

*Commentary on and Reflections from the SVU World Congress in Plzeň:*

## Plzeň with Flying Colors

Although there were some initial skeptics who had concerns whether our Plzeň co-organizers, who had no previous experience with such a mammoth undertaking, could swing it, I am delighted to report that our Plzeň Congress was a smashing success, thanks to the persevering efforts and boundless enthusiasm of Dean Ivo Budil and his associates Mgr. Ivona Skanderova and Bc. Marta Varejkova. It was the army of his young people – there must have been some fifty of them – all of whom attend the University of West Bohemia, who made the difference. They seemed to be everywhere, handsome looking with pleasant smiles and helping hand, many of whom spoke flawless English. Most of them sat behind a whole array of computers, both at the registration desk and at the press room. They were not only computer literate, many of them were real pros. Some of these young people were in evidence already upon our arrival at the Prague Airport carrying highly visible signs “SVU World Congress” for easy identification.

The SVU World Congress was held under the auspices of President Vaclav Havel in close cooperation with the University of West Bohemia and the City of Plzeň. The official opening was scheduled for Monday, June 24, however some of the activities already started on Sunday with the opening of the registration desk and the press center on Jungmannova 3. At 10:30 AM, the West Bohemian University Choir, “Nova ceska pisen” presented a colorful program of the Renaissance Music, including Monteverdi, Lasso, and Gesualdo, arias from Italian operas (Verdi, Puccini), and illustrations of the 20th century music, i.e., Lukas, Laburda and Ropek as well as folk songs.

The Congress was ceremoniously opened on Monday, June 24 in the presence of distinguished guests and representatives of the Czech and Slovak political, cultural, and scientific life in the famed Pilsen Theater of Josef Kajetan Tyl. With the sounds of trumpets came the academic procession of the university hierarchy, dressed in academic gowns, followed by dignitaries who were then seated on the platform. National anthems of four countries where the SVU has the largest membership, i.e., Czech Republic, Slovakia, the US and Canada followed. During the playing of the Slovak anthem, many a participant began to sing along, which brought an occasional tear among those present. The official welcome came from Zdenek Vostracky, Chancellor of the University of West Bohemia, and Mayor Lord of the City of Plzen, Jiri Sneiderger.

Then SVU President Miloslav Rechcigl opened the Congress, followed by official greetings and short speeches by Canadian Ambassador Margaret Huber, the Slovak Ambassador to the Czech Republic Ladislav V. Ballek, Ambassador of the US to the Czech Republic Craig R. Stapleton, President of the Senate of the Czech Parliament Petr Pithart, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the US Martin Palous, and President of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic Helena Illnerova. The impressive program was concluded with the key address by Senator Josef Jarab, the past Chancellor of the Palacky and Central European Universities. All speakers stressed the importance of education and higher learning and the strategic role of Plzeň culturally as well as economically.

After a festive lunch there was a plenary session dedicated to “Tribute to America” with the participation of the Ambassadors from the US and the Czech Republic and the spokesman for Slovakia. The second part of the

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plenary session was devoted to a special symposium, “Czech and Slovak Americans on Behalf of their Old Homeland” with the participation of the presidents and representatives of the major Czech and Czechoslovak ethnic organizations in the US and Canada that have played a major role in the establishment of Czechoslovakia and in the subsequent liberalization movements. They included Czechoslovak National Council, American Sokol, Alliance of Czech Catholics, Council of Free Czechoslovakia, American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences, Czech and Slovak Association of Canada and American Friends of Czech Republic. The first day was concluded with the gala performance by the renown Plzen Philharmonic Orchestra, in the auditorium of the historic Mestanska Beseda, Jiri Malat conducting. The program included works of Antonin Dvorak: Violin Concerto in A minor and the New World Symphony in E minor. Featured was a soloist from the US, Janica Martin.

Over the following four days, in representative historical halls in the center of Plzeň, numerous lectures, discussion panels and symposia took place in a number of concurrent sessions. On the Czech end, the task of organizing the panels was given to the Faculty of Human Studies of the University of West Bohemia, the Medical Faculty of Charles University in Pilsen, the Museum of

West Bohemia, American Center in Plzen, Beer Brewing Museum, the Museum of Skoda History, and the West Czech Gallery, while the US panels were coordinated by Mila Rechcigl. Altogether there were some eighty panels, half conducted in English and half in Czech or Slovak. It would be virtually impossible to describe the content of each session. Suffice to say, that practically every field of human endeavor was covered, from the arts and humanities to social sciences, natural sciences and technology. Most sessions were well attended and all papers I heard were of high quality. Academic panels ended on Friday noon.

In the afternoon the concluding plenary session was scheduled. It started with the presentation of the SVU Elias Human Tolerance Awards to Father Anton Srholec, the winner of the 2001 Award, and Prof. Tomas Halik, the winner of the 2002 Award. The presentations were followed by the addresses of each of the laureates. The second part of the plenary session was devoted to a panel discussion of the relations between the Czech Republic and the Czechs abroad, with the participation of Senator Jarab, Senator Jaroslava Moserova, Mojmir Povolny, Radomir Luza, Benjamin Kuras and Petr Bisek. The plenary session was concluded with a brief talk by Dean Budil and with a presentation of an honorary award by Chancellor Vostracky to SVU President in recognition of his efforts toward "the development of academic, cultural and social relations between the Czech Republic and Czech communities abroad." Immediately after the plenary session there was a meeting of the SVU.

The culmination of the SVU Congress was the Society's gala banquet on Friday night at the restaurant, "Na Spilce", on the premises of the historic Pilsner Urquell brewery, courtesy of the City of Plzeň. Visitors were treated to scrumptious food, and the famous Pilsner Urquell beer, while the band played popular tunes. The occasion was used for presentation of SVU Presidential Citations by SVU President and of SVU Praha Awards by the Chapter President.

During the duration of the Congress the attendees had an opportunity to choose from a highly interesting and varied cultural program, which, in addition to the Pilsen Philharmonic Orchestra, included a piano recital by virtuoso Professor Radoslav Kvapil, the Jirasky concert, featuring F. Liszt, B. Smetana, F. Chopin, L. Janacek, and C. Debussy, a concert of K. Friesl and D. Tolas, based on the compositions of Antonin Dvorak, Bedrich Smetana, and Zdenek Fibich, the Stivin's concert, a piano concert of Petr and Martina Karlicek of the music compositions by Franz Schubert, Antonin Dvorak, Bela Bartok, and Ferenc Liszt, a piano and clarinet concert by Marie Bobkova and Budimir Zvolanek, Georges Bizet's opera "Carmen" under the baton of Jiri Strunc, and the theatrical production of J. Weinberger's play "Kroky po krach cili kdyz se jde, vsechno chce," not to speak of a number of classical Czech films. Interested people could also sign up for various events in connection with the "Year of Jo."

Saturday was reserved for bus excursions through the Plzeň environs with an opportunity to see the historic castles and chateaus, or the renowned spa cities in the western part of the Czech Republic.

Taken as a whole, this was a remarkable event. In addition to the superb academic and cultural program, there were a number of social occasions where the participants could meet their old friends or make new acquaintances that frequently lead to lasting friendships. The hospitality and the friendship of the Plzeň people was clearly visible at every step and one truly felt like being at home and being wanted. As I mentioned in several of my interviews with the reporters, this will be a hard act to follow. The Plzeň organizers, who passed the acid test with flying colors, deserve our sincere thanks and gratitude. They were also successful in attracting a large number of sponsors which made it possible to provide most cultural and social events free of charge. I ascribe their success to the young age and initiative of the organizers, all of whom, starting with Ivo Budil, were below forty years of age.

*MILA REHCIGL, SVU President*

## Remarks of H.E. Margaret Huber

*Ambassador of Canada to the Czech and Slovak Republics  
at the Opening of the SVU World Congress in Plzen*

As Canadian Ambassador to both the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic, I am particularly pleased to be here today and have the opportunity to meet with so many brilliant personalities dedicated to heightening profiles of the Czech Republic and Slovakia in the world and promoting mutual co-operation.

It is also quite positive for me that this event take place in Plzeň, a city I have visited several times and one I like, not only for its beer. The Terry Fox Run in your city was one of my first activities as recently arrived ambassador in September 2000. I believe that for diplomats – who tend to remain in the capital city – it is very important to get out into the regions and explore life in the "real" Czech Republic.

As a Canadian, with a country the size of a continent, we are particularly sensitive to the importance of regional differences and disparities, and I strongly believe it is part of my duty to visit the regions of this beautiful country.

The Canadian Government is strongly supportive of a smooth transition for countries in Central Europe. There are millions of Canadians who claim origins in this part of the world and that is why we want to accompany countries such as the Czech Republic and Slovakia in their successful efforts towards well established transparent democracies. And we put our money where our mouth is. Many programmes of technical cooperation and reinforcement of human security support worthy activities in the region.

These Canadians, from coast to coast, have contributed to the richness and the prosperity of Canadian Society. It is only fair that we now be present in the region to offer exchanges of views, experience and technology.

It is also a rather selfish objective. As the region prospers, our economy, so dependant on the expansion of export markets, only benefits from further commercial and investment exchanges.

I am particularly pleased that His Excellency, Mr. Ladislav Ballek, ambassador of Slovakia, could join us today. Canada and Slovakia enjoy a very intense relationship and I believe that this year will be a major turning point in the history of his country, both as it positions itself in the region, in Europe and in the world. Canada wants to stand by closely and assist as much as it can.

I am also pleased to meet once more an old friend in the person of Ambassador Palouš. Canada and the Czech Republic have for many years now collaborated in the promotion of ideals and programmes in the field of what we call Human Security. This involves of course, the fight against landmines, children's involvement in armed conflicts and the trafficking of small arms. I take this opportunity to salute the Czech Government's support to an important NATO funded project to fight that calamity in Albania. The Czech Republic was the first country in the region to offer financial support for this Canadian initiative and many EU countries are now following suit. I would like to express here publicly Canada's sincere thanks to your country for this invaluable support to international Human Security.

The United States, Canada, Mexico and Europe are now fully engaged in the global economy. This not only creates additional links, but it makes them absolutely mandatory. These links are not only built on intergovernmental exchanges but also on person to person contacts. NGOs such as yours play in this regard a very important role.

This global village, as Canadian Marshall McLuhan labelled it decades ago, is an invaluable opportunity to further strengthen democracy and freedom, values which should never be taken for granted. In this regard, North American and Europe play a key role and our individual countries all have a role to play, no matter their size or power.

Extensive contacts with Europe will ensure that Canada remains a strong and dynamic mosaic. We Canadians have a unique asset in our multicultural society. We are building a society that takes the best in the countries where we come from. Europe, and this part of Europe in particular, has always played an important role in this regard. That is why I believe we should all continue to encourage exchanges at all levels.

The scope of themes of your congress is truly impressive. I wish you a successful and enriching congress.

## Remarks of Hon. Petr Pithart

*President of the Senate, Parliament of the Czech Republic  
at the Opening of the SVU World Congress in Plzen*

There are many places in the world where Czechs and Slovaks continue gathering, sometimes still as Czechoslovaks, as if nothing happened back home. The word "Czechoslovak" is no longer used to refer to a nation, but rather to an ideal. In its institutionalized form, the ideal has failed the test of freedom, but – if I may speak with a bit of pathos – it still lives in the hearts of Czechs and Slovaks.

I am not surprised that most of our expatriot groups around the world see themselves as both Czech and Slovak. Some of them have even expressly refused to accept the split of the federation. Of course, nobody can force them to. I feel they are perhaps expressing a grudge about the split and those who are responsible for it. They go on playing both national anthems on festive occasions. We get to listen to the two anthems in succession only at the airport in Prague or Bratislava when one president visits the other.

We have entered the new millennium as two separate countries, even if our borders are still more open than others. Although our two countries will never reunite, let us hope that Europe will unite and embrace both Slovaks and Czechs. However, it does give us a nightmare. The nightmare is called a Schengen border. Although a Schengen border is, fortunately, politically permeable, it is physically sealed. With a bit of exaggeration, it can be likened to the Iron Curtain. A Schengen border drawn through the center of the meandering Morava River, crawling up the grassy ridges of the beautiful Javorniky, and climbing up and down the steep slopes of the Moravian and Silesian Beskydy, would be a real nightmare. The split of Czechoslovakia was originally just a challenge, even if a risky one. If such a border were drawn, the split would turn out to be a tragedy. It would be a tragedy if the Slovak Republic or the Czech Republic did not accede to the EU, either because we Czechs and Slovaks did not want to or because a member state did not eventually ratify our accession.

Let me be specific, and speak for myself. I miss hearing the Slovak language more often. I now realize how gentle and melodious it sounds, particularly when spoken by women. I miss Slovak mountains: Czech mountains look like buns compared to Slovak ones. I perceive Slovak generosity, particularly in their hospitality, though not only there. It is now more obvious to me how enclosed we Czechs are in the fortress of our mountainous borders. As far as I can judge from reviews and magazines, the Slovak intellectual scene is self-critical, yet confident in a European way. May I say, however, that we are quite similar in how we bungle politics.

I don't know what Slovaks miss. Perhaps they miss Prague. We miss each other, but there is no reason why we should agonize over it. Instead of attending mandatory meetings planned by officials, we can now get together spontaneously, because we want to, because we are interested in each other, and because we admire each other.

Yes, the cloud in our relations had a silver lining; people on both sides of the border realized how different they were. And different we are, though it wasn't so obvious under the previous regime. Many people couldn't bear the newly discovered differences. I – along with many others – saw them as yet another good reason to live together. My counterparts enrich me by being different, by giving me the opportunity to see myself through their eyes and to deepen my self-awareness. It is a pity that so many people were not able to cope with a Slovak minor, through which we could have seen ourselves in ways that are not narcissistic, but it was done, and it can not be undone. It makes no sense to cry over it, to hold grudges, or nurse sentimental nostalgia. We had simply gotten a divorce, then spent some time looking at each other reproachfully, and although we now begin to like each other again, there will be no wedding.

The last century of the last millennium was terrible. Terrible things happened here, in and around the home of Czechs and Slovaks. Nationalistic and communist ideologies made us hate others and wage world wars, civil wars and cold wars. We ask ourselves at the threshold of the new millennium: is it over? What can Czechs and Slovaks do to make sure that it is over?

The world admired us for getting a divorce without slapping each other across the cheeks. We let the world praise us, although we know very well that we had never hated each other and therefore had no reason to slap each other. We enjoy hearing nice things about ourselves. But let us admit that there still are skeletons in the closet. We should taken them out as soon as possible. Slovaks live with more than half a million Hungarians. Czechs, Moravians and Silesians still feel pain in their old wounds. That's how it is; one tends to feel occasional phantom pain in an amputated limb. Germans used to live here; they no longer do, and it is not all nice and dandy. Relations with minorities is an issue we need to resolve first and foremost, both with regard to the current ones and those who once lived here and no longer do.

Everybody is a multiple minority here in Central Europe, always in relation to a different majority. It can either make us much richer, or throw us, time and again, into conflicts.

May academics from all over the world, whatever language they speak and whether they claim Czech or Slovak heritage, help us in the coming days to identify our issues, explore them in a wider context, and thus solve them. That was perhaps one of the reasons to meet here. May we, enriched by your wider and global perspective, face a realistic picture of ourselves with due confidence and truthfulness?

Thank you for making such a long journey to come here from all over the world. We appreciate it. We are interested in you, and proud of what you have accomplished in the world.

## Remarks by Dr. Miloslav Rechcigl, Jr.

*President of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences  
at the Opening of SVU World Congress in Plzen*

Excellencies, Magnificences, Spectabiles, Distinguished Guests:

I should like to join Chancellor Vostracky and Lord Mayor Sneberger in welcoming you to our Congress and to thank the former speakers for their kind words.

It is now my great pleasure, in my capacity as President of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences, or SVU, as it is generally known, to open this historic Congress in Plzen. Those of you who are not familiar with the acronym SVU, it stands for the Czech or Slovak name of our Society, Spolecnost pro vedy a umeni or Spolocnost pro vedy a umenia. This is our 21st World Congress since the inception of the Society in the US Capital, Washington, DC, in 1958.

We have specifically selected the West Bohemian Metropolis for its site because of the City's rich historic traditions, its important place in the Czech economy, the location of the famed Skoda Works and the Pilsner Urquell, and above all – the city's truly pro-American spirit which in 1945 witnessed the arrival of General Patton's troops ready to conquer the Nazi occupiers. Beyond that, we were offered and received here first-class cooperation from our Plzen co-organizers, the University of West Bohemia and the City of Plzen. My gratitude to Chancellor Vostracky and Mayor Lord Sneberger.

I would like to use this opportunity to also express my sincere appreciation and thanks to Dr. Ivo Budil, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities of the West Bohemian University and Dr. Boris Kreuzberg, Dean of the Medical School of Charles University in Plzen under whose direction most of the logistical and program work was done. Let them stand up and let's give them deserving applause.

I normally, on occasions like this, proceed to tell the audience who we are, what we stand for and what have we have accomplished. However, since I will address this very subject at our Plenary session this afternoon, I will reserve my words for that time. Let me only say that SVU represents the cream of the crop of the Czech and Slovak intelligentsia worldwide with chapters in places like Washington, DC, Chicago, New York, Boston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, College Station and Austin, TX, Lincoln, NE, Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Edmonton, Vancouver, Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, Wellington, Tokyo, Japan, Pretoria, South Africa, Munich, London, Stuttgart, Basel-Bern-Zurich, Vienna, Prague, Brno, Plzen, Bratislava, Kosice, and Presov.

Although the Society is nonpolitical in nature, it has always been in the forefront when the question of human rights was at stake or when democracy was threatened. The restoration of civil society in our old homeland belongs to our top priorities. Resurgence of communism and the low turnout in your last elections gives us some concern. Despite the individualistic character of Czech people, we are hopeful that the Czech nation will rise again behind a united national program based on democratic tradition, morality and vision for a bright future. I can assure you that SVU will do its part toward this end.

In my concluding remarks, I would like to again thank the University of West Bohemia and the City of Plzen for hosting this event and the organizers for putting together such an impressive program as well as to wish everyone a very enjoyable time.

# State of the SVU in the Year 2002

*Report of SVU President Dr. Miloslav Rechcigl  
Presented to SVU General Assembly  
Convened 29 June 2002 in Plzen, Czech Republic*

I am pleased to present my State of the SVU Report covering the two-year administrative period since the time this Executive Board assumed its office in August 2000. I will be brief because of the time constrain and besides we have regularly been reporting our activities in Zpravy SVU.

These were two extraordinary years in terms of SVU growth and development and its accomplishments. This is important symbolically since this period marks SVU entry into the new millennium.

Considering the age structure of the Society, the Executive Board selected as its main objective to revitalize the Society with younger people and, with this in mind, it launched a new initiative "Accent on Youth." Success can best be judged by the constantly growing rolls of young people among our membership, as you can verify from our regular reports in our Newsletter. Many of these members are between 20 and 30 years old, all eager to participate in our activities. We have a whole group of young people here from Nebraska who, despite high travel and other expenses, managed to come to our Congress. I applaud their effort, enthusiasm and ingenuity.

Our second priority centered on information technology which is best reflected in the new SVU Website. Thanks to our Webmaster Jiri Eichler we now have a fully functional, comprehensive and interactive website providing information about any aspect of SVU work past and present. We have steadily been improving it in an effort to make the site appealing and user friendly. New categories have been added including "SVU Calendar," "Czech and Slovak Issues," "News from CR and SR," "Czechoslovak America" and, most recently, an "SVU Forum" has been launched. The popularity of the site is apparent from the counter which records the number of visitors. The SVU Website is not only our best calling card but it has become one of the most sought out sources of information about Czech and Slovak matters on the internet.

The most important activity SVU has undertaken was our regional conference in Nebraska. As I pointed out in our Newsletter, "The Nebraska Conference was unique and truly phenomenal which cannot be expressed by a better term than a 'Happening'." The extensive academic program, interwoven with various cultural and social events, large attendance, perfect logistical arrangements, outpouring of friend-ship and enthusiasm, and ever presence of Kacenka Oslzla, barely express what took place there. A conference like that would be difficult to emulate.

One of the direct outcomes of the conference was the establishment of the new chapter in Lincoln, Nebraska which immediately took off and soon had outdone other chapters with their numerous activities.

After the successful Nebraska Conference we immediately started working on the forthcoming SVU World Congress in Plzen. It took quite a bit of effort but the fruits of hard work are plainly visible in the fantastic program and all the cultural and social activities arranged by our Plzen co-organizers. We found an excellent partner in the University of West Bohemia, which, under the leadership of Dean Ivo Budil, has done wonders. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Dean Budil and his collaborators for their splendid work.

Let me now turn to our publication program which has always been considered SVU imperative. I am pleased to see that under the new editorship of Clinton Machann our English periodical Kosmas is again published on schedule. Those of you who are subscribers must also be pleased with its content. Our goal is to make the periodical self support-ing which can only be accomplished by broadening our subscription base. SVU is currently searching for a suitable candidate for a new Associate Editor for Subscriptions under whose responsibility this will fall.

With reference to our newsletter, Zpravy SVU brings regular features such as „From SVU Executive Board,“ „From New SVU Rolls,“ „Focus on Younger Generation,“ „SVU Calendar,“ etc. In addition to the hard copy we regularly post an electronic version of the Newsletter on the internet.

Apart from the two periodicals, we are again publishing SVU mono-graphs. *The Taste of a Lost Homeland* is the title of a bilingual anthol-ogy of Czech and Slovak exile poetry with translations into English. Twenty one poets are represented. The anthology contains close to a hundred poems, all of which have the theme of nostalgia and love for our homeland which was left behind. The anthology has been published in memory of SVU member Frank Marlow and is edited by Vera Borkovec.

The second monograph, entitled *Essays on Czech Music*, is based on writings of Czech musicologist Zdenka Fischman and was prepared for publication by Dagmar White and Judith Fiehler. The SVU published posthumously Dr. Fischmann's work, a long-time SVU member, as a tribute to her contributions to Czech music.

Almost completed is the newly revised *SVU Biographical Directory* which brings basic biographic information on SVU members. As was the case in the past it is anticipated that this publication will again become the top SVU best seller. Some of the initial delays which we experienced were caused by technical difficulties when we attempted to merge the new information with the old data.

And finally, you'll be pleased to know that the Proceedings of the Minnesota and Nebraska SVU Conferences, as well as those of the last SVU Congress in Washington, DC, are readied for publication elec-tronically.

As a part of the new SVU initiative aimed at preserving Czech and Slovak heritage abroad, I had the pleasure of conducting a compre-hensive survey of the Czech and Slovak archival material in the US after completing a similar survey on Czech Historic Sites and Monuments in the US a year earlier. The results of the second survey were compiled in a draft report, *Czechoslovak-American Archivalia*, and were presented to the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs under whose sponsorship and financial assistance it was prepared. Both reports generated lots of interest in the US as well as in the Czech Republic and it was recommended that they be published to make the information more widely available. The surveys were carried out in cooperation and under the aegis of the National Heritage Commission comprised of major Czech organizations in the US. In connection with our efforts to preserve Czech and Slovak cultural heritage abroad, thanks to the generosity of John and Lois

Fiala, the Society has established, in memory of their son, the new Stephen Fiala Cultural Heritage Award to be awarded annually.

I am pleased to report that our Society also played an active role in the organization of a special conference, "The Czech Republic and Czech Americans: Mutual Ties and Joint Partnership" held at the Czech Embassy in Washington, DC on May 18. The aim of the conference was to strengthen ties and enhance cooperation between the Czech Republic and Czech Americans.

Among other activities, SVU provided a donation towards erecting a new statue honoring President Thomas Garrigue Masaryk in Washington, DC. I had the honor of presenting a check, in the amount of \$1,000, to Czech Prime Minister Milos Zeman on the occasion of his visit to the US Capital. In connection with the Masaryk Memorial which will be unveiled in September of this year, the Society has launched a new drive to raise money for a new Masaryk Youth Incentive Fund. The purpose of this fund is to support short term visits of Czech and Slovak students to America which would lead to collaborative grants with the US or Canadian institutions of higher learning. I should like to stress that all contributions for this cause, as well as other gifts to SVU, are tax deductible.

I would be amiss not to mention another SVU priority aimed at assisting in creating civil society in our old homeland. In the spring of 2001, on the initiative of Dr. Andrew Elias as the sponsor, an Annual Andrew Elias SVU Tolerance Award was established. This award includes a prize of \$1,000.

As plainly evident from my report, the last two years were indeed very productive. During this period, SVU's visibility and image has risen to new heights and reached new horizons. Its financial base has been strengthened and a large number of new members, especially young people, were added to its rolls.

I am also pleased to report that SVU local chapters are beginning to catch the prevailing enthusiasm and are making a name for themselves. Apart from the already mentioned chapter in Lincoln, NE, special mention needs to be made of SVU Chapter in Edmonton, Canada which issued a notable CD of Czech music and SVU Chapter in Pittsburgh, PA for its role in unveiling a historic marker commemorating the site of the Pittsburgh Agreement.

In conclusion let me express my sincere appreciation to the out-going members of our Executive Board for their support and my best wishes to the new officers.

## From New SVU Rolls

**YANA BEM** is the owner of Gallery Four in Prague who resides there in summer, while spending winters at Miami Beach, Florida. She is a native of Prague with education from Skola výtvarných umění in Prague (Dipl. 1976) and Ecole des beaux arts in Paris (1968).

**ANTHONY BLAINE COLE** is Post-Doctoral Research Associate at the University of Illinois in Chicago. He is a native of Plainville, KS with academic education from Fort Hays State University (B.S. 1990), Kansas State University (M.S. 1995) and University of Missouri (Ph.D. 2001). He specializes in plant virology.

**JEAN MARY DICKINSON** is a librarian at University of Nebraska at Lincoln. She is a native of Lawrence, KS with education from University of Arizona (B.A. in Russian, 1985; M.L.S. 1995). She specializes in cataloguing and Slavic materials.

**KURT GERALD HARTWIG** is a graduate student with interests in Czech language and theater. He is a native of Bloomington, IN with education from St. Olaf College (B.A. 1991) and Indiana University (M.A. 1998).

**CHRISTOPHER WALLACE HARWOOD** is Lecturer in Czech in the Dept. of Slavic Languages at Columbia University in New York. He is a native of New York City with education from Columbia University (B.A. 1990, M.A. 1992 and Ph.D. 2000). His interests include Czech language pedagogy and 19th and 20th century Czech literature.

**MADELAINE HRON** is a doctoral student at University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, MI. She has academic degrees from the University of Alberta (B.A. 1948) and University of Michigan (M.A. 2000). Her interests are in Czech women, Czech emigrants and Czech literature of the 20th century.

**JAN HVEZDA** is a student at the School of Dentistry in Hradec Králové, Czech Republic.

**CYNTHIA A. KLIMA** is Associate Professor of Foreign Languages and Literatures at the State University of New York at Geneseo, NY. She is a native of Oklahoma City, OK with education from University of Oklahoma (B.A. 1983, M.A. 1986) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Ph.D. 1995). She specializes in Czech, German and Russian literatures and cultures, Central European history, culture and literature.

**MARTHA PEESLEE LEVINE** is a physician who lives in Middletown, PA. She is a native of Chicago with education from Tulane University of Medicine (M.D. 1984). Her interests are in psychiatry and fiction writing.

**RICHARD LELAND LEVINE** is Director of Adolescent Medicine and Outpatient Pediatrics at Penn State/Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey, PA. He is a native of Melrose, MA with education from Tulane University School of Medicine (MD. 1983). He specializes in adolescent medicine and eating disorders.

**ROBERT JOSEPH PAULSON** is retired and lives in St. Paul, MN. He is a native of St. Paul with education from College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN (B.A. 1958, M.A. 1965). His interests are in German-Bohemian immigration.

**HELENA HERTLOVA RATKOUSOVA** is a native of Benesov near Praha and lives in Prague, Czech Republic.

**JANA KOPELANTOVA REHAK** is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Dept. of Anthropology at American University and lives in Baltimore, MD. She is a native of Susice, Czech Republic. Her interests are in cultural anthropology and political science.

**WANDA KRIVANEK ROACH** is retired and owner of business. She is a native of Oklahoma City, OK with education from University of Oklahoma (B.A. 1961, M.A.). Her interests are in special education and travel.

**MATEJ KAREL SCHWITZER** is retired and lives in London, England. He is a native of Vienna, Austria with education from Charles University and University College in London. His interests are in chemical engineering, history and philosophy.

**LADISLAV VENYS** is Director of the Center for Democracy and Free Enterprise in Prague. He is a native of Prague with education from Syracuse University (M.A. 1968) and Charles University (PhD. 1969, Csc. 1990). His interests are in democratic governance, entrepreneur, NGOs and literature.

**LISA ANN VOLESKY** is a student, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree. She is majoring in biology with a minors in chemistry s secondary edu-cation. She is a native of Cedar Rapids, IA. She holds the title of Miss Czech-Slovak USA 2001-2002. Her interests are in Czechs in Iowa.

**KAREN VON KUNES** is Senior Lecturer in the Dept. of Film, Slavic Languages and Literatures at Yale University. She is a native of Prague with education from McGill University (B.A. 1974, Ph.D. 1980) and University of Texas-Austin (M.B.A. 1982). Her interests are in Czech film, Czech literature, Czech language and screen writing.

**MARTIN JAY WASSERMAN** is Professor of Psychology at the Adirondack College at Queensbury, NY. He is a native of Brooklyn, NY with education from Brooklyn College (B.S. 1964), New School for Social Research (1968) and US International University (Ph.D. 1981). His interests are in Franz Kafka and the "Prague Circle" of writers.

## **The 2002 SVU Andrew Elias Human Tolerance Award Goes to Prof. TOMÁŠ HALÍK**

At the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Nomination Committee, consisting of Dr. Slavomil Hubalek (Charles Univ.), Dr. Jiri Pehe (New York Univ. in Prague), Dr. Jirina Siklova (Charles Univ.), and Prof. Zdenek Slouka (Lehigh University), SVU Executive Board named Professor Tomas Halik as the winner of the 2002 SVU Andrew Elias Human Tolerance Award.

The Committee has been fully acquainted with the life and work of Dr. Tomas Halik, the candidate proposed from within SVU ranks for the Award. The materials before the Committee have reinforced their personal knowledge (some of it reaching back over thirty years) of the candidate as a man of exceptional qualities of humaneness, compassion and tolerance. Tomas Halik has amply demonstrated these qualities at many levels of endeavor.

In his functions, all of them voluntary, as the President of the Czech Christian Academy, as a member of the Ecumenical Council established by John Paul II, and a member of the program committee arranging the international meetings of Forum 2000, convoked by President Havel and bringing together personalities of many lands, religions and cultures, Tomas Halik has been consistently one of the strongest voices for tolerance across all human boundaries. In 1998, Halik spent several weeks with monks in a Buddhist monastery in Kyoto, Japan, seeking bases for mutual understanding. As a human being, Tomas Halik has devoted many years to intensive work in anti-alcoholic institutions and with drug addicts and psychopaths, bringing them relief from their misery.

The award which includes a check for \$1,000 was presented to Prof. Halik at the Plenary session of the SVU World Congress in Plzen, June 20, 2002.

## **ACTIVITIES OF SVU MEMBERS**

**PAVEL MACHOTKA** has retired from his university post but not from research or creative work. After moving to Umbria, Italy to a restored farmhouse, he set out again on his writing and painting careers. He has seen to the publication of his most recent research work (*Why People Paint the Way They Do*, which is in press), and begun a second book on Paul Cezanne.

He is enjoying his new contacts in the art world as well, and exhibits actively. His most recent show was in the small hilltop town where he lives, and his next exhibit will be a large retrospective in nearby San Sepolcro, Tuscany, in September.

With access to the internet, he finds that he is as close to his sources of information and his far-flung colleagues as he was before, and he is of course closer to his native Prague. Moving between continents has become easier since 1948, when he escaped Czechoslovakia with his family and settled in the U.S.; old friends are now only farther away, not in another world.



SVU Member, **ZDENEK P. BAZANT**, W.P. Murphy Professor of Civil Engineering and Materials Science, was elected on April 30 a member of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) at the 139th annual meeting of the academy in Washington, D.C. This is his fourth academy membership, after his previous inductions to the National Academy of Engineering (NAE), Washington, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, and Academy of Engineering of Czech Republic, Prague.

This grand academic assembly, established in 1863 by an act of Congress signed by president Lincoln, currently has 1907 members, among which about 140 are also members of NAE. In the field of solid mechanics, the joint NAS-NAE members include J.D. Achenbach, R.W. Clough, S.H. Crandall, L.B. Freund, Y.-C.B. Fung, G.W. Housner, J.W. Hutchinson

and J.R. Rice, an elite group now joined by Bazant whose main contribution to science is considered to be the scaling of failure in solid mechanics.

Last October, Bazant received from Politecnico di Milano his fourth honorary doctorate, after those from the Czech Technical University in Prague, Karlsruhe University, Germany, and University of Colorado, Boulder. Also, he recently received from ISI the award of a “Highly Cited Scientist,” which is given to 250 most cited authors worldwide in engineering, all engineering fields combined. Until the 1980s, all the size effects on structural strength were generally attributed to material randomness. Bazant changed that. He revolutionized the scaling theory beginning with his 1984 discovery of the size effect caused by the energy release associated with large fractures. Introducing asymptotic matching arguments, he derived a deceptively simple law of surprisingly broad applicability, bridging the scaling laws of classical fracture mechanics and plasticity. With his assistants, Bazant experimentally verified his law for concrete, rocks, fiber composites, sea ice, toughened ceramics, cellular materials and snow slabs, and showed how to exploit it to identify material fracture characteristics from experiments. To make computer simulations exhibit the correct scaling, Bazant developed, beginning in 1976, the crack-band and non-local damage concepts now widely used in computations, and justified them by micromechanics of interacting cracks.

## In Memoriam

### **DONN J. KUSHNER (1927-2001)**

Donn J. Kushner, SVU member, the husband of Eva Dubska Kushner, passed away on September 15, 2001, after a valiant struggle against a double illness.

Donn Kushner studied at Harvard (B.Sc. 1948) and McGill (M.Sc. 1950, Ph.D. 1952). He was a research scientist with the Department of Agriculture in Sault Ste. Marie (1954-61) and the National Research Council in Ottawa (1961-65), Associate Professor of Biology (1965-67) and Professor of Biology (1967-88) at the University of Ottawa. In 1988, he joined the Departments of Microbiology and Botany at the Institute of Environmental Studies at the Univ. of Toronto as Professor, and in 1992 became Professor Emeritus in the Department of Botany.

He was a Fellow of Victoria College (1988-92), President of the Canadian Society for Microbiology, Editor of the *Canadian Journal of Microbiology* and of *Archives of Microbiology*. He wrote children's books, several of which won awards and were translated into foreign languages. He was an accomplished chamber music player on the violin and viola.



### **FRANCES MARK (1920-2002)**

Frances Mark or Fanyinka Markova as she was known within the Czechoslovak community, died on December 21, 2001. Although she was born in Prague (January 15, 1920), she grew up in Rokycany. She studied philosophy at Charles University and graduated in 1947. She came to the United States in 1948 and received a Master's Degree in Library Science from the University of Chicago. She was a librarian at the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine and senior cataloger at the National Agricultural Library for over 25 years.

A Holocaust survivor, she was often heard to say: “Every day being alive is a gift.” Mrs. Mark was a member of SVU for a long time, and a dear friend to many of us; she will be an irreplaceable loss.



### **MIROSLAV POSEDEL (1933-2002)**

Dr. Miroslav A. Posedel passed away on April 2, 2002 after a long struggle with cancer. He was a native of Prague where he was born on August 22, 1933. He studied at Charles University where he received his medical degree, specializing in psychiatry.

After coming to the US, Dr. Posedel created the Department of Psychiatry at Southwest General Hospital in Cleveland and was the Head of Psychiatric Department until 1992. Dr. Posedel was one of the founding members of SVU and several times the president of SVU Chapter in Cleveland. He also was the president of the Committee for Liberation of Czechoslovakia in Cleveland Ohio.

He returned to the Czech Republic in summer 2001. He came back on the spring of 2002 to the Cleveland Clinic for cancer treatment and died at his son's house in Lakewood Ohio.



### **JAN NEPOMUK JONAS (1924-2002)**

Jan Nepomuk Jonas died in Hyannis, Massachusetts, USA, on March 18, 2002, at the age of 77. A Structural Civil Engineer and long-time member of the SVU, he was born in Prague as the third and last child of JUDr. Jan Jonas, a leading Czech banker. The family lived in Vinohrady where Jan attended the gymnasium in Slovenská ulice. He was national swimming champion in 1941. When he finished gymnasium, all universities were closed by the Nazis, and he was forced to work in an aviation factory until the end of the war. In 1945 he entered the Technical University (CVUT) to study mechanical engineering in an advanced program and then switched to structural engineering, specializing in soil mechanics. After graduation, he became Assistant to Prof. Alois Myslivec at the Department of Soil Mechanics. After the Communist coup in 1948, he had to leave this position because of his

“unsuitable bourgeois background” and worked at a civil engineering firm in Prague and later at the Geological Research Institute, where he remained until his departure for the USA after the Soviet invasion in 1968.

In the early 1950s, both Jan's family and the family of his wife Eva Stanovská, whom he married in 1952, became targets of state terrorism under the Communist regime. Their property was seized and the family was evicted in the “Action ‘B’ Against



the Bourgeoisie” from their family home to a small two-room flat with no running water in a remote village in Northern Bohemia.

Jan and Eva Jonas and their two young children came to the United States as refugees in March 1969 and settled in Lexington, Massachusetts. After a short association with Harvard University, Jan worked for nearly twenty years at Charles T. Main on large hydroelectric projects in Korea, Nigeria, Paraguay, and the United States. In 1989-90 he served as Acting Co-master of Adams House at Harvard. He was actively supporting numerous Czech anti-Communist causes, and when he was allowed to visit the Czech Republic after 1990, he insisted that respect of human rights and return of the rule of law were most important to hasten the recovery of Czech society from Communist misrule.

## Focus on Younger Generation

*Note: This is a column about the young people and for the young people. This is your column. Send us your story, tell us about your aspiration, your problems, what interests you or what have you. If you are a bit shy, ask your parents to write it for you. Send your comments to: [rechcigl@aol.com](mailto:rechcigl@aol.com)*

**JULIA SVOBODA** was born in 1981 in Stony Brook, New York. Julia is currently a junior at Princeton University (class of 2003) and is an Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) major. She is a 2000 recipient of a Beckman Scholars Award from the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation ([www.beckman-foundation.com](http://www.beckman-foundation.com)). Her research project is entitled “Comparing the Metabolic Costs of Immuno-competence in House Sparrows from Temperate and Tropical Regions.” She has conducted her research for this topic in Panama. She anticipates continuing on in her field of study in a graduate program after graduating from Princeton.

Julia grew up in Bayport, NY, and was fortunate to have her grand-parents, Joseph and Dagmar Svoboda, near by during her formative years. Their efforts in teaching Julia and her sister Katrina conversational Czech enabled the sisters to spend three months in the Czech public school system, where they were immersed in the Czech language. Julia was in fifth grade at the time. Julia went on to complete high school in Bayport, NY, where she achieved many awards, including valedictorian of her class. Today, Julia is an active and fit young lady, enjoying running, biking, and swimming. She has completed the Philadelphia marathon, and a number of local Olympic distance triathlon events. She can be reached at [jsvoboda@princeton.edu](mailto:jsvoboda@princeton.edu).

**KATRINA SVOBODA** was born in 1983, in Stony Brook, New York. Katrina is currently a freshman at Yale University (class of 2005). Katrina is an athlete, and during her high school years has claimed the class B (small schools) New York State championship in each of three individual events: long jump, triple jump, and 400 meter hurdles. She was named Outstanding Track and Field Athlete in Suffolk County, Athlete of the Year in her high school, and graduated ranked third academically in her high school class. She currently competes for the Yale track and field team during the winter and spring seasons.

Katrina was in third grade when she attended the Czech school system, and also has fond memories of “letni tabor”. Though her Czech language ability has slipped over the years, Katrina will be taking a Czech language course at Yale University. Katrina is artistically talented and has an interest in art and architecture. She can be reached at [Psychokittie@aol.com](mailto:Psychokittie@aol.com).

Julia and Katrina still have their rooms at their family home in Bayport, where their parents, Alan and Satu Svoboda, their babicka, Dagmar Svoboda, and the girls' three siblings, Joseph, Lucas, and Alec live.

## SVU CALENDAR 2002

### JANUARY

January 7 - Washington DC Chapter

Event: Lecture, "Putin after Two Years"

Speaker: Prof. Vadim M. Medis, "our own guru, Kremlinologist, and expert on Russia"

Time and Place: 7:30 PM, Little Falls Library, 5501 Massachusetts Ave., Bethesda, MD

January 10 - Prague Chapter

Event: Setkání s režisérem Davidem Radokem

Time and Place: 5 pm., Akademie věd, Národní 3, Praha 1, v místnosti č. 206

January 14 - Nebraska Chapter

Event: Monthly SVU Chapter meeting

Time and Place: 7 pm, Martin Bennet Library, 14th and N Street, Lincoln

January 15 - Washington DC Chapter, jointly with the Czech Embassy

Event: Concert of Washington Musica Viva

Place: Czech Embassy

January 16 - Ottawa Chapter

Event: Lecture „Spomienky na potulky po Tunisku“ Part 2.

January 25 - Swiss Chapter

Event: Premietanie čs. filmu „Stud“ režiséra Ladislava Helgeho z roku 1968

Place: Slavistický seminár, Univerzity Bazilej

January 26 - British Chapter

Event: Lecture, „Čína včera a dnes“

Speaker: Spisovatel Miroslav Hule

Time and Place: 2:30 pm, Velehrad, 22 Ladbroke Square, London W11

January 26 - Los Angeles Chapter

Place: West Los Angeles College

Event: A lecture by Dr. Zdenek Sekanina, an expert on Comet Research, presently working at the JPL in Pasadena. With the participation of the new Consul General of the Czech Republic in Los Angeles, JUDr. Margita Fuchsová

January 28 - Nebraska Chapter

Event: Lecture on Jan Hus followed by a movie about his life

Speaker: Megan Dvorak, University of Nebraska student

Time and Place: 7 pm, Nebraska Union Building, 14th and R Streets, Lincoln

## **FEBRUARY**

February 4 - Washington DC Chapter

Event: Screening of American film “The Search” with Jarmila Novotna

Time and Place: 7:30 pm, Little Falls Public Library, Bethesda, MD

February 11 - Nebraska Chapter

Event: Lecture on Jan Amos Komensky followed by a movie on his life

Speaker: Ron Stiles

Time and Place: 7 pm, Nebraska Union Building, 14th and R Streets, Lincoln

February 14 - Prague Chapter

Event: Pocta Fr. Halasovi (D. Fialková a mladí konzervatoristé)

Time and Place: 5 pm, Akademie ved, Národní 3, Praha 1, v místnosti ř. 206

February 15 - Chicago Chapter

Event: “Natural Supplements and Optimal Health”

Guest speaker: Certified nutritionist Vera E. Sova, MBA

Time and Place: 7:30 pm, Ústředna Moravských Spolků, Berwyn, IL

February 15 - Swiss Chapter

Place: Slavisticky seminar Univerzity Bazilej

Event: Lecture, "Postaveni zen v CR"

Speaker: Doc. PhDr. Jirina Siklová, ved. Katedry soc. prace UK Praha

February 20 - Ottawa Chapter

Event: Lecture "My Travels through Australia and South Africa"

Speaker: Pavel Dvorak

February 21 - Chicago Chapter

Event: Discovering Uprka. Assessment of the Moravian painter

Guest Speaker: George T. Drost, Honorary Consul of the CR

Time and Place: 7:30 pm, John Marshall Law School

February 23 - British Chapter

Event: Lecture, "Ekonomika pred 11. zarim 2001 a po nem"

Speaker: Ekonom Dr. Josef Ludvik Porket (VSE Praha, St. Antony's Oxford, Brunel University).

Time and Place: 2:30 pm, Velehrad, 22 Ladbroke Square, London W11

February 23 - Los Angeles Chapter

Event: A concert of Dvorak's music under the button of Miroslav Kosler from Prague accompanied by dances by the Conejo Civic Ballet Arts group under the artistic director Eva Pokorny.

Place: The Fred Kavli Theater at Thousand Oaks in Thousand Oaks, California.

February 25 - Nebraska Chapter

Event: A preview of "Bohemian Girl" opera by Dr. James Ford

Time and Place: 7 pm, Nebraska Union Building, 14th and R Streets, Lincoln

February 28 - Swiss Chapter

Event: Lecture, "Causa Temelin — Jaderne elektrarny a jejich bezpecnost"

Speaker: Ing. Ladislav Nechvatal, Paul Scherrer Institut

Time and Place: 7 pm, Slavisticky seminar Univerzity Bazilej

End of February (tentative) - Edmonton Chapter - Annual meeting

## **MARCH**

March 4 - Washington DC Chapter

Event: Screening of Leos Janacek's opera "Kata Kabanova"

Place: Little Falls Public Library, Bethesda, MD

March 7 - Minnesota Chapter, jointly with Honorary Consulate of the CR

Event: Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Birth of Tomas Garrigue Masaryk

Speakers: Dr. Josef Mestenhauer, Dr. Ivan Furda and Dr. Mojmir Povolny

Time and Place: 7 pm, CSPA (Sokol) Hall. 383 Michigan St., St. Paul

March 8 - SVU Executive Board

Agenda: SVU World Congress in Plzen, SVU publications etc.

Time and Place: 9 am, SVU President's residence, Rockville, MD  
March 10 - Pittsburgh Chapter  
Event: Performance the Brno Chamber Orchestra  
March 10 - Washington DC Chapter with other Czech organizations  
Event: Commemorative Celebration of T.G. Masaryk's birthday at Czech Embassy  
March 11 - Nebraska Chapter  
Event: Lecture, "Growing up Czech in Nebraska"  
Speaker: Lorraine Duggin, University of Nebraska professor  
Time and Place: 7 pm, Nebraska Union Building, 14th and R Streets, Lincoln  
March 14 - Prague Chapter  
Event: Dr. Petr Spielmann: Tanec smrti v evropské malbě  
Time and Place: 5 pm., Akademie ved, Národní 3, Praha 1, v místnosti c. 206  
March 15 - Chicago Chapter  
Event: Prague Architecture of the 20th Century (aesthetic appreciation)  
Speaker: SVU Chicago vice-president Tony Jandacek  
Time and Place: 7:30 PM, Ustredna Moravskych Spolku, Berwyn, IL  
March 17 - Los Angeles Chapter  
Event: In cooperation with Ceska Narodni Rada, the Chapter will celebrate the Birthrate of the first president of the Czechoslovak Republic, T. G. Masaryk  
Speaker: Milos Halouzka, recitation: Oton Kovarik  
Time and Place: 3 pm, Sokol Hall in Los Angeles, 500 Western Ave. Los Angeles  
March 17 - Pittsburgh Chapter  
Event: Performance of the Kocian Quartet  
March 18 - Nebraska Chapter  
Event: Monthly SVU Chapter meeting  
Time and Place: 7 pm, Martin Bennet Library, 14th and N Street, Lincoln  
March 20 - Ottawa Chapter  
Event: Lecture „Ekonomika, investice a vzájemný ochod âR - Kanada  
Speaker: Vladimír Bartl, Embassy of the Czech Republic in Canada  
March 21 - Bratislava Chapter  
Event: General Assembly Meeting  
Time and Place: 4 pm, Klubova miestnosť SVU, Laurinska ul. c. 14  
March 23 - Washington DC Chapter, jointly with the Czech Embassy  
Event: Concert of the Martinu String Quartet at Czech Embassy  
March 25 - Nebraska Chapter  
Event: Lecture on Easter Czech Traditions, followed by a potluck party  
Speaker: Katya Koubek, University of Nebraska Ph.D. student  
Time and Place: 7 pm, Nebraska Union Building, 14th and R Streets, Lincoln  
March 30 - British Chapter  
Event: "Radio Svobodna Evropa a současnost"  
Speaker: Jan Jun  
Time and Place: 2:30 pm, Velehrad, 22 Ladbroke Square, London W11

***For up-to-date SVU Calendar 2002 see <http://www.svu2000.org/calendar>***