

tion and technological knowledge are high enough in the West to militate against an immediate truly collaborative effort, but the next conference will focus on substantively oriented work groups. Specific discussion of research projects of mutual interest may be the first step toward joint research efforts.⁸

So we can see that history repeats itself. Here we have a little reminder of the beginnings of 'the West European Experiment'. Just like West Europeans some years ago, now East Europeans should first be trained or involved in 'work groups' in order to become suitable partners for their more advanced Western colleagues.

The last half-day of the Vienna conference was devoted to the evaluation of the conference and to future planning. The Vienna conference had opened up new possibilities. A very favourable sign of a bright future and cordial interchange was an offer by the two Czechoslovakian delegates, Janoušek and Jurovsky, on behalf of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. They proposed that the next international conference should take place in Czechoslovakia in October 1968 at the Castle Liblice, the property of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. The conference could be larger, focusing on specific research topics.⁹ The proposal was enthusiastically accepted and the prospect of another conference in Central Europe was very exciting. A task group was immediately set up for the proposed conference to explore the feasibility of organizing it for the following year, 1968.

Prague 1968

Preparations

Czechoslovakia seemed an excellent choice for the next conference. In 1967 the situation there was tonic and seductive. The new party leadership started introducing changes to reform the political system. The monolithic and rigid regime was becoming more flexible and was acquiring certain diversified features; for example, there was less censorship in the media and previously forbidden literature started appearing in the press. The old regime lost its grip on social life and, instead, 'socialism with a human face' became the slogan of the day. Liberalization quickly changed the political atmosphere in the country.

The Transnational Committee started preparing the conference in Czechoslovakia with much care. Rapport between East and West was now established and the next conference was therefore to be more scientifically focused than the Vienna conference. The task group met in Aix-en-Provence in January 1968.¹⁰ It was composed of Tajfel (chairman), Irle, Janoušek, Kelley, Moscovici and Riecken. The Transnational Committee also invited the Soviet sociologist, Yadov, who had played such an important role at the Vienna conference. Unfortunately, Yadov could not attend but it was agreed that his involvement in some way would be absolutely essential for the conference in Czechoslovakia, if Soviet representatives were to be well chosen.

The purpose of the meeting in Aix-en-Provence was to make sure that everything was very well prepared for the Prague conference. Social psychology in Eastern Europe was characterized by a kind of a 'social demand', focusing on useful and practical applications. There was some danger that unless some practical results, based on empirical work, were obtained rather quickly, the boom would not last.¹¹

The Prague conference had special aims. It was seen as the beginning of a wider cooperation between East and West. It was expected that more provision would be made for East European students to be trained in Western Europe and in the USA. Also, there were hopes regarding the development of two-sided exchanges and it was planned that West European scholars and students would study in communist countries. It was expected that the conference papers would be published by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences as a book. This book would include papers from Eastern Europe as well as from the West and would make a visible and identifiable record promoting the field and documenting the establishment of public relations between East and West.

The procedure for invitations was carefully prepared. First, a formal letter was signed by Festinger on behalf of the Transnational Committee, by Moscovici on behalf of the EAESP and by Jurovsky on behalf of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. This was followed by an informal letter, signed by Tajfel, chairman of the task group, describing the invitees' responsibilities, for example, their role as chairman, stimulator, critic, reporter, lecturer, and so on. Riecken was to ask Festinger to give a talk on the 'Usefulness of Social Psychology' and Campbell to give a lecture

on 'Experimental and Non-experimental Methods from a Methodological Point of View'. Riecken would also invite all the USA delegates. These careful arrangements and the flourishing Prague spring promised a great international conference.

The crisis

Dramatic political events changed the course of history. The intention of Czechs and Slovaks to establish socialism with a human face was quashed on 21 August 1968 when the armies of the Warsaw Pact brutally invaded the country. The Brezhnev regime deeply humiliated the Czechoslovakian communist leaders, claiming that the Soviet army had to come to Czechoslovakia to defend socialism because 'the Czechoslovakian people had lost their orientation', meaning that they supported Dubček's reformist movement. From the point of view of the USSR, the invasion made sense: to maintain their territory, if necessary by force. From the other side's point of view, the invasion was unacceptable and the occupied country was not prepared to sacrifice either reason or freedom.

This political event stirred worldwide indignation and put into question the conference's future. For some, to continue with the conference would show support for their colleagues in the occupied country. For others, it represented an expression of acquiescence or, worse, legitimization of the invasion and the new regime. If the events had been less important, a compromise could have been reached. But the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Army at that time was considered as serious as the Hungarian revolution in 1956. It was a violent event that had great international significance for the free world.

This placed both the Transnational Committee and, even more importantly, the EAESP, in a very unusual situation as scientific organizations.

At the time of the invasion, the President of the EAESP, Moscovici, was a Fellow at the Centre of Advanced Study at Stanford University and Tajfel became Acting President of the EAESP. The conference in Prague was to take place on 6–10 October 1968. The first reaction of the organizers seemed to be 'wait and see'. However, there was not much time for waiting. On

26 August, Tajfel sent a circular letter to all members of the EAESP and of the Transnational Committee,¹² requesting them to express their views about the appropriateness of holding the conference.

The line of the Transnational Committee was that the conference should be postponed 'unless further information can be obtained from Prague which would make it likely that, from the point of view of the Czechoslovak hosts, it was desirable to hold it'.¹³ Yet the organizers could not make a decision. On Saturday, 6 September, Tajfel and Mulder visited Moscovici at Stanford and they agreed that the conference should be postponed.¹⁴ The advice of Henry Riecken, President of SSRC at this point, was also to wait and to decide on the basis of the response from Czechoslovakia.

No doubt outsiders and insiders at an event always view the situation differently. In this case, the Czechoslovak organizers wished the conference to go ahead as they saw it as essentially supporting their case. A telegram from Jaromír Janoušek dated 3 September said: 'Irrespective of the present situation in Czechoslovakia, the organizing committee is able to arrange the conference under the terms given and stated before, Jaromír.'¹⁵ And later he wrote to Tajfel,¹⁶ 'Thank you very much for your call, kind words and efficient help. We had a rather shocking experience with international relations during last weeks and so much more we appreciate the genuine international solidarity.'¹⁷ And the last sentence said: 'Looking forward very strongly to see you in our Prague.'¹⁸ Janoušek referred to the isolation of Czechoslovakian scientists and intelligentsia and insisted on continuing with the conference. All previously planned international meetings had been cancelled and people were desperate for international support. In view of this, Riecken thought that the conference should go ahead. It was mainly on these grounds that, in his letter to Mulder, the Secretary of the EAESP, Tajfel¹⁹ suggested that the conference should take place.

There was, however, a split in opinion among the members of both organizing committees. On the Transnational Committee, two European members, Moscovici and Koekebakker, were resolutely against holding the conference.²⁰ The EAESP was divided almost fifty-fifty on the issue. The ensuing disagreement indeed threatened the very existence of the Association. Nuttin²¹

decided not to accept the invitation to the Prague Conference, writing to Tajfel, 'I regret that the EAESP is sponsoring a scientific meeting which will be held at a place which, for the time being, is bound to have unambiguous political meaning . . . I'd like to ask you to relieve me from my organizational responsibility with regard to that Conference.'

The Secretary of the EAESP, Mulder, felt 'pressed' to write a confidential letter to all Committee members and to some others closely associated with the conference (Jezernik, Frijda and Koekebakker),²² pointing out firmly that from the very beginning he had been strongly in favour of postponing the conference for at least six months. He was not aware, however, until very recently that 'independent of each other 3 members of the Committee were *against now!*' He thought that communication had totally failed and that 'important things are not handled properly between all Committee members (within the Committee)', referring implicitly to the Acting President.

Tajfel, who was chair of the organizing group of the conference as well as acting President of the EAESP, was in a precarious position. In the early days of the Soviet invasion, he found it difficult to elicit any views on the matter from members of the task group or from the EAESP. At the same time, he was receiving messages from Prague urging continuation of the conference. Europeans, like Mulder and Koekebakker, warned that other East Europeans, in particular those of a more liberal outlook, would not be allowed to go to Prague. Riecken, too, advised investigating this possibility before making a final decision.²³ This was why Tajfel described events in a chronological order in his letter of 30 September, seeking last minute guidance from members as to what to do:

I feel that I have acted as best I could in a difficult situation. The decisions I took may prove to have been wrong, but I *had* to take some decisions quickly on the basis of the information available to me. . . . On the first day of the conference in Prague, I am scheduled to give one of the three opening speeches – the one in the name of the EAESP. Now, I have no idea what I should do. If you feel that the Association should withdraw its sponsorship of the Conference, please let me know *immediately by telegram* (I am leaving Bristol for Prague on Thursday, 3rd October in the afternoon), and I shall act accordingly.²⁴

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Klasse	Ktbest	Kantoor van afzending UTRECHT	Nr. 34 1606	Wén-tal 22	Datum en tijd 4/10 1700	Dvvs

Dr Jaromir Janousek Institute of Psychology Purkynova ul 2 Praha/1

I have to cancel with regrets participation at the conference

Mauk Mulder +

Figure 9.1 Mulder's telegram to Janoušek

GENERAL INFORMATION

September

The International Conference on Social Psychology will take place at the time and under the terms stated before, that is in Prague at the Hotel International from 7th to 11th October, 1968.

The participants and accompanying persons are expected to arrive in Prague on Sunday, 6th October, 1968. Those who would come earlier or later are kindly requested to inform the Secretary of the Organizing Committee (address see below). The travel expenses will be reimbursed according to the individual wishes either 1) in Prague, or 2) the participants submit an expense account after the conference.

If further informations are needed, please contact Professor Henri Tajfel, the Chairman of the International Planning Committee, Department of Psychology, University of Bristol, Berkeley Square 8-10, Bristol, England, or the Secretary of the Organizing Committee.

Looking forward to see you in Prague.

Dr Jaromír Janoušek, Secretary
Organizing Committee
Institute of Psychology
Purkyňova ul. 2
Praha 1 - Czechoslovakia

Figure 9.2 Janoušek's information on the Prague conference

The letter continued by asking his addressees to say that if they still felt that he was 'taking inappropriate action without consulting other members of the Committee', they should let him know their view. If members still felt, despite Tajfel's explanations, that he was acting inappropriately, he wished 'to resign from the Committee of the Association immediately on my return from Prague. The resignation will also include my withdrawal from any participation in the funds provided by the Ford Foundation.' Mulder, the Secretary of the Association, having received a telephone call from Tajfel, had 'a sleepless night' but eventually gave 'complete consent to the Association's sponsorship of the Conference'.²⁵ However, personally, he felt 'brought into a very unfree situation, and thus really frustrated'. He would not go to Prague.^{26,27}

Attendance at the Conference thus became a personal matter. Many delegates from the West continued with their arrangements and took part in the conference. Others did not go. The two members of the Transnational Committee, Moscovici and Koekebakker, did not go. Of the members of the EAESP, in addition to Moscovici, Mulder and Nuttin did not go.

From the USSR, instead of four invitees, there was only one representative, Mansurov. Yadov, who was the Committee's most important contact, did not come. Of the other 12 invitees from Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland and GDR, only four were present. Of these four participants, two (Jezernik and Rot) came from Yugoslavia, one from Poland and one from Romania.²⁸

The programme went more or less as anticipated (Janoušek, 1969). It included three plenary sessions and six working group meetings. The three plenary sessions based on invited lectures, were followed by discussion. Campbell gave a lecture on 'Quasi-experimental Designs for the Social Psychological Evaluation of Institutional Ameliorative Experiments' (discussant: Jezernik). Himmelweit spoke on 'Social Psychological Aspects of Education' (discussant: Frijda) and Deutsch spoke on 'Conflicts: Productive and Destructive' (discussant: Mansurov).

Six working groups, consisting of approximately six people, each discussed specific topics. These comprised: socialization in childhood and youth, cognitive and behavioural consistency, interpersonal conflict, social psychology of language, intergroup relations; and social perception. The closing plenary session discussed

problems of further transnational cooperation in the advancement of social psychology. In particular, discussions centred on advancing opportunities for communication and informal scholarly contacts among younger research workers.

The article about the conference was published in the *SSRC Items*. The authors, Janoušek and Tajfel (1969), emphasized that 'the Czechoslovak hosts stressed the value of holding the conference in their country at a time when it was particularly important for them to maintain international scientific and cultural bonds.' Otherwise, the report is as neutral as possible, as if everything was absolutely normal and there were no other concerns but scientific ones.

A critical review by Zdeněk Helus (1969), published in the Czechoslovakian psychological journal, is more telling. While Helus describes the content of plenary lectures by Campbell and Himmelweit, he totally changes his style when he talks about Deutsch's paper: 'Deutsch, after Festinger perhaps the second leading figure to come out of the Lewin school, is nearly a legendary personality in social psychology. He has become famous through his ground-breaking experiments in game theory' (*ibid.*, p. 381; our translation). Helus describes Deutsch's plenary lecture on conflict in detail, dealing with conflict in a broad sense and giving interpersonal, intrapersonal and international examples. Destructive conflicts are characterized by the tendency to expand and to escalate. They rely on a strategy of power and upon tactics of threat, coercion and deception. They increase pressure for uniformity of opinion and they invest in militant tendencies and combat. The last part of Deutsch's lecture was devoted to strategies available to groups with limited power. These included opting out from situations, separating from groups with high power, mobilizing own resources, activating subgroups, using existing legal procedures to bring pressure for change and using harassment techniques to increase the other's costs of adhering to the status quo.

One can imagine the impact of this lecture on Czechoslovakian scientists whose country was occupied yet who had to pretend that their scientific conference was taking place under normal circumstances. While still 'neutral' science, Deutsch's lecture must have sounded like music to these humiliated social psychologists,

investing it probably with more political meaning than the author himself intended.

In his autobiographical chapter, Deutsch (1999, p. 30) recalls his 1968 lecture on conflict in Prague:

We met in Prague shortly after the USSR had sent its troops into Czechoslovakia to squash an incipient rebellion against Soviet domination. Despite our misgivings, we came at the strong urging of our Czech colleagues who wanted to maintain their contacts with the West. My paper included a section on what strategies and tactics were available to 'low-power' groups when confronting 'high-power' groups. The Czechs loved it and widely circulated a tape recording they made of it.

Czechoslovakian social psychologists expressed gratitude to the Transnational Committee for not modifying its plans; it was the first international group to keep its commitment to meet in the country after military occupation. They pointed out that the conference helped them maintain their contacts with Western psychologists. The Transnational Committee invited Janoušek to attend its next meeting in November 1968 and afterwards to become a member of the Committee.

After the Conference, the EAESP had a difficult time. Tajfel continued to clarify his position, both with respect to his decision about the conference and other issues, such as bad communication, the possibility of his resignation from the Committee and withdrawal from the Ford grant. While admitting that 'it would be easy for me to use post facto arguments . . . no one who has been to Prague can doubt that it was right to hold the conference and to continue the sponsorship by the Association,'²⁹ he did not do that. He repeated, that under pressure from Prague and from Riecken, 'I came to the firm conclusion that the conference *should* take place, and it would have taken very strong arguments to move me from that position.' Regarding the grant from Ford, despite being dissatisfied with the way Ford wanted to administer it, he decided to accept the situation. And, despite his disappointment with criticism over bad communication, he did not resign from the Committee. The Association soon recovered from the drama of the Prague conference. The grant from Ford to the 'Moscovici's centres' and to the EAESP got it back on the level.