

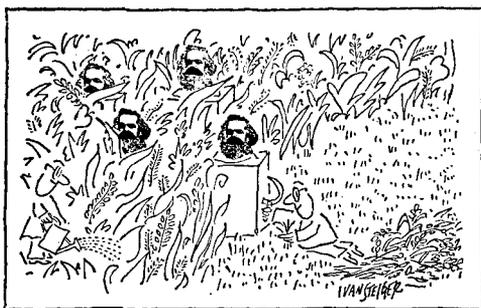
However, while we lag behind American perceptions, making their mistakes late and achieving their understandings behind schedule, we do actually follow, however patronising our tone. There will be more bruises and misfirings, as over the Angolan episode, but if America means to be what she has promised or threatened to be in recent months, Western agonies will only be a transition. She was deferred to in her days of strength, however great the resentments. The era of contraction and disengagement created talk of a world without

a major US presence and encouraged the pleasurable scaring weakness of allies less trammelled and less secure.

There is no greater truth than the line in *Lear*, "All hands leave go when the great wheel runs down hill. . . ." But the great wheel has been arrested in its turning and begins to be trundled back again. Forget the Neutralism, take the patronising Elder Statesmanship in one's stride. Strength is respected even by those who moralise about it. Hands will reach out again.

The Difference between Warsaw & Prague

Parallel Lines Don't Meet—By OTA FILIP



WHAT could be more tempting than to draw a parallel between Prague and Warsaw, especially for those of us who lived through the brief "Spring" of Czechoslovakian "Reform Communism"? Both at home and abroad the opponents of the Husak régime have been following with rapt attention the developments of the Polish "Renewal", and especially notable are the efforts of the group which calls itself the "socialist opposition" to come to theoretical grips with the historic similarities and differences. For example, in the most recent number of *Listy*, the well-known émigré journal (published by Jiri Pelikan from Rome) tries to take stock of the whole situation, but interesting enough confines itself mainly to factual documentation and hesitates to consider the most fundamental question preoccupying Czechoslovak oppositionists everywhere, namely: How was it possible that the Polish Renewal of 1980–81 has actually been more successful, effective, durable than the protagonists of the Prague Spring of 1968?

A straightforward confrontation with this problem is more than a little difficult for the circle of "Reform-Communists" whose notions of reformation have not yet taken them beyond the confines of their original Marxist theories. The utterly non-Marxist character of the astonishing Polish events is not something that can be easily accommodated by the observers and analysts of the Prague "Reform-Communists" or the "socialist opposition" in the emigration. The whole process of renewal, or renaissance, or simply liberalisation has indeed been instigated by the Working Class, but quite without the benefit of the advice (not to mention "the leading role") of a party of cadres which holds itself to be essential to social change.

THIS WAS NOT THE CASE in the Czechoslovakia of 1968. Our Prague Spring never managed to move out of the shadows of the Communist Party and the basic ideology of the Marxist movement. The crisis, after all, began with the struggle for power between younger Party members against the decrepit old Stalinists of the post-War leadership.

OTA FILIP is one of the leading democratic figures in the Czechoslovak emigration. Until the events of 1968 he was forbidden to engage in any literary or journalistic activities: during the "Spring of '68" he was prominent as a non-Communist editor and publisher. In 1969–70 he was jailed for "subversion"; but managed by 1974 to get an exit visa to the West. He lives and writes at present in Munich.

Czechoslovak workers had no discernible interest whatsoever in this inner-party conflict. They had had enough political education since the Party's seizure of power in 1948, after which the leadership had changed more than once, the party line at least several times, but the old miseries remained. Even in the most hopeful and enthusiastic phase of the 1968 developments in Reform Communism, individual representatives of the workers themselves (not, that is, of the avant-garde Party of the proletariat) were conspicuous by their absence. The comrades confined things to themselves, they knew each other; and all the official voices of national reform, of the politics of "socialism with a human face", came out of the ranks of the existing apparatus which, needless to say, had been thoroughly Stalinist in the previous decade. All were, in one sense or another, Party loyalists, and none of them had even the smallest doubt that it was they who were called upon by history (their guru of old) to play the "leading role" in reconstructing an intolerable social order, "ripe" for change. There was an attempt in Prague in the early summer of 1968 to re-establish the Czech Social Democracy, but this was put paid to by one of the "progressive reformers" (Srnkovsky) with the approval of Dubcek. The trade-union organisation was allowed to introduce some small first measures of democratisation within the factories, but the leadership of the trade-union movement remained safely in the hands of tough old Party loyalists.

I don't think it can be doubted that the Prague Reformers never enjoyed either the full support or the enthusiastic confidence of the workers themselves. After the invasion of the Warsaw Pact troops on 21 August 1968, their attitudes emerged with rather sad clearness in the fact that, although they did indeed follow the call for a General Strike, it was only for an hour (and during the midday pause at that). Who, looking back, can doubt that the feeling was that the reformers were worth that but not much more? In other words there was no Lech Walesa in the Czechoslovakia of 1968, and there couldn't have been one, for not even the most progressive reformer among the Marxian Communists was prepared to give up or delegate even the smallest portion of their total power.

The tragic events, in my view, confirmed the lack of real confidence of the working masses in the new Party leadership. In the ensuing period all of the Reform-Communists, with the single exception of Frantisok Kriegel, put their signatures in Moscow, at the end of August, to that humiliating "Moscow Treaty" which was intended to give *ex post facto* legitimacy to the Soviet Occupation. When the Treaty was put to a vote in the Prague parliament, there were only four deputies to be found who voted against it.

Is it any wonder that the people in general took the ultimate turn of events with a certain quiet cynicism? What else could have been expected from such tried and true Party comrades? Who had ever freely voted for them (since their *coup d'état* in February 1948)? When had the citizenry ever been asked who should serve in the Government and what the political party in control should stand for?

HARD AS IT MAY BE to confess it, I am afraid that the Czech and the Slovak workers remained rather indifferent to the final fate of the Reform militants. When Dubcek and his group were removed from all offices, not a worker in any factory appeared to be moved enough to do something about it, nor about the slow purge of party and administration which followed. I can remember hearing those hard, cold, cynical remarks about the harried "Spring" spirits who rushed to the frontiers and exile abroad. How is it they were all rushing to the West which only yesterday was the fortress of imperialism, capitalism, revanchism and general decadence? . . . Why was nobody heading for the oases of Yugoslavia or of China where their "class brothers" or "ideological comrades" were also busy "reforming" totalitarian communism? For all the hopes and longings for a change, for a tolerable social order, for an economy of initiative and enterprise, indeed for a post-Communist future, the masses of the Czechoslovaks had not counted too seriously on old Party militants truly showing the way. They were, in one way or another, written off.

How profoundly differently have the Poles been ordering their affairs! The whole drama of Walesa and *Solidarity* has been having a deep and unsettling effect on the ideas of the Prague protagonists of the "human face." If things were not so clear in 1968 and even in the decade after, the Warsaw movement—with its genuinely new faces, with its unquenchable popular enthusiasm, with its "opening from below"—has made the large theoretical point graphically obvious, especially for those who always need "theory" to join with "practice." If a Communist dictatorship is to be moved from its rigidities and bankrupt habits, if there is to be a practical loosening and durable liberalisation, then the masses of the workers cannot rely on the opportunism of old Party cadres who want to be "only a little bit pregnant" with change. And indeed, in the so-called "People's [now Socialist] Democracies", they are not turning to "Reform-Communists" to lead the way, or looking to Marxian philosophers of whatever colour or revisionist flag for advice on when and how to move and for what objectives. On the long and risky journey to freedom those old cadres are proving to be only an obstacle.

Has Non-Proliferation a Chance?

The Bomb Grows—By NORMAN MOSS



THE ISSUE of the probable proliferation of nuclear weapons is receiving a little more attention these days, due partly to the spectacular anti-proliferation measure carried out by the Israeli Air Force over Baghdad in June. New attention is being paid, not only to what Israel

did, but to what Iraq was doing and might have done, and what other countries might do, and to the anti-proliferation policies that the big powers may follow.

The essential problem is just what it was perceived to be when the nuclear bomb first made its appearance—the dangerous coexistence of weapons of extraordinary annihilating power (and the capacity to make them) with national sovereignty.

The US Administration made a non-proliferation policy statement five weeks after the Baghdad raid. It acknowledged that the urgency of the issue “has been highlighted by the ominous events in the Middle East.” The policy statement represented an abandonment of a number of positions taken up by the Carter Administration rather than any bold moves in new directions. As is true in a number of areas, the difference in philosophy between the two administrations is much greater than the difference in practice.

The Carter Administration wanted to halt the spread of nuclear weapons by restricting the spread of civil nuclear technology and materials. The Reagan Administration wants to permit the spread of civil nuclear technology and speed up the export of US nuclear materials, but keep them in the right channels. The Carter policy, like so many Carter policies, was well-intentioned and aimed in the right direction, but failed to achieve its intended effect. (It was little more than a continuation of the policy announced by President Ford in the last weeks of his administration in October 1976.)

The policy failed partly because it was an attempt to impose unilaterally an American view on the rest of the world; and partly because the genie of nuclear power was already too large and too active to be put back safely in the bottle. It may yet prove to be one of the important ironies of history that the uncorking of the bottle was mostly the work of the United States, with its earlier excessive enthusiasm for the global benefits of nuclear power in the days of the “Atoms for Peace” programme.

The thrust of the policy was anti-plutonium. It opposed the recycling of nuclear fuel in order to use the resulting plutonium in fast-breeder reactors. The fast-breeder produces more plutonium, from otherwise useless depleted uranium, so that when a chain of fast-breeder reactors is built up, the fuel can be re-used almost indefinitely. The Carter Administration argued (and many still argue) that this is dangerous because it involves stockpiling and transporting plutonium, which can be used to make bombs, and also that it is unnecessary, because uranium is not scarce, and the cost of recycling and of operating fast-breeders will prove to be very high. In keeping with this argument, President Carter cancelled the US programme to build a plant to reprocess used fuel, and suspended the programme to build a fast-breeder reactor.

The trouble is that Britain, France, West Germany and Japan, not to mention the Soviet Union, all have long-term plans for nuclear power which include fast-breeder reactors. Other European countries are thinking along the same lines. Arguments were waged across the Atlantic about the scarcity or abundance of uranium, and the cost of extracting plutonium from used fuel.

THE ARGUMENT became a quarrel because the United States put muscle behind its contentions. Most nuclear power reactors around the world are US-designed pressurised water-reactors, and these use enriched uranium as fuel. Enriching uranium is difficult and expensive; the United States has the most capacity for doing it, and is the principal source of enriched uranium. Western European countries and Japan buy most of their uranium in Canada and send it to America to be enriched,