

Crisis of Socialism and Beginning of Democratic Movement in Central Europe

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ABSTRACT

To understand the political background of Central Europe, this article is being divided into two major parts. The first section will deal with the crisis and decline of socialist form of government and the second section will focus on the beginning and rise of democratic movement in Central Europe. The course and speed of events in Central and Eastern Europe, which have surprised everyone (including their protagonists), call for an unbearable reassessment of widely held theories and deeply felt ideologies of socialism, of the nature of democracy and social democracy and of the role of social movements in both. Moreover, both the economic causes and consequences of these socio-political processes merit more attention than has been usual in the excited reception of the 1989 revolution.

Key Words : Socialism, Socialist System and Democratic Movement in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia (Czech and Slovak)

INTRODUCTION

Post-World War II period witnessed the establishment of Marxist-Leninist regimes over those areas of Central and Eastern Europe, which had been designated by the allied power as a part of Soviet sphere of influence. As a result, communist governments were established in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania. Though, the democratic movements in these countries did not occur in a systematic process, it happened through the process of several reformist movements till disintegration of Soviet Union. People were dissatisfied with the existing communist governments, and therefore revolts and protests against the rule, broke out in several countries. However, after the death of Stalin in 1953 and Khrushchev's secret speech in 1956¹, the dissatisfaction among the masses in these countries gained stimulus and ideas of reform began to gain ground.²

Instances of mass political protests occurring during this period include the Berlin uprising of June 1953,³ a small scale worker's revolt in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia in June 1953; worker's strikes in Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria; the Poznan uprising of June 1956 in Poland⁴; and the dramatic revolution in Hungary in Oct-Nov 1956. Apart from these, such political events as the political crisis and the student's revolt in Poland in March 1968; the Czechoslovak reform movement the same year; and two waves of workers unrest in Poland 1970 and 1976 might also be included in the first historical cluster.⁵

With the fall of socialism a broad front of anti-communist opposition evolved, which included all variants of anti-communist political opinion. The Solidarity movement in Poland, Civic Forum in the Czech Republic were some such broad anti-communist fronts. These fronts began as mass protest movements that provided a focus for mobilisation of broad based and spontaneous popular pressure against communist power. Nevertheless, taken together these forums and civil movements led to the collapse of communism and evolution of multi-party system in Central Europe.⁶

Hungary, Poland, and Czech Republic can be characterized as emerging democracies where multi-party system emerged after the collapse of communism in 1989. Since these countries are located in the same region of Central Europe, they hold some common experiences of the end of communism. Communism was marked by a combination of elite concessions, oppositionist pressures and broad public support for change. People of Central Europe and the former Soviet Union demanded right to freedom of speech, democratic assembly, private property and free market. Since the state was not ready to concede these demands, there was widespread opposition against the state policies in the entire region⁷. I have tried to give the answer of these two questions in this article, One is why socialist system has collapsed in central Europe and what is reason behind it? Second are which type of democratic movement has emerged and what role they have played?

Crisis of Socialism in Central Europe :

The term 'socialism' is variously understood and defined by various thinkers and school of thought. It's a particular social system, within a new economic formation, a transitional phase between capitalism and communism⁸.

The second meaning, of it would be considered as normative, that it is about a post capitalist social system which, as it proceeds towards full and complete maturity (in efficiency of industry, quality of life, social equality and justice, and other criteria for maximum development of the individual) should be as 'superior' to capitalism as the latter was 'superior' to feudalism⁹.

The third meaning, of it is – a specific social and political trend, comprising the sum total of social guarantees given priority by government. This is precisely that kind of socialism which forms the election platforms for social – democrats in numerous countries; internationally these parties are not being designated as 'socialist' merely by chance.

The fourth meaning, is widely acceptable among all those countries with heavily-centralized economies and single party (official or otherwise) political systems, which cover approximately one-third of the world's population, and are usually grouped together as 'the socialist camp'¹⁰.

In short, socialism stands for an economic system under which the major instruments of social production (that is, the instruments by which production is carried out for consumption by the larger society) are placed under the ownership and control of public authority in order to ensure that they are properly utilized to secure the public interest. Sometimes, socialism is misunderstood by various scholars because of its commonality with communism, but the main difference lies with their definition that socialism stands for "each according to his work" whereas communism stands for "each according to his needs"¹¹.

On this existing base of heterogeneity the Soviet Union tried to impose an identity of uniformity through communist rule. This was reinforced by the formidable degree of East European dependence on the Soviet Union economically, politically, militarily, diplomatically and ideologically. From the previous experiences of Soviet Union they have learned that such a situation was not acceptable to the majority East European countries. They did try, though was unsuccessfully, in many ways and on different occasions to emerge out of this repressive fold and establish a distinct identity of their own. At the same time, the recent developments in East Europe have sharply brought into several questions, such as (1) a redefinition of East European identity, both territorial and ideological, (2) relevance of Marxism; (3) relevance of communist party and its revolutionary vanguardism; (4) the historical role of

communists and social democrats; (5) new political formations and groupings; (6) performance gap between the economies of socialism and capitalism; (7) the future of socialism and (8) the economic, political, military future of East Europe. Therefore, in order to understand these puzzles, we need to first make an analysis of the dynamic forces at work behind the changes in Eastern Europe¹².

The genesis of Central European developments can be traced to variety of sources. The recent developments are the direct outcome of the steadily deepening crisis of what has been called an inflexible "Command Administrative System". The current upheavals in Central Europe are the cumulative expression of several contributory factors, some of which are discussed below.

Economic Stagnations :

In economic problems, the first important factor has been economic stagnation. The leaderships in East European countries, like their counterpart in the Soviet Union, were ultimately compelled by the gravity of the situation to open their eyes to see what had been so apparent to the intelligentsia society at large, *i.e.* the systems were heading had long lost their ability to compete economically with the capitalist countries of the West which continued to survive. However, it is necessary to stress the significant role played by the centrally-planned economies of the East European countries in laying the material foundations of socialism in the early phase of its development. The advancement of these societies was really fast since it lifted them to the industrial stage within a very short span of time. The major areas of development affecting the social life at an extensive scale were heavy industry, large-scale agriculture and a variety of social services. However, it has now become quite obvious that these centrally-planned economies were rendered incapable by their own inflexibility to promote intensive growth, *i.e.* to increase the productive capacity of the system in terms of quality and quantity. Precisely on these grounds, Soviet and East European systems continued to lag behind. It was particularly, due to technological revolution and computerization in the West, the centralized economies of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were unable to keep pace¹³.

The East European countries not only failed to satisfy the rising expectations of the consumerist psychology but also they could not keep up the developmental strategies at their requisite pace. The poor performance of the economic system became the natural target of popular discontent, which ultimately threatened the legitimacy of the leadership, as it challenged the material basis and ideological justification for the party in power. The failure of this economic system has acknowledged the technological superiority of the West and its capacity to satisfy the consumer's expectations at large. They also recognized that the world economy was dominated by capitalism and they were eager to enter it even on the terms determined by the latter. The haste displayed by East European countries seeking membership of the IMF and World Bank amply testifies to this aspect of the changing reality¹⁴.

The political shifts :

In Poland the key event in the process that debouched into the formation of a solidarity-led government was the wave of strikes in the spring and late summer of 1988, which brought it home to the rulers that the country was headed towards ungovernability, as much as the strikers had ceased to be particularly concerned about material benefits and were striking for its own sake. This created a situation where an explosion became a serious possibility. This recognition promoted a section of the elite to open negotiation with underground Solidarity in a quest for a negotiating partner that still had some authority over society¹⁵.

In 1989, the communist party was operating for the first time, outmatched in the political debate, making concession after concession. The role of ImrePozsgay, who had decided the creation of a western style liberal democracy, was the only viable solution to Hungary's problems, that to be valid in its own right and essential if western support was to be forthcoming a vital factor in this process.

Thereupon, Hungary became a liberal republic, waiting for elections to be held in the spring of 1990¹⁶.

The route towards democracy through economic deterioration has also been affecting Czechoslovakia. In the case of Czechoslovakia the elements in the process were similar, in that there had been many years of criticism from intellectuals, the economy was declining, and there was growing evidence of popular disaffection expressed through street demonstrations. The crowds that filled the entire Wenceslas Square in Prague on and after 20 November were estimated at several hundred thousand strong, and there were demonstrations in some provincial centers were as well. Another particularly worrying sign for the leadership was when party control over the media started to crack – several news papers began to reject the surface unanimity essential for effective authoritarianism and to carry real reports of events. This was followed by demands from television journalists to be allowed to carry full coverage of the demonstrations¹⁷.

In both cases, the process of transformation was clearly affected by the international democratization process as well. The fact that the Soviet Union was no longer a force for the status quo but in the vanguard of reform was significant in making it more difficult for conservatives to rely on the pretext of Soviet disapproval to keep change off the agenda. Equally important, events in the other East and Central European countries became more difficult to ignore when they were no longer isolated to one country to another. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the sight of demonstrating crowds in the GDR- accessible through West Germany and Austrian television-influenced those in Prague, and that the changes in Poland, Hungary and GDR affected events in Bulgaria¹⁸.

Political culture :

One of the most powerful sources of the East European crisis was the political culture of the so called “Command Administrative System”. In such a system, democracy was the first casualty. Society suffered the compulsion of remaining at the receiving end and the citizen found hardly any meaningful opportunities to participate in the affairs of the government and influence its decisions. The political institutions, despite much-vaunted socialist legality, were never allowed to perform their constitutionally intended role. Democratic processes such as competitive election were unknown; the common practice such as Freedom of speech in any area of the social life as well as the independent activity of the masses was stifled. In all those fields where creative endeavour could have brought substantial improvement in the quality in human life and social culture, a rigid control was exercised. No doubt that this political culture of command and obedience was closely connected with the identical command system in economic management. Both were influenced, shaped and strengthened by each other. The perpetuation of such a coercive rule was insured by the existence of a single or dominant party having several satellites which enjoyed the monopoly of power. The organizational principle of democratic-centralism was, for all practical purpose, an empty phase¹⁹.

Soviet Model of Socialism :

The third most important significant contributory factor behind the East European crisis was the declining prestige of Soviet model of socialism. The first shock, which can be explained as the starting point of the process of declining prestige, was Khrushchev’s “secret” speech at the twentieth CPSU congress in 1956. This was soon followed by a series of upheavals in Eastern Europe, the most notable being the Hungarian uprising which had to be crushed only by Soviet intervention²⁰.

The declining prestige of the Soviet model among the intelligentsia had become conspicuous in East European countries a long time ago. The entire economic model which was imposed on all over Eastern Europe, came under vigorous attacks by Marxist economists in mid 1960s. Similarly the Czechoslovakian events of 1968 were associated with a radical redefinition of socialism. The action programme of the communist party of Czechoslovakia was much more than a more critique of Soviet imposed pattern of administration and economic planning. The Czechoslovakian reformists’ objectives

i.e. to realize socialism with human face, to inaugurate a genuinely participatory industrial and political democracy, to re-establish the dignity and independence on the individual as a worker and as a citizen, was a radical departure for Marxist regimes. For the respective goals proper to Marxism, it redefined claims to legitimacy of the party and of the regime itself. Unfortunately the experiments of Czechoslovakia did not last long, crushed as they were by the Soviet army. But they left behind the legend of “martyred ideas” whose triumphant resurrection was witnessed in the countries of Eastern Europe in late 1980.

Similarly, the Polish Solidarity movement of the early 1980s went on to mercilessly expose the hollow pretences of the socialist system in East Europe. To understand why the socialist model was not acceptable to East European countries, the following reasons may be considered as important:

- The Soviet model was treated as a deliberate attempt to arbitrarily impose on Eastern Europe an artificial standard of the homogenization of the politics.
- The absence of democratic ethos in the political process was resented as the culture of an alien political system.
- The sheer magnitude of the enforced political identity of Eastern Europe created a belief of irreversibility resulting in a general feeling of frustration and helplessness.

Thus, intelligentsia in these societies particularly tried to distance itself from the regime, slowly but surely. It was among their ranks that the advocates of reform in Eastern Europe could be identified. The notable cases being held in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland²¹.

The Decline in Legitimacy :

It was not surprising that the Soviet- type systems that were imposed on these countries after the Second World War never gained genuine popular legitimacy. At best they were tolerated in periods when it was going good by the bulk of the population, in Poland in Gierek’s heyday or Hungary when Kadr’s regime was at its zenith. But these system never really sought legitimacy in Western sense, of seeking continuing popular approval expressed through open elections. Rather they claimed to derive their legitimacy from the multi-tiered proposition that the party ruled because it was the legatee of a communist revolution that it represented the best and most progressive elements of the national tradition. However, when all these claims were as threadbare and no longer creditworthy, the party insisted on its monopoly rule because it held power and there was no alternative²².

Perestroika and its Impact on East European Countries:

The abrogation of the Brezhnev’s doctrine and the inauguration of perestroika in the Soviet Union with enthusiastic encouragement to its East European partners to follow suit, introduced favourable “strategic and political” elements leading to the acceleration of East European developments. A happy combination of external and internal situation was created in which the East European regimes, with varying degrees and depending upon their approach and circumstances, found a favourable opportunity as well as faced compelling pressures to react to perestroika²³.

All these were suppressed either by direct Soviet intervention or by the local government with Soviet support. But later in the wake of perestroika, with a Soviet leadership which was largely supportive and encouraging, the reform-minded Central European people found a much more congenial atmosphere. It may be further argued that the East European developments were also encouraged by the Soviet Union for the specific purpose of creating a favourable atmosphere for perestroika. This is evident from Gorbachev’s visit to all East European countries where he lost no opportunity to expound the idea of perestroika. It was not surprising, therefore, that he received an unprecedented enthusiastic response from the people wherever he went in Eastern Europe²⁴. This mass movement suddenly assumed the character of confrontation between the people and regimes. An unwilling Soviet Union coming to the rescue of these regimes worked as a catalyst to the events. All these changes led to the

collapse of socialism in Central and Eastern Europe²⁵.

Arrival of New Generation :

An important factor for the evolution of democratic movement in Central and Eastern Europe was arrival of new generation of people at wider social level. This young generation was pro-democratic and liberal in their outlook. They completely defied the existing authoritarian political system and raised their demands for civil and political rights. For the ruling government, it was easy to negotiate with the people of conservative mindset. But for this new generation, government had no reliable solution. Therefore, the outburst of this new section of society in the form of demonstrations and protests resulted into beginning of democratic and reform movements in Central and Eastern Europe

Due to all the above mentioned reasons the future of socialism in Central and Eastern Europe became depressing. With the weakening of Soviet power and influence, countries from these regions started revolt against their previous rulers.

Beginning of Democratic Movement in Central Europe :

Post- World War-II period witnessed the establishment of Marxist-Leninist regimes over those areas of Central and Eastern Europe which had been designated by the allied power as a part of Soviet sphere of influence. At the outset fragile democratic coalition governments and falsified national elections helped to reduce internal resistance. As a result, communist governments were established in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania. Though the democratic movements in these countries did not occur in a systematic process, it happened through the process of several reformist movements till disintegration of Soviet Union. People were dissatisfied with the existing communist governments and therefore revolts and protests against the rule broke out in several countries²⁶.

It can also be noted, that reformism in Central Europe was closely related to its sub-regional diversities. Thus, in Central Europe the reformist ideas propagated were peculiar and distinct from the rest of the countries in the communist bloc. Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, which belong to this reformist category, always displayed their distinctiveness. Further, it was this peculiar strength of Central European reformism, based as it was on wider social support, which created condition for almost violence free and smooth transition from socialism to liberal democracy in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Here, we may analyze some of these countries –specific cases in greater detail in order to understand the pattern and character of reform in Central and Eastern Europe.

Poland:

The evolution of political parties in Poland can be traced from the Solidarity movement. Solidarity was not a political organisation; it evolved as a trade union. Subsequently, it became a social movement as many of its members considered themselves as social activists²⁷. Poland was also different from other communist regimes as it experienced extensive cooperation of the intelligentsia and workers after 1976 when Committee in Defence of Workers (KOR) was formed. This circumstance provided a strong base for the opposition with large counter-elite who in the sunset years of communism assumed power and lead the country's transition from communism.²⁸

There had been three earlier revolutions in 1956, 1970-71 and 1976 in Poland. They were not successful, as it was driven by self interest of the factions of Solidarity movement. It did not acquire popular support by the masses; therefore easily suppressed by the state. In 1980s, once again there was workers upsurge in Poland. This movement, unlike the earlier struggles was more tightly organised, enjoyed widespread support (10 million workers from the nationalised sector of industry, six lakh peasants in rural Solidarity and a third of the communist party members) , and had a greater political

clarity.²⁹ After the Second World War, the newly re-formed communist party and the Polish Socialist Party were merged with the support of a sizeable section of the working class³⁰.

Gomulka, who represented an anti-Stalinist “national focused” brand of communism, gained the support of many critical students and non party intellectuals who believed that they could provide support to the growing liberalization movement. Uneconomic collective farms were largely dissolved, which led to re-privatization of the bulk of agriculture. Religious freedoms were restored through a guarded reconciliation with the Catholic Church. However, the significant democratizing gains of the “Polish October”³¹ gradually eroded. The worker’s councils were rendered powerless and no significant economic improvements took place. But in respect of voting rights, it had been regularly extended as all candidates remained communist party nominees³².



Fig. 1 : Local Polish Rally for Solidarity December, 1981

(Source: http://csudigitalhumanities.org/exhibits/files/original/rally-for-solidairty014_6cad1f5fe5.jpg)

The worker-intellectual groups gave rise to the origin of independent free trade union Solidarity on 31 August 1980. It followed a wave of strikes and protests on economic situations. The union raised such political demands which were unacceptable to the communist regime. Therefore, as protest resumed, martial law was enforced in the country to prohibit those demands and political organizations. In order to escape from the escalating political instability in Poland, the government agreed to negotiate with the opposition. As a result, Roundtable negotiations between communist officials and Solidarity representatives began in February 1989 and ended in April 1989 with signing of several successful agreements on political and economic reforms³³. The main resolutions of the negotiations were the establishment of second chamber of Parliament *i.e.*, the Senate; parity elections to the Sejm, the establishment of the office of the President chosen by both the houses of Parliament for the term of six years³⁴.

Czechoslovakia :

After the Second World War, the Communists, with Soviet backing rapidly increased their

political power in Czechoslovakia. The Communist leader Klement Gottwald became Prime Minister of the country. The Communists gained control of the ministries of education, interior, and communications. Major industries were nationalized. The conservative political parties were banned and prominent anti-Communists were assassinated or exiled³⁵.

The Prague Spring :

At the beginning of 1968, a progressive section of the Czechoslovak Communist Party realized the need for necessary radical changes to prevent a major economic devastation of the country. In January, Novotný was replaced as general secretary of the party by Alexander Dubček³⁶. This was done to liberalize and democratize Czechoslovakia, and weaned it from its dependence upon USSR, which is formerly known as the Prague Spring. The reformers guaranteed freedom of speech, press, assembly and religion. These reforms gave a greater role to non-Communist parties and groups. It adopted economic reforms, including decentralized decision making and profit incentives. The programme won the support of the people and communist parties in West Europe. However, the reformers met the enmity of the Soviet Government and the Warsaw Pact members. The latter feared that popular demands for reform would spread to them as well. In the meantime the Czechoslovak Government promised to keep the Communists in power and to remain in the Warsaw Pact³⁷.



Fig. 1 : Prague residents surround Soviet tanks in front of the Czechoslovak Radio station building in central Prague during the first day of Soviet-led invasion to then Czechoslovakia August 21, 1968. Czech Russian/Invasion Reuters/Libor Hajsky), Sources:<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1961-1968/soviet-invasion-czechoslovakia>.

The former USSR and its Warsaw Pact allies decided to end Prague Spring. On 20 August 1968, 600,000 Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops occupied Czechoslovakia. The intervention was broadly

condemned throughout the world. A treaty was signed allowing Soviet troops to remain in the country. Dubcek was replaced by Gustav Husák as President of Czechoslovakia. Reforms of the Prague Spring were scrapped.

Czechoslovakia again became a Communist state loyal to the USSR. However, people agitated against the policies and measures of Government with the enactment of Charter 77 in 1977³⁸. The Charter 77 gave voice to the oppressed people, as it stressed on the protection of human rights. Hundreds of people signed a document charging the government with violations of human rights. The spirit of resistance of these movements echoed in the Velvet revolution of 1989, which transformed the political situation in the Czech Republic.

The Velvet Revolution of 1989 :

On 17 November 1989, a peaceful student demonstration initiated revolutionary events in Prague, which was suppressed by the police. However, the outcome of the events was not easily forgettable. It sparked a movement against the communist regime in Czechoslovakia. This led to the origin of "Civic Forum" (OF) as a political movement of dissatisfied people of the existing regime. People accepted Vaclav Havel as the leader of the Civic Forum.

In 1989 the communists in Czechoslovakia were unable to hold back the tide of reform. In November 1989 the Communist Party leaders stepped down, and the government started negotiations with the opposition under the name of Civic Forum, led by the Czech writer Vaclav Havel. Dubcek was elected as Chairman of the Federal Assembly and Havel was chosen as President of Czechoslovakia. The Civic Forum negotiated with the Government on several issues. The agreement focused on the liberalization *i.e.* the release of political prisoners; the elimination of constitutional articles on the leading role of Communist Party in society and in the National Front's political system; the legalization of opposition groups and also unrestricted access to the media and so on³⁹.

In the spring of 1992 it was agreed to hold a referendum to decide the future of Czechoslovakia. The majority voted to create two separate republics, the Czech Republic and the Republic of Slovakia. The break-up of Czechoslovakia was the result of conflicts which led to formation of Civic Forum by Czechs and Public Against Violence (VPN) by Slovaks as separate citizen movements. The emergent system consisted of separate Czech and Slovak Political parties⁴⁰.

Hungary :

Hungary's Stalinist leader Rokosi was reluctant to implement Moscow's "new course" and allow for a measure of power sharing with moderate leaders. In 1953 Rokosi was forced by Kremlin pressures to relinquish the premiership and was replaced by Imer Nagy who sought to limit repression and restrain the forced collectivization program. After two years Nagy himself was ousted for "right wing" deviation and expelled from the party. Rakosi's return in 1955 reversed the liberalization process, but failed to stem rising popular aspirations for democratization. Khrushchev's secret speech in 1956 against Stalin's policies breathed new life into Hungarian reformers and helped to increase dissent among students as well as the implementation of numerous civil liberties. During the fast changing series of events, Rakosi was replaced by Erno Gero in July 1956, but it failed to satisfy the masses who by now were demanding for substantial political reform. Even reappearance of Nagy as Prime Minister in October 1956 failed to stop the escalation of protest actions and political demands among various social groups⁴¹.

During the fighting, the rebels put forward a program for extensive political, economic and social change including broad pluralism, civil liberties, free elections, independent labor unions and workers councils, the abolition of security police and collective farms and the restoration of parliamentary democracy and mixed economy. These demands exceeded even the policy proposed by revisionist communists such as Nagy, who was eventually swept along in the popular tide and bowed to public

pressure for national independence and the termination of Leninist dictatorship. Following the temporary Soviet withdrawal Nagy announced the abolition of the one party system⁴².

The Russian invasion was followed by Nagy declaration of Hungarian neutrality and withdrawal from the Warsaw pact. During the uprising the real centers of authority were the revolutionary workers councils established spontaneously when party control and police supervision collapsed. The Soviet authorities dissolved Nagy's government and assembled a group of loyal pro-Moscow Hungarian Communists to form a new administration under the leadership of Janos Kadar martial law was declared and Kadar's normalization program banned all autonomous organizations and re-established Communist controlled bodies in all areas of public life. Once the resistance was crushed, he tried to win the trust of people and maintained a delicate policy balance between Stalin and Nagy⁴³.

The country specific discussion shows that in each case, there were significant policy changes in neighbouring countries, and collective efforts were made to prevent the crisis. It is logical to argue that when largely similar condition prevail in particular geographic region, a crisis in one country tends to create similar processes in other neighbouring countries and elicit pre-emptive responses from the ruling elite. In this sense, the logical connection between Polish Solidarity movement, October 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the Prague Spring can be easily understood. They signified the continually recurring political stability, fragility and vulnerability for the party-state's institutional order. Each such crisis was followed by a massive demobilization of the popular challenge to the regime and reconsolidation of the institutional system of the party-state. These movements were actually the response of the failure of Stalinist domestic and regional policies in Central Europe, which were caused by the breakdown of forced industrialization and collectivization policies leading to a sensitive economic crisis and several shortages on the consumer front. Most importantly, these events are significant examples of the "interactive nature of political crisis within a unified geographical state system."

Conclusion :

To conclude this section, the mass mobilization in Hungarian Revolution as well as other such events occurring in different parts of Central Europe had the following similar characteristics:

- These movements were of varying degrees such as full blown revolution to localized workers' strikes, students' protests and other type of local protests. These movements were actually the response of the failure of Stalinist domestic and regional policies in Eastern Europe, which were caused by the breakdown of forced industrialization and collectivization policies leading to an acute economic crisis and several shortages on the consumer front. They also have played a important role to collapse of Socialist System in Central Europe.
- In each case there were significant policy changes in neighbouring countries and collective efforts which were made to prevent the crisis. It is logical to argue that when similar geographical condition prevail in the region, a crisis in one country trends to create similar processes in other neighbouring country also and the pre-emptive responses of the ruling elite. In this sense, the logical connection between Polish October of 1956 and the Hungarian Revolution or the Prague spring and the Hungarian economic reforms of 1968 can be easily understood. Most importantly, the events of 1989 are significant examples of the "interactive nature of political crisis within a unified geographical state system."

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38. Charter 77 indicts the government for violations of human rights provisions in the nation's 1960 Constitution and in various treaties and covenants of which Czechoslovakia is a signatory. For details seehttp://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/czechoslovakia/cs_appnd.html.
39. Jiri Suk, "Czechoslovakia's Return to Democracy", in *Transformation: The Czech Experience* (Czech Republic: Hugo Printing Company, 2006), p.13.
40. Michael Klima, "Consolidation and Stabilisation of the Party System in the Czech Republic", *Political Studies*, 46 (1998), p. 493.
41. Janusz, Bugajski and Maxine Pollack (1989) *East European Faultiness: Dissent, Opposition and Soviet Activism*, Boulder: Westview Press, pp.18-19.
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43. Michael G. Fry and Rice Candoluzza (1983), p.87.
