



Having just returned from a trip to Czechoslovakia, during which I established contacts with Prague punks, it's time for a scene report about the past and present situation there. It is quite hard for Czech punks, and their number has declined over the last two years. Estimates run at around 200 punks in Prague and about 20 skinheads (skins there are anti-fascist), but they are sadly divided into differing groups, each more or less centered around some band. It is quite sad to see this in a country where being punk is a daily fight against the authorities who try to smash anyone who is out of "official standards". There are a lot of problems with the VB (General Security Police), who systematically control the punks, prohibiting concerts, and acting brutal (knocking them down, tearing off earrings, shaving hair, etc.) Punks are driven to the police station, beaten, photographed, card-indexed, and sometimes even sent to psychiatric hospitals.

Czech punks are very pessimistic, and have nothing to hope for in this country where anyone who goes without a job for more than a month is considered a criminal and put in prison. And there's no way to avoid the army, which is more violent than the police and where National

Military Service is required for 2 years and where it's almost impossible to travel outside the country.

The Czechoslovakian state affirms officially that there are no punks in CSSR, but punks exist and continue to survive.

Musically speaking, the first Czech punk bands were ENERGIE G, ZIKKURAT, KECUP and EXTEMPORE (the latter doing covers of Sham 69, Damned, etc., then evolving in a more experimental minimalist direction). In 1983, A/64 appeared, formed by ex-KECUP members, and evolved from classical '77 style to hardcore. They broke up in '84, but have a track on the World Class Punk comp tape by ROIR.

At present, there is F.P.B. (ex-4 SKUPINA), a band from Teplice near the East German border. According to all the punks I met, they are the best band in Czechoslovakia. They made an unofficial tape in '84. In Prague there's PLEXIS P.M. (anarcho-hardcore) and FUCKMACHINE ("fun" tendencies). I should also mention V.3.S. and NATEROVE HMOTT? (from Prague too), as well as ZONA A and TLAK (from Bratislava), OI OI HUBERT MACHANE (skins from Liberec), RADEGAST (from Ostrava), ARBAJTER (from Hradec Kralove), and PROBLEM 5, V.Z., NOVODUR, ULTRA-PUNK, ANTIPO, and DEAD CHILD.

A very recent band with very punk lyrics and very political, playing violent music with some traditional influences (they have a fiddle) is the excellent POSADKOVA HUDBA MARNEHO SLAVY from the North Moravia district. Finally, there's a kind of metal-punk band, VISACI ZAMEK, from Prague, but according to some people they are just a bad parody.

The INSTIGATORS from England were in Prague this summer, but the authorities didn't give them the right to play.

Of course, it is impossible to find any fanzines in Czechoslovakia or any records (a few rare clandestine imports make it to the black market), and it's difficult to send cassettes by mail. Czech punks are almost completely cut off from the rest of the world and absolutely need contact and info. Try, if you can, to send them some zines (under anonymous plain cover), information or records (which will be copied for many on cassettes). But, overall, BE CAREFUL! It is almost certain that mail from the West is controlled by censorship, so if you write them don't tell anything about politics or social problems. A lot of punks are in prison or hospitals, and they risk their thin freedom for just writing graffiti or a gesture or a word.

It may occur that the French label Primitiv Cozak will edit some songs from F.P.B.'s live tape, and that will be available on my label Ukutnost Tapes. Thanks, Luk Haas/ B.P. 45/ 57320 Bouzonville/ France

P.S. Here are some contacts: FUCKMACHINE/ c/o Marcel Hauptman/ U Slovanky 1986/ Praha 8-16200/ CSSR Czechoslovakia... PLEXIS P.M./ c/o Petr Hosek/ Slajsojova 11/ Praha 2-12800/ CSSR Czechoslovakia... Other bands through: Jaroslav Martinek/ Utrznice 1180/6/ Praha 2-12000/ CSSR Czechoslovakia.