

UKRAINE AND THE SOVIET-CZECHOSLOVAK CRISIS OF 1968 (PART 2):

New Evidence from the Ukrainian Archives

Compiled, Introduced, Translated, and Annotated by Mark Kramer

The Central State Archive of Public Organizations of Ukraine (TsDAHOU), located in Kyiv, houses all the Soviet-era records of the former Communist Party of Ukraine (UkrCP).¹ These include documents from the UkrCP Politburo and Central Committee (CC) apparatus as well as many personal papers and reports to the Soviet Politburo from each of the officials who served as UkrCP CC First Secretary from 1939 to 1991: Nikita Khrushchev, Lazar' Kaganovich, Leonid Mel'nykov, Oleksii Kyrychenko, Nikolai Podgornyi (Mykola Pidhornyi), Petro Shelest, Volodymyr Shcherbyts'kyi, Volodymyr Ivashko, and Stanyslav Hurenko.² All documents from the Soviet period at TsDAHOU are accessible. Although the photocopying regulations are peculiar (with prices dependent on the "value" of a document), it is possible to order copies of documents at substantially lower cost than at most archives in Moscow.³

For those studying the 1968 Soviet-Czechoslovak crisis, TsDAHOU contains enormously rich holdings. Copies of some of the documents stored there are available at one or more archives in Moscow, but many of the items at TsDAHOU are not accessible in Russia, either because of continued secrecy restrictions or because the documents are present only in Kyiv. Numerous files in Opis' 25 of Fond 1 at TsDAHOU are replete with important materials about the events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia. Among these are reports about Soviet military exercises and planning, redeployments of Soviet troops in the leadup to the invasion, the effects that the mobilization of reservists and requisitioning of civilian vehicles was having on the Ukrainian economy, and the morale of Soviet troops both before and after the invasion. Although a separate state security archive in Kyiv is still closed for research on Cold War topics, some materials from the Soviet Committee on State Security (KGB) and the Ukrainian branch of the KGB can be found in TsDAHOU. Translations of a number of Soviet Army documents and military counterintelligence reports, mainly from the commander of the Kyiv Military District, General Viktor Kulikov (who later was appointed a Marshal of the Soviet Union and commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact), the head of the district's Military Council, General Vladimir Golovkin, and the head of military counterintelligence (local units of the KGB Special Departments) in the Kyiv Military District, General Aleksei Shurepov, will be published along with my commentary in the next issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

The thirty-one documents presented below fall mainly into two broad categories: (1) memoranda transmitted by the

UkrCP First Secretary, Petro Shelest, to the Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU), of which he was a full member; and (2) reports to Shelest from the Ukrainian KGB and from senior UkrCP officials, which he used extensively for his own memoranda (or sometimes retransmitted in full) to the CPSU Politburo. Also included are three other items prepared by Shelest: his report to high-ranking UkrCP officials about the April 1968 plenum of the CPSU Central Committee; the statement he presented to the next CPSU Central Committee plenum, on 17 July 1968, two days after a multilateral meeting in Warsaw; and a speech he delivered to high-ranking UkrCP officials on 18 July 1968, the day after the CPSU Central Committee plenum. All of these documents are best read in conjunction with the excerpts from Shelest's diary in Issue No. 10 of the *CWIHP Bulletin* and the materials from the Russian archives featured in future *CWIHP* publications.⁴

The memoranda translated here are only a small sample of the vast quantity of materials that Shelest dispatched to his colleagues on the CPSU Politburo throughout the 1968 crisis—often more than once a week, and sometimes more than once a day. As the documents below indicate, the tone of Shelest's reports was uniformly hostile to the events in Czechoslovakia. The Ukrainian leader spoke bitterly about the growth of "anti-socialist and counterrevolutionary forces" in Czechoslovakia and the "pernicious effects" this was having in Ukraine and on the security of the USSR as a whole. He constantly urged "decisive [Soviet] action" to resolve the crisis, and warned that "if the healthy forces [in Czechoslovakia] are threatened with mortal danger and the counter-revolution keeps up its onslaught, we [must] rely on the will of our party, the will of our people, and the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact to resort to the most extreme measures."

Well before the 23 March conference in Dresden, which brought together the leaders of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria to discuss recent events in Czechoslovakia, Shelest had begun commissioning reports about the repercussions of the Prague Spring from a number of senior officials in Ukraine, including Yurii Il'nyts'kyi, the first secretary of the UkrCP's Transcarpathian Oblast committee, General Vitalii Nikitchenko, the head of the Ukrainian KGB, and Colonel Oleksii Zhabchenko, the head of the KGB directorate in Transcarpathian Oblast, the area contiguous with Czechoslovakia. Everything in their reports that reflected negatively on the Prague Spring was selected by Shelest to transmit to the CPSU Politburo.

One of the contacts on the Czechoslovak side who proved especially informative for UkrCP officials was Ján Koscelanský, the first secretary of the East Slovakian regional committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (*Komunistická strana Československa*, or KSČ). Koscelanský met regularly with Il'nyts'kyi in 1968 and, on a few occasions, with Shelest as well. Koscelanský started out as a strong supporter of Alexander Dubček and of the reforms in Czechoslovakia, and he generally remained well dis-

danger of right-wing opportunism in a fraternal Communist party and the growth of anti-socialist, counterrevolutionary forces in socialist Czechoslovakia.”⁷ Il'nyts'kyi's prominent role at the plenum and in other high-level forums in 1968 was clearly attributable to Shelest. The combined warnings of the two officials underscored Shelest's view that the Soviet Union must “provide urgent help to the Czechoslovak Communists and the Czechoslovak nation at this trying hour.”⁸

The documents presented here, along with Shelest's di-

[Petro Shelest] spoke bitterly about the growth of “anti-socialist and counterrevolutionary forces” in Czechoslovakia and the “pernicious effects” this was having in Ukraine and on the security of the USSR as a whole.

posed toward the Prague Spring, often seeking to reassure his Ukrainian interlocutors that most of their fears were unwarranted. Nevertheless, Koscelanský gradually became worried about “unsavory developments” and “excesses,” especially in the Czech lands. By 14 May, Koscelanský was warning that “it might be necessary for the Slovaks, together with the fraternal Soviet peoples, to liberate the Czech lands once again.”⁵ This comment, along with many other concerns that Koscelanský expressed, were relayed by Shelest to the full CPSU Politburo. Koscelanský was particularly apprehensive that the “Czechs [might] try to outfox the Slovaks,” creating a federalized state that would still leave the Slovaks in a subordinate position. Although Koscelanský repeatedly sought to allay Moscow's anxieties and to rectify the “mistaken impressions that some Soviet comrades have gained from poor information provided by the Soviet embassy,” his growing misgivings, especially about Czech-Slovak relations, gave Soviet leaders hope that they could exploit rifts among the KSČ reformers.

Koscelanský's chief contact in Ukraine, Yurii Il'nyts'kyi, the head of the UkrCP's Transcarpathian Oblast committee, exerted much greater influence during the crisis than his position normally would have given him. Having spent his whole career as a party official in Transcarpathia, Il'nyts'kyi quickly became apprehensive in 1968 about the spillover from Czechoslovakia. With Shelest's backing, he spoke out repeatedly in public against the “anti-socialist and revisionist elements” in Czechoslovakia who were “exploiting foreign radio stations and television outlets” to disseminate their “vile propaganda” in western Ukraine.⁶ Behind the scenes, too, as the documents here indicate, Il'nyts'kyi went to great lengths to highlight what he saw as a fundamental threat to the stability of Ukraine, especially his own oblast. Even though he was not a member of the CPSU Central Committee, he was among the handful of officials invited to speak at the Central Committee's plenum on 17 July 1968, which was convened to approve the results of the five-power meeting in Warsaw. Il'nyts'kyi's remarks at the plenum echoed Shelest's own speech (translated below) in denouncing the “grave

ary and newly released transcripts of Soviet Politburo meetings in 1968 (which I have discussed elsewhere), should eliminate any lingering doubts about the importance of Ukraine during the Czechoslovak crisis. Before the East-bloc archives were opened, several leading Western scholars had been cautious—and understandably so—in assessing Ukraine's role in 1968. In a major study published in 1974, Grey Hodnett and Peter Potichnyj marshaled a good deal of evidence from open sources indicating “an important linkage between the situation in the Ukraine and the developments in Czechoslovakia,” but they acknowledged that they had no way of determining—at least from publicly available materials—whether the Ukrainian issue was a salient factor in the Soviet Politburo's deliberations in 1968.⁹ A year after the Hodnett/Potichnyj study appeared, another prominent Western scholar, Roman Szporluk, downplayed the role of Ukraine in 1968, arguing that there had been only “unconfirmed reports [in 1968] that the then first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist party took a stand urging the invasion of Czechoslovakia. . . . Whatever the truth of these reports, Ukrainian leaders have probably exerted little significance on the external relations of the USSR.”¹⁰ Several years later, in a detailed analysis of Soviet policy during the Prague Spring, Karen Dawisha was more willing to emphasize Shelest's role in the crisis, depicting him as a strong and influential proponent of military intervention in Czechoslovakia from an early stage.¹¹ Even so, her book was necessarily limited in the evidence it could provide about Ukraine. Although a few important new memoirs and declassified Western documents had become available in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the top-secret records of the Warsaw Pact countries themselves were still closed. Thus, until very recently it was impossible to offer any conclusive judgments about the role of Ukraine and of Shelest personally during the 1968 crisis.

The new archival evidence, new memoirs, and Shelest's diary leave no doubt that Hodnett's and Potichnyj's conclusion was accurate, and that Soviet leaders themselves were deeply worried about the link between events in Czechoslovakia and the growing unrest in Ukraine. The spillover into

Ukraine and other Soviet republics (Moldavia, the Baltic states, Belorussia, and Georgia) was by no means the only factor in the Soviet Politburo's decision to send troops into Czechoslovakia, but it clearly was of enormous importance.¹² Although the Soviet KGB chairman, Yuri Andropov, was the most aggressive proponent of military intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, Shelest and the then-Soviet president, Nikolai Podgornyi (who had formerly served as UkrCP First Secretary), were nearly as vehement. Ukrainian leaders wielded greater "significance [sic] on the external relations of the USSR" in 1968 than many scholars had previously believed.

Quite apart from what the documents reveal about the Soviet-Czechoslovak crisis, they also shed extremely useful light on some of the KGB's procedures. The reports compiled by Nikitchenko and Zhabchenko clearly were based on elaborate networks of "unofficial collaborators" in western Ukraine. Many ordinary citizens were willing to inform on their relatives, friends, co-workers, and neighbors. Although some of these informers may not have realized that the information they provided about other people's comments would be faithfully reproduced in KGB reports, it is likely that most of them were aware of the consequences of their actions.

The boldness of some of the remarks attributed to residents of western Ukraine in the KGB and party reports is striking. Despite the Soviet authorities' efforts to control the media and prevent an influx of "bourgeois, anti-socialist propaganda," it is clear that accurate information about events in Czechoslovakia was making its way to a significant number of ordinary citizens in Ukraine. Some of this information was gleaned either from first-hand observations (of those who lived near military bases) or from Ukrainian-language newspapers and journals published in Czechoslovakia, which were then shipped into western Ukraine. Other information, as Zhabchenko and Il'nyts'kyi acknowledged, came from Western radio broadcasts and from underground materials circulated in Ukraine. The wide range of critical comments cited in the reports suggests that these citizens' "unsavory, hostile sentiments" were typical of the views expressed by a large percentage of non-Communists and even of party members in western Ukraine. Although the KGB and UkrCP reports do not provide any firm statistical breakdown of popular attitudes toward events in Czechoslovakia, the findings are detailed enough to indicate that Hodnett and Potichnyj, far from overstating the spillover into Ukraine, may have been too circumspect. At the very least, the documents confirm that long-standing attempts to foster "monolithic unity" in Soviet Ukraine had yielded little more than a façade.

One final point worth noting about the Ukrainian documents is the evidence they provide about Soviet decision-making during crises—evidence that tallies very well with declassified materials from other countries. The documents indicate that large quantities of raw information from intelligence sources and the Soviet bureaucracy flowed upward in 1968, but that otherwise the CPSU Politburo and Secretariat depended very little on lower-level party and state agencies in their dealings with Czechoslovakia. Decision-making

throughout the crisis was from the top down (i.e., the CPSU Politburo ordered lower-level officials what position to adopt, rather than seeking policy advice from below).¹³ The Politburo kept all media outlets rigidly under its own control. From at least early March 1968 on, all significant articles and broadcasts about Czechoslovakia had to be cleared personally by top officials, and often by Leonid Brezhnev himself.¹⁴ A formal directive to this effect was issued by the Politburo in early June. Moreover, a vast number of documents from the Ukrainian archives—as well as countless items stored in repositories in Russia and other former Soviet republics—reveal that the CPSU Politburo transmitted frequent "informational reports" (i.e., binding "position papers") about the crisis to lower-level party and state organizations, including all those in Ukraine. These lower-level bodies were required to disseminate the Politburo's findings to senior employees and party members.¹⁵ By periodically setting forth the "official view" of events in Czechoslovakia and explicating the Marxist-Leninist rationale for Soviet policy, the Politburo was able to take advantage of the CPSU's entrenched practice of "democratic centralism," which prohibited any dissent or divergence from policies made at higher levels. Soviet leaders thereby enjoyed ample leeway to define the Party's stance during the 1968 crisis without unwanted interference from below.

The documents also show that the Politburo took elaborate steps to ensure that its informational reports were disseminated fully and properly, in strict accordance with its own decrees. One way of accomplishing this goal was by sending a Politburo member (or members) to oversee lower-level party meetings directly, as Shelest did on many occasions in 1968.¹⁶ In addition, the Politburo was able to use the CPSU CC Organizational-Party Work Department as a comprehensive monitoring and feedback mechanism. The first secretaries of all the republic, regional, oblast, and local party committees were obligated to report promptly back to Moscow on the dissemination of the Politburo's analyses and the reactions they encountered. Officials in the Organizational-Party Work Department were responsible for monitoring the performance of these lower-level party organizations and for distilling the huge volume of cables into a memorandum for the top CPSU leadership.¹⁷ This complex, iterative process allowed the Politburo to keep constant watch over the implementation of its decisions and to deprive lower-level party committees—in all the union-republics and outlying regions as well as in Moscow—of any conceivable opportunity or inclination they might have had to deviate from the Politburo's own position. In the unlikely event that officials outside the Politburo and Secretariat became uneasy about the tenor of Soviet policy toward Czechoslovakia, they would have realized that it was pointless and even dangerous to give any hint of (much less try to act on) their misgivings.

The Politburo's use of multiple oversight procedures, as outlined in the new archival materials, underscores the importance that Soviet leaders attached to the implementation of decisions concerning Czechoslovakia. Until now, Western studies of the 1968 crisis have made no mention of this

point, presumably because no evidence was available. One of the very few scholars who did bring up the question of policy implementation, Jiří Valenta, argued that “it is reasonable to assume that Politburo decisions [during the crisis were] formulated in such a way as to give the . . . bureaucracies some room to maneuver.”¹⁸ Valenta’s assumption is contravened by documents in the Ukrainian and Russian archives, which show that, far from “giving the bureaucracies room to maneuver,” Soviet Politburo members closely monitored the implementation of key decisions in 1968 so that they could *prevent* lower-level bodies from gaining any “room to maneuver.” By the time the Politburo reached its final decision on 17 August to resolve the crisis through military force, well-developed oversight mechanisms were firmly in place.¹⁹ New evidence of these arrangements reinforces the notion of a top-down decision-making process

and undermines one of the central tenets of Valenta’s bureaucratic politics thesis, which suggests that lower-level bureaucracies may try to alter or thwart top-level decisions by selectively implementing them or by declining to implement them at all. Such tactics will work only if senior policy-makers are not keeping track of the way their decisions are being implemented or are unwilling to punish transgressions. That may well be true of many issues in most countries, but it was not the case with the Soviet Politburo’s handling of the Czechoslovak crisis in 1968.

The top-down, highly centralized nature of Soviet decision-making in 1968 (and during other crises) was already evident from the CPSU Politburo transcripts and countless other documents in the Russian archives. It is useful to receive additional confirmation of this pattern from materials in Ukraine and the Baltic states.

A NOTE ABOUT THE TRANSLATIONS

Most of the documents translated here were originally in Russian, but some were in Ukrainian and one was in Czech. The archival source listing at the beginning of each translation specifies the original language of the document. The annotations are intended both to provide greater context for understanding the documents and to identify specific individuals, groups, events, and geographic features. The annotations also highlight any gaps and mistakes that arise in a particular document. When the mistakes are minor and are of no substantive import (e.g., a spelling or grammatical mistake), they have been corrected in the translated text, and the corrections are then indicated in the annotations.

Some of the Ukrainian, Russian, and Central European place names in the documents have been translated here in their Anglicized versions (e.g., “Moscow,” “Crimea,” “Russia,” “Ukraine,” “Czechoslovakia,” “Poland,” “Prague,” “Warsaw,” “Bucharest”), but the rest have been either transliterated or preserved in their original form. For the sake of consistency, all transliterations of Ukrainian surnames, given names, and place names have been rendered from the Ukrainian versions rather than the Russian. Thus, for example, “Kyiv” has been used instead of “Kiev,” “Volodymyr” instead of “Vladimir,” “Luhans’k” instead of “Lugansk,” “Mizhhir’ya” instead of “Medgor’e,” and “Kryvyi Rih” instead of “Krivoi Rog.” (The only exception, as noted above, is the name of Nikolai Podgorny, which has been rendered in its more familiar Russian version rather than the Ukrainian version, Mykola Pidhornyi.)

From 1933 to 1946, the Ukrainian language underwent a number of minor orthographic changes that generally were not adopted outside Soviet Ukraine. The version of the language used in current-day Ukraine—which is also the version used in the documents here—was formally approved by the UkrSSR Ministry of Education in 1946. This modified system is slightly more Russified than the Ukrainian spoken by most émigrés in Europe and North America. (Although recent immigrants from Ukraine would be accustomed to the modified orthography, the bulk of the émigré community still uses the orthography approved in 1928 by a special conference in Kharkiv of Ukrainian philologists, lexicographers, and grammarians.) The differences in transliteration are so small that they will be nearly imperceptible to anyone who does not know Ukrainian, but, for the sake of consistency, the modified orthography (i.e., the slightly more Russified version) has been used for transliterations of Ukrainian names and words.

All transliterations of Russian words, place names, surnames, and given names, including the names of ethnic Russian officials who lived or were temporarily stationed in Soviet Ukraine in 1968, have been based on the Russian versions of those names. The transliterations conform to the standard Library of Congress system.

– Mark Kramer

DOCUMENT No. 1

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 27, L. 1, original in Russian.]

Top Secret
CPSU CC

The CC of the Ukrainian CP believes it necessary to inform the CPSU Central Committee of the following.

On 18 February at 7:40 p.m., two Soviet train conductors on the Moscow-to-Prague line, Cdes. Muravin and Ryabov, were approached by an unknown person who described himself as a diplomat from the consulate in Kyiv and who, being in a drunken state, struck up a conversation with them about the Soviet hockey team, which recently took part in the winter Olympic games in Grenoble.²⁰ He asserted that Soviet hockey players do not know how to play and will lose again next year, all things being equal. He added that in his estimation he would put our team in around tenth place.

Then, shifting the conversation to political matters, he declared: "You removed Stalin and Khrushchev, and tomorrow you'll get rid of Brezhnev. The Czechs would be better off doing business with the West than with the Soviet Union. The Soviet people have us by the neck. It would be better if the Germans had destroyed half of Prague than for you to come with your tanks into the capital of Czechoslovakia. You Communists are worse than the imperialists."

During the check of documents at the border crossing, it was established that this individual was the ČSSR Consul-General in Kyiv, Josef Gorak, who was traveling from the Soviet Union to the ČSSR on diplomatic passport No. 004842.²¹

CC SECRETARY, CPOF UKRAINE
P. SHELEST

28 February 1968

No. 1/21

**DOCUMENT No. 2**

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 27, LI. 18-23, original in Russian.]

CPSU CC

Attached is an informational memorandum from the Secretary of the Transcarpathian Oblast of the Ukrainian CP, Cde. Yu. V. Il'nyts'kyi, about the events in Czechoslovakia.

P. SHELEST

21 March 1968
No. 1/22

CENTRAL COMMITTEE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF UKRAINE

STATUS REPORT

For your information I want to report that on 18 March 1968, the 1st Secretary of the KSČ's East Slovakia regional committee, Cde. Jan Koscelanský, called me and requested that we meet at the border that same day. I should note that we have been having these sorts of meetings more or less regularly, mainly at his request. The meetings allow Cde. Koscelanský to share his views about ongoing party and economic work and also about events in the country. The most recent meeting before this one occurred on 10 January, when he informed me about the results of the October, December, and January plenums of the KSČ CC. At previous meetings, Cde. Koscelanský always had been accompanied by the chairman of the provincial executive committee and one or two secretaries from the regional committee. We have had the same level of representation on our side. But on this latest occasion, at his request, the meeting was one-on-one. Cde. Koscelanský informed me about recent events in his country.

He said that the municipal and regional party conferences in their country were very tempestuous. Sharp criticism was directed against the old methods of leadership, which had given rise to a cult of Novotný.²² In his view, the conferences went well. The first set of cadres in the party committees were elected by a secret vote.

Regarding the events under way in Czechoslovakia as a whole, he stated that they are wider and more profound, and will have more far-reaching consequences, than the events of 1948.

The Czechoslovak comrades believe that social development in their country after 1948 moved in the right direction until the beginning of the 1950s, when a period of the cult of personality began both in their country and in other socialist countries.²³

In the ČSSR this cult took a particularly monstrous form once Novotný arrived.

. . . . At present, new progressive forces have been growing, who have waged a decisive struggle against the conservatives. Now the question has arisen of how to foster conditions for the development of democracy in the full sense of that word.

Why, for example, was it possible in the bourgeois republic to criticize the president and to make caricatures of him, whereas it is impossible to do this in the socialist coun-

tries?

The Czechoslovak comrades believe that full democracy requires the elimination of any kind of censorship, the ending of instructions and orders from above to the radio, press, and television, the elimination of judicial proceedings and repression against citizens for their political views and statements, and the rehabilitation of all those who were repressed.²⁴ In connection with this the State Security organs behaved improperly during the cult of personality.²⁵ To ensure that there are no antagonistic classes in the country, the StB organs will be reduced to a minimum and the regular police organs will be expanded. Citizens will be permitted to leave the country, either permanently or temporarily, without any sort of restrictions; and the electrified fence along the border with the FRG will be removed.²⁶



Alexander Dubček

Source: National Archives

Cde. Koscelanský said that they must work in such a way that the capitalists are fenced off from them, rather than being fenced off themselves from the capitalists. The opportunity will

arise to create new social organizations (student, peasant, and other organizations). A decision also has been adopted to postpone regular elections so that favorable conditions can be created for them.

A very important question, in their view, is the linkage of broad democracy with the leading role of the party. They understand it this way: Officials in party organs must be so authoritative and must speak with the masses so convincingly that the masses will support these officials as well as the party without any sort of pressure from above. For this purpose they need new cadres who are able to play such a leading role. . . .

. . . Many questions have been raised at the party conferences about why Comrade L. I. Brezhnev came to Czechoslovakia in December of last year.²⁷ In response to this question, the Czechoslovak comrades have been saying that Novotný invited Cde. L. I. Brezhnev without consulting any of the other members of the CC Presidium. When Comrade L. I. Brezhnev saw that there were two different points of view in the Presidium about how to resolve festering problems, he responded that we will not interfere in your internal affairs,

since your party is monolithic and solid, and the healthy forces in it can resolve all the problems.²⁸

Such an answer and such behavior by Cde. L. I. Brezhnev won universal approval.

Further on, Cde. Koscelanský said that some of the conservatives, in particular the ČSSR representative at CMEA, Simunek, justify the obsolescence of the economy by attributing it to the unequal trade agreements between the USSR and Czechoslovakia.²⁹ In response to this, I remarked to Cde. Koscelanský that I can't speak about trade as a whole, but Czechoslovakia now is third in the world in the production of metals per capita, and once you begin operating the metallurgical combine in Košice with a capacity of 6 million tons of steel a year—a combine that was equipped with assistance from the USSR and with our raw materials, and every day receives 23,000 tons of Kryvyi Rih iron ore and 6,110 tons of Donets'k coal—your country will occupy first place in these categories.³⁰ And this is at the same time when, for example, in our oblast there is a shortage of metal and we are unable to keep the work force busy.³¹

Cde. Koscelanský agreed with this and assured me that they are waging and will continue to wage a struggle against all those who try to cover up for their inactivity by making accusations against the USSR.

. . . Turning to the national question, Cde. Koscelanský said that Czechoslovakia will be a federated republic (Czechs and Slovaks), and the national minorities (Hungarians and Ukrainians) will be given autonomy.³² In response to this I said to him that autonomy is their internal affair, but I requested that he take a look at the Ukrainian newspaper "Nove zhittya," published in Prešov, which features nationalist opinions about the Transcarpathian in the name of the workers of the province, something that is completely unacceptable.³³ Cde. Koscelanský assured me that the current events are not a repetition of the events of 1956 in Hungary, since in Hungary the popular masses rose up against the party and Central Committee, whereas in the ČSSR they are speaking out against the conservatives and the Novotný group and are supporting their party, the CC, and friendship with the Soviet Union. The CC First Secretary, Dubček, enjoys great authority among all spheres of the population. He cited an example that when Cde. Dubček recently had to go to the hospital, students visited him and brought him bouquets of flowers and bottles of "Elinek" plum brandy.

Further on, Cde. Koscelanský reported that on 28 March, they have a CC plenum scheduled, where an "Action Program" will be adopted and the question of Novotný's tenure as President of the Republic will be decided.³⁴

In his view, the shortcomings of the current campaign arise not because many dishonorable people have joined in, but because some do not understand it properly. In addition, the Czechoslovak students sent a greeting to the Polish students, which obviously caused Cde. Gomułka to be angry at the Czechoslovak comrades.³⁵

In conclusion, Cde. Koscelanský requested that we convey to the Soviet friends that, beginning with Cde. Dubček and going through every rank-and-file Communist, they will

do everything possible to strengthen friendship with the Soviet Union and to advance the cause of socialism on the basis of the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

FIRST SECRETARY, TRANSCARPATHIAN
OBLAST COMMITTEE, CPOF UKRAINE

Yu. IL'NYTS'KYI



DOCUMENT No. 3

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 27, LI. 52-54,
original in Russian.]

Top Secret

No. 1382/23

CONVERSATION WITH THE CONSUL-GENERAL
OF THE ČSSR IN KYIV, J. GORAK

23 April 1968

At the invitation of Cde. Gorak, I met with him at the General Consulate building. From the outset J. Gorak emphasized that the discussion would be on an exceptionally "sober" basis, over a cup of coffee. During the conversation, he repeatedly alluded to his close ties with A. Dubček, with whom he had spoken recently about the latest events in Czechoslovakia. In passing, he noted that he, Gorak, has been appointed to take over soon as head of the Soviet Department in the ČSSR Foreign Ministry.³⁶ At the beginning of the conversation, the Consul-General said that he has sensed (and is set to inform Prague about this) an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion around officials at the consulate in Kyiv: Relations with individuals and organizations used to be trusting and open, but they have now given way to perfunctory and purely formal relations.³⁷

Brushing aside my objections on this point, he noted that in his view such an atmosphere is attributable to the improper and incompetent reaction of the Soviet people and senior officials in the Soviet Union to the events mandated by the process of democratization under way in Czechoslovakia.

He stated that it would be worth treating the Czechoslovak events with greater care, taking account in particular of the investigation into the reasons for and methods of the repressions in the ČSSR and the effort to clarify the motives for the suicide of the ČSSR deputy defense minister Janko and a number of political murders.³⁸ According to him, the KSČ CC leadership has deep suspicions that the former president of the ČSSR, A. Novotný, gave an oral command to

Janko, via the head of the CC's 8th Department, that in view of the circumstances they should use the armed forces to attempt to restore him (Novotný) to power.³⁹ If the investigation confirms these suspicions, the results will be published along with the findings of the investigation into the abuses of earlier years that led to the conviction of roughly 40,000 people and that caused Czechoslovak workers to feel even greater antipathy toward the Soviet Union.⁴⁰ In this connection, Gorak stated that the KSČ CC leadership is greatly upset about the frequent contacts between an employee of the Soviet embassy in Prague and the former president even after suspicions about Novotný were published in the press. Isn't it understandable, said Gorak, that these frequent private visits by embassy employees to Novotný remind Czechoslovak citizens of that earlier period of high activity by Soviet advisers, which has created a problem for us today of the rehabilitation of thousands of innocent people and the need to prosecute those who committed such actions?⁴¹

Returning to problems of economic development, Gorak particularly emphasized that Czechoslovakia is seriously considering the possibility of a large loan from the Western powers.⁴² In the hope of positively resolving this matter, as I understood from Gorak, the ČSSR may reassess some of its foreign policy positions, especially in its relations with the FRG and USA.⁴³

In conclusion the Consul-General mentioned the upcoming conference of Communist and workers' parties.⁴⁴ Taking account of the current situation, the KSČ will adopt the same position taken by the Italian and French Communist parties, since it is precisely these parties that have enormous experience regarding the socialist movement in the Western countries and are aware of the specific conditions of work in the industrially developed countries. It is also precisely these Communist parties that have displayed the most appropriate and favorable understanding of the essence of the Czechoslovak events and the aspirations of the ČSSR to assume leadership in the Communist and workers' movement in the Central European countries, which are united by identical features of their development.

The conversation took place in Russian, lasted two hours, and was of a confidential nature. The vice-consul, Cde. Doubrava, joined the conversation from time to time. During the conversation, the Consul-General harshly criticized the leaders of the GDR, especially W. Ulbricht, and also spoke negatively about the events in Poland and the leadership methods of W. Gomułka.

Third Secretary of the
Ukr Foreign Ministry
B. BAKLANOV

25.IV.68

DOCUMENT No. 4

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 97, Ll. 1-62, original in Russian.]

TOP SECRET

REPORT

DELIVERED BY P. E. SHELEST
AT THE PARTY MEETING
IN THE "ARSENAL" FACTORY
"ON THE RESULTS OF THE APRIL PLENUM OF THE CPSU
CC"

25 APRIL 1968

Comrades!

The Communist Party and its Central Committee constantly devote enormous attention to matters concerning the international situation and the development of the Communist movement as the basis for the victory of the forces of world socialism over capitalism.⁴⁵ This is necessary because imperialist reaction recently has been launching attacks against the socialist countries and is trying to weaken and create discord within the socialist commonwealth and the world Communist movement.

We must always remember the shrewd Leninist warning that imperialism, so long as it exists, will struggle with full force for every position and seek to attack the positions of socialism, probing for its weak points.

In connection with this, our party is confronted by an endless flow of new tasks. We live in a world divided into two irreconcilable camps—socialism and capitalism. A fierce, uncompromising class struggle is under way between them. This demands that we precisely and clearly define who is with us in this struggle, who our sincere friends are, and who is reliable and faithful.⁴⁶

Our party and people have learned a great deal from our 50 years of struggle against imperialism and reaction. We are able to discern the most insidious techniques of our enemies. The imperialists understand that nowadays they cannot overwhelm the socialist countries with a frontal attack. They are resorting to ever more refined tactics, trying to get us to let down our guard. They are also attempting to sow dissension among our ranks so that they can launch strikes against individual socialist countries.

All of this means that the Central Committee and the CC Politburo must keep close track of new phenomena and processes on the international scene, and must react to them in a timely manner. It also means that they must continually

perfect all of our foreign policy activity.

The Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, on 9-10 April, was of exceptionally great importance for our party and for the peoples of the Soviet Union. As you know, the agenda of the Plenum was "On Current Problems of the International Situation and on the Struggle by the CPSU for Cohesion in the World Communist Movement." . . .

. . . .⁴⁷

Comrades! The Communists and all workers of our country are especially alarmed about events in Czechoslovakia and the stepped-up activity of revisionist, Zionist, and anti-socialist forces in that country.

The situation in Czechoslovakia has become so complex because certain leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia have failed to undertake a principled, class-based assessment of ongoing events. And some of them, having succumbed to the pressure of petit-bourgeois elements, are even ascribing legitimacy to the demands for "unlimited" democratization and freedom for everyone and everything. They assert that only under these circumstances will the party be able to carry out a "specific" policy suitable for Czechoslovak conditions.⁴⁸

At the same time, hostile elements cloaking themselves with false slogans of "democracy," "reform," and "freedom of thought" are launching an attack on the party and seeking to undermine socialist gains. In this regard, the enemies are acting slyly and insidiously. They are even extolling some of the new leaders, especially those who support notions of "unlimited democracy," "renewal," and "a special Czechoslovak path," as well as those who believe that the intelligentsia must "formulate the party's policy."

Some of the leaders of Czechoslovakia do not understand that by losing control over the propaganda organs—the press, radio, and television—and by condoning the persecution of so-called "conservatives" and the glorification of "progressives," they are causing the dissolution of the party and creating conditions for the stepped-up activity of hostile elements.

The Dresden conference of the leaders of fraternal parties,⁴⁹ which was convened at the initiative of the CPSU, undoubtedly had a great—and, I would even say, a sobering—effect on certain leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.⁵⁰

At this conference, the CPSU delegation provided a frank and scrupulous assessment of the situation in Czechoslovakia, emphasizing that events could develop into a counter-revolutionary upheaval unless decisive measures are promptly implemented. Our delegation drew attention to the fact that in the current situation it is necessary above all to appeal to the working class and tell workers honestly about the situation in the party and the country and, by relying on the support of the working class, to embark on an offensive against reactionaries and anti-socialist elements. Only in these circumstances can the situation be rectified.

At the same time, the Czechoslovak comrades were told

that our party supports Cde. Dubček and the new leadership and is doing everything to help them remedy the situation and thereby strengthen the positions of the new leadership. We urged them to realize that the current leaders of the KSČ have an enormous responsibility for the fate of socialism in Czechoslovakia and for ensuring the proper internal policy and foreign policy line of the KSČ.

Our delegation declared that the CPSU will not remain indifferent to the course of events. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries are taking all necessary measures to forestall the victory of counterrevolution.

The prospects for wider economic cooperation between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union and other socialist countries were also discussed in Dresden, and it was proposed that this matter be considered at the highest level in the near future.

All the delegations of the fraternal socialist countries completely supported and endorsed our assessment and candidly told the KSČ officials about their alarm at the situation in Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak comrades acknowledged that the situation in the republic is complex, but they declared that Czechoslovakia is not turning away from the socialist path and will maintain a policy of friendship with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. It also will uphold its obligations to the Warsaw Pact.⁵¹

The meeting in Dresden was timely and worthwhile. It helped the Czechoslovak comrades correctly grasp the situation in their country, and it had a significant effect on the proceedings and results of the recent KSČ CC Plenum. Just after the Conference, some KSČ leaders said that for them Dresden was a learning experience and that the Soviet comrades were absolutely correct when they warned about the threat of counterrevolution.

It must be said that the recent CC Plenum of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia showed that the party leadership is striving to regain control of events and focus the party's attention and the attention of all workers on the fulfillment of positive tasks of socialist construction.⁵²

The resolutions of the KSČ CC Plenum draw attention to the necessity of increasing the leading role of the party in the country. They also refer to the great importance of the activity of all organs of the party and state apparatus, including the army and state security organs.

But some leading officials at the Plenum, and even Cde. Dubček, to varying degrees supported the demands that are now fashionable in Czechoslovakia for comprehensive "liberalization." It must be said that overall Cde. Dubček's speeches, despite some negative points, provided a better sense that the KSČ leadership understands the necessity of waging a struggle against anti-socialist forces.

In the near future it will be evident to what extent the resolutions of this KSČ CC Plenum can help shift events in the country back onto the right path.

However, even after the KSČ CC Plenum, the situation in the country remains extremely complicated. The revisionist and right-wing opportunist elements, styling themselves as "progressives," continue to attack the party and denigrate

the achievements of socialism in the name of "renewal" and "democratic development." They are exploiting the press, radio, and television to further their anti-party aims, having planted anti-socialist and Zionist elements in the mass media.

Recently—on 13 April, to be exact—the central organ of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, "Rudé právo," published a long article by someone named Kaplan.⁵³ The author claims that the time has come to reexamine the party from its very roots. "This is an important step," he writes. "Changes should be made in all the policy-making procedures. The country's policies must be determined by the whole society, not just by one small part of it" (i.e., the party). Further on, Kaplan says that "all progressive forces have not yet had their say. Non-Communists must play an important role in the political and social life of the country and be able to influence the elections of political leaders." And this has been published repeatedly in the official organ of the Communist Party after the KSČ CC Plenum!

In the same newspaper someone named Šulc writes that the "new policy" cannot be devised by the "old people."⁵⁴

These pronouncements are being made in defiance of statements by certain members of the KSČ CC Presidium, who are calling for the "hysteria surrounding specific cases of rehabilitation to be condemned." They emphasize that the party cannot permit a mass exodus of officials and must support honest party workers. Šulc believes that "the issue here is not only about a 'changing of the guard,' when everything else remains the same, but about the beginning of fundamental changes in the party and society."

The newspaper "Práce," which generally has embraced anti-socialist positions, featured an article claiming that if matters are to be decided by a universal vote, it is doubtful that the KSČ has the right to continue to lead the society.⁵⁵

The failure of the Communist Party to put up a struggle against the revisionist and anti-socialist elements, and the discussions by Communists about "democratization" and "liberalization," have been skillfully exploited by the enemies of socialism to reinforce their activities. Of late, the People's (Catholic) Party and National Socialist Party have been increasingly active.⁵⁶ Until recently, these parties did not have primary organizations, but now they have set them up. It is sufficient to note that in the past three months alone, the People's Party has expanded by 100,000 members and is already demanding to be given not just one but several posts in the government.

We increasingly find in the press, radio, and television, and in speeches at gatherings of intellectuals and students, calls for "renewal." They explain that these statements are in support of a return to the republic of Masaryk and Beneš—that is, a bourgeois republic under the guise of "socialism."⁵⁷

The events in Czechoslovakia show that hostile elements in that country are being directed by a skillful hand from abroad. It has become known that since 1966, the West German and American governments have made an enormous effort in Czechoslovak society to undermine the authority and influence of the KSČ leadership headed by Cde. Novotný.



Petro Shelest

Source: National Archives

By skillfully manipulating the nationalist sentiments of Slovaks and Czechs and the discontent of various strata of the population with violations of “democracy”—discontent that is particularly acute among certain members of the intelligentsia and youth—they have succeeded in intensifying the struggle against leading figures in the party and state.

The US and West German imperialists are following a cautious policy and are deftly using all channels of ideological and economic influence to achieve a further weakening of the role of the Czechoslovak Communist Party in the state affairs and political life of the country and to provoke a gradual schism between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. To this end, they propose to continue a broad campaign justifying and supporting demands about the necessity of carrying out fundamental reforms in the country, establishing a multi-party or at least two-party system in Czechoslovakia, and granting automatic rehabilitation to all those who were earlier convicted.

The revanchists from the Federal Republic of Germany are even proposing to give Czechoslovakia economic assistance of some 260 million marks to develop light industry and improve the population’s living standards.⁵⁸ Ideological subversion and bribery of Czechoslovak citizens are increasing.

This policy is reflected in articles in the Czechoslovak press. On 10 April the weekly “Student” published a lecture by some professor named Sviták under the title “With a Head

Against the Wall,” which he presented to students at Prague university.⁵⁹ In this lecture he voiced the demand: “Support the workers’ movement, but without any officials in the party apparatus; place intellectuals in charge of the movement.”

His entire presentation reflected a malicious, anti-socialist orientation. He criticizes the entire political system of socialism, declaring that the “maximum program of the Communist Party is our minimum program,” and that personnel changes in the leadership are of no interest to him. On the contrary, “we have a fundamental stake in adopting profound structural changes because they will clear the path to an open, socialist society.”

Finishing his lecture, this sorry excuse for a professor declared: “The totalitarian dictatorship is our enemy no. 1. We must destroy this dictatorship, or it will destroy us.”

Events in Czechoslovakia and to some extent in Poland confirm that the American and West German imperialists are using new and, I would say, step-by-step tactics. In Hungary in 1956 the imperialists urged the local reactionaries to embark on an armed attack to seize power, whereas in Czechoslovakia they are trying to establish a bourgeois order by “peaceful means.” That is, they are trying gradually to change the situation so that the reactionaries can gradually seize one position after another. They are building up their forces with the aim of launching a battle—that is, achieving a majority of the votes—in the upcoming elections to the National Assembly.

There is already a serious danger that the People’s and People’s-Socialist Parties in Czechoslovakia will take part in the elections not as part of the National Front (as was done previously), but on the basis of their own demagogic platform in the hope of gaining more votes and demanding the creation of a coalition government, in which the main role will be played by reactionary forces seeking to restore the bourgeois order.

The rationale for this new tactic of imperialism has been explicated by one of the American “theoreticians” of psychological warfare, Margolin.⁶⁰ He wrote that “in the future the role that artillery played in preparations for an infantry attack will be played by subversive propaganda. Its task is to destroy the enemy psychologically before the armed forces even begin to mobilize.” The author argues that “this sort of strategy, if applied correctly, can achieve fantastic results.”⁶¹

Whereas the imperialists and fascists used to speak openly about the destruction of socialism and the enslavement of the populations of other nations, bourgeois propaganda is now concealing its genuine aims by prattling on about “an increase in the material well-being of people,” “unlimited democracy” and “freedom,” and the “delights of the American way of life.”

Even the supervisors of that patently anti-Soviet broadcast station, Radio Liberty, have begun to claim that they are not anti-Soviet and not anti-Communists.⁶² They supposedly are interested only in the “development of democracy” and “equality among the Soviet republics,” as well as “personal freedom.”

The complexity of the struggle in a number of socialist countries is evident from the fact that they must struggle not only against a foreign enemy – imperialism – but also against the remnants of hostile classes and against manifestations of bourgeois ideology.

Bourgeois propaganda and malevolent imperialist intelligence services are using all manner of insidious techniques to try to undermine the trust that the peoples of socialist countries have in their current state and social order and in the internal and foreign policies of the Communist Parties. They are making every effort to discredit the Communists and leading organs of the party and to disrupt party and state discipline. They are also seeking to tarnish the activity of the state security organs, the police, the courts, the procurator's office, and the senior officials in those agencies. By inciting nationalist sentiments, the enemy is doing everything to undermine the friendship between the peoples of socialist countries. Under the guise of a "struggle for democracy," they are stirring up an outdated and unsavory mood among segments of the intelligentsia and young people.

At the same time, the imperialists are resorting to economic subversion. Through front organizations they are providing credits to certain socialist countries, supposedly in the hope of "building bridges" between West and East.⁶³ In reality they are seeking to undermine the socialist commonwealth and its economic ties.

Bourgeois propaganda and imperialist intelligence services are carrying out their subversive activities through a multitude of channels: the radio, the press, different unions, tourists, and other contacts. The big bosses of imperialism are taking vigorous measures to activate bourgeois-émigré counterrevolutionary centers.

During the events in Czechoslovakia and Poland, hostile elements reared their heads. However, they did not dare to speak out openly in support of anti-Communist and anti-Soviet demands. They understand that this game is over once and for all. As a result, while providing cover for themselves with demagogic statements about "friendship" with the Soviet Union, the enemies at the same time are sowing doubts about some sort of "inequality" and about the pursuit of a special, "independent" foreign policy. They are also trying to undercut the leading role of the party.

We all are well aware that they must do this in order to lead workers astray, particularly the gullible younger workers, and to strengthen their anti-popular positions. Under the nationalist slogan of a "special course," they are waging a struggle against socialism and Communism.

At the moment it is still impossible to give any sort of definitive assessment of the events in Czechoslovakia. The CC Politburo supports continual ties with the Czechoslovak comrades and with the leaders of a number of fraternal parties to help the Czechoslovak friends.

We know that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia contains healthy forces, who are able to regain control of the situation and guide the country back onto the socialist path. Our task is to provide comprehensive assistance to these forces and to keep close tabs on the way events develop. In

the event of danger, all of our means and capabilities will be employed to thwart the intrigues of our enemies who want to tear fraternal Czechoslovakia out of the commonwealth of socialist countries.⁶⁴

The Communists of Ukraine and the entire Ukrainian nation wish, with all their heart and soul, great success to the Czechoslovak friends in their complex struggle to normalize the situation in the party and the country and to attain new victories in socialist construction.

....⁶⁵



DOCUMENT No. 5

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 27, Ll. 55-64, original in Ukrainian.]

TO CPSU POLITBURO MEMBER AND UkrCP CC FIRST SECRETARY
Cde. P. Yu. SHELEST⁶⁶

INFORMATIONAL REPORT

For your information, on 29 April 1968 I met the first secretary of the KSC's East Slovakia regional committee, Cde. Ján Koscelanský, and had a three-hour conversation with him. The meeting, as on the previous occasion, occurred at his suggestion and was conducted one-on-one.

At the start of our conversation, Cde. Koscelanský asked me what had happened at the April Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, which had focused on events in Czechoslovakia. I responded that the Plenum had not specifically discussed the situation in your country, but had merely reviewed current problems on the international scene and the struggle of the CPSU to achieve unity and cohesion in the world Communist movement. Among these problems was the recent development of events in Czechoslovakia.⁶⁷ Events in the ČSSR have been marked by the stepped-up activity of unsavory elements. Only if the current KSC leaders assess the situation properly and take necessary measures to overcome the difficulties they confront will events develop in the right direction.

After this, Cde. Koscelanský informed me about the proceedings of their regional conference. In his view, the conference passed off well, in a lively and critical atmosphere. The conference decided to replace two secretaries of the regional committee, Cdes. Kuľko and Kudelásek, who were subject to harsh criticism for having adhered consistently to the old line.⁶⁸ The post of secretary of ideology was filled by the director of the Košice museum, Ladislav Olexa, and the post of secretary of the regional committee for the Košice metallurgical combine was eliminated after the removal of Cde. Kudelásek. Also replaced was the head of the party

commission, Cde. Mockovčiak.⁶⁹

Cde. Koscelanský said it will also be necessary to replace a number of department heads. The sweeping replacement of leading personnel is motivated by the fact that a majority of them have already been in office a long time and are unable to respond properly to recent events. These people are now coming under heavy criticism, and the authority of the party is falling. The masses have demanded that new people be brought into the leadership, and as a result, the replacement of cadres needs to be completed.

According to Cde. Koscelanský, the delegates at the conference very warmly greeted the telegram that our party's Transcarpathian Oblast committee sent to the conference, regarding it as an important gesture of support from the Communists of the Soviet Union. They voted unanimously to thank the oblast committee for its telegram.

A bit later, Cde. Koscelanský spoke about the state of affairs in the country. He declared that the press, television, and radio are no longer subject to any kind of censorship. In this respect he said that literary figures and journalists are referring to a law adopted under feudalism that had specified there would be no censorship.⁷⁰ So why should there be any censorship under socialism? The press, radio, and television have reached the point where they will criticize any leader for his views. Cde. Koscelanský said that the CC First Secretary of the Communist Party of Slovakia, Cde. Biľak, had been criticized openly in the press because he told a gathering of television producers and newspaper editors that they were not behaving properly.

In Moravia, the regional committee adopted a resolution condemning a particular newspaper's treacherous behavior. Afterwards, the newspaper in question criticized the regional committee until a new plenum was convened and the resolution was rescinded. The whole party conference proceeded through this largely reciprocal interaction between the regional committee and the newspaper.

I said to Cde. Koscelanský that I can't imagine why they are permitting immature people to spread propaganda among the population, and are not taking measures to control them. It's even possible to wage a public vendetta against any of the current leaders. In response, Cde. Koscelanský said that party officials should behave in a way that would not incur criticism from the masses or, naturally, the press. That's what you get, he said to me, when the CC organ "Rudé právo" is not controlled by the Central Committee and the editor-in-chief. The question of what materials to publish is decided spontaneously by a number of editors.⁷¹

Cde. Koscelanský insisted that the press is a great and nearly decisive force in society and deserves to be heeded. It gathers and formulates the views of the masses. Anyone who wants to work properly will need to have the support of the masses. Without this support, the CC could not have dismissed anyone from his post or brought in new officials. He then said that the principle of democratic centralism in the party is being violated. Many officials already are afraid of the press, radio, and television. The media reassess these people and begin to raise a fuss, and the officials themselves

are unable to do anything once they are called to account. We increasingly find a pattern in which people are first subjected to public criticism and then driven from their posts.

The growing disregard of the principle of democratic centralism is also evident from an example cited by Cde. Koscelanský. Cde. Koscelanský said that yesterday he had called the CC headquarters in Prague and informed them that a delegation of Ukrainian workers from Prešov had visited the regional committee and been received by a secretary of the regional committee, Ladislav Olexa. The CC Secretary with whom Cde. Koscelanský was speaking asked who this Ladislav Olexa is, since no one knows anything about him, and his candidacy has not been vetted by the Central Committee. So, you can see that, in defiance of common sense, officials are being appointed without any input from the highest party organs.

Many meetings are under way in the country, particularly meetings of students and workers. Cde. Koscelanský said that when he attended a meeting of students, he had been asked some 1,200 questions. In answering them, it was necessary to stick to the point, lest they start whistling, as happened with the rector of the university. Among the questions asked was whether the Transcarpathian region, having been taken illegally from Czechoslovakia, would be returned.⁷² I asked Cde. Koscelanský how he had responded to this question, but he avoided giving a direct answer.

Meetings have been taking place at factories to oppose the factory directors. Workers are demanding increased pay and are pressing all sorts of claims against the heads of the enterprises.

At the Košice metallurgical combine, for example, during one such meeting, the director, Cde. Knižka, was accused of receiving an excessively high salary, of owning a new car, of having a private room in the recreational facility, and of other such things. Newspapers all over the country covered this in full, and as a result, Cde. Knižka reached the point where he suddenly had a heart attack in Bratislava.

I said to Cde. Koscelanský that now you can see where "democracy" and the elimination of censorship are bound to lead. From the sidelines, it is easier to bellow and criticize than to work. And wouldn't you, too, be intimidated by this sort of vilification? As soon as you make a mistake, they use it to criticize you and dismiss you from your post. He agreed with me and said that during his remarks afterward at the factory meeting, he referred to these sorts of criticisms as "Chinese."⁷³ At this particular enterprise, he declared, they've already convened meetings three times to elect the head of the trade union organization, but no one has been willing to be elected, for fear of incurring criticism. As far as Cde. Koscelanský himself is concerned, he said that he had made clear at one of the meetings that if they begin criticizing him, he will promptly react in full force.

At the meetings, assemblies, and conferences, a large number of questions were raised about events in both Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. In connection with this, Cde. Koscelanský said that they write a great deal about these events in the capitalist countries, whereas in the socialist

countries, with the exception of Yugoslavia, they are silent. He asked why this is so. I responded that, as far as I know, excerpts from Dubček's speech at the CC plenum and from the Action Program were published in "Pravda."⁷⁴ I also said that "Pravda" is not able to cover other news from your country when you yourselves don't know what you want, and when the slogans proclaimed by you are not fulfilled.

Cde. Koscelanský said that ordinary people, particularly workers, always greet conversations about the USSR with stormy applause. Although there are some who oppose the Soviet Union, they do so in private and do not dare speak openly this way at meetings and assemblies.

Then Cde. Koscelanský described the recent visit by the president of the republic, Ludvík Svoboda, to Bratislava. He said the president had never encountered such a warm reception as he did here, especially among young people. Cde. Koscelanský emphasized that even though in Prague there had been demonstrations against the election of Svoboda as president, in Bratislava they had deliberately organized a wide range of meetings for the president so that the Czechs would not think the Slovaks were acting against them. At the end of May, Svoboda will visit the East Slovakian region, and they are now busy arranging for him the same sort of reception that he enjoyed in Bratislava.

Further on, Cde. Koscelanský emphasized that three forces have now emerged: the conservatives, the progressives, and the radicals (consisting mainly of Jews) who want to drag the country to the right. Among the radicals is a well-known economist, a Jew, who has broad international Zionist links (I don't recall his name).⁷⁵ There was an attempt to bring him into the CC Presidium, but, Cde. Koscelanský said, the Soviet comrades were opposed to this, and so nothing came of it. Now this is one of the reasons that the radicals are calling ever more urgently for the convocation in 1968 of an extraordinary party congress.

In general, a great struggle has emerged around this question. In the Czech lands, the conferences adopted resolutions in favor of holding a congress this year.⁷⁶ In Slovakia, they also voted in favor of holding a congress, but they did not specify when it should be held and did not indicate whether it should be an extraordinary congress or the regular 14th.

The views of the progressives and radicals about the congress are as follows: The radicals favor convening an extraordinary congress that will remove Novotný and other current CC members (roughly 40 people in all) from the CC because they are a disgrace to the party. The progressives believe that a congress must be convened, but not this year. It should come only after meticulous preparations that will allow a new program and new party statutes to be adopted. If an extraordinary congress were held prematurely, it might enable unsavory people to infiltrate the leadership.

In May, a plenum of the KSČ CC will be held, and the progressives want to gain a definitive understanding of the radicals' views about a congress. If the radicals' motive for convening a congress is only their desire to remove Novotný's group from the CC, that can be done at the ple-

num: These people will voluntarily relinquish their duties as CC members, and replacements for them will be chosen from comrades who are now candidate members.

Cde. Koscelanský said that the provision in the constitution about the Communist Party's leading role in society will be removed. In response, I emphasized that in my view this would be extremely surprising and shocking, since it would be impossible to build socialism and Communism without the leading role of the party. In the process, new full-fledged parties will take shape, as cadres break apart and go their own way, and then seek to deprive the Communist Party of its leading role. In these circumstances, there will soon be 30 parties again in your country, as in the past. Why this is necessary is anyone's guess.

While agreeing that the number of parties might actually be increased, Cde. Koscelanský did not specifically address the other concerns I raised.

He repeated his earlier statements that true democracy is distinctive in that it does not provide for any kinds of secrets about matters that affect the party and the state. In this regard, everything that was discussed at the CC Plenums and at the party conferences was openly covered in the press, on radio, and on television.

At the end of the conversation, he said that political matters are not giving him any time to spend on other issues. For example, he does not know how economic matters and the spring harvest are progressing. He complained that they are working very hard and, in general, he was tired; he had put up with enough, and it would probably be better to be back at the institute delivering lectures than to be involved in politics.

We agreed that in view of the great value of these meetings, it would be worth setting up meetings of the CC secretaries of our republics—the Ukrainian and Slovak—on the Soviet-Czechoslovak border. He endorsed this proposal and said that on 3 May he would be meeting with Cde. Biľak and would inform him about our arrangement. This will be especially appropriate, he said, because Cde. Biľak is a native of our region but has not been back to East Slovakia since the day he was elected first secretary of the Slovakian CC.⁷⁷

Bidding farewell, I said we are convinced that the Czechoslovak Communist Party includes healthy forces who correctly understand how to deal with the situation and who want to guide the party and the country along a Marxist-Leninist path. He responded that he had recently given an interview in which the correspondents asked how he viewed the prospects for carrying out the Action Program. He had answered this question by saying: "It would be good if we succeed in carrying out this Program." I, Cde. Koscelanský added, deliberately put in the word "if," because this might or might not happen.

My personal impression from the conversation with Cde. Koscelanský is that whereas during our previous meetings he had behaved with great animation and had spoken enthusiastically about future plans and prospects, this was no longer the case. It is clear that the notes of doubt and worry that I could detect in Cde. Koscelanský's remarks stem from

the extreme difficulty of using theoretical concepts in practical activity.

He is beginning to question whether they will be successful in building socialism of a “Czechoslovak type.” I could see that Cde. Koscelanský himself is aware that things are not going the way they planned when they embarked on a “new course,” and that the situation in the country has been moving ever further to the right. But because he was one of the initiators of this “new course,” his own ambition does not permit him to speak candidly about what is going on right now in the country. It is true, he said, that it would have been better if this had begun in 1960 and had all been carried out gradually.

FIRST SECRETARY OF THE TRANSCARPATHIAN
OBLAST OF THE CP OF UKRAINE
Yu. IL'NYTS'KYI

Received by High Frequency
from Uzhhorod
30.IV.1968



DOCUMENT No. 6

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 28, Ll. 81-85,
original in Russian.]

12 May 1968

CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

At the instruction of the UkrCP CC Secretary Cde. P. E. Shelest, I am sending you a report from the UkrCP Transcarpathian Oblast committee “On Certain Items Featured in Czechoslovak Television Broadcasts and in the Newspaper ‘Rudé právo’.”

Attachment: as indicated, 5 pages.

DEP. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
UkrCPCC
A. ODNOROMANENKO

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST
PARTY OF UKRAINE

Certain Items Featured in Czechoslovak Television
Broadcasts and in the Newspaper “Rudé právo”

1. On 6 May the ČSSR minister of internal affairs published a directive ending the jamming of radio stations of foreign countries that transmit radio broadcasts for Czechoslovakia. According to the television, the society viewed this decision very favorably.

2. A huge number of tourists from capitalist countries, especially from West Germany and Austria, are visiting Czechoslovakia every day. Some 50,000-55,000 tourists are arriving from the FRG and Austria every day. In coverage on Czechoslovak television at the end of April from an entry-exit border point, they reported that officials from the ČSSR border guard organs are faithfully greeting West German tourists without making any attempt to check their belongings and documents.⁷⁸ To cross the border, all a tourist has to do is stick his head out the window of a bus and show a paper to the border guard, who then smiles happily at him and wishes him a good time in Prague. The television correspondent emphasized the great “efficiency” of the border services and their hospitality to West German tourists.

Thus, in a very direct way, Czechoslovakia is being permeated every day with spies, anti-socialist and anti-Soviet literature, religious objects of all sorts, and other such things.

3. In some reports from the border, they broadcast pictures showing the border guards removing barbed wire from installations along the border with West Germany and Austria.⁷⁹ No doubt, the presence of such installations on the border is now superfluous and unaesthetic.

4. At the 1st of May demonstration in Prague, Czechoslovak television prominently displayed one of the posters held by the column of demonstrators: “We demand an opposition party.”⁸⁰ A bit earlier, the television showed a group of public speakers who openly stated that they must do away with the dictatorship of the Communist party, create an opposition to the Communist party, and establish a new polity using the model of the English and American two-party system.⁸¹

5. Television reports from the regional party conference in České Budějovice highlighted a presentation by one of the speakers, who affirmed the necessity of convening an extraordinary congress as soon as possible, where they would have to elect a completely new leadership and form a new party to replace the compromised KSČ.⁸²

6. At the 1st of May demonstration, one of the television announcers spoke very agitatedly about recent events in the country. “We see demonstrators holding up posters saying ‘We demand an opposition party’,” he said, “but this is not as bad as some other things that have been happening recently. Hostile elements have been taunting and throwing stones through the windows of former prosecutors, judges, and officials from the internal affairs and state security organs. . . . If you look at this realistically, the current victims are honorable people who struggled against criminals, sadists, and other hostile elements. And this is despite the fact that only one out of a hundred officials, perhaps, com-

mitted violations of the law.”⁸³

This same announcer spoke about the plight of economic management officials, indicating that honest directors who sacrificed everything for the success of their enterprises are now being driven from their posts under a variety of pretexts.

7. Elements hostile to socialism have penetrated the press organs, radio, and television. With censorship now lifted under the slogan of “broad information for the public,” they are highlighting unsavory features and deficiencies in various spheres of social life and prison life as well as grave shortcomings in the military barracks. They have even seen fit to show tactical-technical data about Soviet tank production and its weak points. During the broadcast the viewers were informed that more information will be shown about other military technology in the future. (The broadcast was on 4 May 1968.)

8. The former Uniate clergy has been sharply stepping up its propaganda activity in Eastern Slovakia. The congress that assembled in Košice devised an action program demanding the recognition and soonest possible restoration of the Uniate Church, “inasmuch as the Orthodox faith was forcibly set up as a replacement.”⁸⁴ The proceedings of the congress were broadcast on television, and reports about it were published in “Rudé právo.”

9. Jaromír Hetteš,⁸⁵ a secretary of the KSČ’s Eastern Slovakia regional committee, was asked about party cadres in an interview with a television correspondent at the end of April. Hetteš indicated that these cadres can be divided into three groups, beginning with those who lived and struggled during the first Czechoslovak Republic. They were prepared only to seize power, but were unable to manage the national economy. For that reason, a second group of party cadres came in as replacements, and they have remained in power up to now. Initially, they were progressive in their handling of the national economy, but now they have become conservatives.

New cadres are needed to ensure that the economy can develop properly in the future. “In our view, to resolve this matter,” said Hetteš, “it’s necessary to rectify the mistakes of the past whereby the top posts in the state and economic apparatus automatically went to KSČ members. We must now bring in more non-Communists without needing to worry that the chairman of a regional or village council will declare war if he does not happen to be a member of the KSČ.”

10. Systematic propaganda has been featured in “Rudé právo” and on radio and television about a new model of socialist democracy. The propaganda emphasizes that in this respect they have set out on an uncharted path that undoubtedly will earn broad support in the Western world. Incidentally, “Rudé právo” regularly features a compilation of reactions from around the world to the events in Czechoslovakia. Someone or other in the ČSSR is especially happy about seeing praise in the bourgeois press.

11. On 5 May “Rudé právo” featured an article on “Marx and the Communist Party,” which reached the conclusion that Marx was the last Communist philosopher of the XIX

century (and possibly of the XX).⁸⁶ It also spoke about the different components of the “Communist movement”: “The latest path of Lenin was (and to this day remains) the single complete application of Marxism and the single consistent development of Marxist doctrine. But it has gone in only one direction. Marx permitted far more directions than that.”⁸⁷ We are at the beginning of a search, which must proceed. There is no other way.”

12. On 24 April, “Rudé právo” published an article under the headline “Here, Too, We Need Improvements,” which deals with the work of the Union of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship.⁸⁸ Specifically, it says:

“The period of the cult of personality left many traces of formalism and official rigidity (or at least semi-official rigidity) on the movement that arose spontaneously and out of pure love in the face of the Second World War. In the past, certain political figures, who have left us with so many bad things to clear away, often made a monopoly of their friendship with the USSR, and with their verbosity and phraseology they more often harmed things than helped. . . .

“In addition, this period witnessed an unreasonable transfer of the Soviet experience, which meant that along with positive features, we imported things unsuitable for our country, not to mention outdated and egregiously unscientific concepts, such as the creation of a Lysenko school. . . .

“The routes were often stereotyped, most were group offerings, whereas individual tourism is insignificant. . . .”

A bit later the article refers to the presence of Czech students on the virgin lands, where they learned about life without adornments and agitation. They lived and worked with real people and did not exchange pat phrases, but were open, measured, and candid with one another. Our students established close ties with their young Soviet friends, who themselves today are seeking new paths to follow, do not like the phrases muttered by agitators, and are more critical than the previous generation was.⁸⁹

13. A presentation on television by the writer Lustig

At the end of April, the television gave broadcast time to the writer Lustig.⁹⁰ In his presentation, he spoke with open sympathy in favor of the Israeli aggressors, declaring that “such a small country as Israel, in the midst of the Arab world, was unable to wait until the midnight hour struck.”⁹¹

He called on the Czechoslovak government not to supply weapons to the Middle East, and condemned the supply of arms to Egypt by the Soviet Union.

14. On 3 May, “Rudé právo” published an article entitled “1st of May Referendum,” which characterized the demonstrations in Prague and other locales (and also the session of the people’s assembly) as a vote of confidence and trust in the party and government.⁹² The article strongly emphasizes that the demonstrations were spontaneous, that no recording machines were evident there, and that they were not carrying standard typeset posters prepared by appropriate departments in the propaganda establishment and by the party apparatus.

Further on, the newspaper says that all those who have eyes and ears can hear and see what the majority of the

people are aiming for. The 1st of May festivities have given all those, both in the ČSSR and abroad, who are likening the current events in the ČSSR to the Budapest events of 1956, ample grounds to rethink their position.

SECRETARY OF THE TRANSCARPATHIAN OBLAST
COMMITTEE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF UKRAINE

Yu. IL'NYTS'KYI

9 May 1968



DOCUMENT No. 7

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 28, Ll. 65-69,
original in Russian.]

REPORT

On 13 May, I had a meeting with the head of the Interior Ministry Directorate in the East Slovakian region, Colonel J. S. Majer, at his request.⁹³ He arrived at the meeting alone. According to Cde. Majer, his deputy from State Security, Lieut.-Colonel A. A. Dovin, was home sick from a serious nervous disorder. Accompanying me was the head of the 5th Department, Cde. Maiorchuk.⁹⁴

Having said nothing about the reasons for and goals of the meeting, Cde. Majer began, at his own initiative, to speak about the situation in his country, which in his view is becoming more complicated and is characterized by the following:

1. The anti-socialist forces and demagogic and anarchical elements are stepping up their activity. The mass media—the press, radio, and television—remain in the hands of right-wing intellectuals, including many Zionists.⁹⁵ The press, radio, and television are ever more vigorously exploiting for their own ends the agitation, demagoguery, and incitement of passions around the so-called rehabilitations. Cde. Majer gave a direct assurance that something will be done to counter this. On 3 May in Prague a meeting of 50,000 students took place.⁹⁶ Speakers who endorsed Marxist positions were booed and jeered.

Several days ago, at the grave of one of the founders of Czechoslovakia, the Slovak who was a former general in the French service, Štefánik (roughly 60 kilometers from Bratislava), a demonstration of 100,000 people took place, featuring many speeches hostile to socialist Czechoslovakia.⁹⁷ At other meetings and demonstrations, too, the participants are carrying anti-Communist banners and yelling anti-

Communist slogans.

2. Three groups have taken shape in the KSČ CC Presidium:

- conservatives
- centrists
- rightists.

With regard to the conservatives, Cde. Majer was not able to report anything concrete. It is generally understood that they are adopting a wait-and-see position.

The centrists, headed by Cde. Dubček, also include Cde. Lenárt, Cde. Černík, the secretary of the Slovak Communist Party CC, Cde. Biľak, and the secretary of the party committee at the Košice metallurgical combine, Cde. Rigo—all of whom firmly support socialism and friendship with the USSR.⁹⁸

The right wing is headed by Smrkovský.⁹⁹ They are supported by pro-Zionist circles, including Goldstücker, the rector of Charles University (in Prague); Kriegel, a member of the CC Presidium; and Ota Šik. They advocate an orientation toward the West.¹⁰⁰

They are heatedly debating the question of whether to convene an Extraordinary Congress. Four regional organizations have declared their support for convening it.¹⁰¹ Among these is the Prague organization. This is especially unfortunate because the Prague committee is the largest and most influential of the party organizations, and includes many intellectuals among its members. In the Central Committee the rightist group headed by Smrkovský has spoken in favor of a congress.

Cde. Majer affirms that a serious danger has arisen that if an extraordinary congress is convened under current circumstances, the top of the party will be hijacked by rightists. He explains that this will be the likely result of the congress because pro-Zionist elements who have a stake in it enjoy wide support in the provincial party organizations, which in turn will have a strong influence on the congress delegates. They are also raising large amounts of money for this purpose, and, as indicated above, the press, radio, and television are in their hands.

3. Many reactionary organizations have been formed. The largest of them (with nearly 100,000 people) is the so-called Organization of Politically Active Non-Communists.¹⁰² Others include youth organizations, professional groups, sport clubs, Legionnaires (participants in the Czechoslovak rebellion in Siberia and their successors), cultural organizations, and others.¹⁰³

4. The working class is standing on the sidelines, away from these events. This can be explained by the fact that the KSČ, despite having a stake in activating workers, has been deprived of the means of activating them through the press, the radio, and so forth.

5. Colonel Majer showed me a leaflet he had been given, which had been typeset in Czech on a sheet of paper a bit smaller than the standard size. The leaflet was phrased in a Marxist-Leninist spirit and was written skillfully for public

consumption. It says that events in the ČSSR are nothing other than a struggle between socialism and capitalism, and that the question has arisen of who-whom.¹⁰⁴ It also says that the reactionary, bourgeois forces are trying, by means of demagoguery, imprecations, and wild speculation about the inevitable mistakes of the recent past, to lead Czechoslovak workers astray, do away with socialist gains, and plunge the country into the grip of imperialism. It then calls on workers to rise up in defense of the KSC and socialist gains, to put an end to the anti-popular actions of the reactionaries, and to defend their own rights. Cde. Majer says that these sorts of leaflets were distributed in large quantities in Prague. I get the impression that he suspects the Soviet organs are in some way involved in the dissemination of the leaflets. In an emphatically worried manner, he further said that reactionary leaflets in the form of brochures also are being distributed in the country.

6. The situation in Slovakia is significantly better than in the Czech lands, and in Eastern Slovakia it is better than in Western Slovakia.

7. Cde. Majer is very much interested in the reasons for and results of the meeting that took place in Moscow among the leaders of the CPSU, the MSzMP, the PZPR, the SED, and the Communist Party of Bulgaria.¹⁰⁵ We got the impression that this was one of the tasks he had been assigned in asking for this meeting. It is possible that the first secretary of the East Slovakia regional committee of the Slovak Communist Party, Cde. Koscelanský, was the one who gave him this assignment, though perhaps not at his own initiative.

8. On the situation in the army, Cde. Majer said only that it is unfortunate that almost the entire General Staff has been replaced.¹⁰⁶

9. Cde. Majer refrained from characterizing ethnic relations and the behavior of ethnic minorities (Hungarians, Ukrainians, Poles, Germans).¹⁰⁷ With regard to the Ukrainians, he said that in his region they number only 150 (though in reality the number is around 100,000).¹⁰⁸

10. He recounted a meeting he had with the head of the State Security directorate in the neighboring province of Poland, a colonel. The colonel had asked: "Where are you going, where are the Jews taking you?"¹⁰⁹

11. On the situation in the ČSSR State Security organs.

On 7-8 May a conference of the heads of regional Interior Ministry organizations and of the central apparatus took place in Prague. In a report to the conference, Minister Pavel did not give any sort of practical or basic guidelines of how to act in local branches.¹¹⁰ He does not take account of any sort of advice or opinions from the locales. He is occupying his post temporarily, as he himself said, giving himself only a year or two to serve in the post of minister. Cde. Majer speaks about him with irony and says that he will act not in accordance with what Pavel says, but in accordance with the orders of the former minister, since these orders have not been rescinded by anyone and are not in contradiction with the policy of the KSC. However, Pavel spoke (as Cde. Majer suggests, with the aim of demagoguery) in his report about indestructible friendship with the Soviet Union. These words

were met with stormy applause from the participants, and, as Cde. Majer observed, this reaction in the hall evoked displeasure from the minister, who concealed his sentiments only with great difficulty.¹¹¹

When the general part of the conference was over, the minister left. The leaders of the regional directorates managed to get him to come to their separate conference. They asked him sharp questions, including for example: "Not a single reasonable state, neither in the past nor at present, has refused to use such instruments as agent networks and operational equipment to defend its internal security. Why does the ČSSR intend to refuse these things, as minister Pavel himself said in an interview with journalists?" Having been deprived of the opportunity to give an evasive answer, he was forced to say that all these things can be used, but not against honest people.

Yesterday or the day before, Pavel appeared on television. His comments there were much better than the interview he gave to journalists on the eve of the conference and the speech he gave at the conference. This had a positive influence on the mood of State Security officials, who surmised that they had prompted these latest comments from Pavel.

The personnel of the country's State Security organs are top-notch. Without exception, they all firmly support socialist positions and friendship with the Soviet Union.¹¹² They, as Cde. Majer says, are unable to conceive of any other route.

12. It was noticeable that Cde. Majer was unusually optimistic and sought to "reassure" us. He affirmed that they are in a position to control everything and restore order. We get the impression that he subtly, through hints, tried to give us the idea that this assessment of events should be provided to our superiors.

13. Cde. Majer reported that the ČSSR deputy interior minister, Cde. Záruba, would like to award a medal of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship Society to Colonel Cde. Trojak.¹¹³ He subtly gave the hint that if such a meeting were held, Cde. Záruba possibly would recount something that would be of interest to us.

At the end of the meeting, Cde. Majer invited my wife, my children, and me to come to his house on 18-19 May.

HEAD OF THE DIRECTORATE OF THE KGB
UNDER THE UkrSSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
IN TRANSCARPATHIAN OBLAST
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL

A. ZHABCHENKO

14 May 1968
Uzhhorod
No. 3273

DOCUMENT No. 8

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 28, Ll. 70-73, original in Russian.]

SECRET

Sole Copy

REPORT

on a Meeting with Czechoslovak Friends

On 13 May 1968 at the “Bohemia” border-control checkpoint, a meeting was held with Czechoslovak friends. Taking part from their side were the head of the State Security division at the Čierna station, Captain A. Široký, his deputy, Senior Lieutenant J. Katan, and the operations official in that same department, Senior Lieutenant J. Černický.¹¹⁴

Taking part on behalf of the UkrKGB of the UkrSSR Council of Ministers were Lieutenant-Colonel Oleinik and Lieutenant-Colonel Demochko from the Transcarpathian Oblast.¹¹⁵

The meeting took place at the initiative of the Czechoslovak friends and was intended as an exchange of views and an opportunity for the Czechoslovak friends to report on the situation in their country.

The friends declared that, above all, the situation in the country remains tense, especially in Prague, Bratislava, and other cities in the Czech lands. However, no one is taking radical measures to restore order.

As in the past, no one is in control of the press, radio, and television, which are waging a slanderous campaign against the party, against the State Security organs, and in some cases against the Soviet Union.

The ČSSR Interior Ministry, including the *Státní bezpečnost* (State Security) of Czechoslovakia, are not addressing issues required for a struggle against anti-socialist elements and their activities. Agent work on these matters is not being carried out at all.

Recently, according to the friends, State Security formations have been sponsoring conferences and meetings where the situation in the country has been discussed and a free exchange of views on the matter has been taking place.

In this regard, the friends held their own party meeting on 12 May. Their party organization consists of Communists from the State Security division at Čierna station and from border guards at the Čierna border-control checkpoint.

The friends affirmed that there is no unity in their ranks. Many Communists (especially the border guards) do not embrace correct, Marxist positions on questions pertaining to democracy and the internal and external policies of socialist Czechoslovakia.¹¹⁶

A significant part of the discussion at this meeting was devoted to criticism of party organs for their failure to defend

the State Security organs against the slanderers and hooligan elements.

To this end, some of the Communists in the party organization staged protests by refusing to pay their party dues for the month of May. One of the operational agents in this division, Captain Poustranský, who formerly had worked as a supervisor and who had been subject to slander and threats stemming from the actions of the organs during the 1950s, fell seriously ill as a result and, taking account of his family circumstances, expressed thoughts about committing suicide.¹¹⁷

After the party meeting, Cde. Široký reported, the friends decided at their own risk to renew work with agents.

The same sort of party conference took place in Prague, at the Ministry, where the Chairman of the National Assembly, Smrkovský, took part and spoke. In his remarks, as the friends could see, he gave what was supposed to be an objective assessment of the emerging situation in the country and called for a struggle against anti-socialist elements.¹¹⁸ However, everything he said remained just empty words. The categorical prohibition on the organs’ work in internal matters is still in force.¹¹⁹

Recounting articles published in “Rudé právo” that criticized the situation in the ČSSR and the leaders and press organs of other socialist states—Poland, Hungary, the GDR, and the Soviet Union—the friends at the same time expressed bewilderment and anxiety about the failure of ČSSR leaders to take part in the 8 May meeting in Moscow among delegations from the socialist countries.¹²⁰

The press in the ČSSR published an article reportedly entitled “. . . for the first time without the ČSSR . . .”¹²¹

In this connection, the friends reported that from operational sources and – even more – from the press they had learned that almost all the socialist countries disapproved of the situation in the ČSSR and the steps taken by the leaders of Czechoslovakia. However, the leaders had still done nothing to restore order in the country.

The GDR, the friends declared, supposedly expressed open dismay at the presence in the government of Smrkovský, as a former agent of the Gestapo.¹²²

With regard to the positions of the working class and peasantry, the friends again emphasized that these sorts of workers stand solidly behind the positions of the KSČ CC headed by A. Dubček. However, because of weak Marxist-Leninist preparation, they are not participating at all in the democratization process. As the friends put it, workers and peasants are unable to discuss philosophical matters with writers and other representatives of the so-called creative intelligentsia.

The friends expressed disquiet at L. Svoboda’s decision to release a new large party of amnestied individuals from prison to mark Victory Day.¹²³

Their activities are not yet firmly set, but in these circumstances this category of people might be exploited by elements hostile to the ČSSR.

The friends confirmed the information we received about the dissemination of leaflets calling for the removal of A.

Dubček and L. Svododa from their posts and the restoration of a government under Novotný.¹²⁴ However, they said that this took place only in Moravia and Bohemia. There were no such incidents on the territory of Slovakia.

They also confirmed our information about the indecisiveness of the party organs in bringing the so-called People's Militia up to a combat ready state.¹²⁵ In Čierna, there are no weapons ready for them to use. Worse still, the friends said, some people (though they didn't specify who) are speaking about the need to abolish this armed detachment of the party.

Referring to public statements, the friends mentioned a case a week or so earlier when a rebellion broke out among prisoners in one of the camps in the Czech lands.¹²⁶ A discussion focusing on democratization ended when the prisoners ravaged the premises—the living quarters and official areas—and tried physically to destroy the guards and administration. Order was not restored until troops from the Interior Ministry intervened.

As a result of this incident, the first during the tenure of Pavel as Interior Minister, he issued a directive on events in the camp. However, his directive did not specify any sort of concrete measures to prevent similar incidents in other camps. Even so, it was widely publicized in the press.¹²⁷

At the end of the discussion, the friends asked us whether reports in the Western press and radio were accurate about a concentration of Soviet tank forces along the border with the ČSSR for an invasion of Czechoslovakia and about a partial mobilization in the USSR to flesh out these units.¹²⁸

When told that all of this was merely connected with exercises that were under way, the friends noted that if our troops were actually deployed along the state border with the ČSSR, they would be reassured and, possibly, could act more quickly to restore order in the ČSSR.

The friends also noted that the Czechoslovak people are certain that if a threat to socialism in their country were ever to arise, the Soviet people and their army would provide them with necessary military assistance.

DEPUTY CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT OF THE
UkrKGB UNDER THE UkrSSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

FOR TRANSCARP. OBL.
AT THE STA. AND CITY OF CHOP

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL

DEMOCHKO

14 May 1968
No. 3231

DOCUMENT No. 9

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 28, Ll. 81-85,
original in Russian.]

CPSUCC

Having just been in Transcarpathian Oblast, I believe I should inform the CPSU CC about the following: On 10-11 May of this year, in connection with the 23rd anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia from fascist occupiers, the First Secretary of the UkrCP's Transcarpathian Oblast committee, Cde. Il'nyts'kyi, and the chairman of the oblast executive committee, Cde. Rusyn,¹²⁹ visited the ČSSR at the invitation of the KSČ's East Slovakia regional committee and the Regional National Council.

The first secretary of the PZPR's Rzeszow province party committee, Cde. Kruczek, the chairman of the province executive committee, Cde. Duda, the first secretary of the MSZMP's Borsod province committee, Cde. Bodnár, and the chairman of the provincial council, Cde. Papp, were in the city of Košice, in the center of the region.¹³⁰

During the meeting, the first secretary of the East Slovakia regional party committee, Cde. Koscelanský, the chairman of the regional National Assembly, Cde. Gabriška, a secretary of the territorial party, Cde. Boboňko, the deputy chairmen of the National Assembly, Cdes. Ondrušek and Kubašovský, and two other senior officials from the KSČ regional committee and National Assembly, Cdes. Novický and Oleár, took part in the discussions for the Czechoslovak side.¹³¹

The Czechoslovak comrades sought to emphasize that at the invitation of the Soviet, Polish, and Hungarian friends to mark the anniversary, they wanted to express their solidarity with the socialist countries while at the same time doing everything possible to convince their guests that the events in Czechoslovakia will lead to good results. In their presentations, Cdes. Il'nyts'kyi, Kruczek, and Bodnár, when mentioning how favorably disposed the Soviet, Polish, and Hungarian peoples are to Czechoslovakia, expressed alarm at the processes under way in the KSČ and the country.

Judging from the conversation, the Czechoslovak comrades believe that the speeches by anti-socialist elements at the 1st of May festivities are perfectly normal and are a reflection of the success of "democratization." Cde. Koscelanský, in particular, emphasized this point. He also stated that sentiment is growing in the KSČ CC to ensure that a new constitution will not contain a provision enshrining the role of the Communist Party as the leading and guiding force in society. This is being done, the argument goes, to prove that the party can and must achieve its leading position not through administrative means, but through positive action. When our comrades and the Polish and Hungarian comrades expressed doubt about the appropriateness of this decision and argued that without the party's leading role it would be impossible to build socialism, Koscelanský declared that they [the KSČ and the Czechoslovak govern-

ment] are justified in carrying out experiments.

In response to this, he was informed that experiments should be conducted in a kitchen laboratory, not in a country, particularly on such an important matter that affects all Communists and the whole socialist camp. With regard to the organs of propaganda, Koscelanský declared that the party is deliberately not interfering in the press, radio, and television, since those media “helped the CC replace the ‘conservative’ cadres. When the time comes, we will restore order [in the mass media].”¹³²

Cde. Koscelanský declared that they have 15,000 armed People’s Militia forces in the region, which, together with the Prešov tank division, act only on his own orders, not the orders of the KSČ CC. At the same time, he expressed worry that violations of the law were occurring in the country, including instances when the peasants seized land and are preparing to gather the fall harvest solely for themselves.

After Cde. Koscelanský left for a conference in Prague of the secretaries of party committees, Cdes. Gabriška, Boboňko, and Ondrušek began to speak more openly about the danger posed by events in the country and about the need to adopt decisive measures vis-à-vis the propaganda organs; but they are afraid to carry these out.

Cde. Boboňko, a secretary of the regional party committee, said that cadres are being destroyed in the country. All it takes is for someone to say something bad about a senior official, and that official is promptly removed from his post. The party committees do not offer protection for such comrades. A bit later he said that in their region the peasants are illicitly putting up crosses in the schools (in almost every school), as was the case during the bourgeois republic. And no one is speaking out against the stepped-up activity of the Catholic church.¹³³ The teachers are forcing the children of dismissed comrades to sit at separate desks and are mocking them. In the country, more than 7,000 senior party officials have already been dismissed and have been given no new work. Just a day or two ago, a group of young hooligans ransacked the apartment of the chairman of the Prague municipal executive committee, Cde. Černý.¹³⁴

Referring to several senior officials, Cde. Boboňko said: “Smrkovský is Imre Nagy No. 2,” who at the state’s expense has installed 400 people in the newspapers, radio, and television to shape public opinion in a direction favorable to him.¹³⁵ As far as Čisař is concerned, he’s a complete swine, and the same is true of the new minister of internal affairs.”¹³⁶

During the conversations, we sensed that Cde. Koscelanský is well informed about the line of the KSČ CC, in particular about Cde. Dubček’s line. He told our comrades that Cde. Dubček himself is already aware that things have gone very far. However, he [Dubček – trans.] is waiting for statements from below demanding that decisive measures be taken, and then, supposedly, he will take a firm stance. In a separate conversation with Cde. Il’nyts’kyi, Cde. Koscelanský said that Cde. Kruczek had stated, in a conversation with him, that the Poles are worried about the situation in Czechoslovakia and that, if it should prove necessary, they and the Hungarians will use their armies to help the Czecho-

slovak friends.¹³⁷

It is worth noting that during the discussions, the Polish and Hungarian friends completely supported our comrades and displayed a unity of views. The Transcarpathian Oblast party committee is maintaining its ties with the KSČ’s East Slovakian regional committee.

In private letters to friends, relatives, and acquaintances in Transcarpathian Oblast from Czechoslovakia, particularly from the Prešov region where nearly 200,000 Ukrainians live, the correspondents speak about the alarming situation in the Czechoslovak Republic and the persecution of Ukrainians, Hungarians, and Poles.¹³⁸ In a letter to I. M. Chendei (a writer),¹³⁹ one of his acquaintances, I. Prokipčak from Czechoslovakia, reports: “Our (i.e., the Ukrainian population’s) situation is very difficult. We see that someone is sticking up for the Hungarian and Polish communities. Warsaw and Budapest from time to time speak out in defense of their compatriots. But no one is sticking up for us. As a result, nationalist pressure on us from a number of Slovak extremists is becoming all the more onerous and audacious.”

On 13 May, at the request of the head of the interior ministry directorate in the East Slovakia region, Cde. Majer, a meeting took place with the head of the Transcarpathian directorate of the Ukrainian KGB, Cde. Zhabchenko.¹⁴⁰ During the discussion, Cde. Majer spoke, at his own initiative, about the situation in the country and about the stepped-up activity of anti-socialist forces and demagogic and anarchic elements. He showed our comrades a leaflet, typeset in Czech.

The leaflet, invoking Marxist-Leninist principles, gives an evaluation of events in the country in a very impassioned style. It says that events in Czechoslovakia are nothing other than a struggle between socialism and capitalism, which raise the stark question: who will defeat whom? The leaflet calls on workers to stand up in defense of the KSČ and socialist gains, and to act decisively in putting an end to the anti-popular activities of the reactionary forces. Cde. Majer said that such leaflets were being distributed in large quantities in Prague. Our comrades got the impression that Cde. Majer suspects that the Soviet organs are in some way involved in the preparation and dissemination of these leaflets.¹⁴¹

It is telling that, during the conversation, Majer was extremely interested in finding out the reasons for and results of the recent meeting in Moscow of the heads of the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union, Hungary, Poland, the German Democratic Republic, and Bulgaria. These two matters obviously were the reason he requested to meet with our comrades.¹⁴²

On that same day, a meeting took place at the “Chekhiya” industrial enterprise, again at the initiative of the Czechoslovak side.¹⁴³ The head of the State Security division at the Čierna station, Captain Široký, his deputy, Senior Lieutenant Katan, and Senior Lieutenant Černický met with two high-ranking officials from the UkrKGB in Transcarpathian Oblast, Lieutenant-Colonels Cdes. Oleinik and Demochko.

This conversation focused on the question raised by the Czechoslovak comrades: whether reports in the Western press and on Western radio were correct about a concentra-

tion of Soviet tank forces along the border with Czechoslovakia and about a partial mobilization in the Soviet Union to bring these forces up to full strength.¹⁴⁴

In response to our explanation that a regular troop exercise was under way, the Czechoslovaks noted that if Soviet troops actually took up positions along Czechoslovakia's borders, they [the Czechoslovaks] would be calm and it would be possible to restore order in their republic more quickly. The friends stated that the Czechoslovak people are certain that if a threat to socialism arises in their country, the Soviet Union will provide all necessary military assistance to them.

It is essential to point out that in the western provinces [of Ukraine] and in Transcarpathia, where I had to be, the mood among people was very good. Everyone with whom I spoke fully supports the decisions of the April plenum of the CPSU Central Committee and our readiness to provide all necessary assistance to the fraternal Czechoslovak people.

P. SHELEST

14 May 1968
Uzhhorod
No. 1/27



DOCUMENT No. 10

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 23, Ll. 1-3, original in Russian.]

CPSU CC

As a supplement to my memorandum from Transcarpathian Oblast on 14 May (No. 1/27),¹⁴⁵ I want to report: On 14 May, the first secretary of the KSČ's East Slovakian regional committee, Cde. Koscelanský, met at his initiative with two secretaries of the UkrCP's Transcarpathian Oblast committee, Cdes. Il'nyts'kyi and Belousov.¹⁴⁶

During this meeting, Cde. Koscelanský informed our comrades, at his initiative, about the conference of KSČ regional, municipal, and district secretaries that took place on 12-13 May in Prague.¹⁴⁷ During the debate at this conference, Cde. Koscelanský was the first to speak (attached is the text of his speech, which he provided to Cde. Il'nyts'kyi) and offered a proposal on behalf of the East Slovakian regional delegation calling on every member of the KSČ CC Presidium to express his opinion about whether the KSČ Action Program should be implemented. This proposal was adopted.

In his view, the most unsuccessful presentation was by the CC Presidium member Kriegel, who tried to convince everyone that no danger to socialism exists in the country.¹⁴⁸ The presentation by Smrkovský also displeased the partici-

pants, although it was somewhat better than the speeches that preceded it. Císař spoke more wisely. He said he had convened a meeting of the newspaper editors-in-chief in Prague and had given them clear-cut instructions on behalf of the KSČ CC Presidium. These instructions envisage the creation of collective organs of supervision over radio and television. Representatives from the government, trade unions, state bank, and National Front will serve on these organs.¹⁴⁹

Twenty-five of the people who spoke at the conference endorsed the speech by Cde. Koscelanský. Only two dissenting views were expressed, during the speeches by the secretaries of the KSČ Prague municipal committee and the KSČ Brno regional committee.¹⁵⁰

During the conversation, Cde. Koscelanský reported that Cde. Dubček is strongly supported by Comrade Biřak (whose speech at the conference was received warmly and enthusiastically) and Comrades Barbírek, Švestka, Vaculík, Kolder, Lenárt, Piller, Rigo, and Černík. Smrkovský, Kriegel, Špaček, Císař, and Slavík represent only a minority on the CC Presidium.¹⁵¹

In party circles it has become known, according to Cde. Koscelanský, that Smrkovský's speech at the conference was subjected to criticism within this minority group. The reason is that the small group is seeking to take over key posts in the party and government. In particular, Smrkovský is aiming to become president of the republic, Císař the KSČ First Secretary, and Šik the head of the government. This group is demanding that an extraordinary KSČ congress be convened promptly to change the composition of the CC. To forestall this, the East Slovakia regional delegation proposed that they select one Communist from each major party organization and have these representatives engage in discussions with certain CC members so that they will voluntarily relinquish their powers. These matters could then be resolved at the May plenum of the KSČ CC. But this proposal, as Cde. Koscelanský recognizes, has its drawbacks. The minority grouping will be able to achieve its aim of removing 40 members of the CC, a development that will paralyze the work of the CC and leave no option other than to convene a party congress. For this reason, he believes it is necessary to remove certain people from the CC. To give this position greater weight, he is proposing that they convene a Central Committee plenum of the Communist Party of Slovakia on the eve of the KSČ CC Plenum. At the Slovak CC plenum, appropriate decisions on this matter could be adopted, and the notion of convening an extraordinary party congress could be categorically rejected.¹⁵²

Cde. Koscelanský further reported that not only the old bourgeois and petit-bourgeois parties but also the Sudeten Germans are stepping up their activity in the Czech lands.¹⁵³ He stated that Germans who formerly lived in Czechoslovakia and are now in the FRG have bought up all the hotel rooms in Karlovy Vary and are preparing to hold a congress there.

Anti-socialist elements are also stepping up their activity in Slovakia. To curb this, the East Slovakia regional party

committee recently carried out a parade of armed People's Militia in the Rožňava district center. This parade was widely covered in the newspaper "Pravda"—the organ of the Slovak Communist Party CC—as well as in the local newspaper. This example will be emulated in other districts of the region.

The KSČ East Slovakia regional committee proposed to the Slovak Communist Party CC that at all meetings where a change of personnel would be approved, Communists and vanguard workers from all regions of Slovakia should take part, amounting to some 4,000-5,000 people. In this case, Cde. Koscelanský stated, Cdes. Biľak and Barbírek, who want to meet with me [Shelest – *Trans.*] here, will be able to travel to the Soviet-Czechoslovak border.¹⁵⁴ It is precisely with this in mind that he [Koscelanský – *Trans.*] requested today's meeting with Cde. Il'nyts'kyi.

At the end of the conversation, Cde. Koscelanský said that this meeting must be used as much as possible to strengthen friendship between the Czechoslovak and Soviet peoples. We have no certainty, he said, that the situation in the Czech lands will be fixed anytime soon. It might be necessary for the Slovaks, together with the fraternal Soviet peoples, to liberate the Czech lands once again.¹⁵⁵

On 14 May I visited the frontier posts and military units deployed near the Czechoslovak border.¹⁵⁶ I spoke with the soldiers and officers. The mood of all of them was good, ready for combat. Everywhere I went, the soldiers and officers requested me to let the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government know that they are ready to fulfill the orders of the Motherland and to carry out their internationalist duty to defend the Soviet Union and other fraternal socialist countries.¹⁵⁷

P. SHELEST

15 May 1968
Uzhhorod
No. 1/28



DOCUMENT No. 11

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 65, L. 40, original in Russian.]

Secret, Copy No. 1

UkrSSR
COMMITTEE ON STATE SECURITY
under the Council of Ministers
of the Ukrainian SSR

17 May 1968

No. 10/2362

Kyiv

TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANS DEPARTMENT OF
THE UKRAINIAN CP CC

Kyiv

In connection with the growing difficulty of operational conditions in the border oblasts of the UkrSSR (Volyns'k, L'viv, Transcarpathian, Chernivtsi, and Ivano-Frankivs'k)—difficulty caused by recent international events—and in connection with the increased ideological subversion carried out by the countries of the main adversary, the stepped-up activity of hostile anti-Soviet elements, the growing influx of foreigners from capitalist countries, the opening of new routes for tourists in automobiles, the greater travel by Soviet citizens abroad, and the significantly increased number of industrial and defense facilities that are deemed of special importance, it is necessary to strengthen counterintelligence work on all these matters.

However, at present there are acute shortages of operational and other cadres who can organize counterintelligence work in the UkrSSR KGB Directorates in Volyns'k, L'viv, Transcarpathian, Chernivtsi, and Ivano-Frankivs'k Oblasts. For this reason, we believe it is necessary to increase the staffing levels in the aforementioned KGB directorates by 208 people.

The Committee on State Security of Ukraine has sent appropriate recommendations to the all-union Committee on State Security with regard to this matter.

CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON STATE
SECURITY
UNDER THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE
UKRAINIAN SSR

V. NIKITCHENKO



DOCUMENT No. 12

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 28, Ll. 102-112, original in Russian.]

Top Secret

CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

An analysis of materials coming in from various organs in the UkrSSR about the reaction of the republic's population to events in the ČSSR leads to the conclusion that the overwhelming majority of workers in the UkrSSR are reacting prop-

erly to events in that country, expressing full and unqualified approval of the internal and foreign policies of the CPSU and the Soviet government.

Interest in the abovementioned events has been particularly keen in the republic's oblasts that are contiguous with the ČSSR, where the population has the opportunity to hear and view Czechoslovak radio and television broadcasts and where various printed materials flow in directly from the ČSSR by mail and through channels of private visitors. These materials include publications that, in some issues, have featured defamatory and anti-Soviet materials.

Many residents of these oblasts in the republic express deep alarm about the future development of events in Czechoslovakia. . . .¹⁵⁸

Along with this, certain individuals are using the situation in Czechoslovakia to express openly hostile, anti-Soviet sentiments.

Negative commentary about the events is especially salient among nationalist, Zionist, religious, and other anti-Soviet elements.

Thus, a resident of Uzhhorod, S. V. Lendai, who is of Jewish nationality and works as a lawyer in the oblast collegium of lawyers, stated in a discussion:

“ . . . strikes have occurred at factories in the ČSSR and have lasted until the Communist directors were removed. One might think that here, too, the same thing will happen, since many Transcarpathian Communists support these movements in the ČSSR.”

A biology teacher at the V. Bychkovs'ka boarding school in Transcarpathian Oblast, I. N. Ivasyuk, who lived until 1958 in the ČSSR, said in one of the discussions:

“There, in the ČSSR, is a genuine democracy unlike what we have. We, too, need that kind of democracy.”

In the view of S. I. Bogysh, a bookkeeper at a drugstore in the Mizhhir'ya village of Transcarpathian Oblast:

“ . . . in Czechoslovakia they now want to establish the same type of regime that exists in Yugoslavia, that is, to distribute land to the peasants and disband the collective farms. In the USSR, they're also eliminating collective farms. Why should things have to remain along the lines that Stalin set up?”

In the view of a teacher at the Bilotserkivtsi middle school in the Rakhiv district of Transcarpathian Oblast, I. Yu. Vlad, who is of Romanian nationality, “there's not much time left before we settle accounts with those who are in power. . . .”

A certain I. I. Vovkulych, a resident of Onokivtsi village in the Uzhhorod district of Transcarpathian Oblast, even said in a village club: “Soon will come the time when they'll hang those stupid Russians.”¹⁵⁹

A student in the 3rd year of the Khust forestry technical school, M. I. Kurlyshchuk, after a Komsomol meeting where

he was not reelected by the Komsomol organization, said in the presence of an instructor and fellow students:

“Everything is done by coercion in our country. The CPSU long ago lost its authority among the people. The socialist countries increasingly are beginning to reject the CPSU's policy. This is being done by Poland, Czechoslovakia, Cuba, and Romania, and it is all because our government tries to impose its own policies on the other socialist states.¹⁶⁰ . . . In the near future the whole socialist system will fall apart, and I'll be happy to see it.”

Certain Zionist elements are commenting on the events in the ČSSR to promote their own aims. For example, someone named L. I. Shulman, who lives in Khust in Transcarpathian Oblast, declared:

“Czechoslovakia certainly will break away from the USSR, as Romania has already done. After that, Poland and Hungary will go down this same path. This will weaken the socialist system, and capitalism will become strong, all of which will benefit Israel. Once Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary have broken away from the USSR, they will emulate Romania in establishing friendly relations with Israel.”¹⁶¹

Certain nationalist elements from the ethnic minorities living in Ukraine have expressed independent judgments. Two collective farmers from the Perekhrestya village in the Vynohradiv district of Transcarpathian Oblast, B. A. Komlosi and Yu. S. Szentmiklosi,¹⁶² the latter of whom is a candidate member of the CPSU, and certain other collective farmers of Hungarian background, have expressed satisfaction that the national question has been placed on the agenda in the ČSSR. In their view, it would be worth raising the question of autonomy for Hungarians in the USSR as well.¹⁶³

There are even some who believe that the ČSSR government intends to incorporate the territory of Soviet Transcarpathia back into the Czechoslovak state.

For example, the head clerk at the Rakhiv regional consumer union in Transcarpathian Oblast, I. I. Bobel, declared:

“Czechoslovakia is struggling and demanding that the Soviet Union give back Transcarpathia, since this territory is an integral part of the ČSSR, and Czechoslovakia aspires to reclaim it.”

Rumors of a different sort, amounting to a provocation, are circulating among the population in the border oblasts to the effect that the president of the ČSSR, L. Svoboda, was supposedly murdered, that the borders between the FRG and Czechoslovakia and on the territory of the ČSSR are open, that Bundeswehr troops have entered ČSSR territory, and that American military formations are congregated on Czechoslovakia's western borders.¹⁶⁴

The redeployment of individual Soviet military units for

military exercises and the measures to call up a certain number of reservists into the army are being interpreted in this light.

During one of the discussions, an instructor at the L'viv music academy, Vasylenko, expressed his view that the Soviet government intends to send its troops into Czechoslovakia to prevent it from leaving the socialist camp: "Today the Iron Division," he said, "moved with its logistical support branches to Poland. The transfer of the division to Poland and the mobilization are connected with the events in Czechoslovakia."

During a discussion at the "Teplokontrol" factory between officials of the USSR Ministry of Defense—3rd Captain Studenkyn, Major Kapytun, and the shop superintendent of the factory, Gargas—the question came up about the mobilization of some of the factory workers for service in the Soviet Army. Believing this measure to be necessary under the circumstances, Studenkyn said:

"If the Czechs have forgotten who liberated them in 1945, they must be reminded of this through the introduction of our troops onto their territory."

Agreeing with this, Kapytun added:

"If we fail to send troops into Czechoslovakia, West Germany will try to send its own troops, and we will lose not only Czechoslovakia, but also our authority in the eyes of the working class. The problem in Czechoslovakia concerns not only the government with its highly obscure behavior, but also the Czech working class, whom we are not justified in leaving to the whims of fate."

During a conversation with a foreman at the L'viv cinematographic factory, I. Mukalov, about the situation in the ČSSR, a worker from the "Luch" firm in L'viv, E. Butenko, declared:

"Evidently, the citizens of that country have forgotten about the decisive role of the Soviet people in their liberation. We must be vigilant, and that is why a mobilization of reservists for the army is under way."

Supporting Butenko, Mukalov said:

"The FRG revanchists can exploit the tense situation in Czechoslovakia to carry out their predatory and revanchist aims. Hence, the call-up of reservists into the Soviet Army is a necessary measure."

The head of the physics education faculty at Uzhhorod University, S. A. Mykhailivych, saw things this way:

"The redeployment of troops and mobilization of reservist units show that the Soviet government has reached agreement with the ČSSR government and, at

the ČSSR government's request, has sent Soviet troops onto the territory of Czechoslovakia under the guise of carrying out military exercises.¹⁶⁵ This will be a very timely measure. It will eliminate any possible repetition of the events that took place in 1956 in Hungary.

"The presence of Soviet troops will sober up the frenzied representatives of anti-socialist circles who want to restore the old order in Czechoslovakia."

Analogous suggestions about the possibility of sending Soviet troops into the ČSSR, and the reasons for and necessity of such a step, were mentioned by many other people.

A metalworker at the Uzhhorod station, M. Pryatka, recounted his meeting with soldiers from one of the military formations that had arrived at the Syurte station.¹⁶⁶ He praised their combat elan and high spirits and, in particular, he said that after the meeting he no longer had any doubt that "no matter what happens, the USSR in the end will triumph."

On the other hand, certain citizens, despite having many patriotic sentiments, are following the events in a one-sided and non-objective manner, evidently because of anti-Soviet radio broadcasts and various wild ideas and rumors.

For example, two residents of Malye Rativtsi in the Uzhhorod district of Transcarpathian Oblast, S. Király and Z. Adam, expressed the view that "the Czechs want to take back Transcarpathia, which is why [Soviet] troops are being moved here. But let them only try, and they'll come up empty-handed." For their part, a group of women from Borzhava village in the Berehovo district of this same oblast, who gathered after their husbands were called to the local military post, loudly criticized "the disorders in the ČSSR and the inability of the [Czechoslovak] government to restore order in the country without the help of the USSR, which made it necessary to call back our husbands into the army at the very moment when the springtime work in the fields is at its height."

Some residents of the republic's oblasts adjacent to the ČSSR¹⁶⁷ are expressing concern about the arrival of new military units in their oblasts and the partial call-up of reservists, as reflected in the correspondence sent to people in other regions of the USSR. The scale of the events has clearly been overstated in many of the letters.

For example, a female student at Uzhhorod state university, Tokar, reported in a letter to her parents:

"Panic has spread here because many of our fellow students have been drafted into the army and sent off to Czechoslovakia. They're saying that the Czechs are demanding the return of Transcarpathia. The situation is unpleasant."

Another female student at this university, L. Borovyk, indicates in a letter to her parents in the city of Kam"yanets'-Podil's'kyi:

"Everything with me is normal if you don't take into

account the international situation in general and our relations with Czechoslovakia in particular. I'm not exaggerating by saying that the panic here is all-encompassing. The store shelves are bare, that is, there are no matches, salt, or sausages. Without exception, all of the male students from the 6th year, and even the vice dean, have been mobilized into the army."

One of the residents of Domanintsi village in the Uzhhorod district of Transcarpathian Oblast wrote a letter to her parents in which she notes, in particular:

"I don't know how things are with you, but here the situation is abysmal, with all the men conscripted into the army and equipment from other oblasts passing through here day and night."

Instances also have been recorded of individual servicemen who have divulged state secrets connected with the redeployment of Soviet troops.

For example, a member of the Border Guards, Frolov, reported to his parents in a letter from a border-control checkpoint in the city of Mostys'ka:¹⁶⁸

"Here once again our 'neighbors' are experiencing some turbulence. Upon receiving a signal yesterday, the Samaro-Ulyanovsk Iron Division, deployed in L'viv, was put on alert. From 3:00 p.m. until 3:00 a.m., vehicles and tanks constantly passed through, and some went across the border."

Another serviceman wrote to his acquaintance in Kuibyshev:

"Our division received a signal and went on alert this evening, and by 4:00 a.m. we had already marched off and gone across the border. It is unclear precisely where we are heading."

The leakage of secret information from military units is attested by the fact that numerous civilians are well informed about the redeployment of military formations based in the republic. Thus, during a conversation, an instructor at the Uzhhorod music academy, V. I. Shramya, said:

"On 9 May I returned from L'viv. All the troops deployed in L'viv Oblast are in units filled out with reservists, and they have now gone through Poland to the ČSSR-FRG border.

"The troops that have arrived in Transcarpathia are deployed in Khmel'nyts'ka Oblast. They are currently on the highest combat alert."

A laboratory assistant at Uzhhorod university declared:

"The military units that have arrived in Uzhhorod were

earlier deployed in Khmel'nyts'ka Oblast, and now they will be sent to the ČSSR. The military units deployed in Drohobych have received orders to march to Kraków."

The gathering and analysis of information about the reaction of the population to events in the ČSSR are continuing.

P. SHELEST

21 May 1968
No. 1/36



DOCUMENT No. 13

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 65, Ll. 41-46, original in Russian.]

TO THE FIRST SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY
OF UKRAINE

Comrade P. E. SHELEST

Per your instruction, enclosed is a report about border controls and the transport of politically harmful literature, travel by people, and the inspection of freight trains.

ATTACHMENT: 5 pages

CHIEF OF FORCES IN THE WESTERN BORDER
DISTRICT OF THE KGB UNDER THE USSR
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

IVANOV

CHIEF OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT OF
FORCES IN THE WESTERN BORDER DISTRICT OF
THE KGB UNDER THE USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

KOZLOV

22 May 1968

REPORT

On Controls at the Border to Prevent the Transport of Ideologically Harmful Literature and to Regulate the Inflow of People, and on the Inspection of Freight Trains

1. The border-control checkpoints have seized ideologically harmful literature in the following quantities:

- in 1964 - 1,500 items
- in 1965 - 23,942 items
- in 1966 - 28,910 items
- in 1967 - 33,570 items
- 1st quarter of 1968 - 11,833 items

The border guards exercise political control only when passengers are inspected by the customs organs. But because customs officials conduct inspections of citizens crossing the border only in exceptional cases, it is impossible to confiscate ideologically harmful literature in the majority of cases.¹⁶⁹

...¹⁷⁰

2. As a result of meetings held in the first half of 1966 by delegations from the USSR KGB Border Guards with delegations from Poland, the ČSSR, Hungary, and Romania, agreement was reached on inspections at border-control checkpoints of freight trains crossing the state border. The agreements entered into force that same year. In accordance with these agreements, the inspection of trains is carried out only when the trains are leaving the territory—that is, Soviet border guards inspect only the trains that are leaving the territory of the USSR, not the freight on trains arriving in the Soviet Union.

In 1966 (from the time that the single-side inspection of freight trains took effect) and 1967, the Soviet border guards did not inspect more than 33,000 trains arriving on the territory of the Soviet Union.

This inspection regime for freight trains can be exploited by intelligence services of the adversary to send its agents and politically harmful literature into the territory of the USSR.

An agreement with the Romanian delegation on 8 June 1966 provided for the single-side inspection of freight trains passing through the Ungheni station. On 1 August 1967 the Main Directorate of the USSR KGB Border Guards proposed to hold a meeting with Romanian internal affairs ministry officials to clarify the single-side inspection of cargo trains and introduce this practice at all points along the Soviet-Romanian border.

In light of this development, the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of Ukraine and Moldavia, the Committees on State Security of these republics, and the command of the border district jointly sent a telegram to the Main Directorate of the USSR KGB Border Guards, which read as follows:

“The experience of the border-control troops in the district shows that single-side inspections of cargo trains, introduced in 1966, do not permit reliable security of the state border.

“The existing system of inspection work at border-control checkpoints in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary does not exclude the possibility of unhindered passage for border violators. The Polish and Hungarian border guards are so short-handed that they carry out the single-side inspections only formally. The trains are inspected only superficially, and no inspection regime has been set up at the checkpoints. The trains are allowed to go to the border without accompanying observers. The Czechoslovak border guards do not inspect cargo trains at all because this task since 17 April has been left to the customs organs. During the time that single-side inspections have been carried out, there have been four violations of the border into the USSR by freight trains (3 cases at the ‘Chop’ district border checkpoint and 1 at the ‘Brest’ district border checkpoint), as established by periodic inspections.

“Of the 14,378 freight trains that passed through the ‘Brest,’ ‘Chop,’ and ‘Mostys’ka’ district checkpoints and the ‘Ungheni’ border checkpoint during the first six months of this year, only 3,375 were inspected, and the remaining 11,003 passed into Soviet territory without any inspection.¹⁷¹

“The current internal political situation and the foreign policy course adopted by the Romanian government do not permit conditions suitable for introducing single-side inspections and registration of vehicles at all checkpoints along the Soviet-Romanian border. Such an approach would enable the Romanian side to convey ideologically pernicious literature into the USSR, literature that is now published in mass editions in Romania.¹⁷²

“Taking account of the increased subversive activity by the intelligence services of the USA, the FRG, and England against the USSR—and also the sharply reduced level of security along the western borders of Hungary and the ČSSR, as well as the policy of Romania—the district command, the Central Committees of the Communist parties of Ukraine and Moldavia, and the Committees on State Security of these republics believe it would be premature and undesirable to introduce single-side inspections of vehicles at the borders with Romania, the ČSSR, Hungary, and Poland.”

This request from the district went unheeded. On 13 January 1968 the Main Directorate of the USSR KGB Border Guards proposed to move to a single-side inspection of cargo trains along the whole Soviet-Romanian border.

3. In 1967 alone, some 828,576 foreigners, including 92,585 from capitalist countries, entered the USSR through border-control checkpoints in the Western District.¹⁷³

Under the existing regimen, established on 29 April 1964 by Directive No. 0122 of the KGB under the USSR Council of Ministers, the registration and reporting of citizens of socialist countries passing through border-control checkpoints into the USSR on official business, and the registration and reporting of tourists on single-entry visas who arrive on the basis of invitations and telegrams or in transit, are not being carried out with the necessary oversight by the border guards, state security organs, and police. As a result, individuals in these categories who arrive in the USSR have the opportunity to move unhindered around the whole territory of our country and, in general, to remain in the Soviet Union as long as they wish.

CHIEF OF FORCES IN THE WESTERN BORDER DISTRICT OF THE KGB UNDER THE USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

(IVANOV)

CHIEF OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT OF FORCES IN THE WESTERN BORDER DISTRICT OF THE KGB UNDER THE USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

(KOZLOV)

22 May 1968



DOCUMENT No. 14

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 65, Ll. 20-22, original in Russian.]

Top Secret

CPSU CC POLITBURO

Imperialist intelligence services and foreign anti-Soviet centers have recently been strengthening their ideological subversion and stepping up their efforts to smuggle politically harmful literature into the USSR across our republic's western border. By way of comparison: In 1964 the border-control checkpoints in the Western border district seized 1,500 books, pamphlets, and journals of an anti-Soviet, nationalist, and religious nature, whereas in 1966-67 and the first three months of 1968 they have seized 74,317 pieces of this literature as well as many religious objects.¹⁷⁴

Ideologically pernicious literature has been confiscated from foreigners who are coming into our country from the

capitalist states, especially from the USA, the FRG, and France. Such literature also has been confiscated from numerous citizens of the socialist countries as well as a significant number of Soviet citizens who have been traveling abroad. To smuggle in this anti-Soviet literature, they have been adopting a number of devious techniques, including the use of secret compartments in suitcases, handbags, and specially equipped vehicles.¹⁷⁵

The deterioration and enervation of the work of customs organs and border guards at control-points in recent years have made it possible to bring ideologically pernicious literature into the USSR and abroad with impunity. At present, for example, the inspection of freight trains occurs only on one side, and a system has been introduced that enables all passengers, including tourists, to ride across the border with only selective inspections carried out at the discretion of customs officials and border guard troops. In many instances, tourist trains and buses do not get inspected at all. These openings are being exploited by the intelligence services and propaganda centers of the adversary.

In recent years the movement of people and transport vehicles across the border has sharply increased. In the period from 1964 to 1967 alone, permission for people to cross the border in the Western border district increased by one-and-a-half times, and the stream of vehicles grew by more than 20 percent.¹⁷⁶ During that same period the number of officials at the border-control checkpoints was reduced because of organizational restructuring, which prevented them from carrying out their duties satisfactorily.

Because of the significant reduction in the number of officers who were assigned to border-control checkpoints, the duties of control officers were replaced by control-sergeants.¹⁷⁷ This development substantially lowered the quality of work at the border-control checkpoints. Moreover, with the transition to a two-year term of service and the lowering of the conscription age to 18, the sergeant-controllers now have even less opportunity to acquire the experience and skills required to carry out the functions of controllers.¹⁷⁸ For this reason, an urgent necessity has arisen at the border-control checkpoints to bring in border-controllers who know foreign languages.

It is also impossible to regard as acceptable the current situation in which the registration and reporting of citizens from socialist countries who pass through border-control checkpoints into the USSR on official business, and the registration and reporting of tourists on single-entry visas who are entering on the basis of invitations and telegrams or in transit, are not carried out with necessary oversight by the border guards, state security organs, and police. As a result, individuals in these categories who arrive in the USSR have the opportunity to move about the whole territory of our country without hindrance or, in general, to remain in the Soviet Union for as long as they wish. Without a doubt, this situation can be exploited by intelligence services of the adversary to infiltrate their agents into our territory.

The growing complications that recent international events have posed for the operational situation, and the grow-

ing efforts by imperialist intelligence services to exploit legal and illegal channels to infiltrate the USSR with the aim of conducting disruptive activity and carrying out ideological subversion, have also created difficulty for the KGB organs in the border oblasts as a result of the inadequate numbers of operational personnel and officers.¹⁷⁹

To improve border control, strengthen counterintelligence work, and prevent hostile elements and politically harmful literature from being sent into the USSR, the UkrCP Central Committee requests that the CPSU CC Politburo consider increasing the number of personnel at border-control checkpoints in the Western border district by 1,500 and the number of operational agents in KGB organs in the Volyns'k, Transcarpathian, Ivano-Frankivs'k, L'viv, and Chernivtsi oblasts by 200.

We also believe it would be worthwhile to instruct the Committee on State Security under the USSR Council of Ministers, the USSR Ministry of Public Order, and the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade to review the existing procedures for inspections of people and vehicles at the border and to enforce stricter control over foreign citizens who arrive on the territory of the USSR.

SECRETARY, CPOF UKRAINE
P. SHELEST

22 May 1968
No. 1/34



DOCUMENT No. 15

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 28, Ll. 152-160, original in Russian.]

No. 5/3574
25 May 1968
Uzhhorod

Secret

Copy No. 1

TO THE CPSU CC POLITBURO MEMBER AND
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE UkrCPCC

To Comrade P. E. SHELEST
Kyiv

Per your instruction, we are reporting the population's reactions to events in the ČSSR, based on materials received by the UkrSSR KGB Directorate in Transcarpathian Oblast

from 14 to 24 May 1968.

Information flowing into the UkrSSR KGB Directorate in Transcarpathian Oblast from 14 to 24 May indicates that the overwhelming majority of the population in the oblast, as before, correctly understands events in the ČSSR and approves the corresponding measures adopted by the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government.

...¹⁸⁰

In characterizing reactions to events in the ČSSR, the next largest group consists of citizens who, despite being patriotically inclined, are improperly assessing the events and are drawing inappropriate conclusions from those events for a variety of reasons, including that they have been misled by Western radio broadcasts.

A workman at the Khust felt-stripping factory, B. M. Lukechko, who was born in 1922 and is a member of the CPSU, declared:

“Our Communist Party has many enemies. More people hate us than we even imagine. The events in Czechoslovakia are of interest to many people. I believe that the much-anticipated deployment of the Soviet Army into Czechoslovakia would be unfortunate. It would lead to no good, and after this even more people would hate us.”

A resident of Seredne village in the Uzhhorod region, N. E. Danats'ko, a non-Communist who was born in 1914 and is a physician in the district hospital, said in a conversation with other residents of the village, referring to rumors about the forthcoming dispatch of Soviet troops into the ČSSR:

“This would be difficult to imagine, considering that the Soviet government would not want to incur the wrath of other nations. The Soviet government would not take such a risk, since this might spark the flames of war in the heart of Europe.”

A resident of Pavshino village in the Mukachevo region, Maria Kizman, who was born in 1951 and is a 10th-grade student, writes in a letter to her brother who was called into military service in Zaporizhzhya:

“Many young men from our village have been taken into the army. They were in the Pidhorodna barracks for three days, and then moved off to the Czechoslovak border . . .

“It hasn't yet been the case that the lads were afraid to go into the army; you'd speak with them, and they'd say only one thing: ‘Yes, we still have some days left at home, and then we'll be off somewhere . . .,’” and they almost cry. All of them are this way. Now every day you go into the cafeteria, and they're walking around and drinking, and you can hear them all around the town. They'll regret leaving Pavshino.”

A group of collective farmers from the market-garden brigade of Storozhnytsya village in the Uzhhorod district, when discussing recent events, said:

“The citizens of Czechoslovakia—the Czechs and Slovaks—are hostile to one another and are unable to get along. That is why Soviet troops will be sent to Czechoslovakia.”

A resident of Khust, D. D. Szongot, a hairdresser of Hungarian nationality who was born in 1913 and is not a party member, said in a conversation with a customer:

“I served from 1937 to 1940 in the Czechoslovak army in Slovakia, and I know that the Slovaks have strong nationalist inclinations.¹⁸¹ I would even say that they are more strongly nationalist than the Ukrainian underground fighters here were. Now that Dubček has come to power, the Slovaks will be inciting nationalist enmity even more.”

A stoker at the Khust ceramic factory, Vasyľ Vasyľovych Ruda, who was born in 1924 and is not a party member, said in a conversation with his fellow workers:

“President Svoboda demanded that the Soviet Union return Transcarpathia to the ČSSR. Svoboda will carry out his designs and not yield on them because he fought together with the Transcarpathians against fascist Germany.”¹⁸²

In addition, information continues to flow in about tententious and patently hostile reactions both to events in the ČSSR and to the measures adopted by the CPSU CC and Soviet government:

A worker at the Irshava weaving plant, Yu. V. Vovkanych, who was born in 1935 and is not a party member, said:

“Everywhere people hate the Russians. In Poland they threw thousands of the best people into prison because of their hatred for Russians. Romania is against the Russians. The Czechs also have overturned the regime that subordinated itself to the Russians. The Soviet regime in Czechoslovakia will be eliminated with the help of America.”

A former Uniate priest, Andrii Bits’ko, who is 57 years old and is now an upholstery specialist at the Mukachevo furniture combine, said:

“The policy of the new ČSSR government is structured properly; they want to have a genuine democracy. Take any example you wish. In the USSR they prohibited the ringing of church bells because the noise would disturb the tranquility of the population and its leisure. Supersonic jets flying over the city create much more

noise than the bells ever did, and the population has complained about this; but no one has prohibited these flights, which are continuing as always. Now where’s the logic in that?”

“The people of the ČSSR have reached a point where the church can act and develop freely, unlike in the USSR. Political events in the ČSSR will develop in the same way that they did here under Khrushchev once Stalin was gone. All of those whom Stalin persecuted, Khrushchev set free.¹⁸³ Dubček is doing precisely the same with those whom Novotný persecuted.”

Mykhailo Mykhailivych Demes, the head of the sausage division at the Khust public cafeteria factory, who was born in 1923 and is not a party member, complained that he isn’t being permitted to show what he can do. He then said:

“These events don’t alarm me because Transcarpathia will again go over to Czechoslovakia, where the old system can be restored as it existed until 1939, and I’ll become a wealthy private entrepreneur. I’ll show them what I can do.”

A dentist and resident of Mukachevo, Jozef Ida-Mois, who is a Jew born in 1914 and is not a party member, said in a conversation:

“Events in the ČSSR expose the weakness of the socialist camp. The ČSSR, like Romania, will soon be able to carry out an independent policy, in particular with regard to the Jews and Israel.

“Jews are happy that the Czechs and Slovaks have an animus against the Russians, but the USSR is using all manner of pressure against the ČSSR, including economic pressure.”

A teacher at one of the schools in Mukachevo, Vasyľ Vasyľovych Kampo, who is 52 years old and is not a party member, said:

“The friendship between the USSR and the ČSSR hindered the development of Czechoslovakia, as it earlier did with Hungary. The only difference is that the Czechs are much wiser than the Hungarians were in 1956. The Czechs have taken power into their own hands without any bloodshed, and are acting very intelligently. They haven’t done all that much for now, but they’ll gradually be able to do more. Everything is being done to establish the same sort of regime that existed in Masaryk’s time.”

A senior merchandising specialist at the Vinohradiv housewares plant, Vasyľ Medved, who was born in 1926 and is not a party member, said:

“The Czechs are fine lads; they’ll soon leave the stupid Russians behind as they rebuild Czechoslovakia the way it was under Masaryk. They lived so well then; they essentially had everything to their heart’s content. If they call me into active duty in the army, I won’t return any more to Transcarpathia. I’ll run away to the West.”

A worker at the Tyachiv scrap metal loading facility, Mykhailo Vakarov, who is 38 years old and is not a party member, declared:

“If the Soviet Union undertakes any military operations against the ČSSR, Russia will be confronted not only by the other socialist countries, but by the whole nation of Ukraine.”

Information continues to flow in about the assessments of events in the ČSSR made by citizens of that country who are currently in Transcarpathian Oblast on private or official business, as well as about assessments made by citizens of the USSR who are returning from trips to Czechoslovakia.

For example, Juda Simkhovych Fogel, a sales worker in the city of Rakhiv who was born in 1918, told others after he returned from his parents’ house in the ČSSR:

“On 1 May one of the columns of demonstrators in Prague were carrying a placard with the inscription ‘Greetings to Israel.’ In cities of the ČSSR, including Prague and Bratislava, they’re selling postcards with the portrait of the former president of the bourgeois Czechoslovak Republic, Tomáš Masaryk, in many shops. Citizens there are speaking with hatred about Novotný, describing him as an illiterate. They’re all collecting and telling jokes about him. Whenever a street in the city is being torn up, they say that the repair crews are searching for Novotný’s diploma.¹⁸⁴ The Czechs affirm that they support friendship with the Soviet Union because Czechoslovakia receives bread, oil, ore, and other goods and raw materials from the USSR. They condemn the events of 1956 in Hungary and declare that fascists and counterrevolutionaries gained sway there, whereas they, being cultured people, will struggle for democracy through other means.”

A resident of Prague, Ivan Lendl, told one of his relatives from the Irshava district of Transcarpathian Oblast, who was recently visiting him and has now returned home, that in the wake of Novotný’s dismissal the authorities are releasing all the political prisoners from jail and are returning their property to them.

Workers at the factory where Lendl works have had discussions to the effect that because General Svoboda struggled for the liberation of Transcarpathia and is now president, the Czechs might demand the return of Transcarpathia from the USSR, and the Sudetenland will be

given back to the Germans.

By now, political parties have been created in the ČSSR: the Democratic, Socialist, and People’s Parties. These parties are growing very rapidly; many members of the Communist Party are leaving the KSČ and joining the new parties.

Later on, Lendl said that during staff meetings at their factory, the workers ask Communists who will return money and property to the former prisoners—the state or the Communists?¹⁸⁵ They are demanding that the Communists return their money, since they were accomplices of Novotný. As a result of this attitude toward Communists, many of them are refusing supervisory duties and are becoming rank-and-file workers.

According to Lendl, only the Communists are still loyal to the Soviet Union. He asserted that the same sort of events will soon begin in Poland.

A teacher from the Uzhhorod middle school No. 8, Emyliya Pavlovna Dobys, who was born in 1929 and is not a party member, was in Prague from 1 to 10 May on personal business. At a teachers’ collective she said that when she met with Czechoslovak citizens in Prague, they often voiced dissatisfaction with our country. According to her, you could hear statements like: “We and you are not on the same path”; “What did we learn from you over these past 20 years”; “We won’t permit you to dictate to us”; and “Trading with you is disadvantageous because the Americans sell the same things for only one-fifth the price.”

Dobys also says that many young people are wearing pins with Masaryk’s portrait, and that German is being spoken everywhere in Prague. The residents of Prague are well aware that troops have been deployed along their border in Transcarpathia.

Having returned from a private visit to the ČSSR, Mykhailo Stepanovych Magyar, a teacher born in 1935 who lives in Khust, said in a conversation with his brother:

“During my stay in the Sudetenland, I could see that almost all the prisoners have been let out of jail, and they are now publishing articles of a virulently anti-Soviet character in different newspapers and demanding friendship and cooperation with the FRG. They are busy recounting the torment, degradation, and insults that they supposedly experienced.”

Having returned on 8 May from the ČSSR, a collective farm worker in Bedevlya village in the Tyachiv district, Mariya Vasylovna Tyashko, who was born in 1937 and is not a party member, said:

“In conversations in the ČSSR they say that democratization is under way, and they no longer need friendship between the USSR and ČSSR. An artist from one of the drama theaters in Prague (whose name I don’t know) spoke in this vein, describing the Russians as unfriendly. Half the audience in the theater greeted this statement with applause.

“The Germans who were expelled from the Sudetenland express hope in letters to their relatives that their former names will be restored. The Czechs view citizens of the USSR with disdain and speak in their presence about the need to sever the friendship and seek new paths of democratization.”

Having returned from the ČSSR, a worker at the Uzhhorod shoe factory, L. I. Mykovych, who was born in 1915 and is not a party member, says that he was pained by the speech that the poet Jan Procházka gave at a press conference demanding that the KSC and the government fully relinquish any control over literature and the arts and that all remaining restrictions on publishing be eliminated.¹⁸⁶ Students and intellectuals, according to Mykovych, are actively taking part in these events. The young people are not working at all; they’re simply holding meetings.

Varvara Morytsivna Kallus, a resident of Uzhhorod, says:

“Affairs in Prague are very serious and dangerous. So-called ‘modern’ youth, under the sway of American propaganda, are out on the streets. Members of the KSC (friends of Kallus) are dismayed; they feel that the rug has been pulled out from under them, and they don’t understand where it all will lead.

“In Prague they’re talking about how Germans from the FRG are speaking about the forthcoming occupation of the Sudeten region, just as Israel seized the Arab territories, and then they’ll have to let the UN get involved in the matter.”

Petro Iosifivich Grimut, a CPSU member who was born in 1938 and works as a supervisor at the automobile factory in Mizhhir’ya, said:

“Being in the ČSSR on a visit to my uncle, Nikolaj Grimut, who is a pensioner, I heard such statements as: ‘We all hate the Communists of the Soviet Union and especially (and here he names one of the leaders of the CPSU).¹⁸⁷ Even Khrushchev did not permit such interference in the affairs of foreign countries as he is doing now, but our country will move along its own path of development, and we will get by without help from the Soviet Union.’”

Another citizen of the ČSSR, Georgi Klevec, who was born in 1919 and is a native of Repinne village in the Mizhhir’ya district, spoke with great malevolence about the Soviet Union and [Soviet] Communists.

Nikolaj Grimut and Georgi Klevec intend to travel to Transcarpathia this year on personal business.

L. F. Bolyubakh, a foreman at the Mizhhir’ya autopark and CPSU member who was born in 1919 and who recently traveled to the ČSSR as a tourist, reports that one of the ČSSR citizens in Prague told Soviet tourists the following:

“You come here simply to buy things. You in the Soviet

Union do not have, and never had, any sort of truth and justice. You just live a big lie.”

In addition, Bolyubakh says that a huge number of Germans, predominantly young people, are currently in the ČSSR.

Gabriel Putraš, who is living in Prague and is obviously a clergyman, writes in a letter to the secretary of the Mukachevo diocese, Mykola Logoida:

“To our great regret, we on this occasion can in no way give a happy account of the life of our church. In Eastern Slovakia the Uniates have risen again, which has inflamed passions, as manifested by egoism, crude invective, and hatred toward everything that comes from the East, even toward things that are objectively good. . . . If the government completely rescinds the decision made in the 1950s to disband the Uniates in our country and does not return things to where they were on 1.1.1968 as we propose, the Uniates will be fully reestablished in all the parishes where they operated earlier.”

The priest Ivan Puškaš, who arrived in Uzhhorod from Eastern Slovakia (in the ČSSR), said in a conversation with the Uzhhorod priest Dmytrii Shoka:

“The Greek-Catholic episcopate is already active and is taking priests and parishes into the Uniate church.”

I. Ščada, a resident of Brno, writes to his relatives in Mukachevo:

“A situation has arisen here that is turning into a revolution. Everything is returning to the past, and very little of socialism remains. They’re rehabilitating all elements supportive of Masaryk.”

A serviceman in the Czechoslovak army, Štefán Vasilevič Popjuk, born in 1915 and a native of the Rakhiv district in Transcarpathian Oblast, traveled to his relatives on personal business, and during the registration at the district police department after his arrival on 11 May, he said:

“A. Novotný, being CC first secretary and president, accumulated all power in his own hands and sent to prison military servicemen who fought in the corps under General Svoboda. He ordered certain others to be shot. Svoboda himself was demoted. The people of Czechoslovakia demanded that Novotný appear on television to speak about his mistakes, but he refused, so they dismissed him and we went for three months without a president.”¹⁸⁸

Characterizing the situation in the ČSSR at present, Popjuk said that four political parties already exist there, and another two will soon be set up. All of them will function in accordance with the principle of equality and on the basis of

the Communist Party program. The restoration of capitalism in Czechoslovakia will not take place, since the old aristocracy under Masaryk and Beneš no longer exists, and even the Germans living in the ČSSR do not support the idea of returning to the former bourgeois Czechoslovakia.

Popjuk emphasized that he knows a great deal about the crimes of Novotný, since he worked until 1962 in the ČSSR state security organs. During the conversation, he also noted that military exercises involving the ČSSR, the USSR, Bulgaria, and Romania will be held on ČSSR territory.¹⁸⁹

As Popjuk asserted, at present you can travel freely from the ČSSR to the FRG so long as you do it in civilian clothes, because German intelligence has its sights set on military personnel.

A citizen of the ČSSR, Lysý, who is a teacher and lives in Medzilaborce (in Eastern Slovakia),¹⁹⁰ was recently in Mukachevo and said in a conversation with one of her relatives:

“A struggle is under way in the ČSSR for democratization, with three aims in mind: the return of land plots to the peasants, the legalization of private enterprise, and the legalization of private crafts. The driving force behind these events comes from young people and students, who are demanding a return to the order that existed under Masaryk and Beneš.”

When Irina Slezan recently arrived in Uzhhorod from Košice, where she lives, she said:

“During the initial days of the ‘movement for renewal’ in the city of Banská Bystrica (in Western Slovakia), acolytes of Hlinka (the former premier of ‘independent’ Slovakia) went out onto the streets yelling fascist slogans and songs, but they were promptly called to order.”¹⁹¹

Information about this matter continues to flow in. Materials warranting higher-level attention will be reported to the UkrCP Transcarpathian Oblast committee and the KGB of the UkrSSR.

CHIEF OF DIRECTORATE OF THE KGB
UNDER THE UkrSSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
IN TRANSCARPATHIAN OBLAST

A. ZHABCHENKO

DOCUMENT No. 16

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 28, Ll. 128-134, original in Russian.]

CPSU CC

In connection with preparations for the Days of UkrSSR Culture in the ČSSR in May, a group of journalists from the Ukrainian SSR visited Czechoslovakia. They stopped in Prague, Bratislava, Brno, Ostrava, Hradec Králové, Banská Bystrica, and Košice, where they met and spoke with party activists, members of the press, television and radio employees, and the creative intelligentsia. The content of these discussions sheds light on the current situation, which is the backdrop for events now under way in Czechoslovakia.

Some of the Czechoslovak comrades, when characterizing the general situation in the country, told our journalists that “Czechoslovakia today is reminiscent of a furiously speeding stagecoach whose horses are pulling it from whatever side they please. The tragedy of the situation is that the stagecoach does not have a driver. That’s why no one knows where it will end up.”¹⁹² It was also said that “democratization” now is reminiscent of an uncontrollable rock avalanche that no one is able or brave enough to stop.

During a trip around the country, our journalists were repeatedly confronted by evidence that the KSČ is occupying a passive, wait-and-see position, and that members of the party often are not even putting up a fight before conceding the political battlefield to people who not only are estranged from socialism, but are even outright enemies. The reason for this, in their view, is the cult of Novotný, the disregard for principles of intra-party democracy, and the unjustified repression of many honorable people. Some of them cited a figure of 40,000 people who had been repressed, and others gave higher figures.¹⁹³ All these actions of the party were supposedly justified by the intensification of the class struggle under socialism.¹⁹⁴

Among the reasons for the KSČ’s loss of authority, they also mentioned that Novotný had blindly copied the experience of Communist construction in the USSR, based on simplistic and often subjective information about life in the USSR as a model for other socialist countries. The population had reacted very passionately to the many statements and press reports claiming that Soviet advisers working in Czechoslovakia deserved the greatest share of blame for the mistakes committed by Novotný and for the “deformation of society.”

These propagandistic notions confirm that criticism of Novotný in many instances is bound up with criticism of the socialist system in general, and especially with criticism of the Soviet Union.

As the evidence shows, the main discussions are being held on the question of the reestablishment of Masaryk’s bourgeois republic. In Prague, a Masaryk club has been set up, consisting of well-known writers, journalists, actors, and

scholars. On the streets, a brisk trade is under way in portraits of Masaryk. Everywhere they are organizing all kinds of photograph exhibitions and displays devoted to Masaryk. His philosophical works are being given great publicity. One of the popular slogans used by the columns of marchers in the 1st of May demonstration in Prague was the appeal "Study, study, study . . . only writings by Masaryk!" Residents of Brno carried posters with the inscription, "Lenin to the Russians, Masaryk to the Czechs!" Many of the Czech comrades with whom our journalists spoke emphasized that during Masaryk's time Czechoslovakia was a leading European power both economically and politically, whereas now it trails far behind.

It is often the case that this campaign to idealize Masaryk and to restore the arrangements that prevailed during the bourgeois republic is being supported and publicized by the KSČ. At a press conference for the UkrSSR journalists, a member of the KSČ CC, Jan Němec, stated: "We are publishing the works of Masaryk. But we are not afraid of a slide toward bourgeois democracy. Our press will help explore the works of Masaryk. The main thing in the process of democratization that is now under way is to unite Marxism-Leninism with democratic traditions so that we can create our own model of social development."

Throughout the country, particularly in the Czech lands, various new parties and committees are being set up with programs that have not yet been widely published. The most popular among them is the "K-231" union, the aim of which, according to the Czech comrades, is to restore the good names of those who "were destroyed or repressed by the agents of Beria" who supposedly were working in the State Security organs of Czechoslovakia. This union consists of some 70,000 to 130,000 people.¹⁹⁵ Its activities are supported by the KSČ. "If we were to act in any other way," J. Němec told our journalists, "we would not be worthy of our nation." In many discussions the subject came up of the "Union of Politically Active Non-Communists," the club of participants in the 1st and 2nd resistance, and others. They reported to our journalists that the Czechoslovak Socialist Party, of which Beneš was a member, has grown since December 1967 from 30,000 members to 40,000.¹⁹⁶ The number of members in the People's Party also has increased, and the same is true of the Slovak Renewal and Freedom Parties.¹⁹⁷ Rumors are circulating that all these parties will put forth their own candidates separately in the upcoming elections. "If the elections were held today," a secretary of the KSČ regional committee in Banská Bystrica, Cde. Urbanovič,¹⁹⁸ said in a conversation with our journalists, "there is a danger that the KSČ would suffer a crushing defeat, since it has lost all its authority."

According to the observations of our journalists, young people in Czechoslovakia are the furthest of all from socialism and from the Soviet Union. People of age 30 or younger make up only 5-6 percent of the members of the Society for Friendship with the USSR. The Czechoslovak Youth Union has ceased to function for all practical purposes.¹⁹⁹ In its place organizational committees have been set up to form separate unions of working-class, rural, and university youth.

In addition, the former bourgeois youth organizations—the Falcon sports association, the Boy Scouts, the Cub Scouts, and others—have been resurrected.²⁰⁰ On the first of May in Brno, separate detachments of these organizations marched through, demonstrating cadences from the bourgeois period of Masaryk's republic.

Young people are not volunteering to join the party, and the KSČ is therefore growing physically older in its complexion. According to a senior official in the KSČ's Eastern Bohemian regional committee, F. Kruml, 65,000 of the 160,000 party members in the region are over 50 years old, and nearly 50,000 are over 60, whereas only 8,000-10,000 are 30 or younger.

According to the Czechoslovak comrades, patently anti-socialist and anti-Soviet sentiments grew especially rapidly in April and May. Weekly broadcasts covering the Soviet Union disappeared from programs on Czechoslovak radio and television. In Prague, study groups and courses to learn the Russian language have been discontinued. In Brno, during the holiday marking the 23rd anniversary of the liberation of the city by the Soviet Army from the fascists, Soviet flags were torn down, and some groups of demonstrators carried placards reading "Even Further from Moscow!" In Prague, on the sides of houses and on park fences one finds graffiti saying "Down with Communism!" and "With Císař to freedom!" and "Democracy + Císař = Freedom."

Our journalists witnessed an attempt to disrupt the celebration of Victory Day in Prague in J. Fučík Park. During speeches by Comrade Svoboda and Konev and a triumphal concert, they shut off the microphones dozens of times.²⁰¹ This occurred in the presence of leaders of the ČSSR, Cdes. Dubček, Svoboda, Smrkovský, Černík, and Císař. It is worth noting that before the meeting started, the leaders of the ČSSR who attended the ceremony were busy hugging and kissing representatives of the recently revived petit-bourgeois club known as "Barracks." In that same park a concert took place that featured parodies of Soviet songs, with Soviet soldiers played by grotesque and dim-witted people and drunks.

Our journalists also were dismayed by what they found during a visit to the Prague museum of V. I. Lenin. In the exhibits there they saw many portraits family photographs, official photographs, documents, and written materials of Zinoviev, Rykov, Trotsky, Radek, Stolypin, Milyukov, Guchkov, Rasputin, Tsar Nicholas II, Hitler, Mussolini, and Mao Zedong.²⁰² As it turned out, this "modernization" of the museum was carried out during the process of "democratization."

Such items underscore what the results of "unlimited democracy" are. Our comrades said that many honest Communists and friends of the Soviet Union are receiving anonymous letters with threats of physical attacks. There have been instances when the children of "dogmatists" and of Novotný's supporters were forced out of the schools. In Prague alone, according to local data, nearly 20 party officials have committed suicide.²⁰³

Obviously, discipline and order in the Czechoslovak People's Army have gravely declined.²⁰⁴ Many soldiers are

wandering the streets. In conversations, some officers spoke openly against the Soviet Union. Officers and party officials confirm that the People's Army is now highly unpopular, and that young people do not want to serve in it.

From various sources, our comrades learned that roughly 40,000 Germans who fled to the FRG and Austria during the events of 1948 have now returned to Czechoslovakia.²⁰⁵

In conversations with the journalists, many Czech comrades expressed alarm at the emerging situation in Czechoslovakia. Doctor Erban, an old Communist and the chief editor for the press of the ČSSR Academy of Sciences, declared: "Our greatest problem now is that there is no unity in the government. If this continues a month longer, it will be too late to fix it. I must say that over the past 10-12 days, openly anti-Soviet sentiments have sharply increased. During three months of "democratization," we have regressed some 20 years. If the supporters of Masaryk win out, we will regress 50 years. But we are Communists and veterans of the party, and we will seek to halt these events. I think we must wage a resolute fight against the reactionaries and take steps to repeat what we did in February 1948."

The comrades from Slovakia also sought to emphasize the national element. Cde. Cvik,²⁰⁶ the secretary of the KSČ regional committee in Banská Bystrica, told our journalists: "The Czechs are disregarding a class-based approach and are ignoring the fact that Masaryk ordered the shooting of workers. He was a bourgeois leader, and Communists should not purvey his philosophy. We don't agree with the theories of Masaryk-Beneš-Novotný about a unified Czechoslovak nation.²⁰⁷ For us, the main thing is to resolve the matter of an equal federation of Czechs and Slovaks. We must build our own model of socialism, based on the Leninist precept that every nation puts something of its own into its model . . . We can assure you, comrades, that even when we change the methods of our work, we will not be departing from socialist positions by a single millimeter."

The editor of the regional newspaper "Východoslovenské Noviny," Cde. Šemorádik,²⁰⁸ said: "For us, the main thing is to have the same rights that the Czechs have. Why do we live four times worse off than the Czechs do? Why do we have two or three shifts in our schools, whereas the Czechs have just a single shift? In Slovakia they build factories that require hard physical labor, whereas in the Czech lands the work is easier and the pay is higher. For this reason we now say: Enough! We gave a spark to the process of democratization. If it turns out that this process does not resolve our grievances, we will place our machine-guns along the border with the Czech lands and unite our country with the Soviet Union.²⁰⁹ We will not relinquish to anyone the cause for which thousands of Soviet and Slovak soldiers died. Let everyone know—we are your friends to the very end."

A lot of statements, directed against the Soviet Union and the policy of the CPSU, lavished endless praise on the actions and services of Cde. Dubček. Teodor Fiš, the head of the editorial board for the "Political Literature" publishing house in Bratislava, said in a conversation: "I am dissatisfied

with the great power policy of Brezhnev. The policy of Khrushchev was better. Why are you interfering in our affairs? Why do you forbid us from obtaining a loan from the capitalist countries? Why are we unable to travel whenever we want to your country, the country of our friends, but are able to travel to the countries of our enemies—Austria and the FRG—whenever we wish? I believe that the KSČ has compromised itself by its own policy and its collusion with Beria's advisers. If the party breaks down completely, we will build socialism without it. Luigi Longo spoke to us about this possibility."²¹⁰

Adolf Hoffmeister, the secretary of the Artists' Union of Czechoslovakia and a close friend of Cde. Dubček, told our comrades that he regards Dubček as a national hero who reflects the sentiments and aspirations of the entire nation, and it is only now that artists have received genuine freedom.²¹¹

For informational purposes, the CC of the Ukrainian CP is transmitting these reports and observations of the group of journalists.

CC SECRETARY, CPOF UKRAINE

P. SHELEST

30 May 1968

No. 1/38



DOCUMENT No. 17

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 28, Ll. 166-167, original in Russian.]

CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Recently the newspaper "Nove zhittya" and the journals "Duklya" and "Druzhno vpered," which are published in Ukrainian in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic by the Cultural Union of Ukrainian Workers (KSUT), have begun to arrive regularly from the ČSSR for individual citizens and also for schools and museums in the Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast of the UkrSSR. As we reported earlier, these publications often feature materials that incorrectly depict the processes under way in the ČSSR and USSR, and are replete with attacks against well-known cultural figures in the UkrSSR, casting doubt on Ukraine's achievements during the years of Soviet power, and so forth.²¹²

During the period from March to May 1968, some 152 issues of the "Nove zhittya" newspaper, 10 issues of the "Duklya" journal, and 6 issues of the "Druzhno vpered" journal have been sent by the editors of these publications to

Ukrainians living in the ČSSR.

A large quantity of newspapers and journals have been sent to certain individuals for possible redistribution among Soviet citizens. Thus, a resident of the Kolomyi district of Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast, S. Smetanyuk, received 72 copies of the "Nove zhittya" newspaper, including 10 copies of the issues of the newspaper in which the full text of the "KSC Action Program" was published.²¹³ It is telling that this type of literature is often sent to people who in the past have displayed nationalist traits.

Certain citizens of the ČSSR are propagating anti-Soviet and nationalist views and are promoting so-called "democracy and liberalization" in personal correspondence.

The party organs of Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast are taking necessary steps to help workers understand events in the ČSSR and are implementing measures to prevent wider distribution of tendentious literature brought in from the ČSSR.

Reported for informational purposes.

SECRETARY OF UKRAINIAN CP
P. SHELEST

4 June 1968
No. 1/45



DOCUMENT No. 18

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 28, Ll. 180-189, original in Russian.]

Secret

UKRAINIAN CP CC

to Comrade P. E. SHELEST

On the Trip by a Delegation of Soviet Workers to the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic

As directed by the CPSU CC, a delegation of Soviet workers, consisting of 25 people altogether, was in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic from 25 to 29 May to exchange tokens of peace and friendship between the peoples of the ČSSR and the USSR in marking the 23rd anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia from the fascist occupiers.

During their stay in the ČSSR, the delegation visited a number of cities and villages in Slovakia—Košice, Rožňava, Banská Bystrica, Rimavská Sobota, and the village of Švermovo—and also the Košice metallurgical combine, the Pešok machinebuilding factory, the Forestry Technical Insti-

tute in Zvolen, and other places.

At the invitation of the CC of the Slovak Communist Party (KSS), I went with six other members of the delegation (party officials) to Bratislava, where we had a discussion with secretaries of the KSS CC, officials of the party control committee, and the leaders of the Slovak National Assembly. On the evening of 28 May, I attended the official opening in Czechoslovakia of the Days of Culture of the Ukrainian SSR.²¹⁴

In general, the treatment of the Soviet delegation by Czechoslovak officials was exceptionally polite and courteous, though not always sincere.

As a rule, the leaders of local party organs, senior officials in the regime and in public organizations, and representatives from the Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship Union took part in all the ceremonies. During the whole time we were in Slovakia, not a single openly hostile remark was made about the Soviet delegation.

However, the behavior of most of the leaders of local party and other organizations reflected alarm, uncertainty, and trepidation about their own fate.

We got the impression that senior officials were trying to prevent members of the delegation from having broad interaction with workers, peasants, intellectuals, and rank-and-file Communists. They avoided open contacts and held candid discussions only among a narrow circle—during train or car rides, or at other convenient times when no one else was around. There were no mass meetings of the delegation with the public, aside from a meeting on the Soviet-Czechoslovak border in the village of Švermovo.

At our request, discussions were organized at the Pešok machinebuilding factory and the Košice metallurgical combine with instructors and a group of students from the Forestry Technical Institute in Zvolen. We had nearly a three-hour discussion with the members of the Presidium of the KSS Central Slovak regional committee (in Banská Bystrica), which took the form of an exchange of views about party and council work.

In all, the members of the delegation had roughly 20 collective discussions and many individual conversations with the Czechoslovak comrades and local population, which enabled them to form certain impressions of the situation in local party organizations and workers' collectives.

1. The discussions and personal observations indicate that the state of affairs in Czechoslovakia does not fully correspond with the optimistic assessment provided in reports from KSC leaders.

Many local comrades declared to us that in recent weeks the situation in the KSC and the ČSSR not only had failed to stabilize, but had become even worse and more tense. Developments in this respect are working to the benefit of the anti-socialist forces. The anti-socialist elements are becoming increasingly active, and the influence of the KSC is weakening. At the factories, according to the local comrades, the KSC's primary party organizations are being kept apart from the workers' collectives. At some of the enterprises, new trade union committees are being selected without Commu-

nist participants; unjustified changes in management are under way; unrealistic demands are being voiced for increases in pay; and discipline is sharply deteriorating. Workers at the factories are restless and are often expressing dissatisfaction, which in a number of cases is justified. Some of the workers at the Pešok machinebuilding factory declared: "Earlier they said to us that the working class is in charge of the country, but now only the intellectuals appear on television and radio. We ourselves have no such opportunity."

The KSČ's primary party organizations, district committees, and regional committees are effectively abstaining from any sort of mass-political work among the population.

Workers and the local party aktiv express varying opinions, and disagreements have emerged about the ongoing events. We could definitely sense that a deliberate attempt is under way to remove from the political arena not only A. Novotný, but also all of those who actively worked with him and supported him.

Under the influence of anti-Communist elements, the population and even many leading party officials openly express the view that the KSČ should not be a ruling, leading party and should instead be only a prominent force in society.²¹⁵ They also say that the KSČ should not interfere in the work of the government, public organizations, and so forth.

2. On the basis of information at our disposal, we believe that conditions in Slovakia are more auspicious, and that the Communist Party of Slovakia is in full control of the situation and is not yielding to the onslaught of anti-socialist forces.

Nevertheless, it is clear that even in Slovakia the political situation is complex and dangerous. Negative processes are spreading ever more widely, and anti-socialist, anti-party, and anti-Soviet developments are intensifying. A good deal is being said about the federalization of the country and about the improper treatment to which the Slovaks have been subjected by the central ČSSR organs.²¹⁶ Hostility toward the Czechs is rapidly increasing. In addition, the local comrades were speaking about the shared historical experiences of the Slovak, Russian, and Ukrainian peoples and the similarities of their cultures, languages, and other features. As in the Czech lands, the active resistance of anti-socialist elements in Slovakia has undermined the measures that the KSČ CC is trying to carry out to establish control over the mass media and propaganda organs.²¹⁷

Thus, under the influence of forces hostile to the KSČ, the Social Academy of Slovakia, the workers of Tesla Strašnice and the Plzeň turbine factory, and peasants from the J. Komenský mass cooperative adopted a resolution to continue the so-called "democratization process," with demands for freedom of the press and freedom of speech and a struggle against those who are seeking to obstruct these processes.

Communists and workers of the Košice metallurgical combine also adopted a resolution demanding that democratization and liberalization be continued. In a television broadcast in Bratislava on 28 May they said that a proposal is in the works to give land back to landowners in the mountain-

ous districts of the Carpathians.

Kulaks and other petit-bourgeois elements are engaged in a vigorous propaganda campaign against the KSČ's primary party organizations and against cooperatives. All sorts of wild stories are circulating about bad conditions in the public economy and its loss-making nature.²¹⁸ The party aktiv are being harassed and threatened with physical reprisals.

Despite the greatly increased activity of hostile elements, the CC of the Communist Party of Slovakia is not taking appropriate measures to rebuff them. There has been no increase at all in the activity of party members; quite the contrary. The work of many party committees is exceptionally poor. For example, the secretary of the KSS Central Slovakia regional committee, Cde. A. Ťažký, said, during a conversation between the Soviet delegation and members of the regional committee presidium, that after the January (1968) Plenum of the KSČ CC, the regional committee was left without secretaries and without an apparatus.²¹⁹ As a result, the oblast party organization was unable to carry out any sort of work. Not until very recently, after the selection of a new presidium, was it possible for work in the oblast committee to resume. However, the party organs even now are functioning poorly in the locales and are not giving instructions to the primary party organizations or relying on them.

At the Pešok machinebuilding factory, which has 2,800 workers and 560 KSČ members, organizational and ideological work has been neglected. For 7 years the factory included no one from the oblast party leaders, and after the January Plenum of the KSČ CC, there was no one even from the district leaders. No one came to speak at the factory, and no one explained the situation and the tasks ahead. No party slogans and exhortations can be heard at the factory. On the walls in the factory sections they have put up photographs of half-naked women, rather than agitational posters.

According to the acting director of the East Slovak metallurgical combine (in Košice), party and work discipline at the combine has recently deteriorated. Many demagogues have infiltrated the combine, spreading dissent about improper economic relations with the USSR and other matters.

It is alarming that during the official meetings, receptions, and discussions, none of the Slovak comrades would speak about the leading role of the party or about the KSČ CC. They expressed no practical suggestions about how to organize party work under modern circumstances.

The majority of employees in Slovakia with whom we met were bitterly critical of the former KSČ CC leader A. Novotný and the former oblast committee secretaries because there had been no collective leadership in the party and no collective discussion of directives and decisions.²²⁰ All party work was extremely centralized and secretive. Many discussions are being held about instances of legal violations, unworthy behavior by former party leaders and their alienation from the masses, the loss of party spirit, and even moral and political collapse.

As a rule, all the leading officials tried to assure us that

everything there is going well, and that the process of democratization is necessary for them and valuable for the KSČ and the ČSSR. Don't worry, they often said to us, you can rest peacefully, knowing that we have everything under control and are coping with the situation. Different opinions are of no danger to us. They work to the benefit of our struggle for socialism. Certain leaders declare that the KSČ even has a stake in such processes because they supposedly help the party expose its enemies, who can then easily be vanquished and rendered harmless. However, the reality of the situation raises doubts about the accuracy and sincerity of these statements.

We get the impression that the party aktiv overall are not especially alarmed about the fate of the party and the cause of socialism in Czechoslovakia. They are not carrying out a fundamental and clear-headed assessment of the situation in the country and the party. They are giving in to euphoria and smugness. Even during confidential discussions, none of the party officials said that the party is devising practical measures to normalize the situation in the country.

As we observed, the situation is all the more complicated because the KSS is not carrying out a necessary ideological struggle against revisionists on the theoretical front. In this respect, a typical instance occurred during a discussion between the members of our delegation and a group of instructors and students from the Forestry Technical Institute in Zvolen, including the prorectors of the institute, the head of the department of Marxism-Leninism, and the secretary of the party committee.

During the discussion they said it is unnecessary to teach students about the history of the party. On questions of philosophy, political economy, and "political studies," the educational institutes themselves must work out their own programs in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Higher Education, without any sort of interference from the KSČ CC. Instructors from the institute believe it is necessary to eliminate general economic planning in the country, leaving the state planning organs responsible only for certain of the most important categories (volume of financing, deductions from profits, and taxes). All other categories must be based on recommendations from the enterprises themselves, including the nature and volume of production, marketing, and so forth. They believe that the collapse of Communist youth organizations in the educational institutes is a normal development. During a discussion with our delegation, the students of this institute declared that the Czechoslovak Youth Union has outlived its purpose and should be disbanded completely.²²¹ The students do not want to be in the same organization with workers and peasants, since these groups have their own special interests. They propose to create a "Student Parliament" as a union of students, which would be concerned with the students' everyday life, culture, and academic programs, without any sort of political platform.

The leaders of party organizations in Slovakia who came to office after the January and April plenums of the KSČ CC include officials with politically immature and even patently

revisionist outlooks.

Among examples of this phenomenon worth citing is the ideology secretary in the KSS Central Slovakia regional committee, a former instructor in philosophy, Čiřík, who, in the presence of a large group of people at dinner on 26 May, expressed anti-socialist and anti-Soviet views with great relish.²²² He declared that Marxism is obsolete, and that during the period of struggle against the "conservatives," the ideology of Marxism-Leninism has been experiencing a crisis, which has essentially negated the leading role of the party. He said that the USSR did a lot of harm to Czechoslovakia and is not able to serve as a model of socialism because people's living standards in the USSR are inadequate and salaries are low. A bit later he said that there are four groupings in the KSČ CC Presidium.²²³ To ensure unity in the leadership, it will be necessary to remove "conservatives" from the CC Presidium and to reconcile the views of the other members. None of the local officials who were present spoke up against these unsavory views, even though none of them supported what had been said.

The members of the Soviet delegation gave a decisive rebuff to this sorry excuse for an ideologist, attacking his theoretically bankrupt and anti-socialist views.

Along with such elements, there are undoubtedly healthy forces in Slovakia, who view the situation in the country with alarm and recognize how dangerous it is. They are speaking frankly about the necessity to be ready for an armed struggle against the enemies of socialist Czechoslovakia.

A number of Slovak comrades – the secretary of the KSČ²²⁴ Rožňava district committee, Cde. A. Molnár, the chairman of an agricultural cooperative, Cde. Boruška, the former commander of a partisan detachment, Cde. Kuchta, and others – said that they will stick by the Soviet Union and the CPSU to the very end, and that the comrades in Prague should talk less and do more.

Even if they gain a reprieve in Prague, they declared, we ourselves will take up arms in defense of socialist Czechoslovakia. In this struggle we will rely on the working class and the working peasantry, who are faithful to socialism, and on the armed People's Militia at the factories and cooperatives, who fully support the KSČ and stand for friendship and unity with the Soviet Union. A number of such comrades (7-8 of them) asked me to assure them that the Soviet Union will not leave them to their own fate. They requested that we accelerate the schedule for maneuvers of the Warsaw Pact armed forces.

These same comrades said that the anti-socialist forces in the KSČ have systematically disrupted the work of the party. Many primary party organizations and Communists who are dedicated to the party are acting without any definite plan and without centralized leadership. Even if the party organizations adopt resolutions against the anti-socialist forces, no one will read the resolutions aloud. Even in the party organizations themselves, not all the Communists will always know about the resolutions because party discipline has plummeted and fewer than half the members of the party are bothering to turn up for meetings.

In such circumstances, the Communists and party activists awaited the May plenum of the KSČ CC with great alarm. None of them ventured to predict how it would turn out. Some of them expressed the view that even if the Plenum adopts proper resolutions, there is no certainty that they would be implemented in a timely manner under the current KSČ CC leadership.

3. In a highly confidential discussion with me, the first secretary of the Central Slovakia regional party committee, Cde. A. Ťažký, who has close ties with Cde. Biľak, reported that Cde. Dubček supposedly has at his disposal a document showing that at the time when criticism of the KSČ CC and of A. Novotný was unfolding [in March 1968], a list was compiled of 60 leading party officials who would have to be put under arrest.²²⁵ These lists included Cde. Dubček and Cde. Biľak among others. Generals Šejna and Janko were supposedly involved in this plot. A. Ťažký also said that if A. Novotný would not step down from the CC voluntarily or behaved improperly, Cde. Dubček would read this document aloud at the May Plenum of the KSČ CC.

During the visit to the Košice metallurgical combine, a secretary of the East Slovakia party committee, Štefan Boboňko,²²⁶ also told me confidentially that the chairman of the combine's party committee, Cde. Rigo, who is also a member of the KSČ CC Presidium but does not command authority among them, said before leaving for the CC Plenum that, in light of the situation in the country, he would declare he was stepping down from the CC Presidium.²²⁷

4. Having been apprised of the situation in party organizations and workers' collectives in Slovakia, we can affirm that the portrayal of events in the ČSSR and KSČ offered at the latest session of the CPSU CC Politburo is correct.²²⁸

The pressure from right-wing forces has steadily increased in recent days, and the influence of anti-socialist parties, societies, and clubs is growing.

At the same time, the strength of the KSČ, the influence of the party on the masses, and party discipline overall have greatly diminished. Party organizations are working unsatisfactorily even in implementing the recently adopted "KSČ Action Program." As before, there are still no fundamental changes for the better in the mass media and propaganda organs.

Under these circumstances, according to many of the Czechoslovak comrades, it is difficult to foresee how the "KSČ Action Program" will proceed, even though it must remain the basic document of the forthcoming congress. Hence, the convocation of a KSČ congress in September and the elections due in the middle of next year for the ruling organs might lead, in the view of the party aktiv, to a sharp erosion of socialist positions and a reduction of the KSČ's leading role and authority.

Based on an analysis of the facts and the events under way in the political life of the ČSSR and KSČ, it is impossible to ignore the danger that if events in the future continue to develop in the same way as now and the KSČ CC does not

act as soon as possible to adopt concrete and decisive measures—including the dismissal of officials and disbandment of organizations that are hostile to the KSČ, socialism, and the USSR—there may well be a fundamental reorientation of the internal and external policy of Czechoslovakia, and we will lose the ČSSR as a friendly and socialist country.

V.SHCHERBYTS'KYI

4 June 1968

No. S-251



DOCUMENT No. 19

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 30, Ll. 1-6, original in Russian.]

Secret

CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

A Slovak writer, Miloš Krno, who is a Communist and former partisan, has just been in the city of Kyiv.²²⁹ He has traveled to Ukraine numerous times in the past and was a counselor at the Czechoslovak embassy in Moscow at the end of the 1940s.²³⁰ Krno is the author of several stories published in Ukraine, in particular a story about a Hero of the Soviet Union, Ján Nálepka.²³¹ This story was dedicated to friendship between the Soviet and Slovak peoples.

Evaluating the situation in Czechoslovakia, Krno spoke in support of strengthening friendship with the Soviet people and with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. However, in conversations pertaining to the current and future state of affairs in the ČSSR, his unease was palpable, and he seemed somewhat reticent.

In his view, the reasons for the ongoing events in the ČSSR are as follows:

"... Because of the rude leadership of Novotný and his cronies, an extremely tense situation emerged in the country, especially in a material sense. Overall, living conditions in Czechoslovakia aren't all that bad nowadays, but in neighboring countries—the FRG and Austria—the standard of living is much higher. Enemies of the party are citing this and are now exploiting every mistake committed by the previous leadership, which was installed by Khrushchev. They say to the population: you see how socialism stultifies the development of the country and takes a negative toll on our material conditions.²³² If there were no Communist Party, thousands of innocent people would not not have suffered,

and all of us would be much better off materially.”

Krno indicates that many people, including workers, are being allured by this agitation. It could even lead to an attempt at a coup d'état.²³³ There are three forces that might prevent it, and Krno is almost certain about this:

1. The leadership of the Communist Party, if it displays firmness and regains control of the situation in the country.
2. The working class, the majority of which still supports the Communist Party, forming armed patrols and a newly organized Communist division.²³⁴
3. In an extreme case, intervention by the Warsaw Pact countries.

On the question of the reactionary forces, he said the following:

The National Front includes three parties: the Communist, Socialist, and People's (Catholic). Until recently the last two of these parties consisted of only a few dozen members and were purely nominal. But now the opposition forces have taken them over. The Socialist Party already numbers 300,000 people, and the Catholic Party numbers 150,000 people.²³⁵ Incidentally, the clergy, some of whom have joined this party, prefer to maintain a wait-and-see position, since they are afraid that a coup d'état might prove unsuccessful and that they would end up compromising themselves. An article by Blažek in issue no. 13 of the weekly publication of the ČSSR Writers' Union, "Literární Listy," is among the commentaries that reveal the current mood in the Socialist Party.²³⁶ Blažek writes that no party has ever voluntarily left the historical arena, and that all such parties must be removed by force.²³⁷ Now the turn of the Communist Party has come, and it, too, must be removed by force.

In addition to these two parties, there are a number of officially registered clubs. Among them is the Club of "Politically Active Non-Communists." It was organized quite recently but has already become a *de facto* mass party. Its base is in Prague, but there are branches all around the country.²³⁸ It plays a role similar to the role played by the "Petöfi Circle" in Hungary, with the main difference that the latter consisted of only several dozen literary figures, whereas the Club of "Politically Active Non-Communists" already numbers many thousands of people.²³⁹ It is the *de facto* rallying point for bourgeois parties that were disbanded in the past. This club might become the spearhead of an organized coup d'état. Members of the club are taking advantage of the new "press freedom" to publish a variety of fraudulent documents in the newspapers. These items even include spurious "letters of Stalin," which contain orders for the physical annihilation of revolutionaries.²⁴⁰ They are also disseminating rumors about our efforts to arrange the murder of Masaryk and other such things.²⁴¹

An organization known as "Clean Hands" has been set up in Prague.²⁴² (It consists of people who took no part in the repressions.) They say about these "Clean Hands" that they will very skillfully be able to suppress all Communists and all pro-Soviet Czechs and Slovaks. Representatives of this organization say among themselves:

"Democratization will be completed when only two Communists are left in the ČSSR and they end up killing each other."

Club "231" is named for the article in the ČSSR Criminal Code under which many innocent people were convicted in the past. Initially, this club was not very large, and its chief missions were to seek the rehabilitation of those who had been unjustly convicted, to provide them with material sustenance and employment, to press for their readmission into the party, and so forth. More recently, however, this club has taken on an entirely different cast. For one thing, many new members who were never arrested in Czechoslovakia have now joined. This increase in membership has owed a good deal to criminals, whom the leaders of the club have reclassified as "victims of Novotný's regime." At present, the club is harboring dark criminal elements who support trouble-makers and are prepared for any actions that will undermine the existing order.

The activity of anti-Soviet, anti-socialist elements is leading above all to the persecution of pro-Soviet citizens and to demands for the ouster of all officials who held any sort of post in the ČSSR party or state apparatus over the past 20 years. The same thing, says Krno, happened in Hungary, where they began by focusing just on Rákosi and then shifted their attacks to the entire party and government apparatus.

Krno stated that he expects decisive changes in connection with the KSČ CC plenum, which "must resolve the fate of our country."²⁴³ With regard to the future of the ČSSR, he is gloomy. Novotný, says Krno, committed a huge number of mistakes, which his enemies have never failed to exploit. He carried out the same policy of unjustified repressions that Rákosi did in Hungary. The enemies of the USSR blame the Soviet Union for these repressions. But now a letter has been discovered from Stalin to the Czechoslovak leaders concerning the repressions and Soviet advisers.²⁴⁴ In the letter, Stalin writes that the arrest of class enemies is a matter for the Czechoslovaks themselves to handle, and that we make no recommendations about this matter: Let them determine themselves who should be prosecuted and who should not. Thus, says Krno, the arrests of thousands of innocent people and their annihilation should be blamed not on the Soviet Union but on Novotný and his ilk. Now many judges are committing suicide. They sentenced innocent people to death on the basis of false accusations, and now the relatives of those who perished are demanding vengeance.

Characterizing the situation in the KSČ CC, Krno notes that a deep rift has occurred in the CC. Dubček is displaying a lack of resolution, and only two of the members of the Politburo²⁴⁵ are supporting him on all matters. The rest are

speaking out against him.²⁴⁶ A split also has occurred in the party as a whole. For example, in the Moravian city of Ostrava the KSČ has split into two factions: the “Bolsheviks” and the rightist faction. In these circumstances, the legal and illegal activities of opposition parties—the Socialist and Catholic, which have been growing in size—have increased.

Some members of the KSČ CC are even openly claiming that full-fledged opposition parties should be allowed to exist.²⁴⁷ They base their position on the statement by V. I. Lenin that an opposition is necessary to monitor the actions of the ruling party. But, says Krno, the danger is that in today’s circumstances, the opposition inevitably will become an active hostile force and will group all the reactionary elements around itself.

This kind of situation demands more resolute measures on the part of the KSČ CC, but because of the mistaken actions of today’s leaders of the Communist Party, all of this is leading to the growth of malevolent forces inside the country. The KSČ has lost control of the country, and now it will be difficult to regain control.

Krno distinguishes the situation in the Czech lands from that in Slovakia. He says that in Slovakia things are much better, and that no anti-Soviet sentiments have emerged there. But the following contradictions exist there: A struggle is under way for greater Slovak independence and for the federalization of the country. There are some nationalist contradictions. The main thing is that unrest has emerged among the ethnic Hungarian minority, which in Slovakia numbers 400,000 people.²⁴⁸ The Hungarians are demanding autonomy.

The root of the evil is entirely in the Czech lands, where class enemies from the former bourgeoisie and officials from the disbanded bourgeois parties are active.

In this connection, Krno speaks favorably about the upcoming maneuvers of the Warsaw Pact countries, and especially about the arming of workers’ patrols.²⁴⁹ This force, he says, will be capable of actively countering the reactionaries, but the KSČ CC must display the requisite energy and firmness. And Krno is not at all certain whether this will happen.

Krno spoke with particular disapproval about the situation in the ČSSR Writers’ Union, where reactionary and Zionist officials have taken over the leadership. They are persecuting Communist writers, for example V. Mináč, and are setting reactionary writers against them.²⁵⁰ With regard to the treachery of V. Mňačko, he says that Mňačko evidently was just a provocateur.²⁵¹ During the cult of personality, he subscribed to an ultraleft position, which he maintained until the most recent writers’ congress, where the reactionary forces gained ascendance. He then suddenly changed his position 180 degrees and fled to the West, where he received roughly half a million dollars for his little book ridiculing Novotný. Now he has traveled back to the ČSSR for a week. They restored his citizenship to him, but he is willing to return permanently only after the “complete liberalization” of the country.

Krno cited an example that illustrates the mood among students. At the First of May demonstration the columns of

students gave vent to many anti-Soviet slogans, including “Don’t interfere with American efforts to defend civilization in Vietnam!” American students who are studying in Prague were dismayed by these statements. They exclaimed:

“You should be ashamed! We, as Americans, have spoken out on this matter against our own government under Johnson, and now you’re defending these murderers!”

Reported for informational purposes.

P. SHELEST

6 June 1968

No. 1/48



DOCUMENT No. 20

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 30, Ll. 40-45, original in Czech (cover note from Shelest in Russian).]

CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

In the population centers of the Czech lands and Slovakia, an appeal to the population signed by the “Action Committee for a democratic and socialist Czechoslovakia, the borders of which were established 50 years ago” has been posted on the sides of houses and other buildings.

The appeal raises the question of revising the existing border between Czechoslovakia and the USSR.

We succeeded in obtaining a photograph of the appeal that has been circulated. We are sending you a copy of the photograph of the appeal.

In this same report, we are sending you a translation of the appeal from Czech to Russian.²⁵²

P. SHELEST

8 June 1968

No. 1/50

Prague, 14.V.1968

Esteemed friends!

In connection with the 50th anniversary of the Czechoslovak Republic and the process of renewal that is currently under way in our state, our duty—and the duty of every honorable citizen of this state—is to tell the historical truth to our peoples and to struggle for the freedom and independence of our state.

Thousands of the best people from our nations have given their lives for the creation and freedom of our state. The great thinkers and humanists T. G. Masaryk, M. P. Štefánik, and E. Beneš fought their whole lives for the freedom and vigor of our state.

Our greatest duty is to explain to you, the members of our intelligentsia, and through you to our whole society, the historical truth about the difficulty with which our freedom was achieved in the First and Second World Wars and about the ease with which we lost it, thanks to certain individuals.

The blame for this lay with some of our own countrymen, but most of all the blame lay with Stalin's cult of personality and his policies. Even though we fought against fascism on all fronts during the First and Second World Wars and proved victorious, we nonetheless were confronted by a problem affecting a beautiful part of our country, Subcarpathian Ruthenia. This part of our land had never, in our whole history, belonged to Russia.²⁵³ Its people had unanimously and voluntarily chosen 50 years ago to enter the unified family of Czechs and Slovaks, forming the republic of Czechoslovakia. In 1945 the people of Subcarpathia, having been reduced during the war to starvation, were deceived and betrayed by Stalin's policy.²⁵⁴

Immediately after the occupation of the Czechoslovak Republic, thousands of the best sons of Subcarpathia fled in 1939-1940 across the border so that they could take up arms to help drive out the fascists and completely liberate our republic from occupation.²⁵⁵ Despite the countless tragic victims who were deported to Siberian prison camps (only because the people came as they would to their friends in order to liberate our homeland), those who remained alive joined the First Czechoslovak Corps in Buzuluk and voluntarily went to die on the front to liberate their homeland. That is how strong and irrepensible the desire of these people was to defeat fascism and liberate our country.

When the First Czechoslovak Corps was being organized in Buzuluk, 95 percent of the residents of Subcarpathian Ruthenia joined it. The First Czechoslovak Brigade included more than 85 percent of them, and they took part in every battle all the way to Prague.²⁵⁶

In 1944, during the most arduous battles to cross Dukla Pass, two officers (lieutenants) from the First Czechoslovak Army, Turjanica and Vas,²⁵⁷ deserted and came as agents to Subcarpathian Ruthenia without the consent or knowledge of the Czechoslovak command.²⁵⁸ With the help of collaborators and Hungarian stooges, they engaged in illegal agitation among the people for the unification of Subcarpathian Ruthenia with Soviet Russia, not stopping at anything.

Immediately after the liberation of Subcarpathia, military commissariats were set up in all its regions.²⁵⁹ They conducted a mobilization and call-up of people and equipment

for the First Czechoslovak Army, which at that time was fighting on the territory of Slovakia. All the young men living on the territory of Subcarpathia who were suitable for military service joined the First Czechoslovak Army and went to the front voluntarily. They were placed in barracks from which they were supposed to be sent to Slovakia to serve in the First Czechoslovak Army. But despite this, after they were placed in barracks where Soviet units also were deployed, the abovementioned soldiers were secretly transported in vehicles at night and taken from there not to the First Czechoslovak Army in Slovakia, but to Soviet units in Poland; and from there they were sent still further, to the Far East against Japan. They did not return from there until 1948 or later, by which time Subcarpathia had been severed from the Czechoslovak Republic.²⁶⁰ Along the way, many of them who understood that they had been betrayed jumped off the freight trains and did their best to return, after walking many days, to the First Czechoslovak Army in Slovakia.

That is what actually happened.

With the help of collaborators, the agents of Turjanica and Vas exerted crude political pressure on the women and elderly men who remained at home. Lists were compiled, and the agents traveled from house to house and forced people to sign a call for the unification of our territory with Soviet Russia. "If you sign this for Soviet Russia, you will receive flour and bread, but if you sign for the Czechoslovak Republic, you and your whole family will be sent to Siberia." Old people who did not know how to write signed with X's, but they wept and lamented that they were being forced to sign for Russia at the same time that their sons and husbands were fighting in our Czechoslovak Army for our Czechoslovak Republic, which they never stopped dreaming about during these many years. In large cities such as Uzhhorod, so-called "elections" were held, but the results were predetermined by the fact that agitators visited the electoral officials and sternly warned them that any votes against unification with Soviet Russia would mean that their entire families would be deported to Siberia.²⁶¹ Official papers with the inscription "Election Results" were sent to Moscow as a "Manifesto of the Will of the People" in Subcarpathia. We all now know very well what sort of "popular will" this was from the experience of the next 20 years.

In accordance with Stalin's plan, territory had to be carved off from the Czechoslovak Republic, including Košice and the Lower Tatras in the Poprad region.²⁶² Doctor Beneš and the Slovak National Council protested against these actions in regard to the Czechoslovak Republic and also demanded that Košice, Chop, Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, and Berehovo be left in Czechoslovakia. Stalin had to retreat somewhat from his plan and to leave Poprad, but the cities of Chop, Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, and Berehovo and the whole eastern part of Subcarpathia were still included in the territory taken from the Czechoslovak Republic.

These facts clearly show that what happened was not the wish of the Czechoslovak people. Instead, it resulted from the illegal diktat of Stalin and a policy that contradicted international law and all the treaties pertaining to the creation

of the Czechoslovak Republic concluded 50 years ago, which precisely indicate that the Czechoslovak Republic consists of the territory of Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, and Subcarpathian Ruthenia.²⁶³

The people of Subcarpathia were never Ukrainian (or greater Ukrainian) at any point in their history.²⁶⁴ They have their own written tradition, language, and history. Olbracht and others have brilliantly shown the national features and rich culture of Subcarpathia, whose people even after 23 years of having been shorn from the Czechoslovak Republic are still speaking and writing in their own language.²⁶⁵ It has long been known that in educational institutions in the non-Russian republics, instruction is carried out in Russian, irrespective of nationality. In Subcarpathia to this day they are still living and working in accordance with our time zone, even though during those 23 years Moscow time was officially introduced there.²⁶⁶ Our traditions are also being preserved with regard to all the holidays.

The Czechoslovak Republic lost part of its territory that is very well endowed with minerals and raw materials, which we now have to purchase for hard currency. The area could be a wonderful, simply miraculous hub of tourism for all of Europe. It is worth also speaking about the presence there of a large number of diligent, hard-working people who must now go looking for seasonal work all around Russia.

Thousands of sons of Subcarpathia, Slovakia, Moravia, and Bohemia gave their lives on all fronts of the First and Second World Wars for the freedom and independence of our country and for its territorial integrity and unity. Those who remain alive must uphold the legacy of their dead countrymen. We are a heroic and unshakable country. The time has come for the next generation to learn the historical truth about the struggle by our nations to achieve what thousands of the fallen were unable to accomplish. If we do not do this, the new generation will never learn the truth.

Now, in connection with the 50th anniversary of the Czechoslovak Republic and the restoration of legality in the state and the establishment of a federation, each of us must make every effort to create a federation that includes the territory of Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, and Subcarpathian Ruthenia. The example of Yugoslavia attests that this is possible in our circumstances, in the framework of a single state.

Action Committee for a democratic and socialist Czechoslovakia, the borders and territory of which were established 50 years ago

196 signatories

Esteemed friends,

You know from your own experience that for now it is still impossible to publish these signatures. Recent events have shown that the majority of our leaders are inclined only

to replace certain officials, not to replace the whole system of control of the political, administrative, and economic affairs of our country.

Our best opportunity is now at hand, after 20 years of lost time, to establish a genuinely democratic socialist order, the very thing for which our writers, artists, and scholars have been struggling over these past 20 years by pointing out the correct path to our nations. Only our intelligentsia, who managed to survive during this period, can show our nations the proper path of our statehood and true history, the path for our democracy and socialism, and the path to renewed pride for our people, who have been so heroic in the past.



DOCUMENT No. 21

[Source: *TsDAHOU*, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 30, Ll. 15-19, original in Russian.]

C P S U C C

A delegation of workers from the ČSSR was in the city of Uzhhorod and in Kharkiv Oblast from 25 to 29 May. They were visiting our country to exchange tokens of peace and friendship in commemoration of the 23rd anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia from fascist occupiers. The delegation, headed by the KSČ CC Presidium member and acting chairman of the Slovak National Council, Cde. František Barbírek, consisted of 22 representatives of different organizations and departments in Czechoslovakia. There was only one construction worker in the delegation and not a single worker from an agricultural cooperative.

During their stay in Kharkiv Oblast and Uzhhorod, the delegation held discussions with officials from party and government organs, visited the museum of Soviet-Czechoslovak friendship in the village of Sokolovo, and stopped at a collective farm, a university, a tractor factory, and a school, where they had meetings and conversations with workers and saw the sights in Kharkiv and Uzhhorod.

During these meetings and conversations, the guests displayed great interest in the development of the economy and culture of Kharkiv, both the city and the oblast. They raised many questions, particularly about the transition of Kharkiv enterprises to a new economic system, about the average salaries of workers, about pregnancy leaves for female workers, about apartment rent and the price of one square meter of living space in cooperative buildings, about sports in educational institutions and enterprises, about efforts to hold discussions on political themes among university students, about the entry of Communist youth members into the party, and about other matters.

In official speeches as well as private conversations, the

head of the delegation, Cde. F. Barbírek, and certain other delegation members repeatedly spoke about the friendship between the Soviet and Czechoslovak peoples and about the gratitude that the Czechoslovak people felt to the Soviet Union for liberating them from the fascist yoke. They assured the Soviet people that the ČSSR always would be a loyal ally of the USSR. Referring to the difficulties that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is currently experiencing, many members of the delegation expressed anxiety about them, but declared that the KSČ is making every effort to overcome them and to strengthen friendship with the Soviet Union on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles and unshakable internationalism. They expressed certainty that the May plenum of the KSČ CC would facilitate the expeditious restoration of order in the country.²⁶⁷

Cde. F. Barbírek also said that “*Rudé právo*” and a number of other press organs are no longer under the control of the KSČ CC, that anarchy has engulfed the country, and that the state security organs are under the leadership of a “bad man, Josef Pavel, who is complicating the situation, but his instructions, it would seem, are now being ignored, and he will soon be removed from his post.”²⁶⁸ The so-called “non-party clubs” and other parties that are actively working against the KSČ are gaining strength in the country. On this matter, Cde. F. Barbírek always emphasized that the KSČ is overcoming these difficulties and that the ties between the KSČ and CPSU and between the ČSSR and USSR will become stronger.

Other members of the delegation also expressed certainty that the KSČ will be able to overcome the difficulties and lead the country along the path of socialist development. Representatives of Slovakia in the delegation repeatedly noted that the situation in the Slovak regions of the country is better than in the Czech lands, and that the Slovak Communist Party is in control of the situation. Speaking about this in particular were the secretary of the KSS Košice municipal committee, Cde. Severin Martinka, the secretary, Cde. F. Barbírek, Cde. Kamil Makúch, and others.

A member of the delegation and editorial official at the journal of the Union of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship, “*Svět Sovětů*,” Ivanna Gotlibová, who in the past evidently was an editorial employee at “*Rudé právo*,” took the initiative in arranging conversations with Soviet officials, to whom she expressed approval of the changes under way in the ČSSR and spoke idealistically about Tomáš Masaryk. “Masaryk,” she declared, “was a great man who got along well with everyone and had a rapport with the common man. He was for Lenin, but condemned the methods of Stalin. During Masaryk’s time, a total of only 3-4 people were killed in demonstrations, whereas in Gottwald’s time a vastly larger number of innocent people perished.” Referring to a recent article in the newspaper “*Sovetskaya Rossiya*,” she said that “the Soviet press features baseless criticism of Masaryk, which evokes dissatisfaction among the whole population of the ČSSR.”²⁶⁹ For this reason, all the journalists at our publication have come out in defense of Masaryk.” In other conversations, I. Gotlibová gave vent to open malice against the

USSR. In particular, she said: “I would like to see what is happening in our country take place in the USSR as well. Your leaders should be closer to the people, as ours are. I don’t see Ukraine; its language, culture, and everyday life are stifled. This is especially evident in the educational institutions. Only this year did I actually hear the anthem of the UkrSSR.”²⁷⁰ I’m not opposed to the USSR or to socialism, but I’m very much opposed to Stalinist bureaucratism. Our ideal is Solzhenitsyn and his book ‘One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich.’”

The remarks by I. Gotlibová were rebuffed every time. Members of the ČSSR delegation joined us in condemning her behavior. When she attempted to offer a toast at an official reception in honor of the delegation, several of the Czechoslovak comrades, including a worker, Ludvig Kožuch, prevented her from speaking, saying that at this sort of festive occasion it would be unworthy to have her offer a toast on behalf of the delegation.

Some members of the delegation of Slovak descent expressed dissatisfaction with the nationality policy carried out earlier in the ČSSR.

In lunchtime toasts at the university in the Zmiiv district during a reception in honor of the delegation, Cde. F. Barbírek explained the reasons for the current situation in the ČSSR when he mentioned numerous mistakes of the former KSČ leadership, which, in his view, had produced dissatisfaction in the country, particularly in Slovakia. These mistakes reached their height when the current president of the ČSSR, Ludvík Svoboda, was removed from his posts without any reason and was forced to work as a bookkeeper in an agricultural cooperative. The mistakes also culminated in the imprisonment, without any justification, of many former commanders of the partisan detachments that served during the Slovak national uprising. Countless appeals by Slovaks to A. Novotný requesting that he give Slovakia the rights of a republic with a capital in Bratislava went unheeded.²⁷¹

The secretary of the municipal committee of the Union of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship in Bratislava, Cde. Rudolf Vlášek, said: “In the past, the Czechs did not regard us, the Slovaks, as human beings: A teacher or cook in Slovakia who did the same work as someone in the Czech lands and Moravia would receive much less pay. The disparity could be as much as 300 *koruny*. Whenever a Slovak traveled to Prague, he would have to hide his nationality, since they would give a Slovak no more than a single-room apartment for his entire family, whereas they’d give a Czech at least 2-3 rooms for the same size family.” Cde. R. Vlášek expressed certainty that this situation will be changed and indeed is already changing. Great credit for this improvement is due to A. Dubček, who was characterized as “a strong, determined man who, having only the facts at hand, moved against the state of affairs that existed under Novotný.”

The secretary of the Vsetín district committee of the Union of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship, Cde. Ilič Kouda, said that journalists and some editors of “*Rudé právo*” are behaving badly. On the editorial board of the newspaper, they have created an opposition and are speaking out against

the editor-in-chief.²⁷² He reported that Communists have been driven from the leadership in a number of trade unions and that the people who have taken over were convicted in the past for various reasons, including for abuses.

In response to a question about what A. Novotný is doing now, Cde. Kamil Makúch said that “he’s been having regular discussions with Cde. Chervonenko.²⁷³ As a result of these discussions, information reaching the USSR is not always reliable, despite the very accurate reports provided to the Soviet Union by the USSR consul in Bratislava, Cde. Kuznetsov.”²⁷⁴

In discussions with our officials in Kharkiv, Cde. F. Barbírek spoke in favor of a comprehensive strengthening of ties between Slovakia and Ukraine and an exchange of work experience between the UkrSSR and a future Slovak Republic.²⁷⁵

Reported for informational purposes.

P. SHELEST
SECRETARY OF THE UKRAINIAN CP

17 June 1968

No. 1/54



DOCUMENT No. 22

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 30, LI. 203-209, original in Russian.]

TO THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE

On 9 July 1968, the secretary of the Transcarpathian Oblast committee of the Ukrainian CP, Cde. Yu. V. Il’nyts’kyi, met at 4:00 p.m. on the Soviet-Czechoslovak border with the first secretary of the KSČ’s East Slovakia regional committee, Cde. Koscelanský. The meeting took place one-on-one at the request of Cde. Koscelanský.

Cde. Il’nyts’kyi told me that when the meeting began, Cde. Koscelanský informed him about the work of the commission that was set up to arrange the future federalized structure of the Czechoslovak Republic. He said there is no unity in the commission because the Czechs, in seeking quietly to replace the national basis for the division of the country with a territorial basis, are plotting to create a federation of Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia. The Slovaks do not agree with this because the Czechs and Moravians constitute a united whole, and they will be able to form a majority. As a result, Cde. Husák and one of the Czech comrades have currently been instructed to study the matter and to seek a compromise between the Czechs and Slovaks.²⁷⁶ Cde.

Koscelanský affirmed that the Slovaks will not yield in their demand for equality when deciding on a federalized structure for Czechoslovakia.²⁷⁷

During the discussion, Cde. Il’nyts’kyi expressed worry that the forthcoming extraordinary congress of the KSČ might result in the ascendance of rightist elements. Of the 1,400 delegates elected for the congress, only 280 are Slovaks (according to rough data).²⁷⁸ These delegates might select a CC and Presidium in which Slovaks will be a minority, and it is possible that they will elect members who will take the country to the right.²⁷⁹

Cde. Koscelanský responded to Cde. Il’nyts’kyi that such a situation will not arise because it is planned at the beginning of the congress to adopt a resolution that all further resolutions will be enacted only if at least two-thirds of the delegates—two-thirds of the Slovaks and two-thirds of the Czechs—vote for them.

In response, Cde. Il’nyts’kyi warned Cde. Koscelanský that this sort of resolution might not be adopted, since the delegates at the congress were elected not by national origin, but by the number of Communists. Moreover, during a secret vote it will be impossible to discern who voted for one resolution or another (Czechs or Slovaks). Cde. Koscelanský responded to this by saying that they are certain that a necessary resolution will be adopted. He also affirmed that the newly elected CC leadership will include people who deserve that status, including Cdes. Dubček, Černík, and Smrkovský. In Cde. Koscelanský’s view, the new CC will not include Cdes. Kolder (on account of his amoral behavior), Indra, Švestka, Rigo, and Barbírek. Those elected to the CC, according to the recommendations of regional and municipal conferences, will include some hard-working old cadres and many new comrades, who will be able to lead the country along a new path.

Cde. Koscelanský also informed Cde. Il’nyts’kyi about the conduct of recent party conferences. He reported that both in the center and in the districts, cities, and regions, the conferences went well. At the party conference in Bratislava, criticism was directed at Cde. Biľak, who, incidentally, has been elected a delegate to the congress, but only by coming in 29th of the 32 candidates who were given votes.²⁸⁰ When asked how he would explain this, Cde. Koscelanský said there were two reasons. First, there is the question of his national origin. Cde. Biľak is a Ukrainian, and the Slovaks say that all three members of the KSČ CC Presidium from Slovakia are not actually Slovaks (Cde. Rigo is a Gypsy; Cde. Barbírek, as was recently established, is a Czech; and Cde. Biľak is a Ukrainian). Second, Cde. Biľak has not displayed sufficient initiative in replacing the old heads of departments of the Slovak Communist Party CC as well as senior officials in the Slovak National Council.

During the conversation, Cde. Il’nyts’kyi complained to his interlocutor that the Czechoslovak press, radio, and television had recently been stepping up their coverage and broadcasts of anti-socialist, anti-popular, and anti-Soviet materials, particularly the publication of the so-called “2,000 Words” manifesto.²⁸¹ Cde. Koscelanský responded that it

was not worth paying attention to this matter, since 1,960 of the 2,000 words in the article had been lifted from the KSČ Action Program (albeit in paraphrase), and only 40 words, which had been condemned by all the regional and district conferences, had been deemed improper. Cde. Koscelanský argued that it was not worth attaching any special significance to such articles, since by criticizing them (as was done by Cde. Konstantinov in “Pravda”) you might do more harm than good.²⁸² Regarding the statements by Cde. Konstantinov, he expressed the view that it would be better to conduct these sorts of discussions in theoretical journals, rather than in the mass press. Cde. Koscelanský also reported that he personally had been insulted by articles published in the GDR press that had equated the KSČ “progressives” with American imperialists.²⁸³

Cde. Koscelanský acknowledged that some of the rightist elements behind the onslaught in the press and on radio and television had hoped that the KSČ leadership would turn to the right. However, because this did not happen, they are now trying to provoke the leadership into using force against them. But we, declared Cde. Koscelanský, will not give in to these provocations and will not behave that way if only because the West would think that we are retreating from democracy.²⁸⁴ Now, said Cde. Koscelanský, we shouldn’t spend further time on fruitless discussions, but should instead do more for the people and think about how to achieve good results at the forthcoming party congress. Already, he emphasized, we have attained results, and the people are supporting us. Whereas in the past, he continued, it was difficult to engage the people in a conversation, there are now so many who want to speak with us that we do not even have enough time to meet with them all. It is also extremely important, according to Cde. Koscelanský, that we have substantially raised the pay of workers and are compensating peasants for equipment that was made common property during the period of collectivization, and so forth.

Summing up what he had said, Cde. Koscelanský declared that many new things are now being created in the development of socialism (as shown, in particular, by the newly coined slogan of “democratic socialism”). However, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries now do not understand the essence of these internal events. Perhaps they will grasp these changes only after three to four years, as was the case with Yugoslavia, when it was first proclaimed revisionist, and then, after eight years had passed, the other socialist leaders began kissing the party and state leaders of that country.²⁸⁵

Czechoslovakia, Cde. Koscelanský emphasized during the conversation, was formerly at the same level of economic development as the leading West European capitalist countries, but it now lags far behind them. Thanks to the new path of “democratic socialism,” we are trying to bolster the country’s economy. It is not accidental, Cde. Koscelanský declared, that many in the West now say that if the KSČ succeeds in creating a new model of “democratic socialism” (of a European nature), this will be a great setback for the bourgeoisie.

Cde. Koscelanský noted that internal reactionaries will continue to engage in various attacks, if only to provoke the leadership of the country and party into using force and if only to compromise the new ideas of democratization.

Toward the end of the conversation, Cde. Koscelanský sought to reassure Cde. Il’nyts’kyi that all the anxiety about the threat to socialism in the ČSSR is unwarranted. He emphasized that these worries, obviously, have arisen mainly because the information provided to the CPSU CC Politburo and personally to Cde. Brezhnev by the Soviet embassy in Prague is so unreliable. The Soviet embassy, he said, had long been accustomed to the old times of Novotný and is now totally unable to grasp the spirit of the current situation.²⁸⁶ For this reason, he continued, it would be essential to replace the current personnel at the Soviet embassy in Czechoslovakia.

The Soviet Union’s worries and anxiety about extremist elements in the ČSSR are not always understood by the Czechoslovak comrades, Cde. Koscelanský emphasized. To illustrate the point, he noted that one of the speakers at the KSČ Prague conference had earned applause from the audience when he declared that they are grateful to the Soviet Army for having liberated them in 1945, but do not want to see it on their territory now.²⁸⁷

Cde. Koscelanský also reported that enormous criticism had been voiced about the letter from the meeting of the People’s Militia that was sent to workers in the Soviet Union, and also about the personal behavior of the head of the People’s Militia, Cde. Gorčák.²⁸⁸ The workers of Czechoslovakia did not know about this letter and learned about it only from the Soviet press. Responses to the letter, published in the Soviet press, are viewed here as interference in the ČSSR’s internal affairs.

Cde. Koscelanský also informed Cde. Il’nyts’kyi that sessions of the KSČ CC Presidium had been held both yesterday and today, where they had considered what stance to take on the letters sent to the KSČ CC Presidium by the CPSU CC Politburo and by the CCs of the Communist parties of Poland, the GDR, and Hungary.²⁸⁹ In Cde. Koscelanský’s view, the KSČ CC Presidium finds itself in a difficult position, since, on the one hand, it is impossible to publish these documents in the press, but on the other hand, they need to explain the documents to the nation. All these documents, Cde. Koscelanský declared, propose the holding of a conference of the leaders of the Communist parties of socialist countries to discuss the events in Czechoslovakia. However, he personally does not understand why such conferences need to be convened so frequently.

At the end of the discussion, Cde. Il’nyts’kyi told Cde. Koscelanský that from the conversation it was clear that they [the KSČ leadership] were not at all worried about recent events in the country and in the party, whereas “I had thought,” said Cde. Il’nyts’kyi, “that you were coming to request appropriate advice or assistance. However, this is not the case.” In response, Cde. Koscelanský said with great optimism that everything in the ČSSR is going well, and that there is no basis for any alarm. If something unfortunate

should happen, he said, they themselves will ask us, as an older brother, to provide necessary assistance.

During earlier meetings with Cde. Il'nyts'kyi, Cde. Koscelanský had said that it is a very difficult time right now and that he obviously will wait until after the congress to go on vacation. However, at this latest session, he suddenly declared that on Saturday he is leaving on vacation and is driving his car to Romania, all the way to the Black Sea. When Cde. Il'nyts'kyi asked him why he was not going to the Crimea "after Cde. Shelest invited you and you accepted his invitation," Koscelanský responded that the Crimea is too far and that the KSC CC had approved a decision to send him on vacation to Romania.

Reported for informational purposes.

P. SHELEST

10 July 1968



DOCUMENT No. 23

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 97, Ll. 141-149, original in Russian.]

Speech by Cde. P. E. Shelest at the CPSU CC Plenum, 17 July 1968²⁹⁰

Comrades!²⁹¹

The issue being discussed by the CPSU CC Plenum²⁹² is of exceptionally great importance for the whole international Communist and workers' movement and for the cause of socialism.

What we are considering today is not merely some minor difficulties or complex processes, as some of the leading officials in Czechoslovakia keep on trying to convince us. Instead, what we are considering is a grave, right-wing opportunist danger in a fraternal Communist party and the growth of anti-socialist, counterrevolutionary forces in socialist Czechoslovakia.

What is especially troubling is that the leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia are paying lip service to the existence of a serious danger, but at the same time are making no effort to wage a decisive struggle against it.

Why not? Can it be that they are spineless, wishy-washy liberals?²⁹³ Hardly! Dubček, Černík, and certain other leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia know no equal when it comes to the struggle against so-called "conservatives," even though these "conservatives" do not pose the slightest threat to anyone.

But with barely a murmur during this struggle they have dismissed hundreds of senior party officials and subjected

them to groundless attacks, harassment, and outright persecution. This has affected not only officials in the center, but nearly all the secretaries of regional, municipal, and district party committees.

The KSC leaders failed to take into account that these officials included many hard-working and devoted Communists who created the party, worked in the anti-fascist underground, and bore the entire burden of establishing a workers' and peasants' government and of building socialism in that country.²⁹⁴

At the same time, the KSC leaders have failed to hold even a single member of the nefarious right-wing opportunist group strictly accountable before the party, and have not even voiced any criticism of the rightists.²⁹⁵ By now these rightists can be regarded as an organized group. Under the guise of a phony democracy, they are displaying what for Communists is an unacceptable degree of tolerance for the statements of anti-socialist and counterrevolutionary elements, and they are thereby essentially betraying the interests of the working class and of socialism.

At the April Plenum of the CPSU CC it was said that the CC of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia had lost control over the mass media – the press, radio, and television.²⁹⁶ The Czech leaders acknowledged this, too.

Since then, more than three months have passed. But has the situation changed? No, not at all. If anything, it has deteriorated further.²⁹⁷ And the point to be stressed here, as you understand, is that the whole matter could have been resolved within hours if they had simply restored order and reasserted control over everything. But nothing of the sort has been done. As before, these supremely powerful levers of ideological influence are under the control of opportunist and anti-socialist elements, who are actively using them to carry out political terror, deceive the working class, and strike at the party's healthy forces. In the press, on radio, and on television, they openly purvey hostile, counterrevolutionary, anti-Soviet propaganda. They have exerted great pressure on the ongoing district and regional party conferences, and they are continuing with their unfounded persecution and vilification of devoted party cadres.²⁹⁸ They are pinning the label of "conservatives" on these honest cadres and are extolling the so-called "progressives," that is, the members of the right-wing opportunist and revisionist group.²⁹⁹

Only in these circumstances could a patently counterrevolutionary manifesto appear in the central newspapers under the title of "2,000 Words."³⁰⁰ Despite the KSC CC Presidium's formal condemnation of this document, the press, radio, and television are giving wide and positive coverage to it. Moreover, this disgraceful document has become a lively topic of discussion at district and regional party conferences. At some of the conferences, through the connivance of the CC and regional party committees, the document has been endorsed by some of the delegates.

This shows how demagoguery about freedom of speech can be exploited by counterrevolutionaries. This is where the game of "unlimited" democracy and a Czechoslovak "model of socialism" has brought us!

The Czechoslovak comrades babble on about their wholehearted support for “democratic socialism.” But they disregard the fact that our country, the first country in the world in which socialism triumphed, has already been living and prospering for more than 50 years in accordance with socialist laws. What sort of “democratic socialism” are they promoting? If you examine their statements closely, you can see that the word “democratic” is a cover for a transformation of the socialist order, depriving it of its class essence.³⁰¹ As you know, no such thing as abstract democracy exists in nature. Democracy always was and is class-based. Anyone who fails to recognize this cannot be called a Communist.

Some people in Czechoslovakia are urging that the Communist Party should become an elite party, not a party of the working class. This “theory” is alien to Marxism-Leninism insofar as Communists always have totally defended and continue to defend the interests of the vanguard element of our society – the working class.

But this, unfortunately, is not the only problem. All sorts of hostile groups are taking shape in the country. The former right-wing Social Democrats are resurrecting their party, something that no self-respecting Communist Party should ever permit.³⁰² In Czechoslovakia, however, these groups are encountering no resistance at all. Moreover, the leaders of the KSČ claim that the CPSU and other fraternal parties are supposedly dramatizing and exaggerating the situation in their party and country. They are saying this to gloss over the urgency of the situation and to make us let down our guard.

For this reason we can say, with full responsibility, that by losing control [of the mass media], abandoning the principles of democratic centralism, and failing to punish the increased activity of the right-wing opportunist group, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is deviating from the principles of Marxism-Leninism and a class-based, proletarian assessment of the processes and events under way in the party and country. How can it be that a “permanent” session of the Prague municipal party committee is being allowed to carry out subversive work against the decisions and measures of the KSČ CC, attacking the CC from right-wing opportunist positions?³⁰³

Undoubtedly there are healthy forces in the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. But if they are not soon mobilized and do not adopt decisive measures in the near future to destroy the enemies of socialism, and if we fail to provide them with comprehensive support, it cannot be excluded that the Communist Party will gradually be transformed into a social-democratic entity and the country will lose its socialist gains. This is something that we, the Soviet Communists, cannot permit.³⁰⁴ The other fraternal parties that took part in the Warsaw meeting also will not permit this. Our means and capabilities, and the efforts we have exerted in connection with the changing situation in Czechoslovakia, have probably³⁰⁵ been inadequate thus far. That is why we must act quickly to use every possible means of halting the counter-revolution.

In his report Comrade Brezhnev convincingly gave a comprehensive analysis of the situation in the Communist

Party of Czechoslovakia and in the country. His report showed what enormous work the CC Politburo of our party and the CC Politburos of the other fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties have been carrying out to help the leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia objectively and correctly comprehend the situation and to prevent them from abandoning socialism or taking steps that will be inimical to their party and to socialism.

It must also be said that they [the Czechoslovak leaders] have listened closely to our arguments and agreed with our points. They have even thanked us for our advice and claimed that all the negative things happening in their party and country can supposedly be explained by the fact that they, as new leaders, have not yet fully gained control of the situation and have not yet been able to embark on a struggle against the enemies of socialism.

Life has shown that some of these leaders are only masquerading under revolutionary phrases and are pretending to support friendship with our party and country and devotion to the cause of socialism. In reality they are playing a double game – saying one thing and doing another.

As you know, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia adopted an important document, the so-called “Action Program,” even though a better program had already been laid out in the resolutions of the KSČ’s 13th Congress.³⁰⁶ We did not express open criticism of the³⁰⁷ “Action Program,” but we candidly told the Czechoslovak comrades about its shortcomings, particularly that it deviated from a Marxist-Leninist conception of the leading role of the party. We warned them that their enemies might exploit the weak points in this program. Unfortunately, that is precisely what happened. With the connivance of the KSČ CC, the rightist elements are disseminating their propaganda by seizing on the weak points of the “Action Program.”

It is not by chance that forces hostile to socialism exploited this “program” when composing their own counter-revolutionary manifesto, the “2,000 Words,” which was aimed at discrediting the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and inciting anarchy and a fundamental change of the social order.³⁰⁸ The document was an attempt to bring about the ideological destruction of the Communist Party and to push it onto a bourgeois-liberal path, placing Czechoslovakia in opposition to the commonwealth of socialist countries.

Obviously we must now speak openly about and voice Marxist-Leninist criticism of this “Action Program” so that we can help the healthy forces in the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia understand how far they have been dragged into an opportunistic morass by certain leaders of the party.

It is impossible to understand why the Czechoslovak comrades have displayed such complacency when faced with the intensifying propaganda of Western imperialist circles, particularly the USA and West Germany. The point here is not only that with the advent of new leaders this propaganda has not been given a necessary rebuff, but that in Czechoslovakia itself the propaganda is being featured prominently in the newspapers, on television, and on radio. The only thing this accommodating approach by the KSČ CC Presidium has

achieved is to play into the hands of the counterrevolutionaries.

Has this situation arisen by chance? No, it is not by chance. This is evident from the unusual interest that the imperialist circles of the United States of America and West Germany have shown in the events in Czechoslovakia, and the elaborate promises they have made that they will extend large-scale credits once a government of right-wing opportunist elements³⁰⁹ has come to power and broken away from the Soviet Union. The West German revanchists are especially delighted by these events. They have even put forth the notion of a “united Europe.”³¹⁰ They are claiming that “the hour of truth, having arrived in Czechoslovakia in various spheres of social and state activities, is creating an important basis for a united Europe.”

These designs of our class enemies must induce caution among all Communists.³¹¹ Indeed, at the Warsaw meeting of the leaders of parties and governments of the socialist countries, it was said, with all the candor one would expect of Marxist-Leninists, that a mortal danger is hanging over the Communist Party and socialism in Czechoslovakia, and that all necessary assistance must therefore be given to that country to extirpate the forces of counterrevolution, uphold the unity of the party on a Marxist-Leninist basis, and defend socialism – the great achievement of the working class in Czechoslovakia.

Every party bears responsibility first and foremost before its own working class and its own people. At the same time, each party bears responsibility before the international forces of socialism.

In fulfilling our internationalist duty, our party and people bore enormous sacrifices to destroy the dark forces of fascism and liberate the occupied peoples. Our relations with the Communist Party and people of Czechoslovakia have been sealed with the blood of our joint struggle against the common enemy, reinforced by our fraternal alliance relations.

As a result, we are unable—and do not have the right—to stand idly by while all this is happening so close to our western border, in socialist Czechoslovakia. And if the Czechoslovak leaders do not want to mobilize the party and people in a sustained struggle against the counterrevolution to defuse it and then deal it a decisive blow, we must openly tell them that we have a different view and might end up on the opposite side of the barricades.³¹²

They must also know that the Soviet Union and its friends in the Warsaw Pact will never permit the counterrevolution to tear apart the Communist Party and people of Czechoslovakia. In this respect, we have every right to do whatever is needed to fulfill our alliance obligations and defend the socialist gains of the Czechoslovak people.

In the dangerous situation that has unfolded, we must act in a well-conceived way, but also boldly and decisively, since time is slipping away. The threat to the great cause of socialism does not give us the right to behave in any other way.

As a participant in the Dresden and Warsaw meetings and also in meetings with the leaders of the Communist Party

of Slovakia, I want to emphasize the profound unease that the leaders of the fraternal parties and governments of the socialist countries and the KSČ’s own healthy forces feel about the situation in Czechoslovakia and the unanimity of their views about recent events and about measures that must be carried out to protect the gains of socialism in Czechoslovakia.³¹³ The letter sent by the participants in the Warsaw meeting to the KSČ Central Committee unquestionably will help the party’s healthy forces launch a decisive attack against the opportunist group and mobilize the workers and all laborers to destroy the counterrevolution and defend socialism.

The conclusions of Comrade Brezhnev’s report are very serious and totally correct. The steps he mentions there are absolutely essential. The Communists of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people are well aware of what is going on in neighboring Czechoslovakia and are assessing it properly. They ardently and unanimously support the measures carried out by the CPSU Central Committee and will do everything to provide urgent assistance to the Communists and Czechoslovak people at this trying hour.³¹⁴



DOCUMENT No. 24

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 31, Ll. 1-18, original in Russian.]

Comrades!³¹⁵

My task, in reporting to you about the Warsaw meeting of the delegations from the Communist and workers’ parties of the socialist countries, and also about the CPSU CC Plenum that just ended after considering this matter, is facilitated somewhat by the fact that the decree from the CPSU CC Plenum and the Letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia from the fraternal parties, as well as the results of the Warsaw conference, have been published, and you undoubtedly have read them. What is more, the CPSU CC has been continually providing information to the party aktiv about events in Czechoslovakia and the measures adopted by the CPSU and fraternal parties.³¹⁶

These documents have meticulously and clearly defined the position we have adopted, provided an assessment of the ongoing events in Czechoslovakia, and drawn all necessary conclusions. After thoroughly discussing the whole report presented by Cde. Brezhnev, the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee affirmed the correctness of his assessments and conclusions. The Plenum wholeheartedly voted its complete approval of the CC Politburo’s actions on this matter. With unswerving unanimity, the CPSU CC Plenum expressed its admiration and total endorsement of the results of the Meeting in Warsaw of the delegations from the Communist and workers’ parties of the socialist countries.

The Warsaw meeting was the third in a series of meetings on the Czechoslovak question. Dresden, Moscow, and now, finally, Warsaw. Even so, the leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has not drawn appropriate conclusions from the advice and warnings they have received from the other fraternal parties. This has caused the situation in that country to deteriorate even further and to become even more complex. Moreover, the KSČ leadership refused even to take part in the Warsaw conference, having thereby placed themselves in opposition to the parties of the five other countries.

All the participants in the Warsaw conference believe that extremely dangerous events are occurring in Czechoslovakia, that the KSČ is deviating from the principles of Marxism-Leninism, and that a threat has now arisen that the KSČ will be transformed into a social democratic party. There is a grave danger that this transformation will be realized as early as the KSČ's 14th Congress.³¹⁷

The urgency of that danger can be seen in the whole course of events and also in the composition of the delegates who were chosen to devise the KSČ's new Party Rules. The new rules omit the principle of democratic centralism and downgrade the leading role of the party by providing for the formation of factions and groups and the freedom to hold discussions of any sort.³¹⁸ Moreover, the KSČ leadership recently adopted a number of mistaken and dubious decisions and steps that will continue to enervate the party rather than strengthen it.

The upcoming elections to the National Assembly, which the rightist elements intend to carry out without the Communists, might lead to a further and irrevocable departure of Czechoslovakia from socialism, the restoration of capitalism, and the establishment of a bourgeois republic.³¹⁹

Thus, the problem today is not just some minor difficulties or complex processes, as the leading officials in Czechoslovakia keep trying to assure us. Instead, the problem is that a grave, right-wing opportunist danger has arisen in a fraternal Communist party, and that anti-socialist, counter-revolutionary forces in Czechoslovakia are growing. The basis for a counterrevolution in that country is the lingering presence of bourgeois elements who are unremittingly hostile to Communism.

The KSČ has been diluted by the escapades of petit-bourgeois and even bourgeois parties, especially the Social Democratic and National Socialist Parties.³²⁰ Of the pro-Beneš forces alone, more than 250,000 were admitted into the KSČ. All this has greatly complicated the situation and is vitiating the class essence and class orientation of the party.

Everyone at the Warsaw conference agreed that the alarm expressed by Communists in the socialist countries about the situation in the KSČ has grown rapidly. Since January, the situation has become increasingly dangerous. The resolutions of the May plenum of the KSČ, especially the passage acknowledging the rightist danger as the main threat, have not been carried out. The weaknesses and mistakes of the KSČ leadership are being skillfully exploited by the right-wing opportunists and reactionaries in the struggle against

the KSČ and the socialist order. The country is experiencing many trends hostile to Marxism-Leninism, including different types of reformism, revisionism of both the right and the left, and national-chauvinism. In all of this we see a danger that the imperialist and anti-Communist forces are dealing a blow not only to Czechoslovakia, but to all of our socialist countries and to the international Communist and workers' movement.

We understand that on matters of European security our strength is based on the cohesion of the Warsaw Pact, the unity of our efforts and actions, our economic might, and our ideological conviction in the irreconcilable struggle against class enemies.

The KSČ, through its own actions, is weakening the socialist forces in Europe and is violating the common line of the socialist countries on foreign policy issues. Evidence for this comes from the invitation to Brandt to visit Czechoslovakia, where, by some accounts, he will bring up the matter of the return of the Sudeten Germans to Czechoslovakia.³²¹ And what are we to think when we hear ever louder statements opposing the Warsaw Pact? The government organs [of Czechoslovakia] are flirting with the FRG and the United States of America. There is a danger that Czechoslovakia will fall under their influence, since it is known that the USA wants to create a Little Entente that would encompass Romania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the FRG, thereby establishing American hegemony in Europe.

The serious mistakes of the Czechoslovak leaders bring joy to our enemies. The imperialists in the USA and the FRG do not conceal the fact that they have selected Czechoslovakia as the target of their ongoing actions. They are trying gradually, through peaceful means, to destroy the socialist order there. But it is possible under some circumstances that they will use other means as well. We must be prepared for all of this.

That is why, in the letter to the KSČ CC, officials from the fraternal parties who took part in the Warsaw conference candidly, firmly, and resolutely expressed all their concerns about the danger that is looming over Communists and socialist gains in Czechoslovakia. They called on them to embark on a vigorous struggle against the right-wing opportunist danger and the threat of a counterrevolutionary takeover. The situation has now reached the point where the loss of every hour through indecisiveness is playing into the hands of our enemies.

Do the Czechoslovak leaders yet understand the full complexity of the situation, and will they draw the necessary conclusions? We'll be able to tell in the near future.

It must be said that in addition to everything that has happened, a further complication arises from the fact that certain leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia are losing their class instinct. They pay lip service to the existence of a serious danger, but at the same time they fail to wage a decisive struggle against it.

One might ask: why? Can it be that they are just spineless, wishy-washy liberals? Hardly! Dubček, Černík, and certain other leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslo-

vakia know no equal when it comes to the struggle against so-called conservatives, even though the latter pose no threat to anyone and include many devoted Communists.

Under the banner of this struggle, they have dismissed hundreds of party, council, economic, administrative, and military officials and subjected them to groundless attacks, harassment, and outright persecution. This has occurred both in the center and in outlying areas. They have replaced almost all the secretaries of regional, municipal, and district parties. This action, too, was not motivated by any real necessity.

The Czechoslovak leaders disregarded the fact that among all these officials were many hard-working and devoted Communists, who created the party, worked in the anti-fascist underground, fought in the ranks of the Soviet Army against the fascists and in the partisans, and bore the entire burden of establishing a workers' and peasants' regime and of building socialism.

At the same time, these leaders have failed to impose strict party disciplinary measures against even a single member of the vile right-wing opportunist group of Kriegel, Císař, Šik, and others.

The rightist elements are carrying out endless attacks and seeking to isolate and put pressure on the healthy forces in the KSČ. They are now putting forth a new slogan: With Dubček against the Dubčekites! And they are engaged in an unrestrained campaign to compromise and persecute the best cadres of the KSČ who adhere to sound political positions. This applies, in particular, to Kolder, Indra, Bifak, and others.

Moreover, under the guise of democracy, the Czechoslovak leaders are displaying what for Communists is an unacceptable degree of tolerance for the statements of anti-socialist, counterrevolutionary elements and their direct attacks against the USSR and the other socialist countries—Poland, the GDR, Bulgaria, and Hungary. In this way, they are fundamentally betraying the interests of the working class and of socialism.

At the Dresden conference it was said that the CC of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has lost control of the mass media – the press, radio, and television. The Czech leaders acknowledged this at the time. They assured us that they would adopt the most urgent and decisive measures to restore order in the party and the country. Since then, more than three months has passed. But has the situation changed? No, not in the slightest. Not only has the situation failed to improve; it has actually gotten worse. And the point to be stressed here, as you understand, is that the matter could have been resolved within hours if they had asserted order and taken the situation into their own hands. But nothing of the sort has been done.

As previously, these powerful levers of ideological influence are under the control of opportunist and anti-socialist elements, who are actively using them to carry out political terror, deceive the working class, and exert pressure on the healthy forces in the party.

The press, radio, and television are openly featuring hostile, counterrevolutionary, anti-socialist propaganda and

are bringing pressure to bear on the district and regional conferences that are now under way. They are continuing to engage in unfounded persecution against devoted party cadres and are branding them with the label of “conservatives” while extolling the “progressives,” who are members of the opportunist, revisionist group.

Only in such circumstances could a patently counter-revolutionary manifesto appear in the central newspapers in Czechoslovakia under the title “2,000 Words.”³²² Despite the KSČ CC Presidium's formal condemnation of this document, the press, radio, and television are giving wide and positive coverage to it. Moreover, this shameful document has become a lively topic of discussion at district and regional party conferences. At some of the conferences, through the connivance of the CC and regional party committees, the document has been endorsed by some of the delegates.

What is occurring in Czechoslovakia and in the KSČ is far from an internal matter. It is an attempt to strike a blow against the socialist countries and against the international Communist movement.

Demagoguery about freedom of speech is being exploited by the counterrevolution to inflict the most dangerous blows against the revolutionary gains of the working class.

That is where the game of “unlimited” democracy, a Czechoslovak “model of socialism,” and “renewal” has brought us! All of this indicates that the activity of a hostile center, possibly in the KSČ CC Presidium itself, long ago conceived these plans and operations.

The Czechoslovak comrades babble on about their wholehearted support for “democratic socialism,” but they disregard the fact that our country, the first country in the world in which socialism triumphed, has already been living and prospering for more than 50 years in accordance with socialist laws. What sort of “democratic socialism” are they promoting?

If you look closely at what is going on, you find that the word “democratic” is a subterfuge for a transformation of the socialist order, depriving it of its class essence. No such thing as abstract democracy exists in nature. Democracy always was and is class-based. Anyone who fails to recognize this cannot be called a Communist.

The KSČ leadership should have understood long ago that Western policy in Eastern Europe is a seductive policy for unstable elements. Various types of economic reforms and an improvement of the economy in return for Western credits – this is only a trap by the bourgeoisie.³²³

Some in Czechoslovakia are calling for the Communist Party to become an elite party, not a party of the working class. These rightist forces want to soften and dilute the KSČ even more. They are proposing to give the party an injection by suddenly bringing into its ranks some 250,000-300,000 young people, primarily students.³²⁴ What does this mean?

This “theory” is alien to Marxism-Leninism insofar as Communists always have totally defended the interests of the vanguard in our society, the working class. The pro-

posed growth and increased membership of the party must come primarily at the expense of workers.

But that, unfortunately, is not where matters end. It is all too obvious that the KSC, from January on, has been losing one position after another, and that the most important segments in the country are ceding leadership to the hostile forces. A full-fledged counterrevolution has now engulfed the political arena. Now they are no longer speaking, as they were earlier, about mistakes and shortcomings connected with the activities of certain individuals. Instead, they are blaming everything on the party and the socialist order. The chronology of events attests to the consistent and rapid expansion of the rightist elements.

All manner of hostile groups are emerging in the country. The former right-wing Social Democrats have reestablished their party and set up primary organizations as well as district and regional supervisory centers.

All of these hostile and provocative outbursts and actions have not been met with a necessary rebuff either from the KSC leadership or from the government. Moreover, the KSC leaders say that the CPSU and other fraternal parties supposedly are exaggerating the situation in their party and country.

This is being done to gloss over what is in fact a dangerous situation, to induce us to let down our guard, and to disorient the healthy forces in the KSC.

For this reason, we can say, with full responsibility that by losing control [of the mass media], discarding the principles of democratic centralism, engaging in unprincipled discussions and malicious criticism, and failing to punish the increased activity of the right-wing opportunist group, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia is abandoning the principles of Marxism-Leninism and a class-based, proletarian assessment of processes and events in the party and country.

How can it be that a "permanent" plenum of the Prague municipal committee is allowed to carry out its subversive work against the resolutions and measures of the KSC CC and attacking the CC from a right-wing opportunist standpoint?

Undoubtedly, there are healthy forces in the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, but if they do not soon begin to act and do not take decisive measures in the near future to destroy the enemies of socialism, and if we do not give them comprehensive support, it cannot be ruled out that these healthy forces will come under pressure and be thrown out of the party.³²⁵ That would be a tragedy for the KSC, the working class, and the socialist order of Czechoslovakia.

This is something that we, the Soviet Communists, will not permit. It is also something that the other fraternal parties who attended the Warsaw Meeting will not permit. Obviously, our means and capabilities, and the efforts we are making in connection with the changing situation in Czechoslovakia, are already inadequate. For that reason, it is essential to act faster in using all means and measures to put an end to the counterrevolution.

We undoubtedly are using all political, ideological, and

psychological means to influence events, but if, in the struggle, the healthy forces end up being threatened with mortal danger and the counterrevolution keeps up its attacks against the KSC and socialist gains, we will rely on the will of our party, the will of our people, and the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact to resort to the most extreme measures.³²⁶

We understand that there may be a great uproar, and it is even possible that there will be rash actions and armed resistance by extreme right-wing elements acting at the behest of foreign intelligence services.³²⁷ Perhaps this will complicate the situation in the international Communist and workers' movement.³²⁸ We will be using decisive measures to teach a fundamental lesson to the imperialist intriguers as well as the rightists and counterrevolutionary elements.

A blow also will be struck against some anti-party and anti-popular elements who are active from time to time in certain countries that are friendly to us. The counterrevolutionary elements can then blame themselves. Everything must be done to preserve the KSC as a Marxist-Leninist party and to preserve the socialist gains of the working class in Czechoslovakia.

At the CPSU CC Plenum, Comrade Brezhnev's fully authoritative report gave a comprehensive analysis of the situation in the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and in the country. It showed the enormous work carried out by our party's Politburo and the Politburos of the other fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties in helping the leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia evaluate the situation objectively and properly, and in helping them forestall any retreat from Marxism-Leninism.

They have been warned against taking any ill-conceived actions that would be disastrous for the party and for socialism. It must be said that they closely listened to our explanations, agreed with our arguments, and even thanked us for the advice and claimed that all the negative phenomena in the party and the country can be explained by the fact that they, as new leaders, still have not fully gained control of the situation. They also claimed that they will not relent in the struggle against the enemies of socialism, and they assured us that they would need just two weeks to restore order—which soon became a month, and then a month-and-a-half.

The months passed, and matters did not improve. On the contrary, the situation became even more alarming and dangerous. Finally, after assuring us that the situation would be remedied after the May plenum of the KSC CC, and then after the district and regional party conferences, they are now assuring us that it will be fixed after the 14th KSC Congress. But there is great reason to be doubtful about this.

Life has shown that some of these leaders merely assumed the guise of revolutionary phrasing, friendship with our party and country, devotion to the cause of socialism, and fawning assurances. In reality, they acted as double-dealers, saying one thing and doing another.

As you know, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia adopted an important document, the so-called "Action Program," even though the best program for them would have been the resolutions of the KSC's

13th Congress.³²⁹

We have not expressed open criticism of the "Action Program," although we have candidly told the Czechoslovak comrades about its weaknesses, in particular about its retreat from the Marxist-Leninist conception of the leading role of the party. We said that this program itself provided for a further weakening of the KSČ. It envisages an unacceptable partnership with other parties in supervising the country's affairs.

We warned them that their enemies might exploit the weak points of this program. Unfortunately, that is precisely what happened. With the connivance of the KSČ CC, the rightist elements are conducting propaganda precisely by exploiting the weak and ambiguous points in the "Action Program." On this basis, the Social Democrats are stepping up their activity, and various clubs of a dubious nature and purpose are taking shape.

We must now candidly speak out and criticize the "Action Program" from a Marxist-Leninist perspective. The point here is not only that with the advent of a new leadership, this propaganda has not been given a necessary rebuff, but also that in Czechoslovakia itself the propaganda has been given pride of place on the pages of newspapers and on television and radio.

In Prague, an American and unadorned Zionist gives a public speech in which he calls socialist Poland a "social-fascist" country, but Dubček and Černík simply remain silent.³³⁰ It is obvious that all of this is being indulged from above. Such an accommodating stance by the KSČ can only play into the hands of the counterrevolution.

Are these developments accidental? Not in the least! This is evident from the unusual interest that the imperialist circles of the USA and West Germany are displaying toward events in Czechoslovakia and the elaborate promises of large-scale loans that they will give if right-wing opportunist forces come to power and break away from the Soviet Union.

The German revanchists are especially happy about these events. They have even broached the idea of a "united Europe," that is, they say that the "hour of truth, having arrived in Czechoslovakia in different spheres of social and state life, is creating favorable conditions for a united Europe."³³¹

Still, these enemies understand certain things; Bonn and even the Pope in Rome are evaluating the situation in Czechoslovakia and do not want to establish diplomatic relations or conclude any type of agreements, much less give credits, until the KSČ has been destroyed once and for all.

The effort by class enemies to bring about the destruction of the KSČ must instill caution in all of us Communists. Caution is precisely what was expressed at the Warsaw meeting of the leaders of the parties and governments of the socialist countries, where it was said, with all the frankness customary of Marxist-Leninists, that a terrible danger is hanging over the Communist Party and the fate of socialism in Czechoslovakia. That is why all necessary aid will be provided to the KSČ to destroy the forces of counterrevolution, bolster the unity of the party on a Marxist-Leninist basis, and

defend socialism and the great gains of the working class in Czechoslovakia.

Comrade Gomułka said in his speech that the inviolability of the borders of the socialist countries rests on our unity, the strength of the Soviet Union, and the cohesion of the Warsaw Pact.³³²

Comrade Kádár declared that the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the government are ready for any actions that are needed to block the path of counterrevolution in Czechoslovakia.

Comrade Ulbricht said that the Czechoslovak leadership is not in a position to contend with the raging counterrevolution and the demagogic elements, and our duty is to use all means to help the KSČ and its healthy forces gain control of the situation and restore order in the country.

Comrade Zhivkov said that obviously the means we have brought to bear so far have proven insufficient, and the fate of the country and the KSČ are not in the hands of the current leaders. Increasingly, the right-wing and counterrevolutionary elements are in control of the situation. We must comprehensively support and deliver a blow against the counterrevolution through all possible means.³³³

From our delegation, Comrade Brezhnev said that the CPSU and government and the peoples of our multinational country are ready to provide all possible means of assistance to socialist Czechoslovakia against the burgeoning counterrevolution. Every party bears responsibility first and foremost before its own working class and its own nation. At the same time, it bears responsibility before the international forces of socialism.

In fulfilling our internationalist duty, our party and people bore colossal sacrifices to destroy the dark forces of fascism and to liberate the peoples. Our relations with the Communist Party and people of Czechoslovakia are sealed in the blood we jointly shed during the struggle against a common enemy. They are also sealed in fraternal allied relations.³³⁴

The demagoguery of certain KSČ leaders on this matter is inappropriate and pernicious, and it plays into the hands of class enemies. For this reason we are unable and do not have the right to stand idly by while all of this is going on in socialist Czechoslovakia, so close to our western borders.

And if the Czechoslovak leaders do not want to mobilize the party and country for a struggle against the counterrevolution to neutralize it and then deal it a fatal blow, we can openly say that we see things differently and might end up on the other side of the barricades.

They must know that the Soviet Union and its friends in the Warsaw Pact will not permit the counterrevolution to rend asunder the Communist Party and people of Czechoslovakia. In accordance with this, the Warsaw Pact countries will fulfill their alliance obligations to defend the socialist gains of the Czechoslovak people.

We must react sharply to the complex events in Czechoslovakia. These events affect the interests of all socialist countries, and we cannot stand on the sidelines, since we are Communist-internationalists.

The rightist forces are trying to cover up their under-

ground counterrevolutionary activities by pontificating about sovereignty. To be sure, we respect the sovereignty of every country, particularly a socialist country. But if, under the cloak of sovereignty, the counterrevolutionary forces are eviscerating the Communist Party, destroying socialist gains, and undermining alliance obligations, we are not able to tolerate this and must give a decisive rebuff that will annihilate the rightists, destroy the counterrevolution, protect the party and socialist gains, and thereby uphold the existing sovereignty of Czechoslovakia.³³⁵ The behavior of the rightists and their games about sovereignty are reminiscent of a boat sailing on the sea, with each passenger sitting in his own place. Everything begins fine, but imagine that one of the passengers begins drilling a hole in the boat under his sovereign seat, while declaring that sovereignty must be observed. Would it not be better in this case if all the others in the boat ganged up against and tossed overboard anyone who would defend such sovereignty?

In the dangerous situation we face, we must act in a well-conceived way, but boldly and decisively, since time is running out and the threat to the great cause of socialism does not entitle us to act differently.

I, as a participant in the Dresden and Warsaw meetings and also in bilateral meetings with the leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, would like to emphasize the profound anxiety of the leaders of the fraternal parties and governments of the socialist countries and of the KSC's healthy forces about the situation in Czechoslovakia. I would also like to emphasize their unanimous assessment of events and of the measures that must be taken to preserve socialist gains in that country.

The letter sent by the participants in the Warsaw meeting to the KSC Central Committee undoubtedly will help the healthy forces deal a blow to the opportunist group and mobilize the workers and all laborers to destroy the counterrevolution and defend socialist gains in Czechoslovakia.

Comrades! Permit me to express my certainty that Communists in the capital of our republic and the capital oblast, as well as all other workers in the hero city and oblast of Kyiv, unanimously and fervently support the measures and actions of the Central Committee and CPSU CC Politburo aimed at defending socialist gains in Czechoslovakia.

The Communists of Ukraine and the whole people of our republic know very well what is going on in our neighboring state, Czechoslovakia. They evaluate the situation properly and forthrightly.

We assure the CPSU CC that we are ready at any moment to provide urgent assistance to the Communists and Czechoslovak people in the difficult situation that has emerged.

DOCUMENT No. 25

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 31, Ll. 1-4, original in Russian.]

CPSU CC

At the invitation of the oblast committee of the CP of Ukraine, a delegation from the East Slovakian³³⁶ region of the ČSSR, headed by the first secretary of the KSC regional committee, Cde. Miroslav Štěpán, visited the Chernihiv oblast of the UkrSSR from 20 to 24 July to learn about the livelihood of workers and the further development of friendly ties.

The delegation consisted of the following:

Josef Grösser – chairman of the oblast national committee

Jaroslav Ondráček – member of the KSC oblast committee presidium; professor and chair of the department for infectious diseases at the Hradec-Králové medical faculty of Charles University

Václav Jindřich – worker at the “Škoda” factory in Hradec-Králové; secretary of the enterprise party organization

Jaroslava Prof – livestock specialist at a state farm; member of the KSC's Trutnov district committee

During their stay in Chernihiv oblast, the members of the delegation learned about work routines in party and government organs and about the daily lives of collectives at enterprises, collective farms, and educational institutions.

The Chernihiv oblast committee of the CP of Ukraine reports that during the discussions the leader of the delegation, Cde. Štěpán, reviewed the current situation in the ČSSR and expressed approval of the processes under way there.

The thrust of his comments was that over the past 20 years the economy of the ČSSR has not developed, national income and people's living standards have not increased, the management of economic and social affairs has been marked by subjectivism and capriciousness, and conditions have been unsuitable for the fruitful activity of workers, peasants, intellectuals, and party and economic workers. He declared that popular trust in the party was undermined by the unreasonable policies of A. Novotný.

Cde. Štěpán repeatedly emphasized that these shortcomings and the discontent they produce are supposedly the result of an uncritical view and blind imitation of Soviet planning methods, Soviet work styles, and the methods of the Soviet party and state apparatus.

During the discussions, the Czechoslovak comrades emphasized that it was impossible to continue that way, since it was threatening the ideals of socialism and the authority of the party. Although they claimed that the process of democratization of social life and the elimination of subjectivist ele-

ments in economic development are supported by a majority of the party and the people, they did not deny that anti-socialist, hostile forces are trying to exploit this process for their own aims.

When Cde. Štěpán was asked why anti-socialist elements in the ČSSR were being permitted to return to active political life and to use the mass media, he made an unconvincing attempt to attribute this to the lack of unity in the CC and the party, the resistance from supporters of A. Novotný, and the necessity of having the people exert pressure on them. Cde. Štěpán also tried to depict this as a tactic aimed at demarcating social forces so that they can identify who the friends and foes of socialism are. He declared that half of the Czechoslovak nation currently supports the KSČ, a quarter are wavering, and the remaining quarter do not support the party's policy.

When asked why this "process" has been dragged out and the KSČ CC, the government, and the local party organs are not always in control of events, Cde. Štěpán argued that the demarcation of social forces is not yet completed. The Communists and healthy forces of the nation, he added, will not permit a change in the socialist course or in the internal and foreign policies of the state; nor will they permit any erosion of friendship with the Soviet Union.

One of the members of the delegation, Professor Jaroslav Ondráček, who was elected a member of the KSČ regional committee presidium at the recent party conference, expressed strong support for the process of "democratization." From his statements it was evident that his sympathies lie with the countries of the West. During one of the discussions, he stated: "I don't understand and cannot explain to students why we must live worse than the West Germans. After all, their economy suffered more during the war years than ours did, and they have a capitalist system whereas we have socialism. Nonetheless, living standards in their country are much higher than in our country." He spoke a lot about the shortcomings in arrangements for cultural exchanges and tourism between our countries. During one of the discussions, he reported that his daughters twice had gone on vacation in the FRG, whereas he supposedly was unable to send them on vacation to the Soviet Union. Although he gave a favorable assessment of the actions of young people and students in the ČSSR, he did not deny that they are leaning toward anarchism.

A worker at the "Škoda" factory in Hradec-Králové, Cde. Václav Jindřich, currently serves as the secretary of the factory's party committee in addition to his regular duties at work. At the recent regional party conference he was chosen a member of the KSČ regional committee. In the past he worked in the KSČ CC apparatus, but he was dismissed because of his disagreement with the CC's line on economic issues. He worked as a secretary at one of the KSČ district committees, but was soon removed from his post. He was then arrested and served time in prison. He is an active supporter of the "democratization" process, and he spoke in support of the economic platform outlined at the May plenum of the KSČ CC by the ČSSR deputy prime minister, Cde.

O. Šik. According to the members of the delegation, Cde. Jindřich will be elected a delegate to the 14th KSČ Congress and will be recommended to be brought into the CC.

From the discussions with another member of the delegation, the chairman of the regional national committee, Cde. J. Grösser, it is evident that of all the members of the delegation, he has the most clear-headed view of the situation in his country and realistically sees the threat posed by anti-socialist forces. According to him, the greatest danger is that no one in the ČSSR is in any way exercising leadership and no one knows what techniques and methods must be adopted to build socialism according to a "Czechoslovak model."

While pointing out the serious dangers arising from the situation in the country, he said that as a representative of the old leadership (until May of this year, Cde. Grösser worked as a first deputy chairman of the regional national committee), he is now unable to draw attention to himself, since he will immediately be removed from office. He repeatedly stated that he will do everything required of him to forestall the consolidation of rightist forces in the region. Cde. Grösser reported that he has been called many times on the phone in his apartment by people threatening him with physical reprisals.

When the leader of the delegation, Cde. Štěpán, explained the essence of events in the ČSSR and answered questions, he said that the ongoing process will not impinge on the foundations of socialism or the ČSSR's friendship with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. When asked why Czechoslovakia is tolerating anti-socialist actions, he answered that "even a pure stream brings scum to the top," and that the Czechoslovak people have enough common sense, strength, and courage to clean out everything that is carried up. However, he was unable to say concretely how the party, government, and local organs will regain control of the process, and he limited himself to general comments about the party's authority and the healthy forces in the nation.

The members of the Bureau of the Chernihiv Oblast committee of the Ukrainian CP and the members of the Executive Committee of the oblast Council of Workers' Deputies who took part in the discussions with the Czechoslovak comrades conveyed to them their anxiety about the growing signs of anti-socialist trends in the process of "democratization." They also rebutted the mistaken interpretation that the Czechoslovak comrades have of the essence of this process.

Reported for informational purposes.

CC SECRETARY, CPOF UKRAINE
P. SHELEST

22 July 1968
No. 1/74

DOCUMENT No. 26

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 31, Ll. 29-32, original in Russian.]

CPSU CC

The Transcarpathian Oblast party committee reported to the UkrCP CC that on 16 July a meeting along the border took place between the second secretary of the oblast party committee, Cde. V. G. Dykusharov,³³⁷ and a secretary of the KSČ's East Slovakia regional committee, Cde. Jaromír Hetteš, who is the acting leader of the regional committee while Cde. J. Koscelanský is on vacation. Cde. Hetteš's request for the meeting was motivated by a need to discuss the agenda for an upcoming visit of a delegation of party workers from the East Slovakia region to Transcarpathia.

Also taking part in the meeting were the head of the financial department of the KSČ's East Slovakia regional committee, Cde. J. Vislocký, the first secretary of the KSČ's Michalovce district committee, Cde. A. Pirč, the head of the financial department of the Transcarpathian Oblast party committee, Cde. P. M. Honcharyk, and the first secretary of the UkrCP's Uzhhorod district committee, Cde. H. I. Shman'ko.³³⁸

During the meeting the Slovak comrades spoke about the current situation in the ČSSR and, in particular, about the situation in the East Slovakia region.

The KSČ regional committee secretary, Cde. Hetteš, was inclined to play down the danger arising from the situation in the country. When Cde. Hetteš was not present, the first secretary of the KSČ's Michalovce district committee, Cde. Pirč, and the head of the financial department of the KSČ regional committee, Cde. Vislocký, disagreed with Cde. Hetteš's views and said that a very alarming situation is emerging that might have all sorts of unpleasant consequences.

During the discussion, the comrades emphasized that they are alarmed by the fact that the KSČ CC has not informed party organizations about the content of the letters that came in from the fraternal parties.³³⁹ They reported that in connection with this, at Cde. Hetteš's initiative, a session of the presidium of the KSČ's East Slovakian regional committee took place on the night of 15 July, where they discussed this and other matters pertaining to the situation in Czechoslovakia and relations with the Soviet Union. Cde. Hetteš reported that he had asked every member of the presidium to offer his opinion about these matters. All of those who spoke, with the exception of the chairman of the regional national committee, Cde. Gabriška, emphasized the necessity for the KSČ CC to strengthen friendship with the Soviet Union. In particular, Cde. Hetteš said that "Czechoslovakia is the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union is Czechoslovakia." Cde. Gabriška did not make any definite comment about this, but merely said evasively that he shares everyone else's view.

During the meeting, the Slovak comrades reported that the protocol of this session of the KSČ regional committee,

with a demand for the KSČ CC to carry out a firmer and more precise line in strengthening friendship with the Soviet Union as well as a demand for the leadership of the party and government to go to Moscow for negotiations, is being sent to Prague via a secretary of the KSČ regional committee, Cde. Boboňko.³⁴⁰ Cde. Boboňko is supposed to meet personally with Cde. A. Dubček to convey this protocol to him and to inform him about the views of the KSČ East Slovakia regional committee.

During the meeting at the border, the Slovak comrades expressed their views about a number of personnel questions. For example, Cde. Vislocký expressed his fear that Cde. V. Biľak might not be reelected first secretary of the Slovak Communist Party CC at the upcoming KSS Congress.³⁴¹ He reported that Cde. V. Biľak is viewed negatively by the first secretary of the KSČ's East Slovakian regional committee, Cde. J. Koscelanský, and more recently by the first secretary of the KSČ's Central Slovakia regional committee, Cde. Ťažký. The secretary of the Slovak Communist Party CC who is responsible for ideological affairs also has an unfavorable opinion of Cde. V. Biľak. The Slovak comrades reported during our meeting that at the dinner after the regional party conference, Cde. J. Koscelanský had said it was abnormal for a Ukrainian to be in control of the Slovak nation³⁴² and for a Gypsie (he was referring here to Cde. E. Rigo—a member of the KSČ CC Presidium and chairman of the party committee of the East Slovakian metallurgical combine) to be representing the East Slovakian region. Cde. Vislocký indicated that possible candidates for the post of KSS CC first secretary include J. Zrak, the first secretary of the KSČ's Bratislava municipal committee, and an academician named Pavlík.³⁴³

The Slovak comrades reaffirmed the view they had expressed earlier that there is no unity in the KSČ CC leadership. They had an unfavorable opinion of Cdes. J. Smrkovský, F. Kriegel, and O. Šik. Cdes. Hetteš and Vislocký also spoke negatively about the ideology secretary in the KSČ's East Slovakian regional committee, Cde. Olexa, who describes the Soviet comrades as "dogmatists."³⁴⁴

Cde. Vislocký reported that the regional committee of the State Security organs apparently had received a ciphered message from Prague instructing them to monitor the deployment and movements of Soviet troops along the Soviet-Czechoslovak border.³⁴⁵

Cde. Hetteš requested that we inform the leadership of our party that, in his view, it is counterproductive to engage in open polemics in the press, as was done with the article by F. Konstantinov published in "Pravda."³⁴⁶

With regard to the "2,000 Words" appeal, Cde. Hetteš said that he condemns the part of it that is of a clearly counterrevolutionary nature. But he said that 80 percent of the document has been taken more or less verbatim from the KSČ Action Program, whereas only about 20 percent is counterrevolutionary and deserving of condemnation. During the conversation, he also asserted that it was impossible to lump the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia together with the Communist parties of the GDR, Hungary, and Romania, since these countries took part in the war against the Soviet Union.

The Slovak comrades mentioned that a week ago at the Soviet-Hungarian border in the vicinity of Komárno, Cdes. A. Dubček and O. Černík met with the head of the Hungarian government, Cde. E. Fok.³⁴⁷ At this meeting, the Czechoslovak comrades seemed to be hoping that the Hungarian comrades would support them at the forthcoming conference in Warsaw. After this meeting, Cdes. A. Dubček and O. Černík traveled to Košice, where they also invited Cde. L. Svoboda for a brief vacation in the Tatras.³⁴⁸ At the KSČ East Slovakian regional committee headquarters, the three of them held a prolonged discussion. Cde. Vislocký reported that at lunch after the discussion, Cdes. A. Dubček and O. Černík insisted that they would rather be put into prison or become manual laborers than to retreat from the course proclaimed by the January plenum of the KSČ CC.

Reported for informational purposes.

CC SECRETARY, CPOF UKRAINE
P. SHELEST

24 July 1968
No. 1/77



DOCUMENT No. 27

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 32, Ll. 198-201, original in Russian.]

29 August 1968
Registration No. 96/s

Secret

TO THE CPSU CC POLITBURO MEMBER AND
FIRST SECRETARY OF THE UKRAINIAN CP

Comrade P. E. SHELEST

MEMORANDUM

on measures adopted to deal with people who have expressed unsavory views about events in the ČSSR.

The absolute majority of workers in Luhans'k Oblast wholeheartedly and completely support the policy and measures of the CPSU Central Committee and the Soviet government vis-à-vis the events in Czechoslovakia.

At the same time, there have been certain individuals who have expressed unsavory views. Appropriate work is

being carried out with them.

The Councils of Workers' Honor in a number of collectives convened sessions where they discussed the improper behavior of certain individuals.³⁴⁹

For example, at a session on 27 August, the Council of Workers' Honor at Automotive Transport Enterprise No. 12115 in Kommunars'ka discussed the case of a taxi driver, I. K. Khudobyn, who was born in 1923 and is not a party member. While driving passengers around, he expressed anti-Soviet views, claiming that the unemployed in America live better than workers do here. He extolled the multiparty systems in capitalist countries and condemned the Soviet political order, and he spoke disapprovingly about the sending of troops by Warsaw Pact countries into Czechoslovakia.

Some 15 people took part in the Council session: a leader of a chauffeurs' brigade and champion of Communist labor, V. G. Belyaev, a soldier in the Great Patriotic War and leader of a taxi drivers' brigade, D. I. Frolov, a participant in the defense of Moscow and taxi driver, I. S. Zakotyn, a soldier in the Great Patriotic War and champion of Communist labor, the chauffeur A. E. Vdovchenko, and others.

The chairman of the Council explained who everyone was by referring to the services that each had performed. He then provided information about Khudobyn's anti-Soviet outbursts.

From the questions that were asked it was clear that Khudobyn lives well and owns his own home. In his collective, no one had ever interfered with him in any way. It was also clear that he had never been in any of the countries he extolled.

The members of the Council angrily condemned Khudobyn's despicable behavior.

A leader of a chauffeurs' brigade, V. G. Belyaev, a taxi driver, I. S. Zakotyn, the head of auto column No. 2, I. I. Luchko, and a worker, E. S. Hodzevskyi, said that Khudobyn is disparaging the Soviet regime even though it gave him the right to live and work freely and provided him with material sustenance, and that he is extolling a life he has never seen and does not know.

In his speech, a taxi driver, Cde. Zakotyn, said: "I participated in the Finnish and Great Patriotic Wars. I took part in the battles to liberate Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria. I was in Germany. None of these countries is better than our Motherland. You should remember that, Khudobyn. And there is nothing better than our Communist Party, nothing better than our Soviet government. It is simply disgusting for me to look at you after your ridiculous comments."

The members of the Council who spoke demanded that Khudobyn atone for his transgressions by performing honest labor.

In his own remarks at the end of the Council session, Khudobyn acknowledged his guilt and implored the Council of Workers' Honor to let him stay in the collective. He declared that he will work flawlessly, and that if it should prove necessary, he will be the first to go wherever the Motherland sends him.

The Council adopted a decision to trust Khudobyn and

keep him in the collective, but they warned him that if such misdeeds are ever repeated, the Council will request the state security organs to hold him accountable before the law.

Councils of Workers' Honor also met at the "Cultivated Crystal" Mine of the "Red Coal Vein" Trust, at Mine No. 63 of the "Red Partisan Coal" Trust, at "Dry Quarry" Mine No. 1 of the "Red Coal Mine" Trust, at the "Black Sea" Mine of the "Lysichans'k Coal" Trust, and at other sites.

In total, the Councils of Workers' Honor reviewed the cases of 10 people, including a worker at the "Cultivated Crystal" Mine, Yu. G. Rastokyn, a worker at Mine No. 63, L. D. El'tsev, a worker at "Dry Quarry" Mine No. 1, V. I. Sherep, a rock-cleaning worker at the "Black Sea" Mine, V. I. Lanov's'kyi, a worker at the "Central" Mine of the "Anthracite" Trust, A. M. Shklyar, a coal-cutter at Mine No. 68 of the "Red Partisan Coal" Trust, A. M. Runchak, a worker at Artem Mine No. 10 of the "Kommunars'k Coal" Trust, N. N. Abramenko, a tractor-driver at the technical supply facility of the "Lysichans'k Coal" Trust, E. Ermakov, and a house-painter at NOD-4 of the Luhans'k railroad division, K. M. Karyukyn.

At the "Proval's'kyi" collective farm in the Sverdlovs'k district, a party meeting considered the case of a Communist and chauffeur at the collective farm, I. V. Trebnykiv, who expressed unsavory views. The party meeting expelled him from the ranks of the CPSU.

Oblast committee secretaries and bureau members of the Ukrainian CP took part in the meetings of Councils of Workers' Honor.

The reviews by the Councils of Workers' Honor of the cases of individuals who expressed unsavory views are of great educational significance. Through these meetings, the workers themselves provide a correct political assessment of recent developments and deal a rebuff to the demagogues and slanderers.³⁵⁰ The workers also assume control over the future behavior of the individuals whose cases are discussed by the Council.

Councils of Worker' Honor also are stepping up their activity at other enterprises and organizations. Their attention is focused on the struggle against coal-cutters, violators of labor discipline, and other individuals who have engaged in immoral, anti-social acts.

OBLAST COMMITTEE SECRETARY, UKRAINIAN CP

V. SHEVCHENKO³⁵¹

DOCUMENT No. 28

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 32, Ll. 207-208, original in Russian.]

CPSU CC

On 27 August, Radio Liberty broadcast a Ukrainian-language appeal from the Czech writer Miroslav Zikmund to the Soviet public.³⁵² This appeal reportedly had been disseminated earlier by the underground "Brno" radio station.³⁵³

"In these tragic times for my native land," the appeal says, "I, Miroslav Zikmund, appeal to the public of the Soviet Union. . . . You always referred to us [Czechoslovakia] as the most loyal country in the entire socialist camp. Can you really now believe that we are counterrevolutionaries?"

"I firmly appeal to you: Demand from your leaders—from Leonid Brezhnev, Kosygin, Suslov, and other Politburo members as well as from the directors of factories, research institutes, and editorial boards—that the occupation of my homeland cease immediately. Demand an explanation of this unsurpassed treachery by your state officials, who have sacrificed the idea of socialism for great-power interests, caused a split in the international Communist movement, and blemished the honor of the Soviet peoples."

Radio Liberty emphasized that Zikmund is speaking not only for himself, but also on behalf of his friend and fellow writer, Jiří Hanzelka, who has traveled many times to the USSR.

In the final part of his statement, Zikmund specifically appealed to his friends in the Soviet Union, saying: "I request that you, Zhenya Evtushenko, not remain silent."³⁵⁴ Although I am speaking with you today on my own, without Yurii Fedorovych, this does not mean that he is of a different view.³⁵⁵ On the contrary, how could he feel differently when NKVD agents are riding all around our country, just as they did in your country during the Stalinist terror, to arrest thousands of our people who are guilty only of having sought true socialism—socialism with a human face—and of having yearned for freedom, independence, and sovereignty for nations throughout the world, including Czechoslovakia? I request that you not remain silent in the face of this terrible aggression!"

Reported for informational purposes.

SECRETARY OF THE CC, CPOF UKRAINE
P. SHELEST

30 August 1968
No. 1/95

DOCUMENT No. 29

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 32, Ll. 168-172, original in Russian.]

Top Secret

CPSU CC

At the invitation of the Satu Mare, Maramureș, and Suceava county committees and the Tulcea municipal committee of the Romanian Communist Party,³⁵⁶ delegations of workers from Transcarpathia, Ivano-Frankiv'sk, and Chernivtsi oblasts and the city of Izmil, consisting of 3-4 people each, visited these counties of the Socialist Republic of Romania (with which they maintain permanent friendly ties) on 22-26 August to take part in ceremonies commemorating the 24th anniversary of the liberation of the country from fascist oppression.

The oblast committees and Izmil municipal committee of the Ukrainian CP reported to the UkrCP CC about the results of these trips and the nature of the meetings and discussions they had with the leaders of the above-mentioned [Romanian] counties.

The Soviet delegations witnessed the reactions of the Romanian side to the latest events connected with Czechoslovakia.³⁵⁷

Above all, it was evident that the population of Romania has not been given objective information about the state of affairs. It was also evident that information about the Soviet Union has been hushed up, and that a frenzied atmosphere of hostility has been stirred up against our country. Broadcasts on Soviet radio are being jammed at the same time that broadcasts on all the radio stations of capitalist countries are being received without hindrance.

Over the course of three days, the delegation from Ivano-Frankiv'sk oblast (led by the deputy chairman of the oblast executive committee, Cde. A. R. Kakhno) kept on asking the Romanian comrades to give them a Soviet newspaper. These requests, however, went unfulfilled, even though in the past our newspapers always had been on sale in Baia Mare. During commemorations of the liberation anniversary in this city in previous years, Soviet films were always shown, but this year they decided to show only films from the FRG, Italy, and France.

The central Romanian newspapers are refusing to publish materials from TASS and instead are providing tendentious coverage of the events in Czechoslovakia, adhering to the same position that the RCP leadership has adopted toward those events. They also frequently rely on information from underground radio stations in Czechoslovakia.

The official position of the Romanian leadership vis-à-vis the events in Czechoslovakia was clearly manifested during the conferences, workers' demonstrations, receptions, meetings, and discussions in which the members of the Ukrainian oblast delegations took part.

During the speeches at the workers' demonstrations, the first secretaries of the RCP county committees and the RCP Tulcea municipal committee described the assistance provided to the Czechoslovak people by the five socialist countries as an "invasion," "occupation," and other such things. The first secretary of the RCP's Satu Mare county committee, Cde. Uglar,³⁵⁸ even drew a parallel between the dispatch of troops from the socialist countries into the ČSSR and the presence of U.S. forces in Vietnam. In response to these statements, certain people in the audience, who had been specially planted there, cried out: "Invaders, go home!"

The demonstrations, as a rule, were opened by armed detachments of the so-called "Patriotic Guards," which were recently set up.³⁵⁹ In a speech delivered at a demonstration in Baia Mare, the first secretary of the RCP's Maramureș county committee, Cde. Blaj,³⁶⁰ claimed that the sovereignty of the country is under threat. At the end of his speech he declared: "We will not permit any infringement of our sovereignty."³⁶¹

At a meeting in Suceava, the first secretary of the RCP county committee, Cde. Bobu,³⁶² proclaimed a slogan: "We will live, work, fight, and defend our country." But he did not explain whom they would be fighting and from whom they would be protecting the country.

During the demonstrations and meetings, there were no slogans at all about Soviet-Romanian friendship. Nor did the speakers bother to say anything about this. The only thing they mentioned about the Soviet Army is that it struggled jointly with the Romanian army against fascism.

During the receptions, meetings, and discussions, the Romanians' point of view about the events in Czechoslovakia was imposed on the members of our delegations.³⁶³ For example, in a speech at a reception hosted by the RCP's Satu Mare county committee, in which delegations from Transcarpathian Oblast (led by the chief of the Organizational-Party Work Department of the oblast party committee, Cde. V. Yu. Galla) and from the Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg Megyei province of Hungary (led by a secretary of the MSzMP province committee, Cde. Kállái) took part,³⁶⁴ the first secretary of the county committee, Cde. Uglar, said: "At the instruction of the RCP CC, I must make a statement to the delegations of the Soviet Union and the Hungarian People's Republic that the Central Committee of our party condemns the measures taken by the Soviet Union and the four other socialist countries toward Czechoslovakia. The Central Committee regards these measures as aggressive acts, of the sort that humanity has never before known." He then repeated the main points in the well-known speech by N. Ceaușescu on this matter.³⁶⁵ Uglar also declared that the RCP CC regrets that the CPSU CC and the Central Committees of the parties of the other socialist countries did not consult with the leaders of the RCP and SRR and did not inform the Romanian leaders of their intentions vis-à-vis the ČSSR. He said that after N. Ceaușescu's recent trip to the ČSSR, the Romanian leader had declared that there was no danger at all of a counterrevolution in Czechoslovakia.³⁶⁶

Members of the Soviet delegations explained to the Ro-

manian comrades that they are mistaken in their assessment of the underlying nature of the Czechoslovak events. During a farewell breakfast in Satu Mare, which was attended by members of the Bureau of the county party committee and members of the county executive committee, Cde. Yu. V. Galla declared that the delegation cannot agree with the statements that Cde. Uglar made at the county committee headquarters and during the meeting, which accused the USSR and other socialist countries of invading the ČSSR. "Our army," said Cde. V. Yu. Galla, "has never taken on the role of an invader. Everyone knows that we have an army of liberation. Aggression and invasions are alien to our foreign policy and are antithetical to Marxism-Leninism, the principles of proletarian internationalism, and the essence of our social order."

The next speaker, the leader of the delegation from the Szabolcs-Satu Mare³⁶⁷ province of Hungary, Cde. Kállái, also expressed regret about the unfounded allegations that our countries had committed aggression. He declared: "Having survived the counterrevolutionary rebellion of 1956, we [in Hungary] knew better than anyone else that the recent events in Czechoslovakia resembled the situation in Hungary in 1956. One must say with regret that even though the counterrevolutionaries and imperialists drew certain conclusions from the Hungarian events of 1956 and began resorting to other methods, the leaders of the KSČ did not draw any sort of lessons from the Hungarian events."³⁶⁸

Of particular interest is a private conversation that Cdes. V. Yu. Galla and Kállái had with Cde. Uglar during one of the lunches. When Cde. V. Yu. Galla asked Cde. Uglar whether he really believes what he was saying during his formal speeches and whether he agrees that the KSČ would have been subverted from within by rightist elements, Cde. Uglar responded that he and Dubček had studied together in Moscow and therefore he understands Dubeck's character extremely well. Cde. Uglar said he was surprised when he learned that Dubček had been elected First Secretary of the KSČ CC. He then said it was deplorable that such a great furor had been stirred up in Romania around the Czechoslovak question. But at that point he shifted the conversation to a different topic, explaining that they were too isolated in their discussion from the others attending the lunch.

It is worth noting that, as a rule, the official agenda for our delegations was arranged in such a way that the participants got together with only a small group of people and spent more of their time in transit or at enterprises that were not open on the day of their visit.

During the rare contacts that the members of the Soviet delegations had with typical workers in Romania, they heard statements sympathetic to our country. For example, a mechanic on the ferry that transported the delegation from Izmail said: "Who knows where we would be now if there hadn't been the assistance from the Soviet Army and the Russians in general? . . . I wouldn't rule out the possibility that we would be slaves similar to those who are now still under the imperialist yoke." At a festive reception in Baia Mare, some old Romanian Communists asked the delegation

from Ivano-Frankivs'k oblast to convey their greetings to the Communists of the Soviet Union.

Reported for informational purposes.

CC SECRETARY, CPOF UKRAINE
P. SHELEST

3 September 1968
No. 1/98



DOCUMENT No. 30

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 64, Ll. 59-60, original in Ukrainian.]

No. B-40-151

18 September 1968

To the Central Committee of the Ukrainian CP³⁶⁹

The Kyiv municipal committee of the Ukrainian CP has learned that on 16 September 1968 an anonymous leaflet appealing to students at the T. G. Shevchenko Kyiv State University was found and sent from Kyiv to the head of the university committee.³⁷⁰

The text of the leaflet was prepared on a typewriter in Russian script and signed by a group known as "Voice of the People."

The state security organs are seeking to identify the author and typist of this leaflet.

Attachment: photocopy of the text of the leaflet in 2 languages

Secretary of the Kyiv Municipal
Committee of the Ukrainian CP

[signed]

Comrade Students!

You are the intellect and heart of the Country and
Nation! You are the light of verity and the rays of truth!
You are the conscience and soul of the people!

It is your obligation and your duty before the people:

1. To struggle against the runaway bureaucratism of the ruling-party bureaucrats.
2. To wage a merciless struggle against loathsome censorship, which whitewashes everything and is inimical to the nation.
3. To struggle against the parasitism of the privileged party class, demand the elimination of food stores reserved exclusively for party bosses, demand that special hospitals be closed, and organize a march against the pillaging of collective farms and state farms by oblast, municipal, and district party bosses.³⁷¹
5. To struggle against the regime of personalized power and the bosses who hold power in oblast, municipal, district, republic, and all-union establishments and institutions.³⁷²
6. To speak out against the falsification of elections for people's deputies.
7. To struggle for freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly.
8. You must harshly denounce the bosses, who are frightening the people and surrounding themselves with a dim-witted, stony, and fawning protective guard.

Follow the example of the French, Yugoslav, Czechoslovak, and Spanish students.³⁷³

It is time to cast off the yoke and smash the willfully despotic and tyrannical clique of crazed bosses. Down with despotism and whitewashing propaganda. Return to Leninist freedom and Leninist democracy.

Voice of the People.



DOCUMENT No. 31

[Source: TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 257, LI. 2-5, original in Russian.]

CPSU CC

From 24 to 26 October 1969, a party-state delegation from the ČSSR, which was in the Soviet Union for an official, friendly visit at the invitation of the CPSU Central Committee,

the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, and the USSR Council of Ministers, visited Kyiv.

On the first day of the visit, I joined the chairman of the UkrSSR Council of Ministers, Cde. V. V. Shcherbyts'kyi, and the Chairman of the Presidium of the UkrSSR Supreme Soviet, Cde. A. P. Lyashko, in receiving the ČSSR party-state delegation headed by the KSCC First Secretary, Cde. G. Husák.³⁷⁴ Joining us at the reception were the members of the UkrCP CC Politburo, the candidate members of the UkrCP CC Politburo, the first deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the UkrSSR Supreme Soviet, the deputy Chairman of the UkrSSR Council of Ministers, and others.

During the conversation, I told the Czechoslovak guests about the UkrCP's work and about the productive activity in the republic in honor of the 100th anniversary of V. I. Lenin's birth. I also told them about our comprehensive, friendly ties with the other socialist countries, in particular our ties with Czechoslovakia.

Cde. G. Husák thanked me for the heartfelt greeting extended to the delegation by the workers of the capital of Soviet Ukraine. He then gave a detailed overview of the emerging situation in the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

He declared that after January 1968 the KSCC was transformed into a mere discussion club. Opportunistic groups who embrace positions hostile to Marxism-Leninism appeared within the party and even in its very highest organs. All of this had a negative influence on all aspects of the political and economic life of the country.

Cde. G. Husák emphasized the close ties between the internal counterrevolution in Czechoslovakia and the imperialist countries of the West, and he noted the "importance and necessity" of sending allied troops into the territory of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. "We regard this action," Cde. G. Husák said, "as internationalist assistance from the Soviet Union and other fraternal workers' countries to Czechoslovakia in the intensifying struggle against anti-socialist forces and as support to the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia."

Further on, Cde. G. Husák indicated the difficulties hampering the work of party and state organs, which are the result of the unbridled chauvinist propaganda carried out by the mass media over the past year-and-a-half to two years.

In these circumstances, said Cde. G. Husák, we must "start all our work all over again." In his estimation, the rightist forces are further entrenched in many mass organizations of workers – for example, in professional, youth, and student unions. A difficult situation persists on the cultural front, which up to now has been subject to the influence of Western propaganda. In connection with this, Cde. G. Husák noted that not all visitors arriving in Czechoslovakia understand our difficulties. These difficulties can be alleviated only by vigorous political-educational work and even, possibly, by administrative measures.

A large group of activists, Cde. G. Husák continued, have now lined up in support of the leadership. These activists support correct policies and are aiding the struggle to fulfill

the decisions of the May and September Plenums of the KSČ CC. Nonetheless, 50-60 percent of party members are doing nothing for the party. In general they are still unable to be defined. Now the KSČ is paying special attention to the re-registration of all party members and an exchange of party cards.³⁷⁵

Emphasizing the enduring need for the theoretical suitability of Communists on a Marxist-Leninist basis, Cde. G. Husák noted the great difficulties in the party's political-educational work. Because the faculties of Marxism-Leninism at the higher educational institutes, in his view, failed to come to terms with this and themselves became hotbeds of opportunism, the question has arisen about creating new party schools.³⁷⁶

Having indicated that the state system of economic management was practically destroyed, Cde. G. Husák recounted a number of important economic problems looming before the party: an increase in productivity and the stabilization of prices, wages, and foreign trade. In search of the most effective means of resolving these matters, the Czechoslovak specialists are studying the practice and experience of the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries—the GDR, Poland, Hungary, and others. It is absolutely clear to us, said Cde. G. Husák, that “we cannot develop as a country outside the camp of socialism.”

We constantly think, said Cde. G. Husák, about ways to strengthen friendly ties with the socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union, and about ways to overcome misunderstandings that have arisen in the international Communist and workers' movement in connection with the Czechoslovak question.³⁷⁷ Cde. G. Husák noted, in particular, that the Italian Communists still do not have a proper understanding of the Czechoslovak events.³⁷⁸ We must do everything, he emphasized, to ensure that “the Czechoslovak question will be a question only of friendship between our parties and states. There should not be any other sort of Czechoslovak question in the Communist movement.”

At the end of his speech, Cde. G. Husák expressed certainty that the process of consolidation in Czechoslovakia will proceed in the future with rapid steps in both the political and the economic spheres.

The next day, the ČSSR party-state delegation laid wreaths at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, at the graves of Czechoslovak soldiers in the Luk'yanov cemetery, and at the monument erected in honor of the soldiers of the Czechoslovak First Brigade, which took part under the command of Ludvík Svoboda in the battles to liberate Kyiv.

Later that day, the members of the delegation visited the Ukrainian technical design and research institute for superhard materials and instrumentation. After touring the laboratories and shops, the guests met with the staff of the institute. At the meeting, the director of the institute and Hero of Socialist Labor, V. N. Bakul', and the Chairman of the ČSSR Federal Government, Oldřich Černík, both spoke. On that same day the Czechoslovak friends stopped by the Exhibit of Advanced Work in the UkrSSR National Economy.

On 26 October the ČSSR party-state delegation toured

the Kyiv transportation system and rode to the village of Kodaky in the Vasyl'kivs'kyi region of Kyiv oblast, where they learned about the economic work and life of the collective farmers.³⁷⁹ After this, a Soviet-Czechoslovak Friendship meeting took place in the village, attended by as many as 3,000 people. Those who spoke at the meeting, other than the collective farmers, included the Chairman of the UkrSSR Council of Ministers, V. V. Shcherbyts'kyi, and a KSČ CC Secretary, Vasil Biľak.

In honor of the ČSSR party-state delegation, the CC of the Ukrainian Communist Party, the Presidium of the UkrSSR Supreme Soviet, and the UkrSSR Council of Ministers hosted a luncheon. At the luncheon, in accordance with the instructions of the UkrCP CC, the Presidium of the UkrSSR Supreme Soviet, and the UkrSSR Council of Ministers, I gave a speech welcoming the members of the ČSSR party-state delegation. A speech responding to my remarks was delivered by the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Slovakia, S. Sádovský.

On that same day the Czechoslovak friends flew off to Moscow.

The texts of the speeches of the members of the ČSSR party-state delegation are attached.

Transmitted for informational purposes.

CC SECRETARY, CPOF UKRAINE

P. SHELEST

29 October 1969

NOTES

¹In Ukrainian, the name of the archive is Tsentral'nyi Derzhavnyi Arkhiv Hromads'kykh Ob'ednan' Ukrainy.

²Because the Russian version of Podgorni's name is so familiar (from his time as Soviet president) and the Ukrainian version is unfamiliar, I will use the Russian version here. For all other officials who were of Ukrainian descent, I will use the Ukrainian versions of their given names and surnames.

³The head of the reading room determines the “value” of a document, based mainly on whether the item is also stored in the Moscow archives (or some other repository outside Ukraine). The purported “value” does not necessarily correspond at all with the historical importance of a document.

⁴See Mark Kramer, “Ukraine and the Soviet-Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968 (Part 1): New Evidence from the Diary of Petro Shelest,” *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue No. 10 (March 1998), pp. 234-247.

⁵See Document No. 13 below. Excerpt No. 2 from Shelest's diary (pp. 236-239) in my article in Issue 10 of the CWIHP *Bulletin* includes a virtually identical statement by the hardline First Secretary of the Slovak Communist Party, Vasil Biľak.

⁶See, for example, Yu. Il'nyts'kyi, “Istoriya i sovremennost',” *Pravda Ukrainy* (Kyiv), 29 June 1968, p. 2; and Yu. Il'nyts'kyi, “Vernost' internatsionalizmu,” *Pravda Ukrainy* (Kyiv), 7 June 1968, p. 2. For a more elaborate statement of Il'nyts'kyi's views, see his

“Nashe znamiya – internatsionalizm,” *Kommunist Ukrainy* (Kyiv), No. 1 (1969), pp. 85-93.

⁷“Rech’ tov. Yu. V. Il’ nitskogo na Plenum TsK KPSS 17 iyulya 1968 goda,” in “Plenum TsK KPSS: XXIII sozyv – Iyul’skii Plenum TsK KPSS (17.VII.1968),” 17 July 1968 (Top Secret), in Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii (RGANI), Fond (F.) 2, Opis’ (Op.) 3, Delo (D.) 112, Listy (Ll.) 71-76. I have provided a translation of, and commentary on, Il’nyts’kyi’s speech in Part 3 of my “Ukraine and the Soviet-Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968” in a future *CWIHP Bulletin*.

⁸“Rech’ tov. P. E. Shelesta na Plenum TsK KPSS 17 iyulya 1968 goda,” in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 3, D. 112, Ll. 41-51.

⁹Grey Hodnett and Peter J. Potichnyj, *The Ukraine and the Czechoslovak Crisis*, Occasional Paper No. 6 (Canberra: Australian National University’s Research School of Social Sciences, 1970), p. 2.

¹⁰Roman Szporluk, “The Ukraine and the Ukrainians,” in Zev Katz, Rosemarie Rogers, and Frederic Harned, eds., *Handbook of Major Soviet Nationalities* (New York: Free Press, 1975), pp. 30-31.

¹¹Karen Dawisha, *The Kremlin and the Prague Spring* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 23-24, 170-177, 213-225, 258-261, 284, 304, 314-315, and 361-362.

¹²On the spillover into Moldavia, see my articles in Issues 11 and 12-13 of the *CWIHP Bulletin*, pp. 263-264 and 326-335, respectively. On the spillover into the Baltic states and Belorussia, see General V. M. Chebrikov et al., *Istoriya sovetskikh organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, No. 2173 (Top Secret), Moscow, 1977, pp. 543-545. (A copy of this document, obtained from the Latvian archive, is on file in the Harvard Project on Cold War Studies offices.) See also “TsK KP Latvii: Informatsiya ob itogakh oznakomleniya chlenov Tsesisskogo RK partii s pis’mom TsK KPSS ‘O sobytiyakh v Chekhoslovakii,’” No. 1022 (Secret) from B. Indan, Secretary of the Cesu regional committee of the Latvian Communist Party (LaCP), 12 May 1968, in Latvijas Valsts Arhivs (LVA), Fonds (F.) 101, Apridos (Apr.) 32 Lietas (Li.) 82, Lapa (La.) 6; “TsK KPSS Otdel Organizatsionno-partiinoi raboty: Informatsiya ob otnoshenii trudyashchikhsya Estonskoi SSR k voprosam, svyazannym s sobytiyami v Chekhoslovakii,” from A. Bader, Secretary of the Estonian CP, 25 October 1968 (Secret), in Eesti Riigiarhiivi Filiaal (ERAF), F. 130, S. 3141, J.A. 30, N. 203, Ss. 1-5; and “TsK KPSS Otdel organizatsionno-partiinoi raboty: Informatsiya ob otklikakh trudyashchikhsya Estonskoi SSR na sobytiya v Chekhoslovakii,” No. 0149 (Secret), ERAF, F. 130, S. 3141, J.A. 30, N. 203, Ss. 28-30. For evidence of “anti-Soviet incidents” and the spread of “hostile bourgeois ideology” from Czechoslovakia into Georgia, see “TsK KPSS,” Memorandum No. 13995 (Top Secret), 23 May 1968, from V. Mzhavadnadze, First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party, to the CPSU Secretariat, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 22, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 22, Ll. 5-9.

¹³Evidence about the top-down pattern of decision-making, based on newly declassified materials, is provided in my forthcoming book, *Crisis in Czechoslovakia, 1968: The Prague Spring and the Soviet Invasion*. This new information undercuts much of the utility of the “bureaucratic politics” framework employed by Jiří Valenta in *Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968: Anatomy of a Decision*, rev. ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991). Further doubts about Valenta’s approach are raised in Mark Kramer, “The CPSU International Department: Comments and Observations,” in Sergei Grigoriev et al., *The International Department of the CPSU Central Committee* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project, 1995), esp. pp. 109-111.

¹⁴See, for example, the top-secret memorandum from the director-general of the Soviet TASS news agency, Sergei Lapin, 11 March 1968 in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 25, L. 3. Lapin asked the CPSU Politburo for permission to publish in *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* a brief dispatch from the official Polish Press Agency about recent unrest in Poland. Brezhnev personally approved the request: A notation in his handwriting at the bottom of the memorandum says “tov. Brezhnev L. I. soglasen” (“Comrade L. I. Brezhnev agrees”).

¹⁵See, for example, “Informatsiya TsK KPSS o sobytiyakh v Chekhoslovakii” (Top Secret), 23 March 1968, covered in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 27, Ll. 47-59, LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 71, La. 42-48, and RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 10, Ll. 1-12; “Ob itogakh aprel’skogo plenuma TsK KPSS” (Top Secret), 18 April 1968, covered in LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 71, La. 39-41 and LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 82, La. 9-11; “O sobytiyakh v Chekhoslovakii” (Top Secret), 8 May 1968, covered in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 27, Ll. 82-86 and LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 82, La. 1-39; “Informatsiya TsK KPSS po vazhneishim voprosam vneshnei politiki i polozheniya v otdel’nykh sotsialisticheskikh stranakh” (Top Secret) and “Informatsiya TsK KPSS o polozhenii v Chekhoslovakii i o nekotorykh vneshnepoliticheskikh shagakh rumynskogo rukovodstva” (Top Secret), 18 June 1968, covered in LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 71, La. 82-94 and Li. 82, La. 54-55, and RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 1, Ll. 92-99 and D. 10, Ll. 15-26; “O sobytiyakh v Chekhoslovakii” (Top Secret), 8 July 1968, covered in LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 82, La. 59-65 and RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 10, Ll. 27-50; “Ob itogakh iyul’skogo Plenuma TsK KPSS i itogakh Vstrechi v Varshave delegatsii kommunisticheskikh i rabochikh partii sotsialisticheskikh stran” (Top Secret), 18 July 1968, covered in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 31, Ll. 21-35; “Informatsiya o vstreche v Chierne-nad-Tissoi i soveshchanii v Bratislave” (Top Secret), 4 August 1968, covered in LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 71, La. 69-75 and RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 24, Ll. 127-135; “Informatsiya o ‘Kommyunike o sovetsko-chekhoslovatskikh peregovorakh,’” 26 August 1968 (Top Secret), covered in LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 82, La. 71-77; “Informatsiya TsK KPSS o sobytiyakh v Chekhoslovakii” (Top Secret), 2 September 1968, covered in LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 82, La. 78-89; “TsK KPSS,” Memorandum No. P1513 (Secret), 30 September 1968, from I. Shvets, deputy head of sector in the CPSU CC Department for Party-Organizational Work, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 10, L. 97; “O polozhenii v Chekhoslovakii” (Top Secret), 7 February 1969, covered in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 176, Ll. 1-18 and RGANI, F. 5, Op. 61, D. 21, Ll. 79-111; “O sobytiyakh v Chekhoslovakii” (Top Secret), 12 February 1969, covered in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 61, D. 21, Ll. 161-185; and “O sobytiyakh v Chekhoslovakii” (Top Secret), 27 March 1969, in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 177, Ll. 1-8. See also “TsK KPSS,” Memorandum No. 14194 (Top Secret), 27 May 1968, from V. Stepakov, K. Rusakov, and V. Zagladin, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 19, Ll. 109, 133-136.

¹⁶See, for example, Documents Nos. 4 and 25 below. See also “Tsentral’nyi Komitet KPSS,” Memorandum No. 3/40 (Top Secret), from A. Lyashko, Secretary of the UkrCP, 11 May 1968, in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 27, Ll. 82-86; and “Tsentral’nyi Komitet KPSS: Informatsiya o reagirovaniya trudyashchikhsya Ukrainkoi SSR na sobytiya v Chekhoslovakii,” Report No. 1/89 (Secret), from P. Shelest, 22 August 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 1, Ll. 117-121. Among countless examples of meetings where other CPSU Politburo members (Mikhail Suslov, Viktor Grishin, Yuri Andropov, etc.) presided, see “Tsentral’nyi Komitet KPSS: Informatsiya o sobranii partiinogo aktiva Latviiskoi respubliki,” High-Frequency Cable (Top Secret) from Yu. Ya. Ruben, 19 April 1968, in LVA, F. 101, Apr. 32, Li. 71, La. 39-41; “TsK KPSS:

Informatsiya ob itogakh oznakomleniya partiinogo aktiva Moskovskoi gorodskoi partiinoi organizatsii s informatsiei TsK KPSS o polozhenii v Chekhoslovakii i o nekotorykh vneshnepoliticheskikh shagakh rumynskogo rukovodstva,” Report No. 17459 (Secret), 25 June 1968, from V. Grishin, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 10, Ll. 24-26; “TsK KPSS: Informatsiya ob oznakomlenii partiinogo aktiva Moskovskoi gorodskoi partiinoi organizatsii s ocherednoi informatsiei TsK KPSS ‘O polozhenii v Chekhoslovakii,’” Report No. 19176 (Secret), 11 July 1968, from V. Grishin, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 10, Ll. 46-48; and “Informatsiya ob otklikakh gor. Moskvyy, v svyazi s polozheniem v Chekhoslovakii,” Report No. 20188 (Top Secret), 21 August 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 1, Ll. 105-110.

¹⁷See, for example, the department’s summary memorandum on the distribution of the Politburo’s June 1968 report, “TsK KPSS: O rasprostraneni Informatsii TsK KPSS o polozhenii v Chekhoslovakii i nekotorykh vneshnepoliticheskikh shagakh rumynskogo rukovodstva,” Report No. 17254 (Top Secret), from N. Petrovichev, deputy head of the CPSU CC Organizational-Party Work Department, to the CPSU Politburo, 24 June 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 1, Ll. 92-99.

¹⁸Valenta, *Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968*, p. 145.

¹⁹“K voprosu o polozhenii v Chekhoslovakii: Vypiska iz protokola No. 95 zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK ot 17 avgusta 1968 g.,” No. P95/1 (Top Secret), 17 August 1968, in Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii (APRF), F. 3, Op. 45, Prot. No. 38. For further evidence from Ukraine and Russia of the Politburo’s oversight of the final decisions, see “Informatsiya o reagirovaniyakh inostrannykh turistov v svyazi s vvodom v ChSSR voisk SSSR i drugih soyuznykh stran,” Memorandum No. 124-1/177s (Secret), from I. Ishchenko, head of the Intourist branch in Kyiv Oblast, 23 August 1968, in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 31, Ll. 220-223; “Pervomu sekretaryu Tsentral’nogo Komiteta Kommunisticheskoi Partii Ukrainy, Tovarishchu Shelestu P. E.,” Memorandum No. 19/0707 (Top Secret) from Colonel-General V. Kulikov, commander of forces in the USSR’s Kyiv Military District, 23 August 1968, in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 31, Ll. 138-140; “Stenogramma Soveshchaniya predstavitelei kommunisticheskikh i rabochikh partii i pravitel’stv NRB, VNR, GDR, PNR i SSSR po voprosu o polozhenii v Chekhoslovakii,” 18 August 1968 (Top Secret), in Ústav pro soudobé dějiny, Sbíрка Komise vlády ČSFR pro analýzu událostí let 1967-1970 (ÚSD-SK), Z/S 22; “Rabochaya zapis’ zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK KPSS ot 19 avgusta 1968 g.,” 19 August 1968 (Top Secret), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 45, D. 99, Ll. 474-482; “Shifrtelgramma,” from Chervonenko to the CPSU Politburo, 21 August 1968 (Extremely Urgent/Top Secret), in ÚSD-SK, Z/S – MID, Nos. 37 and 39; and an interview with the supreme commander of the invasion, Army-General Ivan Pavlovskii, in “Eto bylo v Prage,” *Izvestiya* (Moscow), 19 August 1968, p. 5. Among other things, Brezhnev sent a CPSU Politburo member, Kirill Mazurov, to Prague to oversee the whole operation and report back directly to the Politburo. See “Shifrtelgramma,” 21 August 1968 (Top Secret), from Kirill Mazurov to the CPSU Politburo, in Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVPRF), F. 059, Op. 58, Portfel’ (Po.) 124, D. 574, Ll. 184-186. See also the interview with Mazurov in “Eto bylo v Prage,” p. 5.

²⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The winter Olympic games in Grenoble, France, on 6-18 February 1968, had ended on the very day of this incident. Since the mid-1950s, the Soviet ice hockey team had dominated the Olympic ice hockey competitions, and the Czechoslovak team also had been a perennial medal winner. (Suspensions had long abounded that one of the reasons Soviet and Czechoslovak ice hockey teams had done so well is that their players were

secretly being paid, in contravention of Olympic rules at that time. Revelations in the early 1980s bore out those suspicions and led to changes in Olympic procedures.) At the Grenoble games, the Soviet ice hockey team won the gold medal and Czechoslovakia took the silver. During an early round of the tournament, the Czechoslovak team had beaten the Soviet team, giving rise to exuberant celebrations in Czechoslovakia. Although Czechoslovakia’s chances for a gold medal were dashed after a loss to Canada (which took the bronze medal), the performance of the Czechoslovak team was good enough to give hope that it might win a gold medal at the next Olympics, due to be held in 1972. This was not the first – or the last – time that ice hockey rivalries affected Soviet-Czechoslovak relations in the late 1960s. On 1 April 1967 the Soviet ambassador in Czechoslovakia, Stepan Chervonenko, sent a top-secret cable to Moscow warning that the final Soviet-Czechoslovak game at the World Ice Hockey Championships in Vienna a few days earlier had brought “a wave of anti-Soviet sentiments” to the surface in Czechoslovakia. Chervonenko noted that “recent encounters between Soviet and Czechoslovak athletes have begun to go beyond questions purely of sports prestige and national pride and have acquired a political character, which might have a detrimental effect on Soviet-Czechoslovak relations.” He recommended serious consideration of “the option of temporarily halting matches on Czechoslovak territory between Soviet and Czechoslovak athletes” and “the option of refusing to send Soviet referees to international competitions in which Czechoslovak athletes are taking part.” See “Otdel TsK KPSS: tov. K. V. Rusakovu,” Cable No. 355 (Top Secret), 1 April 1967, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 300, Ll. 44-54, transmitting a report “Informatsiya o reaktcii v ChSSR na match sbornykh hokkeinykh komand SSSR i ChSSR na chempionate mira v Vene.” Some two years later, in March 1969, another Soviet-Czechoslovak ice hockey game, which was followed by boisterous celebrations in Czechoslovakia of the national team’s victory over the Soviet Union, served as a pretext for the final Soviet crackdown against Dubček, who was forced to relinquish his post as First Secretary at a KSC Central Committee plenum the following month.

²¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Gorak was a frequent target of Shelest’s criticism in 1968, as is evident in several of the documents below (see, for example, Nos. 3 and 9).

²²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Following the death of Klement Gottwald in March 1953, Antonín Novotný became First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. When Novotný’s main rival, Antonín Zapotocký, the President of the ČSSR, died in November 1957, Novotný succeeded him while also keeping his post atop the Communist Party. From that point until the end of 1967, Novotný ruled as both KSC First Secretary and President of the ČSSR.

²³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This period marked the height of show trials in Czechoslovakia, which continued even after the deaths of Josif Stalin and Klement Gottwald in March 1953. For the official report on this era, which was suppressed in Czechoslovakia after the August 1968 invasion, see Jiří Pelikán, ed., *Potlačená zpráva: Zpráva Komise ÚV KSC o politických procesech a rehabilitacích v Československu 1949-68* (Vienna: Karz, 1970). For detailed background and statistics on the use of political repression in Czechoslovakia during the Gottwald and Novotný years, see František Gebauer *et al.*, *Soudní perzekuce politické povahy v Československu 1948-1989: Statistický přehled*, Study No. 12 (Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny, 1993), esp. pp. 3-178.

²⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: For a very useful overview of these issues, see H. Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia’s Interrupted Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 333-411.

²⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The State Security (Státní bezpečnost, or StB) organs in Czechoslovakia, modeled after the Soviet state security apparatus, were a notorious instrument of repression under both Gottwald and Novotný.

²⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Czechoslovak border guards had begun dismantling the barbed-wire and electrified fences along the border with West Germany as early as the last week of March and the first week of April; see "Les militaires enlèvent des barbelés à la frontière germano-tchèque," *Le Monde* (Paris), 5 April 1968, p. 5. A law permitting free travel abroad was discussed in parliamentary committees in the summer of 1968 and was due to be enacted in the fall.

²⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: When a deep split emerged in the fall of 1967 between the anti-Novotný and pro-Novotný forces on the KSČ Presidium, Novotný urged the CPSU General Secretary, Leonid Brezhnev, to come to Prague in December 1967 as a gesture of support. Crucial meetings of both the KSČ Presidium and the KSČ Central Committee were due to be held that month, and Novotný was eager to have Brezhnev attend. The KSČ leader extended the invitation when he was in Moscow in early November 1967 during the 50th anniversary celebrations of the "October Revolution," and he did so without consulting or even informing his colleagues on the KSČ Presidium, much to their dismay later on. Brezhnev had never been particularly close to Novotný (in part because of Novotný's well-known misgivings about the dismissal of Brezhnev's predecessor, Nikita Khrushchev, in 1964), but the Soviet leader decided to accept the invitation, not realizing that Novotný had kept the matter secret from other top Czechoslovak officials. Brezhnev often resorted to "personal diplomacy" in difficult situations, and in this case he was hoping to mend the political rifts in Czechoslovakia and to forestall a showdown between Novotný and his opponents. In the end, though, Brezhnev's visit, far from helping Novotný, contributed to his downfall. Brezhnev initially had intended to offer strong support for Novotný in the leadership dispute, but soon after he arrived in Prague on 8 December, he realized how unpopular the KSČ First Secretary had become. Brezhnev spent 18 consecutive hours holding individual meetings with senior Czechoslovak officials, and by the end he was convinced there was nothing to gain if he tried to prevent the impending dismissal of Novotný from the top party post. Hence, during the rest of his brief visit, Brezhnev generally refrained from appearing to take sides whenever the question of leadership in the KSČ arose (though he did openly endorse Novotný's position on the role of the KSČ Presidium vis-à-vis the KSČ Central Committee). Brezhnev also decided that it would be best if he did not attend a KSČ Presidium meeting scheduled for 11 December, lest his presence be construed as too overt an endorsement of Novotný. Instead, the Soviet leader flew back to Moscow on the evening of the 9th. Brezhnev's abrupt departure and his lukewarm support for Novotný left the KSČ First Secretary vulnerable to a challenge from the anti-Novotný forces, a challenge that paid off when the KSČ Central Committee convened in the latter half of December 1967 and early January 1968. For valuable declassified materials and memoirs about Brezhnev's visit, see "Z vystoupení L. Brežněva při setkání s vedením KSČ na Pražském hrade, 9.12.1967," 9 December 1967 (Top Secret), in ÚSD-SK, D VII; "Záznam telefonického rozhovoru J. Kádára s L. Brežněvem, 13.12.1967," 13 December 1967 (Top Secret), in ÚSD-SK, Z/M; A. M. Aleksandrov-Agentov, *Ot Kollontai do Gorbacheva: Vospominaniya diplomata, sovetnika A. A. Gromyko, pomoshchnika L. I. Brezhneva, Yu. V. Andropova, K. U. Chernenko i M. S. Gorbacheva* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1994), pp. 144-147; and Alexander Dubček, *Hope Dies Last: The Autobiography of Alexander Dubček*,

trans. and ed. by Jiří Hochman (New York: Kodansha International, 1993), pp. 120-123.

²⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This account of Brezhnev's visit is largely accurate (though again it should be noted that Brezhnev did support Novotný's position on a few key issues). It was later widely reported, both inside and outside Czechoslovakia, that Brezhnev had told senior Czechoslovak officials "*Eto vashe delo*" ("This is your own affair") when he was asked to intervene in the KSČ leadership dispute. Declassified materials from Brezhnev's visit show that he made remarks very similar to *eto vashe delo*, but whether he actually used those three words is unclear. Dubček, who was present at the meeting, later was unsure whether Brezhnev had used the expression. Other prominent KSČ officials, such as Josef Smrkovský and Jiří Pelikán, did believe that Brezhnev had uttered the three words, but neither of them was actually present at the meeting. Whatever Brezhnev did or did not say, his posture by the end of his two-day visit was very much in keeping with the spirit of "*Eto vashe delo*." That, however, was not the way Koscelanský viewed the matter at the time. In a secret conversation with the Soviet consul-general in Bratislava at the end of 1967, Koscelanský argued that "Brezhnev's arrival in Prague was very harmful because it implied that come what may, Novotný should be kept in his posts. Brezhnev pretended not to want to interfere in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs, but everyone understood what his real purpose was. He was there to bolster Novotný's standing in the Party." Cited in "Informatsiya k voprosu o polozhenii v rukovodstve KPCh," Cable No. 110 (Top Secret) from I. Kuznetsov, Soviet consul-general in Bratislava, to A. A. Gromyko and K. V. Rusakov, 28 December 1967, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 9-14.

²⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference here is to Otakar Šimůnek, who, in addition to serving as the Czechoslovak representative at the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, was a full member of the KSČ Presidium and a ČSSR deputy prime minister. (He was removed from those posts in April 1968.)

³⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Kryvyi Rih and Donets'k are both in heavily industrialized areas of Ukraine. Kryvyi Rih, in central Ukraine, is the site of a huge iron ore combine and a central power generating station. Donets'k, in the Donbass region of eastern Ukraine, is at the heart of the Ukrainian coal mining and natural gas industries.

³¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Similarly, Nikolai Baibakov, the head of the Soviet State Planning Agency (Gosplan), informed the CPSU Politburo that Czechoslovakia was obtaining many raw materials from the USSR that it could not get from other suppliers unless it paid in hard currency. Czechoslovakia, he added, also was receiving substantial quantities of machinery and semi-finished goods. Trade with the USSR, according to Baibakov, amounted to one-third of Czechoslovakia's total foreign trade. See "Spravka o zhizhennom urovne naseleniya Chekhoslovakii," Memorandum to CPSU Politburo member A. P. Kirilenko, 26 July 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 562, Ll. 7-21.

³²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The large Hungarian community in southern and eastern Slovakia, numbering more than 560,000 (and perhaps as many as 750,000) in 1968, seized the opportunity during the Prague Spring to voice long-standing grievances. From the time the Czechoslovak state was created in 1918, perennial tensions had emerged in Slovakia between the Slovaks (who had languished for centuries under Hungarian rule) and the Hungarians, who in 1968 complained openly about postwar "re-Slovakization" and the suppression of their cultural heritage. The Cultural Union of Czechoslovak Hungarian Workers (*Csehszlovákiai Magyar Dolgozók Kulturális Szövetsége*, or Csemadok) was especially ac-

tive in pursuing far-reaching autonomy for ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia, including separate Hungarian institutions and schools. These demands provoked hostility among many Slovaks, who sought to restore the local branches of *Matica Slovenska* (the main Slovak cultural organ) as a counterweight against *Csemadok*. See Robert R. King, *Minorities Under Communism: Nationalities as a Source of Tension Among Balkan Communist States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 109-123. The much smaller Ruthenian community, numbering roughly 60,000-65,000 and concentrated mostly near Prešov in Eastern Slovakia, initially were less active than the Hungarians in 1968, but were gradually emboldened by the sweep of reforms. In this document, Koscelanský and Il'nyts'kyi refer to the Ruthenians as "Ukrainians," but that is not strictly correct. Although the Ruthenian and Ukrainian languages are now almost indistinguishable (especially the written languages), the Ruthenians actually are a distinct group known as *Rusyny*, who lived for many centuries under Hungarian rule. See Ivan Vanat, "Do pytan'nykh vzyvann'nykh terminiv 'Zakarpattja' ta 'Prjasivscyna'," in *Zovten' i ukrajins'ka kul'tura* (Prešov: Kul'turna spilka ukrains'kykh trudyashchykh, 1968), pp. 602-603. From 1919 to 1938, Subcarpathian Ruthenia (*Podkarpatska Rus*) was an integral part of Czechoslovakia, but it was reoccupied by Hungarian troops from 1939 to 1944. In mid-1945 it was incorporated into Soviet Ukraine, leaving only a small percentage of Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia. (In early 1946, Subcarpathian Ruthenia was converted into Ukraine's Transcarpathian Oblast.) In the 1950s the Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia were harshly persecuted, but in 1968 they made a short-lived – and fruitless – effort to achieve greater autonomy. The Cultural Association of Ukrainian Workers (*Kul'turna spilka ukrains'kykh trudyashchykh*, or KSUT) pressed demands not only for autonomy, but for restoration of the Ukrainian National Council in Czechoslovakia, which had been abolished in 1949. (The Council ended up not being revived, but if it had been, it was due to be renamed the Council of Czechoslovak Ruthenians.) The Ruthenian community in Prešov had long been putting out a number of Ukrainian-language publications, and had also been broadcasting Ukrainian programs on the Prešov radio station. These publications and broadcasts were readily available to many residents of western Ukraine, particularly those in Transcarpathian Oblast, as is evident from the documents I compiled for Part 3 of my "Ukraine and the Soviet-Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968" in the next *CWIHP Bulletin*.

³³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: At times, some of the Ukrainian-language publications based in Prešov, including *Nove zhittya*, did indeed feature criticism of the situation in Soviet Ukraine. For a detailed overview of these publications, see Hodnett and Potichnyj, *The Ukraine and the Czechoslovak Crisis*, esp. pp. 54-75.

³⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Actually, Novotný was forced to resign "for reasons of ill health" just three days later (i.e., on 21 March) amidst a plethora of revelations about recent abuses. After an unconventional "nomination campaign" in late March, which included nominations of Čestmír Císař, Josef Smrkovský, and other leading reformers as potential successors to Novotný, General Ludvík Svoboda was formally approved as the new president on 30 March 1968. Novotný's resignation and Svoboda's candidacy had been endorsed at a preliminary session of the KSČ Central Committee plenum on 28 March. The main part of the plenum began a few days later, from 1 to 5 April, culminating in a vote approving the new KSČ Action Program (*Akční program Komunistické strany Československa*) on 5 April. The program, as published in a lengthy supplement to *Rudé právo* on 10 April, laid out a wide-ranging agenda of political and economic reform. It became the symbolic blueprint of the Prague Spring from April through August 1968. By

the standards of the Soviet bloc in the mid- to late 1960s, the Action Program was remarkably bold and comprehensive, and it was intended as the prelude to a longer-term program of sweeping reform that would be worked out by the government and the legislature.

³⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: During the first few weeks of March, Polish students held riots and demonstrations on the streets of Warsaw and many other Polish cities, carrying signs in support of Dubček and proclaiming "*Polska czeka na swego Dubczeka*" (Poland is awaiting its own Dubček). When the Polish authorities violently quelled the protests, Czechoslovak students responded by issuing a message of solidarity with the Polish students. The episode helped convince Władysław Gomułka that events in Czechoslovakia, if allowed to proceed, would have an "increasingly detrimental effect on Poland." Gomułka became the first Soviet-bloc official to attack the Czechoslovak reforms publicly when, in a speech before party activists on 19 March, he averred that "imperialist reaction and enemies of socialism" were gaining strength in Czechoslovakia. See "Umacniajmy jedność narodu w budownictwie socjalistycznej Ojczyzny: Przemówienie Władysława Gomułki na spotkaniu z aktywem warszawskim," *Żołnierz Wolności* (Warsaw), 20 March 1968, pp. 3-4. The full speech was republished in *Pravda* (Moscow) on 22 March 1968, pp. 3-4. For a detailed overview of the turmoil in Poland, see Jerzy Eisler, *Marzec '68: Geneza – przebieg – konsekwencje* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Trio, 1991), which also includes an extensive bibliography. In addition, see the comments by one of Gomułka's chief rivals and his eventual successor, Edward Gierek, in Janusz Rolicki, ed., *Edward Gierek: Przerwana dekada* (Warsaw: BGW, 1990), pp. 46-48. The unrest in Poland posed a dilemma for Soviet officials, who initially were unsure what, if anything, they should say about the riots. The director-general of the Soviet TASS news agency, Sergei Lapin, felt the need to contact the CPSU CC Politburo for permission just to publish in *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* a brief dispatch from the official Polish Press Agency. Brezhnev personally approved the request. See Lapin's secret memorandum of 11 March 1968 in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 25, L. 3. A notation in Brezhnev's handwriting at the bottom says "*tov. Brezhnev L. I. soglasen*" ("Comrade L. I. Brezhnev agrees").

³⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Department for the USSR was the first of ten regional departments in the Czechoslovak foreign ministry. Although the foreign ministry had less responsibility for Soviet-Czechoslovak relations than the KSČ CC International Relations Department did, the impending transfer of Gorak to this post was viewed with concern in Moscow.

³⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For earlier evidence of Gorak's dissatisfaction with the work climate in Soviet Ukraine, see Document No. 1 above.

³⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In late February 1968, General Jan Šejna, the chief of the KSČ's branch committee in the Czechoslovak ministry of national defense, defected to the United States shortly before he was to be arrested on charges of corruption. Rumors spread that Šejna and General Miroslav Mamula, the head of the KSČ CC's Eighth Department overseeing the armed forces and internal security apparatus, had been behind attempts by the Czechoslovak military in December 1967 and early January 1968 to keep Novotný in power, apparently at Novotný's request. Although details of the "Šejna affair" remained murky even after an official investigation was completed (for lengthy excerpts from the report, see "Proč utěkl Jan Šejna: Výsledky setřetí projednány vládou," published in *Rudé právo* on 12 June 1968, pp. 1-2), what came out was damaging enough that it inspired newspapers throughout Czechoslovakia to publish bitter criticism of Novotný and his supporters. Confronted by these revelations and attacks, hard-line

KSC officials came under increasing pressure to resign. Among many officials who were forced to resign between 5 and 14 March 1968 were Jan Kudrna, the interior minister, and Jan Bartuška, the procurator general, who together had controlled the country's internal security apparatus in close liaison with the Soviet Committee on State Security (KGB). A number of high-ranking Czechoslovak army officers, including Mamula, also were replaced. On 14 March, the same day that Kudrna and Bartuška were dismissed, an announcement was made of the suicide of a deputy defense minister, General Vladimír Janko, following reports of his collaboration with Šejna in December and January on behalf of Novotný. The outpouring of criticism that ensued in the Czechoslovak press led to further calls for Novotný's resignation, and the volume of those demands increased following disclosures that Novotný's son had been a friend of Šejna, and that Šejna's rapid advance in the armed forces had been attributable solely to Novotný's largesse rather than to any professional qualifications.

³⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The fullest official investigation of the reasons for Janko's suicide was not declassified until 1994; see "Informace o samovraždě gen. Vl. JANKA," 14 March 1968 (Top Secret), in Vojenský Historický Archiv (VHA), F. Sekretariát Ministera národní obrany (MNO), Operační správa Generálního Štábu (GS/OS), 154/277.

⁴⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: By this point (23 April), a special commission had been set up under Jan Piller to accelerate and complete the rehabilitations that had begun very slowly in Novotný's final years. No law on rehabilitation had yet been enacted, but Dubček and other senior KSC officials had pledged at the April plenum of the KSC Central Committee that a comprehensive law would soon be adopted.

⁴¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: On the role of Soviet "advisers" in the violent repressions in Czechoslovakia in the 1950s, see Karel Kaplan, *Sovětské poradci v Československu, 1949-1956* (Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny, 1993), esp. pp. 17-58.

⁴²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: At around this time (i.e., in late April), Czechoslovak deputy prime minister Ota Šik indicated that Czechoslovakia urgently needed a loan of at least \$500 million to buy machinery and other badly-needed goods from the West. Šik left no doubt that although he would try to obtain the loan from the Soviet Union, he would turn to Western governments (particularly West Germany and the United States) if necessary. Informal overtures to the West German government about this matter had begun in early 1968, but Šik's public announcement provoked a barrage of criticism from East German leaders, and it also sparked deep misgivings in other Warsaw Pact capitals, including Moscow. The proposed loan was one of the topics that Soviet leaders raised when they summoned Czechoslovak officials to Moscow on 4 May. See "Zapis' peregovorov s delegatsiei ChSSR, 4 maya 1968 goda," 4 May 1968 (Top Secret) in APRF, F. 3, Op. 91, D. 100, Ll. 14, 28-29, 47, 59, 103-104, and 111.

⁴³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: On 17-19 April, just a few days before this conversation with Gorak, a senior representative of the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD), Egon Bahr, paid a secret, unofficial visit to Prague. His arrival was not made public because Czechoslovakia's contacts with the FRG were still deemed highly sensitive. In April 1967, three months after Romania broke ranks with the Warsaw Pact countries and established full diplomatic relations with West Germany, the six other active members of the Pact met in Karlovy Vary and agreed that they would not pursue diplomatic ties or even significantly improve relations with the FRG unless the West German government formally recognized the permanent existence of two German states and accepted the inviolability of the Oder-Neisse line and the border between the two

Germanies. These conditions, championed by the East German leader, Walter Ulbricht, formed what was supposed to be a binding "Ulbricht Doctrine." By the spring of 1968, however, as West German foreign minister Willy Brandt continued to promote *Ostpolitik*, there were increasing signs that one or two of the Warsaw Pact countries, especially Czechoslovakia and Hungary and perhaps even the Soviet Union, might construe the Karlovy Vary commitments more flexibly than Ulbricht would have liked. The East German leader took a number of steps to try to forestall any deviation from the Karlovy Vary agreements, but he remained fearful that Czechoslovakia would press ahead independently in the same way that Romania had. Even under Novotný, the Czechoslovak government had agreed to the establishment of a West German trade mission in Prague, and economic ties between the two countries had increased briskly in the first few months of 1968. In March 1968 the Western press disclosed that Czechoslovakia had made overtures to the West German government about obtaining a loan, and those reports were soon publicly confirmed by ČSSR deputy prime minister Ota Šik (see previous annotation). Moreover, the KSC Action Program, adopted in early April, had called for Czechoslovakia to "pursue a more active European policy" and to "promote mutually advantageous relations with all states." These passages, combined with the gradual improvements in West German-Czechoslovak relations, could not help but antagonize Ulbricht. Thus, when Egon Bahr arrived in Prague on 17 April, Czechoslovak officials were aware of the need for discretion. At the same time, they wanted to explore opportunities that seemed potentially rewarding. Although the SPD was still only a partner in a coalition government, Brandt's party was expected to have a chance before long to form its own government (as indeed proved to be the case). It turned out that the talks with Bahr produced few results – see the declassified account, "Informace o rozhovorech mezinárodního oddělení ÚV KSC s predstavitelem SPD E. Bahrem," 17-19 April, in Státní Ústřední Archiv (SÚA), Archiv Ústředního Výboru (ÚV) KSC, F. 02/1, Ll. 120-126 – but the very fact that the two parties had established direct contact was significant. When word of the meeting later leaked out, Ulbricht angrily accused the Czechoslovak authorities of having reneged on the Karlovy Vary commitments.

⁴⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference here is to a worldwide conference of Communist parties, which the Soviet Union was hoping to convene in Moscow in November 1968. Because of the Czechoslovak crisis, the conference was not held until June 1969, when seventy-five Communist parties officially gathered and another three took part unofficially. Fourteen parties, led by the Chinese and Albanian, declined to attend.

⁴⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest is referring here to a CPSU Central Committee plenum held on 9-10 April 1968. The full transcripts and supporting documents for this plenum were declassified in 1995 (though the materials were not actually available for another five years, reflecting the ambiguity of what the words "classified" and "declassified" mean in Russia). See "Plenum Tsentral'nogo Komiteta KPSS – XXIII Soyvz: Aprel'skii Plenum TsK KPSS (9-10 aprelya 1968 g.)," 9-10 April 1968 (Top Secret), in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 3, Dd. 89-108. The plenum (and Brezhnev's keynote opening speech) were organized around the theme of "Ob aktual'nykh problemakh mezhdunarodnogo polozheniya i bor'be KPSS za splochnost' mirovogo kommunisticheskogo dvizheniya" (On Current Problems Concerning the International Situation and the CPSU's Struggle for Cohesion in the World Communist Movement). Although Shelest's lengthy speech to the "Arsenal" party aktiv covered all the issues discussed at the plenum by Brezhnev and other officials, only the sections dealing specifically with Czechoslovakia are included here. Substantial portions of Shelest's

speech at the plenum itself are featured in Part 3 of my “Ukraine and the Soviet-Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968” the *CWIHP Bulletin*. Shelest’s “Arsenal” speech is much longer and more detailed than his plenum speech, and the “Arsenal” speech touches on certain events in Czechoslovakia that occurred after the plenum was over. However, more than two dozen brief paragraphs (or portions of paragraphs) from the plenum speech are repeated almost verbatim in the “Arsenal” speech. Many of these duplicated paragraphs do not pertain to Czechoslovakia and are therefore not included in the translation here. A small number of duplicated paragraphs concerning events in Czechoslovakia are included here (and are marked as such by annotations) because they were modified significantly from the plenum speech. Numerous paragraphs about Romania that were repeated almost verbatim have been omitted because they can be found in my translation of Shelest’s plenum speech in the next issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

⁴⁶ TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The last three sentences in this paragraph and the whole of the next paragraph are taken almost verbatim from Shelest’s plenum speech.

⁴⁷ TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Omitted here are lengthy sections about the Vietnam war, U.S.-Soviet relations, Sino-Soviet relations, internal developments in China, tensions between the Soviet Union and Cuba, plans for the upcoming world Communist conference, tensions with Romania, and other matters that do not bear directly on the Czechoslovak crisis. The section on Czechoslovakia begins on p. 34 of Shelest’s 62-page speech.

⁴⁸ TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This paragraph and the next three brief paragraphs are taken almost verbatim from Shelest’s plenum speech.

⁴⁹ TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: On 23 March 1968 the Soviet and East German authorities hurriedly convened an emergency meeting in Dresden. Romania was not invited to take part, but the leaders of the six other Warsaw Pact states – Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the Soviet Union – met to discuss recent developments in the Eastern bloc. The Romanians were excluded because they had been uncooperative at top-level meetings in Budapest and Sofia earlier in the year and would probably have behaved in a similar manner at Dresden if they had been invited. Evidently, the rushed timing of the Dresden conference was determined not only by pressure from Ulbricht and the Polish leader, Władysław Gomułka, but also by the approach of a KSC Central Committee plenum (which formally started on 28 March) and by Brezhnev’s desire to act before a successor to Novotný could be named as Czechoslovak president. Having been left out of many of the recent personnel decisions in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Politburo this time wanted to ensure that a politically acceptable candidate would replace Novotný.

⁵⁰ TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Of all the major gatherings between Czechoslovak leaders and their East-bloc counterparts during the 1968 crisis, the Dresden conference was the only one that remained inscrutable until very recently. In the pre-glasnost era, authoritative analyses of the crisis by Western scholars, notably the books by H. Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia’s Interrupted Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976) and Karen Dawisha, *The Kremlin and the Prague Spring* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), contained only brief, sketchy descriptions of the Dresden meeting. Even after the former East-bloc archives opened in the early 1990s, much of what transpired in Dresden remained obscure. Verbatim transcripts of the other multilateral conferences held in 1968 were quickly located in the archives, but no stenographic accounts of the Dresden meeting turned up, and it was generally assumed that none existed. Brezhnev had explicitly requested at the outset of the conference that no minutes

be taken and that the stenographers be ordered to leave the room. His request was duly observed. Hence, the closest thing to a stenographic report in the former Soviet archives and in most of the East European archives was the handwritten notes of the participants. Until 1993, these notes, as well as interviews with and memoirs by participants at Dresden, were the only first-hand source of what went on at the conference. It is now clear, however, that a secret stenographic record – albeit a somewhat incomplete one – was kept by East German officials, thanks to a hidden recording system. The proceedings apparently were taped and transcribed without the knowledge of the other participants, including the Soviet delegates. A copy of the transcribed proceedings, “Stenografische Niederschrift der Beratung von sechs Bruderparteien in Dresden am Sonnabend, dem 23. März 1968,” 23 March 1968 (Top Secret), is stored in the former SED archives in Berlin, Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv (SAPMDB), Zentrales Parteiarhiv (ZPA) der SED, J IV 2/201/777 and 2/201/778. It was discovered in late 1993 by a German researcher, Lutz Priess. The transcript largely corroborates the notes and retrospective accounts of several of the participants in the Dresden conference. For example, the description provided by János Kádár in a lengthy interview in early 1989, based on the extensive handwritten notes he took at the meeting, is amply borne out by the stenographic record. See the interview and documents in *János Kádár: Végrendelet* (Budapest: Kalligram Könyvkiadó, 1989). Much the same is true of the detailed notes produced by other officials such as Vasil Biľak and Władysław Gomułka, whose perspectives on the conference were very different from Kádár’s. Biľak’s notes are available on file cards in SÚA, Archiv ÚV KSČ, F. Gustáv Husák (01), A.j. 131, in Prague, and Gomułka’s notes, titled “Spotkanie w Dreźnie,” can be found on notepad sheets (some of which are inscribed “I Sekretarz Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej”) in the Archiwum Akt Nowych (AAN), Archiwum Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej (KC PZPR), Paczka (Pacz.) 119, Tom (T.) 54, in Warsaw. For the most part, both the tenor and the content of the session are accurately reflected in earlier records. The discovery of the stenographic report is still of great importance, however, not only because it confirms these other sources, but also because it fills in many key gaps. As with the other multilateral meetings in 1968 for which detailed transcripts have recently become available, the Dresden conference can now be studied as fully as needed.

⁵¹ TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Shelest’s brief account here is selective, but generally corresponds well with the transcript and other newly declassified documents. During preliminary contacts to set up the Dresden meeting, Brezhnev and Ulbricht had assured Dubček that the talks would focus on multilateral economic and trade matters and on ways of improving military cooperation in the Warsaw Pact. Invitations were extended to the heads of central planning from all the participating countries. It turned out, however, that the presence of those economic officials was almost wholly cosmetic. The discussion turned immediately to the internal situation in Czechoslovakia, forcing the KSČ delegates onto the defensive throughout. Dubček and his colleagues were dismayed when they realized what the underlying purpose of the meeting really was, and the KSČ leader voiced a strong “reservation” about the sudden change of agenda. Nevertheless, the five Czechoslovak officials continued to take part in the meeting (rather than walking out) and thereby inadvertently legitimized the notion that Czechoslovakia’s “internal affairs” were a valid topic for a multilateral conference. Dubček spoke vigorously in support of his domestic program and reaffirmed Czechoslovakia’s loyalty to the Warsaw Pact. All the other KSČ officials at the conference, including those like Vasil

Biřak and Drahomir Kolder who were distinctly uncomfortable about the reform process, supported Dubček's position and rejected allegations that the KSČ had lost control of events. The response that the Czechoslovak delegates got, however, was surprisingly hostile. In a lengthy, emotional statement, Brezhnev warned that "chaos" would ensue unless the KSČ took urgent steps to reassert strict control over the media, forestall the rise of unofficial political associations, and bolster the "leading role" of the KSČ. The criticisms expressed by Gomuřka and Ulbricht were stronger still. Both leaders charged that a full-scale counterrevolution was already under way in Czechoslovakia. Gomuřka's speech, in particular, was laden with invective and abusive comments that at times threatened to break up the conference. The Hungarian leader, János Kádár, was much more conciliatory, arguing that "the Czechoslovak comrades themselves know best" how to cope with their own problems; but even Kádár sought to convince Dubček and the other KSČ officials that resolute measures were needed soon to prevent the onset of a full-fledged "counterrevolution" in Czechoslovakia. In response, Dubček and the other Czechoslovak officials again staunchly defended the Prague Spring and their own actions, arguing that the KSČ enjoyed greater popular support than ever before and that the Party was fully in control of events. Despite these assurances and the uneasy compromise that ensued, the Dresden meeting left no doubt that the Prague Spring was creating a serious split between Czechoslovakia and its Warsaw Pact allies.

⁵²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest is referring here to a plenum of the KSČ Central Committee on 1-5 April, which adopted the party's new Action Program, called for the rehabilitation of all persons unjustly repressed under Gottwald and Novotný, and elected a new KSČ Presidium and Secretariat.

⁵³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The article in question is Karel Kaplan, "O výsledcích lednového plena ÚV KSČ," *Rudé právo* (Prague), 13 April 1968, p. 3. Kaplan, a prolific historian, was a member of the commission headed by Jan Piller on political and judicial rehabilitations. In that capacity, Kaplan had access to many secret documents in the party and Interior Ministry archives, which he was able to use to good effect, publishing shorter commentaries as well as longer, serialized articles. Kaplan also was one of five members of an official "Commission on the History of Czechoslovakia After 1945" (*Komisa pro dějiny Československa po r. 1945*), which was set up in early 1968 to reassess the country's history. On the same page on which Kaplan's own article appeared in *Rudé právo* on 13 April, an article was published by the full commission to rebut the speech that Novotný had delivered ten days earlier at the KSČ Central Committee plenum. (Although Kaplan was forced to live in exile in Munich after Soviet troops crushed the Prague Spring, he was able to continue publishing valuable books and articles based on his earlier research. Following the demise of the Czechoslovak Communist regime in 1989, Kaplan returned to Prague, where he took up a senior research post at the Institute for Contemporary History and produced a large number of document anthologies and analytical works.)

⁵⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference here is to Zdislav Šulc, "Program nové politiky," *Rudé právo* (Prague), 13 April 1968, p. 1.

⁵⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Presumably, this refers to Miloř Fiala, "Potřeba kritiky," *Práce* (Prague), 12 April 1968, p. 3.

⁵⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The People's Party and Socialist Party in the Czech lands had ceased to be effective organizations after the Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia in 1948. Both parties nominally continued to exist as part of a National Front with the Communist Party, but they had to defer to the KSČ on all matters large and small. In 1968, however, the People's Party and

Socialist Party were gradually revived as separate entities. Although they had not yet become fully independent parties by the time of the Soviet invasion, they were moving in that direction. This was evident as early as March 1968, when the People's Party elected new officers and issued a statement that it would henceforth promote a "Christian worldview." That pledge was reaffirmed when the People's Party released a new program the following month proclaiming itself "an independent and democratic political party . . . committed to a Christian worldview." Although the party indicated that it would remain in the National Front for the time being, it described the Front as no more than "a voluntary grouping of independent and fully equal political parties" and "a forum for dialogue and exchanges of views." The Socialist Party also elected new officers in March 1968 and pledged to become an independent champion of democratic values. In April the Socialists issued a program declaring that Czechoslovakia must embrace "democratic socialism," based on "humanism, democracy, and personal freedom." The Party affirmed that it would "pursue its own goals in accordance with its members' interests" and would never again accept "the right of a single political party to claim to have a universal, uniquely justified, and exclusively correct interpretation of socialism." Further statements from the People's Party and Socialist Party continued through the summer of 1968, and the membership of both parties rapidly expanded.

⁵⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Tomáš Masaryk and Edvard Beneř were two of the three co-founders of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918. Masaryk served as President of Czechoslovakia from 1918 to 1935 (he died in 1937), and Beneř succeeded him, serving as President (including a period in exile during the Nazi occupation) until June 1948, a few months after he was forced to acquiesce in the Communist seizure of power. (Beneř died within three months of his resignation.) After 1948, the memory of Masaryk and Beneř was still widely revered in Czechoslovakia, but officially the Communist authorities had denounced them as "bourgeois opponents of socialism."

⁵⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Economic ties between Czechoslovakia and West Germany had been expanding since the mid-1960s, when Novotný had agreed to the establishment of a West German trade mission in Prague. Economic relations between the two countries continued to develop rapidly in the first few months of 1968. In late March 1968, the Western press disclosed that Czechoslovakia had made overtures to the West German government about the possibility of obtaining a large hard-currency loan (in the range of 200 million to 300 million Deutschmarks). These reports, as indicated in the annotation to Document No. 3 above, were subsequently confirmed by Czechoslovak deputy prime minister Ota Šik. The revelations provoked a sharp rebuke from the East German leader, Walter Ulbricht, who wanted to forestall any improvement of relations with West Germany unless the West German government formally recognized the permanent existence of two German states and accepted the Oder-Neisse border (with Poland) and the inner-German border (with East Germany) as inviolable.

⁵⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This refers to a celebrated speech by Ivan Sviták, a former Communist and Marxist philosopher who became one of the harshest critics of the Communist regime as far back as the mid-1950s. (A series of articles by Sviták in *Literární Noviny* in 1956 and 1957 had brought the first of many official condemnations of him as a "revisionist" and "opportunist.") Before 1968, Sviták had been subjected to reprisals and disciplinary measures (he was dismissed from the Institute of Philosophy in 1964 and then expelled from the KSČ), but in 1968 he became a highly visible proponent of fundamental political changes, includ-

ing free elections, which, he argued, the Communist Party could win only if it transformed itself from “a militarized, bureaucratic organization into a civilian party that upholds fundamental human rights” and “respects the sovereign will of the people as the basis for all power.” In his lectures at Charles University and in other public forums, Sviták especially tried to organize young people around the cause of radical democratization. Many of his essays and commentaries from 1968 were published in translation in the West, notably in the collection *The Czechoslovak Experiment, 1968-1969* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971). Some of his other writings from that period are in an earlier anthology, *Verbotene Horizonte: Prag zwischen zwei Wintern* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 1969).

⁶⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This refers to Leo Jay Margolin, a professor of business administration at New York University and Manhattan Community College. Earlier, he had written a widely-used book about psychological warfare in World War II, *Paper Bullets: A Brief History of Psychological Warfare in World War II* (New York: Froben Press, 1946).

⁶¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This paragraph and the next three were taken almost verbatim from Shelest’s speech to the plenum.

⁶²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The future of Radio Liberty (RL) and Radio Free Europe (RFE) was under review in Washington even as Shelest spoke (though he most likely was unaware of the confidential deliberations). In the mid-1960s, lengthy articles in *The New York Times* and other American newspapers revealed that the two broadcasting agencies had been receiving secret funding from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). These disclosures sparked a debate about the desirability of preserving RFE and RL. Senior officials in the Johnson administration were trying to devise funding and programming options that would prevent Congress from eliminating (or at least drastically curtailing) the radios’ activities. See “The Future of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty,” memorandum from the secretary of the interagency 303 Committee to President Johnson, 25 September 1967 (Secret/Eyes Only), in U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Eastern Europe, 1964-1968*, Vol. XVII (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), pp. 56-66 (hereinafter cited as FRUS with years and volume numbers).

⁶³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: On 23 May 1964, President Lyndon Johnson adopted a “bridge-building” policy toward East-Central Europe, announcing that “we will continue to build bridges across the gulf which has divided us from Eastern Europe. They will be bridges of increased trade, of ideas, of visitors, and of humanitarian aid.” See his speech in Lexington, Virginia in U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-1964* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), Vol. 1, pp. 708-710. For an intriguing collection of declassified materials on the implementation of this policy over the next four years, see FRUS/1964-1968/XVII, pp. 12-112, *passim*. An extended rationale for “bridge-building” was laid out by Zbigniew Brzezinski in his book *Alternative to Partition: For a Broader Conception of America’s Role in Europe* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965). The basic notion was that the United States and other Western countries would seek to build political and economic “bridges” to East European countries (rather than going through Moscow) in the hope of loosening those countries’ ties with the Soviet Union.

⁶⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Some phrases (but no entire sentences) in this paragraph were taken from Shelest’s speech to the plenum.

⁶⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Omitted here are another 17 pages of Shelest’s speech that condemn “Zionists, bourgeois chauvinists, and nationalists” and that deal generally with the world Communist

movement and preparations for the world Communist conference slated for November 1968.

⁶⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Appended to this document is a cover note in Ukrainian, dated 5 May 1968, which reads: “For the Information of members and candidate members of the UkrCP CC Politburo. As ordered by Cde. P. Yu. Shelest.”

⁶⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Il’nyts’kyi’s disclaimer is accurate. As the declassified transcript of the plenum (“Plenum Tsentral’nogo Komiteta KPSS – 9-10 aprelya 1968 goda”), shows, the situation in Czechoslovakia was only one of many issues discussed there.

⁶⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Ján Kuľko had been serving as a regional committee secretary since August 1965, and Alfons Kudelásek had been in that post since February 1963.

⁶⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Ján Mockovčiak’s surname is slightly mistransliterated in the Ukrainian, but is given in the correct form here. Mockovčiak had been in charge of the control and auditing commission since December 1962.

⁷⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This refers to a decree issued by the Habsburg imperial government on 15 March 1848, the day after Prince Clemens Metternich was forced to resign as Imperial Chancellor amidst revolutionary turmoil in Vienna. The decree, which abolished all forms of censorship, was one of several bold – but ultimately inadequate – measures to forestall social upheaval. The law did not withstand the counterrevolutionary backlash of 1849, but it lasted long enough to become intertwined with the Czech “national awakening” led by František Palacký. The 1848 decree was cited in 1968 by, among others, the Club of Independent Journalists and the Club of Independent Writers that emerged within the Czechoslovak Union of Writers in March-April 1968. See “Kruh nezávislých spisovatelů,” *Literární listy* (Prague), 4 April 1968, p. 1; “Rezoluce mimořádného sjezdu čs. novinářů k tiskovému zákonodárství,” *Novinář* (Prague), Vol. XX, Nos. 7-8 (1968), pp. 261-262; and V. Skutiná, “Censura trva,” *Literární listy* (Prague), 20 June 1968, p. 3. Because the revolutionary measures of March 1848 had been welcomed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, numerous Czechoslovak writers and commentators in 1968 defended their calls for free speech by pointing out that Marx himself had described a free press as “the omnipresent, all-seeing eye of the national spirit” and “the spiritual mirror in which the nation views itself.”

⁷¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The publication procedures for *Rudé právo* were mentioned by Oldřich Švestka, the editor-in-chief, during a secret conversation with editors of the CPSU daily *Pravda* at around this time. See “Zapis’ besedy Prezidiuma TsK Kommunisticheskoi partii Chekchoslovakii, glavnyim redaktorem gazety ‘Rudé právo’ tov. Oldrzhikom Shvestkoi,” by A. I. Lukovetz, member of the editorial board at *Pravda*, transmitted to the CPSU Politburo by Mikhail Zimyanin, editor-in-chief of *Pravda*, 20 May 1968 (Top Secret), in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 26, Ll. 33-40.

⁷²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: For an extended discussion of this issue, see Document No. 20 below.

⁷³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This is an indirect reference to the phenomenon in China known as the “Greater Proletarian Cultural Revolution” (or Cultural Revolution, for short), which lasted from October 1966 until the death of Mao Zedong a decade later. Some of the worst excesses of the Cultural Revolution, perpetrated by the Red Guards under Mao’s broad direction, came at the very time that reforms were getting under way in Czechoslovakia. The Cultural Revolution was aimed at destroying much of the Chinese Communist Party, an entity that Mao periodically scaled back through ruthless purges, and was also targeted against anyone suspected of being an “intellectual.” In 1967, the so-called Cultural

Revolution Authority (headed by Mao, Jiang Qing, and Lin Biao) set up a Revolutionary Committee in Shanghai, which launched a chaotic wave of terror across China. High-ranking officials were subject to public denunciations, ritual humiliation, and severe beatings, and the same practices were replicated at all levels of Chinese society. A vast number of people were tortured and killed. Despite the closed nature of Chinese society, horrific accounts of cruelty and violence made their way out of China, and official broadcasts of public denunciations were widely available. Koscelanský obviously is referring to these scenes of vicious humiliation when he refers to the criticism as “Chinese.” The definitive work on the genesis of the Cultural Revolution is the three-volume study by Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974, 1983, and 1997). For a concise account of the Cultural Revolution, see Jean-Louis Margolin, “China: A Long March Into Night,” in Stéphane Courtois, ed., *The Black Book of Communism*, ed. by Mark Kramer, trans. by Mark Kramer and Jonathan Murphy (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 513-538.

⁷⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Il’nyts’kyi is correct here. Brief excerpts from the KSČ Action Program and from Dubček’s speech were published in Moscow *Pravda* on 17 April. Presumably, Koscelanský was hoping that lengthier excerpts would appear and that Soviet journalists and commentators would refer to the Action Program more frequently and favorably.

⁷⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The figure in question here is Ota Šik, who was appointed a deputy prime minister (responsible for economic affairs) in the government formed by Oldřich Černík on 8 April.

⁷⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The reference is to an extraordinary 14th congress of the KSČ. The KSČ’s regular 14th Congress was not due to convene until 1970, but by the early spring of 1968 many officials and commentators in Czechoslovakia were proposing that the congress be held a good deal earlier to accelerate the reform process and permit the formation of a new Central Committee. In late May 1968, the KSČ Central Committee approved the convocation of an extraordinary congress beginning on 9 September 1968. Following the intervention of Soviet troops on 20/21 August, a group of KSČ officials managed to convene an emergency congress in Vysočany with a somewhat limited (though surprisingly large) number of delegates, but the results of that congress were nullified by the Moscow Protocol signed by top Czechoslovak and Soviet officials on 26 August.

⁷⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: See Excerpt No. 2 from Shelest’s diary in my article in Issue 10 of the *CWIHP Bulletin*, pp. 236-239. As Koscelanský says here, Biľak had made his career in East Slovakia, where the local KSS branches traditionally had been more hardline and less urbane than their counterparts in Central and Western Slovakia. (Many Czechs tended not to distinguish among Slovaks, but the Slovaks themselves had long been cognizant of the regional differences.) A large number of officials from Biľak’s network in East Slovakia were elevated to higher-level positions during and after the post-invasion “normalization.”

⁷⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: In response to Soviet complaints, Smrkovský had pledged in the spring of 1968 to introduce new border controls, but, for various reasons, the government took no immediate action along these lines.

⁷⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: See my annotation to Document No. 2 above. Czechoslovak border guards had begun dismantling the barbed-wire and electrified fences along the borders with West Germany and Austria in late March and early April; see “Les militaires enlevés des barbelés à la frontière germano-tchèque,” *Le Monde* (Paris), 5 April 1968, p. 5.

⁸⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: In the document, this phrase is rendered in a rough Ukrainian transliteration (“Zhadame opozichnu stranu”) of the Czech slogan “Žádáme opozičnou stranu.”

⁸¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The May Day celebrations in Czechoslovakia in 1968 were one of the highlights of the Prague Spring. In contrast to the regimented and officially-orchestrated activities of previous years, the celebrations in 1968 featured vast and exuberant crowds who turned out spontaneously to voice enthusiastic approval of Dubček and the ongoing reforms. Marchers in the official parade – as well as many spectators – held banners calling for a multiparty system, free elections, the “restoration” of democracy (as in Masaryk’s time), and even a reassessment of Czechoslovakia’s ties with the Soviet Union. The excitement surrounding the May Day events was heightened still further by the celebration of the Majáles, the Czechoslovak student festival traditionally held in university towns on 1 May. Even under Novotný, the Majáles tended to be boisterous and irreverent (akin to Mardi Gras), often to the displeasure of the Communist authorities. During the limited “thaw” in Czechoslovakia in 1956, students used the Majáles in both Prague and Bratislava to call for nationwide political reforms, expanding on demands made by several delegates at the Second Congress of the Czechoslovak Writers’ Union in April 1956. Soon thereafter, the “thaw” came to an end, and Novotny banned the Majáles for the next nine years. The revived celebrations in 1965, accompanied by flamboyant and off-color posters, again provoked official anger, especially when the American “beat” poet Allen Ginsberg, who was visiting Czechoslovakia, was elected “King of the Majáles” in Prague. (Ginsberg was promptly expelled from the country.) In 1966, the Majáles proved equally controversial, and at least a dozen students in Prague were arrested. Much the same happened in 1967. The student festivities in 1968 thus continued a long-standing pattern of unorthodox celebrations, with the added fervor generated by the Prague Spring. In large, carnival-like rallies around the country, Czechoslovak students (and other celebrants) called for sweeping political reforms and voiced support for the changes initiated by Dubček. The students in Prague also held a demonstration in front of the Polish embassy to express solidarity with Polish students (whose rallies in Warsaw in March were brutally suppressed) and to protest the anti-Semitic campaign under way in Poland. (An even larger rally of Czechoslovak students was organized for the same purpose two days later, provoking a vehement official complaint from the Polish government on 6 May.) For an account of the Majáles activities and other May Day celebrations in 1968, see František Janáček and Jan Moravec, “Mezník i rozcestí reformního hnutí (duben-květen),” in Jiří Padevět, ed., *Československo roku 1968*, 2 vols. (Prague: Parta, 1993), Vol. 1 (*Obrodný proces*), pp. 90-92.

⁸²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: By this point, as reported in *Rudé právo* on 27 April 1968, regional party conferences in Prague, Brno, and Plzeň as well as České Budějovice had called for an extraordinary KSČ congress to be convened in 1968 rather than 1970.

⁸³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Behind the scenes, numerous Czechoslovak officials and diplomats were expressing similar concerns to Soviet leaders. See, for example, “Zapis’ besedy s gosudarstvennym sekretarem ministerstva kul’tury i informatsii ChSSR t. B. Khneupekom,” Cable No. 115 (Top Secret), from V. K. Zhuravlev of the Soviet embassy in Czechoslovakia to K. V. Rusakov and A. A. Gromyko, 1 February 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 71-76; “Zapis’ besedy s zamestitelem zaveduyushchego ideologicheskim otdelom TsK KPCh tov. Ya. Shimekom,” Cable No. 232 (Top Secret) from I. A. Cherkasov, 20 February 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 94-96; “Zapis’ besed s zam. zav. mezhdunarodnogo otdela TsK KPCh tov. M.

Millerom v fevrale 1968 goda,” Cable No. 211 (Top Secret) from I. I. Udal'tsov, minister-counselor at Soviet embassy in Czechoslovakia, to M. Suslov, K. Rusakov, and A. Gromyko, 5 March 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 97-101; “Zapis' besedy so starshim referentom mezhdunarodnogo otdela TsK KPCh t. F. Seminyum, 4 marta 1968 goda,” Cable No. 208 (Top Secret), from I. I. Udal'tsov, minister-counselor at Soviet embassy in Czechoslovakia, to M. Suslov and K. Rusakov, 5 March 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 102-103; “Zapis' besedy s sekretarem TsK SChSD t. Bendoi V., 1 marta 1968 goda,” Cable No. 201 (Secret), from R. A. Lozhnikov, 2nd secretary at the Soviet embassy in Czechoslovakia, 4 March 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 106-107; “Zapis' besedy s zaveduyushchim otdelom molodezhi TsK KPCh t. Ya. Svobodoi i glavnyim redaktorom zhurnala ‘Zhivot strany’ (‘Partiinaya zhizn’) t. I. Valentoï, 4 marta 1968 goda,” Cable No. 241 (Secret) from M. N. Kuznetsov, first secretary at the Soviet embassy in Czechoslovakia, to M. Suslov and K. Rusakov, 12 March 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 110-115; and “Zapis' besedy s chlenom Prezidiuma TsK KPCh, sekretarem TsK KP Slovakii tov. Savol'chikom, 28 fevralya 1968 goda,” Cable No. 238 (Secret) from M. N. Kuznetsov, first secretary at the Soviet embassy in Czechoslovakia, to K. Rusakov, 14 March 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 116-118.

⁸⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Uniates, or Catholics of the Old Eastern (or Byzantine) Rite as they were more formally known, had been forced to merge with the Russian Orthodox Church in March 1946. Most of the Uniates' property and funds were then confiscated by the Orthodox Church. After a further clampdown in 1948, all former Uniate parishes were forcibly closed, and many clergy and ordinary worshipers were persecuted, imprisoned, or, in some cases, murdered. From then on, no Uniate masses were legally permitted anywhere in the Soviet Union. Yet somehow, even under Stalin and Nikita Khrushchev, scattered groups of Uniates were able to keep their faith alive through underground services, especially in western Ukraine (around L'viv as well as in the Transcarpathian region). Although adherents of the faith were severely punished when discovered, the Soviet authorities never wholly succeeded in eliminating the underground Uniate communities in Ukraine. For declassified materials on the destruction of the Uniate Church in western Ukraine, see the documents in Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial-no-Politicheskoi Istorii (RGASPI), F. 17, Op. 125, Dd. 313-315. In Czechoslovakia, the fate of Uniates was, until 1968, similar to the fate of Uniates in the Soviet Union. The Uniate diocese in Eastern Slovakia (centered around Prešov) was forcibly disbanded in April 1950 by the new Communist regime in Czechoslovakia, and a large number of Uniate clergy and worshipers were then persecuted and imprisoned. Over the next 18 years, Uniate rituals were strictly forbidden in Czechoslovakia. During the Prague Spring, however, underground Uniate clergy in Eastern Slovakia sought to have their church legally revived. An appeal to this effect was first drafted in April 1968, and by June the government had endorsed the appeal, giving permission for more than 170 Uniate priests to officiate services. Although tensions soon emerged between the revived Uniate Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church (mainly because the latter had seized most of the Uniates' property after 1950), the revitalization of the Uniate faith in Czechoslovakia was a momentous development in 1968. For a useful overview, see Silvia Ruzicková, “Postavenie cirkví a náboženských společností na Slovensku v rokoch 1968-1970,” in Komisia vlády SR pro analýzu historických udalostí z rokov 1967-1970 and Politologický kabinet SAV, *Slovenská spoločnosť v krízových rokoch, 1967-1970: Zborník štúdií*, 3 vols. (Bratislava: Komisia vlády SR, 1992), Vol. II, pp. 185-233, esp. 211-229.

⁸⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The document incorrectly transliterates Hetteš's given name as Jarolim rather than Jaromir.

⁸⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The article in question is M. Janda and A. Roček, “Marx a Komunistická strana,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 5 May 1968, p. 7.

⁸⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These two sentences were underlined by typewriter in the original.

⁸⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference is to Emil Šip, “I zde třeba zlepšovat,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 24 April 1968, p. 2. All ellipses in the excerpts quoted here were in the original document.

⁸⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This passage is underlined (by typewriter) in the original. For evidence about the restive mood among students in the Soviet Union, especially in Ukraine, see “Studenchestva i sobytiya v Chekhoslovakii,” report transmitted by KGB chairman Yu. V. Andropov to the CPSU Secretariat, 5 November 1968 (Top Secret), in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 48, Ll. 120-153. See also the comments by Brezhnev, Aleksandr Shelepin, and Mikhail Solomentsev in “Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK KPSS ot 21 marta 1968 goda,” 21 March 1968 (Top Secret), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 45, D. 99, Ll. 147-158.

⁹⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The writer in question is Arnošt Lustig (b. 1926), a survivor of Auschwitz, who consistently denounced the Czechoslovak government's decision in June 1967 to break ties with Israel, a decision that he claimed was motivated purely by anti-Semitism. Lustig also was one of three prominent writers (Pavel Kohout and Jan Procházka were the others) who signed a letter on 3 May 1968 to the Polish authorities condemning the anti-Semitic campaign under way in Poland. After the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Lustig was forced into exile and has lived in the United States since 1973 (though in recent years he has spent four months a year in the Czech Republic). For an illuminating interview with him by Pavlina Kostková, see “A Small Stone in a Big Mosaic,” *Central Europe Review*, Vol. 3, No. 28 (22 October 2001), pp. 1 ff.

⁹¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Lustig is referring here to the Six-Day Mideast War in June 1967. In late May 1967, Egyptian President Gamel Abdel Nasser sent troops into the Sinai Peninsula, expelled United Nations peacekeeping forces from the area, proclaimed a “readiness for war” with Israel, and imposed a blockade on the Straits of Tiran, preventing Israeli ships from entering the Gulf of Aqaba. Shelling and terrorist attacks against Israel, which had been occurring on a daily basis even before Egypt occupied the Sinai, intensified along the Syrian and Jordanian borders, as the Egyptian, Syrian, and other Arab armies mobilized for a coordinated, all-out offensive that would “pave the Arab roads with the skulls of Jews.” Faced with imminent attack, the Israeli army preempted the Arab offensive by launching a series of lightning strikes that proved devastatingly effective. Within an hour, more than half of the Egyptian air force's 410 combat planes had been destroyed; and soon thereafter the Egyptian and Jordanian armies were in full-scale retreat. For a concise, insightful overview of Israel's military operations, see Michael Howard and Robert E. Hunter, *Israel and the Arab World: The Crisis of 1967*, Adelphi Paper No. 41 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1967). An excellent reassessment of the events leading up to and following the Six-Day War, as well as the conflict itself, is provided in Michael B. Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), which draws extensively on newly declassified materials and memoirs from numerous countries. Among other things, Oren's book reveals that Egypt's move into the Sinai in May 1967 was spurred in part by disinformation from Soviet officials, who claimed that Israel had deployed nearly a dozen brigades along the border

with Syria in preparation for an attack. In reality, as Soviet officials were well aware, no such deployments by Israel had occurred.

⁹²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference is to Emil Šip, "Prvomájové referendum," *Rudé právo* (Prague), 3 May 1968, p. 2.

⁹³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Ján Majer, a career officer in the State Security organs, actively supported the August 1968 invasion and was appointed first deputy interior minister in 1969.

⁹⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Major Volodymyr Maiorchuk had been head of the 5th Department (responsible for border security) of the Ukrainian KGB in Transcarpathian Oblast since July 1967.

⁹⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Here (and elsewhere in Soviet documents) the term "Zionists" is a codeword for Jews.

⁹⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The mass meeting of young people in Old Town Square (*Staroměstské náměstí*) on 3 May, organized by KAN (see below) and student groups as a follow-up to the boisterous May Day rallies, featured harsh criticism of the KSČ and of Soviet relations with Czechoslovakia. It also featured condemnations of the anti-Semitic campaign under way in Poland. The outpouring of criticism at the meeting was so unsparing that it prompted a lengthy rebuke in *Rudé právo* on 5 May; but this response, far from curbing student unrest, emboldened many of the youth organizers.

⁹⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference here is to General Milan Štefánik, a co-founder of Czechoslovakia, who died in a plane crash in 1919 at the age of 38. The demonstration at Štefánik's grave on 5 May was convened to express dissatisfaction with the pace of efforts in 1968 to reconfigure Czech-Slovak relations. Although the speakers did not call for Slovak independence, many criticized what they regarded as "deliberate obstructiveness" and "condescension" on the part of the Czechs.

⁹⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The officials mentioned here, along with Alexander Dubček and prime minister Oldřich Černík, include Jozef Lenárt, Vasil Biľak, and Emil Rigo, all of whom except Lenárt were full members of the KSČ Presidium. Lenárt had been a full member until 5 April 1968, but he was demoted to candidate status when he became a KSČ Secretary.

⁹⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Josef Smrkovský, an influential proponent of reform in 1968, had been appointed to the KSČ Presidium on 5 April. Although Smrkovský was not among the most radical officials in 1968, he did embrace measures that, in cumulation, brought far-reaching liberalization. In early February 1968, he wrote a celebrated "manifesto" in *Rudé právo* (following up on another widely discussed article he published in *Práce* on 21 January) that laid out the types of reforms the new KSČ leaders were hoping to pursue. See "Jak nyní dál: Nad závěry lednového pléna ÚV KSČ," *Rudé právo* (Prague), 9 February 1968, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The references here are to three prominent Czech Jews: Edward Goldstücker, the head of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union and former prorector of Charles University; František Kriegel, a full member of the KSČ Presidium from April to August 1968 who supported radical liberalization; and Ota Šik, a distinguished economist and supporter of free-market reform who was appointed a deputy prime minister on 8 April.

¹⁰¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The four organizations supporting an early Congress were the South Moravian, South Bohemian, and West Bohemian regional committees and the Prague municipal committee.

¹⁰²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference here is to the Club of Politically Active Non-Communists (*Klub angažovaných nestraníků*, or KAN), which was set up in April 1968 by a group of 144 leading intellectuals and other prominent figures. The club was intended as a political outlet for non-Communist proponents of far-

reaching political and economic reform and, eventually, as the foundation for a liberal democratic party. The two main organizers were Jiřina Mlynková and Ludvík Rybaček, who published several early statements of the group's aims in the writers' weekly *Literární listy*. The club's Manifesto, which was released on 13 May 1968 under the signature of the founding members as well as a few other well-known individuals, including both members and non-members of KAN, proclaimed a commitment to liberal democracy, political pluralism, and the principles embodied in the United Nations (UN) Declaration on Human Rights. See "Manifest Klubu angažovaných nestraníků," *Svobodné Slovo* (Prague), 11 July 1968, p. 1. KAN's manifesto indicated that the club would seek to foster public debate about these principles and to enable members and supporters of KAN to take an active part in elections to the National Assembly. To this end, KAN helped organize the mass demonstration in Prague on 3 May as well as many other meetings and public rallies. The club also applied to participate in the National Front and received tentative indications that its bid would be approved. The application was still formally pending, however, when Soviet tanks moved into Czechoslovakia on 21 August 1968. By that point, the club had been a constant target of Soviet criticism, and thus it was not surprising when Soviet leaders insisted that the group be forcibly disbanded. In September 1968, under the terms of the Moscow Protocol, KAN was permanently banned. During the years of "normalization" under Husák and Jakeš, scattered attempts to rekindle public support for KAN were quickly and brutally squelched. Not until after Communism collapsed in Czechoslovakia in late 1989 was KAN finally resurrected. The club never again approached the visibility it attained in 1968, but as of March 1993 it still claimed – perhaps in an overstatement – several thousand members in the Czech Republic. In the spring of 1995 KAN's leadership voted to merge with the Christian Democratic Party (KDS). The Slovak branch of the group was always very small both in 1968 and after 1989, and it ceased to exist altogether when the Czechoslovak state split apart at the end of 1992.

¹⁰³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For overviews of these organizations, see Galia Golan, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia: The Dubček Era, 1968-1969* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Vladimír Horský, *Prag 1968: Systemveränderung und Systemverteidigung* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1975), pp. 101-257; Vladimír V. Kusin, *Political Grouping in the Czechoslovak Reform Movement* (London: Macmillan, 1972); and Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution*, pp. 563-613.

¹⁰⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This phrase in Russian *kto-kogo* (or in Czech *kdo-koho*) is the famous expression first used by Lenin during the Bolsheviks' rise to power. It casts all political activity in a zero-sum framework whereby one side's gains can come only at all others' expense.

¹⁰⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference here is to a meeting on 8 May 1968, four days after Soviet and Czechoslovak leaders had held bilateral talks in Moscow. The full transcript of the five-country meeting is available in "Zapis' besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditeli bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol'shi," 8 May 1968 (Top Secret), in *ÚSD-SK, 07/15, Archivná jednotka (A.j.) 8, LI. 151-182*.

¹⁰⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This claim is exaggerated. Although a large number of senior military officers had been replaced, the changes did not yet affect "almost the entire General Staff." See Michael Štěpánek-Stemmer, *Die tschechoslowakische Armee: Militär-historische und paktpolitische Aspekte des 'Prager Frühlings' 1968* (Köln: Sonderveröffentlichung des Bundesinstituts für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, 1979), pp. 117-134.

¹⁰⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Omitted from this list is the large Gypsy (Roma) minority in Czechoslovakia, which may have numbered as many as 250,000-350,000. In part because the Gypsies/Roma were not politically organized in 1968 and in part because of engrained discrimination, the Gypsies/Roma were not accorded the same status that other minorities received under Constitutional Act No. 144, adopted in October 1968 in connection with the federalization of Czechoslovakia.

¹⁰⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Actually, the number of Ruthenians (described here as Ukrainians) in Czechoslovakia was a good deal smaller than 100,000 – most likely around 60,000. Of these, most (roughly 40,000) lived in the Prešov region of Slovakia, and another 21,000 lived in the Czech lands. For more on the Ruthenian (*Rusyn*) community in Czechoslovakia, see the relevant annotations in Document No. 2 above and Document No. 20 below. Contrary to Il'nyts'kyi's allegations, the Ruthenians' demands in 1968 did not include the recovery of Transcarpathian Oblast/Subcarpathian Ruthenia. The large majority of Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia, as well as the Slovak and central Czechoslovak authorities, realized that it would be pointless to try to reclaim that territory from Soviet Ukraine.

¹⁰⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: At the time, an anti-Semitic campaign was under way in Poland led by Edward Gierek and Mieczysław Moczar's "Partisans." This may have helped prompt the Polish colonel's question.

¹¹⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference here is to Josef Pavel, an ardent reformer who had been appointed minister of the interior in March 1968, with responsibility for the State Security organs as well as the regular police. In Czechoslovakia, as in other Warsaw Pact countries, the local police were controlled by the central ministry of interior rather than by local governments. Although local officials obviously had some influence over the police within their jurisdiction (both directly and indirectly), the centralized administrative structure often caused friction between the central ministries and local officials.

¹¹¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Pavel had taken a number of steps by this point that indicated his wariness of the Soviet KGB's role in Czechoslovakia, a position that infuriated Moscow. This was one of the reasons that Soviet leaders repeatedly demanded that Pavel be replaced.

¹¹²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For the most part, this assessment was accurate. Although Soviet leaders were concerned that reformist sentiments might eventually spread into the Czechoslovak State Security (*Státní bezpečnost*, or StB) organs, they had far greater confidence about the reliability of the StB than about the reliability of the Czechoslovak army. At Moscow's behest, the Czechoslovak army was confined to its barracks when Soviet troops invaded Czechoslovakia and for several days thereafter. By contrast, Soviet commanders relied on the StB for supporting functions during the invasion. In the early morning hours of 21 August, StB units arrested Dubček and other leading KSČ reformers.

¹¹³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Colonel Jan Záruba was actually the first deputy interior minister, not just a deputy minister. He had been appointed to that job in April 1965 at the same time that Josef Kudrna was appointed minister; but unlike Kudrna, who was forced to resign in March 1968, Záruba had held onto his post.

¹¹⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In order, these ČSSR State Security officials were Anton Široký, Jozef Katan, and Jiří Černický, all of whom were from the Čierna region.

¹¹⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These UkrKGB officials were Vasyl' Oleinik and Pavlo Demochko.

¹¹⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Soviet officials, too, were increasingly worried about the spread of reformist sentiment within the

Czechoslovak Border Guards. These concerns had become so acute by August 1968 that preliminary detachments of Soviet troops were sent to neutralize the Border Guards before the main invading forces moved in.

¹¹⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: A number of Czechoslovak officials (and former officials) from the State Security organs, the Justice Ministry, the Public Security Ministry, and the Interior Ministry had committed suicide in the spring of 1968 after the publication of reports documenting their participation in the mass repression and abuses of the 1950s.

¹¹⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This Interior Ministry conference took place on 6 May. See "Bez důvěry veřejností nemůže bezpečnost plnit úkoly," *Rudé právo* (Prague), 7 May 1968, pp. 1-2. Smrkovský's speech there earned tentative approval from Brezhnev at the five-country meeting in Moscow two days later: "We also have information about Cde. Smrkovský's speech at a meeting of activists in the Ministry of Internal Affairs on 6 May, that is, just after he returned from Moscow. Cde. Smrkovský said it was necessary to struggle against counterrevolution and to appeal to the people for help and support. If the measures that the KSČ leadership and the government must take do not help, it will be necessary to act as in February 1948, that is, to have the working class come out into the streets with arms. If this information about Cde. Smrkovský's speech is accurate, it's a good sign that the Czechoslovak leaders drew the proper conclusions from the Moscow talks [on 4 May]." Cited from "Zapis' besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditeli bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol'shi," 8 May 1968 (Top Secret), in SÚA, Arch. ÚV KSČ, F. 07/15, L. 157.

¹¹⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Under the KSČ Action Program, the State Security (StB) forces were supposed to concentrate exclusively on foreign counterintelligence, not on internal matters. Responsibility for domestic anti-crime activities and public order was to rest solely with a separate Public Security (VB) body. Draft legislation laying out these responsibilities was approved by a parliamentary committee in June, but had not actually taken effect by the time of the Soviet-led invasion. Other sweeping reforms were planned in the Czechoslovak security apparatus, but these, too, were never adopted because of the invasion. For an outline of the planned reforms, see the lengthy, top-secret report on "Problems with the Policy of Safeguarding the Internal and External Security of the State, Their Status at Present, and the Basic Ways of Resolving Them," prepared under the auspices of Josef Pavel for the KSČ's Extraordinary Fourteenth Congress. A copy of the report, which was leaked to the Soviet embassy and transmitted to the Soviet Politburo, can be found in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 310, Ll. 121-153. The elimination of the StB's domestic functions was cited by Walter Ulbricht during the Warsaw Pact conference on 8 May as an example of the "counterrevolution" under way in Czechoslovakia: "[Josef Pavel] is doing great harm to the Communist Party and to socialism. In effect he is liquidating the State Security organs, dividing them into two parts: into counterintelligence organs, and into those dealing with public order, that is, the police. By the way, this step is mandated in the Action Program, where it says that security organs should fight only against foreign intelligence services and do not have the right to be concerned with the life and opinions of Czechoslovak citizens. This means that today the KSČ leadership and the leadership of the ČSSR, as a socialist country, are rejecting the one thing that every state needs for its existence and are destroying the instruments of state power. And this is being done in conjunction with declarations that socialist democracy is 'much more expansive than bourgeois democracy.' Yet bourgeois countries maintain and strengthen their police forces and use them to fight against the Communist movement. . . . So, in Czechoslovakia

the revisionists are ‘expanding’ bourgeois democracy by destroying their own organs of state power. And this is called socialist democracy!” Cited in, “Zapis’ besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditeli bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol’shi,” L. 32.

¹²⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: What is not mentioned here is that KSČ leaders were deliberately excluded from the 8 May meeting. When Dubček and his colleagues were summoned to Moscow for bilateral talks on 4 May, they were not even informed that a multilateral meeting would be taking place four days later. The Czechoslovak authorities did not learn about the meeting until they read a brief communiqué about it in the press. See the transcript, cited above.

¹²¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This refers to Z. Hoření, “Schůzka pěti v Moskvě,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 11 May 1968, p. 3, which argued that Czechoslovakia and the KSČ apparently had been “excommunicated from the inner core” of the socialist camp. See also the follow-up story by Zdeněk Hoření, “Ještě ke schůzce pěti,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 13 May 1968, p. 7.

¹²²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The East German authorities had been waging a vehement campaign against Smrkovský since late March, when a senior SED Politburo member, Kurt Hager, singled out the KSČ official for special condemnation. See “Wir sagen Ja zur sozialistischen Verfassung,” *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), 27 March 1968, p. 7. Hager and Ulbricht kept up these criticisms in subsequent weeks, including at the Moscow conference on 8 May, as mentioned here. See “Zapis’ besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditeli bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol’shi,” Ll. 161-168.

¹²³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: “Rozhodnutí presidenta republiky o amnestii,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 9 May 1968, p. 2.

¹²⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: In the leadup to the KSČ Central Committee plenum in May 1968, a considerable number of pro-Novotný leaflets were distributed anonymously in Prague and Brno by hardline elements from the StB and the KSČ central apparatus. Some Czechoslovak officials suspected that Soviet KGB or embassy personnel were responsible for the leaflets. (See, for example, the comments of Ján Majer cited in Document No. 9 below.) It is clear, from documents that are currently (or were formerly) available in the Russian archives, that Soviet embassy officials were well aware of the leaflet distribution, but it is not yet clear whether they instigated or actively abetted the campaign. It was widely rumored at the time that the printing facilities of *Problemy mira i sotsializma*, a Prague-based journal published in many languages by the CPSU International Department, had been used in producing at least some of the leaflets, but no conclusive documentary evidence along these lines has yet emerged. Presumably, materials stored in the KGB archive and Presidential Archive, which are not yet available, would shed greater light on the matter.

¹²⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The People’s Militia (*Lidová milice*) were paramilitary units under the direct control of the KSČ leadership. These units, known for their staunch loyalty to orthodox Marxism-Leninism, had been among the chief enforcers of Communist rule.

¹²⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This refers to a violent uprising at a prison camp (“corrective educational facility”) in Minkovice u Liberce on 23-24 April, which erupted after egregiously harsh conditions were not eased. The incident was widely covered in the Czechoslovak press and led to calls for sweeping reforms of the prison system. See “Vzpouza v nápravně výchovném ústavu v Minkovicích,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 24 April 1968, p. 2; “První den po vzpouře vězňů,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 25 April 1968, p. 6; and K. Lorenc, “Případ Minkovice,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 26 April 1968, p. 3.

¹²⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: See “O aktuálních otázkách ministerstva vnitra,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 1 May 1968, p. 9; and “Bez důvěry veřejností nemůže bezpečnost plnit úkoly,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 7 May 1968, pp. 1-2.

¹²⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Documents pertaining to these events will be published in the next issue of the CWIHP *Bulletin*.

¹²⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Vasyl’ Rusyn had been the head of the Transcarpathian Oblast executive committee since May 1957 and was also a candidate member of the UkrCP Central Committee.

¹³⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The officials listed here are Stanisław Kruczek, Edward Duda, Ferenc Bodnár, and Lajos Papp.

¹³¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The officials listed here, in addition to Koscelanský, are Jozef Gabriška, Štefán Boboňko, Vincent Ondrušek (his name is misspelled here as Ondruško; later in the document it is spelled correctly), Jozef Kubašovský, Ján Novický, and Štefán Oleár.

¹³²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Dubček and other Czechoslovak officials frequently reassured their Soviet counterparts in 1968 that they would soon “restore order” in the mass media, but Soviet leaders increasingly doubted that these promises would ever be fulfilled.

¹³³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: These same matters were raised (almost word for word) by Yurii Il’nyts’kyi, the first secretary of the UkrCP’s Transcarpathian Oblast committee, in his speech to the CPSU Central Committee plenum on 17 July 1968. See Part 3 of my article in the next issue of the CWIHP *Bulletin*.

¹³⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Ludvík Černý had been the lord mayor of the Prague municipal executive committee since July 1964.

¹³⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The references here are to Josef Smrkovský, one of the most influential members of the Czechoslovak leadership (who became a full member of the KSČ Presidium on 5 April 1968), and Imre Nagy, the reformist prime minister in Hungary in 1953-1955 who was briefly restored to power in October-November 1956, during the abortive revolution in Hungary. After Soviet troops invaded Hungary en masse in early November 1956, Nagy sought refuge in the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest, but he subsequently was arrested by Soviet forces who deceived him into leaving the embassy building. In June 1958 he was executed by the Hungarian government and buried in an unmarked grave. Until 1989, Nagy was officially portrayed by the Hungarian and Soviet authorities as the leader of a “counterrevolutionary rebellion” and a “traitor.”

¹³⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The references here are to Čestmír Císař, a KSČ Secretary since 5 April 1968, and Josef Pavel, the newly appointed interior minister (see Document No. 7 *supra*). Both were identified with the avidly pro-reform group in the KSČ. From early May on, Soviet leaders repeatedly – but unsuccessfully – urged Dubček to remove Císař and Pavel from their posts.

¹³⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Kruczek’s statement reflects the sentiments that Gomułka and other senior PZPR officials were expressing both privately and (to some extent) publicly. See, for example, Gomułka’s comments in “Zapis’ besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditeli bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol’shi,” Ll. 1-42. See also the interviews with high-ranking Polish military officers who took part in the invasion, in Lech Kowalski, ed., *Kryptonim “Dunaj”*: *Udział wojsk polskich w interwencji zbrojnej w Czechosłowacji w 1968 roku* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1992).

¹³⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: These allegations pertain to national minorities in Czechoslovakia: the large Hungarian community and much smaller Ruthenian (*Rusyn*) community in Slovakia (discussed above), and the small Polish community (numbering roughly 71,000) in eastern Moravia, near the borders with Poland and Slovakia. The number of Ruthenians in the Prešov region (de-

scribed here as Ukrainians) was far less than 200,000, as discussed earlier.

¹³⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Ivan Chendei was a well-known writer, satirist, and intellectual in the Subcarpathian Ruthenian region (i.e., the Transcarpathian Oblast) of Soviet Ukraine. As of 1968, his books, published both in Ukrainian/Ruthenian and in Russian translation, included *Bereznevyi snih: Povisti ta opovidannya* (Kyiv: Molod', 1968); *Teren tsvite: Novely, povist'* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 1967); *Koly na ranok blahoslovlyalosya* (Uzhhorod: Karpaty, 1967); *Znaiomtes': Tyachiv, Rakhiv, Yasynya* (Uzhhorod: Karpaty, 1966); *Yak cholovik vid'mu pidkuvav, a kishku vkhyyv pratsyuvatakh: Zakarpats'ki narodni kazky* (Uzhhorod, Karpaty, 1966); *Ptakhy polyshayut' hnizda: Roman* (Kyiv: Radyans'kyi pys'mennyk, 1965); *Poedyinka: Opovidannya* (Kyiv: Derzhlitvydav, 1962); *Teren tsvite* (Uzhhorod: Zakarpats'ke obl. vyd-vo, 1958); *Viter z polonyn: Opovidannya ta povist'* (Kyiv: Derzhlitvydav Ukrainy, 1958); *Skav pip cherez plit: Zbirka zakarpats'koho ukrains'koho narodnoho humoru i satyry pro relihiu, tserkvu i popiv* (Uzhhorod: Zakarpats'ke obl. vyd-vo, 1958). He continued to produce many books and short stories (and even a film script) in the 1970s and 1980s.

¹⁴⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: See the preceding document for Zhabchenko's account of this meeting.

¹⁴¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: See the comments about this matter in Document No. 8 above.

¹⁴²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest's strong assertions here provide a valuable illustration of his tendency to put the most sinister gloss possible on events in Czechoslovakia. Zhabchenko's own report (see Document No. 7) was much more qualified in its assessment of Majer's motives. By contrast, Shelest chose to state unequivocally that the only reasons Majer wanted to meet with Zhabchenko were to complain about the anti-reformist leaflets and to find out what had happened at the 8 May conference in Moscow.

¹⁴³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For an account of this meeting by one of the Ukrainian KGB participants, Lieut.-Colonel Pavlo Demochko, see Document No. 9 above.

¹⁴⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: A large-scale effort was indeed under way to mobilize Soviet troops in the leadup to joint military exercises and preparations for other contingencies on Czechoslovak territory. Documents attesting to the redeployments of units, the call-up of reservists, and the requisitioning of civilian vehicles will be featured in the next issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*. Originally, joint exercises had not been due to take place in Czechoslovakia until 1969, but that schedule was moved ahead to June 1968. As it turned out, Soviet troops began entering Czechoslovakia even earlier – in late May 1968 – just after a delegation of high-ranking Soviet military officers visited the country to make arrangements for the upcoming exercises.

¹⁴⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: See the previous document.

¹⁴⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Borys Belousov had been an oblast committee secretary in Transcarpathia since February 1965.

¹⁴⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For the proceedings stored in the Slovak archives, see "Poradca vedúcich tajomníkov krajských, okresných a mestských výborov KSČ 12.-13. mája 1968," in Slovenský národný archív (SNA), F. ÚV KSS, Č. 68/10, A.j. 2.

¹⁴⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: František Kriegel was consistently among the most radical supporters of political liberalization in 1968. He was a full member of the KSČ Presidium from June to August 1968 and chairman of the National Front from April to early September 1968. The National Front was a grouping of parties and public organizations that had long been a figurehead for Communist domination, but Kriegel and other reformers in 1968 sought to convert the Front into a more pluralistic institution.

¹⁴⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Proposals to establish "advisory and initiating boards" for the mass media in the spring of 1968 provoked unease and opposition among journalists and writers, who feared that censorship might gradually be reimposed in Czechoslovakia, as had happened in Poland after 1956. (Censorship had been eased in Poland during Władysław Gomułka's return to power in October 1956, but Gomułka soon restored the earlier restrictions and guidelines.) Although Čestmír Císař had pledged that the KSČ "does not intend to resume any form of direct control over the press," many journalists and writers in Czechoslovakia were at least as wary of an internal clampdown as they were of foreign military intervention. See "Aktiv Pražských novinářů," *Novinář* (Prague), Vol. XX, No. 4 (1968), p. 112.

¹⁵⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This refers to two of the leading members of the reform movement in Czechoslovakia: Bohumil Šimon (first secretary of the KSČ's Prague municipal committee and a candidate member of the KSČ Presidium) and Josef Špaček (first secretary of the KSČ's South Moravian regional committee and a member of the KSČ Presidium). The Prague municipal committee and the South Moravian regional committee were both strongholds of radical reformist sentiment.

¹⁵¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The officials mentioned here, in addition to those already identified, include František Barbírek, Oldřich Švestka, Martin Vaculík, Drahomír Kolder, Jan Piller, Josef Špaček, and Václav Slavík. Barbírek, Švestka, Kolder, Piller, and Špaček were full members of the KSČ Presidium; Vaculík was still a candidate member of the KSČ Presidium (though he was removed in late May); and Slavík was a member of the KSČ Secretariat (beginning in April 1968) and had earlier been involved in the establishment of an Institute of Political Science under the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences.

¹⁵²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Koscelanský's predictions here turned out to be ill-founded. The May plenum of the KSČ Central Committee voted to convene an extraordinary KSČ congress on 9 September 1968, nearly two years ahead of schedule. The decision to hold an early congress proved crucial, for it greatly reduced the amount of time available to the Soviet Union to eliminate the "threat" posed by the Prague Spring. Soviet officials believed that ardent reformers would dominate the KSČ congress and would remove all the "healthy forces" (hardliners) who potentially could set up an alternative regime if Soviet troops were to move into Czechoslovakia. To ensure that the "healthy forces" would still be in a position to act, Soviet leaders realized that they would have to end the Prague Spring before the newly scheduled KSČ congress took place.

¹⁵³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The ethnic Germans in the Sudetenland, along the Czechoslovak-German border, were subjected to mass reprisals in the early postwar period. After President Beneš issued Decree No. 33 on 2 August 1945, almost all ethnic Germans in Czechoslovakia were deprived of their citizenship, rights, and protection, leaving them in the status of "traitors." (The only ones who were permitted to stay were the small number who had repeatedly spoken out against Nazi Germany.) Over the next year, more than 3 million Germans in Bohemia and Moravia were forcibly "transferred" (i.e. expelled) to Germany, where they had to forfeit all the property they had left behind. By late 1946, only around 165,000 ethnic Germans remained in the Czech lands, and they were not permitted to reclaim their citizenship until 1953. For recent analyses of the expulsions, based on newly declassified archival materials, see the relevant chapters in Philipp Ther and Ana Siljak, eds., *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe, 1944-1948* (Boulder, Col.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001). (My own chapter in the Ther/Siljak volume provides extensive citations to recent works on the subject in German, Czech, Slovak,

and Hungarian as well as in English.) The displaced Sudeten Germans formed an association in the FRG (the Landsmannschaft) that urged the West German government to seek compensation and redress for the indiscriminate expulsions. The Landsmannschaften were influential in West German politics in the late 1940s and 1950s, but their influence began to wane in the 1960s, especially with the advent of *Ostpolitik*. Even so, the Sudeten Germans were unwilling to back down on their demands, and the Landsmannschaft continued to function as a highly visible – though ultimately unsuccessful – lobbying group.

¹⁵⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: On 25 May, Shelest and Ukrainian prime minister Volodymyr Shcherbyts'kyi (who was also a candidate member of the CPSU Politburo) met with Biľak and Barbírek in the small Slovak town of Vyšné Nemecké, just across the border from Uzhhorod. This visit, marking the start of the festive "Ukrainian Days of Culture" in Czechoslovakia, was covered extensively in the Ukrainian press. See, for example, "Torzhestva na granitse SSSR i ChSSR: Vstrecha estafet Moskva-Praga i Praga-Moskva," *Pravda Ukrainy* (Kyiv), 26 May 1968, p. 1. What the press accounts did not mention, however, was the secret meeting that Shelest had with Biľak and Koscelanský in a mountain cottage along the border and in Uzhhorod the previous evening. (See Excerpt No. 2 from Shelest's diary and my commentary on it in Issue 10 of the CWIHP *Bulletin*, pp. 236-239.) The secret visit, which established a clandestine backchannel between the Soviet Politburo and the "healthy forces" in the KSČ, proved to be of great importance for Soviet policy.

¹⁵⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: See Excerpt No. 2 from Shelest's diaries and my commentary on it in Issue 10 of the CWIHP *Bulletin*, pp. 236-239.

¹⁵⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These units had been deployed there in anticipation of the forthcoming military exercises on Czechoslovak territory. More about these preparations will be featured in the next issue of the CWIHP *Bulletin*.

¹⁵⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These comments echo what Soviet defense minister Marshal Andrei Grechko said a month earlier, at the CPSU Central Committee plenum on 10 April 1968. After expressing alarm at the situation in Czechoslovakia, Grechko declared that "we [in the Soviet Army] are ready, at the behest of the party, to join with the armies of the [other] Warsaw Pact countries in coming to the assistance of the Czechoslovak nation if the imperialists and counterrevolutionaries try to tear Czechoslovakia away from the countries of socialism." Quoted from "Plenum TsK KPSS – Aprel' 1968 goda: Zasedanie tret'e (Vechnoe, 10 aprelya)," 9-10 April 1968 (Top Secret), in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 3, D. 93, L. 7.

¹⁵⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Omitted here are several brief comments by residents of Transcarpathian Oblast who expressed "full and unqualified approval" of Soviet policy and alarm about events in Czechoslovakia. Favorable comments about Soviet policy were always cited in documents of this sort, but the far more interesting portions are the unfavorable comments. Later on in the document, the comments of some other residents who expressed dismay at recent events in Czechoslovakia are included, but that is because they shed interesting light on public sentiment about Soviet military preparations in the leadup to the invasion.

¹⁵⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The word "moskalei," used in this sentence, is a pejorative term referring to Russians. It would have the same connotation that a term like "Yankees" or "gringos" would have when used by Latin Americans about the United States.

¹⁶⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: It is interesting that the speaker included Cuba among these countries. Serious tensions between the Soviet Union and Cuba had indeed emerged behind the scenes in the 1960s, but few people outside the ruling circles in Havana and

Moscow were cognizant of those tensions. Not until the early 1990s did solid information about the Soviet-Cuban differences in 1968 come to light. The recently declassified transcripts and supporting documents of the April 1968 plenum of the CPSU Central Committee reveal that the disputes with Cuba were discussed there quite candidly, both in Brezhnev's main report and in the comments of other senior officials. For example, one of the members of the CPSU Politburo, Viktor Grishin, who spoke immediately after Brezhnev, declared that he and other Soviet leaders were "dismayed by the deterioration of Soviet-Cuban relations resulting from the special approach adopted by the Cuban leadership on the question of socialist construction and the paths for development of the world revolutionary process. In these circumstances, the CPSU CC Politburo is adhering to a correct policy and is not compromising its principled line. The Politburo is displaying maximum steadfastness and patience and is striving to help the Romanian and Cuban leaders return to correct positions." Quoted from "XXXIII Sozyv: Aprel'skii Plenum TsK KPSS (9-10 aprelya 1968 g.)," 9-10 April 1968 (Top Secret), in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 3, D. 96, L. 5.

¹⁶¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Unlike all the other Warsaw Pact countries, Romania did not break relations with Israel after the June 1967 Mideast War. The Czechoslovak government's decision to sever ties with Israel came under sharp criticism in 1968 from numerous reformers (especially from writers) within Czechoslovakia; but no change of policy resulted. The mention of Poland here (if cited accurately) is curious insofar as a vicious anti-Semitic campaign was under way in Poland at the time.

¹⁶²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Russian version of these Hungarian surnames is slightly different from the Hungarian (adding a 'v' before the 's' in the '-losi' ending), but I have used the proper Hungarian version here.

¹⁶³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Under the border demarcations at the end of World War II, the territory of Soviet Ukraine expanded by more than 25 percent (165,300 square kilometers), bringing tens of thousands of ethnic Hungarians under Ukraine's jurisdiction, predominantly in the new Transcarpathian Oblast. As of the mid-1960s, the Hungarian community in Ukraine numbered roughly 150,000. Restiveness within this community in 1968 was by no means unprecedented. Recently declassified materials in the Russian archives reveal that unrest was rife among the Hungarians in western Ukraine during and for some time after the 1956 revolution in Hungary. I am currently working on an article about this matter and will provide translations of several key documents in the next issue of the CWIHP *Bulletin*.

¹⁶⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These rumors had been deliberately stirred up by the East German authorities, who highlighted the presence of U.S. tanks in Czechoslovakia in several articles in *Berliner Zeitung*, *Junge Welt*, *Neue Zeit*, and other newspapers on 9 and 10 May. What the East German accounts failed to mention is that the World War II-vintage American tanks (or models of tanks) had been brought to Czechoslovakia by a film production crew to make a documentary. See the Czechoslovak response to the East German reports in "Americké tanky v ČSSR: Tendenční výmysl Berliner Zeitung," *Rudé právo* (Prague), 11 May 1968, p. 3.

¹⁶⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Actually, it was not until 24 May – three days after this document was compiled and shortly after Marshal Grechko had visited Czechoslovakia – that the ČSSR ministry of national defense announced that "joint command-staff exercises will be held in June [1968] on the territories of Czechoslovakia and Poland. The staffs of all services of the forces of the Warsaw Pact countries will take part in the joint exercises. The objective is to test cooperation and command-and-control under current operational conditions and to improve the readiness of troops and com-

mand staffs.” See “Stánovisko Ministra národní obrany,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 25 May 1968, p. 1. It was not until 29 May that the first Soviet military units moved into Czechoslovakia, evidently without informing the Czechoslovak authorities. That same day, the chief of the Warsaw Pact’s main staff, General Mikhail Kazakov, arrived in Prague with an integrated command staff and a Soviet military liaison unit to make preparations for the forthcoming exercises.

¹⁶⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The Syurte station is in the Uzhhorod district of Transcarpathian Oblast.

¹⁶⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: A small typographical error has been corrected here.

¹⁶⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Mostys’ka is an old city in the western part of L’viv Oblast, along the current border with Poland.

¹⁶⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: For further discussion of this point as well as additional data through the first quarter of 1968, see the lengthy report prepared a few weeks earlier, “TsK KP Ukrainy: tovarishchu Drozdenko V. I.,” Report No. 92-s (Secret), from Yu. Il’nyts’kyi to V. I. Drozdenko, 23 April 1968, in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 65, Ll. 28-39.

¹⁷⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Omitted here are excerpts from Soviet legislation on customs and border-control regulations.

¹⁷¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: These checkpoints were located at various points along the USSR’s western perimeter. The Brest checkpoint was in southwestern Belorussia (now Belarus), on the border with Poland. The Chop station was in Transcarpathian Oblast, south of Uzhhorod, at the conjunction of the Czechoslovak, Hungarian, and Ukrainian borders. The corresponding checkpoint on the Czechoslovak side of the border was Čierna and Tisou, and on the Hungarian side was Zahony. The Mostys’ka checkpoint, as I noted in an annotation to the previous document, was in the western portion of L’viv Oblast in Ukraine, along the current border with Poland. The Ungheni checkpoint was in western Moldavia (now Moldova), along the current border with Romania.

¹⁷²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: For other highly classified Soviet reports on Romania’s efforts to ship “ideologically pernicious” literature into the USSR, see Memorandum No. 2039-A (Top Secret) from Yu. V. Andropov, chairman of the KGB, to the CPSU Secretariat, 30 August 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 339, Ll. 58-67; “O Pozitsii Rumynii v svyazi s sobytiyami v Chekhoslovakii,” Report No. MB-4809/65 (Top Secret), from V. Makashev, deputy secretary-general of the Soviet foreign ministry, 16 October 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 339, Ll. 188-194; “TsK KPSS: O nekotorykh problemakh sovetsko-rumynskikh otnoshenii v svete pozitsii, zanyatoi rukovodstvom RKP v svyazi s sobytiyami v Chekhoslovakii,” Report No. 686 (Top Secret), from A. V. Basov, Soviet ambassador in Romania, to the CPSU Politburo, 23 Sept 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 339, Ll. 106-121; and “Ob otnoshenii Rumynii k sobytiyam v Chekhoslovakii (Politicheskoe pis’mo),” Cable No. 1000 (Top Secret), A. V. Basov, Soviet ambassador in Romania, to Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko and the CPSU Secretariat, 23 Sept 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 339, Ll. 130-154. See also my article on the matter, “Moldova, Romania, and the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia,” *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue 12/13 (Fall/Winter 2001), pp. 326-334.

¹⁷³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: For a more detailed breakdown, see “TsK KP Ukrainy: tovarishchu Drozdenko V. I.,” L. 28.

¹⁷⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: For additional data, see the previous document and “TsK KP Ukrainy: tov. Drozdenko V. I.,” Ll. 28-39 (cited above). Here, as in other documents, Shelest cited only statistics that cast a particularly bad light on the spillover from Czechoslovakia.

¹⁷⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: For accounts of individuals who used these various methods of smuggling literature into the Soviet Union, see “TsK KP Ukrainy: tov. Drozdenko V. I.,” esp. Ll. 31-34. See also “Tsentral’nomu Komitetu Komunistychnoi Partii Ukrainy,” Memorandum No. 112-2/10s (Secret), from F. Horyn, head of the Chop station customs inspectorate, I. Mushka, inspector at the Chop station customs inspectorate, and H. Timoshenko, inspector at the Chop station customs inspectorate, 6 March 1968, in TsDAHOU, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 64, Ll. 13-15.

¹⁷⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The numbers provided here imply that a sharp tightening of the inspection system would have caused crippling delays in border traffic. Before 1968, such delays would undoubtedly have seemed excessively burdensome, but the deepening crisis with Czechoslovakia in 1968 was generating pressure for a crackdown at border posts, no matter what the effect on cross-border traffic.

¹⁷⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: In the Soviet military and security forces, the divide between commissioned and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) was enormous – much wider than in most Western countries. In the U.S. and other Western armed forces, large contingents of well-trained, professional NCOs (sergeants and corporals) have long been a staple. There was no direct equivalent in the Soviet army. Soviet NCOs were enlisted men who underwent up to six months of additional training before being assigned as petty and warrant officers. The Soviet NCOs often experienced abuse at the hands of mid-level and senior officers, and they, in turn, frequently mistreated and exploited the conscripts under their command.

¹⁷⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Shelest is referring here to the Soviet Union’s new regulations for military service adopted in 1967. The new Law on Universal Military Service, which applied to conscripts for the security services and customs service as well as the regular army, reduced the period of service from three years to two and lowered the age of conscription from 19 to 18. See Army-General S. M. Shtemenko, *Novyi zakon i voinskaya sluzhba* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1968). The shortening of the term of conscription was attributable to the steady expansion of the conscription pool (the number of 19-year-old males had risen to nearly 2 million by 1967). The lowering of the draft age was designed to bring young men into the army right after they had completed their secondary schooling (normally at age 18), rather than leaving a year in between.

¹⁷⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: See also Chebrikov *et al.*, eds., *Istoriya sovetskikh organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti*, pp. 512-557.

¹⁸⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Omitted here are a few quotations from oblast residents who supported the Soviet Union’s policy toward Czechoslovakia.

¹⁸¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The period to which the speaker is referring marked the inception of Slovak “independence” after German forces occupied the Czech lands. Nationalist sentiment in Slovakia was especially pronounced during those years.

¹⁸²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Ludvík Svoboda had been the wartime commander-in-chief of the Czechoslovak armed units that fought alongside the Soviet Red Army. He subsequently was appointed minister of national defense in Czechoslovakia, a post he held until being demoted in the purges of 1950. See Svoboda’s memoirs of his wartime experiences in *Z Buzuluky do Prahy* (Prague: Orbis, 1961).

¹⁸³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This statement seems odd coming from someone who cares as deeply about religious freedom as the speaker does. On religious matters, unlike on most other issues, Khrushchev was nearly as repressive as Stalin. Khrushchev launched

a violent anti-religious campaign in 1954 and eased it only slightly in the latter half of the 1950s. Then, in February 1960, he appointed a hardline ideologue, Vladimir Kuroedov, to oversee religious affairs, marking the start of another intense anti-religious campaign, which continued almost unabated through the remaining four-and-a-half years of Khrushchev's tenure. Although the Brezhnev era was hardly a time of great religious freedom, Brezhnev did allow more scope for religious worship than Khrushchev did.

¹⁸⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Novotný, the son of a bricklayer, received only an elementary education and served as an apprentice to a locksmith. He received no secondary schooling and was devoid of intellectual curiosity. Before World War II, he was a middle-ranking KSČ official, but at the close of the war he landed the key post of regional party secretary in Prague. By remaining staunchly loyal to the party leader, Klement Gottwald, Novotný continued to advance in the party hierarchy, especially after Gottwald moved against Rudolf Slánský in 1951. Novotný's rise to the highest post in the KSČ thus was attributable to Gottwald's largesse, rather than to any gifts or acumen on Novotný's part. Novotný's lack of education and his limited intellectual capacity made him a frequent target of private jokes.

¹⁸⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: After the Communists seized power in Czechoslovakia in 1948, they acquired vast amounts of property through the expropriation of businesses, factories, farms, large estates, and other holdings both large and small. Although "ownership" (i.e., effective control) of the property was transferred in some cases to state agencies and public organizations, ultimate control rested with the Communist Party. In 1968, a good deal of discussion emerged in Czechoslovakia about the possible compensation for those who had been unjustly imprisoned under Gottwald and Novotný, as well as restitution for people whose property had been confiscated in 1948 or after. (The proposals, however, were never intended to cover potential claims from the roughly 3 million ethnic Germans who had been expelled from the Sudetenland in 1945.) The law on judicial rehabilitations, adopted in late June 1968, provided for material compensation in some cases, but the law was never implemented. The Soviet invasion in August 1968 put an end to any further discussion of the matter, and it was not until after 1989 that a program of restitution and compensation was finally adopted (though again excluding the Sudeten Germans).

¹⁸⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Jan Procházka, a well-known writer, was an outspoken proponent of freedom of expression and other reforms throughout the Prague Spring. At the 4th Congress of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union in June 1967, he denounced official censorship and called for "freedom of creativity," demands that led to his removal as a candidate member of the KSČ Central Committee. From that point on, Procházka was often cited by Soviet leaders as a key organizer of the "anti-socialist" forces.

¹⁸⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The context (especially the next sentence) suggests that the person singled out here was Leonid Brezhnev.

¹⁸⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The speaker is mistaken here, evidently because he believed that when Novotný was removed as KSČ First Secretary in early January 1968, he was also removed as President. In fact, Novotný retained his post as President until 21 March, when he finally resigned "for reason of ill health" under intense political pressure. Svoboda was formally approved as the new president on 30 March. Hence, Czechoslovakia went only nine days, not three months, without a president.

¹⁸⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The notion that Romania would have participated in the maneuvers is obviously far-fetched. The Romanian leader, Nicolae Ceaușescu, had kept Romanian troops

out of most Warsaw Pact activities from the mid-1960s on, and he was strongly supportive of Czechoslovakia in 1968. There was never any likelihood that Romania would contribute troops to the joint maneuvers.

¹⁹⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Medzilaborce is a small town in the northeastern part of Eastern Slovakia, along the border with Poland.

¹⁹¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Zhabchenko's parenthetical interjection about Hlinka is mistaken. Andrej Hlinka, a Catholic priest who founded the ultranationalist Slovak People's Party (*Hlinková slovenská ľudová strana*) in the interwar period, died in August 1938, eight months before Slovakia became nominally independent. Although Hlinka himself was not a fascist, some of his followers, who formed paramilitary units known as the Hlinka Guard, openly advocated a fascist, pro-Nazi program. One of the members of the pro-Nazi group, Vojtech Tuka, served as prime minister during Slovakia's brief period of "independence" (1939-1945) after Germany occupied the Sudetenland, Bohemia, and Moravia. Tuka and his supporters were increasingly able to outflank Hlinka's clerical successor, Jozef Tiso, the president of Slovakia, who, despite his strongly Christian nationalist leanings, initially hoped to forestall the outright Nazification of Slovak society.

¹⁹²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These statements harken back to a famous passage in the novel *Dead Souls* (first published in 1842) by the great 19th-century Russian writer Nikolai Gogol: "And you, my Russia, are you not also speeding along like a troika [three-horse carriage] that nothing can overtake? Is the road not smoking beneath your wheels, and are the bridges not thundering as you ride across them, leaving everything far behind...? What does that awe-inspiring progress of yours foretell? What is the unknown force that lies within your mysterious horses? Surely the winds themselves must be lodged in their manes, and every vein in their bodies must be an ear stretched to catch the celestial message that bids them, with their iron-clad breasts and hooves that barely touch the earth as they gallop, to fly forward on a mission of God. Where, O my Russia, are you speeding off to? Where? Answer me! But no answer comes – only the strange sound of your carriage bells. The air roars past you, dividing into a thousand pieces, for you are overtaking the whole world, and one day you will compel all nations and all empires to stand aside and let you race ahead!"

¹⁹³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The figure of 40,000 is at the lower end of the generally accepted range of 38,000 to 80,000 who were unjustly accused and repressed. See Gebauer *et al.*, *Soudní perzekuce politické povahy v Československu 1948-1989*, pp. 3-111.

¹⁹⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This refers to Stalin's infamous dictum that class struggle intensifies as socialist development approaches Communism. The implication was that violent repression had to be increased to cope with the surging struggle.

¹⁹⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These figures are accurate but misleading. Most of the members took little active part in the organization.

¹⁹⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The figures given here are roughly correct, albeit somewhat high. (Only about 18,000 to 20,000 members were actively involved in the party.) The active membership of the Czechoslovak People's Party was closer to 50,000, which may be the reason that the figure of 40,000 was cited here. For more on the non-Communist Czech parties in 1968, see the relevant annotation to Document No. 4 above.

¹⁹⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Slovak Freedom Party (*Slovenská strana svobody*, or SSS) and the Slovak Renewal Party (*Slovenská strana obrody*, SSO) both were created in the late 1940s out of remnants of the Slovak Democratic Party, which had been set

up just after World War II as a *de facto* successor to the banned Slovak People's Party. In the 1946 elections, the Slovak Democratic Party won 62 percent of the vote in Slovakia, compared to only 30 percent for the Slovak Communist Party. In response, the KSS (supported by the KSČ) used a variety of legal and illegal means to pressure and destroy the Democratic Party, a process that was completed by 1947, several months before the Communist takeover. The Slovak Freedom Party was established in late 1946 by former Democratic Party members who had been persuaded by the KSS to leave, and the Slovak Renewal Party was set up in 1948. The two parties continued to exist after 1948 within the National Front (i.e., under KSČ domination), but were largely moribund. By the mid-1960s, their membership had been reduced to almost zero. In 1968 the Slovak Freedom Party and Renewal Party, headed by Michal zákovič and Jozef Mjartan, respectively, experienced a slight revival, but remained of little efficacy. In neither case did the party's membership exceed 1,000. Hence, although it is true, as Shelest claims, that "the number of members [of the SSS and SSO] has increased," the increase was of very little significance.

¹⁹⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Miroslav Urbanovič had been a secretary in the Central Slovakian regional committee of the Czechoslovak Youth Union since June 1965.

¹⁹⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The official Czechoslovak Youth Union (*Československý svaz mládeže*, or ČSM), the equivalent of the Communist Youth League (*Komsomol*) in the Soviet Union, was greatly discredited and weakened during the Prague Spring. Its membership fell sharply, and even those who still belonged to the ČSM took no part in its activities.

²⁰⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For cogent discussions of these youth groups, see Golan, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia*, pp. 69-78; Horský, *Prag 1968*, pp. 183-190; Kusin, *Political Grouping in the Czechoslovak Reform Movement*, pp. 81-96; and Skilling, *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution*, pp. 596-599.

²⁰¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Marshal Ivan Konev and Marshal Kirill Moskalenko were distinguished military commanders in World War II and were appointed to a number of top-ranking command and defense ministry positions in the postwar era. In 1968 they were still serving, respectively, as Inspector-General and Chief Inspector of the Soviet armed forces. From 8 to 14 May 1968 the two officers led a high-ranking Soviet military delegation on a visit to fifteen Czechoslovak cities at the behest of the CPSU Politburo. See "Sovětská vojenská delegace odcestovala," *Rudé právo* (Prague), 15 May 1968, p. 1. The ostensible purpose of the trip was to mark the 23rd anniversary of Victory Day on 9 May (commemorating the defeat of Germany in World War II), but the Soviet delegation also toured a large number of military facilities, defense industrial plants, and security force bases to assess both the popular mood and the readiness of Czechoslovakia's "healthy forces" to "combat the counterrevolution." In addition, the visit was clearly designed to exert pressure on the KSČ leadership, as Brezhnev privately acknowledged at the five-power meeting in Moscow on 8 May. By "sending a large military delegation," he argued, the Soviet Union was taking a "concrete measure" to "help our friends defend the leading role of the [KSČ] and uphold the cause of socialism in Czechoslovakia." (Quoted from "Zapis' besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditeli bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol'shi," L. 159.) In this regard, Konev's speech during the Victory Day celebration (which Shelest mentions here) was unusually blunt in warning that "the Soviet armed forces are always in full combat readiness" and will "always firmly and reliably defend our socialist gains and our frontiers of the socialist camp," especially in "the ČSSR, which is a bridgehead right next to the capitalist world."

²⁰²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: All of the individuals mentioned

here were officially regarded as mortal enemies – past or present – of the Soviet regime. The names of Trotsky, Rasputin, Nicholas II, Hitler, Mussolini, and Mao Zedong are undoubtedly familiar to all readers, but the other names may be somewhat more obscure. Grigorii Zinoviev, Aleksei Rykov, and Karl Radek were rivals of Stalin who were executed in the 1930s after losing out in the power struggle. (Rykov had sided with Stalin against Zinoviev, but Stalin subsequently turned against Rykov as well.) Pyotr Stolypin was the Russian prime minister and internal affairs minister under Nicholas II who carried out significant land reforms in 1906 – reforms that were staunchly opposed by the Bolsheviks, who demanded outright expropriation. Stolypin was assassinated by a terrorist (who was also a secret police agent) in 1911. Pavel Milyukov was the founder and leader of the Constitutional Democrat (Cadet) party in Russia, which tried to prevent the Bolsheviks from coming to power. Aleksandr Guchkov was a leading figure in the Cadet party. Both Milyukov and Guchkov had to flee abroad after the Bolsheviks seized control in Russia.

²⁰³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Although the figure of 20 is much too high, a number of Czechoslovak officials had committed suicide in 1968, especially those who had been involved in torture and repression in the early 1950s. Josef Sommer, the chief physician at Ruzyně prison who had been implicated in many years of coercive practices against political prisoners, committed suicide on 26 April. At around the same time, Jan Břešťlanský, the deputy chair of the Supreme Court, and Jiří Počepický, the investigative chief in the Prague branch of the State Security, both killed themselves. Their deaths, like Sommer's, followed revelations in the press about the investigative and judicial abuses of the 1950s. A somewhat different case was the suicide of General Vladimír Janko, who, as discussed in annotations to Document No. 2 above, killed himself in March 1968 after disclosures of attempts in December 1967 and January 1968 to keep Novotný in power through military force.

²⁰⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Turmoil increasingly engulfed the Czechoslovak People's Army (*Československá lidová armáda*, or ČLA) in the spring and summer of 1968. The ouster of many staunchly pro-Soviet military officers and National Defense Ministry personnel in the spring of 1968 allowed the reform movement to extend far into the ČLA. A lively debate arose in Czechoslovakia, both publicly and privately, about the possibility of sharply reducing military spending and transferring resources to the civilian economy. Implicit in any such move would be a diminution of the country's military obligations to the Warsaw Pact. Further controversy about Czechoslovakia's role in the Warsaw Pact arose in mid-May 1968 (around the time Shelest was preparing this document) when twenty-one ČLA officers from the Klement Gottwald Military-Political Academy released a "memorandum" that strongly criticized the Pact's structures and proposed numerous reforms both in the alliance and in Czechoslovak policy. The implementation of these measures would have resulted in a markedly different Soviet-East European military relationship. The Gottwald Memorandum received overwhelming support within the Czechoslovak armed forces, and many of the document's proposals were included in drafts prepared by the National Defense Ministry for consideration at the KSČ's upcoming Fourteenth Congress. Combined with the ongoing personnel changes and the debates over military spending, the Gottwald Memorandum sparked fresh apprehension in Moscow about the future of Czechoslovakia's contribution to the Warsaw Pact. Detailed reports from the Soviet Defense Ministry and KGB, which were sent regularly to the CPSU leadership, offered a gloomy view of the "military-political standing and combat readiness of the Czechoslovak armed forces." See, for example, the voluminous reports and memoranda in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, Dd.

232, 243, and 309. In a briefing to the CPSU Politburo on 23 May, Marshal Grechko claimed that the Czechoslovak army was “rapidly deteriorating” and was “no longer capable of defending the border with the FRG.” Cited from “Rabochaya zapis’ zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK KPSS ot 23 maya 1968 g.,” 23 May 1968 (Top Secret), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 45, D. 99, Ll. 260-262. A few weeks later, Soviet military officials warned Brezhnev that if the number of “ČLA officers who favor ‘democratic reforms in the army’” continued to grow, it would accelerate the “grave decline in the Czechoslovak army’s combat capability.” Cited from Shelest’s diary, “Dnevnik P. E. Shelesta,” in Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial’no-Politicheskoi Istorii (RGASPI), F. 666, D. 1, L. 325. Brezhnev, in turn, urged the KSČ leadership on 4 May to realize that “when your army is being weakened, this is not and cannot be a purely internal matter. We count on your [army’s] strength, just as you rely on the might of the Soviet Union.” Cited from “Zapis’ peregovorov s delegatsiei ChSSR, 4 maya 1968 goda,” L. 144.

²⁰⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Actually, almost all of the Germans who left Czechoslovakia after World War II did so in 1945 and 1946 (as discussed above), not 1948. They were forced out in mass expulsions. Of the very large German community that existed in Czechoslovakia before World War II (nearly 3.5 million), only a small fraction (roughly 165,000) remained after 1946, and the numbers gradually declined thereafter.

²⁰⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Rudolf Cvik had been first secretary of the Central Slovakian regional committee since July 1960 and was also a member of both the KSČ Central Committee and the KSS Central Committee until the end of May 1968 (shortly after the Ukrainian delegation visited Czechoslovakia), when he stepped down under pressure at the KSČ Central Committee plenum.

²⁰⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Although it may seem strange to lump Novotný with Masaryk and Beneš, the speaker is correct that on one key issue – the need for a united Czechoslovakia, with Czechs in a dominant role (at least implicitly) – the views of the three were similar. Many Slovaks developed a general resentment of *majorizacia* (majority domination) and tended to make relatively few distinctions among Czech leaders. For a cogent overview of the Czech-Slovak divide, placing the events of 1968 into a wider context, see Carol Skalnik Leff, *National Conflict in Czechoslovakia: The Making and Remaking of the State, 1918-1987* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

²⁰⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Anton Šemorádik had been editor-in-chief of *Východoslovenské noviny* (East Slovakian Newspaper) since December 1966. His surname is mistransliterated as “Shemuradi” in Shelest’s memorandum, but the proper Slovak spelling is given here. I am grateful to Darina Kozuchová, the chief librarian at Šafárik University in Košice, and Lubica Poklembová, the head of the regional bibliographic department at the State Research Library in Košice, for materials from the archive of *Východoslovenské noviny* confirming that Šemorádik was the editor-in-chief of the newspaper in 1968.

²⁰⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Proposals to have Slovakia become a Soviet republic, rather than be reunited with the Czech lands, were devised as far back as the early 1940s by several prominent members of the Slovak Communist Party. See Article 2 of “Programa Komunistickej strany Československa,” 1 May 1941, reproduced in *Sborník Ústavu dejín KSS*, Vol. I (Bratislava: Ústav dejín KSS, 1959), p. 12. The idea also was taken up by a few Slovak nationalists who had served in Jozef Tiso’s government. In particular, the Slovak defense minister, General Fran Čatloš, transmitted a secret “Memorandum” to Stalin in 1944 via Slovak Communist intermediaries. In the Memorandum, Čatloš promised to support

the Red Army during its entry into Slovakia and to turn over the entire Slovak Army to the Soviet Union, while allowing Slovakia to become a constituent part of the USSR after the war. This plan aroused hostility from both Beneš and the Czechoslovak Communists. Although Soviet officials reassured Beneš that they had “no intention of protecting traitors” such as Čatloš, they expressed interest in “temporarily” following up on the defense minister’s ideas. See Zdeněk Fierlinger, *Ve službach ČSR*, 2 vols. (Prague: Orbis, 1948-1949), Vol. II, p. 326. Only after further protests by Beneš did the Soviet government finally reject Čatloš’s proposal. In the meantime, the status of Slovakia continued to provoke tensions among Czechoslovak Communists. In September 1944 the Slovak Communists and Social Democrats held a joint congress in Banská Bystrica, where they formally merged into a single Communist Party. The exiled KSČ leaders (led by Klement Gottwald) were not consulted or even informed in advance about this step. Although the statement issued by the joint congress indicated that KSS officials were willing to accept a new “Czecho-Slovak” state based on strict “equality” between the Czech lands and Slovakia, it also left open the possibility that events might “force our nation to turn in the direction of other fraternal nations,” meaning the Soviet Union. Cited from “Rezolúcia zjednocovacieho zjazdu Komunistickej strany Slovenska a Československej socialnodemokratickej strany robotnickej na Slovensku,” *Pravda* (Banská Bystrica), 17 September 1944, p. 2. The prevailing sentiment among top KSS officials (e.g., Ladislav Novomeský and Gustáv Husák) – who argued that Slovakia would be better off by joining the Soviet Union after the war – was one of the major points of contention with Gottwald and the other leading Czech Communists, who by 1944 had come out firmly in support of restoring Czechoslovakia as a unitary state. Gottwald was aware that Soviet leaders were unwilling to endorse Slovakia’s accession into the USSR, but the proposal itself, by indicating a degree of independence on the part of the KSS, ran contrary to the KSČ leader’s intention of recentralizing the Communist Party. In part for this reason, Slovak Communists who had played a prominent role in the 1944 Slovak National Uprising and in the wartime Slovak National Council (e.g., Husák) were singled out for persecution after February 1948 on charges of “bourgeois nationalist deviations.”

²¹⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Luigi Longo, the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), had visited Czechoslovakia on 5-7 May 1968 during a hard-fought parliamentary election campaign in Italy, the first nationwide elections since Longo took office after Palmiro Togliatti’s death in 1964. Although the Italian Communists were initially cautious about the changes in Czechoslovakia, they soon became enthusiastic supporters of the Prague Spring. Longo’s meetings with Dubček were widely covered in both the Czechoslovak and the Italian media. During private sessions with the KSČ leader, Longo readily acknowledged that the PCI hoped to “take full advantage” of the excitement created by the reforms in Czechoslovakia to enhance its own electoral prospects and to legitimize its program of “open, democratic socialism” for Italy. Longo’s unreserved support for the Prague Spring during his visit irritated many Soviet officials. At the summit of the “Five” in Moscow on 8 May, Brezhnev complained that Longo’s remarks were being “exploited by the unhealthy forces in Czechoslovakia.” (Cited from “Zapis’ besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditel’yami bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol’shi,” L. 158.) Many other formerly secret documents from the PCI leader’s visit were declassified in the early 1990s and are now available in the files of ÚSD-SK and at the SÚA. See, in particular, “Zpráva o navštěvě generálního tajemníka Italské Komunistické strany soudruha Luigi Longa v Praze ve dnech 5.-7. května 1968,” May 1968 (Top Secret) in SÚA, Arch.

ÚV KSČ, F. 02/1, A.j. 30, Ll. 173-176.

²¹¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Adolf Hoffmeister, born in 1902, received a legal degree and served as a diplomat in the late 1940s and 1950s, but spent most of his career both before and after World War II on artistic, cultural, and literary pursuits. He was a renowned caricaturist and sketch artist, and his portraits of well-known contemporaries were similar in quality to the drawings by David Levine featured in *The New York Review of Books* in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Hoffmeister was the illustrator of dozens of books and was in wide demand for his satirical and political cartoons. He also gained prominence as a painter, writer, art and music critic, and food and wine connoisseur. Many anthologies of his drawings, paintings, cartoons, and writings are available in a number of languages, including English. (Hoffmeister lived for a while in Great Britain and the United States, so he ended up publishing a substantial number of cartoons in English translation.) For a small but useful sample of his wide-ranging art, theater, and music criticism, see *Kuo-Cha: Cestopisná reportáž o čínském malířství* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, 1954); *Mrakodrapy v pralese* (Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1964); *Slepčova píšťalka aneb Lidice: Hra o předešlé a třech* (New York: Vydaly New-Yorské listy, 1942); *Hry a protihry* (Prague: Orbis, 1963); *Karel Václav Klíč: O zapomínaném umělci, který se stal vynálezcem* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství krásné literatury, 1955); and *Současné čínské malířství* (Prague: Nakl. československých výtvarných umělců, 1959). For a useful collection of his popular travel writings, see *Lety proti slunci/Pohlednice z Číny/Vyhlička s Pyramid/Made in Japan* (Prague: Československý spisovatel, 1959), which covers China, Egypt, and Japan. A good sample of Hoffmeister's artistic work is now also on display at the appropriately named Hotel Hoffmeister in Prague, which has a whole gallery devoted to his drawings and paintings. Hoffmeister was appointed chairman of the Czechoslovak Union of Fine Artists in December 1964, a post that commanded great authority in Prague. In that capacity he actively promoted cultural and political freedom. He died in 1973.

²¹²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For a concise survey of materials published in these and other Ukrainian-language periodicals in 1968, see Hodnett and Potichnyj, *The Ukraine and the Czechoslovak Crisis*, pp. 14-15, 17.

²¹³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Soviet authorities had declined to publish more than very brief excerpts from the Action Program in the Soviet press. Of the Warsaw Pact countries (other than Czechoslovakia), only Romania published the whole program.

²¹⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These festivals were extensively covered in the Ukrainian press as well as in secret reports prepared by Soviet diplomats and intelligence sources. See, for example, "Tsentral'nyi Komitet KPSS," Memorandum No. 1/61 (Top Secret), 25 June 1968, transmitting a report from V. I. Klovov, member of a UkrSSR government delegation attending the Ukrainian Days of Culture in the ČSSR, in TsDAHOV, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 30, Ll. 161-165; "TsK KPSS: Informatsiya o prebyvanii v ChSSR delegatsii USSR v svyazi s Dnyami kul'tury Ukrainy v Chekhoslovakii," Memorandum No. 1/62 (Top Secret), 25 June 1968, in TsDAHOV, F. 1, Op. 25, Spr. 30, Ll. 150-156; and a large number of reports, memoranda, and cables in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, Dd. 60, 66, and 298-300.

²¹⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This passage and others below were underlined by typewriter in the original document.

²¹⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Under Novotný, no discussion was permitted of possible changes in the Czech-Slovak relationship. That taboo disappeared soon after the Prague Spring began, when proposals to federalize the country, with separate Communist Parties and republic governments for the Czech lands and Slovakia

alongside the central party and state organs, were vigorously debated. The KSČ Action Program committed the authorities to pursue federalization (albeit without any specific guidelines), and a scheme for federalization took shape in the spring and summer of 1968. Following the Soviet invasion, however, the scheme was only partly implemented. On 28 October 1968 the Czech Republic and Slovakia received their own separate governments (of equal status) alongside the federal government, and the National Assembly was divided into two chambers of equal status, thus partly assuaging Slovak grievances about "majority domination" (*majorizacia*). This structure was fully implemented in January 1969, and it was the only product of the reform movement in Czechoslovakia that survived the whole period of "normalization." Nevertheless, the federalization of the state was more than offset by the retraction of plans to federalize the Communist Party. Before the invasion, the intention had been to set up a separate Czech Communist Party, which would be equal to the Slovak Party. Both would have existed alongside the KSČ. After the invasion, Brezhnev pressured the KSČ leadership to abandon plans to form a Czech Party, apparently because he feared that such a move would weaken the KSČ and set a precedent for the establishment of a Russian Party that would detract from the CPSU. (During one of the post-invasion negotiations, Brezhnev remarked: "If the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [in the USSR] has no Communist party of its own, why should there be a separate Communist party for the Czechs?") At a KSČ Central Committee plenum in November 1968, Czechoslovak leaders finally succumbed to Moscow's pressure, announcing that plans to establish a Czech Party would be postponed indefinitely. A separate Communist Party of Slovakia (*Komunistická strana Slovenska*) continued to exist under the KSČ's auspices, but no separate Czech Party was set up. Instead, the November plenum merely created a KSČ CC "Bureau for the Czech Lands," a modest step that was widely viewed in Slovakia as a disappointing retreat. The failure to establish a separate Communist Party for the Czech lands implied that the Czechs, represented by the KSČ, were broadly overseeing Slovakia and the KSS.

²¹⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For an illuminating survey of cultural developments and changes in the mass media in Slovakia in 1968, see Juraj Fabian, "Analýza masových oznamovacích prostriedkov (1967-1970)," in Komisia vlády SR pre analýzu historických udalostí y rokov 1967-1970, *Slovenská spoločnosť v krízových rokoch: Zborník štúdií*, 3 vols. (Bratislava: Politologický kabinet SAV, 1992), Vol. 2, pp. 116-184 (hereinafter cited as Komisia vlády SR, *Slovenská spoločnosť v krízových rokoch*, with appropriate volume and page numbers).

²¹⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This criticism, voiced earlier by economists such as Ota Šik and Radoslav Selucký, was a prominent theme in the landmark document authored by Otakar Turek and three other senior economists, *Nástin koncepcie ďalšieho rozvíjanie ekonomické soustavy řízení*, which was published as a supplement to the newspaper *Hospodářské noviny* in both Prague and Bratislava on 5 April 1968. For a recent analysis of the economic conditions in Slovakia in 1968, see Michal Štefanský, "Niektoré aspekty ekonomicko-sociálneho vývoja na Slovensku," in Komisia vlády SR, *Slovenská spoločnosť v krízových rokoch*, Vol. 1, pp. 95-125.

²¹⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In addition to serving as first secretary of the KSS Central Slovakia regional organization, Anton Ľážký had been elevated to the KSS CC Presidium just two months earlier, on 9 April. He was known to be a strong supporter of political liberalization and a far-reaching restructuring of the Czech-Slovak relationship.

²²⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Discontent in Slovakia had mounted during the final years of Novotný's reign because of a

perception that Novotný wanted to perpetuate Slovakia's subordination to the Czech lands. Dubček was able to use the issue in late 1967, when he was still first secretary of the Slovak Communist Party, in his bid to displace Novotný as head of the KSČ. Although Dubček and other KSČ leaders initially envisaged only modest reforms in Czech-Slovak relations, the question of federalization (of both the state and the Communist Party) was on the agenda by the early spring of 1968.

²²¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: On the decline of the Czechoslovak Youth Union in 1968, see my annotation to Document No. 16 above.

²²²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The official in question is Vladimír Čiřík, who took office in March 1968.

²²³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For a similar analysis of the contending factions on the KSČ Presidium, see Brezhnev's comments at the five-power conference in Moscow on 8 May, transcribed in "Zapis' besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditeli bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol'shi," Ll. 152-154.

²²⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The document mistakenly says CPSU here rather than KSČ, but the context makes it obvious that KSČ is correct.

²²⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For similar comments by a senior KSČ official about Novotný's efforts to stay in office, see "Zapis' besedy Prezidiuma TsK Kommunisticheskoi partii Chekhoslovakii, glavnyim redaktorom gazety 'Rudé právo' tov. Oldrzhikom Shvestkoi," by A. I. Lukovets, member of the editorial board at Moscow *Pravda*, transmitted to the CPSU Politburo by Mikhail Zimyanin, editor-in-chief of *Pravda*, 20 May 1968 (Top Secret), in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 26, Ll. 33-40.

²²⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Boboňko's surname is incorrectly transliterated in the document as Bobojko.

²²⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: If Rigo did say this before leaving for the plenum, he clearly changed his mind by the time he got there, for he made no mention of stepping down.

²²⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The "latest session" of the CPSU Politburo was on 27 May, a session that proved crucial for Soviet policy. (See my commentary preceding Excerpt No. 2 from Shelest's memoirs in Issue No. 10 of the CWIHP *Bulletin*, pp. 236-239.) The transcript of the session is "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK KPSS ot 27-ogo maya 1968 g.," 27 May 1968 (Top Secret), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 45, D. 99, Ll. 270-274. See also "TsK KPSS," Memorandum No. 14194 (Top Secret), 27 May 1968, from V. Stepakov, K. Rusakov, and V. Zagladin to the CPSU Politburo, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 19, Ll. 109, 133-136.

²²⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Miloš Krno originally was trained as a lawyer and diplomat, and was actively involved in Slovak politics in the late 1940s and 1950s; but he had simultaneously begun a separate career as a writer. By the late 1960s he had written many works – novels, poems, and collections of stories – that were widely popular in Slovakia, and he had become a prominent figure in the Slovak literary and cultural community. Outside Slovakia, however, most of his work was relatively unknown. His writings as of 1968 included *A kto ma čaká?* (Bratislava: Smena, 1968); *Kým dohorela cigareta* (Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ, 1968); *Sialene predstavenie* (Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ, 1966); *Tažká hodina* (Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ, 1965); *Výstrel sa vracia* (Bratislava: Smena, 1965); *Jastrabia pol'ana* (Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ, 1963); *Živiteľka* (Bratislava: Slovenské Vyd. Politickej Literatúry, 1960); *V burke: Poezia* (Bratislava: Obroda, 1949); and his account of the Slovak National Uprising, *Viadkut: Poviedky z povstania* (Bratislava: Pravda, 1946). He wrote numerous other books in the 1970s and 1980s, including two volumes of memoirs.

²³⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Krno's stint at the Czechoslovak

embassy in Moscow actually came in 1950-51, when he was only 28 years old.

²³¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest is referring here to Krno's *Vrátim sa živý* (Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ, 1961). Jan Nálepka (1912-1943) was a schoolteacher who became a captain in the Slovak and Soviet partisans during World War II. Under the *nom de guerre* Repkin, Nálepka joined the Czechoslovak partisans in mid-1942 and immediately established close contact with the Soviet Army. In May 1943, he formally enlisted in the Soviet partisans at the behest of the Soviet commander, Major-General A. N. Saburov. Under Saburov's direct command, Nálepka took charge of a Czechoslovak unit responsible for sabotage and reconnaissance in occupied Ukraine and Belorussia. In the fall of 1943, Nálepka's unit helped drive German troops out of the Ukrainian town of Ovruch and helped capture the main bridge just outside the town. On 16 November 1943, Nálepka was killed by German machine-gun fire as his unit battled for control of the local railway station. Soon thereafter, Soviet and Slovak Communist leaders sought to memorialize Nálepka as an exemplar of socialist courage and "a symbol of the fraternal bonds between Slovak and Soviet fighters in the struggle for the freedom and independence of their countries." He was posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and was the subject of numerous artistic and literary works, including Krno's novel.

²³²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Soviet leaders were well aware of these arguments and tried – in vain – to refute them. See, for example, "Spravka o zhizhennom urovne naseleniya Chekhoslovakii," Ll. 7-21.

²³³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: What Krno has in mind here is a "creeping" coup d'état by "anti-socialist and counterrevolutionary" elements, not a violent military takeover.

²³⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference to armed patrols harkens back to the units that were set up to facilitate and consolidate the Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia in February 1948. The specific division to which Krno refers was set up in March-April 1968 under the auspices of the KSČ People's Militia.

²³⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These figures are much too high, at least with respect to active members (which in both cases numbered well under 100,000).

²³⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Vladimír Blažek was a prominent advocate of radical liberalization. The article in question is "Soukromý politický deník," *Literární listy* (Prague), No. 13 (31 May 1968), p. 2.

²³⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This statement, which picks up on Marx's famous dictum that no ruling class has ever given up power without a struggle, is taken out of context by Krno and Shelest. Blažek was a proponent of open, multiparty elections. Although he was doubtful that the KSČ would ever accept free elections, he was clearly seeking peaceful change.

²³⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This is not entirely accurate. The branches of KAN were located predominantly in urban areas of the Czech lands. Although the organization hoped to expand its presence in Slovakia, little progress toward that goal had been achieved before the Soviet invasion.

²³⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Petöfi Circle was set up in March 1956 by the Stalinist leader in Hungary, Mátyás Rákosi, who intended it to be a debating forum for the youth league of the Hungarian Workers' Party (MDF). Rákosi believed that an outlet of this sort would help defuse growing social tension. To his dismay, the club quickly became a leading organ of the anti-Rákosi opposition. On 30 June 1956, Rákosi induced the MDF Central Leadership to adopt a resolution banning the Petöfi Circle and de-

nouncing “anti-party elements” and the “anti-party views” of “a certain group that has formed around Imre Nagy.” This resolution came too late, however, either to end the Petöfi Circle or to forestall the ouster of Rákosi in mid-July 1956. (Rákosi was forced to flee to the Soviet Union, where he lived the remaining fifteen years of his life.) The Petöfi Circle continued to function over the next few months, as social turmoil in Hungary culminated in a full-fledged revolution on 23 October 1956.

²⁴⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: As early as mid-March 1968, some allusions to Stalin’s complicity in the Czechoslovak terror of the 1950s began appearing in the Czechoslovak press. The most comprehensive analysis was presented in the three-part series by Karel Kaplan, “Zamyšlení nad politickými procesy,” *Nová mysl* (Prague), Vol. XXII, No. 6 (June 1968), pp. 765-794; Vol. XXII, No. 7 (July 1968), pp. 906-940; and Vol. XXII, No. 8 (August 1968), pp. 1054-1078. Further installments of Kaplan’s research were due to be published in the same journal, but those plans were cancelled after the Soviet invasion.

²⁴¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Jan Masaryk, the son of Tomáš Masaryk, served as foreign minister in the final non-Communist government under Beneš and, for a very brief while, in the first government established by the KSČ. Masaryk died under mysterious circumstances in March 1948. His defenestration was officially portrayed as a suicide, but there were strong suspicions in Czechoslovakia – both then and afterward – that Soviet secret police “advisers” killed him and subsequently covered it up. (Those suspicions have been largely confirmed by declassified materials, though conclusive evidence remains sealed in the former KGB archives.) On 3 April 1968 the Czechoslovak government announced that it was opening a new investigation into Masaryk’s death. One of the founders and leaders of KAN, Ivan Sviták, was instrumental in bringing about this official inquiry. Not surprisingly, the investigation sparked bitter reactions in Moscow. On 7 May, Soviet leaders issued a statement via the TASS news agency that allegations of Soviet involvement were being concocted by “enemies of socialist Czechoslovakia” who were seeking to “stir up anti-Soviet sentiments among politically unstable people.” At the five-power meeting in Moscow the following day, Brezhnev expressed hope that the TASS statement would undercut “provocative insinuations by reactionary circles . . . that Masaryk was murdered by Soviet agents.” Cited from “Zapis’ besedy v TsK KPSS s rukovoditeliyami bratskikh partii Bolgarii, Vengrii, Germanii, Pol’shi,” L. 156. In a top-secret report prepared after the invasion, the Soviet KGB denounced KAN (and especially the “reactionary philosopher Sviták”) for having “instigated the [KSČ’s] provocative campaign ‘to uncover all the circumstances’ of Jan Masaryk’s suicide.” See “O deyatel’nosti kontrevolyutsionnogo podpol’ya v Chekhoslovakii,” 13 October 1968 (Top Secret), prepared by A. Sakharovskii, chief of the KGB’s 1st Main Directorate, transmitted by Soviet KGB chairman Yurii Andropov to the CPSU Politburo, in RGANI, F. 4, Op. 21, D. 32, L. 109.

²⁴²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This “organization” consisted of a small number of people who took part in a mass symposium in late May 1968 on “the cult of personality in Czechoslovakia,” a forum co-sponsored by the KSČ Institute of History and the Gottwald Museum. The “Clean Hands” group argued that all KSČ officials in the 1950s bore responsibility for the mass repressions, and that all “dirty” politicians should be forced to retire and placed under arrest. See “Informatsiya o diskussii ‘Kul’t lichnosti v Chekhoslovakii,’” Cable No. 15815 (Secret), from R. Lozhnikov, second secretary at the Soviet embassy in Prague, to M. Suslov, P. Demichev, and K. Rusakov, 6 May 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 25, Ll. 134-142. Aside from their contributions to this symposium,

the members of the group played little role in the Prague Spring.

²⁴³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Krno is referring here to the plenum that was held a week earlier, at the end of May.

²⁴⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This letter from Stalin, written in 1951, was cited by Biřak in his speech at the May 1968 plenum of the KSČ Central Committee. The speech was published in *Rudé právo* on 5 June, the day before Shelest spoke with Krno. See “Z diskuse na plenu ŮV KSČ ve dnech 29 května-1 června 1968: Odpovědnost vůči dnešku,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 5 June 1968, p. 2. Biřak used the letter to buttress his contention that responsibility for the violent repression in Czechoslovakia in the early 1950s lay with KSČ officials, not with Stalin. Biřak’s position, however, was at best misleading. Although Czechoslovak leaders (e.g., Gottwald and Novotný) did bear responsibility for the show trials and other repression, the whole process was instigated and guided by Soviet state security “advisers” in the ČSSR Public Security Ministry, Justice Ministry, and Interior Ministry, who were acting at Stalin’s behest. For an authoritative study of the role of these “advisers,” see Kaplan, *Sověřtší poradci v Československu, 1949-1956*, esp. pp. 8-47. In 1951, Stalin personally ordered the removal and – four months later – the arrest of Rudolf Slánský, the KSČ General Secretary, whose show trial and execution in 1952 were the most spectacular in a longer series of repressive incidents. Crucial evidence about these events was released from the Russian Presidential Archive in the late 1990s for four large volumes of collected documents, published as T. V. Volokitina et al., eds., *Sověřskii faktor v Vostochnoi Evrope, 1944-1953: Dokumenty*, 2 vols. (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 1999 and 2002); and T. V. Volokitina et al., eds., *Vostochnoi evrope v dokumentakh rossiiskikh arkhivov: 1944-1953*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Sibir’skii Khronograf, 1997 and 1999).

²⁴⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This should be Presidium, not Politburo.

²⁴⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Krno’s assessment here is wide of the mark. The extent of disagreement within the KSČ Presidium varied from issue to issue, but it was rare that Dubček encountered strong opposition. Indeed, he managed to preserve greater harmony on many issues than one might have expected in the face of such great turbulence at home and pressure from abroad.

²⁴⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This statement is misleading. Although some KSČ officials occasionally had hinted at the possibility of genuine “opposition parties,” Dubček had consistently rejected the idea. His view was endorsed by the KSČ Presidium as a whole. Moreover, it is questionable whether any groups outside the KSČ could have marshaled the resources and support to become “full-fledged” parties. On this point, see Skilling, *Czechoslovakia’s Interrupted Revolution*, pp. 546-555.

²⁴⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This number is much too low. Even the official statistics put the number of ethnic Hungarians in Slovakia at 560,000. See Československý statistický ůřad, *Statistická ročenka Československé Socialistické Republiky, 1968* (Prague: ČSŮ, 1968), p. 312. Unofficial estimates put the figure at around 600,000 to 700,000, or possibly even higher.

²⁴⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The final arrangements for the Warsaw Pact’s “Šumava” military exercises were set during a visit to Czechoslovakia on 17-22 May by a high-ranking Soviet military delegation led by the defense minister, Marshal Andrei Grechko. See “Zpráva o pobytu delegace ozbrojených sil SSSR v ČSSR,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 23 May 1968, p. 1. This delegation was following up on the talks held a few days earlier by the Konev-Moskalenko delegation (see above), which had been in Czechoslovakia from 8 to 14 May, and on a visit in late April by Marshal Ivan Yakubovskii, the commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact armed

forces, who met at length with the ČSSR national defense minister, General Martin Džúr. Krno's mention of "the arming of workers' patrols" refers to the upcoming meeting of the KSČ People's Militia (*Lidová milice*), the paramilitary units that had helped to impose and enforce Communist rule in Czechoslovakia. The meeting, held on 19 June, was supposed to demonstrate the willingness of the People's Militia to uphold Communist principles in the face of an "anti-socialist onslaught." (For further information about this meeting, see my annotations in Document No. 22 below.)

²⁵⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This refers to Vladimír Mináč, a Slovak writer (1922-1996) who had been among the signatories of a letter protesting the highly critical speeches that were delivered at the Fourth Congress of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union in June 1967. The motives of those who signed the letter were varied. Old-line Communists signed it because they rejected all demands for reform. Other signatories, however, particularly a number of Slovak writers, endorsed the letter because they believed that the Congress was being diverted onto issues that were predominantly of interest to Czechs. Evidently, Mináč fell into this category. He maintained a wary stance – endorsing certain reforms, while disapproving of others – once the Prague Spring was under way. Although he was not among the most diehard opponents of liberalization, his signature of the protest letter in June 1967 and his cautious approach thereafter caused tensions with other writers (especially Czech writers) in 1968 who actively supported the reform movement.

²⁵¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest gives the wrong first initial of Ladislav Mňačko, a Slovak writer whose novels, short stories, essays, and commentaries were celebrated for their anti-Stalinist themes. In April 1956, during the Second Congress of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union, Mňačko was at the forefront of those demanding far-reaching political and social reforms. He also gained prominence for his condemnation of the KSČ's periodic reliance on anti-Semitism, dating back to the show trials of Slánský and other leading figures in the early 1950s. In the summer of 1967 Mňačko strongly criticized Czechoslovakia's opposition to Israel during the Six-Day Mideast War. In a further gesture of protest against Czechoslovak policy, he traveled to Israel in August 1967. The KSČ authorities promptly denounced Mňačko as a traitor and stripped him of his citizenship, forcing him to live in exile. His case became one of the main pretexts for Novotný and his chief aide, the ideology secretary Jiří Hendrych, to shut down *Literární noviny*, the predecessor of *Literární listy*. Mňačko was not permitted to return to Czechoslovakia for even a brief visit until mid-1968. Following the Soviet invasion he had to leave the country again, and at that point he settled in West Germany and Austria. After the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia was ousted in late 1989, he moved back to Bratislava and died there in 1994.

²⁵²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The translation here is directly from the Czech text rather than the Russian version, which is incomplete and idiosyncratic.

²⁵³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This statement is accurate. The Subcarpathian Ruthenian region had never been part of the Tsarist Russian empire.

²⁵⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The area known as Subcarpathian Ruthenia (*Podkarpats'ka Rus'*), a poor, mountainous region adjoined by western Ukraine, eastern Slovakia, northeastern Hungary, and southeastern Poland, was under Hungarian rule from the 11th to the early 20th centuries. During that time, the population consisted predominantly of Ruthenians (*Rusyny*), a small East Slavic group whose national identity was tenuous (indeed almost non-existent) until well into the 19th century. In 1918-1919 the Ruthenians, like the Slovaks, willingly joined the new Czechoslo-

vak Republic so that they could be free of Hungarian domination. Over the next twenty years, Subcarpathian Ruthenia became a separate, partly autonomous province of Czechoslovakia. In October 1938, when German troops were directed to begin occupying Bohemia and Moravia, Subcarpathian Ruthenia was granted full self-governing status. Under the pro-Ukrainian leadership of Avhustyn Voloshyn (who displaced the initial leader, Andrii Brodii), the region changed its name to Carpatho-Ukraine. In early 1939, the Axis powers shifted course and approved Hungary's bid to re-annex Carpatho-Ukraine. In desperation, the Carpatho-Ukrainian government proclaimed "independence" on 15 March 1939, just hours before the region was occupied by Hungarian troops, who remained there for the next five-and-a-half years. In October 1944, Soviet units from the 4th Ukrainian Front drove the Hungarians out of Subcarpathian Ruthenia and set up a 20-member Czechoslovak delegation at Khust to create a new government for the region. (In the meantime the USSR's 2nd Ukrainian Front, which included the First Czechoslovak Corps headed by General Ludvík Svoboda, moved into eastern Slovakia via the Dukla Pass, where they encountered heavy fighting.) The Khust delegation, despite its mandate, was increasingly outflanked by the Subcarpathian Communist Party, which relied on the backing of the Red Army to subvert and take over local national councils. On 19 November 1944, the Subcarpathian Communists met at Mukachevo and issued a "demand for Transcarpathian Ukraine to be reunited with Soviet Ukraine." A week later, the Communists established a 17-member National Council at Mukachevo, which "unanimously" reaffirmed the call for "reunification" with Ukraine. From that point on, the Communist-dominated Council held all power in Subcarpathian Ruthenia (which the Council invariably referred to as "Transcarpathian Ukraine") and laid the groundwork for a merger with Soviet Ukraine. The process reached its culmination on 29 June 1945, when the newly restored Czechoslovak government agreed under pressure to sign a treaty ceding the region to Ukraine. This treaty reversed a large number of earlier public and private statements by Soviet officials and exiled Czechoslovak leaders, who had pledged that Subcarpathian Ruthenia would be an integral part of postwar Czechoslovakia. In March 1946 the region was formally renamed Transcarpathian Oblast, and the Ukrainization campaign accelerated. For a superb overview of the history of Subcarpathian Ruthenia, as well as extensive notes and a comprehensive bibliography (through the mid-1970s), see Paul Robert Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity: Subcarpathian Rus', 1848-1948* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978).

²⁵⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: More than 20,000 inhabitants of Subcarpathian Ruthenia fled to eastern Galicia in 1939-1940 after Hungarian troops moved into Subcarpathian Ruthenia. Almost all of the refugees were arrested by Soviet troops on charges of having illegally entered Soviet territory. (Eastern Galicia, like the rest of eastern Poland, was occupied by Soviet troops in September 1939.) They were brought before military tribunals, where they were convicted of espionage and sentenced to lengthy terms in hard labor camps. Roughly three-fifths of them died in the camps. The rest might have perished as well had it not been for the intervention of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile, which pleaded with the Soviet authorities to release the imprisoned Ruthenians, if only to provide manpower for the First Czechoslovak Corps that General Ludvík Svoboda began organizing in July 1941. Not until early 1943, however, were some 2,700 prisoners finally freed and permitted to join Svoboda's units. The delay evidently arose because Soviet officials wanted to ensure that those who were released would not be inclined to turn against the USSR. See Illya Voloshchuk, "Politychni vidnosyny u chekhoslovats'komu viis'ku v SPSR," in

Shlyakh do voli: Zbirnyk spohadiv i dokumentiv pro natsional'no-vyzvol'nu borot'bu ukraïns'koho naseleñnya Chekhoslovachchyny proty fashyzmu v 1939-1945 rr. (Bratislava-Prešov: SPVVUL, 1966), Vol. 2, pp. 214-215.

²⁵⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The percentages here are exaggerated, but it is true that a large majority of Subcarpathian Ruthenian males joined the First Czechoslovak Army, and that after Ruthenian prisoners were freed from Siberian labor camps in 1943, Ruthenians accounted for a highly disproportionate share (two-thirds) of the troops under Svoboda's command. Of the 3,348 soldiers in the Corps by late 1943, 2,210 were Ruthenians. Czech soldiers numbered only 563, and Slovaks only 543, with other nationalities accounting for the remaining 231. See Ivan Vanat, "Zakarpats'kyi ukraïnci v chekhoslovats'komu viis'ku v SRSR," in *Shlyakh do voli*, Vol. 2, pp. 183-201.

²⁵⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Ivan Turjanica and Ivan Vas were long-time members of the Subcarpathian Communist Party, which had gained a sizable following among Ruthenians during the pre-war period. Turjanica played an especially important role in determining the fate of the Subcarpathian region. He had been a member of the Subcarpathian Communist Party since 1925, and in 1932 became editor of the party newspaper, *Karpats'kii Proletar*. He escaped to the Soviet Union after Hungarian units occupied Carpatho-Ukraine, and he then joined Svoboda's First Czechoslovak Corps. At the same time, Turjanica was given the rank of a political officer in the Red Army. In late October 1944 he was appointed a member of the delegation set up by Soviet troops to form a governing body for Subcarpathian Ruthenia. Shortly after the delegation arrived, Turjanica publicly declared that Subcarpathian Ruthenia would be restored as an autonomous province of Czechoslovakia. But by mid-November 1944, he had reversed his position in line with the goals promoted by Moscow. At the conference of the Subcarpathian Communist Party at Mukachevo, he argued that it was time to fulfill the "age-old desire" of the Ruthenians to be "reunited" (*vozz'ednannya*) with Soviet Ukraine. When the Mukachevo Council was established a week later, Turjanica was appointed chairman and Vas was placed in charge of internal security. From that vantage point, they were able to eliminate any further obstacles to the transfer of Subcarpathian Ruthenia to Ukraine. Subsequently, from 1946 to 1948, Turjanica served as General Secretary of the renamed Transcarpathian Oblast Communist Party. For more on Turjanica's exploits, see František Němec and Vladimír Moudry, *The Soviet Seizure of Subcarpathian Ruthenia* (Toronto: William B. Anderson, 1955); Vasyl Markus, *L'incorporation de l'Ukraine subcarpathique a l'Ukraine sovietique, 1944-1945* (Louvain: Centre Ukrainien d'Etudes en Belgique, 1956); and Borys Spivak, *Narysy istorii revolyuciinoi borot'by trudyashchykh Zakarpattya v 1930-1945 rokakh* (Uzhhorod: Vydavnytstvo L'viv's'koho universytetu, 1963). Němec was the head of the Czechoslovak delegation that was established at Khust in October 1944. Markus was an ethnic Ukrainian who took part in the Mukachevo Council, but who went along with the resolutions only under heavy pressure.

²⁵⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The account here is partly correct, but also partly garbled. By this point (late 1944), Turjanica and Vas had already left the First Czechoslovak Corps. Turjanica, as noted above, had been appointed in October 1944 as a member and political adviser of the Czechoslovak delegation at Khust. It was from there that Turjanica went off on his mission with Vas in early November 1944, having explained to the head of the delegation, František Němec, that he was going to visit his mother in Mukachevo. See the first-hand account and documentation in Němec and Moudry, *The Soviet Seizure of Subcarpathian Ruthenia*, pp.

108-109, 232-233.

²⁵⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Czechoslovak delegation at Khust included two generals who were supposed to oversee the drafting of young men from Subcarpathian Ruthenia for Svoboda's units, which were still encountering fierce resistance near Dukla Pass.

²⁶⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This account is broadly accurate. See Němec and Moudry, *The Soviet Seizure of Subcarpathian Ruthenia*, pp. 136 and 142-143, as well as document no. 57 in the invaluable documentary appendix of the Němec/Moudry book.

²⁶¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This account, too, is broadly accurate. Another point worth mentioning here is that shortly after Turjanica arrived in Mukachevo, he founded a newspaper, *Zakarpats'ka Pravda*, which vehemently promoted the cause of "reunification" with Soviet Ukraine, implying that anyone who opposed the idea must be a "Hungarian traitor and spy."

²⁶²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These are portions of eastern Slovakia, where the inhabitants included a substantial number of Ruthenians.

²⁶³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The post-armistice "treaties pertaining to the creation of the Czechoslovak Republic" include the Treaty of Versailles (signed on 7 May 1919), the Treaty of Saint-Germain (signed on 10 September 1919), and the Treaty of Trianon (signed on 4 June 1920). Other crucial documents preceding these treaties were the Cleveland Agreement (signed on 25 October 1915), the Pittsburgh Agreement (signed on 30 May 1918), the Declaration of Independence (adopted by the Czechoslovak National Council on 28 October 1918), and the Declaration of Turciansky Svaty Martin (issued on 30 October 1918).

²⁶⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: To a large extent this is accurate, but in 1944-1945 Soviet Ukrainian officials argued that Subcarpathia Ruthenia had briefly been part of Kyivan Rus' in the 13th century, and that Ukraine was therefore reclaiming one of its territories rather than seizing new land.

²⁶⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The reference here is to Ivan Olbracht (1882-1952), a well-known Czech writer in interwar Czechoslovakia, who wrote frequently about Subcarpathian Ruthenia. Of particular note is his collection of essays *Hory a staletí* (Prague: Melantrich, 1935), which deals with the economic hardships in Subcarpathian Ruthenia. Two years later he published a short-story triptych *Golet v údolení* (Prague: Melantrich, 1937), which depicts Hassidic Jewish life in Subcarpathian Ruthenia, a subject that comes through particularly vividly in the story "O smutných očích Hany Karadžičové." Olbracht's writings were republished in 1972 along with two of his novels (also written in the 1930s) by the same publisher in a volume entitled *Zakarpatská trilogie*.

²⁶⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Moscow time (which during the Soviet era was also used in Ukraine) was introduced in Subcarpathian Ruthenia on 5 November 1944. Until then, the area had been on East-Central European time, two hours behind Moscow time.

²⁶⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The KSČ Central Committee plenum ran from 29 May (the day that this visiting delegation returned to Czechoslovakia) to 1 June 1968.

²⁶⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These comments by Barbírek about the loss of control over the press were echoed, almost word for word, in subsequent reports by the Soviet KGB on the "counterrevolutionary underground in Czechoslovakia." See, in particular, "O deyatel'nosti kontrevolyutsionnogo podpol'ya v Chekhoslovakii" (cited in my annotation to Document 19), Ll. 1-34.

²⁶⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The article to which Gotlibová is referring is M. Shiryamov, "Ch'i interesy zashchishchal Masarik?"

Sovetskaya Rossiya (Moscow), 14 May 1968, p. 2.

²⁷⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: All the union-republics of the USSR (except for the Russian Soviet Federation of Socialist Republics) had their own national anthems from January 1950 on. The Ukrainian anthem was "Zhyvy Ukraina" (Live on, O Ukraine), composed by Andrii Lebedynets with lyrics by Mykola Bazhan and Petro Tychyra (A young poet, Oleksa Novyts'kyi; accused Bazhan and Tychyra of plagiarism and demanded to be listed as a co-lyricist, but his complaints, though not without merit, were brushed aside). (A revised version of the lyrics was adopted in March 1978.) In 1992, the newly independent state of Ukraine shifted its national anthem to "Shehe ne vmerla Ukraina" (Ukraine Has Not Yet Died), based on music composed in 1863 by Mykhailo Verbyts'kyi and lyrics adapted from an 1862 poem by Pavlo Chubyns'kyi.

²⁷¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Changes in the status of Bratislava were the first measures taken in 1968 to rectify the Czech-Slovak relationship. In late February 1968, laws and constitutional amendments were adopted to make Bratislava the "capital city of Slovakia" and to elevate the status of Bratislava's municipal national committee to a status equal to that of the Prague municipal committee – that is, a status roughly equivalent to that of each of the Czech and Slovak regional committees.

²⁷²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The editor-in-chief of *Rudé právo* was Oldřich Švestka, a member of the KSČ CC Presidium, who later became one of the signatories of the secret letter urging Soviet military intervention. For his views at the time of this visit, as expressed in a secret conversation with his counterparts at the CPSU daily *Pravda*, see "Zapis' besedy so chlenom Prezidiuma TsK Kommunisticheskoi partii Chekhoslovakii, glavnyim redaktorom gazety 'Rudé právo' tov. Oldřichom Shvestkoi," by A. I. Lukovets, member of the editorial board at *Pravda*, transmitted to the CPSU Politburo by Mikhail Zimyanin, editor-in-chief of *Pravda*, 20 May 1968 (Top Secret), in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 26, Ll. 33-40.

²⁷³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Stepan Chervonenko was the Soviet ambassador in Czechoslovakia, who took an active part in trying to discredit the Prague Spring. Among Chervonenko's numerous contacts was Novotný even after the latter had been removed as president.

²⁷⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This view of Igor Kuznetsov's reports is generally correct. Cables from the Soviet consulate in Bratislava were sometimes distorted, but usually far less so than those emanating from the Soviet embassy in Prague. See, for example, "Informatsiya k voprosu o polozhenii v rukovodstve KPCh," Cable No. 110 (Secret), to A. A. Gromyko and K. V. Rusakov, 26 December 1967, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 10-13; "Informatsiya k voprosu o polozhenii v rukovodstve KPCh," Cable No. 1 (Secret), to A. A. Gromyko, 2 January 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 299, Ll. 7-9; and "Zapis' besedy s chlenom TsK KPS tov. Ya. Mrazikom," Cable No. 21 (Secret), to A. A. Gromyko, 14 February 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 301, Ll. 71-74.

²⁷⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The federalization of Czechoslovakia, including separate Communist Parties and republic governments for Slovakia and the Czech lands, was due to take effect in the fall of 1968. Barbírek obviously had these plans in mind when he referred to a "future Slovak Republic." (He decidedly was *not* proposing an independent Slovakia.)

²⁷⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: See my annotation later in this document for more about Gustáv Husák's role in July 1968.

²⁷⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The notion of full "equality" between the Czech lands and Slovakia, and the elimination of "majority domination" (*majorizacia*), were central demands put forth by

Slovak officials and groups in 1968.

²⁷⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The data cited here by Il'nyts'kyi are inaccurate, though the proportions are roughly correct. A total of 1,543 delegates were elected, of whom some 1,251 (81 percent) were from the Czech lands and 292 (18 percent) were from Slovakia. In terms of nationality, the proportions were slightly more even. The 1,215 Czech delegates represented 78.6 percent of the total pool, and the 300 Slovaks made up 19.4 percent. The remaining 28 delegates included 14 Hungarians, 7 Ukrainians, and 7 Poles. It is worth noting that the projected representation of Slovak delegates at the Fourteenth Congress in 1968 was greater than at the Thirteenth Congress in 1966, when Czechs outnumbered Slovaks by 1,192 to 265 (82.6 percent versus 17 percent).

²⁷⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: As in other documents, Il'nyts'kyi here assumed (as Soviet officials generally did) that most Slovaks were decidedly less reform-minded than the Czechs.

²⁸⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In early July 1968, a few days before this meeting between Il'nyts'kyi and Koscelanský, a municipal party conference was held in Bratislava. Although Gustáv Husák did not yet occupy a senior position in either the KSS or the KSČ, he was able to gain wide publicity at the conference by voicing strong criticisms of those who were "obstructing reform," a not-so-subtle reference to Biľak, among others. Husák declared that the long-festered problems in Slovakia should be blamed "not just on Novotný," but on "some of our Slovak comrades as well." He demanded that a Slovak Party congress be held in late August, prior to the KSČ's Extraordinary Fourteenth Congress that was due to start on 9 September. A Slovak party congress, he argued, would give a much-needed fillip to the reform process. The municipal conference endorsed his suggestion, and two weeks later (on 18 July) the KSS Central Committee formally voted to hold an early Slovak party congress on 26 August. This change of date was important because it established a de facto deadline for Soviet military action. Soviet leaders feared that if they did not act before the KSS congress took place, reformist forces in the Slovak party would use the gathering to press for the removal of Biľak and other hardline, pro-Soviet officials, paving the way for the wholesale ouster of "healthy forces" at the KSČ's own congress two weeks later. Thus, the concern was that if the Soviet Union waited beyond 26 August before sending in its troops, it would be faced with a fait accompli that would be extremely costly and difficult to undo.

²⁸¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The landmark "Two Thousand Words" ("Dva tisíce slov") manifesto was an ardently pro-reform statement drafted by Ludvík Vaculík and signed by nearly 70 writers, artists, scientists, athletic champions, and other prominent figures. It was published simultaneously in three Prague daily newspapers and the Czechoslovak writers' weekly *Literární Listy* on 27 June 1968. In many respects, the article was intended to help, not disparage, the government. It praised the KSČ leadership for having initiated reforms, and it called on Czechoslovak citizens to work with, rather than against, the KSČ, or at least with the party's reformist members. Moreover, the statement cautioned against the use of pro-reform tactics that were "illegitimate, indecent, or boorish." At the same time, the article urged citizens to resort to "direct action" at the district, local, and regional levels – including public criticism, strikes, demonstrations, and picketing – to compel orthodox, hard-line officials to relinquish their posts. The signatories emphasized that the need to "cleanse" Czechoslovak socialism of its past errors could no longer be deferred, and that events over the next few months would determine the country's fate. At a time of deepening hostility between Czechoslovakia and its Communist allies, not to mention the conflicts within the KSČ, these injunctions and other portions of the manifesto's language seemed indis-

creet and even threatening. Not only did the article imply that Soviet-Czechoslovak relations were “inequitable”; it also warned of the “possibility that foreign [i.e., Soviet] forces will interfere with our internal development,” and pledged that Czechoslovak citizens would defend the reform process “even with arms if necessary.” These words, in combination, aroused deep anger and concern in Moscow about a resurgent “counterrevolution” against both the Communist Party and all pro-Soviet elements in Czechoslovakia. The Soviet embassy had learned on 26 June from unnamed “friends” that a controversial document was about to be published. The chief editor of the CPSU daily *Pravda*, Mikhail Zimyanin, who formerly had been the Soviet ambassador in Czechoslovakia, happened to be in Prague on the 26th. His analysis of the “2,000 Words” and a translated copy of the text were promptly relayed to Moscow by the current Soviet ambassador in Prague, Stepan Chervonenko. Soviet leaders therefore learned right away about this “anti-socialist call to counterrevolution.” In Czechoslovakia itself, the article was widely hailed, but Dubček was irked by the authors’ call for direct action at the local level, which he perceived as a threat to his own gradual approach. Dubček also was aware of the implications of the document vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and the other orthodox members of the Warsaw Pact. As a result, he led the KSČ Presidium in officially condemning the Manifesto shortly after its publication. See “Předsednictvo Ústředního výboru KSČ k prohlášení Dva tisíce slov,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 29 June 1968, p. 1. See also “Stánovisko vlády ČSSR k ‘2000 slov’,” 28 June 1968 (Secret), in VHA, F. Sekretariát MNO, 1968-1969, 158/200. In practical terms, though, little that Dubček could have done at that point would have diminished Moscow’s anger. The simple fact that such an “inflammatory” and “anti-socialist” statement had been published convinced many in the Soviet leadership that the KSČ was no longer in control of events. Indeed, Brezhnev had been speaking with Dubček by phone only hours before the article appeared; and thus he realized, based on Dubček’s failure to mention the upcoming publication, that the Czechoslovak leader himself must not have known about the manifesto until after it was published. The whole episode thus seemed to confirm Brezhnev’s suspicion that the KSČ had lost whatever influence it still had over the press, and with it a large part of its “leading role” in Czechoslovak society.

²⁸²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Fyodor Konstantinov was a prominent headline commentator for the CPSU throughout the 1968 crisis. However, the main article in the Soviet press denouncing the “2,000 Words” manifesto was not by Konstantinov, but by the pseudonymous I. Aleksandrov, “Ataka protiv sotsialisticheskikh ustoev Chekhoslovakii,” *Pravda* (Moscow), 11 July 1968, p. 4. The article by Konstantinov to which Koscelanský is referring here was not a response to the “2,000 Words” manifesto; instead, it came in response to a lengthy speech delivered by the reformist KSČ CC Secretary, Čestmír Císař, on 6 May to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Karl Marx’s birth. See “Marxův myšlenkový odkaz je záštitou, oporou a inspirací: Večer k 150. výročí narození Karla Marxe,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 7 May 1968, pp. 1, 3. In the speech, Císař declared that “every Marxist-Leninist Party must have its own policy, which takes account of national conditions.” He insisted that no Party (i.e., the CPSU) could have a “monopoly on the interpretation of Marxism in contemporary circumstances,” and he chided those who wanted “a part of the Communist movement to be subordinated to another part of the movement.” Konstantinov was assigned the task of drafting a comprehensive rebuttal to Císař’s speech, “Marksizm-Leninizm – Edinoe internatsional’noe uchenie,” *Pravda* (Moscow), 14 June 1968, pp. 2-3. Císař promptly responded in a lengthy article, “V cem je síla živého marxismu-leninismu: Odpověď akademiku F.

Konstantinovovi,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 22 June 1968, p. 3. Konstantinov later responded to Císař’s reply, publishing another lengthy article, “Leninizm-Marksizm sovremennoi epokhi,” *Pravda* (Moscow), 24 July 1968, p. 4.

²⁸³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: For samples of the articles that might have antagonized Koscelanský, see Hajo Herbell, “Bonn zwischen Furcht und Hoffnung,” *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), 24 May 1968, p. 6; and “Graf Razumovsky und die ‘2000 Worte’,” *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), 3 July 1968, p. 7.

²⁸⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: To the extent that this statement is accurate, it sheds interesting light on the influence that Western countries wielded vis-à-vis events in Czechoslovakia – probably without even realizing it.

²⁸⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Koscelanský is referring here to the rapprochement between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in mid-1955. At the end of World War II the Communist regime in Yugoslavia was staunchly loyal to the Soviet Union, but by 1948 Stalin had provoked a bitter conflict with Yugoslavia, a conflict that came to the brink of war. The enmity between Moscow and Belgrade remained acute through the rest of the Stalin era. Soon after Stalin’s death, however, leaders on both sides began pursuing a Soviet-Yugoslav reconciliation, an effort that culminated in a landmark visit to Belgrade by Khrushchev in May 1955. A vast amount of formerly secret documentation on the Soviet-Yugoslav split and the subsequent rapprochement has been released from the Russian, Yugoslav, and other East European archives since the early 1990s. On the reconciliation in 1955, see, among many other items, the hundreds of documents in “Ob itogakh sovetsko-yugoslavskikh peregovorov” in “Plenum TsK KPSS – XIX Sozyv: 4-12 iyulya 1955 g.,” July 1955 (Strictly Secret), in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 1, Dd. 157-180. See also the many valuable materials pertaining to Soviet-Yugoslav relations in 1955 in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 28, Dd. 306, 342, and 404 and RGANI, F. 5, Op. 30, Dd. 88, 90, 121, and 170. On the split itself, see the relevant items in the four volumes of declassified documents edited by T. V. Volokitina et al. (under the titles *Sovetskii faktor v Vostochnoi Evrope* and *Vostochnaya Evropa v dokumentakh rossiiskikh arkhivov*, both cited in my annotation to Document No. 19 above), as well as “Sekretnaya sovetsko-yugoslavskaya perepiska 1948 goda,” *Voprosy istorii* (Moscow), Nos. 4-5, 6-7, and 10-11 (1992), pp. 119-136, 158-172, and 154-169, respectively. For insightful analyses drawing on newly declassified materials, see Leonid Gibianskii, “The Origins of the Soviet-Yugoslav Split,” in Norman M. Naimark and Leonid Gibianskii, eds., *The Establishment of Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 122-152; I. Bukharkin, “Konflikt, ktorogo ne dolzhno bylo byt’ (iz istorii sovetsko-yugoslavskikh otnoshenii),” *Vestnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del SSSR* (Moscow), No. 6 (31 March 1990), pp. 53-57; L. Ya. Gibianskii, “U nachala konflikta: Balkanskii uzel,” *Rabochii klass i sovremnyi mir* (Moscow), No. 2 (March-April 1990), pp. 171-185; I. V. Bukharkin and L. Ya. Gibianskii, “Pervye shagi konflikta,” *Rabochii klass i sovremnyi mir* (Moscow), No. 5 (September-October 1990), pp. 152-163; L. Ya. Gibianskii, “Vyzov v Moskvu,” *Politicheskie issledovaniya* (Moscow), No. 1 (January-February 1991), pp. 195-207; and the related series of articles by L. Ya. Gibianskii, “K istorii sovetsko-yugoslavskogo konflikta 1948-1953 gg.,” in *Sovetskoe slavyanovedenie* (Moscow), No. 3 (May-June 1991), pp. 32-47 and No. 4 (July-August 1991), pp. 12-24; and *Slavyanovedenie* (Moscow), No. 1 (January-February 1992), pp. 68-82 and No. 3 (May-June 1992), pp. 35-51.

²⁸⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Tens of thousands of pages of documents in the former CPSU Central Committee archive (RGANI), which were available in 1992 and the first four months of

1993 (but are now off-limits again), confirm that officials at the Soviet embassy in Prague did their best in 1968 to convince Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders that a grave threat to socialism and to the USSR's security existed in Czechoslovakia. However, it is doubtful that Koscelanský is justified in saying that these reports had "misled" the members of the CPSU Politburo (which implies that their position would have been different if they had received less alarmist information). On the contrary, all evidence suggests that Soviet leaders correctly understood that, from their perspective (of wanting to maintain orthodox Communism in the Soviet bloc), the developments in Czechoslovakia represented a profound threat.

²⁸⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Soviet troops had not been permanently deployed in Czechoslovakia since December 1945, but Soviet units had begun entering Czechoslovak territory in late May 1968 for "Šumava" military exercises that began on 19 June. The exercises, which had been hurriedly moved up from their originally scheduled date in 1969, lasted well beyond their projected completion date of 30 June. The aim, as several of the Warsaw Pact generals privately indicated at the time, was to "paralyze and frighten" the "anti-socialist forces" in Czechoslovakia, to "intimidate wavering elements" in the KSČ, and to "bolster and protect true Communists dedicated to the revolution and to socialism." Cited from the top-secret briefing notes prepared by General István Oláh, Hungarian deputy minister of defense, and General Ferenc Szücs, deputy chief of the Hungarian General Staff, for the MSzMP Politburo, 5 July 1968, in *Magyar Honvédség Központi Irattára* (MHKI), 5/12/11, dok. 1. The political objectives cited by Oláh and Szücs took on even greater salience and urgency as tensions increased during the first few weeks of July. Even when the "Šumava" maneuvers finally ended in late July, the Soviet troops that had been taking part in the exercises remained in Czechoslovakia, fueling rumors that Soviet military commanders were hoping to gain a permanent presence there. A top-secret report to the CPSU leadership from the Soviet military attaché in Czechoslovakia, Lieut.-General Nikolai Trusov, left no doubt that the prolonged troop deployments were "causing ill will among the Czechoslovak population" and were widely regarded as a "violation of the sovereignty and national pride of the Czechs and Slovaks." See "Obzor pressy, peredach radio i televideniya v otnoshenii s komandno-shtabnom ucheniem i prebyvaniiem sovetskikh voisk na territorii Chekhoslovakii," Report No. 5-va to K. Katushev, K. Rusakov, and A. Gromyko, 18 July 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 311, Ll. 3-9. Yet even after leaders in Moscow became aware of these sentiments, they made no effort to clarify the status of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia. KSČ representatives often were unable even to meet with Marshal Ivan Yakubovskii (the commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact, who was overseeing the maneuvers), much less get accurate information from him. Time and again in the first half of July 1968, senior Czechoslovak officials announced specific dates as a "deadline" for the military withdrawals, only to find that the Soviet forces had no intention of pulling out. Some limited withdrawals occurred in the second week of July, but they came to an abrupt halt almost before they started. Reports then emerged that Soviet troops were setting up special electronic jamming gear, complex logistical equipment, large-scale ammunition stores, and other facilities that suggested they might want to remain on Czechoslovak territory indefinitely. See "Odjezd sovětských vojsk," *Rudé právo* (Prague), 19 July 1968, p. 5. Those reports gained extra credence after the Czechoslovak intelligence service intercepted a phone conversation between Marshal Yakubovskii and one of his deputies, General Mikhail Kazakov, in which Yakubovskii averred that Soviet forces would remain in Czechoslovakia "at least until 20 September," the projected closing date of the KSČ's Extraordinary

14th Congress. Cited in Pavel Tigrid, *Why Dubček Fell* (London: Macdonald, 1971), p. 68. Although Soviet leaders did finally agree at the end of July to pull out their troops temporarily, the deployments by that point had been highly beneficial for Soviet military planners. The command headquarters that Yakubovskii set up for the exercises remained intact, as did the elaborate military communications network at Ruzyně Airport just south of Prague, which linked Soviet units in Czechoslovakia with the Soviet High Command and with forces in neighboring Warsaw Pact countries. The retention of these installations in July and August greatly facilitated Soviet preparations for the invasion. (The communications center, in fact, proved invaluable in directing Soviet military air traffic on the night of 20-21 August.) The continued troop deployments also enabled the Soviet Union to put together a final list of military bases, air fields, and weapons depots in Czechoslovakia and to monitor the activities of Czechoslovak army units stationed at those sites. Most important of all, the protracted "Šumava" exercises served as a kind of "dress rehearsal" for the real military operation on 20-21 August. The units and entry routes employed during the exercises were, in almost all cases, the same ones used during the invasion.

²⁸⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: A "letter to the Soviet people" from the KSČ People's Militia (*Lidová milice*), the paramilitary units who were traditionally among the most orthodox, pro-Soviet elements of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, had been published in the Soviet press on 21 June 1968. The letter and a resolution were approved on 19 June at a nationwide gathering in Prague of some 10,000 to 12,000 members of the People's Militia. According to the declassified transcript of Brezhnev's speech at the CPSU Central Committee plenum on 17 July 1968, the People's Militia conference was convened on the basis of the Soviet Union's "repeated recommendations and urgent advice." See "Rech' tovarishcha L. I. Brezhneva," in "Plenum Tsentral'nogo Komiteta KPSS – 17 iyulya 1968 g.," 17 July 1968 (Top Secret), in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 3, D. 214, L. 18. Newly declassified documents (e.g., the items in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 1, Ll. 101-104 and D. 24, Ll. 104-126) also reveal that a highly publicized campaign of letter-writing by Soviet "workers" in support of the KSČ People's Militia in late June and early July was entirely orchestrated by the CPSU CC Propaganda Department. In many cases, the Soviet workers who supposedly had written "spontaneous" letters of support for the People's Militia were unaware of the letters until they read about them in the Soviet press.

²⁸⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Koscelanský is referring here to numerous letters sent in the first week of July urging the KSČ leaders to regain political control in Czechoslovakia and inviting them to take part in a multilateral summit meeting in Warsaw. On 4 July, the Soviet Politburo dispatched a letter to the KSČ Presidium expressing "alarm" at recent events in Czechoslovakia and demanding that the Czechoslovak authorities "adopt concrete and effective measures" to repulse the "anti-socialist and counterrevolutionary forces." Similar letters, though with an even more hostile and minatory edge, were sent to Prague by the East German, Polish, and Bulgarian Communist Parties (Koscelanský mistakenly omits mention of Bulgaria), and a somewhat less threatening letter was sent by János Kádár of Hungary. The letters were not published, but word of them quickly leaked out. In a follow-up to these documents, Brezhnev sent a letter to Dubček on 6 July inviting him to an allied meeting in Warsaw, which was intended to bring together the top officials of all the Warsaw Pact countries (other than Romania) to consider what the Soviet leader described as "the threat to Communism in Czechoslovakia posed by the Two Thousand Words." The other leaders of the "Five" (a group consisting of the Soviet Union,

East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary) extended similar invitations to the KSČ First Secretary over the next few days. But Dubček, having been buoyed by expressions of support from the press and the public as well as from KSČ organizations, rejected all such invitations, claiming that only a series of bilateral talks on Czechoslovak soil would be worthwhile in light of the wide discrepancy between the KSČ Presidium's views of the situation in Czechoslovakia and the views expressed by the leaders of the "Five." Dubček indicated that a joint conference could follow the bilateral meetings, but he urged that Romania and Yugoslavia be invited to take part as well. His position on this matter was unanimously endorsed by the KSČ Presidium (even by the hardline members such as Biřák and Kolder) at both of the meetings that Koscelanský mentions here, on 8 and 9 July. See "Shifrtelgramma," 10 July 1968 (Top Secret/Eyes Only), from S. V. Chervonenko, Soviet ambassador in Czechoslovakia, to the CPSU Politburo, in AVPRF, F. 059, Op. 58, Po. 124, D. 571, Ll. 145-149. The leaders of the "Five" declined to take up Dubček's proposals, in part because they believed he was just trying to buy time until the KSČ's Extraordinary Fourteenth Congress, scheduled for September 1968, had created a *fait accompli* that would leave the reformists in the KSČ beyond any challenge from the party's "healthy forces." Brezhnev and his colleagues decided to proceed with the meeting in Warsaw even without Czechoslovakia's participation.

²⁹⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This plenum was convened on 17 July to endorse the Soviet delegation's actions at the recently-concluded Warsaw meeting. For the declassified transcripts, see "Iyul'skii Plenum TsK KPSS (17.VII.1968)," in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 3, Dd. 108-119, as cited above. The plenum was designed to convey the CPSU Politburo's views and to affix the Central Committee's imprimatur on the Politburo's stance. Despite earlier speculation by Western analysts, the transcripts and other newly declassified materials show that the plenum was *not* convened as a way of responding to pressure from below or of seeking advice from the Central Committee. On the contrary, the plenum was merely an element in the top-down process that characterized Soviet decision-making throughout the crisis. Brezhnev and his Politburo colleagues determined the outcome of the plenum in advance and used it to ensure that the Politburo's position would be binding on all lower-level party organizations. Brezhnev opened the plenum with a lengthy speech highlighting the results of the Warsaw meeting and the events that led up to it. Shelest spoke immediately after Brezhnev. The Ukrainian leader had taken part in the Warsaw meeting (as he did in the Dresden conference), and, aside from Brezhnev, he was the only member of the Soviet delegation in Warsaw who spoke at the 17 July plenum. The marked-up version of Shelest's speech, before it was published in the final stenographic account (*stenograficheskii otchet*) of the plenum, is stored in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 3, D. 112, Ll. 41-51. The version in the stenographic account is in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 3, D. 114, Ll. 9-9ob. The version of the speech stored in the Ukrainian archives (as translated here) is the typescript that Shelest actually used at the plenum. It contains the markings he made before delivering his remarks. The marked-up typescript is nearly identical (though not quite) to the version of his speech in the "author's copy" (*avtorskii ekzemplyar*) and stenographic account of the plenum transcript. The transcript incorporates the changes that Shelest made in handwriting on his typescript, but the paragraph formatting is different, and in one or two places the wording is very slight different. The mark-ups on the "author's copy" were designed mainly to bring the uncorrected copy into line with the original typescript that Shelest used. The changes that Shelest made in the typescript, and the mark-ups that he made on the "author's copy" of the plenum transcript on 18 July

(according to a date Shelest added next to his signature on the final page of the speech), will be noted here.

²⁹¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In the plenum transcript, the exclamation point was deleted, and a comma was inserted, linking the "Comrades" with the next sentence.

²⁹²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In the plenum transcript, this was changed from "CPSU CC Plenum" to "Central Committee Plenum."

²⁹³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In the typescript, the word translated here as "spineless" was *beskharakternye*, but Shelest changed it in handwriting to *beskhrabetnye*. The two words mean roughly the same thing (spineless, weak-willed, unprincipled).

²⁹⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest added the words "in that country" in handwriting at the end of this sentence.

²⁹⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The typescript included "of Kriegel, Cisař, Šik, and others" after the word "group," but Shelest deleted that portion and ended the sentence there. He then added the brief sentence immediately after it.

²⁹⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: See Shelest's report on this plenum in Document No. 4 above. See also the text of his speech at the plenum in Part 3 of my accompanying article in the next issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

²⁹⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest added the word "further" (*eshche bol'she*) in handwriting.

²⁹⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The "district and regional party conferences" to which Shelest is referring here are the sessions that were being held throughout Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1968 to elect delegates for the KSČ's Extraordinary Fourteenth Congress. Soviet leaders had been hoping that the conferences would support the KSČ's "healthy forces" at the expense of radical reformers, but these hopes were sorely disappointed. A popular backlash in Czechoslovakia against the Soviet, East German, and Polish condemnations of the Prague Spring helped reform-minded KSČ officials garner an overwhelming share of votes at the party conferences – precisely what the Soviet Politburo feared most. Candidates who openly supported the "Two Thousand Words" manifesto did particularly well. By early July 1968 it was clear that ardent reformers in the KSČ were going to dominate the Fourteenth Congress, gaining ample leeway to remove orthodox, pro-Moscow officials en masse. This prospect accentuated the time constraints that Soviet leaders believed they were facing, and it spawned even greater anxiety in East Berlin and Warsaw about a possible spill-over from Czechoslovakia.

²⁹⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest added the word "right-wing" by hand before the word "opportunist."

³⁰⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In the typescript, the word "political" appeared right after the word "counterrevolutionary" in this sentence, but Shelest crossed it out.

³⁰¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In the typescript, this paragraph ended here. Shelest moved the next paragraph up to this one, adding the words "As you know" at the beginning.

³⁰²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Social Democratic Party was forced to merge with the KSČ after the Communists seized power in Czechoslovakia in February 1948. For the next twenty years the Social Democrats ceased to exist as an independent entity. Some of the leaders of the disbanded party (e.g., Zdeněk Fierlinger and Evžen Erban) were given senior posts in the KSČ, but other officials had to work in menial jobs or, in certain cases, were arrested and imprisoned. In the early spring of 1968, numerous journalists, political commentators, and former Social Democrats called for the party to be restored as an independent force. Dubček brushed aside these proposals, and the KSČ Presidium and Central Committee consistently reaffirmed the Communist Party's leading role and condemned

attempts to revive the Social Democratic Party. Fierlinger and Erban both joined in the denunciations of the “anti-Communist” proposals to reestablish the Social Democrats. Despite these obstacles, a preparatory committee was set up in Prague in March-April 1968 to pave the way for a revival of the Social Democratic Party. Similar committees were soon formed in Brno, Ostrava, Plzeň, and other cities. By the summer of 1968, more than 150 such groups had been established. The KSC̄ discouraged the formation of these committees, but did not take concrete action to disband them. However, pressure for some sort of crackdown gradually increased, as senior party officials warned that after the 14th KSC̄ Congress the Social Democrats might reemerge as a full-fledged political party with a program attractive enough to Czechoslovak citizens that the party would become “a real opposition force.” Cited from “Zpráva o současné politické situaci Československé socialistické republiky a podmínkách činnosti Komunistické strany Československa (srpen 1968),” report by the KSC̄ Secretariat, August 1968, in SÚA, Arch. ÚV KSC̄, F. 02/1, Ll. 25-26, 44. The Soviet invasion in August 1968 put an end to any further prospect that the Social Democrats would be revived as an independent party. The Moscow Protocol, signed on 26 August by Soviet and Czechoslovak leaders, specifically prohibited the formation of a Social Democratic Party and other “anti-socialist organizations.”

³⁰³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The KSC̄’s Prague municipal committee, headed by Bohumil Šimon, was arguably the most radical organization within the Communist Party. Almost every member of the committee strongly advocated comprehensive reform and democratization. Starting in early July 1968, the Prague committee established a “permanent session,” which Soviet leaders construed as an attempt to forge an alternative power structure alongside the KSC̄ Central Committee and Presidium. In a top-secret report prepared after the invasion, the Soviet KGB alleged that “the Prague municipal party committee, which assumed the role of an underground CC of the KSC̄, became the counterrevolutionary core of the party organs. The top posts in the Prague municipal committee were long ago taken over by right-revisionist and extremist elements . . .” The report also alleged that after Soviet troops marched into Czechoslovakia, “the [KSC̄] leadership used the Prague municipal committee and an operational staff within the Interior Ministry to form a network consisting of underground radio stations, the press, television, armed counterrevolutionary groups, and supplies of weapons, ammunition, and equipment. The KSC̄’s Prague municipal committee played a key role in organizing protests against the five socialist countries,” in “convening the ‘14th KSC̄ Congress,’” in “organizing hostile activities on the radio,” and in “fomenting anti-Soviet hysteria in the ČSSR and confusing the majority of the population, causing them to oppose the USSR.” Cited from “O deyatel’nosti kontrevolyutsionnogo podpol’ya v Chekhoslovakii,” Ll. 117-118.

³⁰⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Shelest changed this from “will not permit” to “cannot permit,” though in the process he made a slight grammatical error that was corrected in the plenum transcript.

³⁰⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Shelest added the words “vozmozhno i” (probably) here in handwriting. It sounds somewhat awkward in English, but in Russian it is a way of softening the statement.

³⁰⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The 13th Congress of the KSC̄ took place in May and June 1966. No reforms of any sort were proposed there, and the Congress merely approved an orthodox Marxist-Leninist program for the “construction and development of socialism.” For the official proceedings and related documents, see *XIII. sjezd Komunistické strany Československa* (Prague: ÚV KSC̄, 1966 and 1967).

³⁰⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: In the “author’s copy,” Shelest inserted the word *etu* here, changing “the” to “this.”

³⁰⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Shelest’s allegation is accurate in one minor respect. Almost all of the language in the 2,000 Words article was based directly or indirectly on the Action Program.

³⁰⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Shelest changed this word in the typescript from “forces” to “elements.”

³¹⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: These remarks were first cited in “Na chto nadeyutsya v Bonne: Podozritel’naya voznya na stranitsakh zapadnogermanskoi pečati,” *Izvestiya* (Moscow), 15 May 1968, p. 2. Similar comments were reported in A. Butenko, “Pod fal’shivym flagom ‘navedeniya mostov,’” *Izvestiya* (Moscow), 16 May 1968, pp. 2-3 and V. Stepanov, “Vedushchaya sila stroitel’stva kommunizma,” *Izvestiya* (Moscow) 11 May 1968, pp. 2-3, which noted that “imperialists” and “revanchists” believe that “any signs of liberalization . . . will lead to the evisceration of Communism.” The notion of forging a “united Europe” through increased contacts with the East-Central European states underlay the West German government’s initial conception of Ostpolitik, including its approaches to Czechoslovakia in 1968. This early version of Ostpolitik was similar to the U.S. policy of “bridge-building.” The goal of both policies was to establish a web of direct links with the East-Central European states – outside Moscow’s auspices – to encourage internal liberalization and a gradual loosening of ties with the Soviet Union, leading over time to the erosion of the East-West divide in Europe. On the logic of West German policy in Europe before and during the Czechoslovak crisis, see Adolf Müller and Bedřich Utitz, *Deutschland und die Tschechoslowakei: Zwei Nachbarvölker auf dem Weg zur Verständigung* (Freudenstadt: Campus Forschung, 1972), pp. 203-298; James H. Wolfe, “West Germany and Czechoslovakia: The Struggle for Reconciliation,” *Orbis*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring 1970), pp. 154-179; Libor Rouček, *Die Tschechoslowakei und die Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1949-1989: Bestimmungsfaktoren, Entwicklungen und Probleme ihrer Beziehungen* (Munich: Tuduv, 1990); Eric G. Frey, *Division and Détente: The Germanies and Their Alliances* (New York: Praeger, 1987); Boris Meissner, ed., *Die deutsche Ostpolitik 1961-1970: Kontinuität und Wandel – Dokumentation* (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1970); Klaus Hildebrand, *Integration und die Souveränität: die Aussenpolitik der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1949-1982* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1991); and Lawrence L. Whetten, *Germany’s Ostpolitik: Relations Between the Federal Republic and the Warsaw Pact Countries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971). The notion that increased contacts with the East-Central European states would eventually lead to a “united Europe” was very different from another conception of a “united Europe” that had long been associated with Franz Josef Strauss, the conservative nationalist leader of the Christian Social Union (CSU) in West Germany. Strauss and other CSU politicians emphasized West European unity *against* the Soviet bloc. In their view, it was misguided to seek improved relations with the Communist states as a stepping-stone to larger goals. They argued that the FRG’s policy in Europe should focus predominantly on building increased cohesion among the Western capitalist countries. Policy toward the Soviet bloc, they contended, should remain as it had been in the 1950s.

³¹¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Shelest crossed out the words “us and” after the word “among.”

³¹²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Shelest made two small changes in this sentence that toned it down slightly. First, he changed the perfective verb *podnyat’* to the imperfective *podnimat’*, giving it the sense of a more sustained struggle. Second, he changed the final part to “might end up on” instead of “are on.”

³¹³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In the typescript, the last part of this sentence read: "must be adopted to protect socialist gains." Shelest changed it by hand.

³¹⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In the plenum transcript, a parenthetical "Applause" (*Applodimenty*) was inserted by the stenographer at the end of this paragraph.

³¹⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This document is untitled and undated, but a number of things – a brief cover note, the content of the document, and references to it in other documents – indicate that it is a report delivered by Shelest to an expanded meeting of the UkrCP Central Committee and the UkrCP Kyiv Oblast committee on 18 July 1968. A CPSU Central Committee plenum had been held the previous day (see Document No. 23 above) to endorse the Soviet delegation's performance at the Warsaw meeting. Shelest's presentation to the UkrCP Central Committee was part of a massive effort to transmit the CPSU Politburo's views (as endorsed by the CPSU Central Committee plenum) to Communist Party organizations all around the Soviet Union. Although some passages from Shelest's remarks to the CPSU Central Committee plenum are repeated almost verbatim in his speech to the UkrCP Central Committee, the latter contains many paragraphs and sentences that are not in the plenum speech. Moreover, even when passages are duplicated, it is useful to see what Shelest chose to emphasize (and omit) for the UkrCP Central Committee, and it is also valuable to gauge how he presented his case.

³¹⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: These informational reports, as discussed in the introduction to this collection of Ukrainian documents, were part of the strategy embraced by the CPSU Politburo to maintain a top-down style of decision-making during crises. The periodic informational reports were distributed to party organizations and government agencies throughout the Soviet Union (and in other Communist countries). The officials in these bodies were responsible for disseminating the Politburo's views to all party members and reporting back to the Politburo on the "wholehearted and unanimous support" that the reports had earned.

³¹⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: As this statement indicates, Shelest and other Soviet leaders were well aware that the KSČ's Extraordinary 14th Congress was likely to result in the ouster of orthodox Communist officials and the election of a strongly pro-reformer Central Committee.

³¹⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: A draft of revised statutes for the KSČ ("Návrh stánov Komunistickej strany Československa"), which were widely expected to be approved at the upcoming 14th Congress, was not published until 10 August (when it appeared as a 16-page supplement to *Rudé právo*), but many of the suggested changes were already known. The proposed statutes represented a major shift in the Prague Spring, for the process of democratization was to extend to some of the most basic aspects of party procedure. By guaranteeing protection for the continued espousal of dissenting views after a decision had been made, the draft statutes (as Shelest argues here) would have contravened the principle of "democratic centralism," which had always been one of the fundamental attributes of a Soviet-style Communist regime. This point had been highlighted in the Warsaw Letter: "We were convinced [in early 1968] that you would defend the Leninist principle of democratic centralism as your most treasured possession. Ignoring either aspect of this principle – whether democracy or centralism – inevitably weakens the party and its leading role, and transforms it into a bureaucratic organization or a debating club."

³¹⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The elections to the ČSSR National Assembly (i.e., the parliament, which was renamed the Federal Assembly after the Czechoslovak state was federalized in October 1968) were due to be held in November 1968. Most observ-

ers expected that reformist forces, including non-Communist representatives, would gain a dominant majority of seats. From 1948 until 1968, the parliament had been of negligible importance in Czechoslovak politics, but during the Prague Spring the National Assembly had assumed a prominent role, not least by passing legislation for major reforms.

³²⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: For more about these parties, see my annotation regarding them in Document No. 23 above.

³²¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: No formal invitation to West German foreign minister Willy Brandt had in fact been extended, but rumors had been circulating over the previous few weeks that the Czechoslovak government was holding secret negotiations with Brandt and other senior West German officials. (Secret talks had been held with one of Brandt's chief aides, Egon Bahr, in mid-April 1968, but the most senior participant from the Czechoslovak side – the deputy head of the KSČ International Relations Department, Josef Šedivý – was well below the level of a KSČ Presidium member. Moreover, the talks did not lead to any breakthroughs on any major issue. See the declassified report on the talks, "Informace o rozhovorech mezinárodního oddělení ÚV KSČ s představitelem SPD E. Bahrem," cited above.) In addition to playing up speculation about an imminent trip by Brandt to Czechoslovakia, headline East European officials contended that Czechoslovak foreign minister Jiří Hajek had met secretly with Brandt in Vienna. The East German authorities, in particular, repeatedly accused the Czechoslovak government of seeking to strike a secret deal with the FRG, exchanging diplomatic recognition for large-scale credits. Ulbricht had reiterated this allegation during the Warsaw meeting a few days earlier, and it may well have been these comments that prompted Shelest's remarks. See "Protokól ze spotkania przywódców partii i rządów krajów socjalistycznych – Bulgarii, NRD, Polski, Węgier i ZSRR – w Warszawie, 14-15 lipca 1968 r.," Copy No. 5 (Top Secret), 14-15 July 1968, in Archiwum Akt Nowych (AAN), Arch. KC PZPR, P. 193, T. 24, Dok. 4, esp. Ll. 8-14. No doubt, Shelest's comment was also influenced by a recent shift in Soviet policy. As recently as mid-June, Soviet leaders had authorized the Soviet ambassador in East Germany, Pyotr Abrasimov, to meet with Brandt in East Berlin. The West German foreign minister was not required to show his passport when he traveled across the intra-Berlin border. The East German authorities were dismayed when they learned of Moscow's decision (see the relevant dispatches from Abrasimov in RGANI, F. 5. Op. 60, Dd. 344 and 345), but Soviet leaders proceeded nonetheless. In the first two weeks of July, however, Soviet policy toward the FRG hardened as tensions with Czechoslovakia increased. On 11 July, the Soviet newspaper *Izvestiya* suddenly began publishing secret correspondence between Moscow and Bonn on the possibility of a renunciation-of-force agreement. This action signaled a temporary halt in the progress toward formal diplomatic relations. It also signaled that, for Moscow, a resolution of the Czechoslovak crisis was now more important than a rapprochement with West Germany.

³²²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: On the "2,000 Words" article, see my annotation in Document No. 22 above.

³²³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This point reinforces one of the major themes in East Germany's coverage of events in Czechoslovakia around the time of the Warsaw meeting and shortly thereafter. See, for example, "Mit dem Blick auf die Stärkung der sozialistischen Arbeiter-und-Bauern-macht die Fehler überwinden," *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), 30 July 1968, p. 6. See also "Die Strategie des Imperialismus und die ČSSR," *Neues Deutschland* (East Berlin), 13 July 1968, p. 6.

³²⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This refers to Čestmír Cisař's idea, first proposed at a joint meeting of the KSČ Presidium and

KSC Secretariat on 21 May 1968, of forming a separate youth wing within the Communist Party. (The discredited Czechoslovak Youth Union had been under the KSC's auspices, but members of the organization were not automatically admitted into the party. Císař wanted to bring young people directly into the KSC.) Císař's proposal came at an auspicious moment, just a month after the commission chaired by Jan Piller had set forth recommendations that would have eased a large number of "old Communists" out of the KSC. Soviet leaders realized that many young people in Czechoslovakia were enthusiastic supporters of the Prague Spring, whereas older KSC members tended to be skeptical of – and even hostile to – the reforms. Hence, Soviet officials denounced Císař's proposal, claiming that it was aimed at "removing from active political life all Communists who are of the soundest ideological-political orientation and who are resolutely speaking out against the right-wing danger." At the Soviet-Czechoslovak meetings in Čierna nad Tisou in late July and early August 1968, Brezhnev also argued (as Shelest does here) that "Cde. Císař's proposal to have the KSC admit 200,000 to 300,000 young people, supposedly to provide an 'injection' for what he calls the 'older' Party, glosses over the deleterious class impact of this grave step." Cited from "Záznam jednání předsednictva ÚV KSC a ÚV KSSS v Čierna n. T., 29.7-1.8.1968," 1 August 1968 (Top Secret), in SÚA, Arch. ÚV KSC, F. 07/15, Sv. 12, A.j. 274, Ll. 17-18.

³²⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This statement indicates a further recognition that the deadline for Soviet action was 26 August 1968, when the Slovak Party Congress was due to convene. As the documents here make clear, Soviet leaders knew that Biľak and others were likely to be excluded from the KSS leadership, paving the way for a decisive victory by "rightist forces" at the 14th KSC Congress in September. Shelest's statement reveals his growing doubts about the ability of the "healthy forces" to act in time without Soviet military support. His contacts with Biľak, as documented in the excerpts from Shelest's diary in my article in Issue 10 of the CWIHP *Bulletin* (pp. 234-248), had given him ample grounds for skepticism.

³²⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This seems to have been the first direct mention by Shelest to a gathering of other UkrCP officials in 1968 about the likelihood of a military solution to the crisis.

³²⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This comment indicates that Soviet leaders were still uncertain whether the incoming troops would encounter armed resistance in Czechoslovakia. No doubt, this uncertainty influenced the size, timing, and nature of the invading force as it was mobilized over the next few weeks. Grechko made sure that the contingent of soldiers entering Czechoslovakia would be large enough and sufficiently well-armed to crush any groups that might take up arms against the invasion. The potential for indigenous resistance also spurred Soviet officials to adopt political and military precautions that would facilitate the entry of Soviet and allied troops into Czechoslovakia. For example, Warsaw Pact commanders diverted Czechoslovak troops, equipment, and ammunition to western Bohemia, ostensibly for use in forthcoming exercises. The real purpose, however, was to keep the ČLA well away from the main routes that would be used by incoming forces. By the time the invasion began on the evening of 20 August, the risk of encountering armed resistance in Czechoslovakia was deemed to be small. (Moreover, Grechko reduced the risk still further at the start of the invasion by phoning the Czechoslovak defense minister, General Martin Dzúr, to warn him that if ČLA units fired "even a single shot" at the incoming troops, the Soviet Army would "crush the resistance mercilessly" and would ensure that Dzúr himself was "strung up from a telephone pole and shot.") Even if the risk of encountering armed resistance had been greater, Shelest's

comment suggests that it would not have been enough to deter Soviet military action.

³²⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This statement provides further evidence that Soviet leaders were under no illusions that military intervention in Czechoslovakia would be unanimously welcomed by Communist parties in Western Europe and other non-Communist countries. But the consensus in Moscow was that increased discord within the world Communist movement would be an acceptable price to pay for the restoration of orthodox Communism in Czechoslovakia. During a meeting with the leaders of East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, and Hungary a month after the invasion, Brezhnev disparaged the objections raised by West European Communist officials: "Well, let them make a fuss; the main thing has been done – the path to counterrevolution in Czechoslovakia has been blocked." Cited from "Zapis' peregovorov s rukovoditelyami kompartii i pravitel'stv Bolgarii, Vengrii, GDR, Pol'shi, 27 sentyabrya 1968 goda," 27 September 1968 (Top Secret), in ÚSD-SK, Z/S 13, L. 37.

³²⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: See my annotation about the KSC's Thirteenth Congress in Document No. 23 above.

³³⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest is referring to a celebrated public lecture by the then-professor Zbigniew Brzezinski in Prague on 14 June 1968. In his speech, Brzezinski offered strong support for the KSC's efforts to carry out sweeping reforms and "improvements of socialism." His comments about Poland, to which Shelest is referring here, were made during a discussion period after the main lecture. Brzezinski's remarks sparked angry commentaries in the Soviet, East German, and Polish media, which alleged that Brzezinski's endorsement of the Prague Spring merely underscored how "bankrupt and obsolete" the KSC's "right-wing opportunist and revisionist policies" truly were. See, for example, "Vneshnyaya politika i ideologicheskaya bor'ba na sovremennom etape," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* (Moscow), No. 6 (June 1968), pp. 3-7. At the Warsaw meeting, Ulbricht denounced Brzezinski again, claiming that the "2,000 Words" statement had been inspired by "the well-known American Sovietologist Brzezinski, who was in Prague and delivered a public lecture. Many people attended, and a discussion ensued. No one who was present contested Brzezinski's thesis. Not a single person there expressed opposition. Nor did Dubček express even the slightest opposition [to Brzezinski's remarks]. . . . What is going on here? Is it not a counterrevolution if an American anti-Communist can speak publicly in Prague and purvey slanders about People's Poland before the members of the Party, saying that this is a fascist country? And it was not only People's Poland that he attacked; he also attacked the Soviet Union." Cited from "Protokół ze spotkania przywódców partii i rządów krajów socjalistycznych – Bulgarii, NRD, Polski, Węgier i ZSRR – w Warszawie, 14-15 lipca 1968 r.," Ll. 9-10. Most likely, Ulbricht's denunciation of Brzezinski's speech helped prompt Shelest's criticisms of this "American and unadorned Zionist." Evidently, Shelest mistakenly assumed that anyone who would condemn Poland's Communist regime (which was promoting an anti-Semitic campaign at the time) must be an "unadorned Zionist" (i.e., a standard codeword in East-bloc countries for a Jew).

³³¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This paragraph and the preceding one appeared as a single paragraph (with slightly different wording) in Shelest's speech at the plenum the previous day. The two paragraphs are significantly toned down, however, by the paragraph that comes immediately after them – a paragraph that does not appear in Shelest's plenum speech.

³³²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Shelest's very brief summary of points emphasized by speakers at the Warsaw meeting is largely accurate. The full transcript is available in "Protokół ze spotkania

przywódców partii i rządów krajów socjalistycznych – Bulgarii, NRD, Polski, Węgier i ZSRR – w Warszawie, 14-15 lipca 1968 r.”

³³³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Shelest’s summary of Zhivkov’s remarks is accurate, but it is puzzling why Shelest did not also mention that Zhivkov explicitly urged the allied countries to “restore the dictatorship of the proletariat” in Czechoslovakia through military intervention: “There is only one appropriate way out – through resolute assistance to Czechoslovakia from our parties and the states of the Warsaw Pact. At present, we cannot rely on internal forces in Czechoslovakia. . . . Only by relying on the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact can we change the situation.” (Cited from “Protokół ze spotkania przywódców partii i rządów krajów socjalistycznych,” L. 29.) Shelest noted in his diary that in informal conversations with Zhivkov right before and after the Bulgarian leader’s speech, Zhivkov had urged the Warsaw Pact countries to be “more decisive,” adding that “the sooner troops are sent, the better.” Cited from “Dnevnik P. E. Shelesta,” Ll. 338-339.

³³⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: At least one line appears to be missing here, but the omission has no discernible impact on the substance of Shelest’s speech.

³³⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This statement encapsulates what later became known as the Brezhnev Doctrine. Compare, for example, S. Kovalev, “Suverenitet i internatsional’nye obyazannosti sotsialisticheskikh stran,” *Pravda* (Moscow), 26 September 1968, pp. 2-3; S. Kovalev, “O ‘mirnoi’ i nemirnoi kontrrevolyutsii,” *Pravda* (Moscow), 11 September 1968, p. 4; and “Zashchita sotsializma – vysshii internatsional’nyi dolg,” *Pravda* (Moscow), 22 August 1968, pp. 1-2. For a cogent review of the genesis of the Brezhnev Doctrine, see Karen Dawisha, “The 1968 Invasion of Czechoslovakia: Causes, Consequences, and Lessons for the Future,” in Karen Dawisha and Philip Hanson, eds., *Soviet-East European Dilemmas: Coercion, Competition and Consent* (London: Heinemann, 1981), pp. 9-25. See also Mark Kramer, “The Czechoslovak Crisis and the Brezhnev Doctrine,” in Carole Fink, Detlef Junker, and Philippe Gassert, eds., *1968: The World Transformed* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 61-124.

³³⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This is clearly a typographical error. It should read East Bohemian, not East Slovakian.

³³⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Volodymyr Dykusarov had been the second secretary of the Transcarpathian Oblast committee since February 1966.

³³⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The officials mentioned here include Jozef Vislocký, Alexander Pirč (whose first initial is mistakenly given here as J, evidently because of confusion with Ján Pirč, a member of the KSS Central Committee), Petro Honcharyk, and Hryhorii Shman’ko.

³³⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This refers to letters sent by the Soviet, East German, Polish, Bulgarian, and Hungarian leaders in early July. See the annotation in Document No. 24 for an explanation of these letters.

³⁴⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: These references to the Soviet Union and negotiations with Moscow reflect the controversy surrounding Dubček’s decision not to attend the conference in Warsaw on 14-15 July. The letter to the KSCĀ Central Committee from the five countries taking part in the Warsaw Meeting had arrived in Prague by the 16th, but it had not yet been published.

³⁴¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: It was already clear by the time of this meeting (16 July) that the Slovak Communist Party would be holding an early congress. Two days later, on 18 July, the KSS Central Committee formally voted to begin the Slovak party congress on 26 August, some two weeks before the opening of the KSCĀ’s Extraordinary Fourteenth Congress.

³⁴²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Koscelanský is referring here to

Vasil Biřak, who was of Ukrainian descent.

³⁴³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Jozef Zrak had been first secretary of the KSCĀ’s Bratislava municipal committee since May 1965. He also was a member of the KSS Secretariat, and in April 1968 he was elected to the KSS Presidium. Zrak was a strong supporter of the reformist trends in the KSCĀ. Ondrej Pavlík had been a full member of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and a corresponding member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences since 1953. He also had served as President of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in 1956. Like Zrak, Pavlík was known for his reformist leanings.

³⁴⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Ladislav Olexa, who was appointed regional secretary for ideology in April 1968, had previously been director of the State Museum in Kořice. For earlier Soviet concerns about Olexa, see Document No. 5 above.

³⁴⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: A directive to this effect had indeed been issued by Oldřich Āerník and Josef Pavel in mid-July, shortly before the meeting recounted here. See the drafts of instructions in ŰSD-SK, B – Archiv MV, F. IM. Similar orders were given to the Czechoslovak ambassadors in the Central European countries surrounding Czechoslovakia: Václav Kolář in the GDR, Antonín Gregor in Poland, and Jozef Půčik in Hungary. Over the next few weeks, dispatches from these embassies and from StB officials provided ominous accounts to the KSCĀ leadership of a steady military buildup around Czechoslovakia’s borders. See, for example, Cables Nos. 7103, 7187, 7259, and 7269 in ŰSD-SK, K. Archiv MZV, Received Dispatches/1968.

³⁴⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: On these polemical skirmishes between Konstantinov and leading KSCĀ officials, see my annotations in Document No. 22 above.

³⁴⁷TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: The information provided here is incomplete. Although Ernő Fock took part in the bilateral Czechoslovak-Hungarian meeting in the Slovak town of Komárno on 13 July, the main Hungarian participant was the MSzMP leader, János Kádár. Also taking part for Hungary was Károly Erdely, a senior foreign ministry official and aide to Kádár. The meeting, which had been initiated by Dubček and Āerník, lasted more than four hours, but it produced no results. Kádár emphasized to the two KSCĀ leaders that they were making a “grave mistake” by refusing to attend the Warsaw Meeting, but he did not succeed in changing their minds. Dubček and Āerník, for their part, quickly sensed that Kádár was more interested in trying to convince them to come to Warsaw than in serving as a genuine intermediary. Moreover, even before the session in Komárno began, the two Czechoslovak leaders had learned, from a Czechoslovak Press Agency dispatch, that Soviet and East European officials were already arriving in Warsaw for a meeting the next day. This disconcerting news not only guaranteed that the talks with Kádár would make little headway, but also prompted Dubček and Āerník to send an urgent message of protest to Brezhnev via the Czechoslovak ambassador in Poland. For a detailed summary of the Komárno meeting, see Kádár’s top-secret report to the MSzMP Politburo, titled “Comrade Kádár’s and Comrade Fock’s Meeting with Comrade Dubček and Comrade Āerník,” 15 July 1968, in *Magyar Országos Levéltár* (MOL), 288, 5/462, ő.e. Kádár also discussed the meeting at some length in his presentation to the Warsaw Meeting on 15 July 1968; see “Protokół ze spotkania przywódców partii i rządów krajów socjalistycznych – Bulgarii, NRD, Polski, Węgier i ZSRR – w Warszawie, 14-15 lipca 1968 r.,” Ll. 18-20. For a useful secondary account of the 13 July meeting, based on new archival sources, see István Vida, “János Kádár and the Czechoslovak Crisis of 1968,” *The Hungarian Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (Summer 1994), pp. 161-162. Dubček’s posthumously published memoirs incorrectly claim that the meeting in Komárno came at Kádár’s invitation; see Dubček, *Hope Dies Last*,

p. 162. Newly available documents leave no doubt that it was Dubček, not Kádár, who initiated the meeting.

³⁴⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Tatra Mountains, running along the Polish-Slovakian border in the central Carpathians, were a favorite vacation and hunting site for Czechoslovak leaders and their Warsaw Pact counterparts.

³⁴⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Enterprise-based disciplinary bodies and quasi-judicial organs were set up during the first few years of the Soviet regime. Despite significant modifications over the years, these bodies retained their main function of enforcing the regime's strict labor codes. Under Khrushchev, reliance on the workplace disciplinary organs and Comrades' Courts (*tovarishcheskie sudy*) steadily increased, but the system was scaled back in the 1960s after Soviet legal specialists demonstrated that the expansion of it was leading to flagrant abuses and illegal rulings. Even so, the workers' councils were still formally empowered to discipline errant workers – powers that came in handy on occasions like this when the regime wanted to prevent or, if necessary, punish any deviations from the official line. For an overview of the disciplinary system from the Soviet perspective, see Yuri Il'inskii, *Sudyat sami: Tovarishcheskii sud za rabotoi* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Znaniye, 1964).

³⁵⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: One of the chief goals of the enterprised-based disciplinary bodies, as indicated here, was to foster a milieu in which ordinary citizens would participate affirmatively in Communist rituals and promote the draconian enforcement of official strictures.

³⁵¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Viktor Shevchenko had been first secretary of the oblast party committee since December 1964 and a member of the UkrCP Central Committee since February 1966.

³⁵²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Miroslav Zikmund was a prominent Czech writer and commentator on international affairs. He co-authored many books with Jiří Hanzelka, another highly respected writer who was a signatory of the “2,000 Words” manifesto and an ardent proponent of drastic reform. Their books were popular not only in Czechoslovakia, but also in many foreign countries, including the Soviet Union. Several of Zikmund's and Hanzelka's works were translated into Russian, English, German, and other languages. For a representative sample of their output in Czech, see *Afrika – snu a skutečnosti* (Prague: Orbis, 1955); *Tam za rekou je Argentina* (Prague: Orbis, 1956); *Obrácený půlměsíc* (Prague: Nakladatelství Politické Literatury, 1961); and *Cejlon – raj bez andělů*, 2nd ed. (Prague: Svoboda, 1991). See also a collection of some of their other essays in *Zvláštní zpráva* (Prague: Lidové nakladatelství, 1990).

³⁵³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: A lengthy, top-secret report compiled by the Soviet KGB in October 1968 noted that the “Brno” underground radio station was one of at least 35 such facilities that were operating unhindered in Czechoslovakia during the first week after the invasion. “O deyatel'nosti kontrevolyutsionnogo podpol'ya v Chekhoslovakii,” report from A. Sakharovskii, head of the KGB's 1st Main Directorate, October 1968 (Top Secret/Special Dossier), in RGANI, F. 4, Op. 21, D. 32, Ll. 99-157. Even after these transmitters were discovered, many continued to function for several days longer.

³⁵⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Zhenya is the diminutive for the first name of the well-known Soviet poet and publicist Evgenii Evtushenko. Unlike the great dissident Andrei Sakharov and a number of other Soviet human rights activists (including a small group who were beaten and arrested after staging a demonstration in Red Square to protest the Soviet invasion), Evtushenko failed to speak out against the intervention in Czechoslovakia.

³⁵⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Zikmund is referring here to Jiří

Hanzelka, using the Ukrainian version of his given name and adding a patronymic.

³⁵⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Satu Mare and Maramureş counties of Romania are both in northern Transylvania, adjacent to Ukraine's Transcarpathian Oblast. The Suceava county is in northern Bukovina, abutting Ukraine's Chernivtsi Oblast (which itself was formerly northern Bukovina). Tulcea is in the easternmost portion of Romania along the Danube delta in northern Dobruja, just across the border from the Ukrainian city of Izmail. It is worth noting that in February 1968, Romania had adopted a new territorial-administrative system, which replaced the old structure of 16 regions and 150 districts with a simpler arrangement of 39 counties (*judete*). The new Satu Mare and Maramureş counties ended up with somewhat lower percentages of ethnic Hungarians under their jurisdictions than the old Satu Mare and Maramureş regions had.

³⁵⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: On this topic, see the various items cited in my annotation to Document No. 13 above.

³⁵⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Iosif Uglar had been first secretary of the RCP's Maramureş regional committee since January 1959. He was also a member of the RCP Central Committee.

³⁵⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: In an emergency speech to the Romanian nation on 21 August 1968, Ceauşescu announced that “we have today decided to set up armed Patriotic Guards” that will give “our people their own armed units to protect their peaceful labor and the independence and sovereignty of our socialist homeland.” The wording of this announcement was somewhat misleading. An entity known as the Patriotic Guards had in fact existed in Romania since November 1956, when it was set up by a party decree to help cope with the spillover from the Hungarian revolution. Until 1968, however, the Guards were little more than a paper organization. Their functions were limited mainly to the safeguarding of heavy industrial areas. What Ceauşescu meant in his 21 August speech is not that he would *create* Patriotic Guards, but that he was mobilizing and fleshing out units that had long been dormant. See Major-General Constantin Antoniu *et al.*, *Armată Republicii Socialiste România: Sinteză Social-Politică și Militară* (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1978), pp. 141-167. From 1968 on, the role of the Patriotic Guards sharply increased. As Romanian military strategy and doctrine shifted increasingly from large-scale offensive operations (à la the Warsaw Pact) to territorial defense, the Patriotic Guards became the preeminent force responsible for front-line defense and mountain warfare. When fully mobilized, the Patriotic Guards consisted of some 900,000 troops, most of which were prepared to fight in mountainous terrain. The regular Romanian army was much smaller.

³⁶⁰TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Gheorghe Blaj had been a secretary in the RCP's Maramureş regional committee since December 1961.

³⁶¹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: This pledge repeats, almost word for word, a statement in Ceauşescu's speech of 21 August 1968 (discussed below).

³⁶²TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Emil Bobu had been the first secretary of the RCP's Suceava regional committee since July 1967. He also was a member of the RCP Central Committee.

³⁶³TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The basic Romanian position was outlined not only in Ceauşescu's speech of 21 August (see next annotation), but also in a communique issued jointly by the RCP Central Committee and the Romanian government that same day. See “Comunicat,” *Scinteia* (Bucharest), 22 August 1968, p. 1. The communique expressed “great alarm” at the “flagrant violation of the national sovereignty of a fraternal, socialist, free, and independent state, an action that contravenes all the principles on which relations between socialist countries are based as well as universally

recognized norms of international law.” The statement called for the immediate withdrawal of the Soviet and East European troops to “allow the Czechoslovak people to handle their internal affairs themselves, without any outside interference.”

³⁶⁴TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Volodymyr Galla had been a department chief in the UkrCP’s Transcarpathian Oblast committee since July 1965. Sandor Kállái had been a secretary of the MSzMP’s Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg Megyei regional committee since June 1964. The Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg Megyei region in northeast Hungary, based around Nyíregyháza, is contiguous with Subcarpathian Ruthenia in Ukraine. Kállái’s surname is slightly mistransliterated in the document, but has been corrected here.

³⁶⁵TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This refers to Ceaușescu’s famous “balcony speech,” on 21 August 1968, just hours after Soviet troops had begun moving *en masse* into Czechoslovakia. From a balcony at the RCP Central Committee headquarters in downtown Bucharest, Ceaușescu denounced the Soviet Union for having “flagrantly violated the freedom and independence of another state,” and he described the invasion as “a colossal error and a grave danger to peace in Europe and to the fate of socialism around the world.” Ceaușescu vowed that Romania would take all necessary steps to defend its own sovereignty and territorial integrity: “It has been said that in Czechoslovakia there was a danger of counterrevolution. Perhaps tomorrow they will claim that our meeting here has reflected counterrevolutionary trends. If that should be the case, we warn all of them that the entire Romanian people will never permit anyone to infringe on the territory of our homeland.” Cited from “Cuvîntul tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu,” *Scînteia* (Bucharest), 22 August 1968, p. 1. Although Ceaușescu gradually toned down his criticisms of the Soviet invasion over the next several days, his balcony speech on 21 August brought him great acclaim for his defiance of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia.

³⁶⁶TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: During a visit to Czechoslovakia on 15-17 August 1968, Ceaușescu publicly hailed the Prague Spring and denied that counterrevolutionary forces were active in the ČSSR. He also signed a new treaty of friendship and cooperation with Czechoslovakia even though he had declined to conclude such an agreement with the Soviet Union. (The new Soviet-Romanian treaty was not signed until 1970, after a good deal more negotiation and bickering.) Ceaușescu’s trip to Czechoslovakia came just a few days after the Yugoslav president, Josip Broz Tito, finished a “working visit” of his own to Prague. During that visit, on 9-11 August, Tito was greeted by jubilant, overflowing crowds. A similar welcome was extended to Ceaușescu. For a sample of the coverage of Ceaușescu’s visit, see “Rumunská stranická a státní delegace v Praze: N. Ceaușescu srdečně vítán v naší zemi,” *Rudé právo* (Prague), 16 August 1968, p. 1; “Înceierea vizitei în Republica Socialistă Cehoslovacă a delegației Române de partid și de stat condusă de tovarășul Nicolae Ceaușescu,” *Scînteia* (Bucharest), 18 August 1968, pp. 1, 5; “O nouă pagină în cronică relațiilor frățești Româno-Cehoslovace,” *Scînteia* (Bucharest), 17 August 1968, pp. 1-2; “Interviul acordat de tovarășul Nicolae Ceaușescu televiziunii din Praga,” *Scînteia* (Bucharest), 17 August 1968, p. 3; “Entuziastul miting de la uzinele ‘Avia’ din Praga,” *Scînteia* (Bucharest), 17 August 1968, pp. 1-2; “Solemnitatea semnării Tratatului de prietenie, colaborare și asistență mutuală,” *Scînteia* (Bucharest), 17 August 1968, p. 3; and “Conferința de presă a tovarășului Nicolae Ceaușescu,” *Scînteia* (Bucharest), 17 August 1968, p. 3. The KSČ’s attempts to play down the two visits seemed to have no effect on the extravagant public displays. Although both Tito and Ceaușescu urged caution upon Dubček and sought to avoid any provocative remarks during their stays (despite prodding by some Czechoslovak journalists), the dominant impression left from both trips was

the spontaneous adulation that the Czechoslovak people had displayed toward two foreign leaders who had successfully defied Moscow in the past. (This was certainly the impression that most Soviet officials had; see, for example, the top-secret reports “Zapis’ besedy s sekretarem Ispolnitel’nogo komiteta TsK SKYu, M. Todorovichem,” Cable No. 380 from I. A. Benediktov, Soviet ambassador in Yugoslavia, to K. F. Katushev and K. V. Rusakov, 14 August 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 279, Ll. 20-23; and “Zapis’ besedy s general’nym sekretarem TsK RKP N. Chaushesku, 19 avgusta 1968 goda,” Cable No. 842 from A. V. Basov, Soviet ambassador in Romania, 20 August 1968, in RGANI, F. 5, Op. 60, D. 339, Ll. 47-52. Many other evaluations expressing similar sentiments can be found in the same files.) This outpouring of popular enthusiasm – the country’s apparent “yearning for its own Tito,” as *Literární listy* put it – spawned new rumors about a possible alliance among Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania. Those rumors, as in the past, were quickly denied by the leaders of all three countries, but hard-line officials elsewhere in Eastern Europe, particularly Walter Ulbricht, seized on the rumors as “proof” of their earlier warnings that a “Little Entente” was being formed to “sever Czechoslovakia from the Soviet Union and from the whole socialist commonwealth.”

³⁶⁷ TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This is a misprint in the document. It should read Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, which is adjacent to the Satu Mares region in Romania.

³⁶⁸TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: This is not entirely accurate. Because Dubček was unable to mollify Soviet displeasure over the internal changes in Czechoslovakia, he strove to reassure Moscow about the firmness of Czechoslovakia’s commitment to the Warsaw Pact and the “socialist commonwealth.” Looking back to the events of 1956 in Hungary, Dubček and other Czechoslovak officials had concluded that by upholding Czechoslovakia’s membership in the Warsaw Pact and maintaining Party control over the reform process, they could carry out far-reaching domestic changes without provoking Soviet military intervention. (See Dubček’s comments about this matter in *Hope Dies Last*, pp. 178-179.) Their judgment in this instance was probably erroneous even in the case of Hungary, inasmuch as the first Soviet intervention in 1956 and the decision to intervene a second time actually predated Hungary’s withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. Whether valid or not, however, the “lesson” that KSČ officials drew from the 1956 crisis – that internal reform would be tolerated so long as membership in the Warsaw Pact and CMEA was never questioned – induced them to make frequent references to the “unbreakable” friendship and alliance between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. As domestic liberalization gathered pace, Dubček continued to issue repeated expressions of solidarity with Moscow and to pledge that Soviet interests would be safeguarded under all circumstances. In the end, all these assurances came to naught.

³⁶⁹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Scrawled across the upper left of the document is a note dated 21 September 1968 indicating that the memorandum was distributed to Shelest and the KGB directorate.

³⁷⁰TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: See the notations in Shelest’s diary pertaining to this incident in Excerpt No. 4 in my article in *CWIHP Bulletin* No. 10.

³⁷¹TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: All the points here refer to perquisites enjoyed by Communist Party leaders and the *nomenklatura* (senior party and state officials at all levels).

³⁷²TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Nothing has been omitted in between Points 3 and 5. The poorly typed leaflet does not include a Point 4.

³⁷³TRANSLATOR’S NOTE: Student unrest was widespread in 1968 not only in these countries, but in numerous others, includ-

ing Italy, West Germany, the United States, Poland, and – perhaps most of all – Mexico, where troops opened fire on a demonstration in Tlatelolco, leaving hundreds dead or wounded. For discussions and comparisons of most of these cases, see the relevant chapters in Fink, Junker, and Gassert, eds., 1968: *The World Transformed*.

³⁷⁴TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Gustáv Husák played a key role in the Slovak Communist Party during World War II and was instrumental in the Communist takeover in Slovakia in 1947-1948, but he fell victim to the high-level purges carried out by Klement Gottwald in the early 1950s and was imprisoned in 1951 on charges of "bourgeois nationalism." He was later rehabilitated and reemerged as a key figure in the KSS. Through much of the Prague Spring, Husák had been a proponent of moderate reform (and in particular a restructuring of Czech-Slovak relations), but after the Soviet-led invasion he shifted steadily toward a hardline, anti-reformist position. Under Soviet auspices in April 1969, he replaced Dubček as First Secretary of the KSČ. Soviet leaders had backed Husák for this post mainly because they believed he would be more acceptable to the Czechoslovak population than would some of the other prospective candidates, who were widely seen in Czechoslovakia as little more than Soviet puppets. Husák consolidated his power at a KSČ Central Committee plenum in September 1969 (a month before this visit to Kyiv), ushering in a period of harsh "normalization." He remained the party leader until 1987.

³⁷⁵TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: To extirpate the remnants of the Prague Spring, the new KSČ leaders authorized the head of the KSČ CC's Control and Auditing Commission, Miloš Jakeš, to oversee a large-scale purge. Hundreds of thousands of pro-reform members of the KSČ were expelled from the party and, in many cases, deprived of meaningful jobs. Many also found that their children faced exclusion or expulsion from higher education and promising career paths. The repercussions from this purge were felt for the next 20 years. See Jakeš's brief first-hand account (which seeks to defend his own unsavory role) in his recent memoir, *Dva roky Generálním tajemníkem* (Prague: Regulus, 1996), pp. 54-66.

³⁷⁶TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Reformist sentiment spread into the KSČ's Higher Party School and numerous other institutes of higher education in Czechoslovakia throughout the Prague Spring. A harsh crackdown on reform-minded faculty at these schools had taken place in the mid-1960s under Novotný's auspices. The historian Milan Hübl, who had consistently spoken out in support of sweeping reform, was a particular target of Novotný's anti-reformist backlash in late 1963 and 1964. Hübl and two of his colleagues at the Higher Party School, Zdeněk Jičínský and Karel Kouba, were removed from their posts, and both Hübl and another dissident historian, Ján Mlynárik, were personally denounced by Novotný in May 1964. Several other historians at the Higher Party School were transferred to different assignments, and the historical faculty as a whole came under sharp criticism from the KSČ Presidium in 1964. In 1968, however, the reformers were back in favor. Not only was Milan Hübl restored to his post at the Higher Party School, but he was also appointed rector. Other important changes of personnel occurred at several universities (including Charles University), at the Institute for the History of Socialism (formerly known as the Institute for the History of the KSČ), at the KSČ's official publishing house, and at a number of research centers affiliated with the Academy of Sciences, including the Institute for the History of the European Socialist Countries and the Institute of Czechoslovak Literature. Proposals for sweeping reform of the academic system and research facilities were actively discussed and refined in the spring and summer of 1968. Many leading scholars at the KSČ's schools and institutes, at the universities, and at the Academy of Sciences institutes were prominently involved in the

broader attempts to press ahead with comprehensive political reform. By writing commentaries in the press, giving public lectures, helping out with the drafting of the Action Program and the preparation of documents for the Fourteenth KSČ Congress, signing pro-reform appeals and petitions, serving as members of various commissions (on rehabilitations, historical reassessments, federalization, and economic reform), and writing speeches for key party and state officials, a large number of scholars made enthusiastic contributions to the Prague Spring. This was particularly evident in the Czech lands, but it was also true in Slovakia. Husák's comments here reflect his awareness that the initial "normalization" had only partly diminished the groundswell of reformist sentiment that emerged at party schools and other higher education facilities in 1968. A more rigorous purge soon followed.

³⁷⁷TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: Husák is referring here to the numerous fissures that emerged in the Communist world as a result of the Soviet-led invasion. Within the Warsaw Pact itself, Albania used the invasion as an opportunity to withdraw formally from the alliance. (Albania had ceased to be a *de facto* member of the Warsaw Pact as far back as 1961, but had not yet formally pulled out.) Another Pact member, Romania, refused to take part in the invasion and promptly condemned it. Although Romania's defiance rapidly ebbed in late 1968 and 1969, Romanian policy never came fully back into line with the policies of the other Warsaw Pact states. Outside the Pact, the invasion was denounced by China (which was only six months away from its own military clashes with the Soviet Union on the Ussuri River) and even caused a good deal of disquiet in Cuba (though Cuban leader Fidel Castro ultimately decided to offer public support for the Soviet action). Equally important, the invasion led to a momentous rift among non-ruling Communist parties. Many of the West European Communist parties, especially the Italian and Spanish, had watched Dubček's reform program with great sympathy and hope. The violent suppression of the Prague Spring aroused open and vehement opposition to the Soviet Union within these parties and stimulated the rise of what became known as "Eurocommunism." The defection of most of the major West European Communist parties from the Soviet orbit was nearly as important in its long-term consequences as the earlier splits with Yugoslavia and China, and far more important than the break with Albania. The emergence of Eurocommunism mitigated potential Soviet influence in Western Europe and significantly altered the complexion of West European politics. More important, the Eurocommunist alternative – an alternative that, unlike the Prague Spring, could not be subdued by Soviet tanks – became a potentially attractive, and thereby disruptive, element in Eastern Europe.

³⁷⁸TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: On the reaction of the Italian Communist Party to the Prague Spring and the invasion of Czechoslovakia, see Joan Barth Urban, *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party: From Togliatti to Berlinguer* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 137-169; Donald L. M. Blackmer and Annie Kriegel, *The International Role of the Communist Parties of Italy and France*, Studies in International Affairs No. 33 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Center for International Affairs, 1975); and George R. Urban, ed., *Eurocommunism: Its Roots and Future in Italy and Elsewhere* (New York: Universe Books, 1978).

³⁷⁹TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The Vasyl'kivs'kyi region (raion) of Kyiv oblast is to the southwest of the Kyiv metropolitan area, adjacent to the Kievo-Svyatoshnyns'kyi raion in which Kyiv itself is located. Kodaky is located almost precisely in the center of Vasyl'kivs'kyi raion.