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1. Slow Moves Toward Reform

Summary: Recent statements by top Czechoslovak party officials, particularly the President's address to local officials in Ceske Budejovice, indicate that there have not been any significant steps forward in the process of "restructuring" since March, apart from the publication of the Draft Law on State Enterprise and the recently published Draft Bill on Agricultural Cooperatives.

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After CPCS leader and Czechoslovak President Gustav Husak had publicly endorsed Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in March 1987, the regime was officially committed to a policy of economic and social reform. The contributions to the public discussion of the draft Law on State Enterprises and a recent speech by Husak indicate, however, that progress in this area has not been decisive.

In an address to local officials in Ceske Budejovice, South Bohemia, on August 28, Husak concentrated on an assessment of the economic situation after the 27th Congress of the CSCP. Although there had been remarkable successes, he said, there were still problems due to some "weak spots," such as indifference and passivity and the failure to act on decisions and to meet goals. He also said that advances in science and technology were not progressing as fast as elsewhere in the world. He complained that although there had been some outstanding results in agriculture and that the country was now self-sufficient in basic agricultural products, 30% of state-owned farms and agricultural cooperatives were not meeting the plan.

Husak confirmed that the "present mechanism of directing is not in accordance with requirements and needs." He went on to say that experience has proved that partial solutions are not sufficient. The system of direction that was introduced in the phase of extensive development cannot secure the new goals we are aiming at. That is why we are restructuring the economic mechanism . . .

Husak said that Czechoslovakia was therefore looking for new approaches to management and new methods of work, a process that was currently taking place in other communist countries as well.

Repeating what he had said at the fifth plenary session of the CC in March 1987, he referred to the significance of the CPSU's example, saying that it had enriched the experience of
all communist countries and inspired the Czechoslovak Communists in solving their own problems. As he had done in March, however, he indicated that this inspiration did have its limits: "Everywhere an effort is being made to change deep-rooted notions and habits. Each socialist country is proceeding in this effort in accordance with its own conditions, needs, and experiences".

So far as the sensitive word "reform" is concerned, Husak again attacked "enemy propaganda," which he said accused Czechoslovak Communists of being afraid to use the word. He said that since the current measures involved far-reaching social changes, there was no reason to be afraid of using the term "reform," although it had been discredited in 1968, "when hostile forces had wanted, under the slogan of reform, to dismantle socialism, to abolish the position of the CP. . . . and to change the country's foreign policy orientation." He argued that

The allegedly slight difference between what happened in 1968 and what we are doing now consists of the fact that we, on the contrary, want to strengthen and develop the advantages of socialism even more.

The similarities between Husak's address in March and his recent speech in Ceske Budejovice are obvious; he gave no hint of any change in official attitudes since March. The developments in Moscow were still an "encouragement and inspiration" rather than a model.

On 18 June the draft Law on State Enterprise was published for public discussion and Husak devoted part of his speech to it. He insisted on the continuing leading role of the party in running the economy:

The securing of the leading role of the party does not consist of having it mentioned in every paragraph of the draft [Law on State Enterprises]. The principle of the leading role of the party results in the practical influence of the party on the public, on cadre policy, and on all spheres of life of the work collectives. Considering the large room for action that the independent activities of enterprises should be given, the party and the socialist state are guarantors of the interests of society.

The same attitude was evident in published discussion about the draft. The internal party journal Zivot Strany recently published contributions to the discussion from local party officials, all of whom pointed out that the leading role of the party had to be preserved under the new conditions. One of them even argued that
The draft Law on State Enterprises naturally results in the growing significance of the leading role of the party under the new conditions of restructuring. Party organizations and all Communists in enterprises must be the political core of the collectives.

It seems, then, that any effort to reform the Czechoslovak economy is being hampered by the bureaucracy of the party itself.

Bilak and Strougal. Prime Minister Lubomir Strougal, who was the first leading Czechoslovak official to comment positively on Gorbachev's reform program and who is often described by Western experts as the driving force of the current Czechoslovak reform plans, has remained surprisingly quiet in recent months. His last major domestic appearance was in April, when he insisted that Soviet reformism made reform in Czechoslovakia inevitable. It is possible that opposition to his views from within the leadership has enforced this reticence.

During his visit to Hungary in August 1987, Strougal reaffirmed, albeit more cautiously, his support for reform and spoke about "the transformation of the political and economic system with the objective of creating a dynamism that is... adjusted to the era of the technological and scientific revolution and a more extensive democratic framework." He also said that these processes had been fundamentally influenced by the "revolutionary activity of the CPSU." The communiqué issued after the visit, however, only mentioned that Strougal had briefed Hungarian Prime Minister Karoly Grosz "on increasing the democratization of public life" in Czechoslovakia.

A recent article by Vasil Bilak, "For Our Common European House," followed Gorbachev’s line closely. Not only did he use the same metaphor in his title as the Soviet party leader, but he also pleaded vehemently for "new thinking" in the spirit of Gorbachev. At a party meeting in eastern Slovakia on 26 August 1987, Bilak said that the reform of Czechoslovak society would require people who not only engaged in discussion in the spirit of "restructuring" but who, above all, acted in this spirit. None of this sounds very convincing from someone with Bilak's reputation as an opponent of reform and liberalization.

It would seem that the Czechoslovaks wish to close the door on the sequence of blunders that they describe as "normalization" but are only slowly venturing into the territory of reform, which they see as a vast expanse of quicksand that threatens to engulf them without a trace. Hence the reliance on rhetoric, which is usually safer than action. In the meantime, economic problems are mounting; and slow though the progress of Czechoslovak reform may be, it cannot be held up indefinitely.

Jan Obrman
1 Radio Prague, 28 August 1987, 6:30 P.M.

2 Ibid.


4 Strougal's speech addressing a workers' rally in Most; Rude Pravo, 14 April 1987, p. 2.

5 Speech given by Strougal at a dinner in Budapest on 31 August 1987.

6 Rude Pravo, 13 August 1987, pp. 1 and 2.
2. Private Enterprise in Czechoslovakia

Summary: The Czechoslovak authorities have increasingly made use of private initiative when the state and cooperative sector has not been able to meet demand for goods and services. The failure of socialist enterprises, particularly in the service fields, has brought a slow liberalization in the authorities' attitude toward private firms, which were abolished starting in 1949. The recent decision by the CPCS CC to allow private citizens to run restaurants and small shops from 1 January 1988 is a continuation of this policy.

* * *

The decision this summer by the Central Committee of the CPCS to allow more privately run enterprises in the service field should not be interpreted as a step toward free enterprise in the Western sense. Under the measure, which was adopted on 13 July 1987 and takes effect on 1 January 1988, individuals with the help of their family members can manage their own restaurants and small shops, mainly in rural areas, provided they have the approval of the local authorities. The decision allows the authorities to use citizens' initiative to offer services that socialist enterprises have not been able to provide.¹

Communist Ideology and Private Enterprise. The authorities have not actually changed their policy toward private enterprise. They still pay tribute to traditional class thinking, since in principle they still maintain that services should be provided by state organizations. Robert Rosko, of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, wrote as recently as 1984 that

Our class collectivity is antagonistic to two sorts of bourgeoisie: the petty bourgeoisie and its developed form in capitalism. It is not possible to get rid of one while tolerating the other. If the socialist mass production of products and services is not able to replace [the] petty-bourgeois producer, he will rise ... [again]. We are not well prepared for a class struggle with this type. ... He is, in fact, a very dangerous type, because he debases everything that can possibly be debased. If he cannot exist on a "full-time basis," he chooses the way of part-time activities. We will be stunned by the types of "division of labor" he will develop.²

Czechoslovakia's service enterprises have caused much dissatisfaction for decades; and many people have asked whether it was necessary to socialize almost all of them³ when the other communist countries did not. Officials have admitted that
there have been serious shortcomings in the number and quality of services, and they realize that people measure the effectiveness of the party's policy against these disappointing results. The prescribed remedies, however, have generally been temporary, partial measures, such as the CC's latest decision.

The Abolition of Free Enterprise. Before World War II Czechoslovakia had a well-functioning network of services; the majority of the 720,000 or so enterprises employing artisans (some 3,000,000 in all) provided services. In 1948, when the Communists took over power, there were 400,000 enterprises employing artisans in the Czech Republic alone. These enterprises were involuntarily incorporated into cooperatives and communes between April 1949 and 1960, when the collectivization of farming was also completed. After the virtual abolition of the private artisans' sector, only 6,553 small firms remained that employed artisans (mostly one-man operations, since only 6,601 people were employed in this sector) in Czechoslovakia. The authorities used many different forms of pressure, including deportation to labor camps and imprisonment, to enforce socialization, particularly in agriculture. Among the more subtle forms of repression were the disproportionate taxation of artisans and farmers under two laws, nos. 50 and 49, which were enacted on 20 and 21 March 1948, respectively.

Criticism of the service sector mounted with the socialization of service enterprises. To stem that tide and to limit the fast-growing black market for services, which often involved stolen material, the government passed a law (No. 20/1965) on 3 March 1965 that allowed homemakers, pensioners, partly handicapped or disabled people, and others to offer certain services outside their normal working hours. Under the law, applicants needed the permission of their employers and of the local authorities to provide the following services: small repair jobs, such as plumbing, bricklaying, and painting; hairdressing; laundering; cleaning; and security guard work. Permits could only be issued, however, if no socialist organization was capable of offering the service. Applicants faced other hindrances as well, such as jealousy from fellow workers. Employers refused to issue the required permits, saying that they could not support private enterprise in a socialist society; and even the authorities appeared reluctant to give their support, mainly on ideological grounds. Thus, the number of permits actually issued was low: 12,286 (2,131 to women) in 1966, increasing to 27,125 in December 1974. After law no. 20 had been amended in 1975 the number fell again. On 1 December 1981 there were only 16,078 "entrepreneurs" left, 4,486 of whom were women.

This relatively small number of "private enterprises" could not come close to meeting the demand, and criticism of services continued. Forced by necessity, the authorities eventually made another concession. Law No. 20/1965 was supplemented by two
laws—Nos. 158 and 154, of 7 and 8 December 1982, for the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic, respectively—in order to increase the number of people working full-time for private firms to provide services. Services can be provided either by the local authorities or by private firms, which then transfer part of their profits to a state organization. Under the new laws the number of permits issued to the private service sector in 1985 reached 33,064 (6,761 of which went to women). By comparison, in the same year the socialist service sector employed 394,265 people out of a total national work force of 7,600,000.¹⁰

Catering Services and Small Stores. State-run restaurants and catering services and the provision of supplies in small villages have been strongly criticized. Some of the problems can be attributed to the sociological changes that occurred as a result of the concentration and specialization of farms in the 1960s and 1970s. This caused a move of people, and consequently services, from smaller communities to agricultural complexes, so that the surrounding communities were severely neglected. Moreover, even though the money spent on wages has been lower,¹¹ restaurants have not been profitable. Cooperatives providing catering services in smaller Czechoslovak communities have had annual losses of 20,000,000 koruny, compared with annual profits of 150,000,000 koruny in the 1970s.¹²

With disastrous results, officials placed restaurants under the jurisdiction of agricultural cooperatives and other organizations and replaced stores with mobile "shops on wheels" that mostly offered a limited assortment and insufficient quantity of products. Now, after the almost total failure of socialist sector services, the authorities have decided to rent out the neglected store buildings and aging equipment to individuals.

The situation in agriculture has been much the same. When cooperatives have not meet demand, the authorities have turned to private initiative. In 1985 private farmers produced 63.6% of the fruit, 38.9% of the vegetables, and 10.4% of the cattle in Czechoslovakia.¹³ Private initiative exists even within the framework of the cooperatives. Members own their own small parcels of farmland; and they can also engage in in "subsidiary production" (nonagricultural production and services), which brings in a considerable share of the cooperatives' overall profit. In some cases, such as the well-known Slusovice cooperative, "subsidiary production" has become more lucrative than agricultural production.

Why Services Do Not Serve. The artisans whose firms had been liquidated during socialization were welcomed as a source of manpower for the nation's industries. At the same time, however, some of their crafts and skills are threatened with extinction as the number of service workers has grown—a situation that has occurred in highly industrialized societies,
as well. Between 1960 and 1980 the number of employees in service jobs increased from 28.5% to 38.1% of the total Czechoslovak work force; in West Germany it increased from 37.6% to 50.7% and in the United States from 57.4% to 68.1%.

Because the government attempted to win support for its policies by offering cheap services, prices have been set too low for the service sector to improve itself. Workers in the service sector make considerably less than those in other branches of the national economy; in 1985 the average salary in the service sector was 2,214 koruny, compared with 2,902 in industry. This causes dissatisfaction among employees, which in turn results in poor-quality work and a quite a lot of illegal work. Moreover, even the organizations that officially provide services would rather do more lucrative jobs for other state-run organizations than concentrate on providing non-profitable services for citizens. In 1985, for instance, the service sector (including production cooperatives) received only 11,900 million koruny from private citizens out of a total income of 49,200 million koruny.

Conclusion. One of the results of almost four decades of communism is a service sector that cannot meet the public’s needs; does poor-quality, expensive work; underpays its employees; and makes them work in bad conditions. Above all, the services are unprofitable. In 1981 76% of the enterprises were either operating at a loss or making minimal profits; since then the situation has grown worse.

The future will show whether the communist authorities, facing increasingly serious economic problems and dissatisfaction among the public, will retreat from their ossified dogmatism and make concessions by providing better services. It also remains to be seen whether artisans will be rehabilitated as a social group, as was intended during the Prague Spring. The announcement by a noncommunist daily of a proposal that the authorities would no longer decide who would be granted a permit for a private enterprise and who would not might herald a first step in the right direction.

F. P.


2 Filozofia, no. 1, January 1984, p. 45.

3 Rude Pravo, 26 June 1982, p. 3.

4 Ibid., 9 July 1987, p. 3.

5 Statisticka Rocenka Ceskoslovenska 1938, p. 58.
6 Prispevky K Dejinam KSC, no. 6, January 1959.

7 Statisticka Rocenka Republiky Ceskoslovenske, 1961, p. 332.

8 Narodni Vybor, no. 28, 28 June 1985, p. 22.


10 Statisticka Rocenka CSSR 1986, p. 532.

11 In 1986 the average salary in catering establishments was only 2,262 koruny, while the overall average salary in Czechoslovakia was 3,056 koruny; Hospodarske Noviny, no. 6, 17 April 1987, p. 15.

12 Ibid., no. 27, 3 July 1987, p. 6.


14 Hospodarske Noviny, no. 21, 22 May 1987.

15 Statisticka Rocenka CSSR 1986, p. 532.

16 Rude Pravo, 9 July 1987, p. 3.

17 Narodni Vybor, no. 8, 7 February 1983, p. 22.

18 Svobodne Slovo, 1 July 1987, p. 4.
3. Draft Law on Reform of Cooperatives Released for Debate

Summary: The Czechoslovak authorities have drafted a law to relax central control of three kinds of cooperatives, those involved in industrial production, the distribution of consumer goods, and the maintenance and renovation of housing. The measure, which emphasizes independence and financial autonomy for the cooperatives, follows two other major draft economic laws, on enterprises and on agriculture.

* * *

On 10 September 1987 the Central Committee of the CPCs, the Czechoslovak government, and the Central Council of Cooperatives released for public discussion the draft of a law to give more independence to three kinds of cooperatives, those involved in industrial production, the distribution of consumer goods, and the maintenance and renovation of housing. Suggestions for amending the draft will be accepted until the end of October, and the law is scheduled to take effect on 1 January 1989.¹

The measure is designed to give a greater role in the nation's economy to one of the three main areas targeted for structural reform: the tertiary sector including retail and public services.² The measure completes a series of major economic draft laws, the others (made public in July and September 1987, respectively) being on enterprises and agriculture.³

What the Measure Says. At the outset the draft encourages cooperatives to "use their independence and financial autonomy to react flexibly to the needs of the population," but it emphasizes that the party will play the leading role. No details are given. The relationship between the party and the cooperatives will probably be specified in the final version of the law.

The measure relaxes top administrative controls and ends the current system under which central agencies, or cooperative associations, manage the cooperatives and set their plans. Under the new law, managers will be nominated by each cooperative's board of directors; and secret ballots are not ruled out. In an effort to encourage smaller cooperatives, the measure stipulates that new cooperatives may be established by a minimum number of 10 people.

The draft bill allows cooperatives to operate on an equal level with state enterprises, in fact to be in "socialist competition" with them, and to engage in transactions and make decisions based on market indicators. It also lets cooperatives engage directly in foreign trade and compete with foreign producers under "specific conditions."
The draft bill states that the cooperatives should be managed in accordance with their plans, "which ensure the goals and tasks of the state plan" but which should be based on "economic contracts, orders, market research, and their own intentions." The draft does not elaborate on how the cooperatives' market-based plans will be made to be compatible with the state plan.

Although the cooperatives will be self-accountable and will have substantially more responsibility for "the satisfaction of society's needs," the measure includes the possibility that the state may "support cooperatives by giving them 'contributions' or other advantages," which are not defined, in order to achieve the state's goals. The state authorities will, however, have to compensate for any economic losses caused by their interference in the cooperatives' affairs. If a cooperative is not running properly, a "consolidation program" may be introduced, which may entail disbanding it or merging it with another cooperative.

The Lessons of History. For decades the official Czechoslovak media have strongly criticized the state of supplies, housing, public services, and the catering system and have held the cooperatives partly to blame. The problems can be traced to the communist takeover in 1948, after which the regime eradicated the private sector, including businesses that employed artisans. These were replaced by cooperatives involved in industrial production and by local enterprises; in 1960 these employed less than half the former artisans. The outcome of this policy was a retail monopoly by the state and a deterioration in services for both the public and industry.

Under the reforms proposed in 1968, new private cooperatives and firms were to be allowed to provide such services as automobile repairs, the central management of cooperatives was to be abolished, and new agencies were to be established to assist but not control them. Cooperatives were to be placed on an equal footing with state retail enterprises, and productional cooperatives were to be allowed to branch out into new sectors and provide consumer services. The state's insensitive imposition of central economic controls in the 1950s and 1960s was criticized.

The invasion of August 1968 ended all reform projects, however. In the 1970s the state began to impose restrictions on the cooperatives involved in industrial production and the distribution of consumer goods. Several hundred productional cooperatives established during the reform era were again disbanded.

The result is that at present cooperatives do not meet demands for more and better public services, catering facilities, maintenance of housing, and other services. A study by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Prague said that the development of public services in Czechoslovakia lagged
behind that in other industrialized countries by about 10 years.  

Assessment. The unsatisfied demand for public services causes at least two major economic and social problems: a persistent imbalance in the market and considerable corruption, bribery, and theft. Hence, the authorities are currently placing special importance on this sector of the economy. The upgrading of a sector that for decades has been neglected reflects changes in the party's economic thinking; in fact, the traditional Marxist preference for industrial production over public services is becoming less pronounced.

Once the law goes into effect it may help increase private initiative and channel it into a more politically and socially acceptable form of cooperatives. Nevertheless, until a more independent system of managing cooperatives is developed, until adequate manpower is ensured, and until new policies on investment and wages are implemented, the weight carried by the cooperative sector will remain relatively low. The transition from control by an economic hierarchy to independent group action is difficult.

M. P.

1 Rude Pravo, 11 September 1987, Appendix. After the law is passed by the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly it will supercede the provisions of Law No. 45/1983 on cooperatives.

2 Prace, 9 January 1987, Appendix; Rude Pravo, 3 April 1987, Appendix; see Czechoslovak Situation Report/1, Radio Free Europe Research, 17 January 1987, item 6. This program of structural reform is aimed at strengthening the tertiary sector, which includes retail and public services; the processing industry, especially the engineering branch; and the agricultural-food sector.

3 See Czechoslovak SR/10, RFER, 10 August 1987, item 1; Rude Pravo, 3 September 1987, Appendix.

4 See Czechoslovak SR/21, RFER, 21 June 1972, item 4; In early 1950 there were 141,817 manufacturing businesses employing artisans in Bohemia and Moravia alone; these had 381,629 employees.

5 Ibid., No. 44, 27 November 1974, item 1.

6 There are 832 cooperatives with a total of 4,500,000 members and 350,000 employees; they are engaged in manufacturing and services, the distribution of consumer goods, and the maintenance and renovation of housing. The productional cooperatives provide different kinds of public services and manufacture 8% of the consumer goods in Czechoslovakia. The distributional cooperatives account for a quarter of the country's retail business and distribute goods to two-fifths of the shops in the country. Housing cooperatives administer more than a third of all apartments, and this share is expected to increase to one half by the year 2000. Rude Pravo, 12 September 1987, p. 1.

4. The CPCS in Search of New Blood

Summary: The new CPCS directives governing the recruitment to and preparation of candidates for party membership focus on improving the composition of the party's ranks and on the personal qualities of the future party cadre. The document shows that the authorities believe that "correct" political thinking and expertise is crucial to the reform process. The directives are intended to strengthen the party's influence in enterprises and prevent the rise of an elite of economic and technocratic managers who may lack the necessary dedication to the party.

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New CPCS directives governing the selection, education, and preparation of candidates for party membership have been in effect since July 1987.¹ The party said that it was necessary to replace the directives of 1962, 1971, and 1972 in light of the 1986 amendments to the party statutes, which had sought to "mobilize the party's members and combine party activism with more effective management."²

The new party directives contain no revolutionary changes; they do, however, reflect a number of problems that are currently plaguing attempts to reform the economy. Principal among these are the facts that there are simply not enough suitable leaders and managers and that qualified young people are unwilling to join the party. While numerical strength is certainly not a problem for the CPCS, there is concern about the moral and professional caliber of many of its members. The deficiencies of the membership are contributing to the party's declining influence and deepening the division between the party and the general public. The challenge of a market-oriented economic reform has mobilized the party not to lose the reins of control over new developments in the economy and, consequently, in society.

Hence, the directives place much emphasis on the "selection and education" of younger, qualified members, the idea being to instill in candidates a zeal that many party members no longer have and to prepare them eventually to replace the officials that are now often blamed for many of the present economic problems.

Generational Change Needed. Perhaps the most interesting part of the document is that appealing for the recruitment of young people from the industrial sector who have "the prerequisites for the development of political work, for commanding authority in their group, and for possessing the moral qualities of a citizen of a socialist society."³ The
party is clearly determined to alter the disproportionate composition of its 1,705,490 members and candidate members, 44.4% of whom are workers, 6% farmers, and 32% white-collar workers. One in seven party members is a university graduate. A third of all party members are under 35. There are, however, plans to change the make-up of the party. The regional party committee of Eastern Slovakia plans to admit more than 20,000 candidates from 1986 to 1990, of whom more than 65% are to be workers, 8% farmers, and 26% white-collar workers.4

The directives entrust the primary organizations with more responsibility for "the thorough evaluation of the political, professional, and other qualities of candidates." At present, it is up to the local party organizations to organize and control the education of candidates, who "have to pass through political training." Primary and district party organizations are obliged to protect the party against the penetration of people whose character is not firm, who are career hunters or carriers of ideologies alien to scientific world views, and who commit misdeeds against communist morality and society's laws.

It is understandable that the party is concerned about the morality of its members: many cases of corruption, alcoholism, and bribery involve party members or officials. The recent trial of Stanislav Babinsky is especially embarrassing for the Czechoslovak party leadership, since some of its leading officials were apparently implicated in the case.5

Increasing importance is being attached to individual work with candidates for party membership. At the moment, "guarantors" (party members who are supposed to be responsible for candidate members) are expected to supervise the education and progress of four or five candidates, which means that they cannot devote sufficient attention and time to each. The directives state that this practice should definitely be abandoned.

The new directives give more responsibility to district party organizations. In the future, the primary party organization is to forward membership applications that have been approved by a meeting of members to the district (or municipal) party committee for confirmation: the presidium of that committee will then discuss the application, if possible in the presence of the candidate. The directives stipulate that the admission procedure should not be a formal affair; and an assigned representative of the district committee should have a private talk with the candidate about the rights and duties embodied in the party statutes.

Assessment. For many years the party leadership has been complaining about passive and lethargic party members and officials, and the party organizations have been blamed for
showing little initiative in activating the general public. It would be wrong to conclude that the party's present approach to candidates and party members is necessarily doomed to the fate of the previous series of ineffective orders, measures, or admonitions. The party seems to have recognized that the laws of the market and the neutral character of science and technology might give rise to an elite of technocrats and enterprise managers who may lack the necessary dedication to the party. Consequently, it feels the vital need to fight for a new approach by party members.

The current commitment to economic reform, which implies a break with the orthodox concepts of the command economy and a greater degree of independence, seems to be somewhat at variance with the party's new approach to the recruitment and preparation of party members, however, which places ever more disciplinary and coercive powers at the command of the party.

M. P.


3 Pravda, 4 September 1987, p. 2.

4 Ibid., and Zivot Strany, no. 24, 1986, pp. 8-9. In the 1980s the average annual increment in party members (taking into consideration deaths, resignations, or expulsion) was less than 60,000. From 1981 to 1986 almost one third of the secretaries and over 45% of the leading secretaries of district party committees and 40% of the secretaries of regional party committees were replaced (Pravda, 16 July 1986, p. 1).

6 Czechoslovak SR/10, RFER, 10 August 1987, item 6; Reuter, 7 September 1987.
5. **Ecological Cooperation With the FRG**

Summary: After several years of consultation at various levels, West Germany and Czechoslovakia have drafted an agreement to cooperate on environmental protection. The agreement is expected to be signed soon.

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Czechoslovakia and West Germany have drafted an agreement for ecological cooperation after several years of negotiations on the problem. The agreement, which was discussed on 20 August 1987 and is expected to be signed soon, includes provisions for the development of relevant technology, especially to reduce pollution in the air and ground and surface water; for study into the causes of and possible solutions to damage to forests from pollution; for the disposal of solid waste; and for the monitoring of changes in the environment.

West Germany has already signed a similar agreement with the Soviet Union and the GDR\(^1\), and Czechoslovakia reached an agreement on ecological cooperation with Austria on 17 July 1987. The agreement with Austria deals with air pollution and research into forests, other ecosystems, and sanitation.\(^2\)

Such cooperation between nations is essential to solving international ecological problems, such as industrial emissions that are carried across borders by the wind and rivers. For example, one of the main problems for neighboring Czechoslovakia and West Germany has been the pollution of the Elbe. Although the Elbe has been polluted primarily by the GDR, the initiative for ecological cooperation came from West Germany, which increasingly insisted on reducing industrial waste in the Elbe and other areas after Bavarian forests were found to have been damaged and West German citizens, fearing for their health, began to complain.

Czechoslovakia and West Germany are both major "exporters" of emissions, particularly of sulfur dioxide, which is extremely harmful and held to be the prime cause of damage to forests. In early consultations between Czechoslovakia and West Germany, both sides made accusations about the main sources of pollution. Data show, however, that both have been at fault. Figures presented at the conference "Economy-Ecology" in Stockholm in May 1986 showed that 1,354,000 tons of the 3,610,000 tons of sulfur dioxide that Czechoslovakia emitted in 1984 remained on its soil, while 135,000 tons fell on the FRG. The FRG, on the other hand, emitted 3,710,000 tons of sulfur dioxide, of which 1,227,000 tons remained within its borders, while 236,000 tons ended up in Czechoslovakia. In 1983 Czechoslovakia signed an international agreement to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide by 30% by 1993 (against levels in 1980). The agreement, which Poland and the United Kingdom have not signed, was reached at a convention on air pollution in 1979.\(^3\)
Negotiations on Three Levels. Official talks on ecology between Czechoslovakia and the FRG started in the first half of the 1980s. The talks were held on three main levels: between Bavaria and Czechoslovakia, between the FRG and Czechoslovakia, and between the opposition Social Democratic Party of West Germany and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Prominent members of the SDP, who were later joined by members of other West German parties, had started having relatively frequent contacts with the Czechoslovak authorities before the 1980s; and these earlier talks almost certainly dealt with ecological problems.

In their talks with the West German government, the Czechoslovak representatives have always insisted that ecological negotiations also deal with disarmament and peace. Karel Nutil, head of the Czechoslovak delegation to an international conference on the environment held in Munich in June 1984 and the Deputy Chairman of the State Commission for Scientific-Technological and Investment Development, said that the most important prerequisite for protecting the environment was peace and understanding between nations. This was not Czechoslovakia's only attempt to distract attention from real ecological problems, despite the fact that solutions were urgently needed.

Bavaria and Czechoslovakia. Of the West German states Bavaria has been the most affected by pollutants from Czechoslovakia. In 1983 seven Christian Social Union members of the Bundestag visited northeastern Bohemia to study the damages from emissions. They also had talks in Prague with Czechoslovak experts on environmental protection.

Bavaria's negotiations have primarily been carried out by the Ministry for Regional Planning and Environment, headed by Alfred Dick, who appears prepared to work out a separate treaty with Czechoslovakia on environmental protection. At a meeting with Czechoslovak and East German experts held in Bayreuth on 3 July 1987, Dick asked them to increase their efforts in ecological protection and indicated his readiness to cooperate. In April he met with Czechoslovak Minister of Fuel and Power Vlastimil Ehrenberger to discuss the desulfurization of coal-burning power plants, which emit the most sulfur dioxide; they also visited a power plant in Prunerov (northern Bohemia) that has been experimenting with a desulfurizing device provided by the West German company UDE.

In North Rhine-Westphalia experts from both countries have been cooperating for some time and are currently working on environmental projects at the Institute for Hygiene in Duesseldorf.

The SDP and the CPCS. Negotiations on the environment have been particularly frequent between the Social Democrats and the Czechoslovak authorities. Their sessions have usually been held
in either Prague or Duesseldorf and have been organized by the local SDP; the government of North Rhine-Westphalia, headed by Johannes Rau; and the Czech National Council, headed by Josef Kemný, who is also a member of the Presidium of the CPCS. In March 1985, for example, 150 experts, including 50 West Germans, attended a 3-day session in Prague. At the meeting, the Chairman of North Rhine-Westphalia's assembly, John van Nes Ziegler, said that cooperation in environmental protection would help bring about world peace, since the problem knew no borders and could only be solved when nations, particularly neighbors, joined forces.9

In addition to these regular contacts, the SDP and the CPCS have formed task groups of experts, which met in 1986 in Prague and in May 1987 in Bonn.10 These experts have welcomed the draft agreement between the two governments and have expressed their satisfaction that it is expected to be signed this year.11 The SDP and the CPCS finally agreed at the meeting in May 1987 that the striving for a healthier environment was closely connected to the struggle for peace.12

The SDP and the CPCS could not agree on the issue of nuclear power, however. The communiqué issued at the meeting in May said that nuclear energy would be indispensable in Czechoslovakia for a long time. The nation appears to have no other option if it is to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide substantially. By 1990 nuclear power plants are planned to produce 25% of Czechoslovakia's power; by 2000 they are planned to produce more than 50%.13

The FRG and the CSSR. Prague, of course, has been aware that contacts on a party level could not substitute for cooperation between governments. Since 1984 commissioners from both governments have been holding talks, although these have mostly gone unnoticed by the Czechoslovak media. These contacts have been reinforced in visits by prominent West German government officials, such as Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher (4 February 1986), Minister for Economics Martin Bangemann (15 August 1986), and President of the Bundestag Philipp Jenninger (June 1987). The agreement is a result of these efforts.

Conclusion. The draft agreement on environmental cooperation between Czechoslovakia and the FRG will not improve the quality of the air and water by itself. For decades Czechoslovakia has neglected this serious problem because of the high cost of remedial action. The devices for desulfurizing 10 large power blocks (with a capacity of 200 megawatts each) would cost 10,000 million koruny, not including operating costs. Only 2,000 million koruny, however, are being spent annually on desulfurization,14 although the total capacity of Czechoslovak coal-burning power plants is more than 12,000 megawatts.
Czechoslovakia can nevertheless profit from the ecological cooperation that has been offered not only by the West German government but by West German firms as well. At last year's Machinery Fair in Brno, a congress of businessmen from North Rhine-Westphalia was held to encourage orders from Czechoslovakia for devices that help protect the environment. West German companies have even offered cooperation in producing highly effective devices for desulfurization in third markets and for Czechoslovakia's own use. Although the offers of help from the FRG may not be for entirely selfless reasons, it is in Czechoslovakia's interest to seize the opportunity.

Frank Pohl

1 dpa, 21 August 1987.
2 Rude Pravo, 18 July 1987, p. 2.
3 Politicka Ekonomie, no. 34, November 1986, p. 1,150.
4 The State Commission for Scientific-Technological and Investment Development is handling environmental issues because Czechoslovakia still does not have a ministry for environmental protection.
5 Radio Prague, 25 June 1984, 4:30 P.M.
6 Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 7 April 1986.
7 Radio Hvezda, 3 April 1987, 10:00 A.M.
8 Rude Pravo, 19 October 1984, p. 7.
9 Ibid., 14 and 15 March 1985, p. 2.
10 Radio Hvezda, 6 May 1987, 4:00 P.M.
11 The Czechoslovak Ambassador to Bonn, Dusan Spacil, had expressed the hope in May 1987 that the agreement might be signed before the end of June.
12 Radio Hvezda, 8 May 1987, 9:00 P.M.
13 Hospodarske Noviny, no. 12, 12 March 1986, p. 2.
14 Pamatky a Priroda, no. 6, June 1987, p. 353.
6. Fifty Years Since the Death of T. G. Masaryk

Summary: Neither official vituperation nor imposed silence have succeeded in banishing T. G. Masaryk from Czechoslovak political thought. He remains a point of reference in the efforts by the dissidents of today to restore and maintain continuity with the country's precommunist history. Re-examining Masaryk is indeed a worthwhile intellectual exercise and is especially appropriate around the 50th anniversary of his death on 14 September 1937.

* * *

The ideas of humanism and democracy as propagated by Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, independent Czechoslovakia's first president (1918 to 1935), have stood the test of time, perhaps even more so because communist rule has repudiated them. Had there been no communism in Eastern Europe, Masaryk would have been remembered as the founder of his country and the first of its democratic leaders. Under communism, however, Masaryk stands out as the consummate representative of a political philosophy that all communist-governed nations in Eastern Europe would still gladly exchange for what their present leaders are offering them, Gorbachevism not excepted. For the peoples of Eastern Europe, Masaryk, unlike Marx and Lenin, is not dead.

A Fuller Life Than Most. Masaryk died 50 years ago, on 14 September 1937, at the age of 87. He entered the Czech political scene in the 1880s on his return from Vienna, where he had been a student and a scholar. He had already experienced life in three ethnic communities--Czech, Slovak (he was born on the Moravian-Slovak border), and German. Married to an American, Charlotte Garrigue, he had widened his philosophical and sociological interests to include Anglo-American scholarly methods and disciplines, something by no means common in the German-centered world of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In Prague he became a professor at the newly opened Czech University but soon chose to involve himself in matters beyond the ivory tower.

Masaryk's life from the time he returned to Prague in 1882 until the end of World War I has been described as "a journey against the tide." He said of the moral compulsion that brought him into public life again and again: "I could not do otherwise." For many years, long before he became President, Masaryk had often been a dissident.

His first major involvement in a public controversy (in 1886 and 1887) was over a conflict between blatant patriotism and scientific honesty: Masaryk opted for the latter, not an easy thing to do in an environment fraught with tension between Czechs and Germans. When forged medieval manuscripts were hailed as proof of the Czech nation's superiority over the Germanic
tribes in the eighth and ninth centuries, Masaryk joined those who questioned their genuineness: "What is at stake is not only the manuscripts' authenticity but also every person's freedom to express his conviction on any matter at any time." For Masaryk, freedom of speech and the importance of unbiased scholarship were superior to partisan nationalism.

In 1899 Masaryk became involved in another cause celebre, the so-called Hilsneriad. Leopold Hilsner, a mentally retarded Jewish vagrant was sentenced to death for the alleged ritual murder of a Christian girl. Masaryk went to battle against anti-Semitism and its reflection in the press.

An examination of the [Hilsner trial has allowed me to look closely at a part of life in this Czech land of ours: it was a joyless picture that I saw... The superstition about ritual murder is a terrible indictment of the Czech nation.

Hilsner's sentence was commuted.

On these occasions, the virulence of plebeian chauvinism and the anti-Semitism of the Czech nation led to Masaryk's becoming the target of a hate campaign: he was mobbed, vilified, and threatened; but he stood his ground.

In 1909 and 1910 Masaryk successfully argued the case of Serbian nationalists who stood trial in Zagreb for treason against the Austro-Hungarian crown. He was able to prove that the indictment had been based on documents forged in the Austrian Embassy in Belgrade. This time, it was the establishment rather than a prejudiced populace to which Masaryk preached honesty; wielding power in the state did not justify the use of dishonest means, he said.

Finally, at the age of 64, when others think of retirement, Masaryk became involved in his most important cause. He concluded that the multinational Hapsburg Empire had become unviable. For the Czechs and Slovaks, whom he saw as two branches of a single nation, this meant looking to independent statehood as a political framework for their future. Masaryk left Prague for the West at the end of 1914 and spent the war championing the Czechoslovak cause in Western Europe, Russia, and the United States. In the process, he came to command respect, authority, and a large army of Czechoslovak legionnaires (troops comprising emigres and former prisoners of war) in Russia, Italy, and France.

The Democratic Option. There was no unity among the Czech politicians about the form a future independent state should take; and a democratic republic based on Western values was not the evident choice that it appears to be in retrospect. (A constitutional monarchy of the British kind or a kingdom oriented toward tsarist Russia were mooted.) Nor was Masaryk
generally recognized as the leader of the anti-Hapsburg front for two or even three years into the war. He considered the possible options for some time and compared notes not only with prominent foreign friends and the Czech and Slovak community in the United States but also with his own earlier study of "the sense of Czech history." He concluded that this history had predetermined the nation to commit itself to humanism and democracy. "The destiny of our nation is directly and logically connected with the West and its modern democracy," he said in his inaugural presidential address on 22 December 1918.

The choice having been made and accepted, Masaryk faced the difficult task of making the Czechoslovak democracy work. The overwhelming majority of the Czech and Slovak population still remembers what came to be known as the First Republic (1918-1938) as a politically free state, with a strong economy and a flourishing cultural life, superior to all forms of statehood that were to follow it. When the Czechs were surveyed in 1968, a majority of the respondents described the First Republic as "the most glorious period" in their nation's history. (The age of John Hus and of King Charles IV, both in the Middle Ages, came out second and third, followed by the Prague Spring.) Among Slovak respondents, the First Republic came out fourth, preceded by the age of Ludovit Stur (the 1840s), the Prague Spring of 1968, and the Slovak uprising against the Nazis in 1944.

Democracy is, by its very nature, not without flaws. Masaryk, the "professor-politician" or "philosopher-king" as some called him, obviously did not preside over a state that was ideal on all counts. While the First Republic created an essentially propitious environment for the intellectual development of Slovakia, the concept of a single Czechoslovak nation resulted in a sense of national grievance that induced a large minority of Slovak voters to seek more autonomy than the unitary constitutional arrangement could offer. It should be remembered that Masaryk's Czechoslovakia survived for only 20 years, too short a time for developments to mature and for ingrained patterns of political thinking to change.

Masaryk and the Communists. After its founding in 1921, the CPCS was willing at first to accept the political environment of the First Republic. Then, from 1929 to 1935, it turned against it with a vengeance, designating it an imperialist state and calling for "Lenin, not Masaryk!" After the Communist International changed its attitude to Hitler in 1935, however, the CPCS declared itself a passionate defender of the republic. From 1945 to the takeover in 1948, and even for a bit longer, the CPCS professed adherence, albeit selective, to Masaryk's heritage, choosing to emphasize his humble origins, his understanding with the Social Democrats in the first decade of the century, and his "progressiveness" as a champion of the Czechoslovak cause against the feudal Hapsburgs. There followed a period of total condemnation and vilification coupled with a
ban on the serious study of Masaryk and his thought. Only in the latter part of the 1960s and during the Prague Spring did the communist ostracism of Masaryk cease for a short period of time.

When surveyed in October 1968, Czech respondents overwhelmingly voted T. G. Masaryk as the historical personality they esteemed most. With the Slovaks, Masaryk came out fourth after Ludovit Stur (the 19th century patriot and reformer of the Slovak language), Alexander Dubček, and Milan Rastislav Stefanik (Masaryk's colleague during the First World War, who was killed in an airplane crash in 1919). Twenty years of denigration did not succeed in eradicating a respect that seems to have impressed itself indelibly on the people's minds and across the generational divides. Those voting for Masaryk in 1968 must have included young people without any personal recollection of or knowledge about him.

Now, almost two decades later, no such survey is likely to take place. The dissidents, many of them former Communists, decided to act in order to preserve a continuity of scholarship about Masaryk and to give the younger age groups some knowledge about him. In the first half of the 1980s, they held a number of discussions about Masaryk and issued a three-volume, almost 900-page, samizdat collection of their writings entitled The Masarykian Symposium. The quality of contributions and of subsequent samizdat publications on Masaryk's heritage is very respectable, considering the conditions under which they originated.

Masaryk himself was one of the earliest critics of Marxism. He devoted a series of lectures at Prague University to the subject in the second half of the 1890s and had them published as a book in 1898 under the title The Social Question: Philosophical and Sociological Foundations of Marxism. It is not without benefit to read the book even today, despite its late 19th century flavor. Mikhail Gorbachev could perhaps recognize himself in Masaryk's words, which predated him by 90 years and the October Revolution by 20:

Reformation, not revolution! ... Without a genuine transformation of head and heart, without a change in thought and manners, a revolution might remove the devil only to put Satan in his place. ... As Marxism spreads among the masses ... negation and revolutionism stand in its way. It needs to become positive and creative. For this reason, Marxism is undergoing the natural process of every radical heresy. ... It makes compromises and becomes opportunistic. The revolutionary finally accepts the tactics of older parties and movements—the Phrygian cap becomes a symbol.

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