

CZECHOSLOVAK NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY THE COUNCIL OF FREE CZECHOSLOVAKIA

420 East 71st Street, New York. N.Y. 10021

Vol. VI, No. 5/6 (56/57)

May/June 1981

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TENSION REMAINS HIGH IN POLAND

The Soviet Union has been intensifying its criticism of Poland; Czechoslovakia and East Germany are following suit. In this climate of impending crisis rumors have again begun to circulate that new Warsaw Pact maneuvers are to be staged near the Polish border.

The Council of Free Czechoslovakia last December issued a declaration on Poland in which it urged the Czechoslovak communist party and government not to interfere in Polish internal affairs (Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. V, No. 12 [December 1980], p. 1). That declaration concluded: "We also call on Czechoslovak citizens to make it unequivocally clear to the Czechoslovak communist government and party that they do not condone the former's position on Poland and that, with the 1968 Soviet invasion and occupation in mind, they reject threats of similar action against the Polish nation and would not permit the participation of the Czechoslovak army in any move against the Polish people and state."

The Czechoslovak Cultural and Information Center in Warsaw has now opened a branch in the Polish port of Szczecin, Rudé právo [Red Right] has reported. The daily organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia explained to its readers that the main purpose of the new branch was to inform Polish workers how Czechoslovakia "has overcome liberalization and counterrevolution" since the country has been under Soviet occupation since August 1968.

REPRESSION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

A new wave of arrests and harassment has taken place in Prague, Bratislava and Brno since the arrest on April 28 of two French nationals on the Czechoslovak-Austrian border. According to an official communiqué, the automobile Françoise Anis and Gilles Thonon were driving was carrying "special technical systems intended for use for subversive activities and large sums of Western currency to be handed over to Czechoslovak citizens for the purpose of subverting their country."

Leopold Unger, writing in the International Herald Tribune, speculated that the arrests may be the prelude to a show trial. "Strange trial, strange timing," Unger commented. "[The] curious discovery of 4,000 West German marks (confiscated and never returned), of pamphlets published by émigré groups, of records and a small duplicating machine — items that are not particularly uncommon in civilized countries — . . . the Czech authorities found a pretext to annihilate what remained of the human rights movement [but] there is another, more political reason. The arrest of French citizens, 'guilty' of a crime that does not exist in the West, and the creation of a 'plot,' with a subsequent political show trial, is, in fact, a test of François Mitterand. The Prague regime has never hesitated to show its distaste for France's new socialist president who signed every protest against abuses of human rights by the Czechoslovak authorities." Expulsion of the two French citizens without trial, Unger claimed, was "a gesture of respect toward the new president and a cynical and clever offer of exchange: . . . the trading of the two French hostages in return for a certain indifference by the ruling Socialists in Paris over the fate of a number of Czechs who still believe in the motto 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity'." The preparation of a show trial in Prague, Unger said, is "above all evidence of the authorities' nervousness — panic even — over what is taking place in Poland. . . . The deterioration of the Czechoslovak economy has worked to increase tension among the population and among the leadership as well. . . . Mr. [Gustáv] Husák [the president of Czechoslovakia and secretary general of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia] is not really afraid of the West, nor of foreign plots. Mr. Husák is afraid of the Czechoslovak people. He knows that he cannot jail an entire nation, a nation that is already behind barbed wire."

Protest in Paris

A demonstration was held at the Square de la Mutualité in Paris June 3 protesting recent arrests of Czechoslovak dissidents and demand their release. Sponsored by leading figures in French public and cultural life and by a number of human-rights organizations, including Amnesty International and the Confédération Générale du Travail, the communist-dominated French labor movement, it was also attended by Françoise Anis and Gilles Thonon, the two French citizens arrested at the Austro-Czechoslovak border on April 28 and released on May 19. One of the keynote speakers at the demonstration, rallied under the slogan "Libérez les Tchécoslovaques," was Mme Véronique Neiertz, secretary for international affairs of President François Mitterand's own Socialist Party. She assured the demonstrators: "We shall do everything in our power and at every level to prevent any new show trial in Prague and to secure the release of those still in prison."

VONS Letter to Madrid

The Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS) sent a letter from Prague on May 15 to "the participants in the meeting of signatories of the Helsinki Final Act in session in Madrid." In part the letter told those attending the follow-up meeting to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe:

"You have already devoted attention to the latest repressive acts of the Czechoslovak authorities against defenders of human rights in our country. We appreciate this and trust that you will follow developments in this case. We are enclosing a VONS communiqué about this matter.

"It is difficult to estimate the consequences and scope of this latest police action aimed apparently at the mass suppression of dissent and at the destruction of efforts to correct at least the most egregious acts of despotism and to preserve the continuity of our national culture at a time when it is under threat of destruction and annihilation. Regardless of its nature, any foreign contact not under official control (and police surveillance) is deemed criminal under Article 98 of the Criminal Code (subversion of the republic). As presently interpreted, this extends even to a mere complaint to the state authorities or courts if this complaint is publicized abroad or if there is any possibility of such publicity. There is no known case of the state-controlled press publishing any complaint against police brutality, any Charter 77 document (though all Charter 77 and VONS documents are sent to the proper authorities and the media), or any literary works, studies, or historical or legal analyses that do not hew unquestioningly to the official line.

"Under such unnatural circumstances it is understandable why foreign outlets are so important for such publications, for they help to provide at least a minimal means for the free exchange of opinion. This is fully in accordance with the Helsinki Final Act, which stipulates the free dissemination of information, and is of vital importance to our Czechoslovak culture. The responsibility for this unnatural situation lies in the ruthless policies of the authorities. Their most recent act of suppression is timed to coincide with the preparation of a final document by the signatories of the Helsinki agreement in Madrid. That document will show the value they ascribe to their international obligations and how intent they are on implementing agreements on basic human rights.

"May 29 will be the second anniversary of the arrest of ten VONS members [Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. IV, No. 6 (June 1980), p. 2], four of whom are still in jail without cause. Since then two have been added to their number: Rudolf Battěk, who has been in detention awaiting trial for eleven months, and Jan Litomský, who was arrested last February. Criminal proceedings have now been started against 16 others who are to be prosecuted for their beliefs. Facts speak for

themselves. We are not listing all those unjustly prosecuted, for this would require a far longer letter. [VONS Communiqué No. 135 of August 3, 1980, listed more than 300 names. Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. V, No. 9/10 (September/October 1980), p. 11]

Prague, May 15, 1981

Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted, Czechoslovak League for Human Rights, a member of the International Federation of Human Rights"

VONS Communiqué No. 250

Enclosed with the letter to Madrid was VONS Communiqué No. 250, "Criminal Prosecution for Subversion of the Republic," the full text of which follows. Since its publication on May 15, two of the accused have been released from detention, Miroslav Kusý and Jiří Müller, but they remain under indictment.

"An extensive police sweep was conducted in Prague, Brno and Bratislava from May 6 to 12. Some 30 citizens were detained, most of them signers of Charter 77. Their apartments, summer homes and places of work were all searched. Literary texts, personal correspondence, notes (even household lists, for instance), manuscripts, even books put out in Czechoslovakia by state publishers were confiscated. The pretext for this massive repressive action was the detention of two French nationals, Gilles Thonon and Françoise Anis, at the Austrian border on April 27, 1981.

"Some of those detained groundlessly were released after some 48 to 96 hours' confinement — for instance, Dr. Zbyněk Fišer (pen name Egon Bondy), poet, novelist, and philosopher; worker Jan Bednář, poet Karel Šiktanc, clergyman Jan Šimsa, sociologist Jaroslav Mezník, Olga Havlová [the wife of playwright Václav Havel], journalist Věra Št'ováčková, historian Milan Otáhal, Sr., writer Karel Pecka, worker Jiří Bednář, and Zina Freundová. Others too were released, but after indictment under Article 98 (1-2, a, b) of the Criminal Code for subversion of the republic by having contacts with a foreign power on a large scale. They face sentences of up to ten years, and include Prof. Dr. Jiří Hájek [foreign minister when Alexander Dubček was party secretary general in 1968 and a Charter 77 spokesman]; Prof. Dr. Zdeněk Jičínský, a jurist; Ing. Ivan Havel, a computer expert [brother of playwright Václav]; Dr. Jozef Jablonický, historian; Ing. Karel Holomek, former chairman of the dissolved Union of Romany Gypsies; and Mojmir Klánský, a writer.

"Of greatest consequence is the fact that, according to our information (which may not be complete), the following twelve are still under arrest: the student Françoise Anis, 24, and the jurist Gilles Thonon, 29, both French nationals [released May 19 and deported]; Eva Kantůrková, born May 11, 1930, writer, Charter 77 signer, address — Prague 5,

Xavierova 13; Dr. Jiřina Šiklová, sociologist, address — Prague 1, Klimentská 17; Karel Kyncl, born January 6, 1927, journalist, Charter 77 signer, address — Prague 4, Lounských 12; Jiří Ruml, born July 8, 1925, Charter 77 signer, VONS member, address — Prague, Kremelská 104; Jan Ruml, born March 5, 1953, Charter 77 signer and member of the Charter 77 collective of spokespersons, VONS member, address same as Jiří Ruml; Prof. Dr. Miroslav Kusý, born December 1, 1931, Charter 77 signer and member of its collective of spokespersons, address — Bratislava-Trnávka, Slovackého 21 [released May 21]; Milan Šimečka, born March 6, 1930, historian, address — Bratislava, Pražská 35; Jiří Müller, born December 29, 1943, worker, former students' movement representative, Charter 77 signer, address — Brno, Chudobova 23 [released May 21]; Docent Dr. Ján Mlynárik, born February 11, 1933, historian, Charter 77 signer, address — Prague 1, Nosticova 14; Jaromír Hořec, born December 18, 1921, poet, address — Prague 4-Spořilov, Jihozápadní III (14). All of the above have been indicted for criminal acts under Article 98 (1-2, a, b) of the Criminal Code.

Prague, May 15, 1981

Committee for the Defense of the
Unjustly Prosecuted, Czechoslovak
League for Human Rights, a member
of the International Federation of
Human Rights"

SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

This May the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia celebrated its sixtieth anniversary. Since its foundation it has never ceased to work against the national aspirations and interests of the Czechoslovak people.

Its beginnings go back to 1919 when an attempt was made to set up a workers' council in Kladno, a mining town some 15 miles west of Prague, by the Bolshevik Alois Muna. Muna advocated a soviet system and kept close touch with Béla Kun, the Hungarian communist leader whose revolutionary hordes were occupying large areas of Slovakia. In 1920 a group calling itself the Marxist Left split from the Social Democratic Party. It was the railroad strike that the Marxist Left called later the same year that prevented aid from being sent to Poland, which was under attack by the Red Army. In the spring of 1921 the Marxist Left officially constituted itself as the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and immediately joined the Third International. On joining the communist international, it accepted 21 conditions of membership even before its own constituent congress had been convened. The primordial condition was total subservience to the Comintern in Moscow. Another important condition was acceptance of the tactics of conspiracy, so that it operated on two levels from the very outset: as an open parliamentary party on the legal level, and on another level as a subversive force

working against Czechoslovakia's democratic parliamentary system.

In 1925 the party was purged on orders from Moscow, which helped to secure the election to its Politburo of Klement Gottwald, who was to tell the country's prewar Parliament: "We go to Moscow to learn how to break your necks!"

Stalinization of the party was effected at its Fifth Congress in 1929, after its leaders had come under severe censure at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern the previous year. The new party leadership, which included Rudolf Slánský, who was to be executed in 1952, was now headed as secretary general by Gottwald, the mastermind of the communist coup d'état of 1948. The Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party was denounced as "social fascist" and President Tomáš G. Masaryk and his supporters were branded as "fascist plotters." The party became a party of "cadres," and 26 communist parliamentary deputies who refused to toe the new Stalinist line of "democratic centralism" were expelled from its ranks.

During the rise of Hitler and the Munich crisis of 1938 Czechoslovakia's communists maintained an ambivalent attitude toward the growing chauvinism of the Sudeten Germans. After the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact they stood unswervingly by Stalin as he collaborated with Hitler in the rape of Poland. The outbreak of hostilities in 1939 were decried as imperialist war. Only after Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union did Czechoslovakia's communists begin resistance against the Nazi occupation of their homeland. Yet even then their resistance at home and abroad was in the service above all of the Soviet Union.

A communist poet, Stanislav Kostka Neuman, hailed the party's servile obedience to Moscow in verse:

Lenin is a miracle,
We a mere field of death.
Humbly shall we fertilize it,
And then from it shall arise
Our descendants in accordance
With what you have taught us,
O Moscow!

After the communists seized power in February 1948, they unleashed a reign of terror; innocent people were liquidated, and finally the party turned on its own children. Some 29,000 persons were brought to trial before state courts, 9,000 before provincial courts, and 62,000 before local courts. About 27,000 were sent to forced-labor camps without trial. Some 35,000 farmers were persecuted during the forced collectivization of the land, and 16,000 small businessmen during the nationalization of industry. An undetermined number of clergy of all denominations were victimized in antireligious campaigns. Between October 1948 and the end of 1952, 233 death sentences were handed down on party orders, and 178 were carried out. The party political secretariat approved 148 capital sentences between 1951 and 1954. And still these figures do not take account of the suffering of untold numbers from every kind of harassment. Nor is it possible to quantify the country's loss from the tens of thousands of Czechs and Slovaks forced into exile.

The attempt to liberalize Czechoslovakia in 1968 foundered because of Soviet intervention. The country's "healthy core" of Stalinists, a handful of party hard-liners led by Gustáv Husák, became the rulers of an unwilling nation. The country was hauled back into the Stalinist past.

The Central Committee of the party condones violence against citizens. Not a single voice was raised during the Sixteenth Party Congress in April against the persecution of members of Charter 77 and others who have demanded for themselves and their countrymen the basic human rights and political freedoms guaranteed even by the communist constitution of Czechoslovakia. Instead, the congress approved the neo-Stalinist regime of "real socialism," condemned the process of renewal occurring in Poland, and pledged its "eternal allegiance" to the Soviet Union, regarded by the population at large as its worst enemy. For all its deeds the party and its members will be held accountable.

New York, May 1981

The Council of Free Czechoslovakia

THE I.L.O. AND WORKERS' RIGHTS IN EASTERN EUROPE

The International Labor Organization (ILO) has proposed that communist countries should follow the lead set by Poland and permit the establishment of independent trade unions.

The ILO committee that reviews compliance with international labor conventions has asked six East European governments to provide information on any steps being taken to recognize workers' rights to set up independent organizations of their own choice. In a report issued on May 6 it noted that allowing free trade unions would be consonant with the human-rights convention ratified by the states of Eastern Europe 25 years ago. The report observed that the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Mongolia and Rumania all either restrict the freedom of association or fail to guarantee workers the right to establish independent unions. It also registered satisfaction at the official registration of Poland's Solidarity movement. In another report adopted by the ILO governing body in February the organization censured the Soviet Union for repressive acts against independent unionists. Both reports were submitted to the ILO annual conference in June (full report in the next issue of Czechoslovak Newsletter).

The ILO challenged the government of Czechoslovakia last year on the issue of human rights as defined by the International Convention on Discrimination in Employment (Convention III), which Prague ratified in 1965. Charter 77 in May 1980 published a document detailing violations of Convention III by the Czechoslovak government. It appealed to the ILO to send a fact-finding mission to make an on-the-spot investigation in Czechoslovakia (Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. V, No. 6 [June 1980], p. 3).

THE STATE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK ECONOMY

The Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, held in Prague April 6-10, gave its approval to a document titled "Main Directions of the Economic and Social Development of Czechoslovakia," which reviewed the results of the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1976-1980) and the intentions of the Seventh Five-Year Plan for the years 1981-1985. The main goal of the new plan, ČTK, the Czechoslovak news agency, reported, is to "maintain and increase the high standard of living" of the country despite what it foresees will be "much more difficult domestic and external conditions."

After surveying the positive achievements of the Sixth Five-Year Plan, the document conceded that "it was not implemented in full." What specifically proved unsatisfactory, it said, were the application of scientific and technological advances, the use of fuel, energy, raw materials and other resources, and the employment of fixed assets and the labor force. "Strategic orientation toward rapid improvement in the effectiveness and quality of all work was not sufficiently reflected in overall economic results," the document reported, and "the future development of our socialist society" will be at a slower rate than the sixth plan had aimed for.

Growth Indicators (as a percentage over the previous five-year plan)

	<u>Sixth Plan</u>	<u>Seventh Plan</u>
National income	20	14 - 16
Industrial production	25	18 - 20
Agricultural production	10	10
New housing units	647,000	550,000

To overcome the "difficult domestic and external conditions," the survey said, it will be necessary "to improve efficiency and quality, to restructure the economy, to make more effective use of scientific and technological advances, and to increase Czechoslovak participation in the international socialist division of labor, especially with the Soviet Union, and workers' participation in planning and management."

"The new five-year plan will have to meet much more difficult conditions and higher costs for fuels, energy, oil, metals, food, and raw and other materials of both foreign and domestic provenance. . . . Wages will be more closely related to productivity, to technical standards and product quality, and to foreign-trade results. Conditions will have to be created to improve manpower savings so that the wages of those who make them possible can be raised."

The survey put particular stress on the need for "strict production and wage discipline," with use of the increase in average wages as "an effective means to enhance motivation and stimulate productivity." It also emphasized the principle of "deserved wages and salaries." The news media have drawn attention to deficiencies of labor morale and discipline, and called for "the elimination of

exaggerated egalitarianism." Pravda [Truth], the daily newspaper of the Central Committee of the Slovak Communist Party, in an article, "Labor Unions and Wage Policies," complained on March 16 that "subjective criteria often determine wages, salaries and bonuses," and that people "are actually paid for their attendance, not the volume or quality of their work." Ladislav Jašík, the secretary of the Central Council of Trade Unions (URO), in the March 3 issue of Práce [Labor], the council's daily, urged "strict control of norms because the Sixth Five-Year Plan has not succeeded in raising national income by increased productivity. . . . The situation is intolerable." He said the labor unions, which serve as transmission belts for party and government decisions in communist states, had decided "to support the government's plans to improve the effectiveness of wages and salaries" by restructuring pay scales. The deputy head of a department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia wrote in Život strany [Party Life], the committee's biweekly journal, No. 21, 1981: "Complex tasks cannot be accomplished with people who are soft, complacent, interested only in their private affairs, and who do not live up to the standards of socialist morality." In simple language, he was saying that employees must work harder for less. The regime must tread cautiously, however. As Karel Hoffmann, chairman of the URO, reminded the Sixteenth Congress, working people "are following and discussing the developments in Poland."

The media have been preparing the nation for harder times ahead. Tribuna [The Tribune], the Czechoslovak party Central Committee's ideological and political weekly, observed on April 29 that, besides external problems, "the depletion of domestic economic resources is an additional factor that has to be taken into account." It called for greater economy in the use of fuel and metals, better management of fixed assets, and an improvement in labor morale and export capacity. What was needed, it said, was a two-percent-a-year saving in fuel and a 4.5-to-5-percent-a-year saving in metals. Under the Seventh Five-Year Plan, crude-oil imports from the Soviet Union, the main supplier, are supposed to be held at the 1980 level despite rising prices and increased consumption by the chemical industry of 15 percent or more.

Fixed assets are a major headache for Czechoslovak planners. The economy suffers from delays and unfinished construction work. The April 29 Tribuna article reported that between 1970 and 1980 only 258 (69.4 percent) of 372 planned projects were completed on schedule. Capital investment under the Seventh Five-Year Plan is to be kept at the previous plan's level (715 billion crowns) precisely because "the potentials of the national income do not allow for any increase over the next five years," Tribuna explained. Instead, emphasis will be on the speedy completion of unfinished projects and shorter construction times.

Czechoslovakia's economic problems are most evident in its diminishing share of world trade. "Main Directions of the Economic and Social Development of Czechoslovakia" said: "A basic task at every level of management [is] a systematic improvement in exportation and efficiency. . . . Czechoslovak participation in the international division of labor must increase, . . . especially our cooperation with the Soviet Union and the other Comecon countries." Commodity exchange with the other countries of the Soviet bloc may rise, but there is little hope that it will improve with the noncommunist world. Czechoslovakia's share of world trade in 1965 was 1.5 percent; now it stands at only 0.9 percent. The most serious falloff has been in machinery exports, a vital part of Czechoslovakia's trade. The Czech-

Czechoslovak Foreign Trade Institute has published data that show that the country's share of world machinery business dropped from 2.78 percent in 1965 to 1.56 percent in 1977. It explained the decline as the result of external factors, particularly the worsening situation on noncommunist markets, but this is a phenomenon that affects all countries, not Czechoslovakia alone. One of the real culprits is the effect of rigid, centralized command planning and growing dependence on the other Comecon countries. The Czechoslovak machine industry is also too slow in modernizing its products to keep them competitive on world markets. As a result Czechoslovakia has to sell below world prices on noncommunist markets if it is to earn the hard currency it so badly needs. According to the institute's figures, Czechoslovakia earns only \$1.84 per kilogram of exported machinery products, while the United States makes \$12.36 per kilogram, Japan \$5.16, and Western Europe \$4.42. Federal Finance Minister Leopold Léř has said that Czechoslovakia has to use some 30 to 40 percent of its national earnings to offset its foreign-trade price differentials.

These are not new problems for Czechoslovakia. It is becoming increasingly dependent on the Soviet Union and the Comecon countries' "international socialist division of labor," and the continued emphasis of President Gustáv Husák's regime on the latter only diminishes the country's chances of increasing its trade with the West. Without some radical change, Czechoslovakia can only be pulled down nearer and nearer to the more backward level of the Soviet economy, with all the political, social and economic consequences that that implies. It will be unable to earn enough hard currency to buy the raw materials and new technology its ailing industry needs, and the standard of living of its people will suffer accordingly.

The Plight of Consumers

A report of the Czechoslovak Federal Statistical Bureau on fulfillment of the 1980 economic plan states: "In general the domestic market was well supplied, though not always in line with demand." The Statistical Bureau of the Czech Republic, however, had this to say: "The supply of basic foodstuffs was assured. More meat and meat products were on sale, but the selection was unsatisfactory. Some shortages were experienced in the areas of textiles, garments, engineering, furniture, glassware, chinaware, domestic appliances, television receivers, sewing machines, stationery, and drugs." The Slovak Statistical Bureau had another version: "The buying power of the population made larger purchases of industrial goods possible, but deliveries to the market and the selections available did not meet demand. The supply of foodstuffs basically satisfied demand."

Listy [Reports], a Czech monthly published in Rome, No. 6, 1980, published "A Letter from Prague" from which the following is an excerpt:

"Centralized planning that is not based on the principle of supply and demand but follows the line of a totalitarian regime causes constant supply difficulties. . . . After work everybody must trudge a thorny path to do shopping that is no mere exchange of money for goods. It is above all a hustle, the outcome of which can never be known in advance. A West

European cannot imagine the obstacles and the feelings of anger that arise on these expeditions. He cannot conceive of going into the fiftieth store without finding the most commonplace articles, let alone luxury goods or special items.

"The availability of goods changes ceaselessly. . . . One day there are no zippers or needles, the next it is toothpaste, or detergent, or radio batteries. A West European cannot imagine not being welcomed with a smile as a customer. . . . The salesclerk has his own problems. His hours in the store he considers wasted time, for after work he too faces the same drudgery of looking around elsewhere for what he needs. And very few of those plodding around in irritation realize that their human rights are being violated and their civic and personal freedoms denied.

"The impossibility for them as workers and creators of value to be able to buy readily what they want for themselves and their families, their humiliation at being jostled in long lines and having to bribe, are indicators of the measure of their freedom or lack of it. Under such circumstances people lose their dignity. They are under constant constraint — to snap up what is available even if it was something else they needed (this they may need in future), to bridle their taste, to lower their standards of quality, to compromise, to be glad they managed to get something even if it is unsatisfactory."

COUNCIL LETTERS

The Attempted Assassination of the Pope

The Council of Free Czechoslovakia has sent a cable to Cardinal Archbishop Agostino Casaroli, secretary of state of Vatican City, expressing the deep sorrow of Czechs and Slovaks at home and throughout the world at the brutal attack on His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

Amnesty International's Twentieth Anniversary

May marked twenty years of the activities of Amnesty International. It signaled the occasion by issuing a declaration denouncing torture, murder, kidnapping and imprisonment of political prisoners in many countries. Almost half of the 154 member countries of the United Nations jail political offenders.

The Council of Free Czechoslovakia has sent a letter to Amnesty International headquarters in London in which it stressed the importance of the pressure of public opinion inspired by the organization. The letter expressed the council's appreciation of the attention that Amnesty International has paid to Czechoslovakia.

and the hope that it will continue to work in the future for the improvement of the conditions of the political prisoners and the human-rights activists jailed in Czechoslovakia.

MISCELLANEOUS

Grain Embargo

Under the headline "Embargo with a Sudden End," Pravda [Truth], the Slovak Communist Party Central Committee daily, on April 27 reported the lifting of the US embargo on grain sales to the Soviet Union, repeating all the arguments against it that had appeared in the American press. While it mentioned Secretary of State Alexander Haig's rather lukewarm warning that the embargo could be reimposed if the Polish situation deteriorates, its main emphasis was on the invulnerability of the Soviet Union. It ridiculed the White House "and its adviser Richard Pipes" who had declared "that either Soviet policy toward the Western democracies must change direction or war becomes inevitable. . . . The failure of the embargo and its raising have proved how false American strategists' assumptions are. . . . Grain from the United States is not a vital necessity to the Soviet Union. During the first three years of the Tenth Five-Year Plan the Soviet Union bought 32.5 million tons of grain from the United States, less than five percent of its own production, while at the same time it exported several million tons to other countries."

Rudé právo [Red Right], the Czechoslovak party Central Committee daily, commented on April 30: "Many politicians and political observers ask whether the Reagan administration has changed course in its relations with the Soviet Union [but] news from Washington indicates that the present American government continues to stress negative trends in its relations with the socialist countries." It concluded: "The embargo, one of the measures of the economic cold war, has collapsed ingloriously. Washington and other Western capitals should learn a lesson from it. Other discriminatory measures in contradiction to the Final Act of Helsinki will come to a like end."

Czechoslovak communist propaganda denies that the embargo had any negative impact on the situation in the Soviet Union, despite reports to the contrary. Nor has it made any mention of past large Soviet purchases of American grain which made it possible for Moscow to export its own grain to the East European states, thus increasing their dependence.

Machinery for the Afghan Economy

Under this headline Pravda [Truth], the Slovak Communist Party Central Committee daily, published on March 5 a report by ČTK, the Czechoslovak news agency, from Kabul that Czechoslovakia will deliver machinery and equipment to Afghanistan

"to complete and maintain a large project begun 33 years ago by the United States [because] the Americans have recently sabotaged it."

The report said the project in the Hilmand valley was one of the largest irrigation undertakings in Afghanistan. "After the revolutionary changes," the dispatch said, "imperialist and capitalist circles discontinued their so-called assistance [and] stopped the delivery of machinery and equipment." Pravda said a contract had been signed in Kabul last December 13 to deliver construction equipment worth \$4.2 million, which would be financed out of a \$90 million credit that Czechoslovakia has granted Afghanistan.

The 1980 Czechoslovak Census

POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

<u>Census Year</u>	<u>Up to 14</u>	<u>15 - 34</u>	<u>35 - 59</u>	<u>60 & over</u>
1961	27.2%	27.7%	31.3%	13.8%
1970	23.1%	30.6%	29.3%	17.0%
1980	24.1%	31.1%	29.0%	15.8%

ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

	<u>Czechoslovakia</u>	<u>Czech Republic</u>	<u>Slovak Republic</u>
1980	7,704,200	5,262,800	2,441,300
Increase over 1970	721,700 (10.3%)	279,200 (5.6%)	442,600 (22.1%)
As percentage of total population			
1961	40.8%	43.0%	41.8%
1970	48.7%	50.8%	44.1%
1980	50.4%	51.2%	48.9%
Economically active women			
1961	40.8%	44.0%	35.0%
1970	44.6%	45.9%	41.3%
1980	46.2%	46.6%	45.3%

DWELLINGS AND HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT

	<u>Czechoslovakia</u>	<u>Czech Republic</u>	<u>Slovak Republic</u>
No. of Family Houses	2,177,700	1,376,700	801,000
No. of Apartments in Family Houses	2,441,500	1,608,700	832,800
No. of Cooperative Apartment Buildings	53,600	39,100	14,700
No. of Apartments in Cooperative Buildings	668,600	472,500	196,100
No. of Persons per Apartment	3.1	2.9	3.5
Apartment Area in Square Meters	43.8	43.1	45.5
Percentage of Apts. with Baths/Showers	79.7%	81.1%	76.4%
Percentage of Apts. with Central Heating	56.8%	57.5%	55.2%
Percentage of Households with:			
Refrigerators	87.1%	87.6%	85.8%
Washing Machines	82.8%	83.1%	82.3%
TV Sets	87.3%	88.0%	85.2%
Automobiles	37.8%	40.3%	31.9%