

Antiwar protests in Prague

9 June 1999

A major antiwar demonstration took place Saturday, 6 June, in Prague, Czech Republic. The original demonstration, the so-called "Street Party", was called by various anarchist and environmental groups as a protest against the impact of capitalist globalisation. About 6,000 to 8,000 young people participated. All four Czech radical left groups [Communist Youth Union—Stalinists, Socialist Workers Organisation—LRCI, Budoucnost ("Future"—after the name of their paper)—CWI and Socialist Solidarity—IS] participated actively, selling their papers and trying to make the former fuzzy meeting more political.

After opening speeches and some music the meeting turned into a march through the city. While many anarchists were ready to just go from one McDonalds to another and throw bricks at their windows the more political part of protesters (influenced by above-mentioned radical left groups) were able to direct it to the American embassy and turn it into a full-scale antiwar protest. Police were taken by surprise and were not able to stop the march. Demonstrators started to chant slogans: "Stop war", "Stop NATO", "American murderers", etc. Seven windows of the embassy were broken. Nobody was injured. This action led to protest of the American ambassador about "lack of protection by police", humble apologies by our politicians and new plans to implement harsher measures against future protests on one hand, but also to a large wave of sympathy from people who think that broken windows are at least an open sign of the attitude of the Czech population to the war in Yugoslavia.

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