



Eastern Europe – Fifty Years Ago

A Press Review by a Hungarian Refugee

Few Czechs Pick Pact Nations

1968.03.16-31.

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Sq2 March 16, 1969

Account of Czech Struggle Also Shows Way of Life

THE CZECH BLACK BOOK.

Prepared by the Institute of History of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. Edited by Robert Littell. Praeger, 303 pages. \$6.95.

The nations of the world were flabbergasted on Aug. 20, 1968, when military forces of the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, East Germany and Bulgaria crossed the border into Czechoslovakia and occupied the capital and other key points of a nation that is allied to them — politically, economically, socially, culturally, and militarily.

The Czechoslovaks were profoundly shocked. They were suffering still another brutality in their short historical period of national existence in

modern times.

Their independent and sovereign nation was created out of the ashes — and aspirations — of World War I, was sacrificed to Hitler's ambitions by the fearful politicians of Western Europe on the eve of World War II, was liberated by Russian troops (except for the American liberation around Pilsen) toward the end of that war, was brought into the Soviet socialist sphere when it turned Communist in 1948, and, 20 years later, was humiliated by an act of armed force that denied their sovereignty and at the same time killed their love for and admiration of the Russians.

When the press reported the invasion of Czechoslovakia by other Warsaw Pact nations,

the issues seemed so unreal as to be ephemeral; the invasion, although unopposed by Czechoslovakian military forces, appeared so unmotivated as to be senseless, the dialogue between the governments so resembled a medieval kind of dialectic as to be meaningless, the reaction of the people of that unhappy land was so racked with pain and anger, grief and defiance, as to seem overdramatized.

Unfortunately for the Czechoslovakians, the issues, the invasion, the dialectic, and the reaction were all real, all terribly significant, all frightfully relevant — not only to the Czechoslovakian people, their friends in their allied nations, and their colleagues in the So-

viet socialist system, but also to the world at large.

And suddenly, at least for those who had only an inkling of what was going on beneath the surface of the finely restrained revolt reported in the press, the self-immolations, the silent protest marches, and the rest; even more for those who never comprehended the ideological confrontation that resulted in the resort to force, the spectacle of allied nations marching against another in what at first blush seemed like an incredibly naive and transparent manifestation of deceit and hypocrisy; "The Czech Black Book" illuminates and clarifies the situation, the issues, the motivations, and the reaction.

It is a diary of events, observations, testimony, broadcasts, articles, and the like, but, most of all, it is a chronological compilation of statements — those made by the Czechoslovakian leaders to explain their actions to their people, and those made by various quasi-public organizations and individuals expressing support for their leaders — during eight days, from Aug. 20 through 28, 1968.

This is not said to demean the effort. It is remarkably sympathetic to a Western onlooker.

What the documents reveal, above all, is the conflict between the Czechoslovakian desire to develop a democratic socialism in accordance with

the will of the people and the Soviet attempt to maintain a monolithic socialism subservient to its own aims of international power. Whether a nation can be sovereign while at the same time responsive to the socialist system or whether an independent nation within that system is, per se, a threat to the system is the basic issue.

Those who are simplistic in their outlook will reject the importance of the question. What is the difference, they will ask. Let all the nations bound together in the Warsaw Pact stew in their own juice, they will say.

The point is, the resolution of the matters involved has enormous significance to the shape of our world.

The strength, unity, and restraint of the Czechoslovakian people and their leaders in opposing, without resort to bloodshed, the Soviet endeavor to suppress what was called the errors of peaceful counter-revolution indicate the equivocal position — geographically, historically, and culturally — occupied by the Czechoslovak state. There is where Eastern Europe meets the West. Whether Czechoslovakia belongs to one or the other or can belong to both has yet to be decided.

"The Czech Black Book" tells why. It is not only an account of a struggle but a description of a way of life.

—MARTIN BLUMENSON.

Times March 18, 1969

Red-Bloc Chiefs Meet for First Time Since Invasion of Czechoslovakia



Associated Press

Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin, center, Defense Minister Andrei A. Grechko, left, and Communist party chief Leonid I. Brezhnev at yesterday's East bloc summit in Budapest. Meeting of seven member countries lasted two and a half hours.

Special to The New York Times

BUDAPEST, March 18—For the first time since the Moscow-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in August, the top leaders of all the seven member countries of the Warsaw Pact met today in Budapest. The meeting, postponed for five hours, lasted two and a

half hours. A resolution, adopted unanimously, made an "appeal to the nations of Europe" to strengthen their efforts for the peace and security of Europe. It was regarded by observers here as a compromise to cover diverging opinions in the East European military alliance. The

resolution did not elaborate on any of the alliance's real problems, but called for an all-European conference devoted to the topics of European security and cooperation. The Communist leaders constituting the political consultative committee, the highest body of the Warsaw Pact,

were the party chiefs, the premiers and the ministers for defense and foreign affairs of the member countries. Although this meeting was designed to show unity and mutual confidence, it started with signs of dis-

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RED BLOC LEADERS MEET IN BUDAPEST

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harmony. The opening of the meeting, scheduled officially for 10 A.M., had to be postponed several times because of what observers believed to be differences of opinion on the draft resolution, mainly between the Soviet Union and independent-minded Rumania.

The conference finally started at 2:30 P.M.

According to sources close to some delegations, the Russians had tried to persuade the others to adopt unanimously a declaration condemning the Chinese Communists as "aggressors."

The Rumanians were understood to have refused to support the declaration, asserting that the border fighting on the Ussuri River, the border between the Soviet Union and China, should first be more thoroughly investigated.

Moscow contends that Chinese Communist troops deliberately violated the border, attacking the Soviet garrison and killing and wounding Soviet troops. Peking insists that the incidents began on a Soviet provocation.

Reports could not be confirmed that the Soviet delegation, led by party chief, Leonid I. Brezhnev, appealed to the conference to decide to send "symbolic military detachments" of each member country to the Soviet-Chinese border to demonstrate the readiness of the Warsaw Pact to react to threats.

The Commander in Chief of the Warsaw Pact forces, Marshal Ivan I. Yakobovskiy, and his chief of Staff, Sergel M. Shtemenko, took part in the conference.

MUCH AS IN U.S.

Czech Students Feel They See Real Truth

By HAYNES JOHNSON
Star Staff Writer

PRAGUE—Except for the language and the foreign symbols on the wall, they could have been students on any campus in America today. They sounded alike and they looked alike—the girls in miniskirts, sweaters, boots, the young men in casual attire, long hair, some with beards.

These Czech students, in fact, share quite similar attitudes and aspirations with their American collegiate contemporaries.

That is remarkable, for the Czechs were born into a society where the Russian language was taught them as children; where the Russians were held up as the great model of friendship and enterprise; where Western influences were carefully extinguished or minimized; where the view of the rest of the world was often seriously distorted.

Yet here they were, sitting in a room and talking animatedly about politics and freedom and liberty and the common

values of their generation around the world.

"I think the meaning of all young people in the world is the same," a 19-year-old girl who wants to be a child psychologist was saying. "We don't want a war. We are against all kinds of aggression. We would like to build a common world, a world without borders. Because it is known that young people are much more progressive than old people."

Her last remark had a faint See PRAGUE, Page A-22

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THE EVENING STAR

Washington, D. C., Wednesday, March 19, 1969

PRAGUE

Students Tell Their Values

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miliar ring. With their idealism, vision and tolerance, these young people too have the feeling that they have the greatest lock on real truth. Like many young Americans, they also are capable of exhibiting an unyielding dogmatism that borders on the tyrannical. They particularly see themselves as superior to the older generation.

"The older group does not agree with the occupation," a young man said, "but they are taking it as reality. We have a name for it, 'hard reality.'"

When an older man protested, and said it wasn't true, that many old Communists in Czechoslovakia, some who had been arrested in the past, are ardently opposed to the Russian presence, the student replied:

"A man who was imprisoned for saying truth is afraid of saying truth once more."

That was the end of that. Despite these kind of differences, a strong bond exists between Czechs of all ages today. In the present difficult period of continuing Russian occupation, the students are playing a vital role.

Just as they assumed opposition leadership last August after Russian tanks rolled into Prague, so today they are providing much of the emotional and intellectual force behind the current passive resistance. In the long run, they are destined to become even more important—and more of a problem—in the complicated equation between the Soviet Union and its neighboring states.

Soviets Distrusted

These students will never forget their feeling of distrust and dislike for the Russians.

Today, they talk endlessly about how best to make an effective show of resistance, without calling down on their nation a greater show of force. "Our problem," one student said, "is how to change things. And it cannot be done by terror or demonstrations in the streets. No, we have to change it by our brains."

Their hope is that the Russians will be made to realize they were wrong—and will leave voluntarily. Their weapon is persuasion, world opinion and the weight of thought from within the Iron Curtain countries that change is inevitable and desirable.

In any event, the students seem determined not to turn back on the reforms that began a year ago January. They concede now that they were naive in thinking the Russians would be pleased at her smaller socialist sister coming up with modifications on the grand plan.

"We're Marxists, Too"

"We are Marxists, too," a girl said. "And it was really very simple. We liked to show them how we can do our own socialism. We can have socialism with a human face, socialism with all the principles of freedom."

Then, looking back, she said: "I didn't hate them (Russians) at all at that time, and we didn't know what they had done to us in the past. We knew only a little piece. The majority of the people couldn't imagine that they would do what they did. They thought they would agree with what we were doing here. Nobody could think that they would come here with their tanks."

She was expressing what appears to be one important, if intangible, result of the occupation. Many Czechs are now questioning, many for the first

times in their lives, what they have been hearing and learning for 20 years.

They speak with little ideological dogma when it comes to politics, and often will say apologetically that they realize they don't know if what they have heard is right.

Vietnam, for instance, is not discussed any more with quite so much assurance for a fixed point of view. The students are against the war, and America's role in it, but now add, as one did:

"You see, our information about Vietnam is not perfect. You see, we hear only from the Russian's point of view."

Their view of America also seems tempered. They especially relate to what they hear about fellow students in the United States.

Americans Different

"I think Americans are very different from us," a young man said, "because they are separated from Europe by a great water. The people are good people, but they can't quite understand the feelings of the people in Europe, and we have to understand that America is a highly-developed country, and so it has quite a lot of different problems from ourselves."

One of his friends interrupted to say:

"The student in the West doesn't know socialism, but they have another position for their fight. They have other causes, and a little bit different opinions from us. But principally the American students have the same opinions as we do. They make their protests in their own way."

The conversation turned to their goals for their country. What, they were asked, did they really mean when they spoke about "socialism with a human face" and "socialism with all principles of freedom"?

Censorship Hit

"No censorship," one student called out.

"Freedom of the press," said another.

"The right to protest," said a third.

"It means," a bearded youth said, "that the politicians have to be real human beings, with real feelings for the people."

Then one gave this definition: "My opinion of socialism is that the people should decide for themselves. They shouldn't be only puppets."

When it was suggested that their words sounded familiar to an American, that, indeed, America professed such goals, a girl quietly remarked:

"But that isn't true. In the United States it is written on a paper, but it is not always written in practice."

She mentioned problems with Negroes, the war, and America's handling of student demonstrators as examples of what to her were obvious contradictions between America's words and deeds.

But to the students America is not a primary concern today.

They know they may have to continue going it alone for quite a long time—and they are prepared to do so.

Before the session ended, the students were asked if they thought they might leave their country in the future. Every single one said they wanted to stay, no matter what happens.

A girl expressed it this way:

"My country has been through such a hard time, that it would be a pity to leave it now. We just live from one day to another."

On the walls of the room where they were gathered were posters of a new Czech martyr, Jan Palach, the young student whose suicide by immolation shocked and touched this nation. He burned himself as a protest against the Russian occupation.

The university where the students attend faces on Red Army Square. Not long ago, the students took down the street signs bearing that name and attempted to put up new ones calling it Jan Palach Square. The police did not allow it.

Now, the windows of the university are painted in white "Namesti Jana Palacha." They have not been forced to remove them.

Pass under 20, 1969

Dubcek Attacks West, Cites Red-Pact Shift

By Kenneth Ames

Special to The Washington Post

PRAGUE, March 19—The Warsaw Pact command was reorganized this week because of activities by NATO, and specifically by West Germany, Czechoslovak Communist Party leader Alexander Dubcek said today.

Dubcek launched a sharp attack on the Western powers while discussing documents signed by Warsaw Pact members in Budapest on Monday.

He described these documents as "increasing participation of each country in solving task of the Warsaw Pact command," and said they "would ensure more rational defense budgeting."

This sounded like just the opposite of the Soviet purpose in convening the Budapest meeting, which had been to revise the Warsaw Pact to strengthen uspernational control over member states' national military forces.

In an interview published today by the Czechoslovak Party newspaper Rude Pravo. Dubcek said that "socialist countries cannot leave unnoticed certain activities of imperialist forces, especially in Europe."

"Sone disturbing phenomena in NATO compelled us to take the necessary steps," he said of the Warsaw Pact meeting. He accused the West of attempting to create a "psychosis of Cold War," and West Germany of failing to halt the growth of neo-Nazism.

Dubcek, who occasioned surprise here when he accepted the chairmanship of the Budapest meeting, said two documents were signed by the seven member-countries providing for a standing committee of their defense ministers, and joint control of the Warsaw Pact command.

Dubcek also made a plea

for an all-European peace conference, while admitting that he saw little possibility of this being convened this year.

His attack on NATO and the West appeared to observers here to be a departure from his previous mild posture. Since he took command of the Party in January, 1968, he had avoided leveling charges against the Western powers in general or Bonn in particular.

There is considerable hard feeling and some embarrassment among Czechoslovaks over the failure to attend last week's Yugoslav Party Congress after a delegation had been named, and over the alacrity with which their leaders fall into line with the Warsaw Pact occupiers of this country on defense issues.

Dubcek is chairman of the recently constituted Defense Council established to create "a high level of preparedness against an external enemy." The Council is responsible to the Federal Assembly and government, thereby removing decisions over defense issues from exclusive Party control.

In his interview, Dubcek may have been addressing an elite Moscow audience, but he succeeded in conveying a definite impression to his compatriots that the Czechoslovak leadership is fully reconciled to its post-invasion status.

Dubcek's statements coincided with the arrival in Moscow of a high-ranking Czechoslovak military delegation headed by Deputy Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Oldrich Stangl. This is the second military delegation from Prague to visit the Soviet Union this month, while high-level Soviet groups descend on Prague at regular intervals for consultations.

ANTI-RUSSIAN MOOD

Czech Village Shows Ferment of Reform

By HAYNES JOHNSON

Star Staff Writer

JILOVE, Czechoslovakia—Jilove isn't listed in the tourist guides. It doesn't even have a real castle sprouting up above the dark hills in solemn, and faded, splendor.

Yet this isolated, rural village, a place of collective farms and geese and a courtyard square with the inevitable old cobblestones, tells much about the events taking place in Czechoslovakia today.

Here one sees how threatening the liberal spirit of reform sweeping Czechoslovakia is to Russia and its Eastern European allies. Here, it is the common people—not the students, writers, trained trade union leaders—who are voicing unyielding opposition to Russia and a strong desire for greater contact with the West.

"If the Soviet Union wouldn't hold onto us by force, the whole socialist countries would fall out of their hands," said a young man in the village pub.

It was lunch time, and the

conversation had begun quietly with only one citizen. Before long, more and more men kept joining the group until two large wooden tables had to be placed together to accommodate them.

They were cooks and welders and mechanics and drivers, "non qualified workers," and one electrician. His income of 3,200 crowns a month (about \$200) meant that he earned more than double his colleagues.

They talked freely, and sometimes heatedly, about their lives and their problems.

"I would like to see us abolish all bureaucracy," said one young man with sandy hair and a light blue sweater. "This is the bad thing which keeps us down."

The conversation kept turning toward a comparison between Czechoslovakia and what they thought they knew about people in the West.

"They have more freedom

See CZECHS, Page A-7

Czechs: Ferment of Reform Bubbles in Isolated Village

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of expression, and human rights are more respected than in this country," someone said.

All of them said they would like to be able to visit the Western countries to see for themselves. They especially were curious about America and asked a number of questions, many of them touching in their naivete ("I would like to go there to see for myself if it is true what they are telling about life in the United States.")

The electrician, also blonde and blue-eyed, summed up their general feeling.

"I am convinced that the whole Socialist section is far behind the West," he said. "I am sure that in the West there is a higher living standard than in our country, and I think it would be useful for our country to have better cooperation with the West. Now we have come to the point where our economy is very backward, and we should study more the Western experiences."

A Different View

Another man gave a slightly different view.

"We are in a Soviet colony, and therefore I would like to know what life is like in the Soviet Union, and then to compare it with life in the United States, because I hear in the Soviet Union they're very backward and therefore I would like to see life in the United States. I would like to find out."

What they were saying takes on a familiar sound after a week in Czechoslovakia. Running through all the conversations is a common theme—of massive discontent with conditions at home, thus creating ever greater pressures for change.

The Czechs, whose country was once among the wealthiest in Europe, are keenly aware that their economy is in a weak condition. There is a great hunger for consumer goods, and an equally great lack of money to purchase what goods are available.

And now, the Czech government has announced new austerity measures to try to halt serious inflationary movements.

Car Rammed

A more personal glimpse into the problems of the people came after an accident—a good, hard, smashing one. Our car was hit in dead center, knocked through an intersection and wound up upside down on the cobblestone street. After we climbed out, the driver stood looking mournfully at the wreckage,

shaking his head as if he had been ruined forever.

It wasn't a question of a lack of insurance, he explained. He had some, although it would not pay much. It would take at least eight weeks to get the car repaired, if, indeed, it could be fixed. But the real problem, he feared, was that he would need a new car.

To get a car, he said, one had to deposit 20,000 crowns in a state bank, make a reservation—and then wait three to five years for delivery.

"We Socialist countries," he said sadly, "we need so much the hard currency and so we keep everyone out so we can't get it."

This popular awareness of their economic plight colors all conversations, and it hardens the determination of the Czechs to do better, in their way, not from outside direction.

A 34-year-old Prague housewife with two children said it this way:

West Impact Feared

"The Russians are afraid that we will be too much influenced from the West, or have too much knowledge of the West. Last year for a week I was in West Berlin. I was very enthusiastic because in East Berlin and then in the West and you can't help but compare it—the buildings and the products and the shops. When we came to West Berlin we looked like poor relatives."

That kind of attitude helps explain why, seemingly overnight, the Czech people united in a determined effort to change the past.

In fact, as Czechs make clear, the reform movement that swept the old, harsh regime of President Antonin Novotny out of power on Jan. 5, 1968, ushering in a period of intense excitement and experimentation culminating finally in the Russian occupation Aug. 21, had been ripening for a long time.

Economic conditions were only the most visible indica-

tion of deep discontent. For 20 years, Czechs had been living in an oppressive society of suspicion, fear and regimentation.

When the time finally came for a new direction, all elements of the Czech population were ready to move and follow the lead of the writers, students and trade union leaders in Prague. But it could not have been accomplished without the support of the common people in such villages as Jilove.

Not far from here, in the pine forests on the mountain slopes, we talked with a couple in their weekend "hut" as they call it (actually, it resembles a small Swiss chalet). The husband was talking about the past, and remarked:

"We have not been living for 20 years, and after January we started to live again and have new hope. Before, we didn't have any view of the future. We were afraid to speak up and afraid to meet people. We had to attend meetings where they just used phrases, phrases, phrases—always empty phrases. One couldn't trust the other."

His wife added: "What we all want is fresh air, better breathing, that our kids should have a better fate than we have had."

Ideology Absent

They didn't mean, nor did any of the Czechs that were interviewed mean, that they want to overthrow socialism and replace it with American-style democracy. Although some Americans still believe their system is the best for all peoples to emulate, and Czechs are not thinking along those lines. They are not even really ideological.

What they want is reform of the past and freedom to fashion their future in their own way.

Although Czechoslovakia is a small country, only the size of New York state with its population of 14.5 million, about the same as the metro-

politan New York City area, it is posing one of the largest questions of our times.

What happens here is one key to the direction of East

and West, both internal and external.

Czechoslovakia is also something else. In the end, it stands for something more significant

than national, political or ideological questions. The question involves a fundamental human trait.

"This is the problem of the

spring, no?" a friend said. "If ing the spring time, it jumps where else, no?"

Press March 24, 1969

Few Czech Tourists Pick Pact Nations

By Kenneth Ames

Special to The Washington Post

PRAGUE — Czechoslovakia's political leaders may have rationalized their relationship with the invaders of their country, but it is clear, from figures released here, that their views are not shared by the spending public.

Only six percent of tourist trips offered to the Soviet Union have so far been sold, according to figures released by Cedok, the official government tourist agency.

Less than 50 per cent capacity has been booked to East Germany and Bulgaria and less than 70 per cent to Hungary. Poland does not figure in the statistics at all. For all Warsaw Pact countries, almost half the offered capacity remains unwanted.

By comparison, 84 per cent of all trips available to Rumania have been sold out and 96 percent to Yugoslavia.

Belgium, France and Italy rate high in popularity and all group tours to these countries are virtually booked tight while Austria, because of sharply rising prices, has suffered a setback compared with last year.

A steadily rising purchasing power, untapped due to limited consumer goods at home, is sending the Czechoslovak tourist further and further afield.

Some of the most popular holidays now being offered are in Egypt, North Africa and India, and tourists can pay for

their trips before leaving with no ceiling on currency because these countries owe an enormous amount of development aid to Prague.

As one official explained, "Paradoxically, it is easier financially to spend three weeks in India or Egypt than to obtain enough currency for a week in Austria next door."

Tourism into Czechoslovakia was disastrously hit last year by the August invasion and has been at a low ebb ever since. Cedok officials are pressuring the government to ease restrictions for foreigners and the re-introduction of visas issued at the frontiers or airports is being considered.

Anti-Semitism Seen As Czech Scapegoat

PRAGUE, March 23 (UPI)—Anti-Semitism is seeping into Czechoslovak politics, particularly as a means for finding scapegoats for "the country's catastrophe," Radio Prague said today.

"It is no secret that here and there, anti-Semitism and Chauvinism are present," said Radio Prague commentator Peter Pithart. "It is perhaps not correct to speak about mass moods, but the seed has been sown."

Wash. Post. March 31.

1969

Husak. Both are considered... tation. No longer a power on... sives want to seat a...

Kremlin and Dubcek Get Closer

'Package' Reported as Czechs Enter Joint Maneuvers

Washington Post Foreign Service

PRAGUE, March 30—Two events this weekend are adding weight to a conviction here that the Kremlin may be on the verge of a policy change that would result in a makeshift modus vivendi with Alexander Dubcek's regime and restore the Czechoslovak Communist Party to the good graces of Moscow.

Rumors of a broad Prague-Moscow package to reach this end have been in the wind here since last week, when the Czechoslovak Party, after a bitter internal struggle, honored Moscow's request not to send a top-level delegation to the Yugoslav Communist Party Congress in Belgrade.

A few days later, Dubcek was ostentatiously congratulated in Budapest by Soviet Party Chief Brezhnev for his handling of the chairmanship of the seven-nation Communist summit conference.

In Joint Maneuvers

The weekend events included the announcement that the Czechoslovak armed forces were participating in a joint maneuver with Poland, Russia and East Germany, and the mild aftermath thus far to the sacking of the Aeroflot Soviet airline building in an anti-Soviet demonstration Friday night.

Tens of thousands of Czechoslovaks poured into the streets after their country's 4-to-3 ice hockey victory over the Soviet Union in Stockholm, in the most aggressive anti-Soviet display since the August invasion.

But aside from a pro forma condemnation the Czech government—both Moscow and Prague appear to be treating the incident lightly.

This weekend—the anniversary of the ouster of

Stalinist President Antonin Novotny and the Dresden conference at which the Prague reformers were called to account for their sins—passed quietly.

Czechoslovakia's participation in the current low-key Warsaw Pact maneuvers suggests an effort by Moscow to restore Prague's military at least to a semblance of equality—and in so doing serve notice to Peking of socialist military solidarity.

The absence of Rumania detracts from this picture, however, and observers here believe Hungarian and Bulgarian forces may have been deliberately left out of the maneuvers to cover over Bucharest's refusal to strengthen its Pact commitment.

New Role for Dubcek

The theory that the Kremlin is trying to make Dubcek and his regime its chief supporting ally in its showdown with China and in rallying support for the June 5 world communist conference in Moscow seems partially borne out by various evidence.

Czechoslovak delegations to Moscow, such as the group from the radically progressive Union of Metal Workers, have told of lavish treatment by their hosts.

In the last two weeks, moreover, Moscow has tolerated—publicly at least—defiant speeches and articles by such progressives as Josef Smrkovsky, Cestmir Cisar and Slovak ideologist Miroslav Kusy.

New Equilibrium

This toleration coincides with what observers detect as a new equilibrium in Czechoslovak politics, with the reformers led by Dubcek still in power and pressing for progress but balanced by centrist and "realist" officials such as Pre-

mier Oldrich Cernik, Czech Party boss Lubomir Strougal and Slovak leader Gustav Husak.

Even the press reflects this balance, with the Czech Communist Party Bureau conservative organ, Trybuna, promoting a sharply different Party line from the Czechoslovak Party organ, Rude Pravo.

Moscow's snubs to visiting East German leader Walter Ulbricht last week, and the Kremlin's refusal to heat up the Berlin crisis earlier this month suggest a Soviet abandonment of Ulbricht's policy of "confrontation" with West Germany.

The other side of this coin is greater toleration for the liberal Czechoslovak policies.

Moscow has now reduced its conditions for normalizing relations with West Germany from six to three—and watered down the remaining three to discard the old demand of full sovereign recognition for Ulbricht's state.

Presumably in harmony with the new Soviet line, Dubcek has been the most forthright proponent of the proposal for a European security conference broached in Budapest.

Nenni to Visit

Ceteka, the national news agency, announced today that Italian Socialist leader Pietro Nenni would visit here next month, indicating that Prague now has the green light to resume contacts with Western Social Democratic and Socialist Parties.

All this indicates that Moscow's easing up on the Prague regime may be part of a grander strategy for a period of quiet on its Western frontiers as it deals with China.

In this theory, a Soviet-Czechoslovak package deal cannot be excluded, and

sources reported this week that one was suggested by Brezhnev recently in a letter to Dubcek. Presumably Soviet demands would include full Czechoslovak political and military support in the Chinese dispute and abandonment of such domestic plans as a plenary Central Committee session on excesses of the Stalinist past that might implicate Soviet agents.

The maximum Czechoslovak demand would be withdrawal of the 70,000 remaining Soviet troops.

Rumanian Action

Bars Soviet Troops

Reuters

BUCHAREST, March 30—Rumania has completed a reorganization of state bodies which would make it constitutionally illegal for Russia to send troops here—for maneuvers or any other purpose—without Rumanian national approval.

The reorganization also bars any dissident minority from inviting the Red Army it on the pretext of preserving socialist gains—Moscow's justification for the invasion of Czechoslovakia last year.

Following elections earlier this month, Rumania reshaped the Defense Council, which decides top-level military issues, placing it under control of the Council of State and the Rumanian Grand National Assembly (Parliament).

This move enhanced the authority of President Nicolae Ceausescu, head of both the Defense Council and the State Council—while weakening that of his critics in the party leadership.

4 Die in Car Crash

PADUA, Italy, March 30 (UPI)—Four youths were killed today when their car went out of control and crashed into an abandoned farmhouse.