

long overdue, and their implementation would result in strengthening socialism in the CSSR and thus the entire socialist camp.

A serious and growing threat has arisen from reactionary, anti-socialist forces in the country, based on remnants of the former exploiting classes, and supported by international imperialism. They are conducting a well-planned counter-revolutionary campaign to undermine the achievements of Socialist Czechoslovakia, and the security of the entire socialist community of nations.

The future of socialism in Czechoslovakia is a matter which vitally affects not only the people of that country but the whole of the socialist camp, of the international working class and national liberation movements.

We fully appreciate and share the anxiety of the Soviet Union and other countries of the Warsaw Pact over these developments. It is false and slanderous to paint the situation as if the Soviet Union were resisting the process of 'democratisation' in Czechoslovakia and threatening to intervene in the internal affairs of that country.

It is rather a tribute to the internationalism and sense of responsibility of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the leaders of other countries of the Warsaw Pact that they should offer their assistance in preserving the socialist gains of the Czech and Slovak working people.

The main enemy of the Czechoslovak working class and its Communist Party is the same as that of all progressive forces in the world: international imperialism and the bourgeois and landlord exploiting classes. We urge upon our fellow-Communists of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to mobilise all their resources against these reactionary forces, within and outside the country; to assert Party leadership in the fields of propaganda and information, to rally the masses and unite the Party and working class against the main enemy. We pledge our support to carry out these aims.

We, South African Communists, declare that the future of Czechoslovakia is the concern not only of Europe but of the progressive anti-imperialists throughout the world. Any weakening of the anti-imperialist front – as we in Africa have learnt from bitter experience – is a setback to our struggle on an international scale, including our own bitter struggle for the liberation of Southern Africa.

DOCUMENT 125:

Further statement on the Czechoslovakian crisis issued by the Central Committee of the SACP on August 23, 1968.

In its statement of July 29th, 1968, our Central Committee expressed grave concern at the direction events were taking in Czechoslovakia. We welcomed the measures to correct serious past distortions of socialist democracy and economic abuses. But we regarded with serious apprehension the use being made of the occasion by anti-socialist and reactionary forces within and outside the country which, without effective reply, could endanger the socialist gains of the

Czechoslovakian working people and jeopardise the security of the socialist community of nations. For this reason we fully understood the concern of the Marxist-Leninist Parties of the Soviet Union and other neighbouring socialist countries, and appreciated their efforts to strengthen socialism in Czechoslovakia and rebuff the forces of counter-revolution.

Unfortunately, since that time the situation has deteriorated. Despite agreements reached with the leaders of the Soviet Union and allied socialist states at Cierna nad Tissa and Bratislava, adequate counter-measures were not taken and the dangers of a counter-revolutionary break-through increased rather than diminished – with internal divisions and disorientation apparently gravely weakening the ability of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to check the drift.

In the face of these circumstances we understand that a majority of the presidium of the CP of Czechoslovakia and the Government appealed to the Soviet Union and other neighbouring Warsaw Pact governments to render aid to them, including the provision of armed forces, to defeat the threat of counter-revolution, of the restoration of capitalism and the opening up of socialist Czechoslovakia to penetration by international imperialism.

We consider the response to this request by the countries and parties concerned to be entirely warranted and necessary. We must deeply regret that affairs in Czechoslovakia had taken such a turn as to require such unusual and exceptional measures, but we fully support the action of the fraternal Parties of the Soviet Union, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Bulgaria and Poland. Had they failed so to respond they would have failed in their duty to the Czechoslovak working people, and risked the loss of Socialist Czechoslovakia, with incalculable consequences to the socialist community and to the cause of national independence, people's power and peace everywhere.

The Czechoslovakian events have been made the occasion for an unprecedented new anti-Soviet campaign by the forces of imperialism, Social Democracy and other elements throughout the world, on the pretext that, for motives of their own, the Soviet and Allied states are interfering in the purely internal affairs of another country.

We believe these allegations to be without foundation. We are convinced that the allied socialist states acted from principled motives and a high sense of responsibility to the international working class and national liberation movements.

The Czech and Slovak people will solve their own internal problems themselves; the allied forces are there to establish the necessary conditions to enable them to do so. We express our solidarity with the Czechoslovak people and our confidence that they will overcome the forces of reaction.

The Central Committee calls upon all our members and supporters to fight vigorously against the anti-Soviet campaign and to strengthen with all their might the fraternal ties within the international Communist movement, and between Communist and non-Communist fighters against imperialism, so as to defeat the world-wide counter-revolutionary offensive of reaction, and to win liberation for our motherland and advance the cause of world peace and socialism.