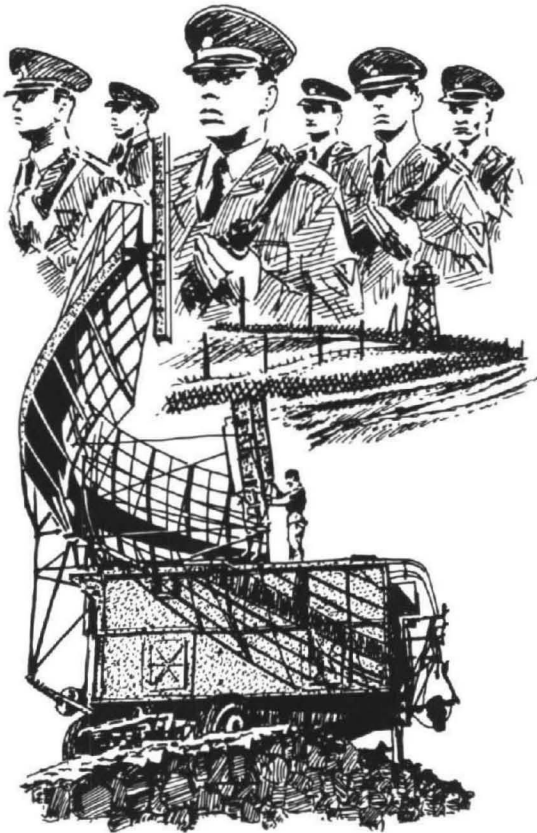


## Chapter 5. National Security



*Manpower, barbed wire, and electronics—  
important elements of national security in Czechoslovakia*

**THE CZECHOSLOVAK PEOPLE'S ARMY** of the late 1980s comprised ground and air forces under the supervision of the Ministry of National Defense. The ground forces accounted for about 70 percent of the total strength of the forces, which in early 1986 was slightly more than 200,000. The armed forces that constitute the people's army have been committed by treaty to the Eastern Europe-Soviet alliance known as the Warsaw Pact. Another military force, the Border Guard, which patrols the country's frontiers, was supervised by the Ministry of Interior, as were two paramilitary police forces—Public Security and State Security—and a part-time, national guard force known as the People's Militia. Manpower for the armed forces and the Border Guard was obtained through a system of universal male conscription; service in the other organizations was voluntary. Women also served in the armed forces and the police forces in small numbers but were not subject to conscription.

All the forces underwent a political purge after the short period of reform in the late 1960s that culminated in an invasion by the armies of five other Warsaw Pact members. The greatest personnel loss at that time occurred in the army, where large numbers of officers who had supported the reform movement either voluntarily resigned or were forced out; the other services were similarly affected, but to a lesser degree. Western analysts disagreed about whether the armed forces had recovered their pre-invasion size, quality, or morale by the late 1980s. Some Western analysts also questioned the reliability of the Czechoslovak forces, but others were convinced that the forces would honor their commitment to the Warsaw Pact if called upon.

Five Soviet ground divisions remained in Czechoslovakia after the departure of the other Warsaw Pact invasion forces in 1968. After nearly two decades, these Soviet forces had become an integral part of the Warsaw Pact defenses in the area, but for many Czechoslovak citizens their presence was still a cause of resentment. In guarded moments, some citizens have referred to the Soviet forces as an army of occupation. The leaders of the government and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, however, have been obsequious in their contacts with Soviet officials and periodically have even thanked the invaders for having shown Czechoslovakia the error of its ways. Marked public unease was also evident in 1983 when the Soviet Union began deploying operational-tactical missiles in Czechoslovakia.

The Czechoslovak munitions industry, which was already well developed when the country was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, continued to produce arms and military equipment in the 1980s. The Škoda armament works of Plzeň was famous long before World War I, and the British Bren gun of World War II fame was originally developed in Brno, from which its name was derived. Škoda and other manufacturers of munitions have maintained a reputation for quality during the communist era, and Czechoslovakia has become a major supplier of arms to Third World countries. The industry also has supplied weapons and equipment for the country's own forces and for other Warsaw Pact forces. Production has included small arms, machine guns, antitank weapons, armored vehicles, tanks (of Soviet design), and jet aircraft.

## **Armed Forces: Historical and Political Setting**

### **Historical Background and Traditions**

#### *To 1918*

Although the history of Czechoslovakia as a sovereign state dates only from the breakup of the Hapsburg Empire at the end of World War I, the military traditions of the Czechs and Slovaks date back to the upheavals of the Middle Ages in Central Europe. Boleslav I of Bohemia, for example, commanded Czech troops at the Battle of Lechfeld in 955, when the forces of the Holy Roman Empire under Otto I finally halted the Hungarian raids through Europe. After their defeat, the Hungarians retreated into the Carpathian Basin, and for most of the next 1,000 years the Slovaks remained under Hungarian domination.

King John of Bohemia and his son Charles fought on the side of the French against the English during the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453). John, lashed to his horse because of blindness, rode to his death on the battlefield at Crécy. Charles, wounded in the same battle, returned to Prague as king and was later crowned Holy Roman Emperor. He is remembered in Czechoslovakia as an enlightened, benevolent king of Bohemia. Charles founded the university that bears his name and ordered the construction of the bridge across the Vltava River, which was also named in his honor. Charles hired French and Italian architects to build the churches, palaces, and mansions that made Prague one of Europe's most beautiful cities.

Additional popular military traditions originated in the religious wars of the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. During the Hussite wars, Jan Žižka became a military leader of such skill and brilliance that his name is well remembered more than 500 years later.

Two centuries after the Hussite wars, religious strife again wracked the Czech lands of Bohemia and Moravia, and at the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, Czech freedom was lost to the Austrian Hapsburgs (see Hapsburg Absolutism and the Bohemian Estates, ch. 1).

### *The Establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic*

Throughout the centuries of foreign rule, the Czechs were subjected, at times, to intense Germanization and the Slovaks to Magyarization; nevertheless, both maintained their ethnic identities, and during the collapse of empires and kingdoms that accompanied World War I, they seized the opportunity for independence. During the war, Czechs and Slovaks in large numbers deserted the armies of Austria and Hungary, respectively, to form the Czechoslovak Legion, military units that fought for the Allied powers in the hope that they were contributing to their own national liberation. The largest Czechoslovak units were formed on the eastern front, but the Russians did not trust them and, until the overthrow of the tsar, did not commit them to battle.

During the period of the Provisional Government in Russia, Alexander Kerensky, then minister of war, allowed General Aleksei Brusilov to include Czechoslovak units in his army as he prepared for a major Russian offensive in June 1917. Russian units, pressured by the Bolsheviks, refused to fight; but the Czechoslovak soldiers, motivated by dreams of a free homeland, fought valiantly. At the Battle of Zborov on the Galician front, they broke through Austro-Hungarian lines and captured more than 4,000 of the enemy, including about 60 officers. They also captured several artillery pieces and machine guns plus quantities of ammunition and supplies. The cost in casualties at Zborov was high—almost 200 killed and 700 wounded—but the taste of victory was sweet and was heightened by the presence in Russia of Tomáš Masaryk.

With the collapse of the eastern front imminent, Masaryk in Russia and Eduard Beneš in France desperately tried to arrange a plan whereby the Czechoslovak Legion would be evacuated through Archangel and shipped to France, where it would be employed in the Allied cause. After the Bolshevik takeover, when the Czechoslovak leaders deemed it impossible to evacuate such a large force through northern Russia, a new plan called for the legion to travel across Siberia to Vladivostok and cross the Pacific, North America, and the Atlantic to France, where it would be committed to combat. At first the Bolsheviks, desirous of ridding the country of such a large foreign armed force, approved of the evacuation through Siberia, with the stipulation that the Czechoslovak units give up

their weapons. Refusing the order to disarm, the legionnaires clashed with the Red Army. Because the 40,000 to 60,000 Czechoslovak troops constituted the strongest force between European Russia and the Pacific Coast, they were able to take control of the Trans-Siberian Railroad, a move necessary to protect their route of departure. Merely by their presence along the strategic railroad, the legionnaires became an important element in the Russian civil war and frequently fought against the Soviet troops. When the war in Europe ended, Czechoslovakia gained independence, and Allied armies intervened in Russia before the last unit of the Czechoslovak Legion was repatriated.

The republic that encompassed the former Czech lands—Bohemia and Moravia—as well as Slovakia and Ruthenia (also known as Carpatho-Ukraine) created an army in 1918 and an air force two years later. Personnel for these forces were recruited from the legions that had fought in Russia, Italy, and France, as well as from the demobilized troops of the defeated Austro-Hungarian armies. Many of the problems of multinationalism that had plagued the Hapsburgs were passed on to the successor states and to their armed forces. The new Czechoslovak forces mirrored the ethnic groups from which they were drawn—Czechs, Germans, Slovaks, Hungarians, and Ruthenians (Ukrainians), plus much smaller numbers of Jews, Poles, and Romanians. (Most Jews had been assimilated and were not categorized as a minority in the armed forces.) Ethnic strength in the forces generally reflected percentages in the population, although Czechs were overrepresented, particularly in the officer corps, which they dominated. Although outright discrimination by the Czechs against minorities was not tolerated, ethnic friction did exist, and the question of reliability worried the Czech-controlled general staff and defense ministry.

### *Munich and After*

After the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany in early 1938, the fear of a similar fate increased in Czechoslovakia; the authorities, however, were determined to fight rather than to submit quietly as the Austrians had done. President Beneš ordered a partial mobilization, and the country began to prepare for the war that appeared to be inevitable. At that time, treaties pledged French, British, and Soviet aid to Czechoslovakia, but at Munich in September Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain of Britain and Premier Édouard Daladier of France capitulated to Hitler's demands and agreed to sacrifice Czechoslovakia in exchange for the peace promised by Hitler. Because the Soviet Union's pledge depended on whether or not France abided by its commitment, Czechoslovakia was left

without allies. Hitler promised at Munich to take only the Sudetenland, but less than six months later, on March 15, 1939, German troops marched into Prague. Bohemia and Moravia became a Nazi protectorate; Slovakia was granted a measure of autonomy but, in effect, became a puppet state (see *The War Years, 1939-45*, ch. 1). The Czechoslovak army, which could have mobilized as many as thirty divisions, was disarmed and disbanded.

During the occupation of the Czech lands, acts of resistance and sabotage were met with vicious reprisals. Persecution became particularly severe under Reinhard Heydrich, who was appointed Reich protector of Bohemia and Moravia in September 1941. Less than nine months later Heydrich, who had previously been deputy to the infamous Heinrich Himmler, was assassinated by two Czechoslovak commandos who had been trained in Britain and parachuted into their homeland to carry out the mission. Nazi retribution was swift and frightful. The village of Lidice, selected as the target for punishment, was completely obliterated. All male inhabitants over age sixteen were shot, all women were sent to concentration camps, and all children were sent to German orphanages. Even Lidice, however, did not end Czechoslovak resistance (see *Czech Resistance*, ch. 1).

In Slovakia conditions were little better for the average citizen than in the Czech lands. Despite its ostensible position as an autonomous state administered by Slovaks, this puppet state had quickly taken on the characteristics of a police state, and the occupying forces pressed the Germanization of the people. All opposition was suppressed, and before long underground resistance groups arose as they had in Bohemia and Moravia. The various Slovak resistance forces coalesced into a single command and staged the Slovak National Uprising from August through October 1944. Although unsuccessful, this uprising was one of the most significant rebellions in Nazi-occupied Europe (see *Slovak Resistance*, ch. 1).

In addition to those fighters who devoted their energies to the resistance movements in various parts of the country, many other Czechoslovak citizens escaped abroad to join Allied armed forces or to form all-Czechoslovak units. Various contingents, including the First Czechoslovak Corps under the command of General Ludvík Svoboda, fought alongside Soviet formations as they liberated eastern Europe. However, these forces arrived in Slovakia too late to relieve the resistance units, which suffered heavy losses during the Slovak National Uprising. In western Europe, a Czechoslovak infantry brigade and three air squadrons accompanied the British forces in the invasion of the continent.

President Beneš, in the meanwhile, had spent most of the war years in London. In March 1945 he traveled to Moscow for negotiations about the program and composition of the new Czechoslovak government that would be formed as the country was liberated. The town of Košice in eastern Slovakia was designated as a temporary capital, and the Košice Program, which outlined a detailed plan for government, was published there. Eight key governmental posts were designated to be filled by members of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (Komunistická strana Československa—KSC), including the Ministry of National Defense, which was put under the charge of Svoboda. The government moved from Košice to Prague on May 10, 1945, and, as defense minister, Svoboda began organizing the armed forces along Soviet lines as agreed to in the Košice Program. Svoboda, a genuine war hero, had fought in both world wars. As a twenty-year-old conscript in the Austro-Hungarian army in 1915, he had been sent to the Russian front, where he deserted and joined the forces that eventually became the Czechoslovak Legion. After returning to civilian life briefly in the early 1920s, Svoboda joined the new army and spent the rest of his life in service, which included the presidency of the republic from 1968 to 1975.

As World War II neared its end in 1945, the American Third Army under the command of General George S. Patton was in Czechoslovakia near Plzeň (Pilsen) and was fully capable of liberating Prague, but prior political arrangements had reserved that highly symbolic act for the Red Army. Over four decades later, Czechoslovak citizens were still frequently reminded that the Red Army had paid a high price in lives and wealth to secure their freedom from the Nazis. They were constantly told that they owed an everlasting debt of gratitude to their liberators. That many in the Czechoslovak Legion died fighting alongside Russian soldiers in Russia during World War I was rarely publicized.

The armed forces that Svoboda began to rebuild in 1945 were heavily influenced by the Soviet forces in which many Czechoslovaks had served, including many officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) who had become members of the KSC. Svoboda had not yet become a party member, although he certainly sympathized with the Soviet cause, and approximately one-third of his top commands were held by communist generals. That communist officers had taken over the posts of troop education officers at all levels, almost without exception, was perhaps of even greater significance. In the election of 1946, military garrisons voted heavily for the communist candidates. Because of the intense political activism of the



communists, however, antagonism arose between the communist-influenced officers from the eastern front and those air force officers from the western front who had been based in London during the war. These two groups constituted the bulk of armed forces personnel in the early postwar period.

### *The Communists Take Over*

After the 1946 election, the communists began to lose some of their popularity, and, as the 1948 election approached, their public support began to decline. Not leaving anything to chance, the communists staged a coup d'état in February 1948 rather than wait for the scheduled May election. To ensure passivity among military units that might object to such unconstitutional methods, Svoboda confined all noncommunist commanders to quarters. Various units under communist command were placed on alert during the coup, but they were not needed and were not used as the legitimate government was ousted and a Moscow-oriented, communist regime was installed.

Early in the new era, the ranks of officers and NCOs were thinned as the military forces, along with all other institutions, were purged to ensure political reliability. The armed forces—now called the Czechoslovak People's Army (Československá lidová armáda—ČSLA)—suffered initially from the loss of competent personnel, but as Soviet advisers reorganized units to fit the Soviet pattern and trained the Czechoslovaks to use the Soviet equipment that was arriving in quantity, the forces gradually developed a credible combat capability.

Having cleaned the governmental institutions of opposition elements, the communist rulers conducted another purge in the early 1950s, this time seeking purity within the party. Svoboda, who had joined the KSČ in 1948, was among those who fell into disfavor. Charged with treason, he was removed from his post as defense minister and sent to work on a collective farm. Others, however, fared worse. Rudolf Slánský, for example, who was first secretary of the party, was executed. Slánský and Svoboda were both rehabilitated—posthumously in the case of Slánský. Svoboda regained his army rank in 1955 and became commandant of the Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy, a post he held until his retirement from military service in 1959. Although the morale of the troops suffered from the purges, the size of the military establishment grew rapidly, increasing from 140,000 in 1950 to over 250,000 in 1951. These well-trained and highly disciplined forces were considered to be capable and competent in 1955 when Czechoslovakia committed its forces to the alliance formed under the terms

of the Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance—the Warsaw Pact.

The ČSLA's prestige continued to grow during the next decade as it increasingly became a "junior partner" in Soviet military strategy in both Eastern Europe and the Third World. Unlike Hungary and Poland, Czechoslovakia experienced no upheavals in 1956 and was therefore considered to be, from the Soviet point of view, the most reliable of the front-line Warsaw Pact states. The ČSLA gave support to the increased Soviet military presence in the Third World. As the Soviet Union became a supplier of arms, Czechoslovakia supplied training expertise to Third World military officers. The ČSLA also underwent considerable modernization in the early 1960s as the Soviet Union redefined the role of the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact members in Warsaw Pact military strategy. As Warsaw Pact strategy shifted from one of massive retaliation to one of limited nuclear warfare, the Czechoslovak military was assigned a specific role to play in the event of war with the West—to tie down North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces in the southern part of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany).

Yet it was precisely this enhanced prestige and concomitant duties that gave rise to increasing discontent in what had been considered up to that time a solidly pro-Soviet military establishment. The modernization of the ČSLA required and spawned an officer corps whose level of education was much higher than that of its predecessor. This educated officer corps, however, increasingly resented the amount of time it was required to devote to its own political education. Some officers also believed that the country's new Warsaw Pact role unjustly favored Warsaw Pact and Soviet defense interests at the expense of Czechoslovakia's. Romania had previously raised this question regarding its own role in the Warsaw Pact. According to the Warsaw Pact's own estimates, the ČSLA would take casualties of 60 to 70 percent in a war against NATO, and Czechoslovakia itself would be turned into a nuclear battlefield. That the Soviet Union made repeated attempts to station troops and nuclear warheads within Czechoslovakia during this time must have exacerbated the situation. Soviet requests were repeatedly turned down, but tensions arose during the process.

The general dissatisfaction within the Czechoslovak military became increasingly evident. In 1966 Czechoslovakia, following the lead of Romania, rejected the Soviet Union's call for more military integration within the Warsaw Pact and sought greater input in planning and strategy for the Warsaw Pact's non-Soviet members. At the same time, plans to effect great structural changes in

Czechoslovak military organizations were under discussion. All these debates heated up in 1968 during the period of political liberalization known as the Prague Spring, when ČSLA commanders put forward plans to democratize the armed forces, plans that included limiting the role of the party (see *The Prague Spring*, ch. 1). National military doctrine became an even greater issue when two important documents were released: the Action Program of the Ministry of Defense and the Memorandum of the Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy. These documents stated that Czechoslovakia should base its defense strategy on its own geopolitical interests and that the threat from the West had been overstated. Although the regime of Alexander Dubček, the party first secretary (title changed to general secretary in 1971), was careful to reassure the Soviet Union that Czechoslovakia would remain committed to the Warsaw Pact, Moscow felt challenged by these developments, which undoubtedly played a major role in the decision to invade in August 1968.

### *The Fraternal Invasion*

On August 20, 1968, Warsaw Pact forces—including troops from Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Hungary, Poland, and the Soviet Union—invaded Czechoslovakia. Approximately 500,000 troops, mostly from the Soviet Union, poured across the borders in a blitzkrieg-like advance (see *Intervention*, ch. 1).

The invasion was meticulously planned and coordinated, as the operation leading to the capture of Prague's Ruzyně International Airport in the early hours of the invasion demonstrated. A special flight from Moscow, which had prior clearance, arrived just as the Warsaw Pact troops began crossing the borders. The aircraft carried more than 100 plainclothes agents, who quickly secured the airport and prepared the way for a huge airlift. Giant An-12 aircraft began arriving at the rate of one per minute, unloading Soviet airborne troops equipped with artillery and light tanks. As the operation at the airport continued, columns of tanks and motorized rifle troops headed toward Prague and other major centers, meeting no resistance.

By dawn on August 21, 1968, Czechoslovakia was an occupied country. During the day, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs “with the endorsement of the President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and on behalf of the Government of the Republic” transmitted to the governments of the invading countries “a resolute protest with the requirement that the illegal occupation of Czechoslovakia be stopped without delay and all armed troops be

withdrawn.” That evening in a nationwide radio broadcast President Svoboda stated that the Warsaw Pact forces had entered the country “without the consent of the constitutional organs of the state,” thus officially denying the Soviet claim that they had been invited into the country to preserve socialism. The people of Czechoslovakia generally resented the presence of foreign troops. They demonstrated their objections in mass gatherings in the streets and by various acts of passive resistance. The invading troops could see that they had not been invited into and were not wanted in Czechoslovakia.

One of the priority missions of the Warsaw Pact forces during the early stages of the invasion was to neutralize the Czechoslovak armed forces. That mission proved to be easy because Czechoslovak authorities had confined the armed forces to their barracks. In effect, the Czechoslovak forces were prisoners in their own barracks although, on orders from the Warsaw Pact command, they had not been disarmed. At the end of three weeks, the Soviet units that had surrounded Czechoslovak military installations were pulled back, but the suspicions that had been aroused among the troops on both sides were not easily dispelled. Czechoslovak military spokesmen tried to depict their forces as the same strong, efficient organization that had previously manned the westernmost wall of the Warsaw Pact, but obvious doubts had been raised in the minds of authorities in the other countries. Czechoslovak citizens, in turn, wondered about allies who could so suddenly become invaders.

### *“Normalization”*

It was not until October 16 that agreement was reached for the partial withdrawal of the Warsaw Pact armies. The Soviet Union made a big show over the agreement, sending Premier Aleksei Kosygin to Prague as leader of a high-level delegation to observe the ceremony. Czechoslovak joy was tempered by the knowledge that a sizable army of occupation would remain after the bulk of the invading force had departed. The Bulgarian, East German, Hungarian, and Polish troops were ordered to leave the country, but Soviet units were to remain in what was referred to as “temporary stationing.” In the agreement, Czechoslovakia retained responsibility for defense of its western borders, but Soviet troops were to be garrisoned in the interior of the country. As events transpired, however, the major Soviet headquarters and four of its five ground divisions were deployed in the Czech Socialist Republic, where they remained in mid-1987.

During the talks leading to the agreement, the Soviet negotiators pressed their Czechoslovak counterparts to reduce the size of

the ČSLA by eliminating the personnel who had supported the Dubček regime. Yet the subsequent force reduction was caused by more than direct Soviet pressure. Dubček's Prague Spring and the subsequent invasion by Warsaw Pact allies had had many ramifications within the armed forces, particularly among the professionals of the officer corps and the NCO corps. In the year preceding the ouster of Antonín Novotný, the first secretary of the KSČ, definite schisms had occurred between those officers supporting the old order and those favoring the reform movement. In February 1968, shortly after Dubček had replaced Novotný as first secretary, Major General Jan Šejna defected to the West. He revealed that he and other hard-line communists had planned to keep Novotný in office, by force if necessary, but the plan fell through when the Presidium voted to oust Novotný. The political dichotomy in the military led to a great thinning of the ranks after the downfall of Dubček and the rise to power of Gustáv Husák in early 1969.

Once its power was consolidated, the Husák government sought to re-establish party control over the armed forces and to ensure their full integration into a Warsaw Pact dominated by the Soviet Union. The Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy—the center of the military debate of the mid-1960s—was temporarily closed, and the ČSLA officer corps was purged. When the purge was completed in 1975, some 11,000 officers and about 30,000 NCOs had been dismissed. Officer strength in the army was reduced by one-third and in the air force by one-half. Demoralization also contributed to this dramatic decrease. In the months following the invasion, nearly 58 percent of all army officers under 30 years of age resigned, and by June 1969 an estimated 50 percent of all students in the country's military academies also had resigned. In order to overcome this drastic reduction in manpower, the qualifications—whether educational or otherwise—for officer candidates were lowered, and at least some candidates were rushed through officer training school in half the normal time. Substantial material and career incentives were used to entice young people into the ranks of officers. The effect of these measures was difficult to assess precisely, but it was clear that their effect must have been minimal. In 1979 a West German source noted that officer shortages in the ČSLA at that time ranged from 20 percent in the air force to 70 percent in the motorized infantry. Overall military strength dropped from 240,000 in 1966 to 168,000 in 1969 and generally stayed below 200,000 for most of the 1970s. Ironically, General Martin Dzúr, the minister of national defense at the time of the invasion, survived the purges and early retirements and retained his post until his death in January 1985.

In the post-Dubček era, the armed forces suffered from the apathy that seemed to infect the entire society after the Stalin-like crushing of the Prague Spring. The failure to resist the “fraternal” invaders undermined the prestige of the military in its own eyes and in the eyes of the public. Despite the purges of possibly unreliable personnel and the redoubling of propaganda efforts in military schools and training programs, some outside observers in the 1970s and 1980s questioned the reliability of the Czechoslovak forces in the event of an East-West conflict. The most frequent questions concerned their reliability in a prolonged offensive war in Western Europe or in a war that was going badly for Warsaw Pact forces. Other outside analysts, however, believed that the Czechoslovak armed forces were well trained, well equipped, and well motivated and that they were capable of carrying their share of Warsaw Pact operations, particularly in defense of their homeland (see *Soviet Influence*, this ch.).

### **Government and Party Control**

The Constitution of 1960, which replaced the original communist constitution of 1948, converted the Czechoslovak Republic into the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. According to the Constitution, “defense of the country and its socialist social order” was the “supreme duty and a matter of honor for every citizen.” Citizens were “duty bound” to serve in the armed forces as prescribed by law. The law provided for a system of universal male conscription.

The president of the federal republic is titular head of the armed forces by virtue of his constitutional designation as commander in chief. In that capacity, he has the power to appoint and promote general officers, but real power is wielded by the State Defense Council (*Rada obrany státu*), which alone has the authority to formulate policy and budget the resources deemed necessary. The council, in turn, is dominated by the KSČ, which Article 4 of the Constitution asserts is “the guiding force in society.”

In 1985 the Czechoslovak government allocated 7.6 percent of its annual budget to defense spending. This percentage included expenses for police, militia, and border guards. Some Western analysts believe that this figure was quite large for a country the size of Czechoslovakia, even if the considerable sums devoted to internal security are taken into account. Other observers, however, have pointed out that defense spending has never recovered its pre-1968 levels. In any case, defense spending as a percentage of the total budget has been gradually increasing since 1974, when it stood at 5.7 percent.

Policy making in the armed forces since 1969 has been a function of the State Defense Council, which was established by law in January of that year. Although the council is a governmental body, the interlocking nature of top governmental and party organs ensures that the KSČ controls it. Because of official secrecy laws, little has been published concerning the council, its meetings, or its functions. When established in 1969, the State Defense Council consisted of the first secretary of the KSČ as chairman and the premier of Czechoslovakia as vice chairman. Members were the minister of national defense, the chief of the General Staff, the minister of interior, the chairman of the Czech National Front, the first secretary of the Communist Party of Slovakia (Komunistická strana Slovenska—KSS), the premier of the Czech Socialist Republic, and the premier of the Slovak Socialist Republic. In 1987 officials holding these positions were members of the KSČ Secretariat, Presidium, Central Committee, or a combination of these bodies. Ostensibly the council was responsible to the Federal Assembly, but the political power of its membership made it responsible only to itself (see *The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia*, ch. 4).

According to its establishing statute, the State Defense Council was intended to be the governmental agency charged with evaluating the country's international obligations and threats to national security. Based upon such evaluation, determinations would be made concerning basic concepts of defense and the configuration of the armed forces. The council also is responsible for determining the proportion of the annual budget that will be used for the support of the defense establishment, and it has final approval of operational planning. During wartime, it would oversee mobilization of the economy as well as the population, direct civil defense measures, and act as the supreme decision-making body for the military forces. The council also is charged with internal security matters.

Defense councils were also established in the governments of the Czech Socialist Republic and the Slovak Socialist Republic, which together constituted the federation that was one of the few legacies of the ill-fated Action Program of Dubček (see *The Prague Spring*, 1968, ch. 1). The legislation creating the federal structure, the Constitutional Law of Federation of October 27, 1968, survived the period of so-called normalization under Husák and continued in force in late 1987. Both national republics established operating governments, but defense was among the responsibilities retained by federal authorities (see *Government Structure*, ch. 4). The purpose and function of the defense councils in the constituent republics was not revealed. It was known, however, that their members

were appointed and subject to recall by the chairman of the State Defense Council.

The Ministry of National Defense is the government agency responsible for the administration and operation of the armed forces. As is true in most Warsaw Pact countries, this ministry is patterned on its Soviet counterpart. Under the direction of the State Defense Council, as of 1987 the defense ministry organized, equipped, and trained the combat and support elements of the military services. The ministry also planned peacetime operations and training, as well as formulating the necessary plans for wartime operation. Additionally, the ministry allocated the funds that have been designated for defense in the national budget. The minister of national defense customarily has been a serving officer, the only four-star general on active duty. Defense ministers have usually ranked high in the KSČ (membership in the Central Committee, for example), but as of 1987 no defense minister had served concurrently in the Presidium.

When the military was restructured to fit the communist mold in the late 1940s, a political network similar to that of the Soviet forces was superimposed on Czechoslovak military organization at every level. Political officers, assigned to all units down to and including battalion, were subordinate to the armed forces' Main Political Directorate, which was linked directly to the KSČ Central Committee. The chief of the Main Political Directorate in early 1987, Lieutenant General Jaroslav Klícha, was a member of the KSČ Central Committee, as was his first deputy. Despite their separate channels of communication and their political subordination, political officers were subject to normal command and could not countermand orders of their military commanders, as had sometimes been true in the Soviet armed forces in earlier years.

Party domination was ensured by the interlocking of party and government positions, that is, by the practice of filling top positions in the government with key party officials. Husák, for example, occupied the top position in the party—general secretary—and the top position in the government—president. In the military, he was the commander in chief and the chairman of the State Defense Council. In effect, all lines led to Husák, but party control was not dependent solely on a single individual. For example, most officers and many senior NCOs were party members, many others aspired to membership, and young officers and NCOs were members of party-sponsored youth organizations. Conscripts were proselytized by unit activists, and political orientation made up a significant part of the routine training programs of military units.



Party indoctrination courses were part of the curricula at military schools and academies.

General Dzúr, who had been appointed minister of national defense by Dubček in April 1968, was co-opted into the KSČ Central Committee in August of that year and continued in both capacities until his death. Dzúr's highest command position on active duty had been as a battalion commander from 1946 until 1948, but, as evidenced by his party activity since 1943, he was very much a politician. In addition to becoming minister of national defense and the highest ranking member of the armed forces, Dzúr displayed unusual political acumen not only by surviving the Dubček debacle but also by retaining his military and party positions. His successor, General Milán Václavík, was likewise elected to the Central Committee, but only after his appointment as minister of national defense in 1985. General Karel Rusov, first deputy minister of national defense and second in rank and importance to Václavík in the military hierarchy, had been a member of the party since 1946 and was elected to the Central Committee in 1981, as was General Miloslav Blahník, the chief of staff. Czechoslovakia had fewer high-ranking military officers in the party hierarchy than was generally the case in other Warsaw Pact countries.

## **Soviet Influence**

### *Loyalties*

Zdeněk Mlynář, secretary of the Central Committee under Dubček who later emigrated, has written that one of the reasons the military was not ordered to resist the invaders in August 1968 was the questionable loyalty of the armed forces leadership. Mlynář believed that some ČSLA units could have been persuaded by their officers to join the "fraternal, international" armies of the Warsaw Pact, which, according to the widely disseminated propaganda, invaded only to help Czechoslovakia preserve its socialist way of life. While the hopelessness of resisting the invasion against overwhelming military forces must have stayed the hands of those charged with organizing the country's defense, they undoubtedly took the question of loyalty into consideration.

The possibility of divided loyalties that worried Mlynář and others in 1968 had its roots in the development of the country since independence. Czechs and Slovaks were among the few peoples of Eastern Europe who did not harbor hatred or grudges against the Russians. Many, both civilian and military, were openly Russophile in attitude—certainly pro-Soviet if not procommunist. Such attitudes were strengthened when Czechoslovakia was abandoned

at Munich in 1938 and again when Soviet armies liberated most of the country in 1945. When the armed forces were rebuilt after World War II, those Czechoslovak fighters who had returned with the Soviets gained the upper hand over those who had fought in the West, ensuring that Soviet influence would be paramount (see Historical Background and Traditions, this ch.).

The armed forces stood aside in 1948 during the communist coup d'état. After the coup, Svoboda and other high-ranking officers joined the KSČ and, with assistance and advice from large numbers of Soviet military advisers, began to reform the ČSLA along Soviet lines. Many officers and NCOs—particularly the veterans of service with American, British, and French forces—were discharged and replaced by less experienced but politically reliable personnel. Combat readiness was low for several years after the coup as forces were restructured to conform to the Soviet pattern. Weapons and equipment of German design were eventually replaced by items of Soviet manufacture or design. As personnel were trained and educated according to Soviet programs and curricula, which included heavy doses of political indoctrination, the strategy and tactics of warfare devised by the Soviet high command became the doctrine of the Czechoslovak forces. By the time of the founding of the Warsaw Pact in 1955, the ČSLA was already achieving a reputation as a well-trained, efficient organization.

By the early 1960s, the ČSLA was considered one of the most loyal and modern of the Warsaw Pact forces; it was, in effect, a satellite of the Soviet military establishment. In following the Soviet lead, the Czechoslovak military simply mirrored the country's communist hierarchy, which tried to be more communist than the Soviet Union by retaining its rigid Stalinist approach long after de-Stalinization had occurred in the Soviet Union and other areas of Eastern Europe. Soviet equipment and weapons were delivered in quantity and periodically updated; Soviet methods of military education and training were adopted; many officers were sent to the Soviet Union for advanced schooling; and field training included multinational exercises usually under Soviet direction. The thought that this military clone might be lost through the actions of political and military reformers, even though they were communist reformers, apparently frightened the Soviet leadership. Undoubtedly, this factor weighed heavily in the decision to invade Czechoslovakia in 1968.

### *Soviet Central Group of Forces in Czechoslovakia*

Soviet influence within the armed forces became even stronger after 1968 because of the units left behind after the withdrawal of

the main invasion forces. Resignations and purges eliminated the officers and NCOs who would have objected to the Soviet occupation, whereas those who remained on active duty and those recruited to replace losses were inclined to favor strong Soviet ties. In late 1987, nearly two decades after the invasion, five Soviet divisions were still stationed in Czechoslovakia and, to all outward appearances, Soviet influence was undiminished.

Soviet military units deployed outside the borders of the Soviet Union after World War II have been organized in groups rather than in fronts, which was the wartime designation of these major formations. Throughout the postwar era, the largest deployment of Soviet forces outside its borders has been the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany located in East Germany. Other groups were the Northern Group of Forces in Poland, the Southern Group of Forces in Hungary, and the Central Group of Forces in Czechoslovakia. The Central Group of forces comprised two tank divisions, three mechanized infantry divisions, three missile brigades, an artillery brigade, and an airborne assault brigade. Total strength was about 85,000. Group headquarters was located in the town of Milovice, northwest of Prague. In October 1984, Colonel General Viktor Yermakov was named by Moscow to command the Central Group of Forces, replacing Lieutenant General Grigoriy Borisov, who had assumed command in January 1981.

Four of the five Soviet ground divisions in Czechoslovakia were stationed in the Czech lands (Milovice, Mladá Boleslav, Vysoké Myto, and Bruntál), while one was headquartered in Slovakia (Zvolen). Armaments in early 1987 included 1,500 main battle tanks, 650 artillery pieces, 90 multipurpose rocket launchers, and 300 front-line aircraft, including 120 helicopters. The aircraft inventory also included Su-25 ground attack airplanes. The Central Group of Forces also possessed fifty operational and operational-tactical nuclear missiles consisting of SS-21s, SS-22s, and SS-23s. The SS-21 sites included Zvolen, Topol'čany, and Vysoké Myto in Slovakia, and at Plzeň, České Budějovice, Mladá Boleslav, Sušice, Milovice, Havlíčkův Brod, Bruntál, and Tábor in the Czech lands. In 1983 the Czechoslovak government attempted to muster public support for the decision to install these missiles. The Czechoslovak citizenry, however, realizing that their country had now become a primary target in a future war, did not support the installation.

The Central Group of Forces is a legacy of the 1968 invasion; until that event, Czechoslovakia had had no Soviet troops stationed permanently within its borders. The degree of permanence of the Central Group of Forces has in the past appeared to be a matter

of semantics. For several years after the invasion, the deployment was referred to officially as "temporary," and a commission for the Temporary Stationing of Soviet Forces on Czechoslovak Territory existed for at least the first ten years. The Soviet purpose in maintaining troop units of the magnitude of the Central Group of Forces is undoubtedly twofold: first, to avoid any future Dubček-like deviations and, second, to increase substantially the strength of the Warsaw Pact on its westernmost frontier.

### **External Threats to National Security**

As of 1987, the party and government leaders of Czechoslovakia continued to assert that West Germany, NATO, and the United States represented the major external threats to their country's security. Alleged West German revanche was periodically denounced in the Czechoslovak press, and those German organizations that called for Germany's 1937 borders to be restored were especially singled out for criticism, as was the Sudeten German Emigré Organization, an organization of those Germans expelled from Czechoslovakia after World War II. Bonn and ultimately Washington were seen by Prague to be exploiting German revanchist sentiments for their own purposes. Džúr had stated in 1984 that NATO was seeking to "achieve military superiority . . . over the Soviet Union and other countries of the Warsaw Pact, to dictate [NATO's] will to independent states, to stop the worldwide revolutionary process, and to dominate the world." A rabid anti-American campaign reached its peak when the Soviet Union failed to prevent the installation of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Western Europe. The deployment of these missiles during the early 1980s was portrayed as a threat to the European military balance. The Czechoslovak leadership, however, did not mention that the missiles had been installed in response to the deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles in the western Soviet Union beginning in 1977. When the Soviet Union installed SS-21 and SS-23 missiles in Czechoslovakia starting in 1983, the Czechoslovak public was noticeably unenthusiastic.

A different kind of threat was seen emanating from Poland at the beginning of the 1980s. The development of the Solidarity trade union movement there obviously alarmed the communist hierarchy in Czechoslovakia, which feared that the labor unrest might spill over into their country. Czechoslovak spokesmen warned the Poles that their toying with socialism could be compared with the Czechoslovak heresy of 1968 and might result in the same kind of disaster.

## **Armed Forces**

### **Ground Forces**

Of the approximately 201,000 personnel on active duty in the ČSLA in 1987, about 145,000, or about 72 percent, served in the ground forces (commonly referred to as the army). About 100,000 of these were conscripts. As in other Warsaw Pact armed forces, the army was by far the largest service. In Czechoslovakia the army was divided into three categories: arms (*zbraně*), auxiliary arms (*pomocné*), and services (*služby*). The arms included infantry, armor, artillery, and engineers. Auxiliary arms included the signal, chemical, and transportation branches. The service branches provided the ČSLA with medical, veterinarian, ordnance, quartermaster, administration, justice, and topographic services. Patterned after the Soviet model, the rear services of the ČSLA were responsible for the procurement of weapons, ammunition, military equipment, and other supplies needed by the armed forces. Some of the equipment required was produced within Czechoslovakia, while the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact states supplied the remainder needed.

Tactical organization followed the Soviet pattern except for some minor local variations and modifications for differences in equipment. Many of the small arms and lighter, crew-served weapons used by the Czechoslovak forces were manufactured locally, sometimes requiring slight changes from the Soviet norm of organization for small units. The primary strength of the army in 1987 was in five tank divisions, five motorized rifle divisions, one airborne regiment, six engineering brigades, and one artillery division consisting of two antitank regiments, two conventional artillery brigades, and three surface-to-surface missile brigades. One of the tank divisions and three of the motorized rifle divisions were considered to be category one, that is, at full strength and fully equipped. The remaining divisions were maintained at lower manning levels—category two or three—that is, between one-third and three-quarters manpower strength, but with full equipment, although some of it might have been obsolete. Full strength of a tank division was estimated at about 11,000 officers and men; that of a motorized rifle division at 14,000 (see fig. 16).

In keeping with Soviet doctrine, both kinds of Czechoslovak divisions were tank-heavy organizations. Motorized rifle divisions possessed 266 tanks; tank divisions possessed 335. (A United States armored division had 324 tanks, only 11 fewer than a Warsaw Pact tank division, but the American organization had about 7,300 more personnel.) In 1987, the Czechoslovak army possessed 3,000 T-54s

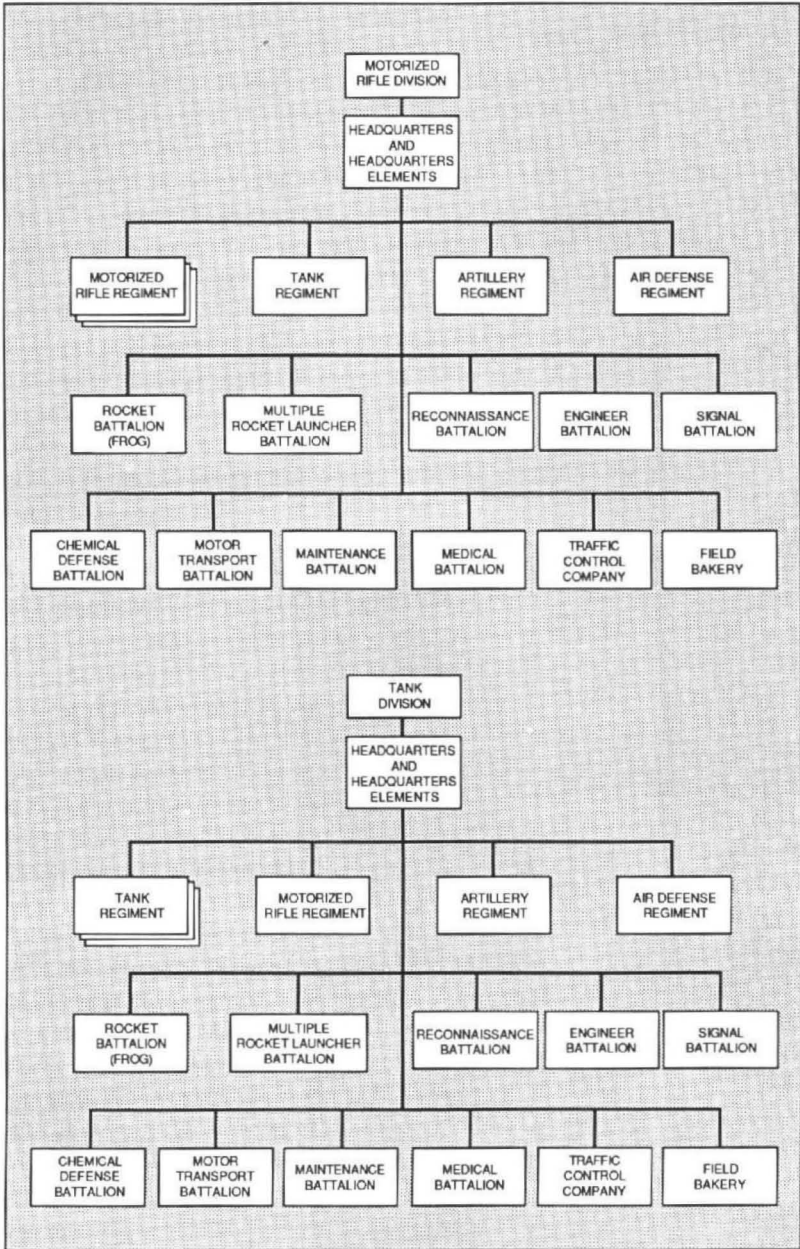


Figure 16. Representative Motorized Rifle and Tank Divisions, 1980

and T-55s that were acquired during the 1960s. During the mid-1980s, the T-55s underwent modification, which indicated that the ČSLA intended to keep them in service into the 1990s. The Czechoslovak tank inventory also included about 500 T-72s, a model that appeared in Soviet units in the early 1970s and began to be seen in Warsaw Pact armies about 1980. Czechoslovakia and Poland reportedly are jointly building the T-72.

The ČSLA's artillery inventory in 1987 included 250 M-53 (100mm), 100 M-1931 and M-1937 (122mm), and 75 M-46 (130mm) guns. It also included 90 M-137 (152mm) gun-howitzers and 250 D-30 (105mm), M-30 (122mm) towed, and M-1974 (122mm) self-propelled howitzers, plus 175 DANA (M-77) (152mm) Tatra 813 truck-mounted, self-propelled howitzers. Introduction of the heavy Soviet M-240 (240mm) self-propelled mortar began in late 1986 or early 1987; it will probably be employed with the 2S7 (203mm) self-propelled gun that was known to have been in use in 1986. These two weapons may be scheduled to use nuclear munitions. In 1986 the ČSLA also possessed 200 RM-70 (122mm) and 120 M-51 (130mm) multiple rocket launchers and 40 FROG, 4 SS-21, and 27 Scud surface-to-surface missiles. Replacement of Scud-B missiles with SS-23 missiles and the installation of SS-12Ms began in 1986. All these missiles are nuclear capable. Antitank weapons included P-27 (112mm) grenade launchers, 100 82mm recoilless launchers, and AT-3 Sagger, AT-4 Spigot, and AT-5 Spandrel antitank guided weapons. Air defense weaponry consisted of 575 S-60 (57mm) towed and M-53/59 (30mm) self-propelled anti-aircraft guns, as well as 175 SA-4, SA-6, SA-7, SA-8, SA-9, and SA-13 surface-to-air missiles (SAMs). Reconnaissance units in the ČSLA possessed 1,250 OT-65 and BRDM scout cars. Motorized infantry units were equipped with 1,100 BVP-1 and 50 BMP-2 infantry combat vehicles and 2,500 OT-62, OT-64, and OT-810 armored personnel carriers. Although the ČSLA imported much of its ground forces weaponry from the Soviet Union, domestic industry supplied a good portion of the army's needs. This included small-caliber weapons and various models of guns, howitzers, rocket launchers, grenade launchers, anti-aircraft guns, and armored personnel carriers. The ČSLA received equipment from other non-Soviet Warsaw Pact countries. Czechoslovakia, in turn, exported its weaponry to both other Warsaw Pact nations and the Third World.

One Western analyst has noted that the ČSLA's artillery holdings in 1986 were 60 percent of that possessed by a Soviet 10-division, 2-army front. This disparity, plus the decided

inferiority of the T-54/55 tanks to NATO's tanks, could cause the ČSLA serious difficulties in the event of war with the West.

## **Air Force**

The Czechoslovak Air Force (Československé letectvo) is tactical in nature; that is, its mission is to support the ground forces and air defense of the country. As of 1987, Czechoslovakia had no counterpart to the Long-Range Air Force of the Soviet Union. Air force personnel in 1987 numbered approximately 56,000. The ratio of career personnel to conscripts was about two to one.

The Czechoslovak Air Force was organized into two air armies. The 7th Air Army was headquartered in Prague and possessed an underground facility at Černý vrch; the 10th Air Army was stationed in Hradec Králové. The air armies consisted of four air divisions with a total of fourteen regiments. The air force possessed twenty-two military airfields and fourteen reserve military airfields (see fig. 17). Four of the military airfields—Mimoň, Mladé, Olomouc, and Sliach—were used by the Soviet air force. Six of the reserve military airfields were used for civil aviation. In 1987 the air force possessed 465 combat aircraft and about 40 armed helicopters. Of the four fighter-ground attack regiments, one consisted of fifty Su-7BM/Us, one of forty MiG-23Ms, one of thirty MiG-21/21 Us, and one of twenty-five Su-25 aircraft. Six interceptor regiments possessed 275 MiG-21, MiG-21 U, and MiG-23 jet aircraft, half of which were used for air defense and half for battlefield support. In early 1987 the Czechoslovak Air Force apparently had recently received one squadron of the most up-to-date MiG-23 BuM fighter bombers.

The reconnaissance regiment flew twenty MiG-21RFs, ten Su-22s, and fifteen Aero L-29s. The two transport regiments had at their disposal two An-12s, six An-24s, forty IL-14s (undergoing replacement by An-26s), one Tu-134, and two let L-410 Ms. The one helicopter regiment consisted of three independent squadrons, which together possessed forty Mi-24 attack helicopters, sixty-five Mi-8 and sixty Mi-4 medium transport helicopters, and fifty-five Mi-2 and twenty Mi-1 light transport helicopters. The Czechoslovak Air Force used Z-43 aircraft for liaison purposes.

The Czechoslovak air defense system comprised a command headquarters, with 3 divisions consisting of 6 SAM regiments possessing some 40 sites and 250 SA-2/3 missiles. The system included aircraft detection and surveillance stations and anti-aircraft artillery units. Most of the SAM sites were located strategically along the border with West Germany. Anti-aircraft artillery units are used for defense against low-flying targets.



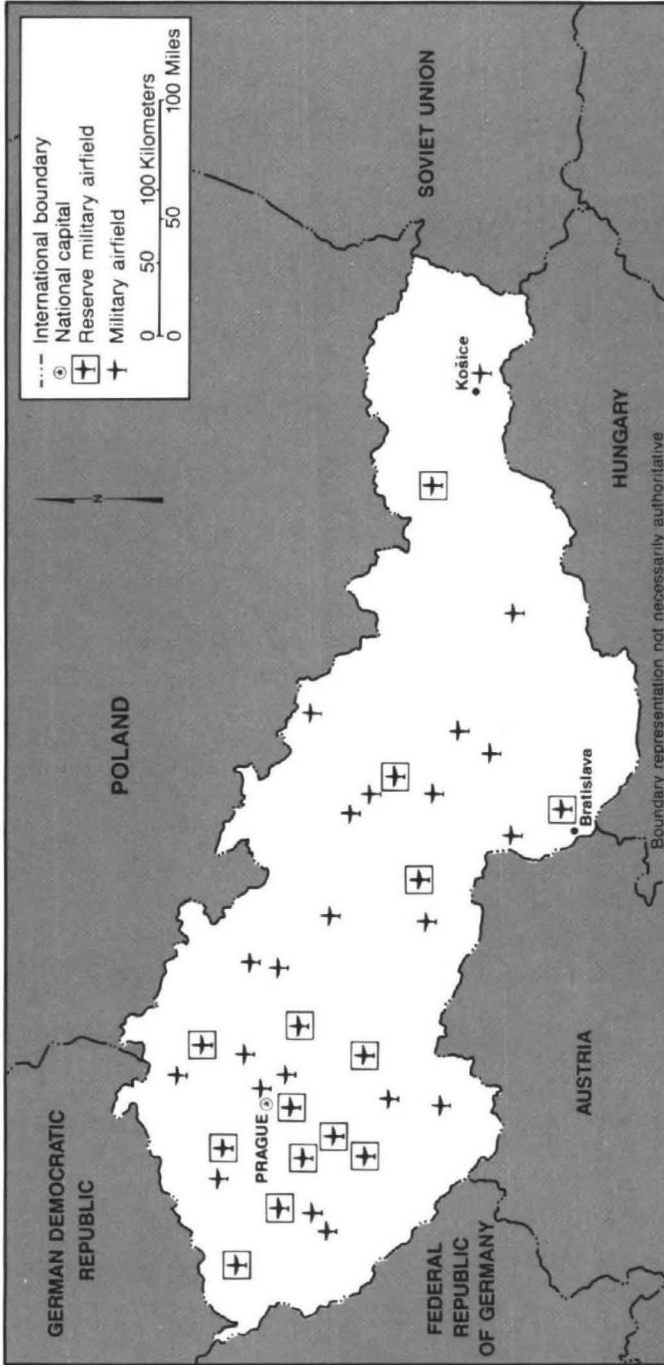
## **Manpower**

National defense legislation enacted into law within a year after the Communist takeover in 1948 provided for universal male conscription. Male citizens must register for the draft in the spring of the year in which they become eighteen years of age. Unless rejected because of physical reasons or given an educational deferment, most are inducted shortly after registration. In 1986 a little less than 70 percent of the ground forces and about 32 percent of the air forces were conscripts.

Early legislation provided for the annual class of draftees to be inducted in the fall, but since 1968 half of the annual class has been called up in the spring and half in the fall. As of 1987 the basic term of service for conscripts was two years in the ground forces and three years in the air forces; however, to avail themselves of technical training some conscripts opted to serve longer terms. Czechoslovak law made no provision for conscientious objection; anyone convicted of evading military service was subject to a prison sentence of up to five years or from five to fifteen years during a state of emergency.

Of the more than 100,000 young men reaching draft age in 1985, slightly more than three-quarters were expected to be found fit for service, which would provide an adequate number of conscripts to replace those completing their tours of duty during the year. In 1982 the number of Czechoslovak males who were under 30 years of age and who had performed military service within the previous 10 years numbered 700,000. The number in the entire military age-group, that is, between the ages of 18 and 50, totaled about 3.5 million in the mid-1980s. Of that number, as many as three-quarters could be considered mentally and physically fit for service if a general mobilization were ordered. Although not subject to conscription, women also served in the armed forces in small numbers. Women could join the ČSLA if they had graduated from high school, passed a qualifying examination, fulfilled the established health and other criteria, and completed a one-year specialized course.

Reserve obligations for conscripts who had completed their active duty generally lasted until age fifty. Upon discharge the conscript was enrolled in the so-called First Reserve, where he remained until reaching age forty. During this period, reserve soldiers and NCOs had to participate in a total of sixteen weeks of exercises. These sixteen weeks generally included three four-week-long exercises that reservists had to take part in during the years in which they turned twenty-four, twenty-seven, and thirty-two. Between



Source: Based on information from Zbyněk Četovský, "The Czechoslovak Air Force," *Armed Forces*, Weybridge, United Kingdom, February 1987, 81.

Figure 17. *Military and Reserve Military Airfields, 1987*

ages forty and fifty, the reservists were carried on the rolls of the Second Reserve. As reservists grow older, the numbers available for call-up (particularly in the Second Reserve) are reduced by many factors, including state of health, occupation of key position in the civilian economy, and hardship cases. Nevertheless, the reserve program would be considered of major importance in any mobilization. Because of the heavy annual turnover in conscript ranks, there are always a substantial number of reservists whose active-duty service has occurred within a ten-year period.

All Warsaw Pact countries have mobilization plans, and all conduct occasional mobilization exercises. Because of strict national security laws, however, little is publicized concerning such exercises in Czechoslovakia; presumably they take place at the local rather than the national level.

In 1987 no official data were available on salaries of officers, warrant officers, and NCOs, nor had information been published on the pay of conscripts. Such data are also considered state secrets. The Czechoslovak press, however, has described the incentives attached to a recruiting program started in 1969. Benefits included a reduction in basic military service (one year instead of two) and bonuses; higher grants and privileges were offered to graduates of secondary schools and universities. A former officer in the Czechoslovak Air Force who emigrated has described the pay and benefits of military pilots: a salary of Kčs7,000 a month (for value of the koruna—see Glossary), full board “of excellent quality,” 30 days’ leave plus a 2-week compulsory rest at the Jeseník spa per year, and additional benefits depending on qualifications. The remuneration of pilots was thus “comparable to that of the director of a medium-sized state enterprise with 5,000 or more employees.” Given the nature of the society, as of 1987 it was safe to assume that high-ranking officers were well paid and probably received salaries in excess of those paid to civilians at comparable levels of employment.

### **Education and Training**

Much of the military education system developed since 1948 has been patterned on Soviet models with the assistance of Soviet advisers. The same may be said of troop training programs in garrison and in the field.

### ***Conscript Training***

New inductees entered into a rigorous program from the start. The first few days of military service were devoted to physical examination, issuance of uniforms, and other routine matters.

During the first weeks, the conscripts underwent physical fitness testing in order to discover deficiencies and to remedy them. Initial training consisted of elementary drill and instruction on customs of service. A typical daily schedule included six hours of training, two hours of supervised political discussion, and two hours of recreation. Part of each Saturday was devoted to cleanup and inspection; the remainder of the weekend was free. Not until the completion of the initial phase of the training were new soldiers sworn into service. The swearing in and the taking of the oath to defend the homeland constituted a ceremonial occasion to which parents and close relatives were invited. After the ceremony, training for combat became the full-time, six-days-a-week occupation of most conscripts for the duration of their active duty.

The training year was divided into four phases, the first of which was devoted to individual training. In this initial phase, trainees received extensive physical fitness training and learned to handle individual weapons. During this period, conscripts went on progressively longer forced marches carrying field packs and practiced live firing of rifles, pistols, and submachine guns. In the second phase of the training year, trainees received platoon and company training and learned to handle crew-served weapons. The third phase stressed battalion-level exercises wherein the companies learned to coordinate actions to achieve various military objectives. The culmination of the training year was the large unit—division or higher—exercise where combined arms operations were stressed under conditions simulating actual combat. Exercises were critiqued in detail for the ultimate edification of company grade officers who, with the assistance of the regular NCOs, became responsible for the retraining of their units to correct deficiencies and avoid repeating mistakes in future exercises.

Training programs were similar in all Warsaw Pact member states, and all followed the Soviet lead. The training program was based on the principle that a soldier should be either training to fight or fighting. There were few frills for the conscripts of the Warsaw Pact forces; free time, furloughs, recreational programs, and the like ranged from minimal to nonexistent. Conscripts spent their time training or working; much time was spent in the field, where military leaders believe that their armies are honed for tasks of the modern battlefield. In addition to the subjects commonly studied by soldiers around the world, Warsaw Pact conscripts also received considerable political propaganda, which was repeated to the point of tedium. Common propaganda themes included the importance of Marxism-Leninism in the training of the armed forces, the leading role of the party in “the building of an advanced

socialist army," and praise of the Soviet forces that liberated the country from the Nazis.

The culmination of the training cycle was reached during the increasingly frequent Warsaw Pact exercises involving Czechoslovak and Soviet forces as well as those of one or several other Warsaw Pact members. Winter exercises held in February 1987 involved only the ČSLA and units of the Central Group of Forces. The Friendship 86 exercises, on the other hand, involved Czechoslovak and Hungarian forces as well as the Soviet forces stationed in Czechoslovakia. The Friendship exercises, which were held in western Bohemia near Doupov and Mělník, consisted of three parts: countering an enemy attack; crossing the Labe River near Mělník, north of Prague; and making a mechanized counterattack with all service branches participating. Another large operation was the Friendship 79 winter exercises in which various armies practiced with live ammunition while undergoing simulated nuclear and chemical attack. In this particular exercise, Soviet units were responsible for the decontamination of Warsaw Pact armies. Czechoslovak forces, however, did receive regular training in decontamination procedures and were frequently tested on their proficiency.

### *Specialized and Officer Training*

In 1987 the ČSLA operated schools ranging from secondary schools through colleges for the academic, technical, and political training and advancement of regular personnel. All military training institutions were highly politicized in keeping with the party orientation of armed forces customary in communist countries. Many senior officers, in addition to successfully completing military schooling at all levels in Czechoslovakia, also have been sent to the Soviet Union for courses in that country's military institutions. General Václavík, for example, attended the Moscow Military Academy of the General Staff and the Frunze Military Academy.

At the highest level were the military academies, which contained two categories of institutions. First was the "university category." This group included the Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy in Bratislava, the Military Medical Research and Continuing Education Department of Jan Evangelist Purkyn Institute in Hradec Králové, and the Military Section of the Department of Physical Education and Sport at Charles University in Prague. The Klement Gottwald Military Political Academy prepared cadres for the political apparatus of the ČSLA. The medical academy prepared military cadres in general medicine, stomatology, and general pharmacy. The physical education department at Charles University

produced specialists in sports organization, sports medicine, and related subjects.

The other category of military academies included five "technical" institutions. These were the Antonín Zápotocký Academy in Brno, the Ludvík Svoboda Higher Academy of the Ground Forces in Vyškov, the Military Technical Academy of Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship in Liptovský Mikuláš, the Military Aviation Academy of the Slovak National Uprising in Košice, and the Military Department of the Academy of Transport and Communications in Žilina. Students from these schools were graduated with the title of engineer and the rank of lieutenant.

In 1987, the ČSLA also operated four gymnasiums, or secondary schools, and eight "military intermediate specialized training" institutions. The military gymnasiums offered courses of study comparable to civilian gymnasiums, with some military education and an emphasis on physical fitness. The specialized training institutions offered different areas of technical training. The gymnasiums and the technical schools were both four-year institutions. Graduation from military secondary schools led to commissioning in the armed forces. Previously the mandatory two-year conscript tour was also part of the procedure, but that requirement for duty in the ranks was cut to five months in 1980. For a brief period after 1968, candidates for commission dropped noticeably, but the allure of a prestigious career overcame political antipathy, and during the 1980s the number of young men seeking military commission was adequate.

In 1987 all but one of the specialized training institutes were connected with two-year officer schools, the students of which become second-lieutenants upon graduation. The two one-year officer schools offered specialized training to gymnasium graduates between eighteen and twenty years of age.

As of 1987, women could not enroll as students in the Czechoslovak military schools; they could, however, take specialized courses to become home air defense specialists, operators in the special-purpose radio technical troops, ground specialists for the air force, office typists, or radio operators. Depending on the speciality, training courses were held in Prague, Košice, and Nové Mesto nad Váhom. Upon passing a final examination, the graduates became members of the ČSLA, either as enlisted personnel with a three-year service obligation, as career enlisted personnel with the rank of warrant officer, or as cadre NCOs.

### *Premilitary Training*

In 1987 all male students had to take basic premilitary subjects in the last three years of the regular nine-year primary school.

According to some critics, however, such training was uneven and inconsistent among the various school districts, and teachers at schools of all levels lacked sufficient training. Military education took up only twenty-five hours a year and included medical, civil defense, topographic, weapons firing, and basic training.

### ***Paramilitary Training***

In 1987 the largest paramilitary organization in Czechoslovakia was the Association for Cooperation with the Army (*Svaz pro spolupráci s armádou—SVAZARM*). Established in 1951, SVAZARM was a carbon copy of the Soviet Union's All-Union Voluntary Society for the Promotion of the Army, Air Force, and Navy. SVAZARM claimed a membership in 1985 of a little over 1 million; 60 percent of the members were under 35 years of age, 43 percent under 20 years, and 18 percent under 15 years. This organization popularized defense training through special interest groups that centered mostly on sports, some of the groups having direct military application. As of 1987, for example, SVAZARM recruited and trained pilot conscripts for the Higher Military Aviation School in Košice. The training included at least twenty flight hours of advanced glider training and thirty-seven to forty hours of basic training on motorized airplanes, as well as the necessary aviation theory. Additional skills taught by SVAZARM that had direct military applicability included parachuting, riflshooting, doghandling, and amateur radio operation. Other activities, for example, automobile driving and airplane modeling, were of dubious value to the military. In fact, one Western observer has called SVAZARM "a huge (and prosperous) sports and recreational organization, only 'paramilitary' in the broadest sense of the word."

Other organizations involved with paramilitary training, including civil defense training, were the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement, the Czechoslovak Socialist Union of Youth, the Pioneers organization, and the Czechoslovak Physical Culture Association. They appear to have played a secondary role to SVAZARM in this regard. During the mid-1980s, Czechoslovak military officers frequently complained that young draftees were physically soft. They were said to lack basic military knowledge and to regard service as an obligation to be endured rather than as a patriotic duty. These complaints mirrored those made in the 1970s despite subsequent increases in the amount of paramilitary education in the secondary schools, in the attention paid to physical education curricula, in the activities of paramilitary organizations, and in propaganda efforts that attempted to instill in youth a positive attitude toward service in the armed forces. Many adults

were said to view paramilitary training as useless or ineffective against weapons of mass destruction. Some employers who were responsible for such training were said merely to go through the motions of instruction and even to look for excuses to prevent conscripts and reservists from participating.

### **Uniforms and Rank Insignia**

In 1987 the Czechoslovak air and ground forces uniforms were the same style and color, except for two air force officer mess-dress uniforms, which were blue as opposed to the traditional olive green. Officers and warrant officers had three basic uniforms (dress, service, and field) designed for year-round wear. NCOs and enlisted personnel had only year-round and field uniforms. The service uniform for officers and enlisted personnel was worn for garrison duty and routine training activities and, with minor variations, was used as a dress uniform by enlisted men. The service uniform consisted of a single-breasted, open-collar, four-pocket, olive-green coat worn with matching trousers, a khaki shirt, and a black tie. NCOs and enlisted men wore this uniform with black boots and belt and an olive-green garrison cap. A variation of the uniform for NCOs and enlisted men consisted of olive-green trousers, a green-gray shirt, black boots, and an olive-green garrison cap.

The summer service uniform for ground force officers resembled that used by the NCOs except that it was worn with an olive-green shirt, trousers with red piping on the outer-leg seam, brown boots, Sam Browne belt, and a service cap. The air force officer service uniform consisted of olive-green trousers with blue piping on the outer-leg seam, a green-gray shirt-jacket that buttoned at the waist, and brown, low-quarter shoes. The summer service uniform for ground force and air force generals resembled the officers' service uniform except that the former was worn with a white shirt and had trouser-piping consisting of two white stripes for the ground forces and two blue stripes for the air force.

The NCOs and enlisted men had a summer and a winter dress uniform that closely resembled their service uniform except that it was worn with a white shirt and a service cap. A full-length overcoat with a fur collar, a fur cap, and gloves were worn with the winter dress uniform.

Ground force officers had a service/dress uniform that, with the addition of a silver belt and aiguillettes, functioned as a parade uniform. Both ground and air force generals and officers had mess uniforms that consisted of an open-collar coat with two waist pockets. The ground force uniform was olive green, and the air force uniform was blue.



The field uniform worn by all personnel consisted of a light-green coat and trousers with a tear-drop and dark-green leaf pattern that served as camouflage. In winter all personnel wore this same uniform with a fur cap and a belted, single-breasted overcoat that had a snap-in lining and a detachable collar. White overalls were used for winter camouflage. The airborne troops also had a tricolor (yellow, brown, and green), puzzle-piece pattern camouflage uniform with a matching soft field cap.

In 1987 the rank insignia of ground and air force personnel were indicated by gold and silver stars and round silver studs of varying number and size. Rank insignia were worn with the field uniform on shoulder-strap sleeves and on shoulder boards made of the same material as the uniform. The shoulder boards and sleeves of warrant officers were trimmed with silver piping, while those of generals and field officers were trimmed with gold piping.

The rank structure of the armed forces was broken down into twenty-one ranks: four general officer ranks, three field grade officer ranks, four company grade officer ranks, three warrant officer ranks, three regular NCO ranks, and four conscript ranks. Traditionally, the rank of army general was reserved for the minister of national defense, who was always an active-duty army officer (see fig. 18).

## **Internal Security and Public Order**

The Ministry of Interior is responsible for public order and internal security. The ministry controls the armed security organizations in the country except for the regular armed forces and some prison guards. It is also responsible, *inter alia*, for fire prevention, government archives, and passport and visa control. In theory the interior ministries that exist at the Czech and Slovak Socialist republic levels have similar responsibilities and functions, but the real power rests in the federal ministry in Prague. The federal Ministry of Interior is considered one of the key posts because of the power inherent in the control of the country's security agencies. In mid-1987, the minister of interior was Vratislav Vajnar, who had held the post since 1983. Vajnar was concurrently a deputy in the Chamber of the People in the Federal Assembly and a member of the KSČ Central Committee.

At the end of World War II, when President Beneš established the first postwar government at Košice, control of the Ministry of Interior was sought and obtained by the KSČ. Party member Václav Nosek was appointed minister and began the process of converting the security forces into arms of the party. Anticommunist police officers and officials were fired, noncommunist personnel

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS												
CZECHOSLOVAK RANK	ARMY AND AIR FORCE	PODPORUČÍK	PORUČÍK	NADPORUČÍK	KAPITÁN	MAJOR	PODPLUKOVNÍK	PLUKOVNÍK	GENERÁL-MAJOR	GENERÁL-PORUČÍK	GENERÁL-PLUKOVNÍK	ARMÁDNÍ GENERAL
U.S. RANK TITLES	20) LEUTENANT	1ST LEUTENANT	CAPTAIN	MAJOR	LEUTENANT COLONEL	COLONEL	BRIGADIER GENERAL	MAJOR GENERAL	LEUTENANT GENERAL	GENERAL		
	<b>NO NAVY</b>											

WARRANT OFFICERS AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL												
CZECHOSLOVAK RANK	VOJÍN	SVOBODNÍK	DESÁTNÍK	ČETAŘ	ROTNÝ	ROTMISTR	NADROTMISTR	PODPRAPORČÍK	PRAPORČÍK	NADPRAPORČÍK		
U.S. RANK TITLES	BASIC PRIVATE	PRIVATE	ARMY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS	CORPORAL SERGEANT	STAFF SERGEANT	TECHNICAL SERGEANT	1ST CLASS SERGEANT	MASTER SERGEANT	MASTER SERGEANT	CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER W1	CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER W2	CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER W3

NOTE: Officer insignia in gold; warrant officer and enlisted personnel insignia in silver. <sup>1</sup>No rank in Czechoslovak Air Force. <sup>2</sup>No rank in U.S. Air Force.

Figure 18. Rank Insignia, 1987

were encouraged to join the party or its youth organization, and all were subjected to heavy doses of communist propaganda. It was Nosek's packing of the police hierarchy with communists that caused the protest resignation of anticommunist government ministers in February 1948, leading to the coup d'état. When the coup took place, Nosek's communist-dominated security forces ensured an easy takeover.

During the purges of the early 1950s, the security agencies aided the Klement Gottwald faction against those communists accused of antistate crimes. Police participation in the purges, their arrogance and lack of scruples in dealing with ordinary citizens, and their brutal methods of interrogation were typical of the Stalinist model that they emulated. The term *Secret Police* as an official appellation was dropped in 1953, but the public, almost thirty years later, still used the title in referring to State Security.

As was the case in the military, but to a lesser extent, some members of the security forces were weeded out for having supported the Dubček reforms. Stability returned to the security forces early in the 1970s—during normalization—and the forces have kept a tight rein on Czechoslovaks ever since. The repressive measures have led to discontent and dissidence, but never to a degree that was beyond control. Many Western observers and most expatriates of the era reported that the public became apathetic after the Warsaw Pact invasion and the return to rigid communist orthodoxy. The dissent movement known as Charter 77 that took form in 1977 was certainly a rebuke to the government and to the KSČ, but it was far from being a mass movement and was rather easily contained by the security police (see *Police Repression*, this ch.; *Charter 77*, ch. 4). Ten years after its inception, the Charter 77 group remained small; security forces had ensured that it would not attract mass support.

### **The National Security Corps**

The police in Czechoslovakia are not called police, but rather security. The National Security Corps (Sbor národní bezpečnosti—SNB) comprises Public Security (Veřejná bezpečnost—VB) and State Security (Státní bezpečnost—StB). Public Security is a uniformed force that performs routine police duties throughout the country. State Security, the former Secret Police, is a plainclothes force, also nationwide, that is at once an investigative agency, an intelligence agency, and a counterintelligence agency. Any activity that could possibly be considered antistate falls under the purview of State Security. In mid-1987, strength figures for the SNB were not available. A 1982 article in the Czechoslovak press

indicated that 75 percent of the SNB members were either members or candidate members of the KSC and that 60 percent were under 30 years of age. In 1986 about 80 percent of the SNB members in Slovakia came from worker or farmer families.

The SNB is an armed force, organized and trained as such but equipped to perform police rather than military functions. Its members are subject to military discipline and are under the jurisdiction of military courts. Ranks in the SNB correspond to equivalent levels in the ČSLA. As of 1987 the SNB was a volunteer service, although the conscription system was apparently used to rebuild the force after the loss of personnel at the end of the Dubček period. Citizens having the requisite physical and educational qualifications could apply for direct appointment to the SNB. Qualifications included completion of the compulsory nine years of schooling and of the basic conscript tour in the armed forces; higher education was required of those seeking appointment to higher level positions, for example, scientific, technical, and investigative positions. The Ministry of Interior operated its own higher level educational institute, which trained security personnel at different stages of their careers. The Advanced School of the National Security Corps, which occupied a large complex of buildings in Prague, granted academic degrees to the SNB and the Border Guard, also under the Ministry of Interior.

Public Security performs routine police functions at all levels from federal to local. In 1987 it was reported to be a relatively small force for the extent of its responsibility, but it was augmented by volunteer auxiliary units. Articles in the Slovak press in the mid-1980s referred to 27,000 auxiliary guards in 3,372 units assisting Public Security in Slovakia alone. No figure was available for the number of auxiliary guards and the number of guard units in the Czech lands, but it is reasonable to assume that these numbers would be at least double that reported for Slovakia. The federal minister of interior controlled other forces that could be ordered to assist Public Security if needed, and he could also request further help from the military.

In mid-1987, the olive-drab uniform of Public Security was almost identical to the ČSLA uniform, but red shoulder boards and red trimming on hats distinguished Public Security personnel from military. Public Security vehicles were yellow and white. The initials *VB* appeared on the sides, front, and rear of police vehicles.

Public Security and State Security units were deployed throughout the country and had headquarters at regional and district levels; there were 10 *kraje* and 114 districts in 1987. Public Security forces also established sections in rural areas. Both forces were under the

ostensible supervision of the ministries of interior of the Czech and Slovak socialist republics. However, there seemed to be no question that operational direction of the security forces emanated from the Ministry of Interior at the federal level and that the two ministries of the component republics had administrative rather than supervisory functions.

### **People's Militia**

In the early, chaotic days after World War II, armed guard units were formed in factories, mines, and other installations to protect private property and prevent sabotage. Most of the personnel assigned to these units were controlled by communist-dominated unions, and although the guard units may have been necessary to prevent lawlessness at the time, they were committed to the ultimate goal of taking over the enterprises they were hired to protect. The importance of the guard units to the communist takeover in 1948 and the extent of their activity seemed to vary widely in different areas of the country; nevertheless, some historians credit them with having paved the way for the coup. Whatever their participation may have been, the guard units were institutionalized when legislation in 1948 created the People's Militia, of which the guards formed the nucleus. The militia's mission was the defense of the socialist society, and militia personnel were given powers of arrest equal to those of the regular police.

Compared with the regular armed forces and the security forces, the People's Militia proved relatively conservative during the Prague Spring. While publicly proclaiming its support for the Dubček reforms, the militia also warned against departing from Soviet-style socialism. The KSČ later reported that some "unfirm" and "fellow traveler" elements of the militia had had to be removed during the period of stabilization, but in the early 1970s the force had been rebuilt and had regained the confidence of the party leadership. Although a membership goal of 250,000 had frequently been discussed by party officials, the total strength had always been shy of that figure; in 1986 membership numbered about 120,000. Specialized militia courses were given at the Ludvík Svoboda Higher Academy of the Ground Forces in Výchov.

In 1987 President Husák was listed as the supreme commander of the People's Militia, and the chief of staff (who actually directed the organization) was Miroslav Novák, who had held the post since 1973. In February 1981, Novák signed an agreement pledging the cooperation of the militia in a joint effort with SVAZARM to upgrade civil defense throughout the country. According to news releases, both organizations had traditionally been involved in civil

defense, and the new agreement was designed to coordinate their endeavors.

## **Border Guard**

Another militarized security force subordinated to the Ministry of Interior is the Border Guard (Pohraniční stráž), which was established in 1951 as a separate agency under the then-existing Ministry of National Security. In 1987 the Border Guard, whose strength was estimated at 11,000, was commanded by General Anton Nemek, whose headquarters was in Prague. The Border Guard is an armed force subject to the same military regulations that govern the ČSLA. In mid-1987, in addition to the individual small arms carried by its personnel, the Border Guard also had some armored vehicles, antitank guns, and machine guns.

The main strength of the Border Guard has been deployed along the West German border since 1950. Smaller units patrolled the Austrian frontier as well as the borders with East Germany and Poland. Only a few units were stationed on the Hungarian and Soviet borders. The basic operational unit was the battalion, which was divided into companies and platoons and could be grouped into brigades for administrative purposes. The federal minister of interior could call the Border Guard to supplement security forces if necessary, and in wartime it could be assigned to the army either to serve specialized guard functions or to fight as infantry. Members of the Antiaircraft Defense (Protivzdušná obrana) helped the Border Guard by instituting air patrols. The portion of the border with Hungary formed by the Danube River was patrolled by the Border Guard, which used launches and patrol boats equipped with radar and infrared sighting devices.

## **Criminal Justice System**

### **Incidence of Crime**

Although not covered extensively in the press in mid-1987, crime appeared to be nearly as widespread in Czechoslovakia as it was in much of the West. In general, however, crime statistics have not been published since 1980.

### **General Crime**

Gypsies (especially in Slovakia) and young people were viewed as the primary perpetrators of crime, and alcohol was seen as a major factor. In Slovakia, for example, 65,869 offenses and petty offenses were registered between January and November 1983; this number was 52 percent more than in the same period of 1982.

Gypsies reportedly were responsible for about 20 percent of these crimes, even though they made up less than 3 percent of the population of Slovakia (see *Ethnic Groups*, ch. 2). "Economic crime," a wide category including shoplifting and vandalism, accounted for Kčs116 million worth of damages. Losses due to burglary went up 37 percent between 1981 and 1985. In 1985, in the Czech Socialist Republic alone, the value of goods stolen was reported as Kčs43 million. Burglaries were a special problem in large cities, especially Prague. Property was inadequately protected, although security devices (such as security locks) were available in the stores.

In the mid-1980s, statistics were not available for rape and other violent crimes. In the 1970s, when statistics were published, the number of court cases involving rape and child abuse fluctuated between 1,623 and 2,475 a year, peaking in 1973. Rapists "on the prowl" appeared to be a common phenomenon, and young girls were warned not to hitchhike. The penalty for rape was three to eight years' imprisonment, which increased to fifteen years if death occurred. The penalty for child abuse was from one to eight years and up to fifteen years if death resulted.

Juvenile delinquency was on the rise in the 1980s and usually involved children from broken homes. Parents were held responsible for their children and could be prosecuted for allowing their child's truancy. Juveniles were believed responsible for about 21 percent of all crime, often vandalizing state-owned property. Youth gangs were not unknown; and drug abuse and alcoholism were major problems. Children convicted of crimes served terms in juvenile correctional and training facilities, apart from adults. They might also be placed in the protective custody of the state, but there was a shortage of institutions to provide such care.

The most common offense in Czechoslovakia was nonpayment of mandatory child support. In a country in which divorce was commonplace, this abuse had become a serious problem. In 1985 approximately 3,800 child support cases were prosecuted in the Czech Socialist Republic alone. In general, convicted parents were given the maximum sentence and were often sent to work camps.

Black-market money changing was also common in Czechoslovakia, as it appeared to be in all East-bloc economies. The black-market changer might be a taxi driver or someone on the street corner waiting for foreign tourists who needed Czechoslovak currency or for Czechoslovak citizens who needed hard currency. Such a money changer would exchange hard (Western) currency for Czechoslovak koruny at a far better rate than the State Bank of Czechoslovakia, often doubling that figure. This "speculation" was highly illegal, and the papers carried reports of such transactions.

On occasion, these money changers were agents of the government who tried to entrap foreigners in a crime.

### ***Drinking and Drugs***

In 1987 the official Czechoslovak press conveyed the impression that the country had few social problems. Occasionally, however, reports appeared on such topics as alcohol abuse, illegal drugs, theft, and "hooliganism" (a catch-all term that covered everything from disorderly conduct to vandalism).

Drinking has always been part of Czech and Slovak life; however, it has become a serious problem since the 1948 communist coup. Apparently, many people drink because there is nothing else to do and because it is a way to escape the dreariness that pervades life in Czechoslovakia. As of 1987 drinking during the workday and drunkenness on the job reportedly were common and even tolerated.

In 1984 Czechoslovakia's per capita consumption of hard liquor (over 20 proof) was 8.2 liters, of beer 140.1 liters, and of wine 15.5 liters. The total amounted to 163.8 liters per capita of alcoholic drinks, as compared with 101.2 liters per capita of nonalcoholic drinks, i.e., alcoholic drinks were consumed at a rate of 1.6 times that of nonalcoholic drinks. There were, however, differences in the drinking habits of Czechs and Slovaks. In 1983 the Czech Socialist Republic's per capita consumption of beer was 154.1 liters, whereas the Slovak Socialist Republic's per capita consumption was 111.8 liters. (Czech beer is world famous; Pilsner beer, for example, is named after the city of Plzeň.) The Slovak Socialist Republic, on the other hand, consumed hard liquor at a rate of 12.2 liters per capita, while the Czech Socialist Republic came in at 6.3 liters. Wine consumption was slightly higher in Slovakia (17.0 liters) than in the Czech lands (14.8 liters). On the whole, the population spent about 19 percent of its total expenditures for food products (about Kčs19 billion annually) on alcohol. Some consumer goods might have been in short supply, but alcohol, especially beer, was plentiful and omnipresent. Czechoslovakia, along with France, West Germany, and East Germany, was among the world's highest consumers of alcoholic beverages, and consumption was increasing.

In the Czech Socialist Republic, consumption of alcohol was linked to 47 percent of all violent crimes and 56 percent of all rape cases. In the Slovak Socialist Republic, the figures were about the same, alcohol figuring in about 50 percent of all crimes.

In 1984 alcoholism was the third most frequent reason cited by women seeking divorce. ("Irreconcilable differences" was first, followed by "infidelity.") Over 18 percent of the women involved



in divorces gave alcoholism as a reason, whereas only 1 percent of men secured divorces for this reason. In Slovakia 26 percent of women and 2 percent of men divorced because of alcoholism; in the Czech lands these figures were roughly 16 percent for women and 1 percent for men.

Although in the 1980s the press started attacking alcoholism more vociferously than it had in the past, little was actually done to fight the problem. Production of alcoholic beverages increased, and they were sold at affordable prices, while production of soft drinks was neglected and their quality was very poor. In October 1984, the government sharply raised the price of alcoholic beverages, but this measure was not intended to reduce alcohol consumption, inasmuch as the price of nonalcoholic beverages was also raised significantly. Because the government had a monopoly on the sale of alcoholic beverages, it would have lost a great deal of money if the country had suddenly become "dry." (Spending on alcohol was also a means of absorbing excess savings because there was little in the way of quality consumer goods to spend them on.) Rather than trying to prohibit alcohol consumption, the government relied on education, especially of the young, but without much success. The government also established ineffective alcoholism boards, which citizens viewed as a token gesture.

Drugs have also been a growing problem in recent years, especially among young people, although abuse was not believed to be at Western levels. As of 1987 the printing of drug-abuse statistics was banned, so that much of what was known about the problem came from Western or nonofficial Czechoslovak sources. The country had an estimated 500,000 drug addicts, although this figure consisted mostly of those addicted to various kinds of medicines. Drug users were a relatively young group; most were in their teens and twenties. According to Charter 77, about 50 percent of addicts were males between fifteen and nineteen years of age. In the case of females, more adult women were addicted than teenage girls. Urine tests of prison inmates showed that about 50 percent used drugs.

Most of the drugs came from pharmacies and were widely available, often without a prescription. Such drugs included amphetamines and barbiturates; codeine was especially popular. Marijuana, heroin, cocaine, LSD, and other illegal drugs, although rare, were also available. They were often smuggled into the country, although sometimes they were produced in clandestine domestic laboratories by persons having a knowledge of chemistry. Drug dealers were usually taxi drivers, hotel employees, black marketers, money changers, and students.

It was also a common practice to buy certain over-the-counter drugs and mix them. A 1961 law that remained in force in 1987 covered only the production and distribution of illegal narcotics (heroin, cocaine, and marijuana) and made no provision for drugs produced from legal drugs. Pharmaceutical supplies and prescription drugs were sometimes illegally diverted to an enterprising person who would concoct new drugs and sell them on the black market. New legislation had been proposed, but no details were available in mid-1987.

Facilities for the treatment of drug addiction were inadequate. Although in 1983 about 8,400 addicts were officially registered in hospital psychiatric departments—1,700 at the Prague Drug Abuse Center alone—only a few beds were set aside for addicts, and specialized care and supervision were rarely provided. There were three drug abuse centers in the country, one each in Prague, Brno, and Liberec, but they could not adequately cope with addicts.

Charter 77 tried to bring the growing drug problem to the attention of the government, calling for more public awareness. The official attitude, however, was that drug abuse, characteristic of sick, decaying, bourgeois Western society, did not exist in socialist Czechoslovakia because there was no reason for it to exist.

## **Penal Code**

Other than for the period of Nazi domination, Czechoslovakia operated under two different penal codes for the first thirty-two years of its existence. Bohemia and Moravia used the Austrian Penal Code, which had been in effect in those areas before independence, whereas Slovakia used the Hungarian Penal Code. Both codes had been amended during the years of independence, but no distinctively Czechoslovak code had been formulated until the KSČ hastily improvised one after the coup.

This 1950 Penal code was harsh and repressive, reflecting the siege mentality of the communist elite, who felt threatened by the people they ruled. Amendments in the mid-1950s eliminated some of the harshest aspects, and a new code was issued in 1961, with a revision in 1973. The 1961 code underwent no significant alteration during the Prague Spring in 1968.

The Czechoslovak Constitution of 1960 guarantees basic political freedoms while negating them in Article 34, which states that citizens are “in all their actions to pay heed to the interests of the socialist state and the society of the working people.” This article thus provides a way for laws to be written that infringe on rights guaranteed elsewhere in the Constitution.



*Morning exercises for the inmates of a penitentiary near Prague  
Courtesy United Nations (J. Foxx)*

Still in effect in late 1987, the Czechoslovak Penal Code of 1961 enroached upon such constitutionally guaranteed rights as freedom of speech, the press, and association. According to provisions of the code's "Sedition" section, people participating in mass demonstrations "against the Republic, its organs or public organizations of the working people" could be punished by sentences of up to 15 years' imprisonment, and under certain circumstances—for example, proof of conspiracy, acts resulting in death, or acts committed during a declared defense emergency—even death. Article 98 dictated punishments for "subversive activity against the social and governmental system of the Republic, against its territorial integrity, defensive capacity or independence, or against its international interests." Article 100 specified prison sentences of up to five years for inciting two or more people against the subjects enumerated in Article 98 or "against the alliances or friendly relations between the Republic and other states." Articles 102 and 104 allowed for prison sentences for those who "publicly defame" the state or its officials or those of any state "belonging to the world socialist system." Article 112 stipulated prison sentences of up to three years for persons harming the interests of Czechoslovakia abroad.

Thus, the Penal Code provided that those who criticized the Czechoslovak government or its policies would be imprisoned. Sentences tended to be more severe for crimes against the state or state property than for crimes against the person or personal property. The death penalty, although infrequently carried out, was permitted for several crimes against the state and for a few heinous crimes against the person.

The 1973 revisions to the code increased the maximum allowable prison sentence from fifteen to twenty-five years for so-called

antisocialist crimes. The death penalty was extended to cover hijacking or kidnapping crimes in which death resulted and to cover cases in which such crimes were committed during a state of emergency. Penalties were increased for fleeing the country and for disclosing state secrets abroad. Articles 106 and 107, concerning state secrets, were expanded to include so many areas of information about the government, the economy, the military, and other institutions that news coverage became almost meaningless. Published articles or public statements only mildly critical of the regime have led to arrests and conviction, and criticisms of the Soviet Union or of Soviet involvement in Czechoslovakia have resulted in prison sentences.

Although the 1961 code was harsh, it was never adhered to strictly. The KSC often issued secret instructions to judges to ensure that certain court rulings would be in accord with its wishes. The Dubček reformers attempted to stop this practice during the period of the Prague Spring, but it was resumed during the subsequent period of "normalization."

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Penal Code with its amendments allowed the regime to protect itself against any further democratization attempts. When the Charter 77 movement emerged, the laws that the authorities could use to crush the incipient democratic force were in the code. Because the offenses for which people were being arrested, e.g., signing Charter 77 or speaking publicly against repression, could be construed as crimes under the Penal Code, those arrested were charged as criminals when in fact they were political offenders.

In 1984 the government introduced a form of punishment for political prisoners called "protective supervision," a kind of internal exile and house arrest. In two such cases, Charter 77 signatories Ladislav Lis and Jan Litomiský were required to report daily to a local police station at a specific time, seven days a week. Violations, including tardiness, could be punished by additional sentences. Those subject to such measures were also subject to house searches at any time.

### **Criminal Procedure Code**

The 1961 Criminal Procedure Code states that a person will not be prosecuted for acts not established as crimes in law and will not be considered guilty until tried by competent authority. An accused may select his or her own attorney and, if in detention, may consult privately with counsel. During trial defendants may not be prohibited from making statements on all charges and on evidence brought against them; they may describe circumstances, exhibit evidence, and make motions in their defense. The code provides

that the accused be informed of his rights at appropriate times during preliminary investigations, detention, and trial. Trials are conducted in the language of the defendant and in a manner suited to the person's educational background or ability to understand court proceedings. Only evidence submitted during the trial can be considered in determining the verdict and sentence.

Police are restricted by the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, but violations occur. In cases of search and seizure, for example, a warrant is required before police may enter a home. The only exceptions are emergency situations when an official cannot be found and when evidence may be lost or destroyed. Despite the provision, house searches have been conducted without warrants, and even though the practice declined during the 1970s and 1980s, people continued to complain that they did not feel secure in their own homes. Pretrial detention is another area where the code has been violated. Two months is the legal limit, but some cases have extended for six months and longer despite the law. For the protection of arrested persons, the code provides that they may be held for no longer than forty-eight hours, at which time a government prosecutor must make a decision concerning release or holding for investigation. However, according to reports from many who had been arrested on political charges, the forty-eight-hour limitation was frequently circumvented.

Another article of the Criminal Procedure Code that was violated with seeming impunity dealt with the conduct of trials. Although the code states that trials must be open, in many cases involving political charges courtrooms have been packed with spectators selected by the authorities, and in most cases foreign correspondents have been barred. Amnesty International reported that in 1976 a courtroom in which four young musicians were tried was literally filled with people invited by officials, leaving only ten spaces for the families, friends, and supporters of the defendants. In that case, the prosecutor also made changes in the case file without notifying defense lawyers, and the judge refused the defense lawyers' request for a postponement that would enable them to study the changes. The defense was also refused permission to call witnesses who had given testimony in the pretrial investigation. In a similar fashion, during the so-called Jazz Section trial in early 1987, the court did not allow the section's long-time counsel to participate or even to attend the trial.

## **Penal System**

According to federal law, "The purpose of imprisonment is to prevent the convicted person from engaging in continued

criminal activity and to educate him systematically toward becoming a law-abiding citizen. The execution of imprisonment must not humiliate human dignity." The laws regulating the operation of prisons appear just and humane and take into account up-to-date theories of penology. Prison authorities are directed to treat prisoners with compassion and respect for human dignity; education and rehabilitation, rather than punishment, are stressed. Prisoners are required to work, but the law states that work hours will be comparable to those in outside society. Remuneration will be fair, and prisoners may build up savings while incarcerated. Cultural and educational projects are to be provided for nonwork hours, and prison libraries are to be well stocked. From first-hand accounts of released prisoners, however, it appears that the actuality of prison life fell far short of the norms directed by law.

As of 1987, prison conditions in Czechoslovakia were poor, especially for political prisoners, who often were subjected to the "third category" of imprisonment, the so-called "harshest regime." Some former prisoners complained of beatings by authorities and confinement in substandard cells. Others told of beatings and ill-treatment by fellow prisoners that were ignored, or possibly encouraged, by guards. Complaints about food were widespread, and dietary deficiencies led to ailments that required medical attention after release. Medical care in prisons was said to be deficient, and family visits were sometimes curtailed or prohibited. These shortcomings were routinely reported during the 1970s and 1980s by Amnesty International, which concluded that prison conditions in Czechoslovakia fell below "internationally accepted standards."

A January 1979 report in Vienna's *Die Presse* about prison conditions in Czechoslovakia referred to the "disastrous" conditions of that country's sixteen remand prisons, or those prisons used for pretrial detention. Cells were said to be tiny, facilities primitive, and medical care haphazard. Prisoners were charged a daily rate for their upkeep, which they were required to pay after release. Some prisoners reportedly owed as much as an average worker earned in five months. The more than twenty non-remand prisons were said to be in extremely poor condition, most having been built prior to World War II or even prior to World War I and never modernized. Discipline in the prisons was said to have become more severe after 1968. Punishments of prisoners included cutting the already small food ration or taking away the privilege of receiving a package once every three months. As had been reported frequently by released prisoners, political offenders were confined with common criminals, and the educational programs called for by law rarely existed in practice. Prisoners were allowed one library book

and one newspaper per week. It was reported that, more often than not, the library book was a collection of speeches by some party functionary.

Physical abuse of political prisoners by prison personnel was also not unknown. In 1987 *Die Presse* reported that one prisoner serving a one-year term for alleged “incitement to rebellion” was beaten so badly by the prison warden that he could neither stand nor walk without the help of police officers when making a court appearance; moreover, scars on his abdomen showed that prison officials and investigation officers had extinguished cigarettes on his body.

Prisoners or former prisoners who complained publicly about mistreatment and poor prison conditions were severely punished. For reporting on harsh conditions at several prisons, Jiří Wolf was accused of “divulging state secrets” in December 1983 and given a six-year sentence at the harshest regime. In June 1984, Jiří Gruntorad received an additional fourteen-month sentence for complaining that he was beaten by a prison guard.

Details on the total number of penal institutions (referred to as corrective educational facilities) were not routinely publicized. Well-known prisons are located at Prague-Pankrác, Bory-Plzeň, and Litoměřice in Bohemia; Mírov and Ostrava in Moravia, and Leopoldov in Slovakia. Facilities at Prague-Ruzyně and Brno-Bohunice served primarily as detention centers for people being held during pretrial investigation or those awaiting appeal hearings. The prison system, including the Corps of Corrective Education (prison guards), was administered by the governments of the Czech and Slovak socialist republics through their ministries of justice.

### **Police Repression**

A manifesto made public under the title Charter 77 in January 1977 challenged the government to live up to its own laws in regard to the rights—human, political, and social—of the Czechoslovak people (see Charter 77, ch. 4; Appendix D). The manifesto revealed that Dubček-style reformism was alive and well eight years after Dubček himself had been forced into obscurity. Signed during the next two years by several hundred citizens representing the entire spectrum of economic, political, and social life, the document claimed to be apolitical, but in an authoritarian state any demand for a lessening of authoritarianism is inherently political, and the government reacted accordingly. The police responded by sharply increasing the very activities of which the Charter complained, that is, unwarranted arrests, illegal searches, harsh interrogations, and

general harassment. Charter spokesman Jan Patočka, a well-known and highly respected retired professor, died one week after an intensive interrogation by State Security agents. Another prominent signer, Václav Havel, who had been blacklisted as a playwright for earlier support of Dubček, was arrested immediately, held for four months, and then released without being charged. Havel was rearrested in 1979 and sentenced to prison for antistate crimes.

Repression continued into the 1980s as the dissidents refused to give up their demand that the basic laws of the land apply to everyone, including those officials sworn to uphold them. In April 1978, a group calling itself the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted (Výbor naobranu nespravedlivě stíhaných—VONS) was formed to publicize the police vendetta against the signers of Charter 77. The new group itself then became a police target, and in October 1979 several of its members were convicted on charges of subversion and sentenced to prison terms. By early 1987, the Charter 77 movement and its offspring, VONS, were still clinging tenaciously to their demand that legal processes be observed, a demand that had brought grief to the members but had also attracted world attention. The movement remained small, and the security agencies always had the upper hand, but the dissidents refused to capitulate.

The use of brutal methods by the Czechoslovak police continued into the 1980s. In a 1984 report, Amnesty International cited Czechoslovakia as a country that used torture as a tool of state policy. Yet continued concern in the West with human rights in Czechoslovakia may have helped to ameliorate the situation after that time. In a 1986 telephone interview with Austrian radio, a Charter 77 spokesman said that the political oppression of human rights activists had diminished somewhat and was not as severe as it had been in the early 1980s. The police also showed restraint at a December 1985 demonstration in downtown Prague commemorating the death of John Lennon, a restraint that had been lacking at a similar demonstration the previous year. Nevertheless, marked oppression of religious groups and believers continued unabated into the 1980s (see Religion, ch. 2). As one Western observer has suggested, this differentiated approach toward dissent indicates that the Czechoslovak government considered religious activists, who are supported by a large segment of the population, to be more of a threat than a small number of political dissidents.

\* \* \*

A number of excellent monographs concerning various aspects of Czechoslovak national security have been published in the 1980s.



Party control of the military, the professionalism and nationalism of the officer corps, and Czechoslovak-Soviet military relations are discussed in *East European Military Establishments* by A. Ross Johnson, Robert W. Dean, and Alexander Alexiev. William J. Lewis's *The Warsaw Pact* presents useful information about the structure, training, and equipment of both the ČSLA and the internal security forces. A former wing commander in the Czechoslovak Air Force, Zbyněk Čeřovský, has written several excellent articles for *Armed Forces* based on his experience and insights. Much has been written by Condoleezza Rice concerning the reliability of the ČSLA and the cohesion and loyalties of its military elite. Richard C. Martin has focused on force modernization and how it may affect the performance of the ČSLA in a future war. Otto Ulč, a former Czechoslovak judge, has continued to write highly entertaining and informative monographs on various aspects of life in Czechoslovakia, including dissent, crime, and public attitudes toward the emplacement of Soviet nuclear-tipped missiles in the country. And finally, *The Military Balance*, published annually by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the *Yearbook on International Communist Affairs*, and the various Janes publications are convenient sources of information on personnel strength and weapons. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)



## Appendix A

### Table

- 1 Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors
- 2 Estimated Population of Principal Cities, January 1986
- 3 Population by Size of Community, 1950 and 1980
- 4 Ethnic Groups, Selected Years, 1930-84
- 5 Population by Social Group, Selected Years, 1930-84
- 6 Education Institutions and Enrollment, Selected School Years, 1948-49 to 1985-86
- 7 Labor Force by Sector, 1960 and 1985
- 8 Production of Selected Industrial Commodities, 1985
- 9 Imports and Exports by Commodity Category, 1985
- 10 Direction of Foreign Trade, 1985



Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients and Factors

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters .....	0.04	inches
Centimeters .....	0.39	inches
Meters .....	3.3	feet
Kilometers .....	0.62	miles
Hectares (10,000 m <sup>2</sup> ) .....	2.47	acres
Square kilometers .....	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters .....	35.3	cubic feet
Liters .....	0.26	gallons
Kilograms .....	2.2	pounds
Metric tons .....	0.98	long tons
.....	1.1	short tons
.....	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius .....	9	degrees Fahrenheit
(Centigrade)	divide by 5 and add 32	

Table 2. Estimated Population of Principal Cities, January 1986

City	Population	City	Population
Prague .....	1,193,513	Olomouc .....	106,086
Bratislava .....	417,103	Liberec .....	100,917
Brno .....	385,684	Hradec Králové .....	99,571
Ostrava .....	327,791	České Budějovice .....	94,451
Košice .....	222,175	Pardubice .....	94,206
Plzeň .....	175,244	Havířov .....	91,873

Source: Based on information from *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 91.

*Czechoslovakia: A Country Study*

*Table 3. Population by Size of Community, 1950 and 1980  
(as percentage of total population)*

Size of Community	1950	1980
0-199 .....	4.5	0.7
200-499 .....	14.1	5.1
500-999 .....	15.8	10.0
1,000-1,999 .....	14.3	11.6
2,000-4,999 .....	14.2	13.2
5,000-9,999 .....	7.4	8.6
10,000-19,999 .....	6.1	10.8
20,000-49,999 .....	6.7	11.3
50,000-999,999 .....	2.9	10.8
100,000 and over .....	14.0	17.9
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Based on information from *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 62.

*Table 4. Ethnic Groups, Selected Years, 1930-84  
(as percentage of total population)*

Ethnic Group	1930	1950	1970	1980	1984
Czech .....	53.0	67.8	65.0	63.6	63.4
Slovak .....	16.4	26.4	29.2	30.7	31.3
Hungarian .....	4.3	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.8
German .....	23.6	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.4
Polish .....	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
Ukrainian and Russian .....	0.8	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.3
Other and undetermined .....	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>100.0*</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*Figures do not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 62; and *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 95.

Table 5. Population by Social Group, Selected Years, 1930-1984  
(as percentage of total population)

Social Group	1930	1950	1970	1984
Workers .....	57.3	56.5	60.1	48.1
Other employees .....	6.8	16.5	27.4	40.7
Members of cooperatives .....	---	0.1	11.1	8.8
Other employees of cooperatives .....	---	---	2.0	0.9
Small and medium-size farmers .....	22.1	20.2	1.2	0.2
Self-employed professionals .....	---	3.1 <sup>1</sup>	0.1	0.1
Small craftspeople and tradespeople .....	8.2	3.7	0.1	0.1 <sup>2</sup>
Capitalists .....	5.5	---	---	---
TOTAL <sup>3</sup> .....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

--- means negligible.

<sup>1</sup> Data include remaining capitalists.

<sup>2</sup> 1983.

<sup>3</sup> Figures do not add to 100 percent because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 62; and *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 95.

Table 6. Education Institutions and Enrollment, Selected School Years,  
1948-49 to 1985-86

Institution	1948-49	1960-61	1970-71	1985-86
Preschool				
Number .....	4,664	6,633	8,227	11,477
Students .....	205,416	285,863	377,593	681,515
Primary				
Number .....	14,286	12,581	10,831	6,332
Students .....	1,523,290	2,152,834	1,966,448	2,074,403
Secondary				
Gymnasiums				
Number .....	292	440	343	343
Students .....	70,440	73,778	110,038	134,392
Vocational				
Number .....	643	725	706	562
Students .....	92,610	238,201	286,407	261,422
University				
Number .....	22	50	37	36
Students .....	64,703	94,040	131,099	168,699

Source: Based on information from *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1986*, Prague, 1987, 546, 549, 566; and *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1985*, Prague, 1986, 388, 390, 393.

Table 7. Labor Force by Sector, 1960 and 1985  
(in thousands)

Sector	1960	1985
<b>Productive</b>		
Agriculture .....	1,466,006	945,562
Forestry .....	101,727	94,236
Industry .....	2,253,061	2,845,283
Construction .....	457,898	630,293
Geology .....	8,863	17,909
Design .....	42,374	78,113
Freight transport .....	182,040	235,878
Industrial communications .....	36,276	56,345
Internal trade .....	393,607	682,596
Foreign trade .....	16,464	25,806
Technical equipment supply .....	32,122	68,823
Agricultural produce purchasing .....	30,644	38,927
Publishing and other productive activities .....	11,461	16,193
Total productive .....	5,032,543	5,735,964
<b>Nonproductive</b>		
Public transport .....	111,463	152,495
Nonindustrial communications .....	36,276	56,345
Science, research, and development .....	96,449	175,045
Residential management .....	29,244	100,127
Residential services .....	14,150	40,343
Traffic services .....	2,080	6,511
Communal services .....	77,567	140,988
Education .....	215,765	435,322
Culture .....	49,876	126,093
Health care .....	156,138	326,404
Social work .....	12,815	47,296
Trade and technical services .....	13,887	54,361
Finance .....	21,928	25,280
Insurance .....	5,714	7,794
Administration, judiciary, prosecution, and arbitration .....	97,719	118,061
Social organizations .....	21,641	55,670
Other .....	9,422	1,853
Total nonproductive .....	972,134	1,869,988
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	<b>6,004,677</b>	<b>7,605,952</b>

Source: Based on information from *Historická statistická ročenka ČSSR*, Prague, 1985, 146-47; and *Statistická ročenka ČSSR, 1986*, Prague, 1986, 184.



Table 8. Production of Selected Industrial Commodities, 1985

Commodity	Unit	Production
Bituminous coal . . . . .	thousands of tons	26,223
Brown coal and lignite . . . . .	-do-	100,387
Electricity . . . . .	millions of kilowatt-hours	80,622
Pig iron . . . . .	thousands of tons	9,562
Crude steel . . . . .	-do-	15,036
Rolled steel . . . . .	-do-	11,037
Cement . . . . .	-do-	10,265
Lime . . . . .	-do-	3,227
Nitrogen fertilizer . . . . .	thousands of tons of nitrogen	582
Plastics . . . . .	thousands of tons	1,100
Chemical fibers . . . . .	-do-	193
Automobiles and supply vehicles . . . . .	thousands	184
Automobiles . . . . .	-do-	177
Bicycles . . . . .	-do-	731
Trucks . . . . .	-do-	48
Integrated circuits . . . . .	millions of korunas*	2,833
Digital computers . . . . .	units	1,460
Metal-cutting machine tools . . . . .	millions of korunas	4,575
Forming machine tools . . . . .	-do-	1,625
Agricultural equipment . . . . .	-do-	3,195
Wheeled and crawler tractors . . . . .	-do-	35
Washing machines . . . . .	thousands	445
Refrigerators and freezers . . . . .	-do-	480
Freezers . . . . .	-do-	160
Televisions . . . . .	-do-	432
Color televisions . . . . .	-do-	193
Furniture . . . . .	millions of korunas	7,819
Paper and cardboard . . . . .	thousands of tons	964
Cotton fabric . . . . .	millions of meters	606

\* For value of the koruna—see Glossary.

Source: Based on information from *Statistika*, No. 3, Prague, 1986, 137.

Table 9. Imports and Exports by Commodity Category, 1985  
(in millions of United States dollars) <sup>1</sup>

Commodity Category	Imports	Exports
Machinery and equipment . . . . .	6,156	10,152
Fuels, minerals, and metals . . . . .	7,229	2,369
Agricultural and forestry products . . . . .	2,165	1,122
Manufactured consumer goods . . . . .	1,020	2,743
Other . . . . .	1,324	1,425
<b>TOTAL . . . . .</b>	<b>17,894</b>	<b>17,810 <sup>2</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup> Imports and exports are free on board. The values of imports and exports by commodity category were calculated by applying East European data on percentage breakdowns to total imports expressed in United States dollars.

<sup>2</sup> Figures do not add to total because of rounding.

Source: Based on information from United States, Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Center, *Handbook of Economic Statistics, 1987*, Washington, 1987, 105-06.

Table 10. Direction of Foreign Trade, 1985  
(in millions of United States dollars) <sup>1</sup>

Country	Imports	Exports
Soviet Union	8,256	7,802
Eastern Europe	5,133	4,757
Developing countries	2,711	2,778
Less developed countries	711	1,281
<b>TOTAL <sup>2</sup> . . . . .</b>	<b>17,894</b>	<b>17,810</b>

<sup>1</sup> Domestic currency converted into United States dollars at the exchange rate prevailing at the time of the transactions. Exports and imports are free on board. Trade with the communist countries was derived by converting the value of the trade expressed in the currency of each East European country to rubles and then to United States dollars at the prevailing foreign exchange rate.

<sup>2</sup> Totals as published.

Source: Based on information from United States, Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Center, *Handbook of Economic Statistics, 1987*, Washington, 1987, 103-04.

## Appendix B

### The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

THE FOUNDING of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (also referred to as Comecon, CMEA, CEMA, or the Council) dates from a 1949 communiqué agreed upon by the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. The precise reasons for Comecon's formation in the aftermath of World War II are quite complex, given the political and economic turmoil of that time. However, Joseph Stalin's desire to enforce Soviet domination of the small states of Eastern Europe and to mollify some states that had expressed interest in the Marshall Plan (see Glossary) were the primary factors in Comecon's formation. The stated purpose of the organization was to enable member states "to exchange economic experiences, extend technical aid to one another, and to render mutual assistance with respect to raw materials, foodstuffs, machines, equipment, etc."

Until the late 1960s, *cooperation* was the official term used to describe Comecon activities. In 1971, with the development and adoption of the Comprehensive Program for the Further Extension and Improvement of Cooperation and the Further Development of Socialist Economic Integration by Comecon Member Countries, Comecon activities were officially termed *integration*. In simplest terms, economic integration is defined as internationalizing the production of manufactured and semimanufactured goods, resources, and services. More specifically, integration attempts to equalize "differences in relative scarcities of goods and services between states through the deliberate elimination of barriers to trade and other forms of interaction." Although such equalization has not been a pivotal point in the formation and implementation of Comecon's economic policies, improved economic integration has always been Comecon's goal.

Soviet domination of Comecon is a function of its economic, political, and military power. The Soviet Union possesses 90 percent of Comecon members' land and energy resources, 70 percent of their population, 65 percent of their national income, and industrial and military capacities second in the world only to those of the United States. The location of many Comecon committee headquarters in Moscow and the large number of Soviet nationals in positions of authority also testify to the power of the Soviet Union within the organization.

Soviet efforts to exercise political power over its Comecon partners, however, have been met with determined opposition. The "sovereign equality" of members, as described in the Comecon Charter, assures members that if they do not wish to participate in a Comecon project they may abstain. East European members have frequently invoked this principle in fear that economic interdependence would further reduce political sovereignty. Thus, neither Comecon nor the Soviet Union as a major force within Comecon has supranational authority. Although this fact ensures some degree of freedom from Soviet economic domination of the other members, it also deprives Comecon of necessary power to achieve maximum economic efficiency.

As of 1987, those countries holding full membership in Comecon were the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Hungary, Romania, Poland, Cuba, the Mongolian People's Republic (Mongolia), and Vietnam. (For the purposes of this appendix, the phrases "East bloc," the "six European members," or the "European members of Comecon" are used interchangeably to refer to Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. When Yugoslavia and Albania are referred to, they are mentioned specifically by name.) The primary documents governing the objectives, organization, and functions of Comecon are the Charter of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (first adopted in 1959 and subsequently amended; all references herein are to the amended 1974 text); the Comprehensive Program for the Further Extension and Improvement of Cooperation and the Further Development of Socialist Economic Integration by the Comecon Member Countries, adopted in 1971; and the Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000, adopted in December 1985. The 1985 Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress and the rise to power of Soviet general secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev have increased Soviet influence in Comecon operations and have led to attempts to give Comecon some degree of supranational authority. The Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress seeks to improve economic cooperation through the development of a more efficient and interconnected scientific and technical base.

## **Membership, Structure, Nature, and Scope**

### **Membership**

In a January 1949 meeting in Moscow, representatives of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet

Union reached the formal decision to establish the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. The communiqué announcing the event cited the refusal of these countries to “subordinate themselves to the dictates of the Marshall Plan” (see Glossary) and their intention to resist the trade boycott imposed by “the United States, Britain and certain other countries of Western Europe” as the major factors contributing to the decision “to organize a more broadly based economic cooperation among the countries of the people’s democracy and the USSR.”

Albania joined the six original members in February 1949, and East Germany entered Comecon in 1950. (Albania, although it had not formally revoked its membership as of mid-1987, stopped participating in Comecon activities in 1961.) Mongolia acceded to membership in 1962, and in the 1970s Comecon expanded its membership to include Cuba (1972) and Vietnam (1978). As of 1987 there were ten full members: the Soviet Union, six East European countries, and three extraregional members (see table A, this Appendix).

Geography, therefore, no longer unites Comecon members. Wide variations in economic size and level of economic development have also tended to generate divergent interests among the member countries. All these factors have combined to give rise to significant differences in the member states’ expectations about the benefits to be derived from membership in Comecon.

Unity is provided instead by political and ideological factors. All Comecon members are “united by a commonality of fundamental class interests and the ideology of Marxism-Leninism” and have common approaches to economic ownership (state versus private) and management (plan versus market). In 1949 the ruling communist parties of the founding states were also linked internationally through the Cominform (see Glossary), from which Yugoslavia had been expelled the previous year. Although the Cominform was disbanded in 1956, interparty links continue to be strong among Comecon members, and all participate in periodic international conferences of communist parties. Comecon provides a mechanism through which its leading member, the Soviet Union, has sought to foster economic links with and among its closest political and military allies. The East European members of Comecon are also militarily allied with the Soviet Union in the Warsaw Pact (see Appendix C).

Official statements stress, however, that Comecon is an open international organization. Its Charter (Article II, Paragraph 2) invites membership from “other countries which share the aims and principles of the Council and have expressed their willingness

*Table A. National Participation in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), November 1986*<sup>1</sup>

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<u>Member Countries</u>	
Bulgaria (1949)	Albania (1949) <sup>2</sup>
Czechoslovakia (1949)	East Germany (1950)
Hungary (1949)	Mongolia (1962)
Poland (1949)	Cuba (1972)
Romania (1949)	Vietnam (1978)
Soviet Union (1949)	

<u>Nonmember Countries</u>	
That regularly sent observer delegations to annual sessions in 1981-86:	That have concluded formal agreements of cooperation with Comecon:
Afghanistan	Yugoslavia (1964)
Angola	Finland (1973)
Ethiopia	Iraq (1975)
Laos	Mexico (1975)
Mozambique	Nicaragua (1983)
Nicaragua	Mozambique (1985)
South Yemen	
Yugoslavia	

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<sup>1</sup> Dates of accession in parentheses.

<sup>2</sup> Albania joined Comecon in February 1949, one month after the organization was formed by the original six members. Although it has not formally revoked its membership, Albania has not participated in Comecon activities since 1961.

to assume the obligations contained in the . . . Charter.” In the late 1950s, a number of other communist-ruled countries—China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea), Mongolia, Vietnam, and Yugoslavia—were invited to participate as observers in Comecon sessions. Although Mongolia and Vietnam later gained full membership, China stopped attending Comecon sessions after 1961. Yugoslavia negotiated a form of associate status in the organization, specified in its 1964 agreement with Comecon.

There are four kinds of relationships a country may have with Comecon: full membership, associate membership, nonsocialist "cooperant" status, and "observer country" status. Mutual agreement determines the precise nature of the relationship. As has been noted, Comecon has ten full members. Yugoslavia is the only country considered to have associate member status. On the basis of the 1964 agreement, Yugoslavia participates in twenty-one of the thirty-two key Comecon institutions as if it were a full member. Finland, Iraq, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Mozambique have a nonsocialist cooperant status with Comecon. Because the governments of these countries are not empowered to conclude agreements in the name of private companies, the governments do not take part in Comecon operations. They are represented in Comecon by commissions made up of members of the government and the business community. The commissions are empowered to sign various "framework" agreements with Comecon's Joint Commission on Cooperation. Since 1957 Comecon has allowed certain countries with communist or pro-Soviet governments to attend sessions as observers. In November 1986, delegations from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Laos, Nicaragua, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) attended the 42d Council Session as observers.

## **Structure**

Although not formally part of the organization's hierarchy, the Conference of First Secretaries of Communist and Workers' Parties and of the Heads of Government of the Comecon Member Countries is Comecon's most important organ. These party and government leaders gather for conference meetings regularly to discuss topics of mutual interest. Because of the rank of conference participants, decisions made here have considerable influence on the actions taken by Comecon and its organs.

The official hierarchy of Comecon consists of the Session of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the Executive Committee of the Council, the Secretariat of the Council, four council committees, twenty-four standing commissions, six interstate conferences, two scientific institutes, and several associated organizations (see fig. A, this Appendix). These bodies will be examined in turn.

The Session, officially the highest Comecon organ, examines fundamental problems of socialist economic integration and directs the activities of the Secretariat and other subordinate organizations. Delegations from each Comecon member country attend these meetings. Prime ministers usually head the delegations, which meet during the second quarter of each year in a member country's

capital (the location of the meeting is determined by a system of rotation based on the Cyrillic alphabet). All interested parties must consider recommendations handed down by the Session. A treaty or other kind of legal agreement implements adopted recommendations. Comecon itself may adopt decisions only on organizational and procedural matters pertaining to itself and its organs.

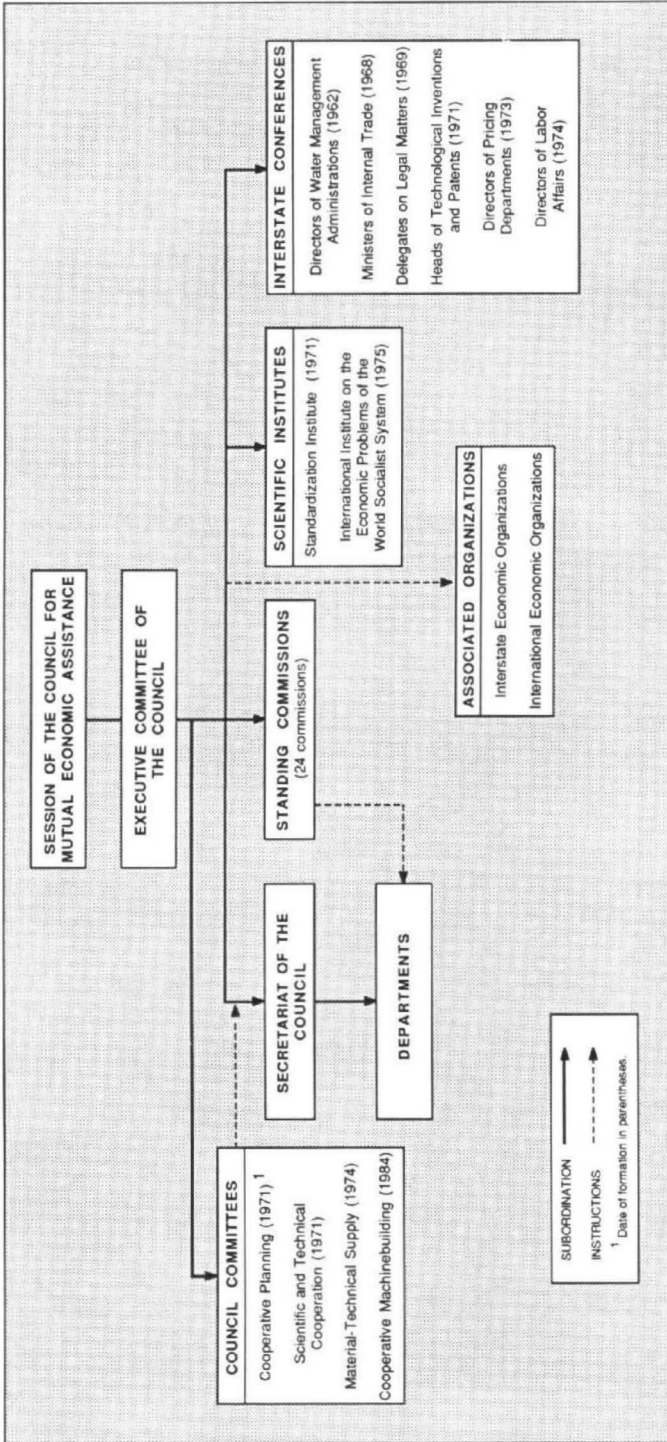
Each country appoints one permanent representative to maintain relations between members and Comecon between annual meetings. An extraordinary Session, such as the one in December 1985, may be held with the consent of at least one-third of the members. Such meetings usually take place in Moscow.

The highest executive organ in Comecon, the Executive Committee, is entrusted with elaborating policy recommendations and supervising their implementation between sessions. In addition, it supervises work on plan coordination and scientific-technical cooperation. Composed of one representative from each member country, usually a deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Executive Committee meets quarterly, usually in Moscow. In 1971 and 1974, the Executive Committee acquired economic departments that rank above the standing commissions. These economic departments considerably strengthened the authority and importance of the Executive Committee.

There are four council committees: Council Committee for Cooperation in Planning, Council Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation, Council Committee for Cooperation in Material and Technical Supply, and Council Committee for Cooperation in Machine Building. Their mission is "to ensure the comprehensive examination and a multilateral settlement of the major problems of cooperation among member countries in the economy, science, and technology." All committees are headquartered in Moscow and usually meet there. These committees advise the standing commissions, the Secretariat, the interstate conferences, and the scientific institutes in their areas of specialization. Their jurisdiction is generally wider than that of the standing commissions because they have the right to make policy recommendations to other Comecon organizations.

The Council Committee for Cooperation in Planning is the most important of the four. It coordinates the national economic plans of Comecon members. As such, it ranks in importance only after the Session and the Executive Committee. Made up of the chairmen of Comecon members' national central planning offices, the Council Committee for Cooperation in Planning draws up draft agreements for joint projects, adopts a resolution approving these projects, and recommends approval to the concerned parties. If





Source: Based on information from O. A. Chukanov, ed., *Nauchno-tekhnicheskoe sotrudnichestvo stran SEV*, Moscow, 1986; and Jozef M. van Brabant, *Socialist Economic Integration*, Cambridge, 1980.

Figure A. Structure of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, 1986

its decisions were not subject to approval by national governments and parties, this committee would be considered Comecon's supranational planning body.

The international Secretariat, Comecon's only permanent body, is Comecon's primary economic research and administrative organ. The secretary, who has been a Soviet official since Comecon's creation, is the official Comecon representative to Comecon member states and to other states and international organizations. Subordinate to the secretary are his deputy and the various departments of the Secretariat, which generally correspond to the standing commissions. The Secretariat's responsibilities include preparation and organization of Comecon sessions and other meetings conducted under the auspices of Comecon; compilation of digests on Comecon activities; conduct of economic and other research for Comecon members; and preparation of recommendations on various issues concerning Comecon operations.

In 1956 eight standing commissions were set up to help Comecon make recommendations pertaining to specific economic sectors. The commissions have been rearranged and renamed a number of times since the establishment of the first eight. In 1986 there were twenty-four standing commissions (see fig. B, this Appendix).

Each commission is headquartered in the capital of a member country and headed by one of that country's leading authorities in the field addressed by the commission. The Secretariat supervises the actual operations of the commissions. The standing commissions have authority only to make recommendations, which must then be approved by the Executive Committee, presented to the Session, and ratified by the interested member countries. Commissions usually meet twice a year in Moscow.

The six interstate conferences (on water management, internal trade, legal matters, inventions and patents, pricing, and labor affairs) serve as forums for discussing shared issues and experiences. They are purely consultative and generally act in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee or its specialized committees.

The scientific institutes on standardization and on economic problems of the world socialist system concern themselves with theoretical problems of international cooperation. Both are headquartered in Moscow and are staffed by experts from various member countries.

Several affiliated agencies, having a variety of relationships with Comecon, exist outside the official Comecon hierarchy. They serve to develop "direct links between appropriate bodies and organizations of Comecon member countries." These affiliated agencies are divided into two categories: intergovernmental economic

*Comecon headquarters,  
Moscow*



organizations (which work on a higher level in the member countries and generally deal with a wider range of managerial and coordinative activities) and international economic organizations (which work closer to the operational level of research, production, or trade). A few examples of the former are the International Bank for Economic Cooperation (manages the transferable ruble system), the International Investment Bank (in charge of financing joint projects), and Intermetal (encourages cooperation in ferrous metallurgy). International economic organizations generally take the form of either joint enterprises, international economic associations or unions, or international economic partnerships. The latter includes Interatominstrument (nuclear machinery producers), Intertekstil-mash (textile machinery producers), and Haldex (a Hungarian-Polish joint enterprise for reprocessing coal slag).

### **Nature of Operation**

Comecon is an interstate organization through which members attempt to coordinate economic activities of mutual interest and to develop multilateral economic, scientific, and technical cooperation. The Charter states that “the sovereign equality of all members” is fundamental to the organization and procedures of Comecon. The Comprehensive Program further emphasizes that the processes of integration of members’ economies are “completely voluntary and do not involve the creation of supranational bodies.”

Hence under the provisions of the Charter, each country has the right to equal representation and one vote in all organs of Comecon, regardless of the country's economic size or the size of its contribution to Comecon's budget.

The "interestedness" provisions of the Charter reinforce the principle of "sovereign equality." Comecon's recommendations and decisions can be adopted only upon agreement among the interested members, and each has the right to declare its "interest" in any matter under consideration. Furthermore, in the words of the Charter, "recommendations and decisions shall not apply to countries that have declared that they have no interest in a particular matter."

Although Comecon recognizes the principle of unanimity, disinterested parties do not have a veto but rather the right to abstain from participation. A declaration of disinterest cannot block a project unless the disinterested party's participation is vital. Otherwise, the Charter implies that the interested parties may proceed without the abstaining member, affirming that a country that has declared a lack of interest "may subsequently adhere to the recommendations and decisions adopted by the remaining members of the Council."

The descriptive term *Comecon* applies to all multilateral activities involving members of the organization and is not restricted to the direct functions of Comecon and its organs. This usage may be extended as well to bilateral relations among members, because in the system of socialist international economic relations, multilateral accords—typically of a general nature—tend to be implemented through a set of more detailed, bilateral agreements.

### **Comecon Versus the European Economic Community**

Although Comecon is loosely referred to as the "European Economic Community (EEC) of Eastern Europe," important contrasts exist between the two organizations. Both organizations administer economic integration; however, their economic structure, size, balance, and influence differ. The EEC incorporates the 270 million people of Western Europe into economic association through intergovernmental agreements aimed at maximizing profits and economic efficiency on a national and international scale. It is a regionally, not ideologically, integrated organization, whose members have all attained an accomplished level of industrialization and are considered to be roughly equal trading partners. The EEC is a supranational body that can adopt decisions (such as removing tariffs) and enforce them. Activity by members is based on initiative and enterprise from below (on the individual or enterprise level) and is strongly influenced by market forces.

Chemical Industry (East Berlin, 1956) <sup>1</sup>	Oil and Gas Industry (Bucharest, 1956)
Nonferrous Metallurgy (Budapest, 1956)	Electrical Power (Moscow, 1956)
Ferrous Metallurgy (Moscow, 1956)	Foreign Trade (Moscow, 1956)
Machine Building (Prague, 1956)	Agriculture (Sofia, 1956)
Coal Industry (Warsaw, 1956)	Construction (East Berlin, 1958)
Light Industry (Prague, 1958)	Transportation (Warsaw, 1958)
Peaceful Utilization of Atomic Energy (Moscow, 1960)	Standardization (East Berlin, 1962)
Currency and Finance (Moscow, 1962)	Statistics (Moscow, 1962)
Radio Technology and Electronics (Budapest, 1963)	Food Industry (Sofia, 1963)
Geology (Ulan Bator, 1963)	Post and Communications (Moscow, 1971)
Civil Aviation (Moscow, 1975)	Public Health (Moscow, 1975)
New Materials and Technologies for <sup>2</sup> Their Production and Development	Biotechnology <sup>2</sup>
<p><sup>1</sup> Location of headquarters and date of formation in parentheses.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> These two commissions were formed sometime after 1980. They were probably formed as a part of the Comprehensive Program of Scientific and Technical Progress approved at the 41st Council Session in December 1985. The location of their headquarters is unknown.</p>	

Source: Based on information from O. A. Chukanov, ed., *Nauchno-tekhnicheskoe sotrudnichestvo stran SEV*, Moscow, 1986, 10–11; and Jozef M. van Brabant, *Socialist Economic Integration*, Cambridge, 1980, 189.

Figure B. Comecon Standing Commissions, 1986

Comecon joins together 450 million people in 10 countries and on 3 continents. The level of industrialization from country to country differs greatly: the organization links three underdeveloped

countries—Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam—with some highly industrialized states. Likewise, a large national income difference exists between European and non-European members. The physical size, military power, and political and economic resource base of the Soviet Union make it the dominant member. In trade among Comecon members, the Soviet Union usually provides raw materials, and East European countries provide finished equipment and machinery. The three underdeveloped Comecon members have a special relationship with the other seven. Comecon realizes disproportionately more political than economic gains from its heavy contributions to these three countries' underdeveloped economies. (see Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam, this Appendix).

Socialist economic integration, or "plan coordination," forms the basis of Comecon's activities. In this system, which mirrors the member countries' planned economies, the decisions handed down from above ignore the influences of market forces or private initiative. Comecon has no supranational authority to make decisions or to implement them. Its recommendations can only be adopted with the full concurrence of interested parties and do not affect those members who declare themselves disinterested parties.

## **Evolution**

### **Early Years**

During Comecon's early years (through 1955), its sessions were convened on an ad hoc basis. The organization lacked clear structure and operated without a charter until a decade after its founding. These loose arrangements reflected the limited goals of Comecon at the time and the character of the Marshall Plan (also governed by a loose structure), to which Comecon served as a response.

From 1949 to 1953, Comecon's function consisted primarily of redirecting trade of member countries toward each other and introducing import-replacement industries, thus making members economically more self-sufficient. Little was done to solve economic problems through a regional policy. This was a period, moreover, when their first five-year plans, formulated along the Soviet model, preoccupied the East European members. In the headlong pursuit of parallel industrialization strategies, East European governments turned their attention inward. Because of Stalin's distrust of multilateral bodies, bilateral ties with the Soviet Union quickly came to dominate the East European members' external relations. Each country dealt with the Soviets on a one-to-one basis by means of direct consultations with Moscow through local Soviet missions.

Although reparations transfers (extracted by the Soviet Union in the immediate postwar years from those East European states it regarded as former World War II enemies) had been replaced by more normal trade relations, outstanding reparations obligations were not halted until 1956. In these circumstances, there was scarcely need or scope for multilateral policies or institutions.

### **Rediscovery of Comecon after Stalin's Death**

After Stalin's death in 1953, however, new leaders and new approaches emerged in the countries of the region. The more industrialized and the more trade dependent of the East European countries (Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Poland) had belatedly recognized the need to adapt the Soviet autarkic model to their own requirements. New approaches to foreign trade emerged during discussions of economic reform. Given their isolation from the rest of the world and the dominance of intrabloc trade in their external relations, interest in these countries inevitably centered on new forms of regional cooperation. For small, centrally planned economies, this meant the need to develop a mechanism through which to coordinate investment and trade policies.

Instability in Eastern Europe and integration in Western Europe increased the desirability of regularizing intrabloc relations in a more elaborate institutional framework. The 1955 Warsaw Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (see Appendix C) and its implementing machinery reinforced political-military links. On the economic front, Comecon was rediscovered. The example of the 1957 Treaty of Rome (see Glossary), which initiated the processes of West European economic integration, gave impetus and direction to Comecon's revival.

### **Rapid Growth in Comecon Activity, 1956-63**

The years 1956 to 1963 witnessed the rapid growth of Comecon institutions and activities, especially after the 1959 Charter went into effect. Comecon, for example, launched a program to unify the electrical power systems of its member states and in 1962 created the Central Dispatching Board to manage the unified system. The organization took similar steps to coordinate railroad and river transport. In 1963 a special bank, the International Bank for Economic Cooperation, was created to facilitate financial settlements among members. In this period, Comecon also undertook a number of bilateral and multilateral investment projects. The most notable project led to the coordinated construction of the Friendship (Druzhba) oil pipeline for the transport and distribution of crude oil from the Soviet Union to Eastern Europe. The Joint Institute

for Nuclear Research, established in 1956, initiated cooperation in another area of long-term importance.

Parallel to these developments, the Soviet Union led efforts to coordinate the investment strategies of the members in the interest of a more rational pattern of regional specialization, increased productivity, and a more rapid overtaking of the capitalist economies. These efforts culminated in 1962 with the adoption at the 15th Council Session of the Basic Principles of the International Socialist Division of Labor. Although the principles of specialization were generally favored by the more industrial, northern-tier states, the less developed East European countries were concerned that such specialization would lead to a concentration of industry in the already established centers and would thus thwart their own ambitious industrialization plans. Moreover the increased economic interdependence that the Basic Principles called for had inevitable political connotations. The latter were reinforced in 1962 by articles and speeches by Soviet party leader Nikita Khrushchev proposing a central Comecon planning organ to implement the Basic Principles and foreseeing the evolution of a "socialist commonwealth" based on a unified regional economy.

These proposals provoked strong and open reaction from Romania on the grounds of "sovereign equality" of members, as articulated most forcefully in the April 1964 Declaration of the Romanian Central Committee. Romania's opposition (combined with the more passive resistance of some other members) succeeded in forestalling supranational planning and reinforcing the interested-party provisions of the Charter. The institutional compromise was the creation of the Bureau for Integrated Planning, which was attached to the Executive Committee and limited to an advisory role on coordination of members' development plans. The Basic Principles, having lost their momentum, were superseded several years later by the Comprehensive Program.

### **A Lull and Subsequent Revitalization in the Late 1960s**

After the fall of Khrushchev in 1964, the new Soviet leadership was preoccupied with internal matters, and the East European countries were themselves busy with programs of economic reform. A comparative lull in Comecon activities ensued, which lasted until well after the 1968 Soviet-led intervention in Czechoslovakia. By the end of the 1960s, Eastern Europe had been shaken by the 1968 events, and there was an obvious need to revitalize programs that would strengthen regional cohesion.

In the late 1960s, the question of how to proceed with plans for economic integration received considerable discussion in specialized



journals and at international meetings of experts. Disillusioned by traditional instruments and concerned with the need to decentralize planning and management in their domestic economies, the reformers argued for the strengthening of market relations among Comecon states. The conservatives continued to stress the importance of planned approaches. If carried to a logical extreme, the latter would involve supranational planning of major aspects of members' economies and the inevitable loss of national autonomy over domestic investment policy. The old conflict between planned approaches to regional specialization and the principle of sovereign equality could not be avoided in any discussion of the mechanism for future cooperation.

### **The Comprehensive Program for Socialist Economic Integration, 1971**

The controversy over supranational planning led to a compromise in the form of the 1971 Comprehensive Program for the Further Extension and Improvement of Cooperation and the Further Development of Socialist Economic Integration, which laid the guidelines for Comecon activity through 1990. The Comprehensive Program incorporated elements of both the market and the plan approaches. Following the market approach, the Comprehensive Program sought to strengthen the role of money, prices, and exchange rates in intra-Comecon relations and to encourage direct contacts among lower level economic entities in the member countries. At the same time, the Comprehensive Program called for more joint planning on a sectoral basis through interstate bodies that would coordinate members' activities in a given sector. New organs were also envisaged in the form of international associations that would engage in actual operations in a designated sector on behalf of the participating countries. Finally, the Comprehensive Program emphasized the need for multilateral projects to develop new regional sources of fuels, energy, and raw materials. Such projects were to be jointly planned, financed, and executed.

The Comprehensive Program introduced a new concept in relations among members: "socialist economic integration." Section I, Paragraph 2 of the Comprehensive Program refers to the need "to intensify and improve" cooperation among members and "to develop socialist economic integration." This phrasing, which has since become standard, implies that the latter is a new and higher level of interaction, "a process of the international socialist division of labor, the drawing closer of [member states'] economies and the formation of modern, highly effective national economic structures." The Comprehensive Program avoids, however,

the suggestion of ultimate fusion of members' economies that had been contained in the 1962 Basic Principles. It sets limits to the integrative process in the following terms: "Socialist economic integration is completely voluntary and does not involve the creation of supranational bodies."

The term *integration* had formerly been used to designate the activities of Western regional organizations such as the EEC. Its new usage in the Comprehensive Program suggested parity of status between Comecon and the EEC. Under subsequent amendments to its Charter, the competence of Comecon to deal with other international organizations and third countries on behalf of its members was made clear. Comecon sought to attract the participation of developing countries in its activities. The language of the Comprehensive Program may thus also be regarded as an attempt to revitalize the image of Comecon in order to make association with it an attractive alternative to associated status with the EEC.

Comecon members adopted the Comprehensive Program at a time when they were actively developing economic relations with the rest of the world, especially with the industrialized Western economies. The Comprehensive Program viewed the two sets of policies as complementary and affirmed that "because the international socialist division of labor is effected with due account taken of the world division of labor, the Comecon member countries shall continue to develop economic, scientific, and technological ties with other countries, irrespective of their social and political system."

In the years following the adoption of the Comprehensive Program, Comecon made some progress toward strengthening market relations among members. The Comprehensive Program's objectives proved somewhat inconsistent with the predominant trends within members' economies in the 1970s, which was a period of recentralization—rather than decentralization—of domestic systems of planning and management. The major exception to this lack of progress lay in the area of intra-Comecon pricing and payment, where the expansion of relations with the West contributed to the adoption of prices and extra-plan settlements closer to international norms. Achievements under the Comprehensive Program have fallen under the heading of planned approaches, especially in the area of joint resource development projects. A second Comecon bank, the International Investment Bank, was established in 1970 to provide a mechanism for the joint financing of such projects. In 1973 Comecon decided to draw up a general plan incorporating these measures. A number of projects formulated in the years immediately following adoption of the Comprehensive Program were then assembled in a document signed at the

29th Council Session in 1975. Entitled the "Concerted Plan for Multilateral Integration Measures," the document covered the 1976-80 five-year-plan period and was proclaimed as the first general plan for the Comecon economies. The joint projects included in the plan were largely completed in the course of the plan period.

A second major initiative toward implementation of the Comprehensive Program came in 1976 at the 30th Council Session, when a decision was made to draw up Long-Term Target Programs for Cooperation in major economic sectors and subsectors. The session designated a number of objectives to which target programs would be directed: "guarantee of the economically based requirements of Comecon member countries for basic kinds of energy, fuels, and raw materials; the development of the machine-building industries on the basis of intense specialization and cooperation in production; the fulfillment of national demands for basic foodstuffs and industrial consumer goods; and modernization and development of transport links among member countries." The 32d Council Session, held in 1978, approved target programs for cooperation through 1990 in the first two areas, as well as in agriculture and the food industries. These programs established the commitments to multilateral cooperation that member countries were to take into account when drawing up their five-year plans for the 1980s.

By the end of the 1970s, with the exception of Poland's agricultural sector, the economic sectors of all Comecon countries had converted to the socialist system. Member states had restructured their economies to emphasize industry, transportation, communications, and material and technical supply, and they had decreased the share of resources devoted to agricultural development. Within industry, member states devoted additional funds to machine building and production of chemicals. Socialist economic integration resulted in the production of goods capable of competing on the world market.

## **The 1980s**

Most Comecon countries ended their 1981-85 five-year plans with decreased extensive economic development (see Glossary), increased expenses for fuel and raw materials, and decreased dependency on the West for both credit and hard currency imports. In the early 1980s, external economic relations had greater impact on the Comecon countries than ever before. When extending credit to East European countries, Western creditors did so assuming that the Soviet Union would offer financial assistance in the event that

payment difficulties arose. This principle, which has always been rejected in the East bloc, proved inoperable in the aftermath of the Polish crisis of 1979-82. The sharp rise in interest rates in the West put the Polish debt at an excessively high level, beyond the amount that the Soviet Union could cover. The resulting liquidity shortage (see Glossary) that occurred in all Comecon countries in 1981 forced them to reduce hard-currency imports.

In the 1980s, high interest rates and the increased value of the United States dollar on international markets made debt servicing more expensive. Thus, reducing indebtedness to the West also became a top priority within Comecon. From 1981 to 1985, the European countries of Comecon attempted to promote the faster growth of exports over imports and sought to strengthen intra-regional trade, build up an increased trade surplus, and decrease indebtedness to Western countries.

In the 1980s, Comecon sessions were held on their regular annual schedule. The two most notable meetings were the special sessions called in June 1984 and December 1985. The first summit-level meeting of Comecon member states in fifteen years was held with much fanfare on June 12-14, 1984, in Moscow (the 23d "Special" Session of Comecon Member Countries). The meeting was held to discuss coordination of economic strategy and long-term goals in view of the "differing perspectives and contrary interests" that had developed among Comecon members since 1969. More specifically, the two fundamental objectives of the meeting were to strengthen unity among members and establish a closer connection between the production base, scientific and technological progress, and capital construction. However, despite the introduction of proposals for improving efficiency and cooperation in six key areas, Western and some Eastern analysts claimed that the meeting was anticlimactic and even a failure.

The ideas and results of the June 14 session were elaborated at the Extraordinary 41st Council Session, which was held on December 17-18, 1985, in Moscow. The meeting was heralded in the Comecon community as "one of the more memorable events in Comecon history." This special session featured the culmination of several years of work on the new Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000. It aimed to create "a firm base for working out an agreed, and in some areas, unified scientific and technical policy and the practical implementation, in the common interest, of higher achievements in science and technology."

The Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000 was originally to be ratified in 1986

but the Soviets advocated an earlier date of completion to enable the Comecon countries to incorporate their commitments to implement the program in their next five-year plans (which started in January 1986). The program laid out sizable tasks in five key areas: electronics, automation systems, nuclear energy, development of new materials, and biotechnology. It sought to restructure and modernize the member states' economies to counteract constraints on labor and material supplies. The need to move to intensive production techniques within Comecon was evident from the fact that from 1961 to 1984 the overall material intensiveness of production did not improve substantially. The 1985 program provided a general framework for Comecon's new direction of development. Details were to be settled in bilateral agreements.

### **Cooperation under the 1971 Comprehensive Program**

The distinction between "market" relations and "planned" relations made in the discussions within Comecon prior to the adoption of the 1971 Comprehensive Program remains a useful approach to understanding Comecon activities. Comecon remains in fact a mixed system, combining elements of both plan and market economies. Although official rhetoric emphasizes regional planning, it must be remembered that intra-Comecon relations continue to be conducted among national entities not governed by any supranational authority. They thus interact on a decentralized basis according to terms negotiated in bilateral and multilateral agreements on trade and cooperation.

### **Market Relations and Instruments**

It is not surprising, given the size of the Soviet economy, that intra-Comecon trade has been dominated by exchanges between the Soviet Union and the other members. Exchanges of Soviet fuels and raw materials for capital goods and consumer manufactures have characterized trade, particularly among the original members. The liquidity shortage in the early 1980s forced the European Comecon countries to work to strengthen the importance of intraregional trade. In the early 1980s, intraregional trade rose to 60 percent of foreign trade of Comecon countries as a whole; for individual members it ranged from 45 to 50 percent in the case of Hungary, Romania, and the Soviet Union, to 83 percent for Cuba and 96 percent for Mongolia.

Trade among the members is negotiated on an annual basis and in considerable detail at the governmental level and is then followed up by interenterprise contracts. Early Comecon efforts to facilitate trade among members concentrated on development of uniform

technical, legal, and statistical standards and on encouragement of long-term trade agreements. The 1971 Comprehensive Program sought to liberalize the system somewhat by recommending broad limits to "fixed-quota" trade among members (trade subject to quantitative or value targets set by bilateral trade agreements). Section VI, Paragraph 19 of the Comprehensive Program affirms that "mutual trade in commodities for which no quotas are established shall be carried on beginning in 1971 with a view to stimulating the development of trade turnover, through expansion of the range and assortment of traded commodities, and to making trade in these commodities more brisk." Later in the same paragraph the Comprehensive Program calls on members to "seek opportunities to develop the export and import of quota-free commodities and to create conditions essential for trade in such commodities." There is no evidence, however, that this appeal has had significant effect or that quota-free trade has grown in importance under the program.

### *Prices*

The 1971 Comprehensive Program also called for improvement in the Comecon system of foreign trade prices. Administratively set prices, such as those used in intra-Comecon trade, do not reflect costs or relative scarcities of inputs and outputs. For this reason, intra-Comecon trade has been based on world market prices. By 1971 a price system governing exchanges among members had developed, under which prices agreed on through negotiation were fixed for five-year periods (corresponding to those of the synchronized, five-year plans of the members). These contract prices were based on adjusted world market prices averaged over the immediately preceding five years; that is, a world-price base was used as the starting point for negotiation. Under this system, therefore, intra-Comecon prices could and did depart substantially from relative prices on world markets.

Although the possibility of breaking this tenuous link with world prices and developing an indigenous system of prices for the Comecon market had been discussed in the 1960s, the evolution of Comecon prices after 1971 went in the opposite direction. Far from a technical or academic matter, the question of prices underlay vital issues of the terms of, and hence gains from, intra-Comecon trade. In particular, relative to actual world prices, intra-Comecon prices in the early 1970s penalized raw materials exporters and benefited exporters of manufactures. After the oil price explosion of 1973, Comecon foreign trade prices swung still further away from world prices to the disadvantage of Comecon suppliers of raw

materials, in particular the Soviet Union. In view of the extra-regional opportunities opened up by the expansion of East-West trade, this yawning gap between Comecon and world prices could no longer be ignored. Hence in 1975, at Soviet instigation, the system of intra-Comecon pricing was reformed.

The reform involved a substantial modification of existing procedures (known as the "Bucharest formula," from the location of the 9th Council Session in 1958 at which it was adopted), but not their abandonment. Under the modified Bucharest formula (which remained in effect as of 1987), prices were fixed every year and were based on a moving average of world prices for the preceding five years. The world-price base of the Bucharest formula was thus retained and still represented an average (although now moving) of adjusted world prices for the preceding five years. For 1975 alone, however, the average was for the preceding three years. Under these arrangements, intra-Comecon prices were more closely linked with world prices than before and throughout the remainder of the 1970s rose with world prices, although with a lag. Until the early 1980s, this new system benefited both the Soviet Union and the other Comecon countries since Soviet oil, priced with the lagged formula, was considerably cheaper than Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) oil, the price of which increased drastically in the 1970s. By 1983-84 this system turned to the Soviet Union's advantage because world market oil prices began to fall, whereas the lagged Soviet oil prices continued to rise.

### *Exchange Rates and Currencies*

Basic features of the state trading systems of the Comecon countries are multiple exchange rates and comprehensive exchange controls that severely restrict the convertibility of members' currencies. These features are rooted in the planned character of the members' economies and their systems of administered prices. Currency inconvertibility in turn dictates bilateral balancing of accounts, which has been one of the basic objectives of intergovernmental trade agreements among members. An earlier system of bilateral clearing accounts was replaced on January 1, 1964, by accounts with the International Bank for Economic Cooperation, using the transferable ruble as the unit of account. Although the bank provided a centralized mechanism of trade accounting and swing credits to cover temporary imbalances, it could not establish a system of multilateral clearing given the centrally planned nature of the members' economies and the inconvertibility of their currencies. In 1987 the transferable ruble remained an artificial currency functioning as an accounting unit and was not a common instrument for

multilateral settlement. For this reason, this currency continued to be termed "transferable" and not "convertible."

The member countries recognize that the multiplicity and inconsistency of their administered exchange rates, the separation of their domestic prices from foreign prices, and the inconvertibility of their currencies are significant obstacles to multilateral trade and cooperation. As of early 1987, Comecon lacked not only a flexible means of payment but also a meaningful, standard unit of account. Both problems have vastly complicated the already complex multilateral projects and programs envisaged by the Comprehensive Program. The creation in 1971 of the International Investment Bank provided a mechanism for joint investment financing, but, like the International Bank for Economic Cooperation, this institution could not by itself resolve these fundamental monetary problems.

Recognizing that money and credit should play a more active role in the Comecon system, the Comprehensive Program established a timetable for the improvement of monetary relations. According to the timetable, measures would be taken "to strengthen and extend" the functions of the "collective currency" (the transferable ruble), and the conditions would be studied and prepared "to make the transferable ruble convertible into national currencies and to make national currencies mutually convertible." To this end, steps would be taken to introduce "economically well-founded and mutually coordinated" rates of exchange between members' currencies and "between 1976 and 1979" to prepare the groundwork for the introduction by 1980 of a "single rate of exchange for the national currency of every country." This timetable was not met. Only in Hungary were the conditions for convertibility gradually being introduced by reforms intended to link domestic prices more directly to world prices.

### **Cooperation in Planning**

If countries are to gain from trade, that trade must be based on rational production structures reflecting resource scarcities. Since the early 1960s, official Comecon documents have stressed the need to promote among members' economies a more cost-effective pattern of specialization in production. This "international socialist division of labor" would, especially in the manufacturing sector, involve specialization within major branches of industry. In the absence of significant, decentralized allocation of resources within these economies, however, production specialization can be brought about only through the mechanism of the national plan and the investment decisions incorporated in it. In the absence at the regional level of supranational planning bodies, a rational pattern



of production specialization among members' economies requires coordination of national economic plans, a process that is not merely technical but also poses inescapable political problems.

The coordination of national five-year economic plans is the most traditional form of cooperation among the members in the area of planning. Although the process of consultation underlying plan coordination remains essentially bilateral, Comecon organs are indirectly involved. The standing commissions draw up proposals for consideration by competent, national planning bodies; the Secretariat assembles information on the results of bilateral consultations; and the Council Committee for Cooperation in Planning (created by Comecon in 1971 at the same session at which the Comprehensive Program was adopted) reviews the progress of plan coordination by members.

In principle, plan coordination covers all economic sectors. Effective and comprehensive plan coordination has, however, been significantly impeded by the continued momentum of earlier parallel development strategies and the desire of members to minimize the risks of mutual dependence (especially given the uncertainties of supply that are characteristic of the members' economies). Plan coordination in practice, therefore, remains for the most part limited to mutual adjustment, through bilateral consultation, of the foreign trade sectors of national five-year plans. Under the Comprehensive Program, there have been renewed efforts to extend plan coordination beyond foreign trade to the spheres of production, investment, science, and technology.

### *Plan Coordination*

According to the 1971 Comprehensive Program, joint planning—multilateral or bilateral—is to be limited to “interested countries” and is “not to interfere with the autonomy of internal planning.” Participating countries will, moreover, retain national ownership of the productive capacities and resources jointly planned. But “joint plans worked out by the member countries will be taken into account by them when drafting their long-term or five-year plans.”

The Comprehensive Program does not clearly assign responsibility for joint planning to any single agency. On the one hand, “coordination of work concerned with joint planning shall be carried out by the central planning bodies of Comecon member countries or their authorized representatives.” On the other hand, “decisions on joint, multilateral planning of chosen branches and lines of production by interested countries shall be based on proposals by countries or Comecon agencies and shall be made by

the Comecon Executive Committee, which also determines the Comecon agencies responsible for the organization of such work.” Finally, mutual commitments resulting from joint planning and other aspects of cooperation shall be incorporated in agreements signed by the interested parties.

It is extremely difficult to gauge the implementation of plan coordination or joint planning under the Comprehensive Program or to assess the activities of the diverse international economic organizations. There is no single, adequate measure of such cooperation. The only data on activities among the Comecon countries published by the annual Comecon yearbooks refer to merchandise trade, and these trade figures cannot be readily associated with cooperative measures taken under the Comprehensive Program. Occasional official figures are published, however, on the aggregate number of industrial specialization and co-production agreements signed by members.

### *Joint Projects*

The clearest area of achievement under the Comprehensive Program has been the joint exploitation and development of natural resources for the economies of the member countries. Joint projects ease the investment burden on a single country when expansion of its production capacity is required to satisfy the needs of other members. Particular attention has been given to energy and fuels, forest industries, iron and steel, and various other metals and minerals. Most of this activity has been carried out in the Soviet Union, the great storehouse of natural resources within Comecon.

Joint development projects are usually organized on a “compensation” basis, a form of investment “in kind.” Participating members advance materials, equipment, and, more recently, manpower and are repaid through scheduled deliveries of the output resulting from, or distributed through, the new facility. Repayment includes a modest “fraternal” rate of interest, but the real financial return to the participating countries depends on the value of the output at the time of delivery. Deliveries at contract prices below world prices will provide an important extra return. No doubt the most important advantage from participation in joint projects, however, is the guarantee of long-term access to basic fuels and raw materials in a world of increasing uncertainty of supply of such products.

### *The Concerted Plan*

The multilateral development projects concluded under the Comprehensive Program formed the backbone of Comecon’s Concerted

Plan for the 1976–80 period. The program allotted 9 billion rubles (nearly US\$12 billion at the official 1975 exchange rate of US\$1.30 per ruble) for joint investments. The Orenburg project was the largest project under the Comprehensive Program. It was undertaken by all East European Comecon countries and the Soviet Union at an estimated cost ranging from the equivalent of US\$5 billion to US\$6 billion, or about half of the cost of all Comecon projects under the Concerted Plan. It consists of a natural gas complex at Orenburg in western Siberia and the 2,677-kilometer Union (Soiuz) natural-gas pipeline, completed in 1978, which links the complex to the western border of the Soviet Union. Construction of a pulp mill in Ust' Ilim (in central Siberia) was the other major project under this program.

These two projects differed from other joint Comecon investments projects in that they were jointly planned and jointly built in the host country (the Soviet Union in both cases). Although the other projects were jointly planned, each country was responsible only for construction within its own borders. Western technology, equipment, and financing played a considerable role. The Soviet Union owns the Orenburg complex and the Ust' Ilim installation and is repaying its East European co-investors at a 2 percent interest rate with an agreed-upon amount of natural gas and wood pulp.

The early 1980s were characterized by more bilateral investment specialization but on a much smaller scale than required for the Orenburg and Ust' Ilim projects. In these latter projects, Eastern Europe provided machinery and equipment for Soviet multilateral resource development. Work also progressed on the previously mentioned Long-Term Target Programs for Cooperation (see The Comprehensive Program for Socialist Economic Integration, 1971, this Appendix).

### *Cooperation in Science and Technology*

To supplement national efforts to upgrade indigenous technology, the 1971 Comprehensive Program emphasizes cooperation in science and technology. The development of new technology is envisaged as a major object of cooperation; collaboration in resource development and specialization in production are to be facilitated by transfers of technology between members. The 1971 Comecon session, which adopted the Comprehensive Program, decided to establish the Special Council Committee for Scientific and Technical Cooperation to ensure the organization and fulfillment of the provisions of the program in this area. Jointly planned and coordinated research programs have extended to the creation of joint research institutes and centers. In terms of number of patents,

documents, and other scientific and technical information exchanges, the available data indicate that the Soviet Union has been the dominant source of technology within Comecon. It has, on the whole, provided more technology to its East European partners than it has received from them, although the balance varies considerably from country to country depending upon relative levels of industrial development. Soviet science also forms the base for several high-technology programs for regional specialization and cooperation, such as nuclear power and computers.

The Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000, adopted in December 1985, has boosted cooperation in science and technology. The program sets forth 93 projects and 800 subprojects within 5 broad areas of development (see *Early Years*, this Appendix). A Soviet ministry will supervise each of the areas and will be responsible for the technical level and quality of output, compliance with research and production schedules, costs, and sales. Each project will be headed by a Soviet organization, which will award contracts to other Comecon-member organizations. The Soviet project heads, who will not be responsible to domestic planners, will have extensive executive powers of their own and will closely supervise all activities. The program represents a fundamentally new approach to multilateral collaboration and a first step toward investing Comecon with some supranational authority.

### ***Labor Resources***

Just as the 1971 Comprehensive Program stimulated investment flows and technology transfers among members, it also increased intra-Comecon flows of another important factor of production: labor. Most of the transfers occurred in connection with joint resource development projects, e.g., Bulgarian workers aiding in the exploitation of Siberian forest resources, Polish workers assisting in the construction of the Union pipeline, or Vietnamese workers helping on the Friendship pipeline in the Soviet Union. Labor was also transferred in response to labor imbalances in member countries. Hungarian workers, for example, were sent to work in East Germany under a bilateral agreement between the two countries. Such transfers, however, are restricted by the universal scarcity of labor that has emerged with the industrialization of the less developed Comecon countries. Moreover the presence of foreign workers has raised practical and ideological issues in socialist planned economies. It should be noted, finally, that cooperation in the area of labor has been by no means limited to planned exchanges of manpower. Comecon countries have exchanged

information on experience in manpower planning and employment and wage policies through Comecon organs and activities.

## **Power Configurations Within Comecon**

### **The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe**

Since Comecon's creation in 1949, the relationship between the Soviet Union and the six East European countries has generally remained the same. The Soviet Union has provided fuel, nonfood raw materials, and semimanufactures (hard goods) to Eastern Europe, which in turn has supplied the Soviet Union with finished machinery and industrial consumer goods (soft goods).

This kind of economic relationship stemmed from a genuine need by the parties in the 1950s. Eastern Europe has poor energy and mineral resources, a problem exacerbated by the low energy efficiency of East European industry. As of mid-1985, factories in Eastern Europe still used 40 percent more fuel than those in the West. As a result of these factors, Eastern European countries have always relied heavily on the Soviet Union for oil. For its part, in the 1950s Eastern Europe supplied the Soviet Union with those goods otherwise unavailable because of Western embargoes. Thus, from the early 1950s to the early 1970s, during the time when there was no world shortage of energy and raw materials, the Soviet Union inexpensively supplied its East European clients with hard goods in exchange for finished machinery and equipment. In addition, Soviet economic policies bought political and military support. During these years, the Soviet Union could be assured of relative political tranquillity within the bloc, obedience in international strategy as laid down by the Soviet Union, and military support of Soviet aims. By the 1980s, both parties were accustomed to this arrangement. The Soviet Union was particularly happy with the arrangement since it still could expand its energy and raw materials complex quickly and relatively cheaply.

In the 1970s, the terms of trade for the Soviet Union had improved. The OPEC price for oil had soared, which put the Soviet Union in a very advantageous position because of its bountiful supply of oil. The soaring price increased the opportunity cost (see Glossary) of providing Eastern Europe with oil at prices lower than those established by OPEC. In addition, extraction and transportation costs for these goods, most of which originated in Siberia, were also rising. In response to the market, the Soviet Union decreased its exports to its East European partners and increased its purchases of soft goods from these countries. This policy forced the East European countries to turn to the West for hard goods

despite the fact that they had fewer goods to export in return for hard currency.

Any hard goods supplied to Eastern Europe by the Soviet Union were sold essentially at a discount price because Comecon prices lagged behind and were lower than those of the world market. Developments in the 1980s made this situation even more complex. The 1983–84 decline in international oil prices left the Soviets with large holdings of oil that, because of the lag in Comecon prices, were still increasing in price. The “nonmarket gains from preferential trade” became quite expensive for the Soviets. East European profits from the implicit subsidization were almost US\$102 billion (in 1981 dollars, using an exchange rate of 1.81 dollars to the ruble) between 1972 and 1981.

### **Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam**

Soviet-initiated Comecon support for the Council’s three least-developed members—Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam—has clearly benefited them, but the burden on the six East European Comecon members has been most unwelcome. Comecon is structured in such a way that the more economically developed members provide support for the less developed members in their major economic sectors. Initially, when Mongolia joined Comecon in 1962, there was no great added burden. The population of Mongolia was relatively small (1 million), and the country’s subsidies came primarily from the Soviet Union. The addition of Cuba (9 million people) in 1972 and Vietnam (40 million people) in 1978, however, quickly escalated the burden. As of early 1987, three-fourths of Comecon’s overseas economic aid went to Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam: almost US\$4 billion went to Cuba, US\$2 billion to Vietnam (half in military aid), and US\$1 billion to Mongolia.

Although the Soviets carry most of the burden, since 1976 the East Europeans have been persuaded to take part in projects to boost the developing countries’ economies. East European countries import Cuban nickel and Mongolian molybdenum and copper; they are also pressed to buy staples, such as Cuban sugar (80 percent of Cuba’s exports), at inflated prices. Eastern Europe also contributes to the International Investment Bank, from which the underdeveloped three can acquire loans at lower interest rates (0.5 to 2 percent) than the East Europeans themselves (2 to 5 percent). In addition, the Soviets sell their fuel and raw materials to Cuba, Vietnam, and Mongolia for less than it is sold to the six East European members. Hence the latter have become competitors for the slowly diminishing Soviet resources. As of 1987, the only benefit accruing to the East Europeans was the services

provided by Vietnamese guest workers. However, the majority of the Vietnamese have worked primarily on the Friendship pipeline in the Soviet Union.

Undeniably, Comecon has been investing heavily in Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam; and the three countries have benefited substantially from these resources. In 1984 increases in capital investments within Comecon were the highest for Vietnam and Cuba (26.9 percent for Vietnam and 14 percent for Cuba, compared with 3.3 percent and less for the others, except Poland and Romania). Increased investments in Mongolia lagged behind Poland and Romania but were nevertheless substantial (5.8 percent). In 1984 the economies of the three developing countries registered the fastest industrial growth of all the Comecon members (see table B, this Appendix).

Given their locations, Comecon membership for Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam appears principally to serve Soviet foreign policy interests. The Soviet Union contributes the most to the development of the three poorer Comecon members, and it also reaps most of the benefits. The Soviet Union imports most of Cuba's sugar and nickel and all of Mongolia's copper and molybdenum (widely used in the construction of aircraft, automobiles, machine tools, gas turbines, and in the field of electronics). Cuba has provided bases for the Soviet navy and military support to Soviet allies in Africa. Vietnam makes its naval and air bases, as well as some 100,000 guest workers, available to the Soviets.

At the June 1984 Comecon economic summit and at subsequent Council sessions, the policy of equalizing the levels of economic development between Comecon member countries was repeatedly stressed. At the November 1986 Comecon session in Bucharest, the East European members "outlined measures to further improve cooperation with Vietnam, Cuba, and Mongolia with a view to developing the main sectors of these countries' national economies." Moreover, the Soviets have repeatedly stressed their earnestness in "normalizing the situation in the Asia-Pacific region and in including that region in the overall process of creating a universal system of international security."

### **Support for Developing Countries**

Comecon provided economic and technical support to 34 developing countries in 1960, 62 countries in 1970, and over 100 countries in 1985. As of 1987, Comecon had assisted in the construction or preparation of over 4,000 projects (mostly industrial) in Asia, Latin America, and Africa (see fig. C, this Appendix). A monetary figure for this assistance is difficult to estimate, although a June

Table B. Change in Industrial Growth Within Comecon  
Member Countries from 1983 to 1984  
(in percentage)

Country	Change
Bulgaria . . . . .	4.3
Cuba . . . . .	12.0
Czechoslovakia . . . . .	3.9
East Germany . . . . .	4.2
Hungary . . . . .	2.8
Mongolia . . . . .	8.3
Poland . . . . .	6.0
Romania . . . . .	7.0
Soviet Union . . . . .	4.2
Vietnam . . . . .	7.2

Source: Based on information from *SEV: Voprosy i otvety*, Moscow, 1985, 62.

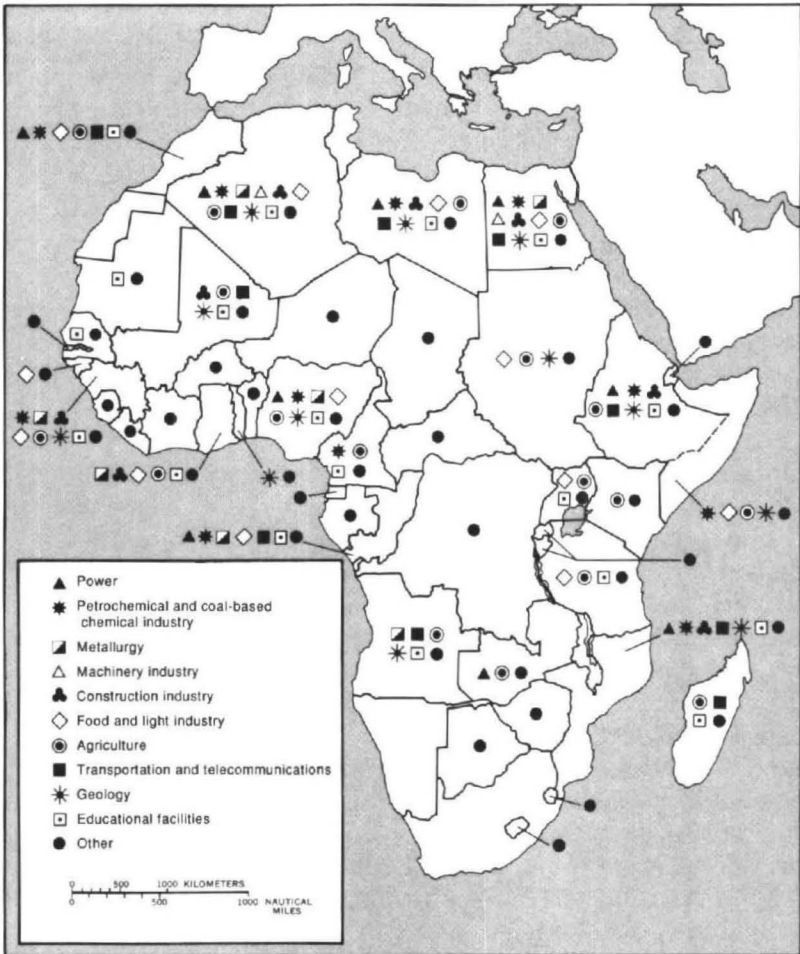
1986 Czechoslovak source valued the exchange between Comecon and developing countries at 34 billion rubles per year (US\$48.4 at the official June 1986 exchange rate of US\$1.42 per ruble). The precise nature of this aid was unclear, and Western observers believe the data to be inflated.

From the 1960s to the mid-1980s, Comecon has sought to encourage the development of industry, energy, transportation, mineral resources, and agriculture of Third World countries. Comecon countries have also provided technical and economic training for personnel in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. When Comecon initially lent support to developing countries, it generally concentrated on developing those products that would support the domestic economies of the Third World, including replacements for imports. In the 1970s and 1980s, assistance from Comecon has been directed toward export-oriented industries. Third World countries have paid for this support with products produced by the project for which Comecon rendered help. This policy has provided Comecon with a stable source of necessary deliveries in addition to political influence in these strategically important areas.

### Trends and Prospects

Comecon has served for more than three decades as a framework for cooperation among the planned economies of the Soviet Union, its allies in Eastern Europe, and, now, Soviet allies in the





Source: Based on information from *Figyelő*, Budapest, October 16, 1986.

*Figure C. Most Important Facilities Built in Africa by Comecon Countries, December 31, 1985*

Third World. Over the years, the Comecon system has grown steadily in scope and experience. The organization now encompasses a complex and sophisticated set of institutions that represent a striking advance over the capabilities of the organization in the early 1960s.

This institutional evolution has reflected changing and expanding goals. Initial, modest objectives of “exchanging experience” and providing “technical assistance” and other forms of “mutual

aid" have been extended to the development of an integrated set of economies based on a coordinated international pattern of production and investment. These ambitious goals are pursued through a broad spectrum of cooperative measures extending from monetary to technological relations.

At the same time, the extraregional goals of the organization have expanded; other countries, both geographically distant and systematically different, are being encouraged to participate in Comecon activities. Parallel efforts have sought to develop Comecon as a mechanism through which to coordinate the foreign economic policies of the members as well as their actual relations with nonmember countries and such organizations as the EEC and the United Nations.

Asymmetries of size and differences in levels of development among Comecon members have deeply affected the institutional character and evolution of the organization. The overwhelming dominance of the Soviet economy has necessarily meant that the bulk of intra-Comecon relations takes the form of bilateral relations between the Soviet Union and the smaller members of Comecon.

These asymmetries have served in other ways to impede progress toward multilateral trade and cooperation within the organization. The sensitivities of the smaller states have dictated that the sovereign equality of members remains a basic tenet of the organization. Despite Soviet political and economic dominance, sovereign equality has constituted a very real obstacle to the acquisition of supranational powers by Comecon organs. Nevertheless, the 1985 Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress up to the Year 2000 took steps to instill some organizations with supranational authority.

The planned nature of the members' economies and the lack of effective market-price mechanisms to facilitate integration have further hindered progress toward Comecon goals. Without the automatic workings of market forces, progress must depend upon conscious acts of policy. This tends to politicize the processes of integration to a greater degree than is the case in market economies.

By 1987 Comecon's Comprehensive Program, adopted in 1971, had undergone considerable change. Multilateral planning faded into traditional bilateral cooperation, and the Bucharest formula for prices assumed a revised form. The 1985 Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Progress, or, as some Western analysts call it, the "Gorbachev Charter," was Comecon's new blueprint for taking a firm grip on its future. Experience in the early 1980s showed that turning to the West and Japan for technological advancement put Comecon in a very dangerous position

because it pulled the East European members further away from the Soviet Union and threatened to leave the entire organization at the mercy of the West. The purpose of the 1985 program was to offset centrifugal forces and reduce Comecon's vulnerability to "technological blackmail" through broadened mutual cooperation, increased efficiency of cooperation, and improved quality of output.

The success of the 1985 program will be closely tied to the success of Gorbachev's changes in the Soviet economy. Major projects for the 1986-90 period include a 5,600-kilometer natural-gas pipeline from the Yamburg Peninsula (in northern Siberia) to Eastern Europe; the Krivoy Rog (in the Ukraine), a mining and enrichment combine that will produce 13 million tons of iron ore annually; the annual production and exchange of 500 million rubles' worth of equipment for nuclear power plants; and joint projects for extracting coal in Poland, magnesite in Czechoslovakia, nickel in Cuba, and nonferrous metals in Mongolia. Recalling the failure record of previous Comecon projects (for example, the disappointing Riad computer project, which in its attempt to standardize components and software is producing unreliable and costly products that fellow members refuse to buy), some Western analysts question whether the 1985 program will accomplish all that it has set out to do.

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Although the selection is still rather sparse, several English-language works on Comecon appeared in the early 1980s. *Socialist Economic Integration* by Jozef van Brabant discusses in great detail the mechanisms and operations of socialist economic integration in general and Comecon in particular. It is perhaps the most comprehensive English-language work on the subject. Several chapters in *East European Integration and East-West Trade*, edited by Paul Marer and John Michael Montias, are particularly helpful in analyzing the mechanisms of Comecon and comparing it with the EEC. Analysis of Comecon's operations and development in the modern economic and political arena is provided in Marer's "The Political Economy of Soviet Relations with Eastern Europe" in *Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe*. The best sources for up-to-date political and economic analysis are the Radio Free Europe background reports. Articles by Vladimir Sobell, in particular, give good insight into the 1985 Comprehensive Program for Scientific and Technical Development.

Russian-language sources provide useful information on Comecon procedures and structure in addition to insight into the Soviet

and East European view of Comecon's goals and shortcomings. Articles in this vein can be found in *Voprosy ekonomiki* and the "Ekonomika" series published in Moscow by Znanie. Translations of selected articles from these publications can be found in the Joint Publications Research Service's USSR Report on Economic Affairs. The Comecon Secretariat publishes a bimonthly bulletin (*Ekonomicheskoe sotrudnichestvo stran-chlenov SEV*), which has a table of contents and a summary in English; an annual *Statisticheskii ezhegodnik stran-chlenov SEV*; and various handbooks. (For complete citations and further information, see Bibliography.)