

# CZECHOSLOVAK NEWSLETTER

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## HOMAGE TO THOMAS G. MASARYK

Jack Matlock, the United States ambassador to Czechoslovakia, visited Lány cemetery, west of Prague, on March 7 to pay homage to Thomas G. Masaryk, the first president of the Czechoslovak Republic (born March 7, 1850). He delivered the following address at the graveside.

"We have come here today to honor the memory of Thomas Garrigue Masaryk, the first president of the Czechoslovak state and architect of its independence. As Americans we honor him not only as a great son of Czechoslovakia, but as a person who played a role in our own history, who had close personal ties with our country, and whose writings and teachings continue to help us understand the contemporary world. For Thomas Masaryk was not only a founder of the modern Czechoslovak state, he was also a philosopher and historian of world importance. It is a great honor for me today, the 132nd anniversary of his birth, to pay tribute to his memory on behalf of the people of the United States by placing this wreath on his grave. May his example and his wisdom give us inspiration and understanding in these complex times."

## DETAINED DISSIDENTS RELEASED

Four dissidents were reported released from jail in Prague on March 22 after

more than ten months' detention. Eva Kantůrková, a writer, Jiřina Šiklová, a sociologist, Karel Kyncl, a journalist, and Jan Ruml, a laborer at Prague waterworks, had all been held on charges of subversion in connection with the arrest at the Czechoslovak-Austrian border last April 27 of two French nationals accused of smuggling illicit literature into the country (see Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. VI, No. 5/6 [May/June 1981], pp. 4-5). Among those arrested at the same time and still in jail are philosophy professor Milan Šimečka, journalist Jiří Ruml (Jan's father), and historian Ján Mlynárik. All of them are under indictment but no date has yet been set for their trial. The regime seems increasingly reluctant to stage the show trial anticipated for them (see Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. VI, No. 9 [September 1981] and Vol. VII, No. 2/3 [February/March 1982]).

#### CHARTER 77 AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Charter 77 petitioned the Czechoslovak government on March 3 urging it to submit an eleven-point resolution on freedom of religion and belief to the ongoing Madrid review session of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It requested that the Czechoslovak delegation in Madrid be authorized to move for incorporation of the eleven points into the final conference document. "We deem it appropriate," the petition said, "that such a proposal should originate in Czechoslovakia, a country with a distinct, centuries-old tradition of respect for personal beliefs and the world outlook of others, a country that has learned from its own history how fatal preferential treatment by those in authority for a single ideology and lifestyle, accompanied by relentless suppression of others, can be." The eleven points of the Charter 77 petition were the following.

1. All states shall modify their laws to guarantee free expression of beliefs, including the espousal and demonstration of religious beliefs in private and public, both within the state and beyond its borders.
2. To this end all citizens shall be free to meet, assemble, associate and organize both within and without the framework of existing churches, religious societies, and organizations.
3. Churches, religious societies, organizations and communities as well as individuals may communicate with each other without restriction both within the state and across its borders, thus contributing to the exchange of ideas, the enrichment of spiritual and religious life, and the eventual increase of mutual understanding and cooperation.
4. These groups and individuals shall have the right to make known their positions on issues of religious, public and international life through the communications media, publications, books and other information sources.
5. Parents and the educators of their choice shall have priority in helping children to form and adopt deep beliefs and faith. The way churches and religious societies give religious education to adults and young people must

not be subject to state supervision or prosecution.

6. The right to education must include theological education subject only to criteria established by the individual schools and churches.

7. All states shall respect the traditions from which these societies, organizations and communities (including congregations and orders) have sprung, and shall enable them to make contact with corresponding groups abroad, whether for purposes of mutual communication or because of their organizational and structural interdependence.

8. All states must respect the autonomous structure of these groups, including close ties with higher bodies at home or abroad. It must be ensured that organizations that are an integral part of the society of a state and have the status of public corporate entities, such as established churches in some countries, do not infringe the rights of other individuals or groups. The rights of such associations, especially churches and religious communities, that are governed by civil law must not be curtailed; the same guarantee must apply equally to their believers and followers in their professions and in public institutions and offices.

9. Churches and religious societies shall enjoy the same rights as all other organizations, whether they are subject to special laws and regulations or not.

10. The aforementioned rights shall not be curtailed except under very extraordinary circumstances (such as a serious threat to national existence or security or in natural disasters), and then only by due process of law that precisely establishes the degree and duration of such curtailment.

11. States shall renounce religious and atheistic propaganda.

The petition was signed by the three current Charter 77 spokespersons: Radim Palouš, Anna Marvanová, and Ladislav Lis.

#### RELIGION UNDER ATTACK

Charter 77 on March 13 published Document No. 11 in protest against violations of the law in the area of religion, particularly with respect to the Roman Catholic church. The following is an abridged version of the document.

Repeated declarations by the government and Pacem in Terris [the government-sponsored organization of "peace priests"] may convey the impression that the legal status of the Roman Catholic church has been satisfactorily resolved. The facts are otherwise, and violate both Article 32 of the Constitution on religious freedom and Articles 18 and 19 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to which Czechoslovakia has subscribed.

The antireligious drive in education is being stepped up, and citizens with

religious convictions are discriminated against. Catholic Charity, the only institution in the Czechoslovak Republic allowed to publish religious literature, put out only one theological work and one hymnal in 1981. The only theological periodical, Duchovní pastýř [The Spiritual Shepherd], is of mediocre quality, and the weekly Katolické noviny [Catholic News] is an instrument of state propaganda. Only half of sixty applicants were admitted in 1981 to the seminary in Litoměřice. In Bratislava twelve divinity students were expelled for staging a hunger strike in 1980. The forcible dissolution of the monastic orders in 1950 remains in force. Increased pressure is being put on priests to become members of Pacem in Terris, which is not recognized by the Catholic hierarchy. Criticism of it is regarded as an attack on socialism.

The following persons were persecuted or jailed for religious activities in 1981: Rev. František Lízna, Rev. Rudolf Šmahel, and three laymen (Josef Adámek, Jaroslav Krumpholc, and Josef Vlček) were sentenced to prison in Olomouc on November 24; Rev. Josef Kordík was given a suspended sentence in Louny in September; Rev. Jaroslav Duka, a Dominican, was sentenced to prison in Plzeň in November; police raided an old-age home for ninety Dominican sisters in Kadaň in October; police raided a home for 110 elderly priests in Moravec in October; religious literature was confiscated and arrests made in Brno, Hošt'ka, Štětí, Bečov and Liberec. In Slovakia prison terms were imposed on Rev. Anton Zlatohlavý, Rev. Gabriel Povala, and a layman, Günter Rompf.

Stanislav Adámek, the 20-year-old son of the jailed Josef, was hauled "by persons unknown" to a forest area near Tišnov (South Moravia) in October 1981, and there spattered with acid and beaten. He was then forced to run ahead of a car that threatened to run him over. The suicides of two practicing believers, Pavel Švanda and Ing. Doufal, have gone unexplained.

Dr. Jaroslav Hájek of the Secretariat for Church Affairs in Prague declared that copying a legally published biblical text, even for private use, was a criminal act punishable under Law 93, 1949, on the dissemination of nonperiodical literature.

The document deplored the arbitrary interpretation of the law by courts on the basis of official manuals biased against defendants rather than the letter of the law itself. It cited a finding that discussion of religious topics or praying in a private home can be considered criminal under Article 178 of the Penal Code. "It was a spiritual activity where the required state supervision was not possible."

The document was signed by the current Charter 77 spokespersons, Radim Palouš, Anna Marvanová, and Ladislav Lis, and a member of the Charter 77 collective, Václav Malý (see Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. VI, Nos. 7/8, 9, 10, and 11/12).

#### Dominican Priest Sentenced

Rev. Jaroslav Duka, a member of the Dominican Order who earned his living as a worker, was sentenced in Plzeň on December 18, 1981, to fifteen months in prison. He had been in detention since July 24, accused of saying mass without

state approval, copying religious texts, and attempting to restore the Dominican Order. He is appealing his sentence.

### Czechoslovak Bishops in Rome

Cardinal František Tomášek, archbishop of Prague, returned to the Czechoslovak capital on March 22 from a 14-day visit to Rome together with four bishops, Jan Pasztor of Nitra, Josef Feranec of Banská Bystrica, Július Gábriš, apostolic administrator of the diocese of Trnava, and Josef Vrána, apostolic administrator of the diocese of Olomouc. The five Czechoslovak dignitaries were received by Pope John Paul on March 11, and celebrated mass with him in his private chapel at the Vatican on March 16. During their stay in the Holy See, the Vatican issued a document prohibiting priests from forming political associations, which a Vatican spokesman said was aimed in part at Czechoslovak priests who belong to Pacem in Terris. Cardinal Tomášek described the organization as totally dependent on the regime in Prague and said it had no dialog with the church hierarchy.

In welcoming the Czechoslovak churchmen, the Pope expressed concern at the situation of the church in their homeland, where, he noted, "most of the dioceses of your country are still vacant [which] fills my soul with profound sorrow," The New York Times reported on March 14. The Pope also spoke of the church's dismay at restrictions imposed on the number of priests and at what he called moves to intimidate young men who sought to enter seminaries.

### CHARTER 77 ON PRICE INCREASES

Charter 77 said that increasing prices had noticeably affected the standard of living in Czechoslovakia in a 4,000-word statement with two appendices issued in Prague on February 15 (cf. Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. VII, No. 2/3 [February-March 1982], p. 11). Signed by the current Charter spokespersons, Radim Palouš, Anna Marvanová and Ladislav Lis, the statement observed that, "despite government promises to keep prices stable, they have been covertly and overtly raised several times. Notwithstanding measures taken in the area of wages and social benefits, the increases have palpably altered our standard of living." They were, it said, an indication of the unhappy state of the economy and a warning of things yet to come.

"The latest increases do not themselves seem extreme enough to cause our living standard to drop, but the situation looks different if account is taken of the overall trend of prices over the last several years. Coal, electricity and gas have gone up 50 percent, gasoline 300 percent, crude oil 200 percent, potatoes 100 percent, coffee 60 percent, certain textiles, children's clothing, and shoes 50 to 100 percent. By our estimate, the latest price increase represents a rise of 300 to 500 crowns a month in the cost of living of a family of two adults and two teenage children, while the family allowance for two children has gone up only 80 crowns. Arguments about a decent standard of living, if

there is anyone who still believes them, hold water only in comparison with the economy of less developed countries. Compared with highly developed countries, we are lagging more and more behind." The paper points an accusing finger at those "in privileged political positions" and those who enjoy "semilegal and illegal advantages, including income from embezzlement and corruption." "It is not without interest that Czechoslovakia now has several tens of thousands of millionaires, probably twice as many as in 1947" before the communists took power.

The document affirms that only "a democratization of the economy and society can stimulate the initiative of people that the government has stifled, and remedy the situation." It makes four suggestions for improving the situation. First: the forthcoming national congress of the Revolutionary Trade-Union Movement (ROH) should discuss the present economic situation on the basis of data supplied by the government and should make them public in full. Second: the ROH congress should draft and publish a program for workers' participation in management and state administration. Third: Following the ROH congress, the Federal Assembly should take up the congress's recommendations and pass appropriate legislation. Fourth: political prisoners should be released, "including Josef Adánek, Rudolf Battěk, Václav Benda, Jiří Gruntorád, Jiří Dienstbier, Václav Havel, Karel Kyncl [now freed], Eva Kantůrková [now freed], Jan Litomiský, Jan Ruml, Jiří Ruml [now freed], František Lizna, Ján Mlynárik, Jiřina Šiklová [now freed], Milan Šimečka, Petr Uhl, and cease illegal persecution of those who signed Charter 77 and others for taking responsible critical attitudes."

#### THE CZECHOSLOVAK LITERARY SCENE

##### Letters to the Czech and Slovak Writers' Unions

Charter 77 sent letters to the Union of Czech Writers and the Union of Slovak Writers on the occasion of their national congresses, the first in five years in both cases. The letters noted: "Five years ago, despite the usual plethora of official statistics and optimistic forecasts, congress delegates were still able to hear two dissenting voices: a statement by Hana Ponická [a Slovak writer now on the black list] on the plight of writers under the pressure of 'normalization' (see Czechoslovak Newsletter, No. 13 [July 1977]) and Charter 77 Document 12, 1977, on the state of Czech literature.

"Both drew attention to the number of unpublished works and of writers not allowed in print and denied the basic means for creative work or even to make a decent living, matters about which there is official silence now. In the five years since the last congresses conditions have worsened: even more writers are in prison and Hana Ponická would scarcely be permitted to deliver her critical comments these days. Though a few formerly blacklisted writers have had works published, belatedly and in small printings (Seifert, Mikulášek, Skácel) or in amended versions (Hrabal), the number of unpublished writers and works has increased.

"We appeal to the congress participants, as members of the cultural community,

to heed their moral obligations and grant a voice to every cultural worker," the Charter 77 letters said. "It is impossible to remain long indifferent to obvious wrongs and distortions in your professional field without it leaving a mark on all those who take part in this game of the blind, deaf and dumb."

#### Charter 77 on the Jan Palach Prize

Charter 77 issued the following statement after it was announced that the 1981 Jan Palach Prize had been awarded Václav Havel, the jailed Czech playwright (see Czechoslovak Newsletter, Vol. VII, No. 2/3 [February/March 1982], pp. 5-6).

"Czechoslovak citizens, especially the signers of Charter 77, are happy to hear that this year's prize of the Jan Palach Committee has been awarded to Václav Havel, in prison for his courageous defense of human rights. It is not only an expression of admiration for Havel's artistic work but also a recognition of the moral qualities of a man who was one of the first three spokesmen for Charter 77 in 1977 [together with Jiří Hájek and the late Jan Patočka], has been persecuted, and has resisted tempting offers to emigrate instead of accepting the fate of a political prisoner. The award of the prize to Václav Havel is recognition of his work within the framework of Charter 77, whose spirit he preserves under the most trying conditions. It is indeed recognition of the work of those, free or in prison, who stand for honesty and the unopportunistic and nonviolent effort to promote a life of tranquillity and a just, humane and dignified peace not only for our country but for all of Europe and the world."

#### A Voice from the Island

The sociologist Rudolf Battěk was sentenced in 1971 to three and a half years in prison as a cofounder of the Club of Committed Nonpartisans during the Prague Spring of 1968. On his release he worked as a window cleaner. He signed Charter 77 and joined the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS), and in July 1981 was again imprisoned for a term of seven and a half years. During his first spell in jail Battěk wrote Essays from the Island which have now been published by Index of Cologne. In his introduction to the book Battěk describes the pressures experienced by prisoners in the "island."

"I would like to say a word about the mental erosion of a prisoner, which is shrewdly exploited by interrogators. It is a major component of human failure. It is familiar to all who have been through it and suffered from prison psychosis. Even those prepared for prison who know what to expect both physically and mentally are unable to avoid the final collapse of the mind. It comes on in a violent spasm during a few days in solitary in the very confined and uncomfortable space of an underground cell, and is followed by 'relief' when the prisoner is moved to a 'habitable,' better-equipped cell on an upper floor with the company of one or more other inmates. The first few days are sometimes decisive whether a prisoner will more or less be able to keep control of the situation or will give way. The first days may trigger neuroses, psychoses, phobias and despair, they are such a drastic contrast to his previous surroundings. . . . Introverts can usually deal with it better. Interrogators know this. They start interrogating only after

1. The prisoner has been softened up, that is, after several days' detention. Insecurity, fear, mental disturbance, emotional instability, possible health problems, and psychologically posed questions during the first period of interrogation may do the job. Excessive sensitivity and self-pity can undermine mental resistance. They will end in complete resignation. Then the prisoner may be willing to make himself out — and, unfortunately, others too — to be more criminal than the indictment had already presupposed."

## NEWS FROM NORMALIZED CZECHOSLOVAKIA

### The Case of Drahomíra Šinoglová

Drahomíra Šinoglová, a mother of three, was sentenced by the district court in Znojmo (South Moravia) in December 1980 to one year in prison on charges of sedition and preparation of sedition. Sedition could not be proved, but a search of her home in Strachotice, near Znojmo, had led to the discovery of a page from a collection of samizdat writings by Czech authors from the years 1970-1978. Mrs. Šinoglová denied doing any copying work. Because of pregnancy the beginning of her prison term was postponed until six months after the birth of her baby. Six months to the day, on March 1, despite her family responsibilities and an appeal on the grounds of her health and a new pregnancy, she was forcibly taken from her home to prison in Brno-Bohunice.

### Persecution of Youths

Police raided the homes of young people in several parts of Czechoslovakia in connection with the circulation of a leaflet urging workers, students and others to support the Solidarity trade union in Poland, communiqué No. 293 of the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS) reported. Several persons were taken into custody, it added.

### Pacifism for Export Only

A military tribunal in Příbram (Central Bohemia) under the chairmanship of Lt. Col. Mojmír Pospíšil has rejected the appeal of Jan Hrabina, a 28-year-old worker with a one-year-old daughter, against a two-and-a-half-year sentence for refusing military service (Article 269/1 of the Penal Code). Hrabina, a signer of Charter 77, had been held incommunicado since May 4, 1981. The severe sentence was justified on the grounds of "the dangerousness of his pacifist opinions in the present world situation." Hrabina, who had said he would refuse to take part in any military action in Poland, had defended himself not only as a conscientious objector but also on the basis of Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev's peace appeals, the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted reported on January 18.