Husak regime has shown no less sensitivity to threats of "subversion" than its pre-1968 predecessors. In 1970 the government announced it had uncovered a number of alleged underground movements and had arrested several individuals for "antistate" activity. In January of 1970 the police claimed to have surfaced a "Trotskyite" group which had conducted a nationwide campaign of creating public dissidence. In August several members of a "teenage group of terrorists" called *Caiman* were convicted of promoting armed sedition and attacks against government

officials and facilities. An organization calling itself the Czechoslovak Citizens Socialist Movement purportedly distributed a "manifesto" to certain Western journalists and Dubcek supporters calling for a return to the ideas of the "Prague Spring."

Allegations of organized subversive activity have also been leveled by the regime at formerly prominent liberals, former party officials, and intellectuals associated with Dubcek's reform movement. While many of these persons clearly engaged in illegal antiregime activity, the charges of organized subversion were exploited largely by conservative party elements against Husak who had pledged that no punitive action would be taken against reformists for activities during the Dubcek period.

The largest series of trials in which subversion was a prominent charge occurred in late summer of 1972, when over 50 second-rank ex-reformers were sentenced for acts—all of them falling into the 1970-72 period—that included incitement and clandestine activity. Specifically, the defendants were accused of producing and disseminating antiregime and anti-Soviet printed matter, maintaining contacts with exiles hostile to the regime, urging the population to boycott the November 1971 elections, and forming subversive groups that sought "to overthrow socialism in Czechoslovakia and to dissolve Czechoslovakia's ties with the socialist countries and the U.S.S.R. in particular." It was perhaps symptomatic of the general desire of the public to hold itself aloof from any potentially disruptive developments that the trials were largely ignored by the masses despite accompanying regime propaganda designed to further discredit Dubcek's followers and underscore the futility of their actions.

F. Maintenance of internal security (S)

1. Police

The maintenance of public order and safety in Czechoslovakia, as in the other East European bloc countries, has involved the extension of regulatory police activity far beyond traditional Western limits. The regular, uniformed police is both organizationally and functionally only a component of an integrated system of security and intelligence agencies under party control, closely cooperating among themselves—despite occasional frictions—and having at their disposal the full resources of the state, including fully militarized components. With the exception of the collection of foreign military intelligence, which is under the purview of the Ministry of National Defense, the entire internal security, intelligence,

counterintelligence, and countersubversive apparatus is subordinate to the Ministry of Interior.

Since 1948 the security apparatus has served as an efficient instrument of protection for party and state interests. The misuse of police power reached its peak during the bloody purge trials from 1949 to 1954. Between 1963, when liberalization began, and early 1968, when Dubcek came to power, there was a shift in emphasis within the security system; it gradually became somewhat less of a conscious instrument of terror and concentrated on more subtle techniques such as the exercise of censorship and intelligence collection.

The Dubcek leadership initiated a reorganization of the police and intelligence services designed to bring their activities under closer scrutiny of parliamentary and executive organs. Their "freewheeling" actions under old-line conservativism were terminated and their responsiveness to party policies was insured. It was hoped that these changes, which also emphasized decentralization within the services, would afford greater protection for Czechoslovak citizens from the capriciousness of police officials.

The present structure of the security apparatus dates from about June 1969, when the Husak regime reversed some of the decentralizing measures adopted under Dubcek, and took other steps to insure the improved morale, loyalty, and effectiveness of the services.

The domestic police apparently underwent few organizational changes in the shuffle of June 1969, although their official name seems to have been changed from the Public Security Police to the Civil Police. The Main Directorate of Civil Police is a division of the Ministry of Interior. An Inspector General's office was established in 1969 as a police review board, presumably to guard against a resurgence of an overpowerful Ministry of Interior as existed under Novotny. The Main Directorate of Civil Police consists of 13 regional directorates which, in turn, are subdivided administratively into district and municipal branches. An extra police regiment responsible for urban security was organized in September 1970. The four largest cities, Prague, Bratislava, Brno, and Ostrava, have their own separate citywide police organizations.

The Civil Police, whose functions are similar to the municipal police in the West, are responsible for normal maintenance of public order and safety, including traffic control, firefighting, civil defense, and guarding prisons. There are thought to be over 30,000 Civil Police in the country. Normally, the police are armed with sidearms, and patrol in pairs

whether on foot or in automobiles. In case of riot or other emergencies, the police can be equipped with helmets, truncheons, submachine guns, and patrol in armored vehicles. Tear gas is employed in riot control. Maintenance of public order and the security of railroad installations are responsibilities of the Public Security for Railroads.

As a rule, the special internal security organs have had precedence over the regular police forces. The secret police, or State Security Police (StB), has traditionally functioned under specialized directorates of the Ministry of Interior and has been in charge of the political surveillance of the population and of foreigners visiting or residing in Czechoslovakia. The official use of the term StB was abolished in 1953, but the designation is still widely used by the public. The regular and special police units are at the disposal of several directorates in charge of StB operations. Political crimes, whether border crossings, economic sabotage, espionage, or conspiracy against the state, are immediately investigated either wholly or at one or another stage by the StB.

The uniformed and well-organized Frontier Guard (PS) has a primary mission of controlling the Czechoslovak borders with West Germany and Austria. The Frontier Guard is subordinate to the Ministry of Interior and is organized along military lines; it includes a small Danube Defense Guard that patrols the Danube river boundary with Austria and Hungary (Figure 13). The Frontier Guard is supported logistically by the Czechoslovak Army, which provides it with armored personnel carriers, other transport vehicles, and small arms of modern design. In patrolling the borders, the Frontier Guard makes extensive use of dog teams, wire barriers, watch towers, and patrols. The Frontier Guard operates border crossing points and is responsible for checking passports and vehicles.

The People's Militia, which sprung to life and played a major intimidating role in the 1948 Communist coup, remains an armed auxiliary of the Communist Party which is trained in military tactics for internal security duties as well as civil defense functions. People's Militia units consist exclusively of party members and are located at key plants and installations. Under Husak, the People's Militia has been enlarged and given the statutory authority to act as auxiliary police. To make its "private army" status even more complete, the Communist Party statutes were amended at the May 1971 Party Congress to include a provision formally confirming the direct subordination of the People's Militia to the central party organs.



FIGURE 13. River police patrol the Danube (U/OU)

2. Countersubversive and counterinsurgency measures and capabilities

There is little question that the political shakeups in Prague since 1968 have had traumatic effects on the security and intelligence services, in terms of both organizational changes and personnel turnover. The rapid changeover from the conservative, quasi-Stalinist hierarchy under Novotny, to Dubcek's liberal one, and to Husak's neoconservative structure almost certainly caused major disruptions in effectiveness and gaps in intelligence functions, some of which may well remain in 1973.

Nevertheless, these services, under the watchful eye of the party, dealt effectively with the disturbances that marked the first postinvasion year, and have been able since then to maintain order and ferret out the sporadic, though persistent, instances of dissident activity. This strongly suggests that Husak's internal security apparatus is fully able, and can be relied on, to suppress or contain openly dissident elements, cope effectively with either localized rioting or, with the aid of the militarized units under the Ministry of Interior, with large-scale disturbances. It can also be assumed that the effectiveness of Czechoslovak internal security forces is certainly augmented by the psychological effect on the population of the threat implicit in the

presence of Soviet military forces that have been on Czechoslovak territory since August 1968.

For its part, the Husak regime has tried to carry out a policy which would reinvest the security services with the means and the authority to enforce domestic tranquillity without recourse to the terror tactics of the early 1960's. The police occasionally have been brutal, but usually only when dealing with public demonstrations. Mass arrests have been made, although most suspects apparently have been released after only a short detention period. In August 1969 the police were granted emergency powers to deal with demonstrations and tough penal codes have been enacted to deal with a rise in crime, in part stimulated by the disorders and disruptions since August 1968.

The government has imposed severe travel restrictions, both on Czechoslovaks traveling abroad and on foreigners coming into the country. Vacation and student travel to Western countries has been drastically curtailed, largely to prevent defections. Czechoslovak diplomats have been put under tight travel restrictions since many of their colleagues defected in 1968 and 1969. Czechoslovak borders have from time to time been closed to Western journalists and some newsmen have been expelled from the country. Western diplomats have occasionally had their travel prerogatives reduced.

G. Selected bibliography (U/OU)

There is a wealth of works on the political and social dynamics of Czechoslovakia both before and after the Communists came to power. Often parochial events in the country's history have later come to be seen as epitomizing trends that have had significant impact on the whole European scene.

This is true of the Czech-German rivalry within the beleaguered Czechoslovak state of the interwar period, and the self-image of the Czechs as sacrificial lambs on the altar of appeasement in 1938 and as the primary catalysts to World War II in Europe. It is also true in the failure of the democratic-Communist coalition in the 1945-48 period ending in the bloodless Communist coup, which, in turn, signalled the beginning of what has been termed the cold war.

Similarly, just as the ensuing history of Communist excesses in Czechoslovakia, the show trials and internecine bloodletting of the 1950-54 period epitomized what is known as the Stalinist era, so did Novotny's reluctance to engage in de-Stalinization lead to the eventual, virtually unconstrained release of idealistic—albeit socialist—political impulses during the 1968 "Prague Spring." The August 1968 invasion

and the subsequent "normalization" of the country have also been held up by both Czechoslovak and foreign, non-Communist, and Communist writers and theoreticians as unique historical events dramatically documenting communism's inability to coexist with the pluralistic tendencies of a traditionally democratic society. Understandably, perhaps, little comprehensive analysis has yet been published on the rule of Gustav Husak and his policy of "normalization."

Although a rich library exists on the pre-Husak period, the treatment is uneven, because of the variety of viewpoints employed, emphasis made, and political and social vested interests involved. Indeed, many authors are emigres and exiles—each has a different reason for taking either a bitter or apologetic approach. Few writers, domestic or foreign, have succeeded in being fully objective.

1. General works

The Slavs; Roger Portal; Harper & Row, New York/Evanston, 1969; an historical survey and ethnology of the Slavic peoples of Russia, Central Europe, and the Balkans. The book includes concise and interpretive sections on Czechs and Slovaks.

The Czechoslovak Contribution to World Culture; Miloslav Recheigl, ed.; Mouton & Co., The Hague/London/Paris, 1964; an anthology of essays on Czech and Slovak classicists, scholars, philosophers, artists, and literary figures. It is written by Czechoslovak expatriates who avoid political polemizing.

The Strangled Democracy, Czechoslovakia 1948-69; David Rodnick; The Caprock Press, Lubbock, Texas, 1970; profiles of various segments of Czechoslovak society—farmers, youth, workers, and their attitudes toward their society and the Communist regime. The book is based on limited personal interviews in Czechoslovakia in 1949 and 1969 and is one of the few available Western accounts of Czechoslovak society under the Communists.

Czechoslovakia in European History; S. Harrison Thomson; Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1953; an account of Czech and Slovak histories through the Communist coup in 1948 and the two peoples' contributions to European history and culture.

2. The pre-1948 period

Czechs and Germans; Elizabeth Wiskemann; Oxford University Press, London/New York/Toronto,

1938; a penetrating account of the historic relations between Czechs and Germans prior to 1938, one of the major elements influencing Czechoslovak history.

The Doomed Democracy: Czechoslovakia in a Disrupted Europe, 1914-38; Vera Olivova; London, 1972; a somewhat self-pitying and determinist historical analysis.

Munich, 1938; Keith Gilbert Robbins; London, 1968; provides the Western view of the road to and from Munich without being an apologia.

The Czechs Under Nazi Rule: The Failure of National Resistance, 1939-42; Vojtech Mastny; London, 1971; an analysis of the divisive and traumatic factors that resulted in the general absence of active resistance to German occupation.

The Masaryk Case; Claire Sterling; Praeger, New York, 1970; a journalistic investigation of the death in 1948 of Jan Masaryk; includes a useful if short review of the 1945-48 "coalition atmosphere" that permitted a steady growth in Communist power.

3. The Stalinist era and after

The Confession; Artur London; William Morrow & Co., Inc.; New York, 1970; a stunning portrayal of the Stalinist purge trials in the early 1950's by one of their victims.

Truth Will Prevail; Marie Slingova; London, 1969; the author's husband was one of those executed during the trials.

The Czechoslovak Political Trials, 1950-54: the Suppressed Report of the Dubcek Government's Commission of Inquiry, 1968; Jiri Pelikan; London, 1971; the author, a prominent Communist journalist of the 1968 reform period now exiled in Rome, puts into context the Dubcek regime's efforts to expose Stalinist excesses.

The Czechoslovak Reform Movement: Communism in Crisis, 1962-68; Galia Golan; Cambridge, England, 1972; the best study of the slow buildup of reformist pressure that led to the downfall of Novotny and Dubcek's assumption of power.

4. The Dubcek era and the 1968 crisis

Prague's 200 Days; Harry Schwartz; Frederick A. Praeger, New York/Washington/London, 1969; one of several journalistic efforts covering the Dubcek era. Detailed, chronological narrative by a leading journalist on the scene.

Dubcek; William Shawcross; Weidenfeld and Nicolson; London, 1970; another journalistic work on the Czechoslovak reform period centered around the biography of Alexander Dubcek. Its primary contribution is the author's original, on-the-spot research concerning Dubcek prior to 1968.

The Czech Black Book; Robert Littell (ed.); London, 1969; a point-by-point refutation by Czechoslovak reformers of the justifications for the

1968 invasion compiled in the Soviet-sponsored, official White Book.

Why Dubcek Fell; Pavel Tigrid; London 1971, *The Czechoslovak Experiment, 1968-69*; Ivan Svitek; Columbia University, New York, 1971; two accounts by well-known emigree scholars of the reasons for Dubcek's failure. Both are somewhat introspective, though the contrast in emphasis reveals the soul-searching of Czechoslovak intellectuals.

Chronology (u/ou)

863

Greek missionaries Cyril and Methodius arrive in Moravia, establishing early Christian unity among Czech peoples; draw up first Slavic alphabet.

906

Moravian Empire is dissolved after defeat by Magyars.

921-29

Bohemia and Moravia are united under crown of Wenceslas, Bohemia's patron saint.

973

Slovakia is annexed by Hungary.

13th century

Germans begin mass migration into Bohemia, setting stage for rapid social and economic development.

1346-78

Bohemia enjoys "Golden Age" under Charles I of Bohemia (Charles IV of Holy Roman Empire).

1348

University of Prague (Charles University), first university in central Europe, is founded.

1415

Martyrdom of Jan Hus precipitates Hussite revolt against domination by Germans and Catholic Church, Czech national consciousness gestates.

1526

Ferdinand assumes Bohemian throne, beginning Hapsburg domination and renewing Catholic domination.

1592-1678

Jan Comenius reforms education and leads latter phase of Czech reformation.

1618

Bohemian Protestants revolt against Catholic Church, initiating Thirty Years War; two Catholic governors are victims of "defenestration of Prague."

1620

Czechs are defeated at Battle of White Mountain, reestablishing Hapsburg rule; during "Time of the Night" Bohemia endures severe political, religious, and cultural persecution; war losses and heavy migration lead to renewed Germanization of Bohemia.

19th century

Czech "renaissance" emphasizes literary works of national history and folklore; Czech language revives.

1847

Austro-Hungarian Empire incorporates Slovakia, Bohemia, and Moravia; economic and cultural growth are facilitated by relatively mild Austrian hegemony.

1918

First Czechoslovak Republic is founded under President Tomas G. Masaryk.

1921

Czechoslovak Communist Party is founded.

1935

Eduard Benes succeeds Masaryk as President of the Republic.

1938

September

Munich Conference cedes Sudetenland to Germany.

1939

March

German troops occupy Czechoslovakia; Bohemia and Moravia become German protectorate and Slovakia becomes "independent" state.

1940

July

United Kingdom recognizes Czechoslovak Government in London under Eduard Benes.

1943

December

Benes signs 20-year friendship and mutual assistance pact with U.S.S.R.

1944

August

Slovak national uprising takes place against Nazis.

1945

April

Kosice program of close relations with U.S.S.R. and nationalization of industry is announced.

May

Last German resistance ends with liberation of Prague.

June

Expulsion of most ethnic Germans is ordered. Ruthenia ceded to U.S.S.R.

December

By mutual agreement, U.S. and Soviet troops withdraw from Czechoslovakia.

1946**May**

Communists receive 38%, National Socialists 18%, Social Democrats 13%, and Slovak Democrats 14% of votes in first postwar general election. Three other parties share remaining 17% of votes.

June

Eduard Benes is unanimously elected President.

July

Klement Gottwald (Communist) forms government.

1947**July**

Under Soviet pressure Czechoslovak cabinet reverses its decision to participate in Marshall Plan.

1948**February**

Communists seize power in bloodless coup and formally establish "people's democracy."

June

Benes resigns presidency.

Gottwald becomes President and Antonin Zapotocky Prime Minister.

1949**January**

First Five Year (Economic) Plan (1949-53) begins.

1951**March**

Roman Catholic Archbishop Beran is banished from Prague.

November

Rudolph Slansky is arrested and charged with conspiracy against state.

1952**November**

Slansky and 10 other former officials are sentenced to death for treason.

1953**March**

Gottwald dies; Zapotocky becomes President and Viliam Siroky Prime Minister.

September

Antonin Novotny becomes party First Secretary.

1955**May**

Warsaw Pact is established.

1956**January**

Second Five Year Plan (1956-60) begins.

1957**November**

President Zapotocky dies; Novotny becomes President, retaining post of party First Secretary.

1960**July**

Newly elected National Assembly proclaims achievement of socialism in Czechoslovakia, ratifies new "socialist" constitution, and changes country's name to "Czechoslovak Socialist Republic."

1961**January**

Third Five Year Plan (1961-65) begins.

June

Judicial law tightens party control over simplified court system.

1962**August**

Third Five Year Plan is scrapped as economic situation deteriorates.

December

12th Party Congress agrees to review 1949-54 purges and to begin de-Stalinization in earnest.

1963**May**

Intellectual ferment reaches point of public criticism of party and state leaders.

June

Regime announces liberalization of cultural policies at writers and journalists unions' congress.

Novotny moves to reassert his control as de-Stalinization gains momentum.

Verdicts of 1949-54 purge trial are revised and victims partially rehabilitated.

September

Premier Siroky is fired and cabinet shuffled; Josef Lenart becomes Premier; party commissions for ideology, economy, standard of living, and agriculture are established.

Americans still in Czechoslovak prisons are released and returned to United States in gesture to improve relations.

1964**March**

Experiments in economic decentralization and "market socialism" begin.

October

Youth demonstrations occur in Prague.

November

Novotny is reelected President for 5-year term.

1965**February**

Radical reform of economy is adopted.

Archbishop Beran is named Cardinal; leaves permanently for Rome.

1966**January**

Economic Reform Program (ERP) is introduced.

May-June

13th Czechoslovak Communist Party Congress elects more liberal Central Committee.

1967**June**

Liberal intellectuals attack conservative Novotny regime at fourth congress of Czechoslovak Writers Union.

July

Novotny visits Moscow to reaffirm his policy position and to gain Soviet support.

October

Slovak leaders, including Dubcek, launch strong personal attack at Central Committee meeting against Novotny for his poor handling of Czech-Slovak problems.

Prague students demonstrate in streets in protest over poor living conditions, but are intercepted and brutally handled by police.

December

Breshnev arrives in Prague to assess political situation and to encourage Czechoslovak party leaders to maintain stable regime.

Novotny is attacked by both Czech and Slovak leaders at Central Committee plenum, and continues to lose support on all levels of Communist Party.

1968**January**

Central Committee plenum ousts Novotny as Party First Secretary and replaces him with Slovak leader Alexander Dubcek. Four additional Dubcek supporters also elected to Presidium, thus providing moderate Dubcek group with a majority.

Dubcek visits Moscow alone for first time as party chief.

1968**February**

Dubcek meets separately with Hungary's Kadar and Poland's Gomulka.

Czechoslovak army Major General Sejna, who is implicated in attempted military coup in support of Novotny, defects to United States.

First issue of *Literarni Listy*, new journal of Liberal intellectuals, appears in Prague.

March

Novotny resigns from presidency, allegedly for reasons of health; wave of resignations among high-ranking regime conservatives follows.

Dubcek attends meeting with Soviet, Polish, East German, Bulgarian, and Hungarian leaders in Dresden in abortive attempt by Prague's bloc allies to influence internal Czechoslovak developments.

Novotny resigns from Party Presidium.

April

New Party Presidium and government cabinet are announced; Oldrich Cernik replaces Lenart as Premier; party announces its Action Program designed to fuse socialism with basic elements of democracy.

May

Dubcek and other leaders visit Soviet Union to discuss Czechoslovak situation.

Soviets and Poles conduct military maneuvers along Czechoslovak border.

Soviet, Polish, East German, Bulgarian, and Hungarian leaders meet in Moscow to present united front against Czechoslovak "democratization."

Soviet Premier Kosygin and Defense Minister Grechko visit Czechoslovakia to confer with Prague leaders.

Novotny is ousted from Central Committee and suspended from party membership.

June-July

Warsaw Pact "command staff exercises" in Czechoslovakia and Poland result in protracted presence of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia after maneuvers are over.

June

National Assembly passes law abolishing prior censorship.

Three Prague newspapers publish "2,000 Words" manifesto written by liberal writer Ludvik Vaculik and signed by other liberals demanding acceleration of "democratization" and calling for dismissal of party leaders who have abused their power. Party Presidium denounces manifesto on same day.

July

Czech National Council established as provisional counterpart to Slovak National Council, as first step in proposed federative arrangement.

Soviet, Polish, East German, Hungarian, and Bulgarian leaders meet in Warsaw and draft letter censuring Dubcek regime and Action Program.

Czechoslovak Minister of National Defense recommends reform of Warsaw Pact command.

Czechoslovak Party Presidium issues reply to "Warsaw Letter" refuting allegations.

Soviet *Pravda* claims that Czechoslovak security forces found secret cache of U.S. arms near West German border.

Soviet-Warsaw Pact military exercises along Czechoslovakia's borders greatly expand.

1968**July-August**

Czechoslovak Presidium and Soviet Politburo meet at Cierna nad Tisou, on Czechoslovak-U.S.S.R. border.

August

Soviet bloc leaders ratify Cierna nad Tisou agreement at special summit session in Bratislava.

Yugoslav President Tito given rousing welcome during 3-day visit to Prague.

East German party boss Ulbricht receives chilly reception during brief trip to consult with Dubcek at Karlovy Vary.

Romanian party chief Ceausescu arrives in Prague to confer with liberal Czechoslovak leadership and to sign 20-year mutual friendship treaty with Czechoslovakia.

Soviet press, after 3-week silence, resumes heavy propaganda barrage opposing Czechoslovak reforms.

Soviet troops, accompanied by East German, Polish, Hungarian, and Bulgarian forces, invade Czechoslovakia on night of 20-21 August; by morning of 21 August, Soviet military in complete control of Prague and other major population centers. Dubcek and other leaders arrested.

Extraordinary "14th" Party Congress convenes clandestinely in Prague factory.

President Svoboda journeys to Moscow to negotiate releases of all arrested leaders and agreement on future of Czechoslovakia under occupation. Dubcek is allowed to resume post as Party First Secretary.

Party plenum hears Dubcek report on Moscow talks; Presidium enlarged to 22 members; Central Committee also expanded.

October

Czechoslovak leaders—Dubcek, Premier Cernik, and Slovak party chief Husak—negotiate with Soviet Politburo in Moscow; communique outlines Soviet demands for "normalization."

Czechoslovaks and Soviets sign status-of-forces agreement in Prague; pact gives semblance of legality to occupation and calls for removal from Czechoslovak soil of bulk of Soviet bloc invasion forces by mid-December.

Czechoslovaks demonstrate in restrained manner on 50th anniversary of founding of Czechoslovak Republic; federalization law transforms Czechoslovakia into two nations—Czech and Slovak—with equal rights.

November

Anti-Soviet demonstrations mark 51st anniversary of Russian October Revolution.

Party plenum announces new middle-of-the-road policies.

Czech and Slovak students stage sit-in strikes to protest further compromise of liberal reform program and to support Dubcek leadership.

December

Czechoslovak and Soviet leaders hold summit conference in Kiyev; Soviets review Czechoslovak progress in fulfilling commitments and impose new demands on Czechoslovak regime.

December

Over one million workers threaten nationwide demonstrations and strikes if any leading political figures—especially National Assembly President Smrkovsky—are ousted.

1969**January**

Czechoslovakia is declared a Federal Republic.

Czech student Jan Palach protests occupation by setting himself on fire in Wenceslas Square; widespread demonstrations occur in Czech Lands; Prague police disrupt crowds with tear gas.

March

Victory of Czechoslovak ice hockey team over Soviets sparks popular riots in Prague; mob sacks Aeroflot office rendering position of Dubcek regime virtually untenable.

April

Leading Communists accused by Dubcek regime of collaborating with Soviets in 1968 are rehabilitated.

Central Committee plenum replaces Dubcek with Husak as First Secretary.

Dubcek replaces Petr Colotka as Chairman of Federal Assembly.

May

Central Committee plenum promulgates "Implementation Directive," spelling out Husak's basic policies of establishing tight party discipline and reconciliation with ex-liberals willing to accept party authority. Ota Sik and Frantisek Kriegel, two of Dubcek's closest supporters, are expelled from party.

August

Large-scale pro-Dubcek demonstrations in Prague on invasion anniversary are brutally dispersed by security forces; regime promulgates Emergency Law temporarily suspending and rule of law.

September

Party Presidium rescinds its August 1968 condemnation of Soviet invasion.

Central Committee plenum removes Dubcek from Presidium; Dubcek refuses to recant; leading Dubcek supporters ousted from Central Committee; Husak eschews punitive measures against liberals.

December

Dubcek named ambassador to Turkey.

1970**January**

Central Committee plenum revises Presidium; Strougal named federal Premier; Dubcek "resigns" from Central Committee.

February

Central Committee implements party card exchange program.

1970**March**

Dubcek suspended from Communist Party.

May

Czechoslovak-U.S.S.R. Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance, signed in Prague, includes principle of "socialist internationalism" justifying Warsaw Pact invasion, provides for close economic cooperation, implicitly commits Czechoslovakia to side with Soviet Union in case of military confrontation between latter and Communist China.

Dubcek returns to Prague and semi-isolation.

June

Dubcek and ex-Premier Oldrich Cernik are stripped of remaining government positions.

Party conservatives heighten criticism of Husak's moderate domestic policies and call for more thorough party purge.

July

Regime publishes counterattacks on conservative critics, highlighting intraparty feud.

Regime publishes official interpretation of Dubcek's role in 1968 reform movement, describing his rise to power as aberration in otherwise necessary reform effort.

August

Quiet passing of second anniversary of invasion strengthens Husak's political position.

September

Party organ *Rude Pravo* declares party purge over and beginning of effort to restore party discipline--second stage of post-Dubcek "consolidation" campaign.

October

Husak fires Czech Minister of Interior and Army liaison officer with Soviet forces to reduce influence of hardliners.

Czechoslovak and West German officials make preliminary plans to open political talks.

November

Regime stresses "reconciliation" with intelligentsia by announcing plans to foster cultural activity, including amnesty for signatories of 1968 political manifestoes.

December

Central Committee plenum issues Party's definitive "Lessons" of Czechoslovak history since 13th Party Congress of 1967; Husak announces postpurge Party membership to be 1,200,000; proceedings indicate stand-off between pro-Husak moderates and conservative faction.

Federal Assembly amends federalization law reducing Slovak economic and administrative autonomy.

1971**May**

14th Party Congress convenes; pronounces "end of the crisis period." Minor leadership changes reflect regime's emphasis

on party unity. Central Committee undergoes large turnover in party's search for reliable and motivated members. Fifth Five Year Plan (1971-75) approved.

November

Elections held to federal, republic, and local government bodies, first such balloting since 1964 (scheduled 1968 elections indefinitely postponed after invasion). Regime claims 99.8% of 10.3 million eligible voters supported official single slate.

December

As result of election "mandate," Husak revamps leadership of Federal Assembly, Czech and Slovak National Councils, and reshuffles respective cabinets. Shifts symbolize final phase of Husak's consolidation of power over government apparatus.

1972**July-August**

Some 50 former second-string party officials and intellectuals associated with Dubcek tried for subversive and other illegal acts committed during 1970-71 period.

December

Foreign Minister Chnoupek visits Romania in effort to heal rift caused by Bucharest's vehement denunciation of the invasion in 1968.

1973**February**

Soviet party leader Brezhnev visits Prague on 25th anniversary of Communist takeover. Brezhnev warmly endorses Husak, presents him with Order of Lenin, and declares Czechoslovakia's "normalization" completed.

March

Aging General Ludvik Svoboda reelected President by Federal Assembly.

June

Czechoslovak-West German treaty initialed in Bonn after Prague dropped persistent demand that Bonn declare 1938 Munich Agreement "void from the beginning."

U.S. Secretary of State Rogers visits Prague in first such visit since World War II. Event paves way for improving bilateral relations within framework of detente, and symbolizes Czechoslovakia's success in gradually breaking out of post-invasion diplomatic isolation.

October

Husak's visit to Yugoslavia ends cool relations that followed Belgrade's 1968 denunciation of Warsaw Pact invasion.

December

Husak pays official visit to India, in first trip to non-Communist country since assuming power.

West German Chancellor Brandt visits Prague for formal signing of bilateral good will treaty, opening way to establishment of diplomatic relations.

SECRET

Glossary (u/ou)

ABBREVIATION	FOREIGN	ENGLISH
KSC.....	<i>Komunistická Strana Československa...</i>	Czechoslovak Communist Party
KSS.....	<i>Komunistická Strana Slovenska.....</i>	Communist Party of Slovakia
NF.....	<i>Narodní Fronta.....</i>	National Front
PS.....	<i>Pohraniční Stráž.....</i>	Frontier Guard
ROH.....	<i>Revoluční Odborové Hnutí.....</i>	Revolutionary Trade Union Movement
SSM.....	<i>Svaz Socialistické Mlodeže.....</i>	Socialist Youth Union
StB.....	<i>Státní Bezpečnost.....</i>	State Security Police
VS.....	<i>Vnitřní Stráž.....</i>	Interior Guard

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