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DIRECTORATE OF
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Intelligence Memorandum

Czechoslovakia: The Problem of Soviet Control

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA: THE PROBLEM OF SOVIET CONTROL

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Summary	1
Mechanisms and Prerequisites	1
January to August 1968: The Dismantling of Soviet Control	5
20-26 August: Military Intervention and Political Compromise	18
September 1968-March 1969: Creating the Prerequisites	25
April-September 1969: Control Restored	37
Dramatis Personae	A-1

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA: THE PROBLEM OF SOVIET CONTROL

MEMORANDUM FOR RECIPIENTS

This Intelligence Report analyzes why the Soviet Union lost political control in Czechoslovakia and how that control was restored during 1968 and 1969. All the weapons in the Soviet arsenal for exercising political control over a brother socialist state were employed at one time or another. The Soviet leadership emerges from the story as fallible in its tactics but certain in its objectives and unrelenting in pursuit of them.

Moscow paid a political price in bringing Prague again to heel, but the price was almost certainly less than Moscow was prepared to pay.

Analysts from the Office of Strategic Research, the Office of Current Intelligence, and the Central Reference Service contributed to the study and the text has been coordinated with those components. The Sov/Eur Staff of the Office of National Estimates also reviewed the study and is in general agreement with it.

The research analyst in charge was James Ogle.

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SUMMARY

The story of Czechoslovakia in 1968 can be told from many perspectives--as it reflects on Soviet Politburo decision making and reaction to crisis, for the significance of the Czechoslovak experiment for world communism, or as an example of "peaceful" military conquest. This report concentrates on the loss and restoration of Soviet control. The Soviet Union's extensive political influence over neighbors with a common ideology cannot be ignored, but this report emphasizes political control in the specific and concrete sense, and the military and political prerequisites for it.

Analysis of the loss and restoration of control is facilitated by distinguishing between mechanisms of and prerequisites for control. The mechanisms of Soviet control in Eastern European nations include:

the presence of advisers, especially in the ministries of interior and national defense;

the special role of the Soviet Ambassador who, as representative of the Soviet Politburo, maintains daily contact with the satellite party leader;

the exchange of delegations at all levels; and, at the top, for matters of greatest importance or in case other mechanisms fail, direct communication, even hard-nosed confrontation, between the General Secretary of the CPSU and the First Secretary of the satellite party.

The Soviets demand a say in major policy decisions and in the appointment of top party and government leaders. If any of the actions of the satellite endanger party rule or satellite ties to the Soviet Union, then the Soviets can intensify political, economic, and military pressure--up to and including military intervention.

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The resort to such pressure implies a failure of the control mechanisms. In fact, the mechanisms fail if the prerequisites are missing. The major prerequisites are:

the Communist Party must hold a monopoly of power;

Soviet willingness to intervene militarily must be credible;

the local Party must be alienated from the people; and,

the local leadership must be capable of fragmentation.

For almost 20 years, Czechoslovakia was a model satellite. However, increasingly dangerous anomalies had begun to weaken Soviet control--there were no Soviet troops stationed in the country; the Slovak drive for autonomy subjected the Czechoslovak party to unusual stress; Western and democratic traditions retained their vitality; and there was increasing antagonism between the long-time Czech ruler, Novotny, and the Brezhnev leadership. When liberals and Slovaks combined to elect Dubcek party first secretary in January 1968, he found himself in a precarious domestic political position and without a program or a personal following among the leaders. He turned for support to the liberals who were then formulating and advocating popular reform programs. Finding support among the liberals and from the populace, he began to bypass mechanisms of Soviet control and instituted reforms which further threatened the prerequisites for Soviet control.

Soviet maneuvering in the first half of 1968 completed the destruction of the four necessary prerequisites. At the end of March 1968, apparently in response to East German and Polish alarm, the Soviet and Bloc leaders (minus Romania) met to caution the Czechoslovaks on their reforms. Consideration of intensified military pressure probably dates from that period; modalities for creating a Soviet

-ii-

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military presence in Czechoslovakia, without outright invasion, were drawn up by the end of April. In early May, there were indications that the Soviets had hoped for a conservative takeover in Czechoslovakia, but their effort to encourage this or to pressure Dubcek only increased the popularity of the Czechoslovak leadership and elicited support from liberals and reform-minded Communists around the world.

That the Soviet tactics had failed became obvious by mid-May, and at the end of the month an exchange of high-level delegations arranged for Warsaw Pact maneuvers within Czechoslovakia. The "Warsaw Letter" of mid-July made it a matter of public record that Czechoslovakia was the most urgent problem in Soviet policy, a problem which was polarizing the international Communist movement into supporters of the Czechoslovak experiment and supporters of Soviet hegemony. A final Soviet effort to coerce or split the Czechoslovak party and leadership and to recruit pro-Soviet leaders among them was made at Cierna at the end of July. This effort only united them more firmly. The events of the first weeks of August proved that the Czechoslovak leaders would not or could not live up to the Soviet demands put on record at the Bratislava meeting of Bloc leaders (minus Romania) immediately after the Cierna meeting. On the night of 20-21 August 1968, the Warsaw Pact forces which had been building up on the borders for months swiftly and efficiently occupied the country. All lesser pressures having failed, the Soviet Politburo employed the ultimate argument--military intervention. No longer would the Czechoslovak leaders have reason to doubt Soviet willingness to use force.

Although some Czechoslovak officials in the security apparatus and in control of mass media attempted to facilitate the Soviet occupation, it appears that the Soviets did not have an alternate leadership ready to install. The Soviets may have hoped that the Czechoslovak Presidium would bow to the new reality and oust Dubcek. This did not happen. The Soviets then turned to Czechoslovak President Svoboda, a "Hero of the Soviet Union," to sanction a "revolutionary" government a la Hungary. Svoboda refused.

-iii-

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Soviet and Czechoslovak conservatives then attempted by a rump meeting of the old Central Committee to codify the existing situation and head off the Extraordinary 14th Congress being called for by clandestine radios. The liberals' control of the communications media frustrated this attempt also. The 14th Congress confirmed Dubcek's right to negotiate with the Soviets. Svoboda, in Moscow with a delegation of self-appointed conservatives, demanded and won reinstatement of the old leadership, then in Soviet custody.

Faced by a tactical political defeat, the Soviets agreed to the reinstatement of Dubcek. This and the Soviet promise not to interfere in Czechoslovak internal affairs (a promise kept to the extent of withdrawing most of the Soviet personnel who had occupied key offices at the time of the invasion) were the main Czechoslovak achievements in the negotiations at the end of August. The Soviet leaders won the nullification of the 14th Congress, amnesty for conservatives, and approval of the occupation until "normalization" was completed. The Soviet achievements created the framework within which they were eventually able to restore the prerequisites for control. It took seven months to do so, but the Soviets, whose invasion could have drowned Czechoslovak liberalism in blood, paid less than the price they were prepared to pay.

The Soviet moves were studied and cautiously executed. Despite their pledges of non-interference, the Soviets immediately began to restore the prerogatives of KGB advisers in the Czechoslovak Ministry of Interior, and they insisted on resurrecting the Soviet right of veto over personnel appointments. Political power centers outside the communist party, the "clubs" and the reborn "bourgeois" parties, were outlawed by the new Minister of Interior. Beginning with the month-long stay of First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov in September, high-level Soviet delegations scouted for and intensively cultivated Czechoslovak leaders who would be responsive to Soviet control. Leading conservatives moved to occupy the middle ground while Soviet-inspired meetings of ultra-conservatives,

-iv-

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with whom the Soviets probably had no intention of collaborating, began a process of polarization of the party. This polarization was facilitated because of the ambiguity of "normalization." Meetings between Soviet and Czechoslovak leaders took on the color of trials at which the Soviets produced extensive dossiers on individuals and circumstantial accounts of policy discussions. These dossiers, intended to intimidate the Czechoslovak leaders, demonstrated the extent of the information the Soviets received from agents and collaborators in Prague and Moscow. Such confrontations, and the constant visits of delegations, slowly demoralized the liberals, raised the ante for Soviet "normalization," and helped "open the eyes" of rising leaders.

By mid-November, leading liberals, some of them subject to individual KGB harassment, began to drop out of the leadership. Control began to slip from Dubcek to one-time liberally inclined leaders such as Cernik, Strougal, and Husak, who had become increasingly "realistic" as a result of Soviet cultivation. Popular resistance by workers and students, encouraged by the mass media, continued, and the first three months of 1969 brought mounting conservative pressure and increasingly dangerous--though uncoordinated--outbursts of resistance. The anti-Soviet demonstrations at the end of March, inspired by a Czechoslovak victory over the Soviet Union in the World Ice Hockey Championships, served as the pretext for what amounted to a Soviet ultimatum. Soviet toleration of Dubcek had reached a point of diminishing returns. There was no power but the party and the people were alienated from it; Soviet military presence was an overriding reality; and the leadership was split. Alexander Dubcek was replaced in mid-April by Gustav Husak who, with the united backing of the Slovak bloc in the Central Committee, was perhaps the only man capable of both leading the nation and following Soviet orders.

The restoration of full party control, and through the party of Soviet control, was increasingly swift and ruthless. By mid-May the mass media had been brought under conservative control by replacement of all key personnel. By the beginning of June liberals had been purged from the party organizations of Bohemia and Moravia.

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In July and August the history of the previous year was rewritten to transfer the taint of "treason" at the time of the invasion from the conservatives to the liberals. Those who demonstrated against the Soviets on the anniversary of the invasion were beaten by Czechoslovak security forces while Soviet forces remained out of sight. On 22 August 1969 the Federal Assembly passed a law to control all manifestations of dissent. The Plenum of 25-26 September removed those leading liberals who refused to recant, including Dubcek, and set the stage for a purge of the party membership.

The failure of the Soviets to install Novotny or a trusted agent like Indra does not detract from the completeness of their victory. Husak--a man once jailed for nationalism, a man who had preceded even Dubcek on the liberal road, a man with a reputation for independence--is, like Kadar in Hungary and Gomulka in Poland before him, well suited for Soviet control. He has been, as he said at the September Plenum, an involuntary student of history. He will carry out the essential Soviet orders as long as the prerequisites exist. The Soviets have seen to it that they do.

-vi-

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Mechanisms and Prerequisites

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[redacted] The mechanics of Soviet control and the channels of communication, though hidden from the public, are well known to functionaries of Communist satellites. [redacted] the system worked well for 20 years in Czechoslovakia. Even the Soviets were lulled into a false sense of security. [redacted]

At the highest level, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) maintained personal contact with the First Secretary of the KSC. The two held periodic meetings, in Moscow and Prague, and there was direct [redacted] communication between them. More routine liaison was conducted between the KSC First Secretary and the Soviet Ambassador, who represented the CPSU Politburo as well as the Soviet government. Liaison at these levels involved all major policy decisions and the important party and government appointments, including the secretaries and Presidium members of the KSC, the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, and the ministers of Interior, National Defense, and Foreign Affairs.

[redacted] Soviet advisers in the Ministry of Interior were assigned down to the directorate level. In the Ministry of National Defense there were 18 Soviet advisers headed by a Senior Representative of the Allied Command of the Warsaw Pact in Czechoslovakia. The Soviet advisers received copies of all important correspondence and helped make decisions in both ministries. In ministries other than Interior and National Defense the Soviet Ambassador and his Embassy subordinates served as advisers. The third channel for control [redacted] was the continuous stream of visits and correspondence between

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Czechoslovak officials and their Soviet counterparts.

Decisions were made at meetings between responsible Soviet and Czechoslovak officials held in Moscow. In ministries without resident Soviet advisers, copies of significant documents were forwarded to Moscow counterparts for information and approval. Government officials who ignored or circumvented the "coordination" process were dealt with through party channels. In the extreme case the complaint was made to the First Secretary of the KSC by the Soviet Ambassador or the General Secretary of the CPSU.

[redacted] stated that there were three inviolable principles in the control system: Czechoslovakia must do nothing to jeopardize party rule in Czechoslovakia, her membership in the world Communist movement, or her ties with the Soviet Union. If these principles were threatened, the Soviets would apply political, economic, and military pressures, and, if necessary, intervene militarily. At the time of his interviews [redacted] was convinced that the Soviets would not relinquish their control and that regaining lost influence was well within Soviet means. The magnitude of the Soviet problem was not clear [redacted] and perhaps, in February 1968, was not yet clear to the Soviet leadership.

For there are certain underlying prerequisites essential to the operation of the control mechanism. The prerequisites are: the Communist Party must hold a monopoly of power; Soviet willingness to intervene militarily must be credible; the local Party must be alienated from the people; and the local leadership must be capable of fragmentation.

The monopoly of power by the Communist Party is a clearly recognized principle; loss of the monopoly in Czechoslovakia was most often mentioned by the Soviets as the reason for their intervention. Communist monopoly of power is both a goal of and a prerequisite for Soviet control of a satellite state.

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If the local police and military are not responsive to the party, then the party can be saved only by an outside force--in the ultimate case, the force of the USSR. The second prerequisite is the belief in Soviet willingness to intervene. Throughout Eastern Europe the original installation of Communist regimes by Soviet military intervention was the rule. In Czechoslovakia the Communists replaced the post-war coalition in 1948 after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. But this exception to the general pattern is more apparent than real. The war and occupation were not long ended, and Czechoslovakia lay well behind the Iron Curtain then being drawn across Europe. Soviet forces were still in Austria. Writing ten years after the 1948 coup, the former Czechoslovak diplomat Edward Taborsky noted that President Benes yielded to the Communist "action committees" because he had concluded that "the only alternative to surrender was a bloody civil war, with strong likelihood of direct or indirect Soviet intervention." The Communist leaders installed in Czechoslovakia in 1948 cited the realities of Soviet power to justify their rule and their policies. But despite the subsequent examples of Soviet willingness to use force in East Germany and Hungary, and the threat to use it in Poland, belief in the possibility of open Soviet military intervention gradually declined in both Communist and non-Communist countries.

The third prerequisite for Soviet control--the alienation of the ruling party from its own population--insulates the party leaders from all popular pressures which might oppose Soviet wishes. The post-Stalin Soviet leadership has come to recognize that minor concessions on this point are desirable to keep popular hostility from boiling over. When it has been necessary to choose, Soviet leaders have tended, where possible, to avoid satellite counterparts who represent the ultimate extreme in Communist alienation from the populace. But this Soviet tactical preference is a secondary matter. Most important is the need to keep East European party leaders from acquiring anything like a genuine mass following. Any such following, in the Soviet view, is likely either to support anti-Soviet nationalist moves by the local leadership (as in Tito's Yugoslavia), or impel the leadership in that direction

-3-

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(as in Nagy's Hungary). It was on this point that the Soviets and Czechoslovaks at Cierna talked past one another so completely as to doom the negotiations. The Chairman of the Slovak National Council, Ondrej Klokoc, in an interview published in the 26 September 1969 issue of the Bratislava Pravda, gave public expression to this least attractive aspect of Communist rule when he paraphrased the July 1968 Cierna negotiations as follows:

"At Cierna nad Tisou the Soviet comrades reproached us by saying that the KSC was losing control of the situation . . . Our representatives answered that the KSC had everything firmly in its hands . . . There are hundreds of thousands of signatures in support of its leadership. The Soviet comrades answered: Well, we can do the same thing. As against your 14 million signatures we can produce 240 million signatures; this can be organized. Our side answered: We beg your pardon, but we, the KSC have not organized it. It came spontaneously, without an impulse by the party. It was the masses themselves. But then, (the Soviets responded) how can it be said that the KSC holds everything firmly in its hands . . .?"

Later in the same interview, Klokoc gave his understanding of reality:

"Last year we heard very often that the KSC would try to gain trust. This is correct in conditions when the Communist party is not in power. To put matters this way in a socialist state, when the Communist party is in power, means, whether we like it or not, to give up the party's leading role in the state and society . . . Neither the party nor the government need be popular."

In sum, as long as the people are alienated from the party they view leadership changes with apathy; the leaders themselves, knowing their unpopularity, must court the Soviet source of power.

-4-

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The fourth prerequisite for Soviet control is the potential for fragmentation in the local leadership itself. The Soviets are not interested in fomenting open factional strife but they are interested in cultivating alternate leaders and in maintaining pressure groups, responsive to their suggestions, within the existing Communist leaderships. Those in and out of power in a satellite state must constantly reassure the Soviet leadership of their fealty and reliability. Such protestations played a major role in Czechoslovakia in 1968. However, when the crunch came the operative elements in the Czechoslovak leadership were united and the Soviets found past reassurances of fealty and reliability to be hollow and deceptive. The pressure tactics the Soviets tried in the first half of 1968 had destroyed this prerequisite too--they had united the leaders and had confirmed their reliance on popular support.

January to August 1968:

The Dismantling of Soviet Control

Despite the absence of a Soviet occupying force and despite its "bourgeois" background, Czechoslovakia was long considered a model satellite and, with Soviet approval, in July 1960, the regime proclaimed Czechoslovakia a "socialist state"--the second in the world after the Soviet Union. Part of the ideological panoply of this distinction, under the de-Stalinizing Khrushchev, was to declare the class struggle won and ended. The cautious and censorious Ulbricht later dated the neglect of ideological work in Czechoslovakia from this period, a charge admitted by the KSC guidelines on ideological education published in October 1969. The Czechoslovak relationship to the Soviets, however, remained unaffected in the first half of the 1960's. A liberal surge against Novotny in 1963, coupled with economic troubles and a Slovak drive for autonomy, had weakened Novotny's personal position by 1964. The ouster of Khrushchev in October 1964 turned Novotny's frustration against the new leaders in the Kremlin [redacted]

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[redacted] The 19 October 1964 KSC Presidium statement on the ouster expressed "surprise" and "emotion" at Khrushchev's fate; Novotny, like the Rumanian Gheorghiu-Dej, did not attend the 7 November 1964 anniversary celebrations in Moscow.

High Czechoslovak party sources attribute to Brezhnev a personal animus toward Novotny as a result of this clash. Other sources quote Brezhnev as declaring that the "negative developments" in Czechoslovakia began after the 13th KSC Congress in June 1966, which expanded the Central Committee to admit young and liberal elements to offset the dogmatists who had been hindering economic reform. The classical control mechanisms [redacted] apparently began to break down after the congress. Two separate reports, one from October 1966 and one referring to a "secret letter" of the CPSU dated 1 January 1967, suggest that Soviet displeasure with Czechoslovak developments was being "leaked" to KSC circles outside the regular control channels--partly to point up the magnitude of Soviet concern and possibly to promote factionalism in the KSC. The criticisms were directed at alleged anti-Soviet expressions in culture, too much openness to the West, and an overly "capitalistic" economic reform. One of the key figures in alerting the Kremlin to the undesirable evolution of Czechoslovakia was the Soviet Ambassador to Prague, Stepan Chervonenko.

The early Soviet attacks on Novotny for alleged toleration of Czechoslovak liberal trends were the first of a series of pressures the Soviets applied--all counterproductive--prior to the intervention of August 1968. By mid-1967 internal opposition had hardened toward Novotny, but it came from the liberal side. Extra-party dissent became increasingly vocal, including the June 1967 attacks on restrictive cultural policy by the Writers' Union and the student protests in October 1967. October also revealed the new power of the "third force," i.e., the Slovak drive for autonomy which, being neither liberal nor conservative, provides the swing vote when the two are deadlocked. (The Soviets overlooked the "third force" in their initial calculations, but they have used it to advantage since

-6-

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the invasion.) The Slovak attack on Novotny at the October 1967 Central Committee plenum threatened to upset the balance of power and precipitated a three-month crisis. Chervonenko sounded the alarm and Novotny asked Brezhnev for help. Brezhnev arrived in Prague on 8 December.

The liberal ideologue Josef Spacek revealed subsequently* that the KSC presidium was evenly split before Novotny's fall, with Chudik, Lastovicka, Lenart, Novotny, and Simunek aligned against Cernik, Dolansky, Dubcek, Hendrych, and Kolder. That was hardly a clear-cut liberal-conservative split--Michael Chudik, as well as Dubcek, had attacked Novotny in October; Hendrych was considered an arch-conservative, and Kolder was generally believed to have played a Soviet game against Dubcek in August 1968. Brezhnev was understandably confused and, according to [redacted], assumed that the battle was between rival conservative factions. Brezhnev refused to support Novotny, and Novotny's fate was sealed. The presidium was unable to agree on a successor. Dubcek's nomination was presented to the Central Committee not by the deadlocked presidium but by an ad-hoc committee including regional party secretaries and was the result of a fortuitous liberal-Slovak coalition. Thus, on 5 January, amidst rumors of a Novotny-inspired military coup, Dubcek became, with initial Soviet acquiescence, the First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. He had neither a program nor plans for a cabinet. Into the vacuum stepped the Slovak, Gustav Husak, with a call for free elections, freedom of opinion, and democratic control of the government. The most critical domestic problem was stagnation in the two-year-old economic reform program. Dubcek, essentially moderate and well aware of his precarious position, turned to new liberal leaders who proceeded to formulate a popular program which he embraced as his own.

*His speech to a regional party conference in Brno,,
18 March 1968.

-7-

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Dubcek's maneuvering [redacted] had included frequent secret visits to Soviet Ambassador Chervonenko; immediately after his election Dubcek went to the Soviet Embassy to pledge his cooperation; and less than a month after his election, on 29 January, Dubcek flew to Moscow to pledge allegiance to Brezhnev. But from then on he began to disregard the customary lines of Soviet control. He discontinued his daily meetings with the Soviet Ambassador, something Novotny had never done. On 19 February he appointed the liberal Vaclav Prchlik to head the Central Committee department for state administration, replacing the conservative, pro-Soviet Miroslav Mamula. Dubcek refused the recommendations of Warsaw Pact commander Yakubovsky that Lomsky be retained as Minister of National Defense. By mid-February, [redacted] Soviet officials in Prague were reduced to asking for information from their increasingly uncooperative Czechoslovak counterparts. In late February a well-placed KSC official reported Soviet displeasure with the pace of the Dubcek liberalization and predicted that economic sanctions would be employed if political pressure failed.

Little happened in March to encourage the Soviets. A progressive, Josef Spacek, replaced Jiri Hendrych as head of the Party's ideological commission; secret voting was introduced for party and government elections; the three top leaders of the Trade Union Council resigned; a deputy minister of National Defense (Colonel General Janko) committed suicide after being implicated in the earlier pro-Novotny coup attempt; the Minister of the Interior was given a vote of no confidence by the National Assembly Presidium; censorship was condemned by the Party censors themselves; and Novotny resigned as president.

On the other hand, conservatives still retained about 40 percent of the Central Committee seats, a majority in regional and local organizations, and a third of the votes even in the National Assembly. Soviet support for Novotny had increased as Dubcek turned to the liberals. Within the Czechoslovak leadership, only opposition to

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Novotny had united the Slovaks and some conservative elements behind Dubcek. With Novotny's removal, Dubcek's strength might erode, and, by abandoning Novotny, the Soviets might encourage a new alignment within the leadership which would facilitate their control.

It is at such a juncture that the Soviets would be most interested in increasing their leverage by cultivating opposing leaders, short of encouraging open factional strife which might endanger party rule itself. [redacted]

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-9-

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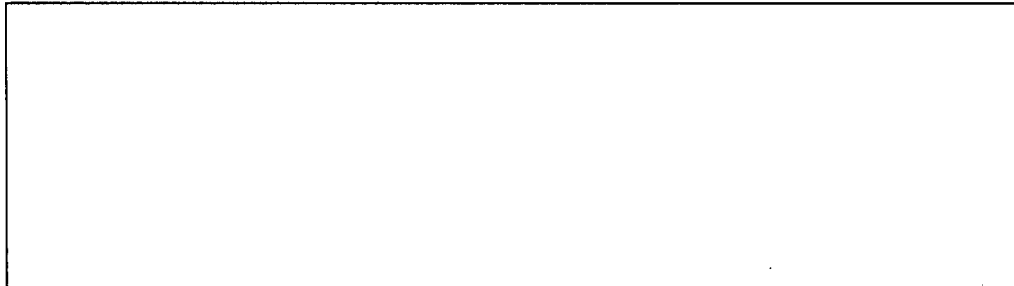
[redacted] however, Cernik proved a weak reed for the Soviets and they treated him badly after the invasion.

The 23-24 March meeting in Dresden attended by the Soviet and East European leaders (minus Romania) was called primarily to discuss Czechoslovak developments in the broader context of general disarray. Gomulka was apparently near panic from his own problems; Ulbricht, still smarting from Czechoslovak "meddling" in East German cultural affairs, was outraged by developments in Prague. It is possible that Gomulka and Ulbricht had urged the convening of the meeting. [redacted] the Soviets defended Dubcek against East German attacks at Dresden but had themselves then taken a harder line and were looking for ways to reverse the liberal trends in Czechoslovakia. Reportedly, Chervonenko was continuing his contacts with Novotny and there was some concern that the Soviets might encourage the conservatives to launch a provocation which would justify intervention. [redacted] reported that shortly after the Dresden meeting senior Bulgarian troop commanders observed that it might be necessary for Bulgaria to perform its "international duty" against the Czechoslovak "counter-revolution."

-10-

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A [redacted] copy of a secret CPSU report on Brezhnev's speech to the Central Committee Plenum of 9 and 10 April 1968 provides additional insight into the Soviet estimate of the Czechoslovak problem. The report stated, concerning the Dresden meeting, that "the concern of the CPSU, as well as of other fraternal parties, for strengthening the position of socialism in Czechoslovakia truly met with the understanding of our Czechoslovak comrades." This provisional endorsement of the Dubcek leadership was balanced by certain demands which Dubcek was expected to satisfy. The report applauds Dubcek's emphasis on "further elevating the role of the Party" but notes that he depicted the situation in the country "in unjustifiably optimistic tones." The passage on Czechoslovakia concludes, "it is not possible to exclude entirely the possibility of another, undesirable turn of events. Under all conditions and under all circumstances, our position based on principles should be clear--it is necessary to do everything to frustrate the intrigues of the enemies of socialism." What the Soviets meant by "everything" was to become increasingly clear.

If the election of Svoboda to the presidency on 30 March 1968 seemed to the Soviets a victory for their policy, the party changes of the next few weeks were signs of its failure. On 2 April it was announced that Hendrych and Koucky had resigned their party positions; only Dubcek, Cernik, and Kolder remained from the Presidium of 5 January. The new Presidium approved an "Action Program" for Czechoslovak reform. Although this program received favorable mention in Moscow at first, a closer reading by the Soviets revealed to them its subversive potential. The new government announced on 8 April seemed clearly to have

-11-

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been formed without Soviet coordination. More and more party meetings picked up the call for convening an early Extraordinary Party Congress to be held in 1968, greatly curtailing the time within which the Soviets could maneuver for a conservative victory. On 23 April Dubcek called in Soviet Ambassador Chervonenko to protest Chervonenko's contacts with Novotny. On 24 April Warsaw Pact Commander Yakubovskiy arrived in Prague.

[redacted] received a number of reports that Yakubovskiy was given a cool reception. The Czechoslovaks reportedly rejected his proposal that Soviet or other Warsaw Pact forces be stationed in Czechoslovakia and they rejected as unfounded his complaint that restrictions had been placed on the Soviet Warsaw Pact liaison officer in Prague (i.e., the senior military adviser assigned to the Czechoslovak Ministry of National Defense). On 3 May, Dubcek, Cernik, Smrkovsky, and Bilak went to Moscow for talks with Brezhnev, Kosygin, Podgorny, Katushev, and Rusakov. Bilak revealed subsequently that the Soviets had approved the Czechoslovak course in general terms but had made imperative demands to "make less noise about it" and to remember that policy must be based on realization that Czechoslovakia was part of the socialist camp. The Czechoslovak request for a loan was refused.

On 12 May 1968 Foreign Minister Hajek told a [redacted] friend about his visit to Moscow on 6 May. Hajek said that his talks with Gromyko had been friendly, but no sooner had he left Moscow than representatives of Poland, East Germany, Bulgaria, and Hungary arrived for another meeting of the "five." Although he had no information on this meeting, Hajek spoke of the threatening atmosphere of 9 and 10 May when he had been awakened at two a.m. by his extremely worried colleagues. [redacted]

[redacted] confirm that the 8 May Moscow meeting had decided that the situation in Czechoslovakia had deteriorated to such an extent that something would have to be done. [redacted]

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It is obvious that the first week of May was critical and probably represented a major turn in Soviet tactics. From the viewpoint of Soviet control of Czechoslovakia, it seems that this period brought home three major lessons to the Soviets. First, the classical control mechanism was completely out of operation--even so powerful an emissary as Marshal Yakubovskiy could not bring leverage to bear. Second, Dubcek was obviously not interested in an alliance with conservatives of Soviet choosing. And third, the conservatives could not or would not act on their own even when Soviet assurances of support had been given them. The Warsaw Pact forces dispatched to the Czechoslovak border in early May were evidently intended to shock the Czechoslovak leaders into realizing the depth of Soviet concern and to bolster the faltering conservatives. Whatever the CPSU Politburo debate thereafter concerning intervention or invasion, its timing and consequences, it seems fair to conclude that from early May the creation of a Soviet military presence in Czechoslovakia was increasingly considered to be one of the most effective options remaining.

On 18 May, Kosygin visited Czechoslovakia, to "take the cure" at Karlovy Vary. Marshal Grechko and General Yepishev were in Prague. On 21 May Radio Bratislava reported that Defense Minister Dzur had agreed with Grechko and Yepishev that Warsaw Pact exercises would take place on Czechoslovak soil. As Soviet thinking turned to the basic realities, restoring the prerequisites for control, the Czechoslovak experiment in liberalization rushed on at such a dizzy pace as to blind the Czechoslovak leaders and people, and world public opinion, to these realities.

By June 1968 the media were completely free; political organizations were forming outside the Communist Party; the elections for the September Congress (as scheduled by the Presidium on 29 May) were giving overwhelming support to Dubcek; rehabilitation of political "criminals" was pressed forward; Novotny was ousted from the Central Committee and a number of conservatives were suspended pending investigation; and Dubcek's Interior Minister Pavel began a purge of the Ministry.

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On 27 June, four publications published the "2,000 Words" manifesto signed by 70 personalities of intellectual, cultural, and political life. Drafted by a Communist and supported by party members and non-party elements alike, the "2,000 Words" was open "counterrevolution" in the eyes of the Czechoslovak conservatives and the Soviets. The party's leading role, which had been defended even in the Action Program of April, was pronounced illegitimate and the manifesto clearly marked a crossroads in Czechoslovak liberalization. But, the experiment was never allowed to run its course, and the polarization between party and people or within the party, which might have served Soviet purposes, was prevented by the very actions intended to produce such polarization--Soviet political pressure at the highest levels and increased efforts to make the military threat credible.

Some eight combat divisions had been brought to the Czechoslovak border between 6 and 10 May. They were retained there ostensibly in preparation for the Sumava Exercise which began officially on 20 June, although scheduled originally for late in the year. The operation was clearly intended as a cover for establishing a Soviet military presence in Czechoslovakia. It was changed to a "staff exercise," possibly in response to Czechoslovak objections and unfavorable publicity in the world press, and initially only three Soviet regiments entered Czechoslovakia, as "markers" for the eight divisions on the border. Prague radio announced the end of the exercise on 1 July, but the Soviet troops delayed their departure until the latter half of July, by which time the KSC presidium and the CPSU Politburo had agreed to meet in Cierna. Other exercises along the Western border of the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe from mid-July through mid-August prepared the forces ultimately used in the invasion.

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On 9 July the KSC presidium stated its intention to avoid attending any repetition of the Dresden conference. On 14 July, the leaders of the Communist parties of the Soviet Union, East Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Poland met in Warsaw and sent a letter to Prague stating that the situation was completely unacceptable and warning against the danger of Czechoslovakia's being torn from the socialist community. On 16 July the KSC presidium drafted a reply to the Warsaw letter rejecting its accusations and demands, an action which was approved by a KSC Central Committee plenum on 19 July. On 22 July it was agreed that the KSC presidium and the Soviet leadership would meet on Czechoslovak soil.

The Czechoslovak problem had reached the stage where its ramifications touched virtually every aspect of Soviet policy. It was no longer merely a matter of Soviet control of an erring satellite, or of preventing disarray in Eastern Europe. The problem also involved Soviet relations with Western Communist Parties which had applauded Dubcek's innovations, the Soviet "image" caught in the dilemma of appearing either weak or brutal, and the problem of detente with the West, especially the United States, which could not help but be affected by a new Soviet outrage in Eastern Europe. Balancing the various priorities and deciding on the measures to be taken fell very largely on the shoulders of Secretary General Brezhnev.

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[redacted] reported on 28 July that the CPSU had informed the Communist Party of Venezuela that the Soviet Union would not allow the democratization of Czechoslovakia even if it had to resort to military intervention. On 30 July a [redacted] told an American Embassy officer that Waldeck Rochet had "firm information" before his trip to Moscow that the Soviets were prepared to intervene militarily and had a puppet government ready in Moscow to install with Soviet tanks. Similar reports from around the world tend to confirm that a CPSU query on local party reaction to military intervention had been circulated in mid-July. [redacted] noted above added that the French and Italian Communist parties had presented a joint demarche to the effect that they would denounce Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia and, in the opinion of this source, this demarche at least had deferred the threatened military intervention.

In the last four to five weeks before the invasion, the Soviets increased their efforts to marshall assets in Czechoslovakia. By the end of July [redacted] were noting that a number of KSC Central Committee members had refused to attend any meetings since 19 July (when the answer to the Warsaw Five was approved), the inference being that Moscow was already attempting to gather the nucleus of a new government. Some 20 conservatives had failed to attend the plenum in the first place, having gone to the Black Sea resort of Sochi at Soviet invitation. The Czechoslovak daily Prace revealed on 30 July that a Soviet general in Czechoslovakia had been in contact with a group of Czechoslovak officers led by General Samuel Kodaj, chief of the political directorate of the Eastern Military District. One report on the Cierna negotiations states that the Czechoslovaks produced proof there of Soviet-induced defections of political leaders to the Soviet Union. Cestmir Cisar, Secretary of the KSC Central Committee, said privately on 1 August that during the

-16-

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month of July several hundred persons including a large number of party activists and 60 members of the Central Committee had been invited to the Soviet Union to spend vacations, and that a large number had accepted. Finally, a Czechoslovak official reported in late July that the KSC leadership had learned of the formation in the Soviet Union (at Sochi) of a "shadow Central Committee" including former First Secretary Novotny, Miroslav Pastyrik, and Michal Chudik. He added, however, that the KSC Presidium was assigning no significance to this report. On 16 July, an [redacted] of the Institute for International Politics and Economics told an American Embassy official that coup stories were taken seriously enough for certain contingency steps to have been taken.

Whatever the significance of this flurry of reports, many of them of dubious reliability, the Cierna negotiations were a final attempt to break the KSC presidium by political pressure and threats. Reports on the 25 July Presidium meeting and on the opening day of the Cierna negotiations identified Kolder, Bilak, Indra, Svestka, Barbirek, and Piller (not all mentioned in any one report) as taking the Soviet side, some reports adding that Barbirek and Kolder had held secret meetings with the Soviets. On 29 and 31 July, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Jiri Hajek told a [redacted] friend that there were differences of opinion within the Presidium but that neither Kolder nor Bilak would agree to be Soviet puppets. Only Barbirek, Hajek said, could play such a role. Noting that new disagreements had arisen at the talks on whether to honor a two-year-old secret agreement of Novotny's to station two Soviet divisions on Czechoslovak soil, Hajek repeated his belief that the Soviets would not intervene militarily.

As was the case with the alleged "shadow Central Committee," these reports of presidium splits are contradictory, sometimes clearly mistaken or part of an ultra-liberal smear campaign. But the very volume of this reporting and the obvious Soviet belief that a puppet government could be installed immediately after the invasion, is suggestive of the magnitude of the Soviet

-17-

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effort to split the Czechoslovak leadership and party on the eve of the invasion.

The Cierna talks and the Bratislava agreement of 3 August on the "cohesion" of the socialist system, (signed by the leaders of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, and Bulgaria), did not sanction a Soviet military presence and the outcome of the negotiations was seen, by the Czechoslovak public and the world at large, as a Dubcek victory. Dubcek's part of the bargain, muzzling the press and possibly promising to retain certain conservatives in the post-Congress party and government, very quickly proved to be beyond his powers. The demonstratively triumphal visits of Tito and Ceausescu to Czechoslovakia boded as ill for Dubcek's future foreign policy. On the night of 20-21 August, forces of the Warsaw Pact "Five" entered Czechoslovakia.

20-26 August: Military Intervention and Political Compromise

The evidence is overwhelming that the Soviets hoped to install a government and party leadership under their control in the immediate aftermath of their intervention. Ambassador Chervonenko was certainly to play a key role in selecting the new Czechoslovak leadership. Almost as certainly, key Czechoslovak officials such as Deputy Minister of Interior Salgovic, Director General Miroslav Sulek of the Czechoslovak News Agency, and Director of the Central Communications Administration Karel Hoffman were assigned roles to facilitate the coup. But considerable doubt remains as to the extent to which the Soviet candidates for the new leadership were themselves privy to the invasion plans. The initial Soviet announcement of the intervention, copies of which were circulated widely abroad and dropped by helicopter over Prague, claimed that the Warsaw Pact forces had crossed the border at the invitation of Czechoslovak party and government "leaders"--changed soon thereafter to read "activists." Faulty intelligence from such sources as Chervonenko may have fed Soviet hopes that the KSC Presidium meeting on the night of 20 August could remove Dubcek and sanction the intervention.

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According to the account published in The Czech Black Book the groundwork for Dubcek's removal had been laid two Presidium sessions earlier when Dubcek was charged with putting his own popularity above the authority of the Presidium itself. The second agenda item on the night of 20 August was a presentation by Jan Kaspar on the instability of the progressive forces and the steadfastness of the conservatives. Kolder and Indra presented a 15-page position paper in support of Kaspar's analysis. Bilak, Rigo, and Kapek spoke in support of these papers and the discussion was still in progress when Cernik, who had left periodically to check on reports from the border, announced that the invasion had begun. The source quoted in The Czech Black Book concludes that the discussion was intended to split the Presidium and force a vote removing Dubcek.* Here as in the days to follow, a combination of Soviet miscalculations and unforeseeable accidents frustrated Soviet plans.

The Presidium meeting had started four hours late. Kolder's suggestion that the second agenda item to be taken up first was rejected and discussion of it did not begin until late in the evening. An apparent Soviet blunder--failure to give advance word of the invasion to those on whom they were counting--compounded the disruption. Although several may not have been surprised by the invasion, most of the evidence suggests only Indra was fully informed in advance.

In a secret speech delivered on 19 December 1968 to leading secretaries of the KSC, Bilak claimed as his view prior to the intervention that if Czechoslovakia

*The four Presidium members who voted against the resolution condemning the invasion (Kolder, Bilak, Rigo, and Svestka) probably were prepared to vote to oust Dubcek. The other seven full members of the Presidium, including Piller, probably would not have voted to oust Dubcek under any circumstances. If the Soviets realized this then their plans to use the old Presidium must have been more complex, and less "legal," than the above account implies.

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did not fulfill its obligations the Soviets "would occupy us," that he "could see no other outcome." Bilak added: "Of course I did not know anything, but it was not so difficult to guess." This seems a fair description of the Czechoslovak conservative (and Soviet) interpretation of the understanding reached at Cierna. It was the progressives, relying unrealistically on support from Rumanian, Yugoslav, French and Italian Communist Parties, and from world public opinion, who had misread the situation. Bilak clearly indicated in his December speech that with the invasion, the only course was to bow to the Soviet will. But it does not follow, and it is probably not true, that he had a prior secret understanding with the Soviet leaders. Of the alleged collaborationists only Svastka, Bilak, Rigo, and Kolder voted against the Presidium proclamation condemning the invasion passed in the emotion-packed, all-night session. At least in part their opposition was based on the view that the proclamation might be interpreted as an appeal for civilian resistance, unrealistic since the armed forces had been ordered not to resist. Conservatives Piller and Barbirek voted for the proclamation, apparently sincerely caught up in the wave of nationalistic unity which the invasion evoked. Jakes and Indra did not vote for procedural reasons. By the early morning hours of 21 August, when the members dispersed and the arrests began, the Soviets had lost their chance to use the old Presidium to legalize the desired changes.

The first Soviet fall-back position was the installation of a "revolutionary worker-peasant government" sanctioned by President Svoboda, similar to the Hungarian case. The Soviet troop commander and/or Ambassador Chervonenko, accompanied by various potential collaborators, presented such demands to Svoboda several times on 21 August. These were categorically rejected and Svoboda refused to even discuss future steps until the arrested leaders (Dubcek, Cernik, Smrkovsky, and Kriegel) were released. The unsuccessful

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"Hungarian solution"* is an interesting indication of the Soviet Communist obsession with continuity and with the forms of legality--as are the periodic "elections."

In his secret speech Bilak states: "We went to the Castle to ask the President of the Republic what was to be done He told us that the Central Committee would be meeting in the Hotel Praha in the evening to try to get these questions settled." The rump session of the Central Committee at the Hotel Praha was the second fall-back position of the Soviets.

The liberal account of this meeting, published on 22 August by Zemedelske Noviny, alleges that some 50 members of the Central Committee met under the guidance of Soviet officers and Bilak, Barbirek, Kolder, and Indra. The resolution passed there sought to "codify" the existing situation without asking for the departure of troops or the release of interned leaders. Bilak claims that a

*Svoboda's counterpart in Hungary in 1956 was the Chairman of the Presidential Council Istvan Dobi who had held his post under the Stalinist dictator Rakosi, who continued in it in the revolutionary government of Imre Nagy and who swore in the Kadar government on 7 November 1956. This slender thread was the only claim to legitimacy which Kadar could claim at the time. But even more important, perhaps, was the fact that Kadar had been a member of Nagy's government himself and the government he came to head bore the "revolutionary" qualification to signify that it was the continuation of that process which had removed Gero (who had succeeded Rakosi when the Soviets themselves removed Rakosi). Kadar's fellow ministers of state in the Nagy government (sworn in by Dobi) included representatives of the Smallholders, Social Democrats, and the Petofi Party. On 1 November 1956, speaking as First Secretary, Kadar announced the formation of a new Communist Party, emphasizing its readiness to collaborate with other democratic parties.

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delegation was chosen to negotiate the release of the leaders. The rump session also sought unsuccessfully to head off the convening of the Extraordinary 14th Congress, then being called for by clandestine radio stations which maintained contact between the liberal Czechoslovak leaders and the people. The 14th Congress met in secret on 22 August and elected a new Central Committee which elected a new progressive and liberal Presidium and reelected Dubcek as First Secretary. The only service the potential collaborators were able to perform for the Soviets was to get themselves attached, without government approval, to the delegation, led by President Svoboda, which departed for Moscow on 23 August to present the Czechoslovak case. Thus the negotiations opened with a clear tactical defeat ringing in Soviet ears, a defeat based on the steadfastness of Svoboda and the unified defiance of the Czechoslovak people. The imprisoned Czechoslovak leaders did not yet know it, but their own unity, among themselves, was also having an effect on the Soviets.

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When the Moscow negotiations opened, initially between Svoboda and Brezhnev only, Svoboda was immediately confronted with the undesirable alternative of continuing as president and sanctioning a conservative regime or seeing Czechoslovakia under occupation administration. He countered with the threat of suicide unless the imprisoned leaders participated in the negotiations. (Another version of Svoboda's dramatic gesture holds that the initial demands were presented by Drahomir Kolder and

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that only Svoboda's suicide threat brought the interview with Brezhnev.) The Soviet demands were that a new government be established, that the occupation continue, that censorship be established, and that party control be restored. Svoboda insisted that the mood of the Czechoslovak populace necessitated that the old leadership should be retained during a period of "normalization." The Soviets accepted this but then demanded that the proceedings of the Extraordinary 14th Congress (which had confirmed the power of Dubcek and others to negotiate) be nullified.

Several versions of the "secret" agreement that resulted from the meetings are available and are generally compatible in content. Points in one or more of these versions, in addition to nullification of the 14th Congress and a pledge to keep the negotiations secret, include: the occupying troops would not interfere in Czechoslovak internal affairs;* "officials who had fought against anti-socialist forces," ie. conservatives, would not be removed; and the activities of "illegal organizations," i.e. the centers of political activity outside the KSC, would be terminated. In one version, as an "expressed" condition, Ambassador Chervonenko would play the role of "protector" to oversee fulfillment of the agreement.

Of the Czechoslovak delegation, only Kriegel, an unyielding liberal, refused to sign the agreement. Indra suffered a heart attack after arrival in Moscow and did not

*This point was considered the most important achievement of the Czechoslovak delegation. The departure, after the first week, of the newly-arrived Soviet advisers or experts from most Czechoslovak offices shows that the Soviets did indeed honor it in the limited sense that they dismantled machinery for direct rule by Soviet citizens. Soviet "interference" in the sense of pressure on the Czechoslovaks was of course not halted, but rather, greatly multiplied.

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sign because of his illness. Two men emerged from the talks in an entirely new light. Svoboda became the hero of the Czechoslovak people. And Husak, apparently because of his intelligence and "realism," attracted Soviet attention.

The Soviets used the seven-month period from the return of the Czechoslovak delegation to the April plenum which replaced Dubcek with Husak, to "pacify" Czechoslovakia and to reestablish the prerequisites for Soviet control. The continued resistance of Dubcek and the Czechoslovak liberals, and the apparent lack of a clearcut Soviet plan, gave an impression that the Soviets were making little headway. But inexorably the Communist Party monopoly of power was restored, the people were alienated from the party, and the party leadership was fragmented--all in the shadow of the ultimate threat of Soviet military intervention, a threat that had become quite credible indeed.

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September 1968-March 1969: Creating the Prerequisites

Gustav Husak was the first member of the Czechoslovak delegation to Moscow to carry out Soviet wishes. The 26-29 August meeting of the Slovak Communist Party, which elected him to succeed Bilak as first secretary, had endorsed the Extraordinary 14th Congress. Returning from Moscow, Husak reopened the matter of the Congress, arguing that because no Slovak delegates had attended the session the Slovak Communist Party should withdraw its endorsement of the proceedings. His argument was accepted and a pretext for nullification of the Extraordinary Congress was created. During his presentations, Husak also sought to exonerate Bilak of any involvement in the Soviet intervention.

Another secret demand of the Soviets was the convening of the old (13th Congress) Central Committee. Dubcek complied; a plenum was held on 31 August. Dubcek briefed the members on the Moscow negotiations, and then, in one of the many defiant acts which kept alive Soviet hatred of Dubcek's leadership, the Central Committee coopted 87 delegates from the 14th Congress.

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To bring the security forces under Soviet control required that Minister of Interior Pavel be removed. He had been purging pro-Soviet elements from the ministry, and he was charged with assisting liberals to escape from Czechoslovakia. He was replaced on 1 September. However, Pavel's replacement, Jan Pelnar, formerly Chairman of the West Bohemian National Committee, probably was a compromise. The Soviets first choice appears to have been Milos Jakes, widely regarded in Czechoslovakia as a Soviet agent. Nevertheless, Pelnar conformed to the Moscow secret agreements. He banned the two liberal political "clubs" on 5 September, and he brought Soviet "advisers" back into

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the ministry.*

There is less information about the reactivation of Soviet advisers in the Ministry of National Defense but some reports suggest that they were brought back and that their numbers were increased so as to cover even lower levels of the organization than before. However, the presence of advisers did not immediately or necessarily guarantee Soviet control. Other ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were not affected and did not receive Soviet advisers. Ambassador Chervonenko, whose imminent removal was a subject of much speculation for months by Czechoslovaks who held him personally responsible for the invasion, remained, and still remains at his post. The delicate guidance of the top Czechoslovak leadership, and the search for alternate leaders, were conducted by high-level Soviet delegations which maintained continual contact with the Czechoslovak leadership.

*According to reports, on 10 September, in a speech to security force officers, Pelnar said:
"For your information, I should like to tell you, the officials of the State Security Service, but also the other components of the Ministry of Interior as well, that the heads of the Ministry of the Interior are discussing with representatives of the Committee for State Security (KGB) of the Council of Ministers of the USSR the question of normalization of relations with KGB authorities along the lines of the agreement concluded in 1962 between our government and the Soviet government with the view to creating conditions for bilateral fulfillment of this agreement. . . . We expect that implementation of the agreement concluded will lead to further consolidation of our State Security apparatus. We have requested responsible officials of the KGB, who, in accordance with the agreement, are working on our territory, to pass to the heads of the Ministry of the Interior their information about the activity of provocateurs and other anti-socialist and disruptive elements whose activities violate our legal code now in force. . . ."

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Soviet first deputy foreign minister Kuznetsov arrived in Prague on 6 September as "representative of the USSR Council of Ministers"--and as supreme adviser to the CPSU Politburo on the spot. He spent most of September in Czechoslovakia, on a "fact finding mission", in private talks with many leaders. He proposed a broad expansion of Soviet advisers, but this fell through except in the case of the armed forces, the Ministry of Interior, and possibly, [redacted] in the communications sector where the assignment of 17 Soviet experts was being considered in September.* In lieu of more advisers, Kuznetsov proposed more frequent and lower level exchanges between Czechoslovak and Soviet counterpart ministerial and economic officials. He also protested Czechoslovak personnel changes without prior notification to the Soviet Union. Kuznetsov visited Husak in Slovakia on 9 September, apparently to sound out his personal opinions.

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*The existence of Soviet "advisers" in the communications sector continued to be reported at rare intervals throughout 1968 and 1969. It is probable that these reports referred to the large group of translators working in the Soviet Embassy. There is no hard evidence of Soviets being attached to Czechoslovak offices connected with the mass media.

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The Kuznetsov mission was discussed by Soviet President N.V. Podgorny in a conversation with [redacted]

Podgorny said that the mission had produced positive results, that Kuznetsov had talked with KSC functionaries on a broad scale, including district committee secretaries, and had discovered that a general misunderstanding prevailed regarding Soviet intentions and past KSC negotiations with other parties. Podgorny emphasized that those forces in the KSC on which the Soviets were relying appeared weak and incapable of action but that Svoboda, Husak, and "recently also" Premier Cernik had taken positions which came closest to meeting Soviet requirements. Podgorny described Dubcek as "shifty as a Gypsy". Podgorny also said that the upcoming meeting with Dubcek did not signify approval of his leadership but would be used to make sure that he understood and carried out the Moscow agreement of 26 August. Soviet troops, Podgorny said, would remain in Czechoslovakia.

Dubcek, Cernik, and Husak were in Moscow on 3 and 4 October and signed a communique which noted that Prague would "reinforce party and state organs with men firmly adhering to positions of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism" and will "consider and sign" a treaty on the "temporary" stationing of troops in Czechoslovakia. In a Plenum speech almost a year later, Husak said of the meeting "that is when my eyes were opened", and he saw that "the whole affair", i.e., Dubcek's management of reforms and negotiations with Soviet leaders, "was not fair play".

Party and government officials revealed, before and after the October 1968 meeting, the Czechoslovak confusion

-28-

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concerning the meaning of the "normalization" concept. The earlier cautious optimism among Czechoslovak leaders had given way to the realization that the conditions which the Soviets had imposed were harder than ever imagined. The psychological pressures being applied included what appeared to the Czechoslovaks as a deliberate obscuring of any common understanding on "normalization" in order to sow disunity within the Czechoslovak leadership.

On 8 October, leading Czechoslovak functionaries received a confidential briefing on the 3-4 October Czechoslovak-Soviet meeting from the liberal Bohumil Simon, then First Secretary of the Prague KSC committee. The conference, Simon said, was like a trial, and began with charges from Brezhnev that Novotny had been warned about negative developments in Czechoslovakia ever since the 13th Congress in 1966 but that Dubcek must bear responsibility for what happened after January 1968. Brezhnev repeatedly pulled out folders containing information on Czechoslovak personalities, including members of the Central Committee elected by the August 1968 Extraordinary 14th Congress. Brezhnev asked for details on how federalization was to affect the party and on being told that a Czech Party would be needed to parallel the Slovak Party he "suggested" that a Czech Bureau be appointed instead. Brezhnev noted further that the Soviets had information that Josef Spacek (a liberal) was a leading candidate to be secretary of the new Czech Party and that the Soviets did not think he was right for the job. He "suggested" that Lubomir Strougal (a hard-liner) was a much better candidate.* Brezhnev also "recommended" a small party based on reliable cadres rather than a mass party. Brezhnev produced folders on local party elections where anti-Soviet candidates had won and asked what kind of nonsense this was. He produced files on heretical proposals originating in the Czechoslovak Political Military Academy and asked why no action had

*Strougal was named to head the new Czech Bureau at the November plenum.

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been taken against those proposing leaving the Warsaw Pact.* New reliable cadres were needed in the Ministry of Interior, he said. Finally, after demanding winter quarters for 100,000 Soviet soldiers, Brezhnev produced another stack of files concerning the alleged persecution of conservatives. The 25 or 30 names cited included Oldrich Pavlovsky, Oldrich Svestka, and Alois Indra ("this devoted son of the working class", Brezhnev said, had been "slandered and boycotted" when he returned to Prague). Brezhnev also "recommended" personnel changes in the mass media, including replacement of the editor of Rude Pravo.

Simon, alluding to conversations with Dubcek, Cernik, and Husak, explained that the documentation for Brezhnev's complaints and demands was obtained from two groups of collaborators recruited from deposed Novotny men. At the Soviet Embassy in Prague, he said, there were close to 200 individuals who read all newspapers and collected and reported information gained from clandestine contacts. One of the most important organizers of this group, according to Simon, was former chief of the Central Committee's ideological department Pavel Auersperg.** Another group of about 100 collaborators worked in Moscow, translating documents.

Chervonenko and Kuznetsov (who had returned to spend the latter half of October in Czechoslovakia) continued to meet with such conservative leaders as Indra and Bilak. Lower level "old Communists", still being pushed in Soviet propaganda, were being used to further

*This Academy was abolished in July 1969, following a purge of its personnel.

**Although Auersperg had been purged at Soviet request two years earlier for having failed to crack down on the dissident intellectuals at that time, he figured in 1968 reports as a possible member of a collaborationist regime.

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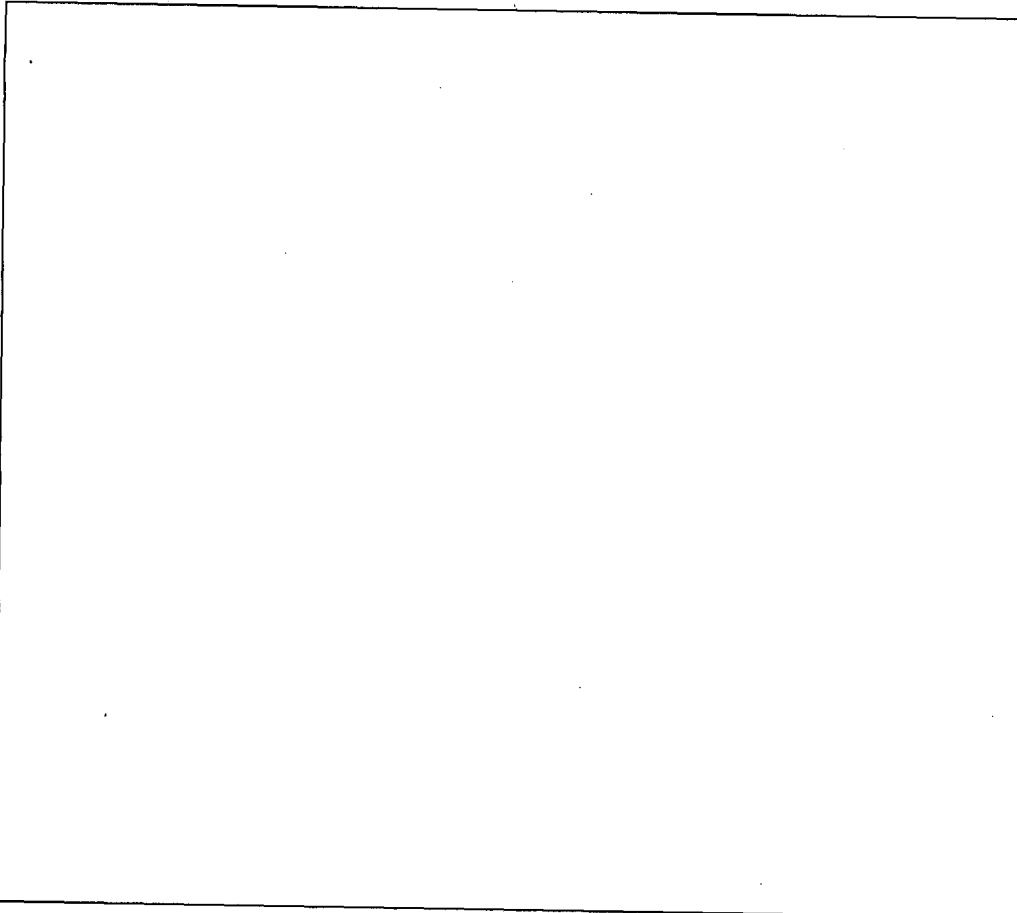
the "polarization" of Czechoslovak political life rather than being developed as a serious alternative political force.

A case in point was a meeting of "old Communists" held 9 October in Prague which approved the occupation and criticized the top leadership for ideological weakness and incompetence. According to a KSC official, the meeting had been organized by the Soviet command in Prague. Other Czechoslovak sources reported subsequently that the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs had protested to the Soviet Embassy concerning the participation of eight Soviet officials in this 9 October meeting. Kuznetsov, in his report to the CPSU Politburo on his visit to Prague, warned against open participation in fractional activity because the treaty governing stationing of troops had closed the "pacification" phase in Czechoslovakia and terror by the KGB or the immediate replacement of Dubcek would be counterproductive. "Old Communist" meetings continued, however, largely sponsored by the Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship Society which, having lost half its members through resignations, became a conservative stronghold. The programs put forward at these meetings were so extreme as to make it possible for even Indra to present himself, by the latter half of 1969, as a "moderate".

-31-

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The plenum which met from 14 to 17 November postponed the 14th Congress indefinitely; released the liberal Zdenek Mlynar, secretary and member of the KSC presidium, from all party functions at his own request, at least partly because he had been subjected to heavy KGB harassment; created an eight-member Executive Committee of the presidium; approved a resolution on the main tasks of the immediate future (which was finally cleared with Brezhnev in a secret flight by Dubcek, Cernik, and Husak to Warsaw, where Brezhnev was attending a party congress); and appointed the conservative Lubomir Strougal to four major

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party posts including chief of the newly-created Czech Bureau. Martin Vaculik, a supporter of Dubcek, was appointed chief of the Central Committee's organization department at the plenum. Shortly afterwards he gave the inside story of the plenum. Pavel Auersperg, he said, led the conservative attack, concentrating on Sik, Spacek, Mlynar, and Kriegel. His speech was answered from the floor by a liberal member demanding the names of the traitors who had invited in the Soviet troops. At this point both Cernik and Husak reminded the plenum that what was past was past and that the Moscow agreements of August prohibited any such discussion. Strougal supported the "realistic" approach of Husak and Cernik and praised the loyalty of Bilak, Kolder, and Indra.* It became clear by the end of the plenum, Vaculik said, that Dubcek had lost control to the triumvirate of Cernik, Husak, and Strougal. This new leadership, Vaculik felt, was better suited to Soviet ends than were the old "true Communists" still being praised by the Soviet-sponsored Radio Vltava and the occupation daily Zpravy.

A KSC official with access to senior party and government officials reported in mid-November that Strougal was typical of those being courted by the Soviets. He added that the Soviets would continue to use the hardliners to split the liberal front but the Soviets were no longer considering collaboration with them. Noting that "Soviet financial outlays to entertain and cultivate persons who interest the Kremlin have increased markedly", this source alleged that Dubcek's personal secretary, Zbynek Sojak, was by then a paid Soviet agent and was supplying the Kremlin with copies of every document which reached Dubcek's desk.

*At subsequent regional meetings, Strougal defended them again, as well as Lenart and Piller, claiming that all these men had demanded Dubcek's return in August.

-33-

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In this increasingly favorable atmosphere, the Soviets pressed ahead to consolidate their hold on the Czechoslovak security apparatus. [redacted] reported in November that Soviet advisers had returned to their posts in the Ministry of Interior in early September but that they were still somewhat isolated. Over the next three months, however, the numbers and authority of the Soviet advisers steadily increased. Especially important to the resurgence of KGB control in the Ministry of Interior was the return to Czechoslovakia, probably from the USSR, of two influential conservatives, Miroslav Mamula and Vilem Salgovic, both probably long-time KGB agents. Personnel matters in the ministries of interior and national defense were discussed by Czechoslovak and Soviet leaders in Kiev in the second week of December. On 16 December, high-level changes were made in the Ministry of Interior and in Dubcek's secretariat.

By the time Kuznetsov's second visit to Prague ended, on 25 November, day-to-day Soviet liaison activities may have returned to Ambassador Chervonenko. However, Soviet delegations of various sorts continued to visit Prague with specific personnel changes to recommend to their Czechoslovak counterparts. Many of these delegations met with Bilak and Indra, who were especially active in local party meetings during the period. On 16 December, Marko, deputy chairman of the Slovak National Council, was invited to go to Moscow. His visit coincided with the visit of acting minister of foreign affairs Pleskot. In light of his subsequent appointment as minister of foreign affairs, coincident with the federalization of the republic on 1 January 1969, Marko's visit seems to have been in line with the Soviet policy of courting and assessing at first hand future leaders.

Despite the increasingly favorable leadership attitudes and the tightening Soviet control of the security apparatus the spirit of popular resistance lived on. The mass media were not yet under control, students had sparked periodic disturbances, and the metal workers had threatened to strike if the liberal and popular Czech, Smrkovsky, was removed from the government. The Soviets evidently felt that it was time for another turn of the screw. On

-34-

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2 January Katushev called on Dubcek; on 3 January Dubcek told the full Presidium that "the state is in danger". On 10 January Cernik confided to the president of the Journalists Union that a new Soviet intervention could be triggered by demonstrations. That day the metal workers dropped their strike plan. Indicative of the increased Soviet pressure was a story passed to the American Embassy on 15 January, on the eve of the Central Committee plenum, that the Soviets had vetoed six Czechoslovak nominees for a state secretary in the Ministry of National Defense. At the plenum, Husak recommended a crackdown on the media (the Slovak Central Committee members were reportedly then voting in a bloc under Husak's guidance) and Indra urged that the time had come to seek out the "traitors" in the party. A Rumanian diplomat in Prague judged, following the plenum, that the Soviets had by then succeeded in splitting the party.

On 16 January, with the Central Committee in session and its mood plain to the people of Prague, the student Jan Palach committed suicide by fire. Renewed student demonstrations followed on 18-20 January. The next two-to-three month period seemed one of disarray on all sides. The fairly clear-cut pattern of Soviet pressure aimed at dismantling Dubcek's control of the situation and creating the prerequisites for their own control was no longer so discernible. The popular resistance which Dubcek had been able to lead, and restrain, now became more erratic. Media ferment continued. The House of People in the new federal parliament elected Smrkovsky as its chairman, despite, or perhaps partly because he had become the subject of attacks in anonymous pamphlets.* In a speech on

*Although the pamphlets were sometimes reported to be of Polish or East German origin, one report from a well-placed source states that the anti-Smrkovsky pamphlets were drafted by Kolder himself after consultations between Minister of Interior Pelnar and the Soviets.

-35-

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5 February Dubcek himself joined the liberal counter-attack. By mid-February the liberals apparently felt that Soviet pressure was easing, possibly in anticipation of the coming International Communist Conference. Accordingly the liberals prepared a new draft law on workers councils and planned a discussion of the report of the rehabilitation committee (with its attendant dangers to conservatives and Soviets) at the next Central Committee plenum.

East European leaders who visited Moscow in February 1969 reported to their own parties, on a highly confidential basis, the thoughts of Brezhnev himself on the state of affairs in Czechoslovakia. [redacted]

Brezhnev also gave his views on the problem in late February to a visiting East European official. Brezhnev saw the Czechoslovak workers council plan as a means to cut off the party from the workers but his talks with the "hypocrite" Dubcek on this matter, he said, had been ineffectual. Rehabilitation, he added, should not be introduced during the current tense internal situation. "It seems", the East European source concluded, for the benefit of his own party and government (and Brezhnev may have meant the lesson to be so taken) "that the Soviet comrades now regret that more radical means were not used against counterrevolutionary and rightist elements after the allied military intervention". The source added that the Soviet Union was continuing to assist "loyal Czechoslovak forces", using, among other things, a continuous exchange of delegations; he mentioned specifically the visit of Pelshe, Chairman of the Party Control Commission of the CPSU.

-36-

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Pelshe was in Czechoslovakia from 27 February to 12 March. On 24 March a meeting of Czechoslovak party control specialists was held in Prague. It seems likely that Pelshe presented to the Czechoslovaks detailed plans for a party purge. Josef Kempny, then secretary for mass media, visited Moscow for the first time from 27 February to 6 March. During his visit he had a seven-hour talk with Brezhnev. At the end of September 1969 Kempny replaced Dubcek in the party Presidium and became deputy federal premier and Czech premier, although he had never held a national post until November 1968.

A final piece to put in place is the Slovak plenum of 13 March. Strougal was the principal guest; Dubcek was absent. The plenum strengthened the hardliners and fully confirmed Husak's hold on the Slovak party.

April-September 1969: Control Restored

The 28-29 March anti-Soviet demonstrations throughout Czechoslovakia, following the Czechoslovak victory over the Soviet Union in the World Ice Hockey Championships in Stockholm, destroyed the premises on which the struggle had been based since the August negotiations in Moscow and permitted the Soviets to complete, in a few weeks, the creation of the prerequisites for complete control. Dubcek had been permitted to remain because it was feared by the CPSU that his removal might have precipitated violence. But now the disturbances he countenanced seemed more dangerous than those which his removal might evoke. Whether or not the Soviets themselves provoked the violence (as the liberals contended) the Soviets interpreted the demonstrations as a breach of the Moscow agreement of 26 August 1968.* There were also

*According to one report Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov told Dubcek and Cernik explicitly that "the demonstrations violated the Moscow Agreement of 26 August 1968".

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indications that the hardliners whom the Soviets had been cultivating, even though they had decided not to collaborate with them, were about to get out of hand as well; the civil strife which they pretended to have prevented by their intervention seemed about to become a reality. Widely interpreted as a sign of Soviet failure, the events of March and April 1969 in fact put the seal of success on the strategy that the Soviets had followed since August 1968.

The initial demonstrations were certainly spontaneous and generally good natured. The accusation published by Tass on 31 March that Smrkovsky had personally taken part in sacking the Aeroflot office clearly indicated how the Soviets were going to use the disturbances. The dissident forces could hardly continue the struggle. When students entered the factories on 3 and 4 April in an attempt to get worker support, they did not get it. The simultaneous arrival on 31 March of Marshal Grechko, Soviet Minister of Defense, and Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Semenov, both uninvited and unannounced, indicated the Soviet readiness to act. [redacted]

[redacted] have identified both Grechko and Semenov (singly, and not together) as plenipotentiary representatives of the CPSU Politburo. It is generally agreed that they delivered an ultimatum, at the least a "last serious warning". This message certainly included the threat that if the Czechoslovaks could not restore order then the Soviets would. While it is also credible that they spoke of creating a military occupation regime, it is doubtful that this was the Politburo plan--the intent of such a threat would more likely have been to underscore the credibility of Soviet military force.

Reporting on the first few days of the new negotiations is obscured by an apparent attempt by hardline Czechoslovak officers to seize power for themselves. Several of these reports name Brigadier General Vaclav Dvorak as the man who proposed a military takeover to Svoboda. Some of these reports go on to say that Grechko's subsequent demand was similarly couched. The bulk of the evidence, however, suggests that the Soviets did not back

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the Czechoslovak generals (although the generals may have been in contact with local Soviet forces) and that Svoboda's tour of military headquarters the first week of April, was undertaken with Soviet approval (some reports say on Grechko's advice) to prevent any disruptive action, liberal or hardline, by the Czechoslovak military. It is certain that the Soviets demanded the removal of Dubcek; it is less certain, although widely reported, that Husak was the first to stand up to the Soviets and to prevent capitulation to their alleged proposal for an occupation regime.

By 2 April Czechoslovak security forces were on full alert. The Presidium put the blame for the disturbances on the media and changes in the editorial board of Rude Pravo were announced on 4 April. Moscow radio broadcasts in Czech began spotting other press targets. On 8 April the progressive chairman of the Czech Office of Press and Information, Josef Vohnout, was replaced by the conservative Josef Havlin. On 11 April, in a speech in Slovakia, Gustav Husak criticized the party leadership for its "lack of consistency, half-heartedness, and lack of unity". The same day a plenum meeting was announced for 17 April. Rumors of threatening Soviet troop movements were spreading unease. On 12 April Radio Prague first broadcast and then rescinded an announcement that additional Soviet troops were entering the country. Warsaw Pact air defense maneuvers, however, did take place on 14-16 April in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the Soviet Union. This was not "another August"--it was another "July," and the Soviet military threat was at last working as it was supposed to have functioned earlier. The Czechoslovak party leadership was intimidated into fundamental organizational concessions.

It is possible, as some reports state, that the Soviets had been "negotiating" with Husak even before the hockey riots. In any case, Husak was by now the most vital force on the Czechoslovak Political scene. He obtained a Slovak Central Committee resolution asking Dubcek to step down, which he did, and, with the Slovak bloc of 45 votes solidly behind him Husak won election as first secretary in the federal Central Committee with only 27 dissenting votes out of about 180. In addition to replacing Dubcek with Husak,

-39-

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the 17 April plenum reduced the Presidium from 23 to 11. Of those dropped, 11 were liberals including Smrkovsky. Dubcek stayed on as a member of the presidium. The plenum also replaced the editor of Rude Pravo. On the eve of the plenum, as its last act, the old Executive Committee declared that Bilak, Barbirek, Kolder, Piller, Rigo, Svestka, Lenart, Kapek, Indra, and Jakes, all conservatives, had been "slandered" by mass media allegations of treason and collaboration. On 24 April Vienna Radio announced that 17 department heads in Czech television had been dismissed. Husak was then in Moscow meeting with Ulbricht, Gomulka, and Kadar.

The "clean-up" of the mass media was swift and ruthless. Following a 6 May Presidium communique stating that the press must participate in "normalization," another wave of editors were changed and papers banned. On 7 May the Slovak government appointed new radio and television directors. The outspoken weeklies Listy and Reporter were banned on 15 May. The editor of the trade union daily Prace resigned that day. The Soviet black daily Zpravy was finally discontinued.

On 30 April Rude Pravo published a statement by four scientists supporting the new line under a heading that implied that they spoke for the union of scientific workers. The outcry was so loud that Rude Pravo backtracked on 6 May and published an apology. [redacted]

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On 12 May the Ministry of Interior party organs met and elected new leaders. On 14 May the press revealed that Pavel Auersperg, a conservative closely allied with pro-Soviet elements, had become chief of the international relations department of the KSC Central Committee. The most far-reaching changes of this period, however, hit the regional organizations of Bohemia and Moravia where a whirlwind tour by Czech Bureau chief Lubomir Strougal removed all editors and many committee members having liberal tendencies. Bohumil Simon and the entire Prague presidium--they had been responsible for convening the 14th Congress during the invasion--resigned on 2 June.

On 16 May a lecture by an Izvestiya editor in Moscow praised the Czechoslovak leadership changes as reflecting "deeper processes." The March riots, the editor said, had brought a sharp polarization in the KSC, a process which had been aided by the "intelligent policy of the CPSU, in particular General Secretary L. I. Brezhnev." On 23 May a Soviet economic delegation led by Deputy Premier Baybakov arrived in Prague, and during the 29-30 May KSC plenum, Husak and Cernik signalled the reversal of the Czechoslovak economic reform.

The May plenum also purged from the Central Committee six liberals including Ota Sik and Frantisek Kriegal (who was also purged from the party). The formal criteria for the purge were having voted against or abstained from voting during the parliamentary approval of the troop-stationing treaty in October and/or having signed the "2,000 Words" manifesto in June 1968--and subsequently failing to make a self criticism. In the first week of June Strougal was named "deputized first secretary," a new post, apparently deriving from his position as chief of the Czech Bureau. Kolder and Indra began stumping the countryside calling for the "pulverizing" of "rightist opportunist forces." On 12 June the chairmen of the KSC control and audit commissions met in Prague to hear Federal Chairman Milos Jakes tell of 2,000 such commissions being set up at local and enterprise levels to deal with "right wing opportunist" and "anti-socialist" forces. The April and May plenums

-41-

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were described as follows by Strougal in an editorial on 8 October:

"The April session created the basic prerequisites for the complete defeat of the reformist, non-Marxist, and anti-socialist attempts. . . a policy which received its first clear features at the May plenum."

Husak, who had visited Budapest on 15 May, Warsaw on 24 May, and East Berlin on 26 May, then led the Czechoslovak delegation to the International Communist Conference in Moscow in June. The behavior of the Czechoslovak delegation guaranteed the Soviets a facade of unity at the international conference that would have been unimaginable a few months earlier.

In early July Bilak began urging Central Committee officials to publish analyses of the August 1968 events, adding that the Soviet action in August 1968 would have to be justified publicly. Articles approving the Soviet presence and justifying the invasion appeared in mid and late July. The July-August 1969 anniversaries of Cierna, Bratislava, and the invasion itself brought an across-the-board effort to rewrite history. Most of the leading conservatives (and Cernik as well) made public statements on what had happened, what they had done and thought. "Secret" party documents and Ministry of Interior reports dating from before the intervention were published to refute the liberal contention that everything had been under control. On 19 August, Husak gave a speech detailing Dubcek's alleged errors--refusal to attend the Warsaw meeting in July 1968, failure to implement the Cierna and Bratislava accords, and failure to tell of the 19 August 1968 letter from the CPSU Politburo, which he had in his pocket the night of the invasion.

Despite rumors of new Warsaw Pact maneuvers which would have justified a massive redeployment of Soviet troops, the security arrangements for the anniversary of the invasion were entirely in Czechoslovak hands. The demonstrators who did protest defiantly (the demonstrations were

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largely peaceful) were beaten by their own countrymen. On 22 August the Federal Assembly proclaimed a temporary hardline law (which became permanent in November) to control all manifestations of dissent. One of the signatures on this law was that of Alexander Dubcek. It was to be virtually his last public act. On 28 August Husak was awarded the Order of Lenin. On 29 August, in a speech on the anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising, Husak said that the Soviets had intervened from a desire to help.

The Soviet award to Husak and his indirect justification of the invasion apparently brought to an end a phase in which the Soviets seemed to have deliberately played Strougal and Husak against one another. Husak remains isolated--Strougal controls the apparatus in Bohemia and Moravia and is reported to command the loyalty of two thirds of the KSC Secretariat while Bilak may be making inroads on Husak's one-time power base in Slovakia. Recent reports speak of two outright Soviet agents in Husak's office. And there is a conservative cry for further purges and even trials. Husak retains a majority in the crucial Presidium, but he also depends on Soviet support against his domestic opponents and, as a "realist" student of history, he is all the more likely to carry out Soviet orders. There is no reason to believe that the Soviets want to see him replaced. There is every reason to believe that their control is completely restored.

Disciplinary action against party members responsible for the "2,000 Words" and against officers responsible for the "anti-Soviet" document issued by the Political Military Academy was taken in early September. The plenum of 25-26 September removed 29 members of the Central Committee including former minister Hajek and Joseph Smrkovsky. Dubcek, while not removed from the Central Committee, lost his seat on the Presidium and subsequently lost his government post as well. The plenum also annulled the Central Committee decision of 19 July 1968 concerning the Warsaw meeting, annulled the Presidium resolution adopted on the night of the invasion, and formally invalidated the aborted 14th Congress. Husak announced a general reissuance of party cards, presaging a thoroughgoing purge of party,

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state, and social organizations. Government changes of 28 September included the return of Karel Hoffmann to the post of Minister-Chairman of the Committee for Post and Telecommunications. A line from the opening paragraph of Husak's closing speech to the September plenum might serve as an epitaph for the era which this plenum closed:

"A comrade said here in the discussion--he has since left this hall--that history will judge this or that phase. It was meant somewhat as a warning. I too have interested myself a little in history during my life, both voluntarily and sometimes because I was forced to do so . . ."

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Dramatis Personae

Soviets

Andropov	--	Chairman of the Committee for State Security (KGB); candidate member of the Politburo
Baybakov	--	Chairman of the State Planning Commission (Gosplan) and Deputy Premier
Blatov	--	Deputy Chief of the Central Committee department for liaison with ruling Communist Parties
Brezhnev	--	General Secretary of the CPSU; member of Politburo
Chervonenko	--	Ambassador to Czechoslovakia
Grechko	--	Minister of Defense
Gromyko	--	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Katushev	--	Secretary of the Central Committee, junior member responsible for liaison with ruling Communist Parties
Kirilenko	--	Secretary of the Central Committee, senior member responsible for liaison with ruling Communist Parties; member of Politburo
Kosygin	--	Chairman of the Council of Ministers (Premier); member of Politburo

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Soviets (Continued)

Kulakov	--	Secretary of the Central Committee
Kuznetsov	--	First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Pelshe	--	Chairman of the Party Control Commission; member of Politburo
Podgornyy	--	Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet (President); member of Politburo
Polyanskiy	--	First Deputy Premier (one of two); member of Politburo
Ponomarev	--	Secretary of the Central Committee and chief of the Central Committee International Department (for liaison with non-ruling Communist Parties)
Rusakov	--	Chief of the Central Committee department for liaison with ruling Communist Parties
Semenov	--	Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Yakubovskiy	--	First Deputy Minister of Defense and Commander-in-Chief of Warsaw Pact Forces
Yepishev	--	Chief of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy in the Ministry of Defense

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Czechs (Cz) and Slovaks (S)

Czechoslovak CP - KSC
Slovak CP - KSS

Auersperg, Pavel (Cz) -- Conservative; onetime chief of the KSC ideological department under Novotny; widely considered a Soviet agent immediately before and for some time after the invasion; now chief of the KSC international department under Husak.

Barbirek, Frantisek (S) -- Conservative; a presidium candidate member under both Novotny and Dubcek; now a member of the Slovak government.

Bilak, Vasil -- Ruthenian or Ukrainian -- Conservative; Secretary and Presidium member under Novotny, Dubcek, and Husak; replaced Dubcek as First Secretary of the KSS in January 1968 and was himself replaced in this post by Husak in August 1968; now making a comeback in KSS.

Cernik, Oldrich (Cz) -- moderate; deputy premier and chairman of the State Planning Commission under Novotny, premier and a member of the KSC presidium since early in the Dubcek era.

Chudik, Michal (S) -- conservative; member of KSC presidium and chairman of the Slovak National Council under Novotny; inactive under Dubcek and Husak.

Cisar, Cestmir (Cz) -- liberal or moderate; ambassador to Rumania under Novotny; Secretary of the KSC under Dubcek; chairman of the Czech National Council under Husak.

Dolansky, Jaromir (Cz) -- member of the KSC Presidium under Novotny; now retired.

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- Dubcek, Alexander (S) -- moderate, first secretary of the KSS under Novotny; first secretary of the KSC from January 1968 to April 1969; continued as KSC presidium member and president of Federal Assembly until September/October 1969.
- Dvorak, Vaclav (Cz) -- conservative; deputy minister of state planning under Novotny; a state secretary in the ministry of national defense under Dubcek and Husak.
- Dzur, Martin (S) -- moderate; deputy minister of national defense under Novotny; Minister of National Defense under Dubcek and Husak.
- Erban, Evzen (Cz) -- moderate; chairman of the state material reserves authority under Novotny; member of the KSC presidium and Chairman of the National Front under Dubcek and Husak.
- Hajek, Jiri (Cz) -- liberal or moderate; Minister of Education under Novotny; Minister of Foreign Affairs under Dubcek (relieved shortly after invasion); director of political institute under Husak.
- Havlin, Josef (Cz) -- conservative; chief of KSC department for education and science under Novotny and Dubcek; now director of federal office for press and information.
- Hendrych, Jiri (Cz) -- conservative; member of presidium and a secretary of KSC under Novotny; continued as member of Central Committee under Dubcek and Husak.
- Hoffmann, Karel (Cz) -- conservative, Minister of Culture under Novotny; Minister of Telecommunications under Dubcek until invasion; minister-chairman of federal committee for posts and telecommunications after September 1969 plenum.

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- Husak, Gustav (S) -- moderate, "realist," or conservative; imprisoned and only very lately rehabilitated under Novotny; deputy premier under Dubcek until invasion; First Secretary of KSS from invasion to April 1969 plenum; First Secretary of KSC since April 1969 plenum.
- Indra, Alois (born in Slovakia of Czech parents) -- conservative; Minister of Transportation under Novotny; KSC secretary under Dubcek and Husak; strongly sponsored by the Soviets in 1968.
- Jakes, Milos (Cz) -- conservative; deputy minister of interior under Novotny; Chairman of the KSC Control and Auditing Commission under Dubcek and Husak; widely considered a Soviet agent in 1968.
- Janko, Vladimir (Cz) -- conservative; deputy minister of National Defense under Novotny; committed suicide in March 1968.
- Kapek, Antonin (Cz) -- conservative, candidate member of KSC Presidium under Novotny and Dubcek; now a secretary in the Czech Bureau.
- Kaspar, Jan (origin unknown) -- conservative; KSC department chief under Dubcek and Husak.
- Kempny, Josef (Cz) -- moderate; chairman of the North Moravian National Committee under Novotny and up to invasion; KSC secretary under Dubcek after invasion; member of KSC presidium and Czech Bureau, federal deputy premier and Czech premier after September 1969 plenum.
- Klokoc, Ondrej (S) -- moderate; editor in chief of Bratislava Pravda under Novotny; Chairman of the Slovak National Council under Dubcek and Husak.

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Kodaj, Samuel (S) -- conservative; lieutenant general; deputy chief of the army political HQ under Novotny; chief of political administration in Eastern Military District under Dubcek; Commander of Eastern Military District under Husak.

Kolder, Drahomir (Cz) -- conservative; secretary and member of the presidium of the KSC under Novotny and under Dubcek until invasion; making comeback in Czech Bureau under Husak.

Koucky, Vladimir (Cz) -- conservative; secretary of the KSC under Novotny; ambassador to Moscow under Dubcek and Husak.

Kriegel, Frantisek (Cz) -- liberal; member of National Assembly under Novotny; member of KSC Presidium and Chairman of National Front under Dubcek; purged from Presidium in April 1969 and from Central Committee and Party in May 1969.

Lastovicka, Bohuslav (Cz) -- conservative; member of KSC presidium and Chairman of the National Assembly under Novotny; inactive under Dubcek and Husak.

Lenart, Josef (S) -- moderate or conservative; premier under Novotny; KSC secretary under Dubcek and Husak.

Lomsky, Bohumir (Cz) -- conservative; Minister of National Defense under Novotny; inactive under Dubcek and Husak.

Mamula, Miroslav (Cz) -- conservative; chief of KSC Department of State Administration under Novotny; widely regarded as Soviet agent in 1968.

Marko, Jan (S) -- moderate; Slovak commissioner for technology under Novotny; Minister of Foreign Affairs since federalization, 1 January 1969.

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- Mlynar, Zdenek (Cz) -- liberal; worked in academic institute for state and law under Novotny; secretary and member of presidium of KSC under Dubcek; resigned November 1968.
- Novotny, Antonin (Cz) -- First Secretary of KSC until January 1968; President until March 1968; inactive under Dubcek and Husak.
- Pastyrlik, Miroslav (Cz) -- conservative; chairman of the Central Council of Trade Unions under Novotny; member of KSC Central Committee under Dubcek and Husak.
- Pavel, Josef (Cz) liberal, worked in Czechoslovak Union of Physical Training under Novotny; Minister of Interior under Dubcek until immediately after invasion; presently subject of continuing conservative attacks.
- Pavlovsky, Oldrich (Cz) -- conservative; ambassador to Moscow under Novotny; Minister of Internal Trade under Dubcek; Ambassador to Finland under Husak.
- Pelnar, Jan (Cz) -- moderate; chairman of the West Bohemian National Committee under Novotny and up to invasion; Minister of Interior since September 1968.
- Piller, Jan (Cz) -- conservative; deputy premier under Novotny; member of KSC presidium under Dubcek and Husak.
- Pleskot, Vaclav (Cz) -- moderate; deputy minister of foreign affairs under Novotny; state secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Dubcek; acted as Minister of Foreign Affairs September to December 1968.
- Prochlik, Vaclav (Cz) -- liberal; Chief of Main Political Directorate in army under Novotny; Chief of KSC Department of State Administration from February 1968 when he replaced Mamula until July 1968 when department was dissolved as concession to Soviets; widely regarded as having played key role in turning Dubcek to liberalism and in cutting Soviet control; expelled from KSC Central Committee in September 1969; parliamentary immunity removed in apparent preparation for trial.

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- Rigo, Emil (S) -- conservative; chairman of the KSS committee in the East/Slovak Iron Works under Novotny; member of KSC Presidium under Dubcek until after invasion; now heads personnel department in East Slovak Iron Works.
- Sadovsky, Stefan (S) -- moderate; KSC secretary under Novotny; member of KSC presidium under Dubcek and Husak; replaced Husak as First Secretary of KSS when Husak replaced Dubcek as First Secretary of KSC.
- Salgovic, Vilem (S) -- conservative; Chairman of KSS Control and Auditing Commission under Novotny; deputy Minister of Interior under Dubcek from June 1968 until invasion; now a military attache in Budapest; widely regarded as key Soviet agent in preparing for the invasion; officially "rehabilitated" in June 1969; recently admitted (October 1969) having had warning of invasion several hours in advance.
- Sejna, Jan (Cz) -- conservative; chief of KSC Committee in the Ministry of National Defense under Novotny; defected to West in February 1968.
- Sik, Ota (Cz) -- liberal; director of Academy of Sciences economics institute and member of State Planning Commission and KSC Economic Commission under Novotny; chief architect of economic reform; deputy premier under Dubcek until invasion, remained abroad thereafter.
- Simon, Bohumil (Cz) -- liberal; chief of KSC department of state economy under Novotny; member of KSC presidium and First Secretary of Prague KSC Committee under Dubcek; resigned in June 1969.

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Simunek, Otakar (Cz) -- conservative; deputy premier under Novotny; inactive under Dubcek and Husak.

Smrkovsky, Josef (Cz) -- liberal; worked in Ministry of Forestry and Water Conservation under Novotny; member of KSC Presidium under Dubcek; President of National Assembly until January 1969; Chairman of Chamber of People, February to September 1969; resigned from Central Committee at September 1969 plenum.

Sojak, Zbynek (Cz) -- conservative; section chief in KSC Central Committee under Novotny; chief of the secretariat of the KSC First Secretary under Dubcek and Husak.

Spacek, Josef (Cz) -- liberal; chief secretary of the South Moravian KSC committee under Novotny and until May 1969; secretary and member of the KSC presidium under Dubcek; now inactive.

Strougal, Lubomir (Cz) -- conservative; KSC secretary under Novotny; deputy premier under Dubcek (and as such voiced liberal demands immediately after invasion); Chairman of the Czech Bureau since its creation in November 1969 (and as such purged liberals in regional organizations); Deputy First Secretary of KSC under Husak.

Sulek, Miroslav (Cz) -- conservative; chief of Czech News Agency CTK under Novotny and until invasion.

Svestka, Oldrich (Cz) -- conservative; editor-in-chief of Rude Pravo under Novotny and until invasion; now editor-in-chief of Tribuna.

A-9

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Svoboda, Ludvik (Cz) -- moderate; retired under Novotny;
President under Dubcek and Husak.

Vaculik, Martin (Cz) -- liberal; First Secretary of the
Prague KSC Committee under Novotny; candidate
member of KSC Presidium under Dubcek; resigned
from Central Committee at September 1969 plenum.

Vohnout, Josef (Cz) -- liberal; Director of Office of
Press and Information under Dubcek; now deputy
editor-in-chief of Zivot Strany.

A-10

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