

Prague Spring 1968

10:00:00	Dissolving pictures: demonstrations, slogans, symbols	
10:00:12	Caption: Prague Spring	
10:00:17	Archive footage – various cuts commentary	Commentary voice-over: In 1968, Czechoslovakia, a firm part of the socialist bloc ruled by Moscow, decided to go its own way of the so-called socialism with a human face. This partial release meant a hope for great changes for the citizens...
10:00:40	Kamila Moučková, at home	I was 40 years old in the spring of 1968. I was the first female news anchor in Europe.
10:00:50	Archive – Moučková reporting	(According to the Freehatten newspaper the manoeuvres have 30 participating ships from Norway, Denmark, Great Britain...)
10:00:57	Back - Moučková at home	What spring 68 meant for me? A great release. After all those terrible years which we had been experiencing we finally identified with the leadership of this country. We felt free, we felt we finally made a step towards some sort of democracy.
10:01:12	Archive footage – demonstration, several shots	
10:01:20	Josef Novotný, Old Town Square	I was twenty-seven years old in 68 and when the Prague Spring came, I had a five-year-old
10:01:24	Old Town Square, Town Hall, Astronomical Clock, tourists	daughter, a family and I was a moving van driver.
10:01:30	Back - Novotný, showing his black-and-white photo, followed by close-up	I expected a time of release, that one would be finally able to choose something, have a look at the world...
10:01:43	Jan Beneš, archive photo	
10:01:47	Jan Beneš, at home-	I was thirty-two when the Prague Spring began and I was in prison at Bory then. I had originally been for treason, later qualified as a mere subversive activity against the republic. I noticed that something was happening through the changed behaviour of the screws. I was released on the day of president Novotný's demise, he granted me amnesty, it was on 22
10:01:52	-Cut: archive photo-	
10:01:59	- back at home	March 68. Only 3 days after that I was invited to the election of the new president. My father was a legionary and the acceding president Svoboda knew him, so we were both invited, father and son.
10:02:04	Archive footage	(Archive background: the ceremony was monitored by 47 various TV broadcasters...)
10:02:17	Beneš at home	
10:02:21	Archive footage	Then I participated in the social tumult; unfortunately I did not like very much that it
10:02:35	Beneš at home	

10:02:45	Archive footage	was at the hands of the people I could not trust because they had a communist past, they had a past of the people who lied. (Archive background: president Ludvík Svoboda on the castle balcony...)
10:02:58	Oldřich Tůma, in his study	It was definitely a time of hope, expectations, of returned pride – of the fact that we are Czechs and Slovaks, that there was something happening here which we did not have to be ashamed of. However, people had very varied expectations to result from it. What the communists wanted to carry out as a reform was probably welcomed by the majority of the society but another large group definitely had ideas which went much further than what Dubcek or Smrkovský could imagine. (Archive background: We want to hear the truth, we want to hear the truth!)
10:03:05	Archive footage	
10:03:28	Jiří Pernes, study	In my opinion, there was a certain leftist element traditionally encoded in the genes of the Czech society, already in the 19th century or during the First Republic. Although in 1968 people were finding out about the terrible crimes committed by the communists during the past twenty years, it did not prevent them from identifying with their politics of socialism with a human face or the democratic socialism.
10:03:37	Archive footage	
10:03:56	Back - Pernes, study	One of the expressions of hope in the politics of socialism with a human face was the idea of the Golden Treasure of the Republic.
10:04:04	Caption: Illusions	
10:04:11	Archive footage	(archive background, v.o. commentary: Our citizens have proved that they love their republic already in numerous cases by various deeds and sacrifices. Also the development of the event „Every citizen at least 1 gram of gold for the Golden Treasure of the Republic“. Many gifts reveal that they have been sent by the people who really do not have much to spare – that this may be their only precious possession, and the main thing for them is the faith in the future of this land, even in difficult times.
10:04:38	Kamila Moučková, at home	Our reporters from the TV news have of course filmed it. I know that I was fighting with my tears a lot when in one report which I later broadcasted there was a grandmother - she could barely walk – she was carrying some gold

		fragments in her fist.
10:04:55	Archive footage	
10:05:00	Jan Beneš, at home	It was nostalgia for the First Republic which prevailed in people's minds in 1968 – so that it would become a decent and human country. We were aware that the country had been robbed, that it was in mud and it needed to get out of it.
10:05:05	Archive footage	So there was the Golden Treasure collection, just like in 1918. My parents and grandparents gave some gold then and we gave some in 1968.
10:05:17	Back - Beneš	In good faith that it would be used for a good purpose and it was for this country.
10:05:26	camera moves to Šárka Benešová sitting nearby	I have to interfere – his mother who remembered all this said: „Don't be foolish, nothing will come out of it, someone will steal it. “.
10:05:35	Archive footage	(archive background, v.o. commentary: Now it is important to consider carefully how to deal with the growing Golden Treasure so that the trust and love of the citizens to the country would not be disappointed.
10:05:44	Back - Beneš couple	My mother's words were then proven, I have a ring there and a gold watch after my grandfather and my wife her necklace. Where are they gone?
10:05:52	Archive footage	
10:05:58	Jitka Vondrová, study	In a short time they managed to collect almost 300 million Czech crowns and almost 100 kg of gold and precious stones.
10:06:03	Archive footage – testimonies of various people (names not stated)	(archive background, v.o. commentary: -And we did all that out of respect to our comrade Dubcek... -Our new freedom which we are gaining back so hard is like a small child which needs to get some talisman in its cradle. -And mainly because I also firmly trust this new leadership.)
10:06:29	Jan Beneš, study	It was a pleasant year which showed the weakness of the regime, its instability. But unfortunately also its strength in the connection to the superpower position of the occupant force.
10:06:40	Archive footage	(archive background, v.o. commentary: -There was a special issue of the Literary Newspaper with a message to the Central Committee Board of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia before the upcoming

- negotiation with the Soviet Union.
- The negotiations were basically about Czechoslovakia's right to its independent way to socialism, appropriate to our needs and traditions, enabling principally the development of democracy.
 - All we are striving for can be summarized in four words: socialism, alliance, sovereignty, freedom.
- 10:07:19 Jan Beneš, at home
- 10:07:29 Archive footage
- 10:07:44 Caption: Occupation
- 10:07:48 Archive footage
- On 19 August Jan Štern and myself were putting together an interview for the Canadian CBS, where the Canadians asked our opinion - what we thought about the fact that the units of the Warsaw pact were gathering at the Polish and East-German border, and whether we were not afraid of military invasion. And we jointly refused it - Jan Štern as a communist, myself as an anti-communist - claiming that it was not possible for them to come because they did not have any reason ...
- (archive background, v.o. commentary:
On one of the darkest nights in the history of Czechoslovakia, from 20 to 21 August 1968. From midnight, groups of military cargo aircraft are landing at Ruzyne airport. Every minute a new tank is leaving the fuselage of the Antonov onto our soil. In front of the building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia . The meeting of the board is interrupted by the Prime Minister Černík with a message about the invasion of the Warsaw Pact armies into Czechoslovakia. The board issues a resolution which is immediately broadcast by radio.
- Ruzyne airport was occupied by several members of the secret police who had known about the aggression already since 8 o'clock of the previous evening. But coming from the airport as well as from the northern border there are tanks of the so-called befriended armies rushing to Prague. Between them a car of patriots with flags. TAS, the Moscow press agency, broadcasts that the soldiers came to protect freedom from a prepared counter-revolution. It also claims that they do not want to interfere with our affairs. But they were reputedly summoned by the highest state and

<p>10:09:26 Kamila Moučková, at home 10:09:34 Archive footage</p>	<p>party officials who do not wish to be named. None of those members of the Board who have been standing in opposition to Dubcek already for a longer period do not want to admit it directly. Although they later try to form a new government and to control the state as usurpers. It was in the night after we finished broadcasting, on 21 August. One of the strongest perceptions of my life was the fact that we had the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia next door and there was shooting.</p>
<p>10:09:42 Back - Moučková</p>	<p>It was a hot August night. Silence, then always a shot and some babies cried awfully. And I cannot ever forget this. Then when it started, I was running to the Central Committee and there I saw the first killed boy. (archive background, v.o. commentary:</p>
<p>10:09:52 Archive footage</p>	<p>The brotherly visit of the armies of the so-called befriended countries is growing into tragic dimensions. There are more and more frequent shots heard in Prague.</p>
<p>10:10:07 Back - Moučková</p>	<p>This was another shock because I am a mother of three children. Then I went immediately to the TV to Vladislavova Street and from then on I was broadcasting.</p>
<p>10:10:12 Archive footage</p>	<p>(archive background, v.o. commentary: A number of soldiers who invaded Czechoslovakia on the first day is estimated at two hundred thousand. That number increased to a half million very soon. Despite that, the occupants are not managing to bring about a decisive reverse in the situation. There was only a handful of traitors.</p>
<p>10:10:35 Jan Beneš, at home</p>	<p>On 21 August at 3 am an acquaintance of mine was banging at the window and screaming : Mr. Benes, run away, the Russians are here! I got into my car and after some dramatic circumstances – through some road detours near Hradec Králové and Svitavy – I came to Brno late at night. Somewhere near Chlumec nad</p>
<p>10:10:43 Archive footage</p>	<p>Cidlinou we met a Russian convoy and I shook my fist at them like this – you villains! But surprisingly the soldiers in the car did the same with their fist. So I said to myself – you idiot, it</p>
<p>10:11:00 Back - Beneš</p>	<p></p>

10:11:12	Archive footage	<p>is a proletarian greeting, they think you are on their side.</p> <p>(archive background, v.o. commentary: Some Soviet soldiers did not have a slightest idea where they were discharged. Only later they found out they were in Czechoslovakia. Many of them realized after conversations with our people – despite the intensive propaganda of their commanders – what an abominable assault has been made.</p>
10:11:44	Josef Novotný, standing in the street with a reporter	<p>Around 11 am I went with my moving truck to Vinohrady and since there were barricades, I parked the car near Italska Street and we went to see what was happening there – because there was shooting. And we saw – over there near the Radio building – there were 2 boys, lying dead, covered. And in that moment a tank came from up there, it was shooting, it ran over a bus – there were barricades here beyond the crossing... I saw a blood-stained flag, probably somewhere here – and I didn't want the tank to drive over it. So I jumped after it and held it. The Russian who was sitting on the tank shot me in the arm. So I caught my arm, the flag under my arm and was running for cover... People were running, stepping over each other. There were Russian cars here, three or four, and people set them on fire. And there was ammunition in one of them.</p> <p>The shock wave threw me against the wall, I had a heavy concussion, they were collecting us here, those who were wounded, and they gradually took us to hospital.</p>
10:11:54	Archive footage	
10:12:08	Back - Novotný	
10:12:14	Back - archive footage	
10:12:20	Back - Novotný	
10:12:25	Back - archive footage	
10:12:38		
10:12:51		
10:13:04	Cornelius Meffert together with Novotný at a table in a café, looking at period photographs	<p>Cornelius Meffert (speaking in German): Volker Krämer took this photo in Prague in 1968, he was here privately and he made many photos during the Russian invasion, or the Warsaw pact soldiers invasion. Then he offered them to the Stern.</p> <p>(Also dieses Foto hat Volker Krämer gemacht 1968 in Prag, er war damals privat hier und hat viele viele Fotos gemacht beim Einmarsch der Russischen beziehungsweise Warschauer Paktstaaten und hat also diese Bilder dann dem Stern angeboten.)</p>
10:13:25	Shots of photographs and	<p>Novotný speaking: In 1993 Mr. Volker Krämer came to visit me, he</p>

10:13:33	documents Back - Meffert and Novotný	took the photo. I didn't know he was taking photos. He came to me to Hradec Králové. I was happy to meet him and he was happy to see me alive.
10:13:44	Shots of photographs	
10:13:56	Back - Meffert a Novotný	We agreed to meet again in five years on the 30th anniversary of Prague Spring and that he would come again. Unfortunately he did not arrive and I have incidentally seen a newspaper clipping that he died in Kosovo. He was shot together with some colleagues.
10:14:05:	Shots of newspaper articles about Kosovo incidents	Cornelius Meffert:
10:14:15	Back - Meffert a Novotný	This photo is one of the most expressive ones, it is an icon which represents the Warsaw Pact invasion. It went all around the world. (Dieses Foto ist halt ein der anrührendsten, also quasi Ikone, quasi was diese Warschauer Geschichte angeht. Also das ist durch über die ganze Welt gegangen.)
10.14:22	Archive footage	
10:14:49	Jiří Pernes, at home	Normalisation in Czechoslovakia actually started as early as August 1968. A group of politicians whom people called „the January men“ and who were looked upon with great hope such as Svoboda, Dubcek, Cernik, Smrkovsky – they were actually sitting on two chairs at that time. They were trying to satisfy the Soviets but they were also trying not to disappoint the trust of the vast majority of the Czechoslovak public. But that was not possible. They had to satisfy either the ones or the others.
10:14:52	Archive footage	(archive background, v.o. commentary: It is Sunday, 10 November. There is a festive meeting on the occasion of 51st anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution organised by the District Committees of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship Association of Prague 4 and Prague 8. Entry was possible with a special invitation only.
10:15:24		
10.15:45	Caption: Protest	
10:15:49	Caption: Czechoslovak film weekly, no.4, 1969	(archive background, v.o. commentary: On 19 January 1969, a student named Jan Palach died. On 20 January Prague honoured his memory.)
	Archive footage contd.	
10:16:12	Jiří Pernes, at home	Jiří Pernes speaking: It was an absolutely shocking gesture for Czechoslovak conditions.

		It is interesting that shortly before the death of Jan Palach a similar tragic gesture took place in Poland. In protest against the occupation of Czechoslovakia and against the Polish participation in it, a workman Siwiec burned himself to death at a large folk celebration.
		Beneš speaking:
10:16:29	Archive footage	It was a commitment for me, you cannot be in Paris when there is something happening in Prague. Therefore we decided to come back and we returned from Paris on 19 January.
10:16:33	Jan Beneš, at home	
10:16:38	Archive footage	
10:16:48	Kamila Moučková, Wenceslas Square	I was just here during that week when Jan Palach burned himself, until his funeral. I spent nights with university students at their colleges... they built tents everywhere here and stayed there overnight. They protested against this establishment. And I would always leave the TV after the second broadcast of the news, take Czech Press Agency news from the teletype and come here to read it to them from this 3rd step at St. Wenceslas. I was speaking with them, I was here with them during the nights.
10:17:25	Archive footage	In his final declaration above all he appealed to the political representatives that they should not give in. And in a similar way later Jan Zajíc did the same.
10:17:31	Jan Beneš, at home	
10:17:39	Archive footage	
10:17:43	Josef Novotný, Old Town Square	Initially I perceived it as a sort of patriotic act, but in the course of time as the normalisation acceded and the protests took place on 21 August 1969 I wondered whether the death of that young man was not in vain. It did not change the situation anyway.
10:18:03	Archive footage	Kamila Moučková:
10:18:22	Kamila Moučková, Karolinum	The governing power constantly stressed through the media that it was all of us who had actually caused the death of a young man. The truth is of course the contrary.
10:18:27	Moučková, Wenceslas Square,	There is one more interesting thing: Jan Palach drew the ticket from the hat as the first of ten people who applied to it. And we then frantically searched for the remaining nine so that they would not do it.
10:18:31	Comes to the place of Jan Palach's immolation; followed by shots of the monument	
10:18:45	Archive footage	Jan Beneš:
10:18:56	Jan Beneš, at home	It was a desperate sacrifice, it was the only way of fighting left for him. It was a desperation of a

		humiliated nation which that man felt more than the others.
10:19:02	Archive footage	Jitka Vondrová:
10:19:16	Jitka Vondrová, study	There were quiet memorial meetings throughout the country. And the party leadership in its frightened reaction was revolted by this reaction but it did not dare to undertake anything against the pressure of the public.
10:19:27	Archive footage	
10:19:40	Jan Beneš, at home	An alarming meeting of the Cechie, a grouping of the very orthodox communists such as Vilém Nový, came with a terrible slander that Palach was only a victim persuaded by conspirators that it would only be some cold fire and that nothing would happen to him. That all of it was just some sort of a show. That was a warning that there are such people among us and that we do not know how to deal with them.
10:19:59	Archive footage	
10:20:11	Caption: Disillusion	
10:20:16	Archive footage	
10:20:30	Josef Novotný, at home	In September 1968 my brother-in-law was returning from Yugoslavia and they bought the Stern in Vienna. When they came back, they asked me to come and see something.
10:20:40	A photo of Novotný	I boasted at work about it and then a denouncement came that I probably had an interview with some journalist.
10:20:45	Novotný with reporter in the street, present day	
10:20:50	Stern cover	I started getting visits from the secret police from Pardubice, they interrogated me several times - what and whom did I see, how many dead... such details. Then there was the strike on the anniversary of 21 August and that was probably the last drop. So in November I was made redundant from work within five days.
10:20:55	Archive footage	
10:21:13		(Archive civil announcement: Citizens, in the name of the law I urge you! Leave this area!)
10:21:25	Kamila Moučková, at home	I was actually fired from the TV twice. First on the 21st August the Russians fired me physically with their machine guns and then later after 21st August I was fired by our people, the management of the TV. I had to leave

10:21:38	Archive photos	immediately.
10:21:45	Moučková at home	Then, twenty-one hard years followed when I did all sorts of things.
10:22:05	Archive footage	I cleaned the stairs – and then I could not do even that because they secretly took a picture of me for the Stern where the first lady of television was cleaning the stairs with gloves and a bucket. Then for 21 years I was sticking together plastic bags as a home worker... I could not go out among other people. (Archive civil announcement: Leave this area, you are subjecting yourselves to intervention by all lawful measures!)
10:22:20	Jan Beneš, at home	Jan Beneš: 21 August 1969 was the breaking point. It actually started even two days earlier for us when they chased us out of a pub with tear gas.
10:22:26	Archive footage	It was of course the secret police or the „bodies“
10:22:31	Jan Beneš, at home	who threw in the tear gas. And when we ran out onto Prikopy Street, we got into a battle with the police but we were not the provoking ones. It was them who wanted to provoke that clash and wanted to show their bestiality, their violence, and to scare and discourage people.
10:22:25	Archive footage	Many people knew that they either had to break or accept what was then called „the reality“, „to acknowledge the reality“. And those who wanted to live better had to cooperate.
10:22:48	Beneš, at home	On 9 October 1969, colonel Kubik, Head of the Investigation Board of the Secret Police told me that he did not know what I was planning but if I had not left that same day by midnight, I would never have left after that.. And that otherwise he did not care. Why did he do it? Did he want to bring me to despair? Since it was already afternoon, there was no connection to the border and he knew I did not have a leaving permit.
10:22:55	Archive footage	Nevertheless, with the help of one German tourist I managed to get across the border, through Germany to France, and my wife got out on 24 November with a passport bought from another Secret Police colonel.
10:23:08	Beneš, at home	
10:23:22	Archive footage	
10:23:30	Beneš, at home	
10:23:36	Archive footage	
10:23:48	Jiří Pernes, study	Jiří Pernes: From April 1969 until 1969 there were Czechs and Slovaks who acted against their own people. It was not the Soviet occupation army, it was the People’s Militia, it was the Czechoslovak
10:23:53	Archive footage	

10:24:21	Pernes, study	Police, it was the Czechoslovak Army. And it is tragic that the symbol of the Prague Spring, Alexander Dubcek, used his personal authority and credit to suppress these demonstrations. Dubcek stopped being the first executive of the Communist Party in April 1969, became the chairman of the National Assembly. And from that position he signed the Extraordinary Measures, the so-called baton law. That ratified
10:24:27	Archive footage	for people who demonstrated in Czechoslovak cities in August 1969 – and called out Dubcek, freedom – to be imprisoned, taken in charge without a court order, and to be fired from work or school.
10:24:47	Pernes, at home	That is all connected with Dubcek’s name.
10:24:51	Archive footage	(archive background, v.o. commentary: A memorial of friendship with the Soviet people was unveiled on Red Army Square in Prostějov during the May celebrations. The sculpture was made by academic sculptor Jan Habart and represents an oath of eternal friendship of a Soviet soldier and our workman.
10:25:16	Oldřich Tůma, study	Oldřich Tůma: Most of the people said to themselves: OK, nothing can be done, politics is filth and there is nothing to be achieved. The whole world is against us, no one will help us, it is not worth it, we shall not be interested.
10:25:27	Archive footage	But the group of people who would support the regime because of inner conviction was much smaller than before 1968. And those who tried to establish themselves somehow in the normalisation regime were leading a double life, less and less compatible with the practices of the regime.
10:25:47	Caption: During the time of occupation in 1968 – 1989, more than 200 citizens were killed and more than 2000 seriously injured. Between 1968-1969, around 100 000 citizens emigrated and asked for political asylum.	
10:25:55	Caption: End of communism in Czechoslovakia, Prague, November 1989	
	Shots from demonstration	

10:26:11	Josef Novotný, at home	I do not regret it, I am just saying that one was really deprived of some things in life... so limited, but I could not absolutely do anything about it...none of us could.
10:26:25	Novotný outside, slow motion, saluting	
10:26:30	Kamila Moučková, at home	It happened that after all those years I shook off the dust from my wings and took flight like a phoenix. And at sixty-five, I started a second career. It is unbelievable and it is fantastic...
10:26:48	Moučková in the street, looking at a poster inviting to the Museum of Communism	
10:26:54	Jan Beneš, at home	So many people coming from here achieved significant positions in America or different parts of the world – in science, business, even in politics. If those people had been here, they could have worked for the benefit of this country. Unfortunately they did not stay, they could not stay or were not allowed to stay.
10:27:14	Beneš, standing outside in front of a fence with many signs commemorating his past	
10:27:20	Final titles	
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