

CZECHOSLOVAK NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY THE COUNCIL OF FREE CZECHOSLOVAKIA

420 East 71 Street, New York, NY 10021

Telephone: (212) 861-0916

Vol. VI, No. 3 (54)

March 1981

CONTENTS

Two Faces of Soviet Policy	p. 1
International Terrorism	p. 3
The Polish Events and Czechoslovakia	p. 4
Economic News	p. 6
Census 1980	p. 8

TWO FACES OF SOVIET POLICY

Contradictory forces are at work in lands where Marx and Lenin predicted that contradictions would be eliminated. Moscow, the fountainhead of "real socialism," lauds patriotism as the highest moral duty at home, but reviles national feelings in its East European empire (and in the non-Russian areas of the Soviet Union) in the name of "proletarian internationalism," the code words to justify intervention in recalcitrant states of the "socialist camp." Known in the West as the Brezhnev doctrine, proletarian internationalism was invoked against Czechoslovakia in 1968 and is now being invoked again against Poland. While the Soviet Union aims to establish a universal "Russified" empire, non-Russian nations have responded with increasing hostility and desires for national self-determination.

Czechoslovakia's own controlled press has cited proletarian internationalism as the justification for the 1968 invasion of the country by the forces of the Warsaw Pact. Slovanský přehled (Slavic Review), the bimonthly journal of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and the Institute of the History of the European Socialist States of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, published an article in its issue No. 5, 1975, by Václav Melichar, who observed: "We must constantly bear it in mind that the defense of socialism is an innately collective concern [of all the socialist countries], . . . that the defense of the socialist world's western frontier is not the single concern of individual states but an international obligation of the whole socialist community. . . . As one, the socialist states will tolerate no threat to the socialist system."

In 1976 Bohumil Němec published an article on proletarian internationalism in two Czech journals, Historie a vojenství (History and Military Science), the bimonthly of the Prague Institute of Military History, and Nová mysl [New Thought], the political theoretical monthly of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Němec emphasized: "The international interests of the working

class must never be allowed to become subordinate to narrow national interest. . . Under socialism national and international interests merge, . . . but it is wrong to equate specific national interest with international interest. It would violate the dialectics of national and international interests. and it would devalue internationalism."

The impact of the continuing crisis in Poland has been to gear up the propaganda machines of Prague and Bratislava to promote proletarian internationalism anew. Nová mysl, No. 11, 1980, carried a nine-page article entitled "Proletarian and Socialist Internationalism." "The working class and the communist parties," it stated, "cannot yield on this principle lest they lose a powerful and well-tested weapon. The protocol of the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union declared proletarian internationalism to be the militant solidarity of all sectors of the international working class, regardless of ethnic, racial, national or religious differences. [When the working class is in power] it is under the obligation to exploit all the opportunities offered by the state. Proletarian internationalism becomes state policy. Lenin wrote: 'I cannot reason from the point of view of my own country, but from that of my part in preparing, propagating and accelerating world revolution.'" Nationalism, the article stated, is "the gravest threat to communism." Similar theses appeared in Rudé právo (Red Right), the Czechoslovak party Central Committee's daily, on November 6, 1980, and in Práca (Labor), the daily of the Slovak Council of Trade Unions, on November 22.

While Gustáv Husák's regime has been extolling proletarian internationalism in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union has recently been playing up the idea of the homeland (rodina). Lenin may have asserted that "workers have no homeland," but President Leonid Brezhnev has been saying that the supreme duty is love of the homeland. The dichotomy between Soviet attitudes at home and abroad serves the single purpose of exercising control over the Soviet empire. Harrison E. Salisbury, an expert commentator on the Soviet Union, remarked in The New York Times on February 1: "Soviet ideological preparations for the solution of external problems by military means are well advanced. . . . The objective of this campaign, carried on directly by the Soviet military and security forces, is to prepare the population, particularly the young, for patriotism as the highest moral duty and for war as the supreme act of man. In this effort can be heard distant echoes of Mussolini's and Hitler's calls to 'national greatness'." And in his book The Russian New Right: Right-Wing Ideologies in the Contemporary USSR (Berkeley, 1978) Alexander Yanov warns, perhaps with some overstatement, of the danger of a possible future amalgamation of Stalinist totalitarianism and Great-Russian chauvinism.

This dichotomous Soviet policy cannot afford to be ignored now that the rise of Polish patriotism is being watched closely not only by other East European countries but also by the non-Russian inhabitants of the Soviet Union itself. To counter this trend, Soviet agents have been trying to stir up anti-Semitism and to portray Jews as the source of anti-Soviet feeling abroad and hostility toward the Russians at home. Yet anti-Soviet sentiments are on the rise throughout East Europe, including among Czechs and Slovaks, who traditionally felt warmly for Russians.

Andrey Amalrik in Will the Soviet Union Survive until 1984? (New York, 1970) wrote: "The nationalist tendencies of the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union will intensify sharply, first in the Baltic area, the Caucasus and the Ukraine,

then in Central Asia and along the Volga. . . . I have no doubt that this great Eastern Slav empire, created by Germans, Byzantines and Mongols, has entered the last decades of its existence." And we might add that these tendencies will intensify not only among the Soviet Union's own non-Russian peoples but also among all the peoples of the whole Soviet empire outside the frontiers of the USSR. But before this happens, the world will face a very dangerous decade.

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Munich Radios Bombed

Several persons were seriously injured, including three employees of Slovak origin, and extensive damage was done when a bomb exploded on Saturday, February 21, in the Munich headquarters of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. Only one week earlier Soviet Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko had written to Secretary of State Alexander Haig that the two radio stations under United States control were making "provocative and instigatory broadcasts that were an open interference in Polish affairs."

Mojmír Povolný, the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia, sent a letter of sympathy to Glen Ferguson, president of the two radios in Munich, with copies to Ralph E. Walter, vicepresident of the International Broadcasting Corporation in Washington, and to the US State Department. The letter stated in part:

"We are happy that the bombing did not result in the loss of human lives, but we are very concerned about the injuries suffered by several of your staff members and among them especially the three Slovak members of the Czechoslovak section. We shall appreciate it very much if you convey to all the victims our concern, sympathy, and best wishes for their full and speedy recovery.

"It is obvious that the bombing was a terrorist act and an attack on the freedom of speech, information and communication on the international plane that your services have represented so successfully since their establishment. It is no coincidence that this vile act was perpetrated at a time when Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty is again under a concerted attack from the Soviet Union and the Central and East European communist countries for bringing objective news, information, and the truth to their peoples to whom they themselves are denying them as a matter of principle. The seed of hatred sown most recently in the Soviet and other communist governments' attacks against your services at the second review session of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in Madrid has produced its brutal fruit in the Munich bombing. They should be and will be held responsible for this crime which has hurt not only your services but which is directed against the rights of man and his liberty everywhere."

Czechoslovak Aid to Terrorists

"As long ago as 1971, Czechoslovakian weapons en route to the Irish Republican Army were seized in Amsterdam," wrote Samuel T. Francis, a specialist in international terrorism, in The New York Times on March 8. Meanwhile a State Department report released in Washington has made public that Jorge Shafik Handal, secretary general of the Communist Party of El Salvador, visited Czechoslovakia last June 24 through 27, and there "was received by Vasil Bil'ak, second secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Bil'ak said that some Czech arms circulating in the world market would be provided so that these arms would not be traced back to Czechoslovakia as the donor country. Transportation would be coordinated with the German Democratic Republic." (Cf. report on the training of professional revolutionaries in Czechoslovakia in Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. III. No. 5 [May 1978], p. 1.) In communist Czechoslovakia gun-running has a long tradition as part of the Soviet scheme to destabilize the noncommunist world.

Alexander Haig Criticized

Rudé právo (Red Right), the daily newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, denounced Secretary of State Alexander Haig on February 5 for accusing the Soviet Union of supporting terrorism. These accusations, Rudé právo wrote, "were not made in Washington for no purpose. After the failure of the 'human rights' campaign, the new administration has launched a new drive. Blaming the socialist countries for supporting international terrorism has a three-fold aim: to discredit the policy of peace of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries; to pervert the essence of national liberation struggles; and to lay a basis for interference in the domestic affairs of other countries. In general, it aims to undermine the process of international detente and to accelerate the arms race. . . . The war against terrorism is supposed to take priority and relegate human rights to a secondary issue. . . . [The United States administration] wants to identify national liberation movements with international terrorism, wants to label as terrorists fighters against imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism, and for the freedom of nations. . . . How else can one explain Haig's crudely insulting remarks against the Palestine Liberation Movement and the struggle of progressive forces in Latin America and elsewhere in the world? A bridgehead is to be established to permit military intervention in El Salvador, to change Nicaragua into a new Chile, and to drown in blood progressive movements fighting for social justice."

THE POLISH EVENTS AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

There has been no slackening of the campaign against the Polish nation's efforts to establish a better and freer way of life for itself. Large-scale Warsaw Pact maneuvers were announced on March 10, to take place in Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. Both the Council of Free Czechoslovakia abroad and Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia have warned against Czechoslovak interference, including the use of force and the threat of force, in Polish affairs (see

Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. V, No. 12 [December 1980], p. 1, and Vol. VI, No. 2 [February 1981], p. 1).

AFL/CIO Attacked

Milan Jelínek, the Washington correspondent of Rudé právo (Red Right), the daily newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, reported on January 16 that Solidarity had concluded an agreement with the AFL/CIO and that, according to Lech Wałęsa, the leader of the Polish independent trade union movement, it had received \$160,000 in spontaneous gifts from friends and sympathizers. Nothing could be further from the truth, Jelínek told Rudé právo's readers. "T. Kahn, assistant to [Lane] Kirkland, president of the AFL/CIO, has stated: 'We did nothing before Lech Wałęsa asked us.' In an effort not to furnish proof that the United States is interfering in Poland's domestic affairs, the powerful AFL/CIO official committed a blunder. . . . He revealed that Wałęsa had personally requested financial and material assistance from the American labor union center."

Jelínek went on to explain what the AFL/CIO is: "It is one of the most reactionary organizations of the American labor movement. It is fully integrated into the bourgeois political system, and it has its own stake and place in the class structure of American imperialism. It is itself a major entrepreneur, a holder of corporate shares, that swells its vast funds through capitalist enterprise. . . . Under the leadership of the ill-starred 'union dictator' George Meany, who bequeathed it to its present president Lane Kirkland, the AFL/CIO took part in fantastic anti-communist crusades. It has supported every action of the bourgeois governments against the socialist states. It has called many times for the liquidation of the 'communist regimes' of Eastern Europe, . . . and Kirkland is continuing Meany's anticommunist doctrines. Officials of Solidarity have declared that they are not against socialism, that Solidarity is not a political organization. If Lech Wałęsa had framed his request along this line, he would not have received one red cent from Kirkland. It is naïve and stupid to believe that AFL/CIO reactionaries would pay tens of thousands of dollars to a Polish labor organization whose aims were the positive solution of present problems, and the strengthening and further development of the socialist system. The question remains: for what reasons, and on the basis of what kind of negotiations and accords, has the AFL/CIO already paid \$160,000 to Solidarity in Poland?"

Polish Events "Correctly" Explained

Recent events in Poland were the topic for discussion at a party conference held on February 14 in Kladno, a coal-mining town 20 miles west of Prague. In a report published on February 16 in Rudé právo (Red Right), the Czechoslovak party Central Committee daily said: "Poland is a fraternal, allied country, our neighbor, to which we are linked by political, military, and economic agreements. For this reason we cannot be indifferent to what happens there. . . . Events in Poland must be explained to our people from a progressive, class point of view, from the angle that correctly reflects our position. The case of Poland is evidence of how reactionary forces try to undermine the socialist order. The Polish United Workers' [communist] Party has frankly acknowledged [that past errors] have caused an up-

surge of opposition activity by antisocialist and counterrevolutionary forces. They are not stirred by social problems. What they are seeking is to destabilize Poland as a socialist state and to achieve their own antisocialist goals." Vasil Bil'ak, a member of the Presidium of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and a champion of Czechoslovakia's "real socialism," told the conference: "None of the imperialists' attacks aimed at weakening the Soviet Union and the socialist community can succeed. Even the Polish working class will eventually understand that those who usurp the right to speak on its behalf are in fact the exponents of reaction. The authentic representative of the Polish workers can be none other than the Polish United Workers' Party — the communists."

Pope John Paul II and His Czech Brethren

Ateizmus (Atheism), a Bratislava bimonthly, criticized the Polish episcopate in its November-December 1980 issue: "Citing Pope John Paul II's statements during his visit to Poland, the Polish bishops have arrogated to themselves the position of 'defenders' of the faithful in 'neighboring countries.' A pastoral letter from them has stated that the Catholic Church in Poland is assuming responsibility for the fate of believers in the 'unfree' (to use the Polish bishops' word) Slav countries. . . . The letter recalled Pope John Paul's reference to the historic link with the 'Czech brethren.' . . . The attitude adopted by the Catholic bishops of the Polish People's Republic toward neighboring, and especially Slav, nations is unheard of. It is nothing other than a hostile attitude . . . and must be consistently and resolutely rejected."

ECONOMIC NEWS

The Czechoslovak government in the summer of 1980 made public a "set of measures" to strengthen the economy (Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. V, No. 6 [June 1980], p. 5). The mass media devoted much space and time to acquaint the public, particularly factory workers, with the measures which were to serve as the basis for the annual plans in the Seventh Five-Year Plan (1981-1985). ČTK, the Czechoslovak news agency, reported on February 28 that new difficulties have now arisen. The agency referred to a draft document, "The Main Directions of Social and Economic Development in Czechoslovakia," prepared by the Presidium of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia for presentation to the Sixth Party Congress opening on April 6. "The main target of the new Five-Year Plan," the report said, "is to maintain and improve our high standard of living despite much more difficult domestic and foreign circumstances." After listing the positive achievements of the 1976-1980 Five-Year Plan, the Presidium's draft conceded that the plan had not been implemented in full. It ascribed this fact to the "unsatisfactory application of the results of scientific and technological progress, ineffective use of fuels, energy, and raw and other materials, and poor use of fixed assets and labor." It said: "Overall economic results did not reflect any quick growth in efficiency or quality of work; . . . the processing industries did not adapt to the requirements of the national economy and of the public; . . . engineering plants failed to adapt to the exacting conditions of the world market; . . . discord between crop and livestock production

and adverse weather conditions [the weather is always blamed!] made extra, expensive imports of grain and feedstuffs necessary. . . . A number of plants in the fuel and energy sector were completed, but there was no reduction in the number of unfinished projects and average construction time."

The draft warned that Czechoslovakia was facing an even more difficult time ahead, with higher fuel and energy costs, higher prices for metals, foods, raw and other materials both of domestic and foreign provenance. Wages would be related more closely to productivity, technical standards and quality, and arrangements would be made for successful enterprises to increase the pay of those workers who had contributed to their success. Predictably, the draft concluded with the assurance: "The further development of our external economic relations will continue to be based on cooperation with the socialist states, particularly the Soviet Union."

1980 Economic Results

The Federal Statistical Office in Prague has published some data on the economic results of 1980. In comparison with 1979 national income rose by 3%, industrial output by 3.2%, agricultural production by 8%, and construction by 1.3%. In other areas results were more disappointing: coal output was 1.3% lower in 1980 than in 1979, for instance. Metal industry production was only 1.2% better than in 1979, chemical production 2.7% better, and food industry output was up 1.7%. A 3.2% average increase in industrial production in 1980 over 1979 was bettered by the engineering industry (4%), building materials (4.4%), and consumer goods (3.8%). In agriculture, sugar beet production was 13% less in 1980 than in 1979, and potato crops were down 27%.

Labor productivity was 2.5% better than in 1979, and average monthly industrial wages reached 2,764 crowns, an increase of 2.5% over 1979. Average income in the agricultural sector was up 3.9%. The total number of persons economically active was 7,340,000 in 1980.

The economy continued to be plagued by labor shortages, however, and there were many complaints (even in speeches by President Gustáv Husák) of shortages of foodstuffs and certain consumer goods, such as shoes and textiles. No figures were published on the standard of living except the statement that it was "in line with demand."

The Federal Statistical Office report stated that the main task of foreign trade was to increase exports by improving the quality of products, particularly of machinery, in order to earn more foreign currency for the purchase of imported raw materials and fuel. "Complex external and internal influences" had affected foreign trade, it said. Trade with the socialist countries had shown "positive development because of the ongoing process of socialist integration"; as a result, overall trade with the socialist countries rose by 8.2% over 1979 levels, and with the Soviet Union by 11.9%. Turnover with the nonsocialist states was 17.9% better than in 1979.

Footwear Need Protection from the Elements

Pravda (Truth), the daily newspaper of the Central Committee of the Slovak Communist Party, reported on November 10, 1980, that people buying winter boots had found inside them a slip that warned: "This product is made of a material that must be protected against rain, damp and snow, so that when drying it will not be damaged or come apart." It also cited the case of a customer who, after three unsuccessful outings to buy shoes, was finally told that the only ones available for sale were in sizes either larger or smaller than his.

The same report complained of meat shortages and long lines outside butchers' shops. President Husák too had warned that "difficulties in meat supplies must be expected." Yet the Federal Statistical Office data claimed that the 1980 output of meat, milk and eggs had "substantially surpassed plan targets."

CENSUS 1980

Population

	<u>On November 1, 1980</u>	<u>Increase over 1970</u>
Czechoslovakia (total)	15,277,000	6.5%
Czech Socialist Republic	10,289,000	4.9%
Slovak Socialist Republic	4,988,000	9.9%
Prague	1,183,000	3.7%
Bratislava	380,000	24.3%

Nationalities

	<u>Czechoslovakia</u>		<u>Czech Republic</u>		<u>Slovak Republic</u>	
Czechs	9,818,600	64.3%	9,763,400	94.9%	55,200	1.1%
Slovaks	4,664,500	30.5%	343,300	3.3%	4,321,100	86.6%
Hungarians	579,600	3.8%	19,800	0.2%	559,800	11.2%
Poles	67,900	0.4%	65,400	0.6%	2,500	0.1%
Germans	61,900	0.4%	56,800	0.6%	5,100	0.1%
Ukrainians	47,600	0.3%	10,400	0.1%	37,200	0.7%
Russians	7,600	0.1%	5,100	0.1%	2,600	0.1%
Other and Unidentified	29,100	0.2%	24,800	0.2%	4,300	0.1%
		100.0%		100.0%		100.0%