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The Re-imposition of Orthodoxy in Czechoslovakia

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Polish events since 1980 have raised again the question of the long-term prospects for a "liberalization" of the communist party regimes in Eastern Europe. The repression of Solidarity and its allied movements that began in December, 1981 seemed to confirm the negative hypothesis advanced by Jean-Francois Revel in *The Totalitarian Temptation*. Revel argues that

There is to this day not one bit of evidence for the . . . hope that communism will evolve toward democratic pluralism. . . . The distinctive characteristic of communism, its very reason for being, is to eliminate the possibility of any challenge to its rule, thus to deny to the people . . . any opportunity to change their minds once the regime is in power.¹

Revel's view is not a new one. Soviet and East European specialists have long argued that repression is an essential feature of the communist regime. Ideological dictates, they have insisted, lead inevitably to party-state interference in economics, art, literature, and even natural science, to name only a few areas of concern. Marxist-Leninist assumptions, of course, are based on the proposition that ideological errors—departures from orthodoxy in any endeavor—lead automatically to political disaster. Thus, repression of "error" is an official obligation. The nature of that repression, however, may vary greatly by time, nation, and regime. Repression need not be, as was often assumed in the past, capricious and unpredictable.

Political repression, a modified form of the official terror of earlier times, is a normal course of events in Eastern Europe today. After decades of communist rule, it has become obvious that deviant behavior in some form will always be present in spite of party pledges to create the "new socialist man." This creates the possibility of political, social, cultural, or economic "error." The need to avoid the consequences of such mistakes necessitates at least a modest degree of repression. Where noticeable political or social disintegration has resulted from the commission of errors, an intensification of repressive measures will be apparent. However, it is important to note that official destructive violence is much less common in the Eastern Europe of the 1980's than was the case during the so-called "Stalinist" era. Repression has changed demonstrably since that violent epoch and takes the form of administrative measures more often than arrests or outright physical brutality, although such actions are still numbered among the weapons of most Eastern European regimes. It is the administrative devices that have been most valuable in the institutionalization of a non-destructive, silent repression. The fact that bureaucratic agencies responsible for mundane matters of daily existence can also serve as

repressive instruments makes possible the subtle integration of repression into the routine fabric of life. In this fashion, it can be directed—with varying intensity—against anyone who deviates from orthodoxy. In addition to this punitive function, repression has increasingly assumed a didactic purpose in that the “audience” is perhaps more important than the victims of repressive actions. Thus, the over-all social impact of repression is just as crucial as the actual discouragement of deviant behavior.

While most popular attention is focused on events in Poland at this time, a study of Eastern Europe’s most recently completed treatment of deviation, the so-called “Czech Spring,” and the thorough re-imposition of orthodoxy in the decade after Dubcek’s brief tenure as First Secretary of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party is instructive for those who wish to understand the dynamics of political control in contemporary Eastern Europe. It is the purpose of this paper to examine the past decade’s repression or “normalization” of Czechoslovakia and, where appropriate, compare that process with similar events elsewhere in the region. Such a comparison is warranted, not only by the numerous common elements in the various regimes, but also by the countless invidious comparisons being drawn by the Czech authorities themselves in the wake of the Polish upheavals.

The purpose of the Czechoslovakian normalization is to re-establish exclusive party control over events in that nation. Exclusive control is a fundamental requirement of an ideology that serves as the foundation for overall party policy. In the Marxist-Leninist system, ideology functions as religion and culture do in the non-socialist state by limiting the range of alternatives open in both collective and individual action. Because of its exceptional importance, ideology clearly requires protection and preservation in communist party states. During its decade of normalization, Czechoslovakia has taken the requirement to repress “error” most seriously with authorities identifying both institutions and philosophies thought to pose a danger to the official belief system of the regime.

The process of normalization is based on a combination of coercion and consumerism. The regime endeavors to increase the available supply to consumer goods as a means of winning the support of the general population while utilizing sanctions against those who are unwilling to recognize the legitimacy of the system on the basis of its economic performance. Through most of the seventies there has been evidence of very real accomplishments in the consumer goods sector. During the decade, ownership of consumer durables such as washing machines and televisions rose dramatically, and car ownership per capita doubled. In March, 1980, Prime Minister Strougal reported that national income had risen 59% while industrial output was up by 75%.² The tenacity and purpose of the effort, however, may be more impressive than the outcome. According to a Wharton report in 1981, Czechoslovakia’s economic performance in 1979—hampered by un-

favorable weather, bad harvests, and general mismanagement—was very poor, and the modest recovery in 1980 was not sufficient to compensate completely for earlier losses. In 1980, national income grew by 3%, and industrial production rose 3.2%, while agricultural output was climbing 6%. The country's nonsocialist trade deficit continued to decline in 1980—falling to about \$425 million—but was projected to rise to \$600 million for 1981 and 1982. Even though Czechoslovakia's national debt stood at \$3.7 billion, it was still the second lowest in Eastern Europe. These improvements neither halted Czechoslovakia's growing dependence on the USSR for energy and raw material imports nor made up for the required 50% increase in the prices of several consumer goods in July, 1979. In fact, in October of 1980 even Prime Minister Strougal acknowledged that the nation's economic picture was somewhat clouded. In 1982, *Rude Pravo* reflected Strougal's concern in a page one commentary demanding further incentives to improve living standards and to increase the supply of attractive products on the domestic market.³ Several weeks later, authorities released an analysis of citizen complaints received by governmental agencies which indicated that most popular concerns related directly to problems with shop supplies, services, and allocation of apartments.⁴ Yet, these economic problems have not yet had a dramatic impact on the living standards of most Czech citizens.⁵ As long as this continues to be the case, the positive side of the party's normalization effort should support the overall objectives.

The negative element of the Czech normalization campaign is directed against the church, an institution with the potential of resisting the party's reassertion of authority. The Polish crisis, of course, demonstrates the extent to which the church can become a dominant element in the political equation of even a communist party state. In an effort to avoid the Polish experience, Czech authorities have formulated a three-part policy toward the church. First, they accuse Western church organizations of hostility toward Marxism-Leninism and of attempting to convince citizens of socialist states that communism is "anti-human and anti-Christian." Second, party leaders suggest that there is a link between the Western organizations and the churches in Czechoslovakia. This connection serves to transform the church into a "retarding element" in Czech society and the only manifestation of an alien ideology still active in socialist society. Finally, party officials accuse church leaders of political unreliability. By 1979, 500 of the country's 3,530 Catholic clergymen had been declared politically suspect and were forbidden to perform pastoral duties.⁶ In 1981 official distrust led to the requirement that numerous church dignitaries take a vow of loyalty to the state if they wished to continue their religious work.⁷ Admittedly spurred on by Polish development, Czech police have begun an extensive campaign against the so-called secret Catholic church in Czechoslovakia. This is a well organized group which, officials charge, is

cooperating with radical centers in the capitalist world that hope to weaken the leading role of the party. This unofficial church is composed not only of secretly ordained priests, secret converts and underground printing establishments, but also of representatives of the existing Catholic organizations who support illegal church activities. Early in 1981, police conducted a series of raids in various parts of the country in an effort to destroy unofficial church groups.⁸ Official policies over the years have always been basically hostile to all religious activities, and these recent endeavors are clearly intended to insure that the church does not become a viable social or political force.

The church in the communist party state makes an attractive target because it represents a tangible, identifiable organized force capable of directing resistance to official dictates. It may become, as in the Polish case, an independent force commanding the allegiance of large numbers of people. There are, however, numerous attitudes and philosophies, not embodied in any organizational entity, which nevertheless represent a threat to the official ideology. In fact, any outlooks other than those demanded by Marxism-Leninism are threats because they retard accomplishment of party-designated tasks. Among the most notorious of these is a "petit bourgeois mentality," a malignancy denounced by every communist regime throughout the world. The Czechoslovakian definition of this attitude is very broad and encompasses almost any critic. A petit bourgeois person, party writers declare, "composes alarming and completely unfounded reports of calamities awaiting consumers, savers, and working people." He is, moreover, one who labors under the mistaken notion that socialism is a "consumer society set-up intended to cater to his wants as a consumer." Revisionism is another ghost haunting the Husak regime, a dangerous philosophy which "brought the party and all society to the verge of catastrophe." The party daily, *Rude Pravo*, warns that there are still people who would like to "evoke and rekindle revisionist theories and "transfer elements of capitalism into socialism." Opportunism, a third threat cited in this category, is described as one of the "main dangers" for society because people either ignore it or do not realize the enormity of the threat it poses. Finally, nationalism, especially in Slovakia, is still another threat to the regime's ideology. There have been numerous incidents during the period of normalization, including at least one well-publicized trial, highlighting the persistence of nationalism in Slovakia.

The problem of nationalism in Czechoslovakia provides an interesting contrast with the Polish and Hungarian situations. Nationalism is a strong unifying force in Poland, something which has persisted throughout numerous difficult epochs and has served as an element bringing the citizens of the nation together. Nationalism in Czechoslovakia, by contrast, has contributed to divisions within the country, and Slovak nationalism is regarded as an especially divisive factor. Official attacks on Slovak na-

tionalism, therefore, find a receptive audience in much of Czechoslovakia whereas an attack on Polish nationalism from the Polish United Workers' Party might be regarded as a defiance of historical tradition. A comparison of the ethnic compositions of the two nations demonstrates the necessity for different approaches. As the table below shows, Poland enjoys a high degree of ethnic homogeneity with all but 1.3% of its population, about 500,000 people, in the dominant group while Czechoslovakia is divided between two large communities and several small ones.

Ethnic Composition of Poland and Czechoslovakia

<i>Poland</i>		<i>Czechoslovakia</i>	
Polish—	98.7%	Czech—	64.3%
Ukrainian—	.6%	Slovakian—	30.0%
Belorussian—	.5%	Magyar—	4.0%
Others—	.2%	German—	.6%
Jewish—	.05%	Polish—	.5%
		Ukrainian—	.4%
		Others—	.2%

Source: *National Basic Intelligence Factbook*, Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, April, 1981 p. 47 and p. 160.

While nationalistic dissonance has been the norm in Czechoslovakia, Poland has experienced a merger of creed and religion that gives it much in common with Hungary. Such a condition and the comparison that it encourages does not augur well for Poland. Hungarian nationalism, like the Polish variety, has been especially intense throughout recent centuries and has been characterized by a coincidence of religion and patriotic fervor. Although the communist regime established after World War Two regarded organized religion as a threat, authorities did not mount a determined "church-wrecking" campaign, and active churches continued to dot the Hungarian countryside. Oaths of allegiance to the state were required of many church officials, and leaders viewed as hostile to the regime, such as Cardinal Mindszenty, were the targets of active persecution. Nevertheless, the Hungarian church was generally accepted as part of the nation's history and numerous Hungarian Marxist scholars have attempted to formulate a concept of socialism compatible with Christianity. Consequently, religion is part of the national life of Hungary and strengthens the national patriotism condemned as a threat by so many communist party regimes. Religion in this predominantly Catholic country has underscored resistance to communism and helped make possible the dramatic events of 1956. More recently this attitude of resistance has fostered the formation of an intellectual opposition that has yet to develop a definite political program. The first public act of this slowly emerging group came in 1977 when it sent a letter of

support to Czechoslovakian signers of Charter 77. It is interesting that while Czech and later Polish initiatives against party orthodoxy were inspired by elements of the Hungarian experiment of 1956, today the Hungarian intellectual dissidents borrow from the Czechs and the Poles by establishing such things as "free universities" and committees to assist victims of administrative persecution.¹¹ The persistence of nationalism in Hungary, Poland and other East European states is especially significant, because it demonstrates that a traditional force—nationalism—is often stronger than the scientific force presumably represented by Marxism-Leninism. The danger that it continues to pose for the party's monopoly of power is equally germane to an examination of what is being attempted by the party leadership in Czechoslovakia. If the similarities in the Hungarian and Polish nationalism lead to the brutal consequences experienced by the Hungarian reformers in 1956, the prospects for even a modicum of tranquility in the region will be severely reduced. Such an unhappy result would also have profound consequences for Soviet-East European relations throughout this decade. Czech critics of the Polish reformers are quick to charge that it is precisely these results which are being sought by NATO, the United States, and "the papists headed by the Pope himself." In 1981, Bratislava *Pravda* charged that a "clerical-nationalist" counterrevolution was underway in Poland and was being openly financed by international anti-communist forces.¹²

While Czech authorities shelter the official ideology from such hostile philosophies as those cited above, they give equal importance to protection from individuals attempting to erode the party's authority. Denunciations of "alien beliefs" without corresponding actions against those espousing such conceptions would obviously be inadequate to achieve the authorities' objectives. In order to insure that the standard litany against hostile beliefs is accompanied by effective steps against the apostles of those beliefs, a significant effort has been made to identify specific enemies of the regime. The emigre dissidents, frustratingly beyond the casual reach of Czech security forces, are the object of special fury. According to authorities, these people are enemies of all citizens of Czechoslovakia, elite as well as non-elite. They are pictured as engaging in "criminal activities" and "working against the interests of their own country. . . ."¹³ Official treatment of such emigres is an illustration of the calculability of contemporary East European repression in that the regime's measures are directed primarily against that small portion of the population which has been blatantly exhibited its opposition. This group, however, may be growing since recent statements by Czech dissidents indicate that more and more of them feel that "exile represents our only hope to extricate ourselves from the position of inferior beings in which communism keeps us."¹⁴

It is the domestic opposition, however, which provides the best illustration of the operation of Czechoslovakia's non-violent repression. The most

severe criticisms are directed against the intellectual component of the broad grouping of opposition forces. It was during the "Prague Spring," Federal Premier Lubomir Strougal charges, that the intellectuals "came out against socialism and its fundamental values" and worked for the "destruction of the political system." Strougal admits that this error "continues to influence" official policy toward the intelligentsia.¹⁵ Formation of Charter 77, a group identified largely with Czech intellectuals, produced even more frenzied attacks on the intelligentsia.¹⁶ The Charter sees itself as an informal association of people of widely differing convictions and does not present itself as a political opposition group. Official statements indicate that the regime does not accept this benign view and the party press not only describes the Charterists as "elitists" increasingly alienated from their fellow citizens but charges that one of the founders, Vaclav Havel, is a "tool of the Western news media" who collaborated with an American spy during the 1960s.¹⁷

Authorities have worked to cultivate the impression that opposition to intellectual dissidents is not centered solely within the party but is in reality a broadly based popular movement. A 1975 radio commentary by Jaroslav Korinek, after describing the activities of those who are "blackening and disparaging the results of our peoples' selfless work," attempted to generate support for moves against intellectuals by warning that "even socialism cannot allow itself the luxury of tolerating the deliberate harming of society."¹⁸ Recently Czech intellectuals have echoed the feelings of the party concerning the developments in Poland. Speakers at a 1981 meeting at Torun University spoke of rightwing revisionism and anti-socialist remarks in Poland today as resembling those espoused by their colleagues during the years of crisis in their own country.¹⁹ In 1977, the deputy head of the Czech Trade Union Congress joined the chorus by declaring that the trade unionists didn't accept lectures on human rights from those conspiring against socialism.²⁰ In preparation for the tenth anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Czech news media emphasized the "mass opposition" of Czech citizens to Dubček's regime as well as to the activities of the Charterists. Speaking on Radio Prague broadcast in 1981, one Czech worker asserted that some rightwing exponents in Czechoslovakia wanted to "exploit the trade unions" and "weaken the socialist community." He further stated that it was the duty of Czech workers to "rebuff these attacks of reaction," and that the Polish workers to do likewise in their country.²¹ The people of Czechoslovakia, according to numerous official reports, were demanding that action be taken against those calling for changes in their country's political system.²² The message of the media was quite clear: the broad masses, the Czech "audience," clearly accepts the message conveyed by the party's repressive efforts and see the would-be reformers as the class enemy.

While few would suggest that a union exists between intellectuals and workers in Czechoslovakia, there is considerable concern about the attitudes of this most important group, misgivings which are a product of reports that factories are suffering from a breakdown of labor discipline. While dissidents cite this as evidence of worker dissatisfaction with political conditions in Czechoslovakia, authorities are vigorously attacking the manifestations of poor discipline. One of the first indications of this effort was a 1973 amendment to the labor code intended to limit the consumption of alcohol at work.²³ Further, the party has complained about the poor quality of Czech merchandise and charging that workers over-estimate their own worth because of the national labor shortage.²⁴ The party does not limit itself to verbal rebukes alone and declares that those who fail will "draw the appropriate consequences from poor and inefficient work" as authorities "penalize the remuneration of refunds . . ."²⁵

Czech dissidents, of course, place a political interpretation on the workers' lack of discipline. Writing in the emigre journal *Listy*, Karel Honza insists that workers have "absolutely rejected all Bolsheviks, communists, and Husakists." Numerous factory militias, he says, have been disbanded because of a shortage of reliable cadres and party organizations in factories are experiencing sharp drops in membership. According to Honza, the only luxury enjoyed by workers is the joy of loafing on the job or the privilege of sneaking off to perform extra jobs elsewhere to supplement salaries received at the factory.²⁶ The appearance of workers' names on Charter 77 is another indication that there might be some substance to dissident claims of worker support for demands expressed by intellectuals.

Merely citing the philosophies and groups which the Husak regime regards as enemies does not provide a complete picture of the actions directed against real or potential oppositional centers. A full account of the party's policy regarding this matter allows us to see the extent to which officials are willing to go in reclaiming their monopoly of power. If the 1960's, culminating with Dubček's ascendancy within the party, were a time of gradual erosion of the regime's absolute monopoly, the 1970's were an epoch of systematic reassertion of that authority. While there have been some questions regarding the role of many workers during this time, it is the intelligentsia—artists, writers, teachers, and scientists—who have borne the brunt of the party's attack. Anti-intellectual attitudes, of course, were common in the early communist years and later became institutionalized. However, in the era of normalization, they have become almost compulsory.

Jeri Pelikan has described the anti-intellectualism of Husak's Czechoslovakia in *Socialist Opposition in Eastern Europe* and outlines the far-reaching effects of this element of the nation's silent repression. Declaring the Czechoslovakian case to be an example of a revolution which has "eaten its own children," Pelikan discusses the fates of the almost 500,000 communists driven from the party following Gustav Husak's elevation to

Dubček's position. These disillusioned people did not generally become targets of outright terror, but were usually subjected to political measures and material pressures. This restrained approach helped accomplish the regime's primary objective, consolidation of its political power, without stimulating more intense opposition to the process of normalization.²⁷ The avoidance of destructive force does not mean that at a later time it cannot be applied selectively or, if necessary, even widely. In exercising restraint authorities are simply using good judgement rather than sacrificing any of their numerous repressive powers.

The stage was set for the 'purification' of the Party at a meeting of the Party Control Commission in 1975 with a call for the Party "to be more demanding" of its membership and to improve members' discipline and education.²⁸ Even before this formal statement there were demands in the press for an improvement in the quality of Party membership and for elimination of members who were unenergetic, opportunistic, or inclined toward "individualistic behavior." For those who view the process as routine, one party journal cautioned that this continuing effort is not "a mere administrative exercise."²⁴

Removal from the ranks of the Party is not the only bureaucratic sanction applied to those offensive to authorities. Several cases will illustrate other methods used against such individuals. Cestmir Cisar, for example, former Party secretary for Brno, was forced into a subordinate position in the Prague office for the care of monuments. The Prime Minister from Dubček's era, Oldrich Cernik, was assigned a position as director of a coal supply operation while Central Committee member Milan Silhan became a bulldozer driver in South Bohemia. Two other prominent figures from the Prague Spring, Presidium member Dr. Zdenek Mlynar and Major General Vaclav Prohlik, a close Dubček associate, suffered similar fates. Mlynar became an entomologist at the National Museum and Prohlik found employment as an underground construction worker.³⁰

Writers have been the targets of other material pressures brought to bear against opposition elements. Dilia, the state copyright agency, is the primary bureaucratic instrument used to deny writers the opportunity of publishing their works, either at home or abroad. Dilia's utility as an agency of nondestructive repression was illustrated by its denial of permission for playwright Pavel Kohout to publish his works in Czechoslovakia or West Germany where his former publisher had arranged for several of his plays to be performed.³¹ Kohout's case, of course, was by no means exceptional and as Dilia's efforts have been supplemented by purges from the membership of the Union of Czechoslovak Writers, many writers find themselves without an outlet for their work. In a nine year period following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the membership of the writers' organization declined from about 400 to 164, indicating that more and more writers are effectively eliminated from producing for the public. Similar pressures have

been applied within the Slovak Writers' Union which expelled Hana Ponická, the well-known author of numerous childrens' books, and a frequent regime critic, declaring that she would be forbidden to publish anything.³² Further, the authorities recognize the importance of communication among dissidents and attempt to restrict their ability to keep in touch with each other. This is true not only for those at home, who frequently find phones disconnected and driver's licenses revoked, but also for those with links abroad. Not only has the Czechoslovakian repression been relatively silent, it has produced, for some people, silence.

These actions are designed not simply to insure that the general public is unable to read literature that might be critical of the regime, but are also intended as punishments for creative people who refuse to use their talents to echo official policy. Punishment rather than censorship was clearly the motive when the popsinger Marta Kubisova was denied the right to perform following the appearance of her signature on a Charter 77 document. State security officials implied she would be allowed to sing again only if she withdrew her support for the petition.³³ The broad cultural impact of normalization was demonstrated by the fact that of the 6,000 pop musicians registered in Czechoslovakia, only 3,000 were being allowed to give performances by 1978.³⁴ There is, of course, an additional motive in such measures since they serve as a lesson for other talented people who do not wish to see their professional ambitions frustrated because of "political shortcomings."

Deprivation of citizenship is another administrative device used to punish as well as intimidate. When Pavel Kohout was denied permission to produce his plays, many expected that he would travel to West Germany in violation of the ban. However, had he done so, he could have been deprived of his citizenship in absentia. Later, he was allowed to go to Austria where he stayed for almost a year with assurance that he could return when he wanted to do so. However, when Kohout tried to return in 1979, he found that he was barred from the country and stripped of his citizenship. This threat can severely limit the options of dissidents who, like former Central Committee Secretary Zdenek Mlynar and historian Jan Tesar, find themselves without employment at home may wish to take a job abroad. Authorities threatened them with loss of citizenship if they chose to leave the country in spite of the fact that they were unable to work at home. Tesar's case was especially acute since he was ill but receiving none of the state aid to which he was entitled.³⁵ Some deprivations of citizenship are more abrupt. In 1980, dissident script writer Jiri Polak, a son of Alexander Dubček's colleague, Ota Sik, was unceremoniously expelled from the country, along with his wife and son, and stripped of his citizenship.³⁶

The security forces also practice methods which are not traditional in their application to East European Dissidents and associated with the more conventional forms of repression. Homes are invaded by policemen at in-

convenient and unanticipated hours, manuscripts are confiscated and surveillance is constant. Imprisonment frequently results from these efforts to suppress opposition. Shortly after the appearance of Charter 77, a number of individuals associated with it were placed under house arrest. Apparently authorities resorted to this modified, restrained form of arrest simply in hopes of preventing dissidents from making contact with people who could publicize their complaints, especially during the conference of West European communists on "Problems of Peace and Socialism" in 1977.³⁷ In 1981, twelve Charter 77 members, including former Foreign Minister Jiri Hayek were arrested and charged with subversion. Four, including Hayek, were released on bail, but the other eight were accused of "serious foreign-backed subversive activities" and face jail sentences of up to ten years. These arrests were a continuance of the attacks against Charter 77 members which heightened in 1981.³⁸ Many others followed, of course, and were not restricted to house arrests. In April, 1982, Anna Marvanova, spokeswoman for Charter 77, was taken into police custody and charged with "incitement to rebellion" while several other charter activists were being hunted by police with orders for their arrest.³⁹ The arrests themselves and the imprisonment that followed have often been accompanied by considerable brutality. The historian Jan Tesar, for example, reported that while he was in prison he was brutally beaten and Jan Patocka, an internationally respected non-Marxist philosopher, died from a cerebral hemorrhage following his eleven hour interrogation in March, 1977.⁴⁰ In Professor Patocka's memory, dissidents organized an underground study group known as the "Jan Patocka University." A series of police raids have been launched against this small, informal group and in 1979, for the first time, authorities arrested one of the numerous visiting Western academics, Norwegian economics professor Thorolf Rafto.⁴¹ Efforts to crush the "university," an intellectual outlet for young people denied admission to formal universities because of the political shortcomings, continued into 1980. Several Western scholars, including philosopher Dr. Anthony Kenny, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, have been detained along with dozens of Czech citizens. Although these detentions have been accompanied by frequent brutality, such as that applied to the philosopher Julius Tomin who on at least two occasions has been apprehended by police for attempting to lecture on Aristotle. There have usually been no formal charges or extended imprisonment resulting from the actions.⁴²

When trials and imprisonment do follow arrests, the victims do not always receive only the traditional confinement. Zcenek Kastak, for example, charged with "anti-state incitement" when he wrote complaints to several newspapers, was sentenced to ten months in jail to be followed by an indefinite period of psychiatric care.⁴³ Nor are the charges necessarily traditional. Several Charterists received prison sentences of up to two years simply for disseminating recordings of a dissident musical group known as "The

Plastic People of the Universe.”⁴⁴

The general popular reaction to this assortment of repressive measures has been silence. During a time when their Polish comrades were experimenting with negotiation, cooperation, debates, confrontations, and, finally, counterattack, the leadership of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party was successfully isolating the dissidents from the people the dissidents believed they could help. The success of the Czech leadership must, in part, be attributed to the positive aspect of the normalization campaign—the effort to provide adequate economic compensations for the population. Though the Czech economy is not the best in Eastern Europe, its problems have not had a dramatic negative impact of the living conditions of the workers. While there are increasingly frequent denunciations of “rampant economic criminality” in Czechoslovakia, there are few of the devastating shortages and inconveniences seen in Poland.⁴⁵ The consumerist aspect of normalization has been sufficient to deprive dissidents of an automatically receptive audience.

The non-destructive nature of the coercive element of normalization is yet another factor that must be taken into account in understanding the defeat of the Czechoslovakian dissidents. First, the targets of repression were usually intellectuals without extensive popular contacts. Except for the apparently widespread problem of poor worker discipline, there is limited evidence that the dissidents can cite to support their arguments that the workers share their aspirations for a renewal of the reforms started by Alexander Dubček in 1968. Second, the novelty and sophistication of the repressive methods has discouraged the making of effective martyrs. The declaration that a rebellious writer’s home is an historic site that should be maintained by the state and not used as a private residence certainly makes life difficult for the writer, but it does not evoke the popular sympathy that imprisonment or execution would elicit. Confinement for psychiatric treatment is a common practice, but the sad figures who emerge after such treatments are incapable of providing inspiring leadership. Less common but more unique was Pavel Kohout’s detention for treatment of a human strain of “hoof and mouth disease.”

Finally, it is necessary to note the Soviet role in the process of normalization. The fact of a Soviet invasion in 1968 underscored the futility of large-scale resistance. Since the time of the intervention, the USSR has played a more restrained role but has continued to exhibit great concern for official treatment of Czech dissidents. High level support, apparently directed by the late Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Aleksei Kosygin, has been applied to insure the dominance of moderate factions committed to pursuit of non-destructive repression that avoids actions that could arouse sympathy for dissidents.⁴⁶ Because the Czechoslovakian situation allowed discreet coordination of Soviet and Czech efforts, the Soviet Union itself did not become an issue during the normalization process. By con-

trast, a variety of factors made the USSR a point of contention between reformers and authorities in Poland and thus served to destabilize Polish politics in recent years. This situation, coupled with the isolation of the small number of dissidents from the broad spectrum of the industrial working population, enabled authorities to avoid the explosive combination of elements accumulating in Poland during this time. Consequently, while orthodoxy was steadily eroded in Poland, it was quietly re-imposed and the party's authority re-established in Czechoslovakia.

¹ Jean-Francois Revel, *the Totalitarian Temptation*, (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1977) p. 28.

² *Rude Pravo*, March 17, 1980, p. 1-2.

³ *Ibid.* February 1, 1982, p. 1.

⁴ Bratislava *Pravda*, April 20, 1982, p. 1.

⁵ "Centrally Planned Economies Outlook," Wharton Centrally Planned Economies Service. (Washington, D.C.), March, 1981, p. 39 and Otto Ulc, "Czechoslovakia and the Polish Virus" *Current History*, April, 1981, p. 155 and pp. 181-182.

⁶ *Radio Free Europe Background Report*, No. 123, May 31, 1979, pp. 7-11.

⁷ *Rude Pravo*, April 29, 1981, p. 7.

⁸ *Foreign Broadcast Information Service: Eastern Europe*, March 3, 1981, p. D7.

⁹ *Rude Pravo*, May 8, 1974, p. 3.

¹⁰ Bratislava *Pravda*, April 29, 1982, p. 3.

¹¹ *Le Monde Diplomatique* (Paris), May, 1981, p. 4.

¹² *Pravda* (Bratislava), May 15, 1981, p. 6.

¹³ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: Eastern Europe*, No. 4752, November 11, 1974, p. A1/1; No. 4820, February 3, 1975, p. A1/2; and No. 4869, April 4, 1975, p. A1/2.

¹⁴ *France-Soir* (Paris), December 30, 1981, p. 2.

¹⁵ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: Eastern Europe*, No. 4760, November 20, 1974, p. D/1.

¹⁶ Bratislava *Pravda*, November 16, 1977, p. 3.

¹⁷ *Rude Pravo*, April 9, 1977, p. 2 and April 12, 1977, p. 2.

¹⁸ *Summary of World Broadcast: Eastern Europe*, No. 4955, July 15, 1975, p. B/2.

¹⁹ Bratislava *Pravda*, May 13, 1981, p. 6.

²⁰ *Rude Pravo*, April 12, 1977, p. 2.

²¹ *Foreign Broadcast Information Service: East Europe*, No. 081, April 28, 1981, p. D3.

²² *Rude Pravo*, July 30, 1977, p. 2-3.

²³ *Summary of World Broadcasts: Eastern Europe*, No. 4429, October 20, 1973, p. B/3.

²⁴ *Rude Pravo*, June 14, 1974, p. 3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, April 26, 1980, p. 3.

²⁶ *Listy*, No. 4, May, 1975, p. 5.

²⁷ Jiri Pelikan, *Socialist Opposition in Eastern Europe* (London: Allyson and Busby, 1976), pp. 35-39.

²⁸ *Rude Pravo*, June 3, 1975, p. 2.

²⁹ Bratislava *Pravda*, August 24, 1979, p. 1.

³⁰ *Die West*, August 21, 1973, p. 22.

³¹ *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, November 20, 1974, p. 12.

³² *Ibid.*, July 12, 1977, p. 10.

³³ *Radio Free Europe: Czechoslovakian Situation Report*, No. 8, March 2, 1977, p. 1.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 1, January 11, 1978, p. 2.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 32, October 17, 1979, p. 1, and No. 16, May 3, 1977, pp. 2-4.

³⁶ *L'Humanite*, October 14, 1980, p. 12.

³⁷ *Radio Free Europe: Czechoslovakian Situation Report*, May 3, 1977, pp. 1-2.

³⁸ *Foreign Broadcast Information Service: Eastern Europe*, No. 107, May 13, 1981, p. D3.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, April 22, 1982, p. D12.

⁴⁰ *Radio Free Europe: Czechoslovakian Situation Report*, No. 10, March 16, 1977, pp. 1-2.

⁴¹ *The Guardian*, September 7, 1979, p. 7.

⁴² *New Statesman*, March 28, 1980, p. 2, and *Daily Telegraph*, April 14, 1980.

⁴³ *Radio Free Europe: Czechoslovakian Situation Report*, No. 1, January 10, 1979, p. 3.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 35, November 2, 1978, p. 2-3, and No. 8, March 19, 1980, p. 1.

⁴⁵ Bratislava *Pravda*, May 10, 1982, p. 1.

⁴⁶ *L'Express* (Paris), August 18, 1979, p. 27.