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Country Profile

Czechoslovakia

May 1974

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SURVEY

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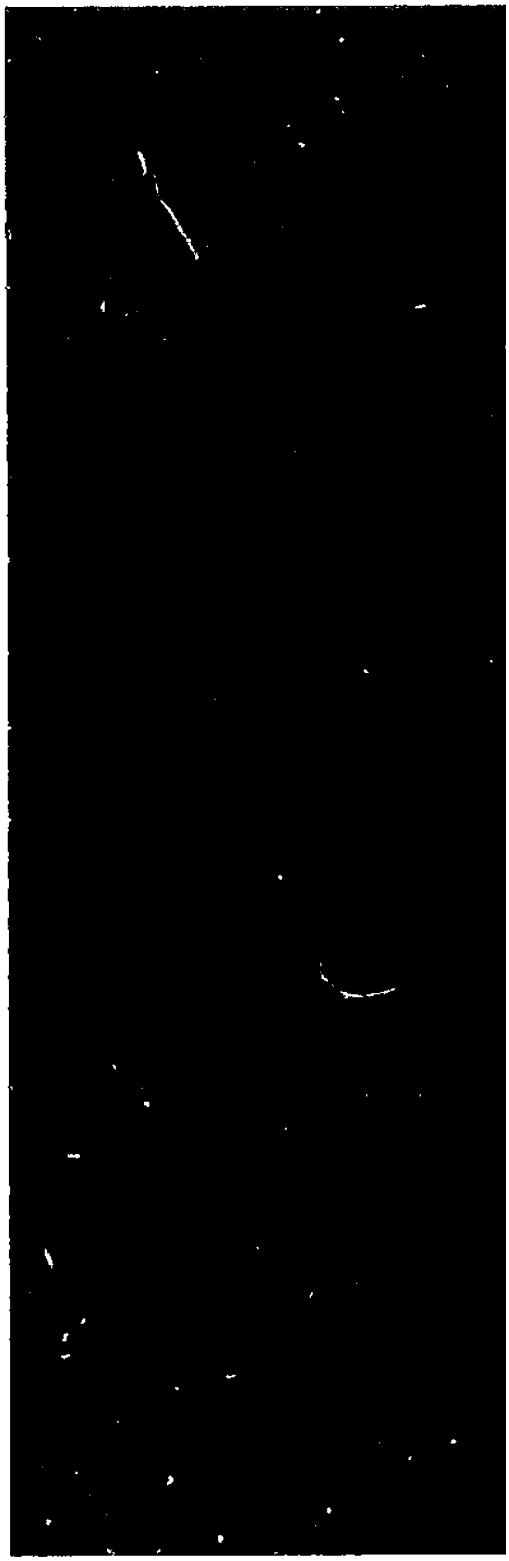

GENERAL SURVEY CHAPTERS

COUNTRY PROFILE Integrated perspective of the subject country • Chronology • Area Brief • Summary Map

THE SOCIETY Social structure • Population • Labor • Health • Living conditions • Social problems • Religion • Education • Public information • Artistic expression

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS Political evolution of the state • Governmental strength and stability • Structure and function • Political dynamics • National policies • Threats to stability • The police • Countersubversion and counterinsurgency capabilities

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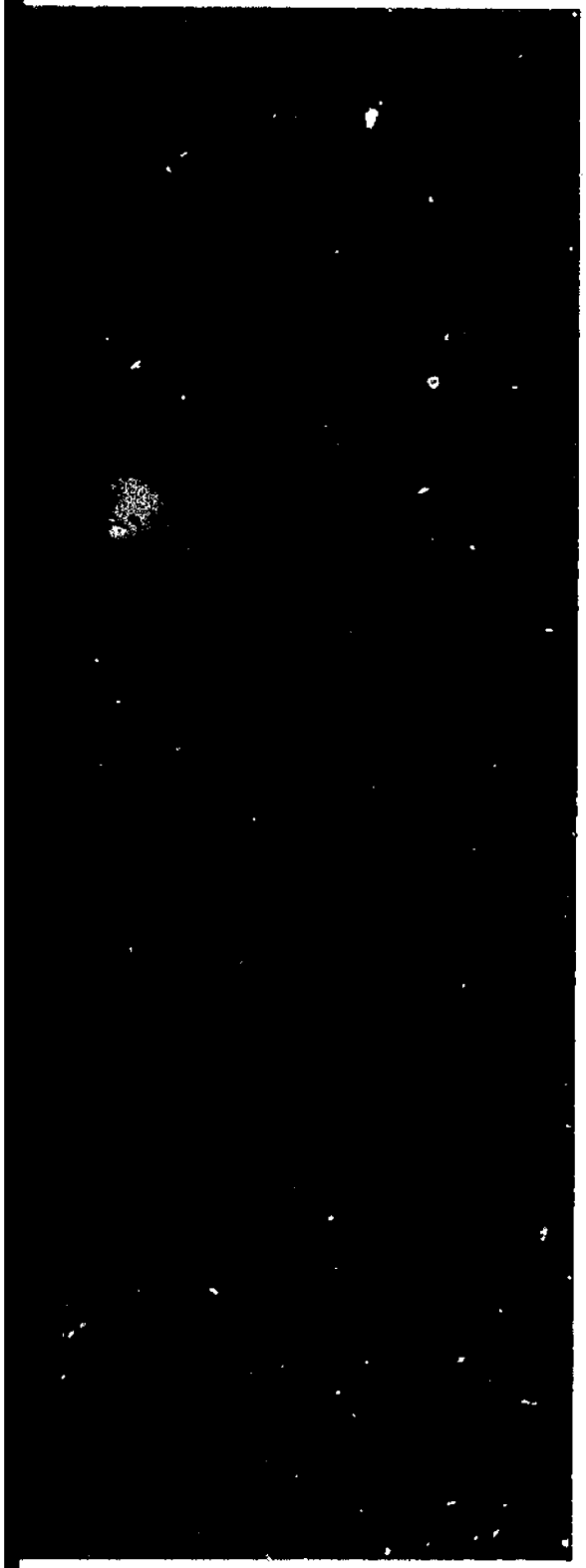
MILITARY GEOGRAPHY Topography and climate • Military geographic regions • Strategic areas • Internal routes • Approaches: land, air

ARMED FORCES The defense establishment • Joint activities • Ground forces • Naval forces • Air forces • Paramilitary

SCIENCE Level of scientific advancement • Organization, planning, and financing of research • Scientific education, manpower, and facilities • Major research fields



Czechoslovakia

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Wenceslas Square in Prague, a wide thoroughfare traditionally used for celebrations and demonstrations

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The Post-Dubcek Era: Back to Prudence and Pragmatism

In sharp contrast to the turbulence and tensions which marked the period immediately following the Warsaw Pact invasion of August 1968, the domestic scene in Czechoslovakia in early 1974 was quiet and outwardly stable. The idealism of the fleeting preintervention Prague Spring had given way to a strongly materialistic pragmatism. In many ways, the population was enjoying a measure of prosperity unknown since just prior to World War II. Consumer luxuries, both of foreign and local manufacture, were available in unprecedented variety and quantity. Both real wages and savings were at alltime highs. After years of privation, the Czechoslovak people were hastening to reap the benefits of what one Western observer has aptly termed "dumpling communism." Preoccupied with their quest for material pleasures—including TV sets, cars, and, most recently, summer cottages—they seemed to have lost all interest in politics. (U/OU)

True enough, a few intellectuals still held high the banner of dissent. But they were becoming increasingly isolated. Most of their countrymen appeared to be resigned, however reluctantly, both to the loss of many of their individual rights and liberties and to the continued presence of about 60,000 Soviet occupation troops on Czechoslovak soil. A consensus had gradually emerged that further overt resistance to clearly overwhelming power could only delay any loosening of internal controls and might even imperil coveted improvements in living standards. Not only did the average man on the street seem almost anxious to forget what the Czechoslovaks now refer to euphemistically as the "August events," but there also appeared to be growing feelings of resentment toward the fallen heroes of the Prague Spring—and toward erudite romanticists in general—for having gotten Czechoslovakia into such a mess in the first place. (U/OU)

Indeed, the agonizing process of "normalization"—psychological, political, and economic—seemed near completion. Czechoslovakia was once again a trusted member of the Soviet bloc. From the Kremlin's point of view, Prague's conservative domestic policies were ideologically sound, and none of Moscow's other Warsaw Pact allies could boast of a better record of loyal cooperation in the foreign policy field. (U/OU)

For better or for worse, a large part of the credit for bringing all this about belongs to Gustav Husak, the shrewd and authoritarian Slovak intellectual who

replaced Alexander Dubcek at the helm of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in April 1969. Operating under the twin banners of realism and moderation, Husak played upon fears of much more unpleasant alternatives to win grudging acceptance of a policy of broad compliance with Moscow's demands. His task was made easier by his reputation for stubborn independence and personal integrity born of long years spent as a political prisoner of the Novotny regime on the charge of "bourgeois Slovak nationalism." Moreover, despite his insistence on discipline, he demonstrated a genuine determination to avoid returning to the harsh administrative and police methods of the 1950's. Like his well-publicized efforts to improve the economic well-being of his countrymen, this aspect of Husak's style of rule did much to ease the pain of capitulation. (U/OU)

Not that the "normalization" process didn't take its human toll. The party was subjected to a purge which cost it—through resignation or involuntary separation—nearly one-third of the 1.7 million members carried on its rolls when Husak came to power. In addition, those individuals who stood in the forefront of the 1968 reform movement have been ostracized and denied responsible or well-paying employment. But, thanks to Husak's continuing resistance to the demands of party ultraconservatives for more severe reprisals, only a handful—primarily people who could be charged with inflammatory or subversive behavior in the postinvasion period—have been brought to trial. Even Dubcek has been spared. And although the question of how to deal with the leading figures of the reform era remains a major point of contention within the Czechoslovak Communist Party, Husak has made it clear that he personally favors a policy of selective rehabilitation. (U/OU)

All told, however, Husak has asked his countrymen to swallow a great deal, not the least of which has been his own gradual conversion from an open critic of the '968 invasion into one of its dutiful apologists. Although he initially promised to preserve the "positive features" of the Prague Spring, he has methodically dismantled or vitiated virtually all of the reforms, including those with which he himself was once closely identified. Censorship has been reinstituted. The party's control over all segments of the government and society has been restored—a process involving, among other things, both recentralization of the economy and abandonment of many of the established or projected features of the country's new binational federal system. Sharp curtailment of freedom of travel to the West has provided yet another cause for popular dismay. But perhaps the cruelest blow of all was the signing in May 1970 of a new

Brezhnev and Husak shake hands following the signing of the 1970 bilateral treaty

bilateral Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance with the U.S.S.R., which not only vindicated the Warsaw Pact invasion but established a legal basis for possible Soviet intervention in the future. (U/OU)

Thus, Husak's bargain was at best a hard one, and it might seem a bit surprising that a people who had made such a show of defiant unity during the initial stages of their confrontation with their Warsaw Pact allies did not hold out for somewhat better terms. After all, the Kremlin's willingness to countenance some rather innovative reforms elsewhere in Eastern Europe and its apparent reluctance to risk taking any action which might adversely affect the new trend toward East-West detente must have suggested to the Czechoslovaks that such a goal was not beyond reach. But a capacity for prolonged heroics is not a characteristic Czechoslovak national trait. (U/OU)

Czechoslovakia was carved from the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918. It is not an ethnically homogeneous state like Poland or Sweden and thus has lacked their cultural unity to help it withstand the unusual pressures occasioned by its

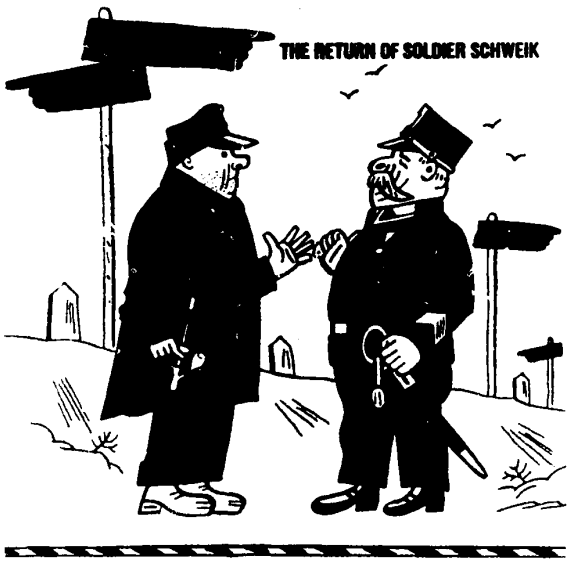
strategic location. Although the Czechs and Slovaks share a Slavic background and were united in their desire for independence from the Dual Monarchy, they differ markedly in cultural and institutional heritage. Indeed, their mutual antagonisms have been exploited successfully by Czechoslovakia's enemies at several critical points in the country's history. Moreover, a legacy of centuries of foreign domination has left a lasting imprint on Czechoslovak society and has played an important role in the political life of the country. (U/OU)

Their long experience with powerful foreign overlords has endowed both the Czechs and—albeit, to a lesser extent—the Slovaks with a down-to-earth realism, a deep-seated respect for the worth of the individual, and a strong dose of caution. With little hope of freeing themselves by force of arms, they learned to preserve their intellectual and national integrity through a mixture of resignation and passive resistance, or simply put—to bend with the wind. Even among the Slovaks, who tend to be somewhat more hot-blooded than the Czechs, rebellious impulses were generally kept in check by considerations of numerical weakness. Today, when confronted with what he judges to be a superior power, the average Czechoslovak citizen is still inclined to fall back on devious maneuvering under a pretense of submission rather than mount outright frontal opposition. Although he is as ready as anyone to rise and fight for his convictions, he is unlikely to do so unless he sees a realistic chance of success. He would rather yield and preserve his strength than risk breaking it in a mere gesture of bold defiance. (U/OU)

These enduring national traits have been immortalized in the figure of "Good Soldier Schweik," the Czech folk hero—now more popular than ever—created by novelist Jaroslav Hasek in 1923. A reluctant conscript in the Austro-Hungarian army during World War I, Schweik managed to frustrate the will of his superiors by feigning obedience, indolence, and stupidity. He did not, for example, risk expressing his pacifist views; he simply got lost—repeatedly—on his way to the front. (U/OU)

The persistence and significance of Czechoslovakia's earthy Schweikist tradition is well illustrated by the parallels between the population's response to the Warsaw Pact invasion and its behavior when the country fell to Hitlerite Germany 30 years earlier. In both instances, the majority of the Czechoslovak people rallied to the defense of their government and their country's sovereignty in the face of a clear external threat—only to break ranks and gradually lapse into seemingly subservient apathy when that threat developed into actual military intervention. Although there were scattered acts of heroism, in neither case were the entering occupation forces met with organized armed resistance. And both times the sacrifice of popular beliefs and ideals on the altar of cautious realism generated a compensatory—in fact, virtually escapist—interest in material comforts. (U/OU)

But even though Husak has been able to exploit his countrymen's traditional instincts and attitudes to achieve his initial domestic objectives, the long-term viability of his conservative program is by no means assured. The doctrinaire formulas of orthodox Marxism-Leninism simply have little appeal for most Czechoslovak citizens. After all, Husak is dealing with a people who, alone in Eastern Europe, experienced a working and fairly liberal democracy throughout the interwar period. Hence, while successful in winning a degree of popular acceptance based on purely pragmatic considerations, he has been unable to develop the broadly based domestic support he needs to revitalize the country politically and economically and to reduce his dependence on Moscow. This absence of rapport and meaningful communication between the regime and the people has been reflected in alarmingly poor job discipline and widespread evasion of minor regulations. Husak is understandably troubled by this situation, and is making a determined effort to correct it. Given the atmosphere of rising expectations generated by the current trend toward East-West detente, however, it seems likely that he will find this task quite difficult. (C)



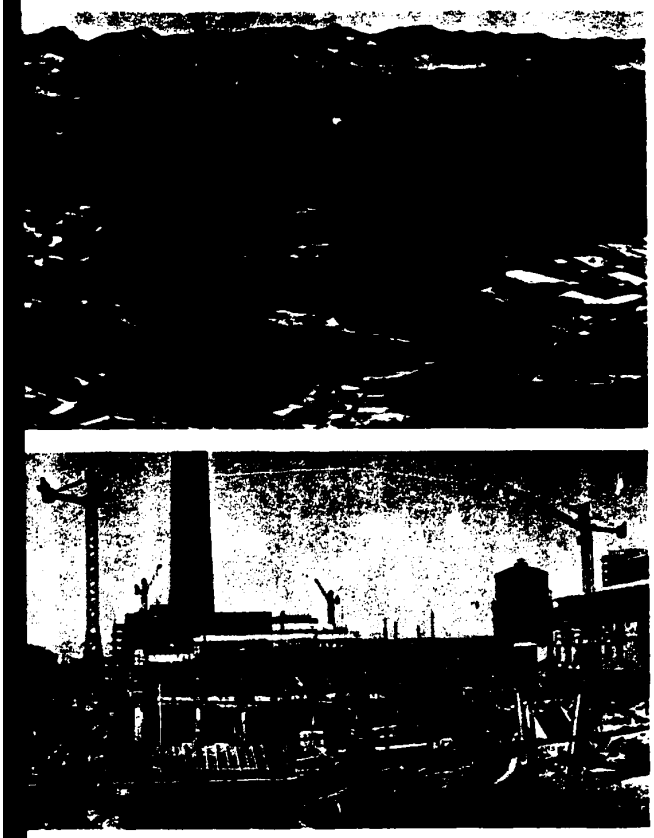
Land of Forests and Factories (u/ou)

Comprising the historic provinces of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia, modern Czechoslovakia is a long and narrow landlocked nation about equal in area to New York State. By almost any measure—location, climate, drainage, or vegetation—it can be characterized as constituting the very heart of Europe. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that geography has played a key role in shaping the political and economic evolution of the country's inhabitants, both before and after they achieved independence. The strategic location of their homeland athwart some of the oldest and most significant trade routes in Europe has traditionally invited intervention by powerful neighbors. And together with the area's long division between Austrian and Magyar overlords, marked variations in weather and terrain have contributed to the growth of the economic disparities and cultural differences which still cause friction between the Czechs and Slovaks today.

For its size, Czechoslovakia exhibits an unusual variety of physical and climatic features. In the west, the Bohemian basin—the core of the so-called Czech Lands—consists primarily of a rolling fertile plateau with broad river valleys and intervening forested divides. Its hilly to mountainous rimlands are extensions of mountain systems further to the west, and the natural transportation routes through them have traditionally oriented the region and its inhabitants toward the western part of Europe. Bohemia's climate, influenced by the maritime weather systems that predominate over western Europe, tends to be somewhat milder than that of most of the rest of the country. Another distinctive feature of Bohemia is the radial convergence of its streams toward Prague in the center. All are tributaries of the Elbe, which drains the region northward and provides a water route to the North Sea. As a whole, the Bohemian region is extensively cultivated, and its northern and western reaches—where there are long-exploited coal and iron deposits and more recently discovered uranium fields—are heavily industrialized.

The Moravian lowlands, also traditional Czech domain, form a distinct transitional zone between the Bohemian basin and Slovakia. A considerable portion of Moravia is hilly, but its valleys—most of which trend toward the Moravian Gate (a strategic gap between the Sudeten Mountains and the Carpathian Alps)—provide the best avenues for north-south communication in central Europe. North of the low divide which separates the headwaters of the Baltic-bound Oder and the southward flowing Morava, the region exhibits some of the physical and climatic characteristics of the Bohemian rimlands. Four-fifths of Moravia lies south of that divide, however, and the weather conditions and terrain features there resemble those of the neighboring lowland areas of southern Slovakia. Moreover, the soils in central and southern Moravia are generally very fertile, and, unlike the forested and marginally productive northern uplands, the area is extensively cultivated. Despite these physical variations, however, most of Moravia is densely populated. In part this reflects the area's historic importance as a hub of commercial activity, but its coal deposits and favorable location favored its early industrialization as well. The first major facilities for manufacturing and metallurgy in what is now Czechoslovakia were built in northernmost Moravia. And while, with active Austrian encouragement, factories and furnaces soon spread westward, Moravia's impressive array of urban industrial centers still nearly matches that of Bohemia.

Slovakia, which makes up the eastern two-fifths of the country, has a few rather sizable pockets of fertile lowland in the south, but unlike Bohemia and



Overlooking the forested Moravian Beskydies are the Slovak Carpathians. The wealth of forest land in Slovakia has given rise to large wood processing works.

Moravia, it is predominantly mountainous. Its rugged highlands extend in a thick arc from the Danube in the southwest to the Soviet frontier in the east, attaining their highest elevations and greatest beauty in the craggy High Tatras mountain chain which forms part of Czechoslovakia's border with Poland. Much of this rough terrain is also heavily forested, and although it poses no insurmountable obstacle to communication, it has reinforced the effects of a thousand years of unenlightened Magyar rule in isolating the Slovaks from western European influence and in retarding their economic development. Drainage is to the Black Sea via the Danube, and since Slovakia's principal communication routes follow the river valleys that penetrate deeply into its mountainous backbone from the Danubian Plain in the south, its natural orientation is toward Hungary and the Balkans. This, in turn, together with the difficulties involved in tapping the region's timber and mineral resources, has contributed to the area's slow rate of industrialization and thus to the economic and cultural differences which set the relatively provincial and tradition-bound Slovaks apart from their more urbanized and sophisticated Czech cousins.

Even in today's age of modern technology, the stubborn facts of geography have hampered Prague's efforts to hasten Slovakia's economic and social development. True, Bratislava and the Vah valley have become the core of a small but highly diversified industrial belt which, with its new petrochemical, machine tool, and steel plants, now complements the traditionally important agricultural economy of the intensively cultivated lowland regions. But despite the local impact of large forestry and mining operations, Slovakia's mountainous hinterland is still a predominantly backward and sparsely populated area, and the people there still live in comparative isolation.

Viewed as a whole, however, Czechoslovakia has attained a rather advanced level of economic development and, over the years, the process of growth has placed increasingly heavy demands on the nation's natural and human resources. While a variety of other important industrial minerals—including tungsten, lead, copper, gold, silver, zinc, and low grade iron ore—continue to be mined, only magnesite and uranium ore (the latter almost totally earmarked for export to the Soviet Union) are being produced in sufficient quantities at present to meet the country's requirements. In some respects, at least, the energy picture is considerably brighter. Both hard and soft coal are still in relatively abundant supply, and hydroelectric power sources are being developed. On the other hand, there is little oil or natural gas anywhere in Czechoslovakia. In fact, locally produced petroleum products account for less than 5% of domestic consumption.

With a population estimated in 1973 at only a little over 14.5 million—less than half that of Poland and well under that of the German Democratic Republic, Eastern Europe's geographically compact industrial giant—Czechoslovakia has also felt a manpower pinch. This problem is not attributable to the modest number of its inhabitants alone, however. Government-sponsored urban migration has seriously depleted the country's agricultural work force, a development which has contributed in no small way to the continuing inability of the modern and extensive agricultural sector to produce enough food to meet domestic needs. At the same time, Czechoslovakia's low rate of population growth—also at least partly a byproduct of the modernization process—has helped to depress the nation's overall manpower pool by bringing about a rise in the median age of the population.

A Star-Crossed People (u/ou)

Czechoslovakia's population may be aging, but at least it is less ethnically complex than it was only a generation ago. In an effort to provide the country with some natural protection against potentially hostile neighbors, the elder statesmen of Versailles gave their creation borders—for the most part historic—that generally follow mountain ridges and major rivers. By so doing, however, they also endowed the Czechoslovak state with large groups of people who were neither Czech nor Slovak and whose existence was subsequently used to justify irredentist territorial claims. Individuals of German extraction, for example, accounted for slightly more than 22% of the population, far outnumbering the Slovaks. Another 11% was composed of Hungarians, Ruthenians, and various lesser minority groups. But as a result of the territorial and population adjustments which followed World War II—the most significant of which were the mass expulsion of Germans, the resettlement of large numbers of Hungarians, and the loss of the country's easternmost province (Ruthenia) to the U.S.S.R.—Czechoslovakia is now almost solidly Slavic. The dominant Czechs now make up about 65% of the population, and the Slovaks about 30%. A half million or so Hungarians, for the most part concentrated in Slovakia near the border of their ethnic homeland, constitute the largest remaining minority group.

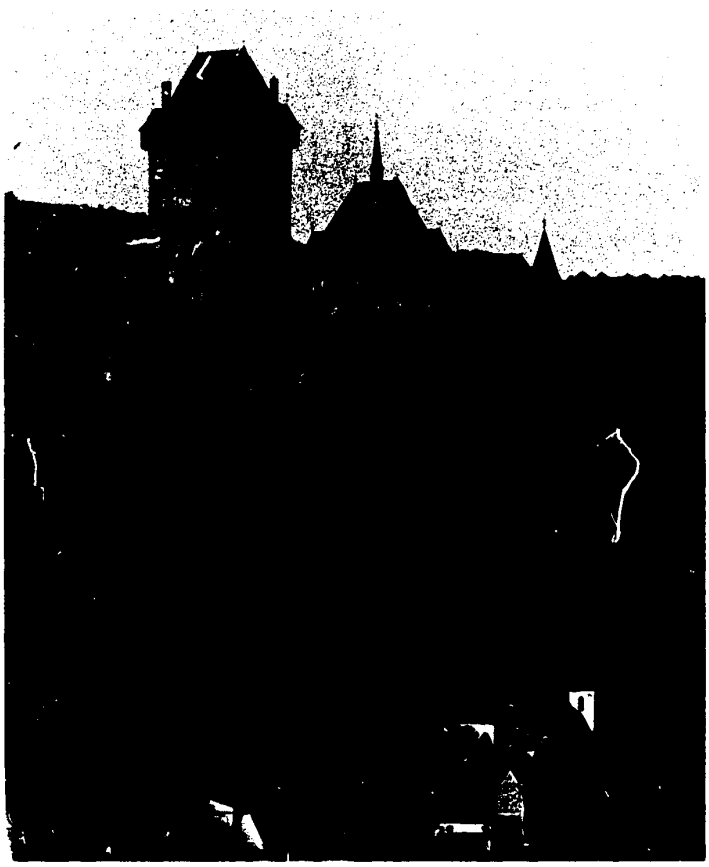
The Czechs and the Slovaks are descendants of a western Slav group that migrated into the general area of their present homeland from beyond the Carpathian mountains before the sixth century A.D. Much of the region had been occupied earlier by Celtic tribes, from one of which, the Boii, Bohemia and the adjacent German state of Bavaria derive their names. The Celts were gradually supplanted by Germanic groups, and in the seventh century, the Slavic tribes banded together for the first time under a single leader—a merchant named Samo—in order to fend off both the Franks and raiding Avar tribesmen from Asia. For a while, they were successful. But Samo's kingdom, which embraced Bohemia, Moravia, and part of present-day Austria, died with him in 685 A.D. For the next 100 years, the history of the Czech and Slovak peoples was scarred by Avar domination and periodic Frankish incursions.

In the early ninth century, however, following the defeat of the Avars by the Franks under Charlemagne, the Czechs and the Slovaks once again emerged from the shadows. Czech princes established what soon became known as the Great Moravian Empire and, in 863, invited Byzantine missionaries Cyril and Methodius to visit their domain and convert their subjects to Christianity. By then, the empire was one of the largest states in Europe. Centered on Moravia and Slovakia and covering a very respectable share of the central and eastern portions of the continent, it showed promise of becoming a permanent fixture of the political scene. Internal discord over succession gradually weakened it, however, and over time, the locus of political power began shifting westward to Bohemia, where the Prague-based Premyslid princely house was gaining strength. Finally, in 906, defeat by Magyar forces that had invaded Slovakia brought the Moravian Empire down altogether.

The Czech Lands survived this catastrophe relatively unscathed. The Premyslid princes succeeded in establishing the independent duchy—later kingdom—of Bohemia and quickly incorporated Moravia into their domain. The Slovaks, on the other hand, had no such luck. Their homeland was annexed by Hungary in 973, an event that ushered them into nearly 10 centuries of uninterrupted isolation and repression.

The Bohemian state is generally regarded as the direct predecessor of modern Czechoslovakia. Indeed, the statue and name of one of its earliest rulers, Prince Vaclav (later sainted and still widely celebrated as the "Good King Wenceslas" whose exploits are recorded in a traditional English Christmas carol) somewhat incongruously continue to grace the main square in Communist Prague today. Although few of Vaclav's successors won greater fame, their influence in shaping the distinctive character and outlook of the Czech people was no less profound.

Under the Premyslids, who ruled until 1306, the Kingdom of Bohemia entered into a loose relationship with the Holy Roman Empire, thus beginning an association with Germanic lands to the west that has affected Czech political and cultural life ever since.



Karlstein, perched in the mountains near Prague

Although frequently torn by dynastic rivalries, the embryonic state not only survived but eventually expanded its territories into parts of Austria and Poland. A brief interregnum followed the death of the last Premyslid king, during which several European royal houses contested for the vacant throne. The victor, John of Luxembourg, rarely visited his new domain, preferring to leave the business of government to his nobles while he sought his fame on the battlefield and his amusement at the French court. But the reign of his son, Charles I (1346-78), is generally considered to be the most brilliant in the history of the Kingdom of Bohemia. Charles was elected Holy Roman Emperor (as Charles IV) in 1355, and Prague for a time became the chief city of the empire.

Charles quickly elevated Bohemia to a position that rivaled those of the greatest states of Europe. Among other things, he established the Prague Archbishopric and founded the first university in central Europe. In 1356, acting in his capacity as Holy Roman Emperor, he issued the Golden Bull, which gave the King of Bohemia first rank among the electors of the empire. In addition, he promoted the use of the Czech language, promulgated a code of laws, and encouraged the growth of cities and commerce. He also imported foreign architects and artisans and initiated a program of public construction that contributed to Prague's later renown as one of Europe's most beautiful cities.

After Charles' death, however, Bohemia entered a prolonged and ultimately fatal period of decline. The line of succession became uncertain, and, together with flagrant church corruption, frequent struggles between successive kings and the entrenched nobility generated considerable popular unrest. Finally, early in the 15th century, the bold rhetoric and martyr's death of Jan Hus—the Prague pastor and university rector who became central Europe's first champion of religious reform—brought matters to a head. His followers, the Hussites, established fortified towns in southern Bohemia and, in 1419, rose in open rebellion against their country's establishment which was con-

trolled by German Catholics. Interestingly, the incident that touched off the fighting was the defenestration of a number of Prague town counselors by their angry Hussite compatriots, a unique form of violence (the victim is literally thrown through a window) which has twice since played a prominent role in Czech history.

The Hussite Wars, which lasted about 20 years, ravaged Bohemia and left a legacy of bitterness and distrust. Basic issues were left unresolved, and the Hussite movement remained active. With the land thus divided, powerful nobles extended their estates at the expense of both the church and the crown. In time, the succession to the Bohemian throne again became confused, passing briefly into Hungarian and Polish hands before being successfully claimed for the House of Hapsburg by Ferdinand I of Austria in 1526.

Although a precursor of later traumatic developments, the advent of Hapsburg rule had little immediate impact on the political, social, and economic structure of the Czech Lands. As legal masters of a complex domain embracing Austria and Hungary as well, Ferdinand and his successors were content to share their royal power with the local church and lay nobility. Thus it was that in an era when the Hapsburgs were becoming more and more involved with the Counter-Reformation, Czech Protestantism drew fresh strength from Luther's teachings and placed Prague on a collision course with Vienna.

Frictions between the House of Hapsburg and native Bohemian nobles finally erupted into open warfare in 1618, setting off a series of conflicts that raged over much of central Europe for 30 years. Once again, hostilities were precipitated by the defenestration of Catholic officials—in this instance, the appointed representatives of Ferdinand II—by assembled Protestant dignitaries in Prague. This time, however, retribution was swift in coming. After joining forces with Maximilian of Bavaria (the head of the Catholic League) and the Elector of Saxony, Ferdinand dealt a decisive defeat to the Czech armies at the Battle of White Mountain, near Prague, on 8 November 1620. From that day forward—and for the next 300 years—traditional Czech independence and civil liberties were forfeit to the Austrian crown.

The leaders of the rebellion were promptly beheaded. Catholicism was proclaimed the area's only religion. The German language was elevated to a higher status than Czech. Religious and political persecution forced most of the surviving nobility to flee, and their estates were handed over to a new gentry composed primarily of Catholics from southern Germany who had supported the Hapsburg cause. All high administrative offices were taken over by crown appointees, and the powers of town and village officials were sharply curtailed. Deprived of both political and intellectual leaders, the Czech nation was reduced to a mass of serfs.

Although the Czech Lands became mere provinces of the Hapsburg monarchy, their resilient inhabitants did not lose their sense of national identity. Regional patriotism surfaced once again in the more relaxed atmosphere of 18th century "enlightened despotism" and subsequently gathered strength under the conditions of comparative prosperity and intellectual freedom that prevailed during much of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Moreover, despite the Hungarians' continuing treatment of the local populace as subhuman, Slovakia experienced a parallel national revival. Thus, when World War I offered an opportunity to win independence from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, there was no dearth of capable Czech and Slovak leaders—men like Thomas G. Masaryk, Eduard Benes, and Milan Stefanik—willing and able to join forces to launch what turned out to be a finely orchestrated and highly successful campaign to attract widespread international support for their cause.

The establishment of Czechoslovakia as an independent democratic republic was proclaimed on 28 October 1918, and its self-appointed National Assembly elected Thomas Masaryk to be the country's first President a few days later. Masaryk was returned to office in the general election which followed final determination of the new state's boundaries and remained there until old age and ill health forced him to retire in 1935. Under his leadership, Czechoslovakia developed into a relatively liberal, prosperous, and democratic nation dependent for its security on treaties linking it with Romania, Yugoslavia, France, and, ultimately, the U.S.S.R. Nevertheless, Eduard Benes, Masaryk's friend and foreign minister who succeeded him as President, was confronted with some formidable problems. Economic difficulties born of the worldwide depression were aggravating old minority-based internal tensions. Moreover, Hitler had already exploited this situation to foster the organization of a large—and growing—Nazi-oriented Sudeten German Party which was calling for autonomy for all Germans in the republic and being generally disruptive politically.

Then, in 1938, when Hitler openly espoused the cause of self-determination for the Sudeten Germans and began levying political and territorial demands on Prague, Czechoslovakia's allies deserted her. The Soviets made a point of announcing their readiness to

join in a rescue effort if, as required under their mutual assistance treaty with Czechoslovakia, France would intervene first. But Paris, like London, was determined to avoid war at all costs. Conclusion of the four-power Munich Agreement of 30 September 1938, which directed unrepresented Czechoslovakia to cede all disputed Sudeten territory to Germany within 10 days, prompted Benes to resign and leave the country. Although his successor, Emil Hacha, was more acceptable to the Axis powers, he was in no position to halt the breakup of his homeland. Poland and Hungary joined Germany in seeking additional bits and pieces of the hapless Czechoslovak state. Finally, in March 1939, Hacha bowed to a new ultimatum from Berlin and surrendered control of all remaining Czech territory to Germany. What was left of Bohemia and Moravia was promptly incorporated *en bloc* into the Third Reich as a protectorate. To the east, Slovakia was established as an autonomous republic under an almost equally onerous degree of German control. After existing for only 21 years, Czechoslovakia disappeared from the map.

The outbreak of World War II enabled Benes to form an exile government in London and, in time, to secure full recognition for his group from all the major Allied powers both as the legal successor to Czechoslovakia's pre-Munich regime and as a cobelligerent in the war against the Axis. As the war progressed, Benes became convinced of the wisdom of a policy of close cooperation with the Soviet Union as well as with the West. In December 1943, he flew to Moscow to conclude a new 20-year treaty of friendship and mutual assistance with the Kremlin. While there, he also agreed to several political compromises that favored his country's Communists in order to secure their cooperation in a postwar government. In early 1945, when it became evident that responsibility for liberating Prague would fall to the Soviets, Benes returned to Moscow in order to work out the details of establishing a provisional government on Czechoslovak soil as soon as circumstances would permit. In April, Benes and his newly reorganized cabinet arrived in Kosice, a town in eastern Slovakia that had been designated as the temporary national capital a few weeks earlier. Their first official act was to publish a detailed governmental plan, the so-called Kosice Program, which revealed the extent of the concessions Benes had made to insure Soviet support.

Indeed, the changes made in Czechoslovakia's traditional political and economic systems under the Kosice Program were nearly as dramatic as the population and territorial adjustments cited earlier. A National Front coalition government was established in which the Communists initially held more than one-third of the portfolios, including the important ministries of defense, interior, agriculture, and information. The conservative Agrarian Party—the largest political party in prewar Czechoslovakia—was barred from participation in the coalition on the grounds that its representatives had collaborated with the Germans during the occupation. Under these circumstances, the Communists were soon able to push through a number of measures that further strengthened their position. Land redistribution, under a thinly disguised system of party patronage, was begun by the Communist minister of agriculture. Nationalization of industry, banking, and commerce was introduced. A reorganization of the military and police establishments aimed at bringing them more fully under Communist control was initiated.

These moves, together with the general popularity enjoyed by the Communists as a result of their prewar and wartime activities, contributed to the party's strong showing in the parliamentary elections of 1946. Receiving 38% of the votes cast, Communists won 114 of the 300 seats at stake—far more than any of the other five coalition parties. Their chief, Klement Gottwald, became prime minister. With little interference from his relatively complacent intended victims, he promptly began laying the groundwork for a total Communist takeover. His opportunity came in February 1948 when, noting that Communist popularity was declining and hoping to hasten new elections, all the non-Communist cabinet ministers resigned in protest of Communist manipulation of the police.

The Communists quickly brought massive pressures to bear on President Benes to force him to form a new government which would exclude their opponents. Communist-controlled action committees in almost every town, factory, school, and government office were armed and sent out to join the police in an overwhelming display of strength in Prague and other key points throughout the country. The radio and press were commandeered and used to saturate the population with pro-Communist propaganda. Tired, sick, and above all anxious to avoid civil war, President Benes capitulated. On February 25, he accepted a new National Front cabinet headed by Gottwald and composed largely of Communists and Communist sympathizers. And, while otherwise relatively bloodless, the coup took a final tragic twist in what may have been yet another defenestration incident. Whether he jumped or fell, as the Communists maintain, or whether he was pushed, as most Czechoslovaks still believe, the body of Jan Masaryk—Benes' postwar foreign minister and son of Czechoslovakia's first President—was found beneath the window of his quarters in Prague Castle on 10 March 1948.

The Stalinist Interlude and the Dubcek Revival (c)

The advent of Communist rule brought a whole new series of traumatic experiences for the Czechoslovak people. Early hopes that local Communist leaders would prove to be less exacting overseers than their Soviet counterparts and that Moscow would allow them to chart their own domestic course were quickly dashed. Gottwald's forces embarked on a determined campaign to secure their victory and force the nation into an ideologically orthodox authoritarian mold. Efforts to liquidate non-Communist elements were stepped up, and in May 1948 the National Assembly, by then Communist-dominated, approved a new constitution redesignating Czechoslovakia a "people's republic" in consonance with the pattern the Soviets had established elsewhere in Eastern Europe. A problem developed when President Benes resigned rather than sign the new charter into law, but Gottwald, Benes' successor as President, made haste to remedy this situation. By mid-June, Czechoslovakia's initial postwar political system had been officially discarded.

With this event, the country entered a grim and lengthy Stalinist phase in its development. Fearful of lingering democratic values, the Gottwald regime employed all the techniques at the disposal of a modern totalitarian state—including intimidation, propaganda, and strict regulation of the political, economic, and cultural life of the people—to consolidate its position. Intensive programs of nationalization of remaining small private firms and of agricultural collectivization were launched. A highly centralized command economy was established in which, just as in its Soviet prototype, investment priority was accorded to heavy industry. Those non-Communist parties which were not disbanded outright were either merged with or made puppets of the Communist Party. Much to the dismay of the nominally autonomous regional Communist Party organization in Slovakia, effective political power was concentrated in the hands of a few top national party leaders in Prague. Ever tighter controls were imposed on educational institutions, the church, and the information media. The population was herded into a web of interlocking Communist-dominated mass organizations embracing almost every aspect of social activity and was subjected to a broad campaign of coercion and terror which reached its zenith during the ruthless Stalinist trials of the late 1940's and early 1950's.

In contrast to what happened in most of the other Communist countries of Eastern Europe, neither Stalin's death in 1953 nor Khrushchev's famous denunciation of his former master 3 years later resulted in any internal liberalization in Czechoslovakia. Gottwald quickly followed Stalin to the grave, but the heirs to his power—Antonin Zapotocky, who stepped up to the Presidency from his former post as prime minister, and Antonin Novotny, who took over leadership of the party—were men of the Stalinist mold. Despite their general unpopularity, however, they were spared the sort of internal unrest that erupted in neighboring Communist states by the tight grip that they maintained on all aspects of Czechoslovak life, the traditional caution of the population, and the steady increase in living standards generated by forced-draft industrial growth.

Zapotocky's death in 1957 brought no change in the ultraconservative orientation of the regime, for Novotny simply donned the hat of President in addition to that of party chief. Three years later, a new constitution was promulgated proclaiming Czechoslovakia to be a mature socialist state, one—indeed, the only one aside from the U.S.S.R.—nearly ready to begin the vaguely defined

Klement Gottwald

Antonin Novotny

process of transition to communism. The charter changed the name of the country to Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and provided for far-reaching administrative changes designed to support the principle of strong centralized rule. In addition to its more mundane objectives, the document was clearly intended to serve as an eloquent testimonial to the success and wisdom of Novotny's domestic policies. But such self-congratulation was a bit premature. In fact, Novotny's outmoded Stalinist system was already beginning to break down.

Over the years, Novotny's policies had alienated most of his countrymen and had even created divisions—albeit for the most part well concealed—within the party itself. The Slovaks, chafing under their total subordination to a Czech-dominated regime in Prague, were particularly unhappy. Moreover, popular discontent, while rarely openly expressed, had quickly found reflection in various forms of passive resistance which not only exacerbated the shortcomings inherent in Czechoslovakia's straitjacketed economy, but undermined the effectiveness of Novotny's political programs as well.

In late 1962, mounting economic troubles and Khrushchev's renewed assault on Stalinism brought matters to a head. Reformist forces inside and outside the party began to agitate openly for the sort of liberalization that had been undertaken throughout most of the rest of Communist Eastern Europe many years earlier. Faced with new economic reverses in 1963, Novotny was forced to modify his policies and sanction a gradual relaxation of controls. Once begun, however, liberalization developed a momentum of its own. Longstanding differences between party liberals and conservatives broke out into the open, frequently impeding the formulation or implementation of policies needed to deal with pressing economic and social problems. Novotny's efforts to establish and maintain a delicate balance between these factions only increased the levels of party discord and official inertia. By late 1967, Novotny was clearly losing control of the situation, and a full-blown party crisis ensued.

Sensing Novotny's vulnerability, a group of Slovak leaders headed by Alexander Dubcek precipitated the crisis during an October meeting of the Party Central Committee by boldly criticizing him and his inefficient Czech-dominated administration and by suggesting that the time had come for collective leadership. Although a number of Czech leaders who also favored a change at the helm soon joined in these personal attacks on the previously sacrosanct Novotny, he managed to postpone discussion of the leadership question for a number of weeks in hopes of improving

his position. It was a bad gamble; Novotny continued to lose support at all levels of the party. The final blow came in early December when Soviet party chief Leonid Brezhnev arrived in Prague for an on-the-spot assessment of the situation and decided not to intervene in Novotny's behalf. Desperate, Novotny and his principal supporters then toyed with the idea of mounting a military coup, but they proved unable to bring one off. In early January 1968 the Central Committee ousted Novotny as Party First Secretary and elected Alexander Dubcek to take his place. Novotny was, however, allowed to retain both the Presidency and his seats on the Party Presidium and Central Committee until March when, partly because of the damaging revelations of a close associate who had defected to the West, his political career came to an abrupt end.

The news of Novotny's fall was received with approval at home and abroad. A brighter era seemed to be in store for the Czechoslovak people, but no one, least of all the Soviets, really expected momentous changes. Dubcek, a compromise choice for the top party post, had been trained in Moscow and had seemed to occupy a middle-of-the-road position on political and economic reform during his rise to leadership of the Slovak Party organization under Novotny. Once in national office, however, he surrounded himself with an impressive team of liberal intellectuals and youthful technocrats whose unorthodox views and impatient energy soon won popular approbation.

Czechoslovakia's brief and exhilarating Prague Spring blossomed in April when the Dubcek regime adopted, and swiftly moved to implement, a comprehensive program for reform—the so-called Action Program. The sweeping changes embodied therein were intended both to rationalize the country's unwieldy socialist system and to humanize it by making it responsive to democratic processes. Thus, personal rights and liberties were guaranteed, including the freedoms of speech and assembly and the right to travel, work, and, in some cases, reside permanently abroad. Censorship was lifted. The role of the party in the process of government was reduced, and the National Assembly was directed to assume its constitutional role as the "supreme organ of state power." Plans were made to establish a decentralized and market-oriented economy, akin in spirit if not in detail to the Yugoslav model. Gustav Husak was called out of political obscurity to lead a drive to federalize the state. And while the Dubcek regime repeatedly reaffirmed its basic loyalty to Moscow, it delighted its prideful domestic constituency by simultaneously serving notice that Czechoslovakia would thenceforth maintain a less subservient stance.

The tasks Dubcek set for himself in the Action Program were not easy. From the outset, the reform process was impeded by quarrels over tactics and priorities and by the maneuvers of formidable opponents both at home and abroad. For their part, Czechoslovak conservatives, both inside and outside the party, opposed Dubcek's programs for ideological reasons and out of fear that they would lose their jobs. Beyond the country's borders, the Soviet Union and its more conservative Warsaw Pact allies, most notably East Germany and Poland, became concerned that Dubcek's reforms not only might lead Czechoslovakia to withdraw from the socialist camp but also might prove to be disastrously contagious. In consequence, the pressures brought to bear on Dubcek from the east to get him to alter his course mounted steadily throughout the spring and summer of 1968, culminating in a summit-level confrontation between the Soviet Politburo and the Czechoslovak Presidium at the Slovak border town of Cierna nad Tisou in late July.

The Soviet-orchestrated campaign of intimidation was, however, a dismal failure. Far from cowing the Czechoslovak people and their leaders, it forged a strong bond of anti-Soviet nationalism between them. Increasing domestic popularity, in turn, encouraged Dubcek and his lieutenants to deal with their Warsaw Pact critics in the best and most devious Schweikist tradition. Finally, when it appeared that the pledges the Soviets thought they had extracted from Dubcek at Cierna nad Tisou would not be fulfilled, the Kremlin's patience ran out. On the night of 20-21 August, Moscow moved to crush the Dubcek experiment by force. About 300,000 troops, predominantly from the Soviet Union but including contingents from East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary, poured into Czechoslovakia. The invasion was swift and well coordinated. There was no organized military resistance and, despite sporadic gunfire and attempts by some Czechoslovak citizens to sabotage the movements of the invading forces, casualties were extremely light. Prague and other major urban centers were quickly occupied. Key Czechoslovak leaders, including Dubcek, were arrested and spirited away to prison cells in the U.S.S.R.

At this point, however, the Soviet Union's carefully laid plans went awry. Failing to foresee the surge of national unity and loyalty to Dubcek that its heavyhanded actions would provoke, the Kremlin had assumed that it could install a collaborationist regime within hours after the intervention. The Soviets quickly learned how wrong they were. Gen. Ludvik Svoboda, the normally mild-mannered old national hero who had succeeded Novotny as President 5

Angry crowd confronts a Soviet tank in Prague

months earlier, refused to name a new government. Leading Czechoslovak conservatives tripped over each other in denying complicity in or sympathy with the invasion. The National Assembly issued a ringing resolution of protest. Angry throngs, defiant radio and television broadcasts, and an irrepressible flood of hastily lettered slogans and posters ridiculed Moscow's lame justification for intervention. An extraordinary congress of the Czechoslovak Party—by name and composition an expeditious substitute for the party conclave previously scheduled for September—was convened in secret under the very noses of the occupation troops in Prague on 22 August. By nightfall, the assembled delegates had elected a new and overwhelmingly liberal Central Committee, reconfirmed Dubcek in his post as First Secretary, condemned the invasion, and adopted a resolution threatening unspecified "measures" if the Czechoslovak leaders being held in the Soviet Union were not freed.

The following day, President Svoboda, accompanied by Husak and an ideologically mixed group of other Czechoslovak leaders, flew to Moscow to demand the release of his colleagues and to negotiate a mutually acceptable solution to the situation created by the invasion. Fearing the outbreak of an uprising similar to the one in Hungary in 1956 and under sharp attack from both Communist and non-Communist critics abroad, the Soviets backed down. Dubcek and his associates were freed and brought to the negotiating table in Moscow. A compromise agreement, one which fell far short of meeting the Kremlin's original objectives, was hammered out, and on the morning of 27 August Czechoslovakia's preinvasion leadership team returned home—tired and discouraged, but intact.

Undaunted, the Soviets launched a determined campaign to undermine the Dubcek group's domestic position by forcing it to implement a number of unpopular measures. In this, the Kremlin was successful. Prague's actions in nullifying the work of the extraordinary party congress, signing a status-of-forces agreement authorizing the "temporary" stationing of Soviet troops on Czechoslovak soil, and creating a new and appropriately "balanced" eight-member body at the apex of the party hierarchy reopened old divisions within the leadership and disappointed the population. Although, as Dubcek had promised, a law federalizing the country into separate Czech and Slovak republics was duly enacted and implemented, bitter factional infighting made it increasingly difficult for him to preserve any other feature of his preinvasion reform program. Finally, in April 1969, he bowed to the inevitable and agreed to step aside in favor of Husak, Slovakia's postintervention party boss and by then the leading advocate of "realism" and "normalization" of relations with the Soviet Union. Subsequently stripped of his remaining party posts and recalled from honorable exile as Ambassador to Turkey, Dubcek was eventually expelled from the party altogether and relegated to a modest and obscure existence as a motor pool supervisor in the Slovak forestry administration, a job he still held in late 1973.

Husak's Headaches (c)

The situation that Husak faced when he took over as Party First Secretary was far from reassuring. The country was suffering from inflation, shortages, and general economic chaos resulting from the beleaguered Dubcek's inability to develop a workable new economic system to replace the discarded centralized controls of the Novotny era. Moreover, the leadership was still bitterly divided, the Czechoslovak people were still indulging in occasional anti-Soviet demonstrations, and the Kremlin had recently renewed threats of direct intervention. It was evident that, at the very minimum, political normalization would require reunification of the party and restoration of its "leading role"; establishment and maintenance of an effective system of control over the country's population and mass social organizations; removal of the disruptive influence of surviving liberal and, in some cases, fundamentally antisocialist elements; and restoration of the confidence of the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact members in the policies of the Czechoslovak Government.

Dubcek with his successor, Husak, the night he resigned as party leader

Despite the apparent urgency of the need to correct the "distortions" of the Dubcek era, Husak sought to establish a relatively moderate regime, one which would gradually win both popular acceptance and support by turning back the clock as gently and selectively as possible. In this, he was hampered to some degree by his own authoritarian bent, a trait which was reflected in his willingness to employ firm and occasionally brutal methods in suppressing the open manifestations of dissent which marred his early months in office. More important, however, his room for maneuver—never very great—shrank markedly as the forced exodus of liberals from public life gradually denied him the traditional centrist option of playing both ends of the political spectrum against each other. Husak's problems on this score were compounded by the Soviets who, suspicious about his reformist past and true intentions with respect to the future, not only withheld the support he needed to consolidate his domestic position but also actively sought to prevent him from becoming too powerful by giving measured encouragement to his hardline critics. In keeping with this strategy, flattering attention was paid to prominent conservatives, especially to those like Alois Indra and Vasil Bilak who were potential contenders for party leadership, and their willing cooperation was enlisted both in keeping a close watch on Husak and in prodding him to further rapid compliance with Soviet wishes.

Because of these pressures, Husak was forced into a series of damaging political retreats. He yielded to his opponents on some key cadre appointments. Bit by bit, he backed away from his early positions on a number of vital issues, including his initial and highly popular contention that the 1968 intervention had been both uninvited and unneeded, his promise that there would be no massive purge of the party membership, and his advocacy of a policy of "reconciliation" with the deposed liberal community. Indeed, as he shifted toward a more orthodox and conservative posture, his policies at times became indistinguishable from those of his hardline rivals.

But Husak's retreat never became a rout. A tough and battle-scarred master of the art of political survival, he yielded just enough to steal his conservative opponents' thunder and to bolster his standing with Moscow. By so doing, he was able to prevent his rivals from converting the party purge of 1970 into a witchhunt that would have deprived the organization of its mass character and reduced it to an elite core of hardliners. He also managed to stave off demands for Stalinist-style political trials and for a wholesale purge of technicians, managers, and other members of the "technical intelligentsia." In late 1970, he even succeeded in getting Moscow to agree to the removal of two of his more troublesome domestic enemies: Czech Interior Minister Groesser and General Rytir, Prague's representative in the Czechoslovak-Soviet Military Liaison Office. Shortly thereafter, following new concessions designed to satisfy Moscow's remaining minimum requirements for political normalization (most notably, the publication of two major party documents sanctifying a Soviet-approved explanation of the origins and nature of the country's recent internal crisis), political infighting in Prague began to taper off.

By late May 1971, when the long-postponed official 14th Congress of the Czechoslovak Party was convened to proclaim the defeat of "revisionism" and the advent of a hopeful new era of solid "socialist construction," the continuation of Husak's tenure as party chief was no longer in doubt. The thoroughness with which he had dismantled the liberal movement and his firmness in quieting public dissent had left his conservative opponents no lever with which to challenge his position. Moreover, the dedication with which he had aligned Czechoslovak policy with Soviet interests and his personal allegiance to Brezhnev had earned him the all-important backing of Moscow. The issue on which he had appeared most vulnerable—his failure to sanction the Warsaw Pact's military intervention in 1968—had been largely diluted by his public accession at the Soviet Party Congress a month before to the thesis that the invasion had been mounted in response to "appeals" by true Czechoslovak Communists.

For the most part, the 14th Congress was a *pro forma* affair, notable primarily for its display of unity within the top leadership. Husak was duly reconfirmed in office and subjected to some warm words of praise from Brezhnev. The changes made in the party leadership and organization were minor, designed either to tie up loose ends remaining from the reform era or, like according Husak the Soviet-style title of general secretary, to underscore Prague's loyalty to the U.S.S.R. Perhaps the most significant of these moves was the decision to recentralize the power structure by abolishing the Czech Bureau—a stopgap body created after the invasion by reformists attempting to federalize the party around equal Czech and Slovak organizations—and by returning the Slovak Party to its traditional subordinate, albeit separate, status.

Despite his emergence as undisputed *primus inter pares*, however, the congress was not an unqualified personal success for Husak. For all their pomp and circumstance, the proceedings had done nothing to improve his domestic popularity or to decrease his dependence on Moscow. Quite the contrary. Not only

Husak delivering closing statement at 14th Party Congress

had he been forced to repeat his endorsement of the invited invasion thesis but, by stressing the collective nature of party authority, the congress had underscored the fact that he had paid for his preeminence by making fundamental concessions to his conservative colleagues. Moreover, the one change made in the membership of the Party Presidium—the replacement of Dubcek-era holdover Evzen Erban by hardliner Karel Hoffman—served notice to all concerned that the conservative wing of the party would continue to exercise a strong voice in the policymaking process.

Husak was subsequently able to redress the leadership balance to his advantage by easing Alois Indra out of his post as Party Secretary and into the less powerful job of Chairman of the National Assembly. But although Husak's position in late 1973 appeared stronger, with regard to both the Soviets and his internal opposition, than at any time since he assumed power, his room for maneuver was still very limited.

The short- and long-term problems that Husak has encountered in the economic field have been inextricably intertwined with his political woes. He was painfully aware that the inherent weaknesses of a command economy had played a major role in Novotny's downfall, yet in moving to overcome the chaos generated by Dubcek's embryonic reforms, he had no choice other than to reimpose a highly centralized system patterned on the Soviet model. From the outset, however, he wisely avoided one major error of the Novotny era by preserving the Dubcek regime's emphasis on building new housing, producing more consumer goods, and upgrading the Czechoslovak diet.

Husak's first order of business was to strengthen his regime's control over the planning and direction of the economy. As in the political field, he moved slowly at first in order to avoid unduly alarming the populace. In mid-1969, however, continued inflationary pressure forced his hand, and Czechoslovakia entered a prolonged period of economic retrenchment and reorganization. Retail prices were increased and then frozen. New investment projects were curtailed. Planned wage increases were halted. A wide range of controls, including obligatory goals for output and trade,

were imposed on the business community. The trade unions were gradually deprived of the meaningful voice in both local and top-level economic decisions that they had acquired during the Dubcek era and eventually were relegated to their traditional role as an instrument of control under the unenlightened leadership of hardliner Karel Hoffman.

Husak succeeded in containing inflation by the end of 1970. He then unveiled a new Five Year Plan (1971-1975) which turned out to be the most cautious of any in Eastern Europe—and the most closely attuned to Moscow's desires. The plan's growth goals were, in fact, clearly understated in order to insure that the economy would enjoy the appearance of healthy progress. In broad terms, the document called for a renewed stress on heavy industry, closer cooperation with the U.S.S.R. and other Communist countries, and increased attention to the immediate needs of the Czechoslovak consumer.

One thing which was conspicuously missing from the plan was any hint of new economic reforms. Indeed, while possible changes affecting prices, wages, and managerial techniques have subsequently become the subject of lively debate within the closed confines of top governmental and party organs, little movement toward overhauling the country's resurrected command economy had been recorded by late 1973. In Husak's defense, it must be said that neither the political balance in Czechoslovakia nor Moscow's renewed emphasis on conformity have favored innovation. Furthermore, there is no denying that Husak's efforts to improve consumer welfare have met with considerable success. At the same time, however, his dutifully orthodox approach to economic and political affairs and his marked reluctance to remove loyal party hacks from important jobs have aggravated old economic problems and created some new difficulties of their own.

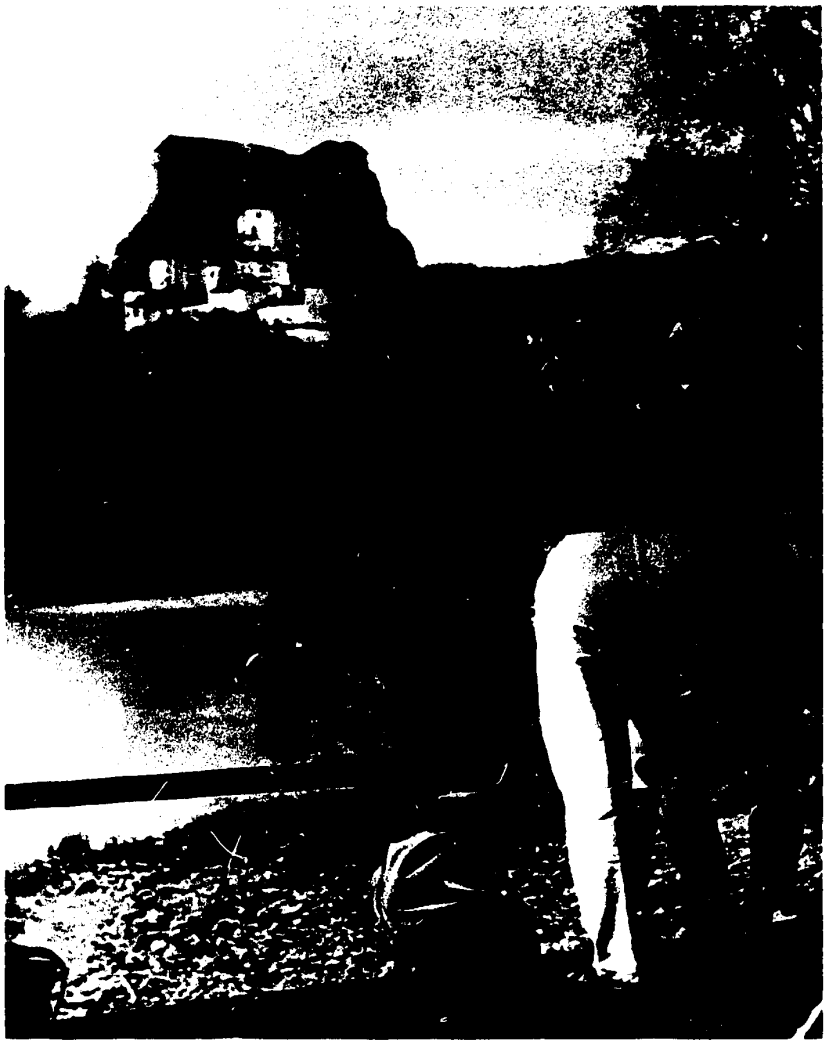
In fact, while the economy continues to plod along (both national income and industrial production have been growing at about 6% a year), it is creaking audibly. The manpower squeeze has grown worse. Exhortation and threats have failed to yield planned gains in productivity. Thanks largely to poor worker discipline and unsound management, construction and production costs have increased much faster than anticipated. In part due to the same factors, major investment projects have been taking an average of 8 years from planning to completion—nearly twice the comparable period in other developed nations. Many industrial facilities are antiquated and lag far behind their Western counterparts. Alarmingly, in view of Husak's efforts to bind his country more closely to the Soviet bloc, even the comparative advantage which Czechoslovak products have traditionally enjoyed within the Council for Economic Mutual Assistance (CEMA) has evaporated.

Husak's principal problems in the field of foreign affairs—Soviet tutelage and troubling isolation—were a logical outgrowth of his normalization campaign. During his first 3 years in office, when he was largely preoccupied with internal matters, his foreign policy was characterized by total subservience to Moscow. Predictably, his regime's overall responsiveness to Soviet desires and, in particular, its action in officially endorsing Brezhnev's views on both the practical and ideological justification for the 1968 invasion, led to a marked deterioration of its relations with free-spirited Yugoslavia and Romania. Similarly, Prague's relations with the leading nations of the non-Communist world became strained as Husak moved to cut off the free travel of Czechoslovak citizens to the West and as his rigid domestic policies came under growing Western criticism.

Toward the end of 1972, increasing self-confidence and the opportunities created by Moscow's unfolding policy of detente prompted Husak to turn his hand to repairing some of this damage. With the Kremlin's blessing, he launched a broad diplomatic offensive designed to restore Czechoslovakia to its preinvasion standing in the international community. There were some setbacks, both of his own making and because of problems in the Middle East, but by early 1974 he could claim an impressive list of accomplishments. Among other things, he had buried the hatchet with Romania and Yugoslavia. At the cost of retreating from its original demand that Bonn declare the 1938 Munich Agreement invalid *ab initio*, Czechoslovakia had concluded a pair of bilateral treaties with West Germany which had paved the way for restoration of normal diplomatic relations between the two countries. Some progress had been made toward resolving longstanding differences with Austria and the Vatican. The U.S. Secretary of State had paid a much publicized visit to Prague, and working-level talks aimed at reaching a satisfactory settlement of opposing U.S. and Czechoslovak financial claims had been initiated.

Despite its more assertive posture, however, Prague's freedom of action in the foreign policy field in early 1974 was still clearly circumscribed by its loyalty to the Soviet Union. Indeed, Czechoslovakia remained the loudest proponent of a "coordinated socialist foreign policy" in Eastern Europe. And under those circumstances, Husak was still finding it hard to develop either domestic support or international respect.

"We Have Been, and We Will Be Again" (c)



This old Czech motto reflects the combination of resignation and basic optimism that still characterizes the outlook of Husak's countrymen. Despite past disappointments, hopes persist that Husak will someday reveal himself to be the ultimate practitioner of Schweikism—that, having lulled both the Kremlin and his hardline domestic opponents into dropping their guard, he will shrewdly exploit the logic and imperatives of detente to launch a new round of liberalizing political and economic reforms. But although such a happy eventuality is not beyond the realm of possibility, the prospects for any significant improvement in Czechoslovakia's internal climate in the near future are not bright.

Whatever his ultimate intentions, Husak is in a difficult position. He cannot chart an even modestly independent course unless he can develop a firm base of popular support similar to that enjoyed by Poland's Gierek or Hungary's Kadar. Ironically, the trend toward East-West detente has made it more difficult for Husak to court this support. For one thing, Moscow has been pressing for increased discipline and conformity in Eastern Europe in order to counter the potentially corrosive impact of detente. As might be expected, the Kremlin's call for an intensification of the struggle against all forms of ideological heresy has been enthusiastically echoed by Czechoslovakia's hardliners. Moreover, although Husak still favors a policy of moderation, even he recognizes that Czechoslovakia is particularly vulnerable to destabilizing Western influences. Not only do most of the popular grievances that combined to topple the Novotny regime still lie close to the surface, but the 1968 invasion created a strong—and for the Czechoslovaks, unprecedented—undercurrent of anti-Sovietism as well. All told, Husak must find the arguments against easing internal controls to be very strong.

In any event, the general trend of developments in Czechoslovakia suggests that Husak's course will continue to swing between suppressing the vestiges of resistance with a stick and luring the masses out of their apathy with a carrot. Unfortunately for the Czechoslovak populace, the stick seemed most in evidence as 1973 drew to a close. For example, about 50 former students and faculty members of the Communist Party's higher school were suddenly and belatedly stripped of their academic titles and degrees. The body of Jan Palach, a young student who immolated himself in January 1969 to protest the Warsaw Pact invasion and its consequences, was mysteriously removed from a cemetery in Prague, and his grave was replaced with that of a virtually unknown woman. In addition, there were reports that a new trial of prominent dissidents was being prepared.

In sum, it would appear that no general thaw is in the immediate offing. Without one, however, it seems almost certain that the economy—and Husak personally—will have to continue to bear the twin burdens of popular apathy and passive resistance. Indeed, even if Husak should introduce some modest economic reforms in the near future, he could find it increasingly difficult just to satisfy the newly whetted economic expectations of his countrymen.

More than 50,000 mourners attend funeral services of Jan Palach, whose self-immolation was in protest of the Soviet-led invasion.

Chronology (u/ou)

863

Greek missionaries Cyril and Methodius arrive in Moravia, establishing early Christian unity among Czech peoples; draw up first Slavic alphabet.

906

Moravian Empire is dissolved after defeat by Magyars.

921–29

Bohemia and Moravia are united under crown of Wenceslas, Bohemia's patron saint.

973

Slovakia is annexed by Hungary.

13th century

Germans begin mass migration into Bohemia, setting stage for rapid social and economic development.

1346–78

Bohemia enjoys "Golden Age" under Charles I of Bohemia (Charles IV of Holy Roman Empire).

1348

University of Prague (Charles University), first university in central Europe, is founded.

1415

Martyrdom of Jan Hus precipitates Hussite revolt against domination by Germans and Catholic Church; Czech national consciousness gestates.

1526

Ferdinand assumes Bohemian throne, beginning Hapsburg domination and renewing Catholic domination.

1592–1670

Jan Comenius reforms education and leads latter phase of Czech reformation.

1618

Bohemian Protestants revolt against Catholic Church, initiating Thirty Years War; two Catholic governors are victims of "defenestration of Prague."

1620

Czechs are defeated at Battle of White Mountain, reestablishing Hapsburg rule; during "Time of the Night" Bohemia endures severe political, religious, and cultural persecution; war losses and heavy migration lead to renewed Germanization of Bohemia.

19th century

Czech "renaissance" emphasizes literary works of national history and folklore; Czech language revives.

1867

Austro-Hungarian Empire incorporates Slovakia, Bohemia, and Moravia; economic and cultural growth are facilitated by relatively mild Austrian hegemony.

1918

First Czechoslovak Republic is founded under President Tomas G. Masaryk.

1921

Czechoslovak Communist Party is founded.

1935

Eduard Benes succeeds Masaryk as President of the Republic.

1938
September

Munich Conference cedes Sudetenland to Germany.

1939
March

German troops occupy Czechoslovakia; Bohemia and Moravia become German protectorate and Slovakia becomes "independent" state.

1940
July

United Kingdom recognizes Czechoslovak Government in London under Eduard Benes.

1943
December

Benes signs 20-year friendship and mutual assistance pact with U.S.S.R.

1944
August

Slovak national uprising takes place against Nazis.

1945
April

Kosice program of close relations with U.S.S.R. and nationalization of industry is announced.

May

Last German resistance ends with liberation of Prague.

June

Expulsion of most ethnic Germans is ordered. Ruthenia ceded to U.S.S.R.

December

By mutual agreement, U.S. and Soviet troops withdraw from Czechoslovakia.

1946
May

Communists receive 38%, National Socialists 18%, Social Democrats 13%, and Slovak Democrats 14% of votes in first postwar general election. Three other parties share remaining 17% of votes.

June

Eduard Benes is unanimously elected President.

July

Klement Gottwald (Communist) forms government.

1947
July

Under Soviet pressure Czechoslovak cabinet reverses its decision to participate in Marshall Plan.

1948
February

Communists seize power in bloodless coup and formally establish "people's democracy."

June

Benes resigns presidency.

Gottwald becomes President and Antonin Zapotocky Prime Minister.

1949
January

First Five Year (Economic) Plan (1949–53) begins.

1951
March

Roman Catholic Archbishop Beran is banished from Prague.

November

Rudolph Slansky is arrested and charged with conspiracy against state.

1952
November

Slansky and 10 other former officials are sentenced to death for treason.

1953
March

Gottwald dies; Zapotocky becomes President and Viliam Siroky Prime Minister.

September

Antonin Novotny becomes party First Secretary.

1955
May

Warsaw Pact is established.

1956
January

Second Five Year Plan (1956–60) begins.

1957
November

President Zapotocky dies; Novotny becomes President, retaining post of party First Secretary.

1960
July

Newly elected National Assembly proclaims achievement of socialism in Czechoslovakia, ratifies new "socialist" constitution, and changes country's name to "Czechoslovak Socialist Republic."

1961
January

Third Five Year Plan (1961–65) begins.

June

Judicial law tightens party control over simplified court system.

1962
August

Third Five Year Plan is scrapped as economic situation deteriorates.

December

12th Party Congress agrees to review 1949–54 purges and to begin de-Stalinization in earnest.

1963
May

Intellectual ferment reaches point of public criticism of party and state leaders.

June

Regime announces liberalization of cultural policies at writers and journalists unions' congress.

Novotny moves to reassert his control as de-Stalinization gains momentum.

Verdicts of 1949–54 purge trial are revised and victims partially rehabilitated.

September

Premier Siroky is fired and cabinet shuffled; Jozef Lenart becomes Premier; party commissions for ideology, economy, standard of living, and agriculture are established.

Americans still in Czechoslovak prisons are released and returned to United States in gesture to improve relations.

1964
March

Experiments in economic decentralization and "market socialism" begin.

October

Youth demonstrations occur in Prague.

November

Novotny is reelected President for 5-year term.

1965
February

Radical reform of economy is adopted.

Archbishop Beran is named Cardinal; leaves permanently for Rome.

1966
January

Economic Reform Program (ERP) is introduced.

May–June

13th Czechoslovak Communist Party Congress elects more liberal Central Committee.

1967
June

Liberal intellectuals attack conservative Novotny regime at fourth congress of Czechoslovak Writers Union.

July

Novotny visits Moscow to reaffirm his policy position and to gain Soviet support.

October

Slovak leaders, including Dubcek, launch strong personal attack at Central Committee meeting against Novotny for his poor handling of Czech-Slovak problems.

Prague students demonstrate in streets in protest over poor living conditions, but are intercepted and brutally manhandled by police.

December

Brezhnev arrives in Prague to assess political situation and to encourage Czechoslovak party leaders to maintain stable regime.

Novotny is attacked by both Czech and Slovak leaders at Central Committee plenum, and continues to lose support on all levels of Communist Party.

1968
January

Central Committee plenum ousts Novotny as Party First Secretary and replaces him with Slovak leader Alexander Dubcek. Four additional Dubcek supporters also elected to Presidium, thus providing moderate Dubcek group with a majority.

Dubcek visits Moscow alone for first time as party chief.

1968
February

Dubcek meets separately with Hungary's Kadar and Poland's Gomulka.

Czechoslovak army Major General Sejna, who is implicated in attempted military coup in support of Novotny, defects to United States.

First issue of *Literarni Listy*, new journal of Liberal intellectuals, appears in Prague.

March

Novotny resigns from presidency, allegedly for reasons of health; wave of resignations among high-ranking regime conservatives follows.

Dubcek attends meeting with Soviet, Polish, East German, Bulgarian, and Hungarian leaders in Dresden in abortive attempt by Prague's bloc allies to influence internal Czechoslovak developments.

Novotny resigns from Party Presidium.

April

New Party Presidium and government cabinet are announced; Oldrich Cernik replaces Lenart as Premier; party announces its Action Program designed to fuse socialism with basic elements of democracy.

May

Dubcek and other leaders visit Soviet Union to discuss Czechoslovak situation.

Soviets and Poles conduct military maneuvers along Czechoslovak border.

Soviet, Polish, East German, Bulgarian, and Hungarian leaders meet in Moscow to present united front against Czechoslovak "democratization."

Soviet Premier Kosygin and Defense Minister Grechko visit Czechoslovakia to confer with Prague leaders.

Novotny is ousted from Central Committee and suspended from party membership.

June–July

Warsaw Pact "command staff exercises" in Czechoslovakia and Poland result in protracted presence of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia after maneuvers are over.

June

National Assembly passes law abolishing prior censorship.

Three Prague newspapers publish "2,000 Words" manifesto written by liberal writer Ludvik Vaculik and signed by other liberals demanding acceleration of "democratization" and calling for dismissal of party leaders who have abused their power. Party Presidium denounces manifesto on same day.

July

Czech National Council established as provisional counterpart to Slovak National Council, as first step in proposed federative arrangement.

Soviet, Polish, East German, Hungarian, and Bulgarian leaders meet in Warsaw and draft letter censuring Dubcek regime and Action Program.

Czechoslovak Minister of National Defense recommends reform of Warsaw Pact command.

Czechoslovak Party Presidium issues reply to "Warsaw Letter" refuting allegations.

Soviet *Pravda* claims that Czechoslovak security forces found secret cache of U.S. arms near West German border.

Soviet-Warsaw Pact military exercises along Czechoslovakia's borders greatly expand.

1968
July–August

Czechoslovak Presidium and Soviet Politburo meet at Cierna nad Tisou, on Czechoslovak-U.S.S.R. border.

August

Soviet bloc leaders ratify Cierna nad Tisou agreement at special summit session in Bratislava.

Yugoslav President Tito given rousing welcome during 3-day visit to Prague.

East German party boss Ulbright receives chilly reception during brief trip to consult with Dubcek at Karlovy Vary.

Rumanian party chief Ceausescu arrives in Prague to confer with liberal Czechoslovak leadership and to sign 20-year mutual friendship treaty with Czechoslovakia.

Soviet press, after 3-week silence, resumes heavy propaganda barrage opposing Czechoslovak reforms.

Soviet troops, accompanied by East German, Polish, Hungarian, and Bulgarian forces, invade Czechoslovakia on night of 20–21 August; by morning of 21 August, Soviet military in complete control of Prague and other major population centers. Dubcek and other leaders arrested.

Extraordinary "14th" Party Congress convenes clandestinely in Prague factory.

President Svoboda journeys to Moscow to negotiate releases of all arrested leaders and agreement on future of Czechoslovakia under occupation. Dubcek is allowed to resume post as Party First Secretary.

Party plenum hears Dubcek report on Moscow talks; Presidium enlarged to 22 members; Central Committee also expanded.

October

Czechoslovak leaders—Dubcek, Premier Cernik, and Slovak party chief Husak—negotiate with Soviet Politburo in Moscow; communique outlines Soviet demands for "normalization."

Czechoslovaks and Soviets sign status-of-forces agreement in Prague; pact gives semblance of legality to occupation and calls for removal from Czechoslovak soil of bulk of Soviet bloc invasion forces by mid-December.

Czechoslovaks demonstrate in restrained manner on 50th anniversary of founding of Czechoslovak Republic; federalization law transforms Czechoslovakia into two nations—Czech and Slovak—with equal rights.

November

Anti-Soviet demonstrations mark 51st anniversary of Russian October Revolution.

Party plenum announces new middle-of-the-road policies.

Czech and Slovak students stage sit-in strikes to protest further compromise of liberal reform program and to support Dubcek leadership.

December

Czechoslovak and Soviet leaders hold summit conference in Kiyev; Soviets review Czechoslovak progress in fulfilling commitments and impose new demands on Czechoslovak regime.

1968
December

Over one million workers threaten nationwide demonstrations and strikes if any leading political figures—especially National Assembly President Smrkovsky—are ousted.

1969
January

Czechoslovakia is declared a Federal Republic.

Czech student Jan Palach protests occupation by setting himself on fire in Wenceslas Square; widespread demonstrations occur in Czech Lands; Prague police disrupt crowds with tear gas.

March

Victory of Czechoslovak ice hockey team over Soviets sparks popular riots in Prague; mob sacks Aeroflot office rendering position of Dubcek regime virtually untenable.

April

Leading Communists accused by Dubcek regime of collaborating with Soviets in 1968 are rehabilitated.

Central Committee plenum replaces Dubcek with Husak as First Secretary.

Dubcek replaces Petr Colotka as Chairman of Federal Assembly.

May

Central Committee plenum promulgates "Implementation Directive," spelling out Husak's basic policies of establishing tight party discipline and reconciliation with ex-liberals willing to accept party authority. Ota Sik and Frantisek Kriegel, two of Dubcek's closest supporters, are expelled from party.

August

Large-scale pro-Dubcek demonstrations in Prague on invasion anniversary are brutally dispersed by security forces; regime promulgates Emergency Law temporarily suspending and rule of law.

September

Party Presidium rescinds its August 1968 condemnation of Soviet invasion.

Central Committee plenum removes Dubcek from Presidium; Dubcek refuses to recant; leading Dubcek supporters ousted from Central Committee; Husak eschews punitive measures against liberals.

December

Dubcek named ambassador to Turkey.

1970
January

Central Committee plenum revises Presidium; Strougal named federal Premier; Dubcek "resigns" from Central Committee.

February

Central Committee implements party card exchange program.

March

Dubcek suspended from Communist Party.

May

Czechoslovak-U.S.S.R. Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance, signed in Prague, includes principle of "socialist internationalism" justifying Warsaw Pact invasion, provides for close economic cooperation, implicitly commits Czechoslovakia to side with Soviet Union in case of military confrontation between latter and Communist China.

Dubcek returns to Prague and semi-isolation.

1970
June

Dubcek and ex-Premier Oldrich Cernik are stripped of remaining government positions.

Party conservatives heighten criticism of Husak's moderate domestic policies and call for more thorough party purge.

July

Regime publishes counterattacks on conservative critics, highlighting intraparty feud.

Regime publishes official interpretation of Dubcek's role in 1968 reform movement, describing his rise to power as aberration in otherwise necessary reform effort.

August

Quiet passing of second anniversary of invasion strengthens Husak's political position.

September

Party organ *Rude Pravo* declares party purge over and beginning of effort to restore party discipline—second stage of post-Dubcek "consolidation" campaign.

October

Husak fires Czech Minister of Interior and Army liaison officer with Soviet forces to reduce influence of hardliners.

Czechoslovak and West German officials make preliminary plans to open political talks.

November

Regime stresses "reconciliation" with intelligentsia by announcing plans to foster cultural activity, including amnesty for signatories of 1968 political manifestoes.

December

Central Committee plenum issues Party's definitive "Lessons" of Czechoslovak history since 13th Party Congress of 1967; Husak announces postpurge Party membership to be 1,200,000; proceedings indicate stand-off between pro-Husak moderates and conservative faction.

Federal Assembly amends federalization law reducing Slovak economic and administrative autonomy.

1971
May

14th Party Congress convenes; pronounces "end of the crisis period." Minor leadership changes reflect regime's emphasis on party unity. Central Committee undergoes large turnover in party's search for reliable and motivated members. Fifth Five Year Plan (1971–75) approved.

November

Elections held to federal, republic, and local government bodies, first such balloting since 1964 (scheduled 1968 elections indefinitely postponed after invasion). Regime claims 99.8% of 10.3 million eligible voters supported official single slate.

December

As result of election "mandate," Husak revamps leadership of Federal Assembly, Czech and Slovak National Councils, and reshuffles respective cabinets. Shifts symbolize final phase of Husak's consolidation of power over government apparatus.

1972
July–August

Some 50 former second-string party officials and intellectuals associated with Dubcek tried for subversive and other illegal acts committed during 1970–71 period.

December

Foreign Minister Chnoupek visits Romania in effort to heal rift caused by Bucharest's vehement denunciation of the invasion in 1968.

1973
February

Soviet party leader Brezhnev visits Prague on 25th anniversary of Communist takeover. Brezhnev warmly endorses Husak, presents him with Order of Lenin, and declares Czechoslovakia's "normalization" completed.

March

Aging General Ludvik Svoboda reelected President by Federal Assembly.

June

Czechoslovak-West German treaty initialed in Bonn after Prague dropped persistent demand that Bonn declare 1938 Munich Agreement "void from the beginning."

U.S. Secretary of State Rogers visits Prague in first such visit since World War II. Event paves way for improving bilateral relations within framework of detente, and symbolizes Czechoslovakia's success in gradually breaking out of post-invasion diplomatic isolation.

October

Husak's visit to Yugoslavia ends cool relations that followed Belgrade's 1968 denunciation of Warsaw Pact invasion.

December

Husak pays official visit to India, in first trip to non-Communist country since assuming power.

West German Chancellor Brandt visits Prague for formal signing of bilateral good will treaty, opening way to establishment of diplomatic relations.

Area Brief (u/ou)

LAND:

Size: 49,400 sq. mi.

Use: 42% arable, 14% other agricultural, 35% forested, 9% other

Land boundaries: 2,200 mi.

PEOPLE:

Population: 14,608,000, average annual growth rate 0.6% (current)

Ethnic divisions: 65.0% Czechs, 29.2% Slovaks, 4.0% Magyars, 0.6% Germans, 0.5% Poles, 0.4% Ukrainians, 0.3% others (Jews, Gypsies)

Religion: 77% Roman Catholic, 20% Protestant, 2% Orthodox, 1% other

Language: Czech, Slovak, Hungarian

Literacy: Almost complete

Labor force: 7.1 million; 18% agriculture, 37% industry, 11% services, 34% construction, communications and others

GOVERNMENT:

Legal name: Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

Type: Communist state

Capital: Prague

Political subdivisions: 2 separate autonomous republics (Czech Socialist Republic and Slovak Socialist Republic); 7 regions (kraj) in Czech lands, three regions in Slovakia; national capitals of Prague and Bratislava have regional status

Legal system: Civil law system based on German codes, modified by Communist legal theory; revised constitution adopted 1960, amended in 1968 and 1970; no judicial review of legislative acts; legal education at Universita Komenskeho School of Law; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Branches: Executive—President (elected by Federal Assembly), cabinet (appointed by President); legislative—Federal Assembly (elected directly), Czech and Slovak National Councils (also elected directly) legislate on limited area of Czech and Slovak affairs; judiciary—Supreme Court (elected by Federal Assembly); entire governmental structure dominated by Communist Party

Government leaders: President Ludvik Svoboda (reelected March 1973), Premier Lubomir Strougal

Suffrage: Universal over age 18

Elections: Governmental bodies every 5 years; President every 5 years (last election, November 1971)

Dominant political party and leader: Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSC), Gustav Husak, General Secretary; Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS) has status of "provincial KSC organization"

Voting strength (1971 election): 99.81% Communist-sponsored single slate

Communists: 1.2 million party members

Other political groups: Puppet parties—Czechoslovak Socialist Party, Czechoslovak People's Party, Slovak Freedom Party, Slovak Revival Party

Member of: CEMA, GATT, IAEA, ICAO, Seabeds Committee, U.N. Warsaw Pact

ECONOMY:

GNP: $36.8 billion in 1972 (at 1971 prices), $2,540 per capita; 1972 real growth rate 3.6%

Agriculture: Diversified agriculture; main crops—wheat, rye, potatoes, sugar beets; net food importer—meat, wheat, vegetable oils, fresh fruits and vegetables; caloric intake, 3,100 calories per day per capita (1967)

Major industries: Machinery, food processing, metallurgy, textiles, chemicals

Shortages: Ores, crude oil, grain

Crude steel: 12.7 million metric tons produced (1972), 880 kg. per capita

Exports: $5,123 million (f.o.b., 1972); 50% machinery, equipment; 28% fuels, raw materials; 4% foods, food products, and live animals; 18% consumer goods, excluding foods (1971)

Imports: $4,662 million (f.o.b., 1972); 33% machinery, equipment; 44% fuels, raw materials; 15% foods, food products, and live animals; 8% consumer goods, excluding foods (1971)

Major trade partners: $9,785 million (1972); 70% Communist countries, 30% with West

Monetary conversion rate: Commercial 5.2 crowns = US$1; noncommercial 10.7 crowns = US$1, tourist rate 13.3 crowns = US$1; old commercial rates: 6.63 crowns = US$1 in 1972; prior to 1972, 7.2 crowns = US$1

Fiscal year: Calendar year

Note: Foreign trade figures were converted at the 1972 rate

COMMUNICATIONS:

Railroads: 8,260 mi.; 8,080 mi. standard gage, 70 mi. broad gage, 110 mi. narrow gage; 1,014 mi. double track; 1,560 mi. electrified; government owned (1972)

Highways: 45,500 mi.; 800 mi. concrete; 28,050 mi. bituminous; 2,400 mi. cobblestone, brick set, stone block; 13,650 mi. crushed stone, gravel, improved earth (1972)

Inland waterways: 517 mi. (1973)

Pipelines: Crude oil, 900 mi.; refined products, 535 mi.; natural gas, 2,800 mi.

Freight carried: Rail—248.9 million short tons, 41.2 billion short ton/mi. (1972); highway—901.4 million short tons, 8.1 billion short ton/mi. (1972); waterway—9.5 million short tons, 2.5 billion short ton/mi. (incl. int'l. transit traffic) (1972)

Ports: No maritime ports; outlets are Gdynia, Gdansk, Stettin in Poland; Rijeka, Yugoslavia; Hamburg, West Germany; Rostock, East Germany; principal river ports are Prague, Melnik, Usti nad Labem, Decin, Komerno, Bratislava (1973)

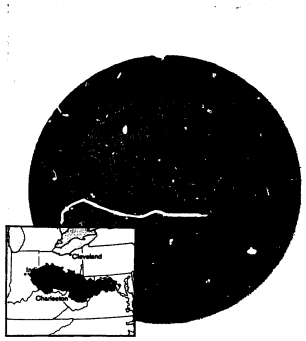
NOTE—This Area Brief is compiled from data appearing in the January 1974 issue of the *NIS Basic Intelligence Factbook.*

Civil air: 45 major transport aircraft (1973)

Airfields: 134 total; 33 with permanent-surface runways; 19 with runways 8,000–11,999 ft., 49 with runways 4,000–7,999 ft.

DEFENSE FORCES:

Military budget: For fiscal year ending 31 December 1972, 17.1 billion crowns, about 6.6% of total budget and 4.2% of est. GNP; 1973 budget unannounced as of 1 November 1973



Land Utilization

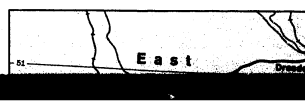
Forest
Major hops area

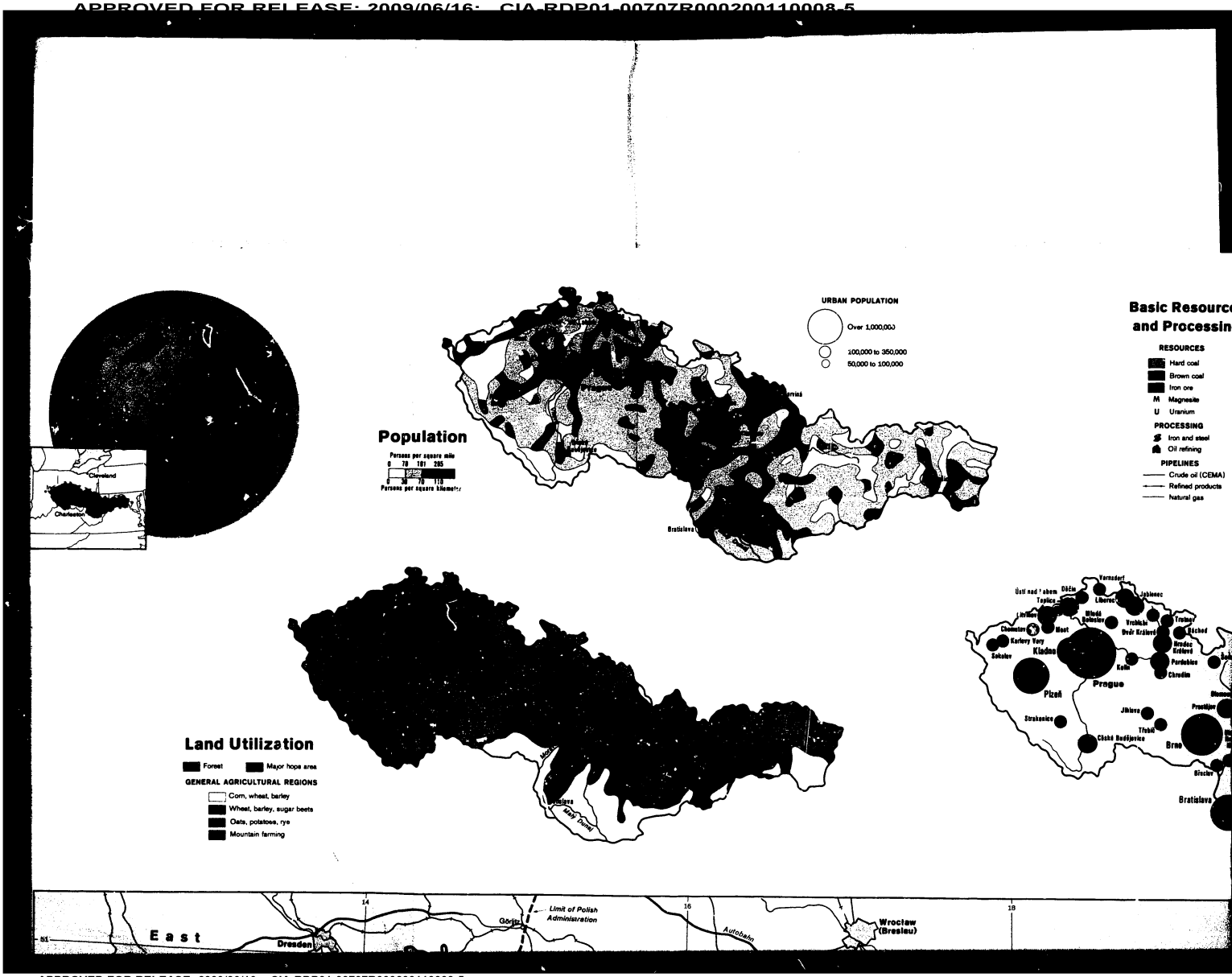
GENERAL AGRICULTURAL REGIONS

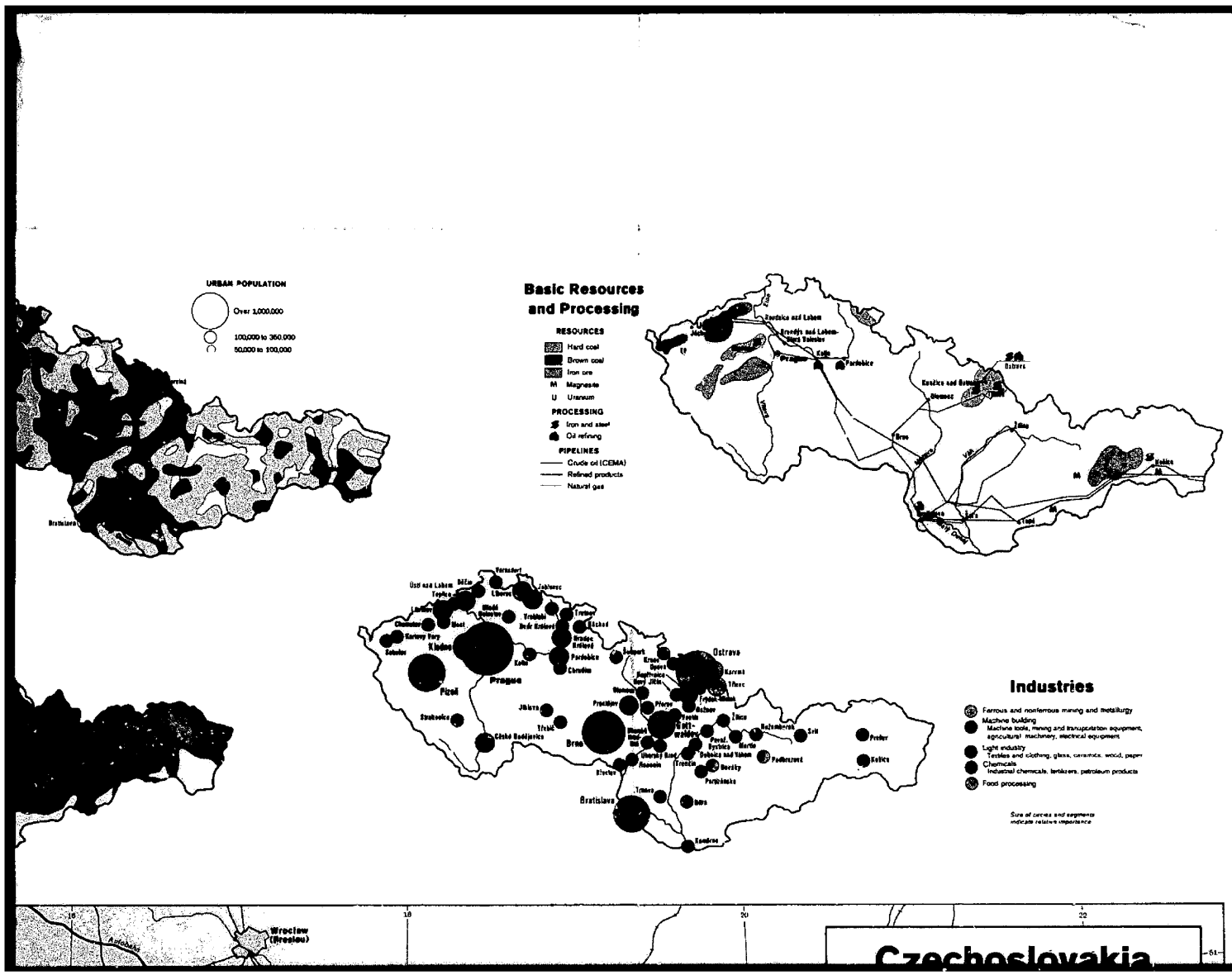
Corn, wheat, barley
Wheat, barley, sugar beets
Oats, potatoes, rye
Mountain farming

PLACES AND FEATURES REFERRED TO IN TEXT (U/OU)

	COORDINATES		COORDINATES		COORDINATES
	° 'N. ° 'E.		° 'N. ° 'E.		° 'N. ° 'E.
Banská Bystrica	48 44 19 09	Králův Dvůr	49 56 14 03	Senec	48 13 17 24
Banská Štiavnica	48 27 18 54	Krnov	50 06 17 43	Sered'	48 17 17 44
Beroun	49 57 14 05	Krompachy			



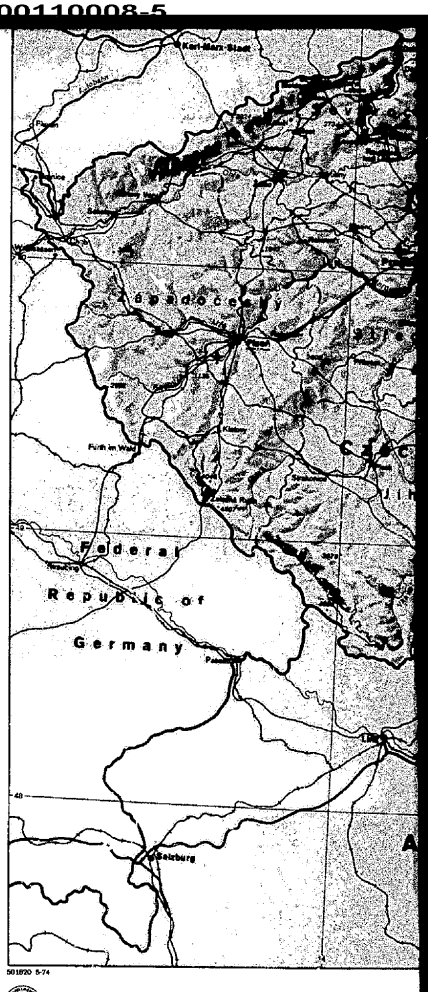




[illegible]	48 28	17 39
Bolevec	49 48	13 22
Brandýs nad Labem (*see of Brandýs nad Labem-Stará Boleslav*)	50 11	14 40
Bratislava	48 09	17 07
Břeclav	48 46	16 53
Brno	49 12	16 38
Budapest, Hungary	47 30	19 05
Budkov	49 04	14 00
Budkovce	48 38	21 56
Budulov	48 35	21 06
Bystřice nad Pernštejnem	49 31	16 16
Čadca	49 26	18 47
Čáslav	49 55	15 24
Čeřejovce	48 35	21 04
Černá v Pošumaví	48 44	14 07
Česká Lípa	50 41	14 33
České Třebová	49 54	16 27
České Budějovice	48 59	14 28
České Velenice	48 45	14 58
Český Krumlov	48 49	14 19
Český Těšín	49 45	18 37
Cheb	50 04	12 22
Chomutov	50 27	13 26
Chop, U.S.S.R.	48 26	22 12
Chudeřice	50 34	13 47
Černa nad Tisou	48 26	22 08
Cieszyn, Poland	49 46	18 38
Cifer	48 19	17 30
Čoltovo	48 30	20 23
Constanta, Romania	44 11	28 39
Danube (*strm*)	45 20	29 40
Děčín	50 47	14 13
Dolní Žleb	50 50	14 13
Dresden, East Germany	51 03	13 45
Dukla Pass (*pass*)	49 25	21 42
Dukovany	49 05	16 12
Elbe (*strm*)	53 50	9 00
Freistadt, Austria	48 30	14 30
Frýdek-Místek (*commune*)	49 40	18 20
Furth im Wald, West Germany	49 18	12 51
Gdynia, Poland	54 30	18 33
Gonyű, Hungary	47 44	17 50
Gottwaldov	49 13	17 40
Habry	49 45	15 29
Hamburg, West Germany	53 33	10 00
Haniska	48 37	21 15
Havlíčkův Brod	49 37	15 25
Hlohovec	48 47	16 46
Hodvice	50 27	14 22
Horná Štubňa	48 49	18 53
Horné Srnie	48 49	18 06
Hradec Králové	50 13	15 50
Hraditaká Mol'va	48 36	21 40
Hranice	49 33	17 44
Hurbanovo	47 52	18 12
Ipeľ (*strm*)	47 49	18 51
Istebné	49 13	19 13
Jablonica	48 36	17 25
Jáchymov	50 22	12 55
Jaroměř	50 22	15 55
Jelšava	18 38	20 14
Jeľšovce	48 24	18 04
Jihlava	49 24	15 35
Karlovy Vary	50 13	12 54
Karviná	49 52	18 33
Katowice, Poland	50 10	18 01
Kladno	50 08	14 06
Klatovy	49 24	13 18
Klobouky	48 39	16 52
Kłodzko, Poland	50 26	16 39
Kolín	50 02	15 12
Komárno	47 46	18 08
Kopřivnice	49 38	18 09
Kutice	48 42	21 15
Kralupy nad Vltavou	50 14	14 19
Kúty	48 40	17 01
Laterální Kanál (*canal*)	50 19	14 22
Levice	48 13	18 36
Liblice	50 05	14 53
Lipník nad Bečvou	49 32	17 36
Lomnický Štít (*rr sta*)	49 12	20 13
Louny	50 21	13 48
Lovinobaňa	48 26	19 36
Lubeník	48 40	20 12
Lučenec	48 20	19 40
Malacky	48 26	17 01
Malín	49 58	15 18
Malý Dunaj (*strm*)	47 45	18 09
Marktredwitz, West Germany	50 00	12 05
Martin	49 04	18 56
Medved'ov	47 48	17 40
Mělník	50 21	14 29
Michalovce	48 45	21 56
Miskolc, Hungary	48 06	20 47
Mladá Boleslav	50 25	14 54
Mníšek pod Brdy	49 52	14 18
Moldava nad Bodvou	48 37	21 00
Morava (*strm*)	48 10	16 59
Moravia (*region*)	49 30	17 00
Moravian Gate (*pass*)	49 35	17 50
Mosonmagyaróvár, Hungary	47 52	17 17
Most	50 32	13 39
Mostárie	50 08	14 42
Nemčiňan	48 16	18 28
Netolice	49 03	14 12
Nitra	48 19	18 05
Nové Mesto nad Váhom	48 45	17 50
Nové Zámky	47 59	18 10
Nový Jičín	49 36	18 01
Nymburk	50 11	15 03
Ogor (*strm*)	53 32	14 38
Ohře (*strm*)	50 32	14 08
Olomouc	49 35	17 15
Ondřejov	49 54	14 48
Opočínek	50 02	15 30
Ostrava	49 50	18 17
Ostravsko-Karvinská Pánev (*region*)	49 50	18 30
Panská Ves	50 32	14 33
Pardubice	50 02	15 47
Pest'in (*hill*)	50 05	14 24
Piest'any	48 36	17 50
Plavecký Štvrtok	48 22	17 00
Plzeň	49 45	13 22
Podbrezová	48 49	19 32
Poděbrady	50 09	15 08
Podunajské Biskupice	48 08	17 13
Poprad	49 03	20 18
Považská Bystrica	49 07	18 27
Povrly	50 40	14 10
Praděd (*mt*)	50 05	17 15
Prague	50 05	14 28
Přerov	49 27	17 27
Prelov	49 00	21 15
Přibor	49 39	18 09
Příbram	49 42	14 01
Prievidza	48 46	18 38
Prostějov	49 28	17 07
Průhonice	50 00	14 34
Púchov	49 08	18 20
Reš	50 10	14 21
Rijeka, Yugoslavia	45 21	14 24
Rimavská Sobota	48 23	20 02
Rostock, East Germany	54 05	12 08
Roudnice nad Labem	50 25	14 15
Rudňany	48 53	20 41
Ruská	48 32	22 09
Šafárikovo	48 25	20 20
Šahy	48 04	18 58
Sal'a	48 09	17 53
Satalice	50 07	14 35
Satan (*mt*)	49 10	20 03
Skuhrov	49 41	15 31
Sládkovičovo	48 12	17 39
Slánec	48 38	21 29
Slaný	50 14	14 06
Slapy	49 49	14 24
Sliač	48 37	19 11
Slovenské Rudohorie (*mts*)	48 45	20 20
Sokolov	50 11	12 38
Staročeská Lhota	49 34	17 55
Starý Bohumín	49 55	18 20
Stettin, Poland	53 25	14 35
Štrbské Pleso	49 07	20 03
Štúrovo	47 48	18 44
Šumperk	49 58	16 58
Tábor	49 25	14 40
Tatry	49 45	14 12
Tehov	49 58	14 42
Teplice	50 38	13 50
Tillyschanz, West Germany	49 35	12 35
Tirane, Albania	41 20	19 50
Tisa (*strm*)	45 15	20 17
Tlmače	48 17	18 32
Tomášová	48 22	20 01
Topoľčany	48 34	18 11
Třebíč	49 13	15 53
Trebišov	48 38	21 43
Trenčín	48 54	18 02
Trinec	49 41	18 39
Trnava	48 22	17 36
Tupá	49 07	18 54
Týn nad Vltavou	49 14	14 25
Ústí nad Labem	50 40	14 02
Uzhgorod, U.S.S.R.	48 47	22 18
Váh (*strm*)	47 55	18 01
Vajková	48 49	19 31
Velká Bíteš	49 18	16 13
Veľké Kapušany	48 33	22 05
Veľké Zlievce	48 12	19 27
Vienna, Austria	48 12	16 22
Vítkovice (*see of Ostrava*)	49 49	18 16
Vltava (*strm*)	50 20	14 29
Vochov	49 46	13 17
Vrchlabí	50 38	15 36
Vrútky	49 07	18 55
Vysoká pri Morave	48 20	16 55
Vysoké Tatry (*mts*)	49 10	20 00
Vysoké Tatry	49 08	20 13
Waidhaus, West Germany	49 39	12 30
Zátiší	50 34	13 36
Zátiší (*see of Prague*)	50 01	14 26
Zbraslav	50 02	13 09
Žiar nad Hronom	48 35	18 52
Židlochovice	49 02	16 37
Žilina	49 13	18 44
Zlaté Moravce	48 23	18 24
Znojmo	48 51	16 03
Zohor	48 19	16 59
Zvolen	48 35	19 08

SELECTED AIRFIELDS

Bechyne	49 16	14 30
Bratislava/Ivanka	48 10	17 13
Caslav/Chotusice	49 56	15 23
Ceske Budejovice	48 57	14 26
Dobrany	49 40	13 16
Hradec Kralove	50 15	15 51
Klecany/Vodochody	50 13	14 24
Milovice	50 14	14 55
Mimon	50 37	14 55
Moonov	49 42	18 07
Namest nad Oslavou	49 10	16 07
Pardubice	50 01	15 44
Prague/Ruzyne	50 06	14 16
Prerov	49 26	17 24
Slac	48 38	19 08
Zatec	50 22	13 35



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