

## **The ACT of DEFIANCE that ended a military Empire**

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It is generally believed the collapse of the USSR was due to the unsuccessful campaign in Afghanistan – not so, though it was an effective final act. Afghanistan was actually the last straw that broke the Soviet back but the major destabilising force originated in Prague in the form of the '68 Velvet Revolution!



***Prague '68***

In an act of DEFIANCE the brave UNARMED Czechs hit the streets of Prague in OPEN REVOLT against Soviet oppression. It was the OPEN ACT OF DEFIANCE against the (military) might of a superpower that inspired people everywhere. 1968 saw more revolts and clashes against oppressive, retrograde, corrupt regimes than any other year in modern history. From the slaughter in Mexico City, the Berkeley protests to Paris and Prague, populations everywhere took a stand against corrupt, criminal regimes -- and WON!

Today citizens of conscience around the globe are stunned and dismayed by the overt fascism and military expansionism of the USA; however, people are slowly recovering from the shock of a democratic nation turning fascist in record time. Stirrings of discontent have once again emanated from Prague but this time against a new totalitarian threat – AMERICA!

The FREE WORLD has no need of missile systems installed by lunatic regimes pursuing empire. Europe was relatively stable until the USA began its illegal military actions in the Balkans, a prelude to future criminal actions in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Today's media moguls ensure that events likely to 'adversely' affect public perceptions/consciousness receive minimal coverage. The recent Prague protests against American missile installations fall into that category. The concerns of a terrified Bush administration may be valid after all!

It is hoped that people everywhere once again find inspiration in the ACTIONS of the brave Czechs; indeed, the people of the Balkans are in dire need of a regional neighbour showing them the way back to self-respect and Freedom.

Torture, illegal detention, deprivation of liberty and war crimes are easily proven today. The following story may serve to inspire others in the fight for liberty and freedom from neo-colonialism today.

## **Anger mounts as police end protest against US base**

military police end six-week 'occupation' by activists

from Gabriel Ronay in Budapest

THE BATTLE lines for America's controversial anti-missile missile shield in central-eastern Europe have been drawn across the Czech Republic, with the pro-base Prague government fast losing the fight for Czech hearts and minds.

Military police have forcibly ended a six-week-old Greenham Common-style "occupation" by Czech Greenpeace activists of Height 718, the planned site of America's missile-tracking high-speed radar base in the Brdy military district southwest of Prague.

Following the centre-right Prague government's signing of the US-Czech missile base agreement last month, a wave of mass protests and "rolling" hunger strikes demonstrated the level of public disquiet over the siting of the US base on Czech soil.

The ranks of environmental protesters, leftist anti-missile activists and the usual rent-a-crowd have recently been boosted by prominent public figures on symbolic, short hunger strikes at Brdy to show their opposition to the American base.

They are being backed by Bruce Gagnon, one of America's leading anti-nuclear protesters. Gagnon, an activist of the US-based Global Network against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, spent two weeks on sympathy hunger strike with the Czechs in his Maine home. He explained to Radio Prague that, having recently been invited to Prague by the No to Bases Coalition, it was "very clear" to him that there was "overwhelming opposition to the US radar in the Czech Republic".

The protesters are demanding the government of Mirek Topolánek halts the parliamentary ratification of the base accord, scheduled for the autumn.

According to the latest opinion poll by Prague's CVVM agency, 66% of Czechs now oppose the siting of the American base in their county, with those backing it down to 24%.

Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, is flying to Prague early next month to formally sign the accord. Reflecting the government's alarm over the public's mounting anti-base mood, Karel Schwarzenberg, the Czech foreign minister, has threatened to resign if parliament rejects the US radar base accord.

"I really think I would have to go to the Prime Minister and hand in my resignation," Schwarzenberg said. "If I don't succeed, I have to give the prime minister a chance to find someone better."

Right on cue, a leading Czech Greenpeace activist countered the foreign minister's pro-base arguments.

Jiri Tutter, leader of the Czech chapter of the environmental protection group, explained the reasons for the Greenpeace protests and the six-week-long occupation of Height 718 at Brdy: "We do not believe that the US radar and the Czech national missile defence are the best tools to secure international peace."

Meanwhile, prime minister Topolánek, and defence minister Vlasta Parkanová condemned the planned hunger strikes as a "political tool unfit to a democracy". President Václav Klaus has also condemned the planned "chain of hunger strikes" to stop the government from ratifying the radar base accord.

He rejected a call from Jan Toma and Jan Bedna, two prominent activists, who recently ended a three-week hunger strike, to discuss the American base issue. Calling the hunger strike "blackmail", president Klaus said that such practices had no place in a modern democracy.

The hunger strikes are to be joined by prominent Czech public figures, including former anti-communist dissident Petr Uhl and actress Anna Geislerová. They have announced they would hold one-day hunger strikes at the Brdy base.

The earlier protests were mainly mass demonstrations. Greenpeace organised a protest against the US base accord outside government offices in Prague; and the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia staged the biggest anti-base demonstration to date, attended by 2000 people, along the perimeter of Brdy.

"The ratification of the Czech-American base treaty in Parliament will not be easy," Klaus has ruefully admitted. The once supine Czech public is now too vocal for that.

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