
Letter from the Central Committees of the Bulgarian, East German, Hungarian, Polish, and Soviet Communist Parties regarding the Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia

TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE ROMANIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

The Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, of the Socialist United Party of Germany, of the Polish United Workers' Party and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union make it their duty to inform you that most of the members of the Presidium of the C.C. of the C.P. of Czechoslovakia and of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic addressed us the request to grant the Czechoslovak people without delay support in the struggle against the rightist, anti-socialist and counterrevolutionary forces, as in the wake of the developments of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, there appeared a real danger of a counterrevolution and of losing the conquests of socialism.

What happened in Czechoslovakia of late? Defaming all the Czechoslovak people's achievements in the twenty years after the socialist revolution, the activity of the C.P. of Czechoslovakia, the anti-socialist, counterrevolutionary forces have seriously prejudiced the position of the P.C. of Czechoslovakia, greatly undermined its influence in the masses, in the ranks of the working class. Convincing proofs thereof are facts like the election in many enterprises of trade union committees without communists, the broad dissemination in the country of the slogan "Soviets devoid of communists!"

The Communist Party experiences now a difficult period of actual scission, which affects both its leadership and, to a greater extent, the basic organizations. Following the mass-wide change of the cadres, which dealt a blow to numerous honest communists who, in their majority, had had nothing to do with past mistakes, the Party organizations in regions and districts got weakened. The moral terror against the honest communists disconcerted the people's masses that were misled, while a certain segment of the people, less prepared politically, were actually drawn into the anti-socialist campaign.

On the contrary, during the past eight months, the counterrevolutionary forces organized themselves, created a system of political parties and organizations, acting under obviously anti-socialist slogans, and grabbed the mass media - an important part of the state apparatus - and used them for their subversive activity. They have been consistently promoting a policy of removing communists from power, of restoring bourgeois democracy, of reinstating capitalist rules.

The reactionary forces in Czechoslovakia try to give a new orientation to foreign policy, to determine the withdrawal of the Czechoslovak S.R. from the Warsaw Treaty organization, from the socialist community. They unfold a broad campaign of discrediting the Warsaw Treaty and the members of this Treaty and apply measures aimed at preparing the reorientation of Czechoslovakia towards the West.

The activity of the reactionary forces in Czechoslovakia is part of the anti-socialist actions of international imperialism. The anti-socialist forces and organizations in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic act in close cooperation with and in fact under the leadership of foreign reactionary centers. Thus the Socialist Party is connected with the Czech counterrevolutionary center of emigrants in Paris. The same center and its press organ Sfidetstvo is closely linked to the "231" club, while numerous former agents of the imperialist secret services are on its leadership. The Popular (Catholic) Party has contacts with the Vienna center headed by

the Jesuit Glinitsa and Kostelitski - both agents of the Austrian Popular (Catholic) Party. The Social-Democratic Party of Czechoslovakia, reconstituted as a matter of fact, acts under the directions of the Socialist International to whom it is connected through the intermediate of the Austrian and West German social democracy. It maintains also permanent relations with the center headquartered abroad of the so-called "Czechoslovak Social-Democratic Party in exile".

Furthermore, a great number of leaders of the counterrevolutionary organizations have close ties with the American and West European imperialist circles. Thus, one of the most inveterate anti-Communists, the ideological leader of the active non-Party members, Ivan Svitak, is in permanent touch with persons attached to the American imperialist circles. The anti-Socialist circles established direct contacts with the reactionary "Free Europe" radio station. A considerable part of the means used by anti-Socialist organizations in Czechoslovakia come from foreign sources.

A legal anti-Socialist opposition has been created in Czechoslovakia that is preparing to take over power.

You know that the Central Committees of the Bulgarian CP, Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (HSWP), Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) and CPSU have done their best, as friends, to help the peoples of Czechoslovakia, its Communist Party, to overcome the dangerous crisis and strike a blow, by political means, against the broadening forces of the counterrevolution.

The permanent contacts of the Communist Party leaders and the socialist countries' governments, the bilateral and multilateral talks with the representatives of the Czechoslovak leadership have been dictated by the sincere wish to support our communist brethren, all working people in the Czechoslovak S.R., to prevent a dangerous turn of events. The meetings between the Political Bureau of the CC of the CPSU and the Presidium of the CC of the C.P. of Czechoslovakia, held at Czerna-nad-Tissou, and them, the Conference of the six fraternal parties in Bratislava served the same aims.

At those meetings, the representatives of the CC of the CP of Czechoslovakia declared confidently that they would take in the shortest possible time palpable measures to improve the situation at home, to strengthen and defend the socialist conquests. We have all hoped that these assurances mirrored their determination to make everything necessary to repel the counterrevolution. If the things agreed by the leaders of the CPSU and the CP of Czechoslovakia at Czerna-nad-Tissou, and by the leaders of the six parties, inclusive of the CP of Czechoslovakia at Bratislava, were put into practice, the political development of Czechoslovakia would have experienced a decisive turn.

But, after the meeting of Czerna and the Bratislava Conference, the leaders of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic disregarded the common agreement and did nothing to make a riposte to the counterrevolution and the rightist, anti-Socialist forces intensified even more their activity.

The goal of the reactionary forces was formulated by themselves in several documents, among which "The Memorandum addressed to the people of Czechoslovakia", drawn up by the organization committee of the "Right Czechoslovak Socialists' Party". This Memorandum reads: "The law we are going to adopt should ban any communist activity in Czechoslovakia. We shall ban and dissolve the Czechoslovak Communist Party, because it is a criminal, fascist party". In the call spread by "Revolutionary Committee of the (underground) Democratic Party in Slovakia" there were formulated, for instance, requests for returning to the peasants, by the end of September, the collectivized lands, and indemnify them for the land "taken" from them; to authorize the legal activity of the bourgeois democratic party in Slovakia; the elections for the organs of

power to be organized under the international control of Britain, USA, Italy and France; to stop publishing in the communist press articles against the western countries, channeling its efforts on unmasking "the Russian communist aggression in Vietnam". This documents ends with the words "Death to the communist party!"

Over these last few days, the anti-Socialist forces have organized signature-raising campaigns in favor of the requests for the dissolution of the workers' militia, which had been created during the struggle for socialism in 1948. Mass meetings and demonstrations of an anti-Socialist nature have accompanied these campaigns. At a demonstration, the participants threw stones at the building of the Central Committee and shouted hooligan, anticommunist slogans. A shameful anti-Socialist campaign was published in the press. Some publications like, for instance, "Literarny Listi", having an ultra-reactionary stance, started to publish materials in which the policy of the socialist countries was identified, as monstrous as this might seem, with Hitler's policy, while the press of the fraternal countries, was equated with Goebbels' propaganda machine.

The counterrevolutionary, anti-Socialist forces and organizations intend, by pressure on the delegates to the Fourteenth Extraordinary Congress through the mass media and by other ways, to obtain the election of the new Central Committee mainly from the ranks of the rightist revisionist elements, and after the Congress to announce early elections for the National Assembly and the local bodies of power, under the slogan "Communists shall not be elected!" They aimed at removing the Communist Party from power and promoting the ascent of the anti-Socialist forces.

Worthy of note is the fact that the tactics of the counterrevolution in Czechoslovakia is different from the one applied in Hungary in 1956. In Czechoslovakia, the reactionary forces started by discrediting the Communist Party, the entire cause of socialism, in order to raise the masses against them and to defeat then the communists in elections.

Obviously, the reactionary forces could not have unfolded an organized offensive against socialism, against the Czechoslovak Communist Party without the help of some persons holding responsible jobs in the Czechoslovak Party and State leadership, persons placing themselves on rightist, revisionist if not utterly anti-Socialist, positions. A lot of facts were eloquent even before about the existence of such persons in the Party leadership, including the participation of some leaders of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in the anti-socialist demonstrations and the open revision of Marxism-Leninism in their speeches. This was also proved by the July Plenum of the CC of the CP of Czechoslovakia, organized like a well-planned show, with the participation of some people chosen subjectively and of the correspondents from the bourgeois press, and which adopted a resolution revising the decisions of the preceding plenums on the rightist threat as the major danger in the present development stage of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic.

The forces in the Presidium of the CC of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia distanced themselves during the Czerna-nad-Tissou meeting: while the minority of the Presidium, headed by A. Dubcek, acted from open rightist, opportunist positions, the majority adopted a principled line and showed the need for a determined fight against the anti-Socialist, reactionary forces, against toleration of reactionary measures. The rightist revisionist elements on the Communist Party leadership and the Czechoslovak Government frustrated the implementation of the agreement reached at Czerna-nad-Tissou and Bratislava concerning the defense of the socialism positions in Czechoslovakia, the struggle with the anti-Socialist forces and the rejection of imperialist plots. Stating, in order to dissimulate, their intention to defend socialism, these people tried, in fact, to gain time and encourage the counterrevolution. In wake of treacherous, vile actions, the socialist

conquests in Czechoslovakia were placed in real jeopardy. Under the circumstances most of the members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and of the Government of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic asked for help from the fraternal socialist states.

The fate of Socialist Czechoslovakia is dear and close to the peoples of all the socialist countries. They cannot accept that our common enemies detach Czechoslovakia from the socialist way, that they imperil it by separating it from the socialist community. Our peoples have suffered too many sacrifices, they shed too much blood in the fierce battles of the past war, in the struggle for social and national liberation, to allow now the counterrevolution to tear Czechoslovakia away from the socialist states family.

The defense of socialism in Czechoslovakia is not only a domestic affair of that country's people, but, as you all realize, a question of safeguarding the security of our countries, of defending the positions of world socialism. For these reasons, we deemed it necessary to comply with the request of our Czechoslovak friends and help the peoples of Czechoslovakia in defense of the conquests of socialism, and consequently, we ordered our military units to take the necessary measures and grant assistance to the Czechoslovak working people.

By making this responsible decision, the Central Committees of our parties took into account the fact that it was the fiercest battle between imperialism and socialism, that Czechoslovakia's going over to the capitalist camp would mean a heavy defeat of world socialism, of the international revolutionary movement.

One cannot forget that such a change of allegiance, if completed, would have put into jeopardy the security of the other socialist countries as well. It would have seriously changed the balance of forces not only in Europe, It would have inspired the American and West German imperialism to increase its activity aimed at undermining from within and without the world socialist system.

It is not a matter of interfering in the domestic affairs of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and of the Czechoslovak people. As we stated repeatedly from the very beginning, we understood that Czechoslovakia needed a process of eliminating past mistakes, of developing socialist democracy, of improving the methods of managing national economy and of raising the living standards of the masses. This is the duty of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia itself, of the Czech people. The allied armies will be withdrawn from the territory of Czechoslovakia as soon as the danger threatening its independence and security, the socialist future of its peoples, is eliminated.

We are aware that bourgeois propaganda is now launching a loose anti-Socialist campaign, that cries about "interference" in the domestic affairs of Czechoslovakia. There will probably appear some temporary difficulties for the fraternal parties. But the loss suffered by the cause of socialism, by the world communist movement, would be infinitely greater, if counterrevolution was to emerge victorious in Czechoslovakia. By extending a brotherly hand to the Czechoslovak comrades, our countries are fulfilling their internationalist duty to the Czechoslovak people, to the international working-class communist movement, and to the national liberation movement. And this duty is more important than anything else.

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