

The Revolutionary Left in Czechoslovakia

Jiri Mueller and the 'Prague Radicals' - Joe Greenwood

The Agreement Between The Czech Student Union
and the Metal Workers Union

The Manifesto of the Revolutionary Socialist Party

The Revolution in Czechoslovakia

The Revolution in Czechoslovakia
and the Role of the Communist Party
The Revolution in Czechoslovakia
and the Role of the Communist Party
The Revolution in Czechoslovakia
and the Role of the Communist Party

INTRODUCTION

This is the third number of a series of pamphlets attempting to provide information, analysis and polemic concerning Eastern Europe. The series "Communism Versus Stalinism" is produced by members of the International Marxist Group, British Section of the Fourth International, in the hope that the pamphlets will be of use in assisting socialist militants in Britain to make sense of developments in Eastern Europe today.

Our first number consisted of one of the most important documents from the revolutionary left in Eastern Europe, Pyotr Grigorenko's Open Letter to the 1969 Conference of Communist Party leaders in Budapest, along with a lengthy critical introduction by Joe Greenwood.

The second number concentrated on the movement of dissident intellectuals in the Soviet Union and contained an article by Oliver MacDonald, outlining the development of the movement and drawing a political balance-sheet of it; in it were also reprinted the famous poem of Yevtushenko, "The Heirs of Stalin", and a Samizdat debate on political strategy.

The present number contains an article by Joe Greenwood on the radical socialist opposition as it developed in the 1960s, contrasting this to the various currents of the "reform movement"; we are also printing, for the first time in English, one of the most important historical documents from the mass movement against the Warsaw Pact invasion: the agreement signed in December 1969 between the student organisation, SVS, and the Czech Metal Workers' Union. Finally we are reprinting the manifesto of the Revolutionary Socialist Party. We would like to thank some members of the Czechoslovak Socialist Opposition abroad for their invaluable co-operation in the production of this pamphlet, although we alone take responsibility for the political positions developed therein.

In conclusion, we would welcome any comments on these pamphlets, suggestions or material for future pamphlets. We can also supply extra copies of the pamphlets, and a range of revolutionary Marxist literature in English and in various East European languages about Eastern Europe today. Finally, members of the editorial board of "Communism versus Stalinism" will be very willing to speak on Eastern Europe putting forward the views of the International Marxist Group and to debate with other tendencies in the working class movement. To contact us on any of these points, write to Oliver MacDonald, c/o The International Marxist Group, 97 Caledonian Rd., London N.1.

JIRI MUELLER AND THE "PRAGUE RADICALS"

-by Joe Greenwood

A Necessary Preamble

The British labour movement is almost unanimous in its condemnation of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia; but it is far from agreed as to the meaning of that invasion, and as to the assessment of the Dubcek reform movement that preceded it.

Every socialist tendency denounced the 1968 invasion and the subsequent repression of Czech resistance leaders -- the only exception was a group of Communist Party members who still evidently believe everything that the Kremlin has been saying about itself for the last 40 years. The Communist Party leadership issued a strong denunciation of the invasion, and has not since retreated from its criticism. Indeed it made a point of opposing the imprisonment of leading Dubckite members of the Czech Communist Party like M. Hubl and Y. Sabata, both of whom remain in jail. Communist Party members like Monty Johnstone, Denis Ogden and Marianne Sling still participate actively in the Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists, which campaigns in this country for the release of the political prisoners thrown into jail after the invasion.

But unity at this level is not reflected in the perspectives put forward for action in the future, or in the appraisal of past events within Czechoslovakia itself. For example, some currents on the left like the International Marxist Group take the view that it is necessary to support the continuing clandestine socialist opposition in Czechoslovakia, and attempt to provide political assistance to it, exchange experiences, and work out common international perspectives. But the Communist Party leadership moves in more or less exactly the opposite direction: it is, at the very moment, preparing for an international conference on political strategy, not with the leaders of the resistance movement, but with the leaders of the invasion forces -- an international conference of pro-Moscow Communist Parties is being organised by Brezhnev for 1975, with the active support of the British Communist Party. The purpose of the conference is precisely to exchange political experiences and work out common perspectives.

This does, of course, represent an acute contradiction within the politics of the Communist Party: its leadership has opposed the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on a question which, for anybody who calls himself a Leninist, is an elementary issue of principle: the right of nations to self-determination.

There would, of course, be one other condition under which the contradictions of the British CP leadership could have been genuinely resolved, although even to mention this possibility is to engage in a grotesque joke: namely, that the CPSU had come to understand the error of its ways and had made a thorough self-criticism of the invasion and denounced it as a crime against the international working class movement and the Czechoslovakian people. John Gollan better than anybody else knows the score on that issue: he, like the leaders of the Spanish CP has been engaged in a bitter struggle against the Kremlin leaders who made ruthless efforts to interfere inside critical Western CPs and topple their leaderships for opposing and continuing to oppose the invasion.

So the acute contradiction remains. The British Party opposed the CPSU on a matter of fundamental principle, but instead of engaging in a principled struggle against the CPSU it is preparing for an international conference at which John Gollan will join with Leonid Brezhnev in proclaiming the 'unshakeable friendship', the 'unbreakable unity' and the various other traditional qualities held in common between their respective parties.

Such a contradictory stance by the British Communist Party is very understandable once the political character of this party is grasped.* And it would be a mistake to imagine that

*It is not the purpose of this article to analyse the political character of the British Communist Party, but it should be noted that the CPGB remains a Stalinist Party in the precise sense that it adheres to the fundamental orientation of subordinating the interests of the international working class to the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. To break from that strategic orientation in the direction of becoming a social democratic party would involve repudiating 50 years of its own history and joining a movement whose global orientation involves the subordination of the interests of the international working class to the direct interests of American and European imperialism. No such transformation has been carried through in the British Communist Party. It would not be possible to comprehend, for example, the CPGB's participation in the 1975 international conference of pro-Moscow CPs if one took the view, apparently held by Ian Birchall of International Socialism that "In perspective, activity and support, the CPs are becoming increasingly social democratic in the classical sense" (Workers Against the Monolith, page 215, Pluto Press, 1974). There are social-democratic currents within some Western CPs, but they are as yet very far from being dominant and bringing about a qualitative change in the nature of these parties. The CPGB leadership's condemnation of the invasion did not mark its subjective break from Stalinism, but rather its desperate effort to avoid losing a great part of the political base of Stalinism in the British labour movement.

political parties cannot survive for any length of time and even maintain a semblance of internal unity in spite of the fact that they harbour absolutely antagonistic political principles at the centre of their politics. Parties can still prosper in such circumstances provided -- and here we come to the crux of the matter -- provided certain conditions are fulfilled. The two chief conditions are the following: first, that a false picture of the meaning of the events in Czechoslovakia gains currency within the working class movement in Britain; and second, that the issue of Czechoslovakia, and especially the burning issue of the defence of the present victims of bureaucratic repression in Czechoslovakia, fades away from the concerns of socialist militants, and more particularly, of CP members and sympathisers in this country.

It is the hope of the present writer that the material in this pamphlet will help to rescue a vital part of the reality of Czechoslovakia from half truths, evasions and down-right distortions which in their totality amount to a false picture, and which the Communist Party, and even that section of it which has been most active in opposing the invasion, would like to be accepted. In one phrase this false picture could be summed up as: the Dubcekite view of history.

Indeed, the British Communist Party is fortunate in the position currently put forward by Alexander Dubcek himself, as shown in his letter to Mrs. Smrkovsky following the death of her husband. In this letter written just after Smrkovsky's death on 14th January 1974 (published in English in the Bulletin of the Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists, No.6-7), Dubcek insists on the correctness of his policies during 1968, but he equally insists upon his loyalty to the Warsaw Pact and the whole edifice of the Kremlin's power in Eastern Europe. His view of the invasion, if sincerely held, cannot be taken seriously, for he appears to believe that the whole operation was based upon false information * being believed by the 'allies' in Moscow. He writes:

* The source of this 'unobjective and distorted' information against whom Dubcek rails was the Soviet Ambassador in Prague during 1968, Mr. Chervonyenko. After the stabilisation of the Husak regime in Czechoslovakia, the most delicate area for the Kremlin bureaucracy's interests in Europe, shifted West to those countries, particularly France, where there was the possibility of Communist Parties entering the Government. Such an event would enormously intensify the class struggle in France and jeopardise the Kremlin's drive for detente with the bourgeoisies of Western Europe. In consequence, during the French Presidential elections, between the first and second rounds when there was the possibility of Mitterand being elected, the Soviet Ambassador took the bold step of paying a well-publicised courtesy call on the bourgeois candidate Giscard d'Estaing, to demonstrate in no uncertain terms where the sympathies of Moscow lay. The man playing the supremely important role of Soviet ambassador was none other than Mr. Chervonyenko freshly appointed after completing his taxing job in Prague!

"To this day I am unable to grasp how our allies (ie. the Kremlin - J.G.) could accept at their face value the patently unobjective and distorted reports about the way we intended to tackle the internal problems of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and of our society, about the actual balance of forces, which evolved during the Prague Spring in favour of the Central Committee, the Party and State leadership. The same goes for information concerning the Party leadership and especially its individual members. Yet it was precisely such information which aroused suspicion and fears as to whether we were really capable of solving our problems with our own internal resources."

Thus Dubcek presents himself as thoroughly loyal today to the forces that organised the invasion. Moreover, he explains the whole effort of the reformers as an effort to solve the problems of the bureaucratic regimes ruling Eastern Europe as far as Czechoslovakia was concerned: an effort to act in the best interests of the Kremlin. And that was indeed the policy of the Dubcekite reformers in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Their drive was to restore popular support for both their own government and for the bureaucracy throughout Eastern Europe. As Dubcek puts it in the same letter: "the Party leadership never betrayed the interests of the CPC, the people, the alliance and internationalism..." (By the alliance he means the Warsaw Pact.) And again: "That was the chief problem for us and for Comrade Smrkovsky -- to make the Party's role more effective, not to deprive the working class of this vital instrument". The Dubcekites sought to carry out this task through a programme of technocratic reform and political liberalisation. At no time did they work for the democratisation of the Czech state: they never called for the development of workers' councils as independent organs of popular power; they never called for freedom of political organisation within such organs of genuine soviet power. Instead they allowed freedom of speech, discussion and assembly, and a loosening of the grip of the party over non-party institutions; they never intended to relinquish that grip -- quite the reverse: by making Party control more flexible, they hoped to strengthen its hold over the masses.

The Dubcekite policy in 1968 rested upon two fallacies: first, that the political forces unleashed by the reform movement could be held at the stage of liberalisation and be prevented from developing into a powerful movement for the thoroughgoing establishment of workers democracy: they hoped that forces able to formulate views against the Party would not press ahead to organise their own independent parties to campaign for their views; second, that the leaders of the other regimes in Eastern Europe would be able to stand on the sidelines as the mass movement in Czechoslovakia developed and as its influence spread rapidly into Ukraine, Hungary, Poland and East Germany.

The invasion took place not because the Kremlin doubted the subjective loyalty of the Dubcekites to itself, It took place because the leaders of the CPSU understood, correctly, that following the projected Fourteenth Party Congress of the Czechoslovak CP, the forces within the Party and State apparatus capable of confronting and suppressing the developing mass mobilisation of intellectuals, young people and workers when it moved out of Party control, would be swept aside and the flood-gates of political revolution would be opened. The value of the Dubcekite leadership to the Soviet bureaucracy, the pay-off from its subjective loyalty to the Warsaw Pact and the Kremlin, lay in the use to which it could be put after the invasion, through its refusal to resolutely mobilise the Czechoslovak masses against the invading armies, its readiness to utilise its prestige among the population to block the emergence of a vigorous anti-bureaucratic leadership for the enormous spontaneous resistance movement of the Czechoslovak people. The report given by Jiri Pelikan, a member of Dubcek's Central Committee at the time of the invasion, speaks volumes about the political 'leadership' of the Dubcekites at that critical moment in Czechoslovakia's history. Asked whether the possibility of armed resistance was ever considered by the Presidium of the Communist Party, he replied:

"No, not at all, The discussion turned on whether the invasion should be condemned. In fact, the biggest discussion was about an amendment to the effect that the invasion was a violation of international law and of the norms governing the relations between socialist states. I think it is an illustration of the weakness of this leadership that they condemned the invasion, but without making any appeal to the people or letting them know what they should do. I was in the Central Committee building that night. They were saying that all was lost..., that nothing could be done... The leaders merely declared that they were against the invasion and did nothing but wait in the Central Committee building to be captured by the Soviet army". (Interview in New Left Review, No.71, Jan.-Feb. 1972).

Whatever their intentions, it was this political role of the Dubcek leadership which led to the eventual demoralisation of the mass movement unleashed by the invasion and the intensified 'normalisation' of the invaded country under the regime of Gustav Husak. The task of providing a perspective and a leadership for the resistance movement had perforce to be borne by young and inexperienced revolutionaries who form the subject of this pamphlet: and by and large they had to carry out their tasks in the teeth of opposition from the Dubcekite leadership.

The explanation of the events in Czechoslovakia during 1968-69 which is emphasised by the leaders of the British Communist Party may be called the Dubcekite version of history in a double sense: first, because it endorses the programme of the leaders

of the reform movement before and after the invasion as well as their view of the causes of the invasion itself; but secondly, and equally importantly, because it focuses all attention on the activity of the Dubcekites themselves, downgrading if not ignoring the actions of those forces on the revolutionary left who refused to be tied to the perspectives of the Party leadership and who played a central role in organising the mass resistance movement independently of the Communist Party in the months following the invasion. The purpose of this article will be to refute any notion that the forces of the 'Prague Spring' consisted of one unified movement under the Party Reform leadership and to unearth the history of a grouping which played a vital role in the history of the Czechoslovak workers' state both before the coming to power of Alexander Dubcek and after his efforts at reform had been crushed by the Warsaw Pact invasion. That grouping was known as the 'Prague Radicals', led by Jiri Mueller.

TOWARDS THE OVERTHROW OF NOVOTNY

Jiri Mueller, born in 1943 and at present serving a five and a half year jail sentence in Czechoslovakia, has never been a member of the Communist Party.

Already in 1964, as a young student in the Prague Engineering faculty, Mueller came out in opposition to the control exerted by the Party and state machine over the activities of the youth. In an article published in April 1964, "The Party and Us", he attacked the structure of the official youth organisation (CSM) as a means of transmitting and implementing the directives of the Party, rather than as a vehicle for independently asserting the aspirations of young people. Although he did not at this time have a fully worked-out analysis of the role of the Communist Party within Czechoslovak society, Mueller saw the need for a youth organisation which could act as a "corrective to the Party's policies". From 1963 onwards the regime, understanding that the implementation of such ideas would turn the youth organisation into a focus of political opposition, carried out strong attacks Mueller and the informal group of 'Prague radicals' with which he was associated throughout the 1960s.

At the time of Mueller's article a critical situation was developing in the CSM and the Party leadership realised that certain structural changes would be necessary in order to avoid its total collapse. But the regime also required that these changes should be initiated by the bureaucracy itself and should result in the strengthening of the CSM and thus also

of the Party's (perhaps more discreet) control over its functioning. Therefore, in the spring of 1966, while the press was full of discussion on the reform of the CSM, Party Secretary Antonin Novotny personally intervened to condemn the activities of the Prague radicals and to re-assert in the crudest way the "leading role of the Party".

In November 1966, at the annual conference of Prague student members of the CSM, it became clear that the influence of the Prague radicals was growing considerably. The composition of the University District Committee elected by the conference reflected this trend and set Mueller on a direct collision course with the regime. The following month, within the space of a few days, he was expelled from the CSM and the University and drafted into that well-known corrector of wayward youth -- the army. In the first half of 1967 a campaign to demand Mueller's reinstatement was waged by the Prague radicals and evoked a considerable response from the mass of students. The Prague CSM University Committee supported Mueller's appeal against the expulsion, and shortly afterwards elected one of his closest collaborators, Jan Kavan, onto the Presidium. The predictable decision of the CSM Central Committee to ratify the expulsion merely underlined its bureaucratic isolation in the eyes of the students.

At this time the Vietnam war became an important factor in the student movement. Although the Party leadership's monopoly of the press acted as a powerful barrier to the development of any awareness of the international class struggle among the masses of Eastern Europe, the intensification of the imperialist war in Vietnam and the successes of the national liberation movement began to stimulate a new political awareness among students. Faced with B-52 bombers over the North Vietnamese workers' republic, the regimes of Eastern Europe were forced to respond with limited aid to Hanoi and open denunciations of the American attacks. But when the enthusiastic Prague students independently organised opposition to the war, they further challenged the rigid control by the Party apparatus over all mass activity and thus sharpened the mounting conflict between students and the regime. Moreover, the split in the World Communist Movement and the Chinese Cultural Revolution both contributed to the objective weakening of the authority of every Stalinist regime.

Once again, Mueller was far from having arrived at a fully worked-out position in relation to this crisis. However, he made no secret of his serious interest in the cultural revolution and in the political issues raised by the split in the world movement. He demanded the right to full information about events in China and the publication of statements by the Chinese Communist Party. He also tried to obtain this information

directly through discussions with members of the Chinese Embassy in Prague. These discussions in fact figured prominently in the 'indictment' that led to his expulsion in December 1966.

THE 'PRAGUE SPRING'

A year later the Novotny regime was seized by a profound crisis out of which a new leadership team under Alexander Dubcek emerged. To gain a popular base, the Dubcekite 'reformers' loosened the bureaucratic stranglehold over the mass organisations. Mueller was re-instated and the leaders of the CSM attempted to take the steam out of the student movement by adopting some of Mueller's earlier proposals. However, the CSM itself was very rapidly discarded by the mass of students and on 19th March 1968 representatives of 17 out of the 24 Prague faculties set up a Preparatory Committee for a Union of University Students, to be totally independent of the CSM. A few days later a national student meeting in Brno made a similar commitment to an independent organisation and, despite continued opposition from the Dubcek Party leadership, a Czech Union of University Students -- the SVS, as it will be called hereafter -- was founded in May.

While continuing to play a leading role in their faculties, the Prague radicals at first adopted an abstentionist position in relation to the SVS. In the early summer of 1968 the turmoil amongst the students was focused at the level of the faculty rather than in the national or regional structures of SVS; right up to the time of the invasion only a minority of faculties were affiliated to the SVS; the Prague Philosophy faculty, for example, began to produce its own regular bulletin generally expressing the positions of the Movement of Revolutionary Youth (out of which the Revolutionary Socialist Party was later to be formed). Nevertheless, the radical socialist students would appear to have made a serious mistake in refusing to accept positions of leadership within the SVS at a time when their past record of struggle and opposition to Party control made them the widely and naturally recognised leaders of the new student movement. Mueller himself was perhaps afraid that he would simply be breathing life into an apparatus that would eventually be integrated into the "power structure". However, the rejection by the clear leaders of the students of a principled fight within a mass democratic union led to the persistence of the fragmentation of the student movement; the other side of the coin was that the SVS was placed in the control of an unrepresentative leadership that was unable to offer a clear way forward or a centralised organisational focus for the mass of students.

THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

The invasion of August 1968 marked a turning point in the development of all political forces in Czechoslovakia - both reformist and revolutionary.

The Dubcekites seem to have thought that they could salvage something from the situation by making all the necessary compromises with Moscow while maintaining their commitment to the Action Programme; in time, the argument went, the Kremlin would see that it had nothing to fear and would allow Dubcek to continue with the reforms. However, the Kremlin was not to be fooled by such an absurd plan; it had already seen that even the limited measures of liberalisation of the spring unleashed the spectre of revolution and it was not prepared to leave matters in the hands of the "incompetent bunglers" in Prague. The more Dubcek dissociated himself from the ferment of the masses and frantically appealed for calm, the closer came the time when he would be thrown on the rubbish heap and replaced by an alliance of Moscow stalwarts and cynical realists. Every step back, every new "agreement" signed with a sigh widened the gulf between the "leaders" and the masses and further asserted the control of the Kremlin. Whatever their intentions and however great the partial contradiction, the actions of the Dubcek leadership after the invasion accorded perfectly with the strategic aim of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The radicalised students in Prague, still primarily organised on a faculty basis, played an important role in the spontaneous resistance to the occupation. But the speed of political events in the following months precluded a further period of gradual differentiation within an amorphous movement. For certain currents the obvious inadequacy of the "reform" leadership pointed the way towards the creation of a political organisation on a clear programme of anti-bureaucratic struggle. Such was to be the case of the growing nucleus of the Revolutionary Socialist Party.

For all the forces to the left of the CP however the only alternative to the "creeping normalisation" imposed by Moscow lay in the mobilisation of the Czechoslovak masses to oppose the concessions. The "Prague radicals" began to fight within the SVS to win the student masses to a perspective of independent political action. At the first parliament of the SVS, held at the end of October, a leading member of the radical group, Karel Kovanda, was elected to the Presidium of the Union; a sharp polarisation followed between the radical students in Prague and the moderate, conciliationist forces in Brno that finally exploded at the third SVS parliament in February 1969. However, throughout the winter all the important positions on the SVS commissions were held by "Prague radicals" and they were in the leadership of nearly all the major student actions.

Mueller, himself, was chairman of the commission for contacts with workers; Lubos Holecek of the commission for internal political affairs; and Jan Kavan of commission for international relations.

On 12 November an action committee of Prague students was established with representatives from nearly all Prague faculties, the school students' union and the Union of Working Youth. The committee proposed a series of actions to coincide with the Plenum of the CP Central Committee on November 17. The newly elected SVS Presidium supported the initiative of the action committee and between 18 and 21 November mass student occupations took place throughout Czechoslovakia in an unprecedented demonstration of united resistance to the dictates of the Kremlin. Undoubtedly the most important consequence of the action was the fact that it laid the basis for an active alliance between students and workers; telegrams flooded in to the action committee expressing the support of sections of workers, and, in some cases, pledging solidarity strike action in the event of repression. Meetings began to be organised in the factories and colleges with speakers invited from the students or workers; the SVS Commission for contacts with workers, headed by Jiri Mueller, began to make systematic approaches to the industrial unions with the aim of reaching agreement on a number of points. On December 19, Mueller spoke at the founding Congress of the Czech Metal Workers' Union, attended by 1200 delegates representing 900,000 workers. The agreement signed by Mueller and a representative of the Union is reprinted elsewhere in this pamphlet.

Shortly after, a number of similar agreements were concluded with all the industrial unions in the country and Mueller was especially active in ensuring that they were followed up by local co-operation between individual factories and faculties. It is clear from the reprinted text and from the ten-point platform of the students that their perspective at this time was essentially one of "holding the line" against further pressure from the Kremlin and bringing about the immediate withdrawal of the troops. Thus, both documents make clear that "the basis of our policy is and shall be the Action Programme of the Communist Party as accepted at the April Central Committee". (Point 1 from the "Ten Points" NLR 53, p.20). However, whilst the radicalised students and trade-union militants do not break from the Dubcekite reform programme in their declarations, the methods and actions they propose in the struggle for democratic rights strike at the heart of the Party monopoly of political activity. In particular, the movement for workers' councils, that was actively supported by the students, was seen in Moscow as an omen of the way things were moving in Czechoslovakia; despite warnings by the government, a national meeting of delegates from two hundred workers' councils was held in

early January at the giant Skoda plant in Pilsen, out of which an ongoing co-ordinating committee was established.

The period from November 1968 to January 1969 was a period that, in the post-1948 history of Eastern Europe, can only be compared with the East German uprising of 1953 and the Hungarian revolution of 1956. The extent and duration of the mass upsurge in Czechoslovakia demonstrated to the Soviet bureaucracy that there was no way of "liberalising" their rule that would not tend to unleash the spectre of workers' power. However, in early 1969 the existence and relative authority of the Dubcekite "reformers" gave the Kremlin precisely enough room for manoeuvre to put an end to the whole experiment without a direct use of the army. Thus, when Moscow began a campaign against one of the most popular CP leaders, Josef Smrkovsky, the workers and students responded with a massive show of support, threatening, in some cases, to take strike action if he were removed from office. The Dubcekites turned their back on the masses and issued a warning to the people of the grave consequences of the threat of strike action for the stability of the country; the final touch was given by the fact that Smrkovsky himself was one of the four signatories of this warning, and indeed, this was probably the decisive factor in persuading the masses to accept his removal as Chairman of the National Assembly. Deprived of any leadership from the Dubcekites for the movement, the working class watched with impotent rage as Smrkovsky and, later, the other reform "leaders" betrayed their interests and went meekly to their fate.

In April 1969 at the 2nd Congress of the SVS, another attempt was made by the conciliationist forces to tie it to the apparatus of the Party and to the political perspectives of the dying Dubcekite leadership. The proposal to affiliate to the CP front organisation, the National Front, failed to win the support of the students, largely as a result of the intervention of Jiri Mueller and the other Prague radicals. In a written statement he declared:

"As I do not wish to replace the free student movement by a transmission belt between state and student, I vote against affiliating with the National Front. To rephrase the West German students' declaration, I would say:
'Only the most stupid oxen choose their own butchers'."

THE REPRESSION

The newly established Husak 'normalisers' lost little time in putting an end to the experience of independent student organisation and activity. In June 1969, a decree of the Ministry of the Interior ordered the immediate dissolution of the SVS, and consequently, the renunciation of the SVS/Trade Union alliances that were the major remaining focus of opposition to Moscow. The alliances were not dead yet, however, and a series of strikes were called in the largest Prague factories to protest against

the dissolution, the purges of the Party and state apparatus and the re-introduction of a tight censorship of the press. The experience of six months' activity between students and workers was one of the most important features of the period and will undoubtedly serve as an inspiration for the development of a new opposition force to the Husak regime.

Mueller himself was not spared the club of repression that was directed against all the mass leaders of 1968-69. In spring of the following year he was expelled from the university for the second time and, once again, the Prague students organised a campaign to demand his re-instatement.

Forced to take a job as a travelling salesman, he did not give up his opposition to the puppet regime imposed by the Kremlin. In November 1971 he was arrested together with the former CP leader, Jaroslav Sabata, and accused of "subversive activity against the socialist state and society" -- a formula used by the bureaucracy to characterise any activity seen as a threat to its domination. The main concrete accusation was that he helped to produce, together with a number of other individuals and organisations, a leaflet denouncing the stage-managed elections of that month as a fraud and reminding Czechoslovak citizens of their constitutional right to abstain from voting and to strike out the name of the single, official "candidate". Mueller, like his co-defendants, refused to recant and pointed to "the fundamental difference between political activity directed against the policies pursued by those at present in power and activity which is anti-socialist and anti-social in nature." His own activity he proudly declared to be "based on socialism, but ... opposed to a regime created as a result of the invasion of Czechoslovakia".

Such elementary distinctions did not impress the learned, "socialist" judge and Mueller was sentenced to 5½ years imprisonment in the summer of 1972. Since then, he has been held in a special section of the Bory prison in Pilsen, where the living conditions are in clear violation of all existing legislation. He has developed gall-stones and continues to be refused X-rays and medical treatment.

JIRI MUELLER AND THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION

The imprisonment of Jiri Mueller is a despicable crime against the students and workers of Czechoslovakia. It has been carried out by political gangsters who deserve the unyielding hatred and contempt of the workers movement throughout the world. The fact that Brezhnev and his stooges in Prague have carried out their crimes in the name of socialism, of Leninism, of proletarian internationalism, is a matter of shame and

humiliation for every honest member of the pro-Moscow Communist Parties. In Czechoslovakia the Soviet bureaucracy showed that it was prepared to go to absolutely any lengths in attacking the interests of the world working class in order to defend its privileges as a parasitic caste -- provided it felt able to get away with it.

An international campaign is gaining strength for the release of Jiri Mueller and all the other political prisoners in the jails of Gustav Husak. But Mueller represents much more than a victim of Stalinist repression. He embodies, in the story of his own struggle, some of the key weapons for any movement to defeat Stalinism, not just in Czechoslovakia, but throughout Eastern Europe: the necessity to organise independently of the Communist Parties; the necessity to put first the interests of masses and to be prepared to break any spurious "unity" with reformists who wish to hold back the advance of the working class or who turn their backs on its interests in the name of "the leading role of the Party", the "unity of the Party", or any other such formula; and the necessity to trust in the action of the masses, to welcome and try to stimulate their activity, rather than fear them or try to contain their initiatives.

These lessons of the great upsurge of political revolution in Czechoslovakia -- the early struggle of the Prague radicals to free the youth organisation from bureaucratic control, the mass mobilisations of the students' union after the invasion in spite of opposition from the Dubcekites, the development of workers' councils, and the creation of an alliance of trade unions with the students' union in the face of Party attacks -- these lessons must not be obscured or forgotten by those working for the future victory of workers democracy in Czechoslovakia and the other bureaucratically dominated workers' states of Eastern Europe.

And indeed, these lessons of the Prague radicals and of the other more ideologically developed groupings in the revolutionary left of 1968 and 1969, are very far from being forgotten in Czechoslovakia today. Revolutionary socialists in that country continue to struggle, in clandestinity and in the teeth of vicious repression, keeping alive the perspective of overthrowing the bureaucracy, spreading the lessons of the class struggle in other parts of the world, attempting to develop contacts in surrounding East European countries and with socialists in the West. The struggle led by Mueller and others is very far from dead. And every possible assistance and solidarity is required in its defense, from socialists and communists in Britain.

(The following agreement, referred to in the article "Jiri Mueller and the 'Prague Radicals'", was the first such agreement to be signed between the SVS and an industrial union. Altogether, fifty-seven such new unions were set up in 1968 and founding congresses took place throughout the autumn and winter; they affiliated to, and, as in the case of the Metal Workers' Union, often sought to change the structure of the ROH -- the "Revolutionary Trade Union Movement" -- a Trade Union Federation created after 1948 and rapidly integrated into the state apparatus.

One or two further points in the Agreement require some background information.

The Socialist Enterprises Act (or rather, bill) lack of public discussion of which is criticized in the agreement, was finally circulated in February 1969. It related principally to the formation of enterprise councils with varying degrees of worker participation and was later the subject of a long debate within the trade-union movement. After P'isak took over, it was rapidly discarded.

Professor Vladimir Kadlec, mentioned in the agreement, was Minister of Education in the Dubcek government and an early personal target of Soviet propaganda. In December 1968, he declared his willingness to resign, given the impossibility of continuing with his policies; the Prague students initiated a campaign, supported by intellectuals and workers, to keep him in office.

The creation of two Communist Parties (of the Czech lands and of Slovakia) within a federal structure was one of the aims of the "reform movement". After the invasion, however, Moscow opposed the calling of a Czech Party Congress, knowing that it would elect a solidly Dubckite leadership; instead, a "Bureau for the Czech lands" was administratively called into being by the Presidium of the CPCz in October 1968. Headed by Lubomir Strougal, a leading pro-Moscow element, it was rejected by the Czech masses and, during the autumn and winter, the student and workers' movement demanded the immediate convocation of a congress of the Czech Communist Party.

CC CPCz -- Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia
CSSR or CSSFR -- Czechoslovak Socialist (Federated) Republic.)

AGREEMENT ON CO-OPERATION (CONCLUDED) BETWEEN THE CZECH TRADE UNION OF METAL WORKERS AND THE UNION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA

Both parties consider the activity of the society which was started by the January 1968 plenary session of the CC CPCz and which was interrupted by the intervention of the five Warsaw pact armies into Czechoslovakia in August 1968 as the basis of Czechoslovakia's further progress toward socialism.

Both parties highly appreciate the fundamental post-January achievements of the people of the CSSR, particularly the following ones:

1. Open participation of the public, headed by the working

class, in formulating the national and CPCz policies.

2. The open dialogue of the public with the national and CPCz leadership, carried out by way of mass media of communication.

3. Restoring the role of the CPCz in the (Czechoslovak) society, particularly by the CPCz Action Programme of April 1968, by the reply of the CC CPCz Presidium to the Warsaw letter of five communist parties of July 1968 and by the Fourteenth Extraordinary CPCz Congress of August 1968.

4. The resistance of the Czechoslovak people against the intervention of foreign armies in August 21st to 28, 1968.

The Czech Trade Union of Metal Workers declares its support for the recent student strike held in support of the ten points of the Union of University Students and demands that such conditions be created for work which would enable Professor Kadlec to stay in the Government. The Union of University Students of Bohemia and Moravia declares its support to the endeavours of metal workers to remove apparatchiki and bureaucrats from the leading bodies of the ROH (Revolutionary Trade Union Movement) and to create an organisation advocating the true interests of workers. The SVS of Bohemia and Moravia joins the Czech Trade Union of Metal Workers in sponsoring a resolution in support of Comrade Josef Smrkovsky.

Both parties reject the present policy of continual concessions to external pressures and of the intentional interruption of the flow of information between the leadership of the State and the leadership of the CPCz, and the public.

Both parties protest against the accumulation of offices, power and information in the hands of a narrow group of leaders.

The two parties do not agree with politics in the Czech Lands being controlled by an undemocratically selected Bureau of the (CC of the) CPCz for (Party) work in the Czech Lands and demand the immediate convocation of the Czech CP Congress.

Both parties reject the attacks against the cultural front and highly appreciate its political involvement.

Both parties warn against (the consequences of) limiting the free activity of mass media of communication.

Both parties are exasperated by the continuous procrastination in solving the concept of economic development, and by the postponement of public discussion on the Socialist Enterprises Act.

Both parties demand that a team of workers' deputies of enterprises and Czechoslovak economists be enabled to work out an alternative economic programme.

Both parties maintain the demand that the sovereignty of the Republic be immediately restored and foreign armies withdrawn.

Both parties demand that new elections to all representative bodies be organized in the shortest possible time.

Both parties shall work to the effect that principles of the General Declaration of Human Rights of the UNO be embodied in the new Constitution of the CSSFR.

Considering the common opinions herein described, considering the necessity to create as wide a popular front as possible which would follow up the policy of the leadership of the State and the leadership of the CPCz, both parties intend:

1. To exchange regularly delegations as well as information about their respective activities, their attitudes and opinions on current problems of the society.
2. To regularly exchange acquired political information.
3. To inform each other beforehand about actions under preparation.
4. To ensure that the leading bodies of the Czech Trade Union (of Metal Workers) and of the SVS forward all information resulting from their contact to their respective basic chapters.
5. To provide mutual support in exploiting the facilities of both contracting parties.
6. To incessantly expand direct contacts between metal workers and university students.
7. To exploit all possibilities in continuously strengthening and reinforcing the informal alliance of workers and the intelligentsia.
8. To explain respective attitudes (of the two parties) by corresponding bodies at corresponding meetings.
9. To carefully and prudently evaluate the development of the political situation and to discuss it by suitable bodies. To demand the realization of their demands by energetic actions.

The agreement was approved by 1200 delegates of the First Congress of the Czech Trade Union of Metal Workers, representing over 900,000 workers.

Prague, December 19th, 1968.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MANIFESTO OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST PARTY

The struggle to assimilate and develop Marxist theory is one of the principal tasks facing the revolutionary left in Eastern Europe. It was out of the numerous discussion groups and student activist circles of 1968 that the first revolutionary cadres began to be formed and the first elements of an action programme worked out.

More specifically the formation of the Revolutionary Socialist Party took place through a programme of intensive education, covering many of the texts of revolutionary Marxism and of other contemporary ideological currents. In 1970, the first volume of a major collection of documents, "Bureaucracy No -- Revolution Yes", had already been duplicated in 1,000 copies. The manifesto of the RSP was the clearest statement of aims to emerge from this ferment and remains a permanent gain for the whole of the revolutionary movement.

Its first achievement was in grasping the need to make a decisive break with the ideology of "pressure groups" that had flourished during the Prague spring and which, despite the appearance of autonomy given to these groups, served to confirm the Party in its monopoly of consciously political activity. Mueller's conception of a political student movement, similar in many ways to that of certain Western revolutionary currents of the period, already represented a first spontaneous rejection of this ideology. However, he never fully saw that, without a revolutionary party capable of grouping the workers' vanguard on an alternative political programme, the masses would never break free from the tutelage of the bureaucracy and its party. The RSP manifesto understands this fundamental point. Nowhere can one find a clearer dissociation from the highest production of the reform movement -- the April 1968 CP Action Programme -- or a clearer realisation of its function in drawing the masses into the strategical web of the Dubcekite Party leadership.

Once the militants of the RSP had made this basic commitment to programmatic independence, it was a matter of course for them to draw the necessary practical conclusions; the formation of a clandestine group; combining underground work and open work in the mass organisations, was a giant step forward, even if its origin in the fragmented student movement led it into a number of mistakes, the most important of which is its failure to grasp the importance of a democratic centralist organisation.

A second important characteristic of the manifesto is its commitment to revolutionary goals in the struggle against the bureaucracy. Here it is no longer a question simply of carrying out personnel changes within the ruling apparatus, but of the destruction of that apparatus and its replacement with genuine

organs of workers' power, with "the direct democracy of the producers". Such a conception is, of course, anathema not only to those who were installed in power by the Soviet invasion, but to all those "friends of Czechoslovakia" who entertain fond hopes that the withered flower of Dubcekism will one day blossom again in a new and this time everlasting Spring sunshine.

Finally the manifesto represents a total break from the cowardly, national perspective that the Dubcekites attempted to impose on the masses, whilst at the same time subordinating everything to the "international" perspective of the Kremlin bureaucracy. In a sense, the forces that were later to become the RSP were "assisted" in this understanding by the very invasion of the national territory by the five Warsaw Pact armies. It was no longer possible to seriously believe in the possibility of socialist democracy in one country; henceforth, the revolutionaries in Eastern Europe must start from the fact that their struggle is inextricably bound up with the world struggle for socialism and against the "'peaceful co-existence' of imperialism and the Kremlin counter-revolutionaries."

In 1970, the RSP had two main centres of activity -- the unofficial trade union committees and the student movement. It was an important force in the Prague Student Parliament where its members made up about a fifth of the forces, not including an important number of sympathisers. Members were prominent in the unofficial Trade Union co-ordinating committees in Prague and in the factory committees, most notably in the Metal Workers' and University employees union. The RSP also had important connections with the Printers' Union which enabled it to bring out 100,000 copies of the leaflet, "TO ALL - TO ALL - TO ALL", reprinted at the end of the manifesto.

The arrest of 26 militants of the RSP in the autumn of 1970 was a major success for the Husak regime and the starting-point for a series of exemplary trials of its most intransigent opponents. A few months later, however, the uprising of the Polish workers in the Baltic ports came as a striking demonstration of the strength of the proletariat of Eastern Europe and of the instability of the bureaucratic regimes. It is above all to these worker militants that the manifesto is addressed and it will be with these forces that a genuine mass party of the working class will be built. The experience of the Revolutionary Socialist Party will be of enormous importance for revolutionaries throughout Eastern Europe in the construction of such a party.

WHAT? IS TO BE DONE?

It seems that the victories of January 1968 are still alive in the thoughts of the people: the breaking free from fear, the will of the workers to decide their own affairs, the free discussion without any censorship or restriction, the confrontation of different views, conceptions and programmes; the idea of trade-unions as a tool of workers defence and not as a tool of the bureaucracy serving to oppress them.

On the other hand we have been cured of many illusions. We no longer believe in the myth of legality, since we know that the bureaucracy uses the law in its own interests and against the people and we are prepared to break these anti-people laws, to combine legal work in the trade-unions with illegal work and gradually, if necessary, abandon legal forms of struggle. We do not believe in the realisation of our demands within the framework of the existing system, since their dynamic threatens the interests of our bureaucracy and the international bureaucracy and they will not abandon their privileges voluntarily.

The attempts at decentralisation also tend to evoke the self-activity of the people and this constitutes a danger for the bureaucratic regime, and arouses a tendency to a takeover of power in the factories and workplaces by workers' councils, which will no longer be answerable either to ministries or to the bureaucratic centre. We do not believe in the Action Programme of the CPCz - we know that it is humane, that it was written with the best intentions and that we can agree with it in many respects, but we are aware that it is the programme of the liberal wing in the leadership of the CPCz, and that its aims must align - we all saw this in August - with the interests of the international bureaucracy, led by the rulers in the Kremlin. The August invasion demonstrated that this programme is not correct, for it is unworkable. We no longer believe in a system where the leadership, even when it is as humane as Dubcek, decides for the workers without them, for only the workers themselves have the right to decide their own destiny. We do not believe in socialism in one country, or that the power of the bureaucracy can be broken in a small isolated country like Czechoslovakia, which would from then on have "gone its own way", had its own "socialism with a human face", for socialism is only one and its face is human, otherwise it is not socialism. We do not believe in neutrality, since in a world of social struggles we cannot be neutral, as we were in 1956, and as the Poles, Hungarians and Germans were in August 1968 - that is not neutrality, that's a crime. We do not believe in help from UNO, we do not believe in "peaceful coexistence" of imperialism and the Kremlin counter revolutionaries.

We believe only in ourselves, in our own reason, our own understanding and powers. When we say ourselves, we are not thinking only of the workers, technicians, farmers, students and intellectuals in our country, but of all those who are in a similar

social position anywhere in the world, for we have understood that our struggle and our organization must have an international character. Our position is very little different from the position of the workers in the neighbouring "peoples democracies" and it is above all with them that we must link up, and it is finally little different from that of the people in the USSR, where social oppression is often joined to oppression of nationalities -- in the Ukraine, the Baltic Republics, Transcaucasia, etc. Even if the political awareness of the people of these countries is often lower than here - they are our allies, our brothers, who are gradually becoming our comrades in struggle, just like the French and Italian workers, just like the oppressed people of Africa and Latin America, just like the workers of the whole world.

The 21st of August and the days following it must not remain the only period of resistance; opposition to Husak's police terror, which is increasing and enveloping the entire country, must become (otherwise it would lose all its mass character) more organized, better worked out and each one of us must link himself to this work, for otherwise our perspectives will be lost for many years. That is why it is necessary gradually to work out a programme for your factory, your workplace, because it will be YOU who will decide the future economic policy as the supreme and sole owners of the means of production with which you work (tools, machines, equipment, means of transport, soil, etc.).

The ideas which emerge from your discussion about the economic, social and political programme of your factory together with your views and experiences should be written down, put up on posters/wall: newspapers/ distributed as widely as possible, passed on to workers of other factories, spread about in town districts, and villages. It is your right and responsibility to know how the managers run the factory and what pressure is exerted on them by higher organs - trade-union leadership, ministries, party apparatus, etc. You should know the prices of raw materials, the prices of the products and how they are determined. It is your right and responsibility to know whether you are working for consumption or for further production, or whether you are producing for storage. It is essential to know what rewards, shares, prizes, etc. the economic leaders get. This is your right and you should try and attain it through RTUMFC - REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNION MOVEMENT FACTORY COMMITTEE, an official organisation. You should make use of this right of workers' control of your own initiative. Publish the facts you discover and inform all the workers. Any form of "participation" of the workers in running factories and enterprises must be rejected. Councils of workers which do not have any real influence on economic management should not in the name of the workers accept a share in the responsibility for an economic policy which is heading for total collapse. NO PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT, BUT WORKERS' CONTROL TODAY AND WORKERS' MANAGEMENT TOMORROW. That is our slogan for the attainment of POLITICAL power by the Czech people. In this respect it is very important to link up with workers from other factories; both from the same industry and same trade-union and

also outside irrespective of what trade-union you belong to. Horizontal links are forbidden but it is up to you to defy this prohibition: working in the RTUMFC you have full rights to contacts, exchange of information and experiences and to co-ordination of further activity irrespective of trade-union membership.

Only your own activity is a real check to the gradual totalisation of our life and only direct action can prevent a return to the darkest days of Stalinism. Only resistance and the unity of us all can hinder the bureaucracy from repression against students, intellectuals, trade-unionists or any of us. It will be difficult to reintroduce political trials in a country where the workers are prepared to go on strike in protest against these trials. Strike action can have tragic results for the bureaucracy. This joint united resistance against the bureaucratic centre is also the political creed of our Revolutionary Socialist Party. In conditions of active resistance we can struggle for our concepts against others, we can justify them in mutual discussion: in an atmosphere of fear and political trials we will become a small, isolated sect, since we have no influence over a people largely cynical and despondent. Not only our party, but each one of us is a guarantee of the future development of our society. Everyone must think deeply about what he has done and what he could do for our liberation.

Let us try to inquire into the essence of our system. There can be no talk of socialism here, we are not talking only about Czechoslovakia. If we examine the system, we must evidently always come to the necessity of an antibureaucratic, genuinely socialist revolution. It turns out that the CPCz and the unions are bound by warnings and instructions from above, from the moment they are prepared to respect them. Thus they are progressively becoming, just like the state and economic apparatus, the army, the police and the courts, mere tools of bureaucratic power. Two things follow from this:

1. Not to abandon the positions which the workers have, especially in the TUs, RTUMFCs. We must hold them chiefly because it is within our power to prevent repressions and safeguard the interests of the workers in the face of the higher organs. It is of course not possible to have any illusions that the unions and the CPCz could become really revolutionary instruments of the workers. The decisive factor will of course obviously be the struggles of the independent organisations of the workers against the bureaucratic power. The situation hitherto - especially in the unions - permits a certain faction in the committees of the RTUM to agree in advance on united action against the conservative minority which may consider itself bound by party discipline. In numerous party organisations it is then possible to declare a complete boycott of commands from above, wait for the dissolution and set up other forms of struggle after dissolution - illegal work by the revolutionary part of the organisation, of course strictly conspiratorial. It could pay

to follow a policy of not voluntarily leaving the CPCz, but merely disengaging from it. This will cause the bureaucracy a lot of difficulties, and at the same time help the polarisation of forces: those who will progress further, those who retire into private life and those who sell themselves to Husak.

2. Gradually to build up illegal groups, which will work alongside the legal activity in the RTUM and the CPCz, and if we eventually lose our positions in those organisations, will go over to exclusively illegal activity, of which we spoke at the beginning. It is important for them to have an influence on the workers even if nobody can know that they belong to such a group. They must also have contacts in other factories, which should always be maintained only between two comrades, so as to minimise the risk of exposure. Do not keep any printed matter in rooms at the factory: rely on your memory, not on a notebook or address book. Collect information, meet, pass on the information, publish it on wall newspapers. Do not let us allow ourselves to be driven into retreat, let us not turn our backs just out of cowardice. The atmosphere at workplaces depends only on our courage and cunning. We are the overwhelming majority and against us there stand only a handful of people.

At the present time in our country discussions are going about variants of the overall social programme. Our conception is that of a socialist, self-managing society, of direct democracy of the producers. It is that of the fulfilment of the age-old ideals of free peoples, ideals of liberty, equality and brotherhood, which can be reached only by the removal of class differences and the creation of the possibility for everyone to decide individually about his own life, about his work and its results. But for our society to reach these socialist goals, it must - we are convinced - pass through a revolutionary process, must first of all destroy the bureaucracy as a social stratum, which means that it must take political and economic power from it. This is connected also with the destruction of all the repressive instruments of its power, especially the StB, State Security Police (Czech KGB), the army, the so-called people's militia and the censorship, simply to destroy the state apparatus and introduce general arming of the people. The working people, which will thus take power, will combine according to its own interests in various organisations, which will put forward various conceptions and programmes. But its will will be expressed through its own non-party institutions - councils at the workplaces, in the various branches of industry, a central council of workers and organs of self-management of the people in towns and villages. These councils will no longer be responsible to a bureaucratic centre, but to the workers, who in an atmosphere of free discussion, freedom of the press and of assembly and association will themselves see to it that their representatives express their interests. We are, however, of the opinion that our people cannot set out on this road alone: the geographic and economic situation does not allow that, the power of the international bureaucracy run from the Kremlin will not permit it. The revolutionary process must spread

to other countries; in co-operation with the people of those countries we want to live and work in the future. But not even our central and eastern Europe can be separated from other countries - socialism pre-supposes the co-operation and brotherhood of the people of the whole world. And therefore our sympathies are on the side of the Latin American partisans, the French students and workers, who in May 1968 gave to the workers of Western Europe a socialist alternative for their future; on the side of the Vietnamese, who are fighting against American imperialism. For the world is only one, and people must decide whether they will accept the alternative of Messrs Nixon, Brezhnev, or Franco, the alternative of passivity, fear, and unfreedom, or the alternative of a free, socialist society. We believe that the Czechoslovak people will take one of the first places in this decision. Our programme will be constantly perfected and will be influenced by the sharpening tensions and contradictions in our countries between the workers, the intelligentsia, and the students on the one hand and the bureaucracy, led by the pro-Moscow power centre, on the other. That is how we understand the class viewpoint in this historical period.

This programme cannot be realised unless numerous groups of vanguard workers and technicians, intellectuals and students exert every effort to organise. The organisations which arise, irrespective of differences in conception and programme would have to work together and carry out actions in common: they could join in a Front of popular resistance. Some of you may possibly join our party, and gradually gain contact. We would like to co-operate with other organisations and parties.

An important place in the popular resistance will of course be taken by the young, who are not bound by family responsibilities and worries and who were most severely hit in August - they lost their perspectives and again became deprived of rights. The bureaucracy will be convinced that this youth without rights is a historical powderkeg of great explosive force. We all consider our programme for the next period to be:

1. To support and uphold as much as possible popular activity; independent actions by the workers, to keep each other informed and to maintain as close contact as possible with workers of other factories.
2. To hold the positions gained in the CPCz, in the unions at workplaces.
3. At the same time to found small illegal groups on a strictly conspiratorial basis. To link up together, to carry out activities in concert and to work out in them a programme for anti-bureaucratic struggle, for the taking of power, a programme for the future socialist society.

TO ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

To all who have not yet got scared and who want to continue resistance to those who at home and abroad brought about the shameful occupation, drove thousands of people into emigration and robbed us young people of our prospects in life.

On the 21st of August many young people want to show that they will never be reconciled to the occupation. Pamphlets have appeared, there has been an attempt at a broadcast, the police have begun to strike back. But arrests must not dissuade us - on the contrary we must try to help the arrested, in future struggles we must avoid their errors. In a time of increasing police terror it is not possible to go on as before, to work legally in official organisations. The contemporary conditions do not allow a classic guerilla war, but the maturity of our people makes possible other, often far more effective forms of resistance, as we were convinced in autumn last year. For the moment it must not go as far as open confrontation. Separately, the organisations of resistance are for the moment weak and disunited. It is necessary to form a popular front of resistance. The Revolutionary Socialist Party also wants to be part of this popular front. Its programme can be expressed in a single sentence: for our future to be the future of a free people, which itself decides about our own affairs, it is absolutely indispensable to have the conscious and resolute activity of each one of us, for liberty cannot be won as a gift, freedom has to be fought for.

Our enemy is a small group of people who decide almost everything which happens in the state and to the state. The interests of this handful of people - presidium of the CC of the CPCz, party secretaries, ministers of key branches, heads of party organisations at the ministries of defence and the interior - are directly served by 22,000 party apparatchiks, 50,000 employees of the ministry of the interior, 50,000 professional soldiers, 106,000 legal and administrative employees, 50,000 members of the economic bureaucracy. And this upper 250,000 rules 14 million citizens of the CSSR, exploits them economically and oppresses them politically and morally. They are supported by their like in the eastern European countries, who are in the same position as we are, the progressive layers, all the oppressed people of the whole world.

The centre of our activity cannot be legal work in the official organisations, before the eyes of the public and unfortunately also of the fuzziest. We became aware in practice of the anti-popular nature of our laws, thanks to the benevolent interpretation of them by the state power, in the period of intensification of popular activity after January 1968. As soon as the state power could support itself with tanks and guns the interpretation of them drastically changed. We know that the laws are only a tool in the hands of the rulers, and that they will not afford us any guarantee. And therefore we must logically go over to illegal forms of struggle.

Wherever you are - in towns, in villages, factories, schools, in clubs, in gangs - organise, form groups of active resistance. Such groups should not have more than ten members. Be careful when making contact with other groups. Study possible forms of revolutionary activity. Make use of the abilities of all your members - if there are among you printers, chemists, pyrotechnicians, radio wirers, etc. Make use of the official organisation too - seek out there people with similar views, make agreements with them on common activity, and on the basis of activity gradually win them for our revolution. Form co-ordinating cells for whole factories, schools and villages. A basic principle would have to be voluntary discipline. Decisions would have to come from the initiative of separate groups. A presupposition of our activity is the obtaining of information about the situation here and abroad. A fair amount of information can be gained from foreign radio: also contact reliable members of the RTUM students. Do not undervalue the study of literature and discussion of theoretic questions. Make use of your own experience in factories, areas where you live, etc. Learn how to manage things about which you have something to say, learn self-management in practice.

The steadily worsening economic and political crisis is facing the power centre with difficulties which the centre will try to solve by attacking the living standards of the population - the functionaries of the CPCz will not want to give up their privileges. We must defend ourselves against these measures by protest actions, eg. if prices of public transport are raised, block it completely for several hours by various means. Use the method of passive resistance - perhaps by literal carrying out of existing rules and regulations. In August we became convinced that even without weapons it is possible to fight effectively against superior forces. We have no expectations of instant success, we must employ a tactic of "creeping revolution". We became convinced that a single isolated country cannot attain freedom - a state where the people itself decides its own destiny. In the other east European countries too there smoulders resistance to the police oppressors native and soviet. In the coming east European spring we will possibly have to go against the tanks, for freedom does not fall from heaven for anyone. A people which does not fight its way to freedom will never be free!
Signed: Young members of the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Czechoslovakia.

The very fact that you discuss, copy out and pass on this appeal will be a good start to your activity.

TO ALL -- TO ALL -- TO ALL!

CZECHOSLOVAK REALITY

The people of our country condemns the invasion of the intervention troops into the CSSR on August 21, 1968 and the associated retreat from the post-January policy, which have produced and are increasing the crisis situation in the state. We protest against this state of affairs in the following way: by not using

on that date any means of public transport except trains - not buying any newspaper or magazine - avoiding any entertainment in public places - buying provisions the previous day, to leave the shops empty - stopping work for 5 minutes at 12.00 as a demonstration - stopping all cars at the same time and sounding the horns - sounding factory sirens and church bells, so that they resound in the hearts of the whole people of Czechoslovakia. Wear tricolours and mourning. In this way the Czechoslovak people will proclaim August 21 as a "Day of Resistance" against the traitorous policy of the bureaucratic power centre and its allies.
Workers/Students/Intellectuals

OTHER PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM RED BOOKS

POLAND

In English

A Revolutionary Socialist Manifesto (An open letter to the party)
- J. Kuron and K. Modzelewski

In Polish

Bulletin - "Na Lewo"
O Biurokracji - Ernest Mandel
Anty-tezy - Odpowiedz L. Kolakowskiemu

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

In English

The Invasion of Czechoslovakia
Manifesto of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, Czechoslovakia 1968
"Pravda Vitezi!" - Bulletin of the Committee to Defend
Czechoslovak Socialists

In Czech

Bulletin - "Informacni Materialy"
O Byrokracii - E. Mandel
Otevreny Dopis PSDS - Kuron and Modzelewski

SOVIET UNION

In English

Communism versus Stalinism - Pyotr Grigorenko
Russian Intellectuals in Revolt (Communism versus Stalinism No.2)
- Oliver MacDonald
Samizdat, Voices of the Soviet Opposition - ed. George Saunders
Ukraine - Unrest and Repression - Andrea Martin
Ferment in Ukraine (collection of Samvydav) - ed. M. Browne
Report from the Beria Reserve - Valentyn Moroz

On Bureaucracy - E. Mandel
The Soviet Economy Today (article) - E. Mandel
Readings on 'State Capitalism' - Mandel, Kidron, Harman
The Development and Disintegration of World Stalinism
Class, Party, and State and the East European Revolution
"Critique" - bi-annual journal of Soviet Studies

In Russian

Revolution Betrayed - L. Trotsky (the original)

THIS PAMPHLET HAS BEEN PRODUCED BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF
THE SERIES "COMMUNISM VERSUS STALINISM"
MADE UP OF MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP
BRITISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

97, Caledonian Rd.,
London N.1.