

**OTHER NATIONS**

to the military. But with a bare 35 percent of the vote, says *Los Angeles Times* correspondent Meisler, Suárez cannot claim to govern unilaterally. The Socialist Workers Party, led by young Felipe González, won nearly 30 percent of the vote and a role in what may become a competitive two-party system. Regional parties and extremist groups (including Francoists and communists) will have to watch from the wings.

But as Spain strives for representative government, the 300,000-man armed forces still openly exhibit Francoist tendencies. (The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces voiced its "general revulsion" over legalization of the Communist Party.) Fascist-trained civil servants, including the more than 100,000 *Policia*, are still in place. Politicians (and terrorists) in the country's two richest regions—Catalonia and the Basque provinces—continue to demand local autonomy. The economy is shaky. Annual inflation runs to 30 percent; almost a million Spaniards are out of work. These factors could slow or reverse the surprisingly robust democratic movement in Spain.

Meisler suggests one immediate reform: elimination of the army's traditional role in internal affairs by giving the military, instead, a "modern defense mission" under civilian control. This shift, he believes, would be encouraged by an invitation to Spain to join the NATO alliance.

### *Another View of Prague's Spring*

"Czechoslovakia's Experiment in Humanizing Socialism: An Examination of Ideological and Tactical Implications" by Frank L. Kaplan, in *East European Quarterly* (Fall 1977), 1200 University Ave., Boulder, Colo. 80302.

Liberalization of Czech Communist Party rule under Alexander Dubcek in 1968—the so-called Prague Spring—brought an outpouring of public sentiment in support of the new regime. Opinion polls showed the Party gaining favor; newspapers, allowed to express themselves freely, called for revival of a multiparty system. This very success, writes Kaplan, professor of journalism at the University of Colorado, spelled disaster for Dubcek's experiment and precipitated invasion by Warsaw Pact forces in August 1968.

Initially, widespread economic failures under hard-line Premier Antonin Novotny gave impetus to the reform movement: In 1963, Czechoslovakia was the only industrialized nation to suffer declines in national output, national income, and real wages. That same year, Soviet-style Marxism came under attack at conferences of the Union of Czechoslovak Writers and the Union of Slovak Journalists. This wave of criticism culminated in rejection of Novotny's policies and adoption of Dubcek's "democratization" program in April 1968.

Despite Soviet accusations—and the urgings of some Czech journalists—the Dubcek regime had no intention of severing relations with Russia and its allies or of withdrawing from the 7-nation Warsaw Pact. To Moscow, the real issue, says Kaplan, was the revival of Czech

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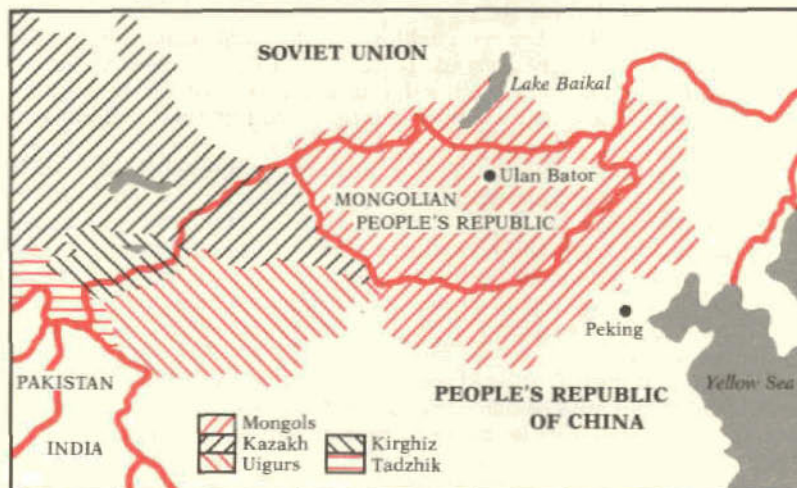
political autonomy that threatened the uneasy cohesion of the Soviet bloc. Czech intellectuals, bent on restoring civil liberties in the tradition of Slavic nationalist Tomáš Masaryk (1850–1937), called for democracy, not just democratization. The Soviets, misunderstanding the role of a free press, failed to distinguish individual opinions from government policy. Essentially, Kaplan contends, the tragic flaw of the Prague Spring lay in the naivité of the new Czech leaders, who believed they could allow partial democratization without unleashing democratic sentiments deeply embedded in Czech society.

### *Ethnic Politics on the Eastern Front*

"The National Minorities Factor in the Sino-Soviet Dispute" by Lowell Tillett, in *Orbis* (Summer 1977), 3508 Market St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

Asian specialists studying the fiercely independent ethnic minorities in the U.S.S.R. and the People's Republic of China have paid little attention to the role these groups play in the Sino-Soviet dispute. According to Tillett, a Wake Forest University historian, ethnic and political boundaries seldom coincide along the contested Sino-Soviet border. This fact, he contends, could have a significant, if unpredictable effect on relations between the two communist giants.

No fewer than 10 ethnic minorities straddle the Sino-Soviet frontier—the longest (6,000 miles), most disputed, most heavily militarized border on earth. The Mongols (3 million) and the Uigurs and Kazakhs (between 4 and 5 million each) are most numerous, followed by the Tadzhik, Kirghiz, and others. Although these "unreliable" populations are relatively small, their strategic importance is not. (For example, minorities comprise only 6 percent of China's population but inhabit fully half of its territory.)



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