

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE  
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

Copyright 1944, The Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of North America  
Editor Frank J. Kovarik, 2502 So. Kedzie Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.

Vol. VII

NOVEMBER 1945

No. 9

## EDITORIAL

The Sokol movement, which was founded in Praha, is so much a part of the people of Czechoslovakia that we decided to devote this issue of the Specialist especially to a summary of its ideals, history and leaders. Being a philatelic publication, we wish to show how the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs honors, in a stampic way, this national movement, which as the former Austro-Hungarian Empire feared, may become Pan Slavic in character. We find that the movement took firm root in all the smaller Slavic countries: Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, Ruthenia, Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia. But, Russia, with its millions of Slavs, did not follow the ideals set forth by Fuegner and Tyrs. Perhaps a country so large did not need the moral inspiration this movement gave to the weak and downtrodden. Perhaps, in the days of the Russian Empire, when freedom was but a word, such a movement was not looked upon with favor by the powerful rulers. That may also be the reason why, even today, no big movement of this sort exists in the land of the Soviets. We must also remember that this movement fosters a love for democratic principles and therefore, any country which professes to be democratic yet continues autocratic rule, dares not give real support to such an organization.

## AN APOLOGY

Dr. Jaffrey called our attention to an error we have been committing since January 1945. We have failed to change the volume number to seven—so we beg your pardon and those of you who care to make this correction, do so.

## SOKOL COMMEMORATIVE POST CARDS

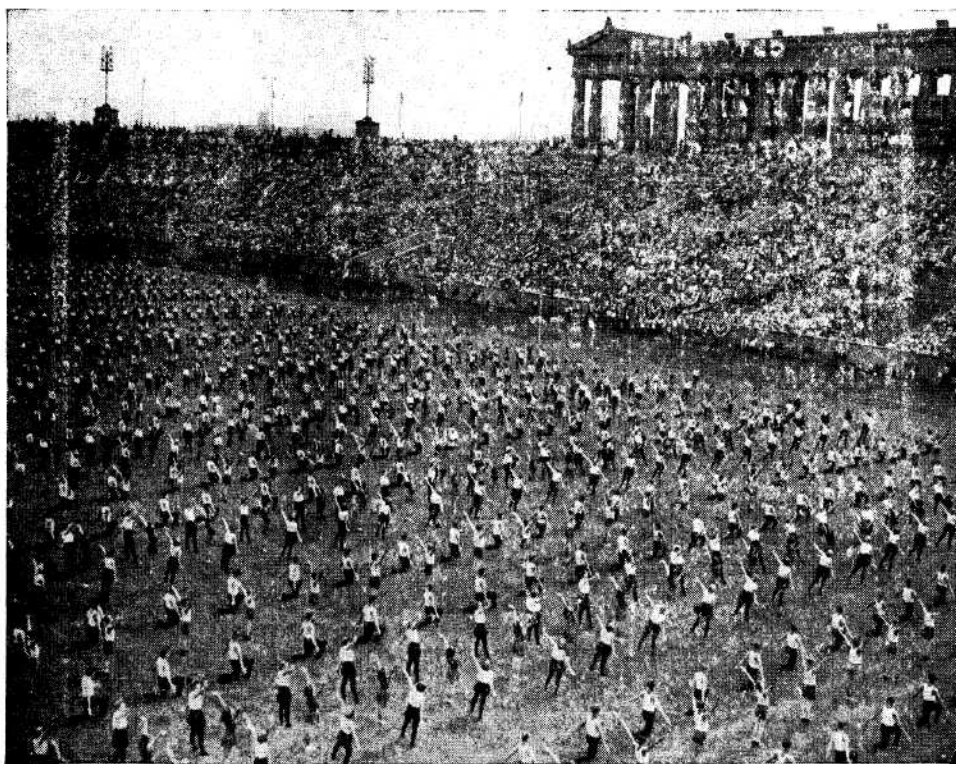
During a recent visit with the editor of the "American Sokol," we talked stamps, of course. Mr. Konecny gave us about (50) fifty Sokol Commemorative post cards—franked with the current ½p. King George of Great Britain. There are two types—one is cancelled with a commemorative cancellation of the 25th Anniversary of the Republic in red—another has this as a cachet and cancelled in green—"C. S. P.—Czechoslovak Field Post—11 No. '43" (November 11th, 1943). The cards are 6"x4"—any member who mails me a franked addressed envelope to conform to this size, may have one—with the compliments of "The American Sokol." Of course, we haven't enough to go around—so, first come, first served and please, don't ask for two or more.

### THE SOKOL MOVEMENT

G. Greenawalt and Frank J. Kovarik

This movement developed with the national awakening of the Czech people in the early sixties of the last century. Upon the loosening of government restrictions at that time Bohemia became alive with public and social movements patterned after the German gymnastic society then popular. At Prague thru the efforts of members of the Schmidt Institute of Physical Culture, a gymnastic club or society was organized. Dr. Miroslav Tyrš, with the brothers Gregř and Em. Tonner organized the society at a meeting Feb. 16th, 1862, with Jindřich Fugner as first president. On March 5th, in the hall of J. Malypetr in Panska Ulice (Gentlemen's Street), Dr. Tyrš started his system of physical education. The desire of the people for a stronger nationalistic spirit gave the Society aims and purposes other than physical culture. In the Society they were developing a new people with new theories of freedom and national feeling and expression. From their exhibitions of disciplinary culture of the body and mind they gained many members and the movement spread beyond the confines of the city. They believed that their theory of fraternity and equality required an outward show and they adopted the Garibaldist uniform and the name SOKOL (FALCON). Dressed in brown uniform with red shirt and a skull cap with a falcon feather in it they typified the spirit of the Garibaldi liberators. Thru the medium of a vocabulary, developed by Dr. Tyrš, which was slavie in

#### ALL SOKOL MEET IN CHICAGO IN 1933



Through the courtesy of Sokol Americky, official organ of the Sokol Movement in the U. S.

origin, they became gymnasts truly slav'ic in feeling and ambition.

At their first public exhibition, June 1st, 1862, in the "at APOLLO" HALL, the first SOKOL banner was unfurled and dedicated. Before the end of the year 8 (eight) groups were founded—in Brno, Jaromer, Jicin, Kolin, Kutna Hora, Nova Paka, Pribram and Turnov. Through the efforts and financial backing of Fugner the Prague Sokol had its own excellent hall, which became the model for other similar ventures. In 1864, Laiblan in Slovenia, in 1866 Lowow in Poland, in 1874, Zagreb in Croatia had their Sokol units. As early as 1865 a unit was organized in St. Louis, Missouri. This unit broke up but was rebuilt on a more solid foundation later, and finally, developed into a strong American Sokol organization.

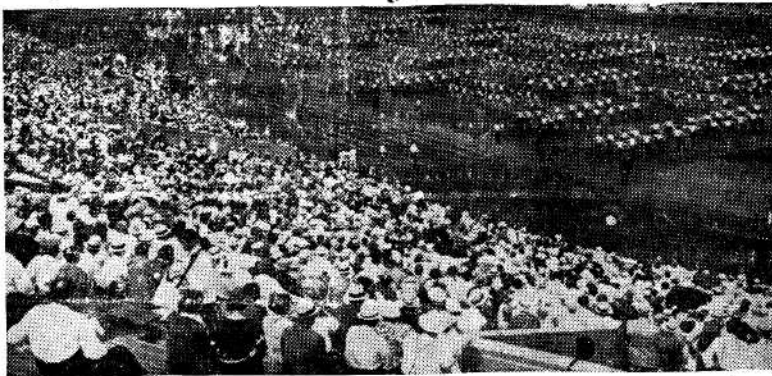
The movement received a sudden set-back in 1865, first, with the death of Fugner and then the financial crisis, but through the efforts of its enthusiastic adherents, especially Dr. Thomas Cerny, Dr. Tyrs, G. Zizka, V. Cerny and others, the great work of Fugner was saved. In 1866, however, with the outbreak of war with Prussia, all activities were stopped. Dr. Tyrs took this opportunity to prepare a militant organization program, but the authorities opposed it and it was never put into effect. This war had unfavorable effects on all nationalistic developments and the SOKOL movement did not remain untouched. Some groups were entirely broken up, others became weakened, but most of them remained strong and were able to build a solid foundation for the future. At the end of 1866, 21 branches were active.

Following the Prussian war political persecution started and it was but natural that much of that persecution was visited upon members of the SOKOL. This did not weaken the organization—on the contrary, it tended to give it popularity and solidify its members into a compact and purposeful whole.

In 1871 there were again 130 groups and Tyrs started an official organ named SOKOL, in which he clearly explained the purpose of the Sokols; physical and moral building of the entire nation to bring to it strength, courage, moral uplift and ability to protect itself. An effort was made to create a single central organization and to call a convention at Prague of all the Sokol units, but due to governmental opposition this plan did not mature. In 1869 a monument to Fugner was built in the Olsany Cemetary through the efforts of the Sokol and as in 1868 when the foundation stone was laid for the National Theater, the Sokols showed their numerical strength. In 1874 at the request of J. Otto, the Prague Sokols built a monument to Zizka, hero of the Hussite Wars, on the field of Pribyslav.

In 1873, due to constantly growing government opposition to any concerted Bohemian action and also due to the financial crisis in the land, many weaker

#### ALL SOKOL MEET IN PRAHA



Through the courtesy of Sokol Americky, official organ of the Sokol Movement in the U. S.

branches, and especially those which were led by men fearful of the government, were either broken up entirely or changed into other organizations, notably "volunteer firemen." But the kernel of the movement remained unharmed and healthy. The Prague Sokol, with its very able leader Thomas Cerny, braved all these storms and even after the official organ, the only link between the various branches, ceased publication, these brave men continued their work. By 1875 only 75 units existed.

When finally conditions turned for the better, the Sokols gained members and greater activity could be seen. January 1881 saw the revival of the official organ under the editorship of Tyrs and in 1882 the first All Sokol meet was held in Prague. It was attended by 76 units, with 1000 members. The public exhibition on the Strelec Island under the leadership of Dr. Tyrs showed 720 drilling sokols on the field. This Meet, which had been enlivened by the presence of Yugoslav Sokols, was the beginning of a new era for the movement. By 1882 there were 120 units. Experience in the past had shown that more attention should be paid to physical education instead of petty bickering, and care was taken to educate more able leaders and teachers. In 1884 a large delegation was sent to Krakow in Poland and this was the beginning of a long series of visits which helped in the creation of a slavie solidarity. The death of Tyrs in 1884 did not check the growth of the movement, it was so well anchored in the national existence.

In 1884 the unification of the various units commenced by the creation of district councils. The Czech Council took the name Tyrs. The councils then presented combined public exhibitions, which, because of the size and colorfulness, helped to strengthen and increase each unit and helped in the formation of new units. In 1886, the Prague Sokol gave a course to teachers in physical culture according to Sokol theory. At the same time a movement was started to build gymnasiums which would conform to Sokol requirements.

A call for a second All Sokol Meet was issued for 1887 and immense preparations were under way when the government prohibited the exhibition of strength and solidarity. This did not deter the American Sokols who arrived and were enthusiastically received everywhere. In Cesky Brod the Sokols hastily organized a public exhibition and contests. This was attended by large numbers of Sokols. The Americans were led by A. Volensky, K. Stulik and J. Cermak. The prohibitions of the Meet served to increase the efforts in the ranks of the Sokols and to increase the activities of the units.

March 4th, 1889, the various councils of Bohemia met in Prague and created the Czech Sokol Union. In 1892 the same was done in Moravia-Silesia by the creation of a Moravian-Silesian Union. Thanks to these two united groups great success was achieved. Unification of the system of physical education—using the same commands and executions—meetings—compulsory audition of the books—teaching of school boys and adolescents—careful selection of teachers—all came as a result of the cooperation of these two mighty unions.

During the National Exposition in Prague in 1891 and again during the Cultural Exposition in 1895 the Sokols held All Sokol Meets in Prague. The former was a great success, with 7,000 Sokols present, including 300 more guests from Poland and 200 from Jugoslavia, and featured 2,300 in massed drill on the exhibition field. The latter was attended by 7,500 members with 4,300 active participants. Both meets had as guests representatives of French gymnasts, thereby beginning a new era of international cooperation. The fourth All Sokol Meet in 1901 had a representation of 12,000 members, 6,500 men active participants, 800 women and 1,700 boys. Since then these Meets or Slets as the Czech call them have grown in numbers and accomplishments.

During the first World War the Czech underground was fed and led by members of the Sokol organization and it was largely through their efforts that the 1918 Revolution was so successful without a drop of bloodshed.

It is but natural that in a free and independent country the movement prospered even tho it was split into three divisions, namely: Ceska Obec Sokolska, Katolicky Orel and Delnicka Telocvicna Jednota. The first division is non-sectarian with a leaning toward anti-clericalism, the second is catholic, and the third contains radical elements.

In the course of time the Sokol actively stepped into field and track competition and tournaments but it never forgot its elementary purpose; development of a lithe and healthy body through calisthenics and proper exercise. One of the slogans of the organization is "A healthy mind in a healthy body." They have accomplished that through a wonderful technique.

---

#### COVERS BEARING NEW ISSUE OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Mr. Alfons Stach, our very good member and dealer of good Czechoslovak material (when it can be had), has sent us for inspection, Air mail, Registered covers, bearing various postage stamps of the re-born Republic. These covers are priced at \$2.50 each and are really more picturesque than the definitive Linden Leaf Issue which is supplanting these early colorful emissions. We believe we are doing our members a service by mentioning this. Those interested should contact friend Alfons at 99 Nassau St., New York 7, N. Y.

---

#### AN APPEAL

For some time I have been going around with the idea to tell the members of a very worthy cause but have refrained so far for certain reasons. However a few days ago I received a letter from Mr. Miller, the able printer of our publication, which prompts me to bring the matter I have had in mind to your attention.

Mr. Miller's letter follows in part.

"Dear Mr. Lowey. In setting type today for the Czechoslovak Specialist (October issue) the thought came to me that perhaps soon parcel post mail to Czechoslovakia will be allowed. With the thought that you perhaps have contact there and that undoubtedly there are many persons who have little to go on and have children who will have very little Christmas this year, or even enough clothes for that matter, friends of Czechoslovaks can help out a little directly. I have a little girl of 7 and a boy of 6 and would like to know of a family over there with a child or two about that age or younger who could use some out-grown clothing, candy and a few toys. I know that whole families have been wiped out,—what Americans as individuals can do, will help."

I already have thanked Mr. Miller for his letter and I again repeat, "Thank you, Mr. Miller, your heart is as great and considerate as this broad land. I take my hat off to you!"

Unfortunately individual packages can not yet be sent to Czechoslovakia. However, for over one year now the "American Relief for Czechoslovakia" has had collecting stations in the larger cities of the United States, where parcels arrive which are then sent to Czechoslovakia and there distributed among the neediest.

Perhaps you, too, like Mr. Miller, have a child who has outgrown its clothes and would like to give these to some child over there. But not only the children are in need, there are thousands of adults, men and women, who have worn their last garment to shreds and are facing a terrible winter without protection. May I ask you to look into your closets and see if you can find something that you can spare. That includes suits, dresses, overcoats, shoes, gloves, socks, etc., etc. Anything will do even if it is mended. Only torn and dirty things are not acceptable.

And now may I "plug" a little for Mrs. Lowey. My wife has been a voluntary worker for this cause since its inception. She has made herself a name by collecting and delivering more clothing to the Central Relief office than any other individual in the Borough of Bronx, which is pretty large. At present a committee is in formation and a collecting station has been rented. If you wish to send a parcel address same to Mrs. Hedy Lowey, 201 Marcy Place, New York 56, N. Y. You will in due time receive an official receipt for your gift and I will mention your name in these columns.

—J. W. Lowey



## MIROSLAV TYRS

G. Greenawalt and F. J. Kovarik



Born September 17th, 1832, in Decin, Miroslav Tyrš lost his parents at an early age. He began his education in the public schools in Vtelna and Strahov. He studied at Malostranske Gymnasium and later at Starobrno Gymnasium in Prague where he majored in the Czech language. He became interested in philosophy, studying natural science, aesthetics and philosophy, particularly the ancient Greek works. In 1860 he was awarded the degree of Doctor of

## Philosophy.

From 1858 to 1860 he was a tutor in the family of Bartelmus in Novy Jachym near Beroun, where he became acquainted with Jindrich (Henry) Fugner, with whom he formed a lasting friendship.

He first entered public life as a publicist with some success. But in 1862 he entered a new field. An ardent believer in physical culture he undertook to organize a physical culture club. With a number of others who attended the physical culture institutes of Malypetr and Schmidt he sought to copy the German turner societies, one of which was in operation in Prague. At Dr. Tyrs's suggestion his friend Henry Fugner was elected president of the new club. Tyrs himself became the club's instructor. From then on Dr. Tyrs devoted himself entirely to manly physical culture in a nationalistic spirit within the organization named Sokol (Falcon). He organized the Prague branch in a democratic spirit, arranged its gymnastic activities, gave it the objective of seeking emancipation for the nation and with this as a nucleus tried to organize similar clubs in other parts of the land.

He drilled gymnastic teachers and gave them a Czech vocabulary of gymnastic terms which could be used by all Slav peoples. This vocabulary is still in use. He developed a system of physical culture, which, because of his deep knowledge of philosophy, aesthetics and physiology, endowed modern methods with the ancient olympic results of a strong and beautiful body. In his book "Basic Physical Culture" he set out the foundation for the Sokol movement. Every move had a logical thoroughness, every exercise was designed to give the body a special strength and to create physical courage. He gave much time to massed drills and public exhibitions which produced aesthetic results with sound healthy exercise. In 1866 when Austria and Prussia were at war he unsuccessfully sought to organize a military group of Sokols, having studied the organization of such a unit and worked out a leadership plan. He wrote many articles about the ancient Olympic Games and tried by every means to promote the organization of Sokols all over the land. At first these efforts met with little result due to the opposition of the government. During the crisis when Austria went through a national bankruptcy, it was his guidance which pulled the organization through so that in 1882 a National Meet and public exhibition was possible.

Dr. Tyrs was also active in politics, holding a mandate in the Czech Parliament for the County of Tabor, but gave it up in 1873, after five years in office, due to the demands of his other work.

He was married in 1872 to Renata Fugner, daughter of his good friend, Henry Fugner. She was a great help to him and assisted him in preparing many of the speeches he presented in various places.

Due to failing health he finally gave up his work in the Sokols and retired to Oetz in Tyrol, where, at the age of 50, he died August 8th, 1894.

---

**NEWS FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

We believe that you will be interested to know the approximate prices which are being asked today in Czechoslovakia for some of the late issues which were released in the homeland and abroad. So let us quote from a report:

The set printed in London .....	80-120 koruny
The set printed in Moscow .....	30-40 koruny
Bratislava Set .....	20-35 koruny
Kosice Sheet .....	70-100 koruny
Olomouc Set .....	600 koruny
Partisan Sheet .....	300-450 koruny
First Protectorate overprints .....	1500 koruny
Music Sheets .....	38,000 koruny
London 1913 Exhibition Sheet .....	2000-3000 koruny
New York World's Fair Sheet .....	450 koruny

Some of these prices seem fantastic but only a month ago some of the above items brought 3 to 4 times the prices quoted above. However, we are

informed these high prices have nothing to do with inflation but are attributed to this fact. During the war and up to now people have earned large salaries and are investing their money in such things which have sales and exchange value in other countries. A stamp is such an item. Another reason for the high prices, primarily for those printed since the liberation is the acute shortage of paper so that not sufficient quantities could and can be printed to satisfy the public demand.

Whereas in pre-war days the stamps of the republic had been solely printed in Prague they are now being printed in various cities. It also should be mentioned that some of the issues can only be used in the city where they originated, as for instance the "Olomouc" set and the "Partisan" sheet. The reason for this is that only very small quantities were printed and that there simply are not enough supplies for other parts of the country. This, however, by no means indicates that they are local issues. Additional printing will or may have been made as soon as paper is available. At present the only set available in sufficient quantities and sold throughout the land is the re-engraved Linden Leaf set. The present conditions are expected to remain until a definite post war set of stamps can be issued.

An interesting sidelight to the present situation is that neither dealers nor collectors know where they stand and what prices should be paid. Demands are increasing by the collecting fraternity for the issuance of a catalogue but at present no one has the courage to undertake this task because this publication would be obsolete by the time it reaches the public. It is not expected that a catalogue will appear until stabilization has taken place.

—J. W. L.

---

#### NEW MEMBERS

- 167—Edward C. Linhart, 1820 So. Ridgeland Avenue, Berwyn, Illinois.  
 168—Mrs. Dorothy B. McEntee, 904 Wellington Road, Baltimore 12, Md.  
 169—F. J. Parker, 140 Nassau Street, New York 7, New York.

---

## Buy Victory bonds!

---

#### OFFICERS FOR THE YEAR 1945

- President: Karel Zahradnick, 13306 Bartlett Av., Cleveland 20, O.  
 Secretary: J. W. Lowey, 201 Marcy Pl., New York 56, N. Y.  
 Treasurer: Guy Greenawalt, 1443 No. Hudson Ave., Chicago 10, Ill.  
 Editor: F. J. Kovarik, 2502 So. Kedzie Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.  
 Librarian: Mrs. M. Glawe, 9640 S. Seeley Ave, Chicago 43, Ill.  
 Sales Mgr.: W. Fritzsche, % McDonald, 3317 Glenwood Rd., Brooklyn 10, N.Y.

---

#### POZOR FILATELISTÉ V Č.S.R.

Chcete-li se státi členy Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of North America neb si vyměňovat známky s jejími členy, pište o informace našemu mezinárodnímu tajemníkovi: **J. W. Lowey, 201 Marcy Place, New York 56, N. Y., U.S.A.**