


Czechoslovakia was next



Thirty years ago this month, the New York Times felt the [winds of change blowing toward Prague](#). The paper had the husband-wife team of Marvin and Madeleine Kalb write a first-hand assessment, and they learned that 90% of Communist Party members were ready for "radical reform." These party members held the "balance of power," according to the Kalbs, and some of them had been pushing for changes for years. Yet the "stale, uninspiring party rulers installed by the Warsaw Pact in 1968 [seemed] determined to resist any change that would undermine their claim to legitimacy." Some of the reformers would be content to modify the existing system, the Kalbs wrote, but "dissidents such as the playwright Václav Havel and the journalist Jiri Dienstbier believe it must be replaced." The Kalbs wrote three months before the Velvet Revolution that, "Czechoslovakia is next." As is often the case, if you want to know what is going to happen, you must read the New York Times.

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