

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

A publication of the Czechoslovak  Philatelic Society of N. America

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Editor Frank J. Kovarik, 8748 Rockefeller Ave., Brookfield, Illinois

Vol. XXII

November 1960

No. 207

EDITORIAL

We had a letter from our esteemed member Dr. Reiner-Deutsch telling us that the award we credited him with was not from the London International but from Unipex. Of course we are sorry about the error in reporting, but really wish he got the award from England. Dr. Matejka holds us that what Czech material was shown in London was of medium quality. Dr. Reiner-Deutsch's Postal History collection is something worthy of the title philately.

Our members were certainly treated to a dainty morsel in the last two issues of the Specialist. We refer to the article entitled "Fakes of the First Overprint Series of Czechoslovakia" which was written by member Jan Karasek of Brno for the collectors of Czechoslovakia. As is well known, every written word, regardless of its nature, must extoll socialism and communism. This article was translated and then rearranged to suit western stomachs by member Jaroslav J. Verner. Articles of this nature are difficult but rewriting a partially propagandizing story into a truly philatelic item definitely is not easy. We congratulate member Verner on his fine dealing with an almost impossible situation and are happy to have Jarka on our staff. We hope for more articles on fakes from the pen of Jenda and translations by Jarka.

As many of our members know, David Lidman, editor of the American Philatelist resigned his post which he held for many years and his office will be taken over by James Chemi, also a newsman. We first became acquainted with Mr. Lidman when he came to the city of Chicago at the time Marshall Field started his Newspaper Sun in our town, about twenty years ago. When Dave became editor of "Philately," Comfort's venture in St. Louis, we visited Dave and there suggested farming out articles which would require more expensive cuts. He acquiesced; the articles would be reprinted in the Specialist "with permission" and the illustrative cuts would become the property of the Society. When Philately died we turned for help to Mr. Harry L. Lindquist who has been our guardian angel before and ever since. It is natural that no magazine wants too many articles on one country only and we were happy when Dave took over the editorship of the American Philatelist, we rotated between the two publications, very grateful for their assistance. We also farm out to the official organ of the S. P. A. whose editor, Mr. J. Elmer Zinsmeister, is an old friend. There are others but not all are acceptable. A letter from Mr. Chemi assures us that the arrangements we had with Mr. Lidman shall continue. We wish Jimmy Chemi a successful term in his new job and assure him of our personal cooperation in keeping up the standard of the organ of the American Philatelic Society.

Despite the fact that we have our major features farmed out, we note that if it wasn't for Compex we would not publish the Specialist. At any rate, not without a raise in dues or a smaller publication. As we mentioned

in the previous issue our printer notified us that the printing cost has gone up. The Chicago officers of the Society met and after studying the figures decided to notify the other officers that they suggest the regular membership rates be raised to \$3.00 per year or \$5.50 for two years. Dues will soon be due and it is the desire of your officers we collect the dues as soon as possible. The other classes of dues shall remain the same as at present (\$5.00 for sustaining membership which entails as a premium the years volume to be mailed flat and \$10.00 for patron membership which entitles the member to a bound volume of the Specialist; this reminds us that most of the Chicago members did not get their patron membership premium for 1959. To save postage we gave the bound volumes to the treasurer to bring to the September meeting but they didn't get it even during the October meeting.) When you get your envelope with dues notice please send in your check or money order as soon as you can. Also, if you can see your way clear, please pass into the sustaining or patron class. There have been members who voluntarily sent three dollars and we thank them. During the discussion the editor suggested the monthly organ be reduced to 12 pages an issue; he was asked how many members were lost when the dues were raised from \$1 to \$2. At that time a careful check revealed that we lost seven members; it was good sound policy to raise the dues. Most members realize they must pay for what they want. We are sure the present members realize the position of the officers and will contribute the additional cost of membership.

The New York Chapter held a membership exhibition of Czecho stamps on the occasion of the 42nd anniversary of Czechoslovakia, Saturday afternoon, October 15, 1960, at the Collectors Club in New York City. We are sorry this news reached us too late for publication in the October Specialist. We hope they had a fine attendance and that the meetings between the various members and viewers established new friendships for Czechoslovakia.

Christmas is not too far away. If you want to help the Society buy for yourself or a philatelic friend one of the Society's publications; the Czech-English and English-Czech Philatelic Vocabulary or the Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia Book or both. See the Treasurer's ad. If our members bought our literary attempts at least for themselves, your officers would never have financial jitters.

A Visit to the Czech Postal Museum

John Velek

After attending the International Stamp Show in London this summer, I was fortunate in being able to visit several other European countries. My itinerary included a three day stopover in Prague, Czechoslovakia. There our member Zdeněk Kvasnička and his son Ivo took time out from their normal activities and conducted me on a tour of their fascinating city. Their hospitality will be long remembered.

One of the high points of the tour was a visit of the Czech Postal Museum. Mr. Kvasnička arranged to have the curator, Mr. Husek, show me around personally. The stamp exhibit is in a large, attractively decorated room. Adjoining was a large room containing their philatelic library which includes a file of our Specialist.

The stamp exhibit is displayed in large frames on easels set up in the center of the room. At one end of the room are other frames built into the wall and constructed so that they can be pulled out one at a time and conveniently examined. These contain the general collection including many early European classics, but also modern issues.

Of more interest to me were the frames mounted in the center of the

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room. These contained uncut sheets of 400 of the Hradčany, a full sheet of the 10h Hradčany neotype proof and many other things too numerous for me to remember. Incidentally, the sheet of neotype proofs showed that the first, ninth and tenth vertical rows had been damaged and removed from the plate, leaving an impression of only 70 positions. While on the subject of Hradčany sheets of 400 I must mention that Mr. Husek was kind enough to take out of the archives their entire holding of these sheets which I would guess to be about 50 in all. I was allowed to examine each one and was amazed to see the different combinations of Hradčany, newspaper and postage due stamps that were printed. One that especially attracted me was a sheet with two panes of 100 of the 40h Hradčany in olive and two of the 60h in green. These of course were the basic stamps for the Red Cross overprints. The unusual thing about this sheet was that the two panes of the 40h were printed diagonally to each other as were the two 60h panes, rather than above each other as was normal. How this was done, none of our group ventured to explain positively, although a couple of theories were advanced.

The biggest thrill was the cabinets along the walls which contained original Hradčany drawings by Mucha, a set-up of 100 double stamp size prints of the 25h Type V stamps, the glass negative used in making the plate, a full sheet of black proofs and most interesting of all, an original 5h Type I plate. One surprising bit of information supplied by Mr. Husek was that no electros were ever made of the Hradčany plates as had been surmised by American collectors, but that all stamps were printed from the original copper, brass or zinc plates which incidently are still in the Museum archives. Also shown in these cases are modern curved steel plates and many other things of great interest to a collector of Czechoslovakia.

The museum also has on display the dandy roll used to impress the linden leaf watermark into the stamp paper used for the Masaryk stamps. This six foot long roll is a wonderful piece of workmanship in fine wire.

All in all, I had a wonderful time in Czechoslovakia due mainly to the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Kvasnička. Also contributing substantially were Mr. Zavřel of the Czech postoffice, Mr. Smolík, President of the Federation of Stamp Clubs and Mr. Bednář, Editor of "Filatelie" who all joined in treating me to a luncheon on the day I left.

They send all of our members an invitation to attend the International Stamp Show in Prague in 1962. I hope many will plan to do so.

Thirteen Days In Czechoslovakia

Dr. James J. Matejka, Jr.

To begin with, these are my impressions and views. My family and I have been in many lands, but the land of my choice is still the land of my birth—the United States of America. And to make it a bit more specific—the West Side of Chicago. This is not in a strict sense patriotism, but due to a feeling of self assurance as to where my roots have been planted. But one must have a different outlook, a desire to look beyond our own backyard and thus be able to mentally compare what one sees outside of his own domicile, with what his own plot contains. It is this factor that makes a person travel, hence this makes a tourist, whether or not the tourist is actually aware of this or not. But sooner or later it will come to him, and then he'll know why the desire for travel has bitten him.

The London International Exhibition in July was a magnificent show. Regardless what kind of a philatelically jaded tongue anyone might have, I am quite sure that the type of material presented was the best. The weather, perhaps the type of a building and perhaps the British sense of privacy might

be factors to discredit the show, but I know that all who came went home with "a good taste in their mouths."

At the Lord Mayor's dinner in the Mansion House I had the privilege of meeting Mr. L. Prokop of the Philatelic Section of Artia as well as the general-secretary of the Czechoslovak Federation of Philatelists, Mr. Bohumil Matejka (no relation). I still think that our own member Leo Eaton of the Liberty Stamp Shop had put me on too high a pedestal either prior to my meeting them or during the introduction, as I certainly didn't think that I was any different than the rest of the members of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society, except that this time I had the fortune of being its president. So we toasted each other with more champagne, but best of all, we toasted philately and how it attracts all of us into a mutual bond regardless of any other beliefs. My wife and I were assured of a lovely time in Praha even though Marie (my wife) was a bit skeptical since both our Society and I were prime movers behind the T. G. Masaryk, Champion of Liberty, stamp. After this party we spoke many times about Czechoslovak philatelic conditions and compared them with what we have at home. We went over the exhibits of Czechoslovakian stamps in the show prepared by our British and Czechoslovak members, compared notes on the exhibit qualities and knowledge these men had. It was interesting to note the ideas both of these men had in connection with these exhibits together with comments on the same frames by our members present at other times during the show. I speak of Arthur I. Kessler, John Velek, and Sam Ray.

But time ran out and soon it was Monday, July 18th; the show was now but a memory and my mother, dad, wife and three kiddies as well as myself were flying on BEA flight 301 across the Channel, through Frankfort, and thence east to Praha. Did we leave our world in back of us when it was announced over the plane's loudspeaker that we were now crossing the Czechoslovak frontier? Time would tell.

The flight was uneventful and we landed at Rozene Airport where there stood in silence hundreds of Czechoslovaks watching the airplanes land and take off—just as many of us Americans do at our own airports. There was about ten minutes of waiting in the airport for our luggage, and then through immigration and customs. They did not look at our passports nor did they open any of our many suitcases to inspect the contents. I exchanged my Cedok vouchers for Czechoslovak currency and we were off in a very fine airport bus to the Czechoslovak Airlines office in Praha. We were here, we had arrived, now what would happen?

Along the way I noted the signs above the stores, the posters and the flags. All Czech. I had never seen this before—except perhaps some 20 years ago along 26th street—the heart of our Czechoslovak settlement in Chicago. I really was in the country of my ancestors. Through a short tunnel I at once was able to see the beautiful Vltava which divides the city and which Smetana used as a title of one of his great works, the Moldau. Now the sights were passing into my view too rapidly to make firm impressions—statues, the Powder Tower and Czech automobiles. The ride was soon over as we had reached the airlines office in the middle of the town. I at once spotted Mr. B. Matejka who then introduced us to his wife, and to Mr. Miroslav Protivenský, a member of the editorial board of the Czechoslovak philatelic magazine, *FILATELIE*. Other citizens gathered around us and closely watched us noting the cut of our clothes and the colors of the ladies dresses, particularly my two daughters and my son Jimmy who is 8.

Luggage was then transferred to two autos and we all drove to the Jalta Hotel where accommodations were made for us back in Chicago. It was simple to check in; the manager met us at the door of the hotel. In our suite of rooms there were bowls of fruit on the tables, bottles of mineral water and

even post cards with the postage affixed within easy reach of any chair.

Early that evening our Czechoslovak philatelic greeters came up to the room, and desired to know what we wanted to see while in Praha so that they would facilitate our seeing same. I had a list of sights prepared back in Chicago which they checked over and said that all of the sights I wanted to see would be easily covered in the length of time I would be in Praha. Plans were made over a few bottles of fine Pilsen beer. Then a sunset view of the Hradčany which will never be forgotten. No wonder Mucha used this view! Later that same evening after dinner, Mr. Z. Kvasnička, our member, came over to the hotel. After a bout with an eye surgeon in a local hospital to remove an imbedded foreign body in my eye which I acquired at the Praha airport, we both viewed his postage stamps at his home where I had the pleasure of meeting Ivo, his son, who is a collector, with United States as his favorite. Time passed by rapidly, but I'm quite sure that if any Czechoslovak citizen saw me in the street during the wee hours of the morning picking linden leaves off the trees in the streets they would have surely called me a crazy American, but I couldn't resist taking a few of them. After all why not use the real McCoy when one speaks about the watermarks of this country?

Things passed in the following days very rapidly. Always early in the morning either Mr. B. Matjka and his party or member Kvasnička seemed to have the day filled with interesting philatelic sights, historic sights, meetings, luncheons, dinners or surprises to make our stay a pleasant one. We had the pleasure of visiting the government printing plant where the stamps of Czechoslovakia were produced. The room where the die is transferred onto a plate from which a sheet of stamps is to be printed is small according to our standards for the number of people working therein. I was shown an old American Stickney press. In another room I was shown the German press which, from gummed stock, prints the stamp and perforates it while an employee piles the finished sheets of stamps to be counted later. In the basement of this building I saw the progressive printing of the Czechoslovak flower series being printed. Five men and women over one press printing in various stages (five I believe) before the final flower stamp is finished. Slow process, but beautiful stamps. By this method I wondered how long it would take Uncle Sam to print the usual 120 million of each of its Giori Press commemoratives if this method was used? I was told by the plant superintendent that a new machine was on order. Next, I saw embossed envelopes printed by a hand fed operation. Also seen were the envelopes which are the official first day covers before stamps are affixed. Next to the Exposition grounds where among the sights visited was the pavillion built by the Republic and used in the recent Brussels Worlds Fair. This was dismantled and returned to Praha so that their own citizens could forever see what was exhibited at Brussels. The technological knowledge of these Czechoslovak methods must certainly rank only second to perhaps West Germany. But more important than this to the philatelists was a preview of the Exposition Hall wherein will be housed the proposed 1962 International Philatelic Exhibition. It was a very fine building, one wing of which will house some 6000 frames of stamps as proposed while the center of the building will hold several thousand guests in the auditorium for a Congress meeting. All other facilities as to the comforts of the expected 50,000 viewers were shown to me. From what I saw it will be a wonderful exhibition and very likely the largest one that Russia and her satellite countries have ever produced.

But I wanted to see stamps and buy stamps! Old ones, different ones than those that are in my philatelic fields. So off to POFIS. This is the official store for philatelists which is a government agency. Standing on the corner of a busy downtown corner, this store was well lighted and busy with about four salespersons and many customers looking and buying. The

prices were perhaps a bit higher than what we are accustomed to paying for the same material here in the States, but then member-dealer Eaton told me that is very usual all over Europe. Mr. B. Matejka and M. Protivenský then took me upstairs in the POFIS building to meet the director of sales, Mr. Sergej Cegrincev. It was a very cordial meeting in his cheerful office and before very long his secretary brought in the best cup of coffee that I had up to then since leaving Chicago. I told Mr. Cegrincev that collectors of the present stamps of Czechoslovakia would be very interested if the sheetlet which is sent to the American press or to American Stamp Clubs would be in English rather than the usual French. Many of the commemoratives had motifs which were new to us, new buildings, new dams, bridges and such, which could be made more interesting to the American collector. I am quite sure that this will be corrected in the future.

Off to the Minister of Transportation where I was introduced to Mr. Jaroslav Zevřel, in charge of the design of the new issues and also to Mr. František Hacaperka, director of postal methods. Here more of that excellent coffee was served. I told these gentlemen that to make their stamps more interesting to the American public they should see to it that official postal exhibits showing the progression of a stamp from the artist's design through the dies and color proofs to the final postage stamp should be considered. These exhibits then sent to philatelic exhibitions throughout the world—very similar to what Ghana, Togo and other countries are doing. I am quite sure that some sort of action will come of this. About an hour was spent here and an official car was at my disposal with a chauffeur to take us back to our hotel.

That night a banquet was held in my honor by the ÚČF (Czechoslovak Federation of Philatelists) at one of the finest restaurants on St. Václav Street (the main avenue of Praha). This was a nine course meal with all of the Czechoslovak delicacies, wines, liquors, and best of all, the beer that is so well known. Marie and I had the pleasure of meeting other members of the Federation as Mr. Star. Bednář, the editor of *FILATELIE* and Jan Tryzna, in charge of stamp collecting for the youths of the country. Here I was presented with a souvenir album of modern Czech stamps, an album of first day covers, and a medal for the work I have done in promoting Czechoslovak philately. A beautiful cup and saucer was also presented to me with the forthcoming Bratislava exhibition monogram thereon manufactured by the same ceramic house that received first prize at Brussels. It is a beautiful and dainty piece of work. My wife thought it was the finest gift of all. After many speeches, one especially noteworthy by the Federation's president, František Smolík, the evening was soon over.

The next day was spent entirely with member Kvasnička who took us to the Hradčany. None of us realized that there was so much to see there. It was wonderful! The National Art Gallery, the presidential palace, St. George Church as well as St. Vitus Cathedral. That evening at Feck's for fine beer and topinka's.

Mr. Zevřel of the Ministry of Transportation whom we had met on the first day of our trip, then decided that he would take me about and show me some of the lovely spots of the Malá Strana. Sights passed before our eyes very fast, Charles Bridge, Vrba Palace, Wallenstein Gardens, St. Nicholas Church, then to Vyšehrad, especially to see the graves of the Republic's great personages as Mucha and others. His knowledge of Czechoslovak history was superb; it seemed that he knew every nook and cranny of those important tourist attractions. In days to come Mrs. Bohumil Matejka took over when her husband was needed in the office of the Federation in preparation for the national stamp exhibit in Bratislava. We visited the Jewish Ghetto

and Jewish sacred treasures which the Nazis attempted to store as a museum of an extinct race here in Praha, Charles University, the astronomical clock, the City Hall, National Theatre, and Tyn Church. I now was able to see why the Republic in former years used these marvelous edifices on their postage stamps. We even visited what was once the Nazi Gestapo Headquarters (now a government building) where the caretaker showed us the very rooms where the Czechoslovak patriots were killed, tortured, smothered and imprisoned. There still remain the ghastly instruments of torture just as they were used during those days of the Protectorate. Remains of the hero's blood on the floor and in the chairs still are present. Later I was taken by Mr. Zavřel to the church where the Czechoslovak parachutists were hidden and later lost their lives after their successful assassination of the despised Heydrich. To this day thousands of autos travel over the very spot where he was killed unnoticed unless it would be pointed out to you. I was also shown this day the Bethlehem Chapel where John Hus preached as well as the Rudolphium (house of Artists) and the Smetana Museum.

I remember very well one fine evening when the Bohumil Matejka's invited us to their home for coffee. This wasn't just coffee, but cakes, cookies, wines and liquors. There I met Mr. Milan Michl, one of the Matejka's relatives, as well as told the story of the color change in A351 by the original discoverer, Mr. Protivensky. This story will be told in later articles.

During our time in the Republic, a Volkswagon and chauffeur was rented from Cedok so that we could visit distant places about Praha. I recall seeing the Karlstein Castle on the way to Blatna where my maternal parents came from, Plzen for beer and to see the great Skoda works, Mariánské Lázně, Karlsbad, then another day to Lidice and Terezín where the horrors of the Nazis are still present to be seen in their fullest array. That day was made a bit cheerful by also seeing Říp where Father Čech said, "This is the place" and by stopping at Mělník for a few glasses of their famous wine. The day my father wished to see his birthplace, we stopped at St. Barbara Church at Kutná Hora to marvel at its architecture, then on to Čáslav and Chotěboř. My dad told me that things have changed here, but the house in the square where he was born still was there. That evening we drove to member Kvasnička's home in Sázava where we met his wife. We marveled at her ability to cook so fine a meal on so short a notice, then sampled the currents, gooseberries and other berries at this lovely spot on the side of a mountain.

But time was running short. We bid all of our friends goodbye until 1962 with dinners at the Jalta and at the Alcron. On July 29th we left with the Volkswagon for Brno through a rather roundabout way. It was of interest to see Tábor, the stronghold of Žižka in his Hussite Wars, the Castle at Hluboká, České Budějovice, Zlatá Koruna and a night at Český Krumlov. The next day we visited Jindřich Hradec, beautiful Telč, Třebíč, and before arriving at Brno I had the chauffeur stop for a tour through the caves at Macoch.

Except for the American Embassy in Praha, the only place that I had seen a flag of the United States displayed was in front of the Grand Hotel in Brno along with several other flags. This gave the hotel an international atmosphere. Indeed so, for the menu was printed in 10 languages—a literal book when one asked for a menu. The head waiter was exceedingly proud of this fact and always waited for the tourist's reaction to the fact that they catered to people of many nations. It was there that we re-met Jan Karásek, our Brno member and his wife. I had been introduced to him in Praha near the astronomical clock for only a moment, when my attention was focused on the clock that was just about to strike the hour. Later, after dinner, with the Karáseks, we toured Brno on foot and saw many of the beautiful sights.

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The next day, Sunday, after church, we climbed the city hall for a most beautiful panorama of Brno. Member Karásek is a very fine person with a flare for presenting every detail which was shown us with the utmost care and exactness. Time to check out of the hotel and catch the train to Vienna. The bellman carried our luggage on a wagon across the street to the railway station, where we inquired as to the proper track for our train. Many thanks to Karásek's as it was announced over the loud speaker that our train would arrive over another track. Had they not been with us I think that we would have been still waiting for the train. It is always sad to say goodbye. There was no exception with the Karáseks, but they did feel better when we told them that I was to return in 1962. "Then we'll have a time!" was the answer.

The train was filled, but we did have a compartment fortunately. It wasn't long before we reached Břeclav at the Austrian border. We were glad too, because the train was very warm and the countryside dusty. Leaving Czechoslovakia was no problem to us. Our passports were collected, there was no baggage inspection, our currency list was returned, but there was no searching nor were there any questions asked. Before our passports were returned to us, I asked one of the sentries standing near my window if he would get me some bottles of beer. (I never thought he would). I gave him whatever change I had and he brought me back three liters of ice cold beer and bemoaned the fact that the storekeeper made him pay a deposit on the bottles. He would accept no tip from me but told me that he was glad to oblige a tourist. Before long the train was moving once again and the temperature cooled off. Before long we knew that we were on Austrian soil, the children could see Coca-Cola advertised!

Personalities on The Stamps of Slovakia

By James R. Yurchak

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During its brief period as an independent state, 1939-1945, the Republic of Slovakia issued some two hundred stamps of various types. Included in this total are issues honoring fifteen figures of ancient and modern Slovak history. Most collectors, unless of Slovak descent or students of Slovak history, probably know little of the men depicted on the stamps. It is the hope of this article to acquaint others with these men and to show their contributions to the Slovak people. The catalogue numbers mentioned are taken from Scotts Catalogue.

ANDRE J. HLINKA (1864-1938), appears on 15 issues 24-33, 63-65, 69, 83. Hlinka was born at Cernova and early in life chose the priesthood for a vocation and was ordained in 1889. Shortly thereafter he became interested in the popular Slovak political movement and began actively to oppose the Hungarian Government which resulted in his arrest and imprisonment for a period of 42 months. At the outbreak of World War I, he began to campaign diligently for separation from Hungary and the establishment of a Czecho-Slovak nation. With this realized, he found that now the Slovaks instead of being under Hungarian rule were under Czech domination. Father Hlinka resumed his fight for Slovak autonomy, this time against the Czechs. He was imprisoned by the Government in Prague, but officials were forced to release him when he was elected to Parliament while in prison. Once again he began his struggle for Slovak independence, a struggle which included a tour of America in 1926 seeking aid from American Slovaks. Father Hlinka became the Champion of Slovak independence but his death in 1938 prevented him from seeing his beloved Slovak people independent.

MILAN STEFANIK (1880-1919) No. 34-36. Stefanik was born in the village of Kosiarisko. During his university days he became interested in astronomy, which was to become his life's work. He received his doctorate in 1904 at Prague, and his labors in this field took him to all parts of the world, a world in which he became recognized as an authority. He was in the Society Islands, building an observatory with an endowment from Andrew Carnegie when World War I broke out. He enlisted in the French Army as a private and rose to the rank of General at the age of 36. During this time he also became an aviator. Due to his acclaim as a world figure he was chosen by his countrymen to lead the military movement for freedom of the Czech and Slovak people. He toured America for aid and he formed three armies in Italy, France and Russia. His Russian Army of Slavic soldiers who had deserted from the Austro-Hungarian army became bottled up as a result of the Russian Revolution, so Stefanik led them through Siberia to ship them to the Western Front. His armies were a great value in the demand for an independent Czechoslovakia. During the years of war, Stefanik had not once seen his homeland, but with the establishment of the new Republic he was summoned home to become Minister of National Defense. Tragedy struck though, as the plane carrying Stefanik crashed on the way to Czechoslovakia and this hero of the Slavic cause was dead at the age of 39.

DR. JOSEF TISO (1877-1947) No. 43, 43A, 110-115, 81. Josef Tiso, a Catholic priest, was elected the first president of the Republic of Slovakia in 1939. Dr. Tiso led Slovakia through the precarious war years as an independent state. He was the first recognized head of an independent Slovakia since the 9th century. His motto "Faithful to Ourselves, Forward in Harmony," expressed the feeling of the Slovak people. When the Red Army "liberated" Slovakia in 1944-45 its status as an independent state disappeared and it was again joined with the resurrected Czechoslovakia and as a reprisal against the Slovak people, Dr. Tiso was executed for "treason."

JOZEF MURGAS (1864-1929) No. 38-39. Father Jozef Murgas was a Slovak immigrant who settled in Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania. He was well known for his work in the field of wireless communications. He held in all some twelve patents in this field. His best known development was a form of communication from moving trains. He was also a leader of American Slovaks in their campaign for an independent Slovakia.

STEPHEN M. DAXNER (1822-1892) and STEPHEN MOYSES (1797-1869) Nos. 62, 63, 64. Daxner, a leader in the 1848 revolution against Hungary, was the author of a MEMORANDUM OF THE SLOVAK NATION, which Bishop Moyses presented to the Hungarian Government and then to the Austrian Emperor requesting the acknowledgement of the Slovak people, their language and rights. As a result of their efforts, the Slovaks were allowed to establish a cultural institution, the "Matica Slovensko" with Bishop Moyses as its first president.

LUDWIG STUR (1815-1856) No. 93. Stur was a Slovak political leader, teacher, journalist and writer. He was a champion of Slovak literature. He became a member of the Hungarian Parliament which led to the profession he loved best, journalism. He became editor of the Slovak National News which spread the cause of the Slovak people. Stur was active in any manner which helped his Slovak people and his writings gave the Slovaks the courage to look ahead to better days. Stur's slogan was "Backward We Cannot, Forward We Must."

MARTIN RAZUS (1888-1937) No. 94. Razus, a Lutheran minister, was a Slovak poet, writer, and political leader. He worked with Father Hlinka in the struggle for Slovak independence. His writings gave words to the long suffering of the Slovaks. He was called "The Conscience of the Slovak People."

Nos. 95-102 were issued in honor of the Ancient Slovak Rulers. The dates mentioned are the approximate dates of their reigns.

PRINCE PRIBINA (c830) No. 95. Pribina was the first Slovak ruler. He erected the first Christian church in Slovakia, this church being also the first Christian church in all the territory of the western Slavs.

PRINCE MOJMIR (c830-846) No. 96. Mojmir united all the various Slovak tribes into a single nation. He attempted to unite the Slovak and Moravian people and founded the nation of Great Moravia.

PRINCE RATISLAV (846-869) No. 97. Ratislav wanting to keep his people united, invited Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the saints to become known as the "Apostles of the Slavs" to complete the task of Christianizing his nation.

KING SVATOPLUK (870-894) No. 98. Svatopluk was the most glorious of the Slovak rulers. He expanded his realm which was known as The Great Moravian Empire, until it became one of the most powerful of its time in Europe. Svatopluk was the first Slovak ruler to be known as a King, and it was under him that the Slovaks reached their height of power.

PRINCE KOCEL (?) No. 99. Kocel was a son of Prince Pribina, who like his father, continued to build churches in Slovakia.

PRINCE MOJIMIR II (894-906) No. 100. Mojimir II defended the kingdom of the Slovaks from various invasions and during his reign the Slovaks still remained as independent people.

SVATOPLUK II (c906) No. 101. Svatopluk II was a son of the great Svatopluk and a brother of Mojimir II. He drove his brother from the throne and claimed the rule. During his reign the Hungarians began to appear as a threat to the Slovaks and eventually in 907 began the invasion of Slovakia with the rule they were to establish lasting for over a thousand years until 1918.

PRINCE BRASLAV (?) No. 103. Very little is known of Braslav, but it is believed he was a son of the Great Svatopluk.

Bibliography: "The Slovaks" by Peter Yurchak; "This is Slovakia" by Francis Hrusovsky; "The Slovaks of Hungary" by Thomas Capek and Dr. Josef Paucó, the President of the Slovak National Council Abroad.

Czechoslovakia On Stamps

by Otto S. Leib

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Nazi-German Defeat

After resignation from the office of President of the Czechoslovak Republic on October 5, 1938, Eduard Benes left the country, fearing that the Nazi oppressors might attempt to silence him by assassination. At first he stayed in Paris until the German war machine invaded France. Then he left for London. In both allied capitals Benes, in cooperation with Jan Masaryk, son of the first President of Czechoslovakia and other Czechoslovak government leaders, formed a national committee, as during World War I. Unfortunately, the allied powers did not recognize this committee as a "government-in-exile" as soon as war was declared, but only in July 1941, one month after Russia was the victim of German aggression. Philatelically, Czechoslovakia disappeared during the German occupation, except for the issues under the name "Bohemia and Moravia." Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine, which should be listed in the catalogue more properly under "Germany, Occupied Countries, World War II." The only exception was a souvenir sheet issued on the oc-

casation of a Czechoslovak stamp exhibition in London in 1943. Under the Czechoslovak coat-of-arms appear five stamps, one with a group portrait of Benes, President Masaryk and General Stefanik and the remainder, pictures from various parts of the Czechoslovak countryside. At the bottom is stated. "By permission of the Czechoslovak Government." Although the sheet had no postal franking value, in fact was not composed of stamps at all, they carried monetary values in Czechoslovak Heller and Koruna. In the space between the four landscape stamps appear the years 1918 and 1943, the 25 year period between the year of issue and the foundation of the republic.

Although the German taskmasters used all possible means to make Bohemia and Moravia dependable sources of military supplies to support the German war machine, removed from allied air attacks, passive resistance and outright sabotage were daily occurrences. Many of those who had reason to fear German vengeance or longed to fight alongside the Allies for the liberation of their country, managed to slip through to join Czechoslovak units, which were attached to Russian, French and British armies. Alone under Great Britain's command served a full Czechoslovak brigade and three air force squadrons. The stamp series Nos. 272-87 gives credit to these brave men by showing typical examples.

While within Czechoslovakia, underground organizations spread into all classes of the population and obeyed orders from the government-in-exile, Communist partisan units listened solely to instructions from Moscow. The Soviet government followed again a policy which showed distrust of the West and an intention to follow a course dictated by military and political motives only. When the underground in Slovakia sent two representatives to Moscow to arrange closer cooperation between Slovak partisans and Moscow on one hand and the Slovak underground on the other, these two messengers were taken prisoner and kept in solitary confinement. When long delayed talks took place, eventually events had progressed so far, that talks were no longer necessary. This despite the fact that Czechoslovak units were fighting alongside of Russian soldiers.

While in Bohemia and Moravia actions against the Nazi-German overlords remained secret, even from fellow citizens in Slovakia clandestine work was not as necessary. The Tiso government was all but isolated from the people and the majority of the population as well as the army, which Slovakia was permitted to have to maintain law and order behind the German battle lines, prepared for the day of liberation. This day of liberation was to occur when German army units should enter Slovakia either on their retreat from the Eastern front or when they should begin to use Slovakia as an advance base for operations. On Soviet-Russian orders, independent of the Slovak underground, Communist partisans began activities in Slovakia which consisted in blowing up railroads, blocking tunnels, dynamiting bridges, raids on military objectives, attacks against the Tiso-police and threats against followers of the Tiso regime. The population did not know that the partisans had only means for hit-and-run activity and thought that active help given to these Communist partisans might speed the day of liberation. As a result of these partisan and underground attacks, the Tiso government became so shaky that it no longer sufficed the purpose of Germany, namely to relieve the German military organization of policing Slovakia.

On August 28, 1944, all of Central and Eastern Slovakia became free from the Tiso administration and the German army was ordered to enter Slovakia. President Tiso's police minister broadcast on the evening of the following day an appeal to the Slovak people in which he asked them to "welcome the German troops everywhere as our Allies." This German entrance into Slovakia was taken as the moment which the London government-in-exile had set to begin the action to rid the country of the oppressors. Unfortunately the Rus-

sian armies made very slow progress through Poland and Romania and were unable to come to the aid of the Slovak people. Crack German troops arrived and were engaged by Slovak army units and civilian volunteers in actions extending over several months. However the army lost all its stores and innumerable officers, soldiers and civilians had to die in mass executions ordered by the Nazi-German army. It seems that the purpose of the Communist inspired partisans activities was the need to divert German army units from the Russian front and now with Slovakia fighting, indeed, seven German divisions, mountain troops and artillery, tank battalions and air force units were engaged to pacify Slovakia. Fortunately time ran out for Nazi-Germany and complete control of Slovakia was never regained. A provisional Slovak government, the Slovak National Council issued proclamations on September 1, 1944 in which it reserved the right to represent Slovakia exclusively for the "democratic and progressive elements of the Slovak nation" and also undertook the task to defend Slovakia militarily.

On October 7, 1944, General Rudolf Viest, sent to Slovakia by the government-in-exile in London, took over command of "the Czechoslovakia First Army operating in Slovakia." His job was exceedingly difficult, since all help had to come from the Western allies, Russia not fulfilling any one of the pledges undertaken, as for instance the flying in of the Czechoslovak parachute brigade, the beginning of an attack against the Germans in the Carpatho-Ukraine and the delivery of arms, although Russian army units were only 100 miles away from Slovak insurgent territory. However Russia flew in Communist agitators, Soviet partisan leaders, political commissars and Communist Slovak leaders who had fled to Moscow. The Russians even requested that the Czechoslovak First Army should be disbanded and its troops split up into partisan units directed by Russian officers. It was the wish of Russia to do the liberating and so impose a Communist regime on the country before its population could constitute its duly elected government. Because of this the military situation of Slovakia became bad and worse. The leaders of the uprising had to move their headquarters more and more into the mountains of the Tatra (Czechoslovakia Nos. 139-40, 149, 166) from where they fought the battle for freedom. Besides the Slovak army, Slovak gendarmes (police), Slovak civilians, Czech, Russian, French, Yugoslav and Bulgarian volunteers were represented among the insurgents and partisans (Czechoslovakia Nos. 663-64).

In occupied Slovakia, German troops aided by Hlinka Guards and the Gestapo terrorized the population, plundered their homes, took away machinery and equipment, set fire to whole villages. Inhabitants of such villages were shipped to German concentration camps and to do forced labor. Railroads were destroyed, telegraph and telephone lines torn down, bridges blown up. Prisoners taken on raids against insurgents were executed without trial. Fifteen members of an American military mission who were also taken prisoners, were taken away to Mauthausen, an extermination camp in Germany, where they were killed, although they wore American military uniforms. Eventually, even members of the Tiso government no longer felt safe and fled to insurgent territory, where they were arrested and held for trial after liberation.

Liberation came eventually, even if late for the living, too late for the uncounted dead. Except for a narrow strip of land, comprising mostly the Sudeten territory ceded to Germany, which was liberated by American troops, Czechoslovakia was freed by the Russian army (Czechoslovakia Nos. 406, 457, 521-22). President Benes established the legal Czechoslovak government at Kosice in Slovakia April 3, 1945, the following day Slovakia's capital Bratislava became free. To commemorate the Slovak uprising against the Nazi-German war machine the set Nos. 288-292 of Czechoslovakia was issued one

year later. In Prague, where German military might was much nearer, freedom came later on May 4th, when the population began to demonstrate against the occupying power. President Benes arrived in the capital of Czechoslovakia on May 16th. Defeat of Germany required six months more.

(to be continued)

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