

DECLARATION FROM THE UNITED SECRETARIAT  
(Fourth International)

DEFEND THE RIGHT OF SELF DETERMINATION FOR THE CZECHOSLOVAKIAN  
WORKERS AND PEASANTS!!

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The escalating pressure which the Kremlin and its agents has exercised and continues to exercise against the leading bodies of the CSSR has rarely been surpassed in brutality. The insults and open threats in the press and on the radio; the uninterrupted campaign of intimidation in the speeches and statements by the leading spokesmen of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, Poland and the German Dem. Republic; the blackmailing threat of an economic blockade; the closing of the frontier to tourist travel from Poland and the GDR; the continuing military manoeuvres in Czechoslovakia itself and at its borders: all directed to force a capitulation of the present leadership of the CCP.

The excuses with which the Kremlin justifies this pressure are as transparently without basis as they are cynical. There is no imminent threat of "imperialist infiltration" or "aggression" against the CSSR. The number of West German tourists in the CSSR is lower than in other workers states such as Rumania and Bulgaria; the number of American visitors lower than in the Soviet Union itself. Imperialism caught in the grasp of the Vietnam war has no intention of creating a second front in Central Europe. On the contrary, the leading spokesmen of world capital voice their anxiety lest the "international equilibrium of forces" be upset as a result of the Czech events, an anxiety, unfortunately, that matches that of the Kremlin.

Trade relations with the imperialist countries, and initiatives of collaboration with Western monopolies, are being expanded by the CSSR regime, but on a more modest scale than in Yugoslavia or in Rumania. In fact, nothing similar to the agreement between the Italian monopoly FIAT and the Soviet government has yet been proposed by the new Czech leadership.

Undoubtedly reactionary former bourgeois political forces are still present in the CSSR, although their social basis is extremely limited. But these forces can find an echo in the working population of the country of which the overwhelming majority are wage and salary earners - because of the tremendous discredit which Stalinism and the Novotny regime has brought to socialism. Any move in the direction of socialist democracy weakens this echo. Any move which reverts towards a bureaucratic dictatorship hated and despised by the masses strengthens the influence of reaction among the more backward sections of the people.

It is therefore necessary to emphasise: the sudden anxiety which the bureaucracy in Moscow, East-Berlin, Warsaw, Sofia and Budapest displays as to the "counter-revolutionary danger" in the CSSR is entirely without foundation. It is hypocritical through and through.

Far from favoring "imperialism" the upsurge of the Czechoslovak masses and the steps towards socialist democracy are powerful blows against the anti-communist hysteria which the leading imperialist circles try to maintain in the West, and assist revolutionary and anti-capitalist developments there. Nothing would assist developments of socialist revolution in Western Europe as much as an emergence of true socialist democracy in Czechoslovakia. It is the brutal intervention of the Kremlin in the Czechoslovak developments which is grist of the mills of imperialist propaganda.

What the Kremlin and its henchmen fear above all is not "imperialist" infiltration in the CSSR, but the infiltration of critical communist ideas into the USSR, Poland, the GDR, Hungary and the other bureaucratically deformed and degenerated workers states.

What they fear is the effects which the modest steps in the direction of socialist democracy achieved today in the CSSR might exercise upon the discontented students intellectuals and workers in their own countries.

What they fear is the ferment of political revolution, which the Czech developments

imperialist countries - symbolised by the French May, 1968 revolutionary events - are spreading everywhere.

For that reason, it is the duty of every revolutionist, of every socialist and communist, to demand an immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from the CSSR, an immediate stop to all pressures, blackmail and threats against the Czech government and people by any outside force.

The Czechoslovak workers and peasants have the right to determine their own fate, without intervention by the Kremlin and its henchmen. They have the right to freely determine themselves the ways and forms in which they want to go forward on the road of building a socialist society.

They have the right to determine themselves how far they are willing to extend the basic principles of working class democracy to all the toiling layers of the population.

It is a sign of the complete degeneration of the ruling bureaucracies in Moscow, and the other CPs allied to it, that what makes them most furious is not at all the presence of imperialist propaganda - you can today find bourgeois newspapers in any Eastern European capital - but the freedom which the Czechoslovak masses have conquered for communists, socialists, revolutionary intellectuals, students and workers, to express their own critical ideas about the building of socialism. Can one find a more abject caricature of "communism" than that of the Brejnev, Gomulka and Ulbricht, clamoring for the reintroduction of censorship upon Czechoslovak communist and socialist writers, journalists, intellectuals, students and workers militants?

We maintain our basic appreciation of the political forces inside the communist movement of the CSSR as expressed in our declaration of April 18, 1968. We are convinced that "liberalisation" is not identical with the establishment of socialist democracy, which means political and economic power in the hands of working class through a congress of democratically elected workers councils (soviets). We do not favor a regime of "liberal" technocratic and "efficient" bureaucrats any more than a regime of "conservative", political and "inefficient" ones. We want to replace both by true socialist democracy, after the pattern laid down by Lenin in "State and Revolution": all power to a congress of democratically elected workers councils; full freedom for all working class tendencies, which accept the socialization of the means of production; self-management of the workers on factory, regional and national level, in the framework of a democratically centralized planned economy; elaboration and application of the plan under constant control of the workers; strict limitation of income inequalities.

We call the workers of Czechoslovakia to stay more vigilant than ever, to defend all the conquests obtained after February 1948 against capitalism, and all the conquests obtained after January 1968 against the bureaucracy, while constantly forging ahead towards the building up of real workers power.

This vigilance is all the more necessary as there is a real danger that the "liberal" bureaucracy will try a compromise with the Kremlin, by slowing down the freedom of speech and publication of the left-wing revolutionary tendencies.

Faced with the pressure and threats by the Kremlin and its agents, it is perfectly admissible to form a united front with all those who defend the right of the Czechoslovak workers and peasants to freely determine the way in which they want to build socialism.

We call upon the revolutionary students, intellectuals and workers in the USSR, Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary and all the other European workers states to fully support the Czechoslovak workers right to self-determination. Taking inspiration from the Czech events, they should step up their fight in their own countries for the elementary rights of socialist democracy which the Czech vanguard is already

We call upon the revolutionary students, intellectuals, workers and peasants of China, Vietnam and North Korea to take a clear stand against the arch-revisionists of the Kremlin and their agents like the revisionist CP leaders in Latin America which supports Moscow's blackmail against the toiling masses in Czechoslovakia.

A struggle against the right-wing opportunist deviations from the revolutionary marxist line; as a struggle for full and total solidarity with the heroic struggle of the Vietnam people against US imperialist aggression, is possible in the bureaucratically deformed workers states in Eastern Europe with a parallel struggle for full socialist democracy, with a parallel struggle against the hateful political and economic monopoly which a privileged bureaucracy in these countries has established over the exercise of power in society, thereby profoundly discrediting socialism and communism. The fight to re-establish a united front between the struggle of the Czechoslovak masses and the worldwide struggle against imperialism - a united front which is made difficult today, as a result of the crimes of Stalin and Novotny - will and can be won if the revolutionists and anti-imperialist fighters the world over show principled solidarity with the struggle of the Czechoslovak masses for their right of self-determination.

Hands off the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic!

Long live the right for self-determination of the Czechoslovak workers and peasants!

Long live socialist democracy, based upon workers power exercised by a congress of democratically elected workers councils!

Long live the unity of the fighters for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe and the USSR, with the anti-imperialist fighters in Asia, Africa and Latin-America, with the vanguard of anti-capitalist revolution in the imperialist countries!

Long live the socialist world revolution!

August 1, 1968.

The United Secretariat of the  
Fourth International

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In re-examining the past of the Communist and socialist movements, Communists need to study all the past issues in the Communist theoretical writings. To this end, we list below a number of books of importance in this respect. They are all available at the THIRD WORLD BOOKSHOP, 35-37 Goulburn Street, City. Some of them are also available at the NEW WORLD BOOKSHOP, Pitt Street, City.

THE STALIN DICTATORSHIP, edited by T.H. Riehy, \$2.00., contains Khrushchev's secret speech and other documents.

TROTSKY'S MARXISM, Nicholas Crasso and Ernest Mandel. 50 cents.

KHRUSHCHEVISM, by Thega Gunawardhana. \$4.50. Sophisticated critique of Khrushchev's policies from a Maoist point of view.

THE ESSENTIAL TROTSKY \$1.30.

THIRTY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE HISTORY OF THE CPSU, by Ernest Germain, 25c.

POLEMIC ON THE GENERAL LINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT. 80c.

THE COMPREHENSIVE (APPROX 600p) ATTACK ON THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY BY THE CHINESE 80 cents.

BASIC QUESTIONS OF COMMUNIST THEORY, 30 cents. Published by the Australian Communist Party at the time of the Hungarian crisis. Provides an interesting contrast with the position taken by the Communist Party taken to-day.

DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF COMMUNISM, edited by Robert V. Daniels, 2 volumes, \$2.10 per volume. Contains most of the basic documents on the history of the international communist movement.

SINO-SOVIET DISPUTE. Edited by Hudson, Lowenthal and Macfarquhar. \$2.95. Documented and analysed from a bourgeois point of view.

STALIN, by Issac Deutscher. Hard back reduced from \$6.00 to \$2.50.

CONTAINMENT AND REVOLUTION, edited by David Horowitz, \$2.50. Articles by Issac Deutscher and others, critical of the Russian attitude towards revolution in western Europe.