CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1968:
SOME ASPECTS OF PLURALISM AND CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

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Milan Jan Reban

In this case study of the 1968 democratization in Czechoslovakia and of its antecedents, selected aspects of pluralism and political participation are described and analyzed. Reference to group activity centers upon the seminal issues of the economy and of Slovak nationalism where the effectiveness of performance was found wanting by affected groups. The events of the 1960's seriously undermined the credibility of the Czechoslovak Communist Party leadership. The above two issues became the focal points in stimulating a "pluralistic and participatory ferment," to use Gabriel Almond's words. Furthermore, the political initiative was taken by those who had become severely dissatisfied with the state of affairs. The ensuing systemic crisis is examined in the context of the literature on political development and modernization, and particular attention is given the theme of pluralization.

Pluralization attendant to the problems of economic performance and the unfulfilled participatory demands emanating from Slovakia is examined in Chapters II and III.

The special role of the reformers who were mostly intellectuals, is examined in Chapter IV. Here too, the various measures for systemic reform are analyzed. Chapter V deals with the response of the Communist Party, especially that of the reformers within the organization, and their principal attempts to make the Party a more effective instrument for interest integration and aggregation are contrasted with the far-reaching changes promulgated by the intellectuals. Given the destabilizing nature of change, some groups and segments of the Party became resistant to reform, and this is also examined. The parameters of reform were ultimately set in the Soviet Union, further complicating the attempts of the leadership of Czechoslovakia. Samuel Huntington observed recently that "Change is a problem for social science." Change, too was a problem for the Czechoslovak political system. This study seeks to add to the better understanding of both.

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For Ann

PREFACE

The pages that follow have their roots in my childhood in Czechoslovakia. For the topic being considered therein, in fact the field of political science, constitutes a logical culmination for one who, as a native of that ambiguously located Central European country, sought to understand the often harsh realities of the diverse political systems in the recent past. The essay is a partial reflection of an effort to combine two major interests: one, the larger interest in political development and modernization, and the events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia, insofar as they can be juxtaposed against that larger frame of reference.

Several acknowledgments are in order, beginning with my parents who taught me that politics is important. I wish to declare my gratitude to Professor Alfred G. Meyer, now of the University of Michigan, who taught me much that I know about the Communist systems. I have been helped and given encouragement by Professor Baljit Singh of Michigan State University, and I am appreciative for his considerable effort in my behalf. Professors Ellen Mickiewicz and Ada Finifter are to be thanked for their helpful critical commentary. Among others, Professor Charles Press contributed

by giving the vast bureaucracy of Michigan State University a touch of understanding.

My wife Ann gave me much help, support, and friendship. Alicia and Milena, two alert girls who so often had to play without their daddy will now be happy, for a while at least.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Historians will have to judge whether the short-lived experiment undertaken in Czechoslovakia to create a new form of democratic socialism during 1968 will have had the same significant impact upon the history of the Communist states and parties as was attributed to the likewise short-lived Paris Commune of 1871. Brought to an abrupt halt in the night of August 20, 1968, the unfinished Czech experiment has already had a great and varied impact far beyond its boundaries of time and geography. Seen as a threat by some and as an inevitable step of hope by others, its repercussions have been detectable at such disparate happenings as the Twenty-fourth CPSU Congress in Moscow, in the intra-party quarrels within the French and Italian Communist parties, or in the cautious approach to reforms being undertaken by the Polish leadership. Such events hold the promise that the experiment will occupy an important landmark in developments within the Communist world. Our appreciation of the events in Czechoslovakia, however, is made complex by several factors. One is the simple fact that the experiment was in its nascent stages when halted. Moreover, it constituted an amalgam of groupings interacting

in kaleidoscopic ways as they sought legitimacy for their differing objectives either within the party and in some cases outside it as well, forces that in their combination constituted the formation of a new political model.

Our study of the Czechoslovak developments of 1968 and their significant antecedents is not intended to be definitive. It is a study of the principal would-be transformers of a political system, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and several groups that came to the fore and acquired significance for the events in question as a result of one superordinate issue, which was the nature and scope of political participation by individuals and groups and by the Communist Party. The fundamental issue of participation became an open issue because of the fruition of several important problems converging at approximately the same time, the principal one being the state of the economy and the other being the nationality problem of Slovakia. These two became focal points in stimulating a "pluralistic, and participatory ferment," to borrow a perceptive phrase by Gabriel Almond.[1]

The massive attempt to formulate a new model of democratic socialism can be seen in part as possibly the most significant attempt ever undertaken to advance rapidly, to modernize, to push along the unfinished revolution

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[1]Gabriel Almond, Political Development (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1970), p. 320.

sweeping not only the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, but the western democracies as well. As Gabriel Almond, in his thoughtful lecture of 1968 observed, in the initial stages of the Communist rule in the Soviet Union and in some of the Eastern European countries, the enlightenment rationality turned into weapons of subjugation of the traditional components of their respective systems, seeking thus to mobilize human and material resources. Almond continues his argument:

> The Communist elites hoped for what they considered to be a postponement of the emancipatory components of the enlightenment, while they maximized the capabilities of their political systems for resource extraction and investment, for the control of resistant and disruptive behavior, and for national security. Already Russian success in science, education, technology, economic productivity and national security has produced some decentralization of the political process. I fail to see how these decentralizing, pluralist tendencies can be reversed, or how their spread can be prevented.[2]

After the "totalitarian" phase, there comes the pressure for the "rendezvous with that part of the enlightenment heritage" which had been deferred. While its configuration cannot be predicted with certainty for the various systems, we have some evidence of its potential characteristics as they were formulated in the 1968 Czechoslovak experiment. This system attempted to meet the next challenge as it has been identified by Almond. He suggested that these systems

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[2] Ibid., p. 318.

> . . . will have in some way to accommodate themselves to the inevitable demands of a healthy, educated, affluent society for both material and spiritual consumer goods. And among these spiritual consumer goods are protections of human dignity and privacy, opportunities for participation, sharing in decision-making processes.[3]

To this he adds rather emphatically his conviction in the growing pluralization of these systems: "My argument for this interpretation of the current and future ideological-political development of at least the European variant of Communism is based in part on empirical evidence of growing pressures toward pluralism and emancipation in the so-called developed Communist countries . . ."[4] in addition to other arguments. Thus, the participatory components of Marxism and Communism come to the fore. Such certainly was the case of Czechoslovakia, for in addition to the demands and proposals emanating from without the Party, there were strong sentiments in certain segments of the Party in favor of extensive participation, and some of the key documents of 1968, such as the Action Program and Draft of Party Statutes attested to its genuine vitality.

Samuel Huntington presents an argument with a slightly different emphasis when he seeks to delineate the dynamics of transformation from the revolutionary to an established system. The Party, according to him, is compelled to face various challenges as the systems pass through several distinct stages of development. Given the utility of his

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[3] Ibid., p. 319.

[4] Ibid., p. 320.

description, it is desirable to state his position in some detail:

> In the initial transformation phase, the party destroys the traditional sources of authority. In the second phase, it consolidates its authority as an organization against the charismatic appeals of the founding leader. In the third, adaptive phase, the party deals with legal-rational challenges to its authority which are, in large part, the product of its earlier successes. The creation of a relatively homogeneous society and the emergence of new social forces require the party to redefine its roles within that society. Four developments which the party must come to terms with are: 1) the emergence of a new, innovative, technical-managerial class; 2) the development of a complex group structure, typical of a more industrial society, whose interests have to be related to the political sphere; 3) the reemergence of a critical intelligentsia apart from and, indeed, increasingly alienated from the institutionalized structures of power; and 4) the demands by local and popular groups for participation in and influence over the political system.[5]

Huntington's scheme allows the isolation of the major variables found in the transformation of the Czechoslovak system during the year 1968, as well as to the examination of its pertinent antecedents. His framework, designed to encompass all one-party authoritarian systems is characterized by a high degree of generality, and in our view does not fully and adequately encompass the more specific and significant aspects of the transformation, which, as we know from even the most cursory examination of other Communist

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[5]Samuel P. Huntington and Clement H. Moore, Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society: The Dynamics of Established One Party Systems (New York: Basic Books, 1970), p. 33.

party-states, can assume differing configurations. Though primarily descriptive, it does isolate for analytical purposes the key dimensions we shall be examining.

First and foremost is the general condition of the Communist Party as the instrument of legitimacy in the system. As such, the Party sought to address itself to the issues of economic development and to the place of Slovakia in the system in order to retain its primacy and legitimacy. In so doing, it had to recognize and respond to the growing significance of the new class of technicians--managers, articulated more specifically by varied groups, the most significant of whom were the economists. Their leading spokesman came to be Ota Šik, and their numbers included other specialists in various phases of economic development. Some of the most important programmatic offerings came from the critical intelligentsia which had enjoyed an especially significant status in Czechoslovakia throughout that country's recent history, and very specifically in the events dealt with here. It therefore commands special scrutiny. Additionally, there were demands from other and varied groupings for participation. It is our intention to describe and analyze these groups as they articulated their objectives, and their interplay with the Communist Party with the resulting bargaining, conflict, and tensions. In the end, of significance for the transformation of Czechoslovakia,

and for that matter, of all Communist party-states of Europe, is the policy of the leadership of the Soviet Union.

Ours is a case study method. While we agree with Teune and Przeworski that it is a fundamental assumption of comparative study "that social science research, including comparative inquiry, should and can lead to general statements about social phenomena,"[6] we hold that many paths can lead to that ultimate objective. While a single case cannot serve as a basis for valid generalizations, we agree with Lijphart that "case studies can make an important contribution to the establishment of general propositions and thus to theory building in political science."[7] Although we recognize that developmental assumptions are found in most studies, we shall attempt to explicate those in our case study. Our problems are of great magnitude, because when we are "dealing with complex processes of development and modernization, virtually all aspects of social life come to have political significance."[8] We share David E. Apter's

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[6]Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, The Logic of Comparative Inquiry (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1970), p. 4.

[7]Arend Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method," The American Political Science Review, LXV (September, 1971), 691. Ultimately we believe with LaPalombara that even the basic descriptive case study contributes, though indirectly, to theory building. Joseph LaPalombara, "Macrotheories and Microapplications in Comparative Politics," Comparative Politics, I (October, 1968), 60-65.

[8]David E. Apter, "Political Systems and Developmental Change," in Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner, eds., The Methodology of Comparative Research (New York: The Free Press, 1970), p. 154.

appraisal of the conceptual problems involved, because Czechoslovakia in the period under scrutiny and other systems undergoing modernization show "imbalances [that] occur between norms, structures, and behavior, which we can describe as a lack of fit. To analyze this lack of fit is a difficult, but important, task of comparative analysis."[9]

Our approach will be eclectic. In defense, we might note that one of the most useful descriptive models of a Communist system has been constructed by Merle Fainsod when he combined the totalitarian model, the bureaucratic model, as well as the model of the one party system in his text.[10] The pluralist perspective of political development will be our approach. In our study, although we are focusing upon one country, we shall make comparative references to selected aspects of the other Communist systems, notably those of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. In describing and analyzing the political phenomena in Czechoslovakia in terms of pluralism, interest aggregation and integration, we are adding to the numbers of comparative studies, for any cross-cultural comparisons call first for a careful survey of concrete national forms of political life. Furthermore, we

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[9] Ibid.

[10] Merle Fainsod, How Russia is Ruled (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963). Although useful, the model presented herein contains certain limitations, for it, too, tends to neglect the input side of the system, among other shortcomings.

are contributing comparatively also by virtue of our contrasting of different periods in Czechoslovakia's development when we compare the developments of 1968 with the conditions that prevailed before that year, and the conditions found after August of 1968. This vertical comparison, as we shall note below, in effect constitutes a study of similarities as well as the differences between political systems.

In Chapter II we propose to examine the economic conditions in Czechoslovakia which gave rise to demands for reform and which undermined the authority of the Party leadership, permitting far-reaching reforms affecting the political situation intimately. Here we shall examine the emergence of the economists as a powerful group and some key dimensions of their criticism, proposals, and their impact within the Party. We shall also touch on the articulation of demands by other elements of the technical-managerial intelligentsia. Chapter III examines the important issue of Slovak nationalism and the nature of Slovak participation in the Czechoslovak system. Both economic problems and Slovak nationalism constituted the major problems demanding resolution in the 1960's. The critical intelligentsia, particularly the creative intellectuals and the students, provided some of the most radical critique of the system, and this critique along with some of their programmatic considerations will constitute the subject of Chapter IV. Chapter V examines

the response of the Communist Party as it sought to reform the system and itself, while responding to the many pressures analyzed in the foregoing chapters. We shall have to touch on the role of the Soviet Union, for at least until now, its elite is the final arbiter of the scope of change within Eastern European systems. Concluding analysis will constitute Chapter VI.[11]

The Political Development Perspective: Some Issues

An examination of the Czechoslovak case can be conducted more effectively today than in the not-too-distant past, because of advances in comparative studies generally, not only in the area of data, but especially due to developments that have seen the inclusion of Communist systems in the domain of general comparative studies.[12] Some of the

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[11]The sources are extracted from the voluminous publications of the period under consideration here. Translations other than those so identified are by the author. Additionally, the writer has benefited from interviews with Czechoslovaks and some Yugoslavs, as well as from participation in several professional meetings in such locations as Ann Arbor, Colorado Springs, and Belgrade.

[12]This revolution of comparative studies is of relatively recent origin. Certainly, the problems that had emerged out of the worldwide geographical scope of interests in the post-World War II period contributed to it. Still more significant questioning occurred as to the state of methodology and theory, because it had been suddenly recognized that meaningful accretion of knowledge would not be derived from studies that were essentially historical and legalistic in approach, and with their descriptive character focusing upon the political institutions. For a "baseline," see the classical characterization of the state of comparative study in the mid-1950's, by Rocy C. Macridis, The Study of Comparative Government (Garden City, New York: Doubleday,

recent approaches to be utilized in our study will be discussed below.

A survey of literature clearly indicates the persistence of certain concepts and models in focusing attention on certain characteristics of Communist systems, characteristics inherently associated with the model of totalitarianism. These usually ascribed the principal role to the ruling elite, to the importance of "conveyor belt" organizations at the disposal of the elite, and the atomization of the social structure. In one useful example focusing on two variables, the accessibility of elites and the availability of non-elites, Kornhauser summarizes the totalitarian society as follows:

> Totalitarian society requires an inaccessible elite and an available population if it is to sustain a system of total control from above--as in certain modern dictatorships. The elite is inaccessible in that elite elements are selected and fixed through co-optation, by virtue of a monopoly over the means of coercion and persuasion in the hands of those at the apex of the structure. The population is available in that its members lack all those independent social formations that could serve as a basis of resistance to the elite. Instead, the population is mobilized by the elite through multiple organizations taken over or created for that purpose.[13]

1955), Chapter 1. While comparative studies blossomed after this date, the inclusion of the Communist systems into this vital development did not occur until the mid-1960's.

[13]William Kornhauser, Politics of Mass Society (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1959), p. 41.

While useful for certain analytical purposes--for example, the analysis of controls in the system--such an abstract type neglects one aspect of the systems, namely the inputs. The resultant perspective tends to be literally one-sided for its attention is given primarily to the output side of the system. In recent years, such emphasis has been challenged, for the study of the Communist party-states and of the Communist parties and movements generally, has been more fully than heretofore integrated with a modicum of success into the mainstream of the study of comparative politics.

H. Gordon Skilling presents the argument for a different emphasis along these lines:

> Communist government has been traditionally analyzed largely in terms of "outputs," that is, the manner in which decisions are made and enforced, but increasing recognition is given to the "inputs," characteristic of every system, including the assertion of group interests as the raw materials of the decision-making process.[14]

Their functioning, to be sure, must be examined if we are to analyze adequately the 1968 thrust for reform in Czechoslovakia. However, there are some special conditions that must be considered, and that is what we propose to do in this essay, for in all Communist party-states, Skilling adds:

> . . . where competing parties do not exist, and party dominates, other means must be found for "sublimating" the influence and the demands of society, and evolving a policy for the community

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[14] H. Gordon Skilling, The Governments of Communist East Europe (New York: Thomas A. Crowell, 1966), p. 114.

> as a whole. . . . Yet the party alone has the right, and the power, to determine the "real interests" of the people as a whole, as opposed to what may seem to them to be their interests, and occupies a "strategic" position which enables it to subordinate the lesser interests to a broader "social" interest.[15]

The most appropriate approach for the study of the Soviet and other Communist systems is the interest group approach, according to Skilling. His most recent work on the subject analyzes certain key groups within the Soviet system, and serves to stimulate discussion of our theoretical approaches to the study of Communist systems.[16] We agree with Skilling that the various groups do constitute an important focus of analysis. At the same time we concur with the critics of the approach when they point to the difficulties inherent in it. For example, the more a system is studied, the more groups it is possible to identify.

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[15] Ibid., p. 114. A well-known Polish political sociologist argues that the groupings in Poland are numerous, and include the not insignificant small Polish parties with their deviation from the "pure" one party system.

He identifies several groups as the equivalent of interest groups: 1) socio-occupational organizations, such as trade unions, professional associations and the like. 2) Associations and organizations which politically educate and represent some segments of society, such as Socialist Youth and the like. 3) Regional organizations. 4) National and ethnic organizations. 5) Religious organizations. See Jerzy J. Wiatr and Jacek Tarkowski, Studies in Polish Political System (Warsaw: Ossolineum, 1967).

[16] The culmination of his work thus far is found in H. Gordon Skilling and Franklyn Griffiths (eds.), Interest Groups in Soviet Politics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971).

This is why at least one critic argues that the group approach becomes truly useful only if combined with the analysis of specific issues, much as we have done in our examination of Czechoslovakia.[17]

In its broadest definition, political development can be conceived of as "a process of meeting new goals and demands in a flexible manner."[18] In the Communist-party systems, the critical focus of this process is the Party. It comes under strain, because systems change, and in the process of change they become transformed. The attendant goal change and the dynamics of self-transformation generally, place a heavy strain upon the integrative system which in the Communist systems is the Party. The tensions and conflicts demanding resolution under these conditions are due to the fact that

> the interests of a system or a subsystem are not always the same as those of the larger system of which they may be a part. Neither are they the same as the interests of the smaller subsystems which it may comprise. To weigh and, if possible, to balance the interests of large political bodies against the divergent interests of the smaller subsystems which they include--down to the individual--has always been a central problem of politics.[19]

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[17] See the review of Skilling's work by Jan Triska, "A New Approach to Soviet Politics," Problems of Communism, XX (July-August, 1971), 77-80.

[18] Alfred Diamant, "The Nature of Political Development," in Jason L. Finkle and Richard W. Gable (eds.), Political Development and Social Change (New York: John Wiley, 1966), p. 92.

[19] Ibid.

The changes in the Communist systems have often been characterized by open conflicts and stresses. It will be helpful if we identify several broad dimensions of their transition.

It has been argued by Professor Meyer that during the now more than fifty years of its existence, the system of the Soviet Union had passed through distinctly differing stages of development; so different that in effect the Soviet Union can be said to have been several unique systems, each one typified by different key functions.[20] The one system that has colored so much of our conceptual framework for the study of the Communist systems--the Stalinist--was one typified by compulsion and mobilization in a drastic effort to industrialize an underdeveloped economy. And, since 1953, we have been witnessing the uneven and sometimes retrogressive attempts to structure a new system, one in a more harmonious relationship with the more modern level of development of that country. Appropriately, and some say necessarily, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been for some years seeking to evolve a role suitable to the demands of a much more complex and heterogeneous system than the one prevailing during the Stalin era. The measures implemented along this line include the general pattern of

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[20]Alfred G. Meyer, "The Soviet Political System," in Samuel Hendel and Randolph L. Braham (eds.), The U.S.S.R. After 50 Years: Promise and Reality (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), pp. 39-60.

de-Stalinization policy, updated party rules, economic decentralization and other moves of liberalization.

It is apparent that the economic variables are of utmost significance in the dynamics discussed above. Precisely, what are some of the factors accountable for the distinction among the systems in different levels of development? First, the Stalinist stage is not inordinately complex, and the pattern of rewards, too, is relatively simple and is regulated principally through compulsion and coercion. However, as the system reaches higher levels of modernity, with its vast inter-dependent characteristics, it also means that the economic decision-making that accompanies it grows proportionately more complex. New and more sophisticated industrial sectors emerge, new patterns of recruitment to make it function smoothly become necessary, but these along with other necessary measures make it essential that the party indeed be the principal instrument for the tasks imposed upon it by this new and higher level of development. Perhaps this necessity explains why Khrushchev sought to transform the Soviet party from the personal tool it had been during the Stalin years. After their examination of several systems and that of the Soviet Union as well, two thoughtful scholars concluded that in the foreseeable future any return to Stalinist ways would be dysfunctional. In fact, there may be but two alternatives:

> 1) increased reliance in the economic sphere upon decentralized decision making, administrative predictability, universalistic criteria of recruitment, and positive incentives to link the goals of individuals with those of society, or 2) major economic dislocations which will lead to a decline in growth rates.[21]

In Czechoslovakia during the 1960's the avoidance of the former led to the latter.

The Eastern European systems, though not lending themselves quite as easily to a comparable periodization--given their economic complexities, their cultural variation and also their comparatively short duration in contrast to the Soviet Union--have nonetheless passed through such differing stages. In the case of Czechoslovakia, H. Gordon Skilling, from the relatively narrow perspective of the nature of the leadership, differentiates the following stages of Communist rule:

> quasi-totalitarian (1948-1953, late 1953-1956, late 1956-1961); consultative authoritarian (early 1953, early 1956); quasi-pluralist authoritarian (1961-1967); pluralist authoritarian (January to August, 1968), and after the occupation in August 1968, moved back toward a quasi-pluralist phase. In each stage, there was a distinctive relationship between groups and leaders, and a varying salience of groups in general and of specific groups.[22]

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[21] Holt and Turner, The Political Basis of Economic Development, p. 378.

[22] H. Gordon Skilling, "Leadership and Group Conflict in Czechoslovakia," in R. Barry Farrell (ed.), Political Leadership in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1970), p. 277.

This useful periodization, however, neglects the broader sweep which must be appreciated in any evaluation of the year 1968 in Czechoslovakia. The imposition of the Stalinist model upon Czechoslovakia at the time of the coup d'état in 1948, could be effectively maintained only for the time being, and meant that Czechoslovakia had been made to function at the plane of an underdeveloped country. The party and its bureaucracy were the products of this period and later could not respond to the many pressures for change. The conclusions of Holt and Turner could have been written with Czechoslovakia in mind. Whereas its economy needed decentralization and other appropriate measures, and whereas it, in fact, adhered to the Stalinist system suitable to a much lower level of development, the prediction of resultant economic dislocation and fall in growth rates was amply borne out. As a result of this economic demise, Czechoslovakia became the key system of the Communist world during 1968 precisely on account of its unique, dramatic, and far-reaching attempt to restructure its politico-economic system. The previous patterns had resulted in a stagnation, and the signs of stagnation and paralysis of the party had become apparent precisely at a time when significant and insistent demands were being made by a variety of subsystems and groupings.

The events of January to August of 1968 in particular demonstrated many significant attempts to create new

institutions clearly in response to the unique historical forces in Czechoslovakia. Consequently, they conflicted with the Soviet model.

However, the direction of change is not easily predictable. When analyzing the Soviet system, we have before us the evidence of wide disagreement concerning the future direction of development in that country.[23] In the economic area, for example, Peter Wiles holds out great hopes for the capabilities of computers, suggesting that their capacity for "perfect computation" will preclude the implementation of measures deemed essential by Holt and Turner.[24] Such capability could permit the maintenance of certain forms of centralization in the future. Because speculation about the prospects for democratization has been at the forefront of much writing in comparative politics since the end of World War II, it is not surprising that similar questions had been raised about its possible introduction in the Soviet Union. However, it has been suggested that the obverse of Stalinism may not necessarily be a democracy, for numerous and powerful trends within the Soviet Union, and for that matter,

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[23]For interesting speculation along these lines, see Zbigniew Brzezinski's essay, "The Soviet Political System: Transformation or Degeneration?" Problems of Communism (January-February, 1966), and the numerous contributions addressed to the same issue in the subsequent issues of Problems of Communism.

[24]Peter Wiles, The Political Economy of Communism (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1962).

universally, suggest otherwise.[25] But, in Czechoslovakia, because of the unique preconditions in that country, there may be a linkage of democracy and communism. And even in the Soviet Union, some hold such possibilities exist. Although taking issue with some of the points we shall be making below and implicitly disagreeing with Holt and Turner, Lewis S. Feuer, in reviewing the activities of the Scientific Opposition and the Literary Opposition in the USSR, reaches the conclusion that

> The fear that above all haunts the Soviet leaders is that a kind of socialist exhaustion will come to pervade their people and that the economy itself will then begin to decline sharply, as itdid in Czechoslovakia under comparable circumstances. Then, the combination of scientists and intellectuals might be reinforced by defecting bodies of bureaucrats, union members, collective farmers, and minority nationalities. Were this to happen, the Prague Spring might yet become the Moscow Summer.[26]

Indirectly taking issue with this line of analysis, George Fisher argues in his stimulating study that the Soviet Union may be evolving a new variant of modernity. Suggesting that the generally accepted pluralistic model may not apply, Fisher instead advances an alternative "monistic" model which

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[25]For example, Alfred G. Meyer, The Soviet Political System (New York: Random House, 1965), especially Part IV.

[26]Lewis S. Feuer, "The Intelligentsia in Opposition," Problems of Communism, XX (November-December, 1970), 16.

> . . . holds for a social order in which all power is public power. Such public power rests in the state. Control of the state puts power into the hands of a single political ruling group. With that type of public power, the ruling group guides closely the economy and other key spheres of life.[27]

This ideal type, to be sure, might be appropriate for the emerging system. It might also be applicable to those systems reaching modernity from relatively low levels of economic development. It is possible to harbor some reservations about its likely performance. For one, such a system--and we assume that computers would play an important role in it--would find itself jammed with an overwhelming number of bits of information to be processed, and with increasingly growing delays in positive feedback cycles. Fisher's model may not, therefore, be applicable to Czechoslovakia nor, possibly, to the Soviet Union.

We are suggesting that the developments in Czechoslovakia, involving some far-reaching readjustments in the system, revealed some genuinely democratic directions in developments. Although in the end these thrusts were more declaratory than implemented, under highly specialized conditions elements of democracy and of reforms of a Communist system do have a degree of compatibility. Our view appears to be compatible with that of a leading student of modernization, David E. Apter. Professor Apter expresses the belief that ". . . in contrast to modernizing societies, highly

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[27]George Fisher, The Soviet System and Modern Society (New York: Atherton Press, 1968), pp. ix-x.

industrialized societies, by virtue of the need for multiple sources of information, have a systems-tendency toward some form of democracy."[28] He recognizes that such a view encompasses the proposition that there is an inverse relationship between coercion and information. Apter argues that increasing modernization poses problems of coordination and control. He adds:

> My personal view is that democratic and libertarian systems work best in industrialized societies where the need to create and apply new information is critical. . . . The peculiar difficulty of modernizing societies, however, is that the more they modernize, the more roles are drawn from an industrial context, and the greater becomes the complexity of the system. . . .[29]

In allowing, then, for the possibility of genuine democratization, it is being suggested here, that some of the conceptual apparatus used by political scientists and political sociologists has at least partial utility in our analysis of the 1968 Czechoslovak case. We are suggesting that the changes contemplated and to some extent carried out in 1968 had exceeded in magnitude the more common liberalization measures found in those reforms that were implemented both in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union within the framework of a basically unaltered system. We view the pluralistic perspective and the concept of a political culture of Czechoslovakia as useful in our analysis of the Czechoslovak experiment. We therefore agree with

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[28]Apter, op. cit., p. 153. [29]Ibid., p. 164.

Ionescu when he observes that pluralization

> is an objective process which accompanies the process of economic, social and political development. The more a society develops the more pluralistic it needs to become in these three planes together.

He then adds that after the initial stages of growth,

> it is efficiency which is sought above all, then the question of how to foster the participation of the people engaged in production and administration replaces that of how to coerce people into massive and indiscriminate work.[30]

In adhering to this perspective, we hold that the changes taking place cannot be meaningfully interpreted solely in terms of the Leninist kto kogo. With its narrow focus upon the ruling party elite, such analysis is entirely too circumscribed to effectively encompass the changes taking place in Eastern European countries and in the Soviet Union as well.[31]

The Challenge for the Party

Restructuring occurred in Czechoslovakia within the larger framework of the gradually loosened post-1963 situation. By the end of 1967, several fundamental problems converged into a wholly unavoidable challenge for the system. Surely, among the more important was the very much belated and truncated attempt at de-Stalinization. The peculiarly

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[30]Ghita Ionescu, The Politics of the European Communist States (New York: Praeger, 1967), p. 273.

[31]Michel Tatu, Power in the Kremlin (New York: The Viking Press, 1967), constitutes a fascinating and often revealing example of this approach.

Comintern-type leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, perpetuated since its ascension to power in 1937, was another. The critical state of the economy, in the initial stages of far-reaching and problematical reforms by 1967, must also be included. With other factors, these combined to produce a growing alienation of certain segments of the intelligentsia, especially in the academic and literary circles, and of the youth as well. And, a basic crisis, a challenge to the very survival of the polity was posed by the emergence of the long-neglected Czechoslovak nationality and ethnic problems, exacerbated by the dynamics of modernization.

As we have already noted, the Soviet model, especially its Stalinist variant, was unsuited for most of the Eastern European states. It was especially inappropriate for the industrially advanced Czechoslovakia, where its imposition had been tantamount to the forced acceptance of an underdeveloped economy when compared to the actuality of 1948. During 1968 much evidence concerning the extent and the techniques of Soviet participation in many facets of the system came to light. This extended from the realm of the economy where the emphasis upon heavy industry resulted in the atrophy of the strong sectors which were not needed by the Soviet Union at the time, to the security apparatus where Beria's men issued their directives. When one knowing official of the 1950's stated that in those years the

"insensitive, authoritarian transfer of insensitive anti-human methods, caused the flowering of all kinds of evil. The advisers had become Tsarist governors,"[32] he echoed a widespread sentiment. The fruition of all such developments was a catalyst for reform, rehabilitation, and justice in the 1960's.

The Czechoslovak Communist Party, being the key instrument in the transformation of its own system, had also to cope with the new situation. Alfred G. Meyer's observation regarding the "sovereign" role of the CPSU in the Soviet system is even more appropriate to the Czechoslovak case:

> Instead of being able to create and undo, political authority may be shifting to the role of interest aggregator, of arbiter between conflicting groups in society. It will have to respond to pressure below rather than putting society under pressure. Society is beginning to "determine" the state. The base is beginning to assert an influence over the super-structure.[33]

Meyer's remark has relevance to the analytical aspect of the problem as well, for it amplifies H. Gordon Skilling's charge that the Communist systems had been traditionally studied more in terms of outputs than inputs which had been grossly neglected. An output-oriented analysis would not be able to deal effectively with those dimensions of the system

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[32]Interview with Ladislav Kopřiva, the first Minister of National Security, in Reportér, III (June 19-26, 1968), p. III [sic].

[33]Meyer, "The Soviet Political System," p. 53.

that, in Meyer's view, obviously have a significant impact upon the system. We will suggest that the democratic tradition of Czechoslovakia had permeated even the party during those critical months of 1968. It is possible, in fact, that the Soviet leadership in its evaluation may have considered this factor in its contingency plans regarding future evolution of the party. Indeed, as we shall note in Chapter V, among the parties of Eastern Europe, the Czechoslovak party had been by far the largest and its history differed from those in neighboring countries. Conceivably, the Soviet reservations may have been justified. Lipset's remark, though made with reference to Communist parties of Western Europe, might have been applicable in the case of Czechoslovakia, for he observed that "if the various European Communist parties had been genuine national parties--that is, if their behavior had been largely determined by experiences within their own countries--they would have evolved in much the same way as the European socialist parties."[34] If one

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[34]Seymour Martin Lipset, Revolution and Counter-revolution: Changes and Persistence in Social Structures (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968), p. 295. It must be admitted, however, that such predictions entail certain risks. During the initial stages of the 1968 transformation, numerous otherwise cautious and capable students of Eastern European systems were attributing a degree of permanence to the developments under way. Thus, even Ghita Ionescu, noted for his significant work on pluralization of Eastern Europe, wrote in early 1968 that "it looks now as if it might last even longer and be transformed from a precarious armistice into a new relation between the new Czechoslovak society and its old and worn-out political regime." See his Introduction of Ludvík Vaculík's significant 1967 speech before the Writer's Congress, The Relations Between Citizen and Power:

considers the past of the Czechoslovak party--from the standpoint of its size, its relatively legitimate inter-bellum role, and the like--party development might have pointed in the direction suggested by Lipset.

As part of the vast transformation, there befalls a particularly heavy burden upon the Communist Party organization, which of course to this day remains the key instrument of rule and change. While the aforementioned appraisal of the shifted situation by Alfred G. Meyer applies in the case under examination here, the more specific comment of a Yugoslav, Bozidar Bogdanovic, made in 1967, spells out more directly the nature of the dilemma for the party as it sought to maintain its primacy while searching for a new position. Bogdanovic wrote,

> Actually, the time is coming nearer when the Party, under new social conditions it itself has created will have to seek a new place for itself. By having created conditions under which social laws have more influence, the Party will also have to free itself from the classical prerogatives of an absolute power.[35]

Similarly, Ghita Ionescu draws the following conclusion from his analysis of Eastern European political dynamics:

> If one were to attempt to forecast their future one would do so by singling out the two features which have shown such a basic continuity in these realities that they might be considered as two irreversible trends. The first is that the

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Contribution at the Czechoslovak Writers' Conference, 1967 (Liberal International British Group, 1968[?]), p. 2.

[35] Politika (Belgrade), October 31, 1967.

> pluralization and the reinstitutionalization which follows from it will continue to lead to the dissolution of the Apparat. The second . . . is that the European Communist states will have in the future become more European than Communist.[36]

Quite correctly, Huntington points out that the relationship of the party vis-a-vis other institutions and groups is a crucial variable, especially so in the dynamics of change. Whereas in pluralistic party systems change is often handled at the party level, "In one-party systems, however, change is in part reflected in the shifting role of groups within the party, but it is even more reflected in the changing balance between the party and other institutions and groups."[37] Huntington also properly admonishes the students of "totalitarian" systems for assigning the party the full primacy within the system, noting that in addition, the party may undergo a vast transformation during the evolution of the system.[38]

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[36] Ionescu, op. cit., p. 271.

[37] Huntington, op. cit., p. 7.

[38] The Polish unions became very decisive in 1970 and 1971 and their relative social isolation in the port cities of northern Poland undoubtedly contributed to the rapid politicization of the atmosphere. In fact, the party-legitimized leadership was completely by-passed by new channels of communication.

CHAPTER II

SOME POLITICAL ASPECTS OF ECONOMIC REFORM

In the early 1960's the message of all basic indicators was the same: the Czechoslovak economy showed unmistakable signs of a crisis. This crisis propelled the issue of the economy to the forefront of public concern, and the Communist party leadership found itself with the most profound challenge since it had come to power in 1948. The issue assumed still greater importance as a result of the resolute commitment of the Communist systems everywhere to rapid rates of economic growth. In this commitment the Czechoslovak leadership was no exception, and for a while acted unduly enthusiastic about its capabilities. However, rapid economic growth alone constitutes a destabilizing force, for it alters the relative positions of various forces within the system. For a long time, it had been the implicit assumption of many studies that economic development results in political stability. Questioning this assertion, Mancur Olson, Jr. reminds us that rapid economic growth with its attendant social dislocation means "that both the gainers and the losers from economic growth can be

destabilizing forces."[1] In fact, due to economic growth, the numbers of people who decline can actually increase. Having experienced a period of very rapid economic growth during the mid-1950's, Czechoslovakia's social order was already in the midst of a profound alteration. This destabilizing stage which counts among its "losers" the poorly skilled, the poorly schooled, the generalists was compounded by the dramatic economic crisis of the 1960's. It was devastating to various groupings, and ultimately led to 1968. While it is not our intent to argue that the political crisis of 1968 was due to economic factors alone, we do hold the issue of economic performance to be the key issue for the coalescence of various political-military measures and proposals. The issue affected the legitimacy of the party leadership, because performance and legitimacy appear to be intertwined, and exacerbated the other principal issue, Slovak nationalism. We shall examine the crucial elements of the economic crisis, of the Communist party's role, and the actions of several critical groups during the period in question.

The Genesis of Reform

In the midst of the 1960 recession, it would have been considered impossible to imagine an economist holding

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[1]Mancur Olson, Jr., "Rapid Growth as a Destabilizing Force," Journal of Economic History, XXIII (December, 1963), 529-52, in Jason I. Finkle and Richard W. Gable, Political Development and Social Change, 2nd ed. (New York: John Wiley, 1971), p. 560.

not only a key party post, but also a high government position in 1968. Yet, this is precisely what happened. The intervening developments made it possible for Ota Šik to rise to the position of Deputy Premier. The event is symbolic of the altered relationships among individuals and groups that occurred in the system and in the party.

In June of 1968, the Deputy Premier, Ota Šik, was able to conduct a series of informative programs on national television designed to acquaint the general public with the unhappy state of the economy. In a status report for mid-1968, he was also seeking to explain the reasons why, after two years of economic reforms beginning in 1967, so little was visible in the way of tangible results. Admitting to the very low state of the economy, Šik placed much of the blame upon the previous leadership, accusing it of dealing indecisively with the problems it had faced. Šik claimed that as early as 1956-57, the economists were able to see some danger signs on the horizon. Among these were the rapid aging of machinery, some of which in the consumer industry sectors was from sixty to eighty years old. Basic political decisions in the investment policy favored heavy industry, and these had been made on the basis of purely subjective judgments. The ever-lengthening period between decision making and implementation of projects exacerbated the crisis. Šik then made numerous invidious comparisons of performance between the advanced capitalist states and

Czechoslovakia.[2] For the ordinary citizen, the consequences of conditions were felt in many ways, ranging from poor housing to poor services. Clearly, time had come for some far-reaching change. Ota Šik's commentary demonstrated that the economists were able to articulate a significant critique as well as to promulgate measures designed to deal with the poor performance of the economy. And, Šik's governmental position, that of a Deputy Premier, had given the younger economists an important spokesman at the apex of the decision-making pyramid in the system, highlighting the inescapable interdependence of political and economic variables.

Šik had alluded to the performance of the new economic model which was put into operation in January of 1967. The model was a far-reaching attempt to rationalize the economy through extensive decentralization and through the incorporation of the market pattern of allocation into the system. According to its broad outlines, the managers of individual enterprises were to enjoy a substantial degree of autonomy, and central planning was to be done in broad strokes only, and in long-range perspective as well. The model was to utilize the indicators of prices, interest, and such. As finally implemented in 1967, the plan, to be sure, was only a partial compromise of what had been initially planned by its proponents, and expectedly met with resistance

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[2]See, for example, Ota Šik, "Přebíráme hospodářství v takovém stavu" [We Are Taking the Economy in Such a State], Lidová demokracie, June 28, 1968.

and criticism from many quarters. The more progressive party leaders undoubtedly wished to realize the plan rapidly so that the further deleterious effects of economic stagnation would be eliminated, believing "the degree of risk in the consistent application of the new system undoubtedly smaller than the degree of risk involved in the endeavor to retain outdated methods of management, whatever the form in which this is done."[3]

In the mid-1960's some had realized quite clearly that in addition, there had been during the period in question what Kenneth Boulding calls a "systemic break,"[4] characterized by a sharp departure from the past. That a major change had occurred had been recognized in some official analyses. According to Bohumil Šimon, in the view of the party Czechoslovakia in its economic evolution in 1967 reflected the "penultimate stage of our industrial revolution," for its primary tasks were to be found in "the rounding off of our industrial revolution and simultaneously the beginning of the scientific and technological revolution."[5] It is not surprising that economic reforms coming at this

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[3]Jiří Kantůrek, "What Progress This Year?" Kulturní tvorba, January 5, 1967.

[4]Kenneth E. Boulding, "Ecology and Environment," Trans-Action, VI (March, 1970), 43.

[5]Behumil Šimon, World Marxist Review, X (July, 1967), 39. Italics are Šimon's.

critical juncture in the transformation of the system, had a profound impact on the political sphere.

The core of the party elite tended to look at the crisis at hand rather narrowly, treating it as an economic problem. But, such approach proved to be much too narrow for the magnitude of the problem. Even in his grudging approval of the eventual reform, Antonín Novotný refused to refer to the measures as "reform," choosing instead to treat it as a perfected system of economic management. Clearly, he was aware of the political implications of such steps. Because of the magnitude of the 1960 crisis, the participation of the economists, their often radical proposals notwithstanding, became a sheer necessity. However, until this point, their ideas were not encouraged.

The overt discussion of economic strategy was an important aspect of the discussion in the 1950's, but not before certain inhibitions against such discussion were overcome. As had been noted by some of the reformers, any discussion of economic matters--precisely because of its interrelationship with the political system--had not been encouraged, and was in fact viewed with distrust by the Party leadership. After the Twentieth Party Congress, some discussion of the economic issues was permitted, but only in a very sharply circumscribed manner. Thus, while the discussion of problems after 1956 encompassed the economic issues, the concomitant issues in the political sphere were not

permitted to be analyzed. Thus the defects in the economy became magnified, the party and society grew farther apart, and the crisis was the result.

In economic terms, the immediate causes of the 1960 crisis are not too difficult to identify. Because of the failure of some key investments in the late 1950's, those investments were then shifted to the years 1961 and 1962, and the volume expected of certain sectors of the economy was far greater than the capacity. Additionally, agricultural problems and the sudden drop off of trade with China exacerbated the problems existing as a result of basic defects in the system. Thus it became necessary to terminate the Third Five-Year Plan, only eighteen months after its inauguration.[6] After an average rate of growth between 1948 and 1961, the growth rate of national income had dropped to 1.5 per cent in 1962 and to an astounding 2.2 per cent for 1963, and only 0.4 per cent for 1964. This indicator alone suggests the magnitude of the problem.[7] As so astutely noted by Mancur Olson, such situation would have its inevitable impact upon the planners whose expertise would have

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[6]See Miroslav Bernášek, "The Czechoslovak Economic Recession, 1962-65," Soviet Studies, XX (April, 1969), 444-461; also, Karel Černý, "Historical Background to Czechoslovak Economic Reform," East European Quarterly, VIII (September, 1969), 337-347; and Ota Šik, "The Economic Impact of Stalinism," Problems of Communism, XX (May-June, 1971), 1-10; also John M. Montias, "A Plan for All Seasons," Survey, No. 51 (April, 1964), pp. 63-76.

[7]From Statistická rocenka ČSSR (1966), pp. 24-25, 28-29, reproduced in Bernasek, op. cit., p. 460.

to be questioned. Obviously seeking explanations and predictions, the Party leaders allowed new voices to be heard. Thus, the analysts of the reformist thrust in Czechoslovakia point to an essay by two Czechoslovak economists as the start of the open debate that ultimately resulted in economic reform,[8] raising obliquely for the first time the political causes of economic problems. From this point on, the proposals of economists came to be bolder. We agree with Bernášek's appraisal of the evolving relationship of the top party leadership to the economists and other technocrats:

> The Novotný group had a very limited knowledge of economics, and their thinking was dominated by simplified theorems of expanded production which regarded high investment as the major vehicle of growth. The same factors which forced the technocrats to accept the basic development strategy which resulted in the structural disequilibrium in the balance of payments also seems to explain the acceptance of excessive investment at the beginning of the 1969's; namely, the political aim of rapid economic growth and development dictated basically by the CPSU, headed by Khrushchev; economic dogmatism and the impossibility of carrying out rational calculations; and finally, the limited economic knowledge and refusal of the party leadership to accept criticism.[9]

The ultimate result was weakening of the party leadership authority, making it vulnerable to open criticism from other groups which we shall discuss elsewhere. But there can be no doubt that the very reforms feared by the leaders,

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[8] B. Komenda and C. Kožušník, "Some Basic Questions Concerning Improvement of the System of Management of the Socialist Economy," Politická ekonomie (1964), No. 3.

[9] Bernášek, op. cit., p. 459.

for they considered them as undermining their leadership, had become necessary. And, with the fragmentation of the leadership at the top, those who could provide solutions to the existing problems were being gradually coopted into the leadership. This explains the rise of Ota Šik and his colleagues.[10]

The proposals advanced by the reformers contained numerous departures from the past, but principal among these were the decentralization of decision-making throughout the economic system, and the introduction of the market pattern in resource allocation in order to achieve efficiency at a time when the command system began to fail. The principal spokesman for reform, as we have already noted, had been Ota Šik. He was appointed during the depth of the recession to head a special party-government commission which prepared the new model. As he recently observed, even the conservative forces "both intellectually and through motives of self-interest" accepted the proposed reform[11] after a lengthy

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[10] Important theoretical discussions preceded the emergence of Ota Šik as the reform protagonist. For example, as early as 1959, Čestmír Kožusník in "Vlastnictví a ekonomické vztahy" [Ownership and Economic Relations], Nová mysl, No. 7 (1959), argued that the central direction of the economy was counterproductive, and that supply-demand relations were needed in a socialist economy. For an interesting overview of these antecedents, see Vladimír V. Kusín, The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), Chapter 9.

[11] Šik, "The Economic Impact of Stalinism," p. 9.

ideological and political debate. Stating the case for reform carefully and seeking at every turn to legitimize his arguments by careful adherence to the Marxist-Leninist principles, he nonetheless acknowledged that there were political implications in the reforms.

Unlike the critical intelligentsia's programatic views about the desired course of action, Šik's views were more pragmatic and concerned primarily with modifications for the economic sphere. Šik recognized that his rather severe critique of what he called the "bureaucratic form of management" clearly affected those interests associated with the extant patterns of the economy. He also recognized that decentralization was a sine qua non of the whole reform package, but its realization would undoubtedly produce many conflicts such as those between central and subordinate units with respect to their domains of decision-making. In the key passage of his principal work on the subject, Šik anticipated that the most serious conflicts would occur in the realm of central and peripheral decision-making and management. The proper resolution of this key issue constituted a problem not only for the economy, but for the society as a whole:

> It is around this question that the greatest disputes between Marxist economists occur, disputes between the economists who adopted, in the Stalinist era, the over-simplified and metaphysical mode of thinking which rigidly absolutizes lifeless schemes of unity and contradiction, with those who are trying to overcome this simplified way of thinking and its

> theoretical results, and to view the new reality in all its complex, conflicting and dialectical unity, which corresponds to the essential principles of scientific Marxism.[12]

Šik and his economists obviously dismissed the suitability of full centralized direction of the economy for a variety of reasons, including the cybernetic one. Simply overburdened, the decision-making systems break down under the weight of the innumerable bits of information in need of processing and not differentiated into those having either long-range or short-range implications.

Noting--in an oblique reference to the Soviet Union--that attempts in other countries are being made to make centralized decision-making more workable, Šik nonetheless predicted that in their efforts those systems are likely to fail. Such efforts "are not based on sufficiently profound analysis of the relation between the central and peripheral management and, therefore, have usually led to rather ineffective reforms and reorganizations."[13] The implication of his statements was that in other countries, especially in the Soviet Union where reforms were proceeding along the lines suggested above, these reforms would be counterproductive. As we shall see below, he would have found himself in agreement with some of the Soviet critics of their own system. Šik reiterated the view with which we generally

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[12]Ota Šik, Plan and Market Under Socialism (Prague: Academia Publishing House, 1967), pp. 122-23.

[13]Ibid., p. 125.

agree, that the command economy has some utility during a particular stage of development, but there comes a juncture where some departures become absolutely necessary. Subsequently, Šik saw only limited circumstances when the command economy had utility, as for instance, in the prosecution of a war or in the preparation for one, or it might be utilized to accelerate

> the economic consolidation of a new, still politically weak regime, to assure the rapid overcoming of unemployment or of insufficient employment, of poverty, and to assure economic independence from hostile states, etc. Under such conditions, preferential management can achieve a rapid priority growth of the necessary production at any price, even at the price of a temporary growth in disproportions and other economic losses. But as soon as this extraordinary system of management, possible only for a short term, is raised to a generally applicable system that is essential for socialism, it must sooner or later act as a brake on growth or cause an absolute decline, as was shown by the example of the ČSSR in 1963.[14]

Simply stated, the vast bureaucracy is incapable of making required decisions rapidly enough, nor can it respond quickly enough to change.

But in order to cope with the requirements of the situation, Šik, speaking at the Thirteenth Party Congress in June of 1966 realized that for the reform to succeed, certain conditions were indispensable. New ideas must be allowed to flow:

> Conditions must be created in which, if somebody comes up with an idea . . . that differs from

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[14] Ibid., pp. 127-128.

> the views of the top official, his initiative will not be doomed from the outset. It is not enough to say that such initiatives are allowed and that nobody can be victimized. So far, people's experience has been different, and it is experience that counts, not words.[15]

By this time, having scored some success, Šik felt emboldened enough to raise such a sensitive point that could have been interpreted as a critique of the Novotný leadership. Furthermore, in expanding beyond the outline of the purely economic plan, such ideas raise the issue of participation in the system. To Šik and his colleagues, conditions had to be created that were conducive to creative and critical participation.

In Czechoslovakia, reformers other than Šik recognized too that their reforms were meeting with resistance because of their inescapable consequences for the political system. One writer stated the central argument in this way:

> The proposals for a new system of management have been based on criticism of the administrative-directive centralism, not on the rejection of the extensive methods of economy alone. A connection between economics and politics is absolutely clear in this respect and our present efforts cannot be limited to questions of economic management but must aim at the creation of general conditions for a more democratic administration and of a rational political system with strictly defined powers.[16]

Given the political choices before it, the Party leaders found it useful to rely on the economists not only out of

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[15] Rudé právo, June 5, 1966.

[16] I. J. Fojtík, "Does a Socialist Man Exist?" Rudé právo, January 5, 1967.

sheer necessity, but by bringing their expertise into the planning, they could claim the resultant successes, or they could more easily dissociate themselves if the opposite were to be the outcome.

The course of Yugoslav economic reforms also indicates how the prospects and possibilities of decentralization are affected by the resistance from political authorities. In fact, even today, some students of the Yugoslav model detect grounds for pessimism in the long run. From the apex of the system, Edvard Kardelj stated the dilemma of change clearly:

> In practice we encounter resistance in some Party organizations and this resistance is more or less along the lines of preserving statist-centralist forms of appropriation, so that all funds can be distributed through political channels.[17]

Even more so than in the Yugoslav case, the reformers had run into political obstacles on their road to reform in Czechoslovakia. Much to the dislike of the reform economists, the reforms, at least until the removal of Novotný in early 1968, were often diluted and implemented only partially. To be sure, their difficulties were compounded by some of the dislocations created by the reforms of 1967 which had triggered off some conditions such as inflation which armed the arguments of opponents. Some economic activities continued to be under tight control. Foreign trade even in

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[17]Proceedings of the III Plenum of the Central Committee of the League of Yugoslav Communists, Borba, March 13, 1966.

1967 remained almost wholly subjugated to political direction, and in fact, had been completely excluded from the scope of the reforms during 1967. One of the principal charges against Novotný, spearheaded by the economist-reformers was that the Novotný leadership did not resolutely carry out the economic reforms, no doubt contributing to the highly visible and significant role played by the economists not only in his downfall, but in their generally important role in the events examined here.

In retrospect, Ota Šik was able to say that indeed,

> The need for new attitudes and new leaders clearly presented a challenge to those entrenched in power--the Novotný regime. A fundamental change in the political ground rules was called for if there was to be any meaningful alteration of the economic structure and of the whole administrative system. Yet, although a growing number of responsible political and economic figures, supported by large segments of the population, came to realize the necessity for radical economic reform, the conservative political dictatorship and the bureaucratic apparatus resisted and obstructed all moves toward the purposeful introduction of new measures. This, in turn, converted the fight for economic reform into a political struggle aimed first at toppling Novotný and then at democratizing the entire political system.[18]

The Yugoslav Precedent

At a time when the problem of participation in their respective systems is being taken up by students both East and West, it is not surprising that the Yugoslav experiment is subjected to close scrutiny. Though recognizing that

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[18]Ota Šik, "The Economic Impact of Stalinism," pp. 9-10.

Yugoslavia is not a polyarchy, Robert Dahl recently pointed to the Yugoslav method of managing economic enterprises as one of the boldest and most promising developments in the institutionalization of participation by workers in their respective enterprises.[19] With like interest, the experiment has been closely watched in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. And, at least one Czechoslovak reformer acknowledged openly--unlike Ŏta Sik--that the path of Yugoslavia was being emulated in Czechoslovakia.[20]

That economic reforms and political transformation, including the transmutation of the party organization and its role in the system go hand in hand has been amply demonstrated in the post-1948 Yugoslav experience. Certainly, the self-management of Yugoslav industry, which incidentally had held some attraction in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union as well, marked a radical departure from the more

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[19]See Robert Dahl, After the Revolution (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 130-132.

[20]See Radoslav Selucký, Czechoslovakia: The Plan That Failed (London: Thomas Nelson, 1970), passim. Also, as early as 1964, Professor Branko Horvat, presently Director of the Institute of Economic Sciences, Belgrade, had been invited by some economists to Prague to present lectures to an audience of economists and high party officials on the subject of the role of the market in a socialist economy. Some participating party members realized the political implications and showed some resistance to the ideas being presented. From personal communication, Belgrade, September 23, 1971.

commonly utilized concept of command hierarchy maintained by a system of central economic planning. Implemented in 1950 and expanded ever since, the measures of decentralization have led to a substantial degree of functional and organizational independence on the part of Yugoslav enterprises. Extensive decentralization in the political sphere in turn contributed to the democratization of Yugoslav political life. The Yugoslav self-management model constituted a pragmatic solution at a time when drastic steps were needed to overcome the negative consequences of the schism between the Soviet Union, and the then secundus inter pares of Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia.

With its extensive participation by all involved, the Yugoslav economy has been changing very rapidly, showing some of the world's most rapid rates of accretion. Specifically, within the individual enterprises some interesting innovations have been introduced, as for example, in the involvement of workers in decision-making and in the establishment of a flexible role for managers. Insofar as its effectiveness is concerned, the lessons are quite clear. There has been rapid growth, and a great degree of elasticity is evident in the political system. There has been a pronounced dimunition of the party's role in the array of decision-making tasks, with the resultant numerical decline

in the size of the party apparatus.[21] Its ability to fight or resist changes in the system has thus lessened.

Of course, the Yugoslav system had been transformed from one that had, until the first interstitial moves to modify it in 1950, been notably backward, hierarchically organized and centralized. Initially, Czechoslovakia, however, encountered wholly different problems. Its economy, for one, in 1945 had been in relatively good condition, surviving the war without the degree of devastation visited upon every other country in the geographical area. More important, Czechoslovakia was much more highly developed. It is not surprising that the Yugoslav model, made operational in a state of backwardness, and thus having some appeals in other Communist party-states on account of their own comparable situation, would be noted and to a degree emulated elsewhere. Its flexibility made it very appealing to certain reformers in Czechoslovakia, where the economy, as we have already noted, had been in a stagnating state since the early 1960's. Evidence shows that the Czech reformers found themselves in agreement with the views of the Yugoslav critics of the command system. As expressed by one Yugoslav scholar:

> The state controlled system was extravagant in its utilization of human labor. The roots of this illness lay in the socio-economic position of the organs of government and the managers as

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[21]The professional apparat declined from a high of 90,000 to the current 8,000.

> state executives. Both of these did not take into proper account the consequences of unprofitable investments. While the capitalist entrepreneur has to consider carefully the profitability of any investment he wishes to undertake, the manager in a state controlled system does not operate in a system which forces him to invest economically or rationally. It further leads to a distorted concept of responsibility. The responsibility rests on political criteria of loyalty rather than on the functional aspects of economic performance.[22]

It is not surprising that participatory and flexibility aspects of the Yugoslav model attracted outside attention and that its transmutations have been found in several economic reforms in Eastern Europe, and partially in "libermanization" in the Soviet Union, though there it had apparently not won full approval from the party hierarchy. Its success was thereby jeopardized. Kavran puts the nature of the appeal of the Yugoslav model in this way:

> The concept of humane market-socialism opposing state socialism with its oppression and lack of motivation has undoubtedly won in Yugoslavia. This is a conception of a modern, open transparent society, capable of changes; "elastic"; with possibilities for every group to express themselves.[23]

The Czechoslovak reformers were seeking to realize these objectives.

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[22]Dragoljub Kavran [Belgrade University Law Faculty], "Self-management in Yugoslavia," unpublished manuscript, p. 9.

[23]Ibid., p. 33.

The Impact of Modernization

In a larger sense, the fate of the early Czechoslovak Communist leaders, and of Novotný as well, leaders who had been wedded rather closely to the perpetuation of the Soviet model, was sealed early in the very process of the transformation of the Czechoslovak system by the particular brand of modernization discussed here. Czechoslovakia witnessed a conflict between those who gave birth to the Communist system and those who have to pursue modernization through managerial procedures. The problems are not in principle dissimilar from those facing the leaderships of modernizing systems generally. The process of modernization, in the eyes of John Kautsky will be resisted by the early revolutionary leaders, and they will do so pursuing policies "which in fact serve the function of justifying their continuance in power and which may slow or prevent industrialization."[24]

The new group, referred to by Huntington as innovative technocrats is of special significance, for numerous reasons. In the Soviet Union, for example, technical-managerial intelligentsia enjoyed a privileged position from the 1930's on, and their growing numbers alone are one indicator of their impact upon the system. We have been reminded anew of their significance in any modernizing system from one source

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[24]John H. Kautsky, "Revolutionary and Managerial Elites in Modernizing Regimes," Comparative Politics, I (July, 1969), 441.

dealing with the developing countries. Cyril Black, in his very thoughtful essay on modernization, makes the telling point that in fact, economic development--and this can be fruitfully seen as the key function of the system being examined here--"depends to a great extent on the intellectual and political aspects of the process, the growth in knowledge and the ability of political leaders to mobilize resources."[25] Though the process has been going on for centuries, the rapidity of the transformation has accelerated in the last century or so. The core of this critical process "has been the scientific and technological revolution,"[26] in which the intellectuals have enjoyed a pivotal role. It should not therefore be surprising that in the transformation of the Communist systems, the intellectuals--such as the economists noted here--would enjoy a strategic role. The Soviet leadership has always been ambivalent toward intellectuals, for even as it needed them, their impact often posed problems for the leadership from the standpoint of maintenance of effective control over them. But, the intellectualization of the modern world has been an inexorable process, and in the transformation of the Czechoslovak system, the leaders had been thrust into a dilemma that in its salient features is not dissimilar from that faced by

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[25] C. E. Black, The Dynamics of Modernization: A Study in Comparative History (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966), p. 19.

[26] Ibid., pp. 19-20.

the Soviet leadership. This similarity needs to be mentioned, because the events of Czechoslovakia had their impact on the Soviet Union where its intellectuals are demanding changes not dissimilar to those sought by their counterparts in Czechoslovakia.[27]

Therefore, the integration of the demands of the technical intelligentsia at his juncture of economic development is not unique to Czechoslovakia, and because the final parameters of reform in Eastern Europe are still drawn in Moscow, we shall turn for a moment to this matter. We know of numerous attempts by Soviet economists to effect significant reforms to make the system capable of doing what it appears to need to do at this time of development. Along with the economists there are others, notably in the technical intelligentsia whose demands are meeting with frustration. While Liberman and other economists have restricted themselves principally to the economic aspects in their reform proposals, there are other intellectuals associated

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[27]The technical intelligentsia is guaranteed a growing weight within the system by virtue of numbers alone. For example, in their comparison of the developing countries where the numbers of students in the sciences were relatively small, the Communist systems generally show a different picture. Czechoslovakia, for example, had some 46 per cent of its students in higher education in scientific and technical facilities and only 6.4 per cent in humanities, arts, and law. See Frederick Harbison and Charles E. Meyers, Education, Manpower and Economic Growth (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), pp. 115-119.

with the new era who articulate more explicitly the more extensive modification of the system.

These demands are manifest in the letter written by Andrei D. Sakharov, a leading scientist and two of his colleagues, when they suggest that reforms of the system are inevitable if the serious shortcomings evident in the Soviet system are not rectified. They argue that

> At the present time it is of great importance to carry out a series of measures directed toward the further democratization of public life in the country. This necessity emerges from the existence of a close link between problems of technical and economic progress, scientific methods of management and questions of information, publicity and competition. This necessity emerges also from internal and external political problems.[28]

To accomplish the above, they call for democratization, greater participation in the decision-making system, quite simply because of the overburdened decision-making machinery, to echo the arguments of the Yugoslavs and of Dr. Šik. Also, in a vein not unlike that of Šik, the Soviet critics argue that present problems can no longer "be solved merely by one or several individuals who have power and who "know everything."[29] Referring specifically to the 1965 economic reforms in the Soviet Union, they adjudged them to have

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[28]Letter of A. D. Sakharov, V. F. Turchin, and R. A. Medvedev to the Leaders of the Party and Government, March 19, 1970, in Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Strategic Arms Limitation Talks of the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, 91st Cong., 2nd Sess. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1970), p. 112.

[29]Ibid., p. 112.

been insufficient to produce the kinds of results that were expected of them. Correctly, as if agreeing with Šik, Sakharov and colleagues realize the inevitability of the political dimension of economic reforms stating, "we are convinced that in order to fulfill all the tasks of the reforms, economic measures alone appear to be insufficient."[30] Again, alluding to the systemic break in the evolution of the system, Sakharov sounds more like Karl W. Deutsch when presenting the following analogy:

> Our economy can be compared with traffic entering a crossroads. When cars were few, the traffic police could easily cope with the task, and traffic ran smoothly. But as the number of cars continually increased, traffic jams occurred. . . . The only way out is to make the crossroads wider.[31]

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[30] Ibid., p. 113. Recent analyses by Western economists appear to amplify this estimate. Gregory Grossman holds that the 1965 reforms did not enhance the efficiency of the Soviet economy. Moreover, as if to suppress the political implications of economic reforms, Brezhnev at the Twenty-fourth Party Congress deliberately spoke of "economic mechanism" rather than "economic reform." Interestingly, Novotný showed similar reluctance in 1965 in his discussions of the Czechoslovak reforms. Grossman's view of the post-1965 performance is contained in this seminal paragraph of commentary on the Ninth Plan: "It may well be that faced with a declining rate of growth of total inputs (itself, of course, partly a result of certain political decisions), with many conflicting claims on resources, and with differences in its midst, the leadership took the momentarily easy way out by adopting a highly optimistic view of the future. . . . it hardly requires saying that such wishful planning may well be counterproductive, and will surely soon compound the political problems that it pretends to brush away." See his "From the Eighth to the Ninth Five-Year Plan," in Norton T. Dodge (ed.), Analysis of the USSR's 24th Party Congress and 9th Five-Year Plan (Mechanicsville, Md.: Cremona Foundation, 1971), p. 61.

[31] Ibid., p. 113.

Sakharov then submits a plea for the integration of the technical intelligentsia into the decisional system, echoing as the rationale some of the points advanced in Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom.[32] Representing what Deutsch calls a linkage group, Sakharov in his wide-ranging critique of the Soviet system and his varied and sometimes radical prescriptions alluded favorably--already in very early 1968 when the essay apparently reached its final form--to the experiment being undertaken in Czechoslovakia. There is no reason to believe that his analyses in this and his other essays were not shared by large segments of the Soviet intelligentsia. He wrote,

> A number of socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia are now experimenting with basic economic problems of the role of planning and of the market, government and cooperative ownership, and so forth. These experiments are of great significance.[33]

In the context of Sakharov's severe critique of the Soviet system was thus voiced his approval of the experiment being undertaken in Czechoslovakia. Representing an ever-increasingly significant element in the Soviet system, the intellectuals in that country no doubt had created some concern about the developments in Czechoslovakia among the Soviet party leaders. At the Twenty-Fourth Party Congress

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[32]Andrei D. Sakharov, Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom (New York: W. W. Norton Co., 1968).

[33]Ibid., p. 78.

there were indications that intellectuals such as Andrei D. Sakharov will have to be under stricter discipline through a more extensive supervision of their activities by party organs.[34]

It can be seen from the foregoing that Soviet intellectuals of the economic realm along with the economists enjoy a particularly significant role in a rapidly growing system but that their impact is greatly enhanced during a systemic break in which there is a departure from the command principles of direction, because coercion and organization become the dominant anddriving forces. However, in Czechoslovakia where the nature of backwardness was at least partially artificially created through the imposition of a Soviet model better suited to a much more underdeveloped setting, intellectuals and economists found themselves in a strategically crucial position at a time when the leadership needed their skills to bring about the modification of the system. As might be expected from the evidence found in other systems, notably in the Soviet Union and even Yugoslavia, reorganization plans have been hampered by numerous omissions and shortcomings. For example, the decentralization of investment decision-making even through the year 1968 lagged behind the projected stages.[35] But even so, in

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[34]See for example, the several articles in Problems of Communism, XX (July-August, 1971), 2-46.

[35]For a useful overview, see Michael Gamarnikow, Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1968), notably Chapter 3.

this realm we have seen that the reformers enjoyed great power, magnified by their alliance with other elements of the technical intelligentsia whose scientific research is supposed to provide the political and economic decision-makers with the information that is essential to rational decision-making. The Academy of Sciences was able to reach the highest echelons of leadership, as indicated by the presence of Ota Šik in the post of Deputy Prime Minister of the government.

On the other hand, it could be said that some of the reforms could have proved beneficial to the Party's image. We may take this to have been the case in Yugoslavia. The many problems that result in the economic sphere and the many conflicts which must be resolved by the party or at least within the party in a centralized economy, can be shifted onto other groups and other decisional centers, thus avoiding the sole responsibility for such on the part of the party. In Yugoslavia, for example, it is the new system rather than the League of Communists that is the beneficiary of the criticism of a relatively high level of unemployment and the necessity of having some 900,000 workers abroad.

Studying the transformation in still another system, that of Poland, Zygmunt Bauman in his review of pertinent sociological studies conducted in Poland detected increasing numbers of people with higher levels of educational and vocational skills among both party activists and party

executives in all the great industrial enterprises in Poland. According to his analysis, important changes have occurred in institutional and behavioral standards, resulting in a certain expertise lag. There is

> . . . first of all, a remarkable shift from predominantly ideological to mainly technical and managerial preoccupations; the party meetings gradually resemble consultative assemblies; the content of individual and collective tasks confided to people in their capacity as party members is, in much greater proportion than before, directly connected with the purely industrial life of the factory. Meetings and everyday activities of party members and especially executives take on a more and more "expert" character; speeches and conversations are full of technical terms. Political merit and ideological virtues are no longer a sufficient qualification for the performance of party functions; one must possess vocational education and professional skill to deal with technical and administrative problems at a table with specialists of the highest rank. In this respect the metamorphosis now taking place in the party function of the managerial power elite is no more than a somewhat belated reflection of a similar change which had already taken place in the managerial staff itself.[36]

Still, Bauman, while agreeing with the students of bureaucracies who have long noted the tensions inherent in such situations, writes about tensions resulting from the relatively modest rate of transformation in a less developed Poland before 1967. It is not surprising, then, that the more rapid transformation of Czechoslovakia would contain many tensions. Furthermore in Poland--and similarly in

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[36]Zygmunt Bauman, "Economic Growth and Social Structure," in Jerzy J. Wiatr and Jacek Tarkowski, Studies in Polish Political System (Warsaw: Ossolineum, 1967), pp. 29-30.

Czechoslovakia--even in the past, community studies show that the former leaders who previously performed some significant tasks in the building of the socialist order found it difficult to give in gracefully to the transformation sweeping both countries. They would often behave negatively, not cooperating with the new styles of executive power, which resulted in inevitable conflicts.[37]

The developments discussed above reflect the modernization and the attendant differentiation of society. The result is a growth of interest groups advancing a variety of goals and identifying different problems. The elites now enjoy a greater degree of physical security as individuals, and they are dependent "on the more routine political 'energy inputs' such as support," but they are now

> much more exposed and susceptible, as entities, to extraneous pressures and influences both from within their own particular society and from the international environment--especially the "socialist" camp. Indeed, these pressures and influences have become regular and indispensable inputs into the socialist political systems, not only generating and defining pivotal issues in the competition between rival contenders for the mantle of succession but also serving--in the decisive stage--to legitimize the final outcome.[38]

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[37] Ibid., p. 32.

[38] Zygmunt Bauman, "Twenty Years After: The Crisis of Soviet-Type Systems," Problems of Communism, XX (November-December, 1971), 45.

The Unions

In addition to the articulation of demands by the technical intelligentsia and the economists, there is still another important grouping that needs to be mentioned in connection with economic reforms: the trade unions. Unlike the USSR trade unions, those of Czechoslovakia have had a long history. They existed long before being converted into "transmission belts" for the implementation of party commands. To legitimize their instrumental role, of course, the arguments continued to be made that the Party and union interests in fact overlapped. Even in the modest reforms throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, it appears that in the face of the growing power of system managers there are dynamic forces at work that seek to strengthen the hand of the workers as they seek participation and representation of their interests. Even the Yugoslav unions, though losing some of the traditional raison d'etre, have been given the legal right to strike, a clear manifestation of their autonomous expression of demands.

The antecedents of union organization in Czechoslovakia, too, were of importance in shaping union activities after 1948, although just like so many other organizations, the trade unions were, in the immediate post-World War II period, utilized more as a conveyor belt at the behest of the Communist Party leadership. Before the war, however, the Communists headed the fourth largest central

organization, the largest one being led by the expected party, the Social Democratic. To facilitate wartime use of Czech labor, the Nazi occupation dissolved prewar organizations and reunified them for the purpose of wartime production mobilization. Though divided into two groupings, they were at the apex unified by Nazi leadership, and after the war, in fact, the immediate days of May 5 through 9, 1945, the apex of the pyramid was simply removed and the Communist-led Central Labor Union (ÚRO) took over. Even while implementing the objectives of the Party leadership, they nonetheless were able to realize some of their own objectives as they participated in policy articulation, making demands on the various levels of the power system in accordance with the role theories of mass organizations. It will be recalled that in the Soviet Union, the Left Opposition of the 1920's drew much of its support from the workers.

There is ample indication that union officials in some countries, including Poland in late 1970 and early 1971, had become aware of the need for change. Assuming the incorporation of a more extensive market pattern orientation into the reform plans of Eastern Europe, Gamarnikow observes that

> A market economy will not need "transmission belts" for its basic operating instrument is to be material incentive. Moreover, it is one thing for the union officials to identify themselves with party decisions and press for their

> implementation but quite another to play the role of supervisors on behalf of the managerial class.[39]

To be sure, the enthusiasm of unions for the Czech reforms was not overwhelming since the conditions of the Czech workers were not too unsatisfactory and work demands upon them not particularly taxing. The expression of anxieties over proposed reforms was, therefore, not surprising, for the workers were bound to be affected--negatively as has been learned elsewhere. In fact, the impact could be quite severe in the early stages of economic reform. These anxieties were seized upon by Novotný as he sought to remain in power while still holding some important posts in early 1968. Novotný and others whose positions were being threatened sought to play upon these fears, intimating that the workers would lose their primacy in the new system, especially while its political concomitants were being formulated. It is, therefore, apparent that the initial stages of reform did not create a particularly enthusiastic response within the unions. But, having been affected by the inflationary pressures after 1953, and other negative manifestations of the overall economic problem, they became receptive to reforms, having overcome their initial reservations. Finally, they began to press for meaningful participation in the system, and began to take part in the 1968 democratization movement, seeking, in alliance with other

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[39]Gamarnikow, pp. 145-46.

groups, to produce structural changes in society which would permit greater participation. Because of the shifting balance of relationships within the system and because of the great pressure for participation from below, the trade union leaders resigned in March of 1968. Although ambivalent about their role in the new economic model, the unions rather swiftly turned into an articulate and pluralized force, making many and varied demands upon the system. In the economic sphere, the Party leadership encountered varied problems with labor unions as a result of their growing autonomous orientation. This process advanced substantially after March 1968, and its dynamics proved so profound that it has been nearly impossible for the Party leadership to reassert its control more than a year after the August 1968 intervention.

That the process of differentiation had been real has been acknowledged in innumerable accounts, a few of which follow. Thus the editorialist of Rudé právo, F. Zdobina, pointed afterward to the very slogan that had become popular, "Unions without Communists"[40] as characteristic of union disorientation. Above all, he charged that anti-socialist elements sought to transform trade unions into opponents of the Party and of the State. These elements had allegedly penetrated numerous leadership positions in various

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[40]F. Zdobina, "Unions without Communists," Rudé právo, May 19, 1970.

union organizations. While it was claimed the development had been arrested, it had not been completely eliminated, clearly attesting to the reality and vitality of the differentiation discussed here. The same writer complained about the remains of the "demagogy" and the appeal of the seemingly popular measures taken during 1968 on behalf of the workers, charging "they defended group interests at the expense of the social ones; they advanced unjustified or impossible to fulfill social demands," thus gaining popularity among the workers.[41]

The reversal in the role of the trade unions--from their belated commencement of reformist activity to their active support of the 1968 measures was a remarkable phenomenon. The recognition of their new and activist role in the system which was, to be sure, expected by the reformist economists was formally made in the Action Program. Recognizing their indispensable role in the future economic development, and the power possessed by the unions, the Action program promised that in order to effect the democratization program in the economy, there would have to be a great deal of independence accorded all participants in the process. In this framework, it becomes imperative to examine the union role. Noting that there exist valid and necessary reasons for independence, drafters of the Action Program stated,

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[41] Ibid.

> The central function of trade unions should be to defend the professional interests of the workers and the working people, and to act as an important partner in solving all questions of economic management; on this platform, the trade unions would be more effective in developing their function of organizing workers and employees for a positive solution of the problems of socialist construction and their educational function connected therewith.[42]

The unions began to democratize their own internal procedures in 1968 and began to take an active part in events. In one sphere, at least, the unions appeared to be heading into a conflict between the managers' and the workers' councils that was not unlike that found in Yugoslavia. For example, whereas the workers sought to participate in the functioning of their enterprises through workers' councils, such participation was not apparently welcome by those to be affected by such measures, notably the managers and certain other officials in the economic sphere. At a meeting of managers and economic officials in Prague, a resolution was passed which declared that the measure of June 6, 1968, establishing these councils was "unsuitable," and that "It came as a surprise to both workers' councils and trade unions."[43]

With their new autonomy, the unions were able to resist the Party leadership after August of 1968. Complaints

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[42]"The Action Program of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia," in Robin Alison Remington (ed.), Winter in Prague: Documents on Czechoslovak Communism in Crisis (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1969), p. 115.

[43]From Práce, February 14, 1969, quoted in Alois Rozehnal, "The Revival of the Czechoslovak Trade Unions," East Europe, XVIII (April, 1969), 7.

had been voiced by unhappy Party leaders about the rate of progress in the smaller plants and in the eyes of the official spokesman, the events could not be viewed favorably. One survey showed that of 380 enterprise committees of ROH which were "activist" during 1968, a great many in 1970 retained their 1968 composition. Furthermore, it appears that changes that harmonize with the wishes of the Party leadership are difficult to carry out, partly because of the reluctance of some workers to take up the necessary posts.

The foregoing does not deny that there were some officials who sought to define at least a semi-autonomous position for the unions prior to 1968. The Chairman of the Trade Union Council, Miroslav Pastýřík, declared at the Party Congress that "trade unions must always keep their own face as an independent and voluntary organization."[44] And, in the early stages of economic reform in Czechoslovakia, the trade unions had taken a relatively independent stand on behalf of their membership with respect to such issues as a labor code, various benefit measures, and so forth. The key question, however, that remained for many unionists and remains to this day is evident in the following comment: "The following point of view is often expressed: What do the unions actually do for the workers (apart from

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[44] M. Pastýřík, "Trade Unions Under New Conditions," Rudé právo, March 24, 1966.

distributing vouchers for recreation centers), how do they defend the workers' interests? What do they do about certain problems they should handle?"[45]

In conclusion, in Czechoslovakia, certain forces were articulated in 1968, supporting a central hypothesis of Alexander Eckstein that there are certain imperatives imposed by a given stage of economic development upon the economic, political, and social systems.[46] The pressures are there, even though the Communist systems, in particular, can choose to maintain or retain

> certain political arrangements and practices even if they are dysfunctional from an economic point of view and even if they entail growing economic costs. Thus, in the case of Czechoslovakia, for example, a highly centralized command system could be maintained in a complex, highly industrialized, and strongly foreign-aid-oriented economy only at a serious sacrifice in efficiency and growth. This sacrifice in turn contributed very significantly to the pressure for economic reforms which then became an important factor in producing political change. Following the Russian invasion, the status quo ante is being re-established more or less consciously at the expense of economic efficiency and growth.[47]

We have seen that particularism and the articulation of group interests became insistent and reached very open proportions during 1968, thus challenging the command principles in operation. After differentiating between market

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[45] M. Straka, "Big Tasks Demand Uncompromising Solutions," Svobodné slovo, July 15, 1966.

[46] Alexander Eckstein, "Economic Development and Political Change in Communist Systems," World Politics, XXII (July, 1970), 475.

[47] Ibid., p. 476.

and administrative decentralization, Eckstein argues, quite correctly, that "decentralized administration and the delegation of powers built into it necessarily lead to goal bifurcation. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to design a system of incentives for a bureaucracy that will assure spontaneous adherence of lower-level organs and micro-units to system goals."[48] As a consequence--and this consequence had been the principal source for opposition to the new model--the government, just as in Yugoslavia, ends up making only what Eckstein calls "macro-decisions." The economic bureaucracy is removed from the realm of decision-making and implementation.

We can understand the resistance that did exist, particularly at the middle levels of the system, from those whose educational level was decidedly inferior to that of the reformers, and whose power was undermined by the deviation on the part of the previously docile "conveyor belt," the union workers. To those in the middle, the new economic model, especially in combination with the other developments in the transformation of the system was much too dangerous to be permitted to continue. But they were incapable for a time to slow its momentum. The final parameters of permissibility were drawn by the invasion and the use of force. After all, as Eckstein so succinctly noted, with growing decentralization and with the introduction of the market

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[48] Ibid., p. 493.

decentralization, inexorable dynamics are set in motion:

> Thus market decentralization undermines the position of many powerholders in the system and pari passu creates new foci of power. The problem is further complicated for Communist regimes because once certain positions of autonomy develop and spread in the system they are very difficult to contain, since they generate pressures for a further spread of autonomy.[49]

The resistance from varied quarters, and even from the Soviet leadership for it had appeared to it, that the leadership of Czechoslovakia might be incapable of preventing the escalation of demands was encapsulated neatly in a popularized critique of the pluralist model. The opposition to it after 1968 became unceasing. The essence of this condemnation is contained in this recent statement:

> In economy, the pluralization represented an attempt to destroy the united economy by denial of the role of the state and of central planning in the direction of economic processes, through the absolutization of independence of enterprises and the functioning of market relations as self-regulating instruments.[50]

Indeed, as Mancur Olson noted, economic change is destabilizing.

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[49] Eckstein, p. 494.

[50] Večerní Praha, June 9, 1970.

CHAPTER III

SLOVAK NATIONALISM

The "participatory" ferment in Eastern Europe reflects the demand for autonomy and a part in decision-making not only for the individual citizen and for the economic enterprise (as in the Yugoslav case[1] and as had been proposed in the Czechoslovak economic reforms) but also for the larger geographical units, and above all, for the nationality. The issue of Slovak nationalism and the nature of Slovak participation in the Czechoslovak system was, in conjunction with the whole economic performance issue, at the heart of the events leading up to 1968. It, too, resulted in the activation of certain critical groups whose demands had an impact reaching beyond the nationalism question; adding to the large-scale demands for pluralization of the system as a whole. Also, the treatment of this issue had been closely interwoven with economic performance. One indicator of interdependence is the timing: the first evidence of large-scale dissatisfaction by various segments

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[1]See an excellent and comprehensive presentation of the Yugoslav case by Branko Horvat, "Yugoslav Economic Policy in the Post-War Period: Problems, Ideas, Institutional Developments," The American Economic Review, LXI, Part 2 (June, 1971), 71-169.

of the Slovak society as well as of the Slovak Communist Party came into the open at exactly the same time as the national economic crisis, that is, in the early 1960's.[2]

We shall examine the key dimensions of the Slovak participatory thrust as it came into conflict with the prevailing centralizing policies of the Prague leadership. Some of the key demands articulated by the Slovaks during the period in question plus the nature of the solutions proposed to deal with this issue will be presented and analyzed.

Unlike the Czechs, the Slovaks sought to deal with the hitherto unresolved nationality problem first. The demands for reforms, though varied in their point of origin, raised in their combinations certain fundamental questions pertaining to the legitimacy of the system as a whole. Sidney Verba suggests the linkage when he argues that there exist certain problem areas which have close ties to the making and enforcement of decisions. The key problem areas Verba refers to are identity, legitimacy, participation, penetration, and distribution. The problem areas--or crises as some prefer--are interrelated, and in Verba's judgment, they all "imply questions of legitimacy: are they [government actions] accepted because of normative beliefs as to their rightness? All imply questions of participation: who

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[2]It is interesting to note that Alexander Dubček became a member of the Slovak Communist Party Presidium in 1962, starting his rise toward 1968. See William Shawcross, Dubček (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971).

took part in making the decision?"[3] Indeed, with reference to Slovakią we may speak of a crisis of political development, a crisis whose significance must not be underestimated for the entire period of 1963-1967, and one the reformers felt compelled to address in their concrete proposals during 1968.

That it was treated by the reformers of the system as one of the fundamental problems is shown in the fact that the Action program of April 1968, contained extensive references to it. The principal solution advanced in the same document and the one finally adopted--namely the plan to federalize Czechoslovakia--demonstrates anew how the overall political reform plan of 1968 sought to create a plurality of political subjects. Whereas the economic reformers saw the necessity for pluralization in order for the economic reform to succeed, the issue of Slovak nationalism contributed to the demand for pluralization from a different direction.

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[3]See Sidney Verba, "Sequences and Development," in Leonard Binder et al., Crises and Sequences in Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 299-300. The concept of legitimacy raised many important questions. For our purposes we shall accept Seymour Martin Lipset's definition that a system must engender and maintain that existing political institutions are "the most appropriate or proper ones for the society." See his "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," The American Political Science Review, LIII (March, 1959), 86.

The Basic Problem

Professor Brzezinski has speculated recently that the complex nationality claims in the Soviet Union are becoming more pronounced, and will constitute one of the principal challenges to the Soviet system in the coming years.[4] This is so despite the fact that nationalities had been at the forefront of concern for Russian revolutionaries, and resultant formulations of the question were close to the core of their revolutionary strategy. With the Soviet Union still wrestling with this problem more than fifty years after the Revolution, it is not surprising that the much younger Communist inheritors of the complex nationalities mosaic of the Austro-Hungarian Empire now experience problems of comparable character. Despite much attention accorded the almost exotic pattern of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia has possibly the more vexing nationality problem in Eastern Europe. Before the war, due to the rise of Hitler in Germany, it was the German minority that received the most attention. After the war, the magnitude of this problem was reduced by the massive deportation of some two and one half million Germans from Czechoslovakia.

Ironically, the very war leading to the "resolution" of the pre-war German minority issue had created propitious circumstances for the reassertion of Slovak nationalism, the

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[4] Zbigniaw Brzezinski, "The Soviet Political System: Transformation or Degeneration," Problems of Communism, XV (January-February, 1966), 1-15.

fulcrum of the current concern with nationalities and ethnic groups in Czechoslovakia. The genesis of the problem must be sought at least partly within the framework of the truncated Slovak state during the war years, which in its way satisfied some of the existing nationalist sentiments. It was brought into sharper focus in the significant Slovak National Uprising of 1944. This uprising turns out, upon closer examination, to have been much more of a nationalist undertaking than had been officially admitted during the subsequent years. Its nationalist outlines, its basically Slovak (and not exclusively Communist) leadership, had been denied or distorted in the Czechoslovak Communist historiography. After 1945, the uprising had been portrayed as having been led by Communists, and principally Czech Communists at that, who acted under Moscow's direction in a military campaign directed against the German armies and their collaborators. Nonetheless, the persistent nationalistic impulse of numerous Slovak leaders and intellectuals was magnified by the deep-seated and growing resentment over the continued charges of "bourgeois nationalism" levelled against their activities throughout the 1960's by the top Party leaders. In combination with other features of nationalist policy--or lack thereof--these conditions thrust Slovakia into the role of catalyst in the 1968 transformation.[5] In the 1950's, it

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[5]See an illuminating article tracing the recent developments in Slovak nationalism by Stanley Riveles, "Slovakia: Catalyst of Crisis," Problems of Communism, XVI (May-June, 1968), 1-9.

should be recalled, several principal leaders of the Slovak CP found themselves charged with "bourgeois nationalist" deviations, while Novotný himself in 1954 accused some Slovak leaders of conspiring with the Hapsburgs and other lackeys of imperialism.[6]

The magnitude of the renewed Slovak assertiveness in the early 1960's left no doubt that, in the long run, Slovakia and its place in the Czechoslovak political system had become a fundamental issue for the future of Czechoslovakia as a state, and not merely a test to the primacy of the party within the system. Comparative politics literature abounds with examples wherein cleavages along political, cultural, and economic level lines cause profound divisions, at times raising questions of the capacities of such countries to retain their unity. Outstanding cases that might be mentioned are Canada, Belgium, and contemporary Pakistan.

The transformation of any political system is an uneven process, and the attendant problems may be examined in terms of the differing rates of social mobilization or, specifically, in terms of the process whereby different strata are integrated into the modernizing sector of society.[7] This particular perspective may be fruitful in our

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[6]Milan Hübl, "Konflikty nebo jednota?" [Conflicts or Unity?], Literarní listy, I (March 14, 1949), 1.

[7]Karl Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," American Political Science Review, XLV (September, 1961), 493-514.

consideration of the participatory demands of Slovakia. Its problem is to some extent related to the issues of economic reform, but has been in fact exacerbated by the relatively marked degree of under-development of Slovakia in contrast with the so-called Czech lands.

The Development Problem

The wide gulf in levels of development separating the Czech lands and Slovakia came to influence numerous relationships between the Czechs and the Slovaks. The principal actors reflected this inescapable reality.[8] For one, the Slovak Communist Party had been an elitist party before the war, whereas it had functioned as a mass party in the Czech lands. This fact allowed the leadership of the Slovak organization to function with a relatively high degree of unity, especially on issues of importance to Slovakia. The Slovak intelligentsia, too, had been smaller in number, and so on issues affecting Slovakia quite homogeneous. As we

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[8]The gap was profound. Thus, the percentage of population engaged in agriculture and industry was as follows:

		Bohemia	Slovakia
Agriculture	1921	29.7	60.6
	1930	24.1	56.8
Industry	1921	40.6	17.4
	1930	41.8	19.1

The pattern was not substantially altered in the ensuing period. From: Annuaire Statistique de la Republique Tchecoslovaque (Prague: Orbis, 1938), p. 15, reproduced in Karel Černý, "Historical Background to Czechoslovak Economic Reform," East European Quarterly, VIII (September, 1969), 340.

shall see, the interaction between the Slovak intelligentsia and the Party in the events dealt with here was extensive, and the positions of the two were mutually reenforcing.

The relationship of development and nationalism is an intimate one. Professor Shoup demonstrates one aspect of this linkage in his extensive analysis of the Yugoslav case, where the

> economic problems became involved in the national question in numerous and subtle ways, but the tendency for economic disputes to assume a national character was particularly evident in two respects: first, in efforts to deal with the great contrast between the developed and underdeveloped regions of Yugoslavia; second, in competition between territorial units, either local or regional which came to be known as particularism, but very often took the form of national rivalries as well.[9]

Shoup's conclusions apply remarkably well to the case of Slovak nationalism, though the economic factors are but one aspect of that nationalism. The central Czechoslovak leadership's approach to the nation-building of Czechoslovakia proceeded along more centralized lines, thus coming into conflict with the particularist demands of the Slovaks. It will be recalled that in Communist systems nation-building entails the building of a unit according to some overall plan, especially in the realm of planned management of social and ethnic groups, so that the social consequences of industrialization and modernization may be

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[9]Paul Shoup, Communism and the Yugoslav National Question (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 228.

controlled by Party leadership. Obviously the demands of the Slovaks were beyond the parameters defined in Prague.

We need not dwell on the details of Slovak development, but it might be desirable to mention a few of the objections raised by the Slovak intellectuals, obviously speaking with the approval of the Slovak Communist leadership. They pointed to the many differences stemming from the unequal development in the two sections of the country, despite massive efforts designed to alter that situation.

For example, the differential levels of wages and of the economic structure were shown to be unfavorable for Slovakia. Not unlike the developing countries, Slovakia found itself with a labor surplus, although exact estimates of its size differ. Thus, the Slovak Union of Women claimed there were some 180,000 job seekers in Slovakia, although the planners perceived that figure as something of an exaggeration. Standard measures utilized by the Czechoslovak Communist Party had been somewhat helpful in raising the level of economic development, but the argument had been made by some critics that the heavy subsidies in Slovakia only weakened the potential influence of the market pattern. In other areas, the picture was quite dismal. Spas, for example, will not reach until 1980 the capacity they enjoyed in 1937. Furthermore, services throughout the land were judged wholly

inadequate.[10] There has also been a disparity between the share of national production and the level of exports (22.6 per cent during the first six months of 1968 as contrasted with 16.2 per cent for imports) so that the many problems of Slovakia only became exacerbated by the very measures slated to ameliorate the conditions of backwardness. In other characteristics, too, the area as contrasted with the Czech lands showed the classicial indicators of underdevelopment: low productivity, heavy reliance upon agriculture, a large proportion of children in the population, and a rapidly increasing productive population sector.[11]

One important Slovak writer, in his angry analysis, described the conditions of inequality between the key parts of Czechoslovakia as shameful, for they reflected nothing but neglect of Slovakia. He charged that the standard solutions for the problem, such as the shifting of surplus labor from the less developed Slovakia to other labor-short regions of Czechoslovakia, were wholly undignified and exploitative. The writer, Anton Hykish, evaluated the political significance of the situation in these terms:

> The renewal of contemporary ČSR is inseparably united with the wish of the majority of the Slovak nation. How would the map of Europe look

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[10] These figures are drawn from several sources, including Jiří Baudiss, "Slovenské obavy a naděje" [Slovak Worries and Hopes], Práce, December 5, 1968, p. 4.

[11] For example, Štefan Gronský, "Jsme nevděčnί?" [Are We Ungrateful?], Kulturní tvorba, April 25, 1968, p. 9.

> had the Slovak insurgents declared the continuity of the Slovak republic and fought for some Democratic Slovak Republic and not for the Czechoslovak Republic? In 1944 the Slovak nation voluntarily gave up a part of its sovereignty for the united, not yet existent state of Czechs and Slovaks, and theoretically can any day change its decision and again ask full sovereignty, to decide for the other constitutional alternative, return of its own state.[12]

Vladimír Minač, in a still more radical position, characterized the Czech policy toward Slovakia as "genocidal." To be sure, he referred to pre-war times, but his words have a contemporary ring.[13] These statements should suffice to indicate the profound sentiment of nationalism among some members of the Slovak intelligentsia, a sentiment not unlike that found in many parts of the developing world.

Edward Shils has made some applicable observations concerning the general role of intellectuals in the developing areas for our case. He observed that parochialism, nationality, and nationalism are important components in the picture of developing countries. It is possibly true that while the large majority of the residents of the Czech lands saw themselves as members of a community called Czechoslovakia, those living in Slovakia granted their foremost allegiance to the Slovak nation. Shils analyzes the linkage

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[12]Anton Hykish, "Proč chce Slovensko federaci?" [Why Slovakia Wants Federation], Reportér, XXX, No. 26 (June 26-July 7, 1968), 15.

[13]"Federace, demokratizace abdikace," [Federation, Democratization, Abdication], Literární listy, I (May 9, 1968), 7.

of nationalism and intellectuals in the developing countries in terms of the latter's intense politicization. Their highly assertive nationalism "underlies many policies to which it is not really germane and serves as a touchstone of nearly every action and policy."[14] While expanding the area of identification on the part of those who share in it, it may nonetheless be the case that intense nationalism widens the divisions within the state.

Other students of development have commented on additional pertinent facets of this issue in the developing countries. John H. Kautsky, for example, assigns a critical role to the intellectual in the modernizing systems, who along with many other group members for a variety of reasons, expresses his resentments in frenetic nationalism. In fact, this nationalism is interpreted by Kautsky as a feeling of resentment against domination by a stronger "colonial" force, which in this case refers to Slovakia's domination by the Czech lands.[15]

Shils, like Kautsky, agrees that the spirit of opposition is very strong among the students and the intelligentsia in general and, in the developing countries, this

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[14]Edward Shils, "The Intellectuals in the Political Development of the New States," World Politics, XII (April, 1960), in Jason L. Finkle and Richard W. Gable (eds.), Political Development and Social Change, 2nd ed. (New York: John Wiley, 1971), p. 259 and passim.

[15]John H. Kautsky, Political Change in Underdeveloped Countries: Nationalism and Communism (New York: John Wiley, 1962), Chapter II.

sentiment affects substantially the existing public opinion. Clearly, the Slovak intellectuals with their articulation of strong charges fit the mold, thereby producing a potentially explosive situation, for we find sentiments that challenge the very legitimacy of the system.

Gabriel Almond suggested that an important test of whether a given nation has evolved a common "secular political culture" is in the response of individuals to key symbols. A public opinion survey addressed indirectly to this point showed sharp differences between Slovaks and Czechs. Whereas the most positive times of the past for the Czech sample were the Hussite period, the reign of Charles IV, and the years of the First Republic; for the Slovaks the three leading events were the Štúr period, the first months of 1968, and the Slovak Uprising. The obverse for the Czechs consisted of the Protectorate of World War II, the post-White Mountain period, and the summer of 1968. For the Slovaks, the times of the Slovak State, the Austro-Hungarian domination, and the 1950's represented the most difficult times. For the greatest leaders of the past, the Czechs named Thomas G. Masaryk, Jan Hus, and Charles IV; while the Slovaks designated Ludovít Štúr, Dubček, and Štefánik.[16]

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[16]"Žijeme minulostí?" [Do We Live by Our Past?], Práce, November 27, 1968, p. 4. This extract from a survey by the Institute of Public Opinion Research, an organization of the Czechoslovak Academy won the approval of Práce: "Such research . . . is needed like salt [to serve] as a barometer which helps us to get rid of superstitions and illusions and takes us closer to reality." Interestingly,

While reflecting to some extent the scenario of the times, these replies alone attested to a deep division which no leadership of Czechoslovakia will ever be able to ignore or to neglect. For where political divisions are reinforced by other lines, especially linguistic or cultural, political sociologists see potential for serious conflicts, especially should issues polarize along these lines as in the situation studied here.[17]

Students of comparative politics have addressed themselves to the question of political "fit" between political culture and the system, and the problem is indeed very complex in the Communist systems generally, for they have been committed to the radical alteration of the political culture existing at the time of their coming to power at the end of World War II.[18] Nonetheless, the poll in question,

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Štúr, a Slovak nationalist, was explicitly condemned by Marx and Engels for his support of the Hapsburgs against the Hungarian Revolution in 1848.

[17]Gabriel Almond, "Comparative Political Systems," Journal of Politics, XVIII (1956), 391-409.

[18]A provocative discussion of the question is presented in Alfred G. Meyer's essay, "The Problem of the Legitimacy of Power in Communist Eastern Europe," unpublished manuscript, and also his "Authority in Communist Political Systems," in Lewis J. Edinger (ed.), Political Leadership in Industrialized Societies (New York: John Wiley, 1967), pp. 84-107. We agree with Meyer's observation that to measure legitimacy of the existing system by comparing it with the criteria they seek to destroy is a problematical matter. That the traditional cultural elements persisted is also a fact, and these criteria were used for comparison by the intellectuals. Thus, in this particular case, the Stalinist practices with their emphasis upon integration of Czechoslovakia conflicted directly with the Slovak search for national identity.

especially in direct comparison with a poll taken before 1948, shows continuities with the pre-Communist era, and so highlights the gap between the system of rule and the context of that rule.[19]

The nationality problem was but one where the search for identity and increasing assertiveness took place. Other relatively dormant ethnic groups came into focus during 1968 after a long period of neglect. These groups posed not only internal challenges, but since they included sizable numbers of Hungarians, Poles, Ukrainians, and Germans, their small size could have been magnified to produce international repercussions well beyond their numbers.[20]

One ethnic problem is illustrated by the Hungarians in Slovakia numbering around 500,000 people. In some Slovak districts they constitute the dominant group. During 1968, their spokesmen publicly demanded equality and other concessions on matters of schooling, the language of instruction and other bread-and-butter issues. But it appears to us that the events of 1968 did not necessarily engender overt concern over democratization among them, but, rather, heightened ethnic demands. As one Hungarian official in

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[19]See reference to this matter in Vladimir V. Kusín, The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 15-16.

[20]The Ukrainians, for instance, had a radio station broadcasting in their language in Prešov in Northeast Slovakia. Its activity was objected to by Soviet authorities during 1968.

Galanta succinctly put it, "the whole regeneration process after the January plenum bypassed our district. We simply have no time for anything; only the nationality problem is being solved."[21]

Similar pluralistic articulation was evident in the religious sphere, where some previously suppressed groups made themselves heard again. The Roman Catholic Church, an especially potent group in the more traditional Slovakia, became much more dynamic as a political force, to cite one example. The nationality and ethnic demands furthermore triggered a whole host of ancillary pressures, articulated by representatives of the territorial divisions of Czechoslovakia, notably those of Moravia and Silesia. In fact, some of their spokesmen called for the creation of a "tri" and "quad" federation in 1968, in place of the one that was actually created. Other spokesmen feared that Brno, the principal city of Moravia, would be at a disadvantage vis-a-vis Bratislava and Prague, slated to be the capitals of the two federation components. Even the most cursory examination of the Moscow-Leningrad Party organization rivalries shows the possible consequences of such enmity.

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[21]Some Slovaks began to object to the treatment accorded them by the Hungarians, and by moving out left numerous villages completely Hungarian. And, in some cases, teachers refused to teach their children Czechoslovakian history, rationalizing their stand by stating that there was little interest in it among their Hungarian children. See Pavel Pokorný, "Vášně na jihu Slovenska" [Passions in South Slovakia], Reportér, XXX (June 12-19, 1968), 14.

The Dynamics of Change

We have shown in our previous description some of the principal dimensions of Slovak nationalism. The question that must be answered now concerns the conditions that made possible the rise of a Slovak, Alexander Dubček, to the top post in the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and that resulted in the formal federalization of Czechoslovakia; to note only two principal indications of the realization of Slovak demands.

Some demands for reform had been heard for years, although no Slovak leader came forth to advocate publicly the federal solution to the problem. In fact, not a Slovak leader advocated the federal solution as late as the historic December-January 1968 session of the Central Committee. Instead, there were some suggestions heard about a return to the Košice Program of 1945. The Košice Program, adopted as the war was coming to a close, enunciated the plans for post-war Czechoslovakia with one of the principal provisions advancing some autonomy for Slovakia. This demand for return to the Košice Program represented a call for the reinstatement of a relationship that had been abrogated almost as soon as it had been forged. The Czech lands and Slovakia, with the support of the Slovak Democratic Party, were united into one Czechoslovakia with the latter receiving a semi-autonomous role. In the Košice Program promulgated in April of 1945, the Slovaks were promised equal treatment in

the resultant unitary state. While the national government administered all of Czechoslovakia, a Slovak regional administration functioned on a basis that made it subordinate to Prague. Almost immediately, but especially so after the coup of February 1948, the relationship of Czechs and Slovaks was subjugated to the Soviet model of nationality policy, with some regional autonomy allowed for Slovakism, and with a program of equalization in the Communist Party.[22] Thus the remains of the Košice Program, with some transmutation, were permitted to continue until the announcement of a new constitution in 1960 which for all practical purposes abrogated once and for all the remaining formal autonomy possessed by Slovaks at that time.

There is ample evidence that the 1968 constitution which declared the arrival of the stage of socialism in Czechoslovakia had been drafted hastily, and that such key questions as the relationship of the Czechs and Slovaks, were decided without discussion by experts. The Czechoslovak leadership at the time committed itself to a policy of integration as a solution to the problem of Slovak participation in the system. The constitutional document stripped the Slovak National Council of its remaining rights and the Slovak Board of Commissioners was further weakened.

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[22]For a summary of the Košice Program, see W. Diamond, Czechoslovakia Between East and West (London: Stephens, 1947), pp. 1-7.

In view of the strong nationalism that permeated not only the truncated Slovak state during World War II, but the very strong nationalist sentiments motivating the Slovak Uprising of 1944, it becomes evident that the centralism sought by the Prague leadership would frustrate Slovak aspirations. It is evident that the Slovak Communist Party leadership succeeded in articulating certain demands for Slovakia in the wake of the frustrating abrogation of its remaining administrative autonomy as a direct result of the rising economic crisis throughout Czechoslovakia. The crisis, as was shown in the preceding chapter, undermined the authority of the leadership in Prague. In this context it became not only possible but in fact necessary as part of the belated destalinization campaign to reopen the trials of the early 1950's.

Specifically, in the Slovak case, this meant the reopening of the "bourgeois nationalism" campaign waged by the Prague leadership against the Slovak Communist leaders, some of whom (Vlado Clementis, for instance) had been executed in the 1950's for their alleged transgressions. Because of the politically sensitive nature of the destalinization campaign, the re-examination of the trials was of limited scope and duration. When it was officially announced as having ended, many unanswered questions about the past were being raised in various quarters. In Slovakia, the frustrations broke into a relatively open and critical discussion in various journals.

Riveles sees the central objections raised by the Slovaks as stemming from the incomplete nature of destalinization. The individuals responsible for Stalinist practices were left untouched, including the head of the Czechoslovak government at the time, Viliam Široký, a Slovak. And, secondly,

> . . . although those accused were themselves rehabilitated, the heresy of "bourgeois nationalism" as an ideological deviation within the SCP remained under official interdiction.

Široký's continued tenure had become offensive, and as a consequence,

> Slovak intellectuals, clearly acting with the consent of the Slovak party, reacted vigorously. Miro Hysko, a prominent journalist, attacked Siroky in the Bratislava Pravda for having initiated the purge at the 9th Slovak Party Congress in May 1950.

Although Novotný counterattacked in strong language, in the fall of 1963 Široký was removed from the Presidium and lost his Premier post.[23]

As has been shown, the impact of Slovakia on the evolution of the system was accentuated by the Czech-Slovak bifurcation of the country. The special conditions present permitted moves not as readily available to leaders within effectively centralized systems. As the removal of Široký attests, the capacity for maneuver on the part of the Slovak CP became increasingly discernible when the CPCS leadership,

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[23]Riveles, "Slovakia: Catalyst of Crisis," pp. 2-3.

and Novotný in particular, responded to the modified Prague-Bratislava relationship repressively and ineptly.

The party leaders reflected views that were symptomatic of many inequities. In the context of the larger issues here, numerous measures assumed greater significance than would have been the case under less charged circumstances. For example, even the designation "Slovak" was deleted during the 1950's in favor of a "comrade from Slovakia" and the grammatical rules imposed Czech spelling. These demeaning gestures were accompanied by other moves against the Slovaks. Lakatoš pointed out that after 1945, whole areas of the Czech borderlands emptied of their former German residents were occupied by Slovaks and in the initial stages of their residence in these areas they maintained their own schools and publications. These were, however, discontinued after 1949. The Slovaks, too, noted that when their compatriots assumed posts with the central administration in Prague, they were only able to assimilate through the adoption of Czech ways. These and other comparable slights contributed to the highly explosive character of Slovak nationalism,[24] which, after all, had been of recent origin. How recent may be seen in a figure mentioned by Vlado Clementis, Slovak leader executed as a "bourgeois nationalist deviationist" in the early 1950's, that before 1918 in all

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[24]"Co si myslí Češi o Slovácích?" [What Are the Czechs Thinking about the Slovaks?], Reportér, III (May 22-29, 1968), 5-6.

of Slovakia there were but some 500 families taking Slovak publications.[25] Clearly, this was a modest foundation for nationalist communication.

Therefore, the opposition to Czechoslovak centralism had become more insistent, with strong overtones of "anti-colonial" nationalism. This particular approach was not embraced by all. Gustav Husák in mid-1968 cautioned the Slovaks that all blame for their plight could not be placed on the Czechs, and called for changes in the Slovak attitude. The Gallup institute in Bratislava showed that in the minds of most Slovaks, the political arrangements that would be satisfactory to them took precedence over economic well-being, a sentiment that is not surprising for it is commonly found in all the developing areas.[26]

Though it was not always unified, the Slovak CP, operating within the context of a reawakened Slovak national sentiment, increased its assertiveness and turned into a relatively independent power center. For all practical purposes, the key Slovak representatives in Prague became divorced from their home base, and by default relinquished political control to those closer to home. So strengthened, the Slovaks made increasingly vehement demands for elimination of the entire "bourgeois nationalist" campaign carried

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[25] Zdeněk Eis quotes the remark Clementis made to Ehrenburg who visited Slovakia in the 1920's. Ibid., p. 6.

[26] See Práce, July 13, 1968.

on by Novotný as late as 1967. In addition, there were the sensational reappraisals of the Uprising occasioned by its twentieth anniversary in 1964, with vocalized complaints against the inadequacies of the constitutional provisions in the 1960 document. These objections blended into an attack on Novotný personally, and on the centralist direction of the Party as a whole.

Ushering in the year 1968 was the selection of Dubček as Novotný's successor in the leading party role. This news, which spread around Prague just before four o'clock in the afternoon of January 5, was the shot at Sarajevo for the Czechoslovak "socialist humanism" experiment. The Slovak, Dubček, was the choice largely on account of Slovakia's new role. As recently as October 1967, Novotný resorted to the "bourgeois nationalism" accusation, but it was to be his last. It was possibly his disposition toward the Slovaks that was even more objectionable than his Czechoslovak commitment. There can be no doubt that at this critical juncture, the Slovaks in effect functioned in the role of a second political party within the system, with Dubček standing at its forefront.[27] Czechoslovak

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[27]See a perceptive commentary by Petr Pithart, "5. ledna 1968?" [January 5, 1968?], Listy, II (January 9, 1969), 1. To mark the break with the 1968 weekly, the Union of Czechoslovak Writers dropped in 1969 the word Literární from its masthead, while letting commentary on contemporary political happenings.

Illustrating the Slovak leverage later and this time in opposition to Dubček is the statement by Vasil Bilak, one of the principal conservatives of 1968, who let it be known

multi-nationalism prompted this development, for it now stood in direct conflict with the prevailing centralist tendencies. One observer evaluated the consequences thusly:

> If then the just efforts of the Slovaks to negate the centralism of Prague had reached in January certain, if symbolic victory [what happened then was not] an opening of a crack, but an actual catastrophic gap, which resulted in that in January the monolithic system began to collapse like a house of cards. The infection of pluralism, be it only "nationalism" was deadly for it.[28]

There is no doubt that the economic reformers within the Communist Party were welcoming the change in leadership and came to support Dubček. This is no indication that the Slovaks were pleased with every facet of the economic reform; indeed the dislocations caused by the new reforms in 1967 worked to the detriment of Slovakia. However, the common desire for change prevailed over the principal reservations held by both groupings in question.

Federation

As of January 1, 1969, ČSSR is formally a federal state of two equal nations. The invasion of the Warsaw Pact forces, however, abruptly altered the environment in which

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that he did not support the summoning of the Extraordinary Congress of the CPCS. At the regional conference of the Slovak CP in Bánská Bystrica he stated pointedly, and in retrospect rather ominously, that "we, the Slovak part will not attend it." Kulturný život (Bratislava), June 7, 1968.

[28]Rastislav Volf, "Nevědomost hříchu neviní?" [Ignorance Does Not Make Sins?"], Kulturní tvorba, IV (April 25, 1968), 10-12.

it was meant to be implemented. Numerous features of the program have since been undone in favor of effective central control.

As shown in the preceding analysis, the Slovak involvement in the reform activities before and during 1968 is a complex issue. While many Slovaks were committed to genuine liberalization, many others perceived liberalization as a vehicle for the attainment of Slovak goals; namely an effective participatory role in the system. Federalization of Czechoslovakia came to be seen as allowing for the latter. It is possible to say that the Czechs gave more support to the creation of an effective model of democratic socialism, whereas the Slovaks sought primarily the realization of nationalist aspirations. Although their motivations differed, both groups viewed with favor a reform designed to give power to a variety of actors. The Slovak leaders found such a solution attractive because it promised to strengthen them in their dealings with the central government in Prague.

Some students of the development have expressed misgivings about the rapidity with which federalization was implemented, pointing out that other Slovak ventures of the past toward self-determination were accompanied by regression. We noted before that the pressure for reform of the asymmetrical Czech-Slovak relationship became so strong by 1966 that the only question that appeared to have validity concerned the nature of that reform. While at the 1967-68

Central Committee session federalization was not openly advocated, the Action Program of the Party announced on April 5, 1968, contained a frank recognition of the past problems in nationality relations. It explained that in order to have an orderly development in the future, it had become necessary

> to effect a crucial change in the constitutional arrangement of the relations between Czechs and Slovaks and to carry out the necessary constitutional changes. It is essential to respect the advantage of a socialist federal arrangement as a recognized and well-tested legal state form of the coexistence of two equal nations in a common socialist state.[29]

As we have already noted, this momentous program was being undertaken without adequate study, without proper planning, and without much preparation. Furthermore, when some of the Slovak leaders who were in opposition suddenly switched sides to become ardent supporters, they provoked suspicion among the Czechs.

After the invasion, too, some Czech critics charged that the Slovaks were able to commence their participation in the new federated state with some semblance of effective representation. Though the Slovak representatives elected were of the traditional communist state variety, they were nonetheless legitimized. Unlike the Czech party, the Communist Party of Slovakia had held its Fourteenth Congress

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[29] "The Action Program of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia," in Robin Alison Remington (ed.), Winter in Prague: Documents on Czechoslovak Communism in Crisis (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1969), p. 107.

shortly after the invasion, and utilized the opportunity for strategy planning. Perhaps because of this, the Slovaks were able to ensure the selection of one of their men as the top leader of the Czechoslovak Communist party--Dr. Gustav Husák. Additionally, the Slovaks had an early opportunity to shift some unwanted officials into numerous national organs that remain largely honorific under present conditions. A fundamental question, raised by a number of observers, is encapsuled in this observation:

> No one has attempted to formulate even roughly what will hold together the newly created republics, the Czech and the Slovak, and why we must continue in the contemporary European political and moral reality to persevere with each other.[30]

One of the younger intellectuals who had taken an active role in the drafting of economic reforms recently explained the overall motivation of the reformers as being aimed at the creation of a plurality of political entities. The calculations with respect to the federalization of Czechoslovakia were as follows:

> The setting up of separate Czech and Slovak parliaments and Czech and Slovak governments under a weaker federal parliament and federal government meant the devolution of state power into three centres. The intention was to federalize the Communist Party in the same way as the state, so that there would be a Slovak Communist Party operating in Slovakia, and a Communist Party of the Czech lands in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, each with its own Central

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[30]Zdeněk Eis, "Oddělujema se a zůstanene spolu," [We Are Separating and Remain Together], Reportér, XXX (December 28, 1968), 5.

> Committee, Praesidium and Secretariat. These national Communist Parties would then share political power with the federal Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. This political pluralism with the Communist movement would itself have meant a great step toward the democratization of public life. For the triangular arrangement of both state and Party organs, as well as of other social and special-interest groups, would create a diversity of power centres and control centres in mutual balance. The federalization of the Republic, therefore, was intended to play a cardinal role not only in settling the nationality question but also in converting the centralized power system into a democratic one.[31]

The expectations of the federalization were obviously far-reaching, and its implementation was perceived by its key advocates, the Slovaks and the reformers, as a variable-sum game. Interestingly, too, this part of the Action Program was the only part committed to a definite implementation schedule.

The federal arrangement was seen by others as a means of eliminating specific inequities. Implicitly equating the Czech and Hungarian domination of Slovakia, Laco Novomeský, one of the principal targets of the "bourgeois nationalism" charge, expressed the hope for an end to Slovak subservience in these terms:

> hundreds of thousands of people had to depart for America, because they were dying of hunger at home. Then came the Masaryk republic, but it did not solve the social question, and again, the Slovaks had to leave for foreign lands so that they could find livelihood; and because emigration to America was curtailed, left for France where they worked in mines. Then there was the

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[31]Radoslav Selucký, Czechoslovakia: The Plan That Failed (London: Thomas Nelson, 1970), pp. 132-33.

> independent state and the Slovaks again went after work, this time to Germany. Then came the socialist republic--and again the Slovaks go after work to Moravia and Bohemia. We want it so that the Slovak would not have to leave, so that he could work and be well at home. And that, we await from the federalization.[32]

Slovakia, it can be seen, pursued its search for independence in a manner that, given the context of the system in 1968, exercised a forceful impact on the course of events. We agree with Peter A. Toma, when he assigns the Slovak developments a critical role in the 1968 model formulation. His statement deserves to be quoted in full:

> The Slovak part in this experiment was overwhelming. For more than five years, Slovak proletarian nationalism and the Czechoslovak struggle for liberalization were two independent movements seeking the same goal, i.e., personal freedom for the Czechoslovak citizens. The progressive Slovak communists were fully aware that self-determination of the Slovaks within the framework of one political system could be achieved only through liberalization leading to the de-centralization of the decision-making process. Thus, in the face of the centralist and totalitarian regime under Novotný, Slovak nationalism became inevitably a force first favoring revisionism, and, later, de-Stalinization and liberalization. Under the pretext of the need to respect the specific Slovak conditions, the Slovak communists were actually engaged in a struggle to gain concessions in the sphere of personal liberties for all citizens of Czechoslovakia.[33]

It is indeed correct to say that the Slovak leaders like Dubček and Husák were much more nationalist in their

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[32]Stanislav Budín, "S Novomeským o federaci" [With Novomesky about Federation], Reportér, III (June 19-26, 1968), 12.

[33]Peter A. Toma, "The Czechoslovak Question Under Communism," East European Quarterly, III (March, 1969), 27.

outlook than other Slovak leaders such as Vilem Široký, Julius Ďuriš, and others, who found the Soviet version of internationalism more acceptable. Toma's analysis is echoed in a statement by Gustav Husák, who sided with the reformers, seemingly calling for the expansion of the rights of individuals, though there were to be in his view definite limits to liberalization after August. But, in the first days of 1968, Husák stated,

> The modern European wants to know what are the issues of state. He wants to understand, to have a say, to help decide his fate and living conditions, to elect his leaders, and then according to their deeds to praise them or even to criticize them. In short, he wants to see the constitutional principle that "the people are the source of all power" implemented in everyday practice. The citizen wants to realize his civic and national self through his national and state representatives. He wants guarantees that he is free of civic responsibility.[34]

Perhaps one manifestation of this general attitude has been the strong anti-Soviet sentiment expressed in many quarters, accompanied by rumors that the Soviet Union has in fact gone so far as to contemplate the separation of Slovakia from the rest of the country, and appending it in some manner to the Ukrainian S.S.R.[35] In the last weeks of the liberalization campaign of 1968, much concern had been expressed concerning the possibility of such a dismemberment

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[34] Kulturný život, January 12, 1968.

[35] Interestingly, similar rumors were circulating at the conclusion of World War II; even President Beneš was reported to have expressed concern over such a possibility, lest the nascent regime fail to cooperate with the USSR.

of Czechoslovakia. Actually the threat of Soviet domination may have served a useful function by ensuring unity in the early stages of federalization. Just as many new nationalist movements seem to require outside threat to achieve objectives set forth by modernizing elites, the leadership of Czechoslovakia may actually have welcomed such a threat as the emergency means for the execution of their maneuvers so necessary to once again re-establish legitimacy and unity in the system. This aim has been buttressed by the careful diminution of various measures designed to implement the plan of a federal state, under the cloak of general antipathy toward the Soviet Union.

Just as at the conclusion of World War II, Slovak particularism is once again under pressure from Prague. Alois Indra, Communist Party Presidium member and Central Committee Secretary, identified generally as one of the leaders seeking the Soviet intervention of August 1968, stated in August 1970 that insofar as the demands of Slovakia are concerned, "the requirements of a united state must always come first. They must prevail over the artificial, narrowly national interests of both the Slovaks and the Czechs." Other critics of Slovak demands also charged that their separate interests are the product of "slogans" gravitating "toward anarchism."[36]

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[36] Rudé právo, August 12, 1970, in East Europe, XX (January, 1971), 54.

Indra's remark contains within it the seeds of the limitations of an effective federal pluralism for an organization whose definition of legitimacy throughout its history had included the necessity for central direction: the Communist Party. It was a heritage which numerous party officials found difficult to alter.

CHAPTER IV

THE INTELLECTUALS

Carl Beck offers a useful reminder to students of political development in Eastern Europe when he reiterates the simple fact that these countries are systems:

> Because they are systems, factors over which the political movement itself has little control create situations to which the system and the movement must respond adaptively. Some of these pressures stem from phenomena which are intrinsic to any system such as feedback and adjustment. Others stem from the unanticipated consequences of action. Pressures that exist in the environment, stimulated by such drives as nationalism and the peculiar religious, economic, and social facts of each country, complicate the pattern of integration. Forces external to the system, such as character of block relations and the status of the cold war, add further difficulties. Such a "model" suggests that the countries of Eastern Europe will develop on a pattern that over time demonstrates a surge in one direction and then in another, with those areas which are neglected becoming the source of future problems.[1]

We have already examined the nature of pluralization and the resolution of the participatory demands induced by the issues of economic development and Slovak nationalism. We shall now turn to one of the complicating factors of integration Professor Beck refers to: principally the creative

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[1]Carl Beck, "Bureaucracy and Political Development in Eastern Europe," in Joseph LaPalombara (ed.), Bureaucracy and Political Development (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 300.

intelligentsia and the youth; the two groups Huntington believes any system must come to terms with. We propose to examine only a few aspects of this complex element of the system: their participatory demands and some of their proposals for the character of that participation. Within the context of the reformist movement, some of these groups often found direct access to key policy-making nodes of the system--occasionally through cooptation--thus directly shaping the proposals being advocated by the reformers.

It needs to be pointed out that the public discussion that ensued in 1968 was facilitated by an unprecedented developed within the Communist world: virtually free functioning of the mass media. To be sure, the mass media did not possess total autonomy, but their very existence contributed to the formulation of the 1968 model immeasurably by providing viewpoints without an official imprimatur. Therefore, their contribution to the democratization process was significant. The contribution is of the following order: Not only does it enhance political literacy, but also constitutes an important means of communication for that layer of population described as the "attentive public" by political scientists. Furthermore, the independence of the media facilitates a variety of opinions. Some intellectuals, as we shall see, were skeptical about the effectiveness of all this mass media activity throughout the months preceding the invasion. Nonetheless, its great impact on the population,

as seen from the public opinion surveys taken during the year, is unmistakable.

The Background of Ferment

The Communist Party leadership and the Czechoslovak intellectuals had been in conflict over liberalization ever since the dampening of the latter's rise in expectations following the Twentieth CPSU Congress in Moscow. The leadership of Antonín Novotný found it prudent to gradually liberalize its policies. For the creative intelligentsia this meant the slight relaxation of attitudes toward certain topics, as, for example, the rehabilitation of Franz Kafka. The scope of public discussion of issues gradually expanded, as we have noted, with respect to certain sensitive issues in Slovakia or in the economic sphere. Even the prior censorship permitted in 1967 the publication of many controversial and critical items. Given the thrust of these developments, Novotný's leadership sought to brake the rate of liberalization. Considering the fact that components of this thrust from below reflected the special characteristics of Czechoslovak history and political culture, the leadership was fearful of a possible degeneration into a popular form of democracy. Such concern was justified, because the existence of the strong democratic components demonstrates how relatively incomplete the process of transformation of Czechoslovakia under Communism had been. Having erected the Communist political institutions, the leaders had not yet

succeeded in creating commensurate structures to support these institutions. In its policies of restraint, the Novotný leadership avoided the return to Stalinism. Nevertheless, the rise in expectations in their meeting with resistance from the leadership constituted a conflictual situation.

The conflict came into full view at the Fourth Congress of the Union of Czechoslovak Writers held on June 27-29, 1967. At this critical juncture for the reform movement, a number of speakers openly criticized the Party leadership, the twenty years of Communist rule, and demanded various far-reaching democratization measures. A young writer, Ludvík Vaculík, delivered a thorough indictment of the Czechoslovak system which received wide attention. Observing at the outset that the Writers were meeting not strictly of their own volition, but only with the prior approval of Party authorities, he warned that this type of generosity should not be repaid with subservience and obsequious service. His accusation of the regime was stated in strong language:

> It is necessary to understand that in the course of twenty years no human problem has been solved in our country--starting with elementary needs such as housing, schools, and economic prosperity, and ending with the finer requirements of life which cannot be provided by the undemocratic systems of the world; for instance, the feeling of full value in the system of society, the subordination of political decisions to ethical criteria, belief in the value of even less important work, the need for confidence among men,

> and development of the education of the entire people.[2]

Vaculík saw the country's leadership acting as a brake on needed progress and made a call for necessary reforms, especially in the realm of individual rights.

Ironically, the Slovak writers who had been attending the meeting chose to leave when their demands for autonomy within the organization were not met. It had after all been the Slovak writers who, under the aegis of the Slovak Communist Party leadership from 1963 on, gave impetus to the radical criticism heard at the session. The events of the meeting had a long background of controversial efforts, all involving struggle between the party and the writers over such issues as censorship, leadership of the writer organizations, and the status of ideological work in the country. In the aftermath of the session, much of the energy of the party leadership from this point onward had to be devoted to controlling the spreading intellectual unrest. In the intense struggle that occurred, the party bureaucracy found the intellectuals difficult to deal with because their programs, proffered in a crisis situation, commanded widespread appeal.

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[2]Ludvík Vaculík, speech at the Fourth Congress of Czechoslovak Writers, June 27-29, 1967, in Richard V. Allen (ed.), Yearbook on International Communist Affairs 1968 (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1969), p. 866.

Political Cultures

In Czechoslovakia, the intellectuals and the students were foremost among those seeking to provide the rationale for democratization and with their proposals sought to endow it with meaning. Their actions had no precedent in the Communist countries, insofar as the depth of their proposals and, above all, the scope of the debate touched every aspect of the system. Aside from the propitious political circumstances, the democratization debate was facilitated by the special ingredients in Czechoslovak political culture. F. K. Organski reminds us that mass democracy appears "to be a most sturdy type of governmental system, capable of surviving the shocks of two world wars."[3] Czechoslovakia was significantly one of only two democracies to disappear--the other being Germany under different circumstances. Some ingredients that sustained it in the first place, such as the positive orientation toward civil liberties, remain to this day.

Just as the large-scale developments and the ensuing disposition of the conflictual issues in Western democracies have much to do with their functioning today, so too were the Czechoslovak antecedents tied to history. We believe that it is here we must seek the explanation for the extraordinary legitimacy enjoyed by Czechoslovak intellectuals to

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[3]F. K. Organski, The Stages of Political Development (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 220.

this day. For background one probably has to go back to the Battle of the White Mountain of 1620, for in this battle and its aftermath the indigenous nobility was eliminated. We agree with Milton Meyer when he says that the

> leadership of the pre-industrial nation devolved upon the aristocracy of Jefferson's dream: an aristocracy of "virtue and talent." Czech leadership, such as it was, fell to the lot of its learned men; the great patriots of the succeeding age were not, as they were in the nationalist movements of Poland and Hungary, counts and barons and knights, but professors like Palacky; not warriors but thinkers.[4]

To be sure, the intellectuals enjoy an extremely pivotal role in all developing contexts, but the Czechoslovak intellectuals have held a dominant position throughout recent history. Their role was also strengthened by the relative absence of anti-intellectualism which even the twenty years of Party rule could not basically alter. The strength of the democratic sentiment was indeed very great, and the various public opinion polls--and there were some twenty taken between April 1968 and March 1969--contain ample support for this view.

Jaroslaw Piekalkiewicz[5] analyzed those polls in order to ascertain the expectations of the Czechoslovaks

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[4]Milton Meyer, "A Study of the Czech Resistance: The Art of the Impossible," A Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, A Center Occasional Paper, Vol. II, Number 3, p. 10.

[5]This account is based on an unpublished paper by Jaroslaw Piekalkiewicz, "Political Opinion in a Communist Country--Czechoslovakia: April, 1968-November, 1968," revised version of a paper presented at the Annual Meeting

about the future course of events and the type of political system they were seeking. As might be expected, most did not perceive the 1968 developments as threatening the socialist system, and a great majority held high hopes for a greater increase in personal freedom. The majority, too, viewed the Party's hegemony in the system as undesirable, and there was considerable sentiment for the existence of several parties. While not as widespread in the general public as among some segments of the intelligentsia, there still had been a substantial sentiment for the functioning of other parties, competing with the Communist in a variety of ways. While the positive evaluation of the liberalization and democratization of 1968 had given the party a relatively popular place, the polls indicated some strong desires in the realms of personal freedom, pluralism, competing political views, free flow of communication, and the like. Obviously, the Czechoslovak citizens were granting legitimacy only tentatively, assuming the price of an effective performance from the Party. According to Piekalkiewicz,

> The plurality of the system was to be assured, not by an ideological proliferation of parties, but by the political pragmatism inherent in a system of election by secret ballot of freely nominated candidates from independent political parties. Surprising, in view of previous and most recent history, was the predicted victory of the Communist Party in such a free and democratic election. The Communist Party would have remained in power, but not as an unchallenged

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of the Rocky Mountain Social Science Association, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado, May 1-2, 1970.

> political hegemony. Its complete control over the economy and administration and, hence, its exclusive patronage system would have been destroyed.[6]

On the whole, public opinion therefore appeared to be supportive of many of the measures of democratization advocated by the intellectuals. Interestingly, the polls also showed that the anti-authoritarian attitudes increased the lower the age of respondents, and the higher their education. In this situation, given the relatively high age of the party organization leadership, we see a potential challenge to the party leadership. Even without the particular circumstances of Czechoslovak liberalization and reform, the rising levels of education alone appear to be creating pressures for pluralization, deemed a requisite of effective modernization.[7]

It will be recalled that Gabriel Almond noted that, in addition to opportunities for participation and decision-making involvement, the new Communist societies will have to come to terms with the demands for "human dignity and privacy," these being spiritual consumer goods.[8] The Czech intellectuals, particularly the writers and students, raised

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[6] Ibid., p. 40.

[7] See Ellen Mickiewicz, "The Modernization of Party Propaganda in the USSR," Slavic Review, XXX (June, 1971), 274-276.

[8] Gabriel Almond, Political Development (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1970), p. 319.

numerous issues and sought the satisfaction of certain demands in this general area. A few illustrations will serve to identify some of the issues being raised.

Concomitant to the call for democratization was a widespread demand for bettering the status of civil liberties, far exceeding in scope similar calls in other states of Eastern Europe. The distillation of this endeavor was a remarkable memorandum prepared by the Faculty of Law of Charles University even prior to January 1968.[9] Basically it called for the divorce of law and politics. It specified that the politics of law must not continue to turn law into an instrument of political power and direction. The law must include the rules and guarantees of a political process which will make possible the respect of a minority "and its rights and seek for its views the majority within the socialist framework," preventing the "representatives of the existing majority to conserve their power positions when they cease to represent the majority." The Faculty memorandum then called for such widespread reforms as a new constitution, election to National Committees in which the majority votes actually win, elimination of prior censorship, steps to guarantee the freedom of scientific inquiry and artistic expression. Additionally, numerous safeguards were called for in the judicial process, removing much of it from the

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[9] UK [newspaper of Charles University], XIV (April 19, 1968).

domain of the Ministry of Interior. The judiciary must have independence from the CPCS, which should state explicitly "in some significant document" that "party directives addressed to the judges, and touching individual judgements, are in conflict with party politics."[10] The students, too, called for adherence to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (a document extensively discussed in 1968), and adherence to laws generally, along with some demands for themselves.[11]

In this area, as well as in others, the critical intelligentsia were capable of articulating many hitherto latent but important issues. For instance, in the realm of justice, the pressure for open discussion of the past was particularly strong. It is clear that even within the highest echelons of the Party there was a revulsion over the trials of the 1950's, which included the so-called "monster processes" that had seen some of the top leaders, including Slánský, die at the hands of their comrades. One author pointed out the irony of the fact that in non-democratic Rumania where the jails were full of political prisoners

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Such as alternate services for conscientious objectors, the elimination of libri prohibiti, and countless others. No doubt, the students were especially disturbing to the conservative leaders, since for many years students were chosen from the "proletarian" milieu and born as well as socialized under the system. In fact, students like to point to this fact in order to give their claims greater legitimacy.

before World War II, there had been but a few political executions after the war, whereas in Czechoslovakia, with its traditions of moderation and relative absence of violence, the opposite had been true after 1948. The same author claimed that during the whole period of the First Republic before World War II, there were only twenty-three individuals who lost their lives fighting against the police machinery of the state. In contrast, the post-1948 figures assume gigantic proportions, and the "numerous executions, liquidations, and camps in Stalinist Czechoslovakia acted as a shock which seriously threatened to discredit the whole of socialism."[12] Given the widespread existence of these sentiments, many groups began to coalesce in order to expose the past.

The issues of justice, dignity, law, and human rights were discussed with frequent references to the past, especially the years of the First Republic. Numerous anniversaries during the year 1968 facilitated abundant critical reappraisals. The 1964 re-examination of the Slovak Uprising illustrates the far-reaching political implications of such activities. By themselves, such activities were pregnant with explosive political implications for challenging

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[12]Karel Jezdinský, "Rumunsko, cesta k demokratizaci?" [Rumania, the Road to Democratization?], Reportér, III (May 22-29, 1968), 17.

orthodox formulations.[13] Interestingly, in one survey seeking the respondents' appraisal of important historical figures, a definite pattern was discernible in the uniformly respectful attitude toward those leaders of the past representing above all the democratic and social traditions, and who were "tied with the people, interpreting its old ideals of freedom, national sovereignty, equality, and deep humanity."[14]

As we noted earlier, the numerous demands being made by the managerial-technical-scientific intelligentsia joined in the demands for dignity, though partly on pragmatic and utilitarian grounds. They perceived themselves playing a vital role, identifying themselves as the motive force for technical, economic, and social evolution. Seeking to emancipate science and technology, they condemned many practices of the past, and were especially resentful of the many kinds of interference from political organs.[15] They blamed

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[13]Press, especially those organs controlled by academicians and writers and students, contained many items identified as having been disallowed by censors before 1968.

[14]Quoted in Jiří Lederer, "Občané a vůdcové," [Citizens and Leaders], Reportér, III (December 18-25, 1968), 13.

[15]For example, over not receiving periodicals from abroad, or receiving them late and with excised items; the need to submit to uniformed secret police officials scientific articles for approval if they were to be published abroad; extensive and bizarre briefings of the few scientists slated to conduct research abroad, and so forth.

not only past officials, but the Party men in the sciences as well, for seeking to make science subservient to politics. In this they did not differ much from the attacks made on the Lysenkoists, the scientists-politicians such as Trapeznikov, by A. D. Sakharov and his scientific allies in the USSR. Aside from the larger scope of such views were the countless complaints of individual scientists, resentful of the fact that Czechoslovak scientists were hindered from doing research abroad, particularly in those countries they considered most advanced and desirable of emulation, the United States and West Germany.

Participatory Demands

Professor Ivan Svíták, one of the important intellectuals in the reform activities of 1968, described the role of the intelligentsia as differing from the thrust stemming from two additional strata of society. The Party apparatus power elite sought economic reform and shift of political leadership. The intelligentsia aimed to create a socialist democracy and the "radically democratic and spontaneously socialist movement of the youth" sought an "integral structural reform."[16] These "tendencies," as he refers to them, "were backed not only by various organizations, but also by different strata and different interest groups. The democratization movement provided the common

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[16]Ivan Svíták, The Czechoslovak Experiment: 1968-69 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 4.

cover for various contradictory tendencies. . . ."[17] Insofar as the expression of interests during 1968 is concerned, Svíták believes that to the intelligentsia, the crisis in Czechoslovakia was much deeper than believed by the power elite,

> because the representatives of its reform wing knew that economic reform depended on the political solution of the crisis; they had to go further than the technocrats and concentrate on socialist democracy, i.e., on the transformation of the political system. The modern, democratically and humanistically oriented radicals did not represent partial interests only. Increasingly, they functioned--rightly--as the spokesmen of the nation as a whole, on behalf of national interests and goals.[18]

In their demands, the reformers required that three components of the political process be accorded legitimacy once again, all bearing on the nature of participation. They were, in the view of Otto Ulc, participation, dissent, and a choice among political alternatives.[19]

One of the key aspects of the transformation of the system is that of participation and conflict management: the task of how to institutionalize the resolution of conflict within the system. In this sphere, the democratization debate entered some extremely sensitive areas, clearly in opposition to the orthodox formulations as to what constitutes the legitimate system. Numerous writers called for

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[17] Ibid., pp. 4-5. [18] Ibid., p. 5.

[19] Otto Ulc, "Political Participation in Czechoslovakia," Journal of Politics, XXXIII (May, 1971), 422-47.

a variety of measures, all of them ultimately impinging upon the future role of the Communist Party. Some argued for democratic representation of various population groups in decision-making, and for a greater influence of public opinion. Some of the calls for the reawakening of political life sought to overcome the existence of widespread apathy. Alexander Kliment, to mention but one case, called for such reawakening of political life, stating emphatically that the monopolization of political life of recent years cast into isolation not only the Party and the people within it, but also estranging those standing outside.

> The society was dissolved into helpless and resigned individuals, who were then as a whole ruled by bureaucracy, and the sovereign party and state apparatus. Political life was practically annulled and replaced by directive steering with the unlimited power of individuals.[20]

In harmony with the Schumpeterian conception of democracy, the need for opposition was recognized. This meant for some the revival of parties and an active role for other groups that began to appear throughout the country. These groups were not ancillary to the Party, but were in fact independent entities. This was one of the most striking developments during 1968. Not serving as the classical conveyor belts for the Party leadership, these groups, including such bodies as the 231 Klub, were virtually

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[20]Alexander Kliment, "Aktivita nepojmenovaných" [Activity of Unlabelled], Literární listy, March 14, 1968, p. 4.

autonomous. They were joined to some extent by numerous traditional organizations that had acquired a degree of functional autonomy, such as the writers groups and the trade unions. De Tocqueville told us long ago how such organizations contribute to democracy. They

> inhibit the state or any single source of private power from dominating all political resources; they are a source of new opinions; they can be the means of communicating ideas, particularly opposition ideas, to a large section of the citizenry; they train men in political skills and so help to increase the level of interest and participation.[21]

The subject of participation was taken up by Michal Lakatoš and others well before 1968. Lakatoš, a political scientist and a Party member, issued a call for reforms to reduce the manipulation of individuals. Creation of a large-scale representative system, allowing open and democratic nominations of candidates for the National Assembly, and self-management for groups generally, would serve this end. Ultimately, his design sought to command ways of bringing the political system and society into greater harmony, assigning the key role to the intermediary organization. They must become the carriers of public interest and must operate freely, without limitations upon their activities, in order to formulate public opinion freely. To Lakatoš,

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[21]Seymour Martin Lipset, Political Man (New York: Doubleday, 1960), p. 67.

such measures are essential prerequisites of a functioning democracy.[22]

We have already alluded to the support for some institutionalization of party competition in the public opinion surveys taken during 1968. Noting that some advocates of democratization proposed to be satisfied with the free functioning of public opinion as the key systemic linkage between the individual and the decision-making machinery, some intellectuals were not satisfied. According to one, Václav Havel, this implied the risky assumption that the government would respond to such inputs. He assumed that the essence of democracy is the public and legal competition for power. According to his line of reasoning, no other entity can perform this function properly. The existing political groupings cannot because they are guided by party-approved leaderships. Nor did Havel see much hope in the revival of the two vestigial parties of the National Front. He continued,

> In other words, as long as our country recognizes the existence of the Communist Party, the demand for a second political party as its full-fledged, dignified and independent partner in the "competition for power" is also necessary. To my mind, the only truly logical and, in our circumstances, effective way (until someone convinces me of a better one) to reach the ideal of democratic

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[22]Michal Lakatoš, "Občanská společnost hledá své místo" [The Public Seeks Its Place], Kulturní noviny, February 24, 1968, p. 1.

> socialism is a regenerated and socialist social structure patterned on the two-party model.[23]

The two would be bound through their consensus on democratic socialism, though Havel implicitly recognized the inevitably important role of the Party in this process, and the fact that the non-Communists would have to win some moral-political recognition for their views. In the words of Otto Ulc, "The issue of participation boiled down to the issue of the incompatibility of democracy and a one-party system," for the Communist Party, in the face of the many proposals being offered, remained the arbiter of participation in the system. As Čestmír Císař, a reformist party leader, observed, the experiment in Czechoslovakia would end immediately in response to an anti-socialist opposition.[24]

Of the many proposals being made, not many were being implemented during 1968. For example, membership in the National Front which was required of all approved structures outside of the Communist Party, was made difficult to attain. As Ulc reports, the Ministry of Interior, which had to approve all applicants, permitted only the Society for Human Rights to join the National Front by June of 1968. Seventy groups sought membership.[25]

Some intellectuals showed impatience and skepticism with the direction of reform during 1968. Moreover, some

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[23]Václav Havel, Literární listy, April 4, 1968.

[24]Otto Ulc, p. 442.

[25]Ibid., p. 443.

of the bold steps were actually counterproductive in the then current atmosphere. The famous "2000 Words" was an inspiring document that encouraged the supporters of democratization, but those in power for whom it was intended, responded with apprehension and concern, if not fury.

There was present, to be sure, ample skepticism at the time, which turned out to be quite prophetic in view of what was to follow. In a lecture at the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University by Ivan Svíták, it was charged,

> The slogan of democratization is an improvisation, born in the extraordinary circumstances of personal conflictual relations in the Politburo; it is the fruit of empirical politics and an incidental product for channeling public dissatisfaction in a desired direction. Democratization never was, and so far is not, the political objective of a new garniture seeking power; it is at best an introductory manifestation which cannot be defended against right away. It is tolerated, and is aimed aginst individuals in leading positions.[26]

And Lakatoš, too, who was interested more in the institutional aspects of democracy, raised inescapable questions about the meaning of the process during the months of 1968:

> All that we call democratization these days, so far passes almost completely outside of representative organs. Voices are heard that would like to see in representative assemblies actual representations of the people's will, but these are still real possibilities so removed, that the voice of the caller must be taken as a voice in the desert. Politics without the possibility for institutional mediation is steam escaping from the boiler whose valve was opened in time. But this steam does not

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[26]Ivan Svíták, "Hlavou proti zdi" [Head Against the Wall], Student, IV (April 10, 1968), 1.

> power the wheels and can be used at best for the activation of the whistle.[27]

He continued to charge that those talking about democratization were simply wasting time. Calling the existing representative bodies mere "props," Lakatoš declared that a society without a system of representation is "hopelessly lost," and will keep losing not only in talk but also in action.[28]

It should be evident from the foregoing account, that the Communist Party had hoped to carry out reforms, inasmuch as possible, with its own imprimatur. The participants who emerged more or less spontaneously had to be curbed, and the ideas that impinged on the Party's primacy in the system were viewed with suspicion.

The Students

For several years before 1968 the students of Czechoslovakia had been increasingly restive and vocal, and their rather innocuous march in November of 1967 to protest living conditions in their Prague dormitories, along with the heavy-handed response by the police thrust them on the scene as a powerful force to be reckoned with by the leadership. Much of the contribution was volatile and verbal. One student writer observed during the outpouring in 1968 that among the

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[27]Michal Lakatoš, "Co se zastupitelskými sbory?" [What With Representative Assemblies?], Kulturní noviny, April 26, 1968, p. 1.

[28]Ibid.

students "there are many theoreticians-ideologists, but almost no practical organizers. It is one of the principal reasons why the new student organization kept shuffling in one place for so long. We were taught to discharge all our potential with endless discussion in gathering of faculties and in committee meetings."[29] To be sure, such activities had their cathartic value; they were yet another safety valve opened in time. Still, the variety of topics, the innumerable manifestoes, the many pronouncements, all added to one basic message to the Party: its socialization efforts with the youth had failed to do the required job. It was the Party's concern during 1968, and it continues to be under extensive examination during 1971.

Again, as in the case of the other organizations, the students of Czechoslovakia occupy a special place with linkages to the past, a past, according to them, of considerable prestige in society. In recent history, the students were openly opposed to the Nazi occupation forces. The executions that followed elevated their position. Students rose to protest the events of 1948, and once again, the events of August 1968. Furthermore, their increasing numbers added weight to their activities in the Czechoslovak system.

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[29]Ludvík Pěnka, "Jsme tam kde jsme" [We Are Where We Are], Student, June 5, 1968, p. 5.

In 1968 the students, too, were seeking structural autonomy for their organizations. The offically sanctioned organizations were unacceptable. Well into 1970, some of the most outspoken criticism continued to emanate from the various student organizations. When the new Minister of Education sought to tell his Party colleagues that dealings with students require special tact and patience on account of their radicalist proclivities, he was rebuked by Rudé pravó which characterized the students as representing the "most aggressive anti-socialist, anti-party and anti-Soviet elements. These vultures have the arrogance to terrorize students" not only in the dormitories, but, most reprehensibly, the officially sanctioned youth organization officers.[30]

The Party's response has been predictably along traditional lines: more controls. And the harshness of these controls applied to the young generally, the university students particularly, and their professors most importantly, is reminiscent of the early 1950's. Recent measures reflect the gravity with which the post-invasion authorities view the dissenting elements in education. The Ministry of Education for the Czech lands created a central section of inspectors. All leadership positions of the Ministry itself were examined and the ranks were reduced in the process. In order to reduce the influence of senior

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[30] Rudé právo, March 4, 1970.

professors, the retirement age of sixty-five is being enforced, which will result in a reduction of one-third of their number. All signers of the 2000 Words Resolution were to be expelled from the Party, with the exception of those publicly recanting the move. Special attention, too, is given the whole subject of Marxism-Leninism instruction which had been found wanting in numerous instances; its influence in the universities lessened with the increasing appeal of the social sciences. The Ministry of Education, furthermore, created disciplinary commissions designed to deal with the political activity of students and others not carrying out their officially sanctioned duties.[31]

Among the yough in general, the Party has been seeking to restore the viability of Party-led organizations, but without much success to date. By the general integration of the student organization into the Socialist Union of Youth (SSM), a newly-created successor to the defunct ČSM, the Party hopes to curb what has been described as "elitist" and "messianic" proclivities of the university youth. And, as would be expected, the most thorough examination had been undertaken in the party schools, especially at the High Political School of the Central Committee. Such measures were undoubtedly deemed necessary to make amends for the poor work done hitherto. A significant portion of students,

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[31]See Lidová demokracie, January 8, 1970.

even by official admissions, fell under the influence of "rightist and antisocial elements," a condition facilitated by the "political disorientation" among the students.[32]

While more severe than the problems the Soviet leadership is having with its youth, the situation is not dissimilar from that in the Soviet Union. Thus, at the Twenty-third Congress of the CPSU, numerous references were made during the proceedings to the status of the Soviet Youth, and in an apparent move to make for more reliably socialized members at the lowest rungs of the party, the procedures for entry were tightened, as regards the age of entry, numbers of individuals in the Party recommending new members, and the like. While not as immediately urgent as the problems facing the Czechoslovak Party, they are nonetheless there and must be faced if the youth is to be properly socialized to carry out the will of the leadership. According to Professor Mickiewicz, one of the resolutions at the Twenty-third Congress stated that "the congress regards a serious improvement in the Marxist-Leninist education and the ideological tempering of party members, especially young communists, as an urgent task of the party organizations."[33] Recent developments in Czechoslovakia echo this view.

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[32]See Předvoj, May 28, 1970.

[33]Pravda, April 9, 1966, p. 4, quoted in Ellen Mickiewicz, Soviet Political Schools (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), pp. 14-15.

Intelligentsia Today

That the various groups of the intelligentsia, creative artists, and the students, continued to be a problem in 1971 is evident from numerous moves undertaken by the Party. Continued dismissals from posts, limitations upon travel, and other comparable measures all indicate the growing concern on the part of the Party. Significantly, some measures reminiscent of the 1950's are being proposed to screen students in order to admit only those suitable for proper socialization. Social background criteria are once again being utilized in the process. Political scoring will be undertaken for applicants to universities, with the applicant's outlook along with that of his family to be considered.[34]

The Party has not been able to suppress fully the tendencies contra the leadership among the intelligentsia, the artists and the students. Furthermore, it has not been successful in gaining sufficient support against their many demands from amongst the general public. It may be that bureaucratic techniques are unsuitable for such tasks.

The measures against students and their teachers are being implemented at a time when, more than ever, the system requires the best talent available for the tasks of economic

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[34]From Učitelské noviny, March 4, 1971, discussed in Eric Bourne, "Czechs Still Maintain Frosty Political Vacuum," The Christian Science Monitor, April 12, 1971, p. 3.

growth alone. Although ample lessons exist about the great losses suffered by Czechoslovakia as a result of the "class warfare" stage of development after 1948, in which great numbers of talented individuals were forced to work in jobs that were obviously far below their capabilities, the lessons are being repeated. For, even here, the leadership will prefer control over efficiency and performance in today's situation.

The enormous concern of the Party leadership with intellectuals, and especially with the creative intelligentsia, stems from the latter's ambiguous role in the system. They are critical to the socialization process, yet, very difficult to control within the boundaries set by the leadership for the scope of that socialization. Furthermore, the relationship is made more complex by the existence of divisions within that leadership. This has been all along the situation in the Soviet Union, but even more so in Czechoslovakia, where additional factors strengthened their position and defined to a degree their role in the system. Their activities, as well as the activities of other groups being considered in our study, reflect the fact that the Eastern European traditional structures were, to begin with, different from those in the Soviet Union by virtue of their being

> more complex and better articulated than what had existed in Russia, and they proved to be much more resilient to onslaught. Yet, while failing to root out entirely the vestiges of

> the pre-communist social order, the party regimes in East Europe nonetheless did succeed in creating new social forces. In many cases, these groupings can well be said to have developed a greater sense of self-conscious corporate identity than their counterparts in the USSR. In a number of instances, especially as concerns the intelligentsia, they have claimed for themselves the ascriptive role traditionally played by their non-communist forebears.[35]

We concur with this analysis.

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[35]Melvin Croan, "Is Mexico the Future of East Europe: Institutional Adaptability and Political Change in Comparative Perspective," in Samuel P. Huntington and Clement H. Moore, Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society: The Dynamics of Established One-Party Systems (New York: Basic Books, 1970), pp. 451-452. Interestingly, the Czechoslovak writers sought to intercede on behalf of Solzhenitsyn with their Soviet counterparts in an obvious attempt to defend the larger principles involved. The Soviet officials were undoubtedly not appreciative of such efforts.

CHAPTER V

THE PARTY RESPONDS

In the formation of authoritative policies of Communist states and the many decisions being made are shaped the Communist parties' preferences. As Professor Meyer states it,

> A decision is therefore the result of weighing the Party's values and the interests of various groups, both within the Party and outside, which have a stake in the decision. Because the process is carried on within the confines of the Party, the Party must be seen as the arena within which occur all conflicts of interest in the Soviet political system.[1]

We have shown in the preceding chapters that the rising levels of modernity of the Communist systems demand new and more efficient procedures and structures to assure the Party's primacy in the system.

In the case of Czechoslovakia, the 1968 reforms stemming from both the economic difficulties of the country and Slovak nationalism, opened up the question of participation. The economic reformers sought to introduce pluralism into the system in order to revive the lagging economy and to make it capable of subsequent growth. After the initial

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[1]Alfred G. Meyer, The Soviet Political System: An Interpretation (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 110.

steps in economic reform, it became evident that concomitant political pluralization would become necessary. Some elements of the Communist Party accepted this prognosis. From the very start, however, the party's approach to pluralization was characterized by ambivalence. On the one hand, some pluralization had to be introduced, and with that very act, the role of the Communist Party in the system would become altered. Of course, the Party was the only organization with the capacity to introduce reforms, so it was in a position to define as clearly as possible the parameters of systemic pluralization.

S. M. Kovalev, an important Soviet writer on ideological questions, stated shortly before the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU that "To give free play to all political forces in the socialist countries in the present atmosphere would mean the suicide of socialism." This argument was specifically designed to answer Western Communist party proposals that "the parties in power in socialist countries should adapt their political practice" so as to acknowledge the compatibility of socialism with such institutions as opposition parties.[2] Kovalev's view undoubtedly reflects faithfully the position of some important Soviet

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[2]From Richard Rockingham Gill, "Kovalev on Non-violent Roads to Socialism and Ever-increasing Impoverishment," Radio Free Europe Research Report No. 0979, April 20, 1971, quoted by Kevin Devlin, "Interparty Relations: Limits of Normalization," Problems of Communism, XX (July-August, 1971), 35.

leaders in the matter, for it was he who wrote the theoretical justification of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. This view, amplified by some Czechoslovak Communist Party leaders represents one end of the continuum in dealing with the subject of pluralization. The other end was represented, as we shall see later, by some younger elements of the Czechoslovak apparat who sought to formulate a new model of rule with institutionalized pluralization. The latter model, formulated under the guidance of Zdenek Mlynar, a Secretary of the Central Committee, was undoubtedly the most radical ever proposed in any Eastern European country outside of Yugoslavia under the aegis of a leading party official. However, in the struggle for reform that was taking place within the party, the center of gravity was closer to Kovalev's position.

We have demonstrated that pluralistic solutions being sought by some of the entities analyzed in our essay had been opposed by certain segments in the Party, especially at the lower levels throughout the period of time in question. However, it was not until the reestablishment of party control after the August 1968 invasion, that we have seen the articulation of opposition to the basic principles at stake. A portion of the attack on pluralism addressed to the economic sphere was previously quoted, but the sweeping condemnation below holds that pluralism is unacceptable, especially in its manifestations during 1968, because

ultimately it undermines the primacy of the Party:

> Sociological pluralism atomizes society into individual estranged cells, or even into individual persons; [it] elevates the interests of social groups; professions, generation groups or of individuals above the all-societal interests, or in the end denies them, and thus rejects the class differentiation of capitalist society and the united interests of the citizens of a socialist state.
>
> Here this idea was exemplified in the 1968-69 years in a conception which absolutized differential interests (of social groups, professions, generations, economic units, ethnic or national groups, etc.) and that these separate interests must have their economic, cultural, and especially political representation. From this emerged the demand for a politically pluralist system--the existence of numbers of political parties struggling for the favor of voters, and a share of power, and in the end, for decisive political power. That is, an attempt to liquidate the leading role of the CPCZ and to reestablish the bourgeois democratic political system.[3]

This statement represents an ambivalent attitude toward conflict, an ambivalence not unique to Communist parties generally or the Czechoslovak party specifically. The irrepressible Kenneth Boulding remarked recently that one of the unfortunate effects of Marxism in conjunction with the cold war has been the unrealistic view of conflict, both in the Communist systems and in the West. Unwillingness to admit the dialectical elements in social process on the one hand, and rejection of the non-dialectical on the other, has resulted in "unrealistic attitudes toward conflict. The dialecticians idealize it, whereas in this country we tend

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[3] Večerní Praha, June 9, 1970.

to suppress it because of our lack of confidence in our ability to manage it."[4]

Marx, viewing the communist future and to some extent the communist distant past, saw harmony, integration and the like. In the future, major causes of social conflict would no longer exist, for all man to man antagonisms would be eliminated. The elimination of a conflict-ridden society will bring into being one that is characterized by harmony and consensus. This basically anti-democratic idea--we agree with Edmund Wilson when he states that Marx could not imagine democracy[5]--is perhaps the core of the ambivalent attitude toward conflict in the communist system. When the Czechoslovak social scientists and philosophers discussed conflict and its management, they were therefore in sensitive territory. But, even the Party had to tackle this vexing dilemma so that the existing problems could be resolved.

In their fundamental dimensions, the issues the Czechoslovak Communist party had to face were not appreciably different from the problems facing all one-party systems. All such systems, after all, must successfully manage several important activities. Not only must they demonstrate

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[4]Kenneth E. Boulding, "Ecology and Environment," Trans-action, VII (March, 1970), 43; also his A Primer on Social Dynamics: History as Dialectics and Development (New York: The Free Press, 1970), especially Chapter 5.

[5]Edmund Wilson, To the Finland Station (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1953), p. 325.

important organizational capabilities and the careful management of opposition, but if they are to succeed, they must be capable of generating legitimacy for themselves and this they cannot do unless they master intra-party divisions and conflicts first, and then the broader conflicts as well. To do so has been necessary--whether in the Soviet Union--or in any other Eastern European system.

Because the Soviet party had been offered as a model to emulate by other parties, and so to the Czechs in 1968, it might be desirable to point out that the 1936 constitution of the Soviet Union mentions the leading role of the party only indirectly, stating in Article 126 that among the various public organizations, the Communist Party is "the leading core of all organizations of the toilers." The Czechoslovak document, in contrast, is a bit more explicit, for the 1960 constitution states that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is "the leading force in society and in that state." The organizational aspects of Communist parties remained remarkably alike throughout the world, and all were and are guided by the organizational principle of democratic centralism to which we shall return shortly. The acceptance of such principles has given the Communist Party of the Soviet Union a claim to defining the legitimacy of other systems. This does not mean that the generation of legitimacy is all that simple. There are other aspects granting the Soviet Party its prerogatives, namely its own rather

impressive achievement, whether measured by the standards of its economic achievements, its ability to survive the stressful period of World War II, and in more recent years, its attempt to become responsive to more variegated inputs than ever before. In other words, the Soviet party in its own way has sought to cope with some of the problems as did the Czechoslovak party officials in the 1960's. However, there are some significant differences in the context in which the Soviet party generated legitimacy for itself. Fainsod observes that

> In contrast to the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe, which bear the stigma of having been established as Soviet client states and which seek their legitimacy in emancipation from Soviet controls, the Soviet regime from its earliest days has been able to draw strong support from identification with a native fund of patriotic sentiment.[6]

While essentially correct, Fainsod's statement nonetheless assumes a unity of experience in Eastern Europe that does not exist upon closer scrutiny. There have been some differentiation factors in the Czechoslovak situation that have affected the role of the party and that have made it significantly different from other Eastern European parties and the Soviet organization as well. We shall identify several of these.

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[6]Merle Fainsod, "The Dynamics of One-Party Systems," in Oliver Garceau (ed.), Political Research and Political Theory (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 226.

A Note on Historical Antecedents

One factor that undoubtedly assisted the Communist Party in generating the special type of system found in Czechoslovakia was the fact that its Communist Party had enjoyed a considerable history of parliamentary participation, and thus acquired a legitimacy not found in the other systems of Eastern Europe.[7]

Its history paralleled the developments of other countries, with the inevitable factionalism after World War I, the attempted coup, and the ultimate birth of the Communist Party in May 1921. With its 300,000 members it had become the third largest organization in total membership. Reaching its membership peak in 1925, the Party nonetheless enjoyed a prominent role in Czechoslovakia, and though not included in the coalition government, gained a permanent place in Czechoslovak politics as a legitimate participant in elections, and despite its radicalism, did not acquire the stigma of a revolutionary or illegal organization.[8]

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[7] In contrast, the Yugoslav Communist Party enjoyed some remarkable successes in the stressful period immediately after WW I, but eventually declined as the opposition to it was accelerated. It did not recover its early image until quite late--only during the guerrilla war during WW II, though Tito and the leadership had come to power in 1937--approximately the same time as the leadership of Czechoslovakia.

[8] See Ivo Duchacek, "The Strategy of Communist Infiltration: Czechoslovakia, 1944-48," World Politics, II (April, 1950), 183. Also, H. Gordon Skilling, "The Formation of a Communist Party in Czechoslovakia," The American Slavic and East European Review (October, 1955), pp. 346-58.

Because of the consequences of the war, which had in Czechoslovakia as well as in all countries affected by it, disrupted the social fabric, the institutional patterns of leadership and so forth, the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia had become the one and the only party possessing a core of leadership and perhaps even more importantly, possessing a program of action. Partly because of this, the membership after the war rose phenomenally--from an official count of 27,000 in May of 1945 to more than 500,000 by July of the same year, and around 1,400,000--close to the level of the 1967 membership by February of 1968.[9]

During the early post-war months, the party also had other organizational advantages, not the least of which was the youthful nature of its leadership--Gottwald, the senior leader--was not yet fifty. And while driven by dissension in the leadership regarding the typical problems of a revolutionary movement: when, how, who, between the leaders who had been imprisoned in concentration camps and those who spent much of their wartime period in London and elsewhere rather than Moscow, all these were problems that had to be dealt with somehow. But in its entirety, the Party successfully enjoyed a position of dominance from the very start. This had been accompanied by the usual accumulation of

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[9]Jan Hajda (ed.), A Study of Contemporary Czechoslovakia (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 324. The exact figures were: May 1945, 27,000; July 1945, 547,000; March 1946, 1,081,544; and 1,414,000 in February of 1948.

offices which allowed a certain group of leaders to prevail, thus ensuring its continued primacy. Such an amalgamation has been interpreted by Ivan Gadourek as a consequence of factionalism that differs from the usual Western patterns, for it represents an attempt "to gain some security in an insecure society and to share power often for power's sake. Carried to its extreme form, this system of sharing power results in a primitive sort of nepotism and accumulation of political offices and functions."[10] With its ability to secure the key power ministries, such as the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Interior, the Party was capable of patronage as well as the takeover or at least the neutralization of certain power centers in the system. In combination with the consequences of the Soviet role in the liberation of Czechoslovakia and the success of the Communist Party in the first, and relatively free election, the Communist Party scored substantial success. It must be noted, nonetheless, that the percentages were on a spectrum that had been shifted sharply to the Left as a result of the elimination of the powerful Agrarian Party, an objective not sought solely by the Communist Party, but that party turned out to be the primary beneficiary. To be sure, some practices had been questioned at the time--such as the striking off the rolls of certain non-Communist voters--presumably

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[10]See Ivan Gadourek, Political Control of Czechoslovakia (Leiden: Stenefert-Kroese, 1953), p. 68.

individuals under investigation by the Ministry of Interior for their collaboration with the Germans.[11] Moreover, there had been some overt moves made by the Soviet high command, including a movement of troops from Austria to East Germany via Czechoslovakia. Although a postponement had been arranged in the end, the threat nonetheless had been made. In short, the foregoing suggests--in agreement with Meyer--that the revolutions of Eastern Europe had had only at best a semi-spontaneous character. Nonetheless, the 1946 election returns showed the Communist Party winning nearly 38 per cent of the vote. The distribution of that vote proved to be quite interesting, though its significance is beyond the scope of our essay. Suffice it to be said that the Czechoslovak Communist Party found itself in a unique position on account of these and other factors. R. V. Burks, in his useful survey of Communist party movements and voting records in Eastern Europe offers the proposition "that in eastern Europe numerically weak ethnic groups produce above-average numbers of Communists, providing these groups have a traditional or an ethnic tie to Russia."[12] He also notes that in the German-surrounded territories, the Czechs and Slovaks, but particularly the former, had included many supporters of

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[11] See Hubert Ripka, Czechoslovakia Enslaved: The Story of the Communist Coup d'etat (London: Gollancz, 1950), p. 46.

[12] R. V. Burks, The Dynamics of Communism in Eastern Europe (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 188.

Communism.[13] It is therefore clear that the unequal impact of modernizing forces had had its far-reaching consequences in this matter. It is no accident, for example, that Kladno, more than any other locality in Czechoslovakia can be singled out as the place where Czechoslovak Communism was born. Interestingly too, the party had the largest membership in Eastern Europe with approximately 0.5 per cent of total population in 1938 and some 21.0 per cent in 1948.[14]

Additionally, in its drive to accumulate legitimacy, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia again could draw not only on the factors noted above, but also on additional unique sources not available to the parties of other Eastern European states. Among the developments it could draw upon was the skillful arrogation of the consequences of the Munich crisis, because in that crisis, so profoundly affecting the entire generation of leadership, the Party was the beneficiary of the disappointment in the Western allies as a result of the Munich pact. Additionally, there was the relatively uncoercive manner in which the non-Communist leadership found it prudent to enter into negotiations and other important decisions concerning the parameters of the Czechoslovak system in Moscow during the war. President Beneš, for example, whose leadership had been tarnished in

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[13] Ibid, pp. 188-89.

[14] See P. Korbel, "Numerical Strength and Composition of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia," published in mimeograph by the Free Europe Committee, New York, 1954, p. 24, quoted in Burks, p. 51.

the very outlines of the Czechoslovak diplomacy that in retrospect appears to have been rather inflexible prior to the Munich crisis, went to Moscow and with this and other of his actions, quite early indicated the recognization of the primacy of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe. Moreover, he made--rather independently--the same decisions regarding the future orientation of Czechoslovak policy as had been sought by the core of the leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party sequestered in the Soviet Union during the war. These remarks are designed to suggest that the negative aftermath of the more forcibly established regimes in other countries, especially in Poland and Rumania, had been avoided in Czechoslovakia and the task of generating legitimacy as a consequence lightened.

However, in recent years, those credits were weakened by the low effectiveness in solving some of the problems analyzed in our essay. Furthermore, the Party found it necessary to deal with some of the challenges stemming from the higher levels of development. Fainsod observes that in the Soviet Union, too, there is now a greater differentiation of the society, with the attendant rise of groups seeking to influence the system:

> The armed forces, the police, the managers of industry and agriculture, the scientific community, and the cultural intelligentsia all have their specialized interests to defend, and since they cannot be promoted outside the party, the party has itself become an arena in which these competing interests must be

> adjusted and reconciled. One of the results has been to introduce a strong adaptive ingredient into the party leadership's mobilizing and coordinating role.[15]

Fainsod concludes that, as a result,

> Even the most powerful and long-lasting of all one-party systems, the Soviet Communist Party, finds itself challenged by the task of maintaining its authority and defining its role in a milieu of increasing professionalism, intensified bureaucratic competition, rising intellectual ferment, and cumulative demands for improvement in living standards.[16]

While the Soviet Communist Party has not been willing to formally relinquish its monopoly, there are bound to result severe tensions in the transforming Soviet system between the demands from below and the party's response to those demands. The Czechoslovak Communist Party leadership chose to address this issue directly in the mid-1960's.

The Pluralist Solution

In Chapter II we have indicated the emergence of new ideas in the economic sphere as early as the late 1950's. Some of these underwent transmutations in the following years, and there have been many changes in the positions of reformist spokesmen in the following year, and the numerous positions being advocated were gradually evolving. Illustrative of this pattern was the career of Zdeněk Mlynář,

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[15] Fainsod, op. cit., p. 227.

[16] Ibid., pp. 245-46.

whose analysis regarding the role of groups in the system changed between 1960 and 1965. In 1965, however, Zdeněk Mlynář, who was serving as the secretary of the legal commission of the Central Committee recognized the significance of interest groups within the system. Later, at the Party's request, he headed a team examining the most suitable social political systems. He articulated the views held by many others when he called for a pluralist political system in which the interest groups would offset the undesirable concentration of power. Obviously, at least some functionaries were favorably inclined toward the far-reaching recommendations of his report:

> As soon as we really recognize the independent entity of the various components in our political system and begin gradually to put the corresponding reforms of basic political relationships into actual practice, we shall have created the first fundamental guarantee against a harmful concentration of power and against a misuse of this concentration for subjective decisions. Opportunities will exist permitting those components (and people's interests) which would be adversely affected by this decision-making monopoly to resist independently. Naturally, this principle will have to be injected into the entire logic of the political system: into the relationships among institutions themselves as well as between institutions and individual citizens, into the relationship of politics and public opinion, into the selection of persons for political posts, etc.[17]

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[17] Zdeněk Mlynář, "Our Political System and the Division of Power," in Robin A. Remington (ed.), Winter in Prague: Documents on Czechoslovak Communism in Crisis (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1969), pp. 44-45.

Subsequently, an extensive investigation of the potential developments was undertaken by different bodies. For instance, a group of the Institute of State and Law affiliated with the Czechoslovak Academy sought to study the development of democracy and political system in a socialist society. Some 150 people had taken part in loose deliberations in which the optimum model of a political system in Czechoslovakia was to include within it several critical components. They investigated the possibilities of a pluralist democracy, to include within it a larger number of political parties. Secondly, there would be a federal arrangement of the Czech-Slovak relationships, and in the economic sphere, self-management of factories, and risk-taking on the part of enterprises, with responsibilities shared by all.[18] Implicit in all of this was, of course, the explicit concern for the safeguarding of the rights of minorities. Numerous officials and writers by 1968 openly argued that no democracy can exist where there is unlimited rule by majority.[19] The analysis had become more sophisticated as the various social sciences acquired a renewed and at least partially independent existence. Thus the sociologists advocated the necessity of focusing upon varied and

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[18]Juraj Sidorenko, "Vědecké hledání demokracie," [Scientific Search for Democracy], Práce, April 18, 1968, p. 1.

[19]Z. Jesenska's statement, for example, in Kulturný život, April 5, 1968.

differentiated interests within the system, rather than the hitherto assumed existence of a "unity of interests," and the political scientists advanced their views in numerous publications for the first time.[20]

That the Czechoslovak Communist Party's role in the system had been seriously undermined by the end of 1967 cannot be questioned, and it is not therefore unexpected that a determined effort would have been made by its leadership to buttress its declining capability to perform the many key systematic functions the party must perform in order to carry out its tasks.

But, that important personal changes had occurred was the only concrete step of the Central Committee sessions in December 1967 and January 1968. As was reported at the time, the discussion revealed widespread sentiment in favor of reform, particularly of the centralist model of societal management, and of the many arbitrary and deleterious interferences in social and cultural life. Clearly, the time had arrived for substantial reform, if for no other reason than to shore up the party's leading role in the system. After many years of near disastrous performance, its effectiveness was undermined to the extent that its legitimacy was crumbling.

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[20]See Vladimír V. Kusín, The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring: The Development of Reformist Ideas in Czechoslovakia (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 102-105. One political scientist in a St. Simonian gesture argued the Party itself should be guided by political science.

It was Smrkovský who, among the leading Party reformers, first communicated with the public. Aside from his speech before the CC in which he commented on the gravity of the Slovak problem among other matters, Smrkovský communicated with the public. In the first such significant statement published in Práce of January 21, he recognized that the people were skeptical of the new developments. Translating the objectives suggested by Mlynář and others, he said that the necessary reforms will require the state apparatus to be rid of

> bureaucratic manners and the sediments from the past . . . change starting with the peak organs of the party and state--and the, or rather simultaneously--continuing all the way down, to the last village, to the last place of work. What it is about, is so that in the party, as also in the state and everywhere else [where it belongs, there will be decision-making on the basis of] democratic basis and principles, whether the party's or the state's. So that there would be no impossibility for domination, either by individuals or by some administration over the people and its organs. Administration must be the executor and the helper of political will, of the people, the party--and not the reverse![21]

As the first major interpretative effort, Smrkovský's speech contained the principal ingredients of the search for a new and viable role by the party progressives. He was also seeking to activate the party as the principal machinery for

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[21]Josef Smrkovský, "Oč dnes jde?" [What is at Stake Today?], Práce, January 21, 1968.

moving the society.[22] Smrkovský was in the vanguard of the democratizing segment of the leadership which recognized the critical nature of existing conditions.

Undoubtedly, Mlynář's thinking provided an important rationale for the reformers. His provocative analyses raised numerous issues regarding the party's systemic role. Sensitized to the demands of a modernizing system, Mlynář sought to define the proper sphere of political leadership. With reference to the economic sphere, Mlynář noted that the political sphere may indeed conflict with the rational management of the former. Effectiveness was to be the key to reform, and this meant also, the creation of bodies that would allow the functioning of various interests. Realizing that conflicts may emerge, Mlynář stated that

> the representative bodies represent a key area, a forum where the interests of society as a whole are defined in the process of a confrontation of different and sometimes contradictory interests and approaches. In this sense the representative bodies are, so to speak, an area where diverse interests collide, and in the course of collision the contradictions are resolved and proper expression is found for the real needs of society.
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> It is in this sense that we call for heightening the role of representative bodies in political

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[22] That this was going to be an exceedingly difficult task was reflected in many studies at the time. For example, in one small survey in 1967, taken at the Pedagogical Faculties, some 74 per cent of the sample considered themselves as politically indifferent. The major reason given by respondents was the dissatisfaction with the gap separating political information and political reality. Arno Běhlohlávek, "Jaká je naše mládež?" [How is Our Youth?], Kulturní tvorba, December 14, 1967.

> leadership. Moreover, enhancing the role of representative bodies is meaningful to the extent that this heightens the role of the masses, i.e., the electorate they represent.[23]

Mlynář sought to provide some criteria for representation, stressing the need for independence on the part of various organizations. Incidentally, the ideas of Michal Lakatoš in our last chapter regarding the role of interests in the system were echoed in the Mlynář proposals. While not as extensive as the actual proposals made by Mlynář and Lakatoš, the political life promised by the Action Program was to include the expression of the workers and of voluntary associations in the decision-making.[24]

While at least some individuals distrusted the whole idea of representation completely--calling instead for direct participation--the proposed models calling for some form of representation prevailed. In 1968, Mlynář himself advanced a model he believed suitable to perform the necessary functions at the new levels of development. Realizing that a system that could possibly result in the defeat of the Communist Party would be unrealistic, he called for a system in which the National Front enveloping political parties and interest groups would play the key role. This

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[23]Zdeněk Mlynář, "Problems of Political Leadership and the New Economic System," World Marxist Review, VIII (December, 1965), 80.

[24]See, for example, Morton Schwartz, "Czechoslovakia's New Political Model," Journal of Politics, XXX (November, 1968), 966-84.

unique model has been summarized by Professor Ulc:

> Access to political participation was to be granted to organizations other than political parties, notably to interest groups formed along functional lines (trade unions, farm organizations, professional groups), generational lines (youth, senior citizens, women), and economic lines (producers).

The required structures would be

> a Political Chamber, consisting of deputies from the Communist Party, from other parties, and from politically non-affiliated groups, the whole to be controlled by four other chambers: (1) Industry and Commerce, (2) Agriculture, (3) Science and Technology, and (4) Culture. Representatives to the four chambers were to be elected from their places of employment and were to be in no way identified with political parties. According to Mlynář's outline, deputies to the four chambers were to be elected directly, while deputies to the Political Chamber were to be chosen indirectly. In the Political Chamber the political parties were to function as a proxy for the electorate. In the remaining chambers the deputies were to be elected directly without the intervention of party structures, thus representing basic social interests of the society.[25]

As Ulc points out, a proposal of this nature, written by the Secretary of the Central Committee was a radical attempt to face the issue of pluralism and participation. Proposals of this far-reaching import were not considered seriously during 1968, but some parts did find their way into the key documents, such as the Action Program. One factor responsible for the impact of some of these proposals was the existence

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[25] In Otto Ulc, "Political Participation in Czechoslovakia," The Journal of Politics, XXXIII (May, 1971), 428. Summary of Zdeněk Mlynář, "On the Democratic Political Organization of the Society," Nová mysl, XXII (May, 1968), 607-627.

of various forces in the top echelon of the party. One observer, for example, noted that the Central Committee was divided in 1968 into three groups. Of its 110 members, some 35 were "progressive," the conservatives were about 40 strong, and the centrist forces around Dubcek consisted of the remaining 35 members.[26] The Southern-Moravian party leadership appeared to be heavily reformist, thus constituting one example of fragmentation found in the Party.[27]

The potential difficulties with the integration of various interests and groupings were evident on a small scale in deciding the role of other political parties. Because of their rapid growth during 1968, the issue promised to acquire greater magnitude in due time. Constituting but a small part of the varied interests that were somehow to be aggregated, were two non-Communist "parties" of the National Front. The People's Party and the Socialist Party were the vestigial remains of the post-World War II party spectrum. During the pre-1968 epoch, these parties were rigidly controlled and their memberships severely curtailed. For example, new applicants to the People's Party with its Catholic background, were screened by various agencies and the ultimate judges were Communists. Though its own by-laws

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[26]See Claire Sterling, The Masaryk Case (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), Chapter 1.

[27]See Pavel Tigrid, "Czechoslovakia: A Post-Mortem," Survey (Autumn, 1969), pp. 133-150.

permitted new members at eighteen years of age, no one under thirty-five was admitted. The party's program was rooted in Christian socialist ideas, yet its officers were unacceptable if they attended church regularly. Moreover, no primary organizations were allowed in places of work. Its membership in 1967 stood at 21,000, and as such, posed no threat to the Communist party. It began to grow rapidly in 1968 and before the invasion it had some 70,000 members and promised to grow still further. Its relatively lively and popular newspaper, Lidová demokracie, was reaching a circulation of 200,000. After January, its leader Dr. Josef Plojhar was dismissed and a more independent and energetic leadership assumed control. Such developments were undoubtedly taken by critics as evidence of the inability of the CPCZ leadership to control the situation.[28]

The rapid growth of these two parties notwithstanding, it appears that the main thrust of activity during 1968 was the creation of effective cadres. But, the basic dilemmas of their role in the system, especially vis-a-vis the leading role of the Communist Party, were never satisfactorily settled. They sought a genuine form of pluralism, yet realizing the inescapable dominance of the Communist

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[28]The pre-January situation is described in Josef Plojhar's "Křížová cesta k socializmu" [The Calvary to Socialism], Mladý svět, X, No. 15. Similar revival occurred in the Socialist Party whose membership in 1967 stood at 11,500, with an average age of 49. See Mladý svět, X, No. 16.

Party with its great resources. Interestingly, the parties--as well as other groups seeking participation--recognized this fact. One reflection of this is the fact that the very word opposition was not generally used in the claims of the reformers. As Ulc noted, the neologism oponentura was coined, its English equivalent might be oppositionism, a word the Czechoslovak reformers believed to be devoid of the more negative component of the concept of opposition.[29]

One difficulty in appraising the post-January developments stems from the fact that virtually all leaders were able to side with January, and in so doing, the many conservative elements among them gave the pre- and post-January developments at least superficial continuity. To be sure, elements of the Party were openly hostile, some adhering close to the Maoist line. One group condemned the writers, the elite theorists, the admirers of cybernetics. And, in its eyes, the dismissal of Novotný was a putsch staged by neo-bourgeois party elements.[30] While representing the more traditional orientation, these elements may be differentiated by degree and perhaps the extent of objectives from the party

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[29]Ulc, op. cit., p. 432.

[30]For one such statement, see "Stanovisko" [Viewpoint], Mladý svět, X, No. 12. After the occupation, some 500 "old" Communists gathered at the Cechie Hall in Praha-Libeň, greeting the occupation armies, and calling for the punishment of guilty counter-revolutionaries. The Czech newsmen were unable to attend.

conservatives proper. The latter were indeed important to the Party's search after January. Signs of their apprehension were evident early, for instance at the March 14 meeting of the Central Committee. Seeking to resist rapid change, they believed events were heading in the wrong direction and were concerned about the massive public discussion sweeping the country. The first clearly visible negative comment abroad was a March 26 speech by Kurt Hager, member of the East German Politburo and its principal ideologist, in which he gave a hostile evaluation of Czechoslovak developments, dwelling at the time upon the favorable response to Czech events in West Germany.

During these critical weeks--and this was noted at the time--the conservative elements remained largely silent, blaming the "terror of the Progressives." While this impression may have been at least partially justified by the vehemence of the criticism of their views, a condition to which they were not accustomed, that alone cannot fully explain their role. It may be that their role was attributable more to the basic weakness of their politics and their thinking, and to some extent, too, by the seeming absence of effective spokesmen. During 1968 they could appear in the mainstream of post-January politics, legitimizing their role by their criticism of the most deplorable aspects of the past. Obliterating the system's boundaries, this new variable of criticism from abroad affected all subsequent

developments. It may be that at least some among the conservatives judged correctly the significance of pressures from abroad, and may have solicited some of them. While supporting the events, conservative activities persistently emphasized consolidation and the importance of authority. Assuming an integral part in the democratization process, their contribution to it was at best ambiguous. As one Czech writer put it, the language of the conservatives in intra-socialist dialogue, and "not only Czech--is critical towards 'democracy,' 'freedom,' and 'humanism.'"[31]

Internal Party Reforms

While seeking a position for dealing with the various manifestations of pluralism in the system as a whole, the Communist Party's proposal for its own restructuring was contained in the August 10, 1968, draft statutes. These in fact triggered the Soviet charge that the Czechoslovak Communist Party was transforming itself into a social democratic organization. The draft proposals marked the first formal deviation from the principles that had been operative since the early 1920's. Although they did not go as far as had been hoped earlier by some of the reformers (they explicitly forbade the activity of organized factions in the

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[31]Frantisek Šámalík, "Konzervativní výzva" [The Conservative Challenge], Reporter, III, No. 44 [n.d.], p. 9. This was the first issue after several weeks of suspension.

party), they gave a significant nod to the minority. In this spirit, the minority had the right

> a. To formulate its standpoints and request that they be recorded; and
> b. To persist in its view and to request from the relevant party organization or organ a reevaluation of its standpoints on the basis of new information and the examination of a decree that has been accepted into practice. It is admissible to use purely ideological means in relations to supporters of the minority view, as long as they are not in fundamental conflict with the program and statutes of the party.[32]

These revisions violated the Soviet principles of democratic centralism, for such views could be held even after being rejected by a majority. Comparable groups according to the CPSU resolution at the Tenth Congress in 1921 were to be expelled from the party. The Czechoslovak plan, on the other hand, ruled out penalties for expression of divergent opinions if they did not come in conflict with the party program and statutes. The party thus sought to inject into its operations an element of genuine democratic centralism.

The party was apparently preparing to withdraw from the comprehensive direction of the system, assuming instead a role somewhat more limited in scope, perhaps akin to Yugoslav practices. However, it was especially in this sphere of intraparty politics where the proposed measures were going to facilitate the expression of various interests,

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[32]"KSČ Draft Statutes," in Remington, op. cit., p. 268.

that one of the key Soviet party rules had been violated. The motivation leading to the 1968 invasion is complex and obviously entailed the interplay of internal and external factors, but surely, the Czechoslovak departures in intra-party politics were a leading cause of that decision.

The Czechoslovak conception of the "leading core" principle was less comprehensive than that adhered to by Moscow, and the measures designed to aggregate the minority interests were deemed in violation of the principles of "democratic centralism." The latter were interpreted as encouraging factionalism. No doubt, the vehemence of the Soviet response is a testimony that the Czechoslovak experience appeared to be welcomed by those whose interests are not systematically represented and acted upon in the Soviet system and elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

With this far-reaching step, the Party sought to raise its capability as the leading arena for conflict resolution within the system. The action was undoubtedly influenced by the desire to increase such capability in order to diminish the demands for other forms of participation over which the party organization would not have as much direct control.

It appears that no principle of legitimacy is more important than that of democratic centralism, and the Czechoslovak proposed reforms were obviously challenging it, along with other aspects of the Soviet model. Some leading party

officials not only questioned the applicability of Leninism, with its primarily Russian heritage not altogether suitable for the Czechoslovak conditions,[33] but also the principal governing tenet of the party organization, "democratic centralism," in view of the growing pluralist tendencies in the system. To be sure, the concept of the leading organization did emerge in the early stages of the Russian revolution, and as had been noted by scholars, it did combine two contradictory principles. Lenin, with his genius for organization and his revolutionary talents, left his mark, but he also left behind a problem for others seeking to adapt the principle to their respective setting, when he combined the principle of the party functioning as a bureaucratic entity which

> was in sharp conflict with another principle of organization: the democratic one. That the proletarian movement should organize itself and manage its own affairs democratically follows logically from the assumption that the proletariat is conscious. And if that assumption is replaced by one which attributes consciousness only to the

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[33] Čestmír Císař at a meeting commemorating the 150th anniversary of Marx's birth declared that "one cannot deny some negative aspects of the fact that the generalized experience of the Soviet communists was gradually asserted as the only possible trend of Marxist thinking and Marxist policy and that Leninism was temporarily turned into a monopolistic interpretation of Marxism." He then declared, "The present conditions of the socialist society which have been created in Czechoslovakia are incompatible with a dogmatic concept of ideology and politics." See Rudé pravo, May 7, 1968.

> party elite, the democracy should reign within that vanguard of the elect.[34]

The solution to the dilemma was a formula of democratic centralism, which quite early, on the heels of the Kronstadt uprising and other internal difficulties of the embryonic Soviet regime came to be interpreted as demanding tight internal discipline. At the time, Lenin drew narrow boundaries of dissent, reminding his party membership that "everyone who criticizes in public must keep in mind the situation of the party in the minds of the enemies by which it is surrounded. . . ."[35] The long range consequences of the critical situation in Russia of 1921 were much more significant in their call for the dissolution of groups adhering to separate platforms, the violation of which was to be punished by expulsion. According to Shapiro, this last provision which had been secret until October 1923 conferred on the Central Committee full disciplinary powers, including the power of expulsion from the party with other specific provisions being enunciated at the time for the expulsion of leadership members.[36] These organizational aspects of Communist parties remained remarkably alike throughout the world, and all were guided by the organizational principle

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[34]Alfred G. Meyer, Communism, 3rd ed. (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 48-49.

[35]Leonard Shapiro, The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), p. 211.

[36]Ibid.

of democratic centralism. And, it had been this fundamental principle, legitimized by none other than Lenin, enshrined for some fifty years, that had been questioned by the Czechoslovak party leadership. Clearly, the conditions of Czechoslovakia, its political culture, were having their impact in this matter.

The lessons were not lost on other systems seeking to transform, particularly that of Hungary. One broad justification for the legitimacy of the system is inherent in the resort to the classical interpretation of socialist legitimacy. For example, a recent restatement which also encompasses the broad view of political change in Hungary and the prospects for the legitimizing of opposition in that country asserts flatly, "Socialism does not have to tolerate an opposition against it because it represents in itself the interest of the working masses."[37] The Hungarian Party has sought to arrest any such development by stressing anew the Leninist principles of democratic centralism, and a fairly narrow definition of democratization, assuring for all practical purposes only a slight liberalization, though not a thorough revision of the system. For these emergency efforts, the Hungarian leaders had been commended by Pravda.[38]

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[37] Nepszabadsag (Budapest), March 3, 1968, p. 5, quoted in Barnabas Racz, "Political Changes in Hungary After the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia," Slavic Review, XXIX (December, 1970), p. 633.

[38] Pravda, February 7, 1969. See Racz's article.

The CPSU: Arbiter of Change

The path of political development in Eastern Europe is shaped not only by the complex internal factors we have been analyzing. External forces, "such as the character of bloc relations and the status of the cold war, add further difficulties."[39]

The above point only highlights the fact that the ultimate arbiter of differentiation within the Eastern European area is the Soviet Union. Not only does its leadership seek to define the permissible limits of differentiation among the countries involved, but because that differentiation is predicated upon the internal aspects of the systems studied here, they ultimately choose to set limits within them as well, particularly in those cases where they can utilize the ultimate political sanction, military power. To this day, the ultimate legitimization of this attitude stems from the fact that from the very beginning, the victorious Bolshevik leaders in 1917, convinced they were creating a wholly new system, sought to interpret developments from the standpoint of the vanguard of the proletarian revolution. They sought to supplant the national states with a classless society, and at every turn, had to recognize that the Soviet Union had to live in a world of nation states. And, the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia represented in one sense the reiteration of the primacy of the Soviet

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[39]Beck, op. cit., p. 300.

vanguard within the socialist community. Therefore, while strenuously defending the ideals of sovereignty, the Soviet justification in limiting the scope of pluralization in the socialist community was succinctly expressed in the so-called Brezhnev doctrine of "limited sovereignty."[40] The invasion of Czechoslovakia and the ensuing rationale for it was immediately condemned by Western commentators. It was also criticized by the Rumanians and Yugoslavs as well as the Chinese, and not unexpectedly, by many Czechoslovak leaders as well.

The response of Ceausescu of Romania on August 21, 1968, was typical of those who appeared to be threatened by the Warsaw Pact move:

> It is inconceivable in today's world, when the people are rising to the struggle to defend their national independence and for equality in rights, that a socialist state, that socialist states, should violate the freedom and the

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[40]The role of certain fortuitous events cannot be wholly dismissed. John A. Armstrong suggests that because of his past involvement with Czechoslovakia, Brezhnev himself may have been taking a special position. Armstrong discovered that the History of Cities and Villages of the Ukrainian SSR refers to a hitherto unknown chapter in Brezhnev's career. He served as political officer with the Eighteenth Army, doing ideological work in Transcarpathian Ruthenia in 1944. This work culminated in the absorption of the region into the Ukrainian SSR. See his "Discussion" in Norton T. Dodge (ed.), Analysis of the USSR's 24th Party Congress and 9th Five-Year Plan (Mechanicsville, Md.: Cremona Foundation, 1971), p. 96.

> independence of another state. There is no justification whatsoever. . . .[41]

Frantisěk Kriegel, one of the key leaders of the Czechoslovak Communist Party raised some of the key points in his eloquent and clandestinely circulated speech delivered immediately prior to his formal explusion form the Central Committee in the spring of 1969. Not only did he condemn the invasion, but he defended his refusal to sign the so-called Moscow Protocol, a post factum agreement to permit the stay of the invading armies of Czechoslovakia for tying the hands of the Republic. Kriegel held that it violated the principles of the UN Charter, and the principles of national coexistence in the Warsaw Pact. Above all, the agreement lacked voluntarism, and the entire development matched the definition of aggression as advanced by the UN.

This definition of aggression had been submitted to that body by the Soviet Union in 1954. Fundamentally, it occurs when a state sends its forces into another without the consent of the government of the latter. The resolution at the time also added that an intervention could not be justified under any circumstances by the developments within the invaded state, by a revolutionary or counterrevolutionary movement, or a civil war. To be sure, a justification compatible with these precepts was advanced by the USSR

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[41] From Scinteia, August 22, 1969, in Remington, op. cit., p. 359. This is possibly the best collection of documents in English.

delegate at the Security Council: the troops were sent in response to the "application by the Czechoslovak government." This stratagem, however, was not at all credible, and almost immediately, was modified. No Czechoslovak leaders allegedly responsible for the invitation had been named, and while it is certain that some indeed sought the invasion, none found it prudent to associate publicly with the Soviet position. The Kremlin leadership, however, did not give up its quest for a formal statement, and after only one year the Husák leadership came to approximate the Soviet wish in publicly stating that the invasion was justifiable. But not even now has the status of quasilegality been achieved by this strategy.

To the Soviet leaders, and to the leaders of other states, notably of East Germany and Poland, the liberalization and democratization of Czechoslovakia posed an extremely grave threat. For the communist party-states, therefore, a different line of reasoning was advanced. This line, now known as the Brezhnev doctrine because that leader had publicly associated with its points at the Polish Party Congress of November 1968, was actually explicated in Pravda of September 25, 1968, by Sergei Kovalev, the Pravda ideological specialist.[42]

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[42]See translation in The New York Times, September 27, 1968, p. 3. All following quotations are from this source.

The Pravda statement clearly implies at the outset that its formulators were aware that the doctrine violates the most elementary rules of international law, and the UN Charter as well, when dismissing the critics of the invasion for they ostensibly use an "abstract approach" in their condemnation:

> The groundlessness of such reasoning consists primarily of an abstract, nonclass approach to the questions of sovereignty and the rights of nations to self-determination.

In the Marxist position

> . . . the norms of law, including the norms of mutual relations of the socialist countries, cannot be interpreted narrowly, formally, and in isolation from the general context of class struggle in the modern world.

In the ideological formulation, the

> laws and legal norms are subjected to the laws of the class struggle, the laws of socialist development . . . [and] the formally juridical reasoning must not overshadow a class approach to the matter. One who does it, thus losing the only correct class criterion in assessing legal norms, begins to measure events with a yardstick of bourgeois law.

It follows that

> A socialist state that is in a system with other states constituting a socialist commonwealth cannot be free of the common interests of that commonwealth.

Other states have the right to intervene, even to the point of using military means if "survival of socialism" is at stake.

The Czechoslovaks, the thrust of the argument implies, adopted in 1968 a "nonaffiliated stand," thus

becoming a weak component of the system. The "anti-socialist elements" of Czechoslovakia were then accused of attempting to cover their demands for the "so-called neutrality" and their policies in general by asserting the right of nations to self-determination:

> However, the implementation of such "self-determination," in other words, Czechoslovakia's detachment from the socialist community, would have come in conflict with its own vital interests and would have been detrimental to the other socialist states.

The invasion is elevated to an act of "international duty," and "an abstract sovereignty" is insufficient as a defense against it.

At the Polish Congress, Brezhnev added,

> . . . when external and internal forces hostile to socialism try to turn the development of a given socialist country in the direction of a restoration of the capitalist system, when a threat arises to the cause of socialism in that country--a threat to the security of the socialist commonwealth as a whole--this is no longer merely a problem for that country's people, but a common problem--the concern of all socialist countries.[43]

This theory was rejected by most Western analysts as being contrary to the practices of the post-Stalin era which had been developing hopefully as late as the Bratislava Declaration only a few weeks before the invasion. That declaration once again affirmed that international relations were to be based on the principles of independence, sovereignty, equality, and of course, non-interference. It is

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[43] Pravda, November 13, 1968.

noteworthy that the participating East German troops were obviously violating the Potsdam agreements, and were the only German armies since 1945 to engage in international aggression.

How new was this argument? In many ways, the justification echoed the early days of the Comintern and the elaborate rationalization of the Soviet domination of that organization of international communism, for

> from the moment of its birth, the Comintern saw itself as the directing center of proletarian world revolution invested with the authority to pass on the revolutionary bona fides of all working-class movements everywhere. In the view of its Bolshevik leaders, the interests of the "socialist commonwealth" made it imperative that "heresy" in one of its parts be exterminated lest it contaminate the other parts and undermine the commonwealth as a whole. Military intervention thus had a built-in rationale reinforced by an ethic that looked upon armies as potential handmaidens of historical progress.[44]

So, while accepting much of international law, and while constructively contributing to its evolution, the Soviet leaders reached for the very "highest" ideologically legitimized principles to solve the Czechoslovak dilemma. That "higher law" is internationalism, designed to regulate the affairs of the "socialist world." In theory, the Marxist-Leninist parties are internationalist. While the content of this concept varies throughout history, during Khrushchev's era it meant that in conjunction with the

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[44]William Korey, "The Comintern and the Genealogy of the 'Brezhnev Doctrine,'" Problems of Communism, XVIII (May-June, 1969), 56.

"objective" community of interests, internationalism assured the Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. Interestingly, although China was never fully integrated into the Soviet-led socialist system, some potentially explosive attempts have been made recently to apply the Brezhnev doctrine to China. The usually doctrinaire paper Sovietskaya Rossiya of March 28, 1970, for instance, declared that "the Mao Tse-tung clique" threatened socialism, and all socialist countries should "wage a resolute struggle" against China, and other allusions place "the left-wing revisionism" of China into the same unacceptable category as the "right wing" variety of Czechoslovak "revisionism" of 1968. In their polemics, the Chinese have gone so far as to compare the Soviet leaders with Hitler's fascist regime, and for their part might choose to apply the logic of the "Brezhnev doctrine" to developments in the Soviet Union.

The cost of the solution is still not tallied. The Soviet leaders have bought some time, for they clearly put the dissident elements on notice that their appeals may be irrelevant, and they conveyed a message to other leaderships that there are limits on their deviation from the Soviet model. Rumania and Yugoslavia have been the two primary targets of such messages. It may well be that at least one of the results has been the symbolic demise of international communism. But, the short-run gains notwithstanding, the Soviet Union will have to learn to live in a greatly differentiated socialist world.

The immediate prospects are not hopeful. For example, the new Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty of friendship and mutual assistance signed in May of 1970 included the language of the "common defense" of Communist systems in its text. Such defense is the "common duty of all the socialist countries." This text will in all probability constitute a model for similar treaties between the USSR and other Eastern European countries as they come up for renewal. The treaty, in effect, grants in advance the right to do what has been done in Czechoslovakia, avoiding the embarrassing post facto validation. Its intent, was no doubt read with the gravest concern in Rumania, whose international policies of late have been very displeasing to Moscow, and whose defense still relies heavily on the inviolability of its sovereignty. Expressions of misgivings had been heard in other socialist countries as well, though necessarily in more muted tones.

From the foregoing account, it should be evident that legitimacy is ultimately what the Soviet leaders say it is. At the core of their position, then, is the insistence that the party does assume the leading role in state and society, and that it adhere to the governing principles of democratic centralism. For the time being, the Czechoslovak Communist Party leaders acceptable to the Soviet leadership and now in control of Czechoslovakia have been seeking to carry out the Soviet directives. With the invasion, certain

short-run gains in the face of varied developments in Eastern Europe have been made, and a halt has at least been temporarily called to the growing pluralist tendencies.

However, as modernization proceeds, the ultimate consequence may end up being "the ultimate disappearance of revolutionary dynamism [leading] to a critical change in the party's image of its role in society and therefore to a crisis in its political legitimization."[45] Because the party never effectively resolved the issue of interest aggregation in 1968, the problem remains.

One of the conservative leaders of the party who had been mentioned during 1968 as one of the group on whom the Soviet leadership had placed its trust, Alois Indra, described some of the concerns of the party leadership at the December 1970 session of the Central Committee. Aside from the obligatory evaluation of 1968 as rightist revisionism, he admitted to some serious problems with certain basic groups so active during that year, realizing the need for support among certain key elements of society, the workers, farm workers, and the key segments of the intelligentsia. Yet, his arguments did not hold any promise for some freedom of activity for these groupings. He argued that the communist leadership was lacking in its control of mass

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[45]See Richard Lowenthal, "Development vs. Utopia in Communist Policy," in Chalmers Johnson (ed.), Change in Communist Systems (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1970), p. 111.

organizations, whose activities he identifies as undermining the effectiveness of the National Front as the legitimizing organization during 1968. To blunt their demands, Indra saw some form of reactivation of the National Front as a necessary requisite for additional steps. In analyzing the mass organizations, Indra once again reexamined the question of their "dependence" and "independence," charging the existence of intra-party groupings unjustified and the respect for the cadres as necessary. He charged too that especially "in interest organizations, the more or less pronounced characteristic interest activity, the avoidance of both ideational activity and engagement in politics," all were undesirable, and had to be rectified through the more careful work of the Communists. Realizing that the increased effectiveness of the system would enhance its quest for legitimacy, Indra recognized the need for greater achievements in the realm of economic development which would produce greater support among workers, an area of grave concern to the party's leadership.

Indra, however, singled out two groups for special attention: the trade unions (ROH) and the SSM (Socialistický Svaz Mládeže), saying that "From their place and mission in our society stems for all party organs and organizations the duty to give them a systematic care." The simplistic and rigid direction of the youth organization was no longer a proper course to follow and if followed would end up being

self-defeating. Indra, too, observed that the special place of the smaller parties must be clarified, after their purge in which they had removed themselves wholly from their 1968 positions, especially at a time when some people "wished to create an opposition force against the communists."[46] We have given the foregoing account more fully in order to demonstrate that the current party leadership was not addressing the issue of pluralism with any new ideas and measures, and instead proposed to pursue the matter in an orthodox fashion.

On the issue of pluralism, Indra and his conservative colleagues in the Czechoslovak leadership shared views with those of the CPSU leadership. At a time when the Czechoslovak party organization sought to reform itself, there had been indications of a growing orthodoxy within the CPSU. Some of these were confirmed at the Twenty-fourth Party Congress in Moscow.

The new party statutes of the CPSU adopted at the Congress not only enhanced, but sought to ensure the party's right to formally intervene in the work of ministries and non-economic agencies, and to control the management of cultural, educational, research, and other institutions. This extension of party controls into sensitive areas of the

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[46]The foregoing account is based on Alois Indra's discussion presented at the session of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, December 10-11, 1970, in Rudé právo, December 17, 1970.

system is the current Soviet response to the development demands of the system. For example, the controls seek to deal with the inevitable impact of the rapidly growing technical and managerial intelligentsia. Furthermore, party organizations have been permitted, as within the ministries, to control their administrative jurisdictions by the new rules, a reversal of past directives dating to the Twenty-third Congress when "petty tutelage" was condemned. Party control, therefore, appears to have been expanded to encompass not only productive operations, but intellectual work as well, to the detriment of modernization. The Soviet rules therefore constitute a basic shift in organizational philosophy. These measures, now being undertaken in the Soviet Union, have been implemented on the basis of certain premises concerning the proper role of the party in the system, premises which formed the foundations of the decisions regarding the developments in Czechoslovakia during 1968.[47] Given the remarks on pluralism by Kovalev, and given the paucity of discussion of economic reforms at the Twenty-fourth Congress, it is reasonable to conclude that the current Soviet leadership will not take any serious steps of decentralization that would produce a meaningful pluralization.

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[47]The U.S. State Department unpublished paper prepared for internal discussion, "The 24th CPSU Congress: An Assessment" is a valuable source of information.

The Party Organization

The party organization must be in good condition in order to be an effective and reliable instrument of rule. To achieve this status, Mr. Brezhnev during 1968 reportedly suggested a radical decrease in size of the Czechoslovak party. Similarly, the CPSU's size became the subject of deliberations at the Twenty-fourth Congress. Brezhnev announced that the Party has become much too large, then standing around 14.5 million membership, and that since seventeen years had elapsed since the last chistka, the time had come to resort to the exchange of cards. Similarly, the Polish Communist Party, with its two million members, is currently in the process of examining its general capacity to rule and its size. As such, the cleansing of the ranks could be used not only to affect the size of the party, but also to ensure the leadership its primacy. Indications are, therefore, that the CPSU leadership is concerned lest its own capacity to act be in jeopardy. It is possible the chistka might be utilized to ensure the rise of the technical-managerial intelligentsia in the party. Its dual effect would be to bring into the party the necessary intelligence to cope with the challenges of the technical-industrial revolution, and consequently, to diminish the pressure for reforms that would impinge upon the political system. To ensure the party's success, increasing professionalism in certain key activities of a modernizing system

is one answer. Professor Mickiewicz has shown such to be the case in the realm of political socialization.[48]

During 1970, the Czechoslovak Communist Party underwent a thorough purge designed to make it, through such an emergency measure, a viable organization in the hands of the post-invasion leadership. Each member of the Party had to return his membership card and before its return had to submit to thorough questioning. Never before has a national Communist Party subjected its entire membership to such scrutiny. Starting with the apex of the organization, the process moved downward. The directives handed to those party organs conducting the hearings contained the general principles of party loyalty, embodied for example in unswerving adherence to the governing principles of democratic centralism, but with stricter than ever interpretation of party discipline being applied to the leadership strata than to the rank and file membership. Those conducting anti-party activities as defined by the current leadership were to be in effect separated from the party. While the Soviet Union defined the parameters of transformation for the socialist community, the Czechoslovak party sought to clarify the position of the leading core. As Tribuna stated, the especially relevant events were the organizing of various

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[48]Ellen Mickiewicz, "The Modernization of Party Propaganda in the USSR," Slavic Review, XXX (June, 1971), especially pp. 274-276.

resolutions,

> such as the platform of 2000 words, anti-Soviet resolutions of August 1968, against the Moscow agreement, against the November resolution, in support of the 10 student demands and others. Further, participation in the organization of various strikes and resolutions in a campaign for the election of J. Smrkovsky to the function of the Chairman of the Federal Assembly, participation in the strike upon the death of J. Palach, disapproval and boycott of the April and May plenum of the CC CPz, the writing of anti-party and anti-Soviet articles in the press and other communication means, etc.[49]

With these individuals, the directives make explicit, the Party must part. In a sense, the process may be described as the institutionalization of emergency resocialization in an attempt to quickly accrue some legitimacy for the tasks before it. Unlike the traditional formal chistkas, the party exchange which did not go very smoothly and according to expectations consisted of a thorough examination of each party member in which he had to turn the old card in, and was not issued another one until satisfactory answers to certain questions were obtained. The exchange of cards clearly constitutes an admission that the party has passed through an extremely serious crisis. Not only was the exchange used to ascertain the loyal core of the party, but also to create an appropriate and desirable state of opinion. Above all, the party card exchange served to define for the time being the very organization of society and its norms. The ensuing analysis has been very thorough, and some chose

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[49] See Tribuna, October 14, 1970.

to drop out simply by returning their cards and not going through the examination procedure. Social pressures have been used rather intricately to compel obedience and loyalty. In some cases, the workers were actually persuaded to remain in the party.

Numerous indications exist that the Czechoslovak party did not meet the events of 1968 in an adequate state of preparedness. Indeed, some suggested the Party was dying out, and nowhere was its dilemma more apparent than in its dealing with the youth. One example will suffice. At the Central Committee session of December-January, 1967-1968, one party leader from the heavily industrial Ostrava region spoke up about the conditions in his district. In a survey taken during 1967, 26 per cent of the local organizations had no members under twenty-five years of age, an in 18 per cent more, there was only one such member. He noted that the party was dying out, that it had no force of attraction for the young, and that something must be done to immediately rectify such an anomaly. One of the reformers, Goldstücker, was to remark later that this disastrous situation became pathetic when, in response to the Ostrava leader's remarks, other delegates challenged his figures, attacked him, questioning him as to why the survey was undertaken without the prior approval of the Presidium.[50]

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[50]Interview with Edward Goldstücker, "In Russland Droht Eine Explosion," Der Spiegel, March 8, 1971, p. 132.

But numerous instances of unhappiness over the state of the party reflect a continuing uneasiness about the future. For example, some party officials continue to be unhappy about the party's inability to communicate with its own membership. Communication is apparently so ineffectual that Rudé právo has carried numerous articles on this matter. Jiří Svoboda wrote recently that when the party drove to power, the admonition to read the party press used to be made regularly, and the primary party organizations each had their press functionaries. In recent years, however, this significant aspect of organizational life was seldom discussed in party meetings. Now the party ranks are being reminded that the press is indeed an indispensable link of communication, observing how very important it had been during 1968. The implications are that the party press had not been read systematically, and that to do so is inherent in one's partiinost, and that it is necessary for every member to read, to subscribe, and to disseminate its communication among others.[51]

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[51]See for example, Jiří Svoboda, "The Communists of Party Press," Rudé právo, March 11, 1970. Rudé právo listed specific complaints about the procedures employed at the county, factory and village levels. Naming local newspapers, it pointed out that these indicators show little attention is being given to the process at the lower levels. It names cases where the local papers carried no news about the party membership card exchange at all, or where it had been mentioned, it was done only in the most perfunctory manner. A typical complaint states that the Jiskra Rychnovska [The Spark of Rychnov] during the period in question carried practically nothing about the talks. And in Rozvoj [Semily

In 1968, the Party sought to cope with the problems at hand in a variety of ways, as we have seen in our account. In addition to the shift in leadership and the relaxation of a variety of policies, such as those affecting censorship, the party generally committed itself to certain reforms. This commitment was stated in the highly publicized Action Program which set the guidelines for the reforms yet to take place. This significant document published in Rudé právo on April 10th of 1968 has received extensive scrutiny in other accounts, but we need to emphasize that it promised continued one-party domination. Seeking to assure widespread participation, it promised the revival of the National Front, and proposed a "symmetrical" solution of the Slovak question. The Communist Party was to continue its primary leading role, but would seek support within the framework of the democratic rule of the socialist state. Furthermore, it obliquely hinted at some reevaluation of Czechoslovakia's participation in the COMECON, as well as of its policies vis-a-vis the German Federal Republic.[52] With the draft of

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County] and the Jičín Předvoj there appeared only one article. Rude pravo concluded, quite correctly, that the editors of regional papers in the East Bohemian region "underestimated the significance of discussions in the party identification card exchange." Rudé právo, June 26, 1970.

[52]This document is available in numerous sources, including Paul Ello, Czechoslovakia's Blueprint for "Freedom" (Washington: Acropolis Books, 1968), pp. 89-178.

the party statutes, it sought to institutionalize intra-party machinery capable of resolving the inevitable conflicts as well as for the achievement of rational decision-making. As Smrkovský put it early in 1968, this was a sine qua non of any reform, because

> Knowing that even in socialist society development takes place through continued engagement of conflicting interests in the economic, social and political order, we should try for such a mechanism of political leadership as would provide for the current regulation of all social conflicts and exclude the necessity of extraordinary administrative interventions.[53]

As much as they could, the party leaders were seeking to deal with conditions that were principally Czechoslovak in origin, conditions stemming from the explicitly Czechoslovak economic model of reform, the unique Slovak form of nationalism, and the very idiosyncratic expression of the critical intelligentsia. Yet, they were ultimately expected to adhere in their response to a model described as Communist, a model very much Soviet in genesis and development. In the ensuing conflict, Soviet power supported Soviet interpretations. In so doing, they were cautioned by some of their own citizens about the possible consequences of their actions, though this has been little comfort to those in Czechoslovakia who were seeking to formulate new solutions.

We believe that without some wholly unpredictable departure from past history, the future reforms that

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[53] Rudé právo, February 9, 1968.

inevitably must occur, will have to be addressed once again to the very same problems the reformers were compelled to face in 1968. Smrkovský's words before the Central Committee in January of 1968 are likely to be echoed by future reformers:

> As an industrial country with democratic traditions and a traditionally strong communist movement, we must finally prove that we are capable of striking up new paths, little known and explored, and capable of solving democratically, and in the spirit of the Party's teaching, the serious economic and political changes which can no longer be deferred.[54]

Moreover, they may resurface with greater intensity than in that remarkable year.

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[54]Most of Smrkovský's provocative speech is reported in Tigrid, op. cit., p. 143.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

In our essay, we analyzed and described selected aspects of pluralism and political participation in the nascent model being built in Czechoslovakia of 1968. This was done with reference to group activity centering upon the issues of economy and nationalism. The ruling Communist Party sought to come to terms with the demands being made upon it, and in turn came forth with proposals of its own. The experiment assumed unique characteristics in its Czechoslovak setting, but the invasion of August 1968 prevented the likely far-reaching transformation. Insofar as it had progressed, the events suggested the experiment promised to be as important as that under way in Yugoslavia. And, some of the solutions being advocated held promise for modernizing political systems anywhere.

The years under study give reenforcement to the recent observation by Karl W. Deutsch, who, in his presidential address before the American Political Science Association, declared that the "overwhelming fact of our time is change--rapid large-scale change in politics, societies, technologies, and cultures. Many of these changes are continuing; some are accelerating." He then declared that

our understanding of change is essential, for it must be dealt with constructively and imaginatively, or the old ways are misapplied where new ways are demanded. The reformers of Czechoslovakia would have agreed with his warning, for

> These dangers exist in all kinds of countries, industrialized or developing, non-Communist or Communist. The struggle for needed new knowledge, for openness, and resourcefulness, for new possibilities, discoveries and innovations, cuts across the great organized ideological divisions of our time.[1]

Similarly, the subject of change should be the proper focus of political analysis. Rustow states bluntly, "Most political actions are deliberately aimed at change. The initiative in politics is typically taken by those who are dissatisfied with the current state of affairs."[2] Our case study has aimed at this objective. We have shown that performance of the Czechoslovak leadership in the economic sphere and with respect to Slovak nationalism caused widespread dissatisfaction, stirring participatory ferment throughout the system. The reformers who came to the fore were mostly intellectuals who did not hold positions of power. They promulgated far-reaching changes. Inside the Party apparatus, the reformers sought more modest objectives:

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[1]Karl W. Deutsch, "On Political Theory and Political Action," The American Political Science Review, LXV (March, 1971), 11.

[2]Dankwart A. Rustow, "Communism and Change," in Chalmers Johnson (ed.), Change in Communist Systems (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970), p. 356.

they sought to make the Party a more effective instrument for processing the demands made upon it in the late 1960's. Although they suggested some radical innovations when these are contrasted with the traditional patterns of activity, the basic objectives of those ideas was the preservation of the leading role of the Party in the system. During 1968, these two broad thrusts merged to press the opponents of transformation. In the Czechoslovak case, there was another important ingredient in the situation worthy of mention. Kusín expresses the view that Dubcek at the very apex of the Party hierarchy "was able to become associated with the reform tendencies originating outside the official structure above all because of his personal sincerity and integrity." The subsequent developments transpired on a high ethical plane, a virtual necessity, for "The nation needed ethical purification."[3] The reformers of the Czechoslovak political system envisioned a widespread structural transformation, democratizing the entire political system. Just as in the economic sphere, the answer they believed appropriate was the introduction of pluralism. In permitting organizations, interest groups and other political forces, it was hoped the feedback process would once again be reestablished. Such measures were seen as an essential prerequisite if the many

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[3]Vladimír V. Kusín, The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 141.

problems facing Czechoslovakia were to be resolved, and if the appropriate solutions were to be reached. This process, however, encountered the resistance of those whose "old ways" were applied when new approaches were demanded.

As we have shown, any transformation is a destabilizing process for some groups. While taking note of the numerous groupings seeking change and demanding new ways, there were numerous other groups feeling threatened. These groups, whether in factory management, state administration, or the party apparat, resisted the thrust for reforms, seeking instead the security of the existing ways. Their principal allies were found in the middle levels of bureaucracy. This is the "middle level," where the center of gravity of bureaucratic organizations is to be found. Unlike the top leaders, they operate in relative anonymity, and they are the "men who do the work" making, permitting, and executing the largest number of strategic decisions.[4] In the Party, for example, they succeeded in resisting the pressures from below, and were, at best, responding slowly to the moves of the top leadership, where, of course, they found some strong supporters. Just as in Yugoslavia, the party apparat would have declined with the introduction of various self-regulating mechanisms into the system, and their positions would have been threatened. They agreed with those who found security

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[4]Karl W. Deutsch, The Nerves of Government (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1963), p. 156.

in the close emulation of the Soviet model, and came to the conclusion that the party was being destroyed by the reformers. It is also possible that their response to change may have been what Lipset has called the "politics of insecurity." Possessing power and incomes higher than their levels of education warranted, they could be expected to respond with a conservative stance.

We have argued that, given the exigencies of the Czechoslovak situation, the pluralization solution in its varied forms being advocated by the intellectuals and their allies within the party--Zdenek Mlynar, for instance--held promise for the future. The proposals were being made with reference to the democratic components of political culture, and unlike in Yugoslavia, where strong pre-industrial elements remain, were to be carried out without such massive pre-industrial obstacles.

The innovations being contemplated were apparently noted with interest--and apparently welcomed as well--by members of the technical-industrial intelligentsia of other countries. In the Soviet Union, Andrei D. Sakharov had expressed the hope the emerging model in Czechoslovakia would be permitted to succeed in order to provide possible alternatives to Soviet development.[5]

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[5]However, it may be that the technical intelligentsia defined its objectives more narrowly: to them, participation meant the ability to supply the necessary information to the government. Conceivably, access might suffice. By

With respect to the Communist Party, Jan Triska writes,

> Like all ruling parties, the Communist Party had one goal above all others: to stay in office. It may have permitted experimentation, innovation, and other social change so long as it perceived the situation crucial to its own staying in office. The nascent class structure, social factionalism, and pluralism not only rapidly increased the party's role as broker of multiple competing political interests at lower levels--a role the CPC leaders had learned to play effectively on top decisional levels in the past--but also created a demand for their supplying a mechanism for resolution of a growing number of conflicts. Under cumulative stress the party elite faced the problem of trading the broad function of social engineers and mobilizers for some narrower functions.[6]

To this end, the party sought to restore internal democracy, minority views were to be allowed, and secret voting re-established, and the aspects of party discipline, suitable to the times of revolutionary activity, were to be eliminated. The Party was to win confidence by responding to the needs of the public, not by the use of command methods. And it was to promote the participatory revolution Gabriel Almond believed necessary. With its various measures, the Czechoslovak party was preparing to make a creative contribution to one-party system dynamics.

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the same token, it may have been precisely this type of participation the Party reformers had in mind when they proposed to allow a greater freedom to intra-Party groupings.

[6]Jan F. Triska, "The Socialist Republic of Czechoslovakia," in Peter A. Toma (ed.), The Changing Face of Communism in Eastern Europe (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1970), pp. 182-183.

However, as we have shown by our excursus into several dimensions of foreign linkages upon Czechoslovakia, there are parameters beyond which Czechoslovakia will not be permitted to go. As the invasion and the subsequent response to its own internal pressures show, the Soviet leadership favors an incremental and conservative transformation some consider inadequate for the needs. Given the conservative-traditionalist inclinations in the Soviet Union, the old concern of spontaneity versus consciousness, so intimately interwoven with the Bolshevik revolutionary strategy, undoubtedly figured in the perception of the events of 1968. The developments were adjudged to have been spontaneous and hence threatening. In a sense, the Soviet leaders concurred with those reformers in Czechoslovakia who saw an inevitable path toward greater democratization, though in the Soviet appraisal those same developments would have been adjudged as rightist counterrevolutionary revisionism.

Our analysis reinforces the observation that "alternative roads to polyarchy may conceivably lead through the growing independence of social and economic organization or else through the evolution of regional or functional autonomies within the ruling parties."[7] The pluralist

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[7]Andrew C. Janos, "Group Politics in Communist Society: A Second Look at the Pluralistic Model," in Samuel P. Huntington and Clement H. Moore (eds.), Authoritarian Politics of Established One-Party Systems (New York: Basic Books, 1970), p. 448.

pressures of 1968 pointed indeed in the direction of such an alternative arrangement.

Although they sought to deal principally with the problems facing Czechoslovakia, the reformers were in the larger sense seeking solutions to the crises facing modernized, industrialized systems everywhere. For some of them, the ends were lofty: "For the first time in history we wanted to make the humanist creed an everyday reality, unfettered by class rivalries or bureaucratic tyranny."[8]

To the political scientist, a study of the movement contributes in its small way to a better understanding of political change. As Samuel P. Huntington observed recently, "Change is a problem for social science."[9] Change is a problem for the Czechoslovak political system.

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[8]Radomir Selucký, Czechoslovakia: The Plan that Failed (London: Thomas Nelson, 1970), p. 135.

[9]Samuel P. Huntington, "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development, and Politics," Comparative Politics, III (April, 1971), p. 283.

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