

November 23, 1989
**Teleprint, 'Summary of the Demands Made by Opposition
Groups Represented by the Civic Forum'**

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Summary:

The demands for reform by the Civic Forum and the anti-communism movement in Czechoslovakia are outlined, in regards to the legal system, political system, economy, and a general re-structuring of power. The general decline in support of the CPCz and growth of support for opposition groups is apparent.

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- English Translation

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Summary of the demands of the opposition groups represented by the Civic Forum

We are providing a summary of the most frequent demands of the opposition groups represented by the Civic Forum. The demands are divided into three areas: the judicial system, the political system and the economy. In all three areas the demands blend together and complement each other. Even when a few of them did not appear in the slogans they disseminated at the demonstrations, it can be counted on that they may appear in public or in a dialogue with several groups in the following days.

A. The Legal System

An unequivocal demand is the full realization of human and civic rights and freedoms in the spirit of the accepted international agreements and commitments, especially the modification of the legal regulations (separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers, especially the constitution, criminal code, the law on the conditions of detention, amnesty for so-called political prisoners, abolition of the so-called undemocratic laws and statutes, establishment of public inspections of security organs and a decrease in their numbers, amendment of the freedom of association and assembly law, the legalization of opposition groups and the facilitation of their free practice, the elimination of so-called persecutions and discriminations of citizens on the basis of their convictions).

B. The Political System

Respect for the right of historical truth, that is the reevaluation of the crisis years 1968/1969, the rehabilitation of the protagonists of the "Prague Spring," and the condemnation of international aid.

The demand to activate the society and the information system (develop an intense dialogue with all the social and ethnic groups in the CSSR and even the émigrés in foreign countries in such a way that the population would become a political nation with a pluralist society, the legalization of independent periodicals, the creation of objective information networks, to enable plurality of opinion in education, liquidation of the state monopoly on schools, the launching of broadcasts of radio and television programs for believers).

Political changes stemming from the revocation of the Lessons from the Crisis Development, [the resignation of] all so-called compromised functionaries of normalization, the removal of Soviet army units in the CSSR in the course of abandoning the security component within the framework of the Warsaw Pact agreements, the removal of paramilitary and police elements from civilian life, the abolition of the Peoples Militia, an end to political and cadre privileges. The extension of the separation between church and state, freedom of activity for male and female religious orders, the retraction of state control over the church. The pluralization of union life, the independence of unions from the state and the employers, the right to establish "free" union organizations.

Further, changes in the Czechoslovak Constitution, especially the retraction of Article 4, which establishes the leading role of the CPCz, and elimination from the constitution of so-called ideological concepts and constructs such as "the working people, Marxist scientific world interpretation, socialistic social and state leadership, the leading role, *et al.*," removal of the "indefinite state sovereignty over one or another political alliance" (basically a veiled demand for neutrality), constitutional "demand for the right for national self-determination up to an eventual split" within the federation, the new delimitation of Moravia, and the return of the traditional state symbols (emblem, flag, hymn).

The opposition further demands that the constitution be expanded to include recognition of the Gypsies and the Jews as nationalities, and to allow the free contact "of minority nationalities with their people, the supplementation of the system of constitutional court and the system of administrative courts, the election of judges and their complete independence, the leadership of jury trials and the institution of investigating judges, the possibility of private law suits against state organs and their members, the institution of the rule that no one can be forced into "military service" and the "establishment of service of a non-military character" for conscientious objectors. The shortening of the basic military service, the introduction of a civil substitution service, a decrease in the army budget and its publication, the humanization of the military service, and the demilitarization of education.

C. The Economy

They demand radical reform of economic aid, the introduction of autonomous forums of collective ownership, plurality of different types of ownership, full renewal of private enterprise in the sphere of trade, craft, small and medium businesses, parts of agriculture and culture. The introduction of family forums and long-term lease of land, provision of long-term loans and material aid to private owners, reconstruction of heavy industry with the removal of false employment and preferences stemming from adverse international economic relations.

In the last hours the following demands are emphasized (the minimal program for the next few days):

- the recognition of the leadership of the Civic Forum as a partner of the Presidium of the CC CPCz and an immediate round-table negotiation;
- the creation of a new government of the so-called Great Coalition coalition with the participation of the representatives of the Civic Forum (i.e. all opposition groups), revived National Front parties and individuals having informal authority;
- the call for free elections with the participation of the established forces;
- the legalization of the activity of opposition groups and the procurement of material means for their activity (offices, etc.).

The research done by the Institute for Public Opinion Research at the Federal Statistical Office in May 1989, shows that a group of the people who were asked, endorsed the following demands of opposition groups represented by the Civic Forum. The demands in question are:

- removal of the leading role of the CPCz - 32% were in favor;
- change in the way the leading role of the CPCz is implemented - 49% were in favor;
- pluralization of the union movement - 35% were in favor;
- cadre changes in the leadership - 77% were in favor;
- changes in the laws limiting freedom of expression, assembly and information - 59% were in favor;
- changes in the system of elections - 60% were in favor;
- changes in the evaluation of the year 1968 - 59% were in favor;
- reprivatization of the means of production - 32% were in favor.

In the research conducted from 22-24 November 1989, 88% (and 93% in Prague) were in favor of

cadre changes in the leadership, and 81% (and 88% in Prague) were in favor of official negotiations with the opposition (meaning its legalization).

A significant number of individuals questioned also think that the next development of the CSSR (its political system and economy) should head towards a system that is somewhere between socialism and capitalism (47%). An almost identical number of people think that it should go the socialist route. In the polls conducted, the difference of opinion between CPCz members and those not affiliated with the party was not ascertained.

From the information of the CC CPCz from 26 November 1989, at 12:00 p.m., it is noticeable that the series of demands found among party members is identical to the demands of the opposition. Emphasis is placed upon:

- further cadre changes in the leadership of the party (with more emphasis on the resignations of Stepán, [and] Zavadil, and less emphasis the resignations of Lenárt, Knotek, Horený);
- a thorough analysis of the past with the assignment of personal responsibility for the state of society;
- engaging in discussion with the opposition;
- an accelerated elaboration and introduction of a proposal for a new constitution of the CSSR, a law on the freedom of association and a law on the freedom of assembly.

In comparison with the information from the RC CPCz from 25 November 1989, a shift has taken place in the demands of the party members to benefit the demands of the opposition (on 25 November only 3 of the 11 demands included in the information were in agreement with the demands of the opposition; on 26 November, 5 of the 10 demands were in agreement with those of the opposition). It is obvious at the same time that in the workers collectives the level of opposition to the general strike called by the Civic Forum for 27 November is diminishing.

Conclusion

In public opinion, but also among CPCz members, there is a noticeable growth of negative tendencies and an inclination toward the demands of the opposition. The situation reveals that in the last few days a significant weakening of the role and prestige of the CPCz in society has occurred as a result of the belated reaction to the developments and the ineffectively accepted decision.

The opposition took the initiative because of the developments in the party. The decisive question will be the correct formulation of the leading role and position of the party in the social system, which must correspond to the opinion and demands of the people. It is clear that the Party will have to be a partner both in the National Front as well as in its relations to the opposition (Civic Forum). Should the corresponding measures and clearly formulated party lines fail to be adopted, there is danger that the party may disintegrate and will have diminished hopes of gaining a significant portion of the vote in the next elections.

It is necessary to immediately publish the accepted measures and conclusions from the dialogue, because the opposition today can use the legal media (radio, television, the National Front press). In the information for the RC and DC CPCz it is necessary to on the one hand to accelerate their flow, inform [everyone] without any delays on all events and decisions about the demands of the opposition and their escalation, but, on the other hand, especially to inform [everyone] about our positions and arguments, through which it would be possible to react to the demands. The RC and DC CPCz themselves must ensure a political evaluation of the situation in the regions, including the developments of local branches of opposition groups and their demands.

(Illegible name)

We are sending information on the conclusions of the nation-wide party caucus which took place in Prague on 28 November of this year.

(Illegible signature)

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