

August 19, 1989

Czechoslovakia: Warsaw Pact Countries Reassess the 1968 Invasion

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Summary:

An analysis of statements from Warsaw Pact countries about the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

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The Czechoslovak regime's legitimacy is being eroded by the reassessment of the Soviet-led invasion in 1968 taking place among its allies:

USSR. Although Moscow has not officially condemned the invasion, Soviet academics and commentators close to President Gorbachev have publicly termed it a mistake. Some senior Soviet officials have implicitly criticized the intervention by openly repudiating the Brezhnev Doctrine, a Western term coined in 1968 to describe the official Soviet justification for the invasion, and a commission has reportedly prepared an official reassessment that criticizes the intervention.

Hungary. The current leadership recently disassociated itself from the Kadar regime's decision to participate in the invasion.

Poland. Both the Sejm and the Solidarity-controlled Senate have voted to condemn Polish participation in the invasion as being against the will of the Polish people and interference in Czechoslovak internal affairs.

East Germany. East German media commentary, on the other hand, maintains that the "fraternal international assistance" was instrumental in preventing "antisocialist forces" from taking power in Czechoslovakia.

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