

CZECHOSLOVAK NEWSLETTER

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ANTIRELIGIOUS CAMPAIGN

The communist government of Czechoslovakia is presently embroiled in a growing campaign against religious and church organizations, and particularly the Vatican.

At the heart of the problem is the organization of a group of pro-regime priests, "Pacem in Terris." Fourteen years ago, in the wake of Czechoslovakia's invasion by Warsaw Pact forces on August 21, 1968, and the subsequent "normalization," the regime set up two "peace movements" for the clergy—the Christian Peace Conference for the Protestant clergy and "Pacem in Terris" for the Roman Catholic priests. Both organizations have constantly been used by the regime for its own political ends under the guise of its "struggle for peace."

"Pacem in Terris" immediately ran into difficulties because of the Vatican's opposition to its being politically misused. On December 13, 1981, Pope Paul John II expressed his disapproval in a letter to the Czechoslovak bishops, and on March 8 of this year the Vatican issued a declaration by the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy in which the Holy See ruled that ecclesiastics should not take part in political activities. Generally interpreted as relating to the priests loyal to the regime in Czechoslovakia, the declaration was handed to a group of visiting Roman Catholic dignitaries in Rome in the middle of March 1982. (The relevant passage reads: "Without doubt these associations are not compatible with priesthood, for directly or indirectly, openly or secretly, their objective is geared to politics.") Led by Cardinal František Tomášek, archbishop of Prague, the delegation included four bishops—Jan Pasztor of Nitra; Jozef Ferenc of Banská Bystrica; Július Gábris, apostolic administrator of Trnava diocese; and Josef Vrána, apostolic administrator of Olomouc diocese (Czechoslovak Newsletter,

Vol. VII, No. 4, April 1982, p. 5). On their return trip the plane was directed to land in Bratislava instead of Prague. The prelates were driven to a secret location where they were met by Karel Hruža, head of the Federal Office for Religious Affairs. He instructed them to remain silent about the declaration and not to make it public.

But Hruža's attempt failed. Clandestine copies of the declaration began to circulate in Slovakia and Cardinal Tomášek allegedly informed his clergy openly about the content of the document. The dioceses of Brno (Moravia) and České Budějovice (southern Bohemia) were reported to have followed the cardinal's example, and some priests dissociated themselves from "Pacem in Terris" despite the danger they ran of being stripped of their authorization to perform pastoral duties. (It should be recalled that already in 1980 Cardinal Tomášek had sent a letter in the name of the episcopate to the regime-controlled Katolické noviny protesting that the weekly had become "an exclusive voice of 'Pacem in Terris,' which represents only a small interest group, compared to the majority of believers whom the paper should serve"—Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. VI, No. 7/8, July/August 1981, p. 6).

The regime realized the consequences. Already discredited among the public, "Pacem in Terris" would disintegrate and the regime would lose a propaganda lever aimed at influencing and confusing the faithful.

In an attempt to counter the danger it therefore switched its tactics.

Open Letter to Catholic Dignitaries

Katolické noviny of July 11, 1982 (issue No. 28), published an open, unsigned letter from "Pacem in Terris" addressed "to the bishops and ordinaries in Czech and Slovak dioceses." This is evidence that the Vatican's declaration irked the government which, however, is reluctant to move to an open confrontation. In a rather moderate tone the letter, entitled "Faithfully Serving the Church and the Country," stressed the loyalty of the "Pacem in Terris" priests "to the Holy Mother Church, the Holy Father, and their bishops," and defensively quoted Vatican documents, including papal encyclicals, "helping to create an atmosphere of trust between the church and the state." Bishops were implored "to continue to seek with circumspection a solution to the problem of the declaration issued by the Congregation for the Clergy to help remove the misunderstanding that has arisen as a result of it" [The declaration] "must not be applied to a movement whose character is implicitly concerned with peace, such as 'Pacem in Terris' Let us be allowed to say that the divulging of [information regarding the Czechoslovak peace priests] amounted to malicious attempts intended to cause harm to truth and good work."

No Change in the Regime's Attitude Toward Religion

But in spite of the moderate tone of the "Pacem in Terris" letter, the campaign against religion continues unabated. (Several of the latest issues of this newsletter reported on the persecution of clergy as well as laymen.) The ideological magazine Nová mysl, No. 7/8, 1982, reported that "clerical anticommunism is spreading in the world, not just within Christianity and among Catholics in particular but also in Islam, both of these religions being based on Judaism." The arti-

ole then stated that clericalism in Czechoslovakia is of "Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish origin, with a predominance of Catholic clericalism."

Both secretariats for church affairs at the Czech and Slovak Ministries of Culture rejected the Vatican declaration and Karel Hruža, the head of the Federal Office for Religious Affairs, published a lengthy article on Czechoslovakia's "church policy." The press carried a number of articles on clericalism in Slovakia, on atheist education, and on the churches' counterattack against antireligious propaganda. The officially sponsored "Pacem in Terris" and the Christian Peace Conference are depicted as idealistically motivated associations of clergy working for peace. But only those efforts for "peace" are approved which serve Soviet ends. When the Lutheran Church in East Germany took the "struggle for peace" seriously, the regime of Honecker intervened immediately. The same would happen in Czechoslovakia.

Statements by the Secretariats for Church Affairs

The secretariats for church affairs at the Czech and Slovak Ministries of Culture issued a statement, entitled "Rights and Obligations," stressing the "defense of peace" as the overriding concern "of all people" (Katolické noviny, No. 30, July 25, 1982). The statement noted that ways should be sought "to resist attempts by the international reaction led by American imperialist circles which are pushing mankind to the brink of a nuclear catastrophe Socialist states and their allies are doing everything to promote peace." "Pacem in Terris" was defended as follows: "Peace is a common goal of all citizens, believers and nonbelievers, and that is why the state supports its work All popes have condemned the arms race It is therefore surprising that the Vatican forbade Czechoslovak bishops to take part in a Moscow conference promoting peace The Catholic Church is debating the so-called 'Declaration of the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy' and some people question its meaning [for Czechoslovakia] Some even see it as an interdiction for the Roman Catholic clergy to engage in the struggle for peace and progress in the world aimed at discrediting relations between church and state. The association of Catholic priests 'Pacem in Terris' serves as a pretext for attacks based on the above-mentioned Vatican declaration It is rather absurd that Catholic clergy in Czechoslovakia should be prevented by the Vatican from engaging in work for peace and are threatened with ecclesiastical sanctions. The Czechoslovak socialist state is therefore pleased to declare that through 'Pacem in Terris' Catholic priests are participating in the realization of such human goals." The statement neglects to mention that everything "Pacem in Terris" does is directed precisely by those government secretariats which issued the statement. It also neglects to mention that only a minority of priests have joined the association, a few under duress, and that some have already dissociated themselves from it following the Vatican declaration.

Karel Hruža on Church Policy in Czechoslovakia

Karel Hruža, head of the Federal Office for Religious Affairs, contested the Vatican declaration in an article in the weekly Tvorba, No. 32, August 11, 1982.

In the first part of his article he quoted the Constitution containing safeguards for religious freedom. "The state does not interfere in church affairs," he noted, a statement sharply contradicting the laws on the books forbidding churches to own any property, thereby making them totally dependent on state

subsidies. In effect, priests are state employees who need government approval for their pastoral work. The state determines how many and which students are admitted to theological faculties.

The second section of Hrůza's article analyzed church-state relations. "The 'Pacem in Terris' association and the Christian Peace Conference," Karel Hrůza wrote, "are under attack by Western broadcast stations and the bourgeois press, by people who hate to see a positive development in church-state relations in Czechoslovakia. Catholic political emigres, seconded by the leading representatives of the Catholic Church, are particularly active. The anti-Czechoslovak campaign is conducted in the spirit of a militant antisocialist policy by the president of the United States, Ronald Reagan. It is well known that during his visit to Rome in June 1982 he asked Pope John Paul II to assume a hard-line stance vis-a-vis Poland and interfere in its domestic affairs. As a reward, Reagan was willing to increase financial aid which the church would distribute to the opposition forces in Poland. Reagan also asked the pope to prevent priests from participating in the peace movement." Mr. Hrůza, hardly a Vatican insider, did not divulge the source of his information. No communiqué was issued on the meeting of President Reagan with Pope John Paul II.

Karel Hrůza wondered how it was possible that "some cardinals did not hesitate to issue a 'bull' in Rome last March, forbidding priests to participate in peace movements." He noted that "all the newly appointed bishops were not only members but even higher officials in 'Pacem in Terris.' Cardinal Tomášek was a member of its executive committee while Bishop Vrána of Olomouc and Slovak Bishops Gábris, Feranec, and Pasztor actively participated in the movement." Mr. Hrůza is wrong. Cardinal Tomášek was never a member of "Pacem in Terris." In 1968, during the Prague Spring, he presided over an organization of clergy and laymen, the "Work of Post-Council Renewal," a body that was completely independent and which was therefore dissolved following the August 1968 occupation of Czechoslovakia. Only Bishop Vrána is known to have participated in the movement, but it is rumored that even he has stopped taking part in its activities.

In the final portion of his article Karel Hrůza tried to justify the drastic manipulation of churches in Czechoslovakia by referring to "other countries where there are state religions." He even used the example of England. It is hard to imagine the British queen, head of the Anglican Church, giving Stalinist orders to clergy in the manner of the church commissar, Karel Hrůza.

Mr. Hrůza would like to "normalize" relations with the Vatican, but on his own terms. "Mutual relations would be highly beneficial to both parties if Pope John Paul II stops the cold war resulting in the nomination of several clandestine bishops for the territory of Czechoslovakia. It would be an act of goodwill if the pope would terminate the existence of clandestine bishops." Karel Hrůza did not mention that the Vatican refuses to consecrate bishops who are more loyal to an atheist government than to their Christian faith. He also failed to note the increase in "unofficial" or "underground" religious activities, especially among young people, as a reaction to the brutal persecution of religion.

Against Clericalism in Slovakia

In the magazine Ateizmus, No. 3, 1982, Ladislav Valach wrote about "new forms and methods of clericalism in Slovakia." It became virulent, Mr. Valach noted, in the 1968-69 period [of liberalization], when the organization "Work of the Post-

Council Renewal" was founded "as mentioned by Charter 77 also." (Being independent, the "Work" was later dissolved.) A new manifestation of clericalism was "an attempt to boycott the successful work of the 'Pacem in Terris' association at the Theological Faculty in Bratislava." (According to unofficial reports, students staged a demonstration against the admission as a theology student of a person known to be a police informer.)

The Bratislava daily Pravda of August 27, 1982, called for an intensification of atheistic education. "There are many questions concerning atheistic education. There is the question why religion survives in our country, what are the channels through which religion is transmitted to the coming generations, what is the social function of religion and the meaning of a modernized faith, what are the relations between religion and nationalism, the question of the efficiency of atheistic propaganda and counterpropaganda, etc."

Jaroslav Čelko, a well-known atheistic ideologue, wrote in Nová mysl, No. 7, 1982, about "clerical anticommunism and how to overcome it." He noted that an increase in anticommunism is evident in the Vatican "as demonstrated by the activities of Pope John Paul II. He does not spare any opportunity to condemn Marxist-Leninist teaching [and] when he lacks valid arguments he turns to fiction—e.g., that there is no religious freedom in our country, etc. His real intention is to inject new life into clericalism with a strong anticommunist accent in our country Attempts are made to strengthen the influence of the church among youth at the expense of the socialist state and its social organizations. The Catholic dignitaries, inspired by the present pope, assume a negative attitude toward the participation of priests in the struggle for peace through their 'Pacem in Terris' association, and some Protestant societies advocate a kind of vague pacifism," "vague pacifism" being a code word for genuine pacifism, not one manipulated by the communist regime.

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The present antireligious campaign in Czechoslovakia has a broad basis. It is to be expected that the regime will pressure church dignitaries to respond to the open letter of "Pacem in Terris" and that the priests who have belonged to it and begin to dissociate themselves from the association because of the Vatican declaration will be threatened with retaliation. Hard as it is, the practice of religion will probably become even harder in the near future in Czechoslovakia. A direct confrontation of the regime with the Vatican is possible. The "Slavic pope" has his divisions, contrary to the contemptuous comment that Stalin allegedly made to Churchill. Moscow is taking the power of the pope very seriously. All religious denominations in Czechoslovakia but especially the Roman Catholic Church face a difficult time.

WORLD AS SEEN BY OFFICIAL PRAGUE

The following are excerpts from articles published in the daily Rudé právo.

Against Imperialism

"[We are living in a period of] mounting aggressiveness of imperialist forces against the policy of peace and international détente advocated by socialist countries, in a period of an unusual increase in class and ideological struggle on a

global scale [waged] by Reagan's administration and its reactionary allies using economic blackmail and unscrupulous interference in the domestic affairs of socialist countries The most reactionary circles of imperialism, especially in the U.S.A., embarked on a course of feverish armament, the creation of new centers of tension in various parts of the world, and open aggression against nations struggling for freedom and independence Particularly dangerous is an attempt of the ruling circles in the United States and NATO countries to alter the military-strategic balance in their favor Their main target is the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Through a policy of differentiation the U.S.A. is trying to drive a wedge between individual fraternal states and the Soviet Union, the chief guarantor of their independence American imperialists and their allies are striving to destabilize the socialist community [and] weaken the unity of the international workers' movement by breaking up its international class solidarity The gamble to split the international communist movement is the main goal of a crusade by the international imperialists against the forces of progress [They] are counting on differences based on historical development The anticommunist propaganda pictures proletarian internationalism as an antithesis to the sovereignty of the individual communist parties. It foments nationalistic feelings, attacks collective ventures, and advocates subjectivist 'national models' of socialism as in Czechoslovakia during the ill-fated crisis years [i.e., the 1968 Prague Spring] Any deviation from the correct policy of any ruling Marxist-Leninist party only complicates relations among socialist countries and gives birth to nationalistic prejudices Already in 1969, Gustav Husák declared at an international meeting of the communist and workers' parties in Moscow that 'a dogmatic left-wing approach makes internationalistic viewpoints absolutistic and does not take into account national differences in the development of individual socialist countries [but], on the other hand, the revisionist right-wing, opportunistic concepts give a one-sided preference to nationalistic positions which weaken the common struggle of socialist countries" (Rudé právo, August 21, 1982).

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It may be recalled that in 1954 Gustav Husák himself was sentenced by the-then "ruling circles" of the communist party of Czechoslovakia to life (he was later rehabilitated) at a trial against "the subversive group of bourgeois nationalists in Slovakia."

Helsinki Recalled

"The Helsinki conference on security and cooperation in Europe ended on August 1, 1975 We are now witnessing a massive attempt to sabotage its implementation, organized by the United States, one of the signatories of its final document. It is trying to replace the concept of trust among nations and mutual understanding by a series of malicious campaigns against socialist states, including a new phase of psychological warfare conducted by the American president, Ronald Reagan. His administration is blatantly interfering in the domestic affairs of socialist states and is even resorting to appeals for the subversion of the socialist order in our countries. Instead of doing away with obstacles to international trade, as called for by the [Helsinki] Final Act, the United States has imposed economic sanctions not only against socialist states but also against its own allies, which are reluctant to subordinate their interests to an American diktat.

"Plans for the deployment of new American medium-range missiles and new strategic 'first-strike' weapons, along with the 'limited nuclear war' concept proclaimed

by the Reagan administration, pose a danger to all states and nations, participants in the Helsinki conference. A growing nuclear arsenal in Western Europe . . . is a gross violation of the obligations the United States solemnly and publicly accepted in Helsinki. Washington has plainly betrayed what it had pledged to do with its signature: to supplement political détente with a military one. The Reagan administration wants to negate everything positive achieved in Helsinki. It is opposing the process of détente and is trying to prevent its uninterrupted advance.

"But the United States . . . cannot destroy the results of the conference. Its Final Act was not born in a random and one-sided fashion. Rather, it was the product of a new power relationship, unfavorable to imperialism, and of the recognition of a military-strategic balance in the world. The present American offensive is striving to change these determining factors. The United States longs for military superiority, a rebirth of the old illusion of an 'America ruling the world.' . . . The Reagan administration is trying in vain to revert to a dream that America was forced to relinquish The prevention of war, changing Europe into a continent of peace was and will be the noble mission of Helsinki" (Rudé právo, July 31, 1982).

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All attempts at the follow-up conference in Madrid to induce the Soviet bloc to honor the human rights provision of the Helsinki Final Act were rebuked by Moscow, actively supported by Czechoslovakia, whose human rights record is one of the worst.

REACTIONS TO POLAND

The Czechoslovak media are continuing their vigorous campaign against the now suppressed Polish renewal movement. František Sojka, Warsaw correspondent of the Czechoslovak radio network, reported on September 14 that the Polish church maintained close contacts with some leaders of the "former Solidarity" union and that sermons by some bishops and priests "aroused justified anxiety." In one of the recent Czechoslovak media attacks against the Polish Catholic Church, the central communist daily Rudé právo accused the Polish primate, archbishop Jozef Glemp, with making appeals for a spontaneous revolt.

A Charter 77 Statement

The Charter 77 human rights movement in Czechoslovakia issued the following statement on the occasion of the second anniversary of the Gdansk agreements in Poland (abridged):

"On August 31, the Polish people recall an important event in their contemporary history--the agreements of Gdansk. In a dialogue between the state and the working class it was then possible to reach an accord on principles and directives for the democratic solution of a serious crisis The process of social renewal evokes great hopes and enthusiastic support by the large majority of Poles. It has also met with sympathy from a broad segment of world opinion and all genuine friends of the Polish people. Charter 77 claims to be one of them. It expresses on behalf of its followers and many other Czechs and Slovaks its feelings of brotherly sympathy and solidarity with those who developed and defended in Poland the process of social renewal and its ideals. It also expresses its and

their critical opinion on the December intervention by the state which interrupted the process without solving any of the problems weighing heavily on Poland. We know from our own experience that such interference by the state, whether external or internal, past or future, cannot solve crisis situations. It can only make them more acute. This is one more reason why we are sincerely interested in what happens in the country of our northern neighbor. It is one more reason for our feelings of warm friendship and community of ideals with all those in Poland who continue their efforts to reach a truly democratic and humane consensus among all patriotic forces of the Polish nation without any act of external interference, a consensus rather than intervention in peaceful demonstrations, a consensus on a national scale of how to manage the economy and the society, a consensus leading to the release of detained people and all political prisoners. Together with the Polish people we regard this as the only way to overcome the tremendous obstacles and to strengthen peaceful survival and cooperation among the nations of our continent."

Dr. Radim Palouš, Anna Marvanová,
Ladislav Lis, Charter 77 spokespersons

Prague, August 8, 1982

CHARTER 77 LETTERS

On the Invasion Anniversary

On August 16, Charter 77 sent a letter to the Federal Assembly and Federal Government of Czechoslovakia (Charter 77 document No. 26/82) in which it recalled "the intervention of the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact that took place 14 years ago followed by a forcible interruption of the process of democratic revival." The letter noted that renewed negotiation for "the withdrawal of the Soviet armed forces from the territory of Czechoslovakia and the reestablishment of the complete sovereignty of the republic would undoubtedly represent a contribution to friendly relations between the countries of Czechoslovakia and the U.S.S.R. It would also be evidence of goodwill and a contribution to détente in Central Europe where the pertinent negotiations have reached a dead end." The letter concluded by calling for "an end to persecution and the release of political prisoners" and for the "elimination of politically motivated obstacles preventing the use of the skill and experience of thousands of our citizens" for the benefit of all. This would facilitate the "preparation of the young generation" in solving the pressing problems of our economy and halt the mass emigration of our citizens abroad." The letter was signed by Dr. Radim Palouš, Anna Marvanová, and Ladislav Lis, Charter 77 spokespersons, and by Dr. Jiří Hájek, member of the Charter 77 collective.

On the Peace Movement

On August 27, Charter 77 published an open letter to the Interchurch Peace Council (Interkerkelijk Vredesberaad) in Holland (Charter 77 document No. 25/82) in which it thanked the Council for its letter of March 15, "which we received but not by mail." The Charter 77 letter identified with the goals of the West European peace movement "not based on official power political structures but on the responsibility of common people.

"[But] the goal of the joint West European peace groups to create a Europe without nuclear arms should not and must not be seen in its present form minus nuclear weapons Peace efforts by way of demonstrations, protests, and other activities merely against military danger are very problematic. There is no genuine, dignified, and peaceful life without basic values which man has the duty to protect."

The letter mentioned "legal bases for peace" such as "the Helsinki agreement and human rights conventions adopted by the United Nations." It also referred to the Charter 77 letter to the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly and government calling for the renegotiation of the stationing of Soviet forces in Czechoslovakia (see above), which would "contribute greatly to the détente between East and West [and] would enhance the exchange of cultural and human values among nations of Central Europe, revive the tradition of cultural exchange among all nations of our continent We hope it would be welcomed by the peace movement of the whole continent." The letter was signed by Dr. Radim Palouš, Anna Marvanová, and Ladislav Lis, Charter 77 spokespersons.

The Charter 77 letter placed emphasis on a peace movement "not based on official power political structures." This is a reaction to the policy of the communist regimes to keep close control on any "peace movement" activity in their countries.

Under the heading, "Together for Life, Against War," Rudé právo of August 2 greeted members of the "International March for Peace 82" who, on Monday, August 2, entered Czechoslovakia from the Soviet Union on their way to Vienna. "Some British and Austrian so-called peace activists wanted to misuse the meeting," Rudé právo wrote, "and tried to drive a wedge in the peace movement. When they realized, however, that marchers had also come from the socialist countries, they concluded that their scheme would fail and they abandoned their provocations." The West European and American press carried reports on how the "peace march" was manipulated in the Soviet Union. The same happened in Czechoslovakia. It was announced in Prague that "a world gathering for peace and life and against nuclear war" would convene in Prague in June 1983 (see also Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. VII, No. 7/8, July/August 1982, p. 1).

NEWS FROM NORMALIZED CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Prime Minister for Better Czechoslovak-American Relations

Federal Prime Minister Lubomír Štrougal told American industrialists on September 13 that Czechoslovakia is interested in intensifying economic, scientific, and cultural relations with the United States and asked for the elimination of obstacles hindering cooperation. The premier made his statement in Prague during a meeting with Fred Kuhlmann, vice president of Anheuser-Busch and chairman of the American section of the Czechoslovak-United States Economic Council.

The Czechoslovak regime's poor performance in the area of human rights has been one of the obstacles to better relations between the United States and Czechoslovakia, whose worsening economic situation needs increased Western trade to earn the hard currency that it badly needs. Even though the long-standing issue of gold seized by the Nazis and impounded by the Allies was solved and the gold returned to Prague, the Czechoslovak government was not granted the most-favored-nation status it was seeking. Meanwhile, some human rights activists, including playwright Václav Havel, are still in jail.

Husak Meets Kadar

The Czechoslovak president and first party secretary Gustav Husák and the Hungarian party leader János Kádár met in Budapest on September 13. A communique issued at the conclusion of Husák's one-day visit to Hungary expressed support for Poland's military rule and condemned "attempts by antisocialist and international reaction to undermine the situation in Poland." It stressed "principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism" as a basis for Hungarian-Czechoslovak friendship.

Qaddafi in Prague

At a dinner that President Gustav Husák gave for the visiting Libyan leader, Muammar el-Qaddafi, in Prague on September 8, the Czechoslovak president attacked "imperialist forces" which "undermine the policy of détente, escalate the arms race, and provoke dangerous hotbeds of tension in various parts of the world." He said that "Czechoslovakia fully supports the constructive proposals of the Soviet Union" and he condemned "Israel's invasion of Lebanon with deep indignation." He said that Czechoslovakia endorses completely Libya's policy and its "active contribution to the joint struggle for progress and democracy and against imperialist forces to reach a just solution on important issues in the contemporary world."

Czechoslovakia is an important arms supplier to Qaddafi.

Foreign Trade

Rudé právo of July 28 reported on the "fulfillment of the economic plan for the first half of 1982" (the second year of the seventh five-year plan). One of the goals of the plan was to expand trade with the nonsocialist countries. Emphasis was placed on improving the quality and on updating manufactured products to make them more competitive on world markets. This goal has not yet been met. Although the overall foreign trade plan for the first six months of 1982 reached 54 percent of the total targeted for the year, it stood at only 48.2 percent with the nonsocialist countries. The regime blames "external economic circumstances" and discrimination by the capitalistic West against socialist countries for the situation, but the growing obsolescence of the equipment in plants may be the main culprit.

Harvest Below Plan

František Pitra, a Central Committee secretary, wrote in Rudé právo of September 14 that the harvest and estimates of crops still in the fields showed that output would be "larger" than in 1981. "Grain production would exceed 10 million metric tons, more than the 1976-80 average, [but] the planned target of 11 million tons would not be achieved." He said that the grain production shortfall "would again have an adverse effect on livestock production." In 1981, Czechoslovakia suffered a bad harvest. Farm output declined 3.4 percent, including 7.1 percent in crops. To keep stores sufficiently supplied, especially with meat, Czechoslovakia must use a substantial amount of its foreign trade earnings to import cereals and feed grain.

Ecological Problems

The New York Times wrote on September 12 that in Prague harmful sulfur dioxide in the air is three times the maximum permissible limit set by the World

Health Organization (WHO), and that in Slovakia 1,800 miles out of the total 3,750 miles of rivers were polluted. The most highly polluted area, one of the worst in Europe, is the north Bohemian coal basin. Zemědělske noviny of August 20 complained that the Labe (Elbe) River has become a sewer. Charter 77 issued a document dealing with the severe environmental problems in Czechoslovakia and indicting the regime with negligence. The document maintained that clean environment is part of the human rights issue and that the government is responsible to its citizens for providing clean air and water to all. Czechoslovak Newsletter carried a report on the destruction of the environment in Czechoslovakia in Vol. V, No. 7/8, July/August 1980, p. 9.

Czechoslovak Tennis Stars

Nové slovo, No. 29, July 22, 1982, had an article on the behavior of Czechoslovak tennis players. "The whole world admires our system of tennis training," it noted. One cannot, however, applaud the fact that "a number of individuals deviate from the official policy of the Czechoslovak Physical Training Union." They sign contracts on their own, "often disregarding the principles of state representation and foreign policy orientation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic." Mentioned are two women tennis players who went to play in Chile, and two male stars, Ivan Lendl and Tomáš Šmíd, who preferred to play in a professional tournament in the United States to defending the Nations Cup for Czechoslovakia. "We must recognize that participation by our top tennis players in foreign events has gotten out of hand, and even if we derive good money from the results this practice needs to be set right." After the defection of Martina Navratilová and others, including a number of hockey players, the Czechoslovak government eased the conditions under which sportspeople may play in the West. A Marxist regime is ready to close its eyes and dialectically stretch its policy to let its players keep more of the money earned in the capitalist world than in the past. Communist regimes hate to see their citizens defecting from the workers' paradise.