***Character Represented by***

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**Czechoslovakia 1990**

Czechoslovakia, founded in 1918, debuted as a democratic nation before turning towards communism. After World War II, the homogenous country decided to join COMECON instead of accepting the Marshall Plan proposed by the United States of America, also agreeing to the Warsaw Pact along with seven other nations. Under the presidency of Gustav Husak, General Secretary of the Communist Party, the “golden age of communism” oversaw the “normalization” program, causing citizens to lose jobs and access to education in order to restore the Soviet Union’s control over the country. Czechoslovakia became a federal state in 1969, Czech and Slovak forming the two republics. A social divide between the two was further emphasized by Nationalist Slovaks.

Throughout the Stalinist period, communism did its part in helping develop Czechoslovakia, as Husak started large industrialization projects such as building industrial plants, chemical factories[[1]](#footnote-1). However, despite seeing an economic growth, not only did it lead to serious environmental issues and a severe health crisis with Slovakia having the world’s highest cancer rate in the mid-1980s[[2]](#footnote-2), but the progress slowly stalled to a stop. With communism not allowing a free market, Gustav Husak’s businesses went bankrupt[[3]](#footnote-3) and the economy growth plateaued.

Czechoslovakia saw Poland, Hungary, and the German Democratic Republic reject communism as the nation started the Velvet Revolution. This non-violent transition of power which took place as the end of 1989 approached, has lead us to the first free elections since 1946. This time however, communism is not the answer, but the cause of our nation’s problems. A change from communism to democracy as well as a movement towards Western values is needed in order to respond to our country’s needs. With our neighbouring countries evolving and our economy stagnating, Czechoslovakia requires a fresh start. The Communist Party was unable to respond to the change in market as European nations turned to quality over quantity. With the government possessing complete control of the economy, there is no room for growth or progress. In order for Czechoslovakia to thrive, a free market must be present, allowing individuals to develop their own businesses. As the state currently owns 99.8% of the industry[[4]](#footnote-4), the distribution of property is needed. By providing the population with capital, you enable the ball to start rolling and gain momentum as projects grow and thrive. This is necessary as capitalism is based on trust. Morever, selling the property instead of distributing it would risk a cycle of debt as individuals purchase property that is sold for a lower price than its initial cost. Foreign trade should not be limited to simply the East European countries, but expand to overseas exchanges as well, such as with the United States. As the control of industries would pass from the government to the capable hands of the population, there is no more need for the government to respond to these needs. With less need for investment in these aspects, Czechoslovakia’s expenses have been cut by a crucial amount. With less expenses and a growing economy, the 3 billion dollar debt will no longer represent a problem. Setting federal and state taxes will allow a steady source of income for Czechoslovakia.

Communism has no place for reform and can no longer answer our nation’s needs. As leader of the Czech Christian and Democratic Union, democracy is the solution to our economy’s lack of development.

*Delegate: Sophia Ye*

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1. Background guide [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Cultural Survival. "Czechs and Slovaks: The Failure to Find a Decent Past."

   Nationalism in Eastern Europe. N.p., 1995. Web. 26 May 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Nedelsky, Nadya. Defining the Sovereign Community: The Czech and Slovak

   Republics. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009. Internet resource. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Background guide [↑](#footnote-ref-4)