

"AS CZECHS AND SLOVAKS, WE KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE OF HISTORY THAT OUR COUNTRIES LED AMBITIOUS AGGRESSORS SEVERAL TIMES TO A TRAP DOOR OF HISTORY. CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS IN THE HEART OF EUROPE AND IT CANNOT BE TRANSPLANTED WITHOUT MORTAL DANGER FOR THE WHOLE CONTINENT. THIS WAS DEMONSTRATED BY MUNICH THIRTY YEARS AGO. NOW, AS AT THAT TIME, THE TANKS OF THE OCCUPANTS MAY BE ROLLING ON ANOTHER TRAPDOOR OF HISTORY.

"MANY CZECHS AND SLOVAKS ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE AND STUDENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO REALIZE THAT ON AUG. 21, 1968 THE ILLUSION CHERISHED BY A SMALL NATION CAME TO AN END, HOWEVER, THE CAPITULATION BEFORE VIOLENCE CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED.

"AS CITIZENS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA WE DENOUNCE THE INVASION AND OCCUPATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA BY THE ARMED FORCES OF THE WARSAW PACT AS AN INTERNATIONAL CRIME. IT IS NOT ONLY THE QUESTION OF CZECHOSLOVAK SOVEREIGNTY, BUT THE QUESTION WHETHER INVASION, AGGRESSION AND OCCUPATION WILL REMAIN UNPUNISHED. THIS IS NOT A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION FOR CZECHS AND SLOVAKS ONLY, IT IS A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION FOR ALL NATIONS, PEOPLES AND STATES.

"WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO HUMAN FREEDOM WITHIN DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM. WE DEEM THIS HUMAN FREEDOM TO BE THE HIGHEST VALUE OF MANKIND. WE BELIEVE THAT INDIVIDUALS' MOVEMENTS, STATES AND THAT WISH TO CREATE A NEW CULTURE BASED ON FOUNDATIONS OTHER THAN HUMAN FREEDOM, ARE IN FACT NOTHING BUT MODERN FORMS OF ENSLAVEMENT. THE VIOLENT ACTS OF THE RECENT DAYS HAVE DEMONSTRATED AGAIN THAT TOTALITARIAN DICTATORSHIP REPRESENT THE GREATEST DANGER TO MANKIND. IT IS A MATTER OF INDIFFERENCE UNDER WHAT IDEOLOGY THE DICTATORS SEND THEIR TANKS INTO PEACEFUL COUNTRIES AND FOR WHAT PRETENDED MOTIVES SOLDIERS SHOOT UNARMED CIVILIANS.

"AT THIS MOMENT THE OCCUPANTS HAVE INSTALLED EXTRAORDINARY RESTRICTIONS AND THE POLICE ALREADY PERSECUTE THE BEST MINDS IN THE NATION. NOW, WE ASK OURSELVES WHETHER IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE IN CENTRAL EUROPE PERSONAL FREEDOM AND CIVIL RIGHTS NOW GENERALLY RESPECTED EVEN IN THE LEAST DEVELOPED ONES OF THE WORLD. THE CRIMINAL OCCUPATION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS COMPARABLE ONLY TO MOST SHAMELESS EXAMPLES OF IMPERIALISTIC AGGRESSIONS.

"WE ARE THEREFORE ADDRESSING OURSELVES TO THE PUBLIC OF THE WORLD, IN PARTICULAR TO ARTISTS, SCIENTISTS AND OTHER INTELLECTUALS OF INTERNATIONAL RENOWN WITH THE REQUEST TO COME WITHOUT DELAY TO THE ASSISTANCE OF FREE SOCIALIST CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

"REPRESENTATIVES OF VARIOUS POLITICAL AND INTELLECTUAL SCHOOLS -- IN SIGNING THIS STATEMENT -- HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TOGETHER BY THE COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF VITAL QUESTIONS OF OUR NATIONS AND OUR STATE. WE BELIEVE THAT THE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION WILL SUPPORT OUR EFFORT TO BRING ABOUT EFFECTIVE COUNTERMEASURES TO AGGRESSION, AND THAT WE SHALL FIND TOGETHER THE WAY TO FURTHER ACTIVE RESISTANCE AGAINST VIOLATIONS OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS.

"WE WANT TO LIVE IN A FREE, SOCIALISTIC, SOVEREIGN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, JOINTLY UPHELD BY WORKERS AS WELL AS INTELLECTUALS, IN A WORLD WITHOUT AGGRESSION, OCCUPATION AND WAR."

THIS STATEMENT WAS SIGNED BY A GROUP OF CZECH AND SLOVAK INTELLECTUALS AMONG WHOM WERE THE FOLLOWING: MILOS FORMAN, FILM DIRECTOR (OSCAR PRIZE WINNER), JIRI MUCHA, WRITER, JIRI NEMEC, FILM DIRECTOR, VERA LINHARTOVA, WRITER, JOSEF NESVADBA, WRITER, PROFESSOR DOCTOR IVAN SVITAK, PHILISOPHER, JOSEF SKVERSCY, WRITER.

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