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1. The agricultural cooperatives in Czechoslovakia before World War II were small "common-aid" organizations which were set up by the farmers of their own accord; no one was forced to join. The cooperatives were started for various reasons. Some of them engaged in purchasing seeds and fodder, etc. for members as well as selling agriculture products. Some cooperatives handled the purchase and allotment of machinery for their members. Others took care of the electrification of the villages. Still other cooperatives helped the private farmers with the cultivation of special products such as hops, potatoes, or cereal grains. There were cooperatives dealing with pastures. Others handled processing of milk. These pre-World War II cooperatives were not collective farms where the land was worked communally and livestock and machines pooled for common use.
2. The Czechoslovak government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, assisted these agricultural cooperatives. The budget of the Ministry always included special allotments for the cooperatives and for specific purposes, e. g., hop production, which might go to the individual farmers. The government spent billions of crowns in the form of subsidies, loans without interest, and completely covered expenses incurred by whole communities, individual farmers, or cooperatives in order to improve and modernize farming methods in Czechoslovakia. (As late as 1951, the Ministry of Agriculture cancelled outstanding debts amounting to hundreds of millions of crowns which were the result of pre-World-War-II loans to communities and cooperatives.) The government assisted the agricultural cooperatives because they were pioneers in modern methods of agriculture resulting in more advantageous and cheaper means of farming.
3. The first collective farms (still officially termed "uniform cooperatives" /Jednotne zemedelske druzstvo - JZD/ to avoid the stigma of any form of the word collectivization) were set up in Czechoslovakia shortly after World War II under the auspices of the Communist Party. However, they were not successful and were soon dissolved. In 1946, governmental aid to Czechoslovak agriculture and methods of allotting

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this aid, as it was known prior to World War II, gradually changed; the Ministry of Agriculture allotted subsidies to the national committees which had to guarantee that the funds would be used only for cooperatives and other communal agricultural needs. Aid to the individual farmers decreased more and more. Further, the Ministry delegated authority to the Czech Farmers' Union (Jednotny svaz ceskych zemedelcu - JSCZ) and to the Slovak Farmers' Union to deal directly with the individual farmers and cooperatives. (These two unions were liquidated in 1952 and their property and activities transferred to the regional national committees and the district national committees.) These unions - for the Ministry - distributed the subsidies and loans to the cooperatives and individual farmers. This procedure conformed to the general policy of decentralization of government activities. The Ministry of Agriculture aimed its policies toward the gradual collectivization of agriculture. (It was a great advantage for the Communists that the Minister of Agriculture was, from 1945, a Communist, DURIS, who had several aides who were zealous Communists.)

4. After 1948 the efforts of the Communists to establish collective farms were intensified. In the beginning, however, propaganda was the only means used to convince farmers of the advantages of a communal solution of their problems and of the advantages to be derived from united labors. The efforts were directed toward implementing the provisions of the "Duris Agriculture Acts".
5. There were four different types of "uniform cooperatives" in Czechoslovakia; each type represented a step toward the complete collectivization of agriculture. In the first type, a preparatory committee, the forerunner of a future, full-scale collective farm, was established and mutual assistance between farmers was initiated. In the second type, some of the boundaries between the fields of individual members were dissolved and common work in these fields was introduced. Animals, buildings, machinery, and tools (animate and inanimate inventory) still remained private property. The crop, which was harvested in common, was divided among the individual members in proportion to the land they had contributed to the cooperative. In the third type, almost all of the animate and inanimate inventory and all of the land was common property. From 10 - 20% of the profits resulting from common work was divided between the individual members in proportion to the land they contributed to the cooperative, while the remaining 80-90% of the profits was divided between the individual members in proportion to the work performed. In the fourth type all of the animate and inanimate inventory was common property, as well as the land, and the profits from common work were divided between the individual members in proportion to the work they had done regardless of the quantity of land they had contributed to the cooperative. From the Communist coup in 1948 until the Communist Congress in May 1949, about 1,900 collective farms were established, some of which were made up from the old cooperatives. Out of this total, about 200 collective farms were of the second and third type and the remaining 1,700 were of the first type.
6. The collective farms were entirely different from the cooperatives as known in Czechoslovakia until 1948. The collective farm was the servant of the régime and had to obey the régime implicitly, mainly because of the fact that the members were not actually owners of the collective farm but only workmen paid in wages. Condominium in this case did not presuppose rights of actual ownership.
7. The CP Congress in May 1949 was a decisive step toward the collectivization of agriculture. This congress proclaimed unequivocally that the régime planned to collectivize all arable land. It was made known that land could no longer be privately owned in a state where industry as a whole was socialized, which, of course, meant a

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forced transformation of Czechoslovak agriculture, which had been based on small and medium-sized farms (2-20 hectares), into a system where farming was done on a large scale either by the collective farms or by "state farms". In general, the collective farm was more advantageous to the government because the responsibility for the farming was in the hands of the members, while the losses incurred by the state farms were borne by the treasury. The reaction of the people to this CP program, as proclaimed in the congress, was, for the most part, negative, necessitating governmental pressure to enforce the program.

8. It was the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture to see that collectivization was carried out. The Ministry utilized the "action committees", some of the members of the national committees, as well as the CP machinery to enforce the establishment of collective farms. Measures were taken against private farmers who resisted collectivization. These farmers were called "village well-to-do's" (vesnicti bohaci) without necessarily being such. Members of the former cooperatives were told to change the cooperatives into collective farms. Steps were also taken against those members of collective farms who agreed with the aim of the program but did not agree with the methods and procedure. Individual farmers or members of collective farms who personally did not agree with CP functionaries were also affected. Those farmers whose property appeared attractive to the CP members or its officials were also put under pressure.
9. The more important measures used to force the farmers to follow the dictates of the régime took the following forms: The private farmer was allotted an insufficient quantity of seeds, plants, or fertilizer and did not have any choice as to quality. Often, it was made very difficult for him to buy necessary agricultural equipment. He was the last to receive aid from the tractor and machinery pools, although he had been forced to contribute his machinery to the pools; sometimes he was not allowed its use at all. Also, the fee to the machinery pools for the use of the machinery and the people to operate it was made very high. The private farmer could not hire labor and was entirely dependent on the members of his family. Practically all of the young persons left the farm for industry. Only long-time farmers and old people remained on the farms. Children of private farmers were not allowed to obtain higher education. The régime in some cases proclaimed the private farmers to be enemies of the working class and thus in effect deprived them of equal treatment by government functionaries. The quota of agriculture products which the farmers had to turn over for distribution was intentionally placed too high for the average private farmer. Some of the farmers bought products (as much as they could afford) on the free market - whenever available - in order to make up their quota. In this way, the farmers quickly spent their savings. Non-fulfillment of quotas resulted in heavy fines so that some of the farmers preferred to go to prison instead.
10. The farmers who after the above still opposed collectivization were charged with sabotage and brought before the National Committee or Court where a part or all of their property was seized, especially agricultural machines and equipment which were then allotted to a tractor and machinery pool. Further, all of the property of the farmer was confiscated and he was transferred to another farm; very often to one in the unoccupied border areas from which the Germans had been expelled. Those farmers who opposed most strongly were imprisoned in forced labor camps. Those farmers, already members of a collective farm, who were opposed to the procedure and methods applied by the régime were fired from the collective farms, their property was confiscated, and they were transferred to other collective farms especially in the border areas. Others were imprisoned in forced labor camps.

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11. While applying all of these measures against farmers who opposed collectivization, the régime supported in every possible way the collective farms. The Ministry spent large sums of money on publications, motion pictures, and on radio to convince the farmers of the advantages of collectivization. Further, the national committees arranged for the farmers to visit the best collective farms. As soon as a collective farm was organized, it was supported by the authorities in its effort to acquire adequate means for production such as horses, barns, machinery, etc., as well as living units. These were very often obtained by confiscation from private farmers who did not join. The collective farms were allotted the necessary seeds, plants, fertilizers, and fodder. The collective farms were the first to be served by the tractor and machinery pools and were provided by the Ministry with plans for construction and with building materials. The collective farms were enabled to obtain credit, and debts dating from the time before the farmers joined the collective farm were cancelled. Outstanding workers of the collective farms were rewarded, monetarily or otherwise, by the régime; also the collective farm, as a unit, received a reward. The Ministry, assisted by the Revolutionary Trade Union, organized a recreation program for "good" collective farmers. For instance, they were given trips to Prague as guests of the Ministry. In order to help the collective farmers during the harvesting season, the authorities organized labor brigades from the employees of industry. During the planting and harvesting seasons officials of the Ministry were sent to the regional and district national committees, who were authorized to take whatever steps were necessary in order to help the collective farms. These officials made reports to the Ministry after they completed their mission. The Ministry paid for veterinary aid required by the collective farms as well as insecticides. The Ministry also trained specialists, i.e., tractor operators, bookkeepers, and supervisory employees for the cooperatives.
12. In spite of all this, the majority of the Czechoslovak farmers still opposed collectivization and it became clear that collectivization would not succeed. At the beginning of 1953, 99% of industry and commerce in Czechoslovakia was socialized, but only 45% of the farm lands was collectivized. Out of this 45%, from 10-15% were state farms and the remaining 30% were collective farms. The total number of collective farms of the 3rd and 4th type, mentioned above, was about 6,800 only; and not all of these were operating profitably. Most of the members of the collective farms were dissatisfied; they were not interested in their work; their wages were low. The collective farms in the border areas were forced to cultivate also "reserve" land - land which had not been cultivated since 1945 because of lack of labor. This reserve land amounted to 150,000 hectares. The help of the labor brigades was needed for the harvest. These brigades, however, were opposed by the industrial workers and office employees because they were deprived of their free time. It very often happened that the crop rotted in the field; this was especially true of the beet and potato crops. The state farms were also inefficient. The production costs on the state farms were too high. They suffered from lack of labor - especially young people - and from low labor morale. There was also a great lack of specialists and supervisory employees, most of whom had been fired as disloyal to the régime. The whole farming industry suffered from the lack of qualified personnel in spite of efforts made by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of State Farms, and the Ministry for Purchase of Agriculture Products. Confidential reports, written by government employees and Party functionaries as the result of meetings with the farmers which reached the Ministry, showed that without the private farmer there would be a catastrophic shortage of agricultural products. Similar reports were sent to the Ministry by its special officials who were sent to the farming areas during planting and harvesting time as mentioned above. Not only the Ministry of Agriculture, but the government as a whole was gravely concerned; early in 1953, special commissions were set up including representatives of the

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Government Presidium, the ministries concerned, and the Communist Party. These commissions were to establish the causes of the failures in agricultural production. The results of the work of these commissions were elaborated into extensive reports classified confidential. A series of speeches apparently based on these reports by various high-ranking political officials followed in May and June of 1953. All of the speeches revealed the failures in agriculture, specifically failures in procedure and methods of establishing collective farms. It was understood from the speeches that the speed toward collectivization had to be slowed down. In a speech in the summer of 1953, President ZAPOTOCKY not only revealed the failures in collectivization but also said that the members of collective farms could leave the farms and start farming again on a private basis. The speech expressed the hope, however, that all those who took this step would return to the collective farm after they recognized that collectivization was the proper way to farm. Naturally, the farmers reacted to ZAPOTOCKY's speech. Many delegations of peasants went to the Ministry of Agriculture to complain about conditions and ask the Minister to take steps to carry out the promises made in the speech; they complained that they were prevented, by local authorities, from leaving the collective farms. These delegations varied in size from 2 to 10 persons, and included both Party members and those who were not. The delegations were usually received politely, listened to, asked to think the situation over, and, if they persisted in their decision, they were referred to the regulations of the collective farms which did not allow them to quit before or during the spring work in the fields or before harvest time. I do not know whether or not the CP functionaries or the regional national committees received any directives to this effect. I do not know how many farmers were allowed to leave the collective farms in the months which followed, but the farmers dissolved most of the collective farms in the Presov and Košice regions after ZAPOTOCKY's speech. Not only were collective farms dissolved in these regions, but many of the local regional committees broke up because no one wanted to serve on the committees. The government had to send special emissaries to govern the villages. (It is my opinion, though I have no concrete evidence to support it, that ZAPOTOCKY had not really intended by his very vague and general speech as many concessions as were later read into it by an impatient peasantry and, therefore, the immediate reaction to the speech caught the government by surprise.)

13. Further results of the official reports on agriculture [paragraph 12] were as follows. The Ministry of Agriculture, along with the Revolutionary Trade Union and the Ministry of Labor, secured 50,000 boys and girls, who were leaving school, for permanent work in agriculture to alleviate the shortage of labor. Another result was an effort to increase the population in the border areas and to cultivate the reserve grounds, which was intensified in the summer of 1953. This action originated at the end of 1952 when the government set aside 900,000,000 crowns (pre-currency reform) to cultivate reserve grounds. The local national committees were authorized to buy tools, seeds, and to pay for necessary repairs of buildings, and to hire farm labor. However, by August 1953 only about 120,000,000 crowns had been disbursed. Lack of labor was the main reason for the failure to bring more than a small part of this unused land into use. Still another result was that confidential instructions were given to the CP functionaries to lower the quota of agricultural products which the private farmers had to turn over for distribution. As another step, it was planned to increase the price paid for agricultural products. This step was actually taken according to Government Bulletin #24, dated 1954, which Source saw after his arrival in the West. In addition, at the time I left, it was planned not only to grant loans to collective farms, but to the private farmers as well. This measure was put into effect according to Government Bulletin #19, 1954. A revision of the agricultural tax was in preparation as another step.

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50X1 Finally, it was planned to lower the fee which private farmers and collective farms had to pay to tractor and machinery pools for assistance. All of these measures proved that the government was well aware of the situation in agriculture and of the overwhelming difficulties involving collectivization. The speech of Minister DURIS on the Czechoslovak budget for 1954 gave a clear picture of the situation in agriculture.

14. this slowdown in collectivization of agriculture was only a temporary measure and that the government will resume a more severe policy as soon as the time is ripe. It will depend on the food supply in Czechoslovakia, i.e., how long the existence of private farmers is necessary to the government. However, a switch toward a more severe policy in collectivization will meet still heavier resistance than after 1949 because the farmers have become aware of their importance to the régime. the slowdown measures which have been taken since the second half of 1953 came too late and that it is no longer possible for the régime to reconcile the farmers.
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