

Prague Spring

Vocabulary

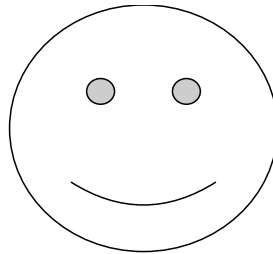
- **Prague spring:** A period of political liberation in Czechoslovakia when it was dominated by the Soviet Union
- **Alexander Dubcek:** The elected First Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, who led the Prague Spring.
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- **Nikita Khrushchev:** The one who criticizes Stalin.
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- **De-Stalinization:** a sequence of political reforms in the Soviet Union and the eastern bloc after the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953
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- **Warsaw Pact:** the collective defense treaty between seven Soviet satellite states that signed during the Cold War. It is used to balance the NATO.
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- **Eastern Bloc:** the group of communist states of Central and Eastern Europe, generally the Soviet Union and the countries of the Warsaw Pact.
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- **1967 Writers' Congress:** In June 1967, few of the Czech writer's union agreed with radical socialists, specifically Ludvík Vaculík, Milan Kundera, etc. They suggest that literature should not be effected by the party. It has significant effects on the begin of Prague Spring
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- **Socialism with a human face:** a process of mild democratization and political liberalization that would still enable the Communist Party to maintain real power.
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- **Action Programme:** a political plan that encourages things including increasing freedom of the press, speech and movement, and encourages economic reforms.
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- **Brezhnev Doctrine:** Soviet Union has the right to intervene to preserve socialism and communism in the Eastern Bloc when necessary.
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- **Nonviolent Resistance:** the practice of achieving goals such as social change through symbolic protests, civil disobedience, economic or political noncooperation, satyagraha, or other methods, without using violence.



- **Normalization:** Husák reversed Dubček's reforms, purged the party of its liberal members, and dismissed from public office professional and intellectual elites who openly expressed disagreement with the political transformation.

Key Events:

- Late 1950s---Early 1960s
 - The beginning of **De-Stalinization:** led by **Antonín Novotný**
 - Antonín Novotný invited **Leonid Brezhnev** for support
 - BUT...
 - Leonid Brezhnev refused: too many people opposing this Novotný guy. **NO HELP**
- Now...It's time for Prague Spring:



Now...It's time for Prague Spring:

- **Alexander Dubček's** rise to power
First: 5 January 1968: Dubček replaced Novotný as First Secretary
Second: April, launched an "**Action Programme**" of liberalizations
Based on: **Socialism with a human face**
What does it mean?
- **Socialism** is not **ONLY** about **freeing the working people** from being exploited, but also about every **individual**.



Who/When/Where:

- **Date:** 5 January-21 August, 1968 (during the cold war) Political liberation in Czechoslovakia
- **Location:** Czechoslovakia (Prague)
- **Who is fighting:** Alexander Dubček VS USSR and the civilians
- **Backing each side:** USSR VS Alexander Dubček (a chairman of Czechoslovakia)

What did Czechoslovakia want?

&What goals have been achieved in the action programme?

- **foreign policy:** keep the good relations with **Western countries** while cooperating with the **Soviet Union** and other Eastern Bloc nations
- **Freedom:** Increasing freedom of **media**, freedom of **movement**
- **Leading role:** enforce the leading role of the communist party more effectively
- **Economy:** mixing planned and market economies



- What's next?
- Reform...
- Reform...
- And Reform...
- The members of the government had been greatly **changed**...
- The Czechoslovakia government had

■ **Soviet Union's reaction:**

■ **EXTREMELY ANGRY!!!**

■ **NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!**

■ **YOU WILL NEVER ESCAPE FROM MY CONTROL! CZECHOSLOVAKIA!!!!**

■ **What did the Soviet Union and the "Warsaw Five" want?**

- They want to keep Czechoslovakia in the Soviet Union's control
- No Reform...
- No Change

- 23 March: **Meeting in Dresden** (Eastern Germany)
- Leaders of **“Warsaw Five”**: USSR, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria and East Germany
- They were concerned about the **growing criticism** in the media of Czechoslovakia...
- Tried Negotiation...
- Dubcek refused

- What's then?
- **INVASION...**



- Why?
- **Brezhnev Doctrine is now introduced:** the right for Soviet Union to intervene the Eastern Bloc countries when necessary, and it is used to protect against revolution and preserve socialism. (They could use military force now)

- **During the invasion:**
- 72 Czechs and Slovaks were killed (19 of those in Slovakia)
- 266 severely wounded and another 436 slightly injured

Dubcek: No, People, Stop resist!



- However, People kept resisting...(Nonviolent resistance)
- 16 January 1969: A student called Jan Palach set himself on fire in Prague's Wenceslas Square to protest against invasion
- 20 August: Dubcek has been arrested and sent to Moscow for negotiation
- UN wants Soviet Union to stop invading Czechoslovakia...Soviet Union: Veto
- **Nothing could stop Soviet Union from invading Czechoslovakia...**

- **Result:**
- 1969: Dubček was replaced as first secretary by Gustáv Husák
- Husák: **Normalization**
 - Reversed Dubček reforms
 - Reinstate the power of police
 - Increase the tie with the rest of communist bloc
 - People cannot commenting on politics in main stream media
 - Purged the liberal members
- Result: the only change that left from the Prague Spring was the name of Czechoslovakia:
- **Czech Socialist Republic and Slovak Socialist Republic**



Timeline:

- In late 1950s—early 1960s, De-Stalinization began.
- 1968/01/05, Alexander Dubček became a chairman.
 - **Why?**
 - wanted Czech more liberal and democratic, but still loyal to Moscow.
 - Inspired by Nikita Khrushchev----Remove press censorship, cultural and artistic freedom. Civil rights
- July 1968, A USSR leader, Brezhnev, proposed a counter-revolutionary with Dubček.
 - **Why?**
 - Reason: He was afraid of Czechoslovakia independence.
 - Result: No clear respond from Dubček
- 20 August 1968, Brezhnev ordered the tanks to Prague, Czechoslovakia.
 - -Reason: Dubček angered the USSR
 - Result: Failed, caused 72 civilians were killed.

Questions:

- What changes in Czechoslovakia did Dubcek bring
- Why did Prague spring happens
- Who wanted to stop the revolt in Czech? Why?
- List two things that achieved from the Action Programme by Alexander Dubcek
- What is “Normalization”, and who started it?
- List two things that caused Novotny’s losing of power.

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