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# Radio and Rebellion: An Investigation of Radio and Its Use by Czechoslovakian Youth During the 1968 August Invasion

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From the rise of numerous protest movements around the globe to the assassinations of political officials and the self-immolation of activists, day-to-day happenings around the world in the year 1968 continually shocked those who lived through the turmoil. Further contributing to the explosive nature of 1968, the advent of new forms of media allowed people around the world to learn of critical historical moments substantially faster than past generations. Along with the rise of satellite television and the rapid transmission of battlefield or protest footage to television screens around the world, radio broadcasting continued to advance technologically and served as a critical medium for communication and relaying breaking information both nationally and internationally. Given this function, radio played a key role in many protest movements and caused those attempting to crush resistance and protest efforts to classify radio as a highly influential tool of resistance, similar to the way in which they classified press publications and leaflets. This paper explores the ways in which radio impacted the actions of youth movements and encouraged cross-generational resistance among the Czech population during the invasion and subsequent occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union between August 21, 1968 and August 27, 1968. Specifically, this paper focuses on the way that the Czechoslovakian youth reacted to radio broadcasts immediately preceding and during the Soviet invasion and how they used radio as a tool to advance their beliefs and vision for the future of Czechoslovakia. During the invasion of Czechoslovakia, established and clandestine radio networks capitalized on shifting political attitudes towards communism among the nation's growing youth movement and guided the response of Czech youth by directing them to engage in acts of passive resistance and providing them with a medium through which they could express their sentiments. Furthermore, the availability of radio networks as a channel of information and a tool of

resistance empowered Czech youth and granted them the ability to work in tandem with older generations of Czech citizens, a cross-generational allyship not frequently seen in 1968, and directly engage in a variety of activities meant to combat the Soviet invasion.

Radio, both as a communication and broadcast medium and as a tool of resistance, was not a new concept in 1968. While its invention occurred in the late nineteenth century, the radio became a household feature beginning in the 1920s when it emerged as a tool of commercial broadcasting.[1] The development of the smaller and more portable transistor radio in 1947 contributed to increased ownership of radios throughout the 1950s and 1960s.[2] By the 1950s, most nations had a national broadcasting network through which they disseminated state-sponsored, and in some countries, commercial programming alongside national broadcasts. As radio gained steadily in popularity, politicians and governments shifted their strategies to incorporate this new medium. As early as the late-1930s and early to mid-1940s, political figures like Winston Churchill and Adolf Hitler utilized radio broadcasts to speak to a broader audience and advance their respective political agendas, with Churchill using his rhetorical talent to engage listeners and Hitler using radio as a means to create a "heroic" and "mystical" version of himself through his speeches.[3] In addition to politicians utilizing radio, the medium became increasingly available to the general population throughout the 1930s and 1940s. During World War II, underground resistance movements across Europe operating with the purpose of subverting Nazi power utilized radio in order to coordinate resistance efforts and generate solidarity throughout the occupied territories in Europe.[4] The use of radio by the general population to construct a widespread and effective resistance movement during the 1940s signaled a new era of radio in which the medium was not only accessible to the common man, but also one in which radio could be used to advance political and social change.

The use of radio as a political tool became increasingly more common in the wake of World War II and with the onset of the Cold War. In the context of the Cold War, a large body of pre-existing scholarly literature suggests that radio played an important role in the tenuous relationship between the East and West. As author René Wolf declared, radio broadcasts, "with [their] personal intimacy, [were] thought to exert an immensely persuasive… influence on a polarized world."[5] The rise of shortwave transmitters, which allowed radio broadcasts to reach remote audiences via an unlimited number of receivers, gave nations the ability to spread their

[1] "A Science Odyssey: People and Discoveries: KDKA Begins to Broadcast," PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), accessed November 12, 2021, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aso/databank/entries/dt20ra.html.
[2] "The Rise of Top 40 Radio," Encyclopædia Britannica (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc.), accessed November 12, 2021, https://www.britannica.com/topic/radio/The-rise-of-Top-40-radio#ref1124110.
[3] Huub Wijfjes, "Spellbinding and Crooning: Sound Amplification, Radio, and Political Rhetoric in International Comparative Perspective, 1900–1945," *Technology and Culture* 55, no. 1 (April 2014): pp. 148-185, https://doi.org/10.1353/tech.2014.0013.
[4] Bob Moore and Bob Moore, "Comparing Resistance and Resistance Movements," in *Resistance in Western Europe*, 1st ed. (London, United Kin: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2000), 256
[5] René Wolf, "'Mass Deception without Deceivers'? the Holocaust on East and West German Radio in the 1960s," *Journal of Contemporary History* 41, no. 4 (October 2006): pp. 741-755, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009406067755.

political and societal commentary to nations previously deemed inaccessible.[6] In the climate of the Cold War, where the conflict between communism and Western capitalism pervaded all aspects of society, states looked unfavorably upon potentially manipulative or antagonistic radio broadcasting. As the twentieth century progressed, both national leaders and the general population realized that radio, with its wide geographic reach and broad audience, was a tool for political activism and a crucial communication medium for social movements.[7] In some instances, the Soviet Union severely limited the use of radio broadcasting for non-state sanctioned purposes and deliberately disrupted non-state broadcasts within its borders and in Eastern bloc nations by employing a technique known as "jamming." These reactions towards radio underscored the perceived importance of such communication mediums.

A considerable body of scholarly works also tout radio as a key tool in the resistance efforts mounted by Eastern European nations throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and in the eventual liberation of a number of these nations from the sphere of Soviet influence. As Linda Risso asserted in her article "Radio Wars: Broadcasting in the Cold War":

> Radio played an important role in the ideological confrontation between East and West as well as within each bloc… it was among the most pressing concerns of contemporary information agencies.[8]

Risso's comment demonstrates the importance of radio in the larger ideological battle of the Cold War, as well as in inter-bloc conflicts. In terms of available broadcast mediums, radio was the most accessible for the average person in Eastern Europe. Despite the popularization of television in western nations like the United States in the 1960s, household television sets did not become commonplace in Eastern Europe until the 1970s and 1980s.[9] The most well-known radio organizations from the Cold War era included the Western-sponsored networks of Radio Free Europe (RFE), Radio Liberty (RL), and Voice of America (VOA), as well as nation-specific networks such as Rundfunk im Amerikanischen Sektor, a station that operated in the American sector of Berlin. These broadcast networks utilized short and medium wave transmitters in order to reach and engage Eastern bloc listeners while also working to counter Soviet propaganda.[10] It is important to note that these radio stations were bastions of free press in many Eastern bloc nations, as domestic radio stations had little to no latitude in relation to what they broadcast and could not promote the same non-censored materials as RFE and RL, as they were state-controlled entities that answered to the leadership in Moscow. As a result, organizations like

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[6] "Shortwave Transmitters," Ampegon (Ampegon, October 30, 2020), https://ampegon.com/shortwave-transmitters/.
[7] Charlotte Bedford, "'The Power of Radio': Radio and Social Change," *Making Waves Behind Bars*, 2018, pp. 19-38, https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781529203363.003.0002.
[8] Linda Risso, "Radio Wars: Broadcasting in the Cold War," *Cold War History* 13, no. 2 (2013): pp. 145-152, https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2012.757134, 145.
[9] "Screening Socialism," Loughborough University Research (Loughborough University), accessed December 15, 2021, https://www.lboro.ac.uk/subjects/communication-media/research/research-projects/screening-socialism/television-histories/tvinromania/.
[10] "History of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty," RFE/RL (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty), accessed December 14, 2021, https://pressroom.rferl.org/history.

RFE and RL became known as, in the words of French historian Jacques Sémelin, "substitute radios."[11] These substitute radios served as a 'free' alternative the Soviet-controlled domestic media outlets.

Realizing their role as a substitute to heavily censored national media, international broadcasts crafted their broadcasting style accordingly. The self-described goal of RFE, agreed upon by historians like A. Ross Johnson, was to provide an "unbiased, professional substitute for the free media that countries behind the Iron Curtain lacked," specifically focusing on local news often omitted from censored national media in order to preserve independent thinking.[12] This broadcast prerogative allowed RFE, as well as RL and VOA, to supply Eastern bloc countries with a steady flow of non-censored information throughout the tumultuous decades of the mid to late twentieth century. Domestic stations held similar goals. As historian Nicholas J. Schlosser asserted in his book, *Cold War on the Airwaves : The Radio Propaganda War Against East Germany*, Rundfunk im Amerikanischen Sektor wanted to maintain a "'strategy of truth' that aimed to counteract Communist propaganda by presenting factual reporting."[13] Through this method, both international and domestic 'free radio' networks, referring to those networks not subject to government censorship, provided a valuable weapon during the Cold War. Author and historian Michael Nelson likened radio to a form of weaponry in his book, *War of the Black Heavens: The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. He claimed that radio was "mightier than the sword" and that a lack of this Western broadcasting would have lengthened the lifespan of the Soviet Union and its influence over Eastern European nations.[14] This comparison demonstrates how powerful radio broadcasting was in the context of the Cold War, an era in which the dissemination of information and propaganda played a central role in political conflicts and rebellions.

While much of the pre-existing scholarly material on mainstream radio networks centers on the impacts of the Western and Western-sponsored media that permeated the Soviet sphere of influence, there also exists a body of scholarship on the role and rise of clandestine radio during the Cold War and its use by different groups of revolutionaries. A collection of scholars, including telecommunications author Donald Brown, historian Julian Hale, and broadcasting pioneer Sig Mickelson, assert that clandestine radios, first utilized in the 1930s, played an integral role in the Cold War by providing a medium through which rebels and resistance movements, which often included galvanized youth, could communicate and organize. Coincidentally, one of the first uses of clandestine networks occurred in Czechoslovakia in

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[11] Jacques Sémelin, "Communication and Resistance. the Instrumental Role of Western Radio Stations in Opening up Eastern Europe," *Réseaux. The French Journal of Communication* 2, no. 1 (1994): pp. 55-69, https://doi.org/10.3406/reso.1994.3260, 57-8.
[12] "History of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty," RFE/RL (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty), accessed December 14, 2021, https://pressroom.rferl.org/history.; Matthew R. Crooker and Jonathan Reed Winkler, "Cool Notes in an Invisible War: The Use of Radio and Music in the Cold War from 1953 to 1968" (dissertation, 2019).
[13] Nicholas J. Schlosser, *Cold War on the Airwaves the Radio Propaganda War against East Germany* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 2.
[14] Michael Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens: The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 1997).

1931.[15] Due to their secret and unrestricted nature, underground radio networks became a key tool for rebels operating in the nations encompassed in the Soviet sphere of influence. Authors of *Clandestine Radio Broadcasting: A Study of Revolutionary and Counterrevolutionary Electronic Communication*, Lawrence C. Soley and John S. Nichols, also assert that the distinction between the broadcasts of 'free' radios like RFE and RL and clandestine radios, like those operating in Czechoslovakia during the August invasion, is not always as clear cut as it may seem.[16] While not imbued with the same core goals, both clandestine and 'free' public radio sought to support the exchange of information and to provide truthful accounts about the situation in Eastern bloc nations, oftentimes leading to wide-ranging impacts. The blurring that Soley and Nicholas refer to strengthens the study of the impacts of public and clandestine radio and reinforces the interplay between the two forms of broadcast. Additionally, it permits the inclusion of source material beyond the limited body of works that discuss the far-reaching impacts of clandestine radio.

To further understand the manner in which both 'free' public and clandestine networks interacted with events during the Cold War, one can examine specific occurrences from the time period and the radio's role in how they transpired. Before the tumultuous events of the Prague Spring and the 1968 August Invasion in Czechoslovakia, radio played a central role in the unrest in two Eastern bloc nations: Poland and Hungary. Radio Free Europe, alongside the Free Europe Committee (FEC), an organization established with the intent of helping eastern European populations retain sovereignty in the face of Soviet communism in the aftermath of World War II, played a critical role in the protests that arose in these nations in the 1950s.[17] By the late 1950s and early 1960s, many European nations had a broadcasting branch of RFE, and Poland and Hungary were no exception. In 1956, the Polish RFE station broadcast throughout the Polish October, a moment of political change in Poland that many thought would lead to reform and some degree of liberalization of Polish socialism.[18] The RFE, which supported the reformist protesters, broadcast to "provide the Polish population… with as much relevant information as possible" while not exacerbating the situation.[19] This demonstrates radio's use as a tool of resistance, as it provided protesters and their supporters with a steady flow of information that aided their protest efforts. A similar sequence of events also occurred in Hungary in 1956 when Hungarians gathered to protest the nation's Stalinist government.[20] However, Hungary's protests quickly descended into a full-fledged revolution. The Hungarian branch of the RFE approached their broadcasts with a similar mission to that of their Polish counterparts throughout the

[15] Lawrence C. Soley and John Nichols, *Clandestine Radio Broadcasting: A Study of Revolutionary and Counterrevolutionary Electronic Communication* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1987).
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] R. Eugene Parta, A. Ross Johnson, and Paul B Henze, "RFE's Early Years: Evolution of Broadcast Policy and Evidence of Broadcast Impact," in *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: A Collection of Studies and Documents* (Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2010), 1.
[18] Adam Bromke, "Background of the Polish October Revolution," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 3, no. 1 (1958): pp. 43-58, https://doi.org/10.1080/00085006.1958.11417837.
[19] R. Eugene Parta, A. Ross Johnson, and Paul B Henze, "RFE's Early Years," 15.
[20] "Hungary, 1956," U.S. Department of State (U.S. Department of State), accessed November 18, 2021, https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/lw/107186.htm.

Hungarian Revolution. While neither nation emerged from its scuffle with the Soviet Union unscathed, in both instances, radio distinguished itself as an important tool for protesters and RFE advanced the idea of increased national autonomy for Eastern bloc nations.

Despite nearly twelve years passing in the wake of the political unrest in Poland and Hungary, the political situation in Czechoslovakia began showing signs of shifting in a similar manner in the mid to late-1960s. By January 1968, the government replaced the standing First Secretary, Antonin Novotny, with Alexander Dubček, a longtime government figure who previously served under Novotny.[21] This change in leadership came after Novotny lost much of his support throughout 1967 and the public began to show signs of unrest. In his new position, Dubček called for the redevelopment of Czech socialism into "socialism with a human face."[22] This rethinking of socialism in Czechoslovakia meant the incorporation of many liberalizing policies typically disallowed in the Eastern bloc. In an early resolution passed by Dubček and the central committee, he called for a "far greater encouragement of an open exchange of views."[23] Other reforms included greater press freedoms, increased access to Western media, and the lessening of travel restrictions of Czech citizens.[24] These freedoms were largely unheard of in the Eastern bloc, as most nations under the Soviet Union's sphere of influence operated under strict directive from the Soviets concerning the materials provided to public and travel allowances. Given the Cold War conflict between the Soviets and the West, the Soviets did not permit the consumption of Western media and severely limited travel to the West. This period of change, which much of the public supported and enjoyed, became known as the Prague Spring. The reforms initiated by Dubček during the Prague Spring grew more progressive over time, pleasing many within the country but also resulting in negative pressure from Soviet leaders to reverse the new policies.

At the time the reforms of the Prague Spring began to spread throughout Czechoslovakia, radio was an established broadcasting medium across the country. As noted by Olesya Tkacheva et al., ascertaining a comprehensive statistic of Czech listenership was not an easy task, as it was difficult, and oftentimes impossible, to implement routine survey mechanisms used to measure such statistics.[25] One recent metric found that over fifty percent of Eastern Europeans routinely listened to Western broadcasts.[26] From this statistic it is reasonable to infer that radio was commonplace in Czech homes in 1968. Furthermore, the invention of transistor radios in 1954 transformed radios from immovable pieces of furniture to handheld devices able to be

[21] Jaromír Navrátil, *The Prague Spring 1968: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2006), liv, 20.
[22] Ibid, xlix.
[23] Navrátil, *The Prague Spring 1968,* 27.
[24] Mark Kurlansky, *1968: The Year That Rocked the World* (New York, NY: Random House Paperbacks, 2005), 36-37.
[25] Olesya Tkacheva et al., "Information Freedom During the Cold War: The Impact of Western Radio Broadcasts," in *Internet Freedom and Political Space* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2013), pp. 149-184, 157-8.
[26] Risso, "Radio Wars: Broadcasting in the Cold War," 145.

transported with ease.[27] Original radios and transistor radios appealed to adults and youth alike, with both groups owning radios during this period. The one limitation on portable radio ownership, however, was the price, which averaged around 400 USD in the 1960s.[28] This price likely precluded lower-income Czechs from owning a portable radio in 1968. Still a considerable portion of the Czech population accessed radio broadcasts, both domestic and international, either through their own radio or via a radio of a friend or relative.

One popular frequency belonged to Radio Prague, one of Czechoslovakia's main broadcast networks. While Soviet influence resulted in the censorship of media in the country for much of the 1950s and 1960s, the reforms of the Prague Spring allowed networks like Radio Prague some latitude in what they broadcast. By the latter half of March 1968, Dubček allowed for the complete abolishment of censorship in relation to the media.[29] Going forward, the Czech media retained the ability to publish and broadcast freely, inciting anger on the part of Soviet leadership in Moscow. These freedoms allowed for a widespread and open discussion of Czech politics, leading to criticisms being levied by the Czech public and media alike about the previous repression as well as the traumas the nation experienced under Stalin prior to 1953.[30] As spring faded into summer the content of the media, including radio, shifted towards the promotion of free speech and the ability for Czechoslovakia to proceed with the development of Czech socialism.[31] The content of these messages demonstrates that radio networks, along with other broadcast mediums, utilized their new freedoms, in part, to question the political state of the nation and support Dubček's reforms despite increasingly negative Soviet responses. The fact that a large portion of the Czech population engaged with these broadcasts and participated in ongoing political conversations alludes to the shifting political sentiments of a portion of the Czech population as the Prague Spring continued.

Despite the tenuous situation between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union throughout the Prague Spring, the Czech youth supported Dubček's changes and the overall turn towards the liberalization of Czechoslovakian socialism. However, even before Dubček's attempts to recreate Czechoslovakian politics to encompass "socialism with a human face," the youth questioned the nation's political system. As Dr. Galia Golan described in her report on youth in Czechoslovakia, "Czechoslovak youth in the early 1960s was a disillusioned and generally speaking apathetic group… repelled by the regimentation, authoritarianism, and deceptions of the communist regime."[32] Even half a decade before the reforms of the Prague Spring, young people were unhappy with the political situation under which they lived. However, the group remained

[27] Joseph Stromberg, "The Transistor Radio Launches the Portable Electronic Age," Smithsonian.com (Smithsonian Institution, October 18, 2011), https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/the-transistor-radio-launches-the-portable-electronic-age-110761753/.
[28] Rose Heichelbech, "The Ridiculously High Cost of Electronics Back in the Day," Dusty Old Thing, March 4, 2021, https://dustyoldthing.com/electronics-prices-change/.
[29] Jan Culik, "The Prague Spring: Dubček, the Media, and Mass Demoralisation," Wilson Center, August 23, 2018, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/the-prague-spring-dubcek-the-media-and-mass-demoralisation.
[30] Kurlansky, *1968: The Year That Rocked the World*, 240-243.
[31] Culik, "The Prague Spring: Dubček, the Media, and Mass Demoralisation,"
[32] Galia Golan, "Youth and Politics in Czechoslovakia," *Journal of Contemporary History* 5, no. 1 (1970): pp. 3-22, https://doi.org/10.1177/002200947000500101, 4.

relatively politically inactive during the early 1960s, with only 11.4% of Czech youth considering themselves politically active.[33] This stemmed, in part, from the fact that the government controlled the Czechoslovakian Youth Movement (CSM) for much of the decade and actively stifled calls for liberalization. By 1967, Czech youth began organizing separately from the CSM. Disgruntled by increasingly repressive measures introduced by Novotny, the CSM's failure to consider any liberalizing policies, and other material concerns, youth engaged in protests and marches and regularly encountered police violence.[34] These protests, along with a comprehensive list of demands authored by the fledgling youth movement, solidified the crucial break with the state-influenced CSM. Conservative members of the Czechoslovakian government responded to these protests negatively and cited the content of Radio Free Europe broadcasts as a catalyst for the youth's political discontent. Despite the rejection of student demands by the Novotny government, Dubček acknowledged what he called the "special position" held by youth and asserted that providing conditions under which youth could express themselves might prove a more productive remedy to the protest problem.[35] When Dubček came to power, his turn towards political liberalization appealed to many students, as it finally seemed as if the government chose to listen to their demands. This feeling of representation and inclusion helps to explain why Czech youth defended Dubček and his government, even as tensions rose between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia in 1968.

By late summer in 1968, tensions between the Soviet Union and the allied Warsaw Pact countries and Czechoslovakia were at an all-time high. A letter from the Warsaw Pact in July noting their "firm resistance to anti-communist forces and… the preservation of the socialist system in Czechoslovakia" and a phone call between Dubček and Soviet leader Leonoid Brezhnev in which Brezhnev accused Dubček of "outright deceit" and sabotage in relation to his handling of domestic affairs in Czechoslovakia indicated that a breaking point was near.[36] On August 18th, officials within the Kremlin authorized the invasion of Czechoslovakia and in the following days, the Soviets quietly placed their forces at the Czech border. Three days later, on August 21st, hundreds of thousands of Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops rolled into Czechoslovakia, marking the end of the Prague Spring and the beginning of a week-long resistance effort by the Czech people, namely the youth.

Part of the resistance efforts undertaken by the Czechoslovakian youth, with the help of other Czech protesters, included the protection of their radio broadcasting networks. Fearing Soviet intervention and in an attempt to combat heavy censorship, select Czech citizens started moving radio operations underground in order to maintain lines of communication.[37] When the Soviets invaded in August, these fears were realized. Soviets labeled radio and television

[33] Golan, "Youth and Politics in Czechoslovakia," 4.
[34] Navrátil, *The Prague Spring* 1968, 23.; Galia Golan, "Youth and Politics in Czechoslovakia," 9-10.
[35] Golan, "Youth and Politics in Czechoslovakia," 11.
[36] Navrátil, *The Prague Spring* 1968, 231, 340.
[37] Tad Szulc and Clyde H Farnsworth, "Invasion of Czechoslovakia: The First Week," *The New York Times*, September 2, 1968, 117 edition, pp. 1-6.

broadcasting stations as primary objectives of the first stage of the invasion.[38] The Soviets considered these mediums to be of strategic importance and wanted to eliminate all sources of free Czech media in order to snuff out dissidence and utilize the broadcasting equipment to spread pro-Soviet propaganda. As Soviet troops crossed the border, Czech radio stations engaged in the first of many critical revolutionary acts at around 1:00 AM when they announced the invasion and warned civilians to not mount a resistance against the advancing Soviet troops.[39] This first announcement was formative, as it directed students towards the use of passive resistance methods rather than outright violence.

***Image 1**: Czech youth watch as an invading tank approaches the Radio Prague building.*

After this announcement, civilians and radio stations awaited the arrival of the tanks and troops. At the Radio Prague broadcasting station in the city, Czech youth poured into the streets in order to mount a defense against the Soviet invaders and protect the radio transmitters housed in the station. The young people of Czechoslovakia felt that "so long as the radio continued broadcasting… the world would know what was happening."[40] While the radio advised passive resistance so as to not provoke a Soviet massacre, the defense of the Radio Prague building marked one of the rare instances in which Czech youth utilized active and violent resistance techniques. The young Czechs threw Molotov cocktails, barricaded the surrounding streets with cars, and used their bodies to block and disable tank crews.[41] The three images on the following page depict the approach of the tanks and two styles of confrontation utilized by Czech students.[42] Image Two shows a young man using a passive resistance technique in the initial

[38] Pavel Žáček, "The KGB and the Czechoslovak State Security Apparatus in August 1968," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 29, no. 4 (October 14, 2016): pp. 626-657, https://doi.org/10.1080/13518046.2016.1232561, 636.
[39] "Czech Republic: A Chronology of Events Leading to the 1968 Invasion," RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty (Czech Republic: A Chronology Of Events Leading To The 1968 Invasion, April 9, 2008), https://www.rferl.org/a/1089303.html.
[40] Szulc and Farnsworth, "Invasion of Czechoslovakia."
[41] Kurlansky, *1968: The Year That Rocked the World*, 292-293.
[42] Josef Koudelka, *Warsaw Pact Troops Approaching the Radio Headquarters.*, photograph, *Magnum Photo* (New York, New York: Magnum Photo), Magnum Photo, accessed November 16, 2021, https://www.magnumphotos.com/newsroom/josef-koudelka-invasion-prague-68/.; Josef Koudelka, Invasion by Warsaw Pact Troops in Front of the Radio Headquarters, photograph, Magnum Photo (New York, New York: Magnum Photo), Magnum Photo, accessed November 16, 2021, https://www.magnumphotos.com/newsroom/josef-

stages of the street battle for Radio Prague in which youth attempted to reason with Soviet troops and demand they leave the station and the country. Image Three depicts a later stage of the fight, in which students like the three young men shown in the photo turned to more violent methods, such as disabling tanks with Molotov cocktails and flaming mattresses in attempts to prevent the fall of Radio Prague. The dedication and bravery displayed by the Czech youth during the battle for Radio Prague demonstrated their understanding that radio in Czechoslovakia was a critical tool of resistance against the Soviets. Even when Soviet gunfire pierced the crowds, Czech youth remained committed, with a fifteen-year-old Czech reporting that "despite scores of people lying dead in the streets, [there was] a giddy black humor was in the air."[43] While incredibly morbid, this atmosphere fostered continued unity between youth resisters in the face of violence.

***Image 2 (left)**: A young Czech man stops a tank and speaks to the Soviet invaders.*
***Image 3 (right)**: Young Czech protesters throw stones at a disabled Soviet tank.*

This instance of violence by youth in defense of Radio Prague stands out as an anomaly amongst the use of passive resistance techniques that defined the August Invasion. As asserted, while radio broadcasts advocated for the use of passive techniques, sporadic episodes of violence still occurred. However, the Czechoslovakian response to the invasion remained predominantly nonviolent. Examining the August Invasion in conjunction with the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, another instance of Soviet aggression towards a dissident country within its sphere of influence, illustrates the differences between a resistance effort guided by violence and one defined by passive resistance and the significance of tending towards nonviolence. On October 23rd, 1956, a student protest in Hungary quickly transformed into a spontaneous and violent revolution. The fighting raged between the Soviets and the Hungarian revolutionaries between October 24th, when the first wave of Soviet forces marched on Budapest, and November 4th, when the Soviet Union deployed another wave of troops and successfully suppressed the revolution.[44] By November 10th, estimates indicated that around 2,500 Hungarians died during the ten-day

koudelka-invasion-prague-68/.; Libor Hajsky, *Czech Youth Throwing Things at a Tank*, photograph, *The Atlantic* (The Atlantic, August 20, 2018), Reuters, https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2018/08/photos-50-years-since-a-soviet-invasion-ended-the-prague-spring/567916/#img01.

[43] David Welna, "Prague 1968: Reforming a Soviet Communist Regime," NPR (NPR, October 18, 2018), https://www.npr.org/2018/10/18/658570673/prague-1968-reforming-a-soviet-communist-regime.

[44] John Furlow et al., "Revolution and Refugees: The Hungarian Revolution of 1956," ed. Eva Molnar, *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 20, no. 2 (1996): pp. 101-117, 102.

uprising.[45] In comparison, a comprehensive investigation conducted by two Czech historians, Prokop Tomek and Ivo Pejčoch, showed that 138 Czechoslovakians perished during the seven-day August Invasion, with 50 of these deaths occurring on the first day when Warsaw Pact Troops shot indiscriminately.[46] Furthermore, Tomek and Pejčoch's investigation failed to yield a single case in which a Czechoslovakian killed a member of the Soviet invasion force.[47] These statistics highlight the overall non-violent nature of the Czechoslovakian resistance efforts in 1968, despite the early occurrence of violence on the streets in front of Radio Prague, when placed in contrast with a comparable event often described by historians as violent. It also speaks to the success of Czechoslovakia's clandestine radio networks in their promotion of passive resistance during the August Invasion.

Despite the considerable efforts of youth and other Czech citizens, Radio Prague fell to the Soviets on the morning of August 21st. Before going silent, a female announcer told the nation that "[the Soviets] are going to silence our voices, but they cannot silence our hearts" in an attempt to provide hope to the youth protesting in the streets.[48] However, the silence alluded to by the announcer did not last long, as clandestine radio networks soon appeared and provided a communication network for the youth sect of the resistance movement.

Less than twelve hours after the fall of Radio Prague, clandestine radio networks appeared and alerted Czech youth and the broader Czech resistance effort of their existence. To denote their separation from the now Soviet-controlled networks, the underground radio broadcasters continually announced that they were "the free, legal Czechoslovak radio" or "the legitimate voice of occupied Czechoslovakia."[49] These radio broadcasts were so influential that in the coming week, radio became "the main means through which a politically mature and effective resistance was shaped."[50] While the radio broadcasters who were working to provide radio coverage via medium and short-wave transmitters were not Czech youth, the rise of these clandestine radio networks was crucial to the continuation of youth resistance efforts. The continuous broadcasts provided much-needed information about troop movements and directed youth on how best to engage with and hinder Soviet troops.[51] The radio broadcasts also served as a critical line of communication for youth activists attempting to contact one another to discuss their movements, as well as those seeking to coordinate youth efforts with those of the broader

[45] "Hungarian Revolution of 1956," Communications Unlimited, October 24, 2017, https://www.communications-unlimited.nl/hungarian-revolution-of-1956-4/.
[46] Prokop Tomek and Ivo Pejčoch, *Černá Kniha Sovětské Okupace: Sovětská Armáda V Československu a JEJÍ OBĚTI: 1968-1991* (Cheb, Czech Republic: Svět křídel, 2018).
[47] Prokop Tomek and Ivo Pejčoch, *Černá Kniha Sovětské Okupace: Sovětská Armáda V Československu a JEJÍ OBĚTI: 1968-1991;* Ruth Frankova, "Historians Pin down Number of 1968 Invasion Victims," Radio Prague International (Radio Prague International, April 8, 2021), https://english.radio.cz/historians-pin-down-number-1968-invasion-victims-8184417.
[48] Joseph Wechsberg, *The Voices* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969), 19.
[49] Wechsberg, *The Voices*, 29.; "Radio Prague Broadcast from August 25th, 1968," August 1968 - Audio Archive - Radio Prague International (Radio Prague International), accessed November 16, 2021, https://archiv.radio.cz/en/static/august-1968/audio.
[50] Gerry Sharp, *Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston, MA: Porter Sargent, 1973), 100.
[51] "Radio Prague Broadcast from August 25th, 1968," August 1968 - Audio Archive - Radio Prague International (Radio Prague International), accessed November 16, 2021, https://archiv.radio.cz/en/static/august-1968/audio.

Czechoslovakian resistance movement.[52] These systems developed tremendously quickly in the evening hours of August 21st, enabling Czech youth to re-engage with Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops in full force the next morning, with some coteries of youth even returning to the streets that evening.

The continuous directive from all of the free and legitimate clandestine stations advised Czech youth to proceed cautiously when demonstrating and restrict their protest efforts to acts of passive resistance. The broadcasters at these stations realized that direct, violent confrontation risked allowing the nation's youth to walk directly into a Soviet trap, resulting in the murder of innocent civilians under the guise that their actions equated to a provocation of Soviet troops. Aware of this, radio stations provided careful updates and directives as to how and when to stage demonstrations, as well as suggesting tactics to fuel ongoing passive resistance. On the evening of August 21st, the radio warned youth to limit their demonstrations, citing the death of numerous civilians that occurred earlier that day.[53] By August 22nd, the clandestine networks routinely reported the license plate numbers of the Soviet vehicles conducting arrests.[54] These cyclical announcements helped civilians avoid those cars and provided Czechs attempting to seize the cars with the necessary knowledge.

After the first day of the invasion, the underground radio stations took an increasingly hardline stance against mass demonstrations and violent conflict with the invading troops. Throughout the invasion, Wenceslas Square, located in the city of Prague, and Freedom Square, located in Brno, served as central locations for protest and became symbols of resistance in Czechoslovakia.[55] These places served as gathering points for young people. Many youths met and gave speeches denouncing the invasion and praising Dubček and even more came to listen to their comrades. On August 21st, protesters in and around Freedom Square grew increasingly restless and concerns arose about the potential for street violence and arrests. A free radio station in Brno acknowledged the situation and urged students to "go home, please," declaring that the absence of unrest in the square might encourage Soviet tanks to leave the center of the city. Another reporter also appealed to the youth by ordering them to back away from burning tanks, crying, "Get away from [the] burning tanks, people, don't stand around! [The Soviets] may shoot!"[56] Despite the impassioned nature of the youth protesters, many heeded the warnings shared by the radio stations and coordinated their time in the streets based on the information provided via broadcasters. Just a day later, on August 23rd, the underground radio stations in Prague broadcast similar messages to those protesting in and around Wenceslas Square. Announcers spoke directly to the youth, saying, "Young people, get off the streets, the situation is serious" and warning that a demonstration scheduled for 5:00 PM that evening in Wenceslas

[52] Zein Nakhoda, "Czechoslovak Resistance to Soviet Occupation, 1968," Global Nonviolent Action Database, May 14, 2011, https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/czechoslovak-resistance-soviet-occupation-1968.
[53] Sharp, *Politics of Nonviolent Action*, 100.; Joseph Wechsberg, *The* Voices, 35.
[54] Constantine Christo Menges, "Prague Resistance, 1968: The Ingenuity of Conviction." Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1968. https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P3930.html, 6.
[55] Szulc and Farnsworth, "Invasion of Czechoslovakia: The First Week."
[56] Wechsberg, *The Voices*, 49-50.

Square would be considered a provocation by the Soviets.[57] Less than an hour later, the nearly 50,000 young people that occupied the square at the time of the radio broadcast were gone.[58] This scenario demonstrates the Czech youth's mindfulness of radio directives and their willingness to cease their protest efforts when such radio directives indicated that their actions risked causing more harm than good to the overall resistance effort.

Covert radio stations also continually advocated for the use of passive resistance methods by Czech youth. The radio argued that violence was futile, and non-violence provided a method of defense that did not supply the Soviets with evidence to rationalize their invasion of an autonomous nation.[59] To emphasize the importance of passive resistance, Vaclav Havel, a highly respected Czech writer who later became the president of Czechoslovakia, broadcast the following message on free airwaves on August 22nd. He spoke passionately but calmly to the Czech population and conveyed the following message: "We urge you: don't engage in open conflict with the occupiers! We have a different weapon: loyalty to our native land. Be loyal and don't betray it! Expose the traitors! Prevent them from doing their work! Fight against them. Success in this fight will mean the aggression will fail."[60] Havel's words not only urged youth to refrain from violent confrontation for safety reasons, but also demonstrated the impactful and effective nature of national loyalty and passive resistance in the hands of the Czech people.

One of the most common forms of passive resistance encouraged by clandestine radios during the first days of the invasion involved directly engaging Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops in conversation. The conversations were simple. As instructed by the radio, Czech youth asked the invaders simple questions like "Why have you come here?" and told them that Czechoslovakia did not need their assistance.[61] Jiri Pehe, a Czechoslovakian who was just 13 years old in August 1968, engaged in conversations with the Soviets and remembered "people going to the tanks and going to the soldiers, and talking to the soldiers who did not even know where they were, they were saying: 'This is a terrible mistake. What are you doing here? Why did you come?'"[62] In response to the bombardment of questioning, many Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops did not know how to respond other than to say that their orders demanded they partake in an intervention in Czechoslovakia. Images Four and Five depict the exchanges between invading forces and young Czechs described by Pehe.[63] In Image Four, the facial expression on the young Czech girl's face

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[57] Wechsberg, *The Voices*, 55.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Sharp, *Politics of Nonviolent Action*, 100
[60] "Vaclav Havel's Radio Appeals from August 1968," VHLF, August 21, 2015, https://www.vhlf.org/news/vaclav-havels-radio-appeals-from-august-1968/.
[61] Szulc and Farnsworth, "Invasion of Czechoslovakia: The First Week."
[62] Marc Santora, "50 Years after Prague Spring, Lessons on Freedom (and a Broken Spirit)," The New York Times (The New York Times, August 21, 2018), https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/20/world/europe/prague-spring-communism.html.
[63] Josef Koudelka, Czech Girl Yelling at Warsaw Pact Soldier on Tank, photograph, *Magnum Photo* (New York, New York: Magnum Photo), Magnum Photo, accessed November 16, 2021, https://www.magnumphotos.com/newsroom/josef-koudelka-invasion-prague-68/.; Bettmann, *A Confrontation Between A Soldier and a Czech Girl*, photograph, *The Atlantic* (The Atlantic, August 20, 2018), Getty, https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2018/08/photos-50-years-since-a-soviet-invasion-ended-the-prague-spring/567916/#img01.

indicates her anger towards the occupying troops and her discomfort at being mere inches away from her occupiers. This speaks volumes to the will of the Czech youth. Similar to Image Four, numerous young people swallowed their fears surrounding their invaders in order to confront them as directed by the radio stations helping to lead the resistance efforts. Image Five not only depicts the bravery of a young Czech girl standing inches away from a Soviet tank and interrogating the tank crew, but also the throngs of youth protesters around her. This photograph demonstrates the dedication of the young girl pictured as well as the willingness of thousands of Czechoslovakian youth to place themselves at the forefront of resistance efforts under the direction of clandestine radio networks.

***Image 4 (left):*** *A young Czech girl speaks with one of the invading soldiers in a crowded street in Prague.*
***Image 5 (right):*** *A young Czech girl yells at soldiers sitting on top of a tank surrounded by other youth protesters.*

Another act of radio-sanctioned passive resistance committed by Czech youth involved basic deception tactics meant to confuse Soviet and Warsaw pact troops as they tried to traverse the country. Knowing that the invading troops had little knowledge about the geography and roadways in Czechoslovakia, the youth heeded the radio's suggestion and switched out or removed street signs and highway markers and covered house numbers.[64] Pavel Machala, who was 21 at the time of the invasion, recalled how "so many street signs, road signs, disappeared" and remembered seeing a sign for Prague pointing in the opposite direction.[65] By altering or destroying potential reference points, the youth sought to slow down the advancement of the soldiers and tank crews. Image Six depicts the damage done to signs by Czech youth in order to render them useless.[66] Some resistance groups went as far as creating false detours on key roads to divert and delay tank reinforcements sent from Poland.[67] Given the soldiers' reliance on geographic landmarks and their inability to discern false traffic diversions, the youth succeeded in temporarily decommissioning numerous sections of the invasion force during the occupation.

[64] Szulc and Farnsworth, "Invasion of Czechoslovakia: The First Week."
[65] Katherine Whittemore, "Reality Czech," Amherst College (Amherst College, August 17, 2018), https://www.amherst.edu/news/news_releases/2018/8-18/reality-czech.
[66] Katherine Whittemore, "Reality Czech," Amherst College (Amherst College, August 17, 2018), https://www.amherst.edu/news/news_releases/2018/8-18/reality-czech.
[67] Szulc and Farnsworth, "Invasion of Czechoslovakia: The First Week."

This success demonstrates the way radio helped to direct Czech youth and their resistance efforts in a manner that allowed them to have an actual negative impact on the invaders they targeted.

***Image 6:*** *Street signs defaced during the August Invasion.*

The radio stations also helped to coordinate specific protest efforts and disseminated this information to their young listeners. On August 22nd, the Fourteenth Party Congress, which formed during the invasion and convened earlier that day, called for a one-hour general strike the next day.[68] Clandestine radios immediately broadcast this information to their audiences. Encompassed within the directive to strike was a request to cease communication with Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops. While the result was not immediate, by the afternoon of August 23rd, many of the most populated protest locations were empty.[69] This again demonstrates how youth protesters who pledged themselves to resisting the Soviets heeded the instructions given via radio broadcasts. Additionally, the invaders, bewildered by the sudden absence of the youth that previously harassed them about their presence, did not know how to handle the situation and some reports indicated that the soldiers fired their rifles indiscriminately into the air.[70] The discomfort and confusion that resulted from this strike and the impacts of youth action described above demonstrated the efficacy of resistance efforts. As Vaclav Havel stated in a radio broadcast on August 23rd:

> We must continue doing what we have done so far: strike, demonstrate, write resolutions and declarations, put up signs in public places, welcome the occupiers with our fists, wear

[68] "The Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia : August 1968," The Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia: Invasion and Resistance (University of Michigan), accessed November 16, 2021, https://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/handle/2027.42/117511/Invasion_and_Resistance.html.; Constantine Christo Menges, "Prague Resistance, 1968," 10.
[69] Menges, "Prague Resistance, 1968," 10.; Szulc and Farnsworth, "Invasion of Czechoslovakia: The First Week."
[70] Szulc and Farnsworth, "Invasion of Czechoslovakia: The First Week."

> the Czechoslovak tricolor, hang out Czechoslovak flags, refuse to deal with collaborators, support only legal bodies and their rules.[71]

Havel's comments during the broadcast not only advocated for methods of passive resistance, such as the general strike, but also reiterated the importance of the multiple methods of protest the youth engaged in while proudly resisting Soviet efforts to diminish Czechoslovakian autonomy. Images Seven and Eight depict youth engagement in the forms of protests mentioned by Havel.[72] The banner carried by the students in Image Seven reads "Never Again with the Soviet Union," a political message that they hoped to convey while participating in a nonviolent march through the streets of Karlovy Vary.[73] A closer look at the picture also reveals that the students wore the Czech tricolor pinned to their chests to display their patriotism as they marched. Image Eight depicts another display of Czech patriotism by youth protesters, with many of the young people on the army truck waving Czech flags as they sang national songs and chanted pro-Czech slogans. Havel's decision to broadcast this information via the clandestine Czech radio networks and the fact that the youth engaged in these suggested forms of protest illustrate how central radio was in relation to the youth resistance movement and the activities in which they chose to participate.


***Image 7:*** *A large group of young Czechs march through the street carrying an anti-Soviet banner.*

[71] "Vaclav Havel's Radio Appeals from August 1968," VHLF, August 21, 2015, https://www.vhlf.org/news/vaclav-havels-radio-appeals-from-august-1968/.
[72] Bettmann, *Karlovy Vary*, photograph, *The Atlantic* (The Atlantic, August 20, 2018), Getty, https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2018/08/photos-50-years-since-a-soviet-invasion-ended-the-prague-spring/567916/#img01.; Bettmann, Czech Youth on a Soviet Military Vehicle, photograph, *The Atlantic* (The Atlantic, August 20, 2018), Getty, https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2018/08/photos-50-years-since-a-soviet-invasion-ended-the-prague-spring/567916/#img01.
[73] Bettmann, *Karlovy Vary*, photograph, *The Atlantic* (The Atlantic, August 20, 2018), Getty, https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2018/08/photos-50-years-since-a-soviet-invasion-ended-the-prague-spring/567916/#img01.

***Image 8:*** *A caravan of Czech youth sitting atop a commandeered military vehicle.*

In addition to directing youth action and serving as an uncensored line of communication, the clandestine radio networks established during the invasion also helped to amplify youth voices. The Czech youth recorded messages relevant to the invasion and their resistance efforts and aired them on the radio networks operating within Czechoslovakia. They also relied on underground networks within the country to smuggle such messages out and pass them to broadcasting stations with a broader audience, such as Radio Free Europe (RFE) and the British Broadcasting Company (BBC). One of the earliest youth broadcasts came soon after many of the clandestine networks began broadcasting on the evening of August 21st around 7:50 PM. In the message, select Czech youth made an appeal to fellow young people across the country to denounce the Soviet Invasion and to engage, if possible, in the fast-forming resistance movement.[74] In the wake of this message, the utilization of the radio by youth became increasingly frequent. At some point during the first few days of the invasion, the underground radio network smuggled a pre-recorded interview with young Czech protesters out of the country and passed it along to the BBC who aired it on August 24th. During this broadcast, one Czech student told the world that "young people were very happy… in the six [eight] months between January and August" before the invasion and that the people of Czechoslovakia would "no longer believe that we [the Czech people] are your [the Soviet's] brothers."[75] This message helped to show the world that the Czech people did not condone the presence of Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops in Czechoslovakia, a message that ran contrary to the narrative the Soviet Union attempted to advance.

On the same day, members of the reformed Czech Youth Organization broadcast a message on multiple radio networks that called upon young people both nationally and internationally to break ties with the Warsaw Pact countries for their support of the Soviet Invasion.[76] In this instance, radio provided Czech youth with the opportunity to call upon young

[74] Wechsberg, *The Voices*, 39.
[75] "BBC Broadcast August 24, 1968: Czech Students Explaining How They Had Argued with Russian Soldiers in the Streets of Prague in an Attempt to Get Them to Return Home," August 1968 - Audio Archive - Radio Prague International (Radio Prague International), accessed November 18, 2021, https://archiv.radio.cz/en/static/august-1968/audio.
[76] Wechsberg, *The Voices*, 63.

people both in their own country and abroad to act in the face of Soviet aggression. On August 26th, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of Czechoslovakia broadcast a dramatic one-and-a-half-minute message hoping to reach audiences both within and outside Czechoslovakia. The female scout spoke to the world, relaying the following message: "In solidarity… with all young people who love freedom, we beg you to actuate through your organizations upon your government to protest against the violent occupation of Czechoslovakia."[77] Again, the utilization of radio by the young people involved with the Scout programs demonstrates not only the hands-on nature of youth protest during the invasion, but also how students recognized radio to be a medium through which they could encourage resistance and make pleas for international solidarity and aid.

The clandestine radio networks within the country also helped to foster a cross-generational resistance effort during the August Invasion. In addition to the widespread youth protest efforts, adult citizens also demonstrated against the Soviet Invasion and engaged in many of the same passive resistance techniques. While a good percentage of youth supported the liberalization of Czechoslovakian socialism and Dubček's reforms, ample evidence exists that "many of those who pushed hardest for change were among the oldest members of the [Czechoslovakia Communist] party."[78] This reality confirms that both youth and adults often shared similar positive opinions on Dubček and his reforms. When Soviets crossed the Czech border, anger and concern erupted amongst youth and elders alike. Given the somber reality of the invasion, the people of Czechoslovakia knew that "their strength derive[d] from their unity."[79] The youth and adult populations immediately understood that their disdain for the Soviet and Warsaw Pact soldiers was a commonality shared by much of the Czech population, ranging from teenagers all the way to the nation's oldest citizens.

***Image 9:*** *A sit-in strike in Wenceslas Square in Prague during the August Invasion*

[77] "Radio Prague Appeals to Scouts," Digital Collections Home – Digital Collections, August 26, 1968, https://digitalcollections.hoover.org/objects/45287/radio-prague-appeals-to-scouts?ctx=68b2ec7612d7e65711ceadf19581e06d4c01c4ad&idx=3.
[78] Golan, "Youth and Politics in Czechoslovakia," 3.
[79] Menges, "Prague Resistance, 1968 : The Ingenuity of Conviction," 15.

One clear instance of cross-generational resistance efforts came during the general strikes that took place during the week of the invasion. Based on details provided via the underground radio networks, youth and adults alike marched into the streets or concealed themselves in their homes in coordination with the radio directive. Image Nine shows a strike that resembled a sit-in that occurred in Wenceslas Square during the invasion.[80] Closer examination of the faces of the crowd shows the varying ages of those occupying the square. Amongst the young protesters concentrated in the center and right side of the photograph, groups of adult Czechs can be seen sitting in the square. For example, in the bottom left corner of the image, a group of older Czech men sit beside smiling young boys. A similar situation arose in the hours before the protest scheduled in Wenceslas Square on August 22nd was called off, fearing violence. Before the calls to return home, thousands of Czech citizens of all ages flooded into the square, coalescing into one large protest movement. Image Ten shows a section of the crowd.[81] In the foreground of the photo, two older men and two older women are visible. One of the men is angled towards the soldiers, suggesting that he is speaking to one of them. Standing behind the adults is a group of young men attempting to talk to the soldiers posted on the edges of the square. The mingling of these groups, especially when engaging in passive resistance efforts, demonstrates the emergence of cross-generational collaboration fostered by radio broadcasts in the early days of the movement. Later in the afternoon when underground radio networks began broadcasting the directive to clear the square to avoid a potential massacre, young people and adults cleared the square together, leaving it nearly deserted by 5:00 PM.[82] Based on this, it is clear that both youth and their elders listened to the clandestine radio networks and paid attention to the directives that were broadcast.

***Image 10 (left):*** *Crowds protesting the Soviet-led invasion in Wenceslas Square on August 22nd.*
***Image 11 (right):*** *Young Czechs standing around a portable radio listening to a broadcast.*

[80] Josef Koudelka, *A Protest in Wenceslas Square*, photograph, *The New York Times* (New York, New York: The New York Times, August 20, 2018), Magnum Photo, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/20/world/europe/prague-spring-communism.html.
[81] *Prague Spring - Suppression Demonstrations and Protests against the Invasion of Czechoslovakia by Troops of the Warsaw Pact Countries*, photograph, *Getty Images* (Getty Images), Getty Images, accessed November 16, 2021, https://www.gettyimages.com/search/2/image?phrase=protests+in+Wenceslas+square+august+1968.
[82] Wechsberg, *The Voices*, 55.

The use of radios in the streets and in safehouses to receive information provides further evidence as to how radio fostered connections between youth protesters and their elders. Young people carried portable radios as they walked throughout Czechoslovakian cities and often congregated around radios to receive updates on the location of the Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces and communications from other cities and protests. Image Eleven shows the way young people crowded around personal radios to listen to the information provided by the clandestine networks.[83] The expression on the face of the young man in the middle of the photograph is particularly impactful. The furrow of his brow, his somber expression, and the way his hand rests on his chin suggest that he, like the others around him, is intently listening to the radio broadcast and contemplating the next course of action for himself and the band of young people surrounding him. Interest in the clandestine radio broadcasts was not limited to the youth of Czechoslovakia. Just as adults and young people banded together when approaching Soviet soldiers, defending the Radio Prague building, and participating in the general strikes held throughout the invasion, members of every generation huddled around small radios in order to gain information. Image Twelve supports this assertion, as it shows an older woman holding a small radio while surrounded by four men ranging in age from a young boy on the left and to an older gentleman on the far right. [84] Armed with the new information they received from radio announcements, protesters of all ages, like the ones shown in Image Twelve, modified and continued their interconnected resistance efforts.

***Image 12:*** *Czech citizens of all ages gather around a small portable radio held by an older woman while listening to the broadcast.*

The formation of a successful cross-generational resistance movement was somewhat of an anomaly in 1968, as many nations suffered from a widening gap in mentality between the youth and their parents and grandparents. The societal differences between the pre-World War II years and the ever-changing 1960s fueled this gap in Europe, Asia, and the Americas, as young

[83] Czech Youth Listening to a Radio Broadcast, photograph, *Digital Journal* (Digital Journal , February 27, 2017), AFP, https://www.digitaljournal.com/world/us-challenges-kremlin-with-new-russian-tv-channel/article/486792.
[84] Corbis, *Czech Civilians Listening to a Portable Radio*, photograph, *The New York Times* (The New York Times, August 20, 2018), Getty, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/20/world/europe/prague-spring-communism.html.

people around the world born in the 1950s and 1960s grew up in a time of peace as opposed to their parents, who endured the atrocities of World War II, and their grandparents who lived through years of bloody attrition and food shortages during the Great War.[85] The safe atmosphere that enveloped members of the baby boomer generation around the world fostered discontentment among the youth. Young people saw the aspirations of their parents' and grandparents' generations as "prosaic," and felt that, in the words of an angry seventeen-year-old German boy, the "disgusting economic miracle" that followed World War II gave rise to "an older generation unable to recognize its superficiality."[86] Unlike their elders, the youth of the 1950s and 1960s questioned the systems they lived under and concerned themselves with both domestic and international events and their consequences. Youth became increasingly involved in politics, taking stances that often opposed their parents on heavy issues such as the war in Vietnam, as well as on unique domestic issues. As Tom Hayden, a well-known American youth activist, stated, "My father's generation believed… that they had defended democracy against foreign despotism. We believed that we were defending democracy from its enemies at home."[87] While some of the factors contributing to the divide between youth and adults in 1968 varied from nation to nation, Hayden's quote accurately illustrates the difference between the mentality of young people and that of older generations around the world in the 1960s. The widening of this divide made the rapid formation of a cross-generational resistance movement in Czechoslovakia even more shocking. The bridging of the generational divide via shared protest methods and collaborative resistance also speaks to the tremendous power of the clandestine radio networks. Radio played a central role in the emergence of the functioning cross-generational resistance movement during the August Invasion. Without the protected clandestine networks, Soviet censorship would have limited communication between youth activists and adult-led resistance efforts, making coordination between the groups more difficult, and the communication of passive resistance directives and warnings impossible.

The creation of a cross-generational resistance movement, the coordination of widespread protest efforts by young people, and the efficacy of passive resistance techniques implemented by Czech youth all demonstrate the far-reaching impact and influence of the clandestine radio networks on youth activism. As demonstrated by the timeline of youth activism throughout the invasion, the announcements and speeches aired by underground radio networks directly influenced youth protest methods by directing young people toward passive resistance methods and notifying them of safety risks and planned strikes. The existence of free radio networks also advanced youth activism during the invasion by granting them access to a medium that amplified their defiant voices in Czechoslovakia and abroad. While the historians often consider the invasion as a military success for the Soviet Union, the existence of free radio and the perseverance of the cross-generational resistance movement that radio helped to produce ensured that the invasion was a clear political defeat for the Soviets. The successful week-long resistance

[85] Gerard J. De Groot, *The Sixties Unplugged: A Kaleidoscopic History of a Disorderly Decade* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 16.
[86] De Groot, *The Sixties Unplugged*, 15.
[87] De Groot, *The Sixties Unplugged*, 16-17.

effort mounted by Czechoslovakian youth and their elders via radio networks not only demonstrated the strength of the Czech people and their opposition to their Soviet oppressors, but also provided a foundation for Czech political resistance that the Velvet Revolution would build upon two decades later. Together, this information emphasizes radio's role in creating and coordinating the youth protest movements during the invasion and radio's long-term impact on Czechoslovakian resistance and politics. Given this incredible significance, those considering the events of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia must not discount the crucial role of clandestine radio in relation to Czech youth activism, and instead must view the existence of underground radio networks as a central component in the history of the August Invasion.

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