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SVU Activities

Preparations for the Eleventh World Congress, Pittsburgh, October 28-31, 1982, University of Pittsburgh, PA

Preparations for the Congress are progressing well. If you plan to give a paper, organize a discussion panel or if you have suggestions of any kind, please write as soon as possible to:

Zdenka Pospisil
554 Orange St.
New Haven, CT 06511, USA

The Chairman of the local arrangements committee is Zdenek Suda. SVU Vice-President Jiri Nehnevajsa is coordinating all preparatory efforts. Both are professors of sociology at the University of Pittsburgh.

Karel Absolon, SVU Vice-President, has accepted the job of coordinating the art exhibits.

The host university has offered us the support and active cooperation of Chancellor Wesley Posvar, Director of the Center for International Studies Burkart Holzner, and Director of Pennsylvania Heritage Studies Center Joseph T. Makarewicz, who plans a special exhibit from his Center's Ethnic Archives Collections.

Congress languages: English, Czech, Slovak, German, French.

Participation by interested non-members is welcome.

Abstracts of papers, as well as selected papers in their entirety, will be published.

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KOSMAS

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KOSMAS, JOURNAL OF CZECHOSLOVAK AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN STUDIES

Editor: John F.N. Bradley, Department of Government, University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL, Great Britain.

The journal is an interdisciplinary cultural forum for scholars and scientists of Czech and Slovak descent and for others interested in the studies of Czechoslovakia in particular, and Central Europe in general. It is sponsored by the University of Manchester and financially supported by the Endowment 1981 set up by the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences. It is managed by an editorial council consisting of the Editor; Professor L. Pospisil; Professor J.Nehnevajsa; Dr. K. Absolon; and Dr.M. Rechcigl,Jun. Issues appear twice a year, in the spring and autumn of every year.

Publication is in English and manuscripts for consideration should be sent to the Editor, K.JCCES, Department of Government, University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL, Great Britain. They should not exceed twenty pages, should be typed double-spaced and submitted in duplicate. To ensure uniformity of style it is suggested that references to books should be as follows: Jan Milič Lochman, Duchovní odkaz obrození. Prague: Kalich, 1964. References to publications in periodicals e.g.: A. Tallentire, "Radiation resistance of bacterial spores". J.App.Bact., 33, 1970 pp.141-147. Footnotes should be at the back of the text.

Subscriptions \$ 20,00 for one year (two issues); members and students \$ 10,00. Cheques should be made payable to K.JCCES and sent to Frank J. Marlow, Esq., 4217 Noble Avenue, Sherman Oaks, California 91403, U.S.A.

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A New Honorary Member

During the Montreal SVU Annual Meeting, Dr. H. Gordon Skilling, 70, Professor of Political Economics at the University of Toronto, accepted honorary membership in the Society from SVU President Dr. Leopold Pospisil. Professor Skilling studied in Czechoslovakia and has for many years followed events there. His last book, **Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia**, is only one proof of his deep understanding of the country. We are proud to count him among our friends.

ZEF

Ruzena Bunza - SVU Press Administrator

Ruzena Bunza was born in Rousinov near Brno and graduated from the Business Academy. When her husband, Dr. Bohumir Bunza, former judge and member of the Czechoslovak Parliament, was suddenly forced to leave the country after February 1948, she remained behind with their two small children. She suffered considerable political persecution, especially after her husband was sentenced to death *in absentia*. Not until nineteen years later, in 1967, did she and her daughter manage to escape. Her son was detained, imprisoned, and finally -- during the Dubcek era -- released.

The reunited family first settled in Rome, where Dr. Bunza worked as a librarian at the International Christian Democratic Center of Studies and Documentation. Ms. Bunza was active in the Czech religious center Velehrad and the editorial department of the Christian Academy. In 1977 Dr. and Mrs. Bunza moved to New York, where they both are active and dedicated members of SVU and other Czechoslovak exile organizations.

Ms. Bunza administers the SVU Press, taking care of the distribution --and in some cases the printing -- of **Zpravy (SVU News)**, this **Bulletin, Promeny (Metamorphoses)** and SVU books. Her labor may sometimes be onerous and less than rewarding, but it fulfills a most vital need.

ZEF

Jiri Nehnevajsa - SVU Vice-President

Jiri Nehnevajsa was born in Dyjakovice in Southern Moravia. After serving in the Royal Air Force during World War II, he studied sociology at Masaryk University in Brno (1945-48) and worked as an editor of **Svobodno noviny**. He left Czechoslovakia in 1948 and continued his studies at the Universite de Lausanne, earning his doctorate *magna cum laude* in Zurich (1953). Since 1961 he has been Professor of Sociology, Chairman of the Sociology Department, and Directory of the University Center for Urban Research at the University of Pittsburgh. He has also been a Visiting Professor of Sociology in Heidelberg and Mannheim (1967-68) and the Dean of the Faculty of Social and Commercial Sciences at the University of Hong Kong (1970-71). In 1980 he worked with the National Science Foundation, analyzing problems of technology and social relations. He has published extensively in the fields of his expertise.

ZEF

What's Your Thing?

Here is the continuation of "our things" for your interest. We plan to enlarge this section in terms of both categories, and information. The Secretary, all officers of the Society and the editors of this **Bulletin** (all of whose addresses appear on the first page) will be glad to serve as liaisons between SVU members and interested readers. Communication is one of our main aims.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Dr. Pechota Honored by the American Jewish Committee

On Sunday, May 17, 1981 Dr. Vratislav Pechota, a distinguished legal scholar at Columbia University and former Czechoslovak diplomat was awarded the first annual Andrei Sakharov Fellowship. Presented by the American Jewish Committee (AJC), the award honors those who further "the right of the individual to know and act upon his rights and duties" and was granted to Dr. Pechota in recognition of his activities as Chief Legal Advisor to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Dubcek regime.

The AJC citation expresses the "belief that this award, and Dr. Pechota's study, will contribute to the realization of Dr. Sakharov's dream that nations the world over would indeed honor the fundamental commitments to human rights." The award thus serves as a "symbol for men and women the world over of the repressive actions and harsh measures facing those who petition for their human rights. The fellowship also reaffirms the commitments of millions of Americans who see these violations as affecting us all."

Dr. Sakharov who celebrated his sixtieth birthday on May 21 was banished from Moscow by Soviet authorities last year for the human rights activities that led to his being awarded the Nobel Peace prize.

Frank Meissner
8323 Still Spring Court
Bethesda, MD 20817

★ ★ ★

A Special Study on Czechoslovakia

The Canadian Council of Captive European Nations ran a special study on Czechoslovakia in the August 1981 **Newsletter** on the occasion of the thirteenth anniversary of the Soviet invasion. The study is divided into chapters on various aspects of Czechoslovakia's connections with Western culture.

The study begins with a brief sketch of the history of the Czechs and Slovaks. We should underline the situation in the nineteenth century when increasing pressure by Germans and Hungarians created an atmosphere of Pan-Slav hopes centering on Russia. The Czechoslovak Republic and its development during the twenty years between its founding and Munich resulted in a modern state with an honorable place among Europe's most progressive countries. Although the Soviet Union gave the impression of supporting Czechoslovakia, it never actually did anything for the country.

FINE ARTS

Art Exhibition in Montreal

Forty-one exhibits by fourteen Czechoslovak artists from the provinces of Montreal and Quebec were showcased during the Annual Meeting of SVU which took place last October in Montreal. They were acrylic paintings by Milan Lapka and Jana Jenicek; water-color paintings by George Kayser, Frantisek Mokrusa, and Anna Vojtechova; oil paintings by Ivan Dobroruka and George Bohdal; ceramics by Eva Lapka; Milos Reindl's work in enamel, Helena Schmaus-Shooner's sculptures in faience and Rose Raba-Reichman's wood and soapstone creations. Pastels and ink were the media of Brano Kloco, while Olga Ulman created her "Golden Prague" on paper. Jaroslav Belik contributed three kinetic sculptures to the exhibition.

The artists have exhibited at the Montreal Expo, in New York, Washington, D.C., Italy, Norway, Germany, etc.

Comparing this roster with those from exhibitions organized for past SVU Congresses, we are struck by the number of new names and the variety of media. Liba Puchmajer (Westchester, New York) who is coordinating the new Fine Arts section, has excellent material to begin with. We hope to hear more about her section's activities.

ZEF



Contemporary Posters from Czechoslovakia

The public is aware of the decorative genius of Alphonse Mucha, the Czech whose turn-of-the-century posters of actress Sarah Bernhardt and of The Seasons have been widely exhibited and reproduced as supreme examples of *art nouveau*. Since Mucha's time poster design has changed enormously. This is as true in Czechoslovakia as in other countries where the poster survives as a medium of communication and culture. In fact, among the Czechs and Slovaks the poster does more than survive; it flourishes, it commands a loyal audience that finds its amalgam of words and forms to be more satisfying than fleeting, stereotyped television images.

In Czechoslovakia posters are plastered on walls and bulletin boards, placed in windows, and purchased at galleries and museums. The posters on display announce art shows, movies, pantomime, plays, and other literary, artistic, and theatrical events. Many of these events occurred in the major cities of Prague, Brno, and Bratislava, but others were held in lesser towns with their own thriving museums and exhibition halls. Sometimes these are old castles and aristocratic palaces converted for cultural purposes.

Most of the posters date from the 1970's, a few from the 1960's. Some are classics reprinted for new occasions. Persons familiar with Mucha's work and the style of Parisian *art nouveau* (in Vienna and Berlin the parallel movements were called The Secession and *Jugendstil*) will recognize the vast distance the poster has traveled since that time. Yet despite all the differences one still observes certain enduring elements.

For one thing, posters with cultural themes are seen as works of art, not merely as advertising or information: the finest artists in Czechoslovakia have tried their hands at posters at some time in their careers. For another, today's posters retain two characteristic Central European qualities: wit, and a sense of history. Wit is a subjective attribute which one comes to appreciate by living in a country and among its people. The historical sense is more concrete. We see it represented graphically in persistent memories of

the past, in respect for landmarks in the country's history, in the celebration of outstanding personalities and monuments of civilization. Those unfamiliar with Czech and Slovak traditions may not readily perceive these qualities in the posters on display, and some posters may lack them altogether; but all viewers can admire their composition, their use of color and typography, their pleasing visual effects.

Under the old Austro-Hungarian empire the poster, as a specific art form aimed at a mass audience, developed slightly later in the lands that now comprise Czechoslovakia than it did in Western Europe and the United States. Shortly before World War I, a group of artists in Prague's Manes Artists' Union -- among them Jan Preisler, Arnost Hofbauer, and Max Svabinsky -- began to use the poster as a vehicle for expressing nationality through popular culture. They combined ornamental with geometric motifs in their designs. Another group, called *Artel*, looked more to the late Secession by emphasizing geometric forms girded with bold typography. These artists, including Vratislav H. Brunner, Jaroslav Benda, and Frantisek Kysela, created an avant-garde constructivist style that foreshadowed advertising later in the 1920's.

The posters of the Great War, with their stark, simplified designs in the service of patriotic propaganda, signaled a clear break with the past and accelerated the new trends. In the 1920's a new generation of Prague artists, the *Devetsil* group, introduced elements of left-oriented caricature, cabaret humor, circus themes, political satire, and photomontage. *Devetsil* exerted a lasting influence that extended beyond the poster into Czech film and architecture.

The institution which has most profoundly shaped the graphic arts in Czechoslovakia is the Higher School of Industrial Art, established in Prague in 1885. From the outset it attracted faculty members from among the leading innovative artists. The School successfully transmitted the national heritage while adapting it to changing conditions. The State School of Graphic Arts in Prague also contributed to poster design and production. Similar schools in the applied arts, later founded in Brno, Zilina, Uherske Hradiste, and elsewhere, spread the new currents to other towns and cities.

After World War II, and especially after 1948, the poster, like all media in Czechoslovakia, became subject to a central ideology advanced to promote a new social and political order. That many contemporary posters still embody older national traditions and demonstrate individual talents and original designs speaks eloquently for the abiding creativity of Czechoslovak graphic artists.

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Z.W. and S.B.W.

Zdenka Winters is associate director of the Sprague Library at Montclair State College. A native of Czechoslovakia, she is a graduate of Charles University in Prague.

Stanley B. Winters is professor of history at the New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark. A historian of East Central Europe and of urban development, he has written about Czechoslovakia and visited there many times.

Former residents of Newark, the Winters' now live in Montclair. They assembled and lent the contemporary Czechoslovak posters which were exhibited at the Newark Public Library from October 1 through December 31, 1981.

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