

Letter from the Civic Forum to US President George Bush and USSR General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev

21 November 1989

Dear Sirs!

On 19 November 1989, the Civic Forum, which feels itself responsible to act as the mouthpiece of the Czechoslovak public, was established in Prague. In a demonstration by the Prague populace, attended by hundreds of thousands of people on Wenceslas Square, the Civic Forum gained a consensus of opinion and therefore is turning to you also in the name of these people.

The Soviet government has announced a policy of non-involvement in connection with the democratic movements in Eastern Europe. We must warn you that in the case of Czechoslovakia, this policy in reality means support for the political leadership which was installed in the year 1968 by forceful intervention, and which, during the course of twenty years of rule, has absolutely discredited itself. One of the demands of the mass political scene.

Dear Sirs, we are of the opinion that the past intervention into Czechoslovak internal events in the year 1968 should be condemned and decried as an unlawful encroachment. The silence surrounding the intervention in August de facto means entanglement into Czechoslovak internal conditions. We beseege you to pay attention to this question during your negotiations; it is not only important for Czechoslovakia these days, but also for all of Europe.

The Civic Forum
In Prague on 21 November 1989

[Source: Informational Service #2, 21 November 1989, p.1. Published in Czech in Jiri Suk. Obcanske Forum. Institute for Contemporary History, Prague, 1989. Translated for CWIHP by Caroline Kovtun.]