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# Czechoslovakia

a country study





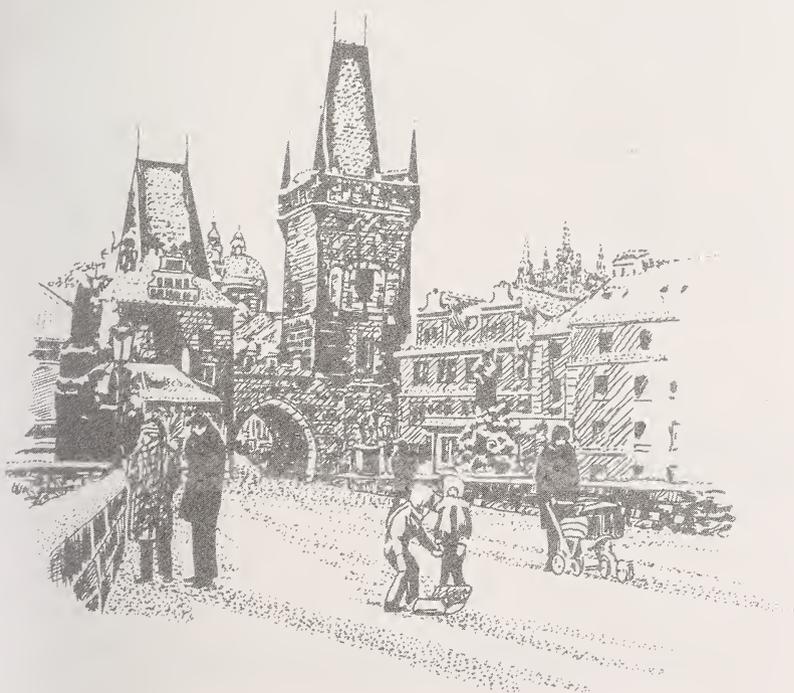




# Czechoslovakia

## a country study

Federal Research Division  
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Research Completed  
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## Foreword

This volume is one in a continuing series of books now being prepared by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress under the Country Studies—Area Handbook Program. The last page of this book lists the other published studies.

Most books in the series deal with a particular foreign country, describing and analyzing its political, economic, social, and national security systems and institutions, and examining the interrelationships of those systems and the ways they are shaped by cultural factors. Each study is written by a multidisciplinary team of social scientists. The authors seek to provide a basic understanding of the observed society, striving for a dynamic rather than a static portrayal. Particular attention is devoted to the people who make up the society, their origins, dominant beliefs and values, their common interests and the issues on which they are divided, the nature and extent of their involvement with national institutions, and their attitudes toward each other and toward their social system and political order.

The books represent the analysis of the authors and should not be construed as an expression of an official United States government position, policy, or decision. The authors have sought to adhere to accepted standards of scholarly objectivity. Corrections, additions, and suggestions for changes from readers will be welcomed for use in future editions.

Louis R. Mortimer  
Acting Chief  
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# Contents

	Page
<b>Foreword</b> .....	iii
<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	v
<b>Preface</b> .....	xiii
<b>Country Profile</b> .....	xv
<b>Introduction</b> .....	xxi
<b>Chapter 1. Historical Setting</b> .....	1
<i>Zenon E. Kohut</i>	
<b>EARLY HISTORY</b> .....	5
First Political Units .....	5
Magyar Invasion .....	7
Bohemian Kingdom .....	7
Hussite Movement .....	10
<b>HAPSBURG RULE, 1526-1867</b> .....	14
The Hapsburgs and the Czechoslovak Lands .....	14
Hapsburg Absolutism and the Bohemian Estates .....	15
Enlightened Absolutism .....	19
National Revival .....	21
Revolutions of 1848 .....	23
<b>THE DUAL MONARCHY, 1867-1918</b> .....	25
Formation of the Dual System .....	25
Austria and the Czechs .....	26
Hungary and the Slovaks .....	27
The Czechoslovak Idea .....	28
World War I .....	28
The Emergence of Subcarpathian Ruthenia (Carpatho-Ukraine) .....	29
<b>THE CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC, 1918-39</b> .....	31
Features of the New State .....	31
Czechoslovak Democracy .....	33
Problem of Dissatisfied Nationalities .....	36
Beneš's Foreign Policy .....	41
Munich .....	42
The Second Republic, 1938-39 .....	44
<b>THE WAR YEARS, 1939-45</b> .....	45
Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia .....	45
Government-in-Exile .....	48

Czech Resistance . . . . .	49
Slovak Republic . . . . .	50
Slovak Resistance . . . . .	51
Soviet Annexation of Carpatho-Ukraine (Subcarpathian Ruthenia) . . . . .	52
Minorities and Population Transfers . . . . .	54
COMMUNIST CZECHOSLOVAKIA . . . . .	54
The Third Republic and the Communist Takeover . . . . .	54
Stalinization . . . . .	57
The Reform Movement . . . . .	60
The Prague Spring, 1968 . . . . .	62
Intervention . . . . .	63
Normalization . . . . .	66
Preserving the Status Quo . . . . .	67
Dissent and Independent Activity . . . . .	68
<b>Chapter 2. The Society and Its Environment . . . . .</b>	<b>73</b>
	<i>Helen Fedor and Mark W. Gould</i>
GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT . . . . .	76
Topography and Drainage . . . . .	76
Climate . . . . .	79
DEMOGRAPHY . . . . .	80
Population . . . . .	80
Urbanization and Migration . . . . .	81
Housing . . . . .	83
Emigration . . . . .	85
ETHNIC GROUPS . . . . .	85
Czechs . . . . .	86
Slovaks . . . . .	90
Others . . . . .	93
LANGUAGE . . . . .	99
SOCIAL GROUPS . . . . .	101
Workers . . . . .	102
Agricultural Workers . . . . .	105
Intelligentsia . . . . .	107
Associations . . . . .	112
The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia . . . . .	113
Trade Unions . . . . .	115
Youth Organizations . . . . .	116
The Family . . . . .	117
RELIGION . . . . .	118
HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE . . . . .	123
EDUCATION . . . . .	126

<b>Chapter 3. The Economy</b> .....	131
	<i>Becky A. Gates</i>
RESOURCE BASE .....	133
LABOR FORCE .....	134
ECONOMIC STRUCTURE AND ITS CONTROL	
MECHANISMS .....	135
ECONOMIC POLICY AND PERFORMANCE .....	139
ECONOMIC SECTORS .....	147
Mining and Energy .....	147
Industry .....	151
Agriculture .....	153
Transportation .....	157
BANKING AND FINANCE .....	160
FOREIGN TRADE .....	163
THE EIGHTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN, 1986-90 .....	167
<b>Chapter 4. Government and Politics</b> .....	171
	<i>Cathleen A. Campbell</i>
POLITICAL SETTING .....	173
Geopolitical Considerations .....	173
Ethnic Considerations .....	174
The 1968 Invasion .....	175
The Policy of Normalization .....	177
A Climate of Orthodoxy .....	178
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA ....	181
National Organization .....	182
Lower-Level Organization .....	186
Membership and Training .....	187
Auxiliary Parties, Mass Organizations, and	
Mass Media .....	189
CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT .....	191
GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE .....	194
The Legislature .....	195
The Executive Branch .....	196
The Judiciary .....	198
Republic and Lower Administrative Levels .....	199
ELECTORAL SYSTEM .....	202
POPULAR POLITICAL EXPRESSION .....	202
Reaction to Normalization .....	203
Charter 77 .....	204
Religious Activists .....	205
FOREIGN RELATIONS .....	205
Policy Making and Administration .....	206

Relations with Communist Nations .....	208
Relations with Noncommunist Nations and Multilateral Ties .....	211
<b>Chapter 5. National Security .....</b>	<b>215</b>
	<i>Kenneth E. Nyirady</i>
<b>ARMED FORCES: HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL</b>	
<b>SETTING .....</b>	<b>218</b>
Historical Background and Traditions .....	218
Government and Party Control .....	228
Soviet Influence .....	231
External Threats to National Security .....	234
<b>ARMED FORCES .....</b>	<b>235</b>
Ground Forces .....	235
Air Force .....	238
Manpower .....	239
Education and Training .....	241
Uniforms and Rank Insignia .....	246
<b>INTERNAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER .....</b>	<b>247</b>
The National Security Corps .....	249
People's Militia .....	251
Border Guard .....	252
<b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM .....</b>	<b>252</b>
Incidence of Crime .....	252
Penal Code .....	256
Criminal Procedure Code .....	258
Penal System .....	259
Police Repression .....	261
<b>Appendix A. Tables .....</b>	<b>265</b>
<b>Appendix B. The Council for Mutual Economic     Assistance .....</b>	<b>273</b>
	<i>Malinda K. Goodrich</i>
<b>MEMBERSHIP, STRUCTURE, NATURE, AND SCOPE ..</b>	<b>274</b>
Membership .....	274
Structure .....	277
Nature of Operation .....	281
Comecon Versus the European Economic Community ..	282
<b>EVOLUTION .....</b>	<b>284</b>
Early Years .....	284
Rediscovery of Comecon after Stalin's Death .....	285
Rapid Growth in Comecon Activity, 1956-63 .....	285
A Lull and Subsequent Revitalization in the Late 1960s .....	286

The Comprehensive Program for Socialist Economic Integration, 1971 .....	287
The 1980s .....	289
COOPERATION UNDER THE 1971 COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM .....	291
Market Relations and Instruments .....	291
Cooperation in Planning .....	294
POWER CONFIGURATIONS WITHIN COMECON .....	299
The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe .....	299
Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam .....	300
Support for Developing Countries .....	301
TRENDS AND PROSPECTS .....	302
<b>Appendix C. The Warsaw Pact .....</b>	<b>307</b>
<i>Karl Wheeler Soper</i>	
THE SOVIET ALLIANCE SYSTEM, 1943-55 .....	309
The Organization of East European National Units, 1943-45 .....	309
The Development of Socialist Armies in Eastern Europe, 1945-55 .....	310
THE WARSAW PACT, 1955-70 .....	313
East-West Diplomacy and the Formation of the Warsaw Pact .....	313
Early Organizational Structure and Activities .....	315
De-Stalinization and National Communism .....	316
The Post-1956 Period .....	319
THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE WARSAW PACT .....	327
Political Organization .....	327
Military Organization .....	327
THE WARSAW PACT, 1970-87 .....	335
Détente .....	336
The Role of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Countries in the Third World .....	337
The Solidarity Crisis .....	339
The End of Détente .....	341
The Problem of Romania in the 1970s and 1980s ....	343
The Renewal of the Alliance .....	344
SOVIET MILITARY STRATEGY AND THE WARSAW PACT .....	346
Soviet Military Strategy .....	346
The Role of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Countries in Soviet Military Strategy .....	348

The Reliability of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Armies . . . . .	350
<b>MILITARY TECHNOLOGY AND THE WARSAW PACT . . . . .</b>	<b>352</b>
The Weapons and Equipment of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Armies . . . . .	352
Coordination of Arms Production . . . . .	354
<b>Appendix D. Manifesto of Charter 77 . . . . .</b>	<b>357</b>
<b>Bibliography . . . . .</b>	<b>363</b>
<b>Glossary . . . . .</b>	<b>393</b>
<b>Index . . . . .</b>	<b>397</b>
<b>List of Figures</b>	
1 Czechoslovakia: Administrative Divisions, 1988 . . . . .	xx
2 Central Europe circa 1097 . . . . .	8
3 The Bohemian Kingdom and Its Extensions, 1378 . . . . .	12
4 Central Europe, 1648 . . . . .	18
5 Central Europe, 1815 . . . . .	22
6 Distintegration of Austria-Hungary, 1918 . . . . .	30
7 The Czechoslovak Republic, 1918-38 . . . . .	34
8 Partitioning of Czechoslovakia, 1938-39 . . . . .	46
9 Topography and Drainage . . . . .	78
10 Age-Sex Distribution, 1985 . . . . .	82
11 Population Density, 1986 . . . . .	84
12 Ethnic Minorities in Czechoslovakia . . . . .	96
13 Transportation System, 1987 . . . . .	158
14 Organization of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, with Top Party Officials, 1987 . . . . .	184
15 Government Organization, 1987 . . . . .	196
16 Representative Motorized Rifle and Tank Divisions, 1980 . . . . .	236
17 Military and Reserve Military Airfields, 1987 . . . . .	240
18 Rank Insignia, 1987 . . . . .	248

## Preface

CZECHOSLOVAKIA: A COUNTRY STUDY replaces the edition of this work published in 1982. Several important developments took place in Czechoslovakia in the period between the two publications. The dissident movement persisted in the face of unrelenting attempts by the government to crush it, and the number of Charter 77 signatories grew steadily. There also has been a revitalization of the Roman Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia. The church's rising popularity was underscored by the government's refusal to allow Pope John Paul II to participate in the festivities celebrating the 1,100th anniversary of the death of Saint Methodius. Perhaps most significant, the aging and conservative Czechoslovak leadership has been confronted in the last years with the growing challenge of *glasnost*' and *perestroika*, promoted by the general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev.

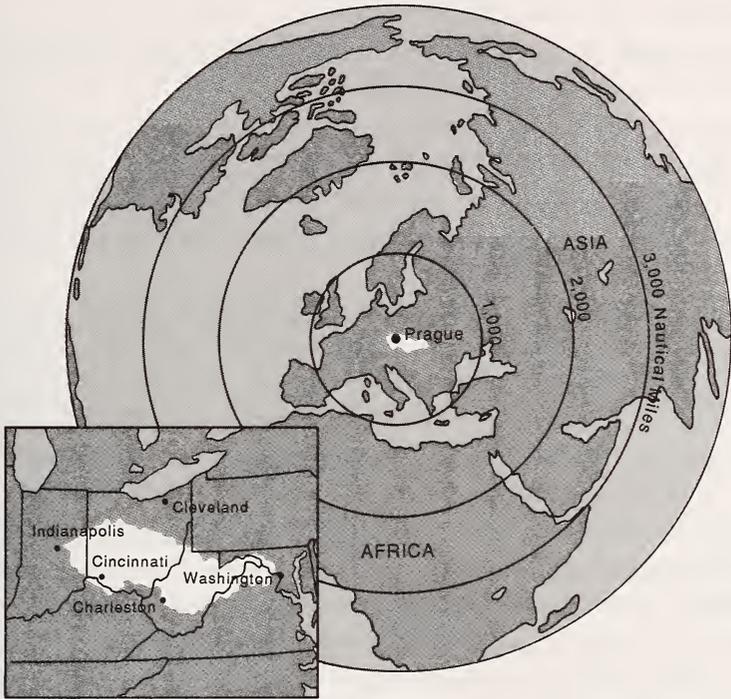
Like its predecessor, this edition attempts to deal with the dominant social, political, economic, and national security aspects of Czechoslovakia. Although the present volume incorporates considerable material from the 1982 edition, it is essentially a new book and contains statistical data and other relevant information from recently published sources. Sources of information included books and scholarly journals, official reports of governments and international organizations, foreign and domestic newspapers, and conference papers and proceedings. Chapter bibliographies appear at the end of the book, and brief comments on some of the more valuable sources recommended for further reading appear at the end of each chapter. Measurements are given in the metric system; a conversion table is provided to assist readers unfamiliar with metric measurements (see table 1, Appendix A). A Glossary is also included.

The contemporary place-names used in this edition are generally those approved by the United States Board on Geographic Names. The reader will find, for example, Prague rather than Praha and Danube rather than Dunaj.

A certain amount of inconsistency seems unavoidable with respect to historical personages. The names of many of the important actors appear here in anglicized form. The reader will note the use of such English names as George, Charles, and Frederick. But the authors have decided to use Jan Hus rather than the anglicized John Huss.



# Country Profile



## Country

**Formal Name:** Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

**Short Form:** Czechoslovakia.

**Term for Citizens:** Czechoslovak(s).

**Capital:** Prague.

## Geography

**Size:** Approximately 127,905 square kilometers.

**Topography:** Generally irregular terrain. Western area, including natural basin centered on Prague, part of north-central European uplands. Eastern region made up of northern reaches of Carpathian Mountains and Danube Basin lands.

**Climate:** Predominantly continental but varies from moderate temperatures of Western Europe to more severe weather systems affecting Eastern Europe and the western Soviet Union.

## **Society**

**Population:** Estimated at 15.6 million in July 1987. Population growth rate 0.3 percent in 1987.

**Education and Literacy:** Education free at all levels and compulsory from age six to sixteen. Vast majority of population literate. Highly developed system of apprenticeship training and vocational schools supplements general secondary schools and institutions of higher education.

**Health:** Free health care available to all citizens. National health planning emphasizes preventive medicine; factory and local health-care centers supplement hospitals and other inpatient institutions. Substantial improvement in rural health care in 1960s and 1970s.

**Language:** Czech and Slovak recognized as official languages; they are mutually intelligible.

**Ethnic Groups:** In 1987 Czechs represented roughly 63 percent of population and Slovaks 31 percent. Hungarians, Ukrainians, Poles, Germans, and Gypsies principal minority groups.

**Religion:** Religious freedom constitutionally guaranteed but limited in practice. Major religious organizations operate under government restrictions. Reliable information on religious affiliation during post-World War II era lacking, but principal denominations Roman Catholic Church, Czechoslovak National Church, Slovak Evangelical Church, Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, and Uniate Church.

## **Economy**

**Gross National Product (GNP):** Estimated US\$135.6 billion in 1985. Per capita GNP US\$8,700. Growth moderate in first half of 1980s. In 1985 real growth rate 1.6 percent. Economy centrally planned with command links controlled by communist party, similar to Soviet Union.

**Energy and Mining:** Country energy short, relying on imported crude oil and natural gas from Soviet Union, domestic brown coal, and nuclear and hydroelectric energy. Energy constraints a major factor in 1980s. Large metallurgical industry but dependent on imports for iron and nonferrous ores.

**Industry:** Extractive and manufacturing industries dominate sector. Major branches include machinery, chemicals, food processing, metallurgy, and textiles. In 1985 production of pig iron 9.6 million tons, crude steel 15 million tons, and cement 10.3 million tons. Industry wasteful of energy, materials, and labor and slow to upgrade technology, but country source of high-quality machinery and arms for other communist countries.

**Agriculture:** Minor sector but supplied bulk of food needs. Dependent on large imports of grains (mainly for livestock feed) in years of adverse weather. In 1980s good harvests resulted in decreased reliance on imports. Meat production constrained by shortage of feed, but high per capita consumption of meat.

**Foreign Trade:** Exports estimated at US\$17.8 billion in 1985, of which 55 percent machinery, 14 percent fuels and materials, 16 percent manufactured consumer goods, 7 percent agricultural and forestry products and 8 percent other. Imports estimated at US\$17.9 billion in 1985, of which 41 percent fuels and materials, 33 percent machinery, 12 percent agricultural and forestry products, 6 percent manufactured consumer goods and 8 percent other. In 1986, about 80 percent of foreign trade with communist countries.

**Exchange Rate:** Official, or commercial, rate Kčs 5.4 per US\$1 in 1987; tourist, or noncommercial, rate Kčs 10.5 per US\$1. Neither rate reflected purchasing power.

**Fiscal Year:** Calendar year.

**Fiscal Policy:** State almost exclusive owner of means of production. Revenues from state enterprises primary source of revenues followed by turnover tax. Large budget expenditures on social programs, subsidies, and investments. Budget usually balanced or small surplus.

## Transportation and Communications

**Railroads:** In 1985 total of 13,141 kilometers, of which 12,883 kilometers standard gauge, 102 kilometers broad gauge, and 156 kilometers narrow gauge; 2,866 kilometers double tracked and 3,221 kilometers electrified. Track and beds suffered from inadequate maintenance.

**Roads:** In 1983 total of 74,064 kilometers, of which 60,765 kilometers paved and 13,299 kilometers graveled. Roads poorly maintained.

**Inland Waterways:** About 475 kilometers in 1985.

**Pipelines:** In 1987 about 1,448 kilometers for crude oil, 1,500 kilometers for refined products, and 8,000 kilometers for natural gas. Network linked domestic oil and gas fields to refineries. Pipelines also linked to large international lines bringing Soviet crude oil and gas to border.

**Freight:** In 1985 about 81 percent of long-distance freight carried by rail. Truck transport accounted for 13 percent, inland waterways for 5 percent, and civil aviation less than 1 percent of freight traffic.

**Ports:** No seaports; used Gdynia, Gdansk, and Szczecin in Poland; Rijeka and Koper in Yugoslavia; Hamburg in Federal Republic of Germany; and Rostock in German Democratic Republic. Czechoslovakia had own fleet and chartered vessels for international cargo. Main river ports Prague, Bratislava, Děčín, and Komárno.

**Telecommunications:** Adequate, modern, automatic system with direct dial connections with many parts of country and most European countries. In 1985 about 23.2 per 100 inhabitants. In January 1987 fifty-four AM, and fourteen FM radio stations, forty-five television stations and eleven Soviet television relays.

## Government and Politics

**Politics:** Monopoly on politics held by Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—KSČ). Gustáv Husák elected first secretary of KSČ in 1969 (changed to general secretary in 1971) and president of Czechoslovakia in 1975. Other parties and organizations exist but function in subordinate roles to KSČ. All political parties, as well as numerous mass organizations, grouped under umbrella of National Front of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. Human rights activists and religious activists severely repressed.

**Government:** Government functioned under 1960 Constitution, which was substantially amended in 1968 and to lesser extents in 1971, 1975, and 1978. 1968 amendments created federal government structure, although subsequent amendments greatly limited authority of Czech Socialist Republic and Slovak Socialist Republic. Power of federal administration severely limited by “shadow government” within KSČ, which made all important policy decisions.

**Foreign Relations:** Formal diplomatic relations with 135 nations in 1987. Czechoslovakia considered strong ally of Soviet Union and

closely followed Soviet lead in international affairs. Relations with United States poor in 1987.

**International Agreements and Memberships:** Active participant in Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), Warsaw Pact, United Nations and its specialized agencies, and Movement of Nonaligned Nations; signatory of conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

## National Security

**Armed Forces:** Czechoslovak People's Army comprised ground forces, numbering 145,000, and air forces, numbering 56,000, in 1987. Conscripts made up slightly less than 70 percent of ground forces and about 32 percent of air force.

**Military Units:** Five tank divisions and five motorized rifle divisions formed nucleus of ground forces in 1987. Combat support provided by one airborne regiment, two antitank regiments, three surface-to-surface missile brigades and two artillery brigades. Air force's 465 combat aircraft and 40 armed helicopters deployed in ground attack, interceptor, and reconnaissance squadrons. Five Soviet ground divisions stationed in Czechoslovakia; total strength about 85,000.

**Equipment:** Thriving armaments industry produced small arms, heavy weapons, armored vehicles, tanks, and jet aircraft. Some also imported from Soviet Union. Tanks produced under Soviet license; most other armaments of Czechoslovak design.

**Police:** National Security Corps included uniformed police (Public Security) and plainclothes police (State Security); both nationwide and subordinate to Ministry of Interior. Border Guard, 11,000 strong, deployed on country's frontiers trained and equipped like military force but subordinate to Ministry of Interior rather than to Ministry of National Defense.

**Paramilitary:** Part-time People's Militia (about 120,000) received some military training and participated in civil defense. Association for Cooperation with the Army (about 1 million) popularized defense training mostly through sports.

**Foreign Military Treaties:** Member of Warsaw Pact; also has bilateral defense treaty with Soviet Union.

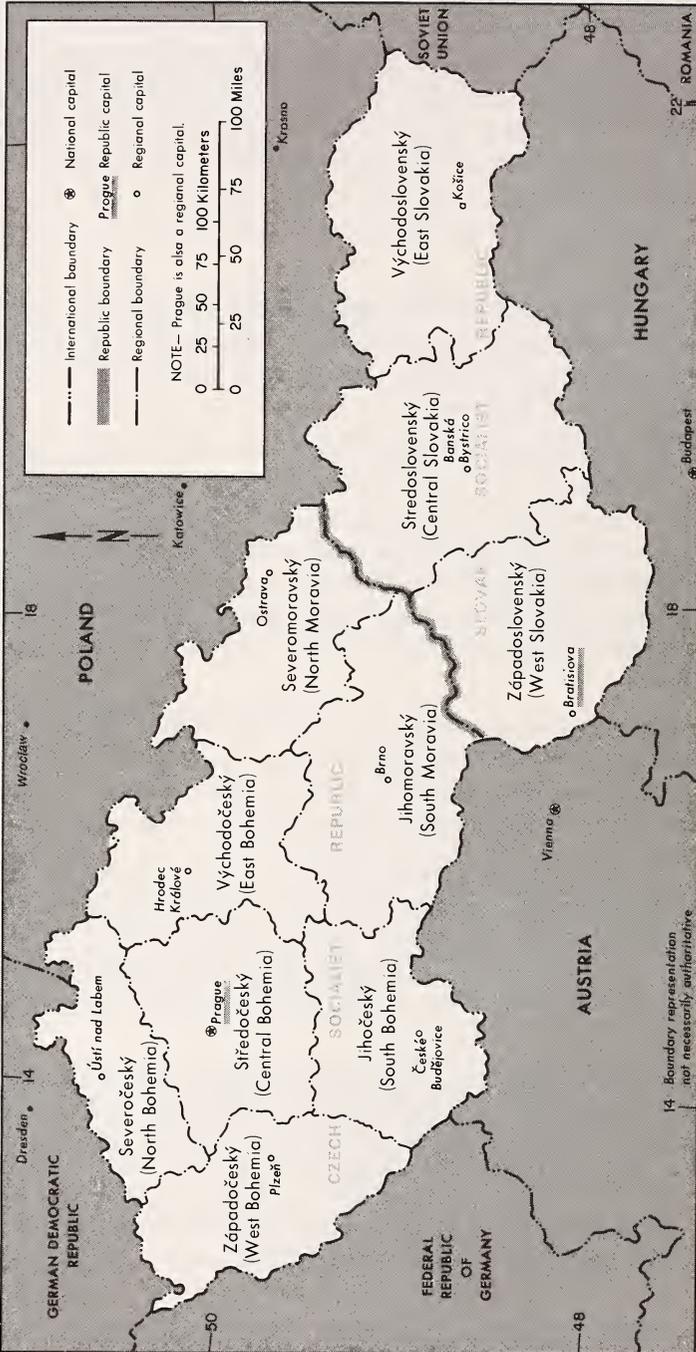


Figure 1. Administrative Divisions, 1988

## Introduction

CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AS THE NAME IMPLIES, is a state uniting two separate nationalities, the Czechs and the Slovaks. Emerging as one of several multinational states in eastern and Central Europe after World War I, the Czechoslovak Republic of 1918 was the fruition of an ideal espoused by both Czech and Slovak intellectuals since the late nineteenth century. This union had the blessing of the victorious Allies, who hoped that the democratic ideals and principles for which so many lives had been sacrificed would inspire the many nationalities inhabiting that region to overcome age-old animosities. President Woodrow Wilson, in particular, viewed the newly established states as microcosms of the United States, where people of different backgrounds and creeds could live peacefully together. Of all the newly created multinational political entities, Czechoslovakia came the closest to fulfilling this dream.

The ancestors of the Czechs and Slovaks were first noted in recorded history in the fifth century, when the ancient Czech tribes settled in Bohemia and Moravia and when Slovak tribes settled in what was to become Slovakia. In the ninth century, the two peoples were united for the first time in the Great Moravian Empire. Positioned between two great civilizations, the Germans in the West and the Byzantine Empire in the East, the Czechs and Slovaks henceforth would play a unique and important role in linking the two worlds. Although both peoples belong to the family of Slavs, they were drawn early in their history into the western European, Roman Catholic orbit (see *First Political Units*, ch. 1). The folk culture of the Czechs and Slovaks remained close to that of their fellow Slavs in the East, but their intellectual and political development was profoundly influenced by western Europe. Today, Czechoslovakia is firmly within the political and economic sphere of the Warsaw Pact alliance, but it still looks to the West for intellectual and spiritual nourishment (see Appendix C).

The unity of the Czech and Slovak people in the Great Moravian Empire was brief. From the beginning of the tenth century and for almost a millennium, the two peoples followed separate courses. Although no independent Czech state existed prior to 1918, the Bohemian Kingdom that emerged in the tenth century and lasted well into the sixteenth century had many of the aspects of a national state. Early in its history, the Bohemian Kingdom became part of the Holy Roman Empire, and the Czech people were subjected

to strong German and Roman Catholic influence (see Bohemian Kingdom, ch. 1). Nevertheless, the Czechs, first under the Holy Roman Empire and later under Hapsburg rule, experienced a considerable degree of political, cultural, and religious autonomy. By the nineteenth century, the Czechs had developed a distinct national identity and culture, as well as a differentiated society made up of a landowning nobility, an urban middle class, an intellectual elite, and workers and peasants (see Hapsburg Rule, 1526–1867, ch. 1).

Unlike the Czechs, the Slovaks did not attain a high level of political, economic, and cultural development prior to the nineteenth century; their Hungarian overlords proved to be far less enlightened masters than the Germans and Austrians. At the beginning of the century, the Slovaks remained, for the most part, an agrarian society, with only a small number of intellectuals. Only in the second half of the nineteenth century did Slovakia undergo large and rapid urbanization (see Urbanization and Migration, ch. 2). National consciousness among the Slovaks also lagged behind that of the Czechs and grew largely as a result of increased contacts with the politically and culturally more advanced Czechs.

The Czechoslovak Republic formed in 1918 contained, in addition to Czechs and Slovaks, numerous Hungarians, Germans, Ukrainians, and Poles. Each minority, however, was granted freedom to develop its own culture and language. The republic also served as a haven for the minorities of the neighboring states fleeing the oppression of the ruling majority (see Czechoslovak Democracy, ch. 1). In spite of the tolerant and libertarian policies of the Czechoslovak government toward the German and other minorities within the republic's borders, Hitler used the pretext of dissatisfied minorities to dismember Czechoslovakia in 1938 as a prelude to his attack on Poland (see Second Republic, 1938–39, ch. 1).

The Third Republic, which was established after World War II, differs markedly from the First Republic of the interwar period. The Czechoslovakia of the 1980s was predominantly a nation of Czechs and Slovaks; ethnic communities of Hungarians, Germans, Ukrainians, Poles, Gypsies, and Jews made up only about 5 percent of the total population (see Ethnic Groups, ch. 2). The post-war nationalization of industry and collectivization of agriculture had also simplified the once complex and diverse Czechoslovak society. The Czechoslovak social structure in the 1980s consisted mainly of workers and collective farmers, a small class of intelligentsia, and, at the top of the hierarchy, the communist party elite (see Social Groups, ch. 2). In the 1980s, Czechoslovakia remained

one of the most highly industrialized and prosperous countries in Eastern Europe and had a comparatively high standard of living. Its citizens did not experience extreme poverty, nor was there a conspicuously wealthy elite. The country still possessed considerable, if dwindling, coal deposits and relatively fertile soil (see Economic Sectors, ch. 3).

According to the 1960 Constitution, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is a federative state composed of “two equal fraternal nations,” the Czechs and the Slovaks. The Czech Socialist Republic and the Slovak Socialist Republic share with the federal government many of the functions and responsibilities of government; the federal government in Prague, however, has exclusive jurisdiction for the most important responsibilities of state, such as foreign affairs, defense, economic policy, and federal justice. As in all communist states, however, real power in Czechoslovakia rests with the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—KSČ). The government branches of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, as well as those of the Czech and Slovak socialist republics, simply implement the policies and decisions of the party (see The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia; Government Structure; ch. 4).

The defense of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic rests with the Czechoslovak People’s Army. Since 1968, however, five Soviet ground divisions have been stationed in Czechoslovakia as part of the Soviet Union’s Central Group of Forces. The Ministry of National Defense, which supervises the Czechoslovak armed forces, has no control over the Soviet military presence on Czechoslovak soil. On the contrary, as part of the Warsaw Pact alliance, Czechoslovak armed forces are part of the Soviet bloc’s military might. Czechoslovak soldiers are strongly influenced by fraternization with other “socialist” armies. In addition, they employ Soviet military training and political indoctrination procedures and are taught to adopt Soviet concepts of military doctrine, strategy and tactics, and command structure (see Armed Forces, ch. 5). Internal national security in Czechoslovakia is maintained by the Border Guard, which is responsible for securing the country’s frontiers; the National Security Corps, made up of uniformed police and the plainclothes State Security force; and a part-time People’s Militia. The internal national security forces are under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior (see Internal Security and Public Order, ch. 5).

The Third Republic was created as a result of a compromise between pre-war Czechoslovak Republic leaders and the KSČ. Following World War II, Czechoslovak nationalist leaders Eduard

Beneš and Tomáš Masaryk hoped to re-establish a republic with the liberal, democratic principles and institutions of pre-war Czechoslovakia. Their hopes were subverted by the KSČ, which at the time had considerable popular support and the backing of the Soviet Union. The KSČ steadily expanded its influence over key ministries and in 1948 delivered the final blow to Czechoslovak democracy by seizing all power (see *The Third Republic and the Communist Takeover*, ch. 1). After 1948 Czechoslovakia moved completely into the Soviet sphere of influence and was transformed into a Stalinist state. The party became the only political force in the country, the state apparatus became highly centralized, and cultural and intellectual life became pedestrian and dull in line with the tenets of socialist realism. All manifestations of dissidence, whether political, religious, or artistic, were repressed; elements within the Czechoslovak society found to be the least bit nonconformist were removed from important positions, arrested, and incarcerated; and workers and peasants, left without a voice, passively submitted to their lot. A widespread political, economic, and cultural malaise prevailed in Czechoslovakia well into the late 1960s (see *Stalinization*, ch. 1).

The Czechoslovak economy, which had been nationalized almost totally by 1952, began to stagnate in the late 1950s. The continued poor economic performance throughout the 1960s led to political instability and demands for reform (see *Economic Policy and Performance*, ch. 3). The period called the “Prague Spring” began as an attempt by party and government leaders to bolster the faltering economy and to overcome the increasingly evident constraints on economic growth. Reformers, both in the party and the state bureaucracy, blamed in particular the central planning system and sought to replace it with a “market socialist” system. Initial calls for reforms, however, did not challenge the paramount role of the KSČ, nor did they include any proposals for liberalizing Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, even the modest proposals for reform met with strong conservative opposition. In fact, the developing political crisis was the result of a broad conflict between the liberal economic and conservative elites in the party and the government (see *The Reform Movement*, ch. 1).

In January 1968, Alexander Dubček replaced Antonín Novotný as the first secretary of the KSČ, and from that point the Prague Spring movement was transformed into a mass movement for political reform, led by a coalition of intellectuals and party officials. The KSČ itself became an agent of reform. A consensus on the need for reform seemed to have developed very quickly on the part of Czechoslovak citizens, who disagreed only on the reform’s scope

and pace. In April 1968, the KSČ Presidium adopted the Action Program, calling for a federalized Czechoslovakia and a “democratic” and “national” model of socialism. At the same time, however, the Presidium reaffirmed Czechoslovakia’s allegiance to the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact (see *The Prague Spring, 1968*, ch. 1).

The pace of reforms in Czechoslovakia—and particularly the degree of penetration of all levels of the KSČ apparatus by the reformers—was a matter of increasing concern to the Soviet Union. The Soviets became especially alarmed when in June 1968 Ludvík Vaculík, a candidate member of the Central Committee of the KSČ, issued a manifesto entitled “Two Thousand Words,” calling for the immediate implementation of the reform program. The Soviet Union was confronted with the prospect of full-scale democratization and political alienation by an integral member of the Soviet bloc. The Soviet response at first consisted of a series of warnings. Warsaw Pact forces held military maneuvers on Czechoslovak soil in the summer of 1968, a letter of castigation signed by Warsaw Pact member states was sent to the KSČ, and Soviet Politburo members met with KSČ leadership in an attempt to push back the reform movement. When all these steps failed, the Warsaw Pact forces, with the exception of Romania, invaded Czechoslovakia. Remarkably, in spite of the exuberance of the spring and summer, Czechoslovak citizens heeded the call of the KSČ Presidium not to shed blood and offered only passive resistance to the invaders. The reform movement collapsed overnight without a shot being fired (see *Intervention*, ch. 1).

The refusal of Czechoslovak citizens to resist with arms the Warsaw Pact invasion of their country did not come as a total surprise. After all, Czechoslovaks had displayed similar behavior when Hitler dismantled their country in 1938 and when the communists forcibly imposed their rule in 1948. Passive resistance when confronted with overwhelming odds and pacifism in general are viewed by many observers as a long-standing Czech national characteristic. Such pacifism is exemplified, if not glorified, in the popular World War I novel *The Good Soldier Švejk* by the Czech writer Jaroslav Hašek. In the novel, the Czech soldier Švejk, a seemingly slow-witted and submissive provincial bumpkin, uses glib and obtuseness, disguised as passive compliance, to outwit the Austrian bureaucracy and military establishment (see *Czechs*, ch. 2). A more convincing explanation for the lack of armed resistance on the part of Czechoslovak citizens in times of grave crisis is perhaps the dualistic nature of their society.

Throughout its existence, Czechoslovakia has lacked the demographic homogeneity of present-day Poland or Hungary. Despite the government's considerable success in the 1950s and 1960s in removing many of the most pronounced economic imbalances between the Czech lands and Slovakia, social and political tensions between the Czechs and the Slovaks persisted. The two peoples consistently pursued different concepts of a Czechoslovak state. The Czechs, who outnumbered the Slovaks two to one, wanted in 1968, as they had in the past, a single Czechoslovak state. The Slovaks, resentful of what they perceived as Czech domination of administrative and educational posts in Slovakia, sought a federative political system in which they would exercise greater political autonomy. Czechoslovakia lacked the kind of unifying forces that were present in Poland, for example. The Roman Catholic Church did not exert a powerful unifying influence, nor was there a strong labor union that represented the interests of all the Czechoslovak workers. The various nationalities and interest groups were united in 1968 only in their efforts to free themselves from the oppressive domination of the party and the state. The reformers themselves assumed that an essential ingredient of the reform movement was the right of the various nationalities and interest groups to pursue their own specific and different aims. These factors made Czechoslovak society ready for democracy in 1968 but incapable of standing up to a totalitarian challenge.

The process of "normalization" following the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia was carried out under the leadership of Gustáv Husák, elected the new first secretary of the KSC in April 1969. Husák had been purged in 1951 for "nationalist" tendencies and imprisoned until 1960. Rehabilitated in 1963, Husák occupied a centrist position in the debates over reforms during the Prague Spring. It was now his task to restore the country to the pre-reform period, to cleanse the party of reformist elements, and to reinstall ideological conformity.

A sense of defeat and alienation permeated Czechoslovak society in the 1970s as hopes for political and economic reforms were dashed. Materialism and consumerism became the main pursuit of most citizens. At first, the country's economy was strong enough to allow for a rise in the standard of living and to satisfy the public's aroused passion for material goods. In the mid-1970s, however, the economy took another turn for the worse, and a prolonged economic decline followed. In response, antisocial behavior became more pronounced. Criminal activity, alcoholism, and absenteeism from work increased alarmingly; labor productivity declined; and more and more Czechoslovak citizens sought escape from their bleak

lives through emigration (see *Reaction to Normalization*, ch. 4). A highly developed sense of humor, as manifested in popular political satire, served as another avenue of escape from everyday doldrums. In his book *Rowboat to Prague*, Alan Levy illustrates the cynical view of life under the socialist system by citing what the people of Czechoslovakia refer to as the “four paradoxes of applied socialism”: everybody works, but nothing gets produced; nothing gets produced, but quotas are met; production quotas are met, but stores have nothing to sell; stores have nothing to sell, but the standard of living continues to rise.

Another aspect of normalization was Czechoslovakia’s increased dependence on the Soviet Union. In the late 1960s, Moscow had initiated a process of integration to make countries like Czechoslovakia increasingly dependent on the Soviet Union. Czechoslovakia, in particular, acquiesced to Soviet pressure in Eastern Europe, almost totally submitting to Soviet control. Indeed, in its desire to preserve the status quo, at times it seemed a more orthodox communist state than the Soviet Union itself. Not surprisingly, Czechoslovakia was one of the staunchest opponents of the 1980–81 reforms and the Solidarity movement in Poland. Since 1968 the ties between the armed forces of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia have been especially strong (see *Soviet Influence*, ch. 5).

The voices of dissent and reform were not completely stilled, however. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, a few individuals continued to call for greater personal freedom. The most prominent of these individuals organized themselves around Charter 77, a manifesto issued in January 1977 and originally signed by 243 leading Czechoslovak intellectuals. The manifesto called upon the government to respect the civil and human rights enumerated in the 1960 Constitution and in several international agreements, in particular the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe’s Final Act (also known as the Helsinki Accords), signed by Czechoslovakia (see *Charter 77*, ch. 4). The response of the Husák regime to the Charter 77 movement was reminiscent of the Stalinist era in Czechoslovakia. The signatories of the charter were viciously attacked in the official press, fired from their jobs, arrested, and imprisoned. Nevertheless, the Charter 77 movement continued to grow. By the mid-1980s, the number of signatories had reached 12,000 and included representatives from almost every segment of society (see *Police Repression*, ch. 5). Another manifestation of dissent in the 1980s was growing religious activism, especially among the young (see *Religion*, ch. 2).

In late 1987, Czechoslovakia once again faced the challenge of reform. Paradoxically, the winds of change were blowing, this time

not from the West but from the East, from the Soviet Union itself. *Glasnost* and *perestroika*, the cornerstones of Mikhail Gorbachev's ambitious program to invigorate the moribund Soviet economy and society, caused the KSČ considerable consternation. The KSČ was under increasing pressure from the Soviet Union to follow its example and institute reforms in Czechoslovakia. Within the KSČ, reformist elements, encouraged by the Gorbachev program and frustrated by the stagnation and inertia in their own country, also pressed for reform.

Conservative opposition to reform remained strong, however. Under the leadership of Husák, the KSČ seemed determined to avoid the excesses of the reform movement of 1968. Although in March 1987 Husák nominally committed Czechoslovakia to follow the program of *perestroika*, he nevertheless cautioned the party in October 1987 not to "hasten solutions too quickly" so as to "minimize the risks that could occur."

December 1, 1987

\* \* \*

On December 17, 1987, some two months after research and writing of this book were completed, Prague announced that Husák, who was one month away from his seventieth birthday, had resigned as head of the KSČ. He retained, however, his post of president of Czechoslovakia and his full membership on the Presidium of the KSČ. Husák's retention of these positions and the fact that the man who replaced him could hardly be called a reformer suggested to most observers that Husák's resignation was caused by failing health rather than by any fundamental shift in the KSČ policies toward reform.

Miloš Jakeš, who replaced Husák as first secretary of the KSČ, was sixty-five years of age at the time of his assumption of the most powerful post in the country. Other than the age difference and the fact that Jakeš is a Czech whereas Husák is a Slovak, there was little to distinguish the new leader from his predecessor, and most observers expected Jakeš to continue Husák's policies.

Jakeš was born August 17, 1922, in Bohemia. He joined the KSČ in 1945 and ten years later became the head of its youth organization, the Czechoslovak Union of Youth. Subsequently he spent some time in Moscow. Between 1968 and 1977, he served as the head of the KSČ's Central Control and Auditing Commission and in this capacity supervised the purge of the KSČ following the Soviet invasion of 1968. In 1977 he was elected to the party's Secretariat and assumed responsibilities for Czechoslovak agriculture. In 1981

he was made a full member of the Presidium, overseeing the party's supervision of economic policy and management. Considered a firm supporter of Husák, Jakeš was viewed as having neither strong reformist nor conservative tendencies.

In his first pronouncements as the head of the KSČ, Jakeš assured the KSČ's Central Committee that he would continue the cautious and moderate path of reform set forth by Husák. He called for a large-scale introduction of new technology as the means to "fundamentally increase the efficiency of the Czechoslovak economy." But he also warned that there would be no "retreat from the fundamental principles of socialism," adding that the party had learned well the "lesson from 1968-69 and know[s] where such a retreat leads." At the same time, Jakeš acknowledged Soviet pressure for reform by pledging to pursue economic restructuring, stating that "just as Soviet Communists, we too must observe the principle that more democracy means more socialism."

Taking the cue from its new leader, the Czechoslovak Central Committee in its plenary meeting of December 18, 1987, failed to make a decision on a very modest proposal for reform. The Czechoslovak version of *perestroika*, which had slowly taken shape during the last months of Husák's rule under the guidance of the reformist and pro-Gorbachev Czechoslovak leader Premier Lubomír Štrougal, called for a modest decentralization of state economic administration but postponed any concrete action until the end of the decade. This reform proposal had been publicly debated and was expected to be approved. The Central Committee returned it to the government for "further work," however, an action which suggesting that committee members disagreed even on this minor reform. The only positive aspect of the whole affair was an unprecedented news conference held by the Central Committee to announce its failure to act.

According to some Western observers, the slow pace of the Czechoslovak reform movement was an irritant to the Soviet leadership. In a congratulatory message to Jakeš, Gorbachev urged the latter to "set forth restructuring of the Czechoslovak economy and democratization of public and political life." "We are confident," Gorbachev added, that "the Central Committee under your leadership will ensure the fulfillment of extensive tasks facing the party." In late 1987, observers were reluctant to predict which course of action the KSČ would follow under its new leader.

January 18, 1988

Ihor Y. Gawdiak



## Chapter 1. Historical Setting



*Orava Castle in Slovakia, dating from the third century A.D.*

CZECHOSLOVAKIA WAS ESTABLISHED in 1918 as a national state of the Czechs and Slovaks. Although these two peoples were closely related, they had undergone different historical experiences. In the ninth century A.D., the ancestors of the Czechs and Slovaks were united in the Great Moravian Empire, but by the tenth century the Hungarians had conquered Slovakia, and for a millennium the Czechs and the Slovaks went their separate ways. The history of Czechoslovakia, therefore, is a story of two separate peoples whose fates sometimes have touched and sometimes have intertwined.

Despite their separate strands of development, both Czechs and Slovaks struggled against a powerful neighbor that threatened their very existence. Both nations showed resilience and perseverance in their search for national self-expression. The Czechs had a much richer tradition of self-rule. From the tenth to the fifteenth century, the Czech-inhabited Bohemian Kingdom was a powerful political and military entity. The immigration into Bohemia of a large number of Germans, however, created tension between Czechs and Germans.

Perhaps the greatest moment of Czech self-expression came with the Hussite movement in the fifteenth century. In 1403 the Czech reformist preacher Jan Hus challenged papal authority and precipitated a broadly based anti-German rebellion. The Hussite religious reform movement developed into a national struggle for autonomy in political and ecclesiastical affairs. For over two centuries the Czechs were able to maintain political self-rule, which was expressed by the Bohemian estates (an assembly of nobles, clergy, and townspeople representing the major social groups in the Bohemian Kingdom) and the Czech Reformed Church.

The failure to establish a native dynasty ultimately doomed the Bohemian Kingdom. In 1526 the Bohemian estates accepted a Hapsburg ruler as monarch. Soon this voluntary subordination was transformed into the hereditary rule of an alien absolutist dynasty. The Bohemian estates resisted, but their defeat by the Hapsburgs at the Battle of White Mountain in 1620 had dire consequences: the entire Czech leadership was either killed or went into exile, the reformed Czech religion was gradually eliminated, and even the Czech language went into decline. As the remnants of the Bohemian Kingdom were abolished, the Czech lands were incorporated into Austria. From self-rule, the Czechs were reduced to an oppressed peasant nation.

New forces at work in the nineteenth century dramatically changed the position of the Czechs. A vigorous industrial revolution transformed a peasant nation into a differentiated society that included industrial workers, a middle class, and intellectuals. Under the influence of the Enlightenment and romanticism, the Czechs experienced a remarkable revival of Czech culture and national consciousness. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Czechs were making political demands, including the reconstitution of an autonomous Bohemian Kingdom. Because of Austria's parliamentary system, the Czechs were able to make significant cultural and political gains, but these were vigorously opposed by Bohemia's Germans, who feared losing their privileged position. On the eve of World War I, the Czech leader Tomáš Masaryk began propagating the Czechoslovak idea, i.e., the reunion of Czechs and Slovaks into one political entity.

The Slovak road to nationhood was even more difficult than that of the Czechs. After incorporation into the Kingdom of Hungary in the tenth century, the Slovaks were reduced to being serfs of their Hungarian overlords. They had no forum for political expression, but maintained their language and folk customs as an expression of their strong national consciousness. On occasion, the Slovaks were able to renew contact with the Czechs. In the fifteenth century, Czech Hussite armies had briefly occupied parts of Slovakia. In the sixteenth century, Czech Protestant literature was circulated in Slovakia, and the Czech language became the literary language of educated Slovaks.

National revival came late and more hesitantly to the Slovaks than to the Czechs. Slovakia was not industrialized until the end of the nineteenth century; therefore, the Slovaks remained primarily a rural people led by a small group of intellectuals. The Slovak leadership had first to decide on the nature of Slovak identity. Some outstanding Slovak scholars, e.g., Pavol Šafárik and Ján Kollár, viewed Slovaks as merely a long-separated part of a single Czechoslovak nation. By the 1840s, however, L'udovít Štúr emphasized the distinctiveness of the Slovak language and people; subsequently, Slovaks viewed themselves as a separate Slovak nationality. As the Slovaks attempted to establish cultural institutions and make political demands, they were blocked by the Hungarian ruling aristocracy. The Slovak national revival was severely repressed, and, on the eve of World War I, the Slovaks were struggling to preserve their newly found national identity.

After a millennium of separation, the Czechs and Slovaks were politically reunited in 1918 in the Czechoslovak Republic. As a parliamentary democracy surrounded by hostile neighbors, the

Czechoslovak Republic not only survived for twenty years but also prospered. Yet the republic was not able to withstand the combined pressure of its dissatisfied minorities and the aggressive designs of its neighbors. Tension was most acute in the German-populated Sudetenland. The rise of Hitler, who became chancellor of Germany in 1933, led to mounting German nationalism in the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia and provided a pretext for Hitler's demand for annexation of this highly industrialized area. Czechoslovakia's major allies, Britain and France, were anxious to avoid a war with Germany. To appease Hitler, they signed the Munich Agreement on September 29, 1938, ceding the Sudetenland to the Third Reich. Bowing to the inevitable, Czechoslovak President Eduard Beneš accepted the Munich decision. In March 1939, Nazi troops occupied all of Bohemia and Moravia, and the Slovaks declared independence. Czechoslovakia ceased to exist.

After World War II, Czechoslovakia was reconstituted as an independent state but again faced the threat of a powerful neighbor. President Beneš had made major concessions to the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, hoping to satisfy it and the Soviet Union while, at the same time, attempting to preserve Czechoslovakia's democratic, pluralistic political system. Beneš's hopes were not realized, and the communists overthrew his coalition government in 1948. Czechoslovakia soon was placed firmly into the Soviet orbit, and Stalinization followed.

Czechoslovakia's democratic tradition had been suppressed but not destroyed. In 1968 the struggle for democracy reemerged within the party itself. While remaining loyal to the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, the leadership of the party under Alexander Dubček attempted to introduce within Czechoslovakia a more democratic form of socialism. The ensuing Prague Spring of 1968 was crushed by the Warsaw Pact invasion. Subsequently, the leadership of the party was purged, and Gustáv Husák, the new general secretary (the title changed from first secretary in 1971), introduced a "normalization" program. Despite Czech and Slovak dissent, as of 1987 Husák continued to enforce an anti-reformist course.

## **Early History**

### **First Political Units**

Although a Czechoslovak state did not emerge until 1918, its roots go back many centuries. The earliest records of Slavic inhabitants in present-day Czechoslovakia date from the fifth century A.D. The ancestors of the Czechs settled in present-day Bohemia and Moravia, and those of the Slovaks settled in

present-day Slovakia. The settlers developed an agricultural economy and built the characteristically circular Slavic villages, the *okrouhlice*.

The peaceful life of the Slavic tribes was shattered in the sixth century by the invasion of the Avars, a people of undetermined origin and language who established a loosely connected empire between the Labe (Elbe) and Dnieper rivers. The Avars did not conquer all the Slavic tribes in the area, but they subjugated some of them and conducted raids on others. It was in response to the Avars that Samo—a foreigner thought to be a Frankish merchant—unified some of the Slavic tribes and in A.D. 625 established the empire of Samo. Although the territorial extent of the empire is not known, it was centered in Bohemia and is considered the first coherent Slavic political unit. The empire disintegrated when Samo died in 658.

A more stable polity emerged in Moravia. The Czech tribes of Moravia helped Charlemagne destroy the Avar Empire (ca. 796) and were rewarded by receiving part of it as a fief. Although the Moravians paid tribute to Charlemagne, they did enjoy considerable independence. Early in the ninth century, Mojmir—a Slavic chief—formed the Moravian Kingdom. His two successors expanded its domains to include Bohemia, Slovakia, southern Poland, and western Hungary. The expanded kingdom became known as the Great Moravian Empire. Its importance to Czechoslovak history is that it united in a single state the ancestors of the Czechs and Slovaks.

The Great Moravian Empire was located at the crossroads of two civilizations: the German lands in the West and Byzantium in the East. From the West the Franks (a Germanic people) conducted destructive raids into Moravian territory, and German priests and monks came to spread Christianity in its Roman form among the Slavs. Mojmir and his fellow chiefs were baptized at Regensburg in modern-day Germany. Rastislav (850–70), Mojmir's successor, feared the German influence as a threat to his personal rule, however, and turned to Byzantium. At Rastislav's request, Emperor Michael of Byzantium dispatched the monks Cyril and Methodius to the Great Moravian Empire to introduce Eastern Christian rites and liturgy in the Slavic language. A new Slavonic script, the Cyrillic alphabet, was devised. Methodius was invested by the pope as archbishop of Moravia. But Svätopluk (871–94), Rastislav's successor, chose to ally himself with the German clerics. After the death of Methodius in 885, the Great Moravian Empire was drawn into the sphere of influence of the Roman Catholic Church. As a result, the Czechs and Slovaks adopted the Latin

alphabet and became further differentiated from the Eastern Slavs, who continued to use the Cyrillic alphabet and adhered to Eastern Orthodoxy.

## **Magyar Invasion**

The unification of Czech and Slovak tribes in a single state was shattered by the Magyar invasion in 907. The Magyars, who entered the region as seminomadic pastoralists, soon developed settled agricultural communities; they held the territory until the Ottoman conquest in the sixteenth century. With the arrival of the Magyars, the Great Moravian Empire disintegrated. The chiefs of the Czech tribes in Bohemia broke from the tribes in Moravia and swore allegiance instead to the Frankish emperor Arnulf. The political center of gravity for the Czechs shifted to Bohemia, where a new political unit, the Bohemian Kingdom, would develop. The Magyars established the Kingdom of Hungary, which included a good part of the Great Moravian Empire, primarily all of modern-day Slovakia. As it turned out, the Magyar invasion had profound long-term consequences, for it meant that the Slavic people of the Kingdom of Hungary—the ancestors of the Slovaks—would be separated politically from the western areas, inhabited by the ancestors of the Czechs for virtually a millennium. This separation was a major factor in the development of distinct Czech and Slovak nationalities.

## **Bohemian Kingdom**

### *Foundation*

When the Great Moravian Empire disintegrated, a new political entity, the Bohemian Kingdom, emerged. It would play an important role in the development of the Czech nation. The Bohemian Kingdom was a major medieval and early modern political, economic, and cultural entity and subsequently was viewed by many Czechs as one of the brightest periods of Czech history. But whatever its long-range implications for Czech history, it is important to remember that the Bohemian Kingdom was a medieval state in which ethnic or national questions were far overshadowed by dynastic politics.

The Bohemian Kingdom emerged in the tenth century when the Přemyslid chiefs—members of the Čechové, a tribe from which the Czechs derive their name—unified neighboring Czech tribes and established a form of centralized rule. Cut off from Byzantium by the Hungarian presence, the Bohemian Kingdom existed in the shadow of the Holy Roman Empire. In 950 the powerful emperor



Source: Based on information from William R. Shepherd, *Shepherd's Historical Atlas*, New York, 1980, and J. F. N. Bradley, *Czechoslovakia: A Short History*, Edinburgh, 1971.

Figure 2. Central Europe circa 1097

Otto I, a Saxon, led an expedition to Bohemia demanding tribute; the Bohemian Kingdom thus became a fief of the Holy Roman Empire and its king one of the seven electors of the emperor. The German emperors continued the practice of using the Roman Catholic clergy to extend German influence into Czech territory. Significantly, the bishopric of Prague, founded in 973 during the reign of Boleslav II (967-99), was subordinated to the German archbishopric of Mainz. Thus, at the same time that Přemyslid rulers utilized the German alliance to consolidate their rule against a perpetually rebellious regional nobility, they struggled to retain their autonomy in relation to the empire.

After a struggle with Poland and Hungary, the Bohemian Kingdom acquired Moravia in 1029. Moravia, however, continued to be a separate margravate, usually ruled by a younger son of the Bohemian king. Because of complex dynastic arrangements, Moravia's link with the Bohemian Kingdom between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries was occasionally severed; during such interludes Moravia was subordinated directly to the Holy Roman Empire or to Hungary (see fig. 2). Although Moravia's fate was intertwined with Bohemia's, in general it did not participate in

Bohemia's civil and religious struggles. The main course of Czech history evolved in Bohemia proper.

### **Growth**

The thirteenth century was the most dynamic period of Přemyslid reign over Bohemia. Emperor Frederick II's preoccupation with Mediterranean affairs and the dynastic struggles known as the Great Interregnum (1254–73) weakened imperial authority in Central Europe, thus providing opportunities for Přemyslid assertiveness. At the same time, the Mongol invasions (1220–42) absorbed the attention of the Bohemian Kingdom's eastern neighbors, the Hungarians and the Poles.

In 1212 King Přemysl Otakar I (1198–1230) extracted a Golden Bull (a formal edict) from the emperor confirming the royal title for Otakar and his descendants. The imperial prerogative to ratify each Bohemian king and to appoint the bishop of Prague was revoked. The king's successor, Přemysl Otakar II (1253–78), married a German princess, Margaret of Babenberg, and became duke of Austria, thereby acquiring upper and lower Austria and part of Styria. He conquered the rest of Styria, most of Carinthia, and parts of Carniola. From 1273, however, Hapsburg emperor Rudolf began to reassert imperial authority. All of Přemysl Otakar's German possessions were lost in 1276, and in 1278 Přemysl Otakar II died in battle against Rudolf.

The thirteenth century was also a period of large-scale German immigration, often encouraged by Přemyslid kings hoping to weaken the influence of their own Czech nobility. The Germans populated towns and mining districts on the Bohemian periphery and in some cases formed German colonies in the interior of the Czech lands. Stříbro, Kutná Hora, Německý Brod (present-day Havlíčkův Brod) and Jihlava were important German settlements. The Germans brought their own code of law—the *jus teutonicum*—which formed the basis of the later commercial law of Bohemia and Moravia. Marriages between Germans and Czech nobles soon became commonplace.

### **Golden Age**

The fourteenth century, particularly the reign of Charles IV (1342–78), is considered the Golden Age of Czech history. By that time the Přemyslid line had died out, and, after a series of dynastic wars, a new Luxemburg dynasty captured the Bohemian crown. Charles, the second Luxemburg king, was raised at the French court and was cosmopolitan in attitude. He strengthened the power and prestige of the Bohemian Kingdom. In 1344 Charles elevated the

bishopric of Prague, making it an archbishopric and freeing it from the jurisdiction of Mainz and the Holy Roman Empire. The archbishop was given the right to crown Bohemian kings. Charles curbed the Czech nobility, rationalized the provincial administration of Bohemia and Moravia, and made Brandenburg, Lusatia, and Silesia into fiefs of the Czech crown (see fig. 3). In 1355 Charles was crowned Holy Roman Emperor. In 1356 he issued a Golden Bull defining and systematizing the process of election to the imperial throne and making the Czech king foremost among the seven electors. The Bohemian Kingdom ceased to be a fief of the emperor.

Charles made Prague into an imperial city. Extensive building projects undertaken by the king included the founding of the New Town southeast of the old city. The royal castle, Hradčany, was rebuilt. Of particular significance was the founding of Charles University in Prague in 1348. Charles's intention was to make Prague into an international center of learning, and the university was divided into Czech, Polish, Saxon, and Bavarian "nations," each with one controlling vote. Charles University, however, would become the nucleus of intense Czech particularism. Charles died in 1378, and the Bohemian crown went to his son, Wenceslas IV.

### **Hussite Movement**

The Hussite movement was a national, as well as a religious, manifestation. As a religious reform movement, it represented a challenge to papal authority and an assertion of national autonomy in ecclesiastical affairs. As a Czech national movement, it acquired anti-imperial and anti-German implications and thus can be considered a manifestation of a long-term Czech-German conflict. The Hussite movement is also viewed by many Czechs as a precursor to the Protestant Reformation.

Hussitism began during the long reign of Wenceslas IV (1378-1419), a period of papal schism and concomitant anarchy in the Holy Roman Empire, and was precipitated by a controversy at Charles University. In 1403 Jan Hus became rector of the university. A reformist preacher, Hus espoused the antipapal and anti-hierarchical teachings of John Wyclif of England, often referred to as the "Morning Star of the Reformation." Hussitism—as Hus's teaching became known—was distinguished by its rejection of the wealth, corruption, and hierarchical tendencies of the Roman Catholic Church. It advocated the Wycliffite doctrine of clerical purity and poverty and insisted on communion under both kinds, bread and wine, for the laity. (The Roman Catholic Church reserved the cup—wine—for the clergy.) The more moderate followers of Hus, the Utraquists, took their name from the Latin

*sub utraque specie*, meaning “under each kind.” A more radical sect soon formed—the Taborite sect. The Taborites, who took their name from the city of Tábora, their stronghold in southern Bohemia, rejected church doctrine and upheld the Bible as the sole authority in all matters of belief.

Soon after Hus assumed office, German professors of theology demanded the condemnation of Wyclif’s writings. Hus protested and received the support of the Czech element at the university. Having only one vote in policy decisions against three for the Germans, the Czechs were outvoted, and the orthodox position was maintained. In subsequent years the Czechs demanded a revision of the university charter, granting more adequate representation to the native, i.e., Czech, faculty.

The university controversy was intensified by the vacillating position of the Bohemian king. His insistence at first on favoring Germans in appointments to councillor and other administrative positions had aroused the national sentiments of the Czech nobility and rallied them to Hus’s defense. The German faculties had the support of Archbishop Zbyněk of Prague and the German clergy. Wenceslas, for political reasons, switched his support from the Germans to Hus and allied with the reformers. On January 18, 1409, Wenceslas issued the Kutná Hora Decree: the Czechs would have three votes; the foreigners, a single vote. Germans were expelled from administrative positions at the university, and Czechs were appointed. In consequence, Germans left Charles University en masse.

Hus’s victory was short lived, however. He preached against the sale of indulgences, which lost him the support of the king, who received a percentage of the sales. In 1412 Hus and his followers were suspended from the university and expelled from Prague. For two years the reformers served as itinerant preachers throughout Bohemia. In 1414 Hus was summoned to the Council of Constance to defend his views. The council condemned him as a heretic and burned him at the stake in 1415.

Hus’s death sparked decades of religious warfare. Sigismund, the pro-papal king of Hungary and successor to the Bohemian throne after the death of Wenceslas in 1419, failed repeatedly in attempts to gain control of the kingdom despite aid by Hungarian and German armies. Riots broke out in Prague. Led by a Czech yeoman, Jan Žižka, the Taborites streamed into the capital. Religious strife pervaded the entire kingdom and was particularly intense in the German-dominated towns. Czech burghers turned against the Roman Catholic Germans; many were massacred, and most survivors fled to the Holy Roman Empire. In the



Source: Based on information from William R. Shepherd, *Shepherd's Historical Atlas*, New York, 1980, and A. H. Hermann, *A History of the Czechs*, London, 1975.

Figure 3. The Bohemian Kingdom and Its Extensions, 1378



*Old Town Hall, Žižka Square, Tábor*

countryside Žižka's armies stormed monasteries, churches, and villages, expelling the Catholic clergy and expropriating ecclesiastical lands.

During the struggle against Sigismund, Taborite armies penetrated into Slovakia as well. Czech refugees from the religious wars in Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia settled there, and from 1438 to 1453 a Czech noble, Jan Jiskra of Brandýs, controlled most of southern Slovakia from the centers of Zvolen and Košice. Thus Hussite doctrine and the Czech Bible were disseminated among the Slovaks, providing the basis for a future link between the Czechs and their Slovak neighbors.

When Sigismund died in 1437, the Bohemian estates elected Albert of Austria as his successor. Albert died, however, and his son, Ladislav the Posthumous—so called because he was born after his father's death—was acknowledged as king. During Ladislav's minority, Bohemia was ruled by a regency composed of moderate reform nobles who were Utraquists. Internal dissension among the Czechs provided the primary challenge to the regency. A part of the Czech nobility remained Catholic and loyal to the pope. A Utraquist delegation to the Council of Basel in 1433 had negotiated a seeming reconciliation with the Catholic Church. The Council's Compact of Basel accepted the basic tenets of Hussitism expressed in the Four Articles of Prague: communion under both kinds; free preaching of the Gospels; expropriation of church land; and

exposure and punishment of public sinners. The pope, however, rejected the compact, thus preventing the reconciliation of Czech Catholics with the Utraquists.

George of Poděbrady, later to become the “national” king of Bohemia, emerged as leader of the Utraquist regency. George installed a Utraquist, John of Rokycany, as archbishop of Prague and succeeded in uniting the more radical Taborites with the Czech Reformed Church. The Catholic party was driven out of Prague. Ladislav died of the plague in 1457, and in 1458 the Bohemian estates elected George of Poděbrady king of Bohemia. The pope, however, refused to recognize the election. Czech Catholic nobles, joined in the League of Zelená Hora, continued to challenge the authority of George of Poděbrady until his death in 1471.

Upon the death of the Hussite king, the Bohemian estates elected a Polish prince, Vladislav II, as king. In 1490 Vladislav also became king of Hungary, and the Polish Jagellonian line ruled both Bohemia and Hungary. The Jagellonians governed Bohemia as absentee monarchs; their influence in the kingdom was minimal, and effective government fell to the regional nobility. Czech Catholics accepted the Compact of Basel in 1485 and were reconciled with the Utraquists.

In 1526 Vladislav’s son, King Louis, was decisively defeated by the Ottomans at Mohács and subsequently died. As a result, the Turks conquered part of the Kingdom of Hungary; the rest (including Slovakia) came under Hapsburg rule. The Bohemian estates elected Archduke Ferdinand, younger brother of Emperor Charles V, to succeed Louis as king of Bohemia. Thus began almost three centuries of Hapsburg rule for both Bohemia and Slovakia.

In several instances, the Bohemian Kingdom had the possibility of becoming a Czech national monarchy. The failure to establish a native dynasty, however, prevented such an outcome and left the fate of the Bohemian Kingdom to dynastic politics and foreign rulers. Although the Bohemian Kingdom evolved neither into a national monarchy nor into a Czech nation-state, the memory of it served as a source of inspiration and pride for modern Czech nationalists.

## **Hapsburg Rule, 1526–1867**

### **The Hapsburgs and the Czechoslovak Lands**

Although the Bohemian Kingdom, the Margravate of Moravia, and Slovakia were all under Hapsburg rule, they followed different paths of development. The defeat at Mohács in 1526 meant that most of Hungary proper was taken by the Turks; until Hungary’s reconquest by the Hapsburgs in the second half of the

seventeenth century, Slovakia became the center of Hungarian political, cultural, and economic life. The Hapsburg kings of Hungary were crowned in Bratislava, the present-day capital of Slovakia, and the Hungarian estates met there. Slovakia's importance in Hungarian life proved of no benefit, however, to the Slovaks. In essence, the Hungarian political nation consisted of an association of estates (primarily the nobility). Because Slovaks were primarily serfs, they were not considered members of a political nation and had no influence on politics in their own land. The Slovak peasant had only to perform duties: work for a landlord, pay taxes, and provide recruits for military service. Even under such hostile conditions, there were a few positive developments. The Protestant Reformation brought to Slovakia literature written in Czech, and Czech replaced Latin as the literary language of a small, educated Slovak elite. But on the whole, the Slovaks languished for centuries in a state of political, economic, and cultural deprivation.

Moravia had accepted the hereditary right of the Austrian Hapsburgs to rule it and thus escaped the intense struggle between native estates and the Hapsburg monarchy that was to characterize Bohemian history. The Moravians had a poorly developed historical or national consciousness, made few demands on the Hapsburgs, and were permitted to live in tranquillity. Late in the eighteenth century, the Margravate of Moravia was abolished and merged with Austrian Silesia.

In contrast to Moravia, the Bohemian Kingdom had entrenched estates that were ready to defend what they considered their rights and liberties. Because the Hapsburgs pursued a policy of centralization, conflict was inevitable. The conflict was further complicated by ethnic and religious issues and was subsequently seen by some as a struggle for the preservation of Czech institutions and the Czech nation.

## **Hapsburg Absolutism and the Bohemian Estates**

### *Initial Clash*

Hapsburg rule brought two centuries of conflict between the Bohemian estates and the monarchy. As a result of this struggle, the Czechs lost a major portion of their native aristocracy, their particular form of religion, and even the widespread use of the Czech language. The Hapsburg policy of centralization began with its first ruler, King Ferdinand (1526-64). His efforts to eliminate the influence of the Bohemian estates were met with stubborn resistance. But the Bohemian estates were themselves divided, primarily on religious lines. By several adroit political maneuvers,

Ferdinand was able to establish hereditary succession to the Bohemian crown for the Hapsburgs. The estates' inability to establish the principle of electing or even confirming a monarch made their position considerably weaker.

The conflict in Bohemia was complicated further by the Reformation and the subsequent wars of religion in Central Europe. Adherents of the Czech Reformed Church (the Hussites) opposed the Roman Catholic Hapsburgs, who were in turn supported by the Czech and German Catholics. The Lutheran Reformation of 1517 introduced an added dimension to the struggle: much of the German burgher population of Bohemia adopted the Reformed Creed (both Lutheran and Calvinist); the Hussites split, and one faction allied with the German Protestants. In 1537 Ferdinand conceded to the Czechs, recognized the Compact of Basel, and accepted moderate Utraquism. The reconciliation, however, was of brief duration.

In 1546 German Protestants united in the Schmalkaldic League to wage war against the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V. Whereas Ferdinand wanted to aid his brother, the Hussite and pro-Protestant Czech nobility sympathized with the German Protestant princes. Armed conflict between Ferdinand and the Bohemian estates broke out in 1547. But the Bohemians were not unified; victory went to Ferdinand, and reprisals against the Czech rebels followed. The property of Czech Utraquist nobility was confiscated and their privileges abrogated. Four rebels (two lesser nobles and two burghers) were executed in the square before the royal palace. Members of the Unity of Czech Brethren, a Hussite sect that had figured prominently in the rebellion, were bitterly persecuted. Their leader, Bishop John Augusta, was sentenced to sixteen years' imprisonment. Ferdinand, now Holy Roman Emperor (1556-64), attempted to extend the influence of Catholicism in Bohemia by forming the Jesuit Academy in Prague and by bringing Jesuit missionaries into Bohemia.

### *Decisive Battle*

Discord between Hapsburgs and Czechs and between Catholics and the followers of the reformed creeds erupted again into an open clash in the early seventeenth century. At that time, the Czechs were able to take advantage of the struggle between two contenders to the imperial throne, and in 1609 they extracted a Letter of Majesty from Emperor Rudolf II (1576-1612) that promised toleration of the Czech Reformed Church, gave control of Charles University to the Czech estates, and made other concessions. Rudolf's successor, Matthias (1612-17), proved to be

an ardent Catholic and quickly moved against the estates. Violation of promises contained in the Letter of Majesty regarding royal and church domains and Matthias's reliance on a council composed of ardent Catholics further increased tensions.

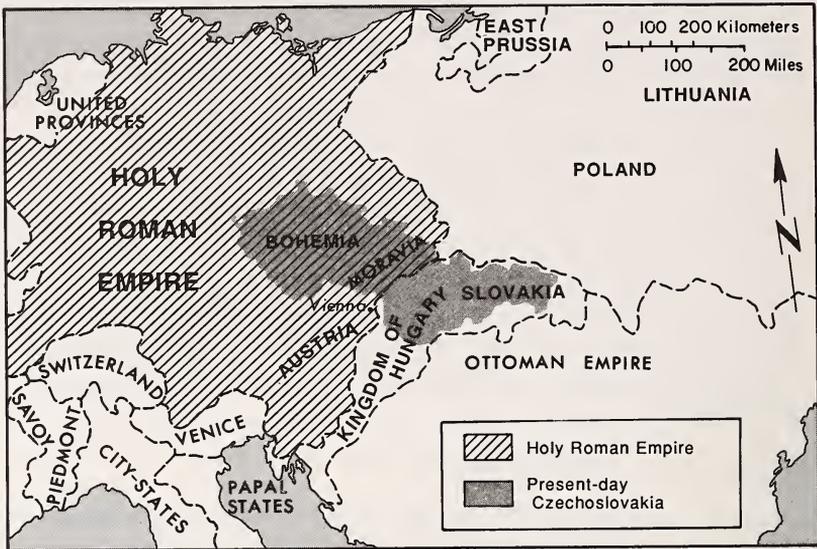
In 1618 two Catholic imperial councillors were thrown out of a window of a Prague castle, signaling an open revolt by the Bohemian estates against the Hapsburgs. The Bohemian estates decided to levy an army, decreed the expulsion of the Jesuits, and proclaimed the Bohemian throne to be elective. They elected a Calvinist, Frederick of the Palatinate, to the Bohemian throne. The Bohemian troops confronted the imperial forces. On November 8, 1620, the Czech estates were decisively defeated at the famous Battle of White Mountain.

### *Consequences of Czech Defeat*

The Czech defeat at the Battle of White Mountain was followed by measures that effectively secured Hapsburg authority and the dominance of the Roman Catholic Church. Many Czech nobles were executed; most others were forced to flee the kingdom. An estimated five-sixths of the Czech nobility went into exile soon after the Battle of White Mountain, and their properties were confiscated. Large numbers of Czech and German Protestant burghers emigrated. In 1622 Charles University was merged with the Jesuit Academy, and the entire education system of the Bohemian Kingdom was placed under Jesuit control. In 1624 all non-Catholic priests were expelled by royal decree.

The Revised Ordinance of the Land (1627) established a legal basis for Hapsburg absolutism. All Czech lands were declared hereditary property of the Hapsburg family. The legislative function of the diets of both Bohemia and Moravia was revoked; all subsequent legislation was to be by royal decree, receiving only formal approval from the diets. The highest officials of the kingdom, to be chosen from among the local nobility, would be strictly subordinate to the king. Thus, little remained of an autonomous and distinct Bohemian Kingdom.

Hapsburg rule was further buttressed by the large-scale immigration into Bohemia of Catholic Germans from south German territories. The Germans received most of the land confiscated from Czech owners and came to constitute the new Bohemian nobility. The remaining Czech Catholic nobles gradually abandoned Czech particularism and became loyal servants of the imperial system. German Catholic immigrants took over commerce and industry as well.



Source: Based on information from "European Diplomacy and Wars (c. 1500-1914)," *Britannica*, VI, 1975, 1091.

Figure 4. Central Europe, 1648

The religious wars continued after the Czech defeat. The Thirty Years' War (1618-48) of the German Protestant princes against the Holy Roman Emperor involved foreign powers and extended beyond German territory. Czechs fought on all sides: most of the rebellious Czech generals joined Protestant armies; Albrecht of Wallenstein was the most prominent Czech defector to the imperial cause. Bohemia served as a battlefield throughout the war. Prince Bethlen Gábor's Hungarian forces, reinforced by Turkish mercenaries, fought against the emperor and periodically devastated Slovakia and Moravia. Protestant German armies and, later, Danish and Swedish armies, laid waste the Czech provinces. Cities, villages, and castle fortresses were destroyed. Lusatia was incorporated into Saxony in 1635.

The Thirty Years' War ended during the reign of Ferdinand III (1637-56). In 1648 the Treaty of Westphalia confirmed the incorporation of the Bohemian Kingdom into the Hapsburg imperial system, which established its seat in Vienna (see fig. 4). Leopold I (1656-1705) defeated the Turks and paved the way for the restoration of the Kingdom of Hungary to its previous territorial dimensions. The brief reign of Joseph I (1705-11) was followed

by that of Charles VI (1711–40). Between 1720 and 1725, Charles concluded a series of treaties by which the various estates of the Hapsburg lands recognized the unity of the territory under Hapsburg rule and accepted hereditary Hapsburg succession, including the female line.

The struggle between the Bohemian estates and Hapsburg absolutism resulted in the complete subordination of the Bohemian estates to Hapsburg interests. In the aftermath of the defeat at White Mountain, the Czechs lost their native noble class, their reformed religion, and a vibrant Czech Protestant culture. With the influx of foreigners, primarily Germans, the German language became more prominent in government and polite society. It seemed that Bohemia was destined to become a mere province of the Hapsburg realm.

### **Enlightened Absolutism**

The reigns of Maria-Theresa (1740–80) and her son Joseph II (1780–90), Holy Roman Emperor and coregent from 1765, were characterized by enlightened rule. Influenced by the ideas of eighteenth-century Enlightenment philosophers, Maria-Theresa and Joseph worked toward rational and efficient administration of the Bohemian Kingdom. In this respect, they opposed regional privilege and the rights of the estates and preferred to rule through a centrally controlled imperial bureaucracy. At the same time, they instituted reforms to eliminate the repressive features of the Counter-Reformation and to permit secular social progress.

Maria-Theresa's accession to the Hapsburg lands was challenged by the territorial aspirations of the increasingly powerful Hohenzollern dynasty. The Prussian king, Frederick II, joined by the dukes of Bavaria and Saxony, invaded the Bohemian Kingdom in 1741. The duke of Bavaria, Charles Albert, was proclaimed king by the Czech nobility. Although Maria-Theresa regained most of the Bohemian Kingdom and was crowned queen in Prague in 1743, all of the highly industrialized territory of Silesia except for Těšín, Opava, and Krnov was ceded to Prussia.

In attempting to make administration more rational, Maria-Theresa embarked on a policy of centralization and bureaucratization. What remained of the Bohemian Kingdom was now merged into the Austrian provinces of the Hapsburg realm. The two separate chancelleries were abolished and replaced by a joint Austro-Bohemian chancellery. The Czech estates were stripped of the last remnants of their political power, and their functions were assumed by imperial civil servants appointed by the queen. The provinces of the Czech and Austrian territories were subdivided into administrative districts. German became the official language.

Further reforms introduced by Maria-Theresa and Joseph II reflected such Enlightenment principles as the dissolution of feudal social structures and the curtailment of power of the Catholic Church. Maria-Theresa nationalized and Germanized the education system, eliminated Jesuit control, and shifted educational emphasis from theology to the sciences. Serfdom was modified: *roboty* (forced labor on the lord's land) was reduced, and serfs could marry and change domiciles without the lord's consent. Joseph II abolished serfdom altogether. In 1781 Joseph's Edict of Toleration extended freedom of worship to Lutherans and Calvinists.

The enlightened rule of Maria-Theresa and Joseph II played a leading role in the development of a modern Czech nation, but one that was full of contradictions. On the one hand, the policy of centralization whittled down further any vestiges of a separate Bohemian Kingdom and resulted in the Germanization of the imperial administration and nobility. On the other hand, by removing the worst features of the Counter-Reformation and by introducing social and educational reforms, these rulers provided the basis for economic progress and the opportunity for social mobility. The consequences for Bohemia were of widespread significance. The nobility turned its attention to industrial enterprise. Many of the nobles sublet their lands and invested their profits in the development of textile, coal, and glass manufacture. Czech peasants, free to leave the land, moved to cities and manufacturing centers. Urban areas, formerly populated by Germans, became increasingly Czech in character. The sons of Czech peasants were sent to school; some attended the university, and a new Czech intellectual elite emerged. During this same period the population of Bohemia nearly quadrupled, and a similar increase occurred in Moravia.

But in response to pressures from the nobility, Joseph's successor, Leopold II (1790-92), abrogated many of Joseph's edicts and restored certain feudal obligations. (Serfdom was not completely abolished until 1848.) Under Francis II (1792-1835), the aristocratic and clerical reaction gathered strength. The war against revolutionary France and the subsequent Napoleonic wars caused a temporary interruption of the reactionary movement. In 1804 Francis II transferred his imperial title to the Austrian domains (Austria, Bohemian Kingdom, Hungary, Galicia, and parts of Italy), and two years later the Holy Roman Empire was formally dissolved. The Austrian Empire came into existence and was to play a leading role in the newly established German Confederation (see fig. 5). From 1815, after the conclusive defeat of Napoleon, the policy of reaction devised by Austria's foreign minister, Prince Metternich, dominated European affairs.

Enlightened rule destroyed the few remaining vestiges of the Bohemian Kingdom. The dismantling of Bohemian institutions and the dominance of the German language seemed to threaten the very existence of the Czech nation. Yet, enlightened rule also provided new educational and economic opportunities for the Czech people. Inadvertently, the enlightened monarchs helped set the stage for a Czech national revival.

### **National Revival**

The first half of the nineteenth century was a period of national awakening in Central Europe. German nationalism—sparked by confrontation with the armies of the French revolutionaries—and Napoleonic expansionism inspired corresponding efforts toward national revival among the subject Slavic peoples. The concept of the “nation,” defined as a people united by linguistic and cultural affinities, produced an intellectual revival that laid the foundation for a subsequent struggle for political autonomy.

In Bohemia, where the nobility was largely German or Germanized, the leaders of the Czech revival were members of the new intelligentsia, which had its origin in peasant stock. Only a small part of the nobility lent the revival support.

The earliest phase of the national movement was philological. Scholars attempted to record and codify native languages. A chair for Czech language and literature was established at Charles-Ferdinand University in 1791. The Czech language, however, had survived only as a peasant patois. The tasks of molding the Czech language into a literary medium and introducing the study of Czech in state schools were accomplished by Josef Dobrovský and Josef Jungmann. Their efforts were rewarded by an efflorescence of Czech literature and the growth of a Czech reading public. Prominent among the original Czech literary elite were poets Ján Kollár (a Slovak), F.L. Čelakovský, Karel J. Erben, and Karel H. Mácha; dramatists V.K. Klicpera and J.K. Tyl; and journalist-politicians F.A. Brauner and Karel Havlíček-Borovský.

The Czech revival acquired an institutional foundation with the establishment of the Museum of the Bohemian Kingdom (1818) as a center for Czech scholarship. In 1827 the museum began publication of a journal that became the first continuous voice of Czech nationalism. In 1830 the museum absorbed the *Malice česká*, a society of Czech intellectuals devoted to the publication of scholarly and popular books. The museum membership, composed of patriotic scholars and nobles, worked to establish contacts with other Slavic peoples and to make Prague the intellectual and scholarly capital of the Slavs.



Source: Based on information from William R. Shepherd, *Shepherd's Historical Atlas*, New York, 1980, 157.

Figure 5. Central Europe, 1815

The major figure of the Czech revival was František Palacký. Of Moravian Protestant descent and attracted by the nationalist spirit of the Hussite tradition, Palacký became the great historian of the Czech nation. His monumental, five-volume *History of the Czech People* focused on the struggle of the Czech nation for political freedom and became one of the pillars of modern Czech life and thought. Palacký—who fancied himself the heir and successor to the great educator and leader of the Unity of Czech Brethren, Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius)—became the political leader of the Czech nation during the revolutionary struggles of 1848. In the tradition of Komenský, Palacký developed a political platform based on cultural renaissance.

The Slovaks experienced an analogous national revival. The Kingdom of Hungary, restored to its original territorial dimensions in 1711, was ruled by a Hungarian aristocracy that was experiencing its own national awakening. In 1792 Hungarian replaced Latin as the official state language. In contrast to the more secular Czech nation, among the subject peoples of Hungary both the Catholic and the Protestant religions retained a solid hold. The Slovak clergy constituted the intellectual elite of the predominantly peasant Slovaks, and the Slovak revival occurred under its leadership.

The initial attempt to develop a Slovak literary language was made by a Jesuit priest, Anton Bernolák. The language he developed in the 1780s was subsequently called *berňolákovčina* and was based primarily on western Slovak dialects. The language was adopted by the Catholic clergy and disseminated in religious literature. Bernolák and his followers, however, remained loyal to the Kingdom of Hungary, and their movement never developed nationalist political implications.

The Protestant revival was more limited in scope, confined largely to the Slovak minority settled in urban centers. Slovak Protestantism was characterized by an attachment to Czech culture. The artificial and archaic language of the Czech Bible, known as *bibličtina*, had served as the literary vehicle of the Protestant clergy since the sixteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, two German-educated Protestant theologians, the poet Ján Kollár and Pavol Šafárik, endeavored to create a literary language that would combine Czech with elements of the central Slovak dialect. They published a reader, *Čítanka*, in 1825, and beginning in the 1830s they gained a following among the younger generation of students at Protestant secondary schools.

At this time, the Slovak national awakening split into two factions. Kollár and Šafárik were adherents of pan-Slavic concepts that stressed the unity of all Slavic peoples. They continued to view Czechs and Slovaks as members of a single nation, and they attempted to draw the languages closer together. Other Slovaks broke with the Czechs and proclaimed the separate identity of the Slovak nation. L'udovít Štúr, a student at the Bratislava secondary school, developed *štúrovčina*, which was based on the central Slovak dialect. In 1843 Štúr advocated that *štúrovčina* be made the Slovak literary language, and it spread rapidly in the Protestant community and beyond. Beginning in the 1840s, Slovak literary development took a separate path from that followed by Czech literature.

## Revolutions of 1848

The Paris revolution of February 1848 precipitated a succession of liberal and national revolts against autocratic governments. Revolutionary disturbances pervaded the territories of the Austrian Empire, and Emperor Ferdinand I (1835–48) promised to reorganize the empire on a constitutional, parliamentary basis.

In the Bohemian Kingdom, a national committee was formed that included Germans and Czechs. But Bohemian Germans favored creating a Greater Germany out of various German-speaking territories. The Bohemian Germans soon withdrew from the committee, signaling the Czech-German conflict that would

characterize subsequent history. Palacký proposed Austro-Slavism as the creed of the Czech national movement. He advocated the preservation of the Austrian Empire as a buffer against both German and Russian expansionism. He also proposed the federalization of the empire on an ethnographic basis to unite the Bohemian Germans with Austria in one province and Czechs and Slovaks in another. Palacky further suggested that the various Slavic peoples of the empire, together constituting a majority, should form a political unit to defend their common interests. In June 1848 the Czechs convened the first Slavic Congress to discuss the possibility of political consolidation of Austrian Slavs, including Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Ruthenians (Ukrainians), Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs.

In the Kingdom of Hungary, the 1848 revolution temporarily toppled Hapsburg absolutism, and there was an attempt at establishing a liberal constitutional government. Conflict soon ensued between the Hungarians and several other nationalities as to how Hungary was to be restructured. Hungarian liberals like Louis Kossuth, who favored the overthrow of the Hapsburgs and an independent Hungary, were at the same time opposed to the aspirations of the non-Hungarian nationalities. The liberals sought to create a national state solely for the Hungarians.

It was within this struggle that the Slovak National Council, under Štúr's leadership, drafted the "Demands of the Slovak Nation." These included the establishment of separate national legislative assemblies and the right of each national group to employ its own language in the Hungarian Diet, in administration, and in the education system. The petition was presented to the Hungarian Diet in May 1848. When it was rejected, armed conflict broke out, and the Slovaks were crushed by Hungarian troops. Disappointed by the Hungarians and hoping to take advantage of the conflict between the imperial government and the Hungarians, Slovak patriots turned to the imperial government, requesting recognition of Slovakia as an independent crown land within the Austrian Empire. But after the Hungarian revolt was suppressed with the aid of Russian troops, Vienna lost interest in the demands of the Slovak and other non-Hungarian nationalities.

National revival for both Czechs and Slovaks had been begun by small groups of intellectuals. At first, the national movements were confined to discussion of language, literature, and culture. But during the revolutions of 1848, the Czechs and Slovaks made bold political demands. The revolutions of 1848 also revealed that the German and Hungarian liberals, who were opposed to Hapsburg absolutism, were equally hostile to Czech and Slovak



*Charles Bridge, Prague*

aspirations. It had become clear that the Czech and Slovak national movements had to contend not only with Hapsburg absolutism but also with increasingly virulent German and Hungarian nationalism.

## **The Dual Monarchy, 1867–1918**

### **Formation of the Dual System**

After the revolutions of 1848, Francis Joseph attempted to rule as an absolute monarch, keeping all the nationalities in check. But the Hapsburgs suffered a series of defeats. In 1859 they were driven out of Italy, and in 1866 they were defeated by Prussia and expelled from the German Confederation. To strengthen his position, Francis Joseph was ready to improve his relations with the Hungarians. At first it seemed that some concessions would be made to Bohemia, but in the end the crown effected a compromise with the Hungarian gentry. The Compromise of 1867 established the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary (also known as the Austro-Hungarian Empire). The two parts of the empire were united by a common ruler, by a joint foreign policy, and, to some extent, by shared finances. Otherwise, Austria and Hungary were virtually independent states, each having its own parliament, government, administration, and judicial system.

Despite a series of crises, this dual system survived until 1918. It made permanent the dominant position of the Hungarians in

Hungary and of the Germans in the Austrian parts of the monarchy. While Czechs, Poles, and other nationalities had some influence in government, they were never permitted to share political power. This inability to come to terms with its nationalities contributed to the ultimate collapse of the Dual Monarchy.

As a result of the dual system, the Czechs and Slovaks continued to go their separate ways. The Slovaks chafed under the Hungarians, and the Czechs were ruled by Vienna. The Austrian and Hungarian parts of the empire had different political systems. Austria had a parliamentary government, and a gradual enlargement of the franchise culminated in universal male suffrage in 1907. The Czechs, therefore, were able to take a greater and greater part in the political life of Austria. In Hungary the franchise continued to be fairly restricted and pretty much controlled by the Hungarian aristocracy. Because of this, very few Slovaks gained positions of importance in Hungary.

### **Austria and the Czechs**

In Austria, German liberals held political power in parliament from 1867 to 1879. They were determined to maintain German dominance in the Austrian part of the empire. The Czech leaders, subsequently labeled Old Czechs, favored alliance with the conservative and largely Germanized Bohemian nobility and advocated the restoration of traditional Bohemian autonomy. In essence, they wanted a reconstituted Bohemian Kingdom (including Moravia and Silesia) with a constitutional arrangement similar to Hungary's. In 1871 the Old Czechs seemed successful, for the government agreed to the Fundamental Articles, which would have reinstated the historic rights of the Bohemian Kingdom. Violent protest from both German and Hungarian liberals ensued, however, and the articles were never adopted.

Objecting to an increase of Slavs in the empire, the German liberals opposed the 1878 Austrian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The emperor, stung by the rejection of his foreign policy, dismissed the liberal government and turned to Count Eduard Taaffe's conservative "Iron Ring" cabinet (1879-83). The Taaffe government took the Slavic element into greater account than the liberals had and, in turn, was supported by the Old Czechs. Czechs made appreciable gains. A language decree promulgated in 1880 put Czech on an equal footing with German in Bohemian administration and law. In 1882 Charles-Ferdinand University in Prague was divided into two separate institutions: one Czech and the other German. These concessions, however, seemed insufficient to a newly developing Czech commercial and industrial bourgeoisie. Intense conflict

ensued as Czechs and Germans attempted to control administration and education. When some of the Old Czechs attempted to work out a compromise with the Bohemian Germans in 1890, they were denounced by a younger and more radical intelligentsia. The next year the Old Czechs were soundly defeated by the Young Czechs, ending a period of attempted compromises.

While relations between Czechs and Germans worsened in Bohemia, they remained relatively tranquil in Moravia. Although the separate administrative status of Moravia had been abolished in the eighteenth century, the area was reconstituted as a separate crown land in 1849. In Moravia, unlike in Bohemia, a compromise was reached, in 1905, between the Czech majority and the German minority. Although the German language retained a slight predominance, the preservation of Czech language and culture was legally guaranteed. The compromise seemed to work reasonably well until the end of Hapsburg rule in 1918.

During the final decade of the empire, obstructionism by both Czechs and Germans rendered parliamentary politics ineffectual, and governments rose and fell with great frequency. The importance of the Young Czech Party waned as Czech politics changed orientation. Political parties advocating democracy and socialism emerged. In 1900 Tomáš Masaryk, a university professor and former Young Czech deputy who was to become president of the Czechoslovak Republic, founded the Czech Progressive Party. Basing its struggle for national autonomy on the principle of popular sovereignty, the Czech Progressive Party supported parliamentary politics, advocated universal suffrage, and rejected radicalism.

## **Hungary and the Slovaks**

In Hungary the government gave full sway to Hungarian nationalism. Only a year after the Compromise of 1867, the Nationalities Act established Hungarian as the exclusive official language. Slovak was relegated to private use and was regarded by the authorities as a peasant dialect. Franchise laws restricted the right to vote to large property holders (approximately 6 percent of the total population), thus favoring the Hungarian aristocracy. As a result, Slovaks rarely elected parliamentary representatives. The Slovaks, nevertheless, formed the Slovak National Party. Supported by Catholics and Protestants, the Slovak National Party was conservative and pan-Slavic in orientation and looked to autocratic Russia for national liberation. It remained the center of Slovak national life until the twentieth century.

Fearing the evolution of a full-fledged Slovak national movement, the Hungarian government attempted to do away with various

aspects of organized Slovak life. In the 1860s, the Slovaks had founded a private cultural foundation, the *Matica slovenská*, which fostered education and encouraged literature and the arts. At its founding, even the Austrian emperor donated 1,000 florins for the *Matica slovenská*. In 1875 the Hungarian government dissolved the *Matica slovenská* and confiscated its assets. Similar attacks were made against Slovak education. In 1874 all three Slovak secondary schools were closed, and in 1879 a law made Hungarian mandatory even in church-sponsored village schools. The Hungarian government attempted to prevent the formation of an educated, nationally conscious, Slovak elite.

It is remarkable that the Slovak national movement was able to survive. Most Slovaks continued to live as peasants or industrial laborers. Poverty prevailed, and on the eve of World War I about 20 percent of the population of Slovakia had emigrated to other lands. This emigration aided the national movement, for it received both moral and financial support from Slovaks living abroad, particularly in the United States. The Slovak national movement was aided also by the example of other nationalities struggling against the Hungarians (particularly the Romanians) and by contacts with the Czechs.

### **The Czechoslovak Idea**

At the turn of the century, the idea of a "Czechoslovak" entity began to be advocated by some Czech and Slovak leaders. The concept that Czechs and Slovaks shared a common heritage was hardly new. But as the two nations developed, the Slovaks had been intent on demonstrating the legitimacy of Slovak as a language separate from Czech. In the 1890s, contacts between Czech and Slovak intellectuals intensified. The Czech leader Masaryk was a keen advocate of Czech-Slovak cooperation. Some of his students formed the Czechoslovak Union and in 1898 published the journal *Hlas* (The Voice). In Slovakia, young Slovak intellectuals began to challenge the old Slovak National Party. But although the Czech and Slovak national movements began drawing closer together, their ultimate goals remained unclear. At least until World War I, the Czech and Slovak national movements struggled for autonomy within Austria and Hungary, respectively. Only during the war did the idea of an independent Czechoslovakia emerge.

### **World War I**

At the outbreak of World War I, the Czechs and Slovaks showed little enthusiasm for fighting for their respective enemies, the Germans and the Hungarians, against fellow Slavs, the Russians and

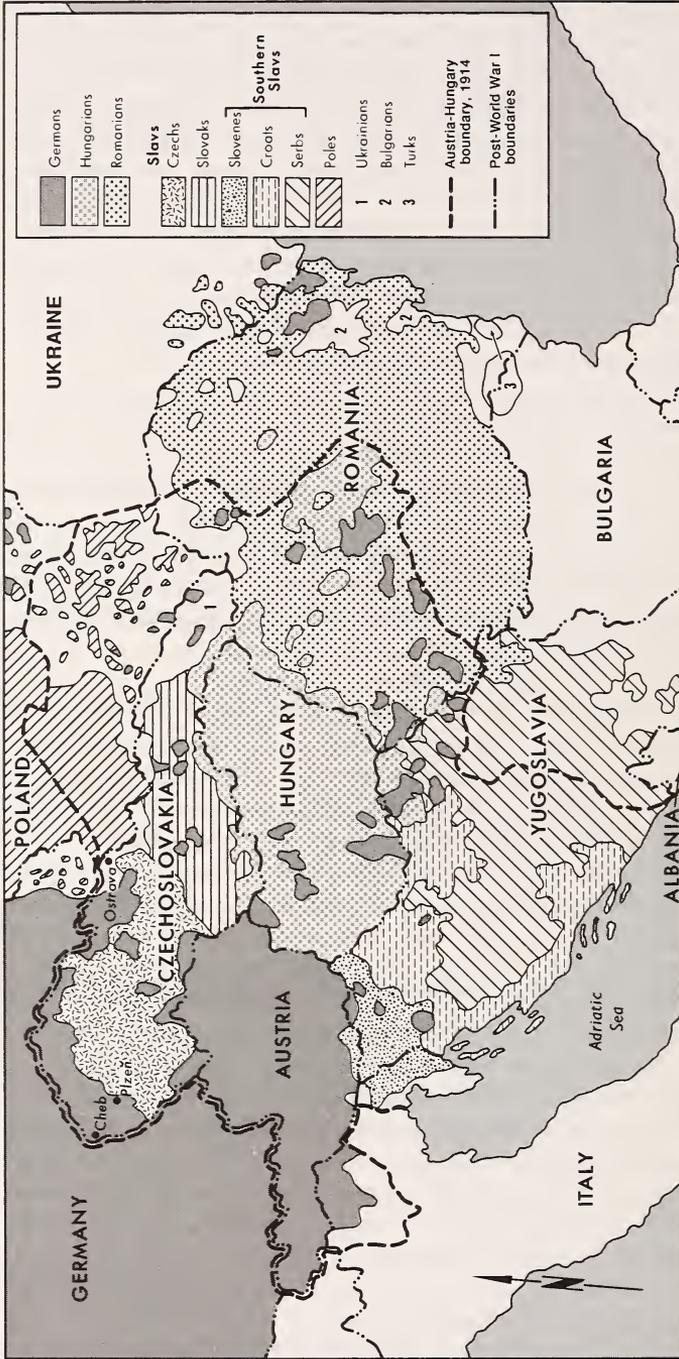
the Serbs. Large numbers of Czechs and Slovaks defected on the Russian front and formed the Czechoslovak Legion. Masaryk went to western Europe and began propagating the idea that the Austro-Hungarian Empire should be dismembered and that Czechoslovakia should be an independent state. In 1916, together with Eduard Beneš and Milan Štefánik (a Slovak war hero), Masaryk created the Czechoslovak National Council. Masaryk in the United States and Beneš in France and Britain worked tirelessly to gain Allied recognition. When secret talks between the Allies and Austrian emperor Charles I (1916–18) collapsed, the Allies recognized, in the summer of 1918, the Czechoslovak National Council as the supreme organ of a future Czechoslovak government.

In early October 1918, Germany and Austria proposed peace negotiations. On October 18, while in the United States, Masaryk issued a declaration of Czechoslovak independence. Masaryk insisted that the new Czechoslovak state include the historic Bohemian Kingdom, containing the German-populated Sudetenland. On October 21, however, German deputies from the Sudetenland joined other German and Austrian deputies in the Austrian parliament in declaring an independent German-Austrian state. Following the abdication of Emperor Charles on November 11, Czech troops occupied the Sudetenland.

Hungary withdrew from the Hapsburg Empire on November 1. The new liberal-democratic government of Hungary under Count Michael Károlyi attempted to retain Slovakia. With Allied approval, the Czechs occupied Slovakia, and the Hungarians were forced to withdraw. The Czechs and Allies agreed on the Danube and Ipel' rivers as the boundary between Hungary and Slovakia; a large Hungarian minority, occupying the fertile plain of the Danube, would be included in the new state (see fig. 6).

### **The Emergence of Subcarpathian Ruthenia (Carpatho-Ukraine)**

The Ruthenians (from the Ukrainian *Rusyn*—a name used for Ukrainians in the Hapsburg monarchy) were Ukrainian-speaking mountain people who lived in the deep, narrow valleys of the Carpathian Mountains. In the eleventh century, Ruthenia (also known as Subcarpathian Ruthenia) came under the Hungarian crown. Poor peasants, grazers, and lumbermen, the Ruthenians were vassals and serfs of the Hungarian magnates dominating the plains of the Tisza River. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Ruthenia lay within the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire. Beginning in the mid-seventeenth century, most Ruthenians were converted from Eastern Orthodoxy to the Uniate Church (see Glossary). Combining spiritual allegiance to Rome with Orthodox



Source: Based on information from A. H. Hermann, *A History of the Czechs*, London, 1975.

Figure 6. Disintegration of Austria-Hungary, 1918

rites, the Uniate Church enabled the Hungarian clergy to win the loyalty of their Eastern-oriented subjects.

The Ruthenians remained a poor, agrarian, and politically inert people. Ruthenian delegates did, however, attend the Slavic Congress in 1848 and later appealed to Vienna for autonomy and the right of cultural development. The great awakener of Subcarpathian Ruthenia was Oleksander Dukhnovych, a Uniate priest, who through his pedagogical, literary, and publishing activities attempted to save the Ruthenians from Hungarianization. The Ruthenian revival was fueled further by a vigorous movement in Galicia (under Austrian administration). But the Compromise of 1867 virtually eliminated the possibility of educational progress; Hungarianization affected all secondary schools and most elementary schools in Ruthenia. Many Ruthenians emigrated (over 50,000 before World War I). Russian pan-Slavic propaganda had an impact beginning in the late nineteenth century, and many Ruthenians became converts to Eastern Orthodoxy.

Political activity on behalf of Ruthenia during World War I was conducted by Ruthenian emigrants in the United States. They formed groups with varying political objectives: semiautonomy within Hungary, complete independence, federation in a Ukrainian state, inclusion in a Soviet federation, or union with the Czechs. The American Ruthenian leader, Gregory Žatkovič, negotiated with Masaryk to make Subcarpathian Ruthenia part of the Czechoslovak Republic. This decision received international sanction in the Treaty of Saint-Germain (September 10, 1919), which guaranteed Subcarpathian Ruthenia autonomy within the Czechoslovak Republic.

## **The Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–39**

### **Features of the New State**

The independence of Czechoslovakia was proclaimed on October 28, 1918, by the Czechoslovak National Council in Prague. Only several years before, an independent Czechoslovakia had been a dream of a small number of intellectuals. The transformation of the dream into reality was a formidable task. While the creation of Czechoslovakia was based on certain historical precedents, it was, nevertheless, a new country carved out of disparate parts of the old Hapsburg Empire. Several ethnic groups and territories with different historical, political, and economic traditions had to be blended into a new state structure. In the face of such obstacles, the creation of Czechoslovak democracy was indeed a triumph. But the Czechoslovak Republic (which also came to be known as

the First Republic) suffered internal constrictions, which, when coupled with foreign aggression, destroyed it.

Initial authority within Czechoslovakia was assumed by the newly created National Assembly on November 14, 1918. Because territorial demarcations were uncertain and elections impossible, the provisional National Assembly was constituted on the basis of the 1911 elections to the Austrian parliament with the addition of fifty-four representatives from Slovakia. National minorities were not represented; Sudeten Germans harbored secessionist aspirations, and Hungarians remained loyal to Hungary. The National Assembly elected Masaryk as its first president, chose a provisional government headed by Karel Kramář, and drafted a provisional constitution.

The Paris Peace Conference convened in January 1919. The Czech delegation was led by Kramář and Beneš, premier and foreign minister respectively, of the Czechoslovak provisional government. The conference approved the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, to encompass the historic Bohemian Kingdom (including Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia), Slovakia, and Ruthenia. The Czechs requested the inclusion of Ruthenia to provide a common frontier with Romania. Těšín, an industrial area also claimed by Poland, was divided between Czechoslovakia (Český Těšín) and Poland (Cieszyn). The Czech claim to Lusatia, which had been part of the Bohemian Kingdom until the Thirty Years' War, was rejected. On September 10, 1919, Czechoslovakia signed a "minorities" treaty, placing its ethnic minorities under the protection of the League of Nations (see fig. 7).

The new nation had a population of over 13.5 million. It had inherited 70 to 80 percent of all the industry of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, including the china and glass industries and the sugar refineries; more than 40 percent of all its distilleries and breweries; the Škoda works of Plzeň (Pilsen), which produced armaments, locomotives, automobiles, and machinery; and the chemical industry of northern Bohemia. The 17 percent of all Hungarian industry that had developed in Slovakia during the late nineteenth century also fell to the republic. Czechoslovakia was one of the world's ten most industrialized states.

The Czech lands were far more industrialized than Slovakia. In Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, 39 percent of the population was employed in industry and 31 percent in agriculture and forestry. Most light and heavy industry was located in the Sudetenland and was owned by Germans and controlled by German-owned banks. Czechs controlled only 20 to 30 percent of all industry. In Slovakia 17.1 percent of the population was employed in industry, and 60.4

percent worked in agriculture and forestry. Only 5 percent of all industry in Slovakia was in Slovak hands. Subcarpathian Ruthenia was essentially without industry.

In the agricultural sector, a program of reform introduced soon after the establishment of the republic was intended to rectify the unequal distribution of land. One-third of all agricultural land and forests belonged to a few aristocratic landowners—mostly Germans and Hungarians—and the Roman Catholic Church. Half of all holdings were under two hectares. The Land Control Act of April 1919 called for the expropriation of all estates exceeding 150 hectares of arable land or 250 hectares of land in general (500 hectares to be the absolute maximum). Redistribution was to proceed on a gradual basis; owners would continue in possession in the interim, and compensation was offered.

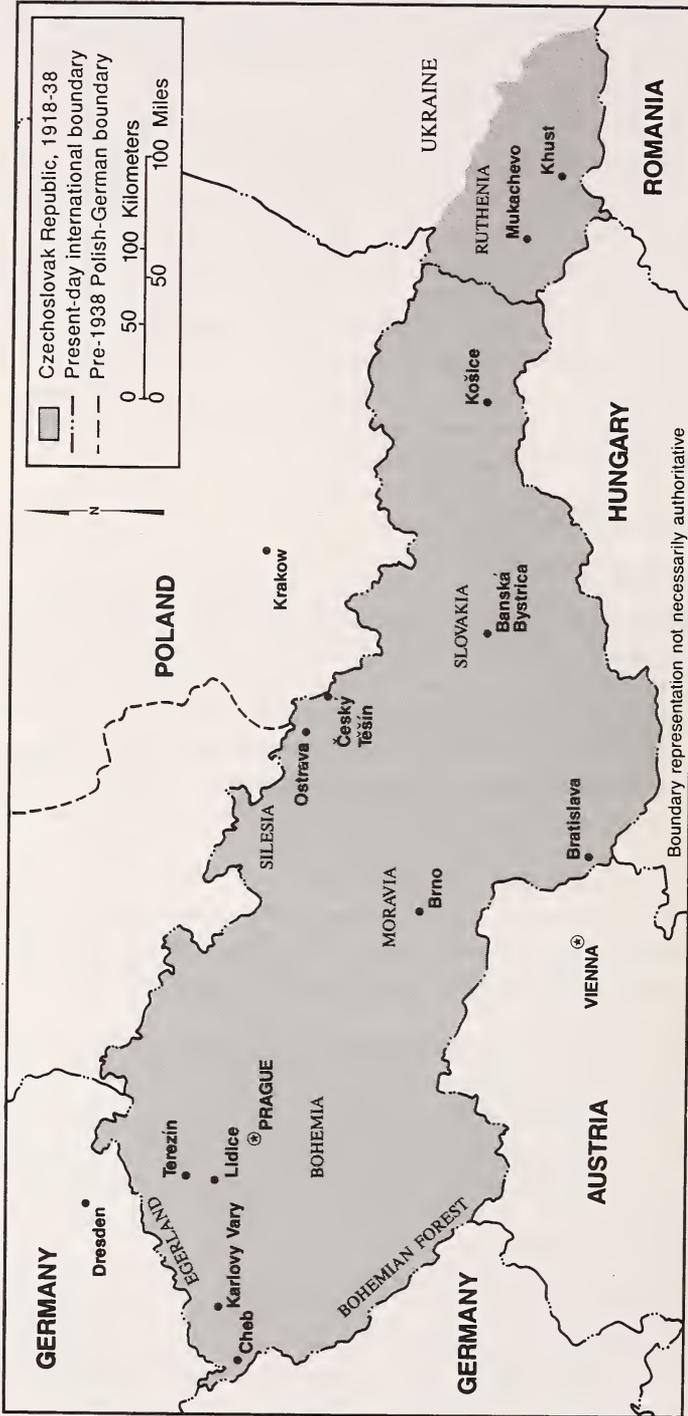
## **Czechoslovak Democracy**

### *The Constitution of 1920*

The constitution of 1920 approved the provisional constitution in its basic features. The Czechoslovak state was conceived as a parliamentary democracy, guided primarily by the National Assembly, consisting of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, whose members were to be elected on the basis of universal suffrage. The National Assembly was responsible for legislative initiative and was given supervisory control over the executive and judiciary as well. Every seven years it elected the president and confirmed the cabinet appointed by him. Executive power was to be shared by the president and the cabinet; the latter, responsible to the National Assembly, was to prevail. The reality differed somewhat from this ideal, however, during the strong presidencies of Masaryk and his successor, Beneš.

To a large extent, Czechoslovak democracy was held together by the country's first president, Masaryk. As the principal founding father of the republic, Masaryk was regarded in the same way that George Washington is regarded in the United States. Such universal respect enabled Masaryk to overcome seemingly irresolvable political problems. Even to this day, Masaryk is regarded as the symbol of Czechoslovak democracy.

The constitution of 1920 provided for the central government to have a high degree of control over local government. Czechoslovakia was divided into *zeme* (lands), such as Czechia, Moravia, and Ruthenia. Although in 1927 assemblies were provided for Czechia, Slovakia, and Ruthenia, their jurisdiction was limited to



Source: Based on information from "Die Entwicklung in der Tschechoslowakei seit 1945," *Staatsbürgerliche Informationen*, Bonn, 1960, 10-11.

Figure 7. The Czechoslovak Republic, 1918-38

adjusting laws and regulations of the central government to local needs. The central government appointed one-third of the members of these assemblies. Centralization prevailed on the next two levels (*župa* and *okres*). Only on the lowest levels, in local communities (*mesto* and *obec*) was government completely in the hands of and elected by the local population.

The constitution identified the "Czechoslovak nation" as the creator and principal constituent of the Czechoslovak state and established Czech and Slovak as official languages. National minorities, however, were assured special protection; in districts where they constituted 20 percent of the population, members of minority groups were granted full freedom to use their language in everyday life, in schools, and in dealings with authorities.

### ***Political Parties***

The operation of the new Czechoslovak government was distinguished by stability. Largely responsible for this were the well-organized political parties that emerged as the real centers of power. Excluding the period from March 1926 to November 1929, when the coalition did not hold, a coalition of five Czechoslovak parties constituted the backbone of the government: Republican Party of Farmers and Peasants, Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party, Czechoslovak National Socialist Party, Czechoslovak Populist Party, and Czechoslovak National Democratic Party. The leaders of these parties became known as the Petka (The Five). The Petka was headed by Antonín Švehla, who held the office of prime minister for most of the 1920s and designed a pattern of coalition politics that survived to 1938. The coalition's policy was expressed in the slogan "We have agreed that we will agree." German parties participated in the government beginning in 1926. Hungarian parties, influenced by irredentist propaganda from Hungary, never joined the Czechoslovak government but were not openly hostile.

The Republican Party of Farmers and Peasants was formed in 1922 from a merger of the Czech Agrarian Party and the Slovak Agrarian Party. Led by Švehla, the new party became the principal voice for the agrarian population, representing mainly peasants with small and medium-sized farms. Švehla combined support for progressive social legislation with a democratic outlook. His party was the core of all government coalitions between 1922 and 1938.

The Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party was considerably weakened when the communists seceded in 1921 to form the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, but by 1929 it had begun to regain its strength. A party of moderation, the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party declared in favor of parliamentary democracy

in 1930. Antonín Hampl was chairman of the party, and Ivan Déer was the leader of its Slovak branch. The Czechoslovak National Socialist Party (called the Czech Socialist Party until 1926) was created before World War I when the socialists split from the Social Democratic Party. It rejected class struggle and promoted nationalism. Led by Václav Klobáček, its membership derived primarily from the lower middle class, civil servants, and the intelligentsia (including Beneš).

The Czechoslovak Populist Party—a fusion of several Catholic parties, groups, and labor unions—developed separately in Bohemia in 1918 and in the more strongly Catholic Moravia in 1919. In 1922 a common executive committee was formed, headed by Jan Šrámek. The Czechoslovak Populists espoused Christian moral principles and the social encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII.

The Czechoslovak National Democratic Party developed from a post-World War I merger of the Young Czech Party with other right and center parties. Ideologically, it was characterized by national radicalism and economic liberalism. Led by Kramář and Alois Rašín, the National Democrats became the party of big business, banking, and industry. The party declined in influence after 1920, however.

## **Problem of Dissatisfied Nationalities**

### *Slovak Autonomy*

Czechoslovakia's centralized political structure might have been well suited to a single-nation state, but it proved inadequate for a multinational state. Constitutional protection of minority languages and culture notwithstanding, the major non-Czech nationalities demanded broader political autonomy. Political autonomy was a particularly grave issue for the Czechs' partners, the Slovaks. In 1918 Masaryk signed an agreement with American Slovaks and Czechs in Pittsburgh, promising Slovak autonomy. The provisional National Assembly, however, agreed on the temporary need for centralized government to secure the stability of the new state. The Hlasists, centered on the journal *Hlas*, continued to favor the drawing together of Czechs and Slovaks. Although the Hlasists did not form a separate political party, they dominated Slovak politics in the early stages of the republic. The Hlasists' support of Prague's centralization policy was bitterly challenged by the Slovak Populist Party. The party had been founded by a Catholic priest, Andrej Hlinka, in December 1918. Hlinka argued for Slovak autonomy both in the National Assembly and at the Paris Peace Conference. He made Slovak autonomy the cornerstone of his policy until his death in August 1938.

*The Roland Fountain,  
Bratislava  
Courtesy Helen Fedor*



The Slovak Populist Party was Catholic in orientation and found its support among Slovak Catholics, many of whom objected to the secularist tendencies of the Czechs. Religious differences compounded secular problems. The Slovak peasantry had suffered hardships during the period of economic readjustment after the disintegration of the Hapsburg Empire. Moreover, the supposed lack of qualified Slovaks had led to the importation of Czechs into Slovakia to fill jobs (formerly held by Hungarians) in administration, education, and the judiciary. Nevertheless, at the height of its popularity in 1925, the Slovak Populist Party polled only 32 percent of the Slovak vote, although Catholics constituted approximately 80 percent of the population. Then, in 1927, a modest concession by Prague granted Slovakia the status of a separate province, and Slovak Populists joined the central government. Monsignor Jozef Tiso and Marek Gažík from Slovakia were appointed to the cabinet.

Although Hlinka's objective was Slovak autonomy within a democratic Czechoslovak state, his party contained a more radical wing, led by Vojtech Tuka. From the early 1920s, Tuka maintained secret contacts with Austria, Hungary, and Hitler's National Socialists (Nazis). He set up the Rodobrana (semimilitary units) and published subversive literature. Tuka gained the support of the younger members of the Slovak Populist Party, who called themselves *Nástupists*, after the journal *Nástup*.

Tuka's arrest and trial in 1929 precipitated the reorientation of Hlinka's party in a totalitarian direction. The *Nástupists* gained control of the party; Slovak Populists resigned from the government. In subsequent years the party's popularity dropped slightly. In 1935 it polled 30 percent of the vote and again refused to join the government. In 1936 Slovak Populists demanded a Czechoslovak alliance with Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy. In September 1938, the Slovak Populist Party received instructions from Hitler to press its demands for Slovak autonomy.

*Conflict in Subcarpathian Ruthenia (Carpatho-Ukraine)*

During World War I, émigré Ruthenian leaders had reached an agreement with Masaryk to include an autonomous Ruthenia in a future Czechoslovak state (see *The Emergence of Subcarpathian Ruthenia (Carpatho-Ukraine)*, this ch.). The agreement received international sanction in the 1919 Treaty of Saint-Germain. The Paris Peace Conference had also stipulated earlier that year that Subcarpathian Ruthenia be granted full autonomy and promised the territory a diet having legislative power in all matters of local administration. But the constitution of 1920 limited the provision on autonomy, making reference to the requirements of the unity of the state. All Ruthenian legislation was made subject to approval by the president of the republic, and the governor of Ruthenia was to be nominated by the president. As a result, even the constitutional provision for Ruthenian autonomy was never implemented; the Ruthenian diet was never convened. The issue of autonomy became a major source of discontent. Other grievances included the placement of the western boundary—which left 150,000 Ruthenians in Slovakia—and the large numbers of Czechs brought to Ruthenia as administrators and educators.

Post-World War I Ruthenia was characterized by a proliferation of political parties and a diversity of cultural tendencies. All Czechoslovak political parties were represented, and a number of indigenous parties emerged as well. Of particular significance were the Ukrainophiles, Russophiles, Hungarians, and communists.

Ukrainophile and Russophile tendencies were strengthened by the large influx of émigrés following the war. The Ukrainophiles were largely Uniates and espoused autonomy within Czechoslovakia. Some favored union with Ukraine. The Ukrainophiles were represented by the Ruthenian National Christian Party led by Augustin Vološin (see *Second Republic, 1938-39*, this ch.). Russophile Ruthenians were largely Orthodox and also espoused Ruthenian autonomy. They were organized politically in the Agricultural Federation, led by Andrej Bródy, and the fascist-style Fencik Party.

Hungarians populated a compact area in southern Ruthenia. They were represented by the Unified Magyar Party, which consistently received 10 percent of the vote in Subcarpathian Ruthenia and was in permanent opposition to the government.

The communists, strong in backward Ruthenia, attempted to appeal to the Ukrainian element by espousing union with the Soviet Ukraine. In 1935 the communists polled 25 percent of the Ruthenian vote. The elections of 1935 gave only 37 percent of the Ruthenian vote to political parties supporting the Czechoslovak government. The communists, Unified Magyars, and autonomist groups polled 63 percent.

### *Sudetenland*

The most intractable nationality problem in the interwar period—one that played a major role in the destruction of democratic Czechoslovakia—was that of the Sudeten Germans. The Sudetenland was inhabited by over 3 million Germans, comprising about 23 percent of the population of the republic. It possessed huge chemical works and lignite mines, as well as textile, china, and glass factories. To the west, a solid German triangle surrounded Cheb (Eger) and included the highly nationalistic Egerland. The Český les (Bohemian Forest) extended along the Bavarian frontier to the poor agricultural areas of southern Bohemia.

Moravia contained patches of “locked” German territory to the north and south. More characteristic were the German “language islands”—towns inhabited by important German minorities and surrounded by Czechs. Extreme German nationalism was never typical of this area. The German nationalism of the coal-mining region of southern Silesia, 40.5 percent German, was restrained by fear of competition from industry in Germany. Early policies of the Czechoslovak government, intended to correct social injustice and effect a moderate redistribution of wealth, had fallen more heavily on the German population than on other citizens. In 1919 the government confiscated one-fifth of each individual’s holdings in paper currency. Germans, constituting the wealthiest element in the Czech lands, were most affected. The Land Control Act brought the expropriation of vast estates belonging to Germans. Land was allotted primarily to Czech peasants, often landless, who constituted the majority of the agricultural population. Only 4.5 percent of all land allotted by January 1937 was received by Sudeten Germans, whose protests were expressed in countless petitions.

According to the 1920 constitution, German minority rights were carefully protected; their educational and cultural institutions were preserved in proportion to the population. Local hostilities were

engendered, however, by policies intended to protect the security of the Czechoslovak state and the rights of Czechs. Border for-estland, considered the most ancient Sudeten German national territory, was expropriated for security reasons. The Czechoslovak government settled Czechs in areas of German concentration in an effort to mitigate German nationalism; the policy, however, often produced the opposite effect. Minority laws were most often applied to create new Czech schools in German districts. Sudeten Germans, in possession of a large number of subsidized local theaters, were required to put these at the disposal of the Czech minority one night a week.

Sudeten German industry, highly dependent on foreign trade and having close financial links with Germany, suffered badly during the depression, particularly when banks in Germany failed in 1931. Czechs, whose industry was concentrated on the production of essential domestic items, suffered less. Tensions between the two groups resulted. Relations between Czechs and Germans were further envenomed when Sudeten Germans were forced to turn to the Czechoslovak government and the Central Bank (*Živnostenská banka*) for assistance. These authorities often made the hiring of Czechs in proportion to their numbers in the population a condition for aid. Czech workmen, dispatched by the government to engage in public works projects in Sudeten German territories, were also resented.

Sudeten German nationalist sentiment ran high during the early years of the republic. The constitution of 1920 was drafted without Sudeten German representation, and the group declined to participate in the election of the president. Sudeten German political parties pursued an "obstructionist," or negativist, policy in parliament. In 1926, however, Chancellor Gustav Stresemann of Germany, adopting a policy of rapprochement with the West, advised Sudeten Germans to cooperate actively with the Czechoslovak government. In consequence, most Sudeten German parties (including the German Agrarian Party, the German Social Democratic Party, and the German Christian Socialist Party) changed from negativism to activism, and Sudeten Germans accepted cabinet posts.

By 1929 only a small number of Sudeten German deputies—most of them members of the German National Party (propertied classes) and the Sudeten Nazi Party (*Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei*)—remained in opposition. Nationalist sentiment flourished, however, among Sudeten German youth, who belonged to a variety of organizations. These included the older *Turnverband* and *Schutzvereine*, the newly formed *Kameradschaftsbund*, the *Nazi Volkssport* (1929), and the *Bereitschaft*.

Sudeten German nationalists, particularly the Nazis, expanded their activities during the depression years. On January 30, 1933, Hitler was elected chancellor of Germany. The Czechoslovak government prepared to suppress the Sudeten Nazi Party. In the fall of 1933 the Sudeten Nazis dissolved their organization, and the German Nationals were pressured to do likewise. German Nationals and Sudeten Nazis were expelled from local government positions. The Sudeten German population was indignant, especially in nationalist strongholds like Egerland.

On October 1, 1933, Konrad Henlein, aided by other members of the Kameradschaftsbund, a youth organization of romantic mystical orientation, created a new political organization. The Sudeten German Home Front (Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront) professed loyalty to the Czechoslovak state but championed decentralization. It absorbed most former German Nationals and Sudeten Nazis. In 1935 the Sudeten German Home Front became the Sudeten German Party (Sudetendeutsche Partei—SdP) and embarked on an active propaganda campaign. In the May election the SdP won more than 60 percent of the Sudeten German vote. The German Agrarians, Christian Socialists, and Social Democrats each lost approximately one-half of their following. The SdP became the fulcrum of German nationalist forces. The party represented itself as striving for a just settlement of Sudeten German claims within the framework of Czechoslovak democracy. Henlein, however, maintained secret contact with Nazi Germany and received material aid from Berlin. The SdP endorsed the idea of a führer and mimicked Nazi methods with banners, slogans, and uniformed troops. Concessions offered by the Czechoslovak government, including the transfer of Sudeten German officials to Sudeten German areas and possible participation of the SdP in the cabinet, were rejected. By 1937 most SdP leaders supported Hitler's pan-German objectives.

On March 13, 1938, Austria was annexed by the Third Reich, a union known as Anschluss. Immediately thereafter almost the entire Sudeten German bourgeois activist movement threw its support to Henlein. On March 22, the German Agrarian Party, led by Gustav Hacker, fused with the SdP. German Christian Socialists suspended their activities on March 24; their deputies and senators entered the SdP parliamentary club. Only the Social Democrats continued to champion democratic freedom. The masses, however, gave overwhelmingsupport to the SdP.

### **Beneš's Foreign Policy**

Eduard Beneš, Czechoslovak foreign minister from 1918 to 1935, created the system of alliances that determined the republic's

international stance in 1938. A democratic statesman of Western orientation, Beneš relied heavily on the League of Nations as guarantor of the postwar status quo and the security of newly formed states. He negotiated the Little Entente (an alliance with Yugoslavia and Romania) in 1921 to counter Hungarian revanchism and Hapsburg restoration. He attempted further to negotiate treaties with Britain and France, seeking their promises of assistance in the event of aggression against the small, democratic Czechoslovak Republic. Britain remained intransigent in its isolationist policy, and in 1924 Beneš concluded a separate alliance with France.

Beneš's Western policy received a serious blow as early as 1925. The Locarno Pact, which paved the way for Germany's admission to the League of Nations, guaranteed Germany's western border. French troops were thus left immobilized on the Rhine, making French assistance to Czechoslovakia difficult. In addition, the treaty stipulated that Germany's eastern frontier would remain subject to negotiation.

When Hitler secured power in 1933, fear of German aggression became generalized in eastern Central Europe. Beneš ignored the possibility of a stronger Central European alliance system, remaining faithful to his Western policy. He did, however, seek the participation of the Soviet Union in an alliance to include France. (Beneš's earlier attitude toward the Soviet regime had been one of caution.) In 1935 the Soviet Union signed treaties with France and Czechoslovakia. In essence, the treaties provided that the Soviet Union would come to Czechoslovakia's aid only if French assistance came first.

In 1935 Beneš succeeded Masaryk as president, and Prime Minister Milan Hodža took over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Hodža's efforts to strengthen alliances in Central Europe came too late. In February 1936 the foreign ministry came under the direction of Kamil Krofta, an adherent of Beneš's line.

## **Munich**

After the Austrian Anschluss, Czechoslovakia was to become Hitler's next target. Hitler's strategy was to exploit the existing Sudeten German minority problem as a pretext for German penetration into eastern Central Europe. Sudeten German leader Henlein offered the SdP as the agent for Hitler's campaign. Henlein met with Hitler in Berlin on March 28, 1938, and was instructed to raise demands unacceptable to the Czechoslovak government. In the Carlsbad Decrees, issued on April 24, the SdP demanded complete autonomy for the Sudetenland and freedom to profess Nazi ideology. If Henlein's demands were granted, the Sudetenland would be in a position to align itself with Nazi Germany.

In 1938 neither Britain nor France desired war. France, not wanting to face Germany alone, subordinated itself to Britain. British prime minister Neville Chamberlain became the major spokesman for the West. Chamberlain believed that Sudeten German grievances were just and Hitler's intention limited. Both Britain and France advised Czechoslovakia to concede. Beneš, however, resisted pressure to move toward autonomy or federalism for the Sudetenland. On May 20, Czechoslovakia initiated a partial mobilization in response to rumors of German troop movements. On May 30, Hitler signed a secret directive for war against Czechoslovakia to begin no later than October 1. The British government demanded that Beneš request a mediator. Not wishing to sever his ties with the West, Beneš reluctantly accepted mediation. The British appointed Walter Runciman as mediator and instructed him to force a solution on Beneš that would be acceptable to the Sudeten Germans. On September 2, Beneš submitted the Fourth Plan, which granted nearly all the demands of the Carlsbad Decrees. Intent on obstructing conciliation, the SdP held a demonstration that provoked police action at the town of Ostrava on September 7. On September 13, the Sudeten Germans broke off negotiations. Violence and disruption ensued. Czechoslovak troops attempted to restore order. Henlein flew to Germany and on September 15 issued a proclamation demanding the return of the Sudetenland to Germany.

On September 15, Hitler met with Chamberlain at Berchtesgaden and demanded the swift return of the Sudetenland to the Third Reich under threat of war. Czechoslovakia, Hitler claimed, was slaughtering the Sudeten Germans. Chamberlain referred the demand to the British and French governments; both accepted. The Czechoslovak government resisted, arguing that Hitler's proposal would ruin the nation's economy and lead ultimately to German control of all of Czechoslovakia. Britain and France issued an ultimatum, making the French commitment to Czechoslovakia contingent upon acceptance. On September 21, Czechoslovakia capitulated. The next day, however, Hitler added new demands, insisting that the claims of Poland and Hungary for their minorities also be satisfied.

The Czechoslovak capitulation precipitated an outburst of national indignation. In demonstrations and rallies, there were calls for a strong military government to defend the integrity of the state. A new cabinet, under General Jan Syrový, was installed, and on September 23 a decree of general mobilization was issued. The Czechoslovak army, highly modernized and possessing an excellent system of frontier fortifications, was prepared to fight. The

Soviet Union announced its willingness to come to Czechoslovakia's assistance. Beneš, however, refused to go to war without the support of the Western powers. War, he believed, would come soon enough.

On September 28, Chamberlain appealed to Hitler for a conference. Hitler met the next day, at Munich, with the chiefs of government of France, Italy, and Britain. The Czechoslovak government was neither invited nor consulted. On September 29, the Munich Agreement was signed by Germany, Italy, France, and Britain. The Czechoslovak government capitulated September 30 and agreed to abide by the agreement.

The Munich Agreement stipulated that Czechoslovakia must cede Sudeten territory to Germany. German occupation of the Sudetenland would be completed by October 10. An international commission (representing Germany, Britain, France, Italy, and Czechoslovakia) would supervise a plebiscite to determine the final frontier. Britain and France promised to join in an international guarantee of the new frontiers against unprovoked aggression. Germany and Italy, however, would not join in the guarantee until the Polish and Hungarian minority problems were settled.

After Munich, Bohemia and Moravia lost about 38 percent of their combined area, as well as about 2.8 million Germans and approximately 750,000 Czechs to Germany. Hungary received 11,882 square kilometers in southern Slovakia and southern Ruthenia; only 53 percent of the population in this territory was Hungarian. Poland acquired Těšín and two minor border areas in northern Slovakia (see fig. 8).

### **The Second Republic, 1938-39**

As a result of the Munich Agreement, the greatly weakened Czechoslovak Republic was forced to grant major concessions to the non-Czechs. The executive committee of the Slovak Populist Party met at Žilina on October 5, 1938, and with the acquiescence of all Slovak parties except the Social Democrats formed an autonomous Slovak government under Tiso. Similarly, the two major factions in Subcarpathian Ruthenia, the Russophiles and Ukrainophiles, agreed on the establishment of an autonomous government, which was constituted on October 8, 1938. Reflecting the spread of modern Ukrainian national consciousness, the pro-Ukrainian faction, led by Vološin, gained control of the local government, and Subcarpathian Ruthenia was renamed Carpatho-Ukraine (see *Problems of Dissatisfied Nationalities*, this ch.).

In November 1938, Emil Hácha, succeeding Beneš, was elected president of the federated Second Republic (now called

Czecho-Slovakia), consisting of three parts: Bohemia and Moravia, Slovakia, and Carpatho-Ukraine. Lacking its natural frontier and having lost its costly system of border fortification, the new state was militarily indefensible. In January 1939, negotiations between Germany and Poland broke down. Hitler, intent on war against Poland, needed to eliminate Czecho-Slovakia first. He scheduled a German invasion of Bohemia and Moravia for the morning of March 15. In the interim, he negotiated with Slovak Populists and with Hungary to prepare the dismemberment of the republic before the invasion. On March 14, the Slovak Diet convened and unanimously declared Slovak independence. Carpatho-Ukraine also declared independence, but Hungarian troops occupied it and eastern Slovakia. Hitler summoned President Hácha to Berlin.

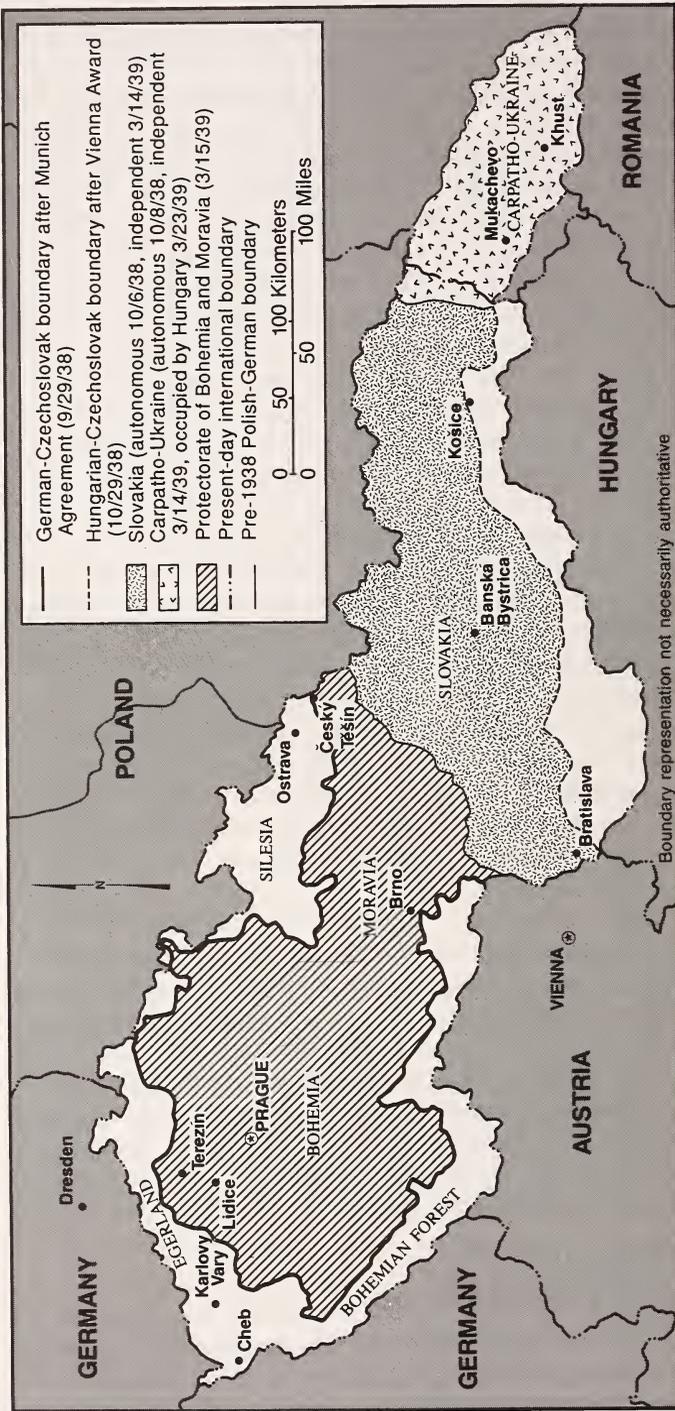
During the early hours of March 15, Hitler informed Hácha of the imminent German invasion. Threatening a Luftwaffe attack on Prague, Hitler persuaded Hácha to order the capitulation of the Czechoslovak army. On the morning of March 15, German troops entered Bohemia and Moravia, meeting no resistance. The Hungarian invasion of Carpatho-Ukraine did encounter resistance, but the Hungarian army quickly crushed it. On March 16, Hitler went to Czecho-Slovakia and from Prague's Hradčany Castle proclaimed Bohemia and Moravia a German protectorate.

Independent Czecho-Slovakia collapsed in the wake of foreign aggression and internal tensions. Subsequently, interwar Czechoslovakia has been idealized by its proponents as the only bastion of democracy surrounded by authoritarian and fascist regimes. It has also been condemned by its detractors as an artificial and unworkable creation of intellectuals supported by the great powers. Both views have some validity. Interwar Czechoslovakia was comprised of lands and peoples that were far from being integrated into a modern nation-state. Moreover, the dominant Czechs, who had suffered political discrimination under the Hapsburgs, were not able to cope with the demands of other nationalities. In fairness to the Czechs, it should be acknowledged that some of the minority demands served as mere pretexts to justify intervention by Nazi Germany. That Czechoslovakia was able under such circumstances to maintain a viable economy and a democratic political system was indeed a remarkable achievement of the interwar period.

## **The War Years, 1939–45**

### **Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia**

For the Czechs of Bohemia and Moravia, German occupation was a period of brutal oppression, made even more painful by the memory of independence and democracy. Legally, Bohemia and



Boundary representation not necessarily authoritative

Source: Based on information from "Die Entwicklung in der Tschechoslowakei seit 1945," *Staatsbürgerliche Informationen*, Bonn, 1960, 10-11

Figure 8. Partitioning of Czechoslovakia, 1938-39

Moravia were declared a protectorate of the Third Reich and were placed under the supervision of the Reich protector, Baron Konstantin von Neurath. German officials manned departments analogous to cabinet ministries. Small German control offices were established locally. The Gestapo assumed police authority. Jews were dismissed from the civil service and placed in an extralegal position. Communism was banned, and many Czech communists fled.

The population of the protectorate was mobilized for labor that would aid the German war effort, and special offices were organized to supervise the management of industries important to that effort. Czechs were drafted to work in coal mines, the iron and steel industry, and armaments production; some were sent to Germany. Consumer goods production, much diminished, was largely directed toward supplying the German armed forces. The protectorate's population was subjected to strict rationing.

German rule was moderate during the first months of the occupation. The Czech government and political system, reorganized by Hácha, continued in existence. Gestapo activities were directed mainly against Czech politicians and the intelligentsia. Nevertheless, the Czechs demonstrated against the occupation on October 28, the anniversary of Czechoslovak independence. The death on November 15 of a medical student, Jan Opletal, who had been wounded in the October violence, precipitated widespread student demonstrations, and the Reich retaliated. Politicians were arrested en masse, as were an estimated 1,800 students and teachers. On November 17, all universities and colleges in the protectorate were closed, and students were sent to work.

In the fall of 1941, the Reich adopted a more radical policy in the protectorate. Reinhard Heydrich was appointed Reich protector of Bohemia and Moravia. Under his authority Prime Minister Alois Eliáš was arrested, the Czech government was reorganized, and all Czech cultural organizations were closed. The Gestapo indulged in arrests and executions. The deportation of Jews to concentration camps was organized, and the fortress town of Terezín was made into a ghetto way station for Jewish families. On June 4, 1942, Heydrich died after being wounded by an assassin. Heydrich's successor, Colonel-General Kurt Daluege, ordered mass arrests and executions and the destruction of the village of Lidice. In 1943 the German war effort was accelerated. Under the authority of Karl Hermann Frank, German minister of state for Bohemia and Moravia, some 30,000 Czech laborers were dispatched to the Reich. Within the protectorate, all non-war-related industry was

prohibited. The Czech population obeyed quiescently up until the final months preceding the liberation.

Czech losses resulting from political persecution and deaths in concentration camps totaled between 36,000 and 55,000, relatively minor losses compared with those of other nations. But the Jewish population of Bohemia and Moravia (118,000 according to the 1930 census) was virtually annihilated. Many Jews emigrated after 1939; more than 70,000 were killed; 8,000 survived at Terezín. Several thousand Jews managed to live in freedom or in hiding throughout the occupation.

### **Government-in-Exile**

Beneš had resigned as president of the Czechoslovak Republic on October 5, 1938. In London he and other Czechoslovak exiles organized a Czechoslovak government-in-exile and negotiated to obtain international recognition for the government and a renunciation of the Munich Agreement and its consequences. Beneš hoped for a restoration of the Czechoslovak state in its pre-Munich form after the anticipated Allied victory. In the summer of 1941, the Allies recognized the exiled government. In 1942 Allied repudiation of the Munich Agreement established the political and legal continuity of the First Republic and Beneš's presidency.

The Munich Agreement had been precipitated by the subversive activities of the Sudeten Germans. During the latter years of the war, Beneš worked toward resolving the German minority problem and received consent from the Allies for a solution based on a postwar transfer of the Sudeten German population.

The First Republic had been committed to a Western policy in foreign affairs. The Munich Agreement was the outcome. Beneš determined to strengthen Czechoslovak security against future German aggression through alliances with Poland and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union, however, objected to a tripartite Czechoslovak-Polish-Soviet commitment. In December 1943, Beneš's government concluded a treaty with the Soviets.

Beneš's interest in maintaining friendly relations with the Soviet Union was motivated also by his desire to avoid Soviet encouragement of a postwar communist coup in Czechoslovakia. Beneš worked to bring Czechoslovak communist exiles in Britain into active cooperation with his government, offering far-reaching concessions, including nationalization of heavy industry and the creation of local people's committees at the war's end. In March 1945, he gave key cabinet positions to Czechoslovak communist exiles in Moscow.

## **Czech Resistance**

In exile, Beneš organized a resistance network. Hácha, Prime Minister Eliáš, and the Czech resistance acknowledged Beneš's leadership. Active collaboration between London and the Czechoslovak home front was maintained throughout the war years. The Czech resistance comprised four main groups. The army command coordinated with a multitude of spontaneous groupings to form the Defense of the Nation (Obrana národa—ON) with branches in Britain and France. Beneš's collaborators, led by Prokop Drtina, created the Political Center (Politické ústředí—PÚ). The PÚ was nearly destroyed by arrests in November 1939, after which younger politicians took control. Social democrats and leftist intellectuals, in association with such groups as trade-unions and educational institutions, constituted the Committee of the Petition We Remain Faithful (Petiční výbor Věrní zůstaňme—PVVZ).

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—KSČ) was the fourth resistance group. The KSČ had been one of over twenty political parties in the democratic First Republic, but it had never gained sufficient votes to unsettle the democratic government. After the Munich Agreement the leadership of the KSČ moved to Moscow and the party went underground. Until 1943, however, KSČ resistance was weak. The Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact in 1939 had left the KSČ in disarray. But ever faithful to the Soviet line, the KSČ began a more active struggle against the Nazis after Germany's attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 (see *The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia*, ch. 4).

The democratic groups—ON, PÚ, and PVVZ—united in early 1940 and formed the Central Committee of the Home Resistance (Ústřední výbor odboje domácího—ÚVOD). Involved primarily in intelligence gathering, the ÚVOD cooperated with a Soviet intelligence organization in Prague. Following the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the democratic groups attempted to create a united front that would include the KSČ. Heydrich's appointment in the fall thwarted these efforts. By mid-1942 the Nazis had succeeded in exterminating the most experienced elements of the Czech resistance forces.

Czech forces regrouped in 1942 and 1943. The Council of the Three (R3), in which the communist underground was strongly represented, emerged as the focal point of the resistance. The R3 prepared to assist the liberating armies of the United States and the Soviet Union. In cooperation with Red Army partisan units, the R3 developed a guerrilla structure.

Guerrilla activity intensified after the formation of a provisional Czechoslovak government in Košice on April 4, 1945. "National committees" took over the administration of towns as the Germans were expelled. Under the supervision of the Red Army, more than 4,850 such committees were formed between 1944 and the end of the war. On May 5 a national uprising began spontaneously in Prague, and the newly formed Czech National Council (Česká národní rada) almost immediately assumed leadership of the revolt. Over 1,600 barricades were erected throughout the city, and some 30,000 Czech men and women battled for three days against 37,000 to 40,000 German troops backed by tanks and artillery. On May 8 the German Wehrmacht capitulated; Soviet troops arrived on May 9.

### **Slovak Republic**

On March 14, 1939, Slovakia declared its independence, calling itself the Slovak Republic. Monsignor Tiso was elected president of this new republic. A clerical nationalist, Tiso opposed the Nazification of Slovak society and hoped instead to establish Slovakia as a nationalist, Christian, corporative state. His plan conflicted with that of Slovak radicals who were organized into the paramilitary Hlinka Guards. The latter cooperated closely with the Nazi-oriented German minority led by Franz Karmasin. Radicals dominated the Slovak government. Vojtech Tuka, recently released from prison, became prime minister; his associate, Ferdinand Ďurčanský, was named foreign minister. Alexander Mach, head of the Hlinka Guards, was propaganda minister. German "advisory missions" were appointed to all Slovak ministries, and German troops were stationed in Slovakia beginning March 15, 1939.

The conflict between Tiso and the radicals resulted in the Salzburg Compromise, concluded between Slovakia and the Reich in July 1940. The compromise called for dual command by the Slovak Populist Party and the Hlinka Guards. The Reich appointed storm trooper leader Manfred von Killinger as the German representative in Slovakia. While Tiso successfully restructured the Slovak Populist Party in harmony with Christian corporative principles, Tuka and Mach radicalized Slovak policy toward the Jews (130,000 in the 1930 census). In September 1941, the Slovak government enacted a "Jewish code," providing a legal foundation for property expropriation, internment, and deportation. In 1942 the Slovak government reached an agreement with Germany on the deportation of Jews. The same year, when most of the deportations occurred, approximately 68,000 Slovak Jews were sent out of Slovakia to German-run concentration camps. Many Jews

escaped deportation under a provision that allowed Tiso to exempt Jews whose services were considered an economic necessity.

Tiso's power was strengthened in October 1942, when the Slovak Diet proclaimed him leader of the state and Slovak Populist Party, giving him rights of intervention in all affairs of state. The Hlinka Guards were effectively subordinated to party control. The new German representative, Hans Elard Ludin, concentrated his energies on war production. German banks acquired a controlling interest in all Slovak industries. With the aid of German investments and technical advice, Slovakia experienced a considerable economic boom, especially in the armaments industry, which had been controlled by the German government since December 1939. To some extent, Slovakia served as a showcase for Hitler's new order.

### **Slovak Resistance**

In the aftermath of Munich, Slovak politicians from the democratic parties (Republican Party of Farmers and Peasants, Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party, and Czechoslovak National Socialist Party) organized a resistance movement. Individual underground cells sprang up in towns and villages throughout Slovakia. A campaign of "whispering" propaganda was initiated to alert the acquiescent Slovak population to the true nature of the Tiso regime. The goal of the democratic resistance was the restoration of the Czechoslovak Republic, but with greater participation for Slovakia. In the spring of 1939, the "Zeta" headquarters was established in Bratislava to coordinate with the Czech resistance and to transmit intelligence information to the liberation movement abroad. Communists remaining in Slovakia formed the underground Communist Party of Slovakia (Komunistická strana Slovenska—KSS) and until 1943 favored the creation of an independent "Soviet Slovakia."

The shortage of qualified personnel enabled resistance members to infiltrate all levels of the Tiso administration, where they promoted economic sabotage. Mutiny within the Slovak army (marshaled by the Axis powers for combat against Poland and, later, the Soviet Union) was encouraged and became commonplace. At Kremnica, on September 15, 1939, approximately 3,500 Slovak soldiers abandoned their transport train and marched into the city. Members of the underground Slovak Revolutionary Youth set fire to machinery in factories, emptied the fuel tanks of locomotives, and exploded munitions in warehouses. Slovak youth turned increasingly against the Tiso regime.

In his Christmas broadcast of 1942, Beneš called for resistance groups in Slovakia to increase their activity in preparation for a

seizure of power. The groups worked to unify their efforts. The following November, negotiations between democratic and communist resistance leaders culminated in the signing of the Christmas Agreement of 1943. The agreement called for the creation of the Slovak National Council to represent the political will of the Slovak nation. The Slovak National Council would act in concert with the Czechoslovak government and liberation movement abroad. The postwar Czechoslovak state would be democratic and organized on the basis of national equality. The Christmas Agreement provided also for a close association with the Soviet Union in foreign policy and military affairs. Beneš endorsed the agreement on March 27, 1944.

The Allied powers agreed that Slovakia would be liberated by Soviet armies. In March 1944, with Beneš's approval, the Slovak National Council authorized Lieutenant-Colonel Ján Golian to prepare for a national coup to be coordinated with the arrival of Soviet troops. Golian organized a secret military center at Banská Bystrica and created Slovak partisan units composed of escaped prisoners of war and army deserters. The Slovak National Uprising of August 29, however, was premature. The Soviet government, regarding the Slovak resistance as politically suspect, failed to inform the Slovaks of a change in Soviet strategy. Despite American efforts to assist the uprising, the German Wehrmacht occupied Slovakia, and Banská Bystrica fell on October 27. Nonetheless, local partisan warfare continued up to the liberation.

### **Soviet Annexation of Carpatho-Ukraine (Subcarpathian Ruthenia)**

On May 8, 1944, Beneš signed an agreement with Soviet leaders stipulating that Czechoslovak territory liberated by Soviet armies would be placed under Czechoslovak civilian control. Subcarpathian Ruthenia had been reconstituted into the autonomous Carpatho-Ukraine during the Second Republic. When the Second Republic collapsed, Carpatho-Ukraine declared its independence but was occupied by the Hungarians (see Second Republic, 1938-39, this ch.). In October 1944, Carpatho-Ukraine was taken by the Soviets. A Czechoslovak delegation under František Němec was dispatched to the area. The delegation was to mobilize the liberated local population to form a Czechoslovak army and to prepare for elections in cooperation with recently established national committees. Loyalty to a Czechoslovak state was tenuous in Carpatho-Ukraine. Beneš's proclamation of April 1944 excluded former collaborationist Hungarians, Germans, and the Russophile Ruthenian followers of Andrej Bródy and the Fencik Party (who had collaborated with the Hungarians) from political participation. This amounted to



*Slovak National Uprising Memorial, Banská Bystrica  
Courtesy Helen Fedor*

approximately one-third of the population. Another one-third was communist, leaving one-third of the population presumably sympathetic to the Czechoslovak Republic.

Upon arrival in Carpatho-Ukraine, the Czechoslovak delegation set up headquarters in Khust and on October 30 issued a mobilization proclamation. Soviet military forces prevented both the printing and the posting of the Czechoslovak proclamation and proceeded instead to organize the local population. Protests from Beneš's government went unheeded. Soviet activities led much of the local population to believe that Soviet annexation was imminent.

The Czechoslovak delegation was also prevented from establishing a cooperative relationship with the local national committees promoted by the Soviets. On November 19, the communists, meeting in Mukachevo, issued a resolution requesting separation of Carpatho-Ukraine from Czechoslovakia and incorporation into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. On November 26, the Congress of National Committees unanimously accepted the resolution of the communists. The congress elected the National Council and instructed that a delegation be sent to Moscow to discuss union. The Czechoslovak delegation was asked to leave Carpatho-Ukraine.

Negotiations between the Czechoslovak government and Moscow ensued. Both Czech and Slovak communists encouraged Beneš to cede Carpatho-Ukraine. The Soviet Union agreed to postpone annexation until the postwar period to avoid compromising Beneš's policy based on the pre-Munich frontiers. The treaty ceding Carpatho-Ukraine to the Soviet Union was signed in June 1945. Czechs and Slovaks living in Carpatho-Ukraine and Ukrainians (Ruthenians) living in Czechoslovakia were given the choice of Czechoslovak or Soviet citizenship.

## **Minorities and Population Transfers**

The Czechoslovak National Front coalition government, formed at Košice in April 1945, issued decrees providing for the expulsion of all Sudeten Germans with the exception of those who had demonstrated loyalty to the republic. German property would be confiscated without compensation. All officials of the SdP, or the Sudeten Nazis, and all members of the Nazi Security Police would be prosecuted.

In May 1945, Czechoslovak troops took possession of the Sudetenland. A Czechoslovak administrative commission composed exclusively of Czechs was established. Sudeten Germans were subjected to restrictive measures and conscripted for compulsory labor to repair war damages. Individual acts of retaliation against Germans and precipitous expulsion under harsh conditions characterized the immediate aftermath of the occupation. On June 15, however, Beneš called Czechoslovak authorities to order. In July Czechoslovak representatives addressed the Potsdam Conference (the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union) and presented plans for a humane and orderly transfer of the Sudeten German population.

The Potsdam Agreement provided for the resettlement of Sudeten Germans in Germany under the supervision of the Allied Control Council. The transfer began in January 1946. By December 31, 1946, some 1.7 million Germans had been resettled in the American Zone and 750,000 in the Soviet Zone. Approximately 225,000 Germans remained in Czechoslovakia, of whom 50,000 emigrated or were expelled soon after.

The Potsdam Agreement pertained to Germans only. Decisions regarding the Hungarian minority reverted to the Czechoslovak government. The resettlement of about 700,000 Hungarians was envisaged at Košice and subsequently reaffirmed by the National Front. Budapest, however, opposed a unilateral transfer. In February 1946, the Hungarian government agreed that Czechoslovakia could expatriate as many Hungarians as there were Slovaks in Hungary wishing to return to Czechoslovakia. By the spring of 1948 only 160,000 Hungarians had been resettled.

Territory ceded to Poland in 1938 and restored to Slovakia after the Nazi invasion of Poland, in accordance with the terms of the German-Slovak agreement of November 21, 1939, became part of the restored Czechoslovak state in 1945. The Polish minority (100,000) enjoyed full civil liberties.

## **Communist Czechoslovakia**

### **Third Republic and the Communist Takeover**

During World War II, Czechoslovakia disappeared from the map of Europe. The re-emergence of Czechoslovakia as a sovereign state

was not only the result of Allied policies but also an indication of the strength of the Czechoslovak idea, particularly as embodied in the First Republic. But Czechoslovakia now found itself within the Soviet sphere of influence—a fact that had to be taken into account in any postwar reconstruction. Thus the political and economic organization of postwar Czechoslovakia was largely the result of negotiations between Beneš and KSČ exiles in Moscow.

The Third Republic came into being in April 1945. Its government, installed at Košice on April 4 and moved to Prague in May, was a National Front coalition in which three socialist parties—KSČ, Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party, and Czechoslovak National Socialist Party—predominated. The Slovak Populist Party was banned as collaborationist with the Nazis. Other conservative yet democratic parties, such as the Republican Party of Farmers and Peasants, were prevented from resuming activities in the postwar period. Certain acceptable nonsocialist parties were included in the coalition; among them were the Catholic People's Party (in Moravia) and the Slovak Democratic Party. All property belonging to Nazi collaborators was confiscated without compensation. Their land was distributed among the peasants, and their industries—amounting to 16.4 percent of all Czechoslovak industry, employing 61.2 percent of the industrial labor force—were nationalized.

Beneš had compromised with the KSČ to avoid a postwar coup; he anticipated that the democratic process would restore a more equitable distribution of power. Beneš had negotiated the Soviet alliance, but at the same time he hoped to establish Czechoslovakia as a “bridge” between East and West, capable of maintaining contacts with both sides. KSČ leader Klement Gottwald, however, professed commitment to a “gradualist” approach, that is, to a KSČ assumption of power by democratic means.

The popular enthusiasm evoked by the Soviet armies of liberation benefited the KSČ. Czechoslovaks, bitterly disappointed by the West at Munich, responded favorably to both the KSČ and the Soviet alliance. Communists secured strong representation in the popularly elected national committees, the new organs of local administration. The KSČ organized and centralized the trade union movement; of 120 representatives to the Central Council of Trade Unions, 94 were communists. The party worked to acquire a mass membership, including peasants and the petite bourgeoisie, as well as the proletariat. Between May 1945 and May 1946, KSČ membership grew from 27,000 to over 1.1 million.

In the May 1946 election, the KSČ won a plurality of 38 percent of the vote. Beneš continued as president of the republic, and

Jan Masaryk, son of the revered founding father, continued as foreign minister. Gottwald became prime minister. Most important, although the communists held only a minority of portfolios, they were able to gain control over such key ministries as information, internal trade, finance, and interior (including the police apparatus). Through these ministries, the communists were able to suppress noncommunist opposition, place party members in positions of power, and create a solid basis for a takeover attempt.

The year that followed was uneventful. The KSČ continued to proclaim its "national" and "democratic" orientation. The turning point came in the summer of 1947. In July the Czechoslovak government, with KSČ approval, accepted an Anglo-French invitation to attend preliminary discussions of the Marshall Plan. The Soviet Union responded immediately to the Czechoslovak move to continue the Western alliance. Stalin summoned Gottwald to Moscow; upon his return to Prague, the KSČ reversed its decision. In subsequent months, the party demonstrated a significant radicalization of its tactics.

The KSČ raised the specter of an impending counterrevolutionary coup as a pretext for intensified activity. Originally announced by Gottwald at the KSČ Central Committee meeting in November 1947, news of the "reactionary plot" was disseminated throughout the country by communist agents-provocateurs and by the communist press. In January 1948, the communist-controlled Ministry of Interior proceeded to purge the Czechoslovak security forces, substituting communists for noncommunists. Simultaneously, the KSČ began agitating for increased nationalization and for a new land reform limiting landholdings to fifty hectares.

A cabinet crisis precipitated the February coup. National Socialist ministers, backed by all noncommunist parties, demanded a halt to the communists' blatant use of the Ministry of Interior's police and security forces to suppress noncommunists. Prime Minister Gottwald, however, repeatedly forestalled discussion of the police issue. On February 20, National Socialists resigned from the cabinet in protest. The Catholic People's Party and the Slovak Democratic Party followed suit.

The twelve noncommunist ministers resigned, in part, to induce Beneš to call for early elections: Communist losses were anticipated owing to popular disapproval of recent KSČ tactics. A January poll indicated a 10-percent decline in communist electoral support. The Czechoslovak National Socialists made their move, however, without adequate coordination with Beneš. The democratic parties, in addition, made no effort to rally popular support.

Beneš refused to accept the cabinet resignations and did not call for elections. In the days that followed, he shunned democratic ministers to avoid accusation of collusion. The Czechoslovak army remained neutral.

In the meantime, the KSČ garnered its forces. The communist-controlled Ministry of Interior deployed police regiments to sensitive areas and equipped a workers' militia. The communist-controlled Ministry of Information refused broadcasting time to noncommunist officials. Ministries held by democratic parties were "secured" by communist "action committees." The action committees also purged all governmental and political party organs of unreliable elements.

On February 25, Beneš, perhaps fearing Soviet intervention, capitulated. He accepted the resignations of the dissident ministers and received a new cabinet list from Gottwald, thus completing the communist takeover.

### **Stalinization**

In February 1948, Czechoslovakia became a "people's democracy"—a preliminary step toward socialism and, ultimately, communism. Bureaucratic centralism under the direction of KSČ leadership was introduced. Dissident elements were purged from all levels of society, including the Catholic Church. The ideological principles of Marxism-Leninism and socialist realism pervaded cultural and intellectual life. The entire education system was submitted to state control. The economy was committed to comprehensive central planning and the elimination of private ownership. Czechoslovakia became a satellite of the Soviet Union; it was a founding member of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) in 1949 and of the Warsaw Pact in 1955 (see Appendix B; Appendix C). The attainment of Soviet-style "socialism" became the government's avowed policy.

A new constitution was passed by the National Assembly on May 9, 1948. Because it was prepared by a special committee in the 1945-48 period, it contained many liberal and democratic provisions. It reflected, however, the reality of Communist power through an addition that discussed the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leadership role of the Communist party. Beneš refused to sign the Ninth-of-May Constitution, as it was called, and resigned from the presidency; he was succeeded by Gottwald.

Although in theory Czechoslovakia remained a multiparty state, in actuality the Communists were in complete control. Political participation became subject to KSČ approval. The KSČ also prescribed percentage representation for non-Marxist parties. The

National Assembly, purged of dissidents, became a mere rubber stamp for KSČ programs. In 1953 an inner cabinet of the National Assembly, the Presidium, was created. Composed of KSČ leaders, the Presidium served to convey party policies through government channels. Regional, district, and local committees were subordinated to the Ministry of Interior. Slovak autonomy was constrained; the KSS was reunited with the KSČ but retained its own identity (see *The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia*, ch. 4).

Gottwald died in 1953. He was succeeded by Antonín Zápotocký as president and by Antonín Novotný as head of the KSČ. Novotný became president in 1957 when Zápotocký died.

Czechoslovak interests were subordinated to the interests of the Soviet Union. Stalin became particularly concerned about controlling and integrating the socialist bloc in the wake of Tito's challenge to his authority. Stalin's paranoia resulted in sweeping political changes in the Soviet Union and the satellite countries. In Czechoslovakia the Stalinists accused their opponents of "conspiracy against the people's democratic order" and "high treason" in order to oust them from positions of power. Large-scale arrests of Communists with an "international" background, i.e., those with a wartime connection with the West, veterans of the Spanish Civil War, Jews, and Slovak "bourgeois nationalists," were followed by show trials. The most spectacular of these was the trial of KSČ first secretary Rudolf Slánský and thirteen other prominent Communist personalities in November and December 1952. Slánský was executed, and many others were sentenced to death or to forced labor in prison camps. The KSČ rank-and-file membership, approximately 2.5 million in March 1948, began to be subjected to careful scrutiny. By 1960 KSČ membership had been reduced to 1.4 million.

The Ninth-of-May Constitution provided for the nationalization of all commercial and industrial enterprises having more than fifty employees. The nonagricultural private sector was nearly eliminated. Private ownership of land was limited to fifty hectares. The remnants of private enterprise and independent farming were permitted to carry on only as a temporary concession to the petite bourgeoisie and the peasantry. The Czechoslovak economy was subjected to a succession of five-year plans (see *Economic Structure and Its Control Mechanisms*, ch. 3).

Following the Soviet example, Czechoslovakia began emphasizing the rapid development of heavy industry. The industrial sector was reorganized with an emphasis on metallurgy, heavy machinery, and coal mining. Production was concentrated in larger units; the more than 350,000 units of the prewar period were

reduced to about 1,700 units by 1958. Industrial output reportedly increased 233 percent between 1948 and 1959; employment in industry, 44 percent. The speed of industrialization was particularly accelerated in Slovakia, where production increased 347 percent and employment, 70 percent. Although Czechoslovakia's industrial growth of 170 percent between 1948 and 1957 was impressive, it was far exceeded by that of Japan (300 percent) and the Federal Republic of Germany (almost 300 percent) and more than equaled by Austria and Greece. For the 1954-59 period, Czechoslovak industrial growth was equaled by France and Italy.

Industrial growth in Czechoslovakia required substantial additional labor. Czechoslovaks were subjected to long hours and long workweeks to meet production quotas. Part-time, volunteer labor—students and white-collar workers—was drafted in massive numbers. Labor productivity, however, was not significantly increased, nor were production costs reduced. Czechoslovak products were characterized by poor quality.

The Ninth-of-May Constitution declared the government's intention to collectivize agriculture. In February 1949, the National Assembly adopted the Unified Agricultural Cooperatives Act. Cooperatives were to be founded on a voluntary basis; formal title to land was left vested in the original owners. The imposition of high compulsory quotas, however, forced peasants to collectivize in order to increase efficiency and facilitate mechanization. Discriminatory policies were employed to bring about the ruin of recalcitrant peasants. Collectivization was near completion by 1960. Sixteen percent of all farmland (obtained from collaborators and peasants) had been turned into state farms (see *Agriculture*, ch. 3).

Despite the elimination of poor land from cultivation and a tremendous increase in the use of fertilizers and tractors, agricultural production declined seriously. By 1959 prewar production levels still had not been met. Major causes of the decline were the diversion of labor from agriculture to industry (in 1948 an estimated 2.2 million workers were employed in agriculture; by 1960, only 1.5 million); the suppression of the "kulak," the most experienced and productive farmer; and the peasantry's opposition to collectivization, which resulted in sabotage.

The 1960 Constitution declared the victory of "socialism" and proclaimed the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. The ambiguous precept of "democratic centralism"—power emanating from the people but bound by the authority of higher organs—was made a formal part of constitutional law. The president, the cabinet, the Slovak National Council, and the local governments were made responsible to the National Assembly. The National Assembly,

however, continued its rubber-stamp approval of KSČ policies. All private enterprises using hired labor were abolished. Comprehensive economic planning was reaffirmed. The Bill of Rights emphasized economic and social rights, e.g., the right to work, leisure, health care, and education. Civil rights, however, were deemphasized. The judiciary was combined with the prosecuting branch; all judges were committed to the protection of the socialist state and the education of citizens in loyalty to the cause of socialism (see *Constitutional Development*, ch. 4).

### **The Reform Movement**

De-Stalinization had a late start in Czechoslovakia. The KSČ leadership virtually ignored the Soviet thaw announced by Nikita Khrushchev in 1956 at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In Czechoslovakia that April, at the Second Writers' Congress, several authors criticized acts of political repression and attempted to gain control of the writers' congress. The writers' rebellion was suppressed, however, and the conservatives retained control. Students in Prague and Bratislava demonstrated on May Day of 1956, demanding freedom of speech and access to the Western press. The Novotný regime condemned these activities and introduced a policy of neo-Stalinism. The 1958 KSČ Party congress formalized the continuation of Stalinism.

In the early 1960s, the Czechoslovak economy became severely stagnated. The industrial growth rate was the lowest in Eastern Europe. Food imports strained the balance of payments. Pressures both from Moscow and from within the party precipitated a reform movement. In 1963 reform-minded Communist intellectuals produced a proliferation of critical articles. Criticism of economic planning merged with more generalized protests against KSČ bureaucratic control and ideological conformity. The KSČ leadership responded. The purge trials of 1949-54 were reviewed, for example, and some of those purged were rehabilitated. Some hardliners were removed from top levels of government and replaced by younger, more liberal communists. Jozef Lenárt replaced Prime Minister Vilam Široký. The KSČ organized committees to review economic policy.

In 1965 the party approved the New Economic Model, which had been drafted under the direction of economist and theoretician Ota Šik. The program called for a second, intensive stage of economic development, emphasizing technological and managerial improvements. Central planning would be limited to overall production and investment indexes as well as price and wage guidelines. Management personnel would be involved in decision making.



*Old Town Square, Prague  
Courtesy Eugene C. Robertson*

Production would be market oriented and geared toward profitability. Prices would respond to supply and demand. Wage differentials would be introduced.

The KSČ “Theses” of December 1965 presented the party response to the call for political reform. Democratic centralism was redefined, placing a stronger emphasis on democracy. The leading role of the KSČ was reaffirmed but limited. In consequence, the National Assembly was promised increased legislative responsibility. The Slovak executive (Board of Commissioners) and legislature (Slovak National Council) were assured that they could assist the central government in program planning and assume responsibility for program implementation in Slovakia. The regional, district, and local national committees were to be permitted a degree of autonomy. The KSČ agreed to refrain from superseding the authority of economic and social organizations. Party control in cultural policy, however, was reaffirmed.

January 1967 was the date for full implementation of the reform program. Novotný and his supporters hesitated, introducing amendments to reinforce central control. Pressure from the reformists was stepped up. Slovaks pressed for federalization. Economists called for complete enterprise autonomy and economic responsiveness to the market mechanism. The Fourth Writers’ Congress

adopted a resolution calling for rehabilitation of the Czechoslovak literary tradition and the establishment of free contact with Western culture. The Novotný regime responded with repressive measures.

At the October 30–31 meeting of the KSČ Central Committee, Alexander Dubček, a moderate reformer, challenged Novotný. As university students in Prague demonstrated in support of the liberals, Novotný appealed to Moscow for assistance. On December 8, Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev arrived in Prague but did not support Novotný. On January 5, 1968, the Central Committee elected Dubček to replace Novotný as first secretary of the KSČ. Novotný's fall from KSČ leadership precipitated initiatives to oust Stalinists from all levels of government, from mass associations, e.g., the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement and the Czechoslovak Union of Youth, and from local party organs. On March 22, 1968, Novotný resigned from the presidency and was succeeded by General Ludvík Svoboda.

### **The Prague Spring, 1968**

Dubček carried the reform movement a step further in the direction of liberalism. After Novotný's fall, censorship was lifted. The media—press, radio, and television—were mobilized for reformist propaganda purposes. The movement to democratize socialism in Czechoslovakia, formerly confined largely to the party intelligentsia, acquired a new, popular dynamism in the spring of 1968. In April the KSČ Presidium adopted the Action Program that had been drafted by a coalition headed by Dubček and made up of reformers, moderates, centrists, and conservatives. The program proposed a “new model of socialism,” profoundly “democratic” and “national,” that is, adapted to Czechoslovak conditions. The National Front and the electoral system were to be democratized, and Czechoslovakia was to be federalized. Freedom of assembly and expression would be guaranteed in constitutional law. The New Economic Model was to be implemented. The Action Program also reaffirmed the Czechoslovak alliance with the Soviet Union and other socialist states. The reform movement, which rejected Stalinism as the road to communism, remained committed to communism as a goal.

The Action Program stipulated that reform must proceed under KSČ direction. In subsequent months, however, popular pressure mounted to implement reforms forthwith. Radical elements found expression: anti-Soviet polemics appeared in the press; the Social Democrats began to form a separate party; new unaffiliated political clubs were created. Party conservatives urged the implementation of repressive measures, but Dubček counseled moderation

and reemphasized KSC leadership. In May he announced that the Fourteenth Party Congress would convene in an early session on September 9. The congress would incorporate the Action Program into the party statutes, draft a federalization law, and elect a new (presumably more liberal) Central Committee.

On June 27, Ludvík Vaculík, a lifelong communist and a candidate member of the Central Committee, published a manifesto entitled "Two Thousand Words." The manifesto expressed concern about conservative elements within the KSC and "foreign" forces as well. (Warsaw Pact maneuvers were held in Czechoslovakia in late June.) It called on the "people" to take the initiative in implementing the reform program. Dubček, the party Presidium, the National Front, and the cabinet sharply denounced the manifesto.

The Soviet leadership was alarmed. In mid-July a Warsaw Pact conference was held without Czechoslovak participation. The Warsaw Pact nations drafted a letter to the KSC leadership referring to the manifesto as an "organizational and political platform of counterrevolution." Pact members demanded the reimposition of censorship, the banning of new political parties and clubs, and the repression of "rightist" forces within the party. The Warsaw Pact nations declared the defense of Czechoslovakia's socialist gains to be not only the task of Czechoslovakia but also the mutual task of all Warsaw Pact countries. The KSC rejected the Warsaw Pact ultimatum, and Dubček requested bilateral talks with the Soviet Union.

## **Intervention**

Soviet leader Brezhnev hesitated to intervene militarily in Czechoslovakia. Dubček's Action Program proposed a "new model of socialism"—"democratic" and "national." Significantly, however, Dubček did not challenge Czechoslovak commitment to the Warsaw Pact. In the early spring of 1968, the Soviet leadership adopted a wait-and-see attitude. By midsummer, however, two camps had formed: advocates and opponents of military intervention.

The pro-interventionist coalition viewed the situation in Czechoslovakia as "counterrevolutionary" and favored the defeat of Dubček and his supporters. This coalition was headed by the Ukrainian party leader Pyotr Shelest and included communist bureaucrats from Belorussia and from the non-Russian national republics of the western part of the Soviet Union (the Baltic republics). The coalition members feared the awakening of nationalism within their respective republics and the influence of the Ukrainian

minority in Czechoslovakia on Ukrainians in the Soviet Union. Bureaucrats responsible for political stability in Soviet cities and for the ideological supervision of the intellectual community also favored a military solution. Within the Warsaw Pact, only the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and Poland were strongly interventionist. Walter Ulbricht and Wladyslaw Gomulka—party leaders of East Germany and Poland, respectively—viewed liberalism as threatening to their own positions.

The Soviet Union agreed to bilateral talks with Czechoslovakia to be held in July at Čierna nad Tisou, Slovakia. At the meeting, Dubček defended the program of the reformist wing of the KSC while pledging commitment to the Warsaw Pact and Comecon. The KSC leadership, however, was divided. Vigorous reformers—Josef Smrkovský, Oldřich Černík, and František Kriegel—supported Dubček. Conservatives—Vasil Bil'ak, Drahomír Kolder, and Oldřich Švestka—adopted an anti-reformist stance. Brezhnev decided on compromise. The KSC delegates reaffirmed their loyalty to the Warsaw Pact and promised to curb "antisocialist" tendencies, prevent the revival of the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party, and control the press more effectively. The Soviets agreed to withdraw their troops (stationed in Czechoslovakia since the June maneuvers) and permit the September 9 party congress.

On August 3, representatives from the Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia met in Bratislava and signed the Bratislava Declaration. The declaration affirmed unshakable fidelity to Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism and declared an implacable struggle against "bourgeois" ideology and all "antisocialist" forces. The Soviet Union expressed its intention to intervene in a Warsaw Pact country if a "bourgeois" system—a pluralist system of several political parties—was ever established. After the Bratislava conference, Soviet troops left Czechoslovak territory but remained along Czechoslovak borders. Dubček made no attempt to mobilize the Czechoslovak army to resist an invasion.

The KSC party congress remained scheduled for September 9. In the week following the Bratislava conference, it became an open secret in Prague that most of Dubček's opponents would be removed from the Central Committee. The Prague municipal party organization prepared and circulated a blacklist. The anti-reformist coalition could hope to stay in power only with Soviet assistance.

KSC anti-reformists, therefore, made efforts to convince the Soviets that the danger of political instability and "counterrevolution" did indeed exist. They used the Kašpar Report, prepared by the Central Committee's Information Department, headed by

Jan Kašpar, to achieve this end. The report provided an extensive review of the general political situation in Czechoslovakia as it might relate to the forthcoming party congress. It predicted that a stable Central Committee and a firm leadership could not necessarily be expected as the outcome of the congress. The report was received by the party Presidium on August 12. Two Presidium members, Kolder and Alois Indra, were instructed to evaluate the report for the August 20 meeting of the Presidium.

Kolder and Indra viewed the Kašpar Report with alarm and, some observers think, communicated their conclusions to the Soviet ambassador, Stepan V. Chervonenko. These actions are thought to have precipitated the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. As the KSČ Presidium convened on August 20, the anti-reformists planned to make a bid for power, pointing to the imminent danger of counterrevolution. Kolder and Indra presented a resolution declaring a state of emergency and calling for "fraternal assistance." The resolution was never voted on: Warsaw Pact troops entered Czechoslovakia that same day.

KSČ conservatives had misinformed Moscow regarding the strength of the reform movement. The KSČ Presidium met during the night of August 20-21; it rejected the option of armed resistance but condemned the invasion. Two-thirds of the KSČ Central Committee opposed the Soviet intervention. A KSČ party congress, convened secretly on August 22, passed a resolution affirming its loyalty to Dubček's Action Program and denouncing the Soviet aggression. President Svoboda repeatedly resisted Soviet pressure to form a new government under Indra. The Czechoslovak population was virtually unanimous in its repudiation of the Soviet action. In compliance with Svoboda's caution against acts that might provoke violence, they avoided mass demonstrations and strikes but observed a symbolic one-hour general work stoppage on August 23. Popular opposition was expressed in numerous spontaneous acts of nonviolent resistance. In Prague and other cities throughout the republic, Czechs and Slovaks greeted Warsaw Pact soldiers with arguments and reproaches. Every form of assistance, including the provision of food and water, was denied the invaders. Signs, placards, and graffiti drawn on walls and pavements denounced the invaders, the Soviet leaders, and suspected collaborators. Pictures of Dubček and Svoboda appeared everywhere.

The generalized resistance caused the Soviet Union to abandon its original plan to oust Dubček. The KSČ leader, who had been arrested on the night of August 20, was taken to Moscow for negotiations. The outcome was the Brezhnev Doctrine of limited sovereignty, which provided for the strengthening of the KSČ, strict

party control of the media, and the suppression of the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party. It was agreed that Dubček would remain in office and that a program of moderate reform would continue.

### **Normalization**

Dubček remained in office only until April 1969. Anti-Soviet demonstrations, following Czechoslovakia's victory over the Soviet team in the World Ice Hockey Championships in March, precipitated Soviet pressures for a KSČ Presidium reorganization. Gustáv Husák (a centrist) was named first secretary (title changed to general secretary in 1971). Only centrists and the conservatives led by Bil'ak continued in the Presidium. A program of "normalization"—the restoration of continuity with the pre-reform period—was initiated. Normalization entailed thoroughgoing political repression and the return to ideological conformity. A new purge cleansed the Czechoslovak leadership of all reformist elements. Of the 115 members of the KSČ Central Committee, 54 were replaced.

Reformists were removed from regional, district, and local party branches in the Czech lands and, to a lesser extent, in Slovakia. KSČ party membership, which had been close to 1.7 million in January 1968, was reduced by about 500,000. Top levels of government and the leadership of social organizations were purged. Publishing houses and film studios were placed under new direction. Censorship was strictly imposed, and a campaign of militant atheism was organized.

Czechoslovakia had been federalized under the Constitutional Law of Federation of October 27, 1968. The newly created Federal Assembly, which replaced the National Assembly, was to work in close cooperation with the Czech National Council and the Slovak National Council. The Husák regime amended the law in January 1971. Although federalism was retained in form, central authority was effectively restored (see *Constitutional Development*, ch. 4).

In May 1970, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance, which incorporated the principle of limited sovereignty. Soviet troops remained stationed in Czechoslovakia, and the Czechoslovak armed forces worked in close cooperation with the Warsaw Pact command (see *Soviet Influence*, ch. 5). Soviet advisers supervised the functioning of the Ministry of Interior and the security apparatus (see *Interior Security and Public Order*, ch. 5). Czechoslovak leaders and propagandists, led by Bil'ak, became the most ardent advocates of proletarian internationalism.

The purges of the first half of 1970 eliminated the reformists

within the party organization. In the fall of 1970, the ex-communist intelligentsia organized the Socialist Movement of Czechoslovak Citizens, a protest movement dedicated to the goals of 1968. Forty-seven leaders of the movement were arrested and tried in the summer of 1972. Organized protest was effectively stilled.

### **Preserving the Status Quo**

In May 1971, party chief Husák announced at the official Fourteenth Party Congress—the 1968 Fourteenth Party Congress had been abrogated—that “normalization” had been completed and that all that remained was for the party to consolidate its gains. Husák’s policy was to maintain a rigid status quo; for the next fifteen years key personnel of the party and government remained the same. In 1975 Husák added the position of president to his post as party chief. He and other party leaders faced the task of rebuilding general party membership after the purges of 1969–71. By 1983 membership had returned to 1.6 million, about the same as in 1960.

In preserving the status quo, the Husák regime required conformity and obedience in all aspects of life. Culture suffered greatly from this straitjacket on independent thought, as did the humanities, social sciences, and ultimately the pure sciences. Art had to adhere to a rigid socialist realist formula. Soviet examples were held up for emulation. During the 1970s and 1980s, many of Czechoslovakia’s most creative individuals were silenced, imprisoned, or sent into exile. Some found expression for their art through samizdat (see Glossary; Dissent and Independent Activity, this ch.). Those artists, poets, and writers who were officially sanctioned were, for the most part, undistinguished. The award of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1984 to Jaroslav Seifert—a poet identified with reformism and not favored by the Husák regime—was a bright spot in an otherwise bleak cultural scene.

In addition to applying repression, Husák also tried to obtain acquiescence to his rule by providing an improved standard of living. He returned Czechoslovakia to an orthodox command economy with a heavy emphasis on central planning and continued to extend industrialization. For a while the policy seemed successful because, despite the lack of investment in new technologies, there was an increase in industrial output. The government encouraged consumerism and materialism and took a tolerant attitude toward a slack work ethic and a growing black-market second economy. In the early 1970s, there was a steady increase in the standard of living; it seemed that the improved economy might mitigate political and cultural oppression and give the government a modicum of legitimacy.

By the mid-1970s, consumerism failed as a palliative for political oppression. The government could not sustain an indefinite expansion without coming to grips with limitations inherent in a command economy. The oil crisis of 1973–74 further exacerbated the economic decline. Materialism, encouraged by a corrupt regime, also produced cynicism, greed, nepotism, corruption, and a lack of work discipline. Whatever elements of a social contract the government tried to establish with Czechoslovak society crumbled with the decline in living standards of the mid-1970s. Czechoslovakia was to have neither freedom nor prosperity.

Another feature of Husák's rule was a continued dependence on the Soviet Union. As of the mid-1980s, Husák had not yet achieved a balance between what could be perceived as Czechoslovak national interest and Soviet dictate. In foreign policy, Czechoslovakia parroted every utterance of the Soviet position. Frequent contacts between the Soviet and Czechoslovak communist parties and governments made certain that the Soviet position on any issue was both understood and followed. The Soviets continued to exert control over Czechoslovak internal affairs, including oversight of the police and security apparatus. Five Soviet ground divisions and two air divisions had become a permanent fixture, while the Czechoslovak military was further integrated into the Warsaw Pact. In the 1980s, approximately 50 percent of Czechoslovakia's foreign trade was with the Soviet Union, and almost 80 percent was with communist countries. There were constant exhortations about further cooperation and integration between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia in industry, science, technology, consumer goods, and agriculture. Deriving its legitimacy from Moscow, the Husák regime remained a slavish imitator of political, cultural, and economic trends emanating from Moscow.

### **Dissent and Independent Activity**

Through the 1970s and 1980s, the regime's emphasis on obedience, conformity, and the preservation of the status quo was challenged by individuals and organized groups aspiring to independent thinking and activity. Although only a few such activities could be deemed political by Western standards, the regime viewed any independent action, no matter how innocuous, as a defiance of the party's control over all aspects of Czechoslovak life. The regime's response to such activity was harassment, persecution, and, in some instances, imprisonment.

The first organized opposition emerged under the umbrella of Charter 77. On January 6, 1977, a manifesto called Charter 77 appeared in West German newspapers. The document was

immediately translated and reprinted throughout the world (see Appendix D). The original manifesto reportedly was signed by 243 persons; among them were artists, former public officials, and other prominent figures, such as Zdeněk Mlynář, secretary of the KSČ Central Committee in 1968; Václav Slavík, a Central Committee member in 1968; and Vaculík, author of "Two Thousand Words." Charter 77 defined itself as "a loose, informal, and open community of people" concerned with the protection of civil and human rights. It denied oppositional intent and based its defense of rights on legally binding international documents signed by the Czechoslovak government and on guarantees of civil rights contained in the Czechoslovak Constitution.

In the context of international détente, Czechoslovakia had signed the United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1968. In 1975 these were ratified by the Federal Assembly, which, according to the Constitution of 1960, is the highest legislative organization. The Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe's Final Act (also known as the Helsinki Accords), signed by Czechoslovakia in 1975, also included guarantees of human rights (see *Popular Political Expression*, ch. 4).

The Charter 77 group declared its objectives to be the following: to draw attention to individual cases of human rights infringements; to suggest remedies; to make general proposals to strengthen rights and freedoms and the mechanisms designed to protect them; and to act as intermediary in situations of conflict. The Charter had over 800 signatures by the end of 1977, including workers and youth; by 1985 nearly 1,200 Czechoslovaks had signed the Charter.

The Husák regime, which claimed that all rights derive from the state and that international covenants are subject to the internal jurisdiction of the state, responded with fury to the Charter. The text was never published in the official media. Signatories were arrested and interrogated; dismissal from employment often followed. The Czechoslovak press launched vicious attacks against the Charter. The public was mobilized to sign either individual condemnations or various forms of "anti-Charter."

Closely associated with Charter 77, the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (*Výbor na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných—VONS*) was formed in 1978 with the specific goal of documenting individual cases of government persecution and human rights violations. Between 1978 and 1984, VONS issued 409 communiqués concerning individuals persecuted or harassed.

On a larger scale, independent activity was expressed through underground writing and publishing. Because of the decentralized

nature of underground writing, it is difficult to estimate its extent or impact. Some observers state that hundreds of books, journals, essays, and short stories were published and distributed. In the mid-1980s, several samizdat publishing houses were in operation. The best known was Edice petlice (Padlock Editions), which had published more than 250 volumes. There were a number of clandestine religious publishing houses that published journals in photocopy or printed form.

The production and distribution of underground literature was difficult. In most cases, manuscripts had to be typed and retyped without the aid of modern publishing equipment. Publication and distribution were also dangerous. Mere possession of samizdat materials could be the basis for harassment, loss of employment, and arrest and imprisonment.

Independent activity also extended to music. The regime was particularly concerned about the impact of Western popular music on Czechoslovak youth. The persecution of rock musicians and their fans led a number of musicians to sign Charter 77. In the forefront of the struggle for independent music was the Jazz Section of the Union of Musicians. Initially organized to promote jazz, in the late 1970s it became a protector of various kinds of nonconformist music. The widely popular Jazz Section had a membership of approximately 7,000 and received no official funds. It published music and promoted concerts and festivals. The regime condemned the Jazz Section for spreading "unacceptable views" among the youth and moved against its leadership. In March 1985, the Jazz Section was dissolved under a 1968 statute banning "counterrevolutionary activities." The Jazz Section continued to operate, however, and in 1986 the government arrested the members of its steering committee.

Because religion offered possibilities for thought and activities independent of the state, it too was severely restricted and controlled. Clergymen were required to be licensed. In attempting to manipulate the number and kind of clergy, the state even sponsored a pro-regime organization of Catholic priests, the Czechoslovak Association of Catholic Clergy (more commonly known as *Pacem in Terris*). Nevertheless, there was religious opposition, including a lively Catholic samizdat. In the 1980s, František Cardinal Tomášek, Czechoslovakia's primate, adopted a more independent stand. In 1984 he invited the pope to come to Czechoslovakia for the 1,100th anniversary of the death of Methodius, the missionary to the Slavs. The pope accepted, but the trip was blocked by the government. The cardinal's invitation and the pope's acceptance were widely circulated in samizdat. A petition requesting the

government to permit the papal visit had 17,000 signatories. The Catholic Church did have a massive commemoration of the 1,100th anniversary in 1985. At Velehrad (the site of Methodius's tomb) more than 150,000 pilgrims attended a commemorative mass, and another 100,000 came to a ceremony at Levoča (in eastern Slovakia).

Unlike in Poland, dissent, opposition to the government, and independent activity were limited in Czechoslovakia to a fairly small segment of the populace. Even the dissenters saw scant prospect for fundamental reforms. In this sense, the Husák regime was successful in preserving the status quo in "normalized" Czechoslovakia.

The selection of Mikhail Gorbachev as general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on March 11, 1985, presented the Husák regime with a new and unexpected challenge to the status quo. Soon after assuming office, Gorbachev began a policy of "restructuring" (*perestroika*) the Soviet economy and advocated "openness" (*glasnost*) in the discussion of economic, social, and, to some extent, political questions. Up to this time, the Husák regime had dutifully adopted the programs and slogans that had emanated from Moscow. But, for a government wholly dedicated to the preservation of the status quo, subjects such as "openness," economic "restructuring," and "reform" had been taboo. Czechoslovakia's future course would depend, to a large extent, on the Husák regime's response to the Gorbachev program (see *A Climate of Orthodoxy*, ch. 4).

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Concise and readable accounts of the history of the Czech and Slovak lands through World War I may be found in Kamil Krofta's *A Short History of Czechoslovakia*, Harrison S. Thomson's *Czechoslovakia in European History*, and J.F.N. Bradley's *Czechoslovakia: A Short History. A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918-1948*, edited by Victor S. Mamatey and Radomír Luža, is a collection of excellent essays treating the First Republic, Munich, and the German occupation. The Sudeten German minority problem is more fully discussed by Radomír Luža in *The Transfer of the Sudeten Germans*. The Slovaks are discussed by Jozef Lettrich in *History of Modern Slovakia*, Eugen Steiner in *The Slovak Dilemma*, and Owen V. Johnson in *Slovakia, 1918-1938*. The Ruthenians (Ukrainians) are covered by Paul R. Magocsi in *The Shaping of a National Identity*. The history of the KSČ up to the February 1948 coup is elaborated in Paul E. Zinner's *Communist Strategy and Tactics in Czechoslovakia*,

1918--48. In *Communism in Czechoslovakia, 1948-1960*, Edward Taborsky discusses political and economic integration into the Soviet system. H. Gordon Skilling's *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution* and Galia Golan's *The Czechoslovak Reform Movement* offer expansive analysis of the Prague Spring, which is also treated with understandable passion in Zdeněk Mlynář's *Nightfrost in Prague*. The reform movement of the late 1950s and the 1960s and the Soviet intervention are also amply treated in Golan's and Mlynář's studies. Vladimir V. Kusin's *From Dubček to Charter 77* sets the scene for contemporary Czechoslovakia. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

## Chapter 2. The Society and Its Environment





THE CZECHOSLOVAK SOCIALIST REPUBLIC of the 1980s provided any number of contrasts with the Czechoslovak Republic (the First Republic), the multinational Central European state formed in 1918 from the dismantled Austro-Hungarian Empire. Large communities of ethnic minorities, some with strong irredentist leanings (like the Sudeten Germans), were a major force in the First Republic's social and political life. As a result of the expulsion of most of the Germans after World War II and the ceding of Carpatho-Ukraine to the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia had become predominantly a nation of Czechs and Slovaks, with small minorities of Germans, Hungarians, Poles, and Ukrainians. Even though Czechoslovakia's ethnic makeup was simplified, the division between Czechs and Slovaks remained a potent social and political force. During the 1950s and 1960s, planners made intensive efforts to redress the economic imbalance between the Czech lands and Slovakia. Although many of the glaring economic disparities between the two were gone by the 1970s, social and political differences persisted.

Interwar society in Czechoslovakia was a complex amalgam of large landholders, farmers, tenants, landless laborers, and specialists (herders, smiths, teachers, clerics, and local officials) in the countryside and of many major entrepreneurs, a large industrial proletariat, hundreds of thousands of small-scale manufacturers, a diverse intelligentsia, shopkeepers, tradesmen, and craftsmen in the city. Nevertheless, extremes of wealth and poverty then typical in so much of Eastern Europe were largely absent.

Because of the post-World War II nationalization of industry (affecting not only large enterprises but nearly half a million handicraft and small-scale industries as well) and collectivization of agriculture, private ownership virtually became a thing of the past in communist Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia's much-simplified contemporary social spectrum is made up of collective farmers, workers, the intelligentsia, the communist party elite, and a few private farmers and tradesmen.

The reform movement of the late 1960s, popularly dubbed the "Prague Spring," was an effort mainly by the Czechs (with some Slovak support) to restructure Marxist-Leninist socialism in a way more suitable to their respective historical, cultural, and economic circumstances. "Normalization," the official label for the government's efforts to stamp out the remnants of this

“counterrevolutionary” movement, was essentially a series of carrot-and-stick measures: far-reaching purges of those who might have been active in the reform era or remotely dissident in the 1970s, coupled with a concerted effort to placate the majority of the populace with relative material prosperity. In the 1980s, the emphasis remained on stifling dissent while trying to prevent further economic deterioration.

## **Geography and Environment**

### **Topography and Drainage**

The country's 127,905 square kilometers divide topographically as well as historically into three major areas: Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia. Bohemia consists of the five western political divisions, or *kraje* (sing., *kraj*): Západočeský (West Bohemia), Severočeský (North Bohemia), Jihočeský (South Bohemia), Východočeský (East Bohemia), and Středočeský (Central Bohemia). Moravia consists of the two central political divisions: Severomoravský (North Moravia) and Jihomoravský (South Moravia). Slovakia consists of the three eastern political divisions: Západoslovenský (West Slovakia), Stredoslovenský (Central Slovakia), and Východoslovenský (East Slovakia). The three Slovak *kraje* constitute the Slovak Socialist Republic; the other seven *kraje* constitute the Czech Socialist Republic. *Kraje* are further subdivided into *okresy* (sing., *okres*), roughly equivalent to counties in the United States.

The areas of western Bohemia and eastern Slovakia belong to different mountain and drainage systems. All but a minute fraction of the Bohemian region drains into the North Sea by way of the Vltava (Moldau) and Labe (Elbe) rivers. The hills and low mountains that encircle this area are part of the north-central European uplands that extend from southern Belgium, through the central German lands, and into Moravia. These uplands, which are distinct from the Alps to the south and the Carpathian Mountains to the east, are known geologically as the Hercynian Massif. Most of Slovakia drains into the Danube (Dunaj) River, and its mountains are part of the Carpathians, which continue eastward and southward into Romania.

The uplands of Moravia are a transition between the Hercynian Massif and the Carpathians and are in contrast with them by having more nearly north-south ridge lines. Most of Moravia drains southward to the Danube, but the Odra (Oder) River rises in the northeast and drains a sizable portion of the northern region (see fig. 9).

### ***Bohemia***

Bohemia's topography has fostered local solidarity and a common set of economic interests. The area is ringed with low mountains or high hills that effectively serve as a watershed along most of its periphery (although they do not lie along the border to the south and southeast). Streams flow from all directions through the Bohemian Basin toward Prague (Praha).

In the northwest, the Krušné hory (Ore Mountains) border on the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and are known to the Germans as the Erzgebirge; the Sudeten Mountains in the northeast border on Poland in an area that was part of Germany before World War II. The Český les, bordering on the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), and the Šumava Mountains, bordering on West Germany and Austria, are mountain ranges that form the western and southwestern portions of the ring around the Bohemian Basin. Both are approximately as high as the Krušné hory. Bohemia's mountainous areas differ greatly in population. The northern regions are densely populated, whereas the less hospitable Český les and Šumava Mountains are among the most sparsely populated areas in the country.

The central lands of the Bohemian Basin are lower in elevation, but their features vary widely. There are small lakes in the central southern region and in the Vltava Basin north of Prague. Some of the western grain lands are gently rolling, while other places have deep gorges cut by streams (such as the Vltava River). A large area southwest of Prague has a broken relief pattern that is typical of several other areas.

### ***Moravia***

Moravia is a topographic borderland situated between Bohemia and Slovakia. Its southwest-to-northeast ridge lines and lower elevations made it useful as a route for communications and commerce from Vienna to the north and northeast during the period of Austrian domination of Central Europe.

The central and southern Moravian lowlands are part of the Danube Basin and are similar to the lowlands they adjoin in southern Slovakia. The upland areas are smaller and more broken than those of Bohemia and Slovakia. The northwest hills are soft sandstone and are cut by deep gorges. South of them, but north of Brno, is a karst limestone area with underground streams and caves. These and the other uplands west of the Morava River are associated with the Hercynian Massif. The land to the east of the Morava is called Carpathian Moravia.

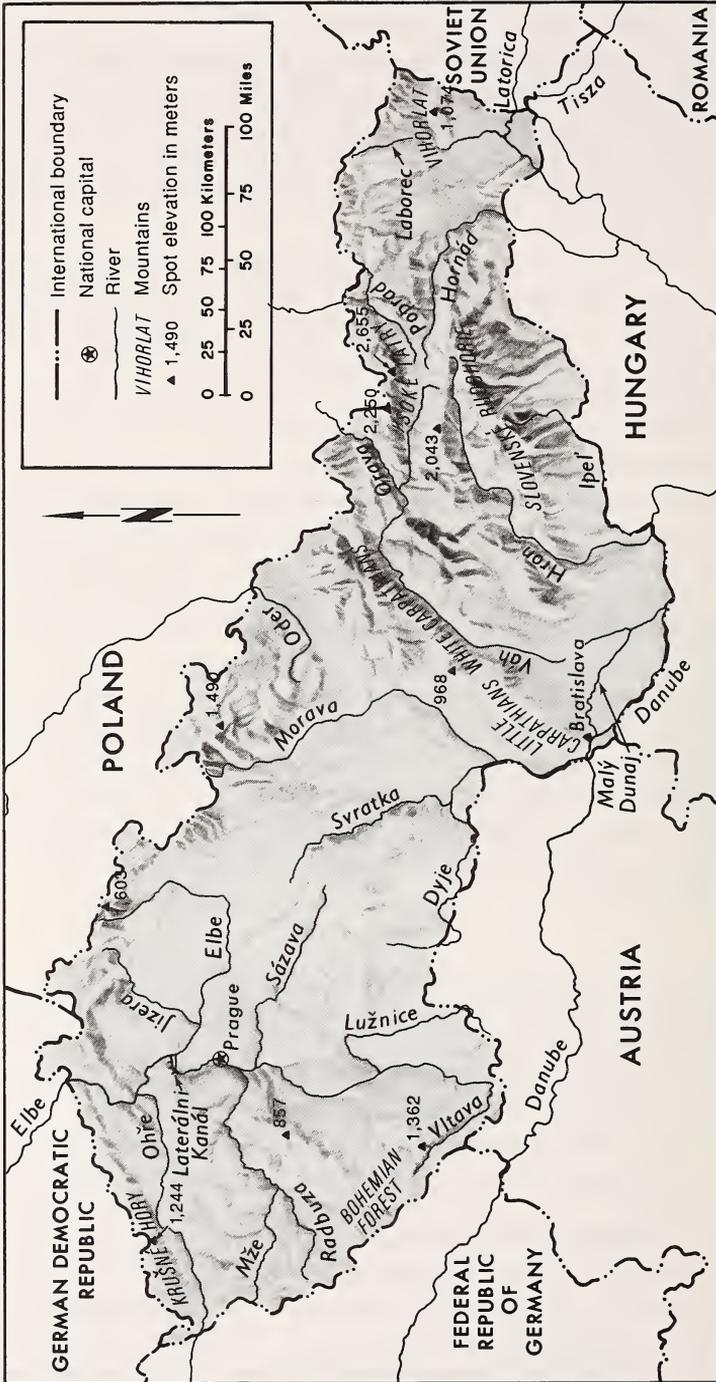


Figure 9. Topography and Drainage

## **Slovakia**

Slovakia's landforms do not make it as distinctive a geographic unit as Bohemia. Its mountain ranges generally run east-west and tend to segregate groups of people; population clusters are most dense in river valleys. The highest elevations are rugged, have the most severe weather, and are the most sparsely settled. Some of the flatlands in southwestern Slovakia are poorly drained and support only a few people.

The main mountain ranges are the Vysoké Tatry (High Tatras) and the Slovenské rudohorie (Slovak Ore Mountains), both of which are part of the Carpathians. The Vysoké Tatry extend in a narrow ridge along the Polish border and are attractive as both a summer and a winter resort area. The highest peak in the country, Gerlachovský štít (also known as Gerlachovka), with an elevation of about 2,655 meters, is in this ridge. Snow persists at the higher elevations well into the summer months and all year long in some sheltered pockets. The tree line is at about 1,500 meters. An ice cap extended into this area during glacial times, leaving pockets that became mountain lakes.

The Slovak lowlands in the south and southeast, bordering on Hungary, are part of the greater Danube Basin. From a point slightly south of the Slovak capital of Bratislava, the main channel of the Danube River demarcates the border between Czechoslovakia and Hungary for about 175 kilometers. As it leaves Bratislava, the Danube divides into two channels: the main channel is the Danube proper, and the northern channel is the Little Danube (Malý Dunaj). The Little Danube flows eastward into the Váh River, which converges with the main Danube at Komárno. The land between the Little Danube and the Danube is known as the Žitný ostrov (Rye Island), a marshland maintained for centuries as a hunting preserve for the nobility. Dikes and artificial drainage have made it possible to cultivate the land for grain production, but it is still sparsely settled.

## **Climate**

Czechoslovakia's central European location influences its climate. Although the continental weather systems that dominate Eastern Europe prevail throughout the country, western regions are frequently influenced by the maritime weather prevalent in Western Europe. When the systems to the north are weak, Mediterranean weather may occasionally brush southern parts of the country.

Winters are fairly cold, cloudy, and humid, although high humidity and cloud cover tend to be more prevalent in valleys and

lower areas. Light rain or snow is frequent. The mountains are covered with snow from early November through April, and accumulations are deep in some places. Lower elevations rarely have more than fifteen centimeters of snow cover at a time.

Summers are usually pleasant. There is heavy rainfall, but it comes in sporadic showers, making for many warm, dry days with scattered cumulus clouds. Prevailing winds are westerly; they are usually light in summer (except during thunderstorms) and somewhat stronger in winter.

Average temperatures in Prague, which is representative of lowland cities in Bohemia and Moravia, range between about 1°C in January and about 19°C in July. Winters are chilly; summers have warm afternoons and cool evenings. In the eastern parts of the country, the temperature extremes are greater. Higher elevations, especially those with western exposures, usually have a narrower temperature range but on the average are considerably cooler. December, January, and February are the coldest months; June, July, and August are the warmest. Spring tends to start late, and autumn may come abruptly in middle or late September. At lower elevations, frosts are rare between the end of April and the beginning of October.

Rainfall varies widely between the plains and the upland areas. Parts of western Bohemia receive only forty centimeters of rainfall per year; some areas in the Vysoké Tatry average two meters. The average rainfall in the vicinity of Prague is forty-eight centimeters. Precipitation varies more than in other areas of Europe, which are often dominated by maritime weather systems; consequently, droughts and floods sometimes occur.

Despite the greater frequency of precipitation during the winter, more than twice as much precipitation, or about 38 percent, falls in the summer. The spring and autumn figures are about equal.

## **Demography**

### **Population**

Data published by the Czechoslovak government in 1986 showed a January 1, 1986, population of 15,520,839 and a 1985 population growth rate of 0.3 percent a year. The annual rate of growth in the Czech Socialist Republic, which contained about two-thirds of the population, was 0.05 percent, and in the Slovak Socialist Republic, 0.73 percent. In 1984 life expectancy was sixty-seven years for men and seventy-four years for women. About 26 percent of the population was under the age of 15, and 17 percent

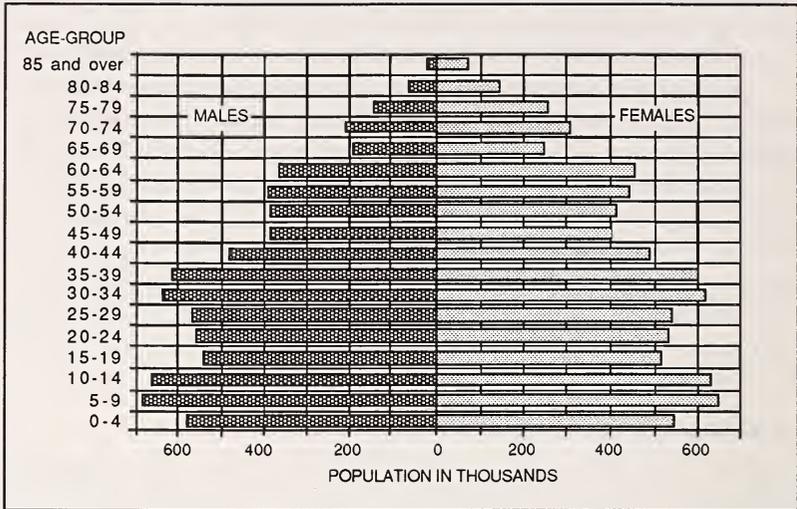
was over the age of 60. There were 104 females for each 100 males among the population as a whole (see fig. 10).

At the start of 1986, the population density was approximately 121 persons per square kilometer. The most densely settled geographic region was Moravia, which had about 154 persons per square kilometer. The figure for Bohemia was about 120, and for Slovakia, about 106 (see fig. 11). The major cities and their estimated populations in January 1986 were as follows: Prague, 1.2 million; Bratislava, 417,103; Brno, 385,684; Ostrava, 327,791; Košice, 222,175; and Plzeň, 175,244 (see table 2, Appendix A). Czechoslovakia remains essentially a society of small cities and towns, in which about 65 percent of the population are classified as urban dwellers.

### **Urbanization and Migration**

The urban tradition in the Czech lands dates from approximately the ninth century A.D., and the growth of towns centered on princely castles and bishops' seats. Artisan and trading activities were a subsidiary part of these urban settlements. Trading, in fact, defined the spread of secondary towns across the countryside, each roughly a day's journey from the next along major trade routes. Prague grew up around Hradčany Castle, having the dual advantage of being both bishopric and princely seat from about the ninth century. By the fourteenth century, it was a major continental city with 40,000 to 50,000 inhabitants, a university (Charles University, one of Europe's first), and an administrative seat of the Holy Roman Empire. After the defeat of the Bohemian nobles in the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, Prague and the other cities of the Czech lands languished until the nineteenth century. Slovakia, as a result of its agrarian nature and Hungarian rule, remained a region of small towns scattered amid farming villages and Hungarian estates.

During the nineteenth century, there was a surge of migration and urbanization in both the Czech lands and Slovakia. Much of this was linked to nineteenth-century Europe's tremendous population increase and the spread of the railroads. Czech and Slovak urbanization proceeded apace; the proportion of the population living in towns of more than 2,000 grew from 18 percent to 45 percent between 1843 and 1910. The rate of increase in major industrial centers was spectacular: between 1828 and 1910, Prague's population grew by a factor of nearly seven, Plzeň's by over thirteen. In 1910 Ostrava had 167 times the population it had a century before. This pattern of urbanization persisted through the First Republic, although at a lower rate.



Source: Based on information from *Statistická ročenka*, Prague, 1986, 96.

Figure 10. Age-Sex Distribution, 1985

Urbanization and migration patterns have altered significantly in the socialist era. A desire to balance population and industrial distribution dictated urban policy from the 1950s through the 1980s. Since World War II, such historically predominant urban centers as Prague and Brno have not been the official, preferred choices for continued growth. Despite consistent efforts to relocate citybound workers away from the traditional destinations of rural emigrants, in the 1980s the six largest cities (all major urban centers in the early twentieth century) nevertheless accounted for over 40 percent of the population living in cities of over 20,000. Beyond this, however, there was relatively little concentration; 50 percent of the population lived in settlements of fewer than 10,000. The landscape was one of small, dispersed settlements, small cities, scattered towns, and cooperative farm centers (see table 3, Appendix A).

Rural-urban migration decreased in the 1970s, apparently less because of balanced population distribution than because commuting matched workers with industrial employment. Excluding intracity commuting, between one-third and one-half of all workers commuted during the 1980s. A substantial portion of these were long-distance, weekly, or monthly commuters. In the planner's view, commuting had replaced migration; it had the considerable advantage of lessening the burdens of expanding industrialization

on urban services. From the worker's perspective, however, commuting was most often a matter of involuntarily deferred migration. Scarce urban housing was the principal constraint on the potential migrant, though one year's rural commuter could still become the next year's city dweller. Commuting has placed heavy demands on the commuter's time and on public transit, which has meant a substantial outlay for both railroad and roadway passenger service. One can gauge the effect of commuting on the working populace by considering that most Czechoslovak factories begin operation at 6:00 A.M. and most offices between 7:00 and 8:00 A.M.

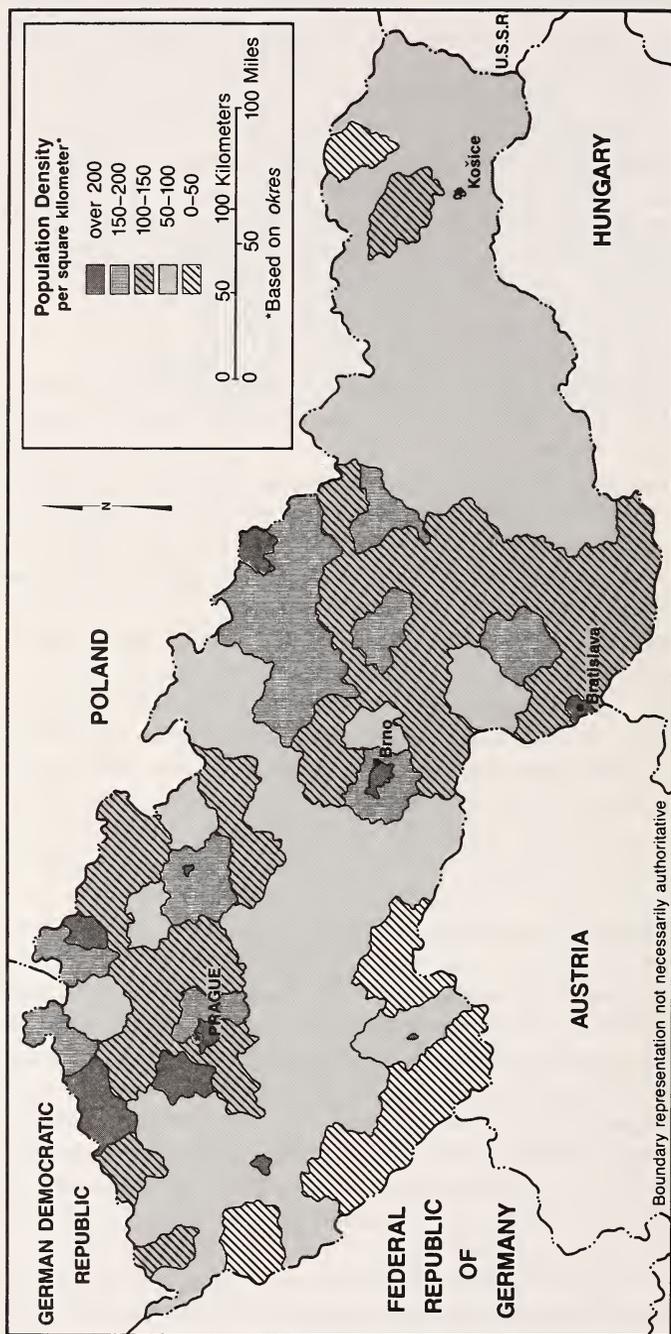
## **Housing**

Planners continued to make efforts to remedy the longstanding housing shortage in rural and urban regions alike. Since statistics did not always provide a comparison between the numbers of households and existing housing units, the housing deficit remained difficult to gauge. A comparison of the number of marriages annually and construction of new housing units between 1960 and 1975 shows that construction exceeded marriages only in 1975. The deficit was most acute in the 1960s, when an average of 7 housing units was built for every 10 marriages; in 1985 the ratio rose to an average of 8.8 units per 10 marriages.

This approximation underestimated the housing deficit: it ignored divorces, the number of extended families living together who would have preferred separate housing, and the decay of old housing (see *The Family*, this ch.). Even waiting lists underestimated how inadequate housing was in the 1980s. Separate housing for single adults had such a low priority with planners that single adults found it difficult even to get on a housing list.

One of the factors contributing to the housing shortage was the low construction rate of rental housing. Major reasons for this were high inflation, high construction costs, and low (heavily subsidized) rents. In 1985 the average building cost for apartments rose to Kčs2,523 per square meter, and the average monthly rent—for the seventh consecutive year—was Kčs358 (for value of the koruna—see Glossary). Construction of individual homes peaked in 1977 at 40,107 and decreased to 29,608 in 1985. Building a home privately was possible, but acquiring labor and materials was difficult and sometimes risky; it often meant borrowing machinery illegally or paying bribes for materials.

Despite substantial gains in the 1970s, Czechoslovakia entered the 1980s with a housing shortage that was likely to take years to remedy. In 1986 the government announced a slight cutback in



Source: Based on information from *Statistická ročenka*, Prague, 1986, 74.

Figure 11. Population Density, 1986

new housing construction for the 1986–90 housing plan, further aggravating the situation.

## **Emigration**

Historically, emigration has always been an option for Czechs and Slovaks dissatisfied with the situation at home. Each wave of emigration had its own impetus. In the nineteenth century, the reasons were primarily economic. In the twentieth century, emigration has largely been prompted by political turmoil, though economic factors still play a role. The first major wave of emigration in this century came after the communists came to power, and the next wave began after the Prague Spring movement was crushed.

In the 1980s the most popular way to emigrate to the West was to travel to Yugoslavia by automobile and, once there, take a detour to Greece, Austria, or Italy (Yugoslav border restrictions were not as strict as those of the Warsaw Pact nations). Only a small percentage of those who applied to emigrate legally could do so. The exact details of the process have never been published, but a reasonably clear picture can be gleaned from those who have succeeded. It is a lengthy and costly process. Those applicants allowed to even consider emigration have been required to repay the state for their education, depending on their level of education and salary, at a rate ranging from Kčs4,000 to Kčs10,000. (The average yearly wage was about Kčs33,600 in 1984.) The applicant was likely to lose his job and be socially ostracized. Technically, at least, such émigrés would be allowed to return for visits. Those who had been politically active, such as Charter 77 signatories found it somewhat easier to emigrate, but they have not been allowed to return and reportedly have had to pay the state exorbitant fees—Kčs23,000 to as much as Kčs80,000—if they had graduated from a university (see *Popular Political Expression*, ch. 4).

Old-age pensioners had no problem visiting or emigrating to the West. The reasons for this were purely economic; if they decided to stay in the West, the state no longer had to pay their pension.

Official statistics for the early 1980s show that, on the average, 3,500 people emigrated legally each year. From 1965 to 1983, a total of 33,000 people emigrated legally. This figure undoubtedly included a large number of ethnic Germans resettled in East Germany. The largest émigré communities are located in Austria, West Germany, the United States, Canada, and Australia.

## **Ethnic Groups**

Czechoslovakia's ethnic composition in 1987 offered a stark contrast to that of the First Republic. No large secessionist German

community troubled the society, and Carpatho-Ukraine (poor and overwhelmingly Ukrainian and Hungarian) had been ceded to the Soviet Union following World War II. Czechs and Slovaks, about two-thirds of the First Republic's populace in 1930, represented about 94 percent of the population by 1950. The aspirations of ethnic minorities had been the pivot on which the First Republic's politics turned. This was no longer the case in the 1980s. Nevertheless, ethnicity continued to be a pervasive issue and an integral part of Czechoslovak life. Although the country's ethnic composition had been simplified, the division between Czechs and Slovaks remained; each group had a distinct history and divergent aspirations.

From 1950 through 1983, the Slovak share of the total population increased steadily. The Czech population as a portion of the total declined by about 4 percent, while the Slovak population increased by slightly more than that. The actual numbers were hardly such as to imperil a Czech majority; in 1983 there were still more than two Czechs for every Slovak. In the mid-1980s, the respective fertility rates were fairly close, but the Slovak fertility rate was declining more slowly.

## **Czechs**

A glance at a map of Central Europe provides one key to understanding Czech culture: the Czech lands—Bohemia and Moravia—are surrounded by Germanic peoples on three sides. The fear of being engulfed by expansionist Germanic hordes remains a traditional and deep-seated one among the Czechs. The Germans prompted Czech concern for their cultural and political survival long before the Munich Agreement of 1938, when Czechoslovakia lost the Sudetenland, and World War II. Czech-German relations were the backdrop against which the controversies of the Hussite period were played out. The Hussite movement focused on German hegemony in university and ecclesiastical offices as much as theological doctrine (see *Hussite Movement*, ch. 1). The linguistic border between Czechs and Germans in the mountains surrounding Bohemia tells something of the determination with which Czechs have resisted German expansion; since the ninth century, that boundary has remained fixed within fifty kilometers of its present location, irrespective of the political fortunes of the two groups.

The Czechs have been part of the major intellectual and artistic traditions of western Europe since the Middle Ages. Czech influence has been formative in movements as diverse as Renaissance music, the Protestant Reformation, structural linguistics, and



*Hus Memorial and Kinsky Palace in Old Town Square, Prague*

twentieth-century European literature. A cultural tradition clearly rationalistic, secular, and anticlerical permeates Czech life; this is partly a consequence of the Hussite period and subsequent Austrian efforts to force Roman Catholicism on a reluctant populace. Part of Czech self-identity focuses on maintaining the unique blend of Slavic and Western elements that make up the Czech heritage.

Czechs seem to possess a predilection for political pluralism and a distinctly antiauthoritarian bent. Czechoslovakia was the one eastern European country to maintain a functioning democracy for the entire interwar period and the only one in which the communist party was never outlawed. In the party's analysis of the errors of the 1960s' "counterrevolution," party ideologues especially decried the prevalence of "social democraticism," which despite more than twenty years of socialist development remained deeply rooted in Czech society.

Austrian rule was relatively benign toward the Czechs. The Hapsburg Empire was more cosmopolitan than aggressively German, consisting of a hodgepodge of central and eastern European ethnic groups. German was the lingua franca, but beyond that, German speakers were not necessarily the only beneficiaries of Hapsburg policies. If, as Tomáš Masaryk put it, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was a "prison of nations," it was equally clear that some parts of the prison were distinctly better than others (see *Hapsburg Rule, 1526-1867*, ch. 1).

In comparison with Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine, both under Hungarian domination for centuries, the Czech lands were remarkably favored. The Austrians lacked the overweening chauvinism of their Hungarian counterparts. On the eve of World War I, German was mandatory neither as the language of instruction nor as a second language. Censorship of the Czech press was limited. Czech associations (the basis of the political parties of the First Republic) flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Cultural organizations, newspapers, and theaters were all commonplace parts of Czech life (see *Associations*, this ch.).

Czechs were overwhelmingly literate; in 1930 some 97 percent of the population over 10 years of age could read and write. There was a substantial middle class that was highly educated and well trained. Czechs had extensive experience in the Austrian bureaucracy and the legislative processes. Their wealth of experience in government contrasted starkly with that of the Slovaks, whom Czechs found backward. A certain degree of animosity has always persisted and continues to persist between the Czechs and Slovaks today (see *Slovaks*, this ch.).

The Czech region was economically favored as well. The Treaty of Versailles gave the Czechs substantial arable land and two-thirds of the former empire's industry. In the late 1930s, after other powers had spent a decade of frenzied effort developing heavy industry for rearmament, the Czech lands still produced half of Central Europe's pig iron and steel. The Czech consumer goods industry was also well developed. However, Bohemia's economic advantages proved to be a two-edged sword. Much industry was owned by a substantial German minority of dubious loyalty, and this figured in Nazi Germany's designs on the republic (see *The Czechoslovak Republic, 1918-38*, ch. 1). Nonetheless, the Czech lands emerged from World War II as virtually the only European region with a reasonably developed industrial structure unscathed by the conflict.

One characterization of the Czech national character is that it is *Švejkian*, a term based on the Czech protagonist in Jaroslav Hašek's famous (and still popular) World War I novel, *The Good Soldier Švejk*. Švejk's adventures in the Great War begin with his arrest by the Austrian police in connection with the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, heir to the Hapsburg throne. In the conflict between the staid Austrian bureaucracy and the military establishment, on the one hand, and the seemingly slow-witted, literal-minded, provincial Švejk, on the other, the Czech consistently gets the better.

In terms of Czech values and behavior, the term *Švejkian* suggests passive acquiescence to whatever regime holds power and recommends a sort of pervasive obtuseness as the safest strategy for political survival. The *Švejkian* means of dealing with those in power, whether Austrian bureaucrats, Czechoslovak communist officials, or Warsaw Pact forces, is the antithesis of armed resistance (see *Popular Political Expression*, ch. 4). In the midst of massive labor unrest in Poland in late 1980, the Soviets hesitated to use armed intervention. Polish workers indicated their readiness to resist in terms unmistakable to an East European: "We are not the Czechs." The Czechs are often criticized for their reluctance to go to the barricades, but the *Švejkian* strategy is less a matter of capitulation than a peculiarly Czech mix of resistance and survival. Hitler is reputed to have said that he never trusted the Czechs less than when they were making concessions.

The principal elements of the Czech ethos were played out in the Czech reaction to events of the Prague Spring of 1968 (see *Intervention*, ch. 1). Both the Czechs' orientation to the West and their *Švejkism* were apparent, in different ways, during the Prague Spring and the Soviet intervention and its aftermath. The late-1960s reform movement had begun as an attempt to remedy the economy's rather dismal performance with as little change as possible but grew into a full-fledged effort to restructure Marxist socialism. The call to redress the wrongs of the Stalinist era led to a full-scale reevaluation of the appropriateness of that model in Czechoslovakia. Czechs called for some measure of political pluralism, for greater autonomy for the myriad associations and unions formerly central to Czech society and now under control of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—KSČ), and for genuine freedom of expression—"socialism with a human face."

It was clear that for a people with a pronounced egalitarian bent, Russian socialism was less than congenial. An anonymous Czech KSČ official related an incident that illustrates the gulf between the Soviets and the Czechs. During the 1968 invasion, a Soviet military commander asked a Czech official to tell him who had ordered the road signs and street names removed (to slow the advance of the invading troops). The official explained that the people themselves had done it without instructions from anyone. It was an explanation the Soviet officer simply could not understand: independent action by the citizenry without orders from someone in authority was beyond his experience.

Czech reformers sought explicitly political changes: greater scope for democratic processes, freedom of expression, and more representative organizations. The Soviet response is, of course, a matter

of history. Because 1968 was, after all, a *Prague Spring*, normalization took a greater toll among Czechs than Slovaks. KSČ membership purges, changes in the managerial personnel of factories, and retributions against writers and artists all fell more heavily on the Czechs.

## **Slovaks**

While Bohemia and Moravia were among the more favored nations in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Slovakia's position was far less enviable. Hungarian rule systematically excluded Slovaks from the political arena. They were consistently gerrymandered out of parliamentary seats and administrative posts, even in local government. In 1910, when Czechs could be found throughout the Austrian bureaucracy, Slovaks held only 5 percent of the judicial offices and 3 percent of the civil service positions in Slovakia. Electoral laws reinforced this inequity: Austrian-dominated lands had universal adult male suffrage, while lands under Hungarian rule had limited suffrage and significant educational and age restrictions. Hungarians were far more aggressively assimilationist than their Austrian counterparts following the establishment of the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary (also known as the Austro-Hungarian Empire) in 1867 (see *The Dual Monarchy, 1867-1918*, ch. 1). Whereas Czech institutions and fraternal associations thrived under the relatively benign tolerance of Austrian rule, the Hungarians closed Slovak secondary schools, repressed Slovak cultural organizations, made Hungarian the official language in 1868, and pursued a course of thoroughgoing Magyarization.

The contrast between the economy of the Czech lands and that of Slovakia was as dramatic as their differing political heritages. Slovakia was agrarian, while the Czech lands were among the most industrialized regions in Europe. But the contrast went beyond that: Czech farmers represented a relatively prosperous, literate, and politically articulate group of middle-income agriculturalists; Slovak farmers were peasant farmers in tenancy on Hungarian estates.

Whereas Czechs wished to create a Czechoslovak nation, Slovaks sought a federation. The First Republic, with its predominantly Czech administrative apparatus, hardly responded to Slovak aspirations for autonomy. In the Slovak view, Czech domination had simply replaced Hungarian, since Czechs who were unable to find positions in Bohemia or Moravia took over local administrative and educational posts in Slovakia.

Linguistic similarity and geographic proximity proved to be an inadequate basis for a nation-state. A Lutheran minority of Slovaks (educated and influential in government) was generally sympathetic

*Michalská Tower,  
Bratislava*



to the republic, but the Slovak Catholic clergy, the rural bourgeoisie, and the peasantry wanted autonomy. The Slovak Republic (1939–45) was, among other things, the culmination of Slovak discontent with Czech hegemony in the country's affairs (see Slovak Republic, ch. 1). Perhaps one measure of how profoundly important ethnicity and autonomy are to Slovaks was a Slovak writer's 1968 call for a more positive reappraisal of the Slovak Republic. Although as a Marxist he found Monsignor Jozef Tiso's "clerico-fascist state" politically abhorrent, he acknowledged that "the Slovak Republic existed as the national state of the Slovaks, the only one in our history. . . ." Comparable sentiments surfaced periodically throughout the 1970s in letters to Bratislava's *Pravda*, even though the newspaper's editors tried to inculcate in their readership a "class and concretely historical approach" to the nationality question.

The division between Czechs and Slovaks persisted as a key element in the reform movement of the 1960s and the retrenchment of the 1970s, a decade that dealt harshly with the aspirations of both Czechs and Slovaks. Ethnicity still remains integral to the social, political, and economic affairs of the country. It is not merely a matter of individual identity, folklore, or tradition.

The post-1948 government has put a high priority on redressing the socioeconomic imbalance between the highly industrialized Czech lands and underdeveloped Slovakia. Slovakia made major

gains in industrial production in the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1970s, its industrial production was near parity with that of the Czech lands. Although Slovak planners were quick to note that capital investment continued to lag, it was clear that Slovakia's share of industrial production had grown tremendously. Slovakia's portion of per capita national income rose from slightly more than 60 percent of that of Bohemia and Moravia in 1948 to nearly 80 percent in 1968, and Slovak per capita earning power equaled that of the Czechs in 1971.

A general improvement in services, especially in health and education, accompanied Slovakia's industrial growth. In the mid-1980s, the number of physicians per capita slightly exceeded that for the Czech lands, whereas in 1948 it had been two-thirds the Czech figure. From 1948 to 1983, the number of students in higher education in Slovakia per 1,000 inhabitants increased from 47 percent of the Czech figure to 119 percent (see *Health and Social Welfare*, this ch.).

Postwar political developments affected Slovaks less favorably. Party rule in Czechoslovakia took a turn that quashed Slovak hopes for federation and national autonomy. In the 1950s purges, prominent Slovak communists who had played major roles in the 1944 Slovak National Uprising were tried and sentenced as "bourgeois nationalists" (see *Stalinization*, ch. 1). Eventually, Czechs also fell victim to the purges, but Slovaks remained convinced that Prague Stalinists were responsible for the trials. Neither the 1948 nor the 1960 constitution offered much scope for Slovak autonomy. In the 1960s, Laco (Ladislav) Novomeský echoed the feelings and frustrations of many Slovaks when he commented that they had become "a tolerated race of vice-chairmen and deputy ministers, a second-class minority generously accorded a one-third quota in everything. . . ."

The regime of Antonín Novotný (first secretary of the KSČ from 1953 to 1968) was frequently less than enlightened in its treatment of Slovakia. Novotný himself demanded "intolerant struggle against any nationalism" and suggested that the real solution to Czech-Slovak relations would be mass intermarriage between the two groups. The Slovaks found this recommendation—to deal with ethnic differences by eliminating them—all too typical of Prague's attitude toward them.

Political developments in the late 1960s and 1970s provided a portrait of Czech and Slovak differences. Slovak demands for reform in the 1960s reflected dissatisfaction with Czech hegemony in government and policy making. Whereas Czechs wanted some measure of political pluralism, the Slovak rallying cry was "No

democratization without federation.” It was less a difference in emphasis than a study in contrasts, and the Slovak focus was institutional change—“federalizing” the government apparatus with largely autonomous Czech and Slovak structures. Slovaks called for the full rehabilitation of the “bourgeois nationalists” and a reappraisal of the 1944 uprising (see *Slovak Resistance*, ch. 1).

Even economic demands split along ethnic lines, although there was considerable variation within both republics in response to calls for economic reform. Czech KSCĚ planners called for implementing the New Economic Model, an integrated economic system allowing substantial autonomy for individual enterprises and intended to promote a general increase in efficiency (see *The Reform Movement*, ch. 1). Slovaks wished economic reform to be adapted to their particular needs. Rather than a single, integrated economic system, they had in mind parallel Czech and Slovak national economic organizations.

Czech reaction to these concerns annoyed Slovaks further. In the Czech view, their own focus on the rehumanization of Marxism was universalistic, whereas the Slovak preoccupation with national autonomy was provincial and anachronistic—certainly too trivial for those whose concern was “socialism with a human face.”

The Constitutional Law of Federation of October 27, 1968, responded to the Slovak desire for autonomy. Significantly, however, the KSCĚ remained strongly centralized. Developments in the 1970s further weakened the two republics’ newly established government structures. KSCĚ efforts, although not necessarily motivated by anti-Slovak feelings, were heavily weighted in favor of centralization (see *Political Setting*, ch. 4). A thoroughgoing adherence to Soviet dictates undermined autonomy as effectively as any overtly anti-Slovak sentiment might have.

Whatever the ultimate fate of federalization, its prominence as an issue among Slovaks—the general populace as well as party members—gave an indication of how important the Czech-Slovak division remained. A 1960s survey found that 73 percent of Slovak respondents supported federalism; 94 percent wished that Czech-Slovak relations might be restructured. A subsequent survey in the mid-1970s, when the new federal structures were in place, found that Slovaks thought the new government organization, in contrast to much of their historical experience, treated Czechs and Slovaks equally.

## **Others**

The roughly 6 percent of the population who are neither Czech nor Slovak have had an uneven history in the postwar era (see

fig. 12). The highly centralized rule of the KSČ undermined the political leverage that the First Republic's multiparty politics had permitted to ethnic minorities. Beyond this, however, the sheer decrease in the German and Ukrainian populations of Czechoslovakia would have limited their influence in any event.

The events of the late 1960s brought calls for reform from ethnic minorities. The government's response was Constitutional Act No. 144 (October 1968), which defined the status of ethnic groups in Czechoslovakia and acknowledged the full political and cultural rights of legally recognized minorities. Minorities were granted the right, with state approval, to their own cultural organizations. The emphasis has been on cultural activities; minority organizations have had no right to represent their members in political affairs.

In the 1980s, Hungarians were the largest enumerated minority ethnic group. In 1984 approximately 590,000 Hungarians (concentrated in southern Slovakia) made up 11 percent of Slovakia's population. Despite significant anti-Hungarian sentiment in Slovakia, the postwar exchange of Slovaks in Hungary for Hungarians in Slovakia met with only limited success; the proportion of Hungarians in the population has changed little since 1930 (see table 4, Appendix A).

Although Hungarians were a distinct minority of the total population, they were highly visible in the border regions of Slovakia. There, Hungarians constituted nearly half the population of some districts. Furthermore, 20 percent lived in exclusively Hungarian settlements. Given Hungary's long domination of Slovakia, Hungarian-Slovak relations have not been easy; the two groups are separated by substantial linguistic and cultural differences. In 1968 some Hungarians in Slovakia called for reincorporation into Hungary. This was apparently a minority view; Hungarian Warsaw Pact troops entering Czechoslovakia in 1968 encountered as much hostility from Hungarians in Slovakia as they did from the rest of the population.

Before their relocation in 1945, Germans outnumbered Czechs in both the Krušné hory and the Sudeten Mountains. Over 3 million Germans were included in the First Republic, constituting the largest German community in a non-German state. They were intensely pan-German and aggressively nationalistic. Their inclusion in the First Republic precipitated massive protests. Throughout the interwar period, Sudeten Germans were acutely aware of their minority status within Czechoslovakia; they found the contrast with their former preeminence galling.

The large, often unabashedly secessionist German minority ultimately proved to be the undoing of the First Republic (see

Munich, ch. 1). With their expulsion, Czechoslovakia lost over one-fifth of its population. Some 165,000 Germans escaped deportation and remained scattered along the country's western border in the former Sudetenland. Through the mid-1970s, Germans represented a declining proportion of the population; younger Germans increasingly were assimilated into Czech society or emigrated to the West. Even those Germans who were not expelled after World War II were not permitted to hold Czechoslovak citizenship until 1953.

In 1968–69 Germans demanded more German-language publications and mandatory German-language instruction in areas having a substantial German minority. The 1968 Constitutional Act No. 144 recognized the Germans' legal status as an ethnic minority for the first time since World War II.

Poles (approximately 71,000 in 1984) were concentrated in the Ostrava mining region on the northern border. In addition to a large community of resident Poles, a substantial number commuted across the border from Poland to work or to take advantage of the relative abundance of Czechoslovak consumer goods. Official policies toward the Poles (resident or not) have attempted to limit their influence both in and out of the workplace. In 1969, for example, a Czech journal reported that a primarily Polish-speaking district in the Ostrava area had been gerrymandered to create two districts, each with a Czech majority.

Czechoslovak officialdom considered Polish influence in the workplace an insidious danger. The "seepage" from more liberal Polish regimes has concerned Czechoslovak communists since the 1950s, when Poles led the way in resisting increased work demands. The 1980–81 unrest in Poland exacerbated the situation (see *Relations with Communist Nations*, ch. 4). There were reports of strikes among the workers in the Ostrava area in late 1980.

Before World War II, Gypsies in Czechoslovakia were considered Czechoslovak citizens of Gypsy nationality. After the war, since they did not possess the properties of a nationality according to communist criteria, they were regarded by the communist regime as merely a special ethnic group. Based on this, the regime approached the matter not as a question of nationality but as a social and political question.

Eastern Slovakia had a sizable Gypsy minority. About 66 percent of the country's Gypsies lived in Slovakia in the 1980s, where they constituted about 4 percent of the population. Estimates of their exact numbers vary, but observers agree that their postwar birthrate has been phenomenal. In the early 1970s, there were

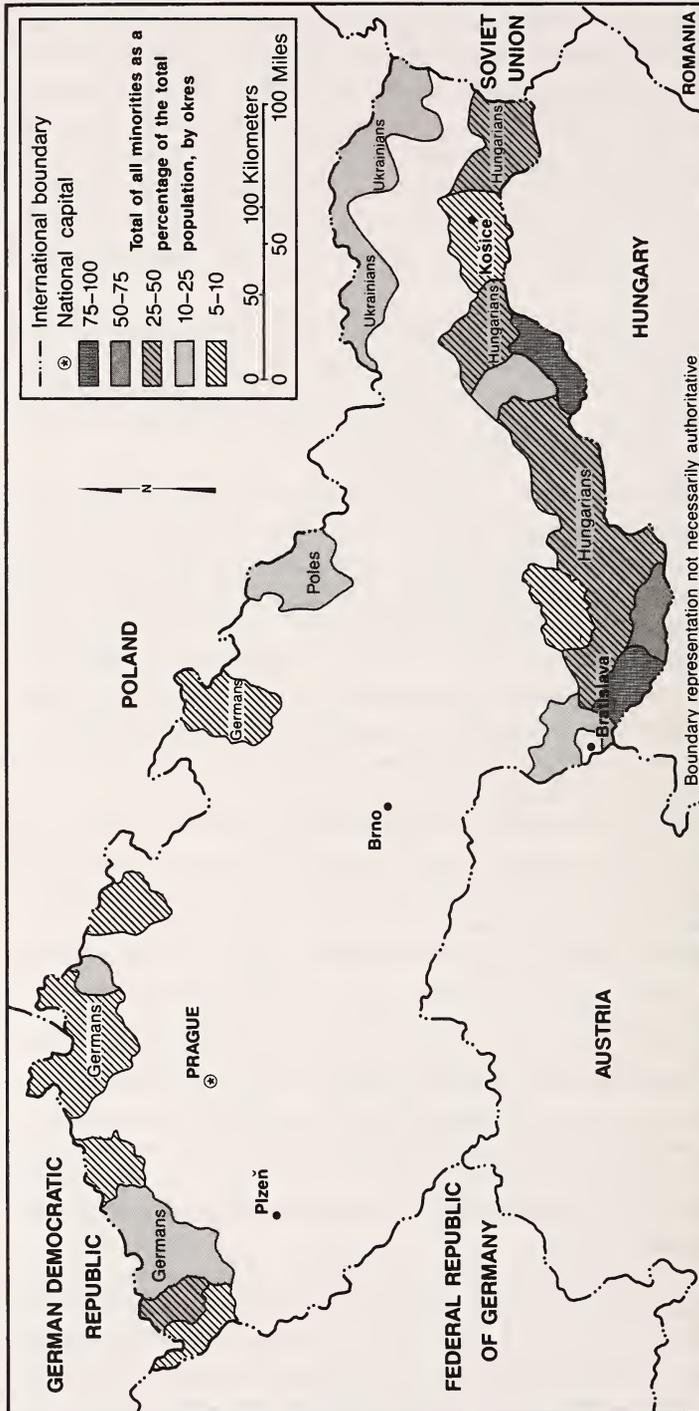


Figure 12. Ethnic Minorities in Czechoslovakia

approximately 200,000 to 300,000 Gypsies in the country. In 1980 estimates ranged from 250,000 to 400,000.

Gypsy intelligentsia agitated unsuccessfully for inclusion of Gypsies in the 1968 Constitutional Act No. 144, and they remained the largest unrecognized minority in Czechoslovakia. Policy makers have found them a conundrum. The Gypsy population combines continued high rates of crime and illiteracy with a cultural system that places low value on regular employment. According to *Czechoslovak Life*, in 1986, "the customs and thinking of the Gypsy population are somewhat different." A 1979 article in Bratislava's *Pravda* asserted that the crime rate among Gypsies was four times the national average. The author went on to call for "the incorporation of all Gypsy citizens of productive age to [sic] the working process" and to decry the number of Gypsies "who constantly refuse to work." A large number of Gypsies were involved in the black market.

Official policy has vacillated between forced assimilation and enforced isolation in carefully controlled settlements. The nomadic wandering integral to Gypsy culture has been illegal since 1958. Laws passed in 1965 and 1969 provided for "dispersion" of Gypsies, i.e., transferring them from areas where they were concentrated to other areas. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, assimilationist policies held clear sway. There were efforts to increase the participation of Gypsy children in preschool, kindergarten, secondary school, apprenticeship programs, and summer recreational and educational camps. There were also concerted government attempts to integrate Gypsies into the national labor force; in the early 1980s, some 90 percent of adult Gypsy males below retirement age were employed. In 1979 about 50 percent of working-age Gypsy women were employed; by 1981 this figure had risen to 74 percent.

Critics have contended that government policies verge on "genocide." They have charged that the government was taking children away from Gypsy parents and pressuring Gypsy women to undergo sterilization. The Gypsy birthrate was reportedly two and one-half to three times the national average; in the mid-1980s, it was 2.6 percent per year as opposed to 0.7 percent per year for the population as a whole.

Czechoslovakia lost most of its Ukrainian population when Carpatho-Ukraine was ceded to the Soviet Union after World War II. This had been the First Republic's poorest region, and, if Slovakia had fared badly under Hungarian domination, Carpatho-Ukraine's situation had been far worse. In the words of one historian, in 1914 the region was "little more than a Magyar deer

park.” Its people were wretchedly poor, having for centuries supplemented the meager living the mountainous area afforded with seasonal agricultural labor and service in the Hungarian infantry. Because of its strong cultural and linguistic links with the Ukrainians of the Soviet Union and interwar Poland, the region was a hotbed of secessionist sentiment throughout the interwar period. There were also calls for Ukrainian autonomy within the Czechoslovak Republic (see *Problems of Dissatisfied Nationalities*, ch. 1).

In 1983 the remaining 48,000 or so Ukrainians were clustered in northeastern Slovakia. They remained overwhelmingly agricultural; often they were private farmers scattered on small, impoverished holdings in mountainous terrain. They were generally Uniates and suffered in the 1950s and 1960s from the government’s repression of that group in favor of the Orthodox Church (see *Religion*, this ch.).

A very small fraction of Czechoslovakia’s pre-World War II Jewish community remained in the 1980s. Estimates of both the prewar and the postwar Jewish population are imprecise. Calculations based on either religious preference or the number of Yiddish speakers ignored the large numbers of assimilated Jews in Bohemia and Slovakia. Most estimates put the pre-World War II population in the neighborhood of 250,000. In 1975 Malcom Browne stated that there were some 5,000 practicing Jews remaining in Czechoslovakia, including about 1,200 in Prague, which once had a large, vibrant Jewish community dating back to the Middle Ages.

In the Czech lands, Nazi efforts to encourage anti-Semitic legislation had met with limited success until the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (see *Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia*, ch. 1). Bohemian Jews had been prominent members of the Czech elite, and anti-Semitism in the Czech lands had more often been directed toward Jews of the Sudetenland, who were condemned both as Germans and as “capitalist exploiters.” Reinhard Heydrich, named Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia in 1941, vowed to make the region *judenrein* (free of Jews) within two months. Heydrich pursued the deportation and extermination of the Jewish population with a passion rare even among those most dedicated to the “final solution.” On June 6, 1943, Hitler declared Germany, Austria, and the Protectorate to be *judenrein*. Most Czech Jews perished, along with sizable numbers of Jewish refugees from Germany, Austria, and Slovakia.

In Slovakia many Jews were Hungarian speakers; they identified and were identified with Hungarian domination. It mattered little that Slovak Catholic and nationalistic anti-Semitism had social and intellectual roots different from Nazi racism. Monsignor

*The Old Jewish  
Cemetery in Prague  
(State Jewish Museum)*



Tiso's government complied with Nazi deportation orders with little reluctance; even baptized Jews were not exempt. Eventually, in 1943, the Vatican intervened, informing Tiso in no uncertain terms that deporting Jews meant sending them to their deaths. After the Slovak National Uprising in 1944 and the Nazi occupation of Slovakia, more Jews were deported. At the time of the Soviet "liberation" of Bratislava, only about 20,000 survived.

Some anti-Jewish sentiment still existed in the 1980s. The government's vehemently anti-Israeli stance, coupled with a persistent failure to distinguish between Israelis and Jews, gave anti-Semitic attitudes continued prominence. Official denunciations of dissidents having purportedly Jewish names added a distinctly anti-Semitic flavor. One Charter 77 signer was condemned as "an international adventurer" and another, more pointedly, as "a foreigner without a fatherland, who was never integrated into the Czech community"—notorious euphemisms long used in anti-Jewish rhetoric. Officials alleged that the signers were under orders from "anticommunist and Zionist centers."

## Language

The correct American English adjective for the language, people, and culture of Slovakia is *Slovak*; Slovak belongs to the *Slavic* group of languages. British usage employs *Slovakian* for the American *Slovak* and uses *Slavonic* where the American usage is *Slavic*.

The adjective for the Czech people, language, and culture is *Czech*. The form *Czechoslovak* is used when referring to the government or a person's or thing's official function, e.g., Czechoslovak citizenship.

Czech and Slovak, the two official languages of Czechoslovakia (as of 1918), are similar but separate languages. They are actually so close as to be mutually intelligible, and Czechoslovak media use both languages, knowing that they will be understood by both Czechs and Slovaks. Czech is spoken by approximately 10 million people, primarily in the Czech Socialist Republic (Bohemia and Moravia); about 5 million people, primarily in Slovakia, speak Slovak. Both are West Slavic languages and are closely related to Polish (also a West Slavic language). Czech and Slovak are more distantly related to Russian (an East Slavic language), with which they share a number of features, although they are not mutually intelligible. Despite the similarities between Czech and Slovak, their literary languages emerged at different times. Both languages use the Roman alphabet, but the alphabets differ slightly.

In addition to the two literary languages, a number of dialects are spoken throughout the country. Everyday speech among villagers (especially older people), for example, will usually be in dialect, whereas in urban areas the dialects are losing their foothold, especially among the educated.

The Slovak literary language as it is known today was not established until the nineteenth century, although Slovak in its different dialects had been spoken for many centuries. At various times, Latin (the official language of Hungary for a time), Hungarian, and Czech had been used as the literary language of the Slovaks. As with Czech, it was the mid-nineteenth century surge of nationalism that finally saw the widespread adoption (earlier efforts had limited success) of what is today's literary language, based on the central dialects.

Change in Slovak, as in all other languages, is an ongoing process. Words, phrases, and idioms fall out of use, while others come in to replace them. Some of today's new words are formed from Slovak elements, but many are borrowed, primarily from English and Russian. The Russian words are part and parcel of the political and economic systems and serve to reinforce connections between the two government systems. English words come into the language mostly in the fields of science and technology (*display* for a computer display), but also in everyday speech (*sexbomba* for sex symbol). These are most often words for which there are no terms in Slovak. What worries some purists is that foreign words

are replacing some perfectly good Slovak words, e.g., *generácia* (generation) for *pokolenie*.

The oldest written records of the Czech language are found in eleventh-century texts. After the tumultuous historical events of the early seventeenth century and the resulting Counter-Reformation, German took precedence over Czech as Prague became a provincial capital. It was only with the upsurge of nationalism throughout Europe in the nineteenth century that Czech came back into its own.

It is often said that the “best” Czech is spoken in Moravia. Various dialects exist, but the most prestigious is that of Prague. As is the case with German in German-speaking countries, there are actually several versions of Czech. This presents difficulties for foreigners wishing to learn to speak Czech. The standard written literary language, *spisovná čeština*, carries the greatest prestige. It is based on the Czech spoken in fourteenth-century Prague during the days of the Czech Golden Age. Today, the written language is the language used in education, the government, the press, most literature, television and radio, industry, and science. It is also the language that foreigners learn. However, outside of university lectures, television and radio, and official meetings, no one really speaks it. Most people, even those who are highly educated, speak a colloquial version of Czech among themselves known variously as *obecná*, *hovorová*, or *běžně mluvená čeština*. Although local dialects produce variations from place to place, this living language is characterized by certain simplifications of the archaic, written literary language. Many modern writers have experimented with it in their writings, and not only in dialogue. Some members of the KSČ have proposed dropping the established literary form of the language in favor of a simplified written version of the spoken language, as it is “the language of the masses.” But this idea has met with strong opposition, especially in academia. One peculiarity of the spoken language is that it often retains German words that have been purged from the written language.

Today, because of close ties with the Soviet Union, Russian has become the major influence on modern Czech. Many English words have also made headway, including *vikend* (weekend), *kempink* (camping, campground), and *diskžokej* (disc jockey). Articles occasionally appear in the press criticizing such “foreignisms.” In an attempt to avoid foreign vocabulary, many old Czech words have been revived or new Czech words formed from old roots.

## Social Groups

Czechoslovakia, of all the East European countries, entered the postwar era with a relatively balanced social structure and

an equitable distribution of resources. Despite some poverty, overall it was a country of relatively well-off workers, small-scale producers, farmers, and a substantial middle class. Nearly half the populace was in the middle-income bracket. Ironically, perhaps, it was balanced and relatively prosperous Czechoslovakia that carried nationalization and income redistribution further than any other East European country. By the mid-1960s, the complaint was that leveling had gone too far. The lowest-paid 40 percent of the population accounted for 60 percent of national income. Earning differentials between blue-collar and white-collar workers were lower than in any other country in Eastern Europe. Further, equitable income distribution was combined in the late 1970s with relative prosperity. Along with East Germany and Hungary, Czechoslovakia enjoyed one of the highest standards of living of any of the Warsaw Pact countries through the 1980s.

The matter of social groups and the differences among them has been a delicate one for those in power in Czechoslovakia. In the Marxist scheme, classes are defined in terms of their relation to the means of production. Industrial production has demanded a more differentiated labor force than the Marxist notion of "one class owning and working the means of production" foresaw. "From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" proved an inadequate principle for distributing socialist wealth. Even in Czechoslovakia, where the party's pursuit of socialist equality was thorough, the "classless" society turned out to be highly diverse.

In the mid-1980s, Czechoslovak censuses divided the population into several occupational groups: workers, other employees, members of various cooperatives (principally agricultural cooperatives), small farmers, self-employed tradesmen and professionals, and capitalists (see table 5, Appendix A). Of these categories, "other employees" was the most diverse, encompassing everyone from low-level clerical workers to cabinet ministers. "Workers" were those whose jobs were primarily manual and industrial. There was the time-hallowed distinction between workers (manual or low-level clerical employees), agricultural employees, and the intelligentsia (whose work is primarily mental and requires more education).

## **Workers**

In 1984 workers made up about one-half of the economically active population and were beneficiaries of policies geared toward maintaining the people's standard of living. According to many observers, Czechoslovakia's internal stability rested on an unspoken bargain between workers and the ruling KSČ: relative material

security in return for acquiescence to continued Soviet domination. Given the persistent economic problems the regime faced, it was a delicate balance. Much of working-class life reflected the regime's efforts to increase labor productivity without precipitating major labor unrest.

Virtually full employment did not make the task easier. In 1984 nearly half the population worked. Some 85 percent of working-age women were employed (not including those on maternity leave), and there were almost 141,000 full-time university students. Working age for women was from fifteen through fifty-four, and for men it was from fifteen through fifty-nine. The proportion of pensioners who had returned to work rose from 12 percent in 1966 to 23 percent in 1983. By the end of the 1970s, the labor shortage was extreme enough for officials to call for greater efforts to employ "internal reserves" of labor, i.e., the partially disabled (of whom nearly one-third were already employed), full-time students, and farmers (during agricultural off-seasons). "Voluntary" brigades of students and apprentices supplied agricultural (harvest) and other labor during summer months.

In Czechoslovakia, as in other socialist countries, virtually full employment often disguises underemployment. Large numbers of people work in positions below their qualifications. This is the result of different factors: some people are reluctant to move to other parts of the country to find work; politically and ideologically "objectionable" people must often turn to menial work; and politically "correct" people hold jobs for which they are not fully qualified. At many enterprises, instead of streamlining operations and dismissing employees whose job performance is unsatisfactory, managers merely shift workers to other positions or juggle employment statistics.

The party's compulsion to avoid labor unrest, enterprise managers' need to meet (or at least approach) production quotas, and a pervasive shortage of labor define the social dynamics of the workplace. Workers have relatively secure employment and income but lack sufficient consumer goods to absorb their income (the rate of saving is extremely high). Nor do workers have a substantive role in organizing work; Ota Šik, noted economic reformer during the 1960s, characterized the Czechoslovak worker as "alienated from the production process, from the fruits of labor, and from the management of industrial enterprises."

Workers' complaints have changed over the years as labor has become more scarce. In the 1950s real wages declined, resulting in periodic work stoppages. The 1953 currency reform sparked protests and demonstrations in major industrial centers that were

little short of riots. Throughout the decade, party leaders complained about workers' "trade unionist" and "anarcho-syndicalist" attitudes and their "take what you can" mentality. Those arrested in the 1953 demonstrations were denounced as "bourgeois elements dressed up in overalls." During the Prague Spring, workers organized to support demands for political liberalization and more representative trade unions.

By the late 1970s, forced overtime had become the workers' most insistent complaint, followed by poor working conditions. These complaints were coupled with steadfast opposition to linking wages with gains in productivity. Workers most frequently called for compliance with the labor code, which limited compulsory overtime (the maximum workweek was supposed to be forty-six hours) and provided for work safety regulations.

One solution to the labor shortage was foreign manpower. For a long time, Poles provided the largest percentage of foreign manpower. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, the proportion of Vietnamese workers grew rapidly. By the end of 1982, there were approximately 26,000 Vietnamese workers in Czechoslovakia, about 0.3 percent of the total manual work force, including apprentices. Reasons given for the rapid expansion of the Vietnamese contingent ranged from the Czechoslovak government's interest in training qualified labor for a friendly socialist country, to repayment of Vietnamese war debt, to the labor surplus in Vietnam. Problems arose as the number of Vietnamese increased drastically and as a program of merely hard work replaced what was to have been a program for training the Vietnamese in work skills.

Other foreigners who worked in Czechoslovakia came from Cuba, Laos, the Mongolian People's Republic, and Hungary. Poles and Hungarians generally worked in their respective border areas.

Most women in Czechoslovakia work, a reflection in part of the labor shortage and in part of the socialist belief that employment for women is the answer to inequality between the sexes. Although women in Czechoslovakia have had a long history of employment (they were over one-third of the labor force in 1930), the postwar surge in female employment has been truly dramatic. Four-fifths of the workers who entered the labor force from 1948 through 1975 were women. By the end of 1976, about 87 percent of working-age women had jobs; in 1984 about 90 percent of women in their reproductive years were in the labor force.

In 1983 women remained concentrated in the traditional fields of female employment. In retail sales they represented 75 percent of all employees; in mass communications, 65 percent; in health care, 80 percent; and in social work, 87 percent. These differences

persisted despite concerted efforts to improve women's educational status and in spite of the wide range of protective legislation covering women workers (see Health and Social Welfare, this ch.).

Women's salaries have lagged behind those of men throughout the socialist era. As late as 1986, women's earnings averaged two-thirds of those of men. In December 1986, one-fifth of all employed mothers earned less than Kčs1,500 per month, while the average salary for all workers at that time was given as Kčs2,800 per month. Only 6 to 7 percent of middle and upper management positions were held by women.

A number of factors account for this continuing inequality. Traditional sexual stereotypes have persisted, socialist rhetoric notwithstanding. Women faced handicaps in the workplace because of their traditional role in child rearing (what regime apologists have dubbed "woman's triple role" of mother-worker-citizen). Czechoslovakia offered ample maternity leave, and women did not lose job seniority by taking it. Nonetheless, employers anticipated that women not only would be absent from work to have children but also would bear the primary responsibility for child care within their families. (In contrast, officialdom has made no mention of man's triple role of father-worker-citizen.) Women's anticipated but unpredictable absence from the workplace influenced employers' allocation of jobs. Women themselves frequently complained about the dual demands of home and work forced upon them. Czechoslovakia's underdeveloped service sector, the general lack of convenience items, limited child-care facilities, and the traditional division of labor within the family all complicated working women's lives in the 1980s. (Men maintained the traditional view that housework and child rearing are "women's work" and often refused to help.) Employed women spent four to eight hours each day on household duties, above and beyond their time at work.

### **Agricultural Workers**

Rural society in the 1980s was a combination of cooperatives (approximately 73 percent of the agricultural labor force), state farms (18 percent), and private farms (9 percent). This represented a dramatic change from the First Republic with its politically active middle-sized farmers, small landholders, and differentiated labor force. Collectivized agriculture has not lacked occupational specialists, but there is no doubt that the socialist regime has streamlined rural society. Differences have persisted, but a dramatic leveling has taken place. Workers on state farms were salaried. Cooperative members' earnings reflected their cooperatives' production, and they supplemented these with sales from small

family garden plots. Private farmers, a declining portion of the agricultural population, augmented their limited agricultural earnings with off-farm employment. The dichotomy between relatively prosperous Bohemia and Moravia and less-developed Slovakia has added to the complexity of contemporary rural society.

Collectivization began in 1949 with the Unified Agricultural Cooperatives Act. The KSC pushed collectivization efforts early in the 1950s and again later in the decade. Large landholders unwilling to join cooperatives and unwise enough to demur were condemned as "kulaks" (see Glossary) and evicted without compensation. Subsequent criticism was muted. By 1960, when collectivization was essentially complete, 90 percent of all agricultural land was in the state sector—a proportion that slowly increased to 95 percent in 1985. During the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s, the number of cooperatives declined. Land was not returned to private cultivation, but rather the cooperative enterprises themselves were consolidated.

Farmers suffered through the 1950s: compulsory collectivization took their property, and the 1953 currency reform eradicated their savings. By the early 1960s, farm laborers worked longer than their nonagricultural counterparts and earned an average of 15 percent less. Not surprisingly, those who had other alternatives took them. Young men found work in the expanding industrial sector; women and the elderly remained. The proportion of the agricultural labor force over 60 years of age rose from 14 percent in 1955 to 20 percent in 1969 and then fell to 11 percent in 1983. By 1960 women accounted for nearly 60 percent of agricultural labor; that figure declined to 42 percent in 1983, many women having found work in industry or the service sector.

During the late 1960s and 1970s, agricultural earnings rose rapidly. Since the mid-1970s, the incomes of cooperative farm members and industrial workers have been comparable. So dramatic was the improvement that in a 1968 poll more than two-thirds of cooperative farm members preferred collectivized agricultural production to private farming. Their consensus was that cooperative farming reduced not only the work burden but also the risks that small to medium-sized landholders faced. Farmers' grievances during the reform era focused on the injustices suffered during collectivization. They wanted those who had been victimized during the 1950s to be rehabilitated and compensated.

The disparity between urban and rural living conditions narrowed in the 1970s. Government planners focused on improving rural day-care facilities; bringing cooperative and state-farm pensions to parity with those of other workers; and increasing the



*Slovak National Theater on Hvizdoslav Square, Bratislava  
Courtesy Helen Fedor*

medical, educational, and shopping facilities available to rural dwellers. There was significant construction and renovation of rural housing. The number of new housing units available to cooperative members rose dramatically in the 1960s and then leveled off, although the number fluctuated from year to year. The general improvement in the amenities did not benefit agricultural workers alone; in the early 1970s, over 40 percent of all industrial workers lived in the countryside (see *Urbanization and Migration*, this ch.).

One result of increased incomes and improved rural living conditions was a rise in the educational level of the agricultural labor force. The percentage of cooperative members with a secondary-school education increased eleven fold from 1960 to the end of 1978, and that of members with a university degree increased thirteen fold.

### **Intelligentsia**

By convention, Marxist theorists subdivide the intelligentsia into the creative (writers, artists, and journalists), the professional (lawyers, educators, physicians, civil servants, and party bureaucrats), and the technical (engineers). Insofar as one might speak of the intelligentsia as an elite, they are the group that has undergone the most drastic change since 1945. Capitalist entrepreneurs and the clergy were obvious and early victims of shifts in the political spectrum. Although their individual fates varied, party

membership was a prerequisite for civil servants, the police, military officers, and educators who wished to continue in their chosen fields.

The typical professional career under party rule has turned out to be anything but secure. The year 1948 saw a turnover in civil service personnel (especially the police) and a substantial influx of workers into political and managerial positions. The 1950s purges struck hardest at the party faithful, i.e., the most direct beneficiaries of the 1948 takeover. The upheaval of nationalization and collectivization efforts that went further than anywhere else in Eastern Europe, coupled with two currency reforms, signaled a flux in economic fortunes during the first decade of communist rule. A Czech, for example, who was a chief executive in industry in 1948, worked as a carpenter for several years thereafter, served a number of years in prison, and then retrained for a career in law was not exceptional.

Change continued to be a defining characteristic of many professional occupations through the 1970s: in 1968 about 60 percent of all army officers under thirty years of age had resigned; by 1971 half of all school supervisors had been replaced; and by 1972 approximately 40 percent of all journalists had been purged. The magnitudes involved were simply staggering, the more so because the victims of the 1970s purges were overwhelmingly Czech (see *Ethnic Groups*, this ch.). During normalization, over 25,000 government and trade union officials were replaced. All told, perhaps 150,000 professionals were unable to work in their fields by the end of the decade. The purges included technical and managerial personnel, as well as writers, artists, and KSC members active in the reform movement. Estimates at the high end suggested that, from the late 1960s to the late 1970s, some 400,000 members of the intelligentsia joined the ranks of manual laborers.

In the mid-1980s, the technical intelligentsia—directors and deputy directors of socialist enterprises, chairmen of agricultural cooperatives, and managers of retail shops, hotels, restaurants, services, and housing—occupied an ambiguous position in the decision-making hierarchy. On the one hand, their jobs often demanded considerable technical expertise; on the other hand, decision making in all sectors had a political component under communist rule. The technical intelligentsia had to reconcile the requirements of technical efficiency with those of political orthodoxy. From the KSC's perspective, the problem was to ensure a politically reliable corps of technical experts. Throughout the 1970s, those selected for political compliance (versus training or expertise) predominated among the technical intelligentsia. When a party functionary was unable to meet the demands of his or her

position, the custom was to call in a technical expert (even if not a party member) for assistance. KSCĚ hard-liners consistently blocked efforts to reinstate reformist managers deposed after 1968.

Calls for more efficient management and periodic “reassessments” of managerial personnel accompanied changes in the ranks of the technical intelligentsia. In 1980 Federal Finance Minister Leopold Ler suggested that failure to meet production goals would be reflected in bonuses given to management and went so far as to intimate that managers might be dismissed for ineptitude. There was a concerted effort on the part of officialdom to make clear to managers that simple political compliance—adequate to ensure one’s employment in the early 1970s—would have to be accompanied by efficiency in production in the 1980s.

Czechoslovak party officials have had a long history of suspicion of higher education, blaming it for ills as diverse as labor unrest and youth’s lack of socialist idealism. Research scientists, to judge from the remarks of D.R. Procházka, director of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in the early 1970s (“I would purge even Einstein if he were a reformist”), have not fared much better.

### *Writers and Artists*

The country’s creative intelligentsia played a pivotal role in the nationalist movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; their manifestos spoke for the aspirations of Czechs and Slovaks within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Their opposition to foreign domination was almost a defining feature of the literature of the period, just as Soviet hegemony and the paralyzing rigidity of party rule have fueled a growing body of dissident literature in recent times.

Intellectual and artistic endeavor flourished during the First Republic. There was, of course, *The Good Soldier Švejk*, published at the end of World War I. The presence of Czech Karel Čapek, Slovak Laco Novomeský, and German Franz Kafka, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Edmund Husserl, to name only the most prominent writers, gives some sense of how prolific the era was. Sigmund Freud came from the Czech lands, as did Gustav Mahler. Ernst Mach and Albert Einstein taught at Charles-Ferdinand University in Prague.

The KSCĚ takeover ushered in the era of Stalinist socialist realism in Czechoslovakia’s arts. It was a movement with strong overtones of Russian chauvinism and a deep anti-Western bias evident in a readiness to denounce anything remotely cosmopolitan as bourgeois, decadent, or both. One suspects that the country that had given world literature Švejk was particularly unpromising ground

for Socialist Realism. A blind optimism coupled with revolutionary fervor are the key components of this aesthetic, portraying life as it should be according to Marxist theory, rather than as it actually is.

Soon after taking power, the the KŠČ at its Ninth Party Congress issued "directives for new socialist culture." The congress declared that "literary and artistic production is an important agent of the ideological and cultural rebirth in our country, and it is destined to play a great role in the socialist education of the masses." Some arts maintained their tradition of excellence throughout the era. Theater productions relied on the classics for their repertoire. Czech filmmakers relied on anti-Nazi, World War II plots to produce works of world renown in the 1960s. This was and has continued to be a safe topic. But writers were a perennial source of consternation for the authorities. Officials of the Novotný regime periodically denounced them for "unprincipled liberalism." Those placed under interdict wrote, as the phrase went, "for the drawer"; some, like Novomeský, were sentenced to long prison terms.

In the 1970s, the regime's policies toward the creative intelligentsia were characterized by a compulsion to control creative activity, coupled with an active paranoia. These policies continued into the 1980s. What motivated censors in ferreting out antisocialist sentiments was sometimes difficult to fathom. Karel Gott, a popular male singer, recorded a song portraying a conversation between a casual lover and his sweetheart that was banned from radio and television. Officialdom found the lyrics "I'll flip a coin when you ask if I'm sincere or not when I say I love you" to be insulting to Czechoslovak currency.

Artists and writers belonged to their own professional organizations. Nonmembers could practice their art as long as they were loyal to the regime, although earning a living outside the major organizations was easier in some fields than others. Actors, as long as they did not aspire to major roles, did not need to join. Artists who were nonmembers effectively limited themselves to ornamental or industrial art. Musicians and singers faced further constraints. In particular, the regime found the personal habits of many members of popular musical groups too divergent from socialist ideals and subjected them to considerable harassment. In fact, it was the arrest and trial of The Plastic People of the Universe, a group active in the musical underground in the 1970s, that precipitated the drafting and signing of Charter 77 (see *Popular Political Expression*, ch. 4).

Writers endured the greatest repression. For the purged, with limited exceptions, official publishing outlets were closed. In the

*Slovak folk art  
painting on glass*  
Courtesy  
Czechoslovak Life



meantime, the three writers' unions (Czechoslovak, Czech, and Slovak), and especially the Czech Writers' Union, set about grooming a younger generation of writers who, if not overwhelmingly devoted to socialism, were at least assiduously apolitical. In the middle to late 1970s, there was a semithaw: the authorities permitted purged writers to recant and, after a proper measure of self-criticism, publish again. For those who did not avail themselves of this chance, options were indeed limited. By the end of the decade, the government had stepped up efforts to keep Czechoslovak authors from publishing abroad. Those writers who wished to publish successfully at home kept to safe territory—science fiction, World War II novels, fantasy, and children's literature—all non-controversial, basically apolitical genres that dominated literary output in the 1980s.

A complicated bureaucratic apparatus governed censorship at home. The most critical variable was whether a writer had been expelled from the KSČ or simply dropped from its membership lists (see *The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia*, ch. 4). There were various kinds and degrees of interdiction: some writers could translate but not write, others could write plays but nothing else, and so forth. Banned writers could sometimes publish their work if a "cover person" assumed authorship. The author might lose from one-third to one-half of the contract fee for the work and might have to permit the cover person to make substantial (and often

unacceptable) changes in the work. The cover person faced stiff penalties if discovered by the authorities. Because normalization was characteristically milder in Slovakia, writers were sometimes able to publish works in Bratislava that the Prague censors found unacceptable. This was also partly due to the fact that the Slovak minister of culture was himself a writer.

### **Associations**

In 1948 there were 6,000 to 7,000 clubs and societies in Czechoslovakia; these had long been integral to social life and national aspirations. The right to form associations was first won in 1848, although the Hapsburgs, realizing that they had opened a Pandora's box in their ethnically diverse empire, revoked it soon thereafter. The Czech lands regained this freedom in 1867. *Sokol* clubs (gymnastic organizations), cultural groups, savings and loan cooperatives, and a host of other clubs proliferated in the Czech lands and anywhere Czech emigrants clustered. Turn-of-the-century Vienna (with more than 100,000 Czechs) had Czech theaters, clubs, newspapers, and banks. The Hungarians, however, offered more concerted opposition to Slovak efforts to organize. Slovak émigrés formed organizations wherever they went, and these associations agitated for Slovakia's inclusion in the First Republic.

A 1951 law gave the Ministry of Interior jurisdiction over associations, and in the 1960s there were only a few hundred societies still in existence. The right to form associations was limited, and the associations themselves were under strict KSC control. Cultural organizations operated under official auspices. Friendship leagues were particularly encouraged: Bulgarian-, Polish-, or Hungarian-Czechoslovak friendship societies could easily receive official approval. The regime particularly favored the Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship League, though its rank-and-file membership declined as a result of a surge of anti-Soviet sentiment after the 1968 invasion. There was official sponsorship for "Circles of Creativity" and "Houses of Enlightenment." Cultural societies for German or Hungarian minorities were acceptable, but religious organizations faced significantly greater restrictions. Any association that might play a role in politics or the economy (that could however remotely or tenuously be construed to threaten KSC domination) was out of the question.

The Prague Spring reinforced this mania for control over associations. The reform movement's potential was nowhere more threatening to the hegemony of the party than in the population's persistent demands for more truly representative organizations in every area of life. That the KSC membership was underrepresented

in the popularly elected leadership of such organizations confirmed the conservatives' worst suspicions: this was a reform movement whose popular manifestations would prove difficult to control. The regime's response was to restrict associations still more.

### **The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia**

According to Marxist-Leninist theory, the communist party represents the working class—the revolutionary proletariat—whose interests it champions against those of the capitalist bourgeoisie. The period between the fall of a bourgeois state and the attainment of communism is a subject on which Marx was reticent, believing that the state would “wither away” once the workers took power. Lenin, facing a real revolution and the possibility that the communist party might be able to seize power, put theoretical subtleties to the side. He suggested that the fall of the bourgeois state (a label of questionable accuracy when applied to tsarist Russia) would be followed by a transitional state characterized by socialism and communist party rule—the “dictatorship of the proletariat.” In practice, the transition from this phase to true communism has proved to be a good deal lengthier than Lenin anticipated. His suggestion that the “dictatorship of the proletariat” should last until 1923 in the Soviet Union serves as a general commentary on the disparity between theory and practice. Once in power, the communist party has behaved very much like other entrenched bureaucracies, and its revolutionary mandate has been lost in the tendency of those in power to wish to remain so.

The Communist Party of Czechoslovak (Komunistická strana Československa—KSČ), which was founded in 1921, came to power in 1948 (see *Communist Czechoslovakia*, ch. 1). Because of the KSČ's mandate to be the workers' party, questions about the social background of party members took on a particular salience. The KSČ was often reticent with precise details about its members, and the question of how many in the party actually belonged to the revolutionary proletariat became a delicate one. Official statements appeared to overstate the percentage of workers within the party's ranks. Nonetheless, a number of trends were clear. The proportion of workers in the KSČ was at its highest (approximately 60 percent of the total membership) after World War II but before the party took power in 1948. After that time, the percentage of workers in the party fell steadily to a low of an estimated one-quarter of the membership in 1970. In the early 1970s, the official media decried the “grave imbalance,” noting that “the present class and social structure of the party membership is not in conformity with the party's role as the vanguard of the working class.” In highly

industrialized central Bohemia, to cite one example, only one in every thirty-five workers was a party member, while one in every five administrators was. In 1976, after intensive efforts to recruit workers, the number of workers rose to one-third of the KSČ membership, i.e., approximately its 1962 level. In the 1980s, driven by the need for intensive economic development, the party relaxed its rigid rule about young workers' priority in admissions and allowed district and regional committees to be flexible in their recruitment policy, as long as the overall proportion of workers did not decrease.

The average age of party members has shown a comparable trend. In the late 1960s, fewer than 30 percent of party members were under thirty-five years of age, nearly 20 percent were over sixty, and roughly half were forty-six or older. The quip in 1971, a half-century after the party's founding in Czechoslovakia, was "After fifty years, a party of fifty-year-olds." There was a determined effort to attract younger members to the party in the middle to late 1970s; one strategy was to recruit children of parents who were KSČ members. The party sent letters to the youngsters' schools and their parents' employers, encouraging the children to join. By early 1980 approximately one-third of KSČ members were thirty-five years of age or younger. In 1983 the average age of the "leading cadre" was still estimated at fifty.

Whatever the social composition of the party, it effectively functions as a ruling elite—a group not known for self-abnegation. As an elite, it allows the talented and/or politically agile significant mobility. Workers might have made up a minority of the party's membership, but many members (estimates vary from one-half to two-thirds) began their careers as workers. Although they tend to exaggerate their humble origins, many functionaries have clearly come from the working class.

Several policies have increased the social mobility of party members. Foremost was doubtless the process of nationalization, started after World War II, when scores of politically active workers assumed managerial-level positions. Periodic purges have played a role as well, permitting the politically compliant to replace those less so (see *Intelligentsia*, this ch.). The numerous education programs offered by the KSČ for its members also represented a significant avenue of mobility, as did policies of preferential admissions to secondary schools and universities; these policies favored the children of workers and agricultural cooperative members especially (see *Education*, this ch.).

It is hardly surprising that the KSČ membership has guarded its perquisites. Aside from special shops, hotels, hospitals, and better

housing for members, KSČ members stood a better chance of obtaining visas for study or travel abroad (especially to the West). Nonmembers realized that their possibilities for advancement in the workplace were severely limited. For anyone in a professional position, KSČ membership was a *sine qua non* for promotion. Part of the decline in workers as a proportion of total membership resulted from the rapid increase in the number of intelligentsia joining the party soon after the communists took power. In the 1980s most economic managers, executives in public administration, and university professors were KSČ members.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the official media have denounced party members' lack of devotion to the pursuit of KSČ policies and goals. Complaints have ranged from members' refusal to display flags from their apartment windows on festive occasions to their failure to show up for party work brigades, attend meetings, or pay dues; a significant minority of members have tended to underreport their incomes (the basis for assessing dues). In 1970, after a purge of approximately one-third of the membership, an average of less than one-half the remaining members attended meetings. Perhaps one-third of the members were consistently recalcitrant in participating in KSČ activities. In 1983 one primary party branch in the Prague-West district was so unmoved by admonishments that it had to be disbanded and its members dispersed among other organizations. In part, this was a measure of disaffection with Czechoslovakia's thoroughgoing subservience to Soviet hegemony, a *Svejikian* response to the lack of political economic autonomy. It was also a reflection of the purge's targets. Those expelled were often the ideologically motivated, the ones for whom developing socialism with a human face represented a significant goal; those who were simply opportunistic survived the purges more easily.

## **Trade Unions**

In the 1980s, trade unions were the largest of all the organizations. A single large federation, the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement, represented most wage earners (80 percent in 1983); to deny someone trade union membership was to imply extreme censure. The role of trade unions under communism is distinctly different from the role they play in Western society. Under capitalism, unions represent the interests of workers against their employers. When the state owns the means of production, there is, theoretically, no such conflict; the unions serve as a "school of socialism" for the membership, the goal being to mobilize workers in pursuit of socialist production goals.

During the reform era before 1968, party reformers and workers alike criticized the Revolutionary Trade Movement as a bureaucratically unwieldy organization that was dominated by conservative party functionaries and served as a "conveyor belt" for official labor policy. Workers typically wanted smaller, more representative unions and a variety of economic benefits. More disturbing to the authorities was workers' propensity to vote party members out of union office and to demand a range of reforms. These reforms were not calculated to allay the fears of those who thought that the KSC's leading role was critical to socialist development. Among the demands were the elimination of party and police files on workers (workers often achieved this end by simply burning the files) and the right of union and management representatives (not party officials) to decide personnel matters.

Even more disturbing to the authorities was the tendency for workers' demands to be explicitly and unequivocally political. In major industrial centers, workers called for political pluralism, organized committees to defend freedom of the press, and voiced their support for the "Two Thousand Words" manifesto (see *The Prague Spring, 1968*, ch. 1). The Writers' Union went so far as to suggest that they would field a slate of candidates for the National Assembly elections. It was not a turn of events congenial to those who preferred Soviet-style socialism. Not surprisingly, the unions were an early target of normalization efforts. An estimated 20 to 50 percent of the leadership was purged, and by the early 1970s the status quo had been effectively restored.

### **Youth Organizations**

Because the creation of the "new socialist man" is an important part of communist ideology, youth organizations have always played an important role in communist regimes. After the 1948 takeover, the KSC formed two Soviet-style youth organizations: the Pioneers (for youngsters eight to fifteen years old) and the Czechoslovak Union of Youth (ages fifteen to twenty-five). Both organizations were geared toward grooming their members (or a fortunate fraction of them) for KSC membership.

By the late 1960s, some 70 percent of all those eligible were members of the Pioneers; the reform movement revealed, however, a number of points of dissatisfaction. Czechoslovak adherence to the Soviet model extended to uniform dress (white shirts and red kerchiefs) and salutes, neither of which was popular among Czechs and Slovaks. In addition, Pioneers leadership was often less than devoted. In 1968, when the organization became voluntary, the number of leaders dropped precipitously; the resulting shortage persisted through the 1980s.

The Czechoslovak Union of Youth had a tumultuous history during the late 1960s and 1970s. As a feeder organization for the KSČ, it faced many of the same problems the party faced in recruiting members. In the mid-1960s, less than half of all fifteen to twenty-five year olds were members; in the mid-1970s, fewer than one-third had joined. As in the case of the KSČ, those who joined tended to do so with their future careers in mind; secondary school and university students were overrepresented, while only a fraction of the eligible industrial and agricultural workers belonged. Furthermore, a single, centralized organization was simply an inadequate vehicle for the interests of such a diverse group. During the reform era, the Czechoslovak Union of Youth split into a number of independent associations, including the Union of High School Students and Apprentices, the Union of Working Youth, and the Union of University Students. It was not a development the party found suitable, and beginning in 1969 party leaders set about reconstituting a unified movement. During the same era, the 1968 invasion spawned a number of dissident youth organizations. In the early 1970s, these were all infiltrated and repressed by the KSČ, a policy that has continued through the 1980s.

In 1970 the party organized the Czechoslovak Socialist Union of Youth, and by mid-decade the skewed recruitment pattern of its predecessor, the Czechoslovak Union of Youth, which had recruited more students than workers, had reappeared. The recruitment effort had been more intense than ever. "I know of only two types of students at this institution," commented one teacher, "those who will not graduate and those who are members of the Czechoslovak Socialist Union of Youth." The nets had been cast so widely that, not surprisingly, some members were unenthusiastic. Throughout the 1970s, there were complaints about the organization's propensity to take any and all joiners (even "beatniks," one writer complained), the association's apolitical and recreational focus, and a membership bent more on securing admission to a university than learning "the principles of socialist patriotism."

In 1983 the Czechoslovak Socialist Union of Youth had a total membership of over 1.5 million. Twenty-five percent of the members were listed as workers, 3 percent as agricultural workers, and 72 percent as "others."

## **The Family**

In the mid-1980s, the family remained a significant force in Czechoslovak society, despite more than thirty-five years of KSČ rule. Families played a pivotal role, according to many observers, in transmitting just those characteristic Czech and Slovak values

that have often been criticized by the regime, e. g., the Czech penchant for political pluralism and the Slovak devotion to Roman Catholicism. Nevertheless, socialism has had a distinctive if often unpredictable effect on family life. The employment of the vast majority of married women of child-bearing age has favored three-generation extended families, in which grandparents (especially grandmothers) have helped women deal with the often conflicting demands of work and child rearing (see *Workers*, this ch.). Family cooperation remained important because child-care centers could not accommodate all children of working mothers, nor would the centers accept children who were ill.

Extended families in which a relative played a significant role in child rearing were more common in households where women had a secondary school or university education. Presumably the presence of a grandparent permitted these women to continue an education or assume work responsibilities that might have been precluded if they bore the major share of child care. Among urban households in which the woman had completed only elementary school or vocational training, relatives rarely played a role in child rearing (in less than 5 percent of those households surveyed, according to a 1970s report). In agricultural regions, where women often worked at home on family garden plots or worked only seasonally, the role of the extended family has been even more limited.

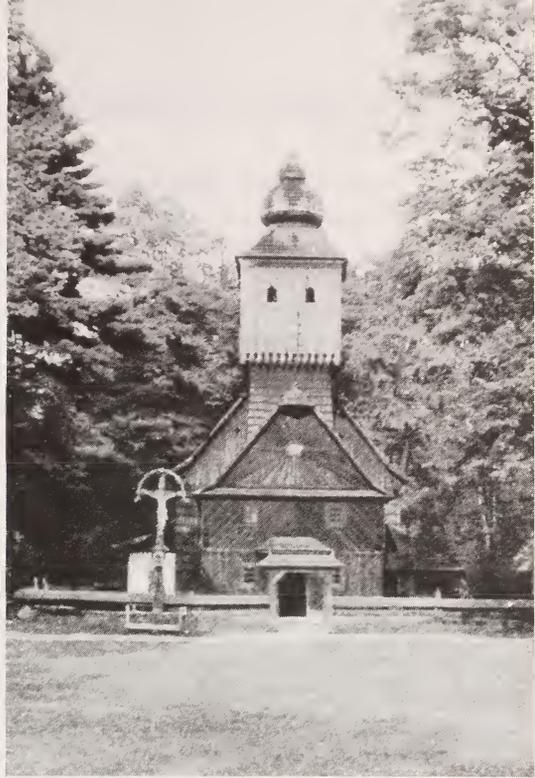
Another factor encouraging extended family households has been Czechoslovakia's endemic housing shortage. Although the government's pronatalist policies favored married couples (especially those with children) in housing allocation, many young families (perhaps one-third) waited up to five years for their first separate apartment. Most of these families shared an apartment with a mother or mother-in-law. Divorced couples sometimes continued living together simply for want of other housing alternatives. For the elderly, who were expected to trade their apartments for smaller ones as spouses died and children left home, the situation was often difficult.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the number of marriages in Czechoslovakia declined while the number of divorces increased. Although marriages began to increase in 1982, the rate of divorce continued to climb; it rose from 14 percent in 1970 to 32 percent in 1985.

## **Religion**

Czechoslovakia entered the socialist era with a varied religious heritage. There were nine major creeds listed in its censuses:

*Old church in  
outdoor museum  
in Rožnov pod  
Radhoštěm, Moravia*



Roman Catholic, Uniate (see Glossary), the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, Lutheran, Calvinist, Orthodox, the Czech Reformed Church (the Hussites), the Old Catholic Church, and Judaism. Nearly 6 percent of the population was without religious preference. At the time of the communist takeover, two of every three citizens were Roman Catholics, but within each major ethnic group there was a sizable minority of Protestants: Czech Brethren in the Czech lands, Lutherans in Slovakia, and Calvinists among the Hungarians.

In Bohemia and Moravia, the Roman Catholics' numerical preponderance was further tempered by a tradition of religious dissent and tolerance dating from the Hussite era. The Old Catholics split with Rome over the issue of papal infallibility in 1870, and the Czechoslovak National Church (an explicitly antipapal, nationalistic sect with Hussite and Unitarian overtones) followed suit in 1919–20. As the Vatican was amply aware, Czechoslovakia was hardly Rome's docile follower, and relations between the Vatican and the First Republic were often stormy. Twice, in 1925 and 1933, the papal nuncio left in protest over what he perceived to be antipapal manifestations on the part of high-ranking government officials. Czechs had associated Roman Catholicism with foreign domination since the forcible suppression of the Hussite movement. They viewed Catholicism as pro-Hapsburg and pro-German.

As of 1987, there had been no reliable national figures on religious affiliation since before World War II. Estimates based on limited surveys indicated that Roman Catholics continued to predominate, accounting for nearly one-half the total population. Not surprisingly, those who did not profess a religious faith increased dramatically in the socialist era. The most provocative information on religious sentiments came from a series of surveys during the 1960s. In northern Moravia, survey results showed that 30 percent of the respondents were atheists, another 30 percent were religious believers, and 40 percent were undecided. Presumably, there were fewer believers in more secular Bohemia and a greater number of believers in traditionally devout Slovakia. A late-1960s survey in Slovakia found that "scientific atheism" had not caught on quite as much as the KSCM might have hoped after twenty years of party rule. Only 14 percent were atheists and 15 percent undecided; atheism was highest among people between the ages of 25 and 39. Religious sentiment reflected social background: nine-tenths of all farmers were believers, as were three-fourths of all blue-collar workers and slightly more than one-half of all white-collar employees (see *Social Groups*, this ch.). Perhaps most disconcerting for the party was the realization that after two decades of denouncing clerics and clerical meddling in politics ("clerico-fascism"), 28 percent of those surveyed thought the clergy should have a public and political role.

The relationship between the advocates of scientific atheism and various religious groups has been uneasy at best. The Czechoslovak Constitution permits freedom of religion and expression, but in the 1980s citizens were well advised not to take these guarantees too literally. Government-controlled organizations existed for most religious creeds except Jehovah's Witnesses, who were prohibited. The most prominent was the Roman Catholic Church. There were also a variety of Protestant sects, including the Czechoslovak Baptist Church, the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, the Slovak Evangelical Church, the Church of the Seventh-Day Adventists, and the Methodist Church of Czechoslovakia. Also represented were the Czechoslovak National Church, the Uniate Church, and Jewish communities. In 1981 a number of church dignitaries stood before the Czechoslovak minister of culture to take a vow of loyalty to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

Official policy toward religious groups in the 1980s was consistent with that of the early socialist era, when a series of measures sought to bring organized religion to heel. The state exercised substantial control over clerical appointments, religious instruction, preaching, and proselytization. Roman Catholics and Uniates were

the major targets. The government closed convents and monasteries and strictly limited admissions to the two remaining seminaries. During the Stalinist trials of the 1950s, more than 6,000 religious people (some old and sick) received prison sentences averaging more than five years apiece. Between 1948 and 1968, the number of priests declined by half, and half the remaining clergy were over sixty years of age. The Catholic Church had already lost a substantial number of clergy with the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans; it faced significant problems with understaffed parishes and an aging clergy. Protestant sects, less dependent on a centralized hierarchy in the running of ecclesiastical affairs and less prominent because of their minority status, fared better.

Uniates had close historic ties to both the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox churches. The communist regime sought to Russify whatever it could and followed a longstanding Russian policy of opposing the Uniate Church. Soon after coming to power, the party forcibly repressed the Uniate Church (following the earlier example of the Soviet Union) in favor of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Orthodox had been a distinct minority in Czechoslovakia, but Orthodox priests took over parishes as the Uniate clergy were imprisoned or sent to work on farms in the Czech lands. The shortage of priests was so extreme that the party gave a crash course in Orthodox doctrine to "politically mature" teachers in the region and sent them into Uniate churches as replacements. Uniates responded with various forms of resistance, ranging from simply leaving church whenever an Orthodox priest arrived to holding services among themselves.

The situation for the churches brightened only briefly during the Prague Spring. The regime of Alexander Dubček allowed the most closely controlled of the government-sponsored religious organizations (the Peace Movement of the Catholic Clergy and its Protestant counterpart) to lapse into inactivity. In 1968 the government also promised a prompt and humane solution to the Uniates' predicament (induced in part by the Uniates seizing "Orthodox" churches and demanding their own clergy and rites) and officially recognized the Uniate Church.

This was an ephemeral thaw in the party's hard-line approach to religion. In the 1970s, the situation of religious groups in Czechoslovakia again deteriorated. The Roman Catholic Church, under the spiritual leadership of František Cardinal Tomášek, archbishop of Prague, was once more the principal target. Throughout the 1970s, the regime arrested clergy and lay people for distributing religious samizdat literature. Protestant and Jewish groups were also harassed, but the Orthodox churches and the

Czechoslovak National Church were generally spared. In an effort to ensure a group of compliant and loyal clergy, the regime of Gustáv Husák organized a number of state-controlled associations, including the Ecumenical Council of the Churches of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the Czechoslovak Association of Catholic Clergy (more commonly known as *Pacem in Terris*), with Czech and Slovak branches.

The regime showed a willingness to permit religious groups to practice their creeds as long as the clergy and the faithful did not bring religion into public life. The complication was that the regime counted almost anything as public life and so, for example, disallowed sermons on the high divorce rate or neglected children. Because the state licensed all clergy, it could weed out anyone deemed unresponsive to state requirements. Thus the clergy, who needed state approval to minister at all, were in a vulnerable position. By mid-1986 the regime had prohibited some 400 (of an approximate 3,200) Roman Catholic priests from ministering.

Theology departments continued to operate under strict admission quotas, and staffing problems grew throughout the decade. Chief Rabbi Richard Feder died in 1970, leaving the Czech Jewish communities without rabbinical direction until 1984. (Slovakia's rabbi was Samuel Grossman.) The new chief rabbi for the country, Daniel Mayer, studied for the rabbinate in Budapest. In 1972 the death of three Roman Catholic bishops and the revocation of state approval of a fourth exacerbated the already acute shortage of Roman Catholic leaders. Talks between the Vatican and the regime were sporadic through the 1970s and produced few material gains for Czechoslovak Roman Catholics. The perennial conflict remained: the appointment of regime loyalists in opposition to choices for parish and diocesan posts. In 1986, out of thirteen church offices, nine bishoprics were vacant and two archbishoprics (Olomouc and Trnava) had only bishops holding office.

In late 1980, there were signs of worsening church-state relations. In October a number of students at the Cyril and Methodius Faculty of Divinity in Bratislava began a hunger strike in protest against *Pacem in Terris*. The state-controlled movement, they said, tried to undermine unity between priests and bishops. In an apparent reply to the incident, Bratislava's *Pravda* took the opportunity to denounce the resurgence of "clerico-fascist ideology," which, given the growth of socialism (commentators were quick to note), lacked a constituency in Czechoslovakia. Nonetheless, clericalism acted on "instructions of the church and clerical centers in the capitalist world." The official media were particularly critical of the "secret church," which the Vatican described as "not only

the secretly ordained priests and bishops, secret convents and secret printing establishments in the country, but also the existing Catholic organizations and spiritual underground movements, as well as all priests and believers who are working illegally in the sphere of the church." These, however, were not organized into a single network. The underground church was believed to be particularly strong in Slovakia.

If normalization after 1968 took a higher toll on the Czechs, the Slovaks have more recently borne the brunt of religious persecution. Slovakia's traditional adherence to religion and an upsurge in belief and practices in the mid-1980s brought on sustained harassment and atheistic propaganda in Slovakia to a greater degree than in the Czech lands. Although methods differed, religious persecution in Slovakia equaled that suffered by the Charter 77 human rights activists and proscribed writers in the Czech lands (see Popular Political Expression, ch. 4).

A development that was particularly distressing to the authorities was the growing interest in religion on the part of young people in Czechoslovakia. Of the more than 100,000 people who took part in celebrations relating to the 1,100th anniversary of the death of Saint Methodius, Cardinal Tomášek noted that "two-thirds of the pilgrims were young people. . . ." One culprit was seen to be the education system, which did not sufficiently stress a scientific-atheistic education (see Education, this ch.).

A number of policies were aimed at curtailing public religious observance. Known adherence to a religious sect meant limited opportunity for advancement in the workplace. Parents had the right to religious instruction for their primary-school children, but to ask for it was to seriously hamper a child's chances for admission to secondary school and the university. The Ministry of Education issued a series of directives for teachers elaborating the errors of religion (among which were idealism and an inadequate set of ethical directives) and calling it an ideological weapon of the bourgeoisie.

## **Health and Social Welfare**

In the 1980s, Czechoslovakia had a comprehensive and universal system of social security under which everyone was entitled to free medical care and medicine, in theory at least. National health planning emphasized preventive medicine. Factory and local health care centers, first aid stations, and a variety of medical clinics supplemented hospitals and other inpatient institutions. The ratio of physicians to inhabitants has improved steadily, climbing from 1 per 745 in 1954 to 1 per 278 in 1985, although there were

shortages of doctors in rural areas. The shift in the distribution of health resources in the 1960s and 1970s was dramatic; facilities were improved, and the number of health care personnel in Slovakia and rural areas increased in general. Despite the improvements, there still remained serious problems in the health-care sector. About 40 percent of all the medical equipment was obsolete, facilities were outdated and in short supply, the bureaucracy was excessive, bribery was widespread (if not the rule), and many urgently needed medications were available only on the black market.

Spas in Czechoslovakia were part of the health care system. In 1985 more than 460,000 people (5 percent of whom were children) stayed at the 35 spas in the Czech lands and 23 spas in Slovakia. Many spas had been in existence for centuries, such as Bardejov (since the thirteenth century) in Slovakia and Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad) in the Czech lands. Many of them specialized in the care and treatment of particular kinds of ailments. All had either mineral or hot springs, and some also offered mud treatments. In bygone days, the spas were frequented by European royalty and the wealthy, but now they are open to all, including foreign tourists (who made up 10 percent of the patients in 1985). A number of people visited spas on vouchers provided by their trade unions.

In 1984 life expectancy in Czechoslovakia was sixty-seven years for men and seventy-five years for women. In 1950 women's life expectancy was approximately 4.6 years longer than men's; by 1983 this difference had increased to nearly 7.5 years. Infant mortality stood at 10.5 per 1,000 live births in 1984, down from 15.6 per 1,000 in 1975. As with medical care, the gap in life expectancy between the Czech lands and Slovakia was narrowed during this period.

In 1985 slightly more than one-quarter of the Czechoslovak population received some kind of pension; the elderly, the disabled, widows, and orphans were all entitled to assistance. Social security benefits (primarily retirement and disability) were equal for all wage earners. The average pension was less than Kčs1,000 per month (workers received an average pension of about Kčs 1,130, cooperative farmers about Kčs880, and independent farmers about Kčs720); this put pensioners among the lowest income earners. A substantial minority of the retired (23 percent) again took up employment to supplement their pensions.

Women workers had a full complement of maternity and child-care benefits. Maternity leave (at 90 percent of full pay) was twenty-six weeks in the 1980s; an additional nine weeks were available for single mothers or for months having multiple births. Employers could not deny a woman's request for an additional year of



*Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad)*  
*Courtesy Eugene C. Robertson*

unpaid leave for child rearing (without loss of job seniority). A system of child allowances and maternity grants also assisted women who took unpaid leave. Women were allowed three days of annual leave in case of illness within the family. There were substantial family allowances, in addition to direct grants, to single parents or families with handicapped children. An unmarried mother, widow, or divorced mother could not be fired if she had a child under three years of age; if she had children between three and fifteen years of age, her employer had to find her another job before dismissing her.

Nursery facilities for younger children were in very short supply; in 1984 they could accommodate less than 10 percent of children under five years of age. Beyond the sheer lack of space, nurseries were poorly distributed and were often concentrated in older centers rather than in new housing developments where young families were likely to reside. Kindergartens were in better supply, and a much higher percentage of children between the ages of three and six years attended these schools. High employment of women and inadequate services contributed to the decline in Czechoslovakia's birthrate in the 1960s. Live births during the decade averaged 16 per 1,000 inhabitants, a significant drop from the 1950s. By 1968 the fertility rate was 2 percent (in comparison with 3 percent in the 1950s); at this rate the population would not

replace itself. In the Czech lands, the population growth rate stood at its 1930s low; in Catholic Slovakia, it was the lowest on record.

The government adopted a variety of explicitly pronatalist policies in the 1970s. Family allowances increased, especially for second and third children. By 1973 a family with three children received roughly one-third the average worker's salary in allowances. Birth grants doubled so that they were the equivalent of two to four weeks of family income. Low-interest loans to newlyweds were designed so that a portion of the principal was canceled with the birth of each child (Kčs1,000 for the first and Kčs4,000 for each subsequent child). All told, the financial incentives were substantial. In addition, couples with children had priority on apartment waiting lists and were entitled to larger living quarters, no small inducement in the face of Czechoslovakia's chronic housing shortage.

Pronatalist policies appear to have had a strong influence on population growth during the 1970s. The birthrate climbed from its 1968 low (14.9 per 1,000 inhabitants) to a peak of 19.9 per 1,000 inhabitants in 1974—one of the highest rates among industrial nations. Perhaps a quarter of this increase reflected the increase in the number of women of child-bearing age in the 1970s. After 1974, however, the birthrate steadily declined, falling to 14.5 by 1985. Figures indicated that a trend toward one-child families was emerging. The message seemed to be that after one decade the government's aid program was ineffective.

A major factor influencing the birthrate was the abortion rate. The number of abortions fluctuated between the 1950s and 1980s, dropping in the early 1960s and the early 1970s. In 1985 there were reportedly 144,712 abortions, or 39 abortions per 100 pregnancies (33.5 per 100 in the Slovak Socialist Republic and 42.1 per 100 in the Czech Socialist Republic). It has been suggested that abortion has remained one of the most favored means of birth control, despite the risks involved. A 1986 change in the abortion law (eliminating the panel needed to approve a request for an abortion) suggested that the regime was giving up in its efforts to reverse at least this aspect of the adverse demographic trends.

## **Education**

Czechoslovakia has a tradition of academic and scholarly endeavor in the mainstream of European thought and a history of higher education dating from the Middle Ages. Charles University was founded in Prague in 1348, and the Academia Istropolitana was founded in Bratislava in 1465. In the First Republic, education was the chief instrument for dealing with ethnic diversity. Perhaps in no other aspect of public life did Czechoslovakia more

effectively address the disparities among Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Ukrainians, and Germans. Eight years of compulsory education in the native language of each ethnic minority did much to raise literacy rates, particularly among Slovaks and Ukrainians. An expanded program of vocational education increased the technical skills of the country's growing industrial labor force. Some disparities remained, however. Germans and Czechs predominated disproportionately in secondary schools and universities. In the Czech lands compulsory education, even in rural areas, had begun nearly half a century before the advent of the republic. Prosperous farmers and even cottagers and tenants had a long history of boarding their children in towns or cities for secondary, vocational, and higher education. Despite regional and ethnic imbalances, Czechoslovakia entered the socialist era with a literate, even highly educated, populace.

Education under KSĊ rule has a history of periodic reforms (often attempting to fit the Soviet model) and efforts to maintain ideological purity within schools. At the same time, higher education has been a reward for political compliance. By the mid-1970s, the historical disparity in educational resources between the Czech lands and Slovakia had been largely redressed. A certain equity in educational opportunity was achieved, partly through the concerted efforts of policy makers and partly through the vicissitudes of normalization.

The Czechoslovak education system has four basic levels: nursery and kindergarten; a compulsory, nine-year primary cycle; various kinds of secondary schools; and a variety of institutions of higher education. Education is compulsory between the ages of six and sixteen. In 1974-75 planners began an education reform, shortening the primary cycle from nine to eight years and standardizing curricula within the secondary-school system. The state financed education, and all textbooks and instructional material below the university level were free.

Secondary schools included gymnasiums, stressing general education and preparation for higher education, and vocational schools, which emphasized technical training; both were four-year programs. A highly developed apprenticeship program and a system of secondary vocational/professional programs were attached to specific industries or industrial plants. In both secondary and higher education, provision was made for workers to attend evening study in combination with work-release time.

In 1985 there were 36 universities or university-level institutions of higher education, comprising 110 faculties; 23 were located in the Czech Socialist Republic, and 13 were located in the Slovak

Socialist Republic. The mid-1970s reform shortened the course of study in most fields from five to four years. A 1980 law on higher education increased the control of the Czech and Slovak ministries of education over universities and technical colleges. Postgraduate study involved three to six years of study. Faculties could exist within a university system or as independent entities (as in the case of the six theological faculties under the direction of both republics' ministries of culture, or educational faculties sometimes administered directly by the republics' ministries of education).

Educational enrollment and admissions have been delicate matters during the socialist era. Virtually everyone attended primary school, and a majority of those of secondary-school age attended some kind of specialized training or a gymnasium (see table 6, Appendix A). Beyond this, however, the questions surrounding university admissions (and who attends secondary schools and who becomes an apprentice) took on political overtones. In the 1950s the children of political prisoners, well-to-do farmers, or known adherents of one or another religion were victims of the party's discriminatory admissions policies.

Youngsters of working-class or peasant background ostensibly had preference over those of other socioeconomic groups. However, a look at students' backgrounds during the 1950s and 1960s reveals that in no year did children of workers or peasants constitute a majority of those in institutions of higher education. Precise estimates vary, but through the mid-1960s workers' families gained an average of one-third of the admission slots, peasants a mere 10 percent, and "others" nearly 60 percent. The proletariat fared better in Slovakia, where nearly half of those with secondary school or university degrees came from workers' or peasants' families.

The regime made intensive efforts to improve the educational status of women in the 1970s. The number of women who completed a course of higher education jumped by 93 percent between 1970 and 1980 (for men the increase was 48 percent). Although women continued to cluster in such traditionally female areas of employment as health and teaching, their enrollment in many secondary schools outstripped that of men. Women have accounted for 40 percent of university enrollment since the mid-1960s. In the 1985-86 school year, this figure was 43 percent.

In 1971 the regime announced that "The selection of applicants must clearly be political in character. . . . We make no secret of the fact that we want to do this at the schools in a manner that will guarantee that future graduates will be supporters of socialism and that they will place their knowledge at the service of socialist society." This was the "principled class approach," a complex set

of criteria that purportedly reflected a student's "talent, interest in the chosen field, class origins, civic and moral considerations, social and political activism of the parents, and the result of the admission examination." In practice, class background and parents' political activities outweighed all other factors. Children of dissidents, of those in political disfavor, or of open adherents of a religious sect were denied admission to higher education in favor of children whose parents were party members or who were of proletarian origin.

Amnesty International reported in 1980 that institutions ranked applicants according to the following criteria: students whose parents were both KSC members, children of farmers or workers, and those with one parent a KSC member. Students who failed to meet any of these conditions were considered last. Children of dissidents were effectively disqualified. The system allowed for some manipulation; a member of the intelligentsia without a political blot on his or her record might have taken a job as a worker temporarily to permit his child a claim to proletarian status. There were charges as well of bribes and corruption surrounding university admissions. Whatever the mechanism involved, the social composition of the student body shifted in the mid-1970s; roughly half of all students in higher education were from workers' or farmers' families.

Charter 77 protested discrimination in educational admissions based on parents' political activity; there was some indication by the late 1970s that, if parental sins could still be visited on the children, at least questions concerning their parents' past and present political affiliations would be less blatant. Whether or not politicizing university admissions ensured that graduates would be "supporters of socialism" could be debated. However, it is evident that in controlling university admissions the regime knew how to ensure acquiescence on the part of most Czechoslovak citizens. If a moderately secure livelihood and a reasonable standard of living were the regime's "carrots," excluding children of dissidents from higher education was one of its more formidable "sticks."

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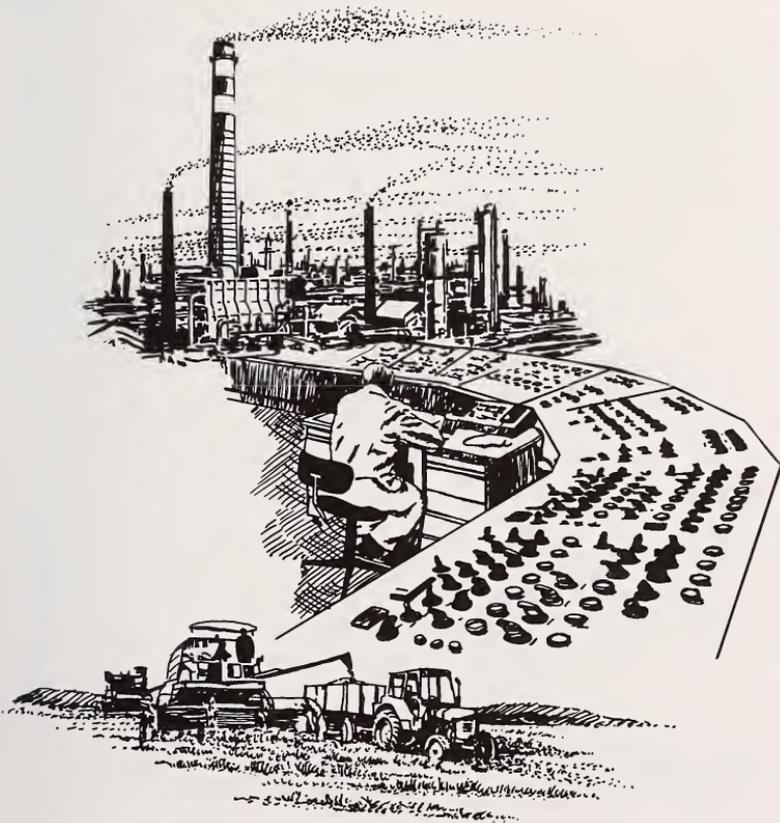
English-language material on contemporary Czechoslovak society is limited. The Czechoslovak government periodically publishes the *Statistical Survey of Czechoslovakia*, a summary of the annual *Statistická ročenka ČSSR*, which contains a wide variety of statistical information. It also publishes a glossy monthly, *Czechoslovak Life*, available in several languages, which offers a view of life in the republic, albeit through rose-colored glasses.

Roy E.H. Mellor's *Eastern Europe* provides good background information, as does Joseph Rothschild's *East Central Europe Between the Two World Wars*. Robert W. Dean's *Nationalism and Political Change in Eastern Europe* and Stanislav J. Kirschbaum's "Slovak Nationalism in Socialist Czechoslovakia" both provide insight into Czech-Slovak relations in the 1970s. Jaroslav Krejčí's *Social Change and Stratification in Postwar Czechoslovakia* assesses socioeconomic relations between the two republics from early in the post-World War II era until the mid-1970s.

The eventful late 1960s and the 1970s are reviewed by Vladimír V. Kusiš in *Political Groupings in the Czechoslovak Reform Movement, From Dubček to Charter 77*, and "Challenge to Normalcy: Political Opposition in Czechoslovakia, 1968-77," and also by Otto Ulč, in *Politics in Czechoslovakia* and "Some Aspects of Czechoslovak Society since 1968." Ota Šik's *Czechoslovakia: The Bureaucratic Economy* and Radoslav Selucký's *Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe: Political Background and Economic Significance*, both works by former Czechoslovak officials purged during normalization, offer analyses of the problems that gave impetus to the reform movement. *Women under Communism*, by Barbara Wolfe Jancar, "Women in East European Socialist Countries" by Jarmila L.A. Horna, and "Women's Labour Participation in Czechoslovakia since World War II" by Alena Heitlinger describe the role of women in Czechoslovak society.

Developments affecting Czechoslovakia's dissidents in the late 1970s and early 1980s are reviewed by O. Sojka in "The Bounds of Silence," H. Gordon Skilling in "Charter 77 and the Musical Underground," and Charles Sawyer in "Writing on the Party's Terms." Jiří Otava's "Religious Freedom in Czechoslovakia" and Peter A. Toma and Milan J. Reban's "Church-State Schism in Czechoslovakia," review church-state relations and detail some of the difficulties that believers face in communist Czechoslovakia. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

## Chapter 3. The Economy





IN THE MID-1980s, Czechoslovakia was one of Eastern Europe's most industrialized and prosperous countries. Although levels of consumption were well below those common in Western Europe, inhabitants of Czechoslovakia enjoyed a standard of living generally higher than that found in most other East European countries. Heavily dependent on foreign trade, the country nevertheless had one of Eastern Europe's smallest international debts to noncommunist countries.

The Czechoslovak economy had serious problems, however. Investments made in industry during the late 1970s and early 1980s had not yielded the results expected. Consumption of energy and raw materials was excessive. Czechoslovak leaders themselves decried the economy's failure to modernize with sufficient speed. According to many Western analysts, other constraints were inherent in the communist system imposed in the late 1940s; yet the cautious Czechoslovak leadership of the 1980s appeared reluctant to make major changes.

The differing statistical concepts and procedures used by communist and noncommunist economists make assessment of the status of the Czechoslovak economy complicated. In recent years, some Western economists have been especially vexed by what they consider to be official Czechoslovak manipulation of economic statistics. Various studies of the official industrial production index have suggested several biases, the most important of which appeared to be the inclusion of new products at increased prices, although a given product may have been almost unchanged from one manufactured a year earlier. This kind of bias could accentuate the growth rates of fast-growing industrial branches and sectors as opposed to slower-growing ones or those that produced a standardized product, and thus the statistics could lead to a skewed picture of overall industrial growth. Foreign trade statistics are particularly difficult to assess because a variety of currency conversion methods are employed to calculate trade turnover value. Data calculated on the basis of noncommunist concepts will be identified here by the use of such Western terms as *gross national product*; Czechoslovak statistics will be called official data or identified by such terms as *net material product* or *national income*.

## Resource Base

Czechoslovakia has significant quantities of coal. Hard coal suitable for extraction is found in the Ostrava coalfields and

near Kladno, Plzeň (Pilsen), Košice, and Trutnov. Brown coal and lignite deposits are located around Chomutov and Most, in the Sokolov field near Karlovy Vary, at Teplice, at České Budějovice, and near Modrý Kameň and Handlová in Slovakia. Reserves of oil and natural gas are rather small.

Iron ore continues to be mined in the Slovenské rudohorie (Slovak Ore Mountains) and near Prague and Plzeň, but reserves have nearly been exhausted. There are also deposits of copper and manganese ores in the Slovenské rudohorie. Lead and zinc ores are found at Kutná Hora and Příbram in central Bohemia, but in insignificant quantities. There are small amounts of mercury, antimony, and tin in the Krušné hory (Ore Mountains), which also contain substantial uranium deposits. Additional mineral resources include salt in Slovakia, graphite near České Budějovice, and kaolin near Plzeň and Karlovy Vary.

In the 1980s, agricultural land constituted just under 55 percent of the country's total land area, and most of this land was suitable for tillage. The soil is relatively fertile in the lowlands but less productive in the mountainous regions. About one-third of the country's territory is forested. Czechoslovakia's forests have been seriously affected by environmental problems, primarily "acid rain" pollution from coal-fired power stations. In the 1980s, the authorities acknowledged the seriousness of the problem, and the Eighth Five-Year Plan (1986-90) allocated funding to combat the pollution.

### **Labor Force**

In 1985 Czechoslovakia's total labor force amounted to about 7.6 million persons. Of these, 46.1 percent were women, giving Czechoslovakia one of the highest female labor rates in the world. Almost 88 percent of the population of working age (between 15 and 59 years of age for men and between 15 and 54 for women) was employed in 1985. About 37.4 percent of the work force was in industry, 13.7 percent in agriculture and forestry, 24.3 percent in other productive sectors, and 24.6 percent in the so-called non-productive (mainly services) sectors (see table 7, Appendix A).

During the first two decades following World War II, redistribution of the work force, especially movement from agriculture to industry, had provided an influx of workers for the government's program emphasizing heavy industry. Women also had entered the work force in record numbers. But falling birthrates in the 1960s, noticeable first in the Czech lands but subsequently occurring in Slovakia as well, gave reason for concern. During the 1970s, the government introduced various measures to encourage workers to continue working after reaching retirement age, with modest

success. In addition, the large number of women already participating in the work force precluded significant increases from this source.

By the mid-1980s, the labor supply was a serious problem for Czechoslovakia. During the Seventh Five-Year Plan (1981-85), the work force increased by less than 3 percent. Because Czechoslovakia's service sectors were less developed than those of the industrialized countries of Western Europe, during the 1980s employment in services continued to expand faster than employment in the productive sectors. The expansion placed additional constraints on industrial enterprises seeking to fill positions. Some Western observers suggested that the labor shortage resulted in part from the tendency of many industrial enterprises to overstaff their operations.

Party and government officials set wage scales and work norms. As part of reform measures effective after 1980, incentive rewards represented a larger share of total pay than had previously been the case. Work norms also increased. Officials were clearly soliciting a greater effort from workers, in terms of both quantity and quality (see *Workers*, ch. 2).

In the mid-1980s, most of the labor force was organized and was represented, at least in theory, by unions (see *Auxiliary Parties, Mass Organizations, and Mass Media*, ch. 4). The party controlled the unions, and a major task of the unions was to motivate workers to work harder and fulfill the plan goals. The unions served as vehicles for disseminating desired views among the workers. The principal activity of the trade unions was the administration of health insurance, social welfare, and workers' recreation programs.

## **Economic Structure and Its Control Mechanisms**

In the mid-1980s, Czechoslovakia had a highly industrialized economy, a fact reflected in the 1985 official statistics concerning production of the net material product of the country (the official measure of aggregate production). The industrial sector accounted for 59.7 percent of the value of the net material product; construction, 11.2 percent; agriculture and forestry, 7.5 percent; and various other productive services (including transport, catering, and retailing, among other activities), 21.6 percent. As of 1980 the socialist sector (state enterprises or cooperatives) generated 97.4 percent of the national income. Of the total work force, almost 99.8 percent was employed in the socialist sector.

The Czechoslovak economy, like most economies in communist countries, differs markedly from market or mixed economies. The most notable feature common to nearly all communist economies,

including Czechoslovakia, is the deliberate and almost complete severance between market forces and the allocation and use of resources. In market economies, decisions by individual consumers and producers tend automatically to regulate supply and demand, consumption and investment, and other economic variables. In most communist economies, these variables are determined by a small governing group and are incorporated in a national plan that has the force of law. The leaders and planners make most economic decisions: setting quotas for production units that are almost completely state owned; directing the flow of materials through the economy; establishing prices for nearly everything, including labor and capital; and controlling investment and consumption. Most communist economies are organized vertically in a command structure radiating from the central authorities down to the individual production units. This is the case in Czechoslovakia, where the centralized economic structure parallels that of the government and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—KSC). This structure gives the party firm control over the government and the economy. It is generally referred to as the Soviet model and was first applied in the Soviet Union, which was initially an agrarian nation with extensive natural resources, a large internal market, and relatively little dependence on foreign trade; the goal was to quickly develop heavy industry and defense production. Czechoslovakia, by contrast, was a small country that had already reached a high level of industrialization and was rather heavily dependent on foreign trade when the Soviet system was first imposed after World War II.

Government ministries prepare general directives concerning the desired development of the economy (see Government Structure, ch. 4). They pass these along to the economic advisory body, the Central Planning Commission, which in turn prepares the long-term targets of the economy. These are expressed in extensive economic plans—in general plans covering periods fifteen to twenty years into the future and in the well-known five-year plans. Since 1969, economic plans for the Czech Socialist Republic and the Slovak Socialist Republic have been produced by their own planning commissions, although the central plan remains the most important. Most significant on a daily operational basis, however, are the short-term annual production objectives. In their final form, these more detailed annual plans have the force of law, no longer being merely guides or recommendations.

In formulating the various plans, the Central Planning Commission converts the directives of the ministries into physical units, devises assignments for key sectors of the economy, and then

delivers this information to the appropriate ministries, which oversee various functional branches of the economy. The production plans are made more specific and concrete through implementation of the system of "material balances," an accounting system that allocates available materials and equipment in an effort to make plan fulfillment possible for all sectors in the economy.

Upon receiving their assignments, the various ministries further subdivide the plan into tasks for the industrial enterprises and trusts or groups of enterprises under their supervision. (A parallel process takes place for agriculture, in which the federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food supervises the planning procedures for the collectives and state farms.) The ministries provide more detailed instructions concerning fulfillment of the assignments and pass them along to the trusts and enterprises. Upon receipt of their proposed tasks, individual enterprises draw up a draft plan with the assistance of their parent trust or ministry. As noted by economist John Stevens, during this phase of planning an important reverse flow of information occurs, from the actual producers at the bottom of the hierarchy to the authorities at the top. Bargaining may take place among the various levels. After receiving feedback concerning the plan, the ministries consult again with the Central Planning Commission and, assembling all the draft plans, formulate an operational plan that can achieve the central directives. The appropriate parts of the assignments are then dispatched once again to the trusts and enterprises. This time, their acceptance by the enterprises and trusts is mandatory.

The norms included in the instructions to the enterprises usually specify the volume and kinds of production required, inputs available, a production schedule, job categories and wage rates, and a description of the centrally funded investment planned. National and republic budget levies and subsidies, profit targets and limitations, and plans for the introduction of new products and technology are also set forth in the instructions.

Evaluation of enterprise performance occurs on several levels. The planning authorities assess plan fulfillment, but there are additional control devices internal and external to the enterprise. Among the duties of KSC members and trade union leaders within the enterprise is monitoring plan fulfillment. The federal Ministry of Finance also sends representatives into the enterprise to investigate accounts. In addition, the State Bank of Czechoslovakia can exert influence on enterprise activities by monitoring enterprise bank accounts (see Banking and Finance, this ch.). Nevertheless, the main source of information for the planners is the enterprises themselves.

Under the Czechoslovak system, foreign trade is a state monopoly, supervised by the central Ministry of Foreign Trade. The ministry oversees the operation of about thirty foreign trade enterprises. As intermediaries between the domestic export producers or import purchasers and the external market, the enterprises are responsible for arranging contracts as well as for financing and generally supervising Czechoslovak foreign trade, usually setting prices that have little connection with domestic production factors.

Advocates of this centralized system of managing the economy contend that it has a number of advantages. In a centrally planned system, authorities can distribute resources and production targets as they choose, balancing the needs of consumption and investment on the basis of long-range goals. Planners in postwar Czechoslovakia, for example, were thus able to expand the country's heavy industrial base as they wished. In turn, research efforts, being centrally directed, can focus on areas deemed vital to the economy's goals. In general, central planning can make it possible for producers to take advantage of economies of scale, eliminating superfluous and wasteful activities. If planning is really effective, the system should result in virtually full employment of resources.

As critics have pointed out, however, certain aspects of the system interfere with its effective functioning. One problem is the assignment of production quotas. Planners generally must base these assignments on the past performance of enterprises. Enterprise managers, knowing that planners tend to assess enterprise performance according to completion or noncompletion of assigned tasks, may be tempted to understate and misrepresent the production potential of their organizations in order to obtain an assignment they can easily handle. Also, they may have little incentive to overfulfill aspects of the current plan; such achievements might lead planners to assign a substantially more difficult or even unachievable task during the next planning period, resulting in a poor performance evaluation for the enterprise. Such a disparity might call into question the validity of the information previously furnished to the planners by the enterprise managers. To ensure plan fulfillment, managers tend to exaggerate their material and labor requirements and then to hoard these inputs, especially if there is reason to worry about punctual delivery of supplies. Furthermore, since planning under the Soviet model aims at full utilization of resources, plans are typically "taut," and an ambitious manager who seeks to obtain resources beyond those needed to achieve the plan norms may find the process difficult and discouraging, if not impossible. Given the emphasis on fulfillment of the plan, managers may also hesitate to adopt new technology, since introduction of

a new procedure might impede operations and even jeopardize plan fulfillment. Critics have also noted that central planning of production can result in an inappropriate assortment of goods from the consumers' point of view or in low-quality production.

The Czechoslovak leadership, aware of these criticisms and also of the deteriorating performance of the national economy in the late 1970s and early 1980s, undertook a series of modest reforms, the "Set of Measures to Improve the System of Planned National Economic Management after 1980" for industry in 1981 and a similar program for agriculture in 1982 (see *Economic Policy and Performance*, this ch.). These measures focused on monetary reform, decentralizing somewhat the management of investment funds by giving more authority to enterprises or, more often, the trusts that supervised groups of enterprises. The reforms left the centralized system fundamentally unchanged, however.

## **Economic Policy and Performance**

The Czechoslovak economy emerged from World War II relatively undamaged. Industry, which was the largest sector of the economy, included large firms in light and heavy industry. During the war, the German occupation authorities had taken over all major industrial plants. After the war, the reconstituted Czechoslovak government took control of these plants. Foreign trade was still in private hands, however, and remained important in the economy. Exports of machinery and consumer goods paid for imports of materials for processing. The quality of Czechoslovak export products was comparable to that of products produced in other industrialized countries. Agriculture also remained in private hands, and farming was still largely a family affair. The labor force as a whole was skilled and productive, and management was competent. This mixed system, containing elements of socialism and private enterprise, operated efficiently in 1947 and 1948 under a two-year plan in which goals were general and indicative rather than mandatory. The country received considerable assistance from the West through the United Nations, and most of its trade was with the West. Until prohibited by Stalin in 1947, Czechoslovakia intended to participate in the United States Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe. By 1948 Czechoslovak production approximated prewar levels, agricultural output being somewhat lower and industrial output somewhat higher than earlier levels. When the KSČ assumed complete political and economic control in February 1948, it began immediately to transform the Czechoslovak economy into a miniature version of that of the Soviet Union (see *Stalinization*, ch. 1). By 1952 the government had nationalized nearly all sectors; many

experienced managers had been replaced by politically reliable individuals, some of them with few technical qualifications. Central planning provided a mandatory guide for institutions and managers to follow in nearly all economic activity.

The targets of the First Five-Year Plan (1949–53) reflected the government's commitment to expansion of the producer goods sector of the economy. The goals were dramatically revised upwards after 1949, partly in response to the Korean War, to build up metallurgy and heavy industry. The country became an important supplier of machinery and arms to other communist countries. Foreign trade with noncommunist countries dropped sharply (in part because of trade controls imposed in those countries); trade with communist countries increased from 40 percent of the country's total in 1948 to 70 percent a decade later. The economy failed to reach the ambitious goals of the first plan, although investment and growth were high. By the end of the plan period, serious inflationary pressures and other imbalances had developed, requiring a currency conversion in 1953 that wiped out many people's savings and provoked outbreaks of civil disorder.

The years 1954 and 1955 were covered by yearly plans only; the scheduling change was part of an effort by the members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) to correlate and integrate their planning by using common planning periods (see Appendix B). The Second Five-Year Plan then encompassed the years 1956–60. During that period, investment continued at a high rate, although real wages and the supply of consumer goods also increased substantially, and national income grew by 6.9 percent. In the late 1950s, however, economic leaders noted that investment efforts were yielding diminishing returns. Large investments were required to sustain economic growth. In 1958 and 1959, in response to this troubling situation, the government made several relatively minor adjustments in the functioning of organizations and prices—the first of the country's economic reforms. The reforms involved some limited decentralization of authority, most notably giving enterprises more autonomy in handling investment funds. The intention was not to alter the Soviet economic model to any great extent but rather to enhance its overall operation. The reforms did not result in noticeable improvements in economic performance, however. Eventually, in 1962, planners quietly scrapped the entire reform program, reimposing most of the central controls.

During the early 1960s, industrial production stagnated. The agricultural sector also registered a relatively poor performance. Agriculture had been a weak part of the economy throughout the 1950s, consistently failing to reach planned output targets, and the



*The Prazdroj brewery, Plzeň*

minimal reforms of 1958–59 had done little to alter the situation. Targets set for the national economy in the Third Five-Year Plan (1961–65) quickly proved to be overly ambitious, particularly with regard to foreign trade. The plan was dropped after a recession in 1962, and annual plans covered the remainder of the period. National income actually declined in 1963. By 1965 it was only 1.9 percent higher than in 1960, in comparison with a 6.9 percent growth rate in the 1956–60 period. Many factors contributed to the economy's poor performance, including adverse weather for agriculture, cancellation of orders by China resulting from the Sino-Soviet dispute, and unrealistic plan goals. By this time, however, reform-minded economists had reached the conclusion that much of the blame lay in deficiencies of the Soviet model. They began to prepare additional reform measures to improve the economy's efficiency.

Serious defects in the Soviet model for economic development had long been recognized by some Czechoslovak economists, and calls for decentralization had occurred as early as 1954. Economists and others had argued that it was inappropriate to apply the Soviet model to Czechoslovakia in a dogmatic manner. The country was already industrialized, had few natural resources and a small internal market, and remained dependent on foreign trade in significant ways. The model emphasized extensive development, such as building new factories, rather than intensive investment in which

production processes were modernized and efficiency improved. The pressure for greater investment and defense production during the 1950s had caused private consumption to grow more slowly than net material product. The result had been a chronic inflationary bias, reflected in shortages of consumer goods and forced savings by the population. Plants and construction firms held large inventories of materials to compensate for irregular deliveries from suppliers. Completion of most investment projects required an inordinate amount of time, freezing funds in unproductive uses. Inadequate investment in agriculture had contributed to the latter's chronically poor performance. Prices were also a problem, based as they were on often conflicting policies; prices reflected neither scarcity nor cost, bore little rational relationship to one another in the domestic market, and had become increasingly divorced from world prices. The system appeared to stifle innovation and to offer no basis for selecting between investment and production alternatives or for judging efficiency.

By the early 1960s, several Czechoslovak economists had analyzed these problems and had remedies to offer. One spokesman for the reformers was the economist Ota Šik, a member of the KSČ Central Committee and its Economic Commission (see National Organization, ch. 4). Party and government officials listened because after the 1962 recession and the earlier failure of the 1958 reforms they recognized that something had to be done. In October 1964, the party published a set of principles for major economic reform and, beginning in 1965, started implementing specific measures. In June 1966, the Thirteenth Party Congress gave its official approval to the new program, which came to be called the New Economic Model (NEM). Some influential party leaders remained opposed to the reforms, apparently concerned about possible domestic political repercussions. These party leaders engaged in what they termed "correction of deficiencies," but in the process they diluted the content of the reform measures. Only after the party leadership changed in January 1968 did support for the reforms increase and the pace of reform quicken (see *The Reform Movement*, ch. 1).

The reform program was multifaceted, and portions of it were never implemented. Its principal object was to limit significantly the role of the central planning authorities while expanding the autonomy and responsibility of the enterprises. The central planning authorities were to concern themselves only with overall long-term planning of economic development and to provide general guidance through the formulation of a limited number of economic goals. Enterprises and their associations would be free to determine short-term production targets within the framework of the

overall goals. Individual enterprises were to become financially viable, realizing a profit from their sales after covering all costs and various state levies. State subsidies would gradually end; enterprises that could not operate at a profit would have to close. Profit, rather than fulfillment of planned quantitative output targets, was to become the main criterion for evaluating the economic performance of enterprises. This change in emphasis, it was hoped, would make enterprises more competitive and more responsive to the demands of customers. At the same time, producers were to be increasingly exposed to foreign competition, so that they would seek to increase their own productivity and lower prices. As a means of earning much-needed hard currencies, exports to Western countries were to be stimulated through incentives encouraging enterprises to make their products competitive on world markets; the incentives would include the right to retain a portion of the foreign currency profit.

In the reform program, a more realistic system of prices was to replace the centrally determined system. Prices were to reflect actual costs, the supply and demand situation, and relevant world prices. Enterprises were to finance investments with their own resources and interest-bearing bank loans and would have to justify their investments in terms of need, effectiveness, and cost so that widespread waste of investment resources would cease. The state would provide investment funds only for key economic development projects. Finally, a revised wage and salary system was to eliminate egalitarianism in the wage structure and substitute a system based on individual work performance and on results obtained by the employing enterprise.

To ensure greater concentration and specialization of industrial production, the government consolidated enterprises into large production units resembling trusts or cartels managed by "branch directorates." These large production units formed an intermediate link between the enterprises and the ministries. The branch directorates had overall responsibility for the performance of enterprises under their jurisdiction, but the division of authority between the larger unit or trust and its subordinate members was not clearly defined.

In the spring of 1968, the government permitted enterprises to experiment with worker participation in management through the establishment of enterprise councils. Direct involvement of workers in the management of enterprises was expected to bring about an improvement in morale and performance by calling into play the workers' self-interest. The form of the councils was left vague because it was thought that the varying sizes of enterprises would necessitate different forms.

In sponsoring their program, Czechoslovak reformers did not intend to introduce free enterprise or to permit free play of market forces. They were committed socialists trying to improve economic management under continuing party control, but with fewer rigid controls than had formerly existed. They had implemented only a portion of their program by August 1968, when Soviet and other Warsaw Pact troops invaded the country and the reform experiment came to an end. The reforms and other elements of the Prague Spring had become too threatening to party control, at least in the Soviet view, to be allowed to continue (see *Intervention*, ch. 1).

The next two years saw the gradual dismantling of most of the program. By the early 1970s, almost all traces of the reform measures had vanished. Economic "normalization" resulted in a reversion to mandatory central planning, price controls, and the system of material balances. Only a few modifications of the central planning system remained, including devolution of some aspects of planning to the consolidated production units and modification of some plan indicators to emphasize efficiency, productivity, quality, and innovation rather than simply gross output targets.

In spite of the apparently disruptive changes and political turmoil of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Czechoslovak economy continued to grow at a respectable rate throughout the period. From 1966 to 1970, the period of the Fourth Five-Year Plan, net material product grew at an average annual rate of 6.9 percent, well exceeding the planned yearly increase of 4.1 to 4.4 percent. Performance was also gratifying during the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1971-75). During this period, net material product grew somewhat more slowly, averaging 5.7 percent yearly, but still exceeded the planned rate of 5.1 percent yearly. The fastest growing sectors in industry during both planning periods were chemicals and engineering (growing at an annual rate of 8 to 10 percent); the slowest growing sectors were fuels (3 to 5 percent) and consumer goods (4 to 6 percent). Wages, incomes, and personal consumption levels rose at respectable rates despite an overall increase in investment. Agriculture continued to be a weak area but had improved markedly. By 1975 the agricultural sector was almost self-sufficient in animal production, and self-sufficiency in crop production appeared to be an attainable goal. Rural wages rose, and mechanization progressed rapidly.

During the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1976-80), by contrast, economic performance was far less satisfactory; in the closing years of the period, the slowdown in economic growth became especially noticeable. Net material product grew by only 3.7 percent yearly on average, instead of the 4.9 percent called for by the plan. Both

agriculture and industry failed to meet planned growth targets; 5.7 to 6.0 and 2.7 to 2.8 percent yearly growth rates were planned, respectively, whereas the rates actually achieved were 4.5 and 1.8 percent. The plan called for an annual average increase in labor productivity of 4.5 percent, an important goal, given constraints on expansion of the labor force; 3.3 percent was actually achieved. Other difficulties included insufficient technological improvement, failure to meet the conservation goals for energy and materials, and less than full use of fixed assets. In addition, the performance of agriculture was disappointing, particularly after the optimal climatic conditions and bumper crops of the early 1970s. Problems in agriculture were in part a result of drought (1976) and severe winter and spring flooding (1979). Other factors, such as shortages of agricultural machinery and spare parts and poor quality of fertilizer, also had an impact on the agricultural sector. Large imports of grain necessarily continued. During the plan period, growth rates in personal consumption declined, reaching a low point of 0.5 percent in 1979. At the same time, in contrast to the previous plan period, retail prices rose by about 11 percent over the 5-year period. During the last few years of the plan, there were widespread consumer complaints about the unavailability of basic commodities such as meat, milk, and vegetables.

The economy's performance was lackluster despite the continuing infusion of substantial investment funds. Since 1948, investment had been the most dynamic element of economic growth, with a growth rate substantially exceeding that of national income. Gross investment had reached a peak of about 31 percent of national income expenditures in the 1950s during Czechoslovakia's most extensive development phase. Gross investment limits of about 30 percent of national expenditures had been typical during the 1960s. The same ceiling was set for the Fifth Five-Year Plan, but the investment rate was edging up. The limit was raised to a maximum of 31 to 33 percent for the Sixth Five-Year Plan, but actual expenditures exceeded this rate, being closer to 34 percent. In part, the rise in the investment rate in the 1970s reflected large capital expenditures for increased mining of coal and other fuels and for the development of engineering branches to produce equipment for nuclear power plants. Nevertheless, given the considerable funding poured into the economy, the mediocre condition of the Czechoslovak industrial plant in general at the end of the 1970s must have been discouraging to economic planners.

The energy and trade problems Czechoslovakia faced in the late 1970s were also major factors in the slowdown in industrial growth. The terms on which Czechoslovakia conducted foreign trade had

begun to deteriorate sharply by the mid-1970s. After 1974 the rapid rise of world oil prices was partially reflected in the price of oil from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia's principal source of fuel and raw materials. Prices of other materials on which the country's economy depended also increased faster than the prices of its exports, which consisted primarily of manufactured goods (especially machinery). Party and government leaders were cautious about increasing foreign indebtedness and attempted to maintain a high level of exports. Increasingly in the 1970s, a substantial portion of the country's production of consumer goods and machinery was diverted to export markets to meet the rising import bill. Restraints on imports from noncommunist countries reduced inputs for domestic industries.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the economy had substantial limitations, which were recognized by economists, political leaders, and even the public at large. The country had perhaps the oldest stock of plant and equipment in Eastern Europe, a stagnant resource base, and growing dependence on energy and material imports. To reduce requirements for energy and raw materials and to increase the competitiveness of Czechoslovak exports, domestic production needed to become more efficient. Furthermore, consumption standards continued to be well below those found in Western Europe.

Economic planners set relatively modest growth targets for the Seventh Five-Year Plan, revising their goals downward two years into the plan. "Intensification" of the economy—focusing on efficient use of resources rather than simply quantitative growth—was the keynote of government policy. The revised goals called for a growth rate in net material product of 10.5 to 13.5 percent. Gross industrial output was to increase by 14 to 18 percent, and gross agricultural output by 7 to 10 percent. Personal consumption was to rise by less than 3 percent.

The early years of the Seventh Five-Year Plan saw a serious slump in the economy. During 1981 and 1982, personal consumption actually declined. The cost of living rose more rapidly than wages. During the final three years, however, an economic recovery made up for the earlier poor performances; according to official calculations, the country succeeded in either meeting or surpassing domestic goals during the plan period as a whole. Official reports listed the growth rate of net material product at 11 percent, growth of gross industrial output at 14.5 percent, growth of gross agricultural output at 9.8 percent, and increase in personal consumption at 5.5 percent. Results of the "intensification" effort were disappointing, however, as leaders acknowledged.

During the plan, consumption of energy decreased by only 1.7 percent per annum, less than the 2 percent goal of the plan (see table 8, Appendix A).

The relatively favorable outcome of the Seventh Five-Year Plan was noteworthy, particularly because several international trends had had negative effects on the Czechoslovak economy during the period. A recession in developed Western countries dampened their markets for Czechoslovak exports; and in 1981 the Soviet Union announced its intention to scale back oil exports to Eastern Europe, including Czechoslovakia, by 10 percent. Although in 1983 and 1984 worldwide prices for oil began to drop, the Comecon (or Soviet) price, tied to a 5-year formula, caused the price of Soviet oil (16.4 million of the 16.6 million tons imported by Czechoslovakia in 1984) to continue to climb. In 1982 the decision of Western banks to restrict credit to Eastern Europe as a result of Poland's serious payment problems and the sizable debts of other East European countries impeded Czechoslovakia's foreign trade with the West.

The poor performance of the economy in the early 1980s persuaded party leaders that some changes were needed. Therefore, in conjunction with the Seventh Five-Year Plan, in 1981 the government introduced a series of limited reforms called the "Set of Measures to Improve the System of Planned National Economic Management after 1980." Relatively conservative in design and initiated without fanfare, these reforms permitted somewhat greater freedom of action for managers of enterprises in selected operational areas, giving them more authority over their own investment activities and over providing financial incentives to workers. The intention was to make industry as a whole more aware of prices and costs. The reforms did not call for any appreciable loosening of central planning and control. In 1982 parallel reform measures were introduced for agriculture; the measures permitted farm officials to exercise greater management initiative and limited the number of binding targets imposed on farm production. Many Western observers believed that these reforms did have a helpful effect during the final years of the plan. It was felt, however, that these partial reforms were not sufficiently comprehensive to bring about the modernization and improvements in efficiency sought by Czechoslovakia's leaders.

## **Economic Sectors**

### **Mining and Energy**

In the mid-1980s, Czechoslovakia's mineral resources were meager. The country was heavily dependent on imports of raw

materials for use in industry (see table 9, Appendix A). Deposits of ferrous metals were small and low grade; in 1983 production amounted to 1.9 million tons. Imports, especially from the Soviet Union, supplied the dominant share of iron ore for the country's important iron and steel industry. Magnetite, a basic input for the steel industry, was more plentiful, making exports possible during the 1970s and 1980s. Deposits of nonferrous metals were limited or nonexistent. Imports supplied most of the country's needs for these metals. In 1983 about 9,500 tons of copper and 3,800 tons of lead were produced. The same year, 7,000 tons of zinc were mined, but imports supplied the bulk of requirements. The country also produced limited amounts of gold and mercury. Imports supplied most of the country's needs for nonferrous metals. Czechoslovakia did supply most of its own requirements for nonmetallic minerals to support the manufacture of building materials, glass, and ceramics.

The bulk of the country's mining activity involved coal, the principal domestic energy source. Located primarily in northern Bohemia and Moravia, freely extractable reserves reportedly amounted to 5.8 billion tons as of 1986. Of this quantity, about 30 percent was bituminous coal. In 1985 production of all coal amounted to 126.6 million tons, a 2.1 percent drop over 1984 that signaled the accelerating exhaustion of easily worked, high-grade reserves. In 1985 Czechoslovakia depended on coal for 60 percent of its energy consumption in contrast with 88 percent in 1960.

The decline in the share of total primary energy consumption represented by coal had occurred even though coal production had expanded throughout the 1970s. During these years, the growing need for energy was met primarily by imported oil and, from the mid-1970s, by natural gas; almost all imports of oil and gas came from the Soviet Union. Domestic crude oil sources and production were modest. Within Czechoslovakia itself, numerous small oil and gas fields had been discovered, but production was minor (about 100,000 tons of crude oil and 800 million cubic meters of natural gas in 1985). These supplied only a small fraction of the country's needs. Geological surveys largely ruled out the possibility of future discoveries of major oil or gas deposits, although one significant new source of natural gas was discovered in 1985 near Gbely in western Slovakia.

During the 1970s, the Soviet Union found it increasingly difficult and costly to meet the fuel and raw materials needs of Czechoslovakia and other East European countries. The unexploited Soviet resources tended to be located in Siberia, where extraction and transport were difficult and costly. One solution to the problem



*The Tisová power station, near Sokolov*

was Comecon's decision to adjust Soviet energy prices annually after 1974; as a result, Soviet prices approached—and eventually at times exceeded—world market prices. The adjustment improved the terms of trade of the Soviet Union at the expense of Czechoslovakia and its neighbors when world prices for many commodities, particularly crude oil, rose sharply in the middle and late 1970s. The higher prices in turn resulted in a larger return to the Soviet Union for its exports of fuels and raw materials and helped to finance expansion of Soviet production capacity. In addition, in the 1970s Comecon initiated several joint projects, such as the construction of a major natural gas pipeline from the Soviet Union to Eastern Europe and of large nuclear power plants in the Soviet Union (see Appendix B). The participating countries, including Czechoslovakia, received payments in the form of natural gas and electricity. In the mid-1980s, Czechoslovakia also participated in construction of the Yamburg natural gas pipeline “Progress” in the Soviet Union.

From 1967 to 1984, Czechoslovakia benefited additionally from a special agreement with the Soviet Union—in effect a Czechoslovak credit from 1967—whereby Czechoslovakia received 5 million tons of Soviet crude oil a year at a late 1960s price, which was just a small fraction of the world market price. Thus while increased Soviet fuel and raw materials export prices imposed a severe burden on Czechoslovakia, the cost was substantially less than if the

country had imported these materials from noncommunist countries. In 1980 a Czechoslovak official indicated that Czechoslovakia was paying about one-fourth the world price for its oil imports. By 1985, however, the situation had changed dramatically. In 1981 the Soviet Union had announced a 10-percent cutback in the crude oil it would deliver to East European countries during the 1981-85 period. Subsequently—and for a variety of other reasons—world oil prices plummeted, but the Soviet price, based on the five-year formula, continued to rise.

In the mid-1980s, the country's leaders considered energy conservation essential. Czechoslovakia's heavy reliance on fuel imports was costly. Imports supplied 95 percent of the country's fuel needs, and the country needed to import about 16.6 million tons of crude oil and 10.5 billion cubic meters of natural gas each year. Conservation was also essential because although Soviet supplies of natural gas were expected to increase, the more important flow of crude oil was likely to stagnate. In the short run, extraction of domestic coal would help Czechoslovakia meet its growing energy needs, but the increase would be slow and costly because deeper deposits had to be mined in order to meet quotas. The fuel problem was especially acute because Czechoslovak industry had a high input of energy per unit of national income, a rate substantially higher than that of Western Europe and some East European countries (7.5 tons of standard fuel per inhabitant per year). Industrial consumption of largely imported raw materials and energy was acknowledged to be perhaps as much as 40 percent higher than in comparable advanced industrial countries. The KSČ leadership rightly believed that considerable savings were possible.

Nevertheless, conservation alone would not suffice. Since the 1970s, economic planners had been pursuing an ambitious nuclear energy program. In the long run, in their judgment, nuclear power was absolutely vital to the projected energy balance. In late 1978, the first major nuclear power plant (of Soviet design) began operation at Jaslovské Bohunice. In 1985 and 1986, portions of the Dukovany station began test runs, and preliminary site work was underway for two more power stations, at Mochovce in western Slovakia and Temelín in southern Bohemia. Nuclear power's share of the total electricity supply increased to almost 20 percent in 1986. According to the long-range plan, with expansion of this power station plus construction of additional stations and the import of electricity from joint nuclear projects in the Soviet Union, nuclear power would provide 30 percent or more of total electricity by 1990. Plans called for nuclear power to account for over 53 percent of electricity by the year 2000. Although the 1986 Chernobyl

accident in the Soviet Union did not alter the government's commitment to nuclear power, particularly since none of the existing or planned reactors used the kind of technology employed at Chernobyl, Czechoslovak leaders acknowledged the need for a thorough review of safety measures. Subsequently a number of special conferences were held concerning nuclear power issues. Czechoslovakia was well positioned to fuel its ambitious nuclear program; in the mid-1980s, the country was an important producer of uranium. Little information on uranium output was available, but annual production was estimated by Western analysts at 2,000 to 3,000 tons. The reserves were located in the Krušné hory of Bohemia.

In the mid-1980s, Czechoslovakia had a substantial number of hydroelectric plants, located mainly on the Váh and Vltava rivers. Work was underway on a major hydroelectric power project on the Danube River at Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros, a controversial joint project with Hungary to which environmentalists, especially in Hungary, had objected. The completed project was expected to supply about 4 percent of Czechoslovak energy requirements. In 1986 the government approved plans for construction of several additional power stations on the Labe and Váh rivers by the end of the century. Czechoslovakia imported some electricity each year from Romania.

## **Industry**

Czechoslovakia inherited the bulk of existing industrial assets following the breakup of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after World War I. Industrialization continued in the interwar years. Even before World War II, the country's armaments and heavy industries were producing commodities accepted throughout the world. World War II left Czechoslovak industrial facilities largely intact. In the late 1940s, Czechoslovakia was one of the most industrialized countries in the world, and the quality of its products was comparable to that of other industrialized countries.

After the KSČ took control of the country, the industrial sector—particularly defense and heavy industry—received priority in terms of investment funds, labor, and materials. Industry was the leading sector in expansion of the economy. The industrial base grew rapidly, as recorded by the official index of industrial production. Starting from a base of 100 in 1948, the index increased to 371.9 in 1960 and 665.5 in 1970. The late 1970s witnessed some deceleration in industrial growth, and the index increased from 921.4 in 1975 to 1,156.7 in 1980. In 1985 the index reached 1,322. The figures suggested substantial growth, and industry's overall performance since World War II had in fact been impressive. However,

various Western studies of the computation of the index of industrial production in communist countries indicated a significant upward bias relative to the calculated planned rate of growth of industrial production used for planning purposes. The main cause of the bias appeared to be higher prices recorded for newly introduced products; in many cases, there was little or no difference between the new product and a similar item produced the year before. The bias appeared to be larger in such branches as machinery and chemicals and tended to enhance plan results. Over time, the bias also led to overstatement of the structural change in fast-growing branches of industry that were introducing new products.

In 1985 the most important branches of industry in terms of the monetary value of their contribution to the economy were machinery, electrical engineering, metalworking, chemicals, asbestos, rubber, and ferrous metallurgy (including ore extraction). Important manufactured products were vehicles, railroad goods, aircraft, electrical goods, heavy machinery, and precision equipment. During the 1970s, Czechoslovakia had signed specialization and joint investment agreements with other Comecon members, committing the country to specific long-term obligations in particular production branches (machine tools and railroad locomotives, for example), partly to ensure the inflow of energy and raw materials. In the 1980s, Czechoslovakia was—except for the Soviet Union—Comecon's only builder of heavy-duty nuclear power equipment and was a joint supplier of such products to other Comecon members. For export, Czechoslovakia specialized in smaller units, while the Soviet Union supplied the larger capacity reactors. In the early and mid-1980s, as part of an effort to "restructure" the industrial economy, the government sought to reduce the relative importance of metallurgy within the industrial sector, cutting back particularly on such traditional products as pig iron, raw steel, and rolled ferrous products in favor of more profitable and less energy-intensive branches.

Despite its favored position within the economy, the industrial sector had serious weaknesses in the mid-1980s. A particularly significant problem was the high energy and material inputs required for a unit of industrial output. Czechoslovak machinery was often heavier than comparable West European equipment and was usually less productive. The slow rate of technological innovation had caused a decline in the country's share of machinery markets in developing nations, noncommunist industrialized countries, and Comecon countries in comparison with the 1950s. Related problems were design limitations and lengthy project completion times, which frequently caused investments to be less productive than hoped.



*The V.I. Lenin factory of the Škoda engineering works, Plzeň*

In addition, old equipment was retired slowly. In 1986 the average age of industrial machinery and equipment was 12 years; 10 percent of the machinery was more than 25 years old, and the percentage was reportedly increasing. These circumstances contributed to the low productivity of Czechoslovak workers compared with their counterparts in Western Europe. Moreover, the overall quality of Czechoslovak exports was frequently below world standards; official government pronouncements emphasized the inadequate technological level of activities in the economy as a whole. Imbalances persisted between supply and demand, both at home and on foreign markets. In 1986 a prominent Czechoslovak economist argued that industry's problems stemmed in part from inadequate specialization, insufficient use of foreign licenses, and cumbersome restraints on research projects.

Most of these problems had already existed in some form during the 1970s, and the government had introduced several measures intended to correct the deficiencies. Laws introduced in 1971 (which went into effect in 1975) had granted limited powers and a degree of decentralization to the intermediate level of administration, positioned between ministries and production enterprises. The intermediate level consisted of associations of industrial enterprises in the same or closely related branches, resembling trusts. The intent was to reduce overhead expenditures, such as planning and research, while promoting innovation and technological development. Changes also were introduced in the wage and price systems in an attempt to improve efficiency. Despite these measures, there was reason for continuing dissatisfaction in the 1980s.

## **Agriculture**

Even before World War II, industrialization in Czechoslovakia had substantially reduced the relative importance of agriculture in

the economy. Before the KSČ gained control of the government, Czechoslovak agriculture consisted primarily of small to mid-size family farms with an efficiency on a par with most of Europe. The situation did not change until 1949, when the KSČ initiated a policy of collectivization. The pace of collectivization was rather gradual until the late 1950s and was generally more thorough in the Czech lands than in Slovakia. Collectivization was essentially completed by 1960. Large numbers of farmers, particularly the young, left agriculture for more attractive industrial jobs. In the 1960s, the active farm population consisted largely of women and older men.

Under communist rule, agriculture received much less attention and investment funding than industry. Partly because of this fact, agricultural output grew slowly, not regaining prewar levels of production until the 1960s. Falling productivity and the need to increase farm output to reduce agricultural imports eventually drew official attention to agriculture. A principal government goal was to encourage large-scale farming that could benefit from modern technologies and powerful farm equipment. Proceeding slowly during the 1960s, consolidation of farms accelerated in the 1970s. Most of the larger cooperatives encompassed several villages and raised a variety of crops and livestock. In the 1960s, in an effort to increase farm incomes, the government raised the prices of farm products; during the previous decade, by contrast, prices for farm produce had been kept low, partly to extract workers and investment funds for the expansion of industry. By the early 1970s, the average farm income reportedly had reached parity with that of urban white-collar workers. The farm labor force of the 1980s was relatively young (45 percent was under 40 years of age in 1980) and well educated. The performance of the agricultural sector improved markedly during the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s. In 1960 the official index of gross agricultural output (in constant 1980 prices) had stood at 96, compared with 100 in 1936. In 1970 the index reached 116.8, and by 1980 it had increased to 143. Between 1981 and 1985, according to official sources, total agricultural production increased by 9.8 percent over the 1980 level.

The total land area of postwar Czechoslovakia is nearly 12.8 million hectares, of which almost 6.8 million hectares are considered agricultural land. The remaining land is classified as nonagricultural and includes 4.5 million hectares of forests. In the mid-1980s, agricultural activity was spread throughout the country. Urbanization and industrialization had slowly but steadily reduced the amount of agricultural land; it declined by over 600,000 hectares between 1948 and the late 1970s. In 1984 irrigation facilities existed for over 322,000 hectares, a little over 6 percent of the arable land.

In addition, as of 1980 the country had 1.3 million hectares of drained area, constituting about 18 percent of all agricultural land. Extensive additional irrigation and drainage had high priority in agricultural planning, despite the heavy costs of these procedures, because there was very little new land that could be brought under cultivation less expensively. The small amount of irrigated land made crop production heavily dependent on weather conditions.

In 1985 some 95 percent of the country's agricultural land was in the socialist sector. The basic unit of production in the mid-1980s was the "unified agricultural cooperative," or farmers' collective. Collective farms had increased in area by 6.5 times since 1950. In 1985 there were 1,677 collectives with 997,798 members. In 1985 there were 226 state farms, which were officially owned and operated by the government and which employed 166,432 workers. In 1985 collective farms held about 4.3 million hectares (plus about 87,000 hectares in private plots), and state farms held 2.1 million hectares. Members of collective farms were permitted to cultivate personal plots of one-half hectare or less and to maintain some livestock. Such personal plots had reached a peak of popularity in the early 1960s, when they had accounted for 355,000 hectares. By 1975 their area had decreased to 171,000 hectares. Production from personal plots was minor and served primarily as a food source for the cultivator. Private farmers owned only 404,000 hectares, consisting mainly of small farms in the hill country of Slovakia. By 1980 there were only 150,000 such small farms operating. In 1982, however, the government introduced measures to encourage private small-scale animal breeding and fruit and vegetable cultivation. Planning authorities did not expect that this activity would be the main source of income for small farmers, and they limited the land used for this purpose primarily to that reclaimed from currently unused, somewhat marginal agricultural land, estimated at 100,000 hectares in 1984. The government hoped, however, that a large proportion of demand for fruit and green vegetables, as well as for meat, would be satisfied in this way. In 1984, according to official reports, small-scale private producers accounted for about 10 percent of meat production, 38 percent of vegetable production, and 64 percent of fruit production. A secondary purpose of the government measures—land reclamation—was a matter of considerable urgency because of the decline in agricultural land that took place in the 1970s and early 1980s.

Government policy encouraged cooperation and specialization among the various agricultural units. Both informal and formal arrangements existed. Mutual aid in terms of machinery or labor for particular tasks had long been practiced among neighboring

farms, and this continued under the collectivized farming system. More formal arrangements took shape in the 1960s and expanded in the 1970s. Many of these took the form of "joint agricultural enterprises," entities that somewhat resembled stock companies. Some cooperative organizations specialized in such activities as fattening of hogs or cattle, production of eggs, or drying and production of feed mixtures. Others offered agrochemical, construction, land improvement, or marketing services. A large number engaged in multiple activities.

Management of most large farms is organized hierarchically on three levels. On large cooperative farms, an assembly of members or their elected representatives is legally responsible for farm operation, although a committee and its chairman carry out daily management of operation. In practice, the assembly functions largely to ratify decisions already made by the chairman. As cooperative farms have increased in size, the authority of the assembly of members has declined. "Boards of economic management," consisting of the chairman and a staff of experts on various operations, have taken over the most important management functions. The second echelon of management in large cooperatives or state farms has responsibility for smaller operations in either a specific area or a particular branch of production. The third level of management organizes the labor force performing the farm work, such as the field brigades. The chairman of a cooperative or the director of a state farm holds most of the power in the organization, and the subordinate levels are severely restricted in their decision making.

Crop cultivation has slowly become less important in the gross output of the agricultural sector. Cropping and livestock were almost equal branches in 1960, but by 1985 crops accounted for only 43 percent of gross agricultural output compared with 57 percent for livestock products. Main crop products in the 1980s were wheat, barley, potatoes, sugar beets, rye, and hops (an important export crop). Sugar, derived from sugar beet production, is both a significant export crop (especially to hard currency areas) and an important item of domestic consumption. Fruit and vegetable acreage accounted for only a small part of the cultivated area. Since the 1950s, the supply of livestock has gradually increased because of government encouragement. Producers have been urged to meet the demand for meat that accompanied the rise in income levels of the population. After the collectivization of agriculture, raising livestock increasingly became a large-scale operation, usually undertaken in conjunction with cropping. The major constraint to livestock expansion has been a shortage of fodder and feed

mixtures, although government pricing policies and the labor demands of animal husbandry have also tended to deter efforts. During the 1970s, progress was made in expanding the supplies of fodder and feed mixtures and the country's processing capacity. However, it remained necessary to supplement the supply of feed and fodder through imports, which became increasingly burdensome because they came from noncommunist countries and thus required payment in convertible currencies.

The basic aim of agricultural policy in the mid-1980s, with regard to both crop and livestock production, was self-sufficiency. Record harvests in 1984 and 1985 made it possible virtually to halt grain imports, which had amounted to about 500,000 tons per year. During the Seventh Five-Year Plan, the government was able to reduce imports of feed grains to one-third the level of the previous five-year plan without causing a reduction in per capita meat consumption, an achievement suggesting that the efficiency of animal husbandry had improved. Performance in the agricultural sector as a whole remained uneven in the 1980s, however. Although some outstanding farms were obtaining excellent grain yields, the uneven quality of farm management contributed to large discrepancies in performance between farms.

## **Transportation**

Czechoslovakia is one of Europe's major transit countries for north-south movement. In 1985 Czechoslovakia had a highly developed transportation system consisting of 13,130 kilometers of railroad tracks, 73,809 kilometers of roads, and 475 kilometers of inland waterways, according to official sources (see fig. 13). The country also had 1,448 kilometers of pipelines for transport of crude oil, 1,500 kilometers for refined products, and 7,500 kilometers for natural gas. The state owned and subsidized the means of transport, and passenger fares were among the lowest in the world. In 1985 cargo movement totaled over 99 billion ton-kilometers. Of the nearly 90 billion ton-kilometers of cargo-carrying service performed by public transportation, railroads handled about 81 percent, roads 13 percent, inland waterways 5 percent, and civil aviation less than 1 percent. Since the 1970s, in an effort to save fuel, the government had been encouraging the displacement of freight transport from the highways to the railroads.

Major improvements were made in the transport infrastructure after World War II, particularly with regard to the railroads, and the result was a relatively extensive and dense road and railroad network. In developing the transportation system, the government's primary goal was to facilitate movement of industrial goods;

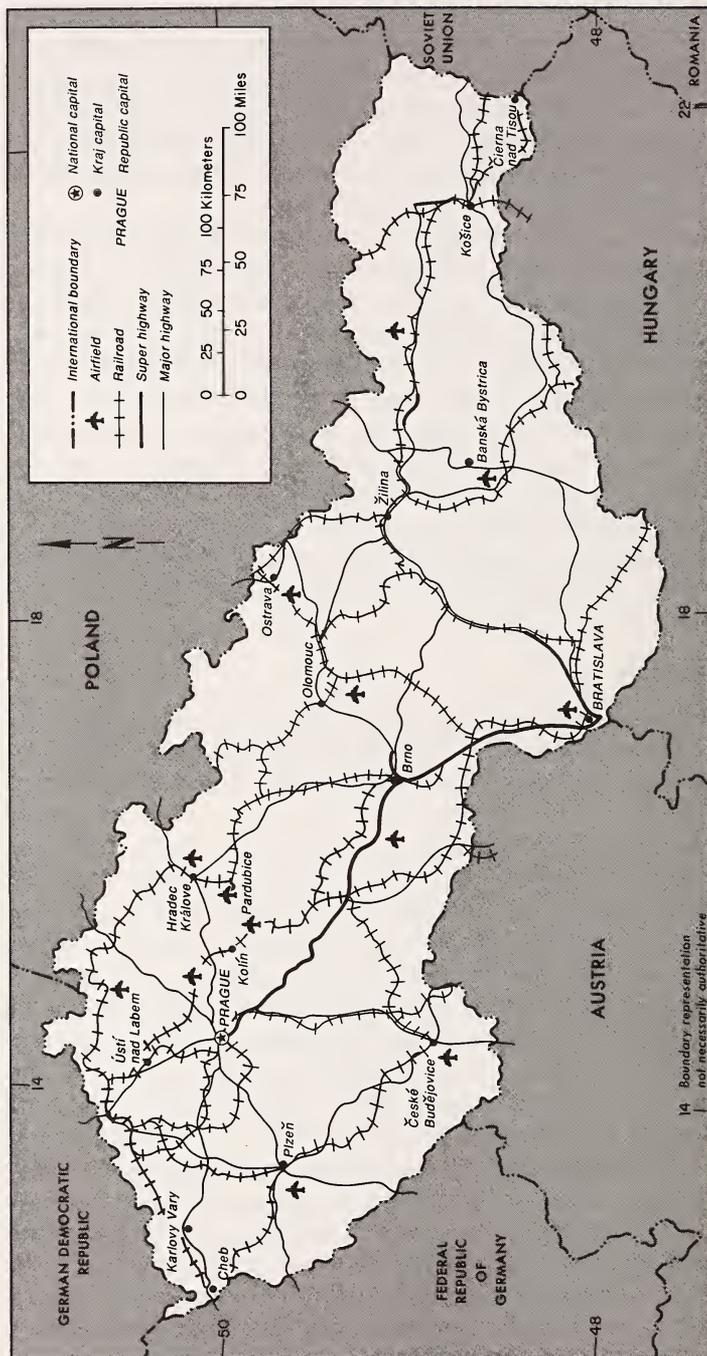


Figure 13. Transportation System, 1987

passenger traffic, while not neglected, received secondary consideration. Nevertheless, in the 1980s transportation frequently was a bottleneck in the economy because of low operating efficiency and long-term inadequate investment. In the mid-1980s, both rail and highway transport systems were in need of substantial upgrading. Although the shortcomings of the systems were well known and received considerable public attention, limited funding slowed the pace of improvement. During the 1981–85 plan period, for example, almost 97 percent of the funding available for railroads—Kčs36 billion (for value of the koruna—Kčs—see Glossary)—had to be spent on repair and replacement, leaving scant resources for major improvement projects. In 1985 about 22 percent of the tracks in the rail network were double track. About 28 percent were electrified, including the main east-west Friendship Railway linking Prague with the Soviet border, which formed the basis of the network. Situated near the center of Europe, Czechoslovakia had rail links to surrounding countries, and transit traffic moved in all directions. Many of the difficulties of the railroads were caused by lack of new equipment, poor maintenance of tracks and rolling stock (partly caused by the lack of spare parts), an insufficient number of skilled workers, and constant pressure to keep operating. The railroad management also had to cope with outmoded station facilities.

The highway system has received less attention than the railroads during the decades since World War II. Most improvements have focused on local roads, and, in general, the country has been slow to develop modern highways. Nevertheless, highway cargo movement increased rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s, doubling between 1970 and 1979. It was only in 1980 that a modern superhighway was completed linking the three largest cities (Prague, Brno, and Bratislava), a distance of 317 kilometers. This project had started in 1938 and was left uncompleted from the early 1940s to the late 1960s. In 1985 approximately 482 kilometers, or somewhat less than 1 percent of the road network, consisted of superhighways. Public officials acknowledged that the status and maintenance of the system remained inadequate for the country's needs.

As a landlocked country, Czechoslovakia has no maritime ports. In the mid-1980s, the country's overseas trade passed through East German, West German, Polish, and Yugoslav ports. The Labe and Danube rivers were both navigable in Czechoslovakia. In the 1980s, the Vltava was carrying increasing amounts of traffic, and efforts were underway to make it more extensively navigable. Principal river ports were located at Prague, Děčín, Komárno, and Bratislava.

Civil aviation played a particularly significant role in the movement of passengers. Czechoslovak Airlines, the state airline company, serviced most European cities and also provided domestic services. A regional airline, Slov-Air, headquartered in Bratislava, provided additional domestic service. In 1985 civil aviation transported 1.2 million travelers. About 90 percent of this transportation service consisted of international flight.

In the mid-1980s, Czechoslovakia had a relatively well developed communications system. According to official data, there were 3,591,045 telephones in the country in 1985, about 23.2 telephones for every 100 persons, the greatest density of telephones among Comecon countries. There were 4,233,702 licensed radios, or one for every 3.7 persons, and 4,368,050 licensed televisions, or one for every 3.6 persons. Both journalism and broadcasting were closely supervised by the government, but many inhabitants could receive West German or Austrian television and radio transmissions as well as Czechoslovak broadcasts.

## **Banking and Finance**

The koruna (Kčs), or crown, is the national currency and consists of 100 halers. In 1986 the currency continued to be convertible only under restricted conditions and at official rates. Violation of exchange regulations constituted a serious offense. The koruna could be used only within the country and was not used in foreign trade. In 1987 the official, or commercial, exchange rate was Kčs5.4 per US\$1; the tourist, or noncommercial, rate was Kčs10.5 per US\$1. The koruna was legally defined in terms of 123 milligrams of gold, which provided a historical basis for the commercial rate.

At the head of the country's banking system was the State Bank of Czechoslovakia. The State Bank was the central bank, the government's financial agent, the country's commercial bank, an investment bank, and the clearing agent for collection notices. It also supervised the other banking in the country and, in conjunction with specific ministries, formulated the financial plan for Czechoslovakia. The other banks, also state owned, were subordinate to the State Bank and relegated to special functions. The Commercial Bank of Czechoslovakia was primarily the bank for foreign currency transactions. Three additional banks—two of which were savings banks, one for each of the republics, providing credit to individuals—completed the banking system in 1980.

The main function of the banking system was to act as the government's agent in implementing the financial plan, an important part of which consisted of expanding and contracting credit to meet the economy's needs. The central authorities controlled most

investments directly, and the national plan regulated production. The State Bank acted as a supervisory agent in extending credit to the enterprises, ensuring that the investments met plan goals. The bulk of bank credit was for working capital, largely utilized to finance the purchase of materials and the sale of finished products. The powers of the State Bank appeared to be somewhat limited, however, since credit was extended according to guidelines for planned production. The central authorities set interest rates, which neither reflected the cost of capital nor appreciably affected the flow of credit. Instead, beginning in the 1970s, interest rates were differentiated to accomplish objectives of the plan. Interest rates were low for enterprises modernizing a production process. Punitive rates were used if firms deviated from plan goals. In the mid-1980s, the greatest portion of investment credits went to the industrial sector, followed by agriculture, construction, and retail trade.

The banking system operated within the framework of the financial plan. Major elements of the financial plan included allocation to consumption and investment, foreign and domestic financing of investment, and wage and price changes. Planning authorities were in a position to use the centralized banking system to carry out major corrective measures, as occurred in 1953 when inflationary pressures became serious and the population's accumulated savings were largely wiped out by a conversion of the currency. After this experience, officials placed stricter controls on investments, permitting real wages and the standard of living to rise gradually. But in the late 1970s, and particularly in the early 1980s, the worsening terms of trade, bottlenecks in the economy, and the need for large investments in energy and industry combined to limit the allocations for consumption.

Imposition of the Soviet model introduced a chronic inflationary bias into the Czechoslovak economy, although the inflation was not necessarily reflected in prices. Control of prices (only private food produce, especially fruit and vegetables, were priced freely) repeatedly produced inflationary manifestations in other areas, such as shortages in the market and increased savings by the population. Although officials generally limited the rise in prices (causing price indexes to advance slowly), by the mid-1970s prices had to be adjusted upward more frequently. This trend continued into the 1980s, and major food price increases occurred in 1982.

In addition to the banking system, another major financial tool for implementing economic policies and the annual plan was the central and republic government budgets. The Czechoslovak government published little budget information. Western

observers believed that small surpluses of revenues were more common than deficits, however. Budget revenues were derived primarily from state economic organizations and the turnover tax. Income taxes provided a small part of revenues. Other minor revenue sources included agricultural taxes and customs duties. The planning authorities redistributed these budget funds according to the plan guidelines, using the budget to encourage certain sectors through subsidies or investment funds. Official policy, for example, stressed rapid development of the Slovak economy, which required the transfer of funds collected in the Czech lands. In 1983 the Slovak Socialist Republic received a fractionally larger share of total revenue (34 percent) than population figures alone would have warranted (32 percent of the country's total population lived in the Slovak Socialist Republic).

Central authorities set prices on over 1.5 million kinds of goods. State enterprises were theoretically autonomous financial entities that covered costs and profits from sales. Because the government set production quotas, wage rates, and prices for the products manufactured and the inputs used in the process, however, managers had little freedom to manage. In the 1950s, the government had collected nearly all enterprise funds above costs for redirection according to its priorities. After the 1958 reforms, enterprises obtained a little more control over surplus funds, although the government continued to control the amount of the surplus. In the 1980s, the government was encouraging enterprises to undertake modernization and other limited investment from their own funds and bank credit and to rely less on budget funds.

The turnover tax, another major source of budget revenue, was originally employed in the Soviet Union as a simple and effective method of collecting most of the funds needed by the government without requiring extensive bookkeeping and estimating. It was introduced in Czechoslovakia in 1953 and lost its importance as the chief source of revenue only in the late 1960s, when other levies extracted funds from state enterprises. The tax was collected on goods destined for retail, the rate varying according to the difference between the producer's costs plus approved margin and the selling price as specified by pricing officials. Retail prices of manufactured consumer goods, such as clothing and particularly tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, and sugar, were substantially higher than those of such basic necessities as potatoes, milk, and eggs. The turnover tax appeared to be both a source of revenue and a tool used to influence consumption patterns.

*Grounds of the  
Brno Trade Fair*  
Courtesy  
Czechoslovak Life



## Foreign Trade

An important characteristic of the Soviet model that was imposed on Czechoslovakia in 1948 was the attempt to insulate the domestic economy and minimize the impact of world economic trends. The system accomplished this in part by severely restricting foreign currency transactions and confining them to official channels at fixed and favorable exchange rates. Within a few years, the exchange rate had lost its historical basis and no longer bore any direct relationship to purchasing power in other currencies. The Soviet model tended to treat foreign trade as a minor aspect of planning. Imports were simply those materials needed to meet the net material balances for the economy, while those commodities that were least needed for the national plan were surrendered for export. Cost was not a real consideration because there was no basis for estimating cost; essentially the central authorities made a political decision that commodity X was needed enough to give up commodity Y for it. Such decisions were often of minor importance in the large Soviet economy. The same was not true in Czechoslovakia, where foreign trade played a prominent role in the national economy. The establishment of state-owned foreign trade enterprises, which served as buffers between foreign companies and the domestic producers of exports and consumers of imports, further isolated the domestic economy. The foreign trade companies bought Czechoslovak

goods for export at domestic prices and sold foreign goods to Czechoslovak customers at domestic prices; but the other half of these transactions, involving actual foreign trade, took place in foreign currencies in foreign markets. The government budget then made adjustments to compensate for any unwanted gains and losses caused by varying foreign and domestic prices.

The foreign trade enterprises successfully carried out the government's policy of rapidly redirecting the bulk of the country's foreign trade from noncommunist countries to communist countries in the period from 1948 to 1953. Many observers contended, however, that the new system had seriously adverse effects on the economy. Isolating domestic producers of export products—primarily manufactured goods—from developments abroad slowed the introduction of new technology, the upgrading of the appearance of products, and the development of sales and service staffs with adequate parts inventories. Isolation hampered the development of export industries and products, reinforcing the autarkic bias of the Soviet model.

After Stalin's death in 1953, Czechoslovak trade with Western countries gradually revived, although it still was far below prewar levels. More than two-thirds of the foreign trade continued to be with Comecon member states. Because of its relatively advanced industrial position within Comecon, Czechoslovakia initially had a secure market for its machinery and equipment exports. As years passed, however, the Soviet Union absorbed growing portions of Czechoslovakia's export capacity and very soon the country came to depend on the Soviet Union for imports of raw materials as well.

By the 1960s, it became clear that the country's dependence on foreign trade was substantial and that a restructuring of the economy was necessary. In the 1970s, the government authorized a number of large enterprises to deal directly, or through affiliations with Czechoslovak foreign trade companies, with foreign purchasers of their products. To encourage further export and modernization, the central authorities permitted Czechoslovak firms to retain a regulated portion of export proceeds. Authorities also acknowledged that the economy seriously lagged behind the noncommunist industrialized countries in application of new technologies. In response, they increased imports of Western products and processes that incorporated advanced technology.

In the mid-1970s, the terms of trade for Czechoslovakia began to deteriorate rapidly. In 1975 the pricing system used to set values on imports and exports in trade between communist countries was adjusted to make them more current and closer to world prices (see Appendix B). The adjustment raised the price of fuels and raw

materials (primarily Czechoslovak imports) much more than it did manufactured goods (the country's main export). The same trend manifested itself in trade with Western industrialized countries. During the late 1970s, the terms of trade continued to worsen; greater and greater quantities of exports were required to purchase the same volume of imports. The combination of worsening terms of trade and the difficulty of expanding exports caused Czechoslovakia's trade imbalance to grow in almost every area. Between 1975 and 1979, the country's excess of imports over exports was nearly US\$1.2 billion with the Soviet Union, US\$690 million with Eastern Europe, and US\$3.3 billion with noncommunist developed countries. These imbalances emerged despite efforts to conserve fuel and raw material use, to slow the volume of other imports, and to increase exports.

During the 1970s, Czechoslovakia, like other countries of Eastern Europe, turned to West European credit sources to obtain financial help for imports as well as longer term investments in modern technology. Czechoslovakia did not publish information on these credits. However, one Western estimate placed Czechoslovakia's hard currency debt to the West at the end of 1979 at US\$4 billion gross and about US\$3.1 billion net. Czechoslovak officials had been much more prudent in building up a foreign currency debt than had several other East European nations, however, and the country's credit standing remained good.

Beginning in 1980, Czechoslovakia was able to achieve a trade surplus with noncommunist countries, but only by drastically curtailing imports. When Western banks tightened credit to Eastern Europe in 1982 (largely in reaction to Polish insolvency), Czechoslovakia redoubled its efforts to curb imports and pay off its debt. This cautious attitude continued to prevail even after the creditors' policy eased. The government's stance did have the disadvantage of depriving Czechoslovakia of potentially helpful Western technology. However, at the end of 1984, Czechoslovakia could boast one of the lowest net hard-currency debts per capita (about US\$15 per inhabitant) in Eastern Europe; only Bulgaria's debt was lower. With the Soviet Union, by contrast, Czechoslovakia continued to run a substantial deficit.

In the mid-1980s, according to official statistics, Czechoslovak trade activities remained overwhelmingly oriented toward intra-Comecon trade. Within Comecon, in keeping with the plan for regional specialization set forth in the Comprehensive Program of 1971, Czechoslovakia concentrated on production of machine tools and electric railroad locomotives; the traditionally strong Czechoslovak armaments industry also remained important. In 1985 almost

78 percent of total Czechoslovak foreign trade turnover was with Comecon members. Trade with "developed capitalist countries," by contrast, was listed at just under 16 percent; and developing countries accounted for over 6 percent. Most Western analysts believed that official Czechoslovak methods of calculation tended to overstate considerably the value of trade conducted in transferable rubles, i.e., with Comecon partners, and to underestimate the value of hard currency trade with noncommunist countries. Nevertheless, the general structure of Czechoslovakia's foreign trade was unmistakable.

Czechoslovak trade was heavily concentrated among a relatively small group of countries. Five countries—the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Poland, Hungary, and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany)—accounted for 71.7 percent of all foreign trade in 1985, according to official statistics. The Soviet Union exerted a powerful influence over the Czechoslovak economy. In 1985 it accounted for 44.8 percent of foreign trade turnover, according to official statistics (see table 10, Appendix A). In 1985 by far the most important exports from Czechoslovakia to the Soviet Union were machinery and various kinds of equipment, such as machine tools, power generating equipment, instruments and laboratory equipment, agricultural machinery, railroad rolling stock and other transport equipment, and equipment for the food, textile, and chemical industries. Such items made up over 60 percent of exports to the Soviet Union. Other minor items were ores and metals, clothing and footwear, chemicals, furniture, domestic appliances, and beverages. Czechoslovak imports from the Soviet Union, by contrast, consisted primarily of raw materials and energy-related items; petroleum and petroleum products accounted for almost 43 percent of import value, and natural gas and electricity totaled 18 percent. Other imported products were machinery and transport equipment, representing almost 10 percent of total imports; metal ores, coal and coke, and pig iron and ferroalloys made up almost 8 percent.

Second, third, and fourth in order of rank in Czechoslovak foreign trade turnover were East Germany, Poland, and Hungary. Other East European Comecon countries—Bulgaria and Romania—were also of considerable importance (seventh and ninth in rank, respectively). Czechoslovak exports to these countries in 1985, according to official data, consisted mainly of machinery and transport equipment, chemical products, and (especially to Hungary) coal and briquettes. Imports likewise were primarily machinery and transport equipment, chemical products, and

various other manufactured goods. Czechoslovakia also imported food and animal products from Hungary.

Among noncommunist countries, an important trade partner was West Germany (fifth in rank). Principal Czechoslovak exports to West Germany in 1985 were various manufactured goods (especially paper and paperboard, textiles, and iron and steel products), mineral fuel products (briquettes, coke, and refined petroleum products), and chemical products. Principal imports from West Germany were machinery (textile- and leather-working machinery, machine tools, and electrical machinery and instruments), chemical products, and various manufactured goods. Other significant trading partners were Austria, Britain, Italy, and France. Engineering products, which accounted for more than 50 percent of all Czechoslovak exports, had a share of only 10 to 11 percent in noncommunist trade, owing to very strong and successful West European competition. Instead, consumer goods, metallurgical products, chemicals, and fuels and raw materials were more important. With regard to imports from noncommunist countries, Czechoslovakia in 1986 was especially interested in the high technology offered by Western Europe and Japan (twenty-fifth in rank). Particularly in demand were products from engineering, electronics, and electrical engineering industries, as well as biotechnology and pharmaceuticals.

As of 1985, Czechoslovakia also conducted substantial amounts of trade with Yugoslavia, China, Syria, and Cuba. Czechoslovak trade with the United States (twenty-third in rank) was modest. In 1985 Czechoslovak exports to the United States included, among other things, footwear and jewelry, glassware, steel bars, wire, shaped steel, prepared or preserved meats, and hops. In 1985 imports consisted, among other things, of raw materials (hides and skins, seeds for producing vegetable oil, and ores and concentrates of base metals), specialized industrial machinery, and printed materials. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Czechoslovakia had imported substantial amounts of grain from the United States, but more abundant domestic harvests enabled the country to reduce these imports in the mid-1980s.

## **The Eighth Five-Year Plan, 1986–90**

The Eighth Five-Year Plan called for further “intensification” within the economy. The plan focused on raising the quality and technological level of production, lowering the cost of energy and materials in relation to output, increasing labor productivity, accelerating the pace of innovation at the workplace, improving discipline, and continuing the “structural” shift of the economy

from productive activities requiring great consumption of energy to more advanced technologies and capital-intensive industry. National income was to rise 19 percent, or just over 3.5 percent annually on average. Plans called for industrial output to grow 15.8 percent, an average increase of about 3 percent yearly, while personal consumption was to grow by only 11.9 percent. Modest as these targets were, they were higher than the results achieved during the Seventh Five-Year Plan. Only agriculture was to grow at a rate slower than that of the previous plan period; with a total increase of 6.9 percent, it would average just over 1 percent growth annually. Investment, while still low, would increase 10.4 percent during the plan (as compared with 2.5 percent in the 1981-85 period). Special attention was to be given to the machine-building and electronics industries, the chemical and metallurgical industries, construction of nuclear power plants and expansion of the natural gas network, and environment-related projects. The plan called for exports to grow at a higher rate than the national income. The government did not plan any substantial borrowing in hard currency, concentrating instead on paying off its relatively modest (US\$2 billion) debt to the West.

The plan called for achievement of the desired growth largely through improved labor productivity; 92 to 95 percent of the growth was to occur in this way. Material costs were to fall by 1.5 percent yearly on average, and specific consumption of fuel was to fall by 2.9 percent. Achievement of both of these goals would require greater savings than had been possible during the 1981-85 plan period.

In the mid-1980s, Czechoslovak leaders acknowledged the persisting weaknesses in the country's economy and its need to modernize more rapidly. Although the government announced no major reforms in conjunction with the Eighth Five-Year Plan, in 1987 an experiment was begun involving about 120 industrial enterprises. These enterprises were to receive only key planning figures from the central authorities; otherwise, they were to have increased autonomy in planning production, seeking profitable forms for their activities, and managing their own finances. The reforms represented a significant step beyond the modest "Set of Measures" of 1981, which had retained strict central controls. Western analysts viewed the experiment as a cautious response to the more ambitious reforms sponsored by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union.

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For English readers, a valuable source of information is John N. Stevens's *Czechoslovakia at the Crossroads*, which surveys the period from 1948 to the early 1980s. Much of the statistical data concerning economic policy and performance in this chapter has been drawn from Stevens's survey. Official statistics may be found in the annual *Bulletin* of the Státní banka československá. The Foreign Broadcast Information Service's *Daily Report: Eastern Europe* provides current reporting of statistics and economic developments carried in the Czechoslovak media. Issues of current concern to Czechoslovak economists are presented in the commentaries and essays of *Czechoslovak Economic Digest*. The United States Congress Joint Economic Committee regularly prints collections of articles on Eastern Europe; as of mid-1987, the most recent collection was the three-volume *East European Economies: Slow Growth in the 1980s*, published in 1985 and 1986.

The standard sources of economic statistics in the Czech language are the yearly *Statistická ročenka ČSSR* and the *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR*. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)



## Chapter 4. Government and Politics





*Czechoslovak coat of arms*

IN 1987 CZECHOSLOVAKIA completed its eighteenth year under the leadership of Gustáv Husák. Placed in power by the Soviets eight months after the August 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Husák regime moved quickly to undo the policies of the previous government, led by Alexander Dubček, and to eliminate what remained of the reform movement known as the Prague Spring. Within two years, Husák's policies of "normalization" succeeded in restoring centralized party control in Czechoslovakia and reestablishing Czechoslovakia's status as a loyal Soviet ally prepared to follow Moscow's directives in both international and domestic affairs.

The normalization process begun after the 1968 invasion set the stage for the emergence in the 1970s of an extremely orthodox political environment. Normalization extended to almost every aspect of Czechoslovak life. Politically, above all else, it meant the reinforcement of the absolute monopoly of power held by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. In the economy, it meant the entrenchment of a command economy that left virtually no room for market forces. In the social sphere, it meant party control of all associational groupings, education, and the printed word. Finally, in the area of national security, it meant increased police powers and the near subordination of the Czechoslovak People's Army to the Soviet-dominated Warsaw Pact.

Czechoslovakia's political orthodoxy continued in the 1980s. Despite rampant bureaucratization, poor economic performance, inefficient administration, and widespread popular apathy, the Husák government introduced no significant changes in organization, personnel, or policies from the early 1970s through the mid-1980s. Only in early 1987, undoubtedly in response to pressure from the new leadership in Moscow, did the Husák government announce that Czechoslovakia was preparing to introduce Soviet-style reforms aimed at improving Czechoslovakia's faltering economy.

## **Political Setting**

### **Geopolitical Considerations**

Lying between the Germans and the Russians, the Czechoslovak state has had its political life in modern times determined, to a considerable extent, by geopolitical factors. In the 1980s,

Czechoslovakia continued to demonstrate subservience to the policies of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in domestic and especially in foreign affairs.

Czechoslovakia's political alignment with the Soviet Union began during World War II. In 1945 it was the Soviet Red Army that liberated Prague from the Nazis. The continued presence of the Red Army in Czechoslovakia until 1946 facilitated the communists' efforts to reorganize local government, the militia, and the Czechoslovak army and to place communists in key positions. Following the February 1948 coup d'état in which the communists seized power, Soviet influence over Czechoslovakia grew markedly. It was abetted through formal alliances, such as the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) and the Warsaw Pact, and through direct intervention, in the 1968 invasion (see *Intervention*, ch. 1).

In the immediate post-World War II period, many Czechoslovak citizens supported the alliance with the Soviet Union. They did not anticipate, however, the rigidities of the Stalinist rule that followed. The people of Czechoslovakia had known authoritarian rule and a lack of civil rights during centuries of domination by the Hapsburgs and under Nazi rule during the war. But the extent of the repression during the early years of the rule by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—the KSC) was unprecedented. In the early 1950s, some 900,000 persons were purged from the ranks of the KSC; about 100,000 were jailed for such political crimes as "bourgeois nationalism." Antonín Novotný became first secretary of the KSC in 1953, the year of Stalin's death, and continued to rule in Stalin's rigidly authoritarian style for fifteen years. In practice (though not in rhetoric), Novotný ignored Nikita Khrushchev's 1956 denunciation of Stalin and made no attempt to imitate the Soviet Union's decentralization of communist party rule. A considerable portion of the party hierarchy did take note of the Soviet decentralization, however. In 1968 they removed Novotný from power and initiated the Prague Spring (see *The Prague Spring*, 1968, ch. 1).

### **Ethnic Considerations**

Another essential ingredient in Czechoslovak political culture has been the varying political aspirations of the nation's two major ethnic groups, the Czechs and the Slovaks (see *Ethnic Groups*, ch. 2). Slovaks were never as satisfied as the Czechs with the nation created in 1918 because they felt dominated by the numerically superior Czech nationals. Slovak nationalists fought diligently throughout the 1920s for greater Slovak autonomy, and in the next decade they succeeded in obtaining constitutional changes granting

more autonomy to Slovakia. In March 1939, Slovakia, encouraged by Hitler, seceded from the new state and allied itself with Germany, calling itself the Slovak Republic. Although nominally independent under the leadership of Monsignor Jozef Tiso, the new Slovak state in reality functioned as a Nazi satellite. After Hitler's defeat, Slovakia was reunited with the Czech lands.

The communist takeover in 1948 did not lead to equitable treatment of Czechs and Slovaks. The Stalinist purges of the early 1950s were particularly harsh on Slovaks; indeed, the definition of "bourgeois nationalism" coincided quite precisely with the aspirations of Slovak nationalism. Among the Slovak leaders arrested and jailed in the early 1950s was Gustáv Husák. Husák later was rehabilitated and eventually named general secretary (the title changed from first secretary in 1971) of the KSC and president of the republic.

Slovak aspirations for greater autonomy played an important role in the political environment during the 1960s. The reform movement associated with the Prague Spring advocated greater independence for Slovakia. The 1968 constitutional amendments redefined Czechoslovakia as a federation of two equal states, the Czech nation and the Slovak nation, and increased the responsibilities of the constituent republics. However, this decentralization of power did not survive the 1968 invasion and subsequent normalization policies. On paper, the federation remained and the Slovak Socialist Republic retained its separate communist party organization and republic-level government organs. In practice, whatever power the 1968 amendments gave to the Slovaks was diminished when the Husák regime reestablished centralized party and government control in the 1970s.

## **The 1968 Invasion**

The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 was a pivotal event in Czechoslovakia's political development. The August intervention by forces from the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary marked the beginning of the end of the Prague Spring and the reformist policies introduced by the Dubček regime. It also set the stage for the reemergence in Czechoslovakia of a pro-Soviet regime and a politically orthodox environment.

In January 1968, Alexander Dubček, who since 1963 had been first secretary of the Communist Party of Slovakia (Komunistická strana Slovenska—KSS), was chosen to replace Antonín Novotný as first secretary of the KSC. Dubček was not then the leader of the KSC reformers but rather was a compromise selection. The

removal of Novotný triggered an outpouring of demands for further changes in all sectors of society. The drive for reform centered on four broad issues: the overall question of political structure and participation, justice and civil liberties, Czech-Slovak relations, and economic organization and planning. In April 1968 the KSČ Central Committee issued its so-called Action Program, which outlined steps toward constructing a "Czechoslovak way to socialism." within the framework of a socialist society ruled by the communist party, the program attempted to decentralize and democratize the system of authority by reducing the role of the KSČ in national life and transferring greater responsibility to the elected bodies of government. Other goals of the reform were to introduce strong guarantees of civil liberties and justice by establishing a system of checks and balances and reducing the power of police organs; to construct a more equitable relationship between Czechs and Slovaks by granting greater autonomy to the latter; and to institute a decentralized planning apparatus with aspects of market socialism.

A number of public opinion polls taken at the time indicated that the reforms envisioned in the Action Program received an extraordinary measure of public support. It was for this reason that they aroused deep concern among the leadership of the Soviet Union and neighboring communist nations. Those leaders feared that the reformist policies in Czechoslovakia would result in the erosion of the authority of the communist party, which in turn would weaken Czechoslovakia's commitment to socialist unity and to the Warsaw Pact and Comecon alliances. They also worried that the implementation of reforms in Czechoslovakia would lead to calls for similar reforms in the Soviet Union and other East European nations.

During the night of August 20-21, the armies of five Warsaw Pact nations invaded and occupied Czechoslovakia. The KSČ Presidium issued a statement over Prague radio condemning the invasion and appealing to the people to remain calm and the army not to resist. No armed resistance was forthcoming. Instead, outrage at the massive invasion was expressed nonviolently: road signs were altered and removed to slow the oncoming invaders; radio transmitters were repeatedly moved to elude takeover; and foreign soldiers were refused service in stores and restaurants and were engaged in heated arguments with Czechoslovak citizens from whom they vainly sought cooperation.

As the Warsaw Pact troops moved into Prague, Soviet security forces arrested Dubček and other top party leaders and flew them to Moscow. Meanwhile, despite the presence of Warsaw Pact troops in Prague, the National Assembly met August 21-27, and delegates managed to convene the "Extraordinary" Congress of the

Czechoslovak Communist Party. Dubček's supporters in the government refused to recognize the Soviet-imposed government and instead demanded to join Dubček in directly negotiating with the Soviets. The talks resulted in the signing of the Moscow Protocol, an uneasy compromise allowing Dubček to remain in power but also requiring the dismissal of some reformists, a tightening of press control, a commitment to no persecution of pro-Soviet communists, and increased Soviet control over KSČ appointments. After signing the Moscow Protocol, Dubček was allowed to return to Prague, where he resumed his duties as first secretary of the party.

Dubček's efforts to maintain political control and to salvage the reform program were stymied by the new conditions imposed by the Soviets. Furthermore, popular resistance to the Soviet invasion continued and was reflected in such episodes as the public suicide of a university student and the vandalizing of Prague's Aeroflot office. All of these factors kept tensions high and led to Dubček's ouster in April 1969. He was replaced by the more orthodox, Soviet-backed Gustáv Husák.

### **The Policy of Normalization**

Once in power, the Husák regime acted quickly to "normalize" the country's political situation. The chief objectives of Husák's normalization were the restoration of firm party rule and the reestablishment of Czechoslovakia's status as a committed member of the socialist bloc. The normalization process involved five interrelated steps: consolidate the Husák leadership and remove reformers from leadership positions; revoke or modify the laws enacted by the reform movement; reestablish centralized control over the economy; reinstate the power of police authorities; and expand Czechoslovakia's ties with other socialist nations. Within a week of assuming power, Husák began to consolidate his leadership by ordering extensive purges of reformists still occupying key positions in the mass media, judiciary, social and mass organizations, lower party organs, and, finally, the highest levels of the KSČ. In the fall of 1969, twenty-nine liberals on the Central Committee were replaced by conservatives. Among the liberals ousted was Dubček, who was dropped from the Presidium (the following year Dubček was expelled from the party; he subsequently became a minor functionary in Slovakia, where he still lived in 1987). Husák also consolidated his leadership by appointing potential rivals to the new government positions created as a result of the 1968 Constitutional Law of Federation.

Once it had consolidated power, the Husák regime moved quickly to implement other normalization policies. In the two years

following the invasion, the new leadership revoked some reformist laws (such as the National Front Act and the Press Act) and simply did not enforce others. It returned economic enterprises, which had been given substantial independence during the Prague Spring, to centralized control through contracts based on central planning and production quotas. It reinstated extreme police control, a step that was reflected in the harsh treatment of demonstrators marking the first-year anniversary of the August intervention. Finally, Husák stabilized Czechoslovakia's relations with its allies by arranging frequent intrabloc exchanges and visits and redirecting Czechoslovakia's foreign economic ties toward greater involvement with socialist nations. By May 1971, party chief Husák could report to the delegates attending the officially sanctioned Fourteenth Party Congress that the process of normalization had been completed satisfactorily and that Czechoslovakia was ready to proceed toward higher forms of socialism (see National Organization, this ch.).

### **A Climate of Orthodoxy**

The objectives of normalization were the restoration of firm KSĈ rule and the reestablishment of Czechoslovakia's position in the socialist bloc. Its result, however, was a political environment that placed primary emphasis on the maintenance of a stable party leadership and its strict control over the population.

A remarkable feature of the KSĈ leadership under Husák has been the absence of significant changes in personnel. The stability of the leadership during the late 1970s and the first half of the 1980s could be attributed not to unanimity in political opinion but rather to practical compromise among different factions vying to retain their leadership positions. Husák's leadership, then, was based not on any ability he may have had to rally opinion but rather on his skill in securing consensuses that were in the mutual interest of a coalition of party leaders.

Husák led the conservative (sometimes called the "moderate" or "pragmatic") wing of the KSĈ leadership. An important Slovak communist party functionary from 1943 to 1950, Husák was arrested in 1951 and sentenced to three years—later to life imprisonment—for "bourgeois nationalism" during the Stalinist purges of the era. Released in 1960 and rehabilitated in 1963, Husák rose to be a deputy prime minister under Dubček, whom he later denounced, and was named KSĈ first secretary in April 1969 and president of the republic in July 1975. Above all, Husák has been a survivor who learned to accommodate the powerful political forces surrounding him.



*Powder Tower and Municipal House, Prague*

Other prominent conservatives who remained in power in 1987 included Lubomír Štrougal, premier of Czechoslovakia; Peter Colotka, premier of the Slovak Socialist Republic; Jozef Lenárt, first secretary of the KSS; and Josef Kempný, chairman of the Czech National Council. These leaders generally supported the reforms instituted under Dubček during the late 1960s but successfully made the transition to orthodox party rule following the invasion and Dubček's decline from power. Subsequently, they adopted a more flexible stance regarding economic reform and dissident activity.

Opposed to the conservatives within the KSČ leadership were the so-called hard-liners. Their leader was Vasil Bil'ak, a Ukrainian from Slovakia who had been a member of the Presidium since 1968 and was chairman of the party's Ideological Commission. Other hard-liners in the top party leadership included Karel Hoffman, a Central Committee secretary and Presidium member; Antonín Kapek, Presidium member; Jan Fojtík, secretary; Alois Indra, Presidium member and chairman of the Federal Assembly (replaced the National Assembly under 1968 federation law); and, on most issues, Miloš Jakeš, chairman of the Economic Commission and Presidium member. These hard-liners opposed economic and political reforms and took a harsh stand on dissent.

After the 1968 invasion, Husák successfully ruled over what was essentially a coalition of the conservative and hard-line factions within the top party leadership. The method by which he ruled was commonly summed up as "reluctant terror." It involved careful adherence to the Soviet Union's policy objectives and the use of what was perceived as the minimum amount of repression at home necessary to fulfill these objectives and prevent a return to Dubček-style reformism. As one result, the membership of the KSČ leadership has changed very little since 1971. The Sixteenth Party Congress in 1981 reelected the incumbent members of the Presidium and Secretariat and elevated one candidate member, Jakeš, to full membership in the Presidium. The Seventeenth Party Congress in 1986 retained the incumbent Secretariat and Presidium and added three new candidate members to the Presidium. In March 1987, Josef Korčák retired from the Presidium and was replaced by Ladislav Adamec. At the same time, Hoffman, a Presidium member, was also appointed a Central Committee secretary.

Popular control during the era of orthodoxy was maintained through various means. Repeated arrests and imprisonment of persons opposing the regime, such as members of Charter 77 and religious activists, continued throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s (see *Dissent and Independent Activity*, ch. 1). Less coercive

controls, such as punishment through job loss, demotion, denial of employment, denial of educational opportunities, housing restrictions, and refusal to grant travel requests, also prevailed.

Another means by which the Husák regime maintained control was to offer considerable consumer gains as a substitute for the loss of personal freedom. Government policies in the first half of the 1970s resulted in high economic growth and large increases in personal consumption. The widespread availability of material goods placated the general populace and promoted overall acceptance of Husák's stringent political controls. During the late 1970s, however, Czechoslovakia's economy began to stagnate, and the regime's ability to appease the population by providing material benefits diminished.

Although the Husák regime succeeded in preserving the status quo in Czechoslovakia for nearly two decades, it faced in the 1980s both internal and external pressures to reform. Domestically, poor economic performance hindered the government's ability to produce the goods needed to satisfy consumer demands (see Economic Policy and Performance, ch. 3). Pressure for political change continued from activists representing, for example, the Roman Catholic Church and the Charter 77 movement. Externally, Czechoslovakia struggled to find a suitable response to the changes introduced by the new leadership in Moscow. The 1985 election of Mikhail Gorbachev as general secretary of the CPSU precipitated a wave of personnel changes in the Soviet party apparatus and a strong emphasis on exploring new ways to stimulate economic growth. Czechoslovakia's initial response to the reformist trends in the Soviet Union focused on voicing public support for Gorbachev's new programs while steadfastly avoiding introducing similar programs within Czechoslovakia. However, in early 1987, on the eve of Gorbachev's visit to Prague, Husák announced that Czechoslovakia was preparing to implement widespread reforms patterned after the Soviet "restructuring" (*perestroika*) campaign. The Czechoslovak leader did not specify what the reforms might include, but his announcement suggested a significant departure from previous policy and represented an apparent victory for the pro-reform, "pragmatic" wing of the KSČ.

## **The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia**

Founded in 1921, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—KSČ) was one of some twenty political parties that competed within the democratic framework of the Czechoslovak Republic (also known as the First Republic), but it never gained sufficient strength to be included in that

government (see *Czechoslovak Democracy*, ch. 1). During World War II many KSCĚ leaders sought refuge in the Soviet Union, where they made preparations to increase the party's power base once the war ended. In the early postwar period the Soviet-supported Czechoslovak communists launched a sustained drive that culminated in their seizure of power in 1948. Once in control, the KSCĚ developed an organizational structure and mode of rule patterned closely after those of the CPSU.

Power is formally held by the National Front of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, a coalition in which the KSCĚ holds two-thirds of the seats while the remaining one-third are shared among five other political parties. But in fact the KSCĚ holds an absolute monopoly on political power, and the other parties within the National Front are little more than auxiliaries. Even the governmental structure of Czechoslovakia exists primarily to implement policy decisions made within the KSCĚ. To ensure its monopoly on power, the KSCĚ places its members in all policy-making positions within the government.

### **National Organization**

KSCĚ organization is based on the Leninist concept of democratic centralism, which provides for the election of party leaders at all levels but requires that each level be fully subject to the control of the next higher unit. Party ideologues assert that democratic centralism is the most important principle in the organizational structure and activity of the party. Accordingly, party programs and policies are directed from the top, and resolutions of higher organs are unconditionally binding on all lower organs and individual party members. In theory, policy matters are freely and openly discussed at congresses, conferences, and membership meetings and in the party press. In practice, however, these discussions merely reflect decisions made by a small contingent of top party officials.

According to party statutes, the supreme KSCĚ organ is the party congress, which normally convenes every five years for a session lasting less than one week (see fig. 14). An exception was made with respect to the Fourteenth Party Congress, which was held in August 1968 under Dubĉek's leadership. This congress was subsequently declared illegal, its proceedings were stricken from party records, and a second "legal" Fourteenth Party Congress was held in May 1971. The Fifteenth Party Congress was held in April 1976; the sixteenth, in April 1981; and the seventeenth, in March 1986.

The party congress theoretically is responsible for making basic policy decisions; in practice, however, it is the Presidium of the Central Committee that holds the decision-making and

policy-making responsibilities. The congress merely endorses the reports and directives of the top party leadership. The statutory duties assigned the party congress include determination of the party's domestic and foreign policies; approval of the party program and statutes; and election of the Central Committee and the Central Control and Auditing Commission, as well as discussion and approval of their reports.

Between congresses the Central Committee is responsible for directing party activities and implementing general policy decisions. Party statutes also provide that the Central Committee functions as the primary arm of KSĈ control over the organs of the federal government and the republics, the National Front, and all cultural and professional organizations. Party members who hold leading positions in these bodies are responsible directly to the Central Committee for the implementation of KSĈ policies. In addition, the Central Committee screens nominations for all important government and party positions and selects the editor in chief of *Rudé právo*, the principal party newspaper. The Central Committee generally meets in full session at least twice a year.

Nevertheless, the Central Committee, like the party congress, has rarely acted as more than a rubber stamp of policy decisions made by the party Presidium. (As an exception to this rule, when factional infighting developed within the Presidium in 1968, the Central Committee assumed crucial importance in resolving the dispute and ousted First Secretary Novotný in favor of Dubček.) Generally, decisions on which the Central Committee votes are reached beforehand so that votes taken at the sessions are unanimous.

Central Committee membership increased gradually from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s. At the Fifteenth Party Congress in 1976, the number of full members in the Central Committee rose from 115 to 121; in 1981, from 121 to 123; and in 1986, from 123 to 135. The number of candidate members rose from forty-five to fifty-three in 1976, to fifty-five in 1981, and to sixty-two in 1986. Of the 135 full members elected in 1986, almost 26 percent were newcomers to the Central Committee, as were approximately 81 percent of the 62 candidate members selected. In terms of composition, the Central Committee normally included leading party and government officials, military officials, and a cross section of outstanding citizens.

The Presidium of the Central Committee, which conducts the work of the party between full committee sessions, formally is elected by the Central Committee; in reality, the top party leaders determine its composition. The Sixteenth Party Congress in 1981 elected

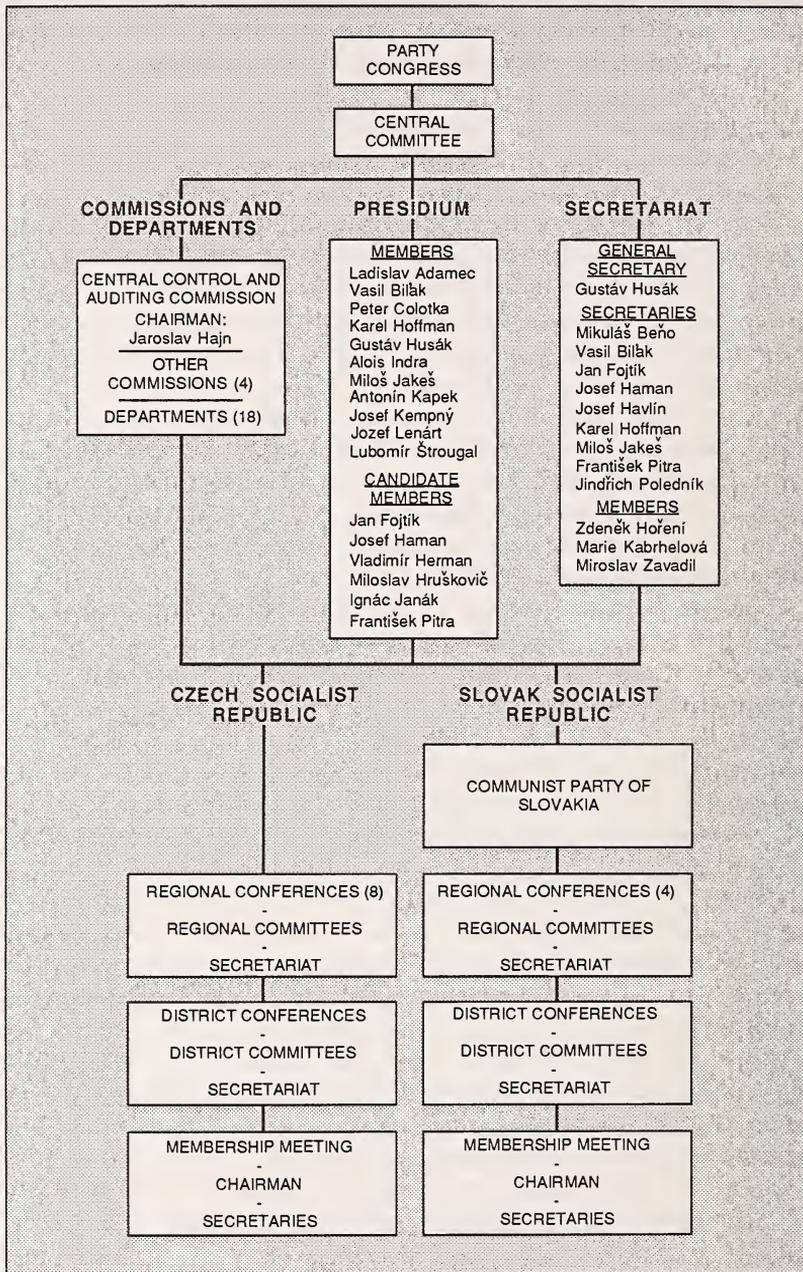


Figure 14. Organization of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, with Top Party Officials, 1987

twelve full members and one candidate member to the Presidium. Membership fluctuated between the sixteenth and seventeenth congresses; just before the Seventeenth Party Congress it stood at eleven full members and three candidate members. The Seventeenth Party Congress retained all the incumbents and added three new candidate members.

While the Presidium functions as the highest policy-making authority in the party hierarchy, the Secretariat of the Central Committee acts as the party's highest administrative authority and as the nerve center of the party's extensive control mechanism. The Secretariat supervises the implementation of decisions made in the Presidium, controls the movement up and down the party ladder, and directs the work within the party and government apparatus. Under Husák, the composition of the Secretariat, like that of the Presidium, has remained rather constant, although in 1987 Secretariat membership did increase with the additions of Hoffman as secretary and Miroslav Zavadil as member. The authority and function of the KSČ Presidium and Secretariat continued to be interlocked in 1987 by the dual membership of Husák, Bil'ak, Fojtík, Hoffman, Jakeš, Josef Haman, and František Pitra.

Another important organ in the party hierarchy is the Central Control and Auditing Commission. As its name implies, the commission plays a dual role, overseeing party discipline and supervising party finances. As an organ for the enforcement of party standards, the Central Control and Auditing Commission has frequently wielded its power to suspend or expel "deviant" party members. It was this commission that directed the massive purges in party membership during the early and late 1970s.

Members of the Central Control and Auditing Commission are elected at each party congress (the Seventeenth Party Congress elected fifty-four members). These members then elect from among themselves a chairman, deputy chairmen, and a small presidium. Subunits of the commission exist at the republic, regional, and district levels of the party structure. The enforcement of party discipline down to the local level also involves the People's Control Commission, which is part of the government structure. František Ondřích, the minister-chairman of the People's Control Commission in late 1986, also served on the Central Control and Auditing Commission.

Other KSČ commissions in 1987 included the Agriculture and Food Commission, the Economic Commission, the Ideological Commission, and the Youth Commission. In 1987 the party also had eighteen departments: agitation and propaganda; agriculture, food industry, forestry, and water management; Comecon

cooperation; culture; economic administration; economics; education and science; elected state organs; external economic relations; fuels and energy; industry; transportation and communications; international affairs; mass media; political organization; science and technology; social organizations and national committees; state administration; and a general department. In most instances the party departments paralleled agencies and ministries of the government and supervised their activities to ensure conformity with KSČ norms and programs. Also under the supervision of the Central Committee were two party training centers—the Advanced School of Politics and the Institute of Marxism-Leninism.

### **Lower-Level Organization**

At the republic level the party structure deviates from the government organization in that a separate communist party unit exists in the Slovak Socialist Republic but not in the Czech Socialist Republic. The KSS emerged from World War II as a party distinct from the KSČ, but the two were united after the communist takeover in 1948. The reform movement of the 1960s advocated a return to a system of autonomous parties for the two republics. The Bureau for the Conduct of Party Work in the Czech Lands was created as a counterpart to the KSS, but it was suppressed after the 1968 invasion and by 1971 had been stricken from party records. The KSS remained, however, undoubtedly as a concession to Slovak nationalism. Nevertheless, the KSS functions solely as a regional affiliate of the KSČ. The KSS does not operate as an independent political institution but rather as directed by the Prague party leadership.

The organizational structure and modus operandi of the KSS parallel those of the KSČ. The KSS party congress meets for several days every five years (just before the KSČ party congress). The KSS party congress selects its central committee members and candidate members, who in turn select a presidium, a secretariat, and a first secretary. Jozef Lenárt, selected as KSS first secretary in 1970, still held that position seventeen years later. Following the March 1986 party congress, the KSS Presidium consisted of eleven members; the Secretariat included, in addition to Lenárt, three secretaries and two members; and the Central Committee comprised ninety-five full members and thirty-six candidate members. The KSS in 1986 also had its own Central Control and Auditing Commission, four other commissions, twelve party departments, and one training facility.

The next step down the party hierarchy is the regional level. The KSČ has ten regional subdivisions (seven in the Czech lands, three

in Slovakia) identical to the *kraje*, the ten major governmental administrative divisions. In addition, however, the Prague and Bratislava municipal party organs, because of their size, are given regional status within the KSČ. Regional conferences select regional committees, which in turn select a leading secretary, a number of secretaries, and a regional control and auditing commission.

Regional units are broken down into a total of 114 district-level organizations. District conferences are held simultaneously every two to three years, at which time each conference selects a district committee that subsequently selects a secretariat to be headed by a district secretary. In the spirit of democratic centralism, authority and responsibility are delegated from the higher KSČ bodies through these successive tiers of the party structure. The regional committees develop the basic programs for the regions and guide the district committees, while the district organizations oversee and direct the local party units.

At the local level the KSČ is structured according to what it calls the "territorial and production principle"; the basic party units are organized in work sites and residences where there are at least five KSČ members. In enterprises or communities where party membership is more numerous, the smaller units function under larger city, village, or factorywide committees. The highest authority of the local organization is, theoretically, the monthly membership meeting, attendance at which is a basic duty of every member. Each group selects its own leadership, consisting of a chairman and one or more secretaries. It also names delegates to the conference of the next higher unit, be it at the municipal (in the case of larger cities) or district level. Local units are described in party statutes as the basis of all party organization and are given specific responsibilities that include participating in the management of economic enterprises; training and indoctrinating members; developing and disseminating propaganda aimed at nonmembers; participating actively in social, economic, and cultural activities; and employing constructive criticism to improve socialist development and community life.

## **Membership and Training**

Since assuming power in 1948, the KSČ has had one of the largest per capita membership rolls in the communist world. Whereas the Leninist guidelines for an elitist party cadre dictate that about 5 percent of the population should be party members, in Czechoslovakia party membership in 1986 comprised approximately 11 percent of the population. The membership roll has often been alleged by party ideologues to contain a large component of

inactive, opportunistic, and “counterrevolutionary” elements. These charges were used on two occasions—between 1948 and 1950 and again between 1969 and 1971—as a pretext to conduct massive purges of the membership. In the first case, the great Stalinist purges, nearly 1 million members were removed; in the wake of the Prague Spring and subsequent invasion, about half that number either resigned or were purged from the KSČ.

Although party leaders did not bemoan the decrease in membership, they did express concern about the effects of the purge on the social and age distribution of the party membership. Although no official statistics were available, unofficial sources claimed that Czechs constituted as many as 90 percent of those purged in the wake of the 1968 invasion. The purges hit especially hard among youth, blue-collar workers, and the intelligentsia within the party membership. As a result, recruitment was especially strong among youth and the working class during the 1970s. It was reported that 90 percent of those enrolled between 1971 and 1976 were under thirty-five years of age and that 62 percent of all new members were classified as workers. The party’s membership efforts in the 1980s focused on recruiting politically and professionally well-qualified people willing to exercise greater activism in implementing the party’s program. Party leaders at the Seventeenth Party Congress in 1986 urged the recruitment of more workers, young people, and women.

Membership in the KSČ is contingent upon completion of a one-year period as a candidate member. Candidate members may not vote or be elected to party committees. In addition to candidates for party membership, there are also candidates for party leadership groups from the local levels to the Presidium. These candidates, already party members, are considered interns training for the future assumption of particular leadership responsibilities.

The indoctrination and training of party members is one of the basic responsibilities of the regional and district organizations, and most of the party training is conducted on these levels. The regional and district units work with the local party organizations in setting up training programs and in determining which members will be enrolled in particular courses of study. On the whole, the system of party schooling has changed little since it was established in 1949. The district or city organization provides weekly classes in the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, the history of communism, socialist economics, and the current party position on domestic and international affairs.

Members training for positions as party functionaries attend seminars at the schools for Marxism-Leninism set up in local areas

or at the more advanced institutes for Marxism-Leninism found in Prague, Brno, and Bratislava. The highest level of party training is offered at the Advanced School of Politics in Prague. Designed to train the top echelon of the party leadership, the three-year curriculum has the official status of a university program and is said to be one of the best programs in political science in Eastern Europe. These institutions are under the direction of the KSČ Central Committee.

### **Auxiliary Parties, Mass Organizations, and Mass Media**

The KSČ is grouped together with the KSS, four other political parties, and all of Czechoslovakia's mass organizations under the political umbrella of the National Front of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. Founded in 1945 to coordinate the coalition of ruling parties, the National Front became subordinate to the KSČ after the 1948 coup. Since then the National Front has functioned as a conveyor of KSČ policy directives to the other political parties and mass organizations. An important function of the National Front is to nominate all candidates for public office and to supervise elections. Individuals running for public office need not be communist, but all candidates must be approved by the National Front. Thus, National Front candidates typically receive more than 99 percent of the votes (voters in Czechoslovakia have the right to refrain from marking their ballots if they do not want to vote for any of the National Front candidates; however, few voters exercise that right for fear of official reprisal).

The National Front in the 1980s included two Czech noncommunist parties and two Slovak noncommunist parties. The Czechoslovak Socialist Party, which had approximately 17,000 members in 1984, drew most of its membership from the former urban middle class and white-collar workers. The Czechoslovak People's Party, which had about 66,000 members in 1984, was primarily Roman Catholic and rurally based. The two Slovak parties, the Slovak Revival Party and the Slovak Freedom Party, were very small and drew their support from the peasant population and Roman Catholics. Each party was organized along the lines of the KSČ, having a party congress, central committee, presidium, and secretariat. Other than having a small number of seats in the Czech National Council, Slovak National Council, and the Federal Assembly, these parties had little input into governmental affairs. They served as auxiliaries of the KSČ and in no way represented an alternative source of political power.

The National Front also grouped together a myriad of mass organizations in the workplace, at schools, and in neighborhoods.

Although mass organizations permeated nearly all aspects of social organization, the most important consisted of trade unions, women's groups, and youth organizations. Whereas in noncommunist nations such organizations act partly as political interest groups to put pressure on the government, in Czechoslovakia the mass organizations have acted as support groups for the KSČ and as channels for the transmission of party policy to the population at large. This is evidenced by the fact that KSČ officials direct the mass organizations at virtually every level.

The Revolutionary Trade Union Movement, which claimed over 7.5 million members in 1984, combined trade unions of workers in virtually every productive capacity. In 1987 its president, Miroslav Zavadil, also chaired its governing body, the Central Council of Trade Unions. The organization of the Central Council of Trade Unions is similar to that of the KSČ in that it consists of a central committee that selects a secretariat and a presidium. In addition to the chairman, the Central Council of Trade Unions has two deputy chairmen. In the spirit of federalized bureaucratic structures that permeated Czechoslovak political organization in the 1970s, the Czech Council of Trade Unions and the Slovak Council of Trade Unions were created.

The Czechoslovak Union of Women, which had about 1 million members in 1984, was chaired in 1987 by Marie Kabrhelová. Its structure includes the familiar secretariat and presidium and a central auditing and control commission. Like the trade union governing organization, the Czechoslovak Union of Women oversees the Czech Union of Women and the Slovak Union of Women. In 1986 Vasil Mohorita headed the Czechoslovak Socialist Union of Youth, which in 1983 claimed over 1.5 million members. A branch organization for youth from eight to fifteen years of age is known as the Pioneers. The aim of both groups is to indoctrinate youth in socialist values and prepare them for membership in the KSČ. Other mass organizations include the Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, the Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters, the Union for Cooperation with the Army, the Peace Committee, and the Physical Culture Association.

As in all East European communist countries, the mass media in Czechoslovakia are controlled by the party. Private ownership of any publication or agency of the mass media is generally forbidden, although churches and other organizations publish small periodicals and newspapers. Even with this informational monopoly in the hands of organizations under KSČ control, all publications are reviewed by the government's Office for Press and Information. Censorship was lifted for three months during the 1968 Prague

Spring but afterward was reimposed under the terms of the 1966 Press Law. The law states that the Czechoslovak press is to provide complete information, but it must also advance the interests of socialist society and promote the people's socialist awareness of the policy of the communist party as the leading force in society and state.

The chief newspaper of the KSČ is the Prague daily, *Rudé právo*, which, with a circulation of 900,000, is the most widely read and most influential newspaper in the country. Its editor in 1987 was Zdeněk Hoření, a member of the Secretariat of the KSČ Central Committee. Its sister publication, Bratislava's, *Pravda*, is the organ of the KSS. Other Prague dailies with large circulations are *Lidová demokracie*, published by the Czechoslovak People's Party; *Mladá fronta*, published by the Czechoslovak Socialist Union of Youth; *Práce*, published by the Central Council of Trade Unions; and *Svobodné Slovo*, published by the Czechoslovak Socialist Party.

Government concern about control of the mass media is such that it is illegal to own a duplicating machine or to reproduce more than eleven copies of any printed material. Nevertheless, a fairly wide distribution of underground publications (popularly known as samizdat throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union) that were established during the Nazi occupation continued throughout communist rule into the 1980s.

The Czechoslovak Press Agency (Československá tisková kancelář—ČTK) receives a state subsidy and is controlled by the federal government through its Presidium. The government also controls several domestic television and radio networks. In addition, many citizens in Czechoslovakia have been able to pick up broadcasts from foreign radio and television stations, both from communist Poland and Hungary and from noncommunist countries like Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). The Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Corporation also have had sizable audiences in Czechoslovakia, and their broadcasts have been subject to only occasional jamming. Radio Free Europe broadcasts, however, were extensively jammed.

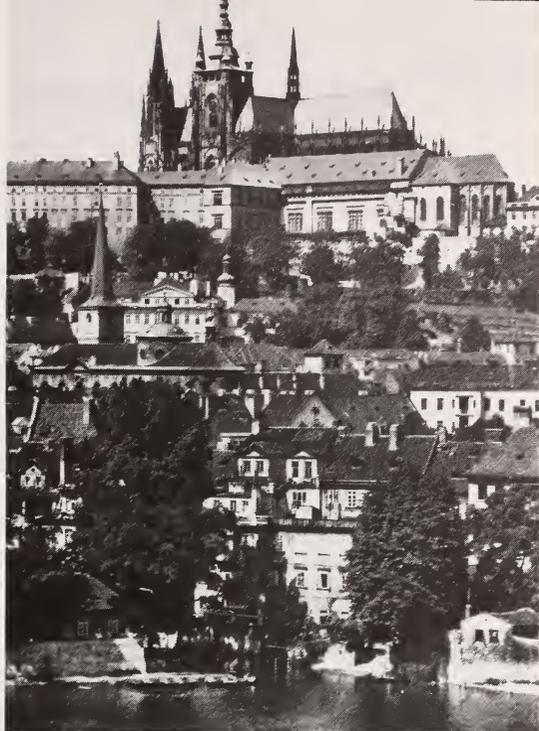
## Constitutional Development

The Constitution promulgated on July 11, 1960, was the nation's second post-World War II constitution, and, though extensively revised through later amendments, it continued in effect in 1987. It replaced the 1948 constitution (often called the Ninth-of-May Constitution), which had come into force shortly after the communist seizure of power. The 1948 constitution established the vanguard role of the KSČ within the Czechoslovak state and

government administration under the Leninist principle of democratic centralism. It also granted a degree of autonomy to Slovakia, which was given its own legislative body and governmental structure, although these were made subordinate to the central authorities in Prague. The most important change in the 1960 Constitution was that it severely limited the autonomy granted Slovakia. The executive branch of the Slovak government was abolished and its duties assigned to the Presidium of the Slovak National Council, thus combining executive and legislative functions into a single body. The National Assembly of the central government was given authority to overrule decisions of the Slovak National Council, and central government agencies took over the administration of the major organs of Slovak local government. The 1960 Constitution reaffirmed that the KSČ is the "proven vanguard of the working class" and that the governing of society and the state should continue to be in accordance with the principle of democratic centralism. It further declared that "socialism has triumphed in our country" and that "we are proceeding toward the construction of an advanced socialist society and gathering strength for the transition to communism." It also acknowledged "our great ally, the fraternal Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." Accordingly, the name of the nation was changed from the Czechoslovak People's Democracy to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

The 1960 Constitution consists of a preamble and 112 articles divided into 9 groupings called chapters. Chapter 1, titled "The Social Order," describes Czechoslovakia as "a unitary State of two fraternal nations possessing equal rights—the Czechs and the Slovaks." Article 2 states that "all power in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic shall belong to the working people." State power will be exercised "through representative bodies which are elected by [the working people], controlled by them, and accountable to them." Principles of the socialist economic system, "in which the means of production are socially owned and the entire national economy directed by plan," are also laid out. Socialist ownership takes two forms: state ownership of natural resources, the means of industrial production, public transportation and communications, banks and insurance firms, and health, educational, and scientific facilities; and cooperative ownership, which is the property of people's cooperatives. Small private enterprises "based on the labor of the owner himself and excluding exploitation of another's labor" are permitted. Personal ownership of consumer goods, homes, and savings derived from labor is guaranteed, as is inheritance of such property.

*Hradčany, traditional seat  
of the Czechoslovak  
government, and the Malá  
Strana section, Prague*



Chapter 2 describes the rights and duties of citizens. Equal rights regardless of nationality, race, or sex are guaranteed. Education is free and compulsory to the age of sixteen; citizens of Hungarian, Ukrainian, and Polish origin are ensured “every opportunity and all means for education in their mother tongue.” Lifetime medical care and material security in old age and in case of disability are guaranteed. Freedom of speech and of the press “consistent with the interests of the working people” are guaranteed. Also guaranteed is the “right to profess any religious faith or to be without religious conviction, and to practice religious beliefs insofar as this does not contravene the law.” Citizens are duty bound to serve in the armed forces, and conscientious objection based on religious conviction is specifically prohibited.

On October 27, 1968, the promulgation of the Constitutional Law of Federation amended fifty-eight articles of the Constitution concerning the structure of government. Again the reform concerned Slovak autonomy; the concentration of governmental authority in Prague was a source of discontent within Slovakia throughout the 1960s, and the federalization of the Czechoslovak government codified in the 1968 constitutional amendments was virtually the only product of the reform movement associated with the Prague Spring to survive. The Czechoslovak state was declared to be composed of “two equal fraternal nations,” the Czech Socialist Republic and the Slovak Socialist Republic, each with its own

national administration paralleling and, at least in theory, equal in status to the federal government. Dual citizenship was established, and many of the former functions of the central government were instead placed under the jurisdiction of the two national governments. The federal government retained exclusive jurisdiction over foreign affairs, national defense, federal reserves, and national resources and held joint jurisdiction in a number of other matters, but the extent of the federalization reform was remarkably vast.

The most significant and lasting change under the 1968 constitutional law was the replacement of the unicameral National Assembly with a bicameral legislature known as the Federal Assembly (see fig. 15). The two bodies, given equal authority, were the Chamber of the People, which was identical to the old National Assembly, and the Chamber of the Nations, which contained an equal number of Czechs and Slovaks. This institutional reform, together with a provision that certain decisions required the majority consent of each half (Czech and Slovak) of the Chamber of the Nations, was designed to end Slovak fear of Czech domination of the legislative branch of the government.

It soon became clear, however, that many aspects of the 1968 federalization were politically, as well as administratively, impractical. Political power remained firmly centralized in the KSČ (proposals to federalize the party were dropped after the 1968 invasion), and the administration of two economic systems, two police systems, and the like proved unworkable. July 1971 amendments to the 1968 Constitutional Law of Federation unified the administration of these and other government functions, ended the practice of dual citizenship and, most important, authorized the federal government to interfere with and invalidate measures of the national governments. Although most of the structures of the 1968 reform remained intact, observers of the Czechoslovak system of government in the 1970s agreed that federalism remained little more than a facade after the enactment of the 1971 constitutional amendments. In May 1975, the 1968 Constitutional Law of Federation was further amended to allow Husák to take over the presidency from the ailing Ludvík Svoboda. At the Seventeenth Party Congress in 1986, Husák called for the preparation of a new constitution to replace the 1960 document.

## **Government Structure**

In 1987 the government structure was based on the amended 1960 Constitution, which identifies the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic as a federative state of two equal fraternal nations. The Constitution stipulates the creation of separate government

structures for the Czech Socialist Republic, located in Prague, and the Slovak Socialist Republic, situated in Bratislava. These republican governments share responsibility with the federal government in areas such as planning, finance, currency, price control, agriculture and food, transportation, labor, wages, social policy, and the media. The central government, located in Prague, has exclusive jurisdiction over foreign policy, international relations, defense, federal stockpiles, federal legislation and administration, and the federal judicial system.

Government institutions in Czechoslovakia perform legislative, executive, and judicial functions. The Constitution clearly defines the responsibilities for making and implementing policy that each branch of government holds. In reality, however, all decisions of state are made by the communist party. Government organs exist purely to administer the party program.

### **The Legislature**

The highest legislative institution is the Federal Assembly, which Chapter 3 of the Constitution recognizes as "the supreme organ of state power and the sole statewide legislative body." The Federal Assembly is divided into two equal chambers, the Chamber of the People and the Chamber of the Nations. The Chamber of the People reflects a system of proportional representation: in 1986 it included 134 deputies from the Czech Socialist Republic and 66 deputies from the Slovak Socialist Republic. The Chamber of Nations has 150 members, 75 from each republic. Deputies are selected through popular elections and serve five-year terms of office; all 350 serve concurrently.

After an election each chamber meets to select its own presidium consisting of three to six members. Together, the chambers elect the forty-member Presidium of the Federal Assembly, which serves as the legislative authority when the assembly is not in session. A joint session of the Federal Assembly selects its chairman and vice chairman. In 1987 Alois Indra served as chairman, a post to which he had been appointed in 1971.

The Federal Assembly meets in regular session at least twice a year, in the spring and fall. Legislation presented to the assembly at these sessions must be approved by both chambers and in some cases requires a majority vote by both the Czech and the Slovak deputies in the Chamber of the Nations. Constitutionally, the Federal Assembly has exclusive jurisdiction in all matters of foreign policy, fundamental matters of domestic policy, the economic plan, and supervision of and control over the executive branch of government. In practice, however, its function is largely confined to

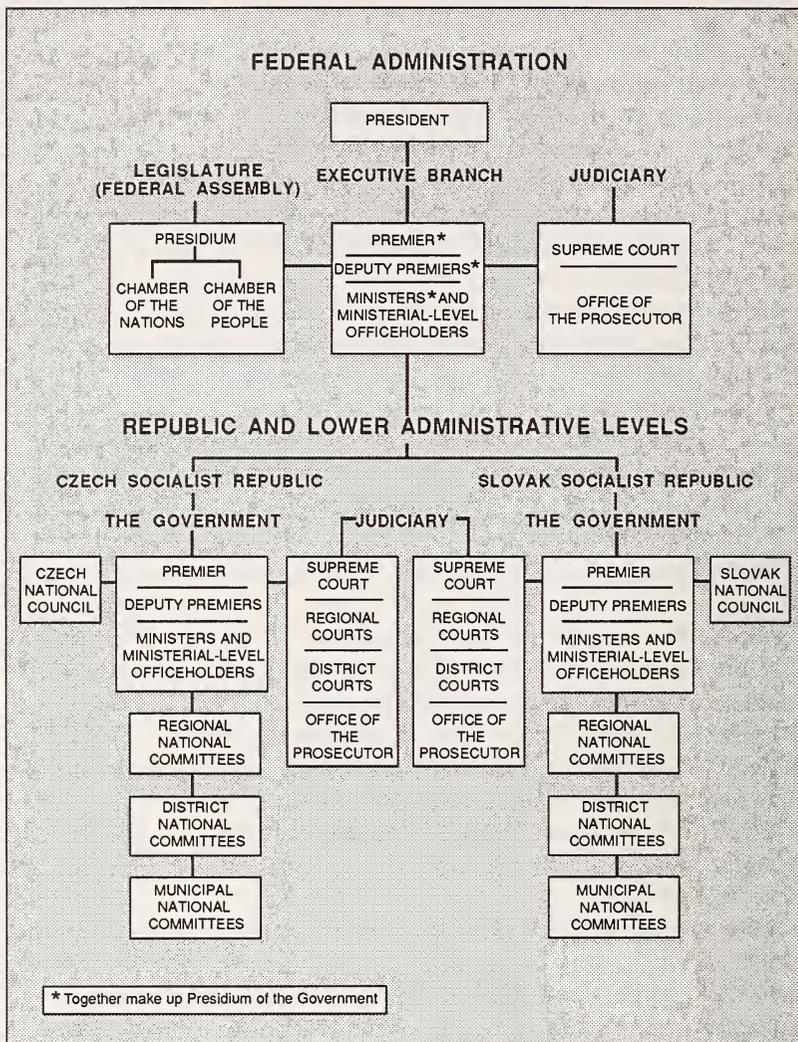


Figure 15. Government Organization, 1987

approving measures placed before it by the KSČ. Laws in Czechoslovakia are decided at the highest level of the communist party and presented to the Federal Assembly for its unanimous approval.

### The Executive Branch

The executive branch of government consists of the president, the premier, a number of deputy premiers, and the federal

ministers. According to the Constitution, the president is elected by the Federal Assembly to a five-year term of office. In practice, the president is first selected by the KSČ leadership and then "officially" voted into office by the Federal Assembly. As head of state, the president represents the nation in diplomatic affairs, receives and appoints envoys, convenes the Federal Assembly, and signs laws into force. He is commander in chief of the armed forces and is empowered to appoint or remove the premier, other members of the executive, and other high civilian and military officials. There is no vice president; rather, the Constitution provides that if the presidential office becomes vacant, the premier will be entrusted with the president's duties until the Federal Assembly elects a new president.

The premier, the deputy premiers (numbering ten in 1987), and the federal cabinet ministers are collectively termed "the government," which is constitutionally defined as "the supreme executive organ of state power." All are chosen by the Central Committee of the KSČ and formally appointed by the president. If both chambers of the Federal Assembly vote to censure any or all members of the government, the president is obliged to remove those members. The premier, deputy premiers, and ministers collectively form the Presidium of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. This Presidium supervises and controls the activities of the federal ministries, commissions, and other departments. These Presidium functions appear to correspond to the purpose of the government as stated in the Constitution, which is to ensure the implementation of laws enacted in the Federal Assembly and to coordinate, direct, and control activities in the federal ministries and other federal offices.

Federal ministers are important administrators, but they lack the political weight of their counterparts in most noncommunist countries. The number of ministries and the division of responsibilities among them have varied over time. In August 1986 there were thirteen federal ministries: agriculture and food; communication; electrotechnical industry; finance; foreign affairs; foreign trade; fuels and power; general engineering; interior; labor and social affairs; metallurgy and heavy engineering; national defense; and transportation. In addition, five individuals held positions that granted them ministerial status. These include the minister-chairmen of the Federal Price Office and the People's Control Commission, the chairman of the State Planning Commission, and the minister-deputy chairmen of the State Planning Commission and the State Commission for Research and Development and Investment Planning. These ministerial and ministerial-level positions

within the government parallel similar organs within the KSČ, where policy is actually formed before it is enacted by federal government officials.

### **The Judiciary**

The highest judicial organ at the federal level is the Supreme Court of Czechoslovakia. Supreme Court judges are elected by the Federal Assembly to serve ten-year terms of office. The Federal Assembly also selects a chairman and vice chairman of the Supreme Court. If the chairman is from the Czech Socialist Republic, the vice chairman must be from the Slovak Socialist Republic, and vice versa. The two republics must be represented by an equal number of Supreme Court judges. Below the Supreme Court of Czechoslovakia are the Supreme Court of the Czech Socialist Republic and the Supreme Court of the Slovak Socialist Republic.

Below the supreme court of each republic are regional and district courts. District courts (one in each district) are the courts of general civil jurisdiction and limited criminal jurisdiction and are presided over by one professional judge and two lay judges (there are no juries in the Czechoslovak judicial system). Regional courts (one in each *kraj*) are located in the capitals of each of Czechoslovakia's ten *kraje* and in Prague. They function as appellate courts and also have jurisdiction over trials in serious criminal cases where imprisonment exceeding five years may be imposed. Regional and district professional judges are chosen by the Czech National Council and the Slovak National Council; lay judges are chosen by district national committees. The Supreme Court of the Czech Socialist Republic and the Supreme Court of the Slovak Socialist Republic serve as appellate courts for their respective regional courts and also hear petitions for breach of law against decisions by the lower courts. The supreme courts of the two republics decide in panels of three professional judges.

Petitions for breach of law against decisions of the republic supreme courts are heard in the Supreme Court at the federal level. In addition to serving as the nation's final court of appeals, the Supreme Court of Czechoslovakia examines the legality of decisions of the federal government and, in general, ensures the uniform interpretation of the laws. It also hears requests for recognition of foreign judgments in Czechoslovakia. The decisions of the Supreme Court emanate from "benches," which comprise the Supreme Court chairman and selected professional judges. The Supreme Court also acts as the final court of appeal in military cases, although below the Supreme Court level military cases are handled in military courts, which are distinct from civil courts.

Another powerful arm of the judiciary is the Office of the Prosecutor. The general prosecutor, a federal officer, is appointed and removed by the president. In addition to the federal office, an Office of the Prosecutor exists for each republic. The republic office is administered by the republic Ministry of Justice. Prosecutors are responsible for supervising the observance of laws and legal regulations by public bodies and individual citizens. The Office of the Prosecutor is responsible for prosecuting both criminal and civil cases. Prosecutors may recommend modification or repeal of laws, and they have the right to summon citizens to appear before them.

### **Republic and Lower Administrative Levels**

The administrative units of Czechoslovakia's two republics are, in each instance, a unicameral legislative body called the national council, an executive branch known as the government, and a judiciary consisting of a supreme court and an office of the prosecutor. Like its corresponding federal government unit, the Federal Assembly, the national council is described as the highest organ of state power in the republic, whereas the government is the "supreme executive authority." The 1968 constitutional amendments that created the two republican, or "national," governmental units initiated a truly federal system of government, which flourished briefly. Since that time, revisions of and deviations from the 1968 amendments have made the two national governments clearly subordinate to the federal governmental structure in Prague. This is apparent both in legislation, such as a 1971 law that authorized the federal government to interfere with and invalidate republican government initiatives, and in the interlocking responsibilities of certain officials within the two levels of government. For example, the premier of each republic is a deputy premier in the federal government, and the chairman of each national council is a member of the Presidium of the Federal Assembly.

Because of the numerical superiority of the Czech population, the Czech National Council has 200 representatives and the Slovak National Council only 150. Except for the difference in the number of deputies, the provisions of the federal Constitution apply equally to the national councils of each republic: deputies are elected to five-year terms of office; the national councils must hold at least two sessions annually; and each national council elects its own presidium (fifteen to twenty-one members in the Slovak National Council and up to twenty-five members in the Czech National Council), which is empowered to act when the full national council is not in session.

In each of the two republics the executive branch consists of a premier, three deputy premiers, and a number of ministers. Both the Czech and the Slovak governments have ministers of agriculture and food, construction, culture, development and technology, education, finance, forestry and water resources, health, industry, interior, justice, labor and social affairs, and trade. The chairmen of the State Planning Commission and the People's Control Commission also hold ministerial status in each republic; the government of the Czech Socialist Republic includes, in addition, two ministers without portfolio.

Below the level of the republics (the national administrations), Czechoslovakia is divided into 10 *kraje*, 114 districts, and several thousand municipal and local units. The principal organs of government at these levels, known as national committees, function in accordance with the principle of democratic centralism. The 1968 Constitutional Law of Federation specifies that the national governments direct and control the activities of all national committees within their respective territories.

The system of national committees was established at the close of World War II by the then-existing provisional government and was used by the communists as a means of consolidating and extending their control. On the local level, the membership of the national committees consists of from fifteen to twenty-five persons. National committees on the higher levels are proportionately larger: national committees at the district level have from 60 to 120 members, and national committees at the *kraj* level have between 80 and 150 members. National committee members are popularly elected for five-year terms of office. Each national committee elects a council from among its membership. The council, composed of a chairman, one or more deputy chairmen, a secretary, and an unspecified number of members, acts as the coordinating and controlling body of the national committee. To expedite the work of the national committee, the council establishes commissions and other subcommittees and can issue decrees and ordinances within its area of jurisdiction.

The national committees on the local level are assigned particular areas of jurisdiction, including maintaining public order and organizing the implementation of the political, economic, and cultural tasks assigned by the KSC and the federal government. The Constitution charges the national committees with the responsibility of organizing and directing the economic, cultural, health, and social services in their areas. The committees must also "ensure the protection of socialist ownership" and see that the "rules of socialist conduct are upheld."



*Town Hall, Plzeň*

## **Electoral System**

Elections in Czechoslovakia are held not to offer the electorate an opportunity to participate in a democratic choice of their government representatives but to confirm the representatives chosen by the KSČ hierarchy. The July 1971 electoral law lengthened the time between elections from four to five years (1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, and so forth) and designated that they take place in the fall, so that each election comes shortly after the party congress in the spring. The 1971 law replaced a 1967 electoral law that allowed the electorate to participate in the choice of candidates; the 1967 law was never applied because the 1968 elections were postponed by the August invasion. The November 1971 elections, then, were the first to be held since 1964. These, like every election, proposed single slates of candidates for the Federal Assembly, the two national councils, and the regional, district, and municipal national committees. The voter may cross out (disapprove) or not cross out (approve) the name of any or all official candidates nominated by the National Front. Polling booths are rarely used, and voting is often carried out collectively by the work force of each enterprise or by other groups of the population.

The 1971 elections were preceded by a concerted effort by a group of dissidents calling themselves the Socialist Movement of Czechoslovak Citizens to urge citizens to boycott the elections or cross off official names in protest of the undemocratic character of the 1971 election law. Official election results, nevertheless, showed that 99.5 percent of the 10.3 million eligible voters did cast ballots, and of these, some 99.8 percent voted for the official candidates. Following the election, rumors circulated that, in fact, up to 10 percent of the population had not voted and that between 10 and 25 percent of the voters had crossed out official names. Whatever the case, after the election some 200 persons associated with the Socialist Movement of Czechoslovak Citizens were arrested. Trials were held during July and August 1972, at which 47 persons were sentenced to a total of 118 years in prison.

In elections held in May 1986, Czechoslovak officials reported that 99.4 percent of registered voters participated in the Federal Assembly elections, and 99.9 percent of the total vote cast went to National Front candidates. Similar results were reported in the elections for the Czech National Council and the Slovak National Council and in the lower-level national committees.

## **Popular Political Expression**

Evaluating public opinion within such a rigid and closed political climate is difficult. Following the 1968 invasion, information

emanated largely from Czechoslovak émigrés and Western visitors to Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovak citizens risked official retaliation by speaking openly about political matters. Such sources were remarkably consistent, nevertheless, in reporting that the Husák government held the active support of some 10 percent of the population. One study conducted by a group of "former" sociologists in 1974 found that active support existed among 10 to 15 percent of the population. This group, according to the study, consisted of persons involved in the Stalinist repression who feared that a liberal regime would force them to account for their crimes, as well as paid party bureaucrats, old-age pensioners, careerists, "parasites" who would serve any regime, and a handful of extremist communist ideologues. One observer noted that "there has not been such a gap between the ruler and the ruled since the Nazi occupation."

### **Reaction to Normalization**

The absence of popular support for the Husák leadership was an inevitable reaction to the repressive policies instituted during the normalization process. Early post-invasion efforts to keep alive the spirit of the Prague Spring were quashed through a series of subversion trials in 1972 that led to jail sentences ranging from nine months to six and one-half years for the opposition leaders. Czechoslovak citizens over the age of fifteen were required to carry a small red identification book, containing an array of information about the individual and a number of pages to be stamped by employers, health officials, and other authorities. All citizens also had permanent files at the office of their local KSČ neighborhood committee, another at their place of employment, and another at the Ministry of Interior.

The most common attitudes toward political activity since the 1968 invasion have been apathy, passivity, and escapism. For the most part, citizens of Czechoslovakia retreated from public political concern during the 1970s into the pursuit of the private pleasures of consumerism. Individuals sought the material goods that remained available during the 1970s, such as new automobiles, houses in the country, household appliances, and access to sporting events and entertainment. As long as these consumer demands were met, the populace for the most part tolerated the stagnant political climate.

Another symptom of the political malaise during the 1970s was the appearance of various forms of antisocial behavior. Petty theft and wanton destruction of public property reportedly were widespread. Alcoholism, already at levels that alarmed officials,

increased; absenteeism and declining worker discipline affected productivity; and emigration, the ultimate expression of alienation, surpassed 100,000 during the 1970s.

### **Charter 77**

The most prominent opposition to the process of normalization has been the movement known as Charter 77. The movement took its name from the title of a document initially circulated within Czechoslovakia in January 1977 (see Appendix D). Originally appearing as a manifesto in a West German newspaper and signed by 243 Czechoslovak citizens representing various occupations, political viewpoints, and religions, the document by the mid-1980s had been signed by 1,200 people. Charter 77 criticized the government for failing to implement human rights provisions of a number of documents it had signed, including the Czechoslovak Constitution, the Final Act of the 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Basket III of the Helsinki Accords), and United Nations covenants on political, civil, economic, and cultural rights. The document also described the signatories as a "loose, informal, and open association of people . . . united by the will to strive individually and collectively for respect for human and civil rights in our country and throughout the world." It emphasized that Charter 77 is not an organization, has no statutes or permanent organs, and "does not form the basis for any oppositional political activity." This final stipulation was a careful effort to stay within the bounds of Czechoslovak law, which makes organized opposition illegal.

The government's reaction to the appearance of Charter 77, which circulated in samizdat form within Czechoslovakia and was published in full in various foreign newspapers, was harsh (see *Police Repression*, ch. 5). The official press described the manifesto as "an antistate, antisocialist, and demagogic, abusive piece of writing," and individual signers were variously described as "traitors and renegades," "a loyal servant and agent of imperialism," "a bankrupt politician," and "an international adventurer." Several means of retaliation were used against the signers, including dismissal from work, denial of educational opportunities for their children, suspension of drivers' licenses, forced exile, loss of citizenship, and detention, trial, and imprisonment.

The treatment of the signers of Charter 77 prompted the creation in April 1978 of a support group, the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (*Výbor na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných—VONS*), to publicize the fate of those associated with the charter. In October 1979 six leaders of this support group,

including Václav Havel, were tried for subversion and sentenced to prison terms of up to five years.

Repression of Charter 77 and VONS members continued in the 1980s. Despite unrelenting discrimination and arrests, however, the groups continued to issue reports on the government's violations of human rights. These documents remained an important source of information on Czechoslovakia's internal affairs.

### **Religious Activists**

Another aspect of popular political expression during the 1970s and 1980s was religious activism. Czechoslovakia during this time witnessed what was described as a "rebirth of religious faith," especially noticeable among Czechoslovak youth, and greater activism on the part of the Roman Catholic Church. The former was manifested by an increase in young people's church attendance and overall participation in church-related activities. The latter was reflected in a greater number of "underground" church services, greater Catholic clergy and lay involvement in the Charter 77 movement, widespread dissemination of Catholic samizdat publications, and a shift in the position of the church's hierarchy regarding church-state relations. Since the election of a Polish cardinal as pope, the Czech primate, František Cardinal Tomášek, has taken a more independent stand. He has condemned the Czechoslovak Association of Catholic Clergy (more commonly known as *Pacem in Terris*), the pro-regime organization of priests, arguing the importance of peace and human rights at the government-sponsored Prague World Peace Assembly in 1983; and increased his support of Charter 77.

Government reaction to the religious activists has been harsh. Repression against the clergy, including arrests, trials, imprisonment, and even raids against homes for elderly priests and nuns, reportedly increased in the 1980s. Also, government restrictions on religious education, church publications, and the number of priests were enforced vigorously. Undoubtedly fearful of its potential impact, the Husák government rejected Pope John Paul II's acceptance of Cardinal Tomášek's 1984 invitation to visit Czechoslovakia.

### **Foreign Relations**

Nowhere is the Soviet Union's overwhelming influence on Czechoslovakia more evident than in foreign relations. Since as far back as 1947, when the Klement Gottwald cabinet succumbed to Soviet pressure and withdrew its announced participation in the Marshall Plan, Czechoslovakia has followed Moscow's lead in

international affairs. Unlike the communist regimes in Yugoslavia and Romania, no Czechoslovak regime since 1948 has deviated significantly from Soviet foreign policy. Even the Dubček government, though seeking reform in economic and domestic political matters, emphasized during its abbreviated existence that it did not advocate a significant change in its foreign policy tenets and alliances.

In the late 1980s, Czechoslovakia's alliances with the Soviet Union and other East European communist states remained the dominant factor influencing Czechoslovak foreign policy. The Husák regime showed little foreign policy initiative, opting instead to echo the Soviet position on every major issue, as it had done for eighteen years. Czechoslovakia's conduct of foreign policy reflected its determination to maintain at all costs the political, economic, and military unity of the socialist bloc.

### **Policy Making and Administration**

The principal foreign policy decision-making body is the KSČ. Within the party the decision-making responsibility resides in the Presidium of the KSČ Central Committee, which is aided by the party's Department of International Affairs. The department provides pertinent information and policy recommendations to the Presidium, channels the party's decisions to the appropriate government agencies, and supervises the implementation of policy.

The extent of Soviet influence on Czechoslovakia's foreign policy suggests that major policy decisions by the party hierarchy receive prior approval from Moscow. The precise mechanics of Soviet control are not certain, but it is likely that Moscow exercises its authority through frequent bilateral and multilateral consultations involving high-level party and government officials. Czechoslovak and Soviet officials met frequently throughout the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s in sessions that included ad hoc summit meetings, sessions of the Warsaw Pact's Political Consultative Committee, Comecon meetings, Soviet and East European party congresses, bilateral meetings between party leaders, and lower level policy meetings, such as those of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Pact. The continued presence in Czechoslovakia of five ground divisions and two air divisions of Soviet troops undoubtedly contributed to Soviet influence.

Within the federal system of government, the bulk of administrative responsibility for foreign affairs falls on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, to a lesser extent, on the Ministry of Foreign Trade. These ministries are under the supervision of the premier in his role as head of government. The president, however, as head



*Mikhail Gorbachev meeting with  
Gustáv Husák during a 1987 visit to Czechoslovakia  
Courtesy Czechoslovak Life*

of state, not only chooses the premier and ministers of foreign affairs and foreign trade but is also constitutionally mandated to represent the nation in its external relations and to appoint diplomatic envoys. Committees on foreign relations exist in both chambers of the Federal Assembly. Sometimes these committees are given specific assignments in policy analysis and serve as channels through which the regime submits foreign policy legislation to the assembly. All foreign policy legislation requires passage by both chambers of the Federal Assembly.

The central organ for implementation of foreign relations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is charged with the direction, coordination, and implementation of foreign policy and the protection of Czechoslovak national interests in international affairs. It also has a role as a coordinating agency for other federal and republic organs; it is supposed to provide them with knowledge of the government's foreign policies and to ensure their cooperation with those policies. In 1987 the ministry was organized into ten geographic departments, ten functional and administrative sections, two training institutes, and one international relations society. Each of the subdivisions was headed by a director and a deputy director. The entire operation of the ministry functioned under the direction of the minister of foreign affairs (in early 1987 Bohuslav Chřoupek,

who had assumed the post in 1971), a first deputy minister, five additional deputy ministers, and offices for the minister's secretariat and general secretariat.

The ministry's administrative sections in 1987 included administration of foreign cultural establishments; services to the diplomatic corps; basic foreign policy questions; consuls; cultural, educational, scientific, and health relations; diplomatic protocol; international economics; international law; international organizations; and press. Also under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were the Institute of International Relations (for which the Central Committee of the KSČ holds joint responsibility), the Czechoslovak Foreign Institute, and the Czechoslovak Society for International Relations.

The Ministry of Foreign Trade is considerably smaller than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1987 it was led by a minister, two first deputy ministers, and seven other deputy ministers. It also contained departments organized according to geographic region, economic system, and level of economic development. Other components of this ministry included the Central Customs Administration and the Legal Affairs Department.

### **Relations with Communist Nations**

Central to Czechoslovakia's relations with communist nations in the late 1980s was its relationship with the Soviet Union. In his address to the Seventeenth Party Congress in March 1986, Husák reasserted the importance Czechoslovakia attaches to its alliance with the Soviet Union. The party chief reconfirmed the "lasting significance of the alliance, friendship, and cooperation with the USSR for vital interests of the Czechoslovak people and for safeguarding the security of our state." That alliance, which Husák described as "based on mutual respect and understanding and on the identity of views between our communist parties on all the fundamental questions," represents the "safeguard on which we rest all our plans and perspectives."

Soviet influence in Czechoslovak foreign affairs was institutionalized after 1948 through the economic alliance of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), founded in 1949, and the Warsaw Pact military alliance, founded in 1955 and renewed in 1985 (see Appendix B; Appendix C). The framework for Soviet influence was expanded with the 1968 introduction of the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine of limited sovereignty and the 1970 Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. Devised as a Soviet justification of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Brezhnev Doctrine

asserts the right of military intervention by Warsaw Pact forces whenever one of the member countries is perceived by Moscow to be threatened either internally or externally, or whenever events in one of these nations are perceived to endanger the socialist alliance. Shortly after the invasion, Czechoslovak officials effectively endorsed the doctrine when they explained that the Warsaw Pact troops “decided to render internationalist assistance to Czechoslovakia” after receiving appeals for help from “party and state leaders, communists, and working people of Czechoslovakia.” The 1970 friendship treaty, among other provisions, legitimized the invasion and the ongoing stationing of Soviet troops on Czechoslovak soil and bound Czechoslovakia to support any war engaged in by the Soviets.

Since coming to power in 1969, the Husák regime has pursued one fundamental objective in its relations with the Soviet Union: to maintain its position as a loyal ally and a staunch defender of Soviet policies. In pursuing this goal, Czechoslovak officials have downplayed any distinct Czechoslovak foreign policy interests that may have existed and instead have adopted Soviet interests as their own. Whereas other East European communist regimes on numerous occasions in the 1970s and 1980s adopted foreign policy positions that differed from those of the Soviets, the Husák regime has consistently echoed the Soviet stance.

Probably the most pressing issue affecting Czechoslovakia's relations with the Soviet Union in the late 1980s was trade. In 1986 trade with the Soviets constituted almost 50 percent of Czechoslovakia's total trade (see *Foreign Trade*, ch. 3). Heavily dependent on the Soviet Union for energy, Czechoslovakia was hard hit by the rising cost of Soviet energy exports. Domestic economic problems, such as declining productivity, low investment, and corruption, made it difficult for Czechoslovakia to produce high-quality exports for the Soviet Union. Czechoslovakia's response to these trends was to advocate even further integration of the Comecon network and particularly the Soviet and Czechoslovak economies.

Czechoslovakia conducted its relations with the other communist nations of Eastern Europe largely through the multilateral facilities of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon. The Prague government was a proponent of the integration of both the economies and the foreign policies of the nations of the region, and it pursued this goal through the mechanisms of Comecon and the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Pact.

Bilateral relations between Czechoslovakia and the communist nations of Eastern Europe were, in large part, a reflection of their respective relations with the Soviet Union. East Germany, which

shared the vision of Soviet-dominated “proletarian internationalism” and was the most ardent critic of the Dubček regime during the 1970s, became Czechoslovakia’s closest friend in Eastern Europe. Poland, with which Czechoslovakia shares a border of some 600 kilometers, was another close friend of the Husák regime through the 1970s. The development of independent trade unions and the demand for economic and political reform in Poland in 1980–81 led to strains in the otherwise amicable relations between the two countries. Labor strife in Poland concerned Czechoslovak authorities primarily for two reasons: Poland’s port of Szczecin served as Czechoslovakia’s main sea outlet, and strikes there disrupted Czechoslovak exports and imports; but, even more important, officials feared that labor unrest in Poland would spill over into Czechoslovakia. The mining area around Ostrava, which was close to the Polish border and inhabited by a sizable Polish minority, was of special concern, and some labor difficulty was reported in the area in late 1980. Czechoslovak officials feared that dissident intellectuals and workers in Czechoslovakia might unite in their support of the working-class dissidents in Poland.

Not surprisingly, Czechoslovakia became the East European nation loudest in its denunciation of Poland’s deviation from socialist unity. At the Sixteenth Party Congress in April 1981, Husák harshly criticized the independent labor unions and their leadership and blamed the “antisocialist” forces abroad for encouraging the “counterrevolutionaries” inside Poland. He pledged support for fellow Polish communists but withheld explicit support for the Polish party or its leadership. The Czechoslovak leadership applauded the December 1981 imposition of martial law in Poland, referring to it as a necessary act of self-defense. Once martial law was established, Czechoslovakia ceased its criticism of Poland and instead turned its attention to resolving bilateral issues, primarily Czechoslovak-Polish trade.

Romania refused to participate with its fellow Warsaw Pact members in the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Instead, it loudly condemned the action and, as a result, had less cordial relations with the Husák regime than with other Warsaw Pact members. Yugoslavia too condemned the invasion, and the Yugoslav ideological stance has evoked constant criticism from Prague, although trade relations between the two states have continued. Albania also condemned the invasion, using it as a pretext to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact. Albania’s ideological dispute with Moscow precluded the development of normal relations with Czechoslovakia.

Likewise, commercial relations with China, which were active until 1964, were strained thereafter by the Sino-Soviet dispute and

by China's condemnation of the 1968 Warsaw Pact action. In the 1980s, Czechoslovakia's relations with China began to improve as both nations sought to expand bilateral trade as a first step toward improving political ties.

Czechoslovakia has remained active in its relations with nations of the Third World, especially socialist nations and what is termed "the national liberation struggles in Asia, Africa, and Latin America." Although Czechoslovakia had political and trade relations with the whole gamut of Third World communist nations during the mid-1980s, its relations were especially close (perhaps because of relative geographic proximity) with Ethiopia, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and the Mongolian People's Republic. Of Soviet-aligned but noncommunist countries, Syria and Libya were particularly close to Czechoslovakia. Of the "national liberation movements," the Palestine Liberation Organization and the insurgents in southern Africa were especially favored by Prague. Czechoslovak relations with the communist Third World typically involved political and military cooperation, trade, and economic and technological cooperation.

### **Relations with Noncommunist Nations and Multilateral Ties**

In the spirit of *détente* of the 1970s, Czechoslovakia expanded and improved its relations with many noncommunist nations. These efforts were hindered by memories of the 1968 invasion, which continued to be condemned by virtually every nation outside the Soviet orbit. Another hindrance that appeared in the latter half of the decade and continued adversely to affect Czechoslovak foreign relations in the 1980s was its poor human rights record. Its repression of dissent, especially regarding Charter 77, brought wide condemnation from the noncommunist world and some Eurocommunists. Despite these problems, important strides were made in some areas. An improvement of relations with its two noncommunist neighbors, West Germany and Austria, was perhaps the most important step forward in Czechoslovak foreign policy during the decade.

Czechoslovak relations with West Germany have in many respects mirrored the state of East-West relations since World War II. The cold war and East German sensitivities precluded any diplomatic thaw until the late 1960s, when the Soviet Union began to promote contact between its allies and the West. Consultation between Czechoslovakia and West Germany began in October 1970 but proceeded slowly, largely because of differing views as to how to nullify the Munich Agreement, a source of Czechoslovak bitterness since 1938. A treaty was signed in December 1973 and implemented in July 1974 that declared the Munich Agreement

immoral and null and void; proclaimed the territorial integrity of both countries and renounced the use of force or threats; and called for the development of cooperation in economy, science, technology, culture, antipollution measures, sports, and transportation. A long-term agreement was concluded in January 1975 covering economic, industrial, and technical cooperation, and a treaty on cultural cooperation was signed in April 1978.

Although these documents provided a framework for a wide range of improvements in relations, their implementation progressed slowly. Trade between the two countries increased (West Germany was Czechoslovakia's largest noncommunist trading partner), but disagreements continued to hinder political relations. In April 1978 the governments agreed that their foreign ministers would meet at least once a year, but meetings scheduled for 1979 and 1980 were canceled because of West German protests over trials of Czechoslovak human rights advocates and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. When the foreign ministers were finally able to meet in December 1980, international affairs prevailed over bilateral matters. Despite the fact that both parties expressed a desire to improve bilateral relations, the main subjects for discussion were the issues of détente, arms control, and concern for the territorial integrity of Poland. At a February 1983 meeting of foreign ministers, the deployment of new missiles in Western Europe and environmental protection were the principal topics discussed.

Relations with Austria, Czechoslovakia's neutral neighbor to the south, warmed considerably during the mid- and late 1970s. A December 1974 property-law settlement resolved claims that had severely damaged relations since World War II and paved the way for the raising of diplomatic relations to the embassy level. The March 1979 visit of Austria's president was the first presidential-level visit between the nations since the 1920s. Nevertheless, two years later a variety of problems continued to strain relations. These included the question of the reunion of families of Czechoslovak exiles in Austria, Austrian criticism of Czechoslovakia's treatment of dissidents, and a reported trade imbalance caused by the low quality of Czechoslovak exports.

In 1981 a planned visit to Austria by Husák was canceled because of Austrian objections to Czechoslovakia's treatment of Charter 77 members and the revelation that Czechoslovakia had sent intelligence agents to spy on Czechoslovak exiles in Austria. The visit eventually took place the following year, but Czechoslovak-Austrian relations remained difficult as new tensions arose. In a 1984 border incident, for example, Czechoslovak border guards

mortally wounded a defector after he had reached Austrian soil and left him to die without notifying Austrian authorities. At a 1985 meeting, the Czechoslovak and Austrian foreign ministers agreed to work to improve relations. The following year, Austria's president visited Czechoslovakia, where he discussed with Husák efforts to establish closer bilateral ties.

Relations between Czechoslovakia and the United States had been very good during the interwar period of the First Republic. These relations were based on trade between two economically advanced nations, political affinities between the two democracies, and the presence of a large number of Czech and Slovak immigrants and their descendants in the United States. After 1948, however, relations deteriorated rapidly, partly because of disagreements over the compensation for the property owned by Americans but seized or nationalized by the Czechoslovak government. Relations were somewhat better in the area of family reunification. Here, the United States succeeded in securing exit visas for some Czechoslovak citizens wishing to emigrate to the United States to join their families. Trade relations were modest, and it was anticipated that there would be no trade agreement until claims were settled. In the late 1980s, bilateral relations remained strained because of United States criticism of Prague's continued repression of human rights activists.

Bilateral relations with the rest of the noncommunist world focused on trade matters. After Western Europe, some of Czechoslovakia's most significant noncommunist trading partners included India, Iraq, and Indonesia. Politically, Czechoslovakia's relations with noncommunist nations mirrored the Soviet Union's relations with those same nations. For example, Czechoslovakia firmly aligned itself with the Arab cause against Israel in the Middle East and with black nationalists against South Africa.

Czechoslovakia's most important multilateral ties are with the member states of the Soviet-dominated Comecon and Warsaw Pact. In addition, Czechoslovakia is a founding member of the United Nations and has acted as an active proponent of the causes of the Soviet Union and its followers within that body. During 1978 and 1979 it served as a member of the Security Council. It has also been an active member of a large number of United Nations specialized agencies, including the International Labor Organization; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the World Health Organization; the Food and Agriculture Organization; and many others. Czechoslovakia also participates in the work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and is a member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and

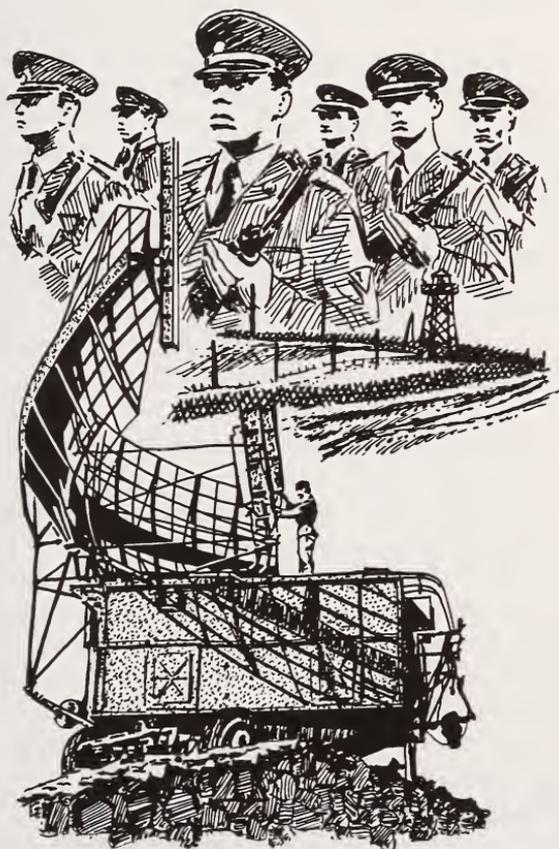
Trade. Czechoslovakia participates with other Warsaw Pact members, the nations of Western Europe, and the United States in efforts to institutionalize East-West détente, including the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction negotiations.

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Of the few English-language books on Czechoslovak politics published during the 1980s, one that provides a good overview of Czechoslovak politics and government is *Czechoslovakia: Profile of a Socialist Republic at the Crossroads of Europe* by David W. Paul. In general, information on Czechoslovakia's internal politics and especially on its foreign relations is found in specific chapters of books on East European relations. For example, chapters in *Soviet-East European Relations* by Robert L. Hutchings and *Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe* by Christopher D. Jones address both domestic and foreign policy issues.

The best information sources for current events in Czechoslovakia are the Radio Free Europe Research *Situation Report: Czechoslovakia*, the Joint Publications Research Service *East Europe Report*, and the Foreign Broadcast Information Service *Daily Report: Eastern Europe*. The Radio Free Europe Research Bulletins provide analyses of current events, as well as detailed background reports on political affairs. The *East Europe Report* and *Daily Report: Eastern Europe* include translations of broadcast announcements and important articles from key newspapers and journals currently published in Czechoslovakia. Finally, the United States Central Intelligence Agency *Directory of Czechoslovak Officials* is a valuable reference aid and is updated periodically. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

## Chapter 5. National Security



*Manpower, barbed wire, and electronics—  
important elements of national security in Czechoslovakia*

THE CZECHOSLOVAK PEOPLE'S ARMY of the late 1980s comprised ground and air forces under the supervision of the Ministry of National Defense. The ground forces accounted for about 70 percent of the total strength of the forces, which in early 1986 was slightly more than 200,000. The armed forces that constitute the people's army have been committed by treaty to the Eastern Europe-Soviet alliance known as the Warsaw Pact. Another military force, the Border Guard, which patrols the country's frontiers, was supervised by the Ministry of Interior, as were two paramilitary police forces—Public Security and State Security—and a part-time, national guard force known as the People's Militia. Manpower for the armed forces and the Border Guard was obtained through a system of universal male conscription; service in the other organizations was voluntary. Women also served in the armed forces and the police forces in small numbers but were not subject to conscription.

All the forces underwent a political purge after the short period of reform in the late 1960s that culminated in an invasion by the armies of five other Warsaw Pact members. The greatest personnel loss at that time occurred in the army, where large numbers of officers who had supported the reform movement either voluntarily resigned or were forced out; the other services were similarly affected, but to a lesser degree. Western analysts disagreed about whether the armed forces had recovered their pre-invasion size, quality, or morale by the late 1980s. Some Western analysts also questioned the reliability of the Czechoslovak forces, but others were convinced that the forces would honor their commitment to the Warsaw Pact if called upon.

Five Soviet ground divisions remained in Czechoslovakia after the departure of the other Warsaw Pact invasion forces in 1968. After nearly two decades, these Soviet forces had become an integral part of the Warsaw Pact defenses in the area, but for many Czechoslovak citizens their presence was still a cause of resentment. In guarded moments, some citizens have referred to the Soviet forces as an army of occupation. The leaders of the government and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, however, have been obsequious in their contacts with Soviet officials and periodically have even thanked the invaders for having shown Czechoslovakia the error of its ways. Marked public unease was also evident in 1983 when the Soviet Union began deploying operational-tactical missiles in Czechoslovakia.

The Czechoslovak munitions industry, which was already well developed when the country was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, continued to produce arms and military equipment in the 1980s. The Škoda armament works of Plzeň was famous long before World War I, and the British Bren gun of World War II fame was originally developed in Brno, from which its name was derived. Škoda and other manufacturers of munitions have maintained a reputation for quality during the communist era, and Czechoslovakia has become a major supplier of arms to Third World countries. The industry also has supplied weapons and equipment for the country's own forces and for other Warsaw Pact forces. Production has included small arms, machine guns, antitank weapons, armored vehicles, tanks (of Soviet design), and jet aircraft.

## **Armed Forces: Historical and Political Setting**

### **Historical Background and Traditions**

#### *To 1918*

Although the history of Czechoslovakia as a sovereign state dates only from the breakup of the Hapsburg Empire at the end of World War I, the military traditions of the Czechs and Slovaks date back to the upheavals of the Middle Ages in Central Europe. Boleslav I of Bohemia, for example, commanded Czech troops at the Battle of Lechfeld in 955, when the forces of the Holy Roman Empire under Otto I finally halted the Hungarian raids through Europe. After their defeat, the Hungarians retreated into the Carpathian Basin, and for most of the next 1,000 years the Slovaks remained under Hungarian domination.

King John of Bohemia and his son Charles fought on the side of the French against the English during the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453). John, lashed to his horse because of blindness, rode to his death on the battlefield at Crécy. Charles, wounded in the same battle, returned to Prague as king and was later crowned Holy Roman Emperor. He is remembered in Czechoslovakia as an enlightened, benevolent king of Bohemia. Charles founded the university that bears his name and ordered the construction of the bridge across the Vltava River, which was also named in his honor. Charles hired French and Italian architects to build the churches, palaces, and mansions that made Prague one of Europe's most beautiful cities.

Additional popular military traditions originated in the religious wars of the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. During the Hussite wars, Jan Žižka became a military leader of such skill and brilliance that his name is well remembered more than 500 years later.

Two centuries after the Hussite wars, religious strife again wracked the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia, and at the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, Czech freedom was lost to the Austrian Hapsburgs (see Hapsburg Absolutism and the Bohemian Estates, ch. 1).

### *The Establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic*

Throughout the centuries of foreign rule, the Czechs were subjected, at times, to intense Germanization and the Slovaks to Magyarization; nevertheless, both maintained their ethnic identities, and during the collapse of empires and kingdoms that accompanied World War I, they seized the opportunity for independence. During the war, Czechs and Slovaks in large numbers deserted the armies of Austria and Hungary, respectively, to form the Czechoslovak Legion, military units that fought for the Allied powers in the hope that they were contributing to their own national liberation. The largest Czechoslovak units were formed on the eastern front, but the Russians did not trust them and, until the overthrow of the tsar, did not commit them to battle.

During the period of the Provisional Government in Russia, Alexander Kerensky, then minister of war, allowed General Aleksei Brusilov to include Czechoslovak units in his army as he prepared for a major Russian offensive in June 1917. Russian units, pressured by the Bolsheviks, refused to fight; but the Czechoslovak soldiers, motivated by dreams of a free homeland, fought valiantly. At the Battle of Zborov on the Galician front, they broke through Austro-Hungarian lines and captured more than 4,000 of the enemy, including about 60 officers. They also captured several artillery pieces and machine guns plus quantities of ammunition and supplies. The cost in casualties at Zborov was high—almost 200 killed and 700 wounded—but the taste of victory was sweet and was heightened by the presence in Russia of Tomáš Masaryk.

With the collapse of the eastern front imminent, Masaryk in Russia and Eduard Beneš in France desperately tried to arrange a plan whereby the Czechoslovak Legion would be evacuated through Archangel and shipped to France, where it would be employed in the Allied cause. After the Bolshevik takeover, when the Czechoslovak leaders deemed it impossible to evacuate such a large force through northern Russia, a new plan called for the legion to travel across Siberia to Vladivostok and cross the Pacific, North America, and the Atlantic to France, where it would be committed to combat. At first the Bolsheviks, desirous of ridding the country of such a large foreign armed force, approved of the evacuation through Siberia, with the stipulation that the Czechoslovak units give up

their weapons. Refusing the order to disarm, the legionnaires clashed with the Red Army. Because the 40,000 to 60,000 Czechoslovak troops constituted the strongest force between European Russia and the Pacific Coast, they were able to take control of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, a move necessary to protect their route of departure. Merely by their presence along the strategic railroad, the legionnaires became an important element in the Russian civil war and frequently fought against the Soviet troops. When the war in Europe ended, Czechoslovakia gained independence, and Allied armies intervened in Russia before the last unit of the Czechoslovak Legion was repatriated.

The republic that encompassed the former Czech lands—Bohemia and Moravia—as well as Slovakia and Ruthenia (also known as Carpatho-Ukraine) created an army in 1918 and an air force two years later. Personnel for these forces were recruited from the legions that had fought in Russia, Italy, and France, as well as from the demobilized troops of the defeated Austro-Hungarian armies. Many of the problems of multinationalism that had plagued the Hapsburgs were passed on to the successor states and to their armed forces. The new Czechoslovak forces mirrored the ethnic groups from which they were drawn—Czechs, Germans, Slovaks, Hungarians, and Ruthenians (Ukrainians), plus much smaller numbers of Jews, Poles, and Romanians. (Most Jews had been assimilated and were not categorized as a minority in the armed forces.) Ethnic strength in the forces generally reflected percentages in the population, although Czechs were overrepresented, particularly in the officer corps, which they dominated. Although outright discrimination by the Czechs against minorities was not tolerated, ethnic friction did exist, and the question of reliability worried the Czech-controlled general staff and defense ministry.

### *Munich and After*

After the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany in early 1938, the fear of a similar fate increased in Czechoslovakia; the authorities, however, were determined to fight rather than to submit quietly as the Austrians had done. President Beneš ordered a partial mobilization, and the country began to prepare for the war that appeared to be inevitable. At that time, treaties pledged French, British, and Soviet aid to Czechoslovakia, but at Munich in September Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain of Britain and Premier Édouard Daladier of France capitulated to Hitler's demands and agreed to sacrifice Czechoslovakia in exchange for the peace promised by Hitler. Because the Soviet Union's pledge depended on whether or not France abided by its commitment, Czechoslovakia was left

without allies. Hitler promised at Munich to take only the Sudetenland, but less than six months later, on March 15, 1939, German troops marched into Prague. Bohemia and Moravia became a Nazi protectorate; Slovakia was granted a measure of autonomy but, in effect, became a puppet state (see *The War Years, 1939–45*, ch. 1). The Czechoslovak army, which could have mobilized as many as thirty divisions, was disarmed and disbanded.

During the occupation of the Czech lands, acts of resistance and sabotage were met with vicious reprisals. Persecution became particularly severe under Reinhard Heydrich, who was appointed Reich protector of Bohemia and Moravia in September 1941. Less than nine months later Heydrich, who had previously been deputy to the infamous Heinrich Himmler, was assassinated by two Czechoslovak commandos who had been trained in Britain and parachuted into their homeland to carry out the mission. Nazi retribution was swift and frightful. The village of Lidice, selected as the target for punishment, was completely obliterated. All male inhabitants over age sixteen were shot, all women were sent to concentration camps, and all children were sent to German orphanages. Even Lidice, however, did not end Czechoslovak resistance (see *Czech Resistance*, ch. 1).

In Slovakia conditions were little better for the average citizen than in the Czech lands. Despite its ostensible position as an autonomous state administered by Slovaks, this puppet state had quickly taken on the characteristics of a police state, and the occupying forces pressed the Germanization of the people. All opposition was suppressed, and before long underground resistance groups arose as they had in Bohemia and Moravia. The various Slovak resistance forces coalesced into a single command and staged the Slovak National Uprising from August through October 1944. Although unsuccessful, this uprising was one of the most significant rebellions in Nazi-occupied Europe (see *Slovak Resistance*, ch. 1).

In addition to those fighters who devoted their energies to the resistance movements in various parts of the country, many other Czechoslovak citizens escaped abroad to join Allied armed forces or to form all-Czechoslovak units. Various contingents, including the First Czechoslovak Corps under the command of General Ludvík Svoboda, fought alongside Soviet formations as they liberated eastern Europe. However, these forces arrived in Slovakia too late to relieve the resistance units, which suffered heavy losses during the Slovak National Uprising. In western Europe, a Czechoslovak infantry brigade and three air squadrons accompanied the British forces in the invasion of the continent.

President Beneš, in the meanwhile, had spent most of the war years in London. In March 1945 he traveled to Moscow for negotiations about the program and composition of the new Czechoslovak government that would be formed as the country was liberated. The town of Košice in eastern Slovakia was designated as a temporary capital, and the Košice Program, which outlined a detailed plan for government, was published there. Eight key governmental posts were designated to be filled by members of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—KSC), including the Ministry of National Defense, which was put under the charge of Svoboda. The government moved from Košice to Prague on May 10, 1945, and, as defense minister, Svoboda began organizing the armed forces along Soviet lines as agreed to in the Košice Program. Svoboda, a genuine war hero, had fought in both world wars. As a twenty-year-old conscript in the Austro-Hungarian army in 1915, he had been sent to the Russian front, where he deserted and joined the forces that eventually became the Czechoslovak Legion. After returning to civilian life briefly in the early 1920s, Svoboda joined the new army and spent the rest of his life in service, which included the presidency of the republic from 1968 to 1975.

As World War II neared its end in 1945, the American Third Army under the command of General George S. Patton was in Czechoslovakia near Plzeň (Pilsen) and was fully capable of liberating Prague, but prior political arrangements had reserved that highly symbolic act for the Red Army. Over four decades later, Czechoslovak citizens were still frequently reminded that the Red Army had paid a high price in lives and wealth to secure their freedom from the Nazis. They were constantly told that they owed an everlasting debt of gratitude to their liberators. That many in the Czechoslovak Legion died fighting alongside Russian soldiers in Russia during World War I was rarely publicized.

The armed forces that Svoboda began to rebuild in 1945 were heavily influenced by the Soviet forces in which many Czechoslovaks had served, including many officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) who had become members of the KSC. Svoboda had not yet become a party member, although he certainly sympathized with the Soviet cause, and approximately one-third of his top commands were held by communist generals. That communist officers had taken over the posts of troop education officers at all levels, almost without exception, was perhaps of even greater significance. In the election of 1946, military garrisons voted heavily for the communist candidates. Because of the intense political activism of the

communists, however, antagonism arose between the communist-influenced officers from the eastern front and those air force officers from the western front who had been based in London during the war. These two groups constituted the bulk of armed forces personnel in the early postwar period.

### *The Communists Take Over*

After the 1946 election, the communists began to lose some of their popularity, and, as the 1948 election approached, their public support began to decline. Not leaving anything to chance, the communists staged a coup d'état in February 1948 rather than wait for the scheduled May election. To ensure passivity among military units that might object to such unconstitutional methods, Svoboda confined all noncommunist commanders to quarters. Various units under communist command were placed on alert during the coup, but they were not needed and were not used as the legitimate government was ousted and a Moscow-oriented, communist regime was installed.

Early in the new era, the ranks of officers and NCOs were thinned as the military forces, along with all other institutions, were purged to ensure political reliability. The armed forces—now called the Czechoslovak People's Army (Československá lidová armáda—ČSLA)—suffered initially from the loss of competent personnel, but as Soviet advisers reorganized units to fit the Soviet pattern and trained the Czechoslovaks to use the Soviet equipment that was arriving in quantity, the forces gradually developed a credible combat capability.

Having cleaned the governmental institutions of opposition elements, the communist rulers conducted another purge in the early 1950s, this time seeking purity within the party. Svoboda, who had joined the KSČ in 1948, was among those who fell into disfavor. Charged with treason, he was removed from his post as defense minister and sent to work on a collective farm. Others, however, fared worse. Rudolf Slánský, for example, who was first secretary of the party, was executed. Slánský and Svoboda were both rehabilitated—posthumously in the case of Slánský. Svoboda regained his army rank in 1955 and became commandant of the Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy, a post he held until his retirement from military service in 1959. Although the morale of the troops suffered from the purges, the size of the military establishment grew rapidly, increasing from 140,000 in 1950 to over 250,000 in 1951. These well-trained and highly disciplined forces were considered to be capable and competent in 1955 when Czechoslovakia committed its forces to the alliance formed under the terms

of the Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance—the Warsaw Pact.

The ČSLA's prestige continued to grow during the next decade as it increasingly became a "junior partner" in Soviet military strategy in both Eastern Europe and the Third World. Unlike Hungary and Poland, Czechoslovakia experienced no upheavals in 1956 and was therefore considered to be, from the Soviet point of view, the most reliable of the front-line Warsaw Pact states. The ČSLA gave support to the increased Soviet military presence in the Third World. As the Soviet Union became a supplier of arms, Czechoslovakia supplied training expertise to Third World military officers. The ČSLA also underwent considerable modernization in the early 1960s as the Soviet Union redefined the role of the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact members in Warsaw Pact military strategy. As Warsaw Pact strategy shifted from one of massive retaliation to one of limited nuclear warfare, the Czechoslovak military was assigned a specific role to play in the event of war with the West—to tie down North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces in the southern part of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany).

Yet it was precisely this enhanced prestige and concomitant duties that gave rise to increasing discontent in what had been considered up to that time a solidly pro-Soviet military establishment. The modernization of the ČSLA required and spawned an officer corps whose level of education was much higher than that of its predecessor. This educated officer corps, however, increasingly resented the amount of time it was required to devote to its own political education. Some officers also believed that the country's new Warsaw Pact role unjustly favored Warsaw Pact and Soviet defense interests at the expense of Czechoslovakia's. Romania had previously raised this question regarding its own role in the Warsaw Pact. According to the Warsaw Pact's own estimates, the ČSLA would take casualties of 60 to 70 percent in a war against NATO, and Czechoslovakia itself would be turned into a nuclear battlefield. That the Soviet Union made repeated attempts to station troops and nuclear warheads within Czechoslovakia during this time must have exacerbated the situation. Soviet requests were repeatedly turned down, but tensions arose during the process.

The general dissatisfaction within the Czechoslovak military became increasingly evident. In 1966 Czechoslovakia, following the lead of Romania, rejected the Soviet Union's call for more military integration within the Warsaw Pact and sought greater input in planning and strategy for the Warsaw Pact's non-Soviet members. At the same time, plans to effect great structural changes in

Czechoslovak military organizations were under discussion. All these debates heated up in 1968 during the period of political liberalization known as the Prague Spring, when ČSLA commanders put forward plans to democratize the armed forces, plans that included limiting the role of the party (see *The Prague Spring*, ch. 1). National military doctrine became an even greater issue when two important documents were released: the Action Program of the Ministry of Defense and the Memorandum of the Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy. These documents stated that Czechoslovakia should base its defense strategy on its own geopolitical interests and that the threat from the West had been overstated. Although the regime of Alexander Dubček, the party first secretary (title changed to general secretary in 1971), was careful to reassure the Soviet Union that Czechoslovakia would remain committed to the Warsaw Pact, Moscow felt challenged by these developments, which undoubtedly played a major role in the decision to invade in August 1968.

### *The Fraternal Invasion*

On August 20, 1968, Warsaw Pact forces—including troops from Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Hungary, Poland, and the Soviet Union—invaded Czechoslovakia. Approximately 500,000 troops, mostly from the Soviet Union, poured across the borders in a blitzkrieg-like advance (see *Intervention*, ch. 1).

The invasion was meticulously planned and coordinated, as the operation leading to the capture of Prague's Ruzyně International Airport in the early hours of the invasion demonstrated. A special flight from Moscow, which had prior clearance, arrived just as the Warsaw Pact troops began crossing the borders. The aircraft carried more than 100 plainclothes agents, who quickly secured the airport and prepared the way for a huge airlift. Giant An-12 aircraft began arriving at the rate of one per minute, unloading Soviet airborne troops equipped with artillery and light tanks. As the operation at the airport continued, columns of tanks and motorized rifle troops headed toward Prague and other major centers, meeting no resistance.

By dawn on August 21, 1968, Czechoslovakia was an occupied country. During the day, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs “with the endorsement of the President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and on behalf of the Government of the Republic” transmitted to the governments of the invading countries “a resolute protest with the requirement that the illegal occupation of Czechoslovakia be stopped without delay and all armed troops be

withdrawn.” That evening in a nationwide radio broadcast President Svoboda stated that the Warsaw Pact forces had entered the country “without the consent of the constitutional organs of the state,” thus officially denying the Soviet claim that they had been invited into the country to preserve socialism. The people of Czechoslovakia generally resented the presence of foreign troops. They demonstrated their objections in mass gatherings in the streets and by various acts of passive resistance. The invading troops could see that they had not been invited into and were not wanted in Czechoslovakia.

One of the priority missions of the Warsaw Pact forces during the early stages of the invasion was to neutralize the Czechoslovak armed forces. That mission proved to be easy because Czechoslovak authorities had confined the armed forces to their barracks. In effect, the Czechoslovak forces were prisoners in their own barracks although, on orders from the Warsaw Pact command, they had not been disarmed. At the end of three weeks, the Soviet units that had surrounded Czechoslovak military installations were pulled back, but the suspicions that had been aroused among the troops on both sides were not easily dispelled. Czechoslovak military spokesmen tried to depict their forces as the same strong, efficient organization that had previously manned the westernmost wall of the Warsaw Pact, but obvious doubts had been raised in the minds of authorities in the other countries. Czechoslovak citizens, in turn, wondered about allies who could so suddenly become invaders.

### *“Normalization”*

It was not until October 16 that agreement was reached for the partial withdrawal of the Warsaw Pact armies. The Soviet Union made a big show over the agreement, sending Premier Aleksei Kosygin to Prague as leader of a high-level delegation to observe the ceremony. Czechoslovak joy was tempered by the knowledge that a sizable army of occupation would remain after the bulk of the invading force had departed. The Bulgarian, East German, Hungarian, and Polish troops were ordered to leave the country, but Soviet units were to remain in what was referred to as “temporary stationing.” In the agreement, Czechoslovakia retained responsibility for defense of its western borders, but Soviet troops were to be garrisoned in the interior of the country. As events transpired, however, the major Soviet headquarters and four of its five ground divisions were deployed in the Czech Socialist Republic, where they remained in mid-1987.

During the talks leading to the agreement, the Soviet negotiators pressed their Czechoslovak counterparts to reduce the size of

the ČSLA by eliminating the personnel who had supported the Dubček regime. Yet the subsequent force reduction was caused by more than direct Soviet pressure. Dubček's Prague Spring and the subsequent invasion by Warsaw Pact allies had had many ramifications within the armed forces, particularly among the professionals of the officer corps and the NCO corps. In the year preceding the ouster of Antonín Novotný, the first secretary of the KSČ, definite schisms had occurred between those officers supporting the old order and those favoring the reform movement. In February 1968, shortly after Dubček had replaced Novotný as first secretary, Major General Jan Šejna defected to the West. He revealed that he and other hard-line communists had planned to keep Novotný in office, by force if necessary, but the plan fell through when the Presidium voted to oust Novotný. The political dichotomy in the military led to a great thinning of the ranks after the downfall of Dubček and the rise to power of Gustáv Husák in early 1969.

Once its power was consolidated, the Husák government sought to re-establish party control over the armed forces and to ensure their full integration into a Warsaw Pact dominated by the Soviet Union. The Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy—the center of the military debate of the mid-1960s—was temporarily closed, and the ČSLA officer corps was purged. When the purge was completed in 1975, some 11,000 officers and about 30,000 NCOs had been dismissed. Officer strength in the army was reduced by one-third and in the air force by one-half. Demoralization also contributed to this dramatic decrease. In the months following the invasion, nearly 58 percent of all army officers under 30 years of age resigned, and by June 1969 an estimated 50 percent of all students in the country's military academies also had resigned. In order to overcome this drastic reduction in manpower, the qualifications—whether educational or otherwise—for officer candidates were lowered, and at least some candidates were rushed through officer training school in half the normal time. Substantial material and career incentives were used to entice young people into the ranks of officers. The effect of these measures was difficult to assess precisely, but it was clear that their effect must have been minimal. In 1979 a West German source noted that officer shortages in the ČSLA at that time ranged from 20 percent in the air force to 70 percent in the motorized infantry. Overall military strength dropped from 240,000 in 1966 to 168,000 in 1969 and generally stayed below 200,000 for most of the 1970s. Ironically, General Martin Dzúr, the minister of national defense at the time of the invasion, survived the purges and early retirements and retained his post until his death in January 1985.

In the post-Dubček era, the armed forces suffered from the apathy that seemed to infect the entire society after the Stalin-like crushing of the Prague Spring. The failure to resist the “fraternal” invaders undermined the prestige of the military in its own eyes and in the eyes of the public. Despite the purges of possibly unreliable personnel and the redoubling of propaganda efforts in military schools and training programs, some outside observers in the 1970s and 1980s questioned the reliability of the Czechoslovak forces in the event of an East-West conflict. The most frequent questions concerned their reliability in a prolonged offensive war in Western Europe or in a war that was going badly for Warsaw Pact forces. Other outside analysts, however, believed that the Czechoslovak armed forces were well trained, well equipped, and well motivated and that they were capable of carrying their share of Warsaw Pact operations, particularly in defense of their homeland (see Soviet Influence, this ch.).

### **Government and Party Control**

The Constitution of 1960, which replaced the original communist constitution of 1948, converted the Czechoslovak Republic into the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. According to the Constitution, “defense of the country and its socialist social order” was the “supreme duty and a matter of honor for every citizen.” Citizens were “duty bound” to serve in the armed forces as prescribed by law. The law provided for a system of universal male conscription.

The president of the federal republic is titular head of the armed forces by virtue of his constitutional designation as commander in chief. In that capacity, he has the power to appoint and promote general officers, but real power is wielded by the State Defense Council (Rada obrany státu), which alone has the authority to formulate policy and budget the resources deemed necessary. The council, in turn, is dominated by the KSČ, which Article 4 of the Constitution asserts is “the guiding force in society.”

In 1985 the Czechoslovak government allocated 7.6 percent of its annual budget to defense spending. This percentage included expenses for police, militia, and border guards. Some Western analysts believe that this figure was quite large for a country the size of Czechoslovakia, even if the considerable sums devoted to internal security are taken into account. Other observers, however, have pointed out that defense spending has never recovered its pre-1968 levels. In any case, defense spending as a percentage of the total budget has been gradually increasing since 1974, when it stood at 5.7 percent.

Policy making in the armed forces since 1969 has been a function of the State Defense Council, which was established by law in January of that year. Although the council is a governmental body, the interlocking nature of top governmental and party organs ensures that the KSC controls it. Because of official secrecy laws, little has been published concerning the council, its meetings, or its functions. When established in 1969, the State Defense Council consisted of the first secretary of the KSC as chairman and the premier of Czechoslovakia as vice chairman. Members were the minister of national defense, the chief of the General Staff, the minister of interior, the chairman of the Czech National Front, the first secretary of the Communist Party of Slovakia (Komunistická strana Slovenska—KSS), the premier of the Czech Socialist Republic, and the premier of the Slovak Socialist Republic. In 1987 officials holding these positions were members of the KSC Secretariat, Presidium, Central Committee, or a combination of these bodies. Ostensibly the council was responsible to the Federal Assembly, but the political power of its membership made it responsible only to itself (see *The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia*, ch. 4).

According to its establishing statute, the State Defense Council was intended to be the governmental agency charged with evaluating the country's international obligations and threats to national security. Based upon such evaluation, determinations would be made concerning basic concepts of defense and the configuration of the armed forces. The council also is responsible for determining the proportion of the annual budget that will be used for the support of the defense establishment, and it has final approval of operational planning. During wartime, it would oversee mobilization of the economy as well as the population, direct civil defense measures, and act as the supreme decision-making body for the military forces. The council also is charged with internal security matters.

Defense councils were also established in the governments of the Czech Socialist Republic and the Slovak Socialist Republic, which together constituted the federation that was one of the few legacies of the ill-fated Action Program of Dubček (see *The Prague Spring*, 1968, ch. 1). The legislation creating the federal structure, the Constitutional Law of Federation of October 27, 1968, survived the period of so-called normalization under Husák and continued in force in late 1987. Both national republics established operating governments, but defense was among the responsibilities retained by federal authorities (see *Government Structure*, ch. 4). The purpose and function of the defense councils in the constituent republics was not revealed. It was known, however, that their members

were appointed and subject to recall by the chairman of the State Defense Council.

The Ministry of National Defense is the government agency responsible for the administration and operation of the armed forces. As is true in most Warsaw Pact countries, this ministry is patterned on its Soviet counterpart. Under the direction of the State Defense Council, as of 1987 the defense ministry organized, equipped, and trained the combat and support elements of the military services. The ministry also planned peacetime operations and training, as well as formulating the necessary plans for wartime operation. Additionally, the ministry allocated the funds that have been designated for defense in the national budget. The minister of national defense customarily has been a serving officer, the only four-star general on active duty. Defense ministers have usually ranked high in the KSČ (membership in the Central Committee, for example), but as of 1987 no defense minister had served concurrently in the Presidium.

When the military was restructured to fit the communist mold in the late 1940s, a political network similar to that of the Soviet forces was superimposed on Czechoslovak military organization at every level. Political officers, assigned to all units down to and including battalion, were subordinate to the armed forces' Main Political Directorate, which was linked directly to the KSČ Central Committee. The chief of the Main Political Directorate in early 1987, Lieutenant General Jaroslav Klícha, was a member of the KSČ Central Committee, as was his first deputy. Despite their separate channels of communication and their political subordination, political officers were subject to normal command and could not countermand orders of their military commanders, as had sometimes been true in the Soviet armed forces in earlier years.

Party domination was ensured by the interlocking of party and government positions, that is, by the practice of filling top positions in the government with key party officials. Husák, for example, occupied the top position in the party—general secretary—and the top position in the government—president. In the military, he was the commander in chief and the chairman of the State Defense Council. In effect, all lines led to Husák, but party control was not dependent solely on a single individual. For example, most officers and many senior NCOs were party members, many others aspired to membership, and young officers and NCOs were members of party-sponsored youth organizations. Conscripts were proselytized by unit activists, and political orientation made up a significant part of the routine training programs of military units.

Party indoctrination courses were part of the curricula at military schools and academies.

General Dzúr, who had been appointed minister of national defense by Dubček in April 1968, was co-opted into the KSČ Central Committee in August of that year and continued in both capacities until his death. Dzúr's highest command position on active duty had been as a battalion commander from 1946 until 1948, but, as evidenced by his party activity since 1943, he was very much a politician. In addition to becoming minister of national defense and the highest ranking member of the armed forces, Dzúr displayed unusual political acumen not only by surviving the Dubček debacle but also by retaining his military and party positions. His successor, General Milán Václavík, was likewise elected to the Central Committee, but only after his appointment as minister of national defense in 1985. General Karel Rusov, first deputy minister of national defense and second in rank and importance to Václavík in the military hierarchy, had been a member of the party since 1946 and was elected to the Central Committee in 1981, as was General Miloslav Blahník, the chief of staff. Czechoslovakia had fewer high-ranking military officers in the party hierarchy than was generally the case in other Warsaw Pact countries.

## **Soviet Influence**

### *Loyalties*

Zdeněk Mlynář, secretary of the Central Committee under Dubček who later emigrated, has written that one of the reasons the military was not ordered to resist the invaders in August 1968 was the questionable loyalty of the armed forces leadership. Mlynář believed that some ČSLA units could have been persuaded by their officers to join the "fraternal, international" armies of the Warsaw Pact, which, according to the widely disseminated propaganda, invaded only to help Czechoslovakia preserve its socialist way of life. While the hopelessness of resisting the invasion against overwhelming military forces must have stayed the hands of those charged with organizing the country's defense, they undoubtedly took the question of loyalty into consideration.

The possibility of divided loyalties that worried Mlynář and others in 1968 had its roots in the development of the country since independence. Czechs and Slovaks were among the few peoples of Eastern Europe who did not harbor hatred of or grudges against the Russians. Many, both civilian and military, were openly Russophile in attitude—certainly pro-Soviet if not procommunist. Such attitudes were strengthened when Czechoslovakia was abandoned

at Munich in 1938 and again when Soviet armies liberated most of the country in 1945. When the armed forces were rebuilt after World War II, those Czechoslovak fighters who had returned with the Soviets gained the upper hand over those who had fought in the West, ensuring that Soviet influence would be paramount (see Historical Background and Traditions, this ch.).

The armed forces stood aside in 1948 during the communist coup d'état. After the coup, Svoboda and other high-ranking officers joined the KSČ and, with assistance and advice from large numbers of Soviet military advisers, began to reform the ČSLA along Soviet lines. Many officers and NCOs—particularly the veterans of service with American, British, and French forces—were discharged and replaced by less experienced but politically reliable personnel. Combat readiness was low for several years after the coup as forces were restructured to conform to the Soviet pattern. Weapons and equipment of German design were eventually replaced by items of Soviet manufacture or design. As personnel were trained and educated according to Soviet programs and curricula, which included heavy doses of political indoctrination, the strategy and tactics of warfare devised by the Soviet high command became the doctrine of the Czechoslovak forces. By the time of the founding of the Warsaw Pact in 1955, the ČSLA was already achieving a reputation as a well-trained, efficient organization.

By the early 1960s, the ČSLA was considered one of the most loyal and modern of the Warsaw Pact forces; it was, in effect, a satellite of the Soviet military establishment. In following the Soviet lead, the Czechoslovak military simply mirrored the country's communist hierarchy, which tried to be more communist than the Soviet Union by retaining its rigid Stalinist approach long after de-Stalinization had occurred in the Soviet Union and other areas of Eastern Europe. Soviet equipment and weapons were delivered in quantity and periodically updated; Soviet methods of military education and training were adopted; many officers were sent to the Soviet Union for advanced schooling; and field training included multinational exercises usually under Soviet direction. The thought that this military clone might be lost through the actions of political and military reformers, even though they were communist reformers, apparently frightened the Soviet leadership. Undoubtedly, this factor weighed heavily in the decision to invade Czechoslovakia in 1968.

### *Soviet Central Group of Forces in Czechoslovakia*

Soviet influence within the armed forces became even stronger after 1968 because of the units left behind after the withdrawal of

the main invasion forces. Resignations and purges eliminated the officers and NCOs who would have objected to the Soviet occupation, whereas those who remained on active duty and those recruited to replace losses were inclined to favor strong Soviet ties. In late 1987, nearly two decades after the invasion, five Soviet divisions were still stationed in Czechoslovakia and, to all outward appearances, Soviet influence was undiminished.

Soviet military units deployed outside the borders of the Soviet Union after World War II have been organized in groups rather than in fronts, which was the wartime designation of these major formations. Throughout the postwar era, the largest deployment of Soviet forces outside its borders has been the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany located in East Germany. Other groups were the Northern Group of Forces in Poland, the Southern Group of Forces in Hungary, and the Central Group of Forces in Czechoslovakia. The Central Group of forces comprised two tank divisions, three mechanized infantry divisions, three missile brigades, an artillery brigade, and an airborne assault brigade. Total strength was about 85,000. Group headquarters was located in the town of Milovice, northwest of Prague. In October 1984, Colonel General Viktor Yermakov was named by Moscow to command the Central Group of Forces, replacing Lieutenant General Grigoriy Borisov, who had assumed command in January 1981.

Four of the five Soviet ground divisions in Czechoslovakia were stationed in the Czech lands (Milovice, Mladá Boleslav, Vysoké Myto, and Bruntál), while one was headquartered in Slovakia (Zvolen). Armaments in early 1987 included 1,500 main battle tanks, 650 artillery pieces, 90 multipurpose rocket launchers, and 300 front-line aircraft, including 120 helicopters. The aircraft inventory also included Su-25 ground attack airplanes. The Central Group of Forces also possessed fifty operational and operational-tactical nuclear missiles consisting of SS-21s, SS-22s, and SS-23s. The SS-21 sites included Zvolen, Topol'čany, and Vysoké Myto in Slovakia, and at Plzeň, České Budějovice, Mladá Boleslav, Sušice, Milovice, Havlíčkův Brod, Bruntál, and Tábor in the Czech lands. In 1983 the Czechoslovak government attempted to muster public support for the decision to install these missiles. The Czechoslovak citizenry, however, realizing that their country had now become a primary target in a future war, did not support the installation.

The Central Group of Forces is a legacy of the 1968 invasion; until that event, Czechoslovakia had had no Soviet troops stationed permanently within its borders. The degree of permanence of the Central Group of Forces has in the past appeared to be a matter

of semantics. For several years after the invasion, the deployment was referred to officially as "temporary," and a commission for the Temporary Stationing of Soviet Forces on Czechoslovak Territory existed for at least the first ten years. The Soviet purpose in maintaining troop units of the magnitude of the Central Group of Forces is undoubtedly twofold: first, to avoid any future Dubček-like deviations and, second, to increase substantially the strength of the Warsaw Pact on its westernmost frontier.

### **External Threats to National Security**

As of 1987, the party and government leaders of Czechoslovakia continued to assert that West Germany, NATO, and the United States represented the major external threats to their country's security. Alleged West German *revanche* was periodically denounced in the Czechoslovak press, and those German organizations that called for Germany's 1937 borders to be restored were especially singled out for criticism, as was the Sudeten German Emigré Organization, an organization of those Germans expelled from Czechoslovakia after World War II. Bonn and ultimately Washington were seen by Prague to be exploiting German *revanchist* sentiments for their own purposes. Džúr had stated in 1984 that NATO was seeking to "achieve military superiority . . . over the Soviet Union and other countries of the Warsaw Pact, to dictate [NATO's] will to independent states, to stop the worldwide revolutionary process, and to dominate the world." A rabid anti-American campaign reached its peak when the Soviet Union failed to prevent the installation of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Western Europe. The deployment of these missiles during the early 1980s was portrayed as a threat to the European military balance. The Czechoslovak leadership, however, did not mention that the missiles had been installed in response to the deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles in the western Soviet Union beginning in 1977. When the Soviet Union installed SS-21 and SS-23 missiles in Czechoslovakia starting in 1983, the Czechoslovak public was noticeably unenthusiastic.

A different kind of threat was seen emanating from Poland at the beginning of the 1980s. The development of the Solidarity trade union movement there obviously alarmed the communist hierarchy in Czechoslovakia, which feared that the labor unrest might spill over into their country. Czechoslovak spokesmen warned the Poles that their toying with socialism could be compared with the Czechoslovak heresy of 1968 and might result in the same kind of disaster.

## Armed Forces

### Ground Forces

Of the approximately 201,000 personnel on active duty in the ČSLA in 1987, about 145,000, or about 72 percent, served in the ground forces (commonly referred to as the army). About 100,000 of these were conscripts. As in other Warsaw Pact armed forces, the army was by far the largest service. In Czechoslovakia the army was divided into three categories: arms (*zbraně*), auxiliary arms (*pomocné*), and services (*služby*). The arms included infantry, armor, artillery, and engineers. Auxiliary arms included the signal, chemical, and transportation branches. The service branches provided the ČSLA with medical, veterinarian, ordnance, quartermaster, administration, justice, and topographic services. Patterned after the Soviet model, the rear services of the ČSLA were responsible for the procurement of weapons, ammunition, military equipment, and other supplies needed by the armed forces. Some of the equipment required was produced within Czechoslovakia, while the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact states supplied the remainder needed.

Tactical organization followed the Soviet pattern except for some minor local variations and modifications for differences in equipment. Many of the small arms and lighter, crew-served weapons used by the Czechoslovak forces were manufactured locally, sometimes requiring slight changes from the Soviet norm of organization for small units. The primary strength of the army in 1987 was in five tank divisions, five motorized rifle divisions, one airborne regiment, six engineering brigades, and one artillery division consisting of two antitank regiments, two conventional artillery brigades, and three surface-to-surface missile brigades. One of the tank divisions and three of the motorized rifle divisions were considered to be category one, that is, at full strength and fully equipped. The remaining divisions were maintained at lower manning levels—category two or three—that is, between one-third and three-quarters manpower strength, but with full equipment, although some of it might have been obsolete. Full strength of a tank division was estimated at about 11,000 officers and men; that of a motorized rifle division at 14,000 (see fig. 16).

In keeping with Soviet doctrine, both kinds of Czechoslovak divisions were tank-heavy organizations. Motorized rifle divisions possessed 266 tanks; tank divisions possessed 335. (A United States armored division had 324 tanks, only 11 fewer than a Warsaw Pact tank division, but the American organization had about 7,300 more personnel.) In 1987, the Czechoslovak army possessed 3,000 T-54s

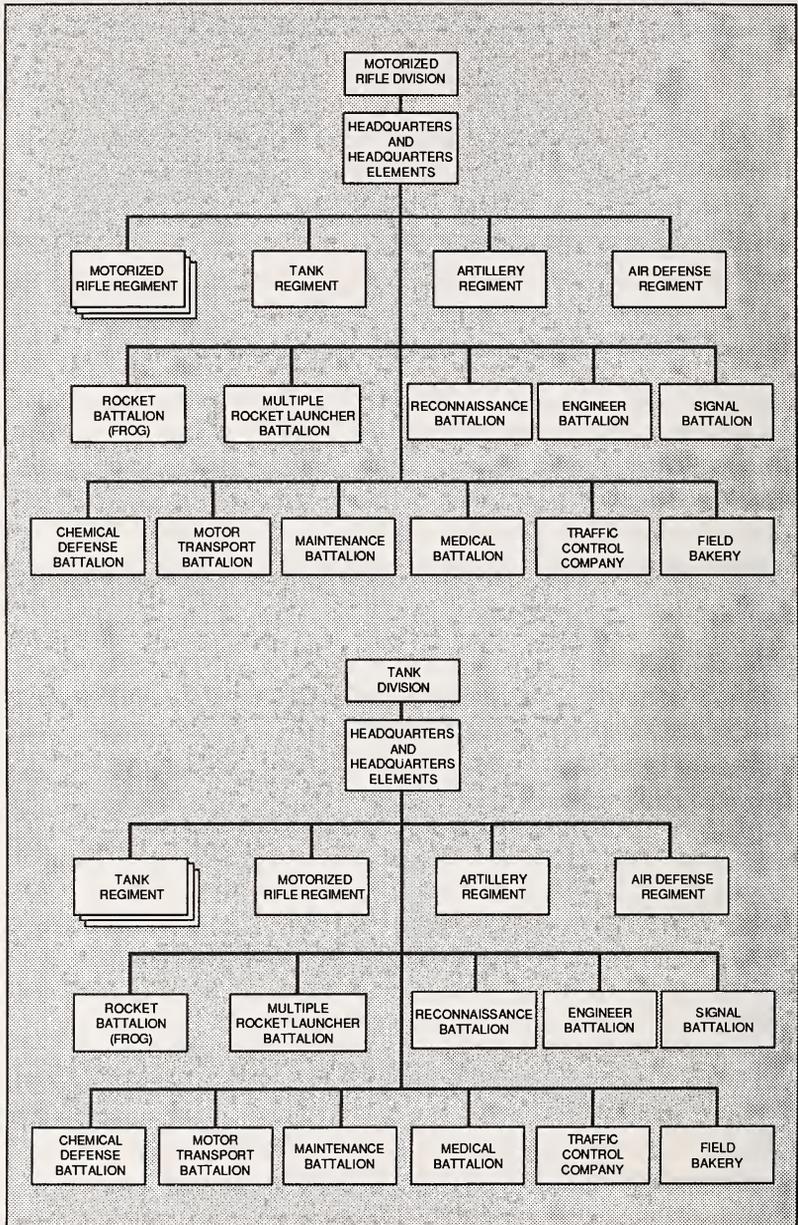


Figure 16. Representative Motorized Rifle and Tank Divisions, 1980

and T-55s that were acquired during the 1960s. During the mid-1980s, the T-55s underwent modification, which indicated that the ČSLA intended to keep them in service into the 1990s. The Czechoslovak tank inventory also included about 500 T-72s, a model that appeared in Soviet units in the early 1970s and began to be seen in Warsaw Pact armies about 1980. Czechoslovakia and Poland reportedly are jointly building the T-72.

The ČSLA's artillery inventory in 1987 included 250 M-53 (100mm), 100 M-1931 and M-1937 (122mm), and 75 M-46 (130mm) guns. It also included 90 M-137 (152mm) gun-howitzers and 250 D-30 (105mm), M-30 (122mm) towed, and M-1974 (122mm) self-propelled howitzers, plus 175 DANA (M-77) (152mm) Tatra 813 truck-mounted, self-propelled howitzers. Introduction of the heavy Soviet M-240 (240mm) self-propelled mortar began in late 1986 or early 1987; it will probably be employed with the 2S7 (203mm) self-propelled gun that was known to have been in use in 1986. These two weapons may be scheduled to use nuclear munitions. In 1986 the ČSLA also possessed 200 RM-70 (122mm) and 120 M-51 (130mm) multiple rocket launchers and 40 FROG, 4 SS-21, and 27 Scud surface-to-surface missiles. Replacement of Scud-B missiles with SS-23 missiles and the installation of SS-12Ms began in 1986. All these missiles are nuclear capable. Antitank weapons included P-27 (112mm) grenade launchers, 100 82mm recoilless launchers, and AT-3 Sagger, AT-4 Spigot, and AT-5 Spandrel antitank guided weapons. Air defense weaponry consisted of 575 S-60 (57mm) towed and M-53/59 (30mm) self-propelled anti-aircraft guns, as well as 175 SA-4, SA-6, SA-7, SA-8, SA-9, and SA-13 surface-to-air missiles (SAMs). Reconnaissance units in the ČSLA possessed 1,250 OT-65 and BRDM scout cars. Motorized infantry units were equipped with 1,100 BVP-1 and 50 BMP-2 infantry combat vehicles and 2,500 OT-62, OT-64, and OT-810 armored personnel carriers. Although the ČSLA imported much of its ground forces weaponry from the Soviet Union, domestic industry supplied a good portion of the army's needs. This included small-caliber weapons and various models of guns, howitzers, rocket launchers, grenade launchers, anti-aircraft guns, and armored personnel carriers. The ČSLA received equipment from other non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries. Czechoslovakia, in turn, exported its weaponry to both other Warsaw Pact nations and the Third World.

One Western analyst has noted that the ČSLA's artillery holdings in 1986 were 60 percent of that possessed by a Soviet 10-division, 2-army front. This disparity, plus the decided

inferiority of the T-54/55 tanks to NATO's tanks, could cause the ČSLA serious difficulties in the event of war with the West.

### **Air Force**

The Czechoslovak Air Force (Československé letectvo) is tactical in nature; that is, its mission is to support the ground forces and air defense of the country. As of 1987, Czechoslovakia had no counterpart to the Long-Range Air Force of the Soviet Union. Air force personnel in 1987 numbered approximately 56,000. The ratio of career personnel to conscripts was about two to one.

The Czechoslovak Air Force was organized into two air armies. The 7th Air Army was headquartered in Prague and possessed an underground facility at Černý vrch; the 10th Air Army was stationed in Hradec Králové. The air armies consisted of four air divisions with a total of fourteen regiments. The air force possessed twenty-two military airfields and fourteen reserve military airfields (see fig. 17). Four of the military airfields—Mimoň, Mladé, Olomouc, and Sliach—were used by the Soviet air force. Six of the reserve military airfields were used for civil aviation. In 1987 the air force possessed 465 combat aircraft and about 40 armed helicopters. Of the four fighter-ground attack regiments, one consisted of fifty Su-7BM/Us, one of forty MiG-23Ms, one of thirty MiG-21/21 Us, and one of twenty-five Su-25 aircraft. Six interceptor regiments possessed 275 MiG-21, MiG-21 U, and MiG-23 jet aircraft, half of which were used for air defense and half for battlefield support. In early 1987 the Czechoslovak Air Force apparently had recently received one squadron of the most up-to-date MiG-23 BuM fighter bombers.

The reconnaissance regiment flew twenty MiG-21RFs, ten Su-22s, and fifteen Aero L-29s. The two transport regiments had at their disposal two An-12s, six An-24s, forty IL-14s (undergoing replacement by An-26s), one Tu-134, and two let L-410 Ms. The one helicopter regiment consisted of three independent squadrons, which together possessed forty Mi-24 attack helicopters, sixty-five Mi-8 and sixty Mi-4 medium transport helicopters, and fifty-five Mi-2 and twenty Mi-1 light transport helicopters. The Czechoslovak Air Force used Z-43 aircraft for liaison purposes.

The Czechoslovak air defense system comprised a command headquarters, with 3 divisions consisting of 6 SAM regiments possessing some 40 sites and 250 SA-2/3 missiles. The system included aircraft detection and surveillance stations and anti-aircraft artillery units. Most of the SAM sites were located strategically along the border with West Germany. Anti-aircraft artillery units are used for defense against low-flying targets.

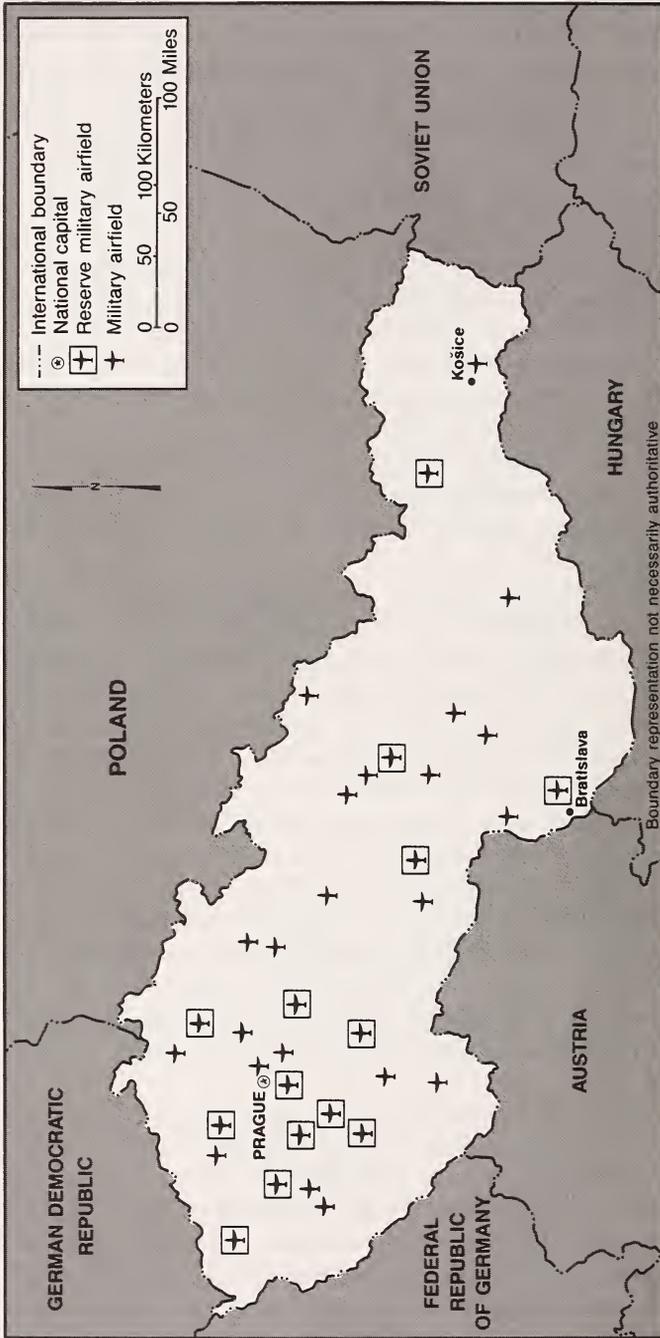
## **Manpower**

National defense legislation enacted into law within a year after the Communist takeover in 1948 provided for universal male conscription. Male citizens must register for the draft in the spring of the year in which they become eighteen years of age. Unless rejected because of physical reasons or given an educational deferment, most are inducted shortly after registration. In 1986 a little less than 70 percent of the ground forces and about 32 percent of the air forces were conscripts.

Early legislation provided for the annual class of draftees to be inducted in the fall, but since 1968 half of the annual class has been called up in the spring and half in the fall. As of 1987 the basic term of service for conscripts was two years in the ground forces and three years in the air forces; however, to avail themselves of technical training some conscripts opted to serve longer terms. Czechoslovak law made no provision for conscientious objection; anyone convicted of evading military service was subject to a prison sentence of up to five years or from five to fifteen years during a state of emergency.

Of the more than 100,000 young men reaching draft age in 1985, slightly more than three-quarters were expected to be found fit for service, which would provide an adequate number of conscripts to replace those completing their tours of duty during the year. In 1982 the number of Czechoslovak males who were under 30 years of age and who had performed military service within the previous 10 years numbered 700,000. The number in the entire military age-group, that is, between the ages of 18 and 50, totaled about 3.5 million in the mid-1980s. Of that number, as many as three-quarters could be considered mentally and physically fit for service if a general mobilization were ordered. Although not subject to conscription, women also served in the armed forces in small numbers. Women could join the ČSLA if they had graduated from high school, passed a qualifying examination, fulfilled the established health and other criteria, and completed a one-year specialized course.

Reserve obligations for conscripts who had completed their active duty generally lasted until age fifty. Upon discharge the conscript was enrolled in the so-called First Reserve, where he remained until reaching age forty. During this period, reserve soldiers and NCOs had to participate in a total of sixteen weeks of exercises. These sixteen weeks generally included three four-week-long exercises that reservists had to take part in during the years in which they turned twenty-four, twenty-seven, and thirty-two. Between



Source: Based on information from Zbyněk Čerovský, "The Czechoslovak Air Force," *Armed Forces*, Weybridge, United Kingdom, February 1987, 81.

Figure 17. *Military and Reserve Military Airfields, 1987*

ages forty and fifty, the reservists were carried on the rolls of the Second Reserve. As reservists grow older, the numbers available for call-up (particularly in the Second Reserve) are reduced by many factors, including state of health, occupation of key position in the civilian economy, and hardship cases. Nevertheless, the reserve program would be considered of major importance in any mobilization. Because of the heavy annual turnover in conscript ranks, there are always a substantial number of reservists whose active-duty service has occurred within a ten-year period.

All Warsaw Pact countries have mobilization plans, and all conduct occasional mobilization exercises. Because of strict national security laws, however, little is publicized concerning such exercises in Czechoslovakia; presumably they take place at the local rather than the national level.

In 1987 no official data were available on salaries of officers, warrant officers, and NCOs, nor had information been published on the pay of conscripts. Such data are also considered state secrets. The Czechoslovak press, however, has described the incentives attached to a recruiting program started in 1969. Benefits included a reduction in basic military service (one year instead of two) and bonuses; higher grants and privileges were offered to graduates of secondary schools and universities. A former officer in the Czechoslovak Air Force who emigrated has described the pay and benefits of military pilots: a salary of Kčs7,000 a month (for value of the koruna—see Glossary), full board “of excellent quality,” 30 days’ leave plus a 2-week compulsory rest at the Jeseník spa per year, and additional benefits depending on qualifications. The remuneration of pilots was thus “comparable to that of the director of a medium-sized state enterprise with 5,000 or more employees.” Given the nature of the society, as of 1987 it was safe to assume that high-ranking officers were well paid and probably received salaries in excess of those paid to civilians at comparable levels of employment.

## **Education and Training**

Much of the military education system developed since 1948 has been patterned on Soviet models with the assistance of Soviet advisers. The same may be said of troop training programs in garrison and in the field.

### *Conscript Training*

New inductees entered into a rigorous program from the start. The first few days of military service were devoted to physical examination, issuance of uniforms, and other routine matters.

During the first weeks, the conscripts underwent physical fitness testing in order to discover deficiencies and to remedy them. Initial training consisted of elementary drill and instruction on customs of service. A typical daily schedule included six hours of training, two hours of supervised political discussion, and two hours of recreation. Part of each Saturday was devoted to cleanup and inspection; the remainder of the weekend was free. Not until the completion of the initial phase of the training were new soldiers sworn into service. The swearing in and the taking of the oath to defend the homeland constituted a ceremonial occasion to which parents and close relatives were invited. After the ceremony, training for combat became the full-time, six-days-a-week occupation of most conscripts for the duration of their active duty.

The training year was divided into four phases, the first of which was devoted to individual training. In this initial phase, trainees received extensive physical fitness training and learned to handle individual weapons. During this period, conscripts went on progressively longer forced marches carrying field packs and practiced live firing of rifles, pistols, and submachine guns. In the second phase of the training year, trainees received platoon and company training and learned to handle crew-served weapons. The third phase stressed battalion-level exercises wherein the companies learned to coordinate actions to achieve various military objectives. The culmination of the training year was the large unit—division or higher—exercise where combined arms operations were stressed under conditions simulating actual combat. Exercises were critiqued in detail for the ultimate edification of company grade officers who, with the assistance of the regular NCOs, became responsible for the retraining of their units to correct deficiencies and avoid repeating mistakes in future exercises.

Training programs were similar in all Warsaw Pact member states, and all followed the Soviet lead. The training program was based on the principle that a soldier should be either training to fight or fighting. There were few frills for the conscripts of the Warsaw Pact forces; free time, furloughs, recreational programs, and the like ranged from minimal to nonexistent. Conscripts spent their time training or working; much time was spent in the field, where military leaders believe that their armies are honed for tasks of the modern battlefield. In addition to the subjects commonly studied by soldiers around the world, Warsaw Pact conscripts also received considerable political propaganda, which was repeated to the point of tedium. Common propaganda themes included the importance of Marxism-Leninism in the training of the armed forces, the leading role of the party in “the building of an advanced

socialist army," and praise of the Soviet forces that liberated the country from the Nazis.

The culmination of the training cycle was reached during the increasingly frequent Warsaw Pact exercises involving Czechoslovak and Soviet forces as well as those of one or several other Warsaw Pact members. Winter exercises held in February 1987 involved only the ČSLA and units of the Central Group of Forces. The Friendship 86 exercises, on the other hand, involved Czechoslovak and Hungarian forces as well as the Soviet forces stationed in Czechoslovakia. The Friendship exercises, which were held in western Bohemia near Doupov and Mělník, consisted of three parts: countering an enemy attack; crossing the Labe River near Mělník, north of Prague; and making a mechanized counterattack with all service branches participating. Another large operation was the Friendship 79 winter exercises in which various armies practiced with live ammunition while undergoing simulated nuclear and chemical attack. In this particular exercise, Soviet units were responsible for the decontamination of Warsaw Pact armies. Czechoslovak forces, however, did receive regular training in decontamination procedures and were frequently tested on their proficiency.

### *Specialized and Officer Training*

In 1987 the ČSLA operated schools ranging from secondary schools through colleges for the academic, technical, and political training and advancement of regular personnel. All military training institutions were highly politicized in keeping with the party orientation of armed forces customary in communist countries. Many senior officers, in addition to successfully completing military schooling at all levels in Czechoslovakia, also have been sent to the Soviet Union for courses in that country's military institutions. General Václavík, for example, attended the Moscow Military Academy of the General Staff and the Frunze Military Academy.

At the highest level were the military academies, which contained two categories of institutions. First was the "university category." This group included the Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy in Bratislava, the Military Medical Research and Continuing Education Department of Jan Evangelist Purkyn Institute in Hradec Králové, and the Military Section of the Department of Physical Education and Sport at Charles University in Prague. The Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy prepared cadres for the political apparatus of the ČSLA. The medical academy prepared military cadres in general medicine, stomatology, and general pharmacy. The physical education department at Charles University

produced specialists in sports organization, sports medicine, and related subjects.

The other category of military academies included five "technical" institutions. These were the Antonín Zápotocký Academy in Brno, the Ludvík Svoboda Higher Academy of the Ground Forces in Vyškov, the Military Technical Academy of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship in Liptovský Mikuláš, the Military Aviation Academy of the Slovak National Uprising in Košice, and the Military Department of the Academy of Transport and Communications in Žilina. Students from these schools were graduated with the title of engineer and the rank of lieutenant.

In 1987, the ČSLA also operated four gymnasiums, or secondary schools, and eight "military intermediate specialized training" institutions. The military gymnasiums offered courses of study comparable to civilian gymnasiums, with some military education and an emphasis on physical fitness. The specialized training institutions offered different areas of technical training. The gymnasiums and the technical schools were both four-year institutions. Graduation from military secondary schools led to commissioning in the armed forces. Previously the mandatory two-year conscript tour was also part of the procedure, but that requirement for duty in the ranks was cut to five months in 1980. For a brief period after 1968, candidates for commission dropped noticeably, but the allure of a prestigious career overcame political antipathy, and during the 1980s the number of young men seeking military commission was adequate.

In 1987 all but one of the specialized training institutes were connected with two-year officer schools, the students of which become second-lieutenants upon graduation. The two one-year officer schools offered specialized training to gymnasium graduates between eighteen and twenty years of age.

As of 1987, women could not enroll as students in the Czechoslovak military schools; they could, however, take specialized courses to become home air defense specialists, operators in the special-purpose radio technical troops, ground specialists for the air force, office typists, or radio operators. Depending on the speciality, training courses were held in Prague, Košice, and Nové Mesto nad Váhom. Upon passing a final examination, the graduates became members of the ČSLA, either as enlisted personnel with a three-year service obligation, as career enlisted personnel with the rank of warrant officer, or as cadre NCOs.

### *Premilitary Training*

In 1987 all male students had to take basic premilitary subjects in the last three years of the regular nine-year primary school.

According to some critics, however, such training was uneven and inconsistent among the various school districts, and teachers at schools of all levels lacked sufficient training. Military education took up only twenty-five hours a year and included medical, civil defense, topographic, weapons firing, and basic training.

### *Paramilitary Training*

In 1987 the largest paramilitary organization in Czechoslovakia was the Association for Cooperation with the Army (Svaz pro spolupráci s armádou—SVAZARM). Established in 1951, SVAZARM was a carbon copy of the Soviet Union's All-Union Voluntary Society for the Promotion of the Army, Air Force, and Navy. SVAZARM claimed a membership in 1985 of a little over 1 million; 60 percent of the members were under 35 years of age, 43 percent under 20 years, and 18 percent under 15 years. This organization popularized defense training through special interest groups that centered mostly on sports, some of the groups having direct military application. As of 1987, for example, SVAZARM recruited and trained pilot conscripts for the Higher Military Aviation School in Košice. The training included at least twenty flight hours of advanced glider training and thirty-seven to forty hours of basic training on motorized airplanes, as well as the necessary aviation theory. Additional skills taught by SVAZARM that had direct military applicability included parachuting, riflshooting, doghandling, and amateur radio operation. Other activities, for example, automobile driving and airplane modeling, were of dubious value to the military. In fact, one Western observer has called SVAZARM "a huge (and prosperous) sports and recreational organization, only 'paramilitary' in the broadest sense of the word."

Other organizations involved with paramilitary training, including civil defense training, were the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement, the Czechoslovak Socialist Union of Youth, the Pioneers organization, and the Czechoslovak Physical Culture Association. They appear to have played a secondary role to SVAZARM in this regard. During the mid-1980s, Czechoslovak military officers frequently complained that young draftees were physically soft. They were said to lack basic military knowledge and to regard service as an obligation to be endured rather than as a patriotic duty. These complaints mirrored those made in the 1970s despite subsequent increases in the amount of paramilitary education in the secondary schools, in the attention paid to physical education curricula, in the activities of paramilitary organizations, and in propaganda efforts that attempted to instill in youth a positive attitude toward service in the armed forces. Many adults

were said to view paramilitary training as useless or ineffective against weapons of mass destruction. Some employers who were responsible for such training were said merely to go through the motions of instruction and even to look for excuses to prevent conscripts and reservists from participating.

### **Uniforms and Rank Insignia**

In 1987 the Czechoslovak air and ground forces uniforms were the same style and color, except for two air force officer mess-dress uniforms, which were blue as opposed to the traditional olive green. Officers and warrant officers had three basic uniforms (dress, service, and field) designed for year-round wear. NCOs and enlisted personnel had only year-round and field uniforms. The service uniform for officers and enlisted personnel was worn for garrison duty and routine training activities and, with minor variations, was used as a dress uniform by enlisted men. The service uniform consisted of a single-breasted, open-collar, four-pocket, olive-green coat worn with matching trousers, a khaki shirt, and a black tie. NCOs and enlisted men wore this uniform with black boots and belt and an olive-green garrison cap. A variation of the uniform for NCOs and enlisted men consisted of olive-green trousers, a green-gray shirt, black boots, and an olive-green garrison cap.

The summer service uniform for ground force officers resembled that used by the NCOs except that it was worn with an olive-green shirt, trousers with red piping on the outer-leg seam, brown boots, Sam Browne belt, and a service cap. The air force officer service uniform consisted of olive-green trousers with blue piping on the outer-leg seam, a green-gray shirt-jacket that buttoned at the waist, and brown, low-quarter shoes. The summer service uniform for ground force and air force generals resembled the officers' service uniform except that the former was worn with a white shirt and had trouser-piping consisting of two white stripes for the ground forces and two blue stripes for the air force.

The NCOs and enlisted men had a summer and a winter dress uniform that closely resembled their service uniform except that it was worn with a white shirt and a service cap. A full-length overcoat with a fur collar, a fur cap, and gloves were worn with the winter dress uniform.

Ground force officers had a service/dress uniform that, with the addition of a silver belt and aiguillettes, functioned as a parade uniform. Both ground and air force generals and officers had mess uniforms that consisted of an open-collar coat with two waist pockets. The ground force uniform was olive green, and the air force uniform was blue.

The field uniform worn by all personnel consisted of a light-green coat and trousers with a tear-drop and dark-green leaf pattern that served as camouflage. In winter all personnel wore this same uniform with a fur cap and a belted, single-breasted overcoat that had a snap-in lining and a detachable collar. White overalls were used for winter camouflage. The airborne troops also had a tricolor (yellow, brown, and green), puzzle-piece pattern camouflage uniform with a matching soft field cap.

In 1987 the rank insignia of ground and air force personnel were indicated by gold and silver stars and round silver studs of varying number and size. Rank insignia were worn with the field uniform on shoulder-strap sleeves and on shoulder boards made of the same material as the uniform. The shoulder boards and sleeves of warrant officers were trimmed with silver piping, while those of generals and field officers were trimmed with gold piping.

The rank structure of the armed forces was broken down into twenty-one ranks: four general officer ranks, three field grade officer ranks, four company grade officer ranks, three warrant officer ranks, three regular NCO ranks, and four conscript ranks. Traditionally, the rank of army general was reserved for the minister of national defense, who was always an active-duty army officer (see fig. 18).

## **Internal Security and Public Order**

The Ministry of Interior is responsible for public order and internal security. The ministry controls the armed security organizations in the country except for the regular armed forces and some prison guards. It is also responsible, *inter alia*, for fire prevention, government archives, and passport and visa control. In theory the interior ministries that exist at the Czech and Slovak Socialist republic levels have similar responsibilities and functions, but the real power rests in the federal ministry in Prague. The federal Ministry of Interior is considered one of the key posts because of the power inherent in the control of the country's security agencies. In mid-1987, the minister of interior was Vratislav Vajnar, who had held the post since 1983. Vajnar was concurrently a deputy in the Chamber of the People in the Federal Assembly and a member of the KSČ Central Committee.

At the end of World War II, when President Beneš established the first postwar government at Košice, control of the Ministry of Interior was sought and obtained by the KSČ. Party member Václav Nosek was appointed minister and began the process of converting the security forces into arms of the party. Anticomunist police officers and officials were fired, noncommunist personnel

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

CZECHOSLOVAK RANK	ARMY AND AIR FORCE	PODPORUČÍK	PORUČÍK	NADPORUČÍK	KAPITÁN	MAJOR	POD-PLUKOVNÍK	PLUKOVNÍK	GENERÁL-MAJOR	GENERÁL-PORUČÍK	GENERÁL-PLUKOVNÍK	ARMÁDNÍ GENERAL	
U.S. RANK TITLES	2D LIEUTENANT	1ST LIEUTENANT	CAPTAIN	MAJOR	LIEUTENANT COLONEL	COLONEL	BRIGADIER GENERAL	MAJOR GENERAL	LIEUTENANT GENERAL	GENERAL			
				<b>NO NAVY</b>									

WARRANT OFFICERS AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL

CZECHOSLOVAK RANK	ARMY AND AIR FORCE	VOJÍN	SVOBODNÍK	DESÁTNÍK	ČETAŘ	ROTNÝ	ROTMISTR	NADROTMISTR	PODPRAPORČÍK	PRAPORČÍK	NADPRAPORČÍK	
U.S. RANK TITLES	BASIC PRIVATE PRIVATE AIRMAN PRIVATE (1ST CLASS)	PRIVATE BASIC AIRMAN 1ST CLASS	PRIVATE BASIC	CORPORAL	STAFF SERGEANT SERGEANT	TECHNICAL SERGEANT SERGEANT	1ST CLASS SERGEANT	1ST CLASS SERGEANT	MASTER SERGEANT SERGEANT	SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT	COMMAND SERGEANT MASTER SERGEANT MAJOR SERGEANT	CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER W-3

NOTE: Officer insignia is gold; warrant officer and enlisted personnel insignia is silver. <sup>1</sup>No rank in Czechoslovak Air Force. <sup>2</sup>No rank in U.S. Air Force.

Figure 18. Rank Insignia, 1987

were encouraged to join the party or its youth organization, and all were subjected to heavy doses of communist propaganda. It was Nosek's packing of the police hierarchy with communists that caused the protest resignation of anticommunist government ministers in February 1948, leading to the coup d'état. When the coup took place, Nosek's communist-dominated security forces ensured an easy takeover.

During the purges of the early 1950s, the security agencies aided the Klement Gottwald faction against those communists accused of antistate crimes. Police participation in the purges, their arrogance and lack of scruples in dealing with ordinary citizens, and their brutal methods of interrogation were typical of the Stalinist model that they emulated. The term *Secret Police* as an official appellation was dropped in 1953, but the public, almost thirty years later, still used the title in referring to State Security.

As was the case in the military, but to a lesser extent, some members of the security forces were weeded out for having supported the Dubček reforms. Stability returned to the security forces early in the 1970s—during normalization—and the forces have kept a tight rein on Czechoslovaks ever since. The repressive measures have led to discontent and dissidence, but never to a degree that was beyond control. Many Western observers and most expatriates of the era reported that the public became apathetic after the Warsaw Pact invasion and the return to rigid communist orthodoxy. The dissent movement known as Charter 77 that took form in 1977 was certainly a rebuke to the government and to the KSČ, but it was far from being a mass movement and was rather easily contained by the security police (see *Police Repression*, this ch.; *Charter 77*, ch. 4). Ten years after its inception, the Charter 77 group remained small; security forces had ensured that it would not attract mass support.

### **The National Security Corps**

The police in Czechoslovakia are not called police, but rather security. The National Security Corps (*Sbor národní bezpečnosti*—SNB) comprises Public Security (*Veřejná bezpečnost*—VB) and State Security (*Státní bezpečnost*—StB). Public Security is a uniformed force that performs routine police duties throughout the country. State Security, the former Secret Police, is a plainclothes force, also nationwide, that is at once an investigative agency, an intelligence agency, and a counterintelligence agency. Any activity that could possibly be considered antistate falls under the purview of State Security. In mid-1987, strength figures for the SNB were not available. A 1982 article in the Czechoslovak press

indicated that 75 percent of the SNB members were either members or candidate members of the KSČ and that 60 percent were under 30 years of age. In 1986 about 80 percent of the SNB members in Slovakia came from worker or farmer families.

The SNB is an armed force, organized and trained as such but equipped to perform police rather than military functions. Its members are subject to military discipline and are under the jurisdiction of military courts. Ranks in the SNB correspond to equivalent levels in the ČSLA. As of 1987 the SNB was a volunteer service, although the conscription system was apparently used to rebuild the force after the loss of personnel at the end of the Dubček period. Citizens having the requisite physical and educational qualifications could apply for direct appointment to the SNB. Qualifications included completion of the compulsory nine years of schooling and of the basic conscript tour in the armed forces; higher education was required of those seeking appointment to higher level positions, for example, scientific, technical, and investigative positions. The Ministry of Interior operated its own higher level educational institute, which trained security personnel at different stages of their careers. The Advanced School of the National Security Corps, which occupied a large complex of buildings in Prague, granted academic degrees to the SNB and the Border Guard, also under the Ministry of Interior.

Public Security performs routine police functions at all levels from federal to local. In 1987 it was reported to be a relatively small force for the extent of its responsibility, but it was augmented by volunteer auxiliary units. Articles in the Slovak press in the mid-1980s referred to 27,000 auxiliary guards in 3,372 units assisting Public Security in Slovakia alone. No figure was available for the number of auxiliary guards and the number of guard units in the Czech lands, but it is reasonable to assume that these numbers would be at least double that reported for Slovakia. The federal minister of interior controlled other forces that could be ordered to assist Public Security if needed, and he could also request further help from the military.

In mid-1987, the olive-drab uniform of Public Security was almost identical to the ČSLA uniform, but red shoulder boards and red trimming on hats distinguished Public Security personnel from military. Public Security vehicles were yellow and white. The initials *VB* appeared on the sides, front, and rear of police vehicles.

Public Security and State Security units were deployed throughout the country and had headquarters at regional and district levels; there were 10 *kraje* and 114 districts in 1987. Public Security forces also established sections in rural areas. Both forces were under the

ostensible supervision of the ministries of interior of the Czech and Slovak socialist republics. However, there seemed to be no question that operational direction of the security forces emanated from the Ministry of Interior at the federal level and that the two ministries of the component republics had administrative rather than supervisory functions.

## **People's Militia**

In the early, chaotic days after World War II, armed guard units were formed in factories, mines, and other installations to protect private property and prevent sabotage. Most of the personnel assigned to these units were controlled by communist-dominated unions, and although the guard units may have been necessary to prevent lawlessness at the time, they were committed to the ultimate goal of taking over the enterprises they were hired to protect. The importance of the guard units to the communist takeover in 1948 and the extent of their activity seemed to vary widely in different areas of the country; nevertheless, some historians credit them with having paved the way for the coup. Whatever their participation may have been, the guard units were institutionalized when legislation in 1948 created the People's Militia, of which the guards formed the nucleus. The militia's mission was the defense of the socialist society, and militia personnel were given powers of arrest equal to those of the regular police.

Compared with the regular armed forces and the security forces, the People's Militia proved relatively conservative during the Prague Spring. While publicly proclaiming its support for the Dubček reforms, the militia also warned against departing from Soviet-style socialism. The KŠČ later reported that some "unfirm" and "fellow traveler" elements of the militia had had to be removed during the period of stabilization, but in the early 1970s the force had been rebuilt and had regained the confidence of the party leadership. Although a membership goal of 250,000 had frequently been discussed by party officials, the total strength had always been shy of that figure; in 1986 membership numbered about 120,000. Specialized militia courses were given at the Ludvík Svoboda Higher Academy of the Ground Forces in Výchov.

In 1987 President Husák was listed as the supreme commander of the People's Militia, and the chief of staff (who actually directed the organization) was Miroslav Novák, who had held the post since 1973. In February 1981, Novák signed an agreement pledging the cooperation of the militia in a joint effort with SVAZARM to upgrade civil defense throughout the country. According to news releases, both organizations had traditionally been involved in civil

defense, and the new agreement was designed to coordinate their endeavors.

### **Border Guard**

Another militarized security force subordinated to the Ministry of Interior is the Border Guard (Pohraniční stráž), which was established in 1951 as a separate agency under the then-existing Ministry of National Security. In 1987 the Border Guard, whose strength was estimated at 11,000, was commanded by General Anton Nemek, whose headquarters was in Prague. The Border Guard is an armed force subject to the same military regulations that govern the ČSLA. In mid-1987, in addition to the individual small arms carried by its personnel, the Border Guard also had some armored vehicles, antitank guns, and machine guns.

The main strength of the Border Guard has been deployed along the West German border since 1950. Smaller units patrolled the Austrian frontier as well as the borders with East Germany and Poland. Only a few units were stationed on the Hungarian and Soviet borders. The basic operational unit was the battalion, which was divided into companies and platoons and could be grouped into brigades for administrative purposes. The federal minister of interior could call the Border Guard to supplement security forces if necessary, and in wartime it could be assigned to the army either to serve specialized guard functions or to fight as infantry. Members of the Antiaircraft Defense (Protivzdušná obrana) helped the Border Guard by instituting air patrols. The portion of the border with Hungary formed by the Danube River was patrolled by the Border Guard, which used launches and patrol boats equipped with radar and infrared sighting devices.

### **Criminal Justice System**

#### **Incidence of Crime**

Although not covered extensively in the press in mid-1987, crime appeared to be nearly as widespread in Czechoslovakia as it was in much of the West. In general, however, crime statistics have not been published since 1980.

#### *General Crime*

Gypsies (especially in Slovakia) and young people were viewed as the primary perpetrators of crime, and alcohol was seen as a major factor. In Slovakia, for example, 65,869 offenses and petty offenses were registered between January and November 1983; this number was 52 percent more than in the same period of 1982.

Gypsies reportedly were responsible for about 20 percent of these crimes, even though they made up less than 3 percent of the population of Slovakia (see *Ethnic Groups*, ch. 2). "Economic crime," a wide category including shoplifting and vandalism, accounted for Kčs116 million worth of damages. Losses due to burglary went up 37 percent between 1981 and 1985. In 1985, in the Czech Socialist Republic alone, the value of goods stolen was reported as Kčs43 million. Burglaries were a special problem in large cities, especially Prague. Property was inadequately protected, although security devices (such as security locks) were available in the stores.

In the mid-1980s, statistics were not available for rape and other violent crimes. In the 1970s, when statistics were published, the number of court cases involving rape and child abuse fluctuated between 1,623 and 2,475 a year, peaking in 1973. Rapists "on the prowl" appeared to be a common phenomenon, and young girls were warned not to hitchhike. The penalty for rape was three to eight years' imprisonment, which increased to fifteen years if death occurred. The penalty for child abuse was from one to eight years and up to fifteen years if death resulted.

Juvenile delinquency was on the rise in the 1980s and usually involved children from broken homes. Parents were held responsible for their children and could be prosecuted for allowing their child's truancy. Juveniles were believed responsible for about 21 percent of all crime, often vandalizing state-owned property. Youth gangs were not unknown; and drug abuse and alcoholism were major problems. Children convicted of crimes served terms in juvenile correctional and training facilities, apart from adults. They might also be placed in the protective custody of the state, but there was a shortage of institutions to provide such care.

The most common offense in Czechoslovakia was nonpayment of mandatory child support. In a country in which divorce was commonplace, this abuse had become a serious problem. In 1985 approximately 3,800 child support cases were prosecuted in the Czech Socialist Republic alone. In general, convicted parents were given the maximum sentence and were often sent to work camps.

Black-market money changing was also common in Czechoslovakia, as it appeared to be in all East-bloc economies. The black-market changer might be a taxi driver or someone on the street corner waiting for foreign tourists who needed Czechoslovak currency or for Czechoslovak citizens who needed hard currency. Such a money changer would exchange hard (Western) currency for Czechoslovak koruny at a far better rate than the State Bank of Czechoslovakia, often doubling that figure. This "speculation" was highly illegal, and the papers carried reports of such transactions.

On occasion, these money changers were agents of the government who tried to entrap foreigners in a crime.

### *Drinking and Drugs*

In 1987 the official Czechoslovak press conveyed the impression that the country had few social problems. Occasionally, however, reports appeared on such topics as alcohol abuse, illegal drugs, theft, and "hooliganism" (a catch-all term that covered everything from disorderly conduct to vandalism).

Drinking has always been part of Czech and Slovak life; however, it has become a serious problem since the 1948 communist coup. Apparently, many people drink because there is nothing else to do and because it is a way to escape the dreariness that pervades life in Czechoslovakia. As of 1987 drinking during the workday and drunkenness on the job reportedly were common and even tolerated.

In 1984 Czechoslovakia's per capita consumption of hard liquor (over 20 proof) was 8.2 liters, of beer 140.1 liters, and of wine 15.5 liters. The total amounted to 163.8 liters per capita of alcoholic drinks, as compared with 101.2 liters per capita of nonalcoholic drinks, i.e., alcoholic drinks were consumed at a rate of 1.6 times that of nonalcoholic drinks. There were, however, differences in the drinking habits of Czechs and Slovaks. In 1983 the Czech Socialist Republic's per capita consumption of beer was 154.1 liters, whereas the Slovak Socialist Republic's per capita consumption was 111.8 liters. (Czech beer is world famous; Pilsner beer, for example, is named after the city of Plzeň.) The Slovak Socialist Republic, on the other hand, consumed hard liquor at a rate of 12.2 liters per capita, while the Czech Socialist Republic came in at 6.3 liters. Wine consumption was slightly higher in Slovakia (17.0 liters) than in the Czech lands (14.8 liters). On the whole, the population spent about 19 percent of its total expenditures for food products (about Kčs19 billion annually) on alcohol. Some consumer goods might have been in short supply, but alcohol, especially beer, was plentiful and omnipresent. Czechoslovakia, along with France, West Germany, and East Germany, was among the world's highest consumers of alcoholic beverages, and consumption was increasing.

In the Czech Socialist Republic, consumption of alcohol was linked to 47 percent of all violent crimes and 56 percent of all rape cases. In the Slovak Socialist Republic, the figures were about the same, alcohol figuring in about 50 percent of all crimes.

In 1984 alcoholism was the third most frequent reason cited by women seeking divorce. ("Irreconcilable differences" was first, followed by "infidelity.") Over 18 percent of the women involved

in divorces gave alcoholism as a reason, whereas only 1 percent of men secured divorces for this reason. In Slovakia 26 percent of women and 2 percent of men divorced because of alcoholism; in the Czech lands these figures were roughly 16 percent for women and 1 percent for men.

Although in the 1980s the press started attacking alcoholism more vociferously than it had in the past, little was actually done to fight the problem. Production of alcoholic beverages increased, and they were sold at affordable prices, while production of soft drinks was neglected and their quality was very poor. In October 1984, the government sharply raised the price of alcoholic beverages, but this measure was not intended to reduce alcohol consumption, inasmuch as the price of nonalcoholic beverages was also raised significantly. Because the government had a monopoly on the sale of alcoholic beverages, it would have lost a great deal of money if the country had suddenly become "dry." (Spending on alcohol was also a means of absorbing excess savings because there was little in the way of quality consumer goods to spend them on.) Rather than trying to prohibit alcohol consumption, the government relied on education, especially of the young, but without much success. The government also established ineffective alcoholism boards, which citizens viewed as a token gesture.

Drugs have also been a growing problem in recent years, especially among young people, although abuse was not believed to be at Western levels. As of 1987 the printing of drug-abuse statistics was banned, so that much of what was known about the problem came from Western or nonofficial Czechoslovak sources. The country had an estimated 500,000 drug addicts, although this figure consisted mostly of those addicted to various kinds of medicines. Drug users were a relatively young group; most were in their teens and twenties. According to Charter 77, about 50 percent of addicts were males between fifteen and nineteen years of age. In the case of females, more adult women were addicted than teenage girls. Urine tests of prison inmates showed that about 50 percent used drugs.

Most of the drugs came from pharmacies and were widely available, often without a prescription. Such drugs included amphetamines and barbiturates; codeine was especially popular. Marijuana, heroin, cocaine, LSD, and other illegal drugs, although rare, were also available. They were often smuggled into the country, although sometimes they were produced in clandestine domestic laboratories by persons having a knowledge of chemistry. Drug dealers were usually taxi drivers, hotel employees, black marketers, money changers, and students.

It was also a common practice to buy certain over-the-counter drugs and mix them. A 1961 law that remained in force in 1987 covered only the production and distribution of illegal narcotics (heroin, cocaine, and marijuana) and made no provision for drugs produced from legal drugs. Pharmaceutical supplies and prescription drugs were sometimes illegally diverted to an enterprising person who would concoct new drugs and sell them on the black market. New legislation had been proposed, but no details were available in mid-1987.

Facilities for the treatment of drug addiction were inadequate. Although in 1983 about 8,400 addicts were officially registered in hospital psychiatric departments—1,700 at the Prague Drug Abuse Center alone—only a few beds were set aside for addicts, and specialized care and supervision were rarely provided. There were three drug abuse centers in the country, one each in Prague, Brno, and Liberec, but they could not adequately cope with addicts.

Charter 77 tried to bring the growing drug problem to the attention of the government, calling for more public awareness. The official attitude, however, was that drug abuse, characteristic of sick, decaying, bourgeois Western society, did not exist in socialist Czechoslovakia because there was no reason for it to exist.

### **Penal Code**

Other than for the period of Nazi domination, Czechoslovakia operated under two different penal codes for the first thirty-two years of its existence. Bohemia and Moravia used the Austrian Penal Code, which had been in effect in those areas before independence, whereas Slovakia used the Hungarian Penal Code. Both codes had been amended during the years of independence, but no distinctively Czechoslovak code had been formulated until the KSČ hastily improvised one after the coup.

This 1950 Penal code was harsh and repressive, reflecting the siege mentality of the communist elite, who felt threatened by the people they ruled. Amendments in the mid-1950s eliminated some of the harshest aspects, and a new code was issued in 1961, with a revision in 1973. The 1961 code underwent no significant alteration during the Prague Spring in 1968.

The Czechoslovak Constitution of 1960 guarantees basic political freedoms while negating them in Article 34, which states that citizens are “in all their actions to pay heed to the interests of the socialist state and the society of the working people.” This article thus provides a way for laws to be written that infringe on rights guaranteed elsewhere in the Constitution.



*Morning exercises for the inmates of a penitentiary near Prague  
Courtesy United Nations (J. Foxx)*

Still in effect in late 1987, the Czechoslovak Penal Code of 1961 enroached upon such constitutionally guaranteed rights as freedom of speech, the press, and association. According to provisions of the code's "Sedition" section, people participating in mass demonstrations "against the Republic, its organs or public organizations of the working people" could be punished by sentences of up to 15 years' imprisonment, and under certain circumstances—for example, proof of conspiracy, acts resulting in death, or acts committed during a declared defense emergency—even death. Article 98 dictated punishments for "subversive activity against the social and governmental system of the Republic, against its territorial integrity, defensive capacity or independence, or against its international interests." Article 100 specified prison sentences of up to five years for inciting two or more people against the subjects enumerated in Article 98 or "against the alliances or friendly relations between the Republic and other states." Articles 102 and 104 allowed for prison sentences for those who "publicly defame" the state or its officials or those of any state "belonging to the world socialist system." Article 112 stipulated prison sentences of up to three years for persons harming the interests of Czechoslovakia abroad.

Thus, the Penal Code provided that those who criticized the Czechoslovak government or its policies would be imprisoned. Sentences tended to be more severe for crimes against the state or state property than for crimes against the person or personal property. The death penalty, although infrequently carried out, was permitted for several crimes against the state and for a few heinous crimes against the person.

The 1973 revisions to the code increased the maximum allowable prison sentence from fifteen to twenty-five years for so-called

antisocialist crimes. The death penalty was extended to cover hijacking or kidnapping crimes in which death resulted and to cover cases in which such crimes were committed during a state of emergency. Penalties were increased for fleeing the country and for disclosing state secrets abroad. Articles 106 and 107, concerning state secrets, were expanded to include so many areas of information about the government, the economy, the military, and other institutions that news coverage became almost meaningless. Published articles or public statements only mildly critical of the regime have led to arrests and conviction, and criticisms of the Soviet Union or of Soviet involvement in Czechoslovakia have resulted in prison sentences.

Although the 1961 code was harsh, it was never adhered to strictly. The KSČ often issued secret instructions to judges to ensure that certain court rulings would be in accord with its wishes. The Dubček reformers attempted to stop this practice during the period of the Prague Spring, but it was resumed during the subsequent period of "normalization."

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Penal Code with its amendments allowed the regime to protect itself against any further democratization attempts. When the Charter 77 movement emerged, the laws that the authorities could use to crush the incipient democratic force were in the code. Because the offenses for which people were being arrested, e.g., signing Charter 77 or speaking publicly against repression, could be construed as crimes under the Penal Code, those arrested were charged as criminals when in fact they were political offenders.

In 1984 the government introduced a form of punishment for political prisoners called "protective supervision," a kind of internal exile and house arrest. In two such cases, Charter 77 signatories Ladislav Lis and Jan Litomiský were required to report daily to a local police station at a specific time, seven days a week. Violations, including tardiness, could be punished by additional sentences. Those subject to such measures were also subject to house searches at any time.

### **Criminal Procedure Code**

The 1961 Criminal Procedure Code states that a person will not be prosecuted for acts not established as crimes in law and will not be considered guilty until tried by competent authority. An accused may select his or her own attorney and, if in detention, may consult privately with counsel. During trial defendants may not be prohibited from making statements on all charges and on evidence brought against them; they may describe circumstances, exhibit evidence, and make motions in their defense. The code provides

that the accused be informed of his rights at appropriate times during preliminary investigations, detention, and trial. Trials are conducted in the language of the defendant and in a manner suited to the person's educational background or ability to understand court proceedings. Only evidence submitted during the trial can be considered in determining the verdict and sentence.

Police are restricted by the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, but violations occur. In cases of search and seizure, for example, a warrant is required before police may enter a home. The only exceptions are emergency situations when an official cannot be found and when evidence may be lost or destroyed. Despite the provision, house searches have been conducted without warrants, and even though the practice declined during the 1970s and 1980s, people continued to complain that they did not feel secure in their own homes. Pretrial detention is another area where the code has been violated. Two months is the legal limit, but some cases have extended for six months and longer despite the law. For the protection of arrested persons, the code provides that they may be held for no longer than forty-eight hours, at which time a government prosecutor must make a decision concerning release or holding for investigation. However, according to reports from many who had been arrested on political charges, the forty-eight-hour limitation was frequently circumvented.

Another article of the Criminal Procedure Code that was violated with seeming impunity dealt with the conduct of trials. Although the code states that trials must be open, in many cases involving political charges courtrooms have been packed with spectators selected by the authorities, and in most cases foreign correspondents have been barred. Amnesty International reported that in 1976 a courtroom in which four young musicians were tried was literally filled with people invited by officials, leaving only ten spaces for the families, friends, and supporters of the defendants. In that case, the prosecutor also made changes in the case file without notifying defense lawyers, and the judge refused the defense lawyers' request for a postponement that would enable them to study the changes. The defense was also refused permission to call witnesses who had given testimony in the pretrial investigation. In a similar fashion, during the so-called Jazz Section trial in early 1987, the court did not allow the section's long-time counsel to participate or even to attend the trial.

## **Penal System**

According to federal law, "The purpose of imprisonment is to prevent the convicted person from engaging in continued

criminal activity and to educate him systematically toward becoming a law-abiding citizen. The execution of imprisonment must not humiliate human dignity." The laws regulating the operation of prisons appear just and humane and take into account up-to-date theories of penology. Prison authorities are directed to treat prisoners with compassion and respect for human dignity; education and rehabilitation, rather than punishment, are stressed. Prisoners are required to work, but the law states that work hours will be comparable to those in outside society. Remuneration will be fair, and prisoners may build up savings while incarcerated. Cultural and educational projects are to be provided for nonwork hours, and prison libraries are to be well stocked. From first-hand accounts of released prisoners, however, it appears that the actuality of prison life fell far short of the norms directed by law.

As of 1987, prison conditions in Czechoslovakia were poor, especially for political prisoners, who often were subjected to the "third category" of imprisonment, the so-called "harshest regime." Some former prisoners complained of beatings by authorities and confinement in substandard cells. Others told of beatings and ill-treatment by fellow prisoners that were ignored, or possibly encouraged, by guards. Complaints about food were widespread, and dietary deficiencies led to ailments that required medical attention after release. Medical care in prisons was said to be deficient, and family visits were sometimes curtailed or prohibited. These shortcomings were routinely reported during the 1970s and 1980s by Amnesty International, which concluded that prison conditions in Czechoslovakia fell below "internationally accepted standards."

A January 1979 report in Vienna's *Die Presse* about prison conditions in Czechoslovakia referred to the "disastrous" conditions of that country's sixteen remand prisons, or those prisons used for pretrial detention. Cells were said to be tiny, facilities primitive, and medical care haphazard. Prisoners were charged a daily rate for their upkeep, which they were required to pay after release. Some prisoners reportedly owed as much as an average worker earned in five months. The more than twenty non-remand prisons were said to be in extremely poor condition, most having been built prior to World War II or even prior to World War I and never modernized. Discipline in the prisons was said to have become more severe after 1968. Punishments of prisoners included cutting the already small food ration or taking away the privilege of receiving a package once every three months. As had been reported frequently by released prisoners, political offenders were confined with common criminals, and the educational programs called for by law rarely existed in practice. Prisoners were allowed one library book

and one newspaper per week. It was reported that, more often than not, the library book was a collection of speeches by some party functionary.

Physical abuse of political prisoners by prison personnel was also not unknown. In 1987 *Die Presse* reported that one prisoner serving a one-year term for alleged "incitement to rebellion" was beaten so badly by the prison warden that he could neither stand nor walk without the help of police officers when making a court appearance; moreover, scars on his abdomen showed that prison officials and investigation officers had extinguished cigarettes on his body.

Prisoners or former prisoners who complained publicly about mistreatment and poor prison conditions were severely punished. For reporting on harsh conditions at several prisons, Jiří Wolf was accused of "divulging state secrets" in December 1983 and given a six-year sentence at the harshest regime. In June 1984, Jiří Gruntorad received an additional fourteen-month sentence for complaining that he was beaten by a prison guard.

Details on the total number of penal institutions (referred to as corrective educational facilities) were not routinely publicized. Well-known prisons are located at Prague-Pankrác, Bory-Plzeň, and Litoměřice in Bohemia; Mírov and Ostrava in Moravia, and Leopoldov in Slovakia. Facilities at Prague-Ruzyně and Brno-Bohunice served primarily as detention centers for people being held during pretrial investigation or those awaiting appeal hearings. The prison system, including the Corps of Corrective Education (prison guards), was administered by the governments of the Czech and Slovak socialist republics through their ministries of justice.

### Police Repression

A manifesto made public under the title Charter 77 in January 1977 challenged the government to live up to its own laws in regard to the rights—human, political, and social—of the Czechoslovak people (see Charter 77, ch. 4; Appendix D). The manifesto revealed that Dubček-style reformism was alive and well eight years after Dubček himself had been forced into obscurity. Signed during the next two years by several hundred citizens representing the entire spectrum of economic, political, and social life, the document claimed to be apolitical, but in an authoritarian state any demand for a lessening of authoritarianism is inherently political, and the government reacted accordingly. The police responded by sharply increasing the very activities of which the Charter complained, that is, unwarranted arrests, illegal searches, harsh interrogations, and

general harassment. Charter spokesman Jan Patočka, a well-known and highly respected retired professor, died one week after an intensive interrogation by State Security agents. Another prominent signer, Václav Havel, who had been blacklisted as a playwright for earlier support of Dubček, was arrested immediately, held for four months, and then released without being charged. Havel was rearrested in 1979 and sentenced to prison for antistate crimes.

Repression continued into the 1980s as the dissidents refused to give up their demand that the basic laws of the land apply to everyone, including those officials sworn to uphold them. In April 1978, a group calling itself the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (Výbor naobranu nespravedlivě stíhaných—VONS) was formed to publicize the police vendetta against the signers of Charter 77. The new group itself then became a police target, and in October 1979 several of its members were convicted on charges of subversion and sentenced to prison terms. By early 1987, the Charter 77 movement and its offspring, VONS, were still clinging tenaciously to their demand that legal processes be observed, a demand that had brought grief to the members but had also attracted world attention. The movement remained small, and the security agencies always had the upper hand, but the dissidents refused to capitulate.

The use of brutal methods by the Czechoslovak police continued into the 1980s. In a 1984 report, Amnesty International cited Czechoslovakia as a country that used torture as a tool of state policy. Yet continued concern in the West with human rights in Czechoslovakia may have helped to ameliorate the situation after that time. In a 1986 telephone interview with Austrian radio, a Charter 77 spokesman said that the political oppression of human rights activists had diminished somewhat and was not as severe as it had been in the early 1980s. The police also showed restraint at a December 1985 demonstration in downtown Prague commemorating the death of John Lennon, a restraint that had been lacking at a similar demonstration the previous year. Nevertheless, marked oppression of religious groups and believers continued unabated into the 1980s (see Religion, ch. 2). As one Western observer has suggested, this differentiated approach toward dissent indicates that the Czechoslovak government considered religious activists, who are supported by a large segment of the population, to be more of a threat than a small number of political dissidents.

\* \* \*

A number of excellent monographs concerning various aspects of Czechoslovak national security have been published in the 1980s.

Party control of the military, the professionalism and nationalism of the officer corps, and Czechoslovak-Soviet military relations are discussed in *East European Military Establishments* by A. Ross Johnson, Robert W. Dean, and Alexander Alexiev. William J. Lewis's *The Warsaw Pact* presents useful information about the structure, training, and equipment of both the ČSLA and the internal security forces. A former wing commander in the Czechoslovak Air Force, Zbyněk Čeřovský, has written several excellent articles for *Armed Forces* based on his experience and insights. Much has been written by Condoleezza Rice concerning the reliability of the ČSLA and the cohesion and loyalties of its military elite. Richard C. Martin has focused on force modernization and how it may affect the performance of the ČSLA in a future war. Otto Ulč, a former Czechoslovak judge, has continued to write highly entertaining and informative monographs on various aspects of life in Czechoslovakia, including dissent, crime, and public attitudes toward the emplacement of Soviet nuclear-tipped missiles in the country. And finally, *The Military Balance*, published annually by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the *Yearbook on International Communist Affairs*, and the various Janes publications are convenient sources of information on personnel strength and weapons. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)



## Appendix A

### Table

- 1 Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors
- 2 Estimated Population of Principal Cities, January 1986
- 3 Population by Size of Community, 1950 and 1980
- 4 Ethnic Groups, Selected Years, 1930-84
- 5 Population by Social Group, Selected Years, 1930-84
- 6 Education Institutions and Enrollment, Selected School Years,  
1948-49 to 1985-86
- 7 Labor Force by Sector, 1960 and 1985
- 8 Production of Selected Industrial Commodities, 1985
- 9 Imports and Exports by Commodity Category, 1985
- 10 Direction of Foreign Trade, 1985



Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters .....	0.04	inches
Centimeters .....	0.39	inches
Meters .....	3.3	feet
Kilometers .....	0.62	miles
Hectares (10,000 m <sup>2</sup> ) .....	2.47	acres
Square kilometers .....	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters .....	35.3	cubic feet
Liters .....	0.26	gallons
Kilograms .....	2.2	pounds
Metric tons .....	0.98	long tons
.....	1.1	short tons
.....	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius .....	9	degrees Fahrenheit
(Centigrade)	divide by 5 and add 32	

Table 2. Estimated Population of Principal Cities, January 1986

City	Population	City	Population
Prague .....	1,193,513	Olomouc .....	106,086
Bratislava .....	417,103	Liberec .....	100,917
Brno .....	385,684	Hradec Králové .....	99,571
Ostrava .....	327,791	České Budějovice .....	94,451
Košice .....	222,175	Pardubice .....	94,206
Plzeň .....	175,244	Havířov .....	91,873

Source: Based on information from *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 91.

Table 3. Population by Size of Community, 1950 and 1980  
(as percentage of total population)

Size of Community	1950	1980
0-199 .....	4.5	0.7
200-499 .....	14.1	5.1
500-999 .....	15.8	10.0
1,000-1,999 .....	14.3	11.6
2,000-4,999 .....	14.2	13.2
5,000-9,999 .....	7.4	8.6
10,000-19,999 .....	6.1	10.8
20,000-49,999 .....	6.7	11.3
50,000-999,999 .....	2.9	10.8
100,000 and over .....	14.0	17.9
TOTAL .....	100.0	100.0

Source: Based on information from *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 62.

Table 4. Ethnic Groups, Selected Years, 1930-84  
(as percentage of total population)

Ethnic Group	1930	1950	1970	1980	1984
Czech .....	53.0	67.8	65.0	63.6	63.4
Slovak .....	16.4	26.4	29.2	30.7	31.3
Hungarian .....	4.3	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.8
German .....	23.6	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.4
Polish .....	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
Ukrainian and Russian .....	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.3
Other and undetermined .....	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
TOTAL .....	100.0*	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

\*Figures do not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 62; and *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 95.

Table 5. *Population by Social Group, Selected Years, 1930-1984*  
(as percentage of total population)

Social Group	1930	1950	1970	1984
Workers . . . . .	57.3	56.5	60.1	48.1
Other employees . . . . .	6.8	16.5	27.4	40.7
Members of cooperatives . . . . .	---	0.1	11.1	8.8
Other employees of cooperatives . . . . .	---	---	2.0	0.9
Small and medium-size farmers . . . . .	22.1	20.2	1.2	0.2
Self-employed professionals . . . . .	---	3.1 <sup>1</sup>	0.1	0.1
Small craftspeople and tradespeople . . . . .	8.2	3.7	0.1	0.1 <sup>2</sup>
Capitalists . . . . .	5.5	---	---	---
TOTAL <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

--- means negligible.

<sup>1</sup> Data include remaining capitalists.

<sup>2</sup> 1983.

<sup>3</sup> Figures do not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 62; and *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 95.

Table 6. *Education Institutions and Enrollment, Selected School Years, 1948-49 to 1985-86*

Institution	1948-49	1960-61	1970-71	1985-86
Preschool				
Number . . . . .	4,664	6,633	8,227	11,477
Students . . . . .	205,416	285,863	377,593	681,515
Primary				
Number . . . . .	14,286	12,581	10,831	6,332
Students . . . . .	1,523,290	2,152,834	1,966,448	2,074,403
Secondary				
Gymnasiums				
Number . . . . .	292	440	343	343
Students . . . . .	70,440	73,778	110,038	134,392
Vocational				
Number . . . . .	643	725	706	562
Students . . . . .	92,610	238,201	286,407	261,422
University				
Number . . . . .	22	50	37	36
Students . . . . .	64,703	94,040	131,099	168,699

Source: Based on information from *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1986*, Prague, 1987, 546, 549, 566; and *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 388, 390, 393.

*Czechoslovakia: A Country Study*

*Table 7. Labor Force by Sector, 1960 and 1985  
(in thousands)*

Sector	1960	1985
<b>Productive</b>		
Agriculture . . . . .	1,466,006	945,562
Forestry . . . . .	101,727	94,236
Industry . . . . .	2,253,061	2,845,283
Construction . . . . .	457,898	630,293
Geology . . . . .	8,863	17,909
Design . . . . .	42,374	78,113
Freight transport . . . . .	182,040	235,878
Industrial communications . . . . .	36,276	56,345
Internal trade . . . . .	393,607	682,596
Foreign trade . . . . .	16,464	25,806
Technical equipment supply . . . . .	32,122	68,823
Agricultural produce purchasing . . . . .	30,644	38,927
Publishing and other productive activities . . . . .	11,461	16,193
Total productive . . . . .	5,032,543	5,735,964
<b>Nonproductive</b>		
Public transport . . . . .	111,463	152,495
Nonindustrial communications . . . . .	36,276	56,345
Science, research, and development . . . . .	96,449	175,045
Residential management . . . . .	29,244	100,127
Residential services . . . . .	14,150	40,343
Traffic services . . . . .	2,080	6,511
Communal services . . . . .	77,567	140,988
Education . . . . .	215,765	435,322
Culture . . . . .	49,876	126,093
Health care . . . . .	156,138	326,404
Social work . . . . .	12,815	47,296
Trade and technical services . . . . .	13,887	54,361
Finance . . . . .	21,928	25,280
Insurance . . . . .	5,714	7,794
Administration, judiciary, prosecution, and arbitration . . . . .	97,719	118,061
Social organizations . . . . .	21,641	55,670
Other . . . . .	9,422	1,853
Total nonproductive . . . . .	972,134	1,869,988
<b>TOTAL</b> . . . . .	6,004,677	7,605,952

Source: Based on information from *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR*, Prague, 1985, 146-47; and *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1986*, Prague, 1986, 184.

Table 8. Production of Selected Industrial Commodities, 1985

Commodity	Unit	Production
Bituminous coal . . . . .	thousands of tons	26,223
Brown coal and lignite . . . . .	-do-	100,387
Electricity . . . . .	millions of kilowatt-hours	80,622
Pig iron . . . . .	thousands of tons	9,562
Crude steel . . . . .	-do-	15,036
Rolled steel . . . . .	-do-	11,037
Cement . . . . .	-do-	10,265
Lime . . . . .	-do-	3,227
Nitrogenous fertilizer . . . . .	thousands of tons of nitrogen	582
Plastics . . . . .	thousands of tons	1,100
Chemical fibers . . . . .	-do-	193
Automobiles and supply vehicles . . . . .	thousands	184
Automobiles . . . . .	-do-	177
Bicycles . . . . .	-do-	731
Trucks . . . . .	-do-	48
Integrated circuits . . . . .	millions of korunas*	2,833
Digital computers . . . . .	units	1,460
Metal-cutting machine tools . . . . .	millions of korunas	4,575
Forming machine tools . . . . .	-do-	1,625
Agricultural equipment . . . . .	-do-	3,195
Wheeled and crawler tractors . . . . .	-do-	35
Washing machines . . . . .	thousands	445
Refrigerators and freezers . . . . .	-do-	480
Freezers . . . . .	-do-	160
Televisions . . . . .	-do-	432
Color televisions . . . . .	-do-	193
Furniture . . . . .	millions of korunas	7,819
Paper and cardboard . . . . .	thousands of tons	964
Cotton fabric . . . . .	millions of meters	606

\* For value of the koruna—see Glossary.

Source: Based on information from *Statistika*, No. 3, Prague, 1986, 137.

Table 9. Imports and Exports by Commodity Category, 1985  
(in millions of United States dollars) <sup>1</sup>

Commodity Category	Imports	Exports
Machinery and equipment . . . . .	6,156	10,152
Fuels, minerals, and metals . . . . .	7,229	2,369
Agricultural and forestry products . . . . .	2,165	1,122
Manufactured consumer goods . . . . .	1,020	2,743
Other . . . . .	1,324	1,425
TOTAL . . . . .	17,894	17,810 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Imports and exports are free on board. The values of imports and exports by commodity category were calculated by applying East European data on percentage breakdowns to total imports expressed in United States dollars.

<sup>2</sup> Figures do not add to total because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from United States, Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Center, *Handbook of Economic Statistics, 1987*, Washington, 1987, 105-06.

Table 10. Direction of Foreign Trade, 1985  
(in millions of United States dollars) <sup>1</sup>

Country	Imports	Exports
Soviet Union	8,256	7,802
Eastern Europe	5,133	4,757
Developing countries	2,711	2,778
Less developed countries	711	1,281
TOTAL <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	17,894	17,810

<sup>1</sup> Domestic currency converted into United States dollars at the exchange rate prevailing at the time of the transactions. Exports and imports are free on board. Trade with the communist countries was derived by converting the value of the trade expressed in the currency of each East European country to rubles and then to United States dollars at the prevailing foreign exchange rate.

<sup>2</sup> Totals as published.

Source: Based on information from United States, Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Center, *Handbook of Economic Statistics, 1987*, Washington, 1987, 103-04.

### The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

THE FOUNDING of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (also referred to as Comecon, CMEA, CEMA, or the Council) dates from a 1949 communiqué agreed upon by the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. The precise reasons for Comecon's formation in the aftermath of World War II are quite complex, given the political and economic turmoil of that time. However, Joseph Stalin's desire to enforce Soviet domination of the small states of Eastern Europe and to mollify some states that had expressed interest in the Marshall Plan (see Glossary) were the primary factors in Comecon's formation. The stated purpose of the organization was to enable member states "to exchange economic experiences, extend technical aid to one another, and to render mutual assistance with respect to raw materials, foodstuffs, machines, equipment, etc."

Until the late 1960s, *cooperation* was the official term used to describe Comecon activities. In 1971, with the development and adoption of the Comprehensive Program for the Further Extension and Improvement of Cooperation and the Further Development of Socialist Economic Integration by Comecon Member Countries, Comecon activities were officially termed *integration*. In simplest terms, economic integration is defined as internationalizing the production of manufactured and semimanufactured goods, resources, and services. More specifically, integration attempts to equalize "differences in relative scarcities of goods and services between states through the deliberate elimination of barriers to trade and other forms of interaction." Although such equalization has not been a pivotal point in the formation and implementation of Comecon's economic policies, improved economic integration has always been Comecon's goal.

Soviet domination of Comecon is a function of its economic, political, and military power. The Soviet Union possesses 90 percent of Comecon members' land and energy resources, 70 percent of their population, 65 percent of their national income, and industrial and military capacities second in the world only to those of the United States. The location of many Comecon committee headquarters in Moscow and the large number of Soviet nationals in positions of authority also testify to the power of the Soviet Union within the organization.

Soviet efforts to exercise political power over its Comecon partners, however, have been met with determined opposition. The "sovereign equality" of members, as described in the Comecon Charter, assures members that if they do not wish to participate in a Comecon project they may abstain. East European members have frequently invoked this principle in fear that economic interdependence would further reduce political sovereignty. Thus, neither Comecon nor the Soviet Union as a major force within Comecon has supranational authority. Although this fact ensures some degree of freedom from Soviet economic domination of the other members, it also deprives Comecon of necessary power to achieve maximum economic efficiency.

As of 1987, those countries holding full membership in Comecon were the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Hungary, Romania, Poland, Cuba, the Mongolian People's Republic (Mongolia), and Vietnam. (For the purposes of this appendix, the phrases "East bloc," the "six European members," or the "European members of Comecon" are used interchangeably to refer to Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. When Yugoslavia and Albania are referred to, they are mentioned specifically by name.) The primary documents governing the objectives, organization, and functions of Comecon are the Charter of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (first adopted in 1959 and subsequently amended; all references herein are to the amended 1974 text); the Comprehensive Program for the Further Extension and Improvement of Cooperation and the Further Development of Socialist Economic Integration by the Comecon Member Countries, adopted in 1971; and the Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000, adopted in December 1985. The 1985 Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress and the rise to power of Soviet general secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev have increased Soviet influence in Comecon operations and have led to attempts to give Comecon some degree of supranational authority. The Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress seeks to improve economic cooperation through the development of a more efficient and interconnected scientific and technical base.

## **Membership, Structure, Nature, and Scope**

### **Membership**

In a January 1949 meeting in Moscow, representatives of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet

Union reached the formal decision to establish the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. The communiqué announcing the event cited the refusal of these countries to “subordinate themselves to the dictates of the Marshall Plan” (see Glossary) and their intention to resist the trade boycott imposed by “the United States, Britain and certain other countries of Western Europe” as the major factors contributing to the decision “to organize a more broadly based economic cooperation among the countries of the people’s democracy and the USSR.”

Albania joined the six original members in February 1949, and East Germany entered Comecon in 1950. (Albania, although it had not formally revoked its membership as of mid-1987, stopped participating in Comecon activities in 1961.) Mongolia acceded to membership in 1962, and in the 1970s Comecon expanded its membership to include Cuba (1972) and Vietnam (1978). As of 1987 there were ten full members: the Soviet Union, six East European countries, and three extraregional members (see table A, this Appendix).

Geography, therefore, no longer unites Comecon members. Wide variations in economic size and level of economic development have also tended to generate divergent interests among the member countries. All these factors have combined to give rise to significant differences in the member states’ expectations about the benefits to be derived from membership in Comecon.

Unity is provided instead by political and ideological factors. All Comecon members are “united by a commonality of fundamental class interests and the ideology of Marxism-Leninism” and have common approaches to economic ownership (state versus private) and management (plan versus market). In 1949 the ruling communist parties of the founding states were also linked internationally through the Cominform (see Glossary), from which Yugoslavia had been expelled the previous year. Although the Cominform was disbanded in 1956, interparty links continue to be strong among Comecon members, and all participate in periodic international conferences of communist parties. Comecon provides a mechanism through which its leading member, the Soviet Union, has sought to foster economic links with and among its closest political and military allies. The East European members of Comecon are also militarily allied with the Soviet Union in the Warsaw Pact (see Appendix C).

Official statements stress, however, that Comecon is an open international organization. Its Charter (Article II, Paragraph 2) invites membership from “other countries which share the aims and principles of the Council and have expressed their willingness

*Table A. National Participation in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), November 1986*<sup>1</sup>

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Member Countries

Bulgaria (1949)	Albania (1949) <sup>2</sup>
Czechoslovakia (1949)	East Germany (1950)
Hungary (1949)	Mongolia (1962)
Poland (1949)	Cuba (1972)
Romania (1949)	Vietnam (1978)
Soviet Union (1949)	

Nonmember Countries

That regularly sent observer delegations to annual sessions in 1981-86:	That have concluded formal agreements of cooperation with Comecon:
Afghanistan	Yugoslavia (1964)
Angola	Finland (1973)
Ethiopia	Iraq (1975)
Laos	Mexico (1975)
Mozambique	Nicaragua (1983)
Nicaragua	Mozambique (1985)
South Yemen	
Yugoslavia	

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<sup>1</sup> Dates of accession in parentheses.

<sup>2</sup> Albania joined Comecon in February 1949, one month after the organization was formed by the original six members. Although it has not formally revoked its membership, Albania has not participated in Comecon activities since 1961.

to assume the obligations contained in the . . . Charter.' In the late 1950s, a number of other communist-ruled countries—China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), Mongolia, Vietnam, and Yugoslavia—were invited to participate as observers in Comecon sessions. Although Mongolia and Vietnam later gained full membership, China stopped attending Comecon sessions after 1961. Yugoslavia negotiated a form of associate status in the organization, specified in its 1964 agreement with Comecon.

There are four kinds of relationships a country may have with Comecon: full membership, associate membership, nonsocialist "cooperant" status, and "observer country" status. Mutual agreement determines the precise nature of the relationship. As has been noted, Comecon has ten full members. Yugoslavia is the only country considered to have associate member status. On the basis of the 1964 agreement, Yugoslavia participates in twenty-one of the thirty-two key Comecon institutions as if it were a full member. Finland, Iraq, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Mozambique have a non-socialist cooperant status with Comecon. Because the governments of these countries are not empowered to conclude agreements in the name of private companies, the governments do not take part in Comecon operations. They are represented in Comecon by commissions made up of members of the government and the business community. The commissions are empowered to sign various "framework" agreements with Comecon's Joint Commission on Cooperation. Since 1957 Comecon has allowed certain countries with communist or pro-Soviet governments to attend sessions as observers. In November 1986, delegations from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Laos, Nicaragua, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) attended the 42d Council Session as observers.

### **Structure**

Although not formally part of the organization's hierarchy, the Conference of First Secretaries of Communist and Workers' Parties and of the Heads of Government of the Comecon Member Countries is Comecon's most important organ. These party and government leaders gather for conference meetings regularly to discuss topics of mutual interest. Because of the rank of conference participants, decisions made here have considerable influence on the actions taken by Comecon and its organs.

The official hierarchy of Comecon consists of the Session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the Executive Committee of the Council, the Secretariat of the Council, four council committees, twenty-four standing commissions, six interstate conferences, two scientific institutes, and several associated organizations (see fig. A, this Appendix). These bodies will be examined in turn.

The Session, officially the highest Comecon organ, examines fundamental problems of socialist economic integration and directs the activities of the Secretariat and other subordinate organizations. Delegations from each Comecon member country attend these meetings. Prime ministers usually head the delegations, which meet during the second quarter of each year in a member country's

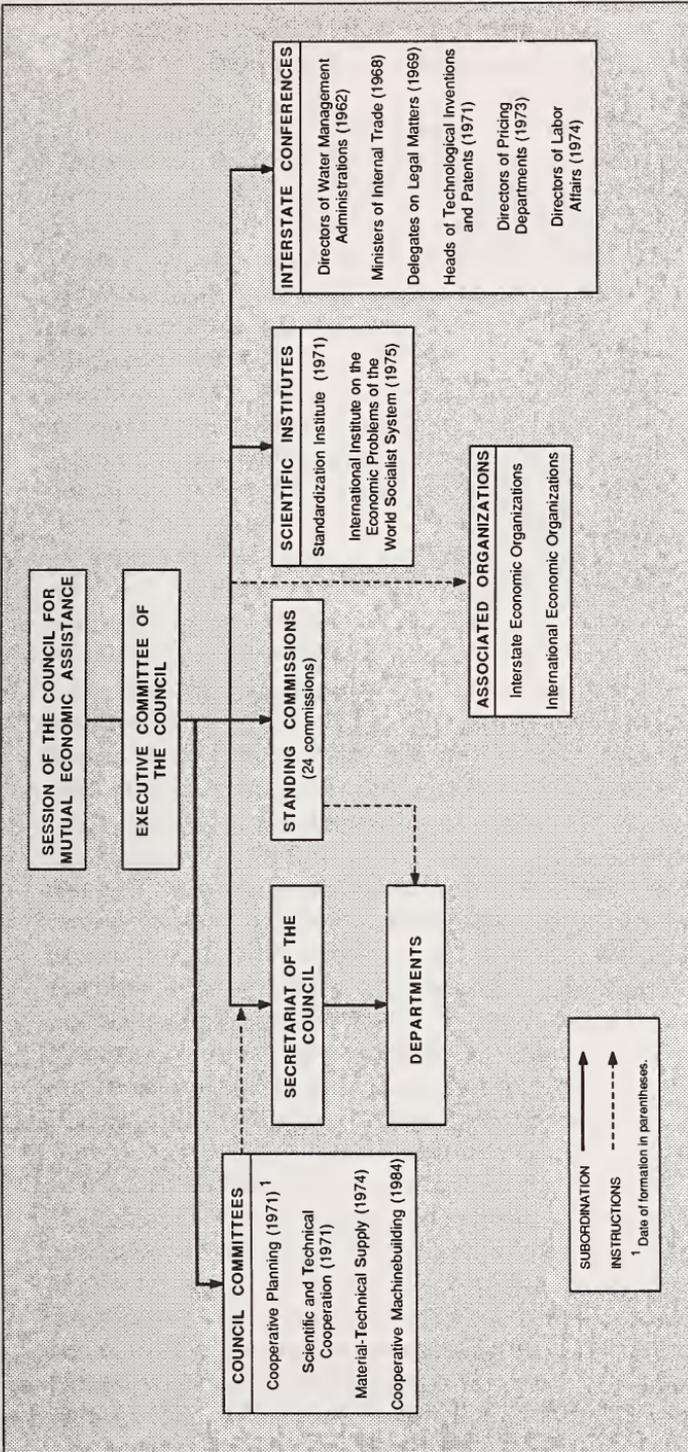
capital (the location of the meeting is determined by a system of rotation based on the Cyrillic alphabet). All interested parties must consider recommendations handed down by the Session. A treaty or other kind of legal agreement implements adopted recommendations. Comecon itself may adopt decisions only on organizational and procedural matters pertaining to itself and its organs.

Each country appoints one permanent representative to maintain relations between members and Comecon between annual meetings. An extraordinary Session, such as the one in December 1985, may be held with the consent of at least one-third of the members. Such meetings usually take place in Moscow.

The highest executive organ in Comecon, the Executive Committee, is entrusted with elaborating policy recommendations and supervising their implementation between sessions. In addition, it supervises work on plan coordination and scientific-technical cooperation. Composed of one representative from each member country, usually a deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Executive Committee meets quarterly, usually in Moscow. In 1971 and 1974, the Executive Committee acquired economic departments that rank above the standing commissions. These economic departments considerably strengthened the authority and importance of the Executive Committee.

There are four council committees: Council Committee for Cooperation in Planning, Council Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation, Council Committee for Cooperation in Material and Technical Supply, and Council Committee for Cooperation in Machine Building. Their mission is "to ensure the comprehensive examination and a multilateral settlement of the major problems of cooperation among member countries in the economy, science, and technology." All committees are headquartered in Moscow and usually meet there. These committees advise the standing commissions, the Secretariat, the interstate conferences, and the scientific institutes in their areas of specialization. Their jurisdiction is generally wider than that of the standing commissions because they have the right to make policy recommendations to other Comecon organizations.

The Council Committee for Cooperation in Planning is the most important of the four. It coordinates the national economic plans of Comecon members. As such, it ranks in importance only after the Session and the Executive Committee. Made up of the chairmen of Comecon members' national central planning offices, the Council Committee for Cooperation in Planning draws up draft agreements for joint projects, adopts a resolution approving these projects, and recommends approval to the concerned parties. If



Source: Based on information from O. A. Chukanov, ed., *Nauchno-tekhnicheskoe sotrudnichestvo stran SEV*, Moscow, 1986; and Jozef M. van Brabant, *Socialist Economic Integration*, Cambridge, 1980.

Figure A. Structure of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 1986

its decisions were not subject to approval by national governments and parties, this committee would be considered Comecon's supranational planning body.

The international Secretariat, Comecon's only permanent body, is Comecon's primary economic research and administrative organ. The secretary, who has been a Soviet official since Comecon's creation, is the official Comecon representative to Comecon member states and to other states and international organizations. Subordinate to the secretary are his deputy and the various departments of the Secretariat, which generally correspond to the standing commissions. The Secretariat's responsibilities include preparation and organization of Comecon sessions and other meetings conducted under the auspices of Comecon; compilation of digests on Comecon activities; conduct of economic and other research for Comecon members; and preparation of recommendations on various issues concerning Comecon operations.

In 1956 eight standing commissions were set up to help Comecon make recommendations pertaining to specific economic sectors. The commissions have been rearranged and renamed a number of times since the establishment of the first eight. In 1986 there were twenty-four standing commissions (see fig. B, this Appendix).

Each commission is headquartered in the capital of a member country and headed by one of that country's leading authorities in the field addressed by the commission. The Secretariat supervises the actual operations of the commissions. The standing commissions have authority only to make recommendations, which must then be approved by the Executive Committee, presented to the Session, and ratified by the interested member countries. Commissions usually meet twice a year in Moscow.

The six interstate conferences (on water management, internal trade, legal matters, inventions and patents, pricing, and labor affairs) serve as forums for discussing shared issues and experiences. They are purely consultative and generally act in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee or its specialized committees.

The scientific institutes on standardization and on economic problems of the world socialist system concern themselves with theoretical problems of international cooperation. Both are headquartered in Moscow and are staffed by experts from various member countries.

Several affiliated agencies, having a variety of relationships with Comecon, exist outside the official Comecon hierarchy. They serve to develop "direct links between appropriate bodies and organizations of Comecon member countries." These affiliated agencies are divided into two categories: intergovernmental economic

*Comecon headquarters,  
Moscow*



organizations (which work on a higher level in the member countries and generally deal with a wider range of managerial and coordinative activities) and international economic organizations (which work closer to the operational level of research, production, or trade). A few examples of the former are the International Bank for Economic Cooperation (manages the transferable ruble system), the International Investment Bank (in charge of financing joint projects), and Intermetal (encourages cooperation in ferrous metallurgy). International economic organizations generally take the form of either joint enterprises, international economic associations or unions, or international economic partnerships. The latter includes Interatominstrument (nuclear machinery producers), Intertekstil-mash (textile machinery producers), and Haldex (a Hungarian-Polish joint enterprise for reprocessing coal slag).

### **Nature of Operation**

Comecon is an interstate organization through which members attempt to coordinate economic activities of mutual interest and to develop multilateral economic, scientific, and technical cooperation. The Charter states that "the sovereign equality of all members" is fundamental to the organization and procedures of Comecon. The Comprehensive Program further emphasizes that the processes of integration of members' economies are "completely voluntary and do not involve the creation of supranational bodies."

Hence under the provisions of the Charter, each country has the right to equal representation and one vote in all organs of Comecon, regardless of the country's economic size or the size of its contribution to Comecon's budget.

The "interestedness" provisions of the Charter reinforce the principle of "sovereign equality." Comecon's recommendations and decisions can be adopted only upon agreement among the interested members, and each has the right to declare its "interest" in any matter under consideration. Furthermore, in the words of the Charter, "recommendations and decisions shall not apply to countries that have declared that they have no interest in a particular matter."

Although Comecon recognizes the principle of unanimity, disinterested parties do not have a veto but rather the right to abstain from participation. A declaration of disinterest cannot block a project unless the disinterested party's participation is vital. Otherwise, the Charter implies that the interested parties may proceed without the abstaining member, affirming that a country that has declared a lack of interest "may subsequently adhere to the recommendations and decisions adopted by the remaining members of the Council."

The descriptive term *Comecon* applies to all multilateral activities involving members of the organization and is not restricted to the direct functions of Comecon and its organs. This usage may be extended as well to bilateral relations among members, because in the system of socialist international economic relations, multilateral accords—typically of a general nature—tend to be implemented through a set of more detailed, bilateral agreements.

### **Comecon Versus the European Economic Community**

Although Comecon is loosely referred to as the "European Economic Community (EEC) of Eastern Europe," important contrasts exist between the two organizations. Both organizations administer economic integration; however, their economic structure, size, balance, and influence differ. The EEC incorporates the 270 million people of Western Europe into economic association through intergovernmental agreements aimed at maximizing profits and economic efficiency on a national and international scale. It is a regionally, not ideologically, integrated organization, whose members have all attained an accomplished level of industrialization and are considered to be roughly equal trading partners. The EEC is a supranational body that can adopt decisions (such as removing tariffs) and enforce them. Activity by members is based on initiative and enterprise from below (on the individual or enterprise level) and is strongly influenced by market forces.

Chemical Industry (East Berlin, 1956) <sup>1</sup>	Oil and Gas Industry (Bucharest, 1956)
Nonferrous Metallurgy (Budapest, 1956)	Electrical Power (Moscow, 1956)
Ferrous Metallurgy (Moscow, 1956)	Foreign Trade (Moscow, 1956)
Machine Building (Prague, 1956)	Agriculture (Sofia, 1956)
Coal Industry (Warsaw, 1956)	Construction (East Berlin, 1958)
Light Industry (Prague, 1958)	Transportation (Warsaw, 1958)
Peaceful Utilization of Atomic Energy (Moscow, 1960)	Standardization (East Berlin, 1962)
Currency and Finance (Moscow, 1962)	Statistics (Moscow, 1962)
Radio Technology and Electronics (Budapest, 1963)	Food Industry (Sofia, 1963)
Geology (Ulan Bator, 1963)	Post and Communications (Moscow, 1971)
Civil Aviation (Moscow, 1975)	Public Health (Moscow, 1975)
New Materials and Technologies for <sup>2</sup> Their Production and Development	Biotechnology <sup>2</sup>
<p><sup>1</sup> Location of headquarters and date of formation in parentheses.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> These two commissions were formed sometime after 1980. They were probably formed as a part of the Comprehensive Program of Scientific and Technical Progress approved at the 41st Council Session in December 1985. The location of their headquarters is unknown.</p>	

Source: Based on information from O. A. Chukanov, ed., *Nauchno-tehnicheskoe sotrudnichestvo stran SEV*, Moscow, 1986, 10-11; and Jozef M. van Brabant, *Socialist Economic Integration*, Cambridge, 1980, 189.

Figure B. Comecon Standing Commissions, 1986

Comecon joins together 450 million people in 10 countries and on 3 continents. The level of industrialization from country to country differs greatly: the organization links three underdeveloped

countries—Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam—with some highly industrialized states. Likewise, a large national income difference exists between European and non-European members. The physical size, military power, and political and economic resource base of the Soviet Union make it the dominant member. In trade among Comecon members, the Soviet Union usually provides raw materials, and East European countries provide finished equipment and machinery. The three underdeveloped Comecon members have a special relationship with the other seven. Comecon realizes disproportionately more political than economic gains from its heavy contributions to these three countries' underdeveloped economies. (see Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam, this Appendix).

Socialist economic integration, or "plan coordination," forms the basis of Comecon's activities. In this system, which mirrors the member countries' planned economies, the decisions handed down from above ignore the influences of market forces or private initiative. Comecon has no supranational authority to make decisions or to implement them. Its recommendations can only be adopted with the full concurrence of interested parties and do not affect those members who declare themselves disinterested parties.

## **Evolution**

### **Early Years**

During Comecon's early years (through 1955), its sessions were convened on an ad hoc basis. The organization lacked clear structure and operated without a charter until a decade after its founding. These loose arrangements reflected the limited goals of Comecon at the time and the character of the Marshall Plan (also governed by a loose structure), to which Comecon served as a response.

From 1949 to 1953, Comecon's function consisted primarily of redirecting trade of member countries toward each other and introducing import-replacement industries, thus making members economically more self-sufficient. Little was done to solve economic problems through a regional policy. This was a period, moreover, when their first five-year plans, formulated along the Soviet model, preoccupied the East European members. In the headlong pursuit of parallel industrialization strategies, East European governments turned their attention inward. Because of Stalin's distrust of multilateral bodies, bilateral ties with the Soviet Union quickly came to dominate the East European members' external relations. Each country dealt with the Soviets on a one-to-one basis by means of direct consultations with Moscow through local Soviet missions.

Although reparations transfers (extracted by the Soviet Union in the immediate postwar years from those East European states it regarded as former World War II enemies) had been replaced by more normal trade relations, outstanding reparations obligations were not halted until 1956. In these circumstances, there was scarcely need or scope for multilateral policies or institutions.

### **Rediscovery of Comecon after Stalin's Death**

After Stalin's death in 1953, however, new leaders and new approaches emerged in the countries of the region. The more industrialized and the more trade dependent of the East European countries (Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Poland) had belatedly recognized the need to adapt the Soviet autarkic model to their own requirements. New approaches to foreign trade emerged during discussions of economic reform. Given their isolation from the rest of the world and the dominance of intrabloc trade in their external relations, interest in these countries inevitably centered on new forms of regional cooperation. For small, centrally planned economies, this meant the need to develop a mechanism through which to coordinate investment and trade policies.

Instability in Eastern Europe and integration in Western Europe increased the desirability of regularizing intrabloc relations in a more elaborate institutional framework. The 1955 Warsaw Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (see Appendix C) and its implementing machinery reinforced political-military links. On the economic front, Comecon was rediscovered. The example of the 1957 Treaty of Rome (see Glossary), which initiated the processes of West European economic integration, gave impetus and direction to Comecon's revival.

### **Rapid Growth in Comecon Activity, 1956-63**

The years 1956 to 1963 witnessed the rapid growth of Comecon institutions and activities, especially after the 1959 Charter went into effect. Comecon, for example, launched a program to unify the electrical power systems of its member states and in 1962 created the Central Dispatching Board to manage the unified system. The organization took similar steps to coordinate railroad and river transport. In 1963 a special bank, the International Bank for Economic Cooperation, was created to facilitate financial settlements among members. In this period, Comecon also undertook a number of bilateral and multilateral investment projects. The most notable project led to the coordinated construction of the Friendship (Druzhba) oil pipeline for the transport and distribution of crude oil from the Soviet Union to Eastern Europe. The Joint Institute

for Nuclear Research, established in 1956, initiated cooperation in another area of long-term importance.

Parallel to these developments, the Soviet Union led efforts to coordinate the investment strategies of the members in the interest of a more rational pattern of regional specialization, increased productivity, and a more rapid overtaking of the capitalist economies. These efforts culminated in 1962 with the adoption at the 15th Council Session of the Basic Principles of the International Socialist Division of Labor. Although the principles of specialization were generally favored by the more industrial, northern-tier states, the less developed East European countries were concerned that such specialization would lead to a concentration of industry in the already established centers and would thus thwart their own ambitious industrialization plans. Moreover the increased economic interdependence that the Basic Principles called for had inevitable political connotations. The latter were reinforced in 1962 by articles and speeches by Soviet party leader Nikita Khrushchev proposing a central Comecon planning organ to implement the Basic Principles and foreseeing the evolution of a "socialist commonwealth" based on a unified regional economy.

These proposals provoked strong and open reaction from Romania on the grounds of "sovereign equality" of members, as articulated most forcefully in the April 1964 Declaration of the Romanian Central Committee. Romania's opposition (combined with the more passive resistance of some other members) succeeded in forestalling supranational planning and reinforcing the interested-party provisions of the Charter. The institutional compromise was the creation of the Bureau for Integrated Planning, which was attached to the Executive Committee and limited to an advisory role on coordination of members' development plans. The Basic Principles, having lost their momentum, were superseded several years later by the Comprehensive Program.

### **A Lull and Subsequent Revitalization in the Late 1960s**

After the fall of Khrushchev in 1964, the new Soviet leadership was preoccupied with internal matters, and the East European countries were themselves busy with programs of economic reform. A comparative lull in Comecon activities ensued, which lasted until well after the 1968 Soviet-led intervention in Czechoslovakia. By the end of the 1960s, Eastern Europe had been shaken by the 1968 events, and there was an obvious need to revitalize programs that would strengthen regional cohesion.

In the late 1960s, the question of how to proceed with plans for economic integration received considerable discussion in specialized

journals and at international meetings of experts. Disillusioned by traditional instruments and concerned with the need to decentralize planning and management in their domestic economies, the reformers argued for the strengthening of market relations among Comecon states. The conservatives continued to stress the importance of planned approaches. If carried to a logical extreme, the latter would involve supranational planning of major aspects of members' economies and the inevitable loss of national autonomy over domestic investment policy. The old conflict between planned approaches to regional specialization and the principle of sovereign equality could not be avoided in any discussion of the mechanism for future cooperation.

### **The Comprehensive Program for Socialist Economic Integration, 1971**

The controversy over supranational planning led to a compromise in the form of the 1971 Comprehensive Program for the Further Extension and Improvement of Cooperation and the Further Development of Socialist Economic Integration, which laid the guidelines for Comecon activity through 1990. The Comprehensive Program incorporated elements of both the market and the plan approaches. Following the market approach, the Comprehensive Program sought to strengthen the role of money, prices, and exchange rates in intra-Comecon relations and to encourage direct contacts among lower level economic entities in the member countries. At the same time, the Comprehensive Program called for more joint planning on a sectoral basis through interstate bodies that would coordinate members' activities in a given sector. New organs were also envisaged in the form of international associations that would engage in actual operations in a designated sector on behalf of the participating countries. Finally, the Comprehensive Program emphasized the need for multilateral projects to develop new regional sources of fuels, energy, and raw materials. Such projects were to be jointly planned, financed, and executed.

The Comprehensive Program introduced a new concept in relations among members: "socialist economic integration." Section I, Paragraph 2 of the Comprehensive Program refers to the need "to intensify and improve" cooperation among members and "to develop socialist economic integration." This phrasing, which has since become standard, implies that the latter is a new and higher level of interaction, "a process of the international socialist division of labor, the drawing closer of [member states'] economies and the formation of modern, highly effective national economic structures." The Comprehensive Program avoids, however,

the suggestion of ultimate fusion of members' economies that had been contained in the 1962 Basic Principles. It sets limits to the integrative process in the following terms: "Socialist economic integration is completely voluntary and does not involve the creation of supranational bodies."

The term *integration* had formerly been used to designate the activities of Western regional organizations such as the EEC. Its new usage in the Comprehensive Program suggested parity of status between Comecon and the EEC. Under subsequent amendments to its Charter, the competence of Comecon to deal with other international organizations and third countries on behalf of its members was made clear. Comecon sought to attract the participation of developing countries in its activities. The language of the Comprehensive Program may thus also be regarded as an attempt to revitalize the image of Comecon in order to make association with it an attractive alternative to associated status with the EEC.

Comecon members adopted the Comprehensive Program at a time when they were actively developing economic relations with the rest of the world, especially with the industrialized Western economies. The Comprehensive Program viewed the two sets of policies as complementary and affirmed that "because the international socialist division of labor is effected with due account taken of the world division of labor, the Comecon member countries shall continue to develop economic, scientific, and technological ties with other countries, irrespective of their social and political system."

In the years following the adoption of the Comprehensive Program, Comecon made some progress toward strengthening market relations among members. The Comprehensive Program's objectives proved somewhat inconsistent with the predominant trends within members' economies in the 1970s, which was a period of recentralization—rather than decentralization—of domestic systems of planning and management. The major exception to this lack of progress lay in the area of intra-Comecon pricing and payment, where the expansion of relations with the West contributed to the adoption of prices and extra-plan settlements closer to international norms. Achievements under the Comprehensive Program have fallen under the heading of planned approaches, especially in the area of joint resource development projects. A second Comecon bank, the International Investment Bank, was established in 1970 to provide a mechanism for the joint financing of such projects. In 1973 Comecon decided to draw up a general plan incorporating these measures. A number of projects formulated in the years immediately following adoption of the Comprehensive Program were then assembled in a document signed at the

29th Council Session in 1975. Entitled the “Concerted Plan for Multilateral Integration Measures,” the document covered the 1976–80 five-year-plan period and was proclaimed as the first general plan for the Comecon economies. The joint projects included in the plan were largely completed in the course of the plan period.

A second major initiative toward implementation of the Comprehensive Program came in 1976 at the 30th Council Session, when a decision was made to draw up Long-Term Target Programs for Cooperation in major economic sectors and subsectors. The session designated a number of objectives to which target programs would be directed: “guarantee of the economically based requirements of Comecon member countries for basic kinds of energy, fuels, and raw materials; the development of the machine-building industries on the basis of intense specialization and cooperation in production; the fulfillment of national demands for basic foodstuffs and industrial consumer goods; and modernization and development of transport links among member countries.” The 32d Council Session, held in 1978, approved target programs for cooperation through 1990 in the first two areas, as well as in agriculture and the food industries. These programs established the commitments to multilateral cooperation that member countries were to take into account when drawing up their five-year plans for the 1980s.

By the end of the 1970s, with the exception of Poland’s agricultural sector, the economic sectors of all Comecon countries had converted to the socialist system. Member states had restructured their economies to emphasize industry, transportation, communications, and material and technical supply, and they had decreased the share of resources devoted to agricultural development. Within industry, member states devoted additional funds to machine building and production of chemicals. Socialist economic integration resulted in the production of goods capable of competing on the world market.

## **The 1980s**

Most Comecon countries ended their 1981–85 five-year plans with decreased extensive economic development (see Glossary), increased expenses for fuel and raw materials, and decreased dependency on the West for both credit and hard currency imports. In the early 1980s, external economic relations had greater impact on the Comecon countries than ever before. When extending credit to East European countries, Western creditors did so assuming that the Soviet Union would offer financial assistance in the event that

payment difficulties arose. This principle, which has always been rejected in the East bloc, proved inoperable in the aftermath of the Polish crisis of 1979–82. The sharp rise in interest rates in the West put the Polish debt at an excessively high level, beyond the amount that the Soviet Union could cover. The resulting liquidity shortage (see Glossary) that occurred in all Comecon countries in 1981 forced them to reduce hard-currency imports.

In the 1980s, high interest rates and the increased value of the United States dollar on international markets made debt servicing more expensive. Thus, reducing indebtedness to the West also became a top priority within Comecon. From 1981 to 1985, the European countries of Comecon attempted to promote the faster growth of exports over imports and sought to strengthen intra-regional trade, build up an increased trade surplus, and decrease indebtedness to Western countries.

In the 1980s, Comecon sessions were held on their regular annual schedule. The two most notable meetings were the special sessions called in June 1984 and December 1985. The first summit-level meeting of Comecon member states in fifteen years was held with much fanfare on June 12–14, 1984, in Moscow (the 23d “Special” Session of Comecon Member Countries). The meeting was held to discuss coordination of economic strategy and long-term goals in view of the “differing perspectives and contrary interests” that had developed among Comecon members since 1969. More specifically, the two fundamental objectives of the meeting were to strengthen unity among members and establish a closer connection between the production base, scientific and technological progress, and capital construction. However, despite the introduction of proposals for improving efficiency and cooperation in six key areas, Western and some Eastern analysts claimed that the meeting was anticlimactic and even a failure.

The ideas and results of the June 14 session were elaborated at the Extraordinary 41st Council Session, which was held on December 17–18, 1985, in Moscow. The meeting was heralded in the Comecon community as “one of the more memorable events in Comecon history.” This special session featured the culmination of several years of work on the new Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000. It aimed to create “a firm base for working out an agreed, and in some areas, unified scientific and technical policy and the practical implementation, in the common interest, of higher achievements in science and technology.”

The Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000 was originally to be ratified in 1986

but the Soviets advocated an earlier date of completion to enable the Comecon countries to incorporate their commitments to implement the program in their next five-year plans (which started in January 1986). The program laid out sizable tasks in five key areas: electronics, automation systems, nuclear energy, development of new materials, and biotechnology. It sought to restructure and modernize the member states' economies to counteract constraints on labor and material supplies. The need to move to intensive production techniques within Comecon was evident from the fact that from 1961 to 1984 the overall material intensiveness of production did not improve substantially. The 1985 program provided a general framework for Comecon's new direction of development. Details were to be settled in bilateral agreements.

### **Cooperation under the 1971 Comprehensive Program**

The distinction between "market" relations and "planned" relations made in the discussions within Comecon prior to the adoption of the 1971 Comprehensive Program remains a useful approach to understanding Comecon activities. Comecon remains in fact a mixed system, combining elements of both plan and market economies. Although official rhetoric emphasizes regional planning, it must be remembered that intra-Comecon relations continue to be conducted among national entities not governed by any supranational authority. They thus interact on a decentralized basis according to terms negotiated in bilateral and multilateral agreements on trade and cooperation.

### **Market Relations and Instruments**

It is not surprising, given the size of the Soviet economy, that intra-Comecon trade has been dominated by exchanges between the Soviet Union and the other members. Exchanges of Soviet fuels and raw materials for capital goods and consumer manufactures have characterized trade, particularly among the original members. The liquidity shortage in the early 1980s forced the European Comecon countries to work to strengthen the importance of intraregional trade. In the early 1980s, intraregional trade rose to 60 percent of foreign trade of Comecon countries as a whole; for individual members it ranged from 45 to 50 percent in the case of Hungary, Romania, and the Soviet Union, to 83 percent for Cuba and 96 percent for Mongolia.

Trade among the members is negotiated on an annual basis and in considerable detail at the governmental level and is then followed up by interenterprise contracts. Early Comecon efforts to facilitate trade among members concentrated on development of uniform

technical, legal, and statistical standards and on encouragement of long-term trade agreements. The 1971 Comprehensive Program sought to liberalize the system somewhat by recommending broad limits to "fixed-quota" trade among members (trade subject to quantitative or value targets set by bilateral trade agreements). Section VI, Paragraph 19 of the Comprehensive Program affirms that "mutual trade in commodities for which no quotas are established shall be carried on beginning in 1971 with a view to stimulating the development of trade turnover, through expansion of the range and assortment of traded commodities, and to making trade in these commodities more brisk." Later in the same paragraph the Comprehensive Program calls on members to "seek opportunities to develop the export and import of quota-free commodities and to create conditions essential for trade in such commodities." There is no evidence, however, that this appeal has had significant effect or that quota-free trade has grown in importance under the program.

### *Prices*

The 1971 Comprehensive Program also called for improvement in the Comecon system of foreign trade prices. Administratively set prices, such as those used in intra-Comecon trade, do not reflect costs or relative scarcities of inputs and outputs. For this reason, intra-Comecon trade has been based on world market prices. By 1971 a price system governing exchanges among members had developed, under which prices agreed on through negotiation were fixed for five-year periods (corresponding to those of the synchronized, five-year plans of the members). These contract prices were based on adjusted world market prices averaged over the immediately preceding five years; that is, a world-price base was used as the starting point for negotiation. Under this system, therefore, intra-Comecon prices could and did depart substantially from relative prices on world markets.

Although the possibility of breaking this tenuous link with world prices and developing an indigenous system of prices for the Comecon market had been discussed in the 1960s, the evolution of Comecon prices after 1971 went in the opposite direction. Far from a technical or academic matter, the question of prices underlay vital issues of the terms of, and hence gains from, intra-Comecon trade. In particular, relative to actual world prices, intra-Comecon prices in the early 1970s penalized raw materials exporters and benefited exporters of manufactures. After the oil price explosion of 1973, Comecon foreign trade prices swung still further away from world prices to the disadvantage of Comecon suppliers of raw

materials, in particular the Soviet Union. In view of the extra-regional opportunities opened up by the expansion of East-West trade, this yawning gap between Comecon and world prices could no longer be ignored. Hence in 1975, at Soviet instigation, the system of intra-Comecon pricing was reformed.

The reform involved a substantial modification of existing procedures (known as the "Bucharest formula," from the location of the 9th Council Session in 1958 at which it was adopted), but not their abandonment. Under the modified Bucharest formula (which remained in effect as of 1987), prices were fixed every year and were based on a moving average of world prices for the preceding five years. The world-price base of the Bucharest formula was thus retained and still represented an average (although now moving) of adjusted world prices for the preceding five years. For 1975 alone, however, the average was for the preceding three years. Under these arrangements, intra-Comecon prices were more closely linked with world prices than before and throughout the remainder of the 1970s rose with world prices, although with a lag. Until the early 1980s, this new system benefited both the Soviet Union and the other Comecon countries since Soviet oil, priced with the lagged formula, was considerably cheaper than Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil, the price of which increased drastically in the 1970s. By 1983-84 this system turned to the Soviet Union's advantage because world market oil prices began to fall, whereas the lagged Soviet oil prices continued to rise.

### *Exchange Rates and Currencies*

Basic features of the state trading systems of the Comecon countries are multiple exchange rates and comprehensive exchange controls that severely restrict the convertibility of members' currencies. These features are rooted in the planned character of the members' economies and their systems of administered prices. Currency inconvertibility in turn dictates bilateral balancing of accounts, which has been one of the basic objectives of intergovernmental trade agreements among members. An earlier system of bilateral clearing accounts was replaced on January 1, 1964, by accounts with the International Bank for Economic Cooperation, using the transferable ruble as the unit of account. Although the bank provided a centralized mechanism of trade accounting and swing credits to cover temporary imbalances, it could not establish a system of multilateral clearing given the centrally planned nature of the members' economies and the inconvertibility of their currencies. In 1987 the transferable ruble remained an artificial currency functioning as an accounting unit and was not a common instrument for

multilateral settlement. For this reason, this currency continued to be termed "transferable" and not "convertible."

The member countries recognize that the multiplicity and inconsistency of their administered exchange rates, the separation of their domestic prices from foreign prices, and the inconvertibility of their currencies are significant obstacles to multilateral trade and cooperation. As of early 1987, Comecon lacked not only a flexible means of payment but also a meaningful, standard unit of account. Both problems have vastly complicated the already complex multilateral projects and programs envisaged by the Comprehensive Program. The creation in 1971 of the International Investment Bank provided a mechanism for joint investment financing, but, like the International Bank for Economic Cooperation, this institution could not by itself resolve these fundamental monetary problems.

Recognizing that money and credit should play a more active role in the Comecon system, the Comprehensive Program established a timetable for the improvement of monetary relations. According to the timetable, measures would be taken "to strengthen and extend" the functions of the "collective currency" (the transferable ruble), and the conditions would be studied and prepared "to make the transferable ruble convertible into national currencies and to make national currencies mutually convertible." To this end, steps would be taken to introduce "economically well-founded and mutually coordinated" rates of exchange between members' currencies and "between 1976 and 1979" to prepare the groundwork for the introduction by 1980 of a "single rate of exchange for the national currency of every country." This timetable was not met. Only in Hungary were the conditions for convertibility gradually being introduced by reforms intended to link domestic prices more directly to world prices.

## **Cooperation in Planning**

If countries are to gain from trade, that trade must be based on rational production structures reflecting resource scarcities. Since the early 1960s, official Comecon documents have stressed the need to promote among members' economies a more cost-effective pattern of specialization in production. This "international socialist division of labor" would, especially in the manufacturing sector, involve specialization within major branches of industry. In the absence of significant, decentralized allocation of resources within these economies, however, production specialization can be brought about only through the mechanism of the national plan and the investment decisions incorporated in it. In the absence at the regional level of supranational planning bodies, a rational pattern

of production specialization among members' economies requires coordination of national economic plans, a process that is not merely technical but also poses inescapable political problems.

The coordination of national five-year economic plans is the most traditional form of cooperation among the members in the area of planning. Although the process of consultation underlying plan coordination remains essentially bilateral, Comecon organs are indirectly involved. The standing commissions draw up proposals for consideration by competent, national planning bodies; the Secretariat assembles information on the results of bilateral consultations; and the Council Committee for Cooperation in Planning (created by Comecon in 1971 at the same session at which the Comprehensive Program was adopted) reviews the progress of plan coordination by members.

In principle, plan coordination covers all economic sectors. Effective and comprehensive plan coordination has, however, been significantly impeded by the continued momentum of earlier parallel development strategies and the desire of members to minimize the risks of mutual dependence (especially given the uncertainties of supply that are characteristic of the members' economies). Plan coordination in practice, therefore, remains for the most part limited to mutual adjustment, through bilateral consultation, of the foreign trade sectors of national five-year plans. Under the Comprehensive Program, there have been renewed efforts to extend plan coordination beyond foreign trade to the spheres of production, investment, science, and technology.

### *Plan Coordination*

According to the 1971 Comprehensive Program, joint planning—multilateral or bilateral—is to be limited to “interested countries” and is “not to interfere with the autonomy of internal planning.” Participating countries will, moreover, retain national ownership of the productive capacities and resources jointly planned. But “joint plans worked out by the member countries will be taken into account by them when drafting their long-term or five-year plans.”

The Comprehensive Program does not clearly assign responsibility for joint planning to any single agency. On the one hand, “coordination of work concerned with joint planning shall be carried out by the central planning bodies of Comecon member countries or their authorized representatives.” On the other hand, “decisions on joint, multilateral planning of chosen branches and lines of production by interested countries shall be based on proposals by countries or Comecon agencies and shall be made by

the Comecon Executive Committee, which also determines the Comecon agencies responsible for the organization of such work." Finally, mutual commitments resulting from joint planning and other aspects of cooperation shall be incorporated in agreements signed by the interested parties.

It is extremely difficult to gauge the implementation of plan coordination or joint planning under the Comprehensive Program or to assess the activities of the diverse international economic organizations. There is no single, adequate measure of such cooperation. The only data on activities among the Comecon countries published by the annual Comecon yearbooks refer to merchandise trade, and these trade figures cannot be readily associated with cooperative measures taken under the Comprehensive Program. Occasional official figures are published, however, on the aggregate number of industrial specialization and co-production agreements signed by members.

### *Joint Projects*

The clearest area of achievement under the Comprehensive Program has been the joint exploitation and development of natural resources for the economies of the member countries. Joint projects ease the investment burden on a single country when expansion of its production capacity is required to satisfy the needs of other members. Particular attention has been given to energy and fuels, forest industries, iron and steel, and various other metals and minerals. Most of this activity has been carried out in the Soviet Union, the great storehouse of natural resources within Comecon.

Joint development projects are usually organized on a "compensation" basis, a form of investment "in kind." Participating members advance materials, equipment, and, more recently, manpower and are repaid through scheduled deliveries of the output resulting from, or distributed through, the new facility. Repayment includes a modest "fraternal" rate of interest, but the real financial return to the participating countries depends on the value of the output at the time of delivery. Deliveries at contract prices below world prices will provide an important extra return. No doubt the most important advantage from participation in joint projects, however, is the guarantee of long-term access to basic fuels and raw materials in a world of increasing uncertainty of supply of such products.

### *The Concerted Plan*

The multilateral development projects concluded under the Comprehensive Program formed the backbone of Comecon's Concerted

Plan for the 1976–80 period. The program allotted 9 billion rubles (nearly US\$12 billion at the official 1975 exchange rate of US\$1.30 per ruble) for joint investments. The Orenburg project was the largest project under the Comprehensive Program. It was undertaken by all East European Comecon countries and the Soviet Union at an estimated cost ranging from the equivalent of US\$5 billion to US\$6 billion, or about half of the cost of all Comecon projects under the Concerted Plan. It consists of a natural gas complex at Orenburg in western Siberia and the 2,677-kilometer Union (Soiuz) natural-gas pipeline, completed in 1978, which links the complex to the western border of the Soviet Union. Construction of a pulp mill in Ust' Ilim (in central Siberia) was the other major project under this program.

These two projects differed from other joint Comecon investments projects in that they were jointly planned and jointly built in the host country (the Soviet Union in both cases). Although the other projects were jointly planned, each country was responsible only for construction within its own borders. Western technology, equipment, and financing played a considerable role. The Soviet Union owns the Orenburg complex and the Ust' Ilim installation and is repaying its East European co-investors at a 2 percent interest rate with an agreed-upon amount of natural gas and wood pulp.

The early 1980s were characterized by more bilateral investment specialization but on a much smaller scale than required for the Orenburg and Ust' Ilim projects. In these latter projects, Eastern Europe provided machinery and equipment for Soviet multilateral resource development. Work also progressed on the previously mentioned Long-Term Target Programs for Cooperation (see The Comprehensive Program for Socialist Economic Integration, 1971, this Appendix).

### *Cooperation in Science and Technology*

To supplement national efforts to upgrade indigenous technology, the 1971 Comprehensive Program emphasizes cooperation in science and technology. The development of new technology is envisaged as a major object of cooperation; collaboration in resource development and specialization in production are to be facilitated by transfers of technology between members. The 1971 Comecon session, which adopted the Comprehensive Program, decided to establish the Special Council Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation to ensure the organization and fulfillment of the provisions of the program in this area. Jointly planned and coordinated research programs have extended to the creation of joint research institutes and centers. In terms of number of patents,

documents, and other scientific and technical information exchanges, the available data indicate that the Soviet Union has been the dominant source of technology within Comecon. It has, on the whole, provided more technology to its East European partners than it has received from them, although the balance varies considerably from country to country depending upon relative levels of industrial development. Soviet science also forms the base for several high-technology programs for regional specialization and cooperation, such as nuclear power and computers.

The Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000, adopted in December 1985, has boosted cooperation in science and technology. The program sets forth 93 projects and 800 subprojects within 5 broad areas of development (see *Early Years*, this Appendix). A Soviet ministry will supervise each of the areas and will be responsible for the technical level and quality of output, compliance with research and production schedules, costs, and sales. Each project will be headed by a Soviet organization, which will award contracts to other Comecon-member organizations. The Soviet project heads, who will not be responsible to domestic planners, will have extensive executive powers of their own and will closely supervise all activities. The program represents a fundamentally new approach to multilateral collaboration and a first step toward investing Comecon with some supranational authority.

### *Labor Resources*

Just as the 1971 Comprehensive Program stimulated investment flows and technology transfers among members, it also increased intra-Comecon flows of another important factor of production: labor. Most of the transfers occurred in connection with joint resource development projects, e.g., Bulgarian workers aiding in the exploitation of Siberian forest resources, Polish workers assisting in the construction of the Union pipeline, or Vietnamese workers helping on the Friendship pipeline in the Soviet Union. Labor was also transferred in response to labor imbalances in member countries. Hungarian workers, for example, were sent to work in East Germany under a bilateral agreement between the two countries. Such transfers, however, are restricted by the universal scarcity of labor that has emerged with the industrialization of the less developed Comecon countries. Moreover the presence of foreign workers has raised practical and ideological issues in socialist planned economies. It should be noted, finally, that cooperation in the area of labor has been by no means limited to planned exchanges of manpower. Comecon countries have exchanged

information on experience in manpower planning and employment and wage policies through Comecon organs and activities.

## **Power Configurations Within Comecon**

### **The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe**

Since Comecon's creation in 1949, the relationship between the Soviet Union and the six East European countries has generally remained the same. The Soviet Union has provided fuel, nonfood raw materials, and semimanufactures (hard goods) to Eastern Europe, which in turn has supplied the Soviet Union with finished machinery and industrial consumer goods (soft goods).

This kind of economic relationship stemmed from a genuine need by the parties in the 1950s. Eastern Europe has poor energy and mineral resources, a problem exacerbated by the low energy efficiency of East European industry. As of mid-1985, factories in Eastern Europe still used 40 percent more fuel than those in the West. As a result of these factors, Eastern European countries have always relied heavily on the Soviet Union for oil. For its part, in the 1950s Eastern Europe supplied the Soviet Union with those goods otherwise unavailable because of Western embargoes. Thus, from the early 1950s to the early 1970s, during the time when there was no world shortage of energy and raw materials, the Soviet Union inexpensively supplied its East European clients with hard goods in exchange for finished machinery and equipment. In addition, Soviet economic policies bought political and military support. During these years, the Soviet Union could be assured of relative political tranquillity within the bloc, obedience in international strategy as laid down by the Soviet Union, and military support of Soviet aims. By the 1980s, both parties were accustomed to this arrangement. The Soviet Union was particularly happy with the arrangement since it still could expand its energy and raw materials complex quickly and relatively cheaply.

In the 1970s, the terms of trade for the Soviet Union had improved. The OPEC price for oil had soared, which put the Soviet Union in a very advantageous position because of its bountiful supply of oil. The soaring price increased the opportunity cost (see Glossary) of providing Eastern Europe with oil at prices lower than those established by OPEC. In addition, extraction and transportation costs for these goods, most of which originated in Siberia, were also rising. In response to the market, the Soviet Union decreased its exports to its East European partners and increased its purchases of soft goods from these countries. This policy forced the East European countries to turn to the West for hard goods

despite the fact that they had fewer goods to export in return for hard currency.

Any hard goods supplied to Eastern Europe by the Soviet Union were sold essentially at a discount price because Comecon prices lagged behind and were lower than those of the world market. Developments in the 1980s made this situation even more complex. The 1983–84 decline in international oil prices left the Soviets with large holdings of oil that, because of the lag in Comecon prices, were still increasing in price. The “nonmarket gains from preferential trade” became quite expensive for the Soviets. East European profits from the implicit subsidization were almost US\$102 billion (in 1981 dollars, using an exchange rate of 1.81 dollars to the ruble) between 1972 and 1981.

### **Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam**

Soviet-initiated Comecon support for the Council’s three least-developed members—Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam—has clearly benefited them, but the burden on the six East European Comecon members has been most unwelcome. Comecon is structured in such a way that the more economically developed members provide support for the less developed members in their major economic sectors. Initially, when Mongolia joined Comecon in 1962, there was no great added burden. The population of Mongolia was relatively small (1 million), and the country’s subsidies came primarily from the Soviet Union. The addition of Cuba (9 million people) in 1972 and Vietnam (40 million people) in 1978, however, quickly escalated the burden. As of early 1987, three-fourths of Comecon’s overseas economic aid went to Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam: almost US\$4 billion went to Cuba, US\$2 billion to Vietnam (half in military aid), and US\$1 billion to Mongolia.

Although the Soviets carry most of the burden, since 1976 the East Europeans have been persuaded to take part in projects to boost the developing countries’ economies. East European countries import Cuban nickel and Mongolian molybdenum and copper; they are also pressed to buy staples, such as Cuban sugar (80 percent of Cuba’s exports), at inflated prices. Eastern Europe also contributes to the International Investment Bank, from which the underdeveloped three can acquire loans at lower interest rates (0.5 to 2 percent) than the East Europeans themselves (2 to 5 percent). In addition, the Soviets sell their fuel and raw materials to Cuba, Vietnam, and Mongolia for less than it is sold to the six East European members. Hence the latter have become competitors for the slowly diminishing Soviet resources. As of 1987, the only benefit accruing to the East Europeans was the services

provided by Vietnamese guest workers. However, the majority of the Vietnamese have worked primarily on the Friendship pipeline in the Soviet Union.

Undeniably, Comecon has been investing heavily in Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam; and the three countries have benefited substantially from these resources. In 1984 increases in capital investments within Comecon were the highest for Vietnam and Cuba (26.9 percent for Vietnam and 14 percent for Cuba, compared with 3.3 percent and less for the others, except Poland and Romania). Increased investments in Mongolia lagged behind Poland and Romania but were nevertheless substantial (5.8 percent). In 1984 the economies of the three developing countries registered the fastest industrial growth of all the Comecon members (see table B, this Appendix).

Given their locations, Comecon membership for Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam appears principally to serve Soviet foreign policy interests. The Soviet Union contributes the most to the development of the three poorer Comecon members, and it also reaps most of the benefits. The Soviet Union imports most of Cuba's sugar and nickel and all of Mongolia's copper and molybdenum (widely used in the construction of aircraft, automobiles, machine tools, gas turbines, and in the field of electronics). Cuba has provided bases for the Soviet navy and military support to Soviet allies in Africa. Vietnam makes its naval and air bases, as well as some 100,000 guest workers, available to the Soviets.

At the June 1984 Comecon economic summit and at subsequent Council sessions, the policy of equalizing the levels of economic development between Comecon member countries was repeatedly stressed. At the November 1986 Comecon session in Bucharest, the East European members "outlined measures to further improve cooperation with Vietnam, Cuba, and Mongolia with a view to developing the main sectors of these countries' national economies." Moreover, the Soviets have repeatedly stressed their earnestness in "normalizing the situation in the Asia-Pacific region and in including that region in the overall process of creating a universal system of international security."

### **Support for Developing Countries**

Comecon provided economic and technical support to 34 developing countries in 1960, 62 countries in 1970, and over 100 countries in 1985. As of 1987, Comecon had assisted in the construction or preparation of over 4,000 projects (mostly industrial) in Asia, Latin America, and Africa (see fig. C, this Appendix). A monetary figure for this assistance is difficult to estimate, although a June

Table B. Change in Industrial Growth Within Comecon Member Countries from 1983 to 1984 (in percentage)

Country	Change
Bulgaria . . . . .	4.3
Cuba . . . . .	12.0
Czechoslovakia . . . . .	3.9
East Germany . . . . .	4.2
Hungary . . . . .	2.8
Mongolia . . . . .	8.3
Poland . . . . .	6.0
Romania . . . . .	7.0
Soviet Union . . . . .	4.2
Vietnam . . . . .	7.2

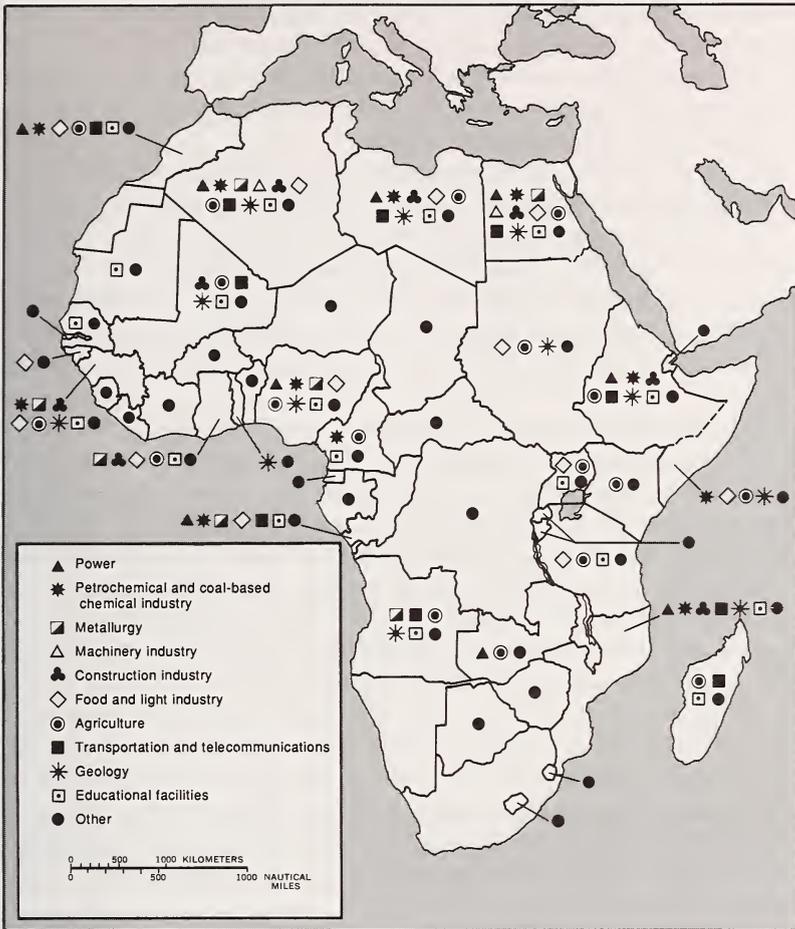
Source: Based on information from *SEV: Voprosy i otvety*, Moscow, 1985, 62.

1986 Czechoslovak source valued the exchange between Comecon and developing countries at 34 billion rubles per year (US\$48.4 at the official June 1986 exchange rate of US\$1.42 per ruble). The precise nature of this aid was unclear, and Western observers believe the data to be inflated.

From the 1960s to the mid-1980s, Comecon has sought to encourage the development of industry, energy, transportation, mineral resources, and agriculture of Third World countries. Comecon countries have also provided technical and economic training for personnel in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. When Comecon initially lent support to developing countries, it generally concentrated on developing those products that would support the domestic economies of the Third World, including replacements for imports. In the 1970s and 1980s, assistance from Comecon has been directed toward export-oriented industries. Third World countries have paid for this support with products produced by the project for which Comecon rendered help. This policy has provided Comecon with a stable source of necessary deliveries in addition to political influence in these strategically important areas.

### Trends and Prospects

Comecon has served for more than three decades as a framework for cooperation among the planned economies of the Soviet Union, its allies in Eastern Europe, and, now, Soviet allies in the



Source: Based on information from *Figyelő*, Budapest, October 16, 1986.

*Figure C. Most Important Facilities Built in Africa by Comecon Countries, December 31, 1985*

Third World. Over the years, the Comecon system has grown steadily in scope and experience. The organization now encompasses a complex and sophisticated set of institutions that represent a striking advance over the capabilities of the organization in the early 1960s.

This institutional evolution has reflected changing and expanding goals. Initial, modest objectives of “exchanging experience” and providing “technical assistance” and other forms of “mutual

aid'' have been extended to the development of an integrated set of economies based on a coordinated international pattern of production and investment. These ambitious goals are pursued through a broad spectrum of cooperative measures extending from monetary to technological relations.

At the same time, the extraregional goals of the organization have expanded; other countries, both geographically distant and systemically different, are being encouraged to participate in Comecon activities. Parallel efforts have sought to develop Comecon as a mechanism through which to coordinate the foreign economic policies of the members as well as their actual relations with nonmember countries and such organizations as the EEC and the United Nations.

Asymmetries of size and differences in levels of development among Comecon members have deeply affected the institutional character and evolution of the organization. The overwhelming dominance of the Soviet economy has necessarily meant that the bulk of intra-Comecon relations takes the form of bilateral relations between the Soviet Union and the smaller members of Comecon.

These asymmetries have served in other ways to impede progress toward multilateral trade and cooperation within the organization. The sensitivities of the smaller states have dictated that the sovereign equality of members remains a basic tenet of the organization. Despite Soviet political and economic dominance, sovereign equality has constituted a very real obstacle to the acquisition of supranational powers by Comecon organs. Nevertheless, the 1985 Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000 took steps to instill some organizations with supranational authority.

The planned nature of the members' economies and the lack of effective market-price mechanisms to facilitate integration have further hindered progress toward Comecon goals. Without the automatic workings of market forces, progress must depend upon conscious acts of policy. This tends to politicize the processes of integration to a greater degree than is the case in market economies.

By 1987 Comecon's Comprehensive Program, adopted in 1971, had undergone considerable change. Multilateral planning faded into traditional bilateral cooperation, and the Bucharest formula for prices assumed a revised form. The 1985 Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress, or, as some Western analysts call it, the "Gorbachev Charter," was Comecon's new blueprint for taking a firm grip on its future. Experience in the early 1980s showed that turning to the West and Japan for technological advancement put Comecon in a very dangerous position

because it pulled the East European members further away from the Soviet Union and threatened to leave the entire organization at the mercy of the West. The purpose of the 1985 program was to offset centrifugal forces and reduce Comecon's vulnerability to "technological blackmail" through broadened mutual cooperation, increased efficiency of cooperation, and improved quality of output.

The success of the 1985 program will be closely tied to the success of Gorbachev's changes in the Soviet economy. Major projects for the 1986-90 period include a 5,600-kilometer natural-gas pipeline from the Yamburg Peninsula (in northern Siberia) to Eastern Europe; the Krivoy Rog (in the Ukraine), a mining and enrichment combine that will produce 13 million tons of iron ore annually; the annual production and exchange of 500 million rubles' worth of equipment for nuclear power plants; and joint projects for extracting coal in Poland, magnesite in Czechoslovakia, nickel in Cuba, and nonferrous metals in Mongolia. Recalling the failure record of previous Comecon projects (for example, the disappointing Riad computer project, which in its attempt to standardize components and software is producing unreliable and costly products that fellow members refuse to buy), some Western analysts question whether the 1985 program will accomplish all that it has set out to do.

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Although the selection is still rather sparse, several English-language works on Comecon appeared in the early 1980s. *Socialist Economic Integration* by Jozef van Brabant discusses in great detail the mechanisms and operations of socialist economic integration in general and Comecon in particular. It is perhaps the most comprehensive English-language work on the subject. Several chapters in *East European Integration and East-West Trade*, edited by Paul Marer and John Michael Montias, are particularly helpful in analyzing the mechanisms of Comecon and comparing it with the EEC. Analysis of Comecon's operations and development in the modern economic and political arena is provided in Marer's "The Political Economy of Soviet Relations with Eastern Europe" in *Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe*. The best sources for up-to-date political and economic analysis are the Radio Free Europe background reports. Articles by Vladimir Sobell, in particular, give good insight into the 1985 Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Development.

Russian-language sources provide useful information on Comecon procedures and structure in addition to insight into the Soviet

and East European view of Comecon's goals and shortcomings. Articles in this vein can be found in *Voprosy ekonomiki* and the "Ekonomika" series published in Moscow by Znanie. Translations of selected articles from these publications can be found in the Joint Publications Research Service's USSR Report on Economic Affairs. The Comecon Secretariat publishes a bimonthly bulletin (*Ekonomicheskoe sotrudnichestvo stran-chlenov SEV*), which has a table of contents and a summary in English; an annual *Statisticheskii ezhegodnik stran-chlenov SEV*; and various handbooks. (For complete citations and further information, see Bibliography.)

### The Warsaw Pact

IN APRIL 1985, the general secretaries of the communist and workers' parties of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Hungary, Poland, and Romania gathered in Warsaw to sign a protocol extending the effective term of the 1955 Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance, which originally established the Soviet-led political-military alliance in Eastern Europe. Their action ensured that the Warsaw Pact, as it is commonly known, will remain part of the international political and military landscape well into the future. The thirtieth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact and its renewal make a review of its origins and evolution particularly appropriate.

The Warsaw Pact alliance of the East European socialist states is the nominal counterweight to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on the European continent (see fig. A, this Appendix). Unlike NATO, founded in 1949, however, the Warsaw Pact does not have an independent organizational structure but functions as part of the Soviet Ministry of Defense. In fact, throughout the more than thirty years since it was founded, the Warsaw Pact has served as one of the Soviet Union's primary mechanisms for keeping its East European allies under its political and military control. The Soviet Union has used the Warsaw Pact to erect a facade of collective decision making and action around the reality of its political domination and military intervention in the internal affairs of its allies. At the same time, the Soviet Union also has used the Warsaw Pact to develop East European socialist armies and harness them to its military strategy.

Since its inception, the Warsaw Pact has reflected the changing pattern of Soviet-East European relations and manifested problems that affect all alliances. The Warsaw Pact has evolved into something other than the mechanism of control the Soviet Union originally intended it to be, and it has become increasingly less dominated by the Soviet Union since the 1960s. The organizational structure of the Warsaw Pact has grown and has provided a forum for greater intra-alliance debate, bargaining, and conflict between the Soviet Union and its allies over the issues of national independence, policy autonomy, and East European participation in alliance decision making. While the Warsaw Pact retains its internal

*Czechoslovakia: A Country Study*



*Figure A. The Warsaw Pact Member States, 1987*

function in Soviet-East European relations, its non-Soviet members have also developed sufficient military capabilities to become useful adjuncts of Soviet power against NATO in Europe.

## **The Soviet Alliance System, 1943–55**

Long before the establishment of the Warsaw Pact in 1955, the Soviet Union had molded the East European states into an alliance serving its security interests. While liberating Eastern Europe from Nazi Germany in World War II, the Red Army established political and military control over that region. The Soviet Union's size, economic weight, and sheer military power made its domination inevitable in this part of Europe, which historically had been dominated by great powers. The Soviet Union intended to use Eastern Europe as a buffer zone for the forward defense of its western borders and to keep threatening ideological influences at bay. Continued control of Eastern Europe became second only to defense of the homeland in the hierarchy of Soviet security priorities. The Soviet Union ensured its control of the region by turning the East European countries into subjugated allies.

## **The Organization of East European National Units, 1943–45**

During World War II, the Soviet Union began to build what Soviet sources refer to as history's first coalition of a progressive type when it organized or reorganized the armies of Eastern Europe to fight with the Red Army against the German Wehrmacht. The command and control procedures established in this military alliance would serve as the model on which the Soviet Union would build the Warsaw Pact after 1955. During the last years of the war, Soviet commanders and officers gained valuable experience in directing multinational forces that would later be put to use in the Warsaw Pact. The units formed between 1943 and 1945 also provided the foundation on which the Soviet Union could build postwar East European national armies.

The Red Army began to form, train, and arm Polish and Czechoslovak national units on Soviet territory in 1943. These units fought with the Red Army as it carried its offensive westward into German-occupied Poland and Czechoslovakia and then into Germany itself. By contrast, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania were wartime enemies of the Soviet Union. Although ruled by ostensibly fascist regimes, these countries allied with Nazi Germany mainly to recover territories lost through the peace settlements of World War I or seized by the Soviet Union under the terms of the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact. However, by 1943 the Red Army had destroyed the Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Romanian forces fighting alongside the Wehrmacht. In 1944 it occupied Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania, and shortly thereafter it began the process of transforming the remnants of their armies into allied

units that could re-enter the war on the side of the Soviet Union. These allied units represented a mix of East European nationals fleeing Nazi occupation, deportees from Soviet-occupied areas, and enemy prisoners of war. Red Army political officers organized extensive indoctrination programs in the allied units under Soviet control and purged any politically suspect personnel. In all, the Soviet Union formed and armed more than 29 divisions and 37 brigades or regiments, which included more than 500,000 East European troops.

The allied national formations were directly subordinate to the headquarters of the Soviet Supreme High Command and its executive body, the Soviet General Staff. Although the Soviet Union directly commanded all allied units, the Supreme High Command included one representative from each of the East European forces. Lacking authority, these representatives simply relayed directives from the Supreme High Command and General Staff to the commanders of East European units. While all national units had so-called Soviet advisers, some Red Army officers openly discharged command and staff responsibilities in the East European armies. Even when commanded by East European officers, non-Soviet contingents participated in operations against the Wehrmacht only as part of Soviet fronts.

### **The Development of Socialist Armies in Eastern Europe, 1945–55**

At the end of World War II, the Red Army occupied Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Poland, and eastern Germany, and Soviet front commanders headed the Allied Control Commission in each of these occupied countries. The Soviet Union gave its most important occupation forces a garrison status when it established the Northern Group of Forces (NGF) in 1947 and the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany (GSFG) in 1949. By 1949 the Soviet Union had concluded twenty-year bilateral treaties on friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance with Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. These treaties prohibited the East European regimes from entering into relations with states hostile to the Soviet Union, officially made these countries Soviet allies, and granted the Soviet Union rights to a continued military presence on their territory. The continued presence of Red Army forces guaranteed Soviet control of these countries. By contrast, the Soviet Union did not occupy either Albania or Yugoslavia during or after the war, and both countries remained outside direct Soviet control.

The circumstances of Soviet occupation facilitated the installation of communist-dominated governments called “people’s democracies” in Eastern Europe. The indoctrinated East European

troops that had fought with the Red Army to liberate their countries from Nazi occupation became politically useful to the Soviet Union as it established socialist states in Eastern Europe. The East European satellite regimes depended entirely on Soviet military power—and the continued deployment of 1 million Red Army soldiers—to stay in power. In return, the new East European political and military elites were obliged to respect Soviet political and security interests in the region.

While transforming the East European governments, the Soviet Union also continued the process of strengthening its political control over the East European armed forces and reshaping them along Soviet military lines after World War II. In Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union instituted a system of local communist party controls over the military based on the Soviet model. The East European communist parties thoroughly penetrated the East European military establishments to ensure their loyalty to the newly established political order. At the same time, the Soviet Union built these armies up to support local security and police forces against domestic disorder or other threats to communist party rule. Reliable East European military establishments could be counted on to support communist rule and, consequently, ensure continued Soviet control of Eastern Europe. In fact, in the late 1940s and the 1950s the Soviet Union was more concerned about cultivating and monitoring political loyalty in its East European military allies than increasing their utility as combat forces.

The postwar military establishments in Eastern Europe consisted of rival communist and noncommunist wartime antifascist resistance movements, national units established on Soviet territory during the war, prewar national military commands, and various other armed forces elements that spent the war years in exile or fighting in the West. Using the weight of the Red Army and its occupation authority, the Soviet Union purged or co-opted the noncommunist nationalists in the East European armies and thereby eliminated a group likely to oppose their restructuring along Soviet lines. In the case of communist forces, the Soviet Union trusted and promoted personnel who had served in the national units formed on its territory over native communists who had fought in the East European underground organizations independent of Soviet control.

After 1948 the East European armies adopted regular political education programs. This Soviet-style indoctrination was aimed primarily at raising communist party membership within the officer corps and building a military leadership cadre loyal to the socialist system and the national communist regime. Unquestionable political loyalty was more important than professional competence for

advancement in the military hierarchy. Appropriate class origin became the principal criterion for admission to the East European officer corps and military schools. The Soviet Union and national communist party regimes transformed the East European military establishments into a vehicle of upward mobility for the working class and peasantry, who were unaccustomed to this kind of opportunity. Many of the officers in the new East European armed forces supported the new regimes because their newly acquired professional and social status hinged on the continuance of communist party rule.

The Soviet Union assigned trusted national communist party leaders to the most important East European military command positions despite their lack of military qualifications. The East European ministries of defense established political departments on the model of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy. Throughout the 1950s, prewar East European communists served as political officers, sharing command prerogatives with professional officers and evaluating their loyalty to the communist regime and compliance with its directives. Heavily armed paramilitary forces under the control of the East European internal security networks became powerful rivals for the national armies and checked their potentially great influence within the political system. The Soviet foreign intelligence apparatus also closely monitored the allied national military establishments.

Despite the great diversity of the new Soviet allies in terms of military history and traditions, the Sovietization of the East European national armies, which occurred between 1945 and the early 1950s, followed a consistent pattern in every case. The Soviet Union forced its East European allies to emulate Soviet Army ranks and uniforms and abandon all distinctive national military customs and practices; these allied armies used all Soviet-made weapons and equipment. The Soviet Union also insisted on the adoption of Soviet Army organization and tactics within the East European armies. Following the precedent established during World War II, the Soviet Union assigned Soviet officers to duty at all levels of the East European national command structures, from the general (main) staffs down to the regimental level, as its primary means of military control. Although officially termed advisers, these Soviet Army officers generally made the most important decisions within the East European armies. Direct Soviet control over the national military establishments was most complete in strategically important Poland. Soviet officers held approximately half the command positions in the postwar Polish Army despite the fact that few spoke Polish. Soviet officers and instructors staffed the national military

academies, and the study of Russian became mandatory for East European army officers. The Soviet Union also accepted many of the most promising and eager East European officers into Soviet mid-career military institutions and academies for the advanced study essential to their promotion within the national armed forces command structures.

Despite Soviet efforts to develop political and military instruments of control and the continued presence of Soviet Army occupation forces, the Soviet Union still faced resistance to its domination of Eastern Europe. The Soviet troops in the GSFG acted unilaterally when the East German Garrisoned People's Police refused to crush the June 1953 workers' uprising in East Berlin. This action set a precedent for the Soviet use of force to retain control of its buffer zone in Eastern Europe.

## **The Warsaw Pact, 1955–70**

### **East-West Diplomacy and the Formation of the Warsaw Pact**

In May 1955, the Soviet Union institutionalized its East European alliance system when it gathered together representatives from Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania in Warsaw to sign the multilateral Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance, which was identical to their existing bilateral treaties with the Soviet Union. Initially, the Soviets claimed that the Warsaw Pact was a direct response to the inclusion of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) in NATO in 1955. The formation of a legally defined, multilateral alliance organization also reinforced the Soviet Union's claim to great power status as the leader of the world socialist system, enhanced its prestige, and legitimized its presence and influence in Eastern Europe. However, as events inside the Soviet alliance developed, this initial external impetus for the formation of the Warsaw Pact lost its importance, and the Soviet Union found a formal alliance useful for other purposes. The Soviet Union created a structure for dealing with its East European allies more efficiently when it superimposed the multilateral Warsaw Pact on their existing bilateral treaty ties.

In the early 1950s, the United States and its Western allies carried out an agreement to re-arm West Germany and integrate it into NATO. This development threatened a vital Soviet foreign policy objective: the Soviet Union was intent on preventing the resurgence of a powerful German nation and particularly one allied with the Western powers. In an effort to derail the admission of West Germany to NATO, the Soviet representative at the 1954

Four-Power Foreign Ministers Conference in Berlin, Viacheslav Molotov, went so far as to propose the possibility of holding simultaneous elections in both German states that might lead to a re-unified, though neutral and unarmed, Germany. At the same time, the Soviet Union also proposed to the Western powers a general treaty on collective security in Europe and the dismantling of existing military blocs (meaning NATO). When this tactic failed and West Germany joined NATO on May 5, 1955, the Soviet Union declared that West Germany's membership in the Western alliance created a special threat to Soviet interests. The Soviet Union also declared that this development made its existing network of bilateral treaties an inadequate security guarantee and forced the East European socialist countries to "combine efforts in a strong political and military alliance." On May 14, 1955, the Soviet Union and its East European allies signed the Warsaw Pact.

While the Soviets had avoided formalizing their alliance to keep the onus of dividing Europe into opposing blocs on the West, the admission into NATO of the European state with the greatest potential military power forced the Soviet Union to take NATO into account for the first time. The Soviet Union also used West Germany's membership in NATO for propaganda purposes. The Soviets evoked the threat of a re-armed, "revanchist" West Germany seeking to reverse its defeat in World War II to remind the East European countries of their debt to the Soviet Union for their liberation, their need for Soviet protection against a recent enemy, and their corresponding duty to respect Soviet security interests and join the Warsaw Pact.

The Soviet Union had important reasons for institutionalizing the informal alliance system established through its bilateral treaties with the East European countries, concluded before the 1949 formation of NATO. As a formal organization, the Warsaw Pact provided the Soviet Union an official counterweight to NATO in East-West diplomacy. The Warsaw Pact gave the Soviet Union an equal status with the United States as the leader of an alliance of ostensibly independent nations supporting its foreign policy initiatives in the international arena. The multilateral Warsaw Pact was an improvement over strictly bilateral ties as a mechanism for transmitting Soviet defense and foreign policy directives to the East European allies. The Warsaw Pact also helped to legitimize the presence of Soviet troops—and overwhelming Soviet influence—in Eastern Europe.

The 1955 Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance between the Soviet Union and its East European allies, which established the Warsaw Pact, stated that relations among

the signatories were based on total equality, mutual noninterference in internal affairs, and respect for national sovereignty and independence. It declared that the Warsaw Pact's function was collective self-defense of the member states against external aggression, as provided for in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. The terms of the alliance specified the Political Consultative Committee (PCC) as the highest alliance organ. The founding document formed the Joint Command to organize the actual defense of the Warsaw Pact member states, declared that the national deputy ministers of defense would act as the deputies of the Warsaw Pact commander in chief, and established the Joint Staff, which included the representatives of the general (main) staffs of all its member states. The treaty set the Warsaw Pact's duration at twenty years with an automatic ten-year extension, provided that none of the member states renounced it before its expiration. The treaty also included a standing offer to disband simultaneously with other military alliances, i.e., NATO, contingent on East-West agreement about a general treaty on collective security in Europe. This provision indicated that the Soviet Union either did not expect that such an accord could be negotiated or did not consider its new multilateral alliance structure very important.

### **Early Organizational Structure and Activities**

Until the early 1960s, the Soviet Union used the Warsaw Pact more as a tool in East-West diplomacy than as a functioning political-military alliance. Under the leadership of General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Union sought to project a more flexible and less threatening image abroad and, toward this end, used the alliance's PCC to publicize its foreign policy initiatives and peace offensives, including frequent calls for the formation of an all-European collective security system to replace the continent's existing military alliances. The main result of Western acceptance of these disingenuous Soviet proposals would have been the removal of American troops from Europe, the weakening of ties among the Western states, and increasingly effective Soviet pressure on Western Europe. The Soviet Union also used the PCC to propose a nonaggression pact between NATO and the Warsaw Pact and the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe.

In the first few years after 1955, little of the Warsaw Pact's activity was directed at building a multilateral military alliance. The Soviet Union concentrated primarily on making the Warsaw Pact a reliable instrument for controlling the East European allies. In fact, the putatively supranational military agencies of the Warsaw Pact were completely subordinate to a national agency of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet General Staff in Moscow housed the alliance's Joint Command and Joint Staff and, through these organs, controlled the entire military apparatus of the Warsaw Pact as well as the allied armies. Although the highest ranking officers of the alliance were supposed to be selected through the mutual agreement of its member states, the Soviets unilaterally appointed a first deputy Soviet minister of defense and first deputy chief of the Soviet General Staff to serve as Warsaw Pact commander in chief and chief of staff, respectively. While these two Soviet officers ranked below the Soviet minister of defense, they still outranked the ministers of defense in the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) countries. The Soviet General Staff also posted senior colonel generals as resident representatives of the Warsaw Pact commander in chief in all East European capitals. Serving with the "agreement of their host countries," these successors to the wartime and postwar Soviet advisers in the allied armies equaled the East European ministers of defense in rank and provided a point of contact for the commander in chief, Joint Command, and Soviet General Staff inside the national military establishments. They directed and monitored the military training and political indoctrination programs of the national armies to synchronize their development with the Soviet Army. The strict Soviet control of the Warsaw Pact's high military command positions, established at this early stage, clearly indicated the subordination of the East European allies to the Soviet Union.

In 1956 the Warsaw Pact member states admitted East Germany to the Joint Command and sanctioned the transformation of its Garrisoned People's Police into a full-fledged army. But the Soviet Union took no steps to integrate the allied armies into a multinational force. The Soviet Union organized only one joint Warsaw Pact military exercise and made no attempt to make the alliance functional before 1961 except through the incorporation of East European territory into the Soviet national air defense structure.

### **De-Stalinization and National Communism**

In his 1956 secret speech at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, General Secretary Khrushchev denounced the arbitrariness, excesses, and terror of the Joseph Stalin era. Khrushchev sought to achieve greater legitimacy for communist party rule on the basis of the party's ability to meet the material needs of the Soviet population. His de-Stalinization campaign quickly influenced developments in Eastern Europe. Khrushchev accepted the replacement of Stalinist Polish and Hungarian leaders with newly rehabilitated communist party figures, who were able to generate genuine popular support for their regimes by

molding the socialist system to the specific historical, political, and economic conditions in their countries. Pursuing his more sophisticated approach in international affairs, Khrushchev sought to turn Soviet-controlled East European satellites into at least semisovereign countries and to make Soviet domination of the Warsaw Pact less obvious. The Warsaw Pact's formal structure served Khrushchev's purpose well, providing a facade of genuine consultation and of joint defense and foreign-policy decision making by the Soviet Union and the East European countries.

De-Stalinization in the Soviet Union made a superficial renationalization of the East European military establishments possible. The Soviet Union allowed the East European armies to restore their distinctive national practices and to re-emphasize professional military opinions over political considerations in most areas. Military training supplanted political indoctrination as the primary task of the East European military establishments. Most important, the Soviet Ministry of Defense recalled many Soviet Army officers and advisers from their positions within the East European armies. Although the Soviet Union still remained in control of its alliance system, these changes in the Warsaw Pact and the NSWP armies removed some of the most objectionable features of Sovietization.

In October 1956, the Polish and Hungarian communist parties lost control of the de-Stalinization process in their countries. The ensuing crises threatened the integrity of the entire Soviet alliance system in Eastern Europe. Although Khrushchev reacted quickly to rein in the East European allies and thwart this challenge to Soviet interests, his response in these two cases led to a significant change in the role of the Warsaw Pact as an element of Soviet security.

### *The "Polish October"*

The October 1956, workers' riots in Poland defined the boundaries of national communism acceptable to the Soviet Union. The Polish United Workers Party found that the grievances that inspired the riots could be ameliorated without presenting a challenge to its monopoly on political power or its strict adherence to Soviet foreign policy and security interests. At first, when the Polish Army and police forces refused to suppress rioting workers, the Soviet Union prepared its forces in East Germany and Poland for an intervention to restore order in the country. However, Poland's new communist party leader, Wladyslaw Gomulka, and the Polish Army's top commanders indicated to Khrushchev and the other Soviet leaders that any Soviet intervention in the internal affairs of Poland would meet united, massive resistance. While insisting on Poland's right to exercise greater autonomy in domestic matters,

Gomulka also pointed out that the Polish United Workers Party remained in firm control of the country and expressed his intention to continue to accept Soviet direction in external affairs. Gomulka even denounced the simultaneous revolution in Hungary and Hungary's attempt to leave the Warsaw Pact, which nearly ruptured the Soviet alliance system in Eastern Europe. Gomulka's position protected the Soviet Union's most vital interests and enabled Poland to reach a compromise with the Soviet leadership to defuse the crisis. Faced with Polish resistance to a possible invasion, the Soviet Union established its minimum requirements for the East European allies: upholding the leading role of the communist party in society and remaining a member of the Warsaw Pact. These two conditions ensured that Eastern Europe would remain a buffer zone for the Soviet Union.

### *The Hungarian Revolution*

By contrast, the full-scale revolution in Hungary, which began in late October with public demonstrations in support of the rioting Polish workers, openly flouted these Soviet stipulations. An initial domestic liberalization acceptable to the Soviet Union quickly focused on nonnegotiable issues like the communist party's exclusive hold on political power and genuine national independence. With overwhelming support from the Hungarian public, the new communist party leader, Imre Nagy, instituted multiparty elections. More important, Nagy withdrew Hungary from the Warsaw Pact and ended Hungary's alliance with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Army invaded with 200,000 troops, crushed the Hungarian Revolution, and brought Hungary back within limits tolerable to the Soviet Union. The five days of pitched battles left 25,000 Hungarians dead.

After 1956 the Soviet Union practically disbanded the Hungarian Army and reinstated a program of political indoctrination in the units that remained. In May 1957, unable to rely on Hungarian forces to maintain order, the Soviet Union increased its troop level in Hungary from two to four divisions and forced Hungary to sign a status-of-forces agreement, placing the Soviet military presence on a solid and permanent legal basis. The Soviet Army forces stationed in Hungary officially became the Southern Group of Forces (SGF).

The events of 1956 in Poland and Hungary forced a Soviet re-evaluation of the reliability and roles of the NSWP countries in its alliance system. Before 1956 the Soviet leadership believed that the Stalinist policy of heavy political indoctrination and enforced Sovietization had transformed the national armies into reliable

instruments of the Soviet Union. However, the East European armies were still likely to remain loyal to national causes. Only one Hungarian Army unit fought beside the Soviet troops that put down the 1956 revolution. In both the Polish and the Hungarian military establishments, a basic loyalty to the national communist party regime was mixed with a strong desire for greater national sovereignty. With East Germany still a recent enemy and Poland and Hungary now suspect allies, the Soviet Union turned to Czechoslovakia as its most reliable junior partner in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Czechoslovakia became the Soviet Union's first proxy in the Third World when its military pilots trained Egyptian personnel to fly Soviet-built MiG fighter aircraft. The Soviet Union thereby established a pattern of shifting the weight of its reliance from one East European country to another in response to various crises.

### **The Post-1956 Period**

After the very foundation of the Soviet alliance system in Eastern Europe was shaken in 1956, Khrushchev sought to shore up the Soviet Union's position. Several developments made the task even more difficult. Between 1956 and 1962, the growing Soviet-Chinese dispute threatened to break up the Warsaw Pact. In 1962 Albania severed relations with the Soviet Union and terminated Soviet rights to the use of a valuable Mediterranean naval base on its Adriatic Sea coast. That same year, Albania ended its active participation in the Warsaw Pact and sided with the Chinese against the Soviets. Following the example of Yugoslavia in the late 1940s, Albania was able to resist Soviet pressures. Lacking a common border with Albania and having neither occupation troops nor overwhelming influence in that country, the Soviet Union was unable to use either persuasion or force to bring Albania back into the Warsaw Pact. Khrushchev used Warsaw Pact meetings to mobilize the political support of the Soviet Union's East European allies against China and Albania, as well as to reinforce its control of Eastern Europe and its claim to leadership of the communist world. More important, however, after Albania joined Yugoslavia and Hungary on the list of defections and near-defections from the Soviet alliance system in Eastern Europe, the Soviets began to turn the Warsaw Pact into a tool for militarily preventing defections in the future.

### *The Internal Function of the Warsaw Pact*

Although Khrushchev invoked the terms of the Warsaw Pact as a justification for the Soviet invasion of Hungary, the action was in no sense a cooperative allied effort. In the early 1960s, however,

the Soviets took steps to turn the alliance's Joint Armed Forces (JAF) into a multinational invasion force. In the future, an appeal to the Warsaw Pact's collective self-defense provisions and the participation of allied forces would put a multilateral cover over unilateral Soviet interventions to keep errant member states in the alliance and their communist parties in power. The Soviet Union sought to legitimize its future policing actions by presenting them as the product of joint Warsaw Pact decisions. In this way, the Soviets hoped to deflect the kind of direct international criticism they were subjected to after the invasion of Hungary. However, such internal deployments were clearly contrary to the Warsaw Pact's rule of mutual noninterference in domestic affairs and conflicted with the alliance's declared purpose of collective self-defense against external aggression. To circumvent this semantic difficulty, the Soviets merely redefined external aggression to include any spontaneous anti-Soviet, anticommunist uprising in an allied state. Discarding domestic grievances as a possible cause, the Soviet Union declared that such outbreaks were a result of imperialist provocations and thereby constituted external aggression.

In the 1960s, the Soviet Union began to prepare the Warsaw Pact for its internal function of keeping the NSWP member states within the alliance. The Soviet Union took a series of steps to transform the Warsaw Pact into its intra-alliance intervention force. Although it had previously worked with the East European military establishments on a bilateral basis, the Soviet Union started to integrate the national armies under the Warsaw Pact framework. Marshal of the Soviet Union Andrei Grechko, who became commander in chief of the alliance in 1960, was uniquely qualified to serve in his post. During World War II, he commanded a Soviet Army group that included significant Polish and Czechoslovak units. Beginning in 1961, Grechko made joint military exercises between Soviet forces and the allied national armies the primary focus of Warsaw Pact military activities.

The Soviet Union arranged these joint exercises to prevent any NSWP member state from fully controlling its national army and to reduce the possibility that an East European regime could successfully resist Soviet domination and pursue independent policies. The Soviet-organized series of joint Warsaw Pact exercises was intended to prevent other East European national command authorities from following the example of Yugoslavia and Albania and adopting a territorial defense strategy. Developed in the Yugoslav and Albanian partisan struggles of World War II, territorial defense entailed a mobilization of the entire population for a prolonged guerrilla war against an intervening power. Under this

strategy, the national communist party leadership would maintain its integrity to direct the resistance, seek international support for the country's defense, and keep an invader from replacing it with a more compliant regime. Territorial defense deterred invasions by threatening considerable opposition and enabled Yugoslavia and Albania to assert their independence from the Soviet Union. By training and integrating the remaining allied armies in joint exercises for operations only within a multinational force, however, the Soviet Union reduced the ability of the other East European countries to conduct military actions independent of Soviet control or to hinder a Soviet invasion, as Poland and Hungary had done in October 1956.

Large-scale multilateral exercises provided opportunities for Soviet officers to command troops of different nationalities and trained East European national units to take orders from the Warsaw Pact or Soviet command structure. Including Soviet troops stationed in the NSWP countries and the western military districts of the Soviet Union, joint maneuvers drilled Soviet Army forces for rapid, massive invasions of allied countries with the symbolic participation of NSWP units. Besides turning the allied armies into a multinational invasion force for controlling Eastern Europe, joint exercises also gave the Warsaw Pact armies greater capabilities for a coalition war against NATO. In the early 1960s, the Soviet Union modernized the NSWP armies with T-54 and T-55 tanks, self-propelled artillery, short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs) equipped with conventional warheads, and MiG-21 and Su-7 ground attack fighter aircraft. The Soviet Union completed the mechanization of East European infantry divisions, and these new motorized rifle divisions trained with the Soviet Army for combined arms combat in a nuclear environment. These changes greatly increased the military value and effectiveness of the NSWP forces. In the early 1960s, the Soviet Union gave the East European armies their first real supporting role in its European theater operations.

### *Romania and the Warsaw Pact*

Ironically, at the very time that the Soviet Union gave the Warsaw Pact more substance and modernized its force structure, resentment of Soviet political, organizational, and military domination of the Warsaw Pact and the NSWP armies increased. There was considerable East European dissatisfaction with a Warsaw Pact hierarchy that placed a subordinate of the Soviet minister of defense over the East European defense ministers. The Soviets considered the national ministers of defense, with the rank of colonel general, equivalent only to Soviet military district commanders. The strongest

objections to the subordinate status of the NSWP countries inside the Warsaw Pact came from the Communist Party of Romania (Partidul Communist Roman) and its military leadership under Nicolae Ceaușescu.

The first indications of an independent Romanian course appeared while the Soviet Union was shoring up its hold on Eastern Europe through formal status-of-forces agreements with its allies. In 1958 Romania moved in the opposite direction by demanding the withdrawal from its territory of all Soviet troops, advisers, and the Soviet resident representative. To cover Soviet embarrassment, Khrushchev called this a unilateral troop reduction contributing to greater European security. Reducing its participation in Warsaw Pact activities considerably, Romania also refused to allow Soviet or NSWP forces, which could serve as Warsaw Pact intervention forces, to cross or conduct exercises on its territory.

In the 1960s Romania demanded basic changes in the Warsaw Pact structure to give the East European member states a greater role in alliance decision making. At several PCC meetings, Romania proposed that the leading Warsaw Pact command positions, including its commander in chief, rotate among the top military leaders of each country. In response, the Soviet Union tried again to mollify its allies and deemphasize its control of the alliance by moving the Warsaw Pact military organization out of the Soviet General Staff and making it a distinct entity, albeit still within the Soviet Ministry of Defense. The Soviet Union also placed some joint exercises held on NSWP territory under the nominal command of the host country's minister of defense. However, Soviet Army commanders still conducted almost two-thirds of all Warsaw Pact maneuvers, and these concessions proved too little and too late.

With the aim of ending Soviet domination and guarding against Soviet encroachments, Romania reasserted full national control over its armed forces and military policies in 1963 when, following the lead of Yugoslavia and Albania, it adopted a territorial defense strategy called "War of the Entire People." This nation-in-arms strategy entailed compulsory participation in civilian defense organizations, militias, and reserve and paramilitary forces, as well as rapid mobilization. The goal of Romania's strategy was to make any Soviet intervention prohibitively protracted and costly. Romania rejected any integration of Warsaw Pact forces that could undercut its ability to resist a Soviet invasion. For example, it ended its participation in Warsaw Pact joint exercises because multinational maneuvers required the Romanian Army to assign its forces to a non-Romanian command authority. Romania stopped

sending its army officers to Soviet military schools for higher education. When the Romanian military establishment and its educational institutions assumed these functions, training focused strictly on Romania's independent military strategy. Romania also terminated its regular exchange of intelligence with the Soviet Union and directed counterintelligence efforts against possible Soviet penetration of the Romanian Army. These steps combined to make it a truly national military establishment responsive only to domestic political authorities and ensured that it would defend the country's sovereignty.

Romania's independent national defense policy helped to underwrite its assertion of greater policy autonomy. In the only Warsaw Pact body in which it continued to participate actively, the PCC, Romania found a forum to make its disagreements with the Soviet Union public, to frustrate Soviet plans, and to work to protect its new autonomy. The Soviet Union could not maintain the illusion of Warsaw Pact harmony when Romanian recalcitrance forced the PCC to adopt "coordinated" rather than unanimous decisions. Romania even held up PCC approval for several weeks of the appointment of Marshal of the Soviet Union Ivan Iakubovskii as Warsaw Pact commander in chief. However, Romania did not enjoy the relative geographical isolation from the Soviet Union that made Yugoslav and Albanian independence possible, and the Soviet Union would not tolerate another outright withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact.

### *The Prague Spring*

In 1968 an acute crisis in the Soviet alliance system suddenly overwhelmed the slowly festering problem of Romania. The Prague Spring represented a more serious challenge than that posed by Romania because it occurred in an area more crucial to Soviet security. The domestic liberalization program of the Czechoslovak communist regime led by Alexander Dubček threatened to generate popular demands for similar changes in the other East European countries and even parts of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union believed it necessary to forestall the spread of liberalization and to assert its right to enforce the boundaries of ideological permissibility in Eastern Europe. However, domestic change in Czechoslovakia also began to affect defense and foreign policy, just as it had in Hungary in 1956, despite Dubček's declared intention to keep Czechoslovakia within the Warsaw Pact. This worrying development was an important factor in the Soviet decision to invade Czechoslovakia in 1968—one that Western analysts have generally overlooked.

The new political climate of the Prague Spring and the lifting of press censorship brought into the open a longstanding debate within the Czechoslovak military establishment over the nature of the Warsaw Pact and Czechoslovakia's membership in it. In the mid-1960s, this debate centered on Soviet domination of the NSWP countries and of the Warsaw Pact and its command structure. Czechoslovakia had supported Romania in its opposition to Soviet calls for greater military integration and backed its demands for a genuine East European role in alliance decision making at PCC meetings.

In 1968 high-ranking Czechoslovak officers and staff members at the Klement Gottwald Military Academy began to discuss the need for a truly independent national defense strategy based on Czechoslovakia's national interests rather than the Soviet security interests that always prevailed in the Warsaw Pact. The fundamental premise of such an independent military policy was that an all-European collective security system, mutual nonaggression agreements among European states, the withdrawal of all troops from foreign countries, and a Central European nuclear-free zone could guarantee the country's security against outside aggression better than its membership in the Warsaw Pact. Although the Soviet Union had advocated these same arrangements in the 1950s, Czechoslovakia was clearly out of step with the Soviet line in 1968. Czechoslovakia threatened to complicate Soviet military strategy in Central Europe by becoming a neutral country dividing the Warsaw Pact into two parts along its front with NATO.

The concepts underpinning this developing Czechoslovak national defense strategy were formalized in the Gottwald Academy Memorandum circulated to the general (main) staffs of the other Warsaw Pact armies. The Gottwald Memorandum received a favorable response from Poland, Hungary, and Romania. In a televised news conference, at the height of the 1968 crisis, the chief of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia's military department, Lieutenant General Václav Prchlík, denounced the Warsaw Pact as an unequal alliance and declared that the Czechoslovak Army was prepared to defend the country's sovereignty by force, if necessary. In the end, the Soviet Union intervened to prevent the Czechoslovak Army from fully developing the military capabilities to implement its newly announced independent defense strategy, which could have guaranteed national independence in the political and economic spheres. The August 1968 invasion preempted the possibility of the Czechoslovak Army's mounting a credible deterrent against future Soviet interventions. The Soviet decision

in favor of intervention focused, in large measure, on ensuring its ability to maintain physical control of its wayward ally in the future.

In contrast to its rapid, bloody suppression of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, the Soviet Union engaged in a lengthy campaign of military coercion against Czechoslovakia. In 1968 the Soviet Union conducted more joint Warsaw Pact exercises than in any other year since the maneuvers began in the early 1960s. The Soviet Union used these exercises to mask preparations for, and threaten, a Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia that would occur unless Dubček complied with Soviet demands and abandoned his political liberalization program. Massive Warsaw Pact rear services and communications exercises in July and August enabled the Soviet General Staff to execute its plan for the invasion without alerting Western governments. Under the pretext of exercises, Soviet and NSWP divisions were brought up to full strength, reservists were called up, and civilian transportation resources were requisitioned. The cover that these exercises provided allowed the Soviet Union to deploy forces along Czechoslovakia's borders in Poland and East Germany and to demonstrate to the Czechoslovak leadership its readiness to intervene.

On August 20, a force consisting of twenty-three Soviet Army divisions invaded Czechoslovakia. Token NSWP contingents, including one Hungarian, two East German, and two Polish divisions, along with one Bulgarian brigade, also took part in the invasion. In the wake of its invasion, the Soviet Union installed a more compliant communist party leadership and concluded a status-of-forces agreement with Czechoslovakia, which established a permanent Soviet presence in that country for the first time. Five Soviet Army divisions remained in Czechoslovakia to protect the country from future "imperialist threats." These troops became the Central Group of Forces (CGF) and added to Soviet strength directly bordering NATO. The Czechoslovak Army, having failed to oppose the Soviet intervention and defend the country's sovereignty, suffered a tremendous loss of prestige after 1968. At Soviet direction, reliable Czechoslovak authorities conducted a purge and political re-education campaign in the Czechoslovak Army and cut its size. After 1968 the Soviet Union closed and reorganized the Klement Gottwald Military Academy. With its one-time junior partner now proven unreliable, the Soviet Union turned to Poland as its principal East European ally.

The Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia showed the hollowness of the Soviet alliance system in Eastern Europe in both its political and its military aspects. The Soviet Union did not convene the PCC to invoke the Warsaw Pact's terms during the 1968 crisis

because a formal PCC session would have revealed a deep rift in the Soviet alliance and given Czechoslovakia an international platform from which it could have defended its reform program. The Soviet Union did not allow NSWP officers to direct the Warsaw Pact exercises that preceded the intervention in Czechoslovakia, and Soviet Army officers commanded all multinational exercises during the crisis. While the intervention force was mobilized and deployed under the Warsaw Pact's commander in chief, the Soviet General Staff transferred full operational command of the invasion to the commander in chief of the Soviet ground forces, Army General I.G. Pavlovskii. Despite the participation of numerous East European army units, the invasion of Czechoslovakia was not in any sense a multilateral action. The Soviet invasion force carried out all important operations on Czechoslovakia's territory. Moreover, the Soviet Union quickly withdrew all NSWP troops from Czechoslovakia to forestall the possibility of their ideological contamination. NSWP participation served primarily to make the invasion appear to be a multinational operation and to deflect direct international criticism of the Soviet Union.

While the participation of four NSWP armies in the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia demonstrated considerable Warsaw Pact cohesion, the invasion also served to erode it. The invasion of Czechoslovakia proved that the Warsaw Pact's internal mission of keeping orthodox East European communist party regimes in power—and less orthodox ones in line—was more important than the external mission of defending its member states against external aggression. The Soviet Union was unable to conceal the fact that the alliance served as the ultimate mechanism for its control of Eastern Europe. Formulated in response to the crisis in Czechoslovakia, the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine declared that the East European countries had “limited” sovereignty to be exercised only as long as it did not damage the interests of the “socialist commonwealth” as a whole. Since the Soviet Union defined the interests of the “socialist commonwealth,” it could force its NSWP allies to respect its overwhelming security interest in keeping Eastern Europe as its buffer zone.

The Romanian leader, Ceaușescu, after refusing to contribute troops to the Soviet intervention force as the other East European countries had done, denounced the invasion of Czechoslovakia as a violation of international law and the Warsaw Pact's cardinal principle of mutual noninterference in internal affairs. Ceaușescu insisted that collective self-defense against external aggression was the only valid mission of the Warsaw Pact. Albania also objected to the Soviet invasion and indicated its disapproval by withdrawing

formally from the Warsaw Pact after six years of inactive membership.

## **The Organizational Structure of the Warsaw Pact**

The Warsaw Pact administers both the political and the military activities of the Soviet alliance system in Eastern Europe. A series of changes beginning in 1969 gave the Warsaw Pact the structure it retained through the mid-1980s.

### **Political Organization**

The general (first) secretaries of the communist and workers' parties and heads of state of the Warsaw Pact member states meet in the PCC (see table A, this Appendix). The PCC provides a formal point of contact for the Soviet and East European leaders in addition to less formal bilateral meetings and visits. As the highest decision-making body of the Warsaw Pact, the PCC is charged with assessing international developments that could affect the security of the allied states and warrant the execution of the Warsaw Pact's collective self-defense provisions. In practice, however, the Soviet Union has been unwilling to rely on the PCC to perform this function, fearing that Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Romania could use PCC meetings to oppose Soviet plans and policies. The PCC is also the main center for coordinating the foreign policy activities of the Warsaw Pact countries. Since the late 1960s, when several member states began to use the alliance structure to confront the Soviets and assert more independent foreign policies, the Soviet Union has had to bargain and negotiate to gain support for its foreign policy within Warsaw Pact councils.

In 1976 the PCC established the permanent Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (CMFA) to regularize the previously ad hoc meetings of Soviet and East European representatives to the Warsaw Pact. Given the official task of preparing recommendations for and executing the decisions of the PCC, the CMFA and its permanent Joint Secretariat have provided the Soviet Union an additional point of contact to establish a consensus among its allies on contentious issues. Less formal meetings of the deputy ministers of foreign affairs of the Warsaw Pact member states represent another layer of alliance coordination. If alliance problems can be resolved at these working levels, they will not erupt into embarrassing disputes between the Soviet and East European leaders at PCC meetings.

### **Military Organization**

The Warsaw Pact's military organization is larger and more active

*Table A. Formal Meetings of the Warsaw Pact Agencies, 1956-87*

Date	Place	Body	Final Communiqué Summary
1956 January	Prague	PCC <sup>1</sup>	National People's Army of East Germany formed
1958 May	Moscow	-do-	Proposed nonaggression pact with NATO. Removal of Soviet troops from Romania
1960 February	-do-	-do-	
1961 March	-do-	-do-	
1962 June	-do-	-do-	
1963 July	-do-	-do-	
1965 January	Warsaw	-do-	Convening a conference on collective security in Europe in 1966
July	Bucharest	-do-	Strengthening peace and security in Europe
1968 March	Sofia	-do-	
1969 -do-	Budapest	-do-	The Committee of Ministers of Defense (CMD) established. An appeal for a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Improving the command and control, structure, and agencies of the Warsaw Pact
December	Moscow	Military Council	Strengthening the command and control agencies of the Warsaw Pact
-do-	-do-	CMD	Strengthening the defense capability of the Warsaw Pact
1970 April	Budapest	Military Council	
May	Sofia	CMD	
August	Moscow	PCC	The situation in Europe
October	Varna	Military Council	
December	East Berlin	PCC	Third World conflicts. Strengthening security in Europe
1971 March	Budapest	CMD	Developing Warsaw Pact command, control, and communications systems
May	East Berlin	Military Council	
October	Poland	-do-	

Table A.—Continued

	Date	Place	Body	Final Communiqué Summary
1972	January	Prague	PCC	Peace, security, and cooperation in Europe
	February	East Berlin	CMD	The situation in Europe
	April	Bucharest	Military Council	Interaction among the allied armies
	October	Minsk	-do-	
1973	February	Warsaw	CMD	
	May	Sofia	Military Council	
	October	Prague	-do-	
1974	February	Bucharest	CMD	
	March	Budapest	Military Council	
	April	Warsaw	PCC	Third World conflicts
	November	East Berlin	Military Council	
1975	January	Moscow	CMD	Current activities of the directive agencies of the JAF <sup>2</sup>
	May	Warsaw	Military Council	
	October	Bucharest	-do-	
	November	Prague	CMD	Improving training methods. Current activities of the directive agencies of the JAF
1976	May	Kiev	Military Council	
	November	Bucharest	PCC	Furthering détente in Europe. Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (CMFA) established
	December	Sofia	CMD	Current activities of the JAF's command and control agencies
1977	May	Prague	Military Council	
	-do-	Moscow	CMD	Problems of peace, security, and cooperation in Europe
	October	Sofia	Military Council	
	November	Budapest	CMD	

*Czechoslovakia: A Country Study*

*Table A.—Continued*

	Date	Place	Body	Final Communiqué Summary
1978	April	Sofia	CMFA	The Belgrade CSCE review meeting
	May	Budapest	Military Council	
	October	East Berlin	-do-	
	November	Moscow	PCC	
	December	East Berlin	CMD	
1979	April	Warsaw	Military Council	Détente
	May	Budapest	CMFA	
	October	Bucharest	Military Council	
	December	Warsaw	CMD	
	-do-	-do-	CMFA	
1980	May	-do-	PCC	The status of détente. The Warsaw Pact's twenty-fifth anniversary
	-do-	Moscow	Military Council	Détente. Summarized twenty-five years of work to develop the allied armies
	October	Prague	-do-	
	-do-	Warsaw	CMFA	
	December	Bucharest	CMD	
1981	April	Sofia	Military Council	
	October	Budapest	-do-	
	December	Bucharest	CMFA	
	-do-	Moscow	CMD	
	-do-	East Berlin	Military Council	
1982	October	Warsaw	-do-	
	-do-	Moscow	CMFA	Measures to strengthen peace and security in Europe
1983	January	Prague	PCC	A proposal for a non-use-of-force pact with NATO <sup>5</sup>
	-do-	-do-	CMD	
	April	-do-	CMFA	Détente
	-do-	Bucharest	Military Council	
	October	Sofia	CMFA	The situation in Europe

Table A.—Continued

Date	Place	Body	Final Communiqué Summary
-do-	East Berlin	CMD	The tense and dangerous situation in Europe
October	Lvov	Military Council	
December	Sofia	CMD	
1984 April	Budapest	CMFA	The situation in Europe
-do-	Prague	Military Council	
October	Sofia	-do-	The international situation exacerbated by the United States and NATO
December	East Berlin	CMFA	
-do-	Budapest	CMD	
1985 May	-do-	Military Council	
October	Sofia	PCC	
November	East Berlin	Military Council	
December	-do-	CMD	
1986 March	Warsaw	CMFA	The Reykjavik summit meeting
April	-do-	Military Council	
June	Budapest	PCC	
October	Bucharest	CMFA	
1987 March	Moscow	-do-	
April	Minsk	Military Council	
May	East Berlin	PCC	

<sup>1</sup> PCC—Political Consultative Committee.<sup>2</sup> JAF—Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact Member States.<sup>3</sup> NATO—North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

than the alliance's political bodies. Several different organizations are responsible for implementing PCC directives on defense matters and developing the capabilities of the national armies that constitute the JAF. However, the principal task of the military organizations is to link the East European armies to the Soviet armed forces. The alliance's military agencies coordinate the training and mobilization of East European national forces assigned to

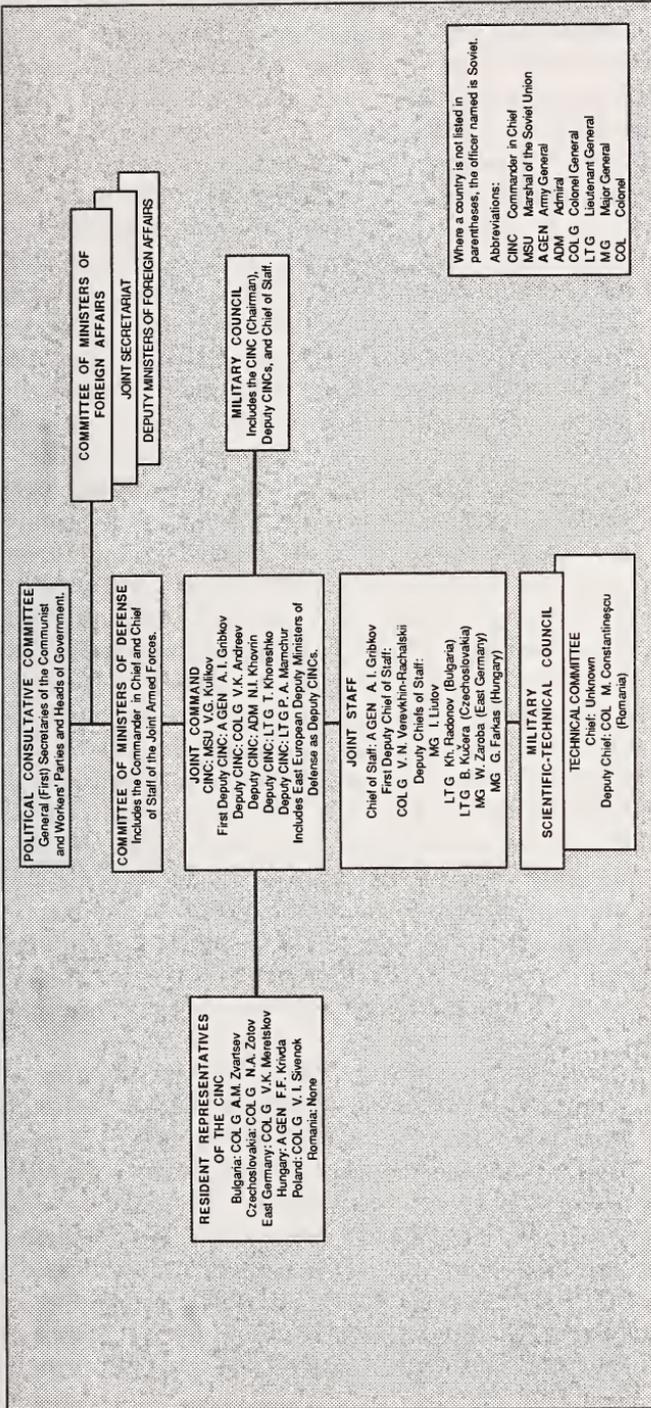
the Warsaw Pact. In turn, these forces can be deployed in accordance with Soviet military strategy against an NSWP country or NATO.

Soviet control of the Warsaw Pact as a military alliance is scarcely veiled. The Warsaw Pact's JAF has no command structure, logistics network, air defense system, or operations directorate separate from the Soviet Ministry of Defense. The 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia demonstrated how easily control of the JAF could be transferred in wartime to the Soviet General Staff and Soviet field commanders. The dual roles of the Warsaw Pact commander in chief, who is a first deputy Soviet minister of defense, and the Warsaw Pact chief of staff, who is a first deputy chief of the Soviet General Staff, facilitate the transfer of Warsaw Pact forces to Soviet control. The subordination of the Warsaw Pact to the Soviet General Staff is also shown clearly in the Soviet military hierarchy. The chief of the Soviet General Staff is listed above the Warsaw Pact commander in chief in the Soviet order of precedence, even though both positions are filled by first deputy Soviet ministers of defense.

Ironically, the first innovations in the Warsaw Pact's structure since 1955 came after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, which had clearly underlined Soviet control of the alliance. At the 1969 PCC session in Budapest, the Soviet Union agreed to cosmetic alterations in the Warsaw Pact designed to address East European complaints about Soviet domination of the alliance. These changes included the establishment of the formal Committee of Ministers of Defense (CMD) and the Military Council as well as the addition of more non-Soviet officers to the Joint Command and the Joint Staff (see fig. B, this Appendix).

The CMD is the leading military body of the Warsaw Pact. In addition to the ministers of defense of the Warsaw Pact member states, the commander in chief and the chief of staff of the JAF are statutory members of the CMD. With its three seats on the CMD, the Soviet Union can exercise a working majority in the nine-member body with the votes of only two of its more loyal East European allies. The chairmanship of the CMD supposedly rotates among the ministers of defense. In any event, the brief annual meetings of the CMD severely limit its work to pro forma pronouncements or narrow guidelines for the Joint Command, Military Council, and Joint Staff to follow.

The Joint Command develops the overall training plan for joint Warsaw Pact exercises and for the national armies to promote the assimilation of Soviet equipment and tactics. Headed by the Warsaw Pact's commander in chief, the Joint Command is divided into distinct Soviet and East European tiers. The deputy commanders



Source: Based on information from United States, Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence, *USSR Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Officials: A Reference Aid*, Washington, October 1986, 31-36.

Figure B. The Organizational Structure of the Warsaw Pact, 1987

in chief include Soviet and East European officers. The Soviet officers serving as deputy commanders in chief are specifically responsible for coordinating the East European navies and air forces with the corresponding Soviet service branches. The East European deputy commanders in chief are the deputy ministers of defense of the NSWP countries. While providing formal NSWP representation in the Joint Command, the East European deputies also assist in the coordination of Soviet and non-Soviet forces. The commander in chief, deputy commanders in chief, and chief of staff of the JAF gather in the Military Council on a semiannual basis to plan and evaluate operational and combat training. With the Warsaw Pact's commander in chief acting as chairman, the sessions of the Military Council rotate among the capitals of the Warsaw Pact countries.

The Joint Staff is the only standing Warsaw Pact military body and is the official executive organ of the CMD, commander in chief, and Military Council. As such, it performs the bulk of the Warsaw Pact's work in the military realm. Like the Joint Command, the Joint Staff has both Soviet and East European officers. These non-Soviet officers also serve as the principal link between the Soviet and East European armed forces. The Joint Staff organizes all joint exercises and arranges multilateral meetings and contacts of Warsaw Pact military personnel at all levels.

The PCC's establishment of official CMD meetings, the Military Council, and the bifurcation of the Joint Command and Joint Staff allowed for greater formal East European representation, as well as more working-level positions for senior non-Soviet officers, in the alliance. Increased NSWP input into the alliance decision-making process ameliorated East European dissatisfaction with continued Soviet dominance of the Warsaw Pact and even facilitated the work of the JAF. However, a larger NSWP role in the alliance did not reduce actual Soviet control of the Warsaw Pact command structure.

The 1969 PCC meeting also approved the formation of two more Warsaw Pact military bodies, the Military Scientific-Technical Council and the Technical Committee. These innovations in the Warsaw Pact structure represented a Soviet attempt to harness NSWP weapons and military equipment production, which had greatly increased during the 1960s. The Military Scientific-Technical Council assumed responsibility for directing armaments research and development within the Warsaw Pact, while the Technical Committee coordinated standardization. Comecon's Military-Industrial Commission supervised NSWP military production facilities (see Appendix B).

After 1969 the Soviet Union insisted on tighter Warsaw Pact military integration as the price for greater NSWP participation in alliance decision making. Under the pretext of directing Warsaw Pact programs and activities aimed at integration, officers from the Soviet Ministry of Defense penetrated the East European armed forces. Meetings between senior officers from the Soviet and East European main political directorates allowed the Soviets to monitor the loyalty of the national military establishments. Joint Warsaw Pact exercises afforded ample opportunity for the evaluation and selection of reliable East European officers for promotion to command positions in the field, the national military hierarchies, and the Joint Staff. Warsaw Pact military science conferences, including representatives from each NSWP general (main) staff, enabled the Soviets to check for signs that an East European ally was formulating a national strategy or developing military capabilities beyond Soviet control. In 1973 the deputy ministers of foreign affairs signed the "Convention on the Capacities, Privileges, and Immunities of the Staff and Other Administrative Organs of the Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact Member States," which established the principle of extraterritoriality for alliance agencies, legally sanctioned the efforts of these Soviet officers to penetrate the East European military establishments, and prevented any host government interference in their work. Moreover, the Warsaw Pact commander in chief still retained his resident representatives in the national ministries of defense as direct sources of information on the situation inside the allied armies.

### **The Warsaw Pact, 1970–87**

The crisis in Czechoslovakia and Romania's recalcitrance gave a new dimension to the challenge facing the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union's East European allies had learned that withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact and achieving independence from Soviet control were unrealistic goals, and they aimed instead at establishing a greater measure of autonomy within the alliance. Romania had successfully carved out a more independent position within the bounds of the Warsaw Pact. In doing so, it provided an example to the other East European countries of how to use the Warsaw Pact councils and committees to articulate positions contrary to Soviet interests. Beginning in the early 1970s, the East European allies formed intra-alliance coalitions in Warsaw Pact meetings to oppose the Soviet Union, defuse its pressure on any one NSWP member state, and delay or obstruct Soviet policies. The Soviets could no longer use the alliance to transmit their positions to, and receive an automatic endorsement from, the

subordinate NSWP countries. While still far from genuine consultation, Warsaw Pact policy coordination between the Soviet Union and the East European countries in the 1970s was a step away from the blatant Soviet control of the alliance that had characterized the 1950s. East European opposition forced the Soviet Union to treat the Warsaw Pact as a forum for managing relations with its allies and bidding for their support on issues like *détente*, the Third World, the Solidarity crisis in Poland, alliance burden-sharing, and relations with NATO.

### **Détente**

In the late 1960s, the Soviet Union abandoned its earlier efforts to achieve the simultaneous dissolution of the two European military blocs and concentrated instead on legitimizing the territorial status quo in Europe. The Soviets asserted that the official East-West agreements reached during the *détente* era "legally secured the most important political-territorial results of World War II." Under these arrangements, the Soviet Union allowed its East European allies to recognize West Germany's existence as a separate state. In return the West, and West Germany in particular, explicitly accepted the inviolability of all postwar borders in Eastern Europe and tacitly recognized Soviet control of the eastern half of both Germany and Europe. The Soviets claim the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which ratified the existing political division of Europe, as a major victory for Soviet diplomacy and the realization of longstanding Soviet calls, issued through the PCC, for a general European conference on collective security.

The consequences of *détente*, however, also posed a significant challenge to Soviet control of Eastern Europe. First, *détente* caused a crisis in Soviet-East German relations. East Germany's leader, Walter Ulbricht, opposed improved relations with West Germany and, following Ceaușescu's tactics, used Warsaw Pact councils to attack the Soviet *détente* policy openly. In the end, the Soviet Union removed Ulbricht from power, in 1971, and proceeded unhindered into *détente* with the West. Second, *détente* blurred the strict bipolarity of the cold war era, opened Eastern Europe to greater Western influence, and loosened Soviet control over its allies. The relaxation of East-West tensions in the 1970s reduced the level of threat perceived by the NSWP countries, along with their perceived need for Soviet protection, and eroded Warsaw Pact alliance cohesion. After the West formally accepted the territorial status quo in Europe, the Soviet Union was unable to point to the danger of "imperialist" attempts to overturn East European communist

party regimes to justify its demand for strict Warsaw Pact unity behind its leadership, as it had in earlier years. The Soviets resorted to occasional propaganda offensives, accusing West Germany of *revanche* and aggressive intentions in Eastern Europe, to remind its allies of their ultimate dependence on Soviet protection and to reinforce the Warsaw Pact's cohesion against the attraction of good relations with the West.

Despite these problems, the *détente* period witnessed relatively stable Soviet-East European relations within the Warsaw Pact. In the early 1970s, the Soviet Union greatly expanded military cooperation with the NSWP countries. The joint Warsaw Pact exercises, conducted in the 1970s, gave the Soviet allies their first real capability for offensive operations other than intra-bloc policing actions. The East European countries also began to take an active part in Soviet strategy in the Third World.

### **The Role of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Countries in the Third World**

With Eastern Europe in a relatively quiescent phase, the Soviet Union began to build an informal alliance system in the Third World during the 1970s. In this undertaking the Soviets drew on their experiences in developing allies in Eastern Europe after 1945. Reflecting this continuity, the Soviet Union called its new Third World allies "people's democracies" and their armed forces "national liberation armies." The Soviets also drew on their East European resources directly by enlisting the Warsaw Pact allies as proxies to "enhance the role of socialism in world affairs," that is, to support Soviet interests in the Middle East and Africa. Since the late 1970s, the NSWP countries have been active mainly in Soviet-allied Angola, Congo, Ethiopia, Libya, Mozambique, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen), and Syria.

The Soviet Union employed its Warsaw Pact allies as surrogates primarily because their activities would minimize the need for direct Soviet involvement and obviate possible international criticism of Soviet actions in the Third World. Avowedly independent East European actions would be unlikely to precipitate or justify a response by the United States. The Soviet Union also counted on closer East European economic ties with Third World countries to alleviate some of Eastern Europe's financial problems. From the East European perspective, involvement in the Third World offered an opportunity for reduced reliance on the Soviet Union and for semiautonomous relations with other countries.

In the 1970s, the East European allies followed the lead of Soviet diplomacy and signed treaties on friendship, cooperation, and mutual

assistance with most of the important Soviet Third World allies. These treaties established a "socialist division of labor" among the East European countries, in which each specialized in the provision of certain aspects of military or economic assistance to different Soviet Third World allies. The most important part of the treaties concerned military cooperation; the Soviets have openly acknowledged the important role of the East European allies in providing weapons to the "national armies of countries with socialist orientation."

In the 1970s and 1980s, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany were the principal Soviet proxies for arms transfers to the Third World. These NSWP countries supplied Soviet-manufactured equipment, spare parts, and training personnel to various Third World armies. The Soviet Union used these countries to transship weapons to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) in the early 1970s, Soviet-backed forces in the 1975 Angolan civil war, and Nicaragua in the 1980s. The Soviet Union also relied on East German advisers to set up armed militias, paramilitary police forces, and internal security and intelligence organizations for selected Third World allies. The Soviets considered this task especially important because an efficient security apparatus would be essential for suppressing opposition forces and keeping a ruling regime, allied to the Soviet Union, in power. In addition to on-site activities, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and particularly East Germany trained Third World military and security personnel in Eastern Europe during the 1980s.

During this period, the Soviet Union also relied on its East European allies to provide the bulk of Soviet bloc economic aid and credits to the countries of the Third World. Perhaps revealing their hesitancy about military activities outside the Warsaw Pact's European operational area, Hungary and Poland have confined their Third World involvement to commercial assistance. Both countries sent economic and administrative advisers to assist in the management of state-directed industrial enterprises in the Third World as part of a Soviet campaign to demonstrate the advantages of the "socialist path of development" to potential Third World allies.

The Warsaw Pact has added no new member states in the more than thirty years of its existence. Even at the height of its Third World activities in the mid- to late 1970s, the Soviet Union did not offer Warsaw Pact membership to any of its important Third World allies. In 1986, after the United States bombed Libya in retaliation for its support of international terrorism, the Soviet Union was reported to have strongly discouraged Libyan interest in

Warsaw Pact membership, expressed through one or more NSWP countries, and limited its support of Libya to bilateral consultations after the raid. Having continually accused the United States of attempting to extend NATO's sphere of activity beyond Europe, the Soviets did not want to open themselves to charges of broadening the Warsaw Pact. In any event, the Soviet Union would be unlikely to accept a noncommunist, non-European state into the Warsaw Pact. Moreover, the Soviets have already had considerable success in establishing strong allies throughout the world, outside their formal military alliance.

Beginning in the late 1970s, mounting economic problems sharply curtailed the contribution of the East European allies to Soviet Third World activities. In the early 1980s, when turmoil in Poland reminded the Soviet Union that Eastern Europe remained its most valuable asset, the Third World became a somewhat less important object of Soviet attention.

### **The Solidarity Crisis**

The rise of the independent trade union Solidarity shook the foundation of communist party rule in Poland and, consequently, Soviet control of a country the Soviet Union considers critical to its security and alliance system. Given Poland's central geographic position, this unrest threatened to isolate East Germany, sever vital lines of communication to Soviet forces deployed against NATO, and disrupt Soviet control in the rest of Eastern Europe.

As in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Soviet Union used the Warsaw Pact to carry out a campaign of military coercion against the Polish leadership. In 1980 and 1981, the Soviet Union conducted joint Warsaw Pact exercises with a higher frequency than at any time since 1968 to exert pressure on the Polish regime to solve the Solidarity problem. Under the cover that the exercises afforded, the Soviet Union mobilized and deployed its reserve and regular troops in the Belorussian Military District as a potential invasion force. In the West-81 and Union-81 exercises, Soviet forces practiced amphibious and airborne assault landings on the Baltic Sea coast of Poland. These maneuvers demonstrated a ready Soviet capability for intervention in Poland.

In the midst of the Polish crisis, Warsaw Pact commander in chief Viktor Kulikov played a crucial role in intra-alliance diplomacy on behalf of the Soviet leadership. Kulikov maintained almost constant contact with the Polish leadership and conferred with the leaders of Bulgaria, East Germany, and Romania about a possible multilateral Warsaw Pact military action against Poland. In December 1981, Kulikov pressed Polish United Workers Party first

secretary Wojciech Jaruzelski to activate his contingency plan for declaring martial law with the warning that the Soviet Union was ready to intervene in the absence of quick action by Polish authorities. As it turned out, the Polish government instituted martial law and suppressed Solidarity just as the Soviet press was reporting that these steps were necessary to ensure that Poland could meet its Warsaw Pact commitment to the security of the other member states.

From the Soviet perspective, the imposition of martial law by Polish internal security forces was the best possible outcome. Martial law made the suppression of Solidarity a strictly domestic affair and spared the Soviet Union the international criticism that an invasion would have generated. However, the extensive use of Polish paramilitary police and riot troops suggested that the Soviet Union could not count on the Polish Army to put down Polish workers. Moreover, while the Brezhnev Doctrine of using force to maintain the leading role of the communist party in society was upheld in Poland, it was not the Soviet Union that enforced it.

Some question remains as to whether the Soviet Union could have used force successfully against Poland. An invasion would have damaged the Soviet Union's beneficial détente relationship with Western Europe. Intervention would also have added to the evidence that the internal police function of the Warsaw Pact was more important than the putative external collective self-defense mission it had never exercised. Moreover, Romania, and conceivably Hungary, would have refused to contribute contingents to a multinational Warsaw Pact force intended to camouflage a Soviet invasion. Failure to gain the support of its allies would have represented a substantial embarrassment to the Soviet Union. In stark contrast to the unopposed intervention in Czechoslovakia, the Soviets probably also anticipated tenacious resistance from the general population and the Polish Army to any move against Poland. Finally, an invasion would have placed a weighty economic and military burden on the Soviet Union; the occupation and administration of Poland would have tied down at least ten Soviet Army divisions for an extended period of time. Nevertheless, had there been no other option, the Soviet Union would certainly have invaded Poland to eliminate Solidarity's challenge to communist party rule in that country.

Although the Polish Army had previously played an important role in Soviet strategy for a coalition war against NATO, the Soviet Union had to revise its plans and estimates of Poland's reliability after 1981, and it turned to East Germany as its most reliable ally. In the early 1980s, because of its eager promotion of Soviet

interests in the Third World and its importance in Soviet military strategy, East Germany completed its transformation from defeated enemy and dependent ally into the premier junior partner of the Soviet Union. Ironically, East Germany's efficiency and loyalty have made the Soviet Union uncomfortable. Encroaching somewhat on the leading role of the Soviet Union in the Warsaw Pact, East Germany has been the only NSWP country to institute the rank of marshal, matching the highest Soviet Army rank and implying its equality with the Soviet Union.

### **The End of Détente**

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the West grew disenchanted with détente, which had failed to prevent Soviet advances in the Third World, the deployment of SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) aimed at West European targets, the invasion of Afghanistan, or the suppression of Solidarity. The Soviet Union used the renewal of East-West conflict as a justification for forcing its allies to close ranks within the Warsaw Pact. But restoring the alliance's cohesion and renewing its confrontation with Western Europe proved difficult after several years of good East-West relations. The East European countries had acquired a stake in maintaining détente for various reasons. In the early 1980s, internal Warsaw Pact disputes centered on relations with the West after détente, NSWP contributions to alliance defense spending, and the alliance's reaction to IRBM deployments by NATO. The resolution of these disputes produced significant changes in the Warsaw Pact as, for the first time, two or more NSWP countries simultaneously challenged Soviet military and foreign policy preferences within the alliance.

In the PCC meetings of the late 1970s and early 1980s, Soviet and East European leaders of the Warsaw Pact debated about the threat emanating from NATO. When the Soviet Union argued that a new cold war loomed over Europe, the East European countries insisted that the improved European political climate of détente still prevailed. On several occasions, the Soviets had to compromise on the relative weight of these two alternatives in the language of PCC declarations. Although the Soviet Union succeeded in officially ending détente for the Warsaw Pact, it was unable to achieve significantly greater alliance cohesion or integration.

Discussions of the "NATO threat" also played a large part in Warsaw Pact debates about an appropriate level of NSWP military expenditure. The Soviet Union used the 1978 PCC meeting to try to force its allies to match a scheduled 3-percent, long-term increase in the military budgets of the NATO countries. Although

the East European countries initially balked at this Soviet demand, they eventually agreed to the increase. However, only East Germany actually honored its pledge, and the Soviet Union failed to achieve its goal of increased NSWP military spending.

The debate on alliance burden-sharing did not end in 1978. Beginning in the late 1970s, the Soviets carefully noted that one of the Warsaw Pact's most important functions was monitoring the "fraternal countries and the fulfillment of their duties in the joint defense of socialism." In 1983 Romania adopted a unilateral three-year freeze on its military budget at its 1982 level. In 1985 Ceaușescu frustrated the Soviet Union by calling for a unilateral Warsaw Pact reduction in arms expenditures, ostensibly to put pressure on NATO to follow its example. At the same time, Hungary opposed Soviet demands for increased spending, arguing instead for more rational use of existing resources. In the mid-1980s, East Germany was the only Soviet ally that continued to expand its military spending.

The refusal of the NSWP countries to meet their Warsaw Pact financial obligations in the 1980s clearly indicated diminished alliance cohesion. The East European leaders argued that the costs of joint exercises, their support for Soviet Army garrisons, and the drain of conscription represented sufficient contributions to the alliance at a time of hardship in their domestic economies. In addition to providing access to bases and facilities opposite NATO, the East European communist regimes were also obligated to abide by Soviet foreign policy and security interests to earn a Soviet guarantee against domestic challenges to their continued rule. For its part, the Soviet Union paid a stiff price in terms of economic aid and subsidized trade with the NSWP countries to maintain its buffer zone in Eastern Europe.

The issue of an appropriate Warsaw Pact response to NATO's 1983 deployment of American Pershing II and cruise missiles, matching the Soviet SS-20s, proved to be the most divisive one for the Soviet Union and its East European allies in the early and mid-1980s. After joining in a vociferous Soviet propaganda campaign against the deployment, the East European countries split with the Soviet Union over how to react when their "peace offensive" failed to forestall it.

In 1983 East Germany, Hungary, and Romania indicated their intention to "limit the damage" to East-West ties that could have resulted from the deployment of NATO's new missiles. In doing so, these countries raised the possibility of an independent role for the smaller countries of both alliances in reducing conflicts between the two superpowers. In particular, East Germany sought to insulate

its profitable economic ties with West Germany, established through détente, against the general deterioration in East-West political relations. While East Germany had always been the foremost proponent of "socialist internationalism," that is, strict adherence to Soviet foreign policy interests, its position on this issue caused a rift in the Warsaw Pact. In effect, East Germany asserted that the national interests of the East European countries did not coincide exactly with those of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia attacked the East German stand, accusing the improbable intra-bloc alliance of East Germany, Hungary, and Romania of undermining the class basis of Warsaw Pact foreign policy. The Soviet Union indicated that it would not permit its allies to become mediators between East and West. The Soviet Union forced East Germany to accept its "counterdeployments" of SS-21 and SS-23 SRBMs and compelled SED general secretary Erich Honecker to cancel his impending visit to West Germany. The Soviets thereby reaffirmed their right to determine the conditions under which the Warsaw Pact member states would conduct relations with the NATO countries. However, the Soviet Union also had to forego any meeting of the PCC in 1984 that might have allowed its recalcitrant allies to publicize their differences on this issue.

As late as 1985, Soviet leaders still had not completely resolved the question of the proper connection between the national and international interests of the socialist countries. Some Soviet commentators adopted a conciliatory approach toward the East European position by stating that membership in the Warsaw Pact did not erase a country's specific national interests, which could be combined harmoniously with the common international interests of all the member states. Others, however, simply repeated the Brezhnev Doctrine and its stricture that a socialist state's sovereignty involves not only the right to independence but also a responsibility to the "socialist commonwealth" as a whole.

### **The Problem of Romania in the 1970s and 1980s**

The 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia was, tangentially, a warning to Romania about its attempts to pursue genuine national independence. But Ceaușescu, in addition to refusing to contribute Romanian troops to the Warsaw Pact invasion force, openly declared that Romania would resist any similar Soviet intervention on its territory. Romania pronounced that henceforth the Soviet Union represented its most likely national security threat. After 1968 the Romanian Army accelerated its efforts to make its independent defense strategy a credible deterrent to a possible Soviet

invasion of the country. In the 1970s Romania also established stronger ties to the West, China, and the Third World. These diplomatic, economic, and military relations were intended to increase Romania's independence from the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union, while guaranteeing broad international support for Romania in the event of a Soviet invasion.

Throughout the 1970s, Romania continued to reject military integration within the Warsaw Pact framework and military intervention against other member states, while insisting on the right of the East European countries to resolve their internal problems without Soviet interference. Romanian objections to the Soviet line within the Warsaw Pact forced the Soviet Union to acknowledge the "possibility of differences arising in the views of the ruling communist parties on the assessment of some international developments." To obtain Romanian assent on several questions, the Soviet Union also had to substitute the milder formulation "international solidarity" for "socialist internationalism"—the code phrase for the subordination of East European national interests to Soviet interests—in PCC declarations. Pursuing a policy opposed to close alliance integration, Romania resisted Soviet domination of Warsaw Pact weapons production as a threat to its autonomy and refused to participate in the work of the Military Scientific-Technical Council and Technical Committee (see *The Military Organization of the Warsaw Pact*, this Appendix). Nevertheless, the Soviets have insisted that a Romanian Army officer hold a position on the Technical Committee; his rank, however, is not appropriate to that level of responsibility. The Soviet claims are probably intended to obscure the fact that Romania does not actually engage in joint Warsaw Pact weapons production efforts.

Despite continued Romanian defiance of Soviet policies in the Warsaw Pact during the 1980s, the Soviet Union successfully exploited Romania's severe economic problems and bribed Romania with energy supplies on several occasions to gain its assent, or at least silence, in the Warsaw Pact. Although Romania raised the price the Soviet Union had to pay to bring it into line, Romanian dependence on Soviet economic support may foreshadow Romania's transformation into a more cooperative Warsaw Pact ally. Moreover, in 1985 Ceaușescu dismissed Minister of Foreign Affairs Stefan Andrei and Minister of Defense Constantin Olteanu, who helped establish the country's independent policies and would have opposed closer Romanian involvement with the Warsaw Pact.

### **The Renewal of the Alliance**

In his first important task after becoming general secretary of

the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev organized a meeting of the East European leaders to renew the Warsaw Pact, which was due to expire that May after thirty years. There was little doubt that the Warsaw Pact member states would renew the alliance. However, there was some speculation that the Soviet Union might unilaterally dismantle its formal alliance structure to improve the Soviet image in the West and put pressure on NATO to disband. The Soviets could still have relied on the network of bilateral treaties in Eastern Europe, which predated the formation of the Warsaw Pact and had been renewed regularly. Combined with later status-of-forces agreements, these treaties ensured that the essence of the Soviet alliance system and buffer zone in Eastern Europe would remain intact, regardless of the Warsaw Pact's status. But despite their utility, the bilateral treaties could never substitute for the Warsaw Pact. Without a formal alliance, the Soviet Union would have to coordinate foreign policy and military integration with its East European allies through cumbersome bilateral arrangements. Without the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet Union would have no political equivalent of NATO for international negotiations like the CSCE and Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction talks, or for issuing its arms control pronouncements. The Soviet Union would also have to give up its equal status with the United States as an alliance leader.

Although the Soviet and East European leaders debated the terms of the Warsaw Pact's renewal at their April 1985 meeting—Ceaușescu reportedly proposed that it be renewed for a shorter period—they did not change the original 1955 document, or the alliance's structure, in any way. The Soviets concluded that this outcome proved that the Warsaw Pact truly embodied the "fundamental long-term interests of the fraternal countries." The decision to leave the Warsaw Pact unamended was probably the easiest alternative for the Soviet Union and its allies; the alliance was renewed for another twenty-year term with an automatic ten-year extension.

In the mid- to late 1980s, the future of the Warsaw Pact hinged on Gorbachev's developing policy toward Eastern Europe. At the Twenty-seventh Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1986, Gorbachev acknowledged that differences existed among the Soviet allies and that it would be unrealistic to expect them to have identical views on all issues. There has been no firm indication, as yet, of whether Gorbachev would be willing to grant the Soviet allies more policy latitude or insist on tighter coordination with the Soviet Union. However, demonstrating a greater sensitivity to East European concerns than previous Soviet leaders,

Gorbachev briefed the NSWP leaders in their own capitals after the 1985 Geneva and 1986 Reykjavik superpower summit meetings.

According to many Western analysts, mounting economic difficulties in the late 1980s and the advanced age of trusted, long-time communist party leaders, like Gustáv Husák in Czechoslovakia, Todor Zhivkov in Bulgaria, and Janos Kádár in Hungary, presented the danger of domestic turmoil and internal power struggles in the NSWP countries. These problems had the potential to monopolize Soviet attention and constrain Soviet global activities. But the Soviet Union could turn these potential crises into opportunities, using its economic leverage to pressure its East European allies to adhere more closely to Soviet positions or to influence the political succession process to ensure that a new generation of leaders in Eastern Europe would respect Soviet interests. Soviet insistence on greater NSWP military spending could fuel further economic deterioration, leading to political unrest and even threats to the integrity of the Soviet alliance system in several countries simultaneously. Conversely, limited, Soviet-sanctioned deviation from orthodox socialism could make the East European regimes more secure and reduce the Soviet burden of policing the Warsaw Pact.

### **Soviet Military Strategy and the Warsaw Pact**

The Soviet ground forces constitute the bulk of the Warsaw Pact's military power. In 1987 the Soviet Union provided 73 of the 126 Warsaw Pact tank and motorized rifle divisions. Located in the Soviet Groups of Forces (SGFs) and four westernmost military districts of the Soviet Union, these Soviet Army divisions comprise the majority of the Warsaw Pact's combat-ready, full-strength units. Looking at the numbers of Soviet troops stationed in or near Eastern Europe, and the historical record, one could conclude that the Warsaw Pact is only a Soviet mechanism for organizing intra-alliance interventions or maintaining control of Eastern Europe and does not significantly augment Soviet offensive power vis-à-vis NATO. Essentially a peacetime structure for NSWP training and mobilization, the Warsaw Pact has no independent role in wartime nor a military strategy distinct from Soviet military strategy. However, the individual NSWP armies play important parts in Soviet strategy for war, outside the formal context of the Warsaw Pact.

### **Soviet Military Strategy**

The goal of Soviet military strategy in Europe is a quick victory over NATO in a nonnuclear war. The Soviet Union would attempt to defeat NATO decisively before its political and military command

structure could consult and decide how to respond to an attack. Under this strategy, success would hinge on inflicting a rapid succession of defeats on NATO to break its will to fight, knock some of its member states out of the war, and cause the collapse of the Western alliance. A quick victory would also keep the United States from escalating the conflict to the nuclear level by making retaliation against the Soviet Union futile. A rapid defeat of NATO would preempt the mobilization of its superior industrial and economic resources, as well as reinforcement from the United States, which would enable NATO to prevail in a longer war. Most significant, in a strictly conventional war the Soviet Union could conceivably capture its objective, the economic potential of Western Europe, relatively intact.

In the 1970s, Soviet nuclear force developments increased the likelihood that a European war would remain on the conventional level. By matching the United States in intercontinental ballistic missiles and adding intermediate-range SS-20s to its nuclear forces, the Soviet Union undercut NATO's option to employ nuclear weapons to avoid defeat in a conventional war. After the United States neutralized the Soviet SS-20 IRBM advantage by deploying Pershing II and cruise missiles, the Soviet Union tried to use its so-called "counterdeployments" of SS-21 and SS-23 SRBMs to gain a nuclear war-fighting edge in the European theater. At the same time, the Soviet Union made NATO's dependence on nuclear weapons less tenable by issuing Warsaw Pact proposals for mutual no-first-use pledges and the establishment of nuclear-free zones.

The Soviet plan for winning a conventional war quickly to preclude the possibility of a nuclear response by NATO and the United States was based on the deep-strike concept Soviet military theoreticians first proposed in the 1930s. After 1972 the Soviet Army put deep strike into practice in annual joint Warsaw Pact exercises, including "Brotherhood-in-Arms," "Union," "Friendship," "West," and "Shield." Deep strike would carry an attack behind the front lines of battle, far into NATO's rear areas. The Soviet Union would launch simultaneous missile and air strikes against vital NATO installations to disrupt or destroy the Western alliance's early warning surveillance systems, command and communications network, and nuclear delivery systems. Following this initial strike, the modern-day successor of the World War II-era Soviet mobile group formations, generated out of the SGFs in Eastern Europe, would break through and encircle NATO's prepared defenses in order to isolate its forward forces from reinforcement. Consisting of two or more tank and motorized rifle divisions,

army-level mobile groups would also overrun important NATO objectives behind the front lines to facilitate the advance of Soviet follow-on forces, which would cross NSWP territory from the westernmost Soviet military districts.

The Warsaw Pact countries provide forward bases, staging areas, and interior lines of communication for the Soviet Union against NATO. Peacetime access to East European territory under the Warsaw Pact framework has enabled the Soviet military to preposition troops, equipment, and supplies and to make reinforcement plans for wartime. In the 1970s, the Soviet Union increased road and rail capacity and built new airfields and pipelines in Eastern Europe. However, a quick Soviet victory through deep strike could be complicated by the fact that the attacking forces would have to achieve almost total surprise. Past Soviet mobilizations for relatively small actions in Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, and Poland took an average of ninety days, while United States satellites observed the entire process. Moreover, the advance notification of large-scale troop movements, required under agreements made at the CSCE, would also complicate the concealment of mobilization. Yet the Soviet Union could disguise its offensive deployments against NATO as semiannual troop rotations in the GSFG, field exercises, or preparations for intervention against an ally.

### **The Role of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Countries in Soviet Military Strategy**

The Warsaw Pact has no multilateral command or decision-making structure independent of the Soviet Army. NSWP forces would fight in Soviet, rather than joint Warsaw Pact, military operations. Soviet military writings about the alliances of World War I and World War II, as well as numerous recent works marking the thirtieth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact in 1985, reveal the current Soviet view of coalition warfare. The Warsaw Pact's chief of staff, A.I. Gribkov, has written that centralized strategic control, like that the Red Army exercised over the allied East European national units between 1943 and 1945, is valid today for the Warsaw Pact's JAF (see *The Organization of East European National Units, 1943-45*, this Appendix).

Soviet military historians indicate that the East European allies did not establish or direct operations on independent national fronts during World War II. The East European forces fought in units, at and below the army level, on Soviet fronts and under the Soviet command structure. The headquarters of the Soviet Supreme High Command exercised control over all allied units through the Soviet

General Staff. At the same time, the commanders in chief of the allied countries were attached to and "advised" the Soviet Supreme High Command. There were no special coalition bodies to make joint decisions on operational problems. A chart adapted from a Soviet journal indicates that the Soviet-directed alliance in World War II lacked a multilateral command structure independent of the Red Army's chain of command, an arrangement that also reflects the current situation in the Warsaw Pact (see fig. C, this Appendix). The Warsaw Pact's lack of a wartime command structure independent of the Soviet command structure is clear evidence of the subordination of the NSWP armies to the Soviet Army.

Since the early 1960s, the Soviet Union has used the Warsaw Pact to prepare non-Soviet forces to take part in Soviet Army operations in the European theater of war. In wartime the Warsaw Pact commander in chief and chief of staff would transfer NSWP forces, mobilized and deployed under the Warsaw Pact aegis, to the operational control of the Soviet ground forces. After deployment the Soviet Union could employ NSWP armies, comprised of various East European divisions, on its fronts (see Glossary). In joint Warsaw Pact exercises, the Soviet Union has detached carefully selected, highly reliable East European units, at and below the division-level, from their national command structures. These specific contingents are trained for offensive operations within Soviet ground forces divisions. NSWP units, integrated in this manner, would fight as component parts of Soviet armies on Soviet fronts.

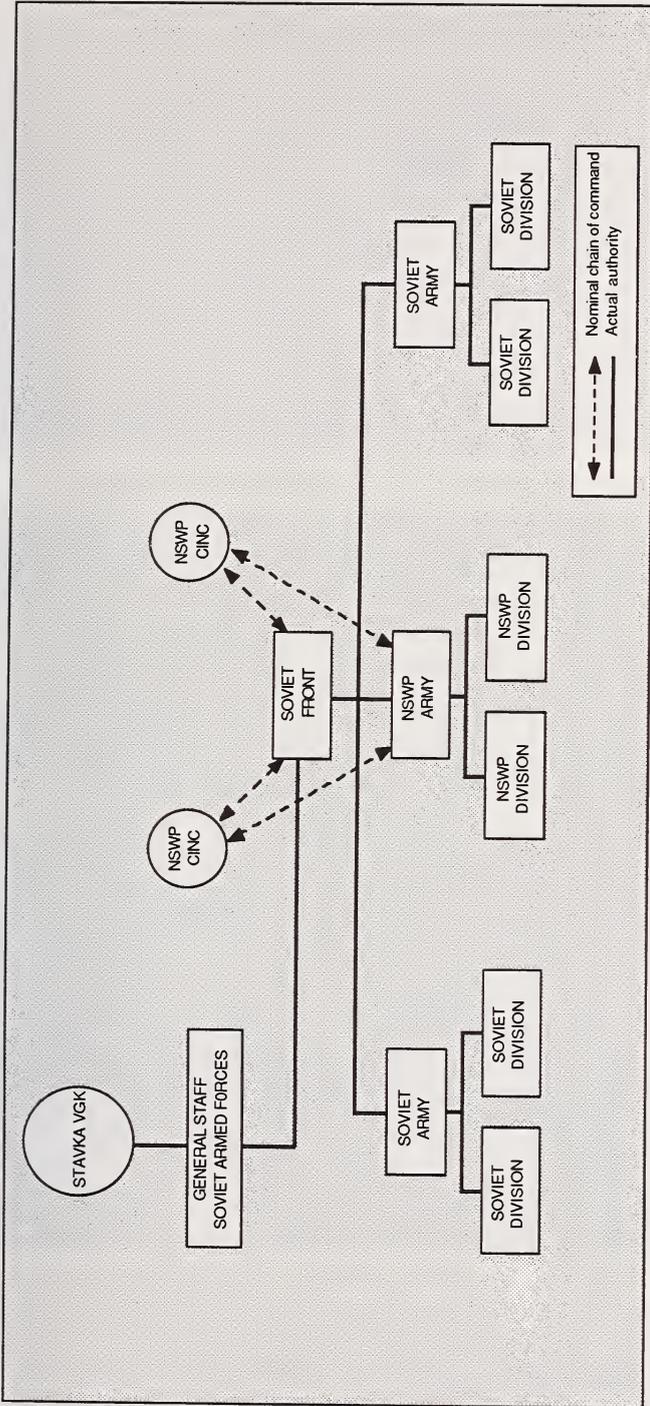
The East European countries play specific roles in Soviet strategy against NATO based on their particular military capabilities. Poland has the largest and best NSWP air force that the Soviet Union could employ in a theater air offensive. Both Poland and East Germany have substantial naval forces that, in wartime, would revert to the command of the Soviet Baltic Fleet to render fire support for Soviet ground operations. These two Soviet allies also have amphibious forces that could carry out assault landings along the Baltic Sea coast into NATO's rear areas. While its mobile groups would penetrate deep into NATO territory, the Soviet Union would entrust the less reliable or capable East European armies, like those of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria, with a basically defensive mission. The East European countries are responsible for securing their territory, Soviet rear areas, and lines of communication. The air defense systems of all NSWP countries are linked directly into the Soviet Air Defense Forces command. This gives the Soviet Union an impressive early warning network against NATO air attacks.

## **The Reliability of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Armies**

The Soviet Union counts on greater cooperation from its Warsaw Pact allies in a full-scale war with NATO than in intra-alliance policing actions. Nevertheless, the Soviets expect that a protracted war in Europe would strain the cohesion of the Warsaw Pact. This view may derive from the experience of World War II, in which Nazi Germany's weak alliance partners, Romania, Hungary, and Bulgaria, left the war early and eventually joined the Soviet side. A stalemate in a protracted European war could lead to unrest, endanger communist party control in Eastern Europe, and fracture the entire Soviet alliance system. NSWP reliability would also decline, requiring the Soviet Army to reassign its own forces to carry out unfulfilled NSWP functions or even to occupy a non-compliant ally's territory.

Continuing Soviet concern over the combat reliability of its East European allies influences, to a great extent, the employment of NSWP forces under Soviet strategy. Soviet military leaders believe that the Warsaw Pact allies would be most likely to remain loyal if the Soviet Army engaged in a short, successful offensive against NATO, while deploying NSWP forces defensively. Under this scenario, the NSWP allies would absorb the brunt of NATO attacks against Soviet forces on East European territory. Fighting in Eastern Europe would reinforce the impression among the NSWP countries that their actions constituted a legitimate defense against outside attack. The Soviet Union would still have to be selective in deploying the allied armies offensively. For example, the Soviet Union would probably elect to pit East German forces against non-German NATO troops along the central front. Other NSWP forces that the Soviet Union employed offensively would probably be interspersed with Soviet units on Soviet fronts to increase their reliability. The Soviet Union would not establish separate East European national fronts against NATO. Independent NSWP fronts would force the Soviet Union to rely too heavily on its allies to perform well in wartime. Moreover, independent East European fronts could serve as the basis for a territorial defense strategy and successful resistance to future Soviet policing actions in Eastern Europe.

Soviet concern over the reliability of its Warsaw Pact allies is also reflected in the alliance's military-technical policy, which is controlled by the Soviets. The Soviet Union has given the East European allies less modern, though still effective, weapons and equipment to keep their armies several steps behind the Soviet Army. The Soviets cannot modernize the East European armies without concomitantly improving their capability to resist Soviet intervention.



Source: Based on information from S. Radzievskii, "Voennoe sotrudnichestvo i soglasovanie usilii stran antigitlerovskoi koalitsii," *Voenna-istoricheskii zhurnal*, Moscow, June 1982, 39-47.

Figure C. Combat Employment of Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Forces in Soviet Strategy

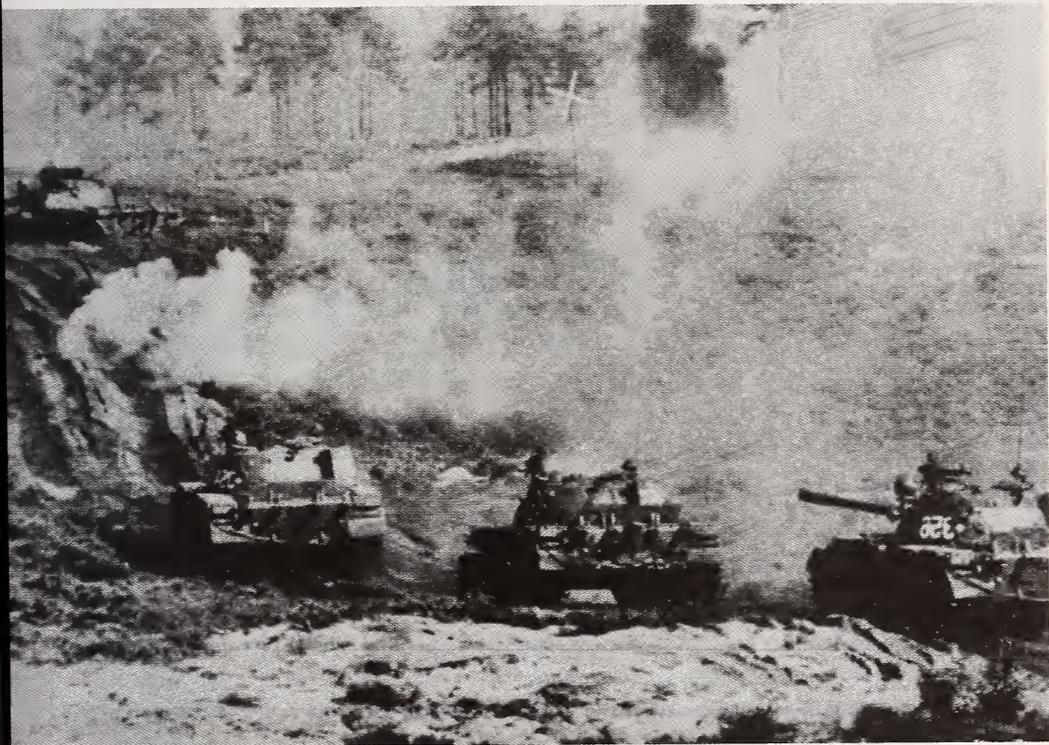
## **Military Technology and the Warsaw Pact**

As a result of its preponderance in the alliance, the Soviet Union has imposed a level of standardization in the Warsaw Pact that NATO cannot match. Standardization in NATO focuses primarily on the compatibility of ammunition and communications equipment among national armies. By contrast, the Soviet concept of standardization involves a broad complex of measures aimed at achieving "unified strategic views on the general character of a future war and the capabilities for conducting it." The Soviet Union uses the Warsaw Pact framework to bring its allies into line with its view of strategy, operations, tactics, organizational structure, service regulations, field manuals, documents, staff procedures, and maintenance and supply activities.

## **The Weapons and Equipment of the Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact Armies**

By the 1980s, the Soviet Union had achieved a degree of technical interoperability among the allied armies that some observers would consider to be a significant military advantage over NATO. However, the Soviet allies had weapons and equipment that were both outdated and insufficient in number. As one Western analyst has pointed out, the NSWP armies remain fully one generation behind the Soviet Union in their inventories of modern equipment and weapons systems and well below Soviet norms in force structure quantities. Although T-64 and T-72 tanks had become standard and modern infantry combat vehicles, including the BMP-1, comprised two-thirds of the armored infantry vehicles in Soviet Army units deployed in Eastern Europe, the NSWP armies still relied primarily on older T-54 and T-55 tanks and domestically produced versions of Soviet BTR-50 and BTR-60 armored personnel carriers. The East European air forces did not receive the MiG-23, first built in 1971, until the late 1970s, and they still did not have the most modern Soviet ground attack fighter-bombers, like the MiG-27 and Su-24, in the mid- to late 1980s. These deficiencies called into question NSWP capabilities for joining in Soviet offensive operations against NATO and indicated primarily a rear-area role for the NSWP armies in Soviet strategy.

Within the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet Union decides which of the allies receive the most up-to-date weapons. Beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Soviet Union provided the strategically located Northern Tier countries, East Germany and Poland especially, with greater quantities of advanced armaments. By contrast, the less important Southern Tier, consisting of Hungary, Bulgaria,



*The major Warsaw Pact maneuvers of 1980, called "Brotherhood-in-Arms 80," took place in East Germany.  
Courtesy United Press International*

and Romania, received used equipment that was being replaced in Soviet or Northern Tier forces. In the mid-1970s, overall NSWP force development slowed suddenly as the Soviet Union became more interested in selling arms to earn hard currency and gain greater influence in the Third World, particularly in the oil-rich Arab states of the Middle East. At the same time, growing economic problems in Eastern Europe made many Third World countries look like better customers for Soviet arms sales. Between 1974 and 1978, the Soviet Union sent the equivalent of US\$18.5 million of a total US\$27 million in arms transfers outside the Warsaw Pact. Moreover, massive Soviet efforts to replace heavy Arab equipment losses in the 1973 war against Israel and the 1982 Syrian-Israeli air war over Lebanon came largely at the expense of modernization for the East European allies. In the late 1980s, the NSWP countries clearly resented the fact that some Soviet Third World allies, including Algeria, Libya, and Syria, had taken delivery of the newest Soviet weapons systems, such as the MiG-25, not yet in their own inventories. The Soviet Union probably looked at a complete modernization program for the NSWP armies as unnecessary and prohibitively costly for either it or its allies to undertake.

### **Coordination of Arms Production**

The Soviet Union claims the right to play the leading role in the Warsaw Pact on the basis of its scientific, technical, and economic preponderance in the alliance. The Soviet Union also acknowledges its duty to cooperate with the NSWP countries by sharing military-technical information and developing their local defense industries. This cooperation, however, amounts to Soviet control over the supply of major weapons systems and is an important aspect of Soviet domination of the Warsaw Pact allies. Warsaw Pact military-technical cooperation prevents the NSWP countries from adopting autonomous policies or otherwise defying Soviet interests through a national defense capability based on domestic arms production. In discussions of the United States and NATO, the Soviets acknowledge that standardization and control of arms purchases are effective in increasing the influence of the leading member of an alliance over its smaller partners. In the same way, Soviet arms supplies to Eastern Europe have made the NSWP military establishments more dependent on the Soviet Union. To deny its allies the military capability to successfully resist a Soviet invasion, the Soviet Union does not allow the NSWP countries to produce sufficient quantities or more than a few kinds of weapons for their national armies.

Romania is the only Warsaw Pact country that has escaped Soviet military-technical domination. In the late 1960s, Romania recognized the danger of depending on the Soviet Union as its sole source of military equipment and weapons. As a result, Romania initiated heavy domestic production of relatively low-technology infantry weapons and began to seek non-Soviet sources for more advanced armaments. Romania has produced British transport aircraft, Chinese fast-attack boats, and French helicopters under various coproduction and licensing arrangements. Romania has also produced a fighter-bomber jointly with Yugoslavia. However, Romania still remains backward in its military technology because both the Soviet Union and Western countries are reluctant to transfer their most modern weapons to it. Each side must assume that any technology given to Romania could end up in enemy hands.

Apart from Romania, the Soviet Union benefits from the limited military production of its East European allies. It has organized an efficient division of labor among the NSWP countries in this area. Czechoslovakia and East Germany, in particular, are heavily industrialized and probably surpass the Soviet Union in their high-technology capabilities. The Northern Tier countries produce some Soviet heavy weapons, including older tanks, artillery, and infantry combat vehicles on license. However, the Soviet Union generally restricts its allies to the production of a relatively narrow range of military equipment, including small arms, munitions, communications, radar, optical, and other precision instruments and various components and parts for larger Soviet-designed weapons systems.

\* \* \*

The 1980s have witnessed a dramatic increase in the amount of secondary source material published about the Warsaw Pact. The works of Alex Alexiev, Andrzej Korbonski, and Condoleezza Rice, as well as various Soviet writers, provide a complete picture of the Soviet alliance system and the East European military establishments before the formation of the Warsaw Pact. William J. Lewis's *The Warsaw Pact: Arms, Doctrine, and Strategy* is a very useful reference work with considerable information on the establishment of the Warsaw Pact and the armies of its member states. The works of Malcolm Mackintosh, a long-time observer of the Warsaw Pact, cover the changes in the Warsaw Pact's organizational structure and functions through the years. Christopher D. Jones's *Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe: Political Autonomy and the Warsaw Pact* and subsequent articles provide a coherent interpretation of the Soviet

Union's use of the Warsaw Pact to control its East European allies. In "The Warsaw Pact at 25," Dale R. Herspring examines intra-alliance politics in the PCC and East European attempts to reduce Soviet domination of the Warsaw Pact. Soviet military journals are the best source for insights into the East European role in Soviet military strategy. Daniel N. Nelson and Ivan Volgyes analyze East European reliability in the Warsaw Pact. Nelson takes a quantitative approach to this ephemeral topic. By contrast, Volgyes uses a historical and political framework to draw his conclusions on the reliability issue. The works of Richard C. Martin and Daniel S. Papp present thorough discussions of Soviet policies on arming and equipping the NSWP allies. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

### Manifesto of Charter 77

[The following manifesto first appeared in Western Europe in early January 1977. Within a few days Charter 77—as its anonymous authors called the document and the movement responsible for its appearance—had been translated into most major languages and had received attention throughout the world. Charter 77 soon became well known within Czechoslovakia as a result of Western radiobroadcasts. Charter 77 indicts the government for violations of human rights provisions in the nation's 1960 Constitution and in various treaties and covenants of which Czechoslovakia is a signatory. The translation presented here appeared in *The Times* of London on January 7, 1977, bearing a notation that it was an “authorized” translation. The notation indicated neither who had made nor who had authorized the translation.]

IN THE CZECHOSLOVAK Register of Laws No. 120 of October 13, 1976, texts were published of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which were signed on behalf of our republic in 1968, reiterated at Helsinki in 1975 and came into force in our country on March 23, 1976. From that date our citizens have enjoyed the rights, and our state the duties, ensuing from them.

The human rights and freedoms underwritten by these covenants constitute features of civilized life for which many progressive movements have striven throughout history and whose codification could greatly assist humane developments in our society.

We accordingly welcome the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic's accession to those agreements.

Their publication, however, serves as a powerful reminder of the extent to which basic human rights in our country exist, regrettably, on paper alone.

The right to freedom of expression, for example, guaranteed by Article 19 of the first-mentioned covenant, is in our case purely illusory. Tens of thousands of our citizens are prevented from working in their own fields for the sole reason that they hold views differing from official ones, and are discriminated against and harassed in all kinds of ways by the authorities and public organizations. Deprived as they are of any means to defend themselves, they become victims of a virtual apartheid.

Hundreds of thousands of other citizens are denied that "freedom from fear" mentioned in the preamble to the first covenant, being condemned to the constant risk of unemployment or other penalties if they voice their own opinions.

In violation of Article 13 of the second-mentioned covenant, guaranteeing everyone the right to education, countless young people are prevented from studying because of their own views or even their parents'. Innumerable citizens live in fear of their own, or their children's right to education being withdrawn if they should ever speak up in accordance with their convictions.

Any exercise of the right to "seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print" or "in the form of art" specified in Article 19, Clause 2 of the first covenant is followed by extra-judicial and even judicial sanctions, often in the form of criminal charges, as in the recent trial of young musicians.

Freedom of public expression is inhibited by the centralized control of all the communication media and of publishing and cultural institutions. No philosophical, political or scientific view or artistic activity that departs ever so slightly from the narrow bounds of official ideology or aesthetics is allowed to be published; no open criticism can be made of abnormal social phenomena; no public defense is possible against false and insulting charges made in official propaganda—the legal protection against "attacks on honor and reputation" clearly guaranteed by Article 17 of the first covenant is in practice non-existent: false accusations cannot be rebutted, and any attempt to secure compensation or correction through the courts is futile; no open debate is allowed in the domain of thought and art.

Many scholars, writers, artists and others are penalized for having legally published or expressed, years ago, opinions which are condemned by those who hold political power today.

Freedom of religious confession, emphatically guaranteed by Article 18 of the first covenant, is continually curtailed by arbitrary official action; by interference with the activity of churchmen, who are constantly threatened by the refusal of the state to permit them the exercise of their functions, or by the withdrawal of such permission; by financial or other transactions against those who express their religious faith in word or action; by constraints on religious training and so forth.

One instrument for the curtailment or in many cases complete elimination of many civic rights is the system by which all national institutions and organizations are in effect subject to political

directives from the machinery of the ruling party and to decisions made by powerful individuals.

The constitution of the republic, its laws and legal norms do not regulate the form or content, the issuing or application of such decisions; they are often only given out verbally, unknown to the public at large and beyond its powers to check; their originators are responsible to no one but themselves and their own hierarchy; yet they have a decisive impact on the decision-making and executive organs of government, justice, trade unions, interest groups and all other organizations, of the other political parties, enterprises, factories, institutions, offices and so on, for whom these instructions have precedence even before the law.

Where organizations or individuals, in the interpretation of their rights and duties, come into conflict with such directives, they cannot have recourse to any non-party authority, since none such exists. This constitutes, of course, a serious limitation of the right ensuing from Articles 21 and 22 of the first-mentioned covenant, which provides for freedom of association and forbids any restriction on its exercise, from Article 25 on the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, and from Article 26 stipulating equal protection by the law without discrimination.

This state of affairs likewise prevents workers and others from exercising the unrestricted right to establish trade unions and other organizations to protect their economic and social interests, and from freely enjoying the right to strike provided for in Clause 1 of Article 8 in the second-mentioned covenant.

Further civic rights, including the explicit prohibition of "arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence" (Article 17 of the first covenant), are seriously vitiated by the various forms of interference in the private life of citizens exercised by the Ministry of the Interior, for example by bugging telephones and houses, opening mail, following personal movements, searching homes, setting up networks of neighborhood informers (often recruited by illicit threats or promises) and in other ways.

The ministry frequently interferes in employers' decisions, instigates acts of discrimination by authorities and organizations, brings weight to bear on the organs of justice and even orchestrates propaganda campaigns in the media. This activity is governed by no law and, being clandestine, affords the citizen no chance to defend himself.

In cases of prosecution on political grounds the investigative and judicial organs violate the rights of those charged and those defending them, as guaranteed by Article 14 of the first covenant and indeed by Czechoslovak law. The prison treatment of those

sentenced in such cases is an affront to their human dignity and a menace to their health, being aimed at breaking their morale.

Clause 2, Article 12 of the first covenant, guaranteeing every citizen the right to leave the country, is consistently violated, or under the pretense of "defense of national security" is subjected to various unjustifiable conditions (Clause 3). The granting of entry visas to foreigners is also treated arbitrarily, and many are unable to visit Czechoslovakia merely because of professional or personal contacts with those of our citizens who are subject to discrimination.

Some of our people—either in private, at their places of work or by the only feasible public channel, the foreign media—have drawn attention to the systematic violation of human rights and democratic freedoms and demanded amends in specific cases. But their pleas have remained largely ignored or been made grounds for police investigation.

Responsibility for the maintenance of civic rights in our country naturally devolves in the first place on the political and state authorities. Yet not only on them: everyone bears his share of responsibility for the conditions that prevail and accordingly also for the observance of legally enshrined agreements, binding upon all individuals as well as upon governments.

It is this sense of co-responsibility, our belief in the importance of its conscious public acceptance and the general need to give it new and more effective expression that led us to the idea of creating Charter 77, whose inception we today publicly announce.

Charter 77 is a loose, informal and open association of people of various shades of opinion, faiths and professions united by the will to strive individually and collectively for the respecting of civic and human rights in our own country and throughout the world—rights accorded to all men by the two mentioned international covenants, by the Final Act of the Helsinki conference and by numerous other international documents opposing war, violence and social or spiritual oppression, and which are comprehensively laid down in the UN Universal Charter of Human Rights.

Charter 77 springs from a background of friendship and solidarity among people who share our concern for those ideals that have inspired, and continue to inspire, their lives and their work.

Charter 77 is not an organization; it has no rules, permanent bodies or formal membership. It embraces everyone who agrees with its ideas and participates in its work. It does not form the basis for any oppositional political activity. Like many similar citizen initiatives in various countries, West and East, it seeks to promote the general public interest.

It does not aim, then, to set out its own platform of political or social reform or change, but within its own field of impact to conduct a constructive dialogue with the political and state authorities, particularly by drawing attention to individual cases where human and civic rights are violated, to document such grievances and suggest remedies, to make proposals of a more general character calculated to reinforce such rights and machinery for protecting them, to act as an intermediary in situations of conflict which may lead to violations of rights, and so forth.

By its symbolic name Charter 77 denotes that it has come into being at the start of a year proclaimed as Political Prisoners' Year—a year in which a conference in Belgrade is due to review the implementation of the obligations assumed at Helsinki.

As signatories, we hereby authorize Professor Dr. Jan Patočka, Dr. Václav Havel and Professor Dr. Jiří Hajek to act as the spokesmen for the Charter. These spokesmen are endowed with full authority to represent it vis-à-vis state and other bodies, and the public at home and abroad, and their signatures attest to the authenticity of documents issued by the Charter. They will have us and others who join us as their colleagues taking part in any needful negotiations, shouldering particular tasks and sharing every responsibility.

We believe that Charter 77 will help to enable all citizens of Czechoslovakia to work and live as free human beings.



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## Glossary

- army—In Soviet military usage, an army has at least two divisions. A Soviet or non-Soviet Warsaw Pact motorized rifle division has between 10,000 and 14,000 troops.
- Carpatho-Ukraine (also Subcarpathian Ruthenia)—An area once part of Czechoslovakia but ceded to the Soviet Union after World War II. Populated mostly by Ukrainians, who prior to World War II were sometimes referred to as Ruthenians.
- Charter 77—The human rights document around which Czech and Slovak dissidents have rallied since its signing in 1977.
- Comecon—Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. Sometimes cited as CMEA or CEMA. Members in 1987 included Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Hungary, the Mongolian People's Republic, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam. Its purpose is to further economic cooperation among members.
- Cominform—The Communist Information Bureau, made up of the communist parties of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia (expelled in 1948), France, and Italy. It was formed on Soviet initiative in 1947 and dissolved on Soviet initiative in 1956. The Cominform's primary function was to publish propaganda touting international communist solidarity. It was regarded primarily as a tool of Soviet foreign policy.
- communist and communism—Czechoslovakia officially describes itself as "socialist" and its economic system as "socialism" (the preferred terms in the West are "communist" and "communism") and claims that it is working its way toward communism, which Lenin defined as a higher stage of socialism. Czechoslovak socialism bears scant resemblance to the democratic socialism of, for example, Scandinavian countries.
- Dual Monarchy—The dual Austro-Hungarian monarchy established by the Compromise of 1867 and lasting until 1918. Austria and Hungary were virtually separate states, each having its own parliament, administration, and judicial system. They shared a common ruler, a joint foreign policy, and finances.
- extensive economic development—Expanding production by adding resources rather than by improving the efficiency by which these resources are exploited.
- front—In Soviet military usage, a front consists of at least two armies and usually more than that number. Two or more fronts constitute a theater of military operations.

- Hussitism—Teachings of the fifteenth-century Czech religious reformer Jan Hus challenging papal authority and the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church. In asserting national autonomy in ecclesiastical affairs, Hussitism acquired an anti-German reputation and was considered a Czech national movement.
- koruna (pl., *koruny*)—National currency consisting of 100 halers (*haléře*—Cz.; *haliere*—Sl.). Symbol is Kčs. In 1987 the official, or commercial, exchange rate was Kčs5.4 per US\$1; the tourist, or noncommercial, rate was Kčs10.5 per US\$1. The value of US\$1 on the black market was at least twice the tourist rate of exchange.
- kraj* (pl., *kraje*)—Primary administrative region into which both the Czech and the Slovak socialist republics are divided.
- kulaks—the relatively prosperous segment of peasants in the Russian Empire disenfranchised by Soviet authorities.
- liquidity shortage—The lack of assets that can be readily converted to cash.
- Marshall Plan—A plan announced in June 1947 by the United States Secretary of State George C. Marshall, for the reconstruction of Europe after World War II. The plan involved a considerable amount of United States aid.
- Munich Agreement—An agreement in September 1938 between Germany, Italy, Britain, and France calling on Czechoslovakia to cede the Sudetenland (*q.v.*) to Germany and smaller parts of its territory to Hungary and Poland.
- “normalization”—A return to tight party control over Czechoslovak life following the suppression of the Prague Spring (*q.v.*) reform movement.
- okres* (pl., *okresy*)—Administrative territorial subdivision of *kraj* (*q.v.*) roughly equivalent to a county in the United States.
- opportunity cost—The value of a good or service in terms of what had to be sacrificed in order to obtain that item.
- Prague Spring—The culmination in the spring of 1968 of the late 1960s reform movement in Czechoslovakia. Cut short by the Warsaw Pact (*q.v.*) invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968.
- samizdat—Literally, self publication. Russian word for the printing and circulating of materials not permitted by the government.
- Sudetenland—An area in Czechoslovakia along the German border. Before World War II populated primarily by Germans. After the war most of the Germans were forcibly resettled in Germany.

- Švejk—The fictional hero of Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk*. He symbolizes characteristic Czech passive resistance.
- Treaty of Rome 1957—Established the European Economic Community (EEC—also known as the Common Market).
- Uniate Church—Sometimes referred to as the Greek Catholic Church. A branch of the Catholic Church preserving the Eastern rite and discipline but submitting to papal authority; found primarily in western Ukraine and Carpatho-Ukraine (*q.v.*).
- Warsaw Pact—Political-military alliance founded in 1955 as a counterweight to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Members in 1987 included Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union. Has served as the Soviet Union's primary mechanism for keeping political and military control over Eastern Europe.



- Academia Istropolitana, 126  
 "acid rain," 134  
 Action Program, 62, 63, 65, 176, 225, 229  
 Adamec, Ladislav, 180  
 Advanced School of Politics, 186, 189  
 Advanced School of the National Security Corps, 250  
 Aeroflot, 177  
 Afghanistan, 212, 277, 348  
 Africa, 301-2, 337  
 Agricultural Federation, 38  
 agriculture, xvii, 153-57; collectivization of, 59, 75, 105-6, 108, 155-56; crops, 156; in Czechoslovak Republic, 33; irrigation, 154-55; labor force, 106, 154; land, 134, 154-55; levels of management, 156; livestock, 156-57; performance, 140-41, 142, 145; private sector, 139, 155; production, 144, 154; socialist sector, 155-56; wages, 106; women in, 106, 154  
 air force (*see also* armed forces), 220, 238  
 airports and aviation, 160, 225, 233, 238  
 Albania: and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 274, 275; independent course of, 310, 322, 323; relations with, 210; territorial defense, 320, 321; withdrawal from Warsaw Pact, 319, 326-27  
 Albert of Austria, 13  
 Albrecht of Wallenstein, 18  
 alcoholism, 254-55  
 Algeria, 354  
 All-Union Voluntary Society for the Promotion of the Army, Air Force, and Navy, 245  
 Allied Control Commission, 310  
 Allied Control Council, 54  
 Allied powers, xxi, 219-20, 221; and Czechoslovak boundaries, 29; and Czechoslovak National Council, 29; and liberation of Slovakia, 52; and Munich Agreement, 43-44, 48  
 alphabet: Cyrillic, 6, 7, 278; Latin, 6-7, 100  
 Alps, 76  
 American Zone, 54  
 Amnesty International, 129, 259, 260, 262  
 Andrei, Stefan, 344  
 Angola, 337  
 Anschluss, 41, 42  
 Antiaircraft Defense (Protivzdušná obrana), 252  
 Antonín Zápotocký Academy, 244  
 Arabs, 213  
 Archangel, 219  
 armed forces (*see also* army, Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance), xix, xxiii, 217-47; air force, 220, 238; budget, 228, 229; and communist takeover, 223-25, 232; conscription, 217, 228, 235, 238, 239, 250; control of, by Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 222-23, 228-32; enlisted personnel, 224; equipment, xix, 235-38; and "fraternal" invasion of 1968, 225-26; gymnasiums (secondary schools), 244; loyalties, 231-32; manpower, 239-41; and membership in Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 230; military academies, 243-44; military courts, 198-250; mobilization plans, 241; morale, 224, 227-28; and Munich Agreement, 220-21; "normalization," 226-28; officer training, 244; officers, 224; paramilitary training, 245-46; political officers in, 230; premilitary training, 244-45; purges of, 217, 223, 227-28, 233, 235; rank insignia and structure, 247; recruitment, 241; reliability, 217; reserves, 239-41; role of, in Soviet military strategy, 349; role of, in Warsaw Pact, xxiii, 224-25; Soviet domination of, xxvii, 231-33, 235; specialized training, 244; Stalinist approach, 232; traditions, 218-19; training of conscripts, 241-43; uniforms, 245-47; wages, 241; and Warsaw Pact exercises, 243; women, 217, 239, 244; and World War I, 219-20; and World War II, 221-23  
 arms transfers: to Third World, 338  
 army (*see also* armed forces), 173, 217, 223, 235-38; equipment, 235-38; and

- “fraternal” invasion of 1968, 324–25; and Munich Agreement, 221; organization, 235; personnel, 235; purges of, 217, 325; under Red Army (1943–45), 309–10; and Warsaw Pact, 224, 243
- Arnulf, 7
- Asia, 301–2
- Association for Cooperation with the Army (Svaz pro spolupráci s armádou—SVAZARM), xix, 245, 250
- atheism, 120
- Atlantic Ocean, 219
- Australia, 85
- Austria (*see also* Austrian Empire, Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, Hapsburg Empire), 28; annexation of, by Nazi Germany, 220; and Anschluss, 41, 42; and émigrés, 85; and Great Interregnum, 9; and *judenrein*, 98; parliament, 32; radio and television, 160, 191, 262; rate of industrial growth, 59; relations with, 212–13; rule by, xxii, 3, 4, 77; security at border with, 252; and Slovak autonomy, 37; trade with, 167; and World War I, 29
- Austrian Empire, 23, 24
- Austrian Penal Code, 256
- Austro-Bohemian chancellery, 19
- Austro-Hungarian Empire. *See* Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary
- Austro-Slavism, 24
- Avar Empire, 6
- Axis powers (*see also* Germany), 51
- Baltic republics, 63
- Baltic Sea, 339, 349
- banks and banking, 40, 137, 160–61; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 281, 285, 288, 293–94, 300; German-owned banks, 32
- Banská Bystrica, 52
- Bardejov, 124
- Battle of Lechfeld (955), 218
- Battle of White Mountain (1620), 3, 16, 19, 81, 219
- Battle of Zborov, 219
- Bavaria, 19, 39
- Bavarian “nation”: of Charles University, 10
- Belgium, 76
- Belgrade, 361
- Belorussia, 63
- Belorussian Military District, 339
- Beneš, Eduard, xxiii–xxiv, 36; and Carpatho-Ukraine, 52–53; and communist takeover, 55–57; as foreign minister, 41–42; and government-in-exile, 48; and independence, 29, 32, 219; and Munich Agreement, 42–44, 220; as president, 5, 33, 42, 57, 247; and the resistance, 49, 51–52; and transfer of Sudeten Germans, 54; and World War II, 222
- Berchtesgaden, 43
- Bereitschaft, 40
- Berlin, 42, 45, 314; and Sudeten Germans, 41
- Bernolák, Anton, 23
- bernolákovčina* (Slovak literary language), 23
- běžně mluvená čeština*, 101
- bibličtina*, 23
- Bil’ak, Vasil, 64, 66, 180, 185
- Bill of Rights, 60
- Blahník, Miloslav, 231
- Board of Commissioners, 61
- Bohemia (*see also* Bohemian Kingdom, Czech lands, Czech Socialist Republic), xxi, 90; and Austrian Penal Code, 256; climate, 80; and coal mining, 148; Czech-German relations in, 26–27; in Czechoslovak Republic, 32; and the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, 25–26; early history, 5–7; and Friendship exercises, 243; German occupation of, 5, 45–48, 221; Golden Age, 10; under Hapsburg rule, 16, 17; Hussites in, 11; industry in, 32; Jews in, 98; mountain and drainage systems, 76; and Munich Agreement, 44; national revival in, 21–25; political divisions, 76; political parties, 36; population density, 81; and religion, 120; and religious wars, 13, 16; and rural society, 106; and Second Republic, 45; Taborites in, 11; during Thirty Years’ War, 18; topography, 77
- Bohemian Basin, 77
- Bohemian estates, 3, 13, 14; and Hapsburg rule, 15–16, 17, 19
- Bohemian Forest. *See* Český les
- Bohemian Germans, 27
- Bohemian Jews, 98
- Bohemian Kingdom, xxi–xxii, 3, 7–14; after Battle of White Mountain, 17, 81;

- demand for reconstitution of, 4, 26; and enlightened absolutism, 19–21; and Hapsburg rule, 15, 18; inclusion of, in Czechoslovak Republic, 29, 32  
 Bohemian nobles, 81  
 Boleslav I, 218  
 Boleslav II, 8  
 Bonn, 234  
 Border Guard (Pohraniční stráž), xxiii, 217, 250, 252  
 Borisov, Grigoriy, 233  
 Bory-Plzeň, 261  
 Bosnia-Hercegovina, 26  
 boundaries: acceptance of, by West, 336  
 boundary agreement, 29  
 “bourgeois nationalism,” 174, 175, 178  
 “bourgeois nationalists,” 92, 93  
 Brandýs, 13  
 Bratislava, 79, 126, 187; coronation of Hapsburg kings in, 15; government in, 195; population, 81; press, 122, 191; river port in, xviii, 159; and Slov-Air, 160; and Slovak literary language, 23; Soviet “liberation” of, 99; student demonstrations in, 60; superhighway link to, 159; training in Marxism-Leninism, 189; “Zeta” headquarters in, 51  
 Bratislava Declaration, 64  
 Brauner, F. A., 21  
 Brezhnev, Leonid, 62, 63  
 Brezhnev Doctrine, 208, 326, 340, 343  
 Britain, 232; arms production, 218, 355; exiles in, 48; and Hundred Years’ War, 218; and Marshall Plan, 56; and Munich Agreement, 5, 43–44, 220; and Potsdam Conference, 54; proposed treaty with, 42; and resistance movement, 221; trade with, 167, 275  
 British Broadcasting Corporation, 191  
 Brno, 77, 218, 244, 256; Marxist-Leninist training in, 189; population, 81; and rural-urban migration, 81; superhighway link to, 159  
 Brno-Bohunice, 261  
 Bródy, Andrej, 38, 52  
 Brotherhood-in-Arms exercise, 347  
 Browne, Malcom, 98  
 Bruntál, 233  
 Brusilov, Aleksei, 219  
 Bucharest, 301  
 Bucharest formula, 293, 304  
 Budapest, 54, 332  
 budget, 161–62  
 Bulgaria (*see also* Eastern Europe), 165, 166; arms transfers from, to Third World, 338; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 273, 274–75; and “fraternal” invasion of 1968, 175–76, 225–26, 325; labor force transfers, 298; military equipment, 352; military training by, of Third World personnel, 338; Red Army occupation of, 309–10; reliability of army, 350; role of, in Soviet military strategy, 349; and Solidarity crisis, 339; and Warsaw Pact, 307–8  
 Bureau for the Conduct of Party Work in the Czech Lands, 186  
 Byzantine Empire, xxi, 6, 7  
 Canada, 85  
 Čapek, Karel, 109  
 Carinthia, 9  
 Carlsbad Decrees, 42–44  
 Carniola, 9  
 Carpathian Basin, 218  
 Carpathian Moravia, 77  
 Carpathian Mountains, xv, 29, 76, 79  
 Carpatho-Ukraine (*see also* Subcarpathian Ruthenia), 97–98, 305; and Hungarian rule, 88; invasion of, 44, 45; proposed autonomy, 38; and Second Republic, 45; Soviet annexation of, 52–53, 75, 86, 97  
 Catholic Church. *See* Roman Catholic Church  
 Catholic People’s Party, 55, 56  
 Ceaușescu, Nicolae, 322, 336, 342, 344, 345  
 Čechové, 7  
 Čelakovský, F. L., 21  
 CEMA. *See* Council for Mutual Economic Assistance  
 censorship, 88, 110, 111, 112, 190–91  
 Central Bank, 40  
 Central Bohemia (Středočeský kraj), 76  
 Central Committee, xxv, xxix, 180, 182–85, 208, 229, 230, 231, 247; and Action Program, 176; and Communist takeover, 56; and economic reform, 142; and Kašpar Report, 64–65; membership, 183; and “normalization,” 177; and political training, 189; and Prague Spring of 1868, 62, 63; Secretariat, 185

- Central Committee of the Home Resistance (Ústřední výbor odboje domácího—ÚVOD), 49
- Central Control and Auditing Commission, xxviii, 183, 185
- Central Council of Trade Unions, 191
- Central Customs Administration, 208
- Central Europe, 9, 42, 77, 88, 218; national revival in, 21; proposed nuclear-free zone, 315, 324
- Central Planning Commission, 136-37
- Central Slovakia (Stredoslovenský kraj), 76
- Černík, Oldřich, 64
- Černý vrch, 238
- Česká národní rada. *See* Czech National Council
- České Budějovice, 134, 233
- Československá lidová armáda. *See* army
- Československá tisková kancelář. *See* Czechoslovak Press Agency
- Československé letectvo. *See* air force
- Český les (Bohemian Forest), 39, 77
- Český Těšín, 32
- Chamber of Deputies, 33
- Chamber of the Nations, 194, 195
- Chamber of the People, 194, 195, 247
- Chamberlain, Neville, 43-44, 220
- Charlemagne, 6
- Charles Albert, 19
- Charles Bridge, 218
- Charles-Ferdinand University, 21, 26, 109
- Charles I, Emperor, 29
- Charles IV, King, 9-10
- Charles (son of King John of Bohemia), 218
- Charles University, 81, 243; and Czech estates, 16; founding of, 10, 126; and Kutná Hora Decree, 11; merger of, with Jesuit Academy, 17
- Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, 14, 16
- Charles VI, 18
- Charter 77, xxvii, 68-70, 85, 99, 110, 123, 248, 255, 256; and educational admissions policy, 129; Manifesto of, 357-61; and Penal Code of 1961, 258; persecution of signers of, xxvii, 180-81, 204-5, 211, 212, 261-62
- Cheb (Eger), 39
- Chernobyl, 150-51
- Chervonenko, Stepan V., 63
- China, 141; arms production, 355; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 276; dispute with Soviet Union, 319; relations with, 210-11; Romanian relations with, 344; trade with, 167
- Chňoupek, Bohuslav, 207
- Chomutov, 134
- Christmas Agreement (1943), 52
- Čierna nad Tisou, 64
- Cieszyn, 32
- "Circles of Creativity," 112
- Čítanka, 23
- civil rights: repression of, xxiv, 60, 202-3, 259
- climate, xvi, 79-80
- CMEA. *See* Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
- CMFA. *See* Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs
- collaborators, 52-53
- Colorka, Peter, 180
- Comecon. *See* Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
- Comenius (Jan Amos Komenský), 22
- Cominform, 275
- Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (Výbor na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných—VONS), 69, 204, 262
- Committee of Ministers of Defense (CMD), 332
- Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (CMFA), 327
- Committee of the Petition "We Remain Faithful" (Petiční výbor Věrní zůstaňme—PVVZ), 49
- communications, xviii, 62, 160, 190-91
- Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—KSČ) (*see also* Central Committee, Presidium), xviii, xxiv, 35, 113-15, 181-91; Agriculture and Food Commission, 185; and the armed forces, 217, 222-23, 228-31; armed forces membership in, 232; and Charter 77, 68-71; and collectivization of agriculture, 106, 154; and communist takeover, 55-57; and Constitution of 1948, 191; and democratic centralism, 182; and the economy, 136-37, 139; education under, 127; as elite, 114; and energy conservation, 150; and foreign policy, 206; Congress, 63, 67, 178, 182;

- and "fraternal" invasion of 1968, 48; and industry, 151; and the intelligentsia, 107-9; in interwar period, 87; and Kašpar Report, 56; local units, 187; lower-level organization, 186-87; and mass organizations, 112; member participation, 115; membership, 187-88; membership privileges, 114-15; Miloš Jakeš as first secretary of, xxviii-xxix; and minority groups, 94; and national committees, 200; and New Economic Model, 93; and "normalization," 173, 203; organization, 182-86; party congresses, 63, 67, 110, 142, 176, 178, 180, 182, 183-85, 194, 208; and Penal Code of 1961, 256, 258; and People's Militia, 250; percentage of workers in, 113-14; and Prague Spring of 1968, xxiv-xxv, 62, 63; Presidium, 62, 63; purges, 57, 90, 92, 108-9, 113-14, 115; and reform movement, 60, 89-90; repression by, 174; and resistance movement, 49; role of party congress, 182-83; Secretariat, xxviii, 229; and selection of president, 197; social composition, 113-14; and Soviet reform program, xxviii; and Stalinization, 57-58; "Theses," 61; and trade unions, 116; training, 188-89; and Warsaw Pact, 324; and workers, 102-4; and youth organizations, 116-17
- Communist Party of Romania (Partidul Communist Roman), 322
- Communist Party of Slovakia (Komunistická strana Slovenska—KSS), 51, 58, 175, 186, 229; Central Committee, 186; Central Control and Auditing Commission, 186; Presidium, 186
- Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), 71, 174, 345; and Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 182; Twentieth Congress, 60, 316; Twenty-seventh Congress, 345
- Communist takeover, 5, 54-57, 175, 223, 250
- Compact of Basel (1485), 14, 16
- Compromise of 1867, 25, 27
- concentration camps, 47-48, 50-51
- Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), xix, xxvii, 69, 204, 214, 336, 345, 348, 360
- Congo, 337
- Congress of National Committees, 53
- Constitution of 1920, 32, 33-35, 40
- Constitution of 1948 (Ninth-of-May Constitution), 57, 58-60, 191-92
- Constitution of 1960 , xviii, xxiii, xxvii, 191-94, 199, 228; and government structure, 194-97; human rights provisions, 69, 204; and political freedom, 256; and religious freedom, 120; and rights and duties of citizens, 193; "The Social Order," 192; violations of human rights provisions in, 357
- Constitutional Act No. 144, 94, 95
- Constitutional Law of Federation (1968), 93, 177, 193, 194, 200, 229
- Corps of Corrective Education, 261
- Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), 64, 176, 273-305; affiliated agencies, 280-81; aid to developing countries, 301-2; Basic Principles of the International Socialist Division of Labor, 286, 288; Bureau for Integrated Planning, 286; Charter (1959), 273-74, 281-82, 285; Comprehensive Program (1971), 165, 274, 281, 286, 287-89, 291-94, 295-98, 304; Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000, 274, 290-91; Concerted Plan for Multilateral Integration Measures, 289, 296-97; and convertibility of currency, 293-94; council committees, 278-79, 295; 9th Council Session, 293; 15th Council Session, 286; 29th Council Session, 289; 30th Council Session, 289; 32d Council Session, 289; 42d Council Session, 277; 23d "Special" Session, 290; early years (1945-53), 284-85; and European Economic Community, 282-84, 288; exchange rates, 293-94; Executive Committee, 277, 278, 286, 296; Extraordinary 41st Council Session, 290; five-year plans, 289, 291, 292, 295; and foreign relations, 209, 213; and foreign trade pricing, 292-93; founding of, 57, 273; indebtedness to the West, 289-90; integration, 104, 273, 288; interstate conferences, 280; Joint Commission on Cooperation, 277; joint projects, 296-97, 305; labor force transfers, 298-299; Long-Term Target Programs for Cooperation, 289; member cooperation in science and

- technology, 297-98; membership, xix, 274-77; plan coordination, 294-97; post-Khrushchev period, 286-87; post-Stalin period (1953-55), 285; power configuration within, 299-301; prices, 292-93; rapid growth of (1956-63), 285-86; rights of member countries, 281; the 1980s, 289-91; scientific institutes, 280; Secretariat, 277, 278, 280, 295; Session, 277-78; Soviet domination of, 174, 206, 208, 273-74, 299-300; and Soviet model, 284; Special Council Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation, 297; standing commissions, 280; structure, 277-80; trade among member countries, 147, 149, 152, 164-66, 283-84, 291-92
- Council of Basel (1433), 13
- Council of Constance (1415), 11
- Council of Foreign Ministers, 206
- Council of the Three (R3), 49
- "counterrevolution," 87
- "counterrevolutionary" movement, 76
- courts, 198; military, 198, 250
- Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 69
- CPSU. *See* Communist Party of the Soviet Union
- criminal justice system, 252-62; crime, xxvi, 252-55; police repression, 261-62; rights of defendants, 258-59; trials, 259
- Criminal Procedure Code, 258-59
- Croats, 24
- CSCE. *See* Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
- ČSLA. *See* army
- ČTK. *See* Czechoslovak Press Agency
- Cuba, 104, 167; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 274, 275, 284, 291, 300-1, 305
- currency, 160; black-market money changing, 253-54; exchange rate, xvii, 160, 163; hard, 253; nonconvertible, 293-94; reform, 103-4, 106, 108
- Cyril and Methodius Faculty of Divinity, 122
- Cyril (monk), 6
- Czech Agrarian Party, 35
- Czech Bible, 13, 23
- Czech Council of Trade Unions, 190
- Czech estates, 16-17, 19
- Czech lands (*see also* Bohemia, Moravia), xxv, 90, 91, 92; armed forces, 220; and religious wars, 219; and right to form associations, 112; share of total revenue, 162; Soviet troops in, 233; spas, 124; urbanization, 81
- Czech language, xvi, 3, 4; *bibličina*, 23; dialects, 101; "foreignisms" in, 101; and German, 26; as a literary language, 15, 21; loss of, 15; in Moravia, 27; as official language, xvi, 35, 100
- Czech "nation": of Charles University, 10
- Czech National Council (Česká národní rada), 50, 180, 189, 199, 202
- Czech nobility, 9, 10, 13, 19; after Battle of White Mountain, 17; and religious wars, 16
- Czech Progressive Party, 27
- Czech-Slovak relations, xxv, 88, 90, 91-93
- Czech Socialist Party, 36
- Czech Socialist Republic (*see also* Bohemia, Czech lands, Moravia), xviii, xxiii, 76, 186, 193, 229; and alcohol consumption, 254-55; crime in, 253; and Czech language, 100; and the economy, 136; and education, 127; executive branch, 200; government, 195; population, 80-81; prison system, 261
- Czech tribes, xxi, 7
- Czech Union of Women, 190
- Czech Writers' Union, 111
- Czechia, 33
- Czechoslovak Air Force (Československé letectvo). *See* air force
- Czechoslovak Airlines, 160
- Czechoslovak Association of Catholic Clergy (Pacem in Terris), 70, 122, 205
- Czechoslovak Foreign Institute, 208
- Czechoslovak Legion, 29, 219-20, 222
- Czechoslovak Life*, 97
- Czechoslovak National Council, 29, 31
- Czechoslovak National Democratic Party, 35, 36
- Czechoslovak National Socialist Party, 35, 36, 51, 55, 56
- Czechoslovak People's Army (Československá lidová armáda—ČSLA). *See* army
- Czechoslovak People's Democracy, 192
- Czechoslovak People's Party, 189, 191

- Czechoslovak Physical Culture Association, 245
- Czechoslovak Populist Party, 35, 36
- Czechoslovak Press Agency (Československá tisková kancelář—ČTK), 191
- Czechoslovak Republic (First Republic), xxi, 4–5, 27, 31–44, 55, 75, 90, 97, 219–20; agricultural workers, 105; and Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 181; and creative intelligentsia, 109; and education, 126; ethnic composition, 31–32; foreign policy, 41–42; government-in-exile, 48; government structure, 33–35; minority groups, xxii, 36–41, 94–95; and Munich Agreement, 42–44; Slovak resistance movement, 51; and Subcarpathian Ruthenia, 31; and Ukrainian autonomy, 98; urbanization, 81; and the Vatican, 119
- Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party, 35, 55, 64, 65–66
- Czechoslovak Socialist Party, 189, 191
- Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, xv, 75, 192; proclamation of, 59
- Czechoslovak Socialist Union of Youth, 190, 191, 245
- Czechoslovak Society for International Relations, 208
- Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship League, 112
- Czechoslovak Union, 28
- Czechoslovak Union of Women, 190
- Czechoslovak Union of Youth, xxviii, 62, 116
- Czechs, xvi, xxi–xxii, 86–90, 174–75; in armed forces, 220; in Carpatho-Ukraine, 53; Catholics, 16; cultural tradition, 86–87; in Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, 26–27; and education, 127; and first Slavic Congress, 24; history, 3–7; importation of, into German areas, 40; importation of, into Slovakia, 37; national character, 88–89; and Prague Spring of 1968, 75; share of total population, 86; in Subcarpathian Ruthenia, 38; and youth organizations, 116
- Daladier, Édouard, 220
- Daluege, Kurt, 47
- Danish armies, 18
- Danube Basin, xv, 77, 79
- Danube (Dunaj) River, 29, 76, 79, 151, 159, 252
- de-Stalinization, 60–62, 89, 232, 316–17
- Děčín, xviii, 159
- Defense of the Nation (Obrana národa—ON), 49
- “Demands of the Slovak Nation,” 24
- Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea), 276
- Department of International Affairs, 206
- Dérier, Ivan, 36
- détente, 336–37, 340, 341–43
- Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei. *See* Sudeten Nazi Party
- dissent, 68–71; student demonstrations, 60, 62
- Dneiper River, 6
- Dobrovský, Josef, 21
- domestic arms production, 355
- Doupov, 243
- Drtina, Prokop, 49
- Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary (Austro-Hungarian Empire), 25–26, 29, 32, 75, 87, 90; armed forces, 220; and industry, 151; and the intelligentsia, 109; and World War II, 219
- Dubček, Alexander, 250; and the Action Program, 62–63, 229; and Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 178, 180, 182, 183; and foreign policy, 206; and Fourteenth Party Congress, 182; and “fraternal” invasion of 1968, 175–77, 225, 227, 228; and Prague Spring of 1968, xxiv, 5, 173, 323, 325; reforms, 234, 249, 258, 261–62; and religious organizations, 121
- Dukhnovych, Oleksander, 31
- Dukovany, 150
- Dunaj River. *See* Danube River
- Řurčanský, Ferdinand, 50
- Dzúr, Martin, 227, 231, 234
- East, 55
- East Berlin: June 1953 worker uprising in, 313
- East Bohemia (Východočeský kraj), 76
- East Germany. *See* German Democratic Republic
- East Slovakia (Východoslovenský kraj), 76
- East-West conflict, 228
- Eastern Europe (*see also* Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, non-Soviet

- Warsaw Pact countries), xvi, xxiii, xxvii, 75, 146, 189, 231; alliances with, 206; class origin and upward mobility, 312; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 284–85, 286, 298, 302, 305; credit restrictions, 147; and de-Stalinization, 232, 316–17; debt to Western countries, 133, 289–90; development of socialist armies in, 310–13; foreign debt, 165; foreign policy, 209; and Friendship (Družba) pipeline, 285; fuel imports to, from Soviet Union, 148–50; income distribution, 101–2; paramilitary forces, 312; and Soviet alliance system (1943–45), 309; Soviet bilateral relationships with countries of, 299–300; Soviet control of armed forces of, 311–13; Soviet training of troops of, 309–10; Soviet troops stationed in, 314; Sovietization of national armies of, 312, 318–19; and Union (Soiuz) natural-gas pipeline, 297; and Warsaw Pact, 313, 344, 345–46; weather systems, 79–80
- Eastern Slavs, 7
- Economic Commission, 142, 180
- economy (see also Council for Mutual Economic Assistance), xvi–xvii, xxiv, 58, 60, 133–69; “branch directorates,” 143; budget, 161–62; central planning, 136–39, 140, 147; decentralization (proposed), xxix, 141–44, 147; exchange rate, xvii, 160, 163; financial plan, 161; fiscal policy, xvii; five-year plans, 58, 134, 135, 140, 144–47, 157, 167–68, 295; foreign debt, 165, 168; gross national product, xvi, 133; inflation, 142; “intensification,” 146, 167; interest rates, 161; and interest rates in West, 290; investment in, 140, 142, 143, 145; market economy, 291; national income, 133; net material product, 133, 135, 144, 146; and New Economic Model (NEM), 142; and “normalization,” 144; per capita income in Slovakia, 92; performance, 140–41, 144–47; personal consumption, 145, 146, 181; petroleum prices, 146; “planned” economy, 291; prices, 142, 143, 161, 162; problems, 133; production quotas, 138–39; and profit, 143; reforms, 139, 140–44; in Slovakia, 90, 91; and Soviet model, 136, 138, 140, 141–42, 161, 163, 164; standard of living, xxvi, 102; statistical concepts, 133; structure of, 135–39; wage and salary system, 143
- Ecumenical Council of the Churches of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, 122
- Edice petlice (Padlock Editions), 70
- Edict of Toleration, 20
- education, xvi, 126–29; and class background, 128–29; compulsory, 127; of Gypsy children, 97; kindergarten, 125; levels of, 127; literacy rate, xvi, 88, 127; and membership in Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 129; primary, 127, 128; and rule of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 109, 127, 129; in rural areas, 107; secondary, 127, 128; in Slovakia, 28, 91, 92; university-level, 127–28; of women, 118
- EEC. See European Economic Community
- Eger (Cheb), 39
- Egerland, 39
- Eighth Five-Year Plan (1986–90), 134, 167–68
- Einstein, Albert, 109
- Elbe River. See Labe River
- electoral system, 202
- Eliáš, Alois, 47, 49
- emigration, 85, 204
- émigré communities, 85
- energy, xvi, 145–46, 148–51; conservation of, 150; hydroelectric plants, 151; imports, 148–51, 209; natural gas, 148, 149; nuclear power, 145, 150–51; oil, 146, 147, 148, 149–50, 299–300
- Enlightenment, 4, 19
- environment, 134, 212
- Ěrben, Karel J., 21
- Erzgebirge. See Krušné hory
- Ethiopia, 211, 277, 337
- ethnic groups. See minority groups
- European Economic Community (EEC), 282, 288, 304
- “Extraordinary” Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (1968), 176
- family, 117–18; abortion, 126; divorce, 118, 254–55; extended family households, 118; marriage, 118

- Feder, Richard, 122
- Federal Assembly, 180, 247; and civil rights, 69; election of, 202; establishment of, 194; and foreign relations, 207; function of, 195-96, 197, 229; and political parties, 189; Presidium, 195
- Federal Price Office, 197
- Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany): alleged *revanche*, 234, 314, 337; arms transfers from, to Third World, 338; and Charter 77 manifesto, 204; East European recognition of, 336; and *émigrés*, 85; and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 313-14; press, 68-69; radio and television, 160, 191; rate of industrial growth, 59; relations with, 211-12; seaports in, xviii, 159; security at border with, 252; trade with, 166, 167, 212; Warsaw Pact strategy against, 224
- Fencik Party, 38, 52
- Ferdinand, Archduke: assassination of, 88
- Ferdinand, Archduke (Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia), 14, 15-16
- Ferdinand I, Emperor, 23
- Ferdinand III, 18
- Fifteenth Party Congress (1976), 182, 183
- Fifth Five-Year Plan (1971-75), 144, 145
- Final Act. *See* Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe
- 'final solution,' 98
- Finland, 277
- First Czechoslovak Corps, 221
- First Five-Year Plan (1949-53), 140
- First Republic. *See* Czechoslovak Republic
- First Reserve, 239
- Fojtík, Jan, 180, 185
- foreign exchange rates, xvii, 160, 163; members of Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 293
- foreign relations, xviii-xix, 41-42, 205-14; administration, 206-8; with Communist nations, 208-11; East-West *détente*, 214; and human rights record, 211, 212; multilateral, 213-14; with noncommunist nations, 211-13; policy making, 206; Soviet domination of, 68; with Soviet Union, 205-6, 208-9
- forests, 134, 154
- Four Articles of Prague, 13
- Four-Power Foreign Ministers Conference, 314
- Fourteenth Party Congress, 63, 67, 178, 182
- Fourth Five-Year Plan (1966-70), 144
- Fourth Plan, 42-44
- Fourth Writers' Congress, 61-62
- France, 20, 232; arms production, 355; and Czech resistance groups, 49; French revolution, 21; and Hundred Years' War, 218; and Marshall Plan, 56; and Munich Agreement, 5, 43-44, 220; rate of industrial growth, 59; trade with, 167; treaty with, 42, 220; and World War I, 219, 220
- Francis II, 20
- Francis Joseph, 25
- Frank, Karl Hermann, 47
- Franks, 6
- "fraternal" invasion of 1968, xxv, 173, 175-77, 208, 210, 227, 228, 248, 323-27, 332, 343; and armed forces, 225-26; and economic reform, 286
- Frederick II, 19
- Frederick II, Přemyslid Emperor, 9
- Frederick of the Palatinate, 17
- Freud, Sigmund, 109
- Friendship (Družba) oil pipeline, 285, 298, 301
- Friendship exercises, 243, 347
- Friendship Railway, 159
- Frunze Military Academy, 243
- Fundamental Articles, 26
- Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros, 151
- Gábor, Prince Bethlen, 18
- Galicia, 20, 31, 219
- Gažík, Marek, 37
- Gbely, 148
- Gdansk, xviii
- Gdynia, xviii
- General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, 213-14
- General Council of Trade Unions, 55
- General Staff, 229
- Geneva, 346
- geography, xv-xvi, 76-79
- geopolitical factors, 173-74
- George of Poděbrady, 14
- Gerlachovský štít (Gerlachovka), 79
- German Agrarian Party, 40, 41
- German Christian Socialist Party, 40, 41
- German Confederation, 25

- German Democratic Republic (East Germany) (*see also* Eastern Europe), arms production, 355; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 274, 275; and East-West ties, 211, 342-43; and "fraternal" invasion of 1968, 175-76, 225-26, 325; Garrisoned People's Police, 316; labor force transfers, 298; military budget, 342; military equipment, 352; military training by, of Third World personnel, 338; relations with, 209-10; reliability of, 340-41; reliability of army, 350; role of, in Soviet military strategy, 349; seaports, xviii, 159; security at border with, 252; and Solidarity crisis, 339; Soviet forces at border with, 325; standard of living, 102; and Warsaw Pact, 307-8, 316
- German immigration, 3, 9
- German language, 87, 88, 95, 101; dominance of, 21, 27; as official language, 19
- German National Party, 40, 41
- German political parties, 35
- German-Slovak agreement, 54
- German Social Democratic Party, 40, 41
- Germanization, 219
- Germans (*see also* Sudeten Germans), xvi, xxi, xxii, in armed forces, 220; in Bohemia, 3, 4; Catholics, 16; at Charles University, 11; collaborators, 52-53; and Czech-German conflict, 10, 23-25; in Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, 26; and education, 127; emigration of, 85; and industry, 32; influence of, xxii; and *jus teutonicum*, 9; as landowners, 33; and mass organizations, 112; as new Bohemian nobility, 17; Protestants, 16, 18
- Germany (*see also* Federal Republic of Germany, German Democratic Republic), xxii, 6, 43, 47, 76, 350; and Anschluss, 41, 42; capitulation of, in Czechoslovakia, 50; invasion by, 45; invasion by, of Soviet Union, 49; and *judenrein*, 98, 99; and Munich Agreement, 5, 42-44; nationalism in, 5, 21, 24-25; negotiations with Poland, 45; occupation of Czech lands, 5, 45-48, 174; pre-World War II, 38; relations with, 86; and Slovakia, 50-51; and World War I, 28-29, 29; and World War II, 309, 350
- Gestapo, 47
- glasnost' (openness), xxviii, 71
- Golden Age, 9-10
- Golden Bull, 10
- Golian, Ján, 52
- Gomulka, Wladyslaw, 64, 317
- Good Soldier Švejk*, The, xxv, 88, 109
- Gorbachev, Mikhail, xxix, 71, 168, 181, 274, 305, 345-46
- "Gorbachev Charter," 304
- Gott, Karel, 110
- Gottwald, Klement, 55, 56, 57, 58, 248; and Marshall Plan, 205
- Gottwald Academy Memorandum, 324
- government, local, 33-35; national committees, 200
- government, national, xviii, 33-35, 194-99; centralization of, 33-35, 36; criminal justice system, 252-62; executive branch, 196-98; federal structure of, xviii, 193-95; judicial system, 198-99; legislature, 195-96; ministries, 197
- government, republic level, 199-200; executive branch, 200; legislature, 199
- government-in-exile, 48
- Great Interregnum, 9
- Great Moravian Empire, xxi, 3, 6, 7
- Greater Germany, 23
- Grechko, Andrei, 320
- Greece, 59, 85
- Gribov, A. I., 348
- Grossman, Samuel, 122
- Gruntorad, Jiří, 261
- Hácha, Emil, 44, 45, 47, 49
- Hacker, Gustav, 41
- Hajek, Jiří, 361
- Haldex, 281
- Haman, Josef, 185
- Hamburg, xviii
- Hampl, Antonín, 36
- Handlová, 134
- Hapsburg Empire: and Bohemian estates, 15-16; disintegration of, 31, 37; lack of civil rights under, 174; and mass organizations, 112; and minority groups, 220; policy of centralization, 19-20; rule of, xxii, 3, 14-21, 45, 87
- Hašek, Jaroslav, xxv, 88

- Havel, Václav, 205, 262, 361  
 Havlíček-Borovský, Karel, 21  
 Havlíčkův Brod, 9, 233  
 health care, xvi, 123–24; abortions, 126; alcoholism, xxvi, 203, 254–55; birth rate, 97, 125–26; drug abuse, 255–56; infant mortality, 124; life expectancy, 80–81, 124; spas, 124  
 Helsinki, xxvii, 357, 360  
 Helsinki Accords. *See* Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe  
 Henlein, Konrad, 41, 42  
 Hercynian Massif, 76, 77  
 Heydrich, Reinhard, 47, 49, 98, 221  
 High Tatras. *See* Vysoké Tatry  
 Higher Military Aviation School, 245  
 Himmler, Heinrich, 221  
*History of the Czech People*, 22  
 Hitler, Adolf, xxii, xxv, 5, 37, 38, 41, 89, 175; and Munich Agreement, 42–44, 220–21; and Slovakia, 51  
*Hlas* (The Voice), 28, 36  
 Hlasists, 36  
 Hlinka, Andrej, 36, 37  
 Hlinka Guards, 50  
 Hodža, Milan, 42  
 Hoffman, Karel, 180, 185  
 Hohenzollern dynasty, 19  
 Holy Roman Empire, xxi–xxii, 7–8, 10, 11, 18, 81, 218; dissolution of, 20  
 Honecker, Erich, 343  
 “hooliganism,” 254  
 Hoření, Zdeněk, 191  
 “Houses of Enlightenment,” 112  
 housing, 83–85, 118; in rural areas, 107  
*hovorová čeština*, 101  
 Hradčany Castle, 10, 45, 81  
 Hradec Králové, 238, 243  
 human rights violations (*see also* Charter 77), xviii, 204, 357–61; and foreign relations, 211, 212, 213  
 Hundred Years’ War, 218  
 Hungarian army, 319  
 Hungarian Diet, 24  
 Hungarian estates, 15  
 Hungarian language, 90, 98, 100; as exclusive official language, 27; mandatory in Slovakia, 28; as official language in Hungary, 22  
 Hungarian Penal Code, 256  
 Hungarian Revolution, 318–19, 323, 325  
 Hungarians, xvi, xxii, 43, 75; in armed forces, 220; collaborators, 52–53; in Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, 25–26; and education, 127; and Hapsburg rule, 37; as landowners, 33; and mass organizations, 112; political parties, 35, 38, 39; relations of, with Slovaks, 94; transfer of, 54  
 Hungary (*see also* Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, Eastern Europe, Kingdom of Hungary), xxv, 6, 37, 42, 191, 321; armed forces, 319, 350; and Bohemian Kingdom, 8, 9, 11; border, 79; and Carpatho-Ukraine, 52, 88, 97–98; convertibility of currency, 294; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 273, 274–75; and East-West ties, 342, 343; economic aid from, to Third World, 338; foreign workers from, 104; and “fraternal” invasion of 1968, 175–76, 225–26, 325; and Friendship 86 exercises, 243; and Gottwald Academy Memorandum, 324; and Haldex, 281; and Hapsburg rule, 20; and Jagellonians, 13, 14; joint hydroelectric project with, 151; labor force transfers, 298; and mass organizations, 112; military budget, 342; military equipment, 352; and Munich Agreement, 44; nationalism in, 24–25; radio and television, 191; Red Army occupation of, 309–10; religion in, 22; role of, in Soviet military strategy, 349; security at border with, 252; and Slovakia, xxii, 3, 27–28, 81, 88, 90, 94, 218; Soviet invasion of, 319, 320; standard of living, 102; and Subcarpathian Ruthenia, 29–30; trade with, 166–67; and trade with members of Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 291; and Warsaw Pact, 307–8; and World War I, 28–29; and World War II, 45  
 Hus, Jan, 3, 10–11  
 Husák, Gustáv, xviii, xxvii, xxix, 194, 212, 213, 346; and alliance with Soviet Union, 208, 209; and the armed forces, 227, 230, 251; and church-state relations, 122; and federalism, 66, 175; and foreign policy, 206; leadership of, 173, 178–81; and “normalization,” xxvi, 5, 67–68, 177–78; popular support of, 203; and religious activism, 205; resignation of, xxvii; and Secretariat of the Central Committee, 185; and Soviet reform program, xxviii

## Czechoslovakia: A Country Study

- Husserl, Edmund, 109  
Hussite movement, 3, 10-14, 16, 22, 86, 87, 119  
Hussite wars, 4, 218-19
- Iakubovskii, Ivan, 323  
Ideological Commission, 180, 185  
immigration: German, 3, 9; visa control, 247  
independence, 29, 31  
India, 213  
Indonesia, 213  
Indra, Alois, 180, 195  
industrial revolution, 3  
industry, xvii, 32-33, 88, 139, 151-53; munitions, 218; nationalization of, 58-59; in Sudetenland, 39, 40  
inland waterways, xvii, 159  
Institute for Nuclear Research, 285-86  
Institute of International Relations, 208  
Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 186  
intelligentsia, 107-12; creative, 108, 109-12; professional, 107-8; professional organizations, 110; repression of, 110-12; technical, 108-9  
"intensification": of economy, 146, 167  
Interatominstrument, 281  
Intermetal, 281  
internal security and public order, 229, 247-52; Border Guard, 217, 250, 252; People's Militia, 217, 251-252; police, xix, 249-51, 261-62; police repression, 261-62  
International Bank for Economic Cooperation, 281, 285, 293, 294  
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 357-60  
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 357-59  
International Investment Bank, 281, 288, 293, 300  
Intertekstilmash, 281  
Ipel' River, 29  
Iraq, 213, 277  
"Iron Ring" cabinet, 26  
irrigation, 154-55  
Israel, 213, 354  
Italy, 20, 25, 85, 218; and Munich Agreement, 44; pre-World War II, 38; rate of industrial growth, 59; trade with, 167; and World War I, 220  
Jagellonian line, 14  
Jakeš, Miloš, xxviii-xxix, 180, 185  
Japan, 59, 167  
Jaruzelski, Wojciech, 340  
Jaslovské Bohunice, 150  
Jazz Section, 70, 259  
Jesuit Academy, 16, 17  
Jesuits, 16, 17, 23  
"Jewish code," 50  
Jews, 58; in armed forces, 220; deportation of, 47-48, 50-51, 98-99  
Jihlava, 9  
Jihočeský kraj (South Bohemia), 76  
Jihomoravský kraj (South Moravia), 76  
Jiskra, Jan of Brandýs, 13  
John, King of Bohemia, 218  
John Augusta (bishop), 16  
John of Rokycany, 14  
John Paul II, Pope, 205  
Joseph I, 18  
Joseph II, Holy Roman Emperor, 1920  
*judenrein*, 98  
judicial system, 60, 198-99; courts, 198; criminal justice, 252-62; judges, 198; Office of the Prosecutor, 198; penal code, 256-58; penal system, 259-61  
Jungmann, Josef, 21  
*jus teutonicum*, 9
- Kabrhelová, Marie, 190  
Kádár, János, 346  
Kafka, Franz, 109  
Kameradschaftsbund, 40, 41  
Kapek, Antonín, 180  
Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad), 124, 134  
Karmasin, Franz, 50  
Károlyi, Count Michael, 29  
Kašpar, Jan, 65  
*Kašpar Report*, 64-65  
Kempný, Josef, 180  
Kerensky, Alexander, 219  
Khrushchev, Nikita: and Basic Principles, 286; and de-Stalinization, 60, 316-17; and Warsaw Pact, 315, 319, 322  
Khust, 53  
Killinger, Manfred von, 50  
Kingdom of Hungary (*see also* Hungary), 7, 18, 22, 23; and 1948 revolution, 24; rule of Slovakia, 4  
Kladno, 134  
Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy (formerly Klement Gottwald

- Military Academy), 223, 225, 227, 243, 324, 325  
 Klícha, Jaroslav, 230  
 Klicpera, V. K., 21  
 Klofáč, Václav, 36  
 Kolder, Drahomír, 64, 65  
 Kollár, Ján, 4, 21, 23  
 Komárno, xviii, 79, 159  
 Komenský (Comenius), Jan Amos 22  
 Komunistická strana Československa. (*see* Communist Party of Czechoslovakia)  
 Komunistická strana Slovenska (KSS). *See* Communist Party of Slovakia  
 Koper, xviii  
 Korčák, Josef, 180  
 Korean War, 140  
 Košice, 54, 134; military training in, 244, 245; population, 81; and religious wars, 13; as temporary capital, 50, 222, 247  
 Košice Program, 222  
 Kossuth, Louis, 24  
 Kosygin, Aleksei, 226  
*kraj* (political division), 76, 187, 198, 200, 250  
 Kramář, Karel, 32, 36  
 Kremnica, 51  
 Kriegel, František, 64  
 Krivoy Rog, 305  
 Krnov, 19  
 Krofta, Kamil, 42  
 Krušné hory (Ore Mountains), 77, 94, 134, 151  
 KSČ. *See* Communist Party of Czechoslovakia  
 KSS. *See* Communist Party of Slovakia  
 kulaks, 59, 106  
 Kulikov, Viktor, 339  
 Kutná Hora, 9, 134  
 Kutná Hora Decree, 11  
  
 Labe (Elbe) River, 6, 76, 159, 243  
 labor code, 104  
 labor force, xxvi, 134-35, 139; foreign workers in, 298-99; under German rule, 47; Gypsies in, 98; shortage, 104, 134-35; wage scales, 135; women in, 104-5, 134-35; and work norms, 135  
 Ladislav the Posthumous, 13, 14  
 Land Control Act (1919), 33, 39  
 land reform, 33  
 landownership, 58  
 language (*see also* Czech language, German language, Hungarian language, Slovak language), xvi; East Slavic, 100; Latin, 15, 22, 100; Polish, 100; Russian, 100, 313; Ukrainian, 29; West Slavic, 100; Yiddish, 98  
 Laos, 104, 277  
 Latin America, 301-2  
 League of Nations, 32, 42  
 League of Zelená Hora, 14  
 Lebanon, 354  
 Legal Affairs Department, 208  
 Lenárt, Jozef, 60, 180, 186  
 Lenin, Vladimir, 113, 182, 187  
 Lennon, John, 262  
 Leo XIII, Pope, 36  
 Leopold I, 18  
 Leopold II, 20  
 Leopoldov, 261  
 Ler, Leopold, 109  
 Letter of Majesty, 16-17  
 Levoča, 71  
 Levy, Alan, xxvii  
 Liberec, 256  
 Libya, 211, 337; bombing of, by United States, 338-39; Soviet arms sales to, 354  
 Lidice, 47, 221  
*Lidová demokracie*, 191  
 Liptovský Mikuláš, 244  
 Lis, Ladislav, 258  
 Litoměřice, 261  
 Litomiský, Jan, 258  
 Little Danube (Malý Dunaj), 79  
 Little Entente, 42  
 Locarno Pact, 42  
 London, 48, 49, 223, 357  
 Long-Term Target Programs for Cooperation, 297  
 Louis, King, 14  
 Ludin, Hans Elard, 51  
 Ludvík Svoboda Higher Academy of the Ground Forces, 244, 250  
 Luftwaffe, 45  
 Lusatia, 18, 32  
 Luxemburg dynasty, 9  
  
 Mach, Alexander, 50  
 Mach, Ernst, 109  
 Mácha, Karel H., 21  
 Magyars, 7, 90, 219  
 Mahler, Gustav, 109  
 Main Political Directorate, 230, 312

## Czechoslovakia: A Country Study

- Mainz, 8, 10  
Malý Dunaj. *See* Little Danube  
Margaret of Babenberg, 9  
Margravate of Moravia, 14, 15  
Maria-Theresa, 19-20  
Marshall Plan, 56, 139, 205, 273, 275, 284  
Marx, Karl, 113  
Marxism, 89, 93, 110  
Marxism-Leninism, 57, 64, 75, 113, 242, 275; training in, 188-89  
Masaryk, Jan: and independence, 28, 29, 32; as president, 32, 33, 42; and Slovak autonomy, 36; and Subcarpathian Ruthenia, 31, 38  
Masaryk, Tomáš, xxiv, 4, 87, 219; as president, 27  
mass organizations (*see also* Communist Party of Czechoslovakia), 112-17, 189-90; cultural, 112; minority groups, 112; trade unions, 115-16; youth organizations, 116-17  
Matica slovenská, 28  
Matice česká, 21  
Matthias, 16-17  
Mayer, Daniel, 122  
Mělník, 243  
*mesto*, 35  
Methodius, Saint, 6, 70-71, 123  
Metternich, Prince, 20  
Mexico, 277  
Michael, Emperor of Byzantium, 6  
Middle Ages, 86, 98, 126, 218  
Middle East, 213, 337, 354  
migration, 82-83  
Military Aviation Academy of the Slovak National Uprising, 244  
Military Council, 332  
Military Department of the Academy of Transport and Communications, 244  
Military Medical Research and Continuing Education Department of Jan Evangelist Purkyn, 243  
Military Scientific-Technical Council, 334, 344  
Military Section of the Department of Physical Education and Sport, 243  
Military Technical Academy of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship, 244  
Milovice, 233  
Military Council, 334  
Mimoň, 238  
mining, xvi, 147-48; coal, 58, 145, 148  
Ministry of Agriculture and Food, 137  
Ministry of Education, 123  
Ministry of Finance, 137  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 206, 207-8, 225  
Ministry of Foreign Trade, 138, 206, 208  
Ministry of Information, 56  
Ministry of Interior, xix, xxiii, 58, 66; and communist takeover, 56-57; and human rights violations, 358; and internal security, 217, 229, 247, 250-51; and mass organizations, 112; and "normalization," 203  
Ministry of Justice, 199  
Ministry of National Defense, xix, xxiii, 217, 229, 230  
Ministry of National Security, 252  
"minorities" treaty, 32  
minority groups (*see also* Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Poles, Slovaks, Sudeten Germans, Ukrainians), xvi, xxii, 32, 35, 75, 85-86, 93-99, 220; dissatisfaction of, 36-41; and education, 126-27; Gypsies, xvi, 95-96, 252-53; and population transfers, 54; problems, 42-44  
Mírov, 261  
missiles: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 212, 234, 341, 342; Soviet, 233, 234, 321, 341, 343, 347; United States, 347  
Mladá Boleslav, 233  
*Mladá fronta*, 191  
Mladé, 238  
Mlynář, Zdeněk, 69  
Mochovce, 150  
Modrý Kameň, 134  
Mohács, 14  
Mohorita, Vasil, 190  
Mojmír, 6  
Moldau River. *See* Vltava River  
Molotov, Vacheslav, 314  
Mongol invasions, 9  
Mongolian People's Republic: and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 274, 275, 284, 291, 300-1, 305; foreign workers from, 104; relations with, 211  
Morava River, 77  
Moravia (*see also* Czech lands, Czech Socialist Republic), xxi, and Austrian Penal Code, 256; and Bohemian Kingdom, 8, 26; climate, 80; and coal mining, 148; and Constitution of 1920, 33;

- Czech-German relations, 27, 86; in Czechoslovak Republic, 32; and Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, 90; early history, 5-7; German occupation of, 5, 45, 45-48, 221; in Golden Age, 10; Great Moravian Empire, 3, 5, 7; under Hapsburg rule, 15, 17; industry in, 32; and "locked" German territory, 39; Margravate of Moravia, 14, 15; mountain and drainage systems, 76; and Munich Agreement, 44; political divisions, 76; political parties in, 36, 55; population density, 81; and religion, 120; and rural society, 106; and Second Republic, 45; during Thirty Years' War, 18; topography, 77
- Moravia-Silesia, 13
- Moravian Kingdom, 6
- "Morning Star of the Reformation," 10
- Moscow, 62, 173, 181, 222, 225; annexation of Carpatho-Ukraine, 53; and Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 49; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 273, 274, 278, 284, 290; domination by, of Czechoslovak foreign policy, 205-6; and reform movement, 60, 65 Moscow Military Academy of the General Staff, 243
- Moscow Protocol, 177
- Most, 134
- Movement of Nonaligned Nations, xix
- Mozambique, 277, 337
- Mukachevo, 53
- Munich, 55
- Munich Agreement (1938), 5, 42-44, 48, 49, 51, 86, 220-21; nullification of, 211-12
- Museum of the Bohemian Kingdom, 21
- Mussolini, Benito, 38
- Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction, 214, 345
- Nagy, Imre, 318
- Napoleon Bonaparte, 20
- Napoleonic wars, 20
- Nástup*, 37
- Nástupists, 37
- National Assembly, 32, 33, 116, 192; and Constitution of 1948, 57; and Constitution of 1960, 59-60; and political reform, 61; and Prague Spring of 1968, 176; Presidium, 58; replacement of, by Federal Assembly, 66, 194; and Slovak autonomy, 36
- national committees, 50, 200
- National Council, 53
- National Front Act, 178
- National Front of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, xviii, 54, 55, 202; nomination of candidates, 202; and Prague Spring of 1968, 62, 63; role of, 182, 183, 189-90
- national revival, 21-25
- national security (*see also* armed forces, internal security and public order, Warsaw Pact), xix, xxiii, 234
- National Security Corps (Sbor národní bezpečnosti-SNB), xix, xxiii, 249-51
- National Socialist Party, 37, 56
- national unity, 4, 28, 29; and Great Moravian Empire, 6
- nationalism, xxii, 28
- nationalism, Czech, 15
- nationalism, Slovak, 27-28
- Nationalities Act, 27
- nationalization, 58-59, 75, 108, 139-40
- NATO. *See* North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- natural resources, xxiii, 133-34; coal, 133-34; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 296; lignite, 133-34; uranium, 134, 151
- Nazi collaborators, 55
- Nazi Security Police, 54
- Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact (1939), 49, 309
- Nazi Volkssport, 40
- Nazification of Slovak society, 50
- NEM. *See* New Economic Model
- Němec, František, 52
- Německý Brod, 9
- Nemek, Anton, 252
- Neurath, Konstantin von, 47
- New Economic Model (NEM), 60, 62, 93, 142
- Nicaragua, 277
- Ninth-of-May Constitution. *See* Constitution of 1948
- Ninth Party Congress, 110
- Nobel Prize for Literature, 67
- non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) countries, 102, 230, 231, 316, 320-22; armed forces, 350, 352-54; arms production, 354-55; and autonomy, 335-36; economic aid from, to Third

- World, 338; import of military equipment to, 236; intra-alliance coalitions of, 335; and "fraternal" invasion of 1968, 323-27; joint exercises, 320-21; and Mikhail Gorbachev, 345-46; military budget, 341-42, 346; military equipment, 352-54; military training programs, 242-43; mobilization plans, 241; role of, in Soviet strategy against North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 224, 346-50; role of, in Third World, 337-39; Soviet domination of, 321-23 "normalization," xxvi-xxvii, 5, 71, 75-76, 90, 173, 177-78; and the army, 226-28; and Penal Code of 1961, 258; and preserving status quo, 67-68; and professional occupations, 108; reaction to, 203-4; and religion, 123; and trade unions, 116
- North America, 219
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): missile deployments by, 234, 341, 342; Soviet strategy against, 224, 324, 340, 346-50; standardization in, 352; and Warsaw Pact, 307, 308, 313-15, 345
- North Bohemia (*Severočeský kraj*), 76
- North Korea. *See* Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- North Moravia (*Severomoravský kraj*), 76
- North Sea, 76
- Northern Tier countries: armed forces, 352-54; arms production, 355
- Nosek, Václav, 247-48
- Novák, Miroslav, 250
- Nové Mesto nad Váhom, 244
- Novomeský, Laco (Ladislav), 92, 109, 110
- Novotný, Antonín, xxiv, 58, 183, 227; and creative intelligentsia, 110; and reform movement, 60, 61-62, 175, 227; and Slovakia, 92; Stalinist style of, 174
- NSWP. *See* non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries
- nuclear-free zone, 315, 324
- nuclear weapons, 224, 347
- obec*, 35
- obecná čeština*, 101
- Obrana národa (ON). *See* Defense of the Nation
- Oder River. *See* Odra River
- Odra (Oder) River, 76
- Office for Press and Information, 190
- oil, 146, 147, 148, 149-50, 299, 299-300
- okres*, 35
- okrouhlice*, 6
- Old Czechs, 26-27
- Olomouc, 122, 238
- Olteanu, Constantin, 344
- ON. *See* Defense of the Nation
- Ondřich, František, 185
- Opava, 19
- OPEC. *See* Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
- Opletal, Jan, 47
- Ore Mountains. *See* Krušné hory
- Orenburg, 297
- Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), 293, 299
- Ostrava, 43, 95, 261; population, 81
- Otto I, 8, 218
- Ottoman Empire, 7, 14, 29
- Pacem in Terris. *See* Czechoslovak Association of Catholic Clergy
- Pacific Coast, 220
- Pacific Ocean, 219
- Palacký, František, 22, 24
- Palestine Liberation Organization, 211
- paramilitary forces, 217
- "parasites," 203
- Paris, 23
- Paris Peace Conference, 32, 36, 38
- passport control, 247
- Patočka, Jan, 262, 361
- Patton, George S., 222
- PCC. *See* Political Consultative Committee
- Pavlovskii, I. G., 326
- Peace Committee, 190
- Penal Code of 1950, 256
- Penal Code of 1961, 256-58; death penalty, 257-58; prison sentences, 257-58; "protective supervision," 258; "Sedition" section, 257
- penal system, 259-61; physical abuse, 261; political prisoners, 260-61; prison camps, 58; prison conditions, 260-61
- People's Control Commission, 185, 197, 200
- "people's democracies," 57-60, 310
- People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen), 211, 277, 337

- People's Militia, xix, xxiii, 217, 251-52  
 perestroika (restructuring), xxviii, xxix,  
 71, 181  
 Petka (The Five), 35  
 Physical Culture Association, 190  
 Pilsen. *See* Plzeň  
 Pioneers, 116, 190, 245  
 pipelines, xviii, 149, 159-60, 285, 297,  
 298, 301  
 Pitra, František, 185  
 Pittsburgh, 36  
 Plastic People of the Universe, The, 110  
 Plzeň (Pilsen), 32, 134, 218, 222, 233;  
 population, 81  
 Poděbrady, 14  
 Pohraniční stráž. *See* Border Guard  
 Poland (*see also* Eastern Europe), xxv, 51,  
 212, 348; army of, under Red Army,  
 309-10; and Bohemian Kingdom, 8,  
 11; border, 32, 79; and Carpatho-  
 Ukraine, 98; and Council for Mutual  
 Economic Assistance, 273, 274-75,  
 289, 301, 305; debt crisis of, 147, 290;  
 dissent in, 71; economic aid from, to  
 Third World, 338; foreign workers  
 from, 104; and "fraternal" invasion of  
 1968, 175-76, 225-26, 325; and  
 German-Slovak agreement, 54; and  
 Germany, xxii, 45; and Gottwald  
 Academy Memorandum, 324; and  
 Haldex, 281; Jagellonian line, 13; labor  
 force transfers, 298; loyalties of armed  
 forces, 319; martial law in, 340; mili-  
 tary equipment, 352; and military in-  
 tervention, 64; and Moravian  
 Kingdom, 6; and Munich Agreement,  
 44; ports in, xviii, 159; proposed alli-  
 ance with, 48; radio and television, 6;  
 role of, in Soviet military strategy, 349;  
 security at border with, 252; Solidarity,  
 xxvii, 234, 339-41; Soviet control  
 of armed forces of, 312-13; Soviet  
 forces at border of, 325; trade with,  
 166; unrest in, 89, 95; and Warsaw  
 Pact, 307-8  
 Poles, xvi, xxii, 43, 54, 75; in armed  
 forces, 220; and first Slavic Congress,  
 24; policy toward, 95  
 police, xix, 249-51; repression by,  
 261-62; Secret Police, 248; women, 217  
 Polish Army, 317  
 Polish "nation": of Charles University,  
 10  
 "Polish October," 317-18  
 Polish United Workers Party, 317-18,  
 339  
 Political Center (Politické ústředí—PÚ), 49  
 Political Consultative Committee (PCC),  
 206, 327-34, 344; and détente, 336;  
 and East European role, 324; and  
 "fraternal" invasion of 1968, 325-26;  
 and military budget of non-Soviet War-  
 saw Pact countries, 341-42; and Roman-  
 ian independent course, 322, 323, 344  
 political parties, xviii, 35-36, 44, 55, 56,  
 62, 88; in Slovakia, 51; in Subcar-  
 pathian Ruthenia, 38-39  
 Political Prisoners' Year, 361  
 political reform, 61-62  
 political repression, 202-3  
 Politické ústředí (PÚ). *See* Political Center  
 pope, 13, 205; challenge to authority of,  
 10; and Compact of Basel, 13; invita-  
 tion of, to Czechoslovakia, 70  
 population, xv, xvi, 80-81; birthrate, 97;  
 density, 81  
 ports, xvii, 159  
 Potsdam Agreement, 54  
 Potsdam Conference, 54  
*Práce*, 191  
 Prague, 26, 92, 126, 134, 244; and armed  
 forces, 225, 227, 228; bishopric of, 9,  
 10; Border Guard headquarters, 252;  
 as capital, xv; climate, 55, 56, 80; and  
 Communist Party of Czechoslovakia,  
 187; coronation of Maria-Theresa in,  
 1; crime in, 253; and Czech language,  
 101; and Czech national character, 75,  
 89; Czech-Slovak relations, 36, 92;  
 demonstration in, 262; and the econ-  
 omy, 144; expulsion of Jan Hus from,  
 11; "fraternal" invasion of 1968, 176,  
 225; and Friendship exercises, 243; and  
 Friendship Railway, 159; German oc-  
 cupation of, 45, 221; in Golden Age,  
 10; government in, 192, 195, 199, 247;  
 human rights record, 213; liberation of,  
 50, 174, 222; in Middle Ages, 218;  
 migration to, 81; military bases, 233,  
 238; New Town, 10; political training  
 in, 189; population, 81; proclamation  
 of independence in, 31; and relations  
 with West, 234; river port in, xviii, 159;  
 and Slavs, 21; and Slovak autonomy,  
 175, 193; superhighway link to, 159;  
 topography, 77; urbanization, 81

## Czechoslovakia: A Country Study

- Prague Drug Abuse Center, 256  
Prague-Pankrác, 261  
Prague-Ruzyně, 261  
Prague Spring of 1968, xxiv, 5, 62-63, 90, 174, 203; and armed forces, 225, 227, 228; and censorship, 190-91; and the economy, 144; and emigration, 85; and mass organizations, 112; and membership in Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 188; and Penal Code of 1961, 256, 258; and People's Militia, 251; and religion, 121; and Slovak autonomy, 175, 193; and trade unions, 104; and Warsaw Pact, 323-24  
Prague World Peace Assembly, 205  
*Pravda*, 91, 97, 122, 191  
Prchlík, Václav, 324  
Přemysl Otakar II, King, 9  
Přemysl Otakar I, King, 9  
Přemyslid, 7, 8, 9  
Presidium, xxv, 180, 182-85, 188, 206, 229, 230; and "fraternal" invasion of 1968, 176; membership, 183-85; and "normalization," 177  
Presidium of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, 197  
press, 62, 115, 183, 234; and armed forces, 241, 250; attacks by, on alcoholism, 255; censorship of, 88, 111-12, 190-91, 324; and Charter 77, 69; and church-state relations, 122; and minority groups, 95, 97; and Slovak autonomy, 91  
Press Act, 178  
*Presse, Die*, 260, 261  
Přibram, 134  
prisons, 260-61; prison camps, 58  
Procházka, D. R., 109  
"Progress" natural-gas pipeline, 149  
Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, 45-48, 98  
Protivzdušná obrana (Antiaircraft Defense), 252  
Prussia, 19, 25  
PÚ. *See* Political Center  
Public Security (Veřejná bezpečnost-VB), xix, 217, 249-51  
purges: of armed forces, 217, 223, 227-28, 233, 235; of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 90, 92, 108-9, 114, 115; and "normalization," 76, 90, 177; and reform movement, 60; Stalinist purges, 57, 58, 175, 188  
PVVZ. *See* Committee of the Petition "We Remain Faithful"  
Radio Free Europe, 191  
railroads, xvii, 159-60, 220  
rainfall, 80  
Rašín, Alois, 36  
Rastislav, 6  
Red Army, 220; control of East European units, 348; and guerilla activities, 49-50; liberation of Eastern Europe, 309-10; liberation of Prague, 174, 222; occupation of Eastern Europe, 310-313  
reform movement (*see also* Prague Spring of 1968), xvi, 60-62, 89, 112-13, 139, 140-44  
reform policies, 175-77  
Regensburg, 6  
religion (*see also* Hussite movement, Roman Catholic Church), xvi, 3, 118-23; Calvinist Church, 119; Calvinist Reformed Creed, 16; Christianity, 6; Church of the Seventh Day Adventists, 120; clergy, 121; Counter-Reformation, 19, 20, 101; curtailment of freedom of, xvi, 70, 358; Czech Reformed Church, 3, 14, 16, 119; Czechoslovak Baptist Church, 120; Czechoslovak National Church, xvi, 119, 120, 122; Eastern Orthodox Church, 7, 29, 31, 121; Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, xvi, 119, 120; Jehovah's Witnesses, 120; Judaism, 119, 120, 121, 122; Lutheran Church, 90, 119; Methodist Church of Czechoslovakia, 120; official policy toward, 120-23; Old Catholic Church, 119; Orthodox Church, 38, 98, 119; persecution of religious activists, 180-81, 205; Protestant Reformation, 10, 15, 16, 86; Protestant sects, 119, 120, 121; Protestantism, 22, 27; publishing houses, 70; Reformation, 16; Reformed Creed, 16; religious activism, xxvii; Russian Orthodox Church, 121; Slovak Evangelical Church, xvi; Uniate Church, xvi, 29-31, 38, 98, 119, 120, 121; Utraquism, 10-11, 14, 16  
religious wars, 11-14, 16, 218-19  
"reluctant terror," 180  
Republican Party of Farmers and Peasants, 35, 51, 55

- resistance movement, 49–50, 51–52, 221  
 Revised Ordinance of the Land (1627), 17  
 Revolutionary Trade Union Movement, 62, 115–16, 190, 245  
 Reykjavik, 346  
 Rhine River, 42  
 Riad computer project, 305  
 Rilke, Rainer Maria, 109  
 roads, xvii, 159, 160  
*roboty*, 20  
 Rodobrana, 37  
 Roman Catholic Church, xvi, xxi, xxii, xxv, 17, 71, 87, 118, 119, 120–23; clergy, 13; in Czech lands, 8; and deportation of Jews, 99; and Enlightenment, 20; Germans, 11; in Hungary, 22; and Hussite movement, 10; influence, xxi, xxii, xxv, 6, 17; as landowner, 33; political parties, 36, 189; purge of, 57; and religious activists, 181, 205; and religious wars, 16–17; samizdat, 70, 205; and Slovak National Party, 27; underground movement, 122–23; and Ultraquists, 13  
 Romania (*see also* Eastern Europe): alliance with, 42; arms production, 355; border with, 32, 76; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 273, 274–75, 286, 301; Declaration of the Romanian Central Committee, 286; and East-West ties, 342, 343; electricity from, 151; foreign policy, 206; and Gottwald Academy Memorandum, 324; independent course, 321–23, 324, 343–44; military budget, 342; military equipment, 354; nonparticipation of, in “fraternal” invasion of 1968, xxv, 210, 343; Red Army occupation of, 309–10; relations with, 210; reliability of army, 350; and Solidarity crisis, 339; trade with, 166; trade with members of Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 291; and Warsaw Pact, 224, 307–8  
 Romanian army, 322–23  
 Romanians: in armed forces, 220  
 Rome, 119  
 Rostock, xviii  
*Rowboat to Prague*, xxvii  
*Rudé právo*, 183, 191  
 Rudolf, Emperor, 9  
 Rudolf II, Emperor, 16  
 Runciman, Walter, 42–44  
 Rusov, Karel, 231  
 Russia, 23; Provisional Government, 219; and revolution of 1848, 24; and World War I, 28, 219–20  
 Russian civil war, 220  
 Russophiles, 38, 44, 231; Ruthenians, 52–53  
 Rusyn, 29  
 Ruthenia. *See* Subcarpathian Ruthenia, Carpatho-Ukraine  
 Ruthenian National Christian Party, 38  
 Ruzyně International Airport, 225  
 Rye Island. *See* Žitný ostrov  
  
 Šafárik, Pavol, 4, 23  
 Salzburg Compromise, 50  
 samizdat, 70, 191, 204, 205  
 Samo, 6  
 Saxon “nation”: of Charles University, 10  
 Saxony, 18, 19  
 Schmalkaldic League, 16  
 Schutzvereine, 40  
 SdP. *See* Sudeten German Party  
 Second Five-Year Plan (1956–60), 140  
 Second Republic, 44–45, 52  
 Second Reserve, 241  
 Second Writers’ Congress, 60  
 Secret Police, 248  
 Seifert, Jaroslav, 67  
 Šejna, Jan, 227  
 Senate, 33  
 Serbs, 24, 28–29  
 “Set of Measures to Improve the System of Planned National Economic Management after 1980,” 139, 147, 168  
 Seventeenth Party Congress (1986), 180, 185, 188, 194, 208  
 Seventh Five-Year Plan (1981–85), 135, 146, 147, 157, 168  
 Severočeský kraj (North Bohemia), 76  
 Severomoravský kraj (North Moravia), 76  
 Shelest, Pyotr, 63  
 Shield exercise, 347  
 Siberia, 148, 219, 297, 298, 305  
 Sigismund, 11, 13  
 Šik, Ota, 60, 103, 142  
 Silesia, 15, 19, 26; in Czechoslovak Republic, 32; German nationalism in, 39; industry in, 32  
 Široký, Viliam, 60

## *Czechoslovakia: A Country Study*

- Sixteenth Party Congress, 180, 183-85  
Sixth Five-Year Plan (1976-80), 144, 145  
Škoda, 32, 218  
Slánský, Rudolf, 58, 223  
Slavic Congress, 24, 31  
Slavic peoples, xxi, 7, 21, 70  
Slavic (Slavonic) language group, 99  
Slavic tribes, 5-7  
Slavic unity, 23, 27, 31  
Slavík, Václav, 69  
Sliač, 238  
Slov-Air, 160  
Slovak Agrarian Party, 35  
Slovak Council of Trade Unions, 190  
Slovak Democratic Party, 55, 56  
Slovak Diet, 45, 51  
Slovak Evangelical Church, 120  
Slovak Freedom Party, 189  
Slovak language, 99; borrowing in, 100; as a literary language, 23, 100; as official language, xvi, 35, 100; as peasant dialect, 27  
Slovak National Council, 24, 52, 59, 61, 66, 189, 199; election results, 202; Presidium, 192  
Slovak National Party, 27, 28  
Slovak National Uprising, 52, 92, 99, 221  
Slovak Ore Mountains. *See* Slovenské rudohorie  
Slovak Populist Party, 36-37, 38, 44, 45, 50, 51, 55  
Slovak Republic, 50-51, 91, 175  
Slovak Resistance, 51-52  
Slovak Revival Party, 189  
Slovak Revolutionary Youth, 51  
Slovak Socialist Republic, xviii, xxiii, 76, 193; and alcohol consumption, 254-55; and Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 186, 229; diminished power of, 175; and the economy, 136; and education, 127-28; government, 195; population, 80-81; prison system, 261; share of total revenue, 162  
Slovak tribes, xxi, 7  
Slovak Union of Women, 190  
Slovakia (Slovensko) (*see also* Slovak Socialist Republic), xxi, xxv, 64, 77; and anti-Semitism, 98; army, 51; and autonomy, xxv, 36, 37, 58, 91-93, 174-75, 192, 193; "bourgeois nationalists," 58; and creative intelligentsia, 112; crime in, 252; in Czechoslovak Republic, 32; economy, 91, 92; education, 91, 92; and federalism, 93; German occupation of, 52; Germanization of, 221; Gypsies in, 95-96; under Hapsburg rule, 14, 15; health care, 92, 124; Hungarian minority in, 94; and Hungarian Penal Code, 256; Hungarian rule of, 88, 218; independence, 5; and industrialization, 59, 91-92; industry in, 32; local government, 33-35; and mass organizations, 112; mountain and drainage system, 76; and Munich Agreement, 44; national identity, 4; national revival, 22-25; per capita income, 92; political divisions, 76; and political reform, 61; population density, 81; and religion, 23, 37, 91, 120; and rural society, 106; Ruthenians in, 38; and Second Republic, 45; Soviet troops in, 233; Taborites in, 13; during Thirty Years' War, 18; topography, 76, 77, 79; Ukrainians in, 98; urbanization, xxii, 81; and World War II, 221  
Slovaks, xvi, xxi-xxii, 75, 90-93; in armed forces, 220; in Carpatho-Ukraine, 53; in Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, 26-27; early history, 5-7; and education, 127; and first Slavic Congress, 24; history of, 3-4; share of total population, 86; transfer of, from Hungary, 54; and youth organizations, 116  
Slovenes, 24  
Slovenské rudohorie (Slovak Ore Mountains), 79, 134  
Slovensko. *See* Slovakia  
Smrkovský, Josef, 64  
SNB. *See* National Security Corps  
Social Democratic Party, 36, 44, 51, 62  
"social democraticism," 87  
social welfare, 123, 124-26; child care, 118, 124-25; family allowances, 124; maternity leave, 124; pensions, 124; pronatalist policies, 126  
Socialist Movement of Czechoslovak Citizens, 202  
Socialist Realism, 109-10  
society, xvi, xxii, 4, 102-18; class distinctions, 102; elite, xxii, 98, 114; family, 117-18; intellectual elite, 20, 22; intellectuals, 4; intelligentsia, xxii, 107-12; interwar period, 75; middle class, 4, 102; nobility, 20, 21; peasants, 20, 58, 59, 106; post-World War II, 75;

- rural, 105-7; serfs, 15, 20; social mobility, 113-14; structure, xxii, 101-2; upward mobility, 312; women in the labor force, 104-5; workers, xxii, 102-5
- Sokol clubs, 112
- Sokolov, 134
- Solidarity, xxvii, 339-41
- South Africa, 213
- South Bohemia (*Jihočeský kraj*), 76
- South Moravia (*Jihomoravský kraj*), 76
- South Yemen. *See* People's Democratic Republic of Yemen
- Southern Tier forces, 352
- Soviet Air Defense Forces, 349
- Soviet Baltic Fleet, 349
- Soviet General Forces, 347
- Soviet General Staff, 310, 322, 325, 326, 332, 348-49
- Soviet model, 136, 138, 140, 141-42, 161, 163, 164, 284-84
- "Soviet Slovakia," 51
- Soviet Supreme High Command, 310, 348-49
- Soviet Ukraine, 39
- Soviet Union (*see also* Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, Red Army, Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance), xvi, xviii-xix, xxvii; and Action Program, 62; airfields in Czechoslovakia, 238; and Albanian departure from Warsaw Pact, 319; alliance system (1943-55), 308; alliance with, 42, 44, 48, 55; annexation by, of Carpatho-Ukraine, 52-53; armies of "liberation," 50, 55; arms sales by, to Third World, 354; attack on, by Germany, 49; bilateral defense treaty with, xix, 208; bilateral treaties with East European countries, 310; and Bratislava Declaration, 64; and Carpatho-Ukraine, 75, 97; Central Group of Forces, xxiii, 233-34, 243, 325; and Christmas Agreement of 1943, 52; and coalition government, 5; and Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 182; and Constitution of 1960, 192; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 273-74, 274-75, 284-85, 302-5; and creative intelligentsia, 109; and Czech guerilla activities, 49; and Czechoslovak armed forces, 223-25, 231-32; dispute with China, 319; domination by, 103, 93, 173-74; domination by, of foreign policy, 205-6, 208-9, 213; and East European arms production, 354-55; and East-West ties, 211, 343; and the economy, 139, 168; foreign aid, 300-1; and foreign trade prices, 293; formation of Warsaw Pact, 313-15; and Friendship (*Druzhiba*) pipeline, 285; and Friendship Railway, 159; Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, 233, 310, 313; and the Hungarian Revolution, 318-19; invasion of 1968, xxv, 175-77, 208, 225-26, 323-27, 325, 332; labor force transfers, 298; "liberation" by, of Bratislava, 99; Long-Range Air Force, 238; and Marxism-Leninism, 113; military aid from, 235, 236; military aid to Eastern Europe, 352-54; and military intervention, 63-66, 89, 340; military strategy, 346-49; military training, 242-43, 245; Ministry of Defense, 307, 322, 332, 335; missile deployment, 234; and Munich Agreement, 220; natural resources, 296; navy, 301; Northern Group of Forces, 233, 310; oil and gas exports, 146, 147, 148-51; and Poland, 89; and "Polish October," 317-18; and political repression, 258; and Potsdam Conference, 54; press, 340; Progress pipeline, 149; reform program, xxviii; relationship with East European members of Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 299-300; and resistance movement, 51; and Romanian independent course, 343-44; satellite countries, 57, 58; security at border with, 252; Sino-Soviet dispute, 141; and Solidarity crisis, 339-41; Southern Group of Forces, 233, 318; Soviet Groups of Forces, 346; and Soviet model, 136, 138, 141; sphere of influence, 55; takeover of Czechoslovakia, 56; and technology within Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 298; and Third World alliances, 337-39; trade with, 165, 166, 209; trade with members of Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 291; troops based in Czechoslovakia, xix, xxiii, 209, 226, 233; and turnover tax, 162; Union (*Soiuz*) natural-gas pipeline, 297; and youth organizations, 116
- Soviet Zone, 54

## Czechoslovakia: A Country Study

- Spanish Civil War, 58  
*spisovná čeština* (literary language), 101  
Šrámek, Jan, 36  
Stalin, Joseph, 58, 139, 164, 273, 284, 285, 316-17  
Stalinist era, xxvi, 89  
Stalinist purges, 57, 58, 175, 188  
Stalinist trials, 92, 121  
Stalinists, 62, 92  
Stalinization, xxiv, 5, 57-60  
standard of living, xxvi, 102  
State Bank of Czechoslovakia, 137, 160-61  
State Commission for Research and Development and Investment Planning, 197  
State Defense Council (Rada obrany státu), 228, 229, 230  
State Planning Commission, 197, 200  
State Security (Státní bezpečnost-StB), xix, xxiii, 217, 249-51, 262  
Státní bezpečnost. *See* State Security  
StB. *See* State Security  
Štefánik, Milan, 29  
Stevens, John, 137  
Štredočeský kraj (Central Bohemia), 76  
Stredoslovenský kraj (Central Slovakia), 76  
Stresemann, Gustav, 40  
Stříbro, 9  
Štrougal, Lubomír, xxix, 180  
student demonstrations, 60, 62  
Štúr, L'udovít, 4, 23, 24  
*štúrovčina*, 23  
Styria, 9  
Subcarpathian Ruthenia (*see also* Carpatho-Ukraine), 29-31, 33; and autonomy, 38-39; communists in, 38, 39; in Czechoslovak Republic, 32; and first Slavic Congress, 24; industry in, 33; and Munich Agreement, 44; political parties in, 38-39  
Subcarpathian Ruthenians: in armed forces, 220  
Sudeten German Emigré Organization, 234  
Sudeten German Home Front (Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront), 41  
Sudeten German Party (Sudetendeutsche Partei), 41, 42-43, 54  
Sudeten Germans, 32, 48, 75, 94-95; demand for autonomy, 42-43; expulsion of, 54, 95; and German nationalism, 39-41; political parties, 40-41  
Sudeten Mountains, 94  
Sudeten Nazi Party (Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei), 40, 41, 54  
Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront. *See* Sudeten German Home Front  
Sudetendeutsche Partei. *See* Sudeten German Party  
Sudetenland, 5, 29, 86; industry in, 32, 39; and Munich Agreement, 221; nationality problems in, 39-41  
Šumava Mountains (Šumavské podhůří), 77  
Supreme Court of Czechoslovakia, 198  
Supreme Court of the Czech Socialist Republic, 198  
Supreme Court of the Slovak Socialist Republic, 198  
Sušice, 233  
Svätopluk, 6  
Svaz pro spolupráci s armádou (SVAZARM). *See* Association for Cooperation with the Army  
SVAZARM. *See* Association for Cooperation with the Army  
Švehla, Antonín, 35  
Švejkian, 88-89, 115  
Švestka, Oldřich, 64  
Svoboda, Ludvík, 62, 65, 194, 221, 222, 223, 226, 232  
*Svobodné slovo*, 191  
Swedish armies, 18  
Syria, 337; relations with, 211; Soviet arms sales to, 354; trade with, 167  
Syrový, Jan, 43  
Szczecin, xviii  
Taaffe, Count Edward, 26  
Tábor, 233  
Taborites, 11, 13  
taxes: income, 162; turnover, 162  
Technical Committee, 334, 344  
Temelín, 150  
Temporary Stationing of Soviet Forces on Czechoslovak Territory, 234  
Teplíce, 134  
Terezín, 47, 48  
Těšín, 19, 32, 44  
"Theses," 61  
Third Czechoslovak Republic, xxii, xxiii-xxiv, 54-55  
Third Five-Year Plan (1961-65), 141

- Third Reich. *See* Germany
- Third World, 218, 224; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 301-2, 303; economic aid to, 201-2, 338; imports of military equipment by, 236; military training by non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries, 338; relations with, 211; role of non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries in, 337-39; Romanian relations with, 344; Soviet arms sales to, 354
- Thirteenth Party Congress, 142
- Thirty Years' War, 18, 32
- Tiso, Jozef, 37, 44, 50-51, 91, 99, 175
- Tisza River, 29
- Tito, 58
- Tomášek, František Cardinal, 70, 121, 123, 205
- Topol'čany, 233
- trade, xvii, 138, 139, 140, 163-67; among members of Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 291-92, 299-300; "Bucharest formula," 293; dependence on, 136, 141, 163-64; East-West, 293; exports, 166-67; imports, 166-67; partners, 166; price system, 292-93; problems, 145-46; with Soviet Union, 209; and state-owned foreign trade enterprises, 163-64; terms of, 164-65; with Western countries, 140, 164, 165, 166
- trade unions, 55, 104, 115-16, 135, 190; right to form, 359
- Trans-Siberian Railroad, 220
- Transcarpathian Ruthenia. *See* Carpatho-Ukraine, Subcarpathian Ruthenia
- transportation, xvii-xviii, 157-60; civil aviation, 160, 238; inland waterways, xvii, 159; pipelines, xviii, 149, 159-60, 285, 297, 298, 301; ports, xviii, 159; railroads, xvii, 159-60, 220; roads, xvii, 159, 160
- Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (1970), 208
- Treaty of Rome (1957), 285
- Treaty of Saint-Germain (1919), 31, 38
- Treaty of Versailles, 88
- Treaty of Westphalia (1648), 18
- Trnava, 122
- Trutnov, 134
- Tuka, Vojtech, 37-38, 50
- Turkey, 14, 18
- Turnverband, 40
- "Two Thousand Words," xxv, 63, 69, 116
- Tyl, J. K., 21
- Ukraine. *See* Carpatho-Ukraine
- Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, 53
- Ukrainians, xvi, xxii, 29, 75, 97-98; in Czechoslovakia, 53; and education, 127; and first Slavic Congress, 24; in Soviet Union, 64
- Ukrainophiles, 38, 44
- Ulbricht, Walter, 64, 336
- UN. *See* United Nations
- Uniate Church. *See* religion
- Unified Agricultural Cooperatives Act, 59, 106
- Unified Magyar Party, 39
- Union exercise, 339, 347
- Union for Cooperation with the Army, 190
- Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, 190
- Union of Anti-Fascist Fighters, 190
- Union of High School Students and Apprentices, 117
- Union of University Students, 117
- Union of Working Youth, 117
- Union (Soiuz) natural-gas pipeline, 297, 298
- United Nations, xix, 139, 213; Conference on Trade and Development, 213; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 304; Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, 69; Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 213; Food and Agriculture Organization, 213; International Labor Organization, 213; Security Council, 213; Universal Charter of Human Rights, 315, 360; World Health Organization, 213
- United States, 31, 33, 36, 76, 139, 232, 275, 315; bombing of Libya, 338-39; Czech and Slovak immigrants in, 213; and Czech guerilla activities, 49; and Czechoslovak Republic, xxi; declaration of Czechoslovak independence in, 29; and emigrés, 85; and Potsdam Conference, 54; relations with, xix, 213, 214, 234; and Slovak National Uprising, 52; and Soviet strategy in Europe, 347, 348; trade with, 167, 213; value of dollar, 290;

- and Warsaw Pact alliances with the Third World, 337
- United States Third Army, 222
- Unity of Czech Brethren, 16, 21
- universal male suffrage, 26
- urbanization, 81; and commuting, 82-83
- USSR. *See* Soviet Union
- Ust' Ilim, 297
- Ústřední výbor odboje domácího. *See* Central Committee of the Home Resistance
- ÚVOD. *See* Central Committee of the Home Resistance
- Václavík, Milan, 231, 243
- Vaculík, Ludvík, xxv, 63, 69
- Váh River, 79, 151
- Vajnar, Vratislav, 247
- Vatican *See also* Roman Catholic Church, 119, 122
- VB. *See* Public Security
- Velehrad, 71
- Veřejná bezpečnost. *See* Public Security
- Vienna, 18, 31, 77, 260
- Vietnam, 104; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 274, 275, 276, 284, 300-1; labor force transfers, 298
- Vladislav II, King, 14
- Vladivostok, 219
- Vltava Basin, 77
- Vltava (Moldau) River, 76, 151, 159, 218
- Voice of America, 191
- Vološin, Augustin, 38, 44
- VONS. *See* Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted
- Výbor na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných (VONS). *See* Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted
- Východočeský kraj (East Bohemia), 76
- Východoslovenský kraj (East Slovakia), 76
- Vyškov, 244, 250
- Vysoké Mýto, 233
- Vysoké Tatry (High Tatras), 77, 80
- wages, 103-4, 144; agricultural workers, 106; armed forces, 241; women, 105
- Wallenstein, 18
- "War of the Entire People," 322
- Warsaw Pact. *See* Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance
- Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Economic Assistance (1955), xix, xxi, xxiii, xxv, 57, 85, 174, 275, 285, 307-55; Albanian departure from, 319; Czechoslovak exports to member countries, 218; and Czechoslovak foreign relations, 208, 209, 210, 213, 214; and Czechoslovak military equipment, 235-36; and East European autonomy, 335-36; "fraternal" invasion of 1968, xxv, 5, 94, 144, 173, 175, 176, 210, 217, 225-26, 227, 228, 248, 323-27; independent course of Romania, 321-23; Joint Armed Forces, 320, 331-35; Joint Command, 315, 316, 332-34; joint exercises, 63, 243, 316, 321, 322, 335, 337, 339, 347; Joint Secretariat, 327; Joint Staff, 315, 316, 332-34; military equipment, 321; and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, 313-15; organizational structure, 307-8, 315-16, 327-35; prevention of member defections, 319-21; renewal of, 344-46; and right of military intervention, 209; role of Czechoslovak armed forces in, xxiii, 224-25; Romanian objections to, 343-44; standardization in, 35; *Svejkian* strategy against, 89
- Washington, 234
- Washington, George, 33
- Wehrmacht, 309, 310
- Wenceslas IV, King, 10, 11
- West Bohemia (*Západočeský kraj*), 76
- West exercise, 339, 347
- West Germany. *See* Federal Republic of Germany
- West Slovakia (*Západoslovenský kraj*), 76
- Western Europe, xvi, xxi, 86, 275, 282, 284; East European relations with, 214, 341, 342-43; East-West conflict, 86, 228; standard of living, 133, 146; trade with, 167; weather systems, 79-80
- Western world, 55, 62; banks, 147; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 304; and credit to East European countries, 290-91; embargoes, 299; emigration to, 85; and human rights, 262; popular music, 70; Romanian relations with, 344; and trade unions, 115
- Wilson, Woodrow, xxi
- Wolf, Jiří, 261
- women: in agriculture, 106; in armed

- forces, 217; and education, 118, 128; in the labor force, 104-5; and military training, 244
- workers, 4, 102-5; and Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 113-14; participation of, in management, 143; as percentage of population, 103; under-employment of, 103
- World War I, 4, 28-29, 38, 88, 348; Czechoslovak Legion in, 222; peace settlements, 309; and Ruthenian autonomy, 31
- World War II, xxii, 5, 45-48, 54, 75, 81, 86, 88, 95, 234, 247; and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 182; as safe topic for writers, 110, 111; Soviet-directed alliance in, 348, 349, 350; and Soviet Union, 174, 309; territorial defense, 320-21
- Writers' Union, 116
- Wyclif, John, 10, 11
- Yamburg, 149
- Yamburg Peninsula, 305
- Yermakov, Viktor, 233
- Young Czech Party, 27, 36
- youth: and crime, 253; organizations, 116-17; and religious activism, 205
- Youth Commission, 185
- Yugoslavia, 85, 275, 310; arms production, 355; and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 276, 277; emigration through, 85; foreign policy, 206; independent course of, 274, 322, 323; ports, xviii, 159; relations with, 42, 210; territorial defense, 320, 321; trade with, 167
- Západočeský kraj (West Bohemia), 76
- Západoslovenský kraj (West Slovakia), 76
- Zápotocký, Antonín, 58
- Žatkovič, Gregory, 31
- Zavadil, Miroslav, 185, 190
- Zbyněk, Archbishop of Prague, 11
- zeme* (lands), 33
- "Zeta" headquarters, 51
- Zhivkov, Todor, 346
- Žilina, 44, 244
- Žitný ostrov (Rye Island), 79
- Živnostenská banka. *See* Central Bank
- Žižka, Jan, 11-12, 218
- župa* (administrative division), 35
- Zvolen, 13, 233



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