

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



Official Monthly Journal of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately, Inc. (USPS 808300)

Silver Award Interphil '76 — Silver Award Capex '78 — Silver-Bronze Praga '78

A.P.S. Unit 18

S.P.A. Branch 284

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## EASY PLATE IDENTIFICATION IN THE 1951 AIR MAIL ISSUE

by Henry Hahn, SCP

The third post-World War II Air Mail issue of Czechoslovakia, Scott C36-C39, sometimes referred to as the "1951 Resorts Air Issue" was flat-plate printed in sheets of 10. Since collecting miniature sheets was far less common thirty years ago than it is now, miniature sheets of this issue are correspondingly less common.

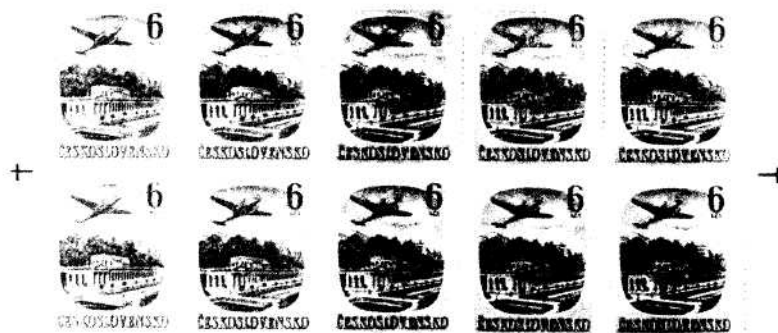


Figure 1. Miniature sheet of 10, second printing (wider margins).

The first three values of the set, i.e., the 6 Kcs, 10 Kcs, and 15 Kcs were printed from two plates, whereas the 20 Kcs value was printed from only one plate. According to the "Specialized Catalogue"\*, the three lower values were printed from two printing forms, each having one plate; the first plate of each issued in two printings, the first having narrower sheet margins.

\*Specialized Catalogue of Czechoslovak Postage Stamps, PRAGA 1978, p. 297.

The above statement is somewhat confusing, since it does not state whether the *second* plate is *also* issued in two printings or if it is always associated with either wide or narrow sheet margins.

Based on my own observation of the high (20 Kcs) value, which was printed from one plate only, the width of margins may not be an indication of which plate was used in the low values, since both wider and narrower margins exist in the 20 Kcs value. Whether margin width is significant or not in the low values would require observation of more sheets that I have had at my disposal.

An easier means of identifying the plates may be based on the dimensions of the register crosses (napichove krizky) shown in figures 1 and 2.



Figure 2. Typical register crosses in left 6 kcs and right 10 kcs sheets.

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If one were to assume that all combinations of printing and plates were issued, then the second column in the table below would have no significance. However, if each printing were associated with one plate only in the case of the three low values, i.e., if plate 1 was used in the first printing only (narrow margins) and plate 2 was used only in the second printing, the measurements of the crosses would permit definite assignment of plate numbers.

The following measurements apply to the specimens in my collection:

| <i>Value</i> | <i>Sheet dimensions (mm)<br/>Probable Printing ( )</i> | <i>Left Cross<br/>Horiz/Vert<br/>(mm)</i> | <i>Right Cross<br/>Horiz/Vert<br/>(mm)</i> | <i>Remarks</i>   |
|--------------|--|---|--|--|
| 6 Kcs        | 158 x 86.5   | 5.2 x 2.7                                 | 4.1 x 3.4                                  | Dot below left cross                                       |
| 6 Kcs        | 161 x 88 (2)   | 5.1 x 2.7                                 | 5.6 x 3.5                                  | Dot below left cross                                       |
| 6 Kcs        | 162.5 x 90 (2)   | 5.1 x 2.7                                 | 5.8 x 3.5                                  | Dot below left cross                                       |
| 10 Kcs       | 157.5 x 85 (1)   | 4 x 3                                     | 5.2 x 3                                    | Line and dot below left cross                              |
| 10 Kcs       | 160.5 x 90.5 (2)                                       | 2.1 x 2.2                                 | 2 x 3                                      | Dot under left cross, tiny cross to left of right cross    |
| 15 Kcs       | 160 x 81 (1)   | 6.9 x 2.5                                 | 6.2 x 5.2                                  | Dot under left cross, vertical lines in crosses are double |
| 15 Kcs       | 158 x 87 (2)   | 2.5 x 2.1                                 | 2.4 x 2.7                                  | Series of dots near right cross                            |
| 20 Kcs       | 158 x 87 (1)   | 4.2 x 2.6                                 | 5 x 2.4                                    | Dot below left cross, dot in left upper quadrant           |
| 20 Kcs       | 161 x 91 (2)   | 4.2 x 2.6                                 | 5 x 2.4                                    | Dot below left cross, dot in left upper quadrant           |

The crosses in both 20 Kcs sheets - which have differing overall dimensions - are identical. This is uniquely so in the high value, confirmation (at least in this instance) that only one plate was used. The fact that the overall sheet size differs, however, would tend to indicate that two printings exist.

As for the three low values, significant and easily measured dimensional variations appear in the register crosses, suggesting that these may provide a clue as to plate identification. The right horizontal bar in the 6 and 10 Kcs and the left horizontal bar in the 15 Kcs show the largest differences.

The overall sheet dimensions, which according to the previously cited reference may be used in identifying the first and second printing, present somewhat of a problem. Since the reference gives no actual dimensions, one can only surmise that the relatively small differences observed are truly representative of the two printings. One may assume that "wider margins" would imply both horizontal and vertical dimensions. If this assumption is correct and the sheets examined indeed represent the first two printings, then there is an inconsistency in the 15 Kcs value where one sheet is narrower in the horizontal dimension and, at the same time, wider in the vertical dimension.

There is some likelihood that the wide margins, representative of the second printing, are *much* wider than those I have measured; and that the measurements I have made are merely production variations within the same printing. It is also possible, to a much lesser extent, that the cross dimensions are merely printing variations. It is hoped that comments from our readers, based on similar measurements of their own sheets or published information that we have missed, will shed more light on this subject.

## BOOK REVIEW: Evald Larsen's Plating of the 100 heller Hradcan stamp by Vladislav Hanak

The publication *100 Heller Hradcany II Pladebeskrivelse af Plade I og II* by Evald Larsen was published in 1980 by the Danish Philatelic Society. The 32 page brochure is divided into three parts. In the first, after an introduction, all the flaws (distinguishing marks) of Plates I and II are described verbally, first in Danish and then in English. The second part consists of enlarged drawings of the design details on which specific flaws have been marked and numbered according to plate and stamp position. The final section contains photographs of all 200 stamps of the two plates, the flaws marked with arrows.

In the preface the author describes how he organized his work. He notes that he did not have full sheets at his disposition, but rather worked from blocks and strips which he put together like a jigsaw puzzle. Following the completion of the plating, he obtained a full sheet of printer's waste printed together with the 30 heller stamp, but was nevertheless able to check his work. He notes that he ignored the traces of the plate screws on some of the edge stamps.

The sketches are excellent aides for identifying the plate positions since it is not really possible to go thru all 200 photographs when identifying a stamp. They are not, however, nor can they be, completely exhaustive aides. The photographs in the last section might have been of better quality. Individual positions were blown up to 9 x 7.5 cm. After marking the flaw they were cut up into the size 5.3 x 4.1 cm.

When comparing Larson's study with my collection and strips and blocks of my friends I asked some questions for which I sought answers. Is the Larsen brochure adequate for a collector with easily available material to reconstruct

both plates? It is adequate if he has sufficient number of blocks or strips. But if he only has individual stamps, then certainly not. The flaws are drawn on the stamps, but many are small and often are missing on the stamp while others are covered or hidden by the cancellation or are not identifiable due to some other printing shortcoming. The sun rays are completely standardized on the photographs. Everyone who works at identifying plate flaws on Hradcan stamps knows that it is often the rays and the sun (and sometime the Mucha signature) that are the safest identifying mark by which to determine the position of a stamp. This is especially true for the first and second designs, but it holds for the rest of them as well.

The rule that the sun rays are different in each of the positions applies to the 100 heller issue. They are, therefore, the distinguishing features to determine the exact plate position for any given stamp. For instance, Larsen registers a dot on the sun at 2 o'clock for the 62nd position of plate I. There is a color dot there, but only on 25% of the stamps that I examined. At many other positions it occurs 50% of the time; only on those where the dot is larger is it possible to identify the plate position with 100% certainty.

Are all printing and plate flaws in Larsen's brochure? They are not. Not even all the variants of some of the positions. For instance:

I/1: A color spot between the value tablet and the band above the one.

A color dot on the sun at 1215.

Break in the frame above the C in Cesko.

The break appeared on only about half of the stamps I examined, on the other half of the stamps the frame was normal. (trans. note: Larsen actually states that this break only occurs in later printings).

II/1: Among other flaws there is a dot on the inside of the leg of the one.

But here too the flaw appears on only part of the printing. Two variant of flaws also exist on many other plate positions and one must also concern oneself with them.

When examining this problem the question also arises how many plates were actually used to print this value. Nebesky, in his description of plate numbers, claims this value was printed from four plates. Josef Hanak in his study leans toward the same conclusion, writing that two variants of each plate exist. I asked Dr. Frantisk Kubat, the author of Monografie Vol. I, about this and he claims categorically that the stamps were printed from only two. This is a question needing future study.

Did E. Larsen identify all the 200 stamps correctly in his reconstruction? Based on the strips, blocks in my own collection and those loaned to me by friends,

I must conclude no. The following plate positions of the II plate do not check out: 23, 61 and 90. Using 90 as a for instance, Larsen notes a color dot to the left of the main ray, a break in the small tail feather of the right dove and a colored line above this break. On our copies, and I examined more than 50, there is only the break of the feather. But all of our stamps from this plate position have a major flaw -- the T in STA has a thin leg leaning to the left. On all the other 199 stamps the leg is normal and vertical or leaning slightly to the right. J. Hanak already noted this flaw and expressed the opinion that this was a

retouch. Of course E. Larsen, according to his own testimony, had a printer's waste sheet of plate II. If the T is normal there then in truth we are dealing with a retouch. On the other hand I also have this stamp on printer's waste and the T is already deformed there.

Josef Hanak and later L. Novotny in his Handbook list retouches of positions I & II/5 and II/68. Dr. F. Kubat, however, does not recognize them as such and claims that there was no retouching done on the 100 heller value.

In conclusion I would like to thank Mr. Evald Larsen for his work. At the same time I have tried to point out some of the problems that still need study and solution. They are not few, time passes and the needed material does not get more plentiful. Finally, it is unfortunate that all the detailed studies of the Hradcan stamps have been published outside Czechoslovakia and hence are difficult for our collectors to obtain. I trust, however, that this situation will be rectified that future work on some of the values of the first Czechoslovak stamp issue will be published in that country.

**Translators note:** Vladislav Hanak raises some valid points in this article in pointing out the discrepancies between Mr. Larsen's research and his own. This is a useful contribution to our knowledge and just might lead to an interesting discussion. I certainly would hope so. But I am of the view that Mr. Hanak was rather longer on his criticism than on his praise. By his own admission Mr. Larsen was working under great handicap in his plating work. He did not have whole sheets, but had to reconstruct them, not with any guide, but blind. I would submit that this in itself should call forth admiration and praise. Indeed, it would have been easier to work from larger accumulations of materials, such as Mr. Hanak apparently has available to him.

Mr. Hanak's concern that the plating work that has been done and published has been abroad. I agree that this is unfortunate because there has been so little of it. It would seem to me that the collectors in Czechoslovakia have a serious question to ask themselves. Why has not any of this work been done there? In the past I have commented on the slowness of the publication of the *Monografie*. I might also add that I have not found the amount of serious research published in Czechoslovakia on various aspects of Czechoslovak philately overwhelming. Let us hope this situation improves. And let us also hope that collectors everywhere continue to share their efforts with all of us. We will all be richer from these efforts. Mr. Larsen has made a genuine contribution and we look forward to his further reports.

Jaroslav J. Verner

## 1982 DUES ARE DUE

Enclosed with this issue of the SPECIALIST you will find an envelope to be used in paying your 1982 dues to the Society for Czechoslovak Philately. Please sit right down and send off your dues -- \$15.00 for regular membership or \$25.00 for patron membership. For overseas members note that there is a surcharge of \$4.00 for surface or \$8.00 for airmail postage for the SPECIALIST.

## REINER-DEUTSCH MEMORIAL FUND

The SPECIALIST has received a check for \$10.00 from our long-time member and member of the Board, Joe Stein, asking that it be applied toward a memorial to Dr. William Reiner-Deutsch, who died on August 4, 1981. Your Editorial Board thinks that this is a fine idea, and proposes to make it the start of a Fund to pay for publishing as a Memorial dedicated to Dr. Reiner-Deutsch the Index to the Czechoslovak Specialist which has just been completed by Ann Vondra. We feel that this would be quite appropriate, since Dr. Reiner-Deutsch was Editor of the SPECIALIST for many years and has always been concerned with philatelic literature. Your President and your Editor have contributed like amounts and suggest that any other members who desire to add to the Fund send their donations to either Henry Hahn or Dick Major (see masthead for addresses). Please make checks payable to the Czechoslovak Specialist.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S STOCK BOOK

With the approach of the Holiday Season, let me wish all of you good health, much cheer and continued enjoyment of stamps, which have brought us together. Have you ever sat back and marvelled at the magic of our little bits of paper? I'm not thinking of the challenges of research or intellectual endeavors. I'm thinking of the people I know through stamps and the ties we have formed over the years. If these aren't as important as your collection, you are missing half of what stamps have to offer. Our hobby is certainly not for "loners".

I'm sure that you realize that the catalyst to all of this is, at least in part, *organized* philately. Some members give more of themselves to our Society, some give less. But nearly everybody gives a little, and it is this "little" by many that is particularly important to our Society now. We are fortunate in having good officers, chairmen, writers and others, who are always ready to trade some time for the rewards their activities bring. But we are concerned at this time with those members who support our Society mainly through the payment of dues and the use of our services -- the circuits, expertizing service, library, etc.

As you may have read, we have raised our dues structure by a significant amount. This has been necessitated primarily by printing costs, though other factors are contributing as well. For example, a new SPECIALIST INDEX, covering the past sixteen years of publication, is now ready to go to press. What worries us is WILL THE DUES INCREASE RESULT IN LOSS OF MEMBERS? It could - considering the state of our economy. If it does we'll retrench even beyond those economies which I spoke of in my October column. We might have to publish the SPECIALIST quarterly instead of monthly, eliminate halftone pictures and otherwise reduce services. We know that such action would result in further losses in membership, and eventual extinction. While this thought is far too morbid to deal with at this Yuletide Season, time is essential. We must know, as soon as possible, whether or not we are facing a membership loss due to the dues increase - and it is for that reason that I'd like to urge you to pay your dues NOW.

Where we go from here is up to you - whether you stick with us or not. If I have persuaded you to write us a dues check while we have your attention, we'll all enter into the Society's 43rd year of activity as strong as ever. If I've persuaded you and it has hit you at a bad time - you can't 'spare the bucks' - drop me a note in private. We don't intend to lose even one member for that reason alone.

Henry Hahn



## NEW ISSUES

### Commemorative Postage Stamp "SPACE RESEARCH"

*The 20th Anniversary of Man's First Flight Into Space - J. Gagarin*

The Federal Ministry of Post and Telecommunications of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic issued a commemorative postage stamp "Space Research" on 5 April, 1981, in honor of the 20th anniversary of man's first flight into space.

On 12 April 1961, the whole world followed the first flight of a human being into space. The first astronaut was Jurii Alexeyevitch Gagarin, then twenty-seven years of age and a major in the Soviet air force. He flew for 108 minutes in a space ship called Vostok (East). In 1965, INTERKOSMOS, an institution of countries whose program is based on cooperation among all members, came into being. The program of INTERKOSMOS also includes space flights realized with international crews. The first space flight of this kind took place on 2 March 1978, the members of the crew on that occasion being Alexii Gubarev of the Soviet Union and Vladimir Remek of Czechoslovakia.

Considerable attention has already been devoted to space research themes in the field of Czechoslovak stamp design. This year's "Space Research" issue is, as a whole, devoted to the 20th anniversary of man's first flight into space and the world's first astronaut, Jurii Alexeyevitch Gagarin, as well as to the INTERKOSMOS program. A small, attractive graphic sheet printed by means of multi-colour flat recess print was chosen for this issue.

The basis of the issue is a commemorative stamp of large size with a value of 6 Czechoslovak crowns. Its picture is a smiling portrait of J.A. Gagarin accompanied by the text "J.A. Gagarin 1961-1981." The stamp is accompanied by a first day cover containing a sketched decoration in the form of expressive symbols: a globe, a satellite, a red, five-pointed star and a dove of peace.

The printed sheet contains two stamps, one is situated in its upper left and another in its lower right corner and drawings are situated in the two opposite corners. Also depicted on the small graphic sheet are the national flags of the countries which are participating in the INTERKOSMOS program.

The designs of the whole issue are the work of a Slovak painter and graphic artist Jozef Balaz. The engravers, Josef Hercik and Ladislav Jirka, known for their outstanding, precise work, cooperated with Josef Balaz. The former engraved the stamps of the "Space Research" issue, while the latter engraved the two drawings on the printing sheet and the decoration on the first day cover.

A description of the stamp follows:

6 Czechoslovak crowns - J.A. Gagarin 1961-1981  
Engraved by Josef Hercik  
Colours: red, gold, blue, black

The issue was printed by the Post Printing Office in Prague with the use of the printing technique of multi-colour flat recess print. The printing sheet has the form of a small graphic sheet. It contains two stamps of a size of 40 x 50 mm.

A first day cover, whose decoration comprises a globe, a satellite, a red, five-pointed star and a dove of peace, was issued with the stamp.



*Tarašon*  
J. A. GAGARIN  
PRVÝ ČLOVEK VO VESMÍRE  
1961 - 1981  
MEDZINÁRODNÉ LETY DO VESMÍRU - INTERKOZMOS



## Commemorative Postage Stamps “The 60th Anniversary of the Founding of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia”

On 6 April 1981, the Federal Ministry of Communications of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic issued three stamps (accompanied by two first day covers), dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

The three stamps were designed by two artists. The stamp of 1 Czechoslovak crown was prepared by the painter and graphic artist Jirina Adamcova and the stamps of 50 hellers and 4 Czechoslovak crowns by the painter and graphic artist Zdenek Filip with whom the leading engravers Jindra Schmidt and Bedrich Housa co-operated.

Interesting variants of drawn compositions created from two basic motifs can be seen in the pictures on all three of the above-mentioned stamps. The first motif consists of hands or figures wielding a red flag, while the second has the form of a symbol of modern industry, agriculture, science and technology. In the drawing on the two first day covers issued in connection with these stamps, the official emblem of the 60th anniversary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (two heads - a girl's and a man's - and a flag) can be seen.

The issue comprises the following three stamps:

50 hellers - 60 rokov KSC/60 Years of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia/  
- in Slovak

Engraver: Jindra Schmidt  
Colours: dark blue, red, blue, gold

1 Czechoslovak crown - 60 let KSC/60 Years of the Communist Party of  
Czechoslovakia/ - in Czech

Engraver: Bedrich Housa  
Colours: dark brown, red, blue, gold

5 Czechoslovak crowns - 60 let KSC/60 Years of the Communist Party of  
Czechoslovakia/ - in Czech

Engraver: Bedrich Housa  
Colours: dark mauve, blue, ochre, red

The issue was printed by the Post Printing office in Prague with the use of rotary recess print combined with three-coloured photogravure in sheets containing 50 pieces. The size of the picture part of the stamps is 23 x 40 mm.

The issue was accompanied by two first day covers: the first with a drawing depicting the official emblem of the 60th anniversary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and two heads - a girl's and a man's; the second with a symbolic drawing and a flag.



### Commemorative Stamp "Socialist Democracy - Elections to Representative Bodies"

On 1 June 1981, the Federal Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of Czechoslovakia issued a commemorative postage stamp entitled "Socialist Democracy - Elections to Representative Bodies."

The constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic includes a provision stating that general, equal and direct elections by secret ballot to representative bodies at all levels shall be held every five years. According to this constitutional law, all Czechoslovak citizens who are 18 years of age and older will go to the polls at the end of the first week in June of this year to exercise their civil rights.

This important occasion - election day - is being hailed and publicized on June 1, 1981 by the issue of a commemorative stamp with a symbolic picture: the faces of two young people and the inscription "Volime Mir" (We Vote for Peace) against a backdrop of an array of flags. Issued with the stamp is a First Day Cover with an interesting cachet depicting a flag composed of a large mass of people.

Particulars of this stamp are as follows:

50 h - We Vote for Peace  
 Engraved by Josef Hercik  
 Colours: red, blue, greenish-blue

The stamp as well as the cachet on the first day cover were designed by the painter and graphic artist Wolfgang Schlosser.

The stamp was printed by rotary recess print combined with two-colour photogravure in sheets of 50 at the Post Printing Office in Prague. The dimensions of the stamp picture are 23 x 40 mm.

Issued with the stamp is a first day cover with a symbolic depiction of a flag.

Dr. Ladislav V. Fischmeister, M.D.  
 State Hospital, MacClenny, Florida 32063

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| 2. HRADCANY, PERF. 1-1000h(13) .....   | 89.00    |
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| 4. HRADCANY, ESSAYS, 300h in brown and gray black, each .....                  | 18.00    |
| 5. HRADCANY, 5h green, ART PAPER, .....  | 15.00    |
| 6. HRADCANY, BLACK PRINT-ART PAP. 1-1000h(15) .....                            | 70.00    |
| 7. HRADCANY, BLACK PRINT, BLACK on brown pap. 3-120(7) .....                   | 19.00    |
| 8. HRADCANY, 3h GUTTER .....   | 11.00    |
| 9. HRADCANY, 5h GUTTER .....   | 22.00    |
| 10. HRADCANY, 10h IMPERFORATE .....  | 22.00    |
| 11. HRADCANY, 20h IMPERFORATE .....  | 67.00    |
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| 13. HRADCANY, 30h violet, IMPERF. .....  | 79.00    |
| 14. HRADCANY, 30h DARK violet .....  | 75.00    |
| 15. PC 1919. 3h - 1 K comp. BOTH types .....                                   | 13.00    |
| 16. PC, 3h TYPE IIa .....  | 18.00    |
| 17. PC, 5h TYPE IIa .....  | 22.00    |
| 18. PC, 15h TYPE IIa .....   | 18.00    |
| 19. PC, 5h TYPE Ia in a block of 6 (...I & II & Ia) .....                      | 65.00    |
| 20. PC, 15h TYPE Ia & IIa and typical plates defects in a block of 8..RR ..... | 85.00    |
| 21. PC, 25h, TYPE Ia .....   | 30.00    |
| 22. PC, 20h, LIGHT green .....   | 55.00    |
| 23. PC, 60h offset .....   | 7.00     |
| 24. PC, 1 k OFFSET .....   | 20.00    |
| 25. PC, 1 k BLACK overprint .....  | 55.00    |
| 26. PC, 2 k, small & large format, granit pap., BOTH TYPES (6) .....           | 10.00    |
| 27. PC, 3 k ROSE .....   | 24.00    |
| 28. PC, 3 k CLARET (BRAUNKARMIN) .....   | 710.00   |
| 29. PC, 3 k, granit .....  | 7.50     |
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| 31. PC, 4 k INVERTED OVERPRINT .....   | 32.00    |
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| 47. PC, PORTO, 50h SMALL numerals...R .....                                    | 235.00   |
| 48. PC, PORTO, 1 k .....   | 3.00     |
| 49. P.C.1919. Porto 10 K .....   | \$198.00 |

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| 50. P.C., 1 h gray .....  | 10.00   |
| 51. P.C., 10/24 .....   | 55.00   |
| 52. P.C., 15/2 M.Terezie .....  | 69.00   |
| 53. P.C., 20/24 .....   | 55.00   |
| 54. P.C., On Hungarian stamps, 2f-40f, COMPL., ALL 4 types (40) ..... | 43.00   |
| 55. P.C., 3 k, Parlament .....  | 28.00   |
| 56. P.C., 5 k, Parlament .....  | 75.00   |
| 57. P.C., Zita 40f INVERTED overpr .....                              | 13.00   |
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