

Module 05: 1968 — A Generation in Revolt?

Evidence 23: "People of Prague!" Poster



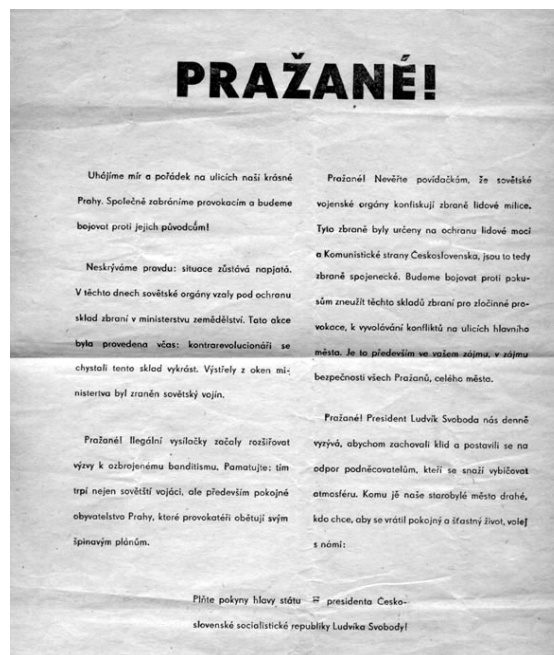
Introduction

The following poster was plastered all over the streets of Prague in the tense days after the invasion.

Questions to Consider

- What kinds of concerns does this Soviet announcement try to mollify?
- How do the authors interpret the resistance to the invasion?

Document



Translation:

People of Prague!

We shall defend peace and order on the streets of our beautiful Prague. Together we shall prevent the provocations and fight against their originators!

We shall not hide the truth: the situation remains tense. In these days,

Soviet organs have taken the arms stockpile at the Ministry of Agriculture under their protection. This action was executed just in time: the counter-revolutionaries were preparing to loot this stockpile. A Soviet soldier was wounded by shots from the Ministry windows.

People of Prague! Illegal transmitters have begun spreading calls to armed banditry. Remember: that harms not only Soviet soldiers, but above all the peaceful population of Prague, whom the provocateurs are sacrificing to their dirty plans.

People of Prague! Don't believe the tall tales saying that Soviet military organs are confiscating the weapons of the People's Militia. These weapons were meant for the protection of the people's power and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, so they are arms of the alliance. We shall fight against attempts to misuse these arms stockpiles for criminal provocations that seek to call forth conflicts in the streets of the capital. This is in your interest above all, in the interest of the security of all citizens of Prague, of the whole city.

People of Prague! President Ludvik Svoboda appeals daily for us to preserve peace and stand up in opposition against the instigators who are trying to whip up the atmosphere. Whoever holds our ancient city dear, whoever wants a peaceful and happy life to return, call out with us:

Fulfill the instructions of Ludvik Svoboda, head of state and president of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic!

Source:

"The Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia: August 1968," the Labadie Collection of Social Protest Material, exhibit at the University of Michigan's Special Collections Library. Documents selected by Brian Rosenblum and Jonathan Bolton and translated by Jonathan Bolton.

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/spec-coll/czech/des17.html>.