

HOW WAS IT WITH THE RESIGNATIONS IN FEBRUARY 1948

Václav Veber

For more than forty years, Czech historiography has accepted the wrong notion that the communist assumption of power in February 1948 took place using basically constitutional and legal means, even though the communists widely used the pressures in the streets and most of their methods were disputable. It was only historian Václav Veber who demonstrated beyond dispute that the events in February 1948 were a coup d'état not only according to the common sense, but also to the strict interpretation of law. The study focuses on two problems: how come that Beneš failed so grossly at a moment of utmost threat to the state, and how come that his unconstitutional behaviour has not been known for a long time.

"RUDOLF, CHEER UP..." THE FATEFUL 15 MARCH 1939 AND PRIME MINISTER RUDOLF BERAN

Jaroslav Rokoský

Whoever is in power is responsible for it. Rudolf Beran was in power in the top political position during the Second Republic period and he is what European history knows as the 'tragic figure'. A recognized politician, he was basically in a wrong place at a wrong time; he was forced to negotiate and cooperate with the occupation forces, which earned him the reputation of a traitor who is to blame for all the misfortune that afflicted Bohemia and Moravia. Jaroslav Rokoský, the author of an in-the-works extensive biography on Beran, tries to break this typical image of his. This study focuses on the drama before and during the occupation.

THE DEFENCE OF CARPATHIAN RUTHENIA

Radan Lášek

In addition to the seventieth anniversary of the German occupation of Bohemia and Moravia, we also commemorate the occupation of Carpathian Ruthenia by the army of Horthy's Hungary. This study focuses on specific events in the easternmost part of the period Czechoslovak republic, the political turbulence at the turn of 1938 and 1939, various countries' interests in territorial gains at Czechoslovakia's expense, and on separatists' efforts to eliminate Czechoslovak

power in Carpathian Ruthenia. Developments culminated in March 1939 as Czech military and police forces were involved in numerous rear-guard actions, followed by the evacuation of Czechoslovak citizens from Carpathian Ruthenia. Carpathian Ruthenia never became a part of Czechoslovakia again.

I NEVER WANTED TO STAND AGAINST THE STATE AND THE NATION

AN OUTLINE OF THE LIFE STORY OF FRANTIŠEK RAČANSKÝ, ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL SOCIALISTIC PARTY'S "POLITICAL SIX"

Martin Jindra

František Račanský was as a high ranking official of the Prague Municipal Authority for a long time, an important representative of the Czechoslovak Hussite Church and a prominent member of the Czechoslovak socialists. His religion, political attitude and activity were the pretext of his arrest and conviction. He provided his apartment several times to the "Political Six", a group of representatives of the parties eliminated by the communists who, led by Milada Horáková, met and informed one another about the developments and prepared for the potential restoration of democracy. This earned František Račanský a sentence of 28 years for treason and espionage; he served almost 13 years in the communist prisons.

XAVER-JINDRA RESISTANCE IN THE KUTNÁ HORA AND ČÁSLAV REGIONS

Václav Veber

Memory and History introduces a new section, entitled the Third Resistance. It focuses on the resistance against the communist power after 1948, the history of which is still hidden in the archives. The first paper describes the anti-communist resistance around the Central Bohemian towns of Kutná Hora and Čáslav where many groups operated, engaging in activities ranging from supporting guerrillas and foreign agents to independent sabotage and pressure actions. The communist secret police soon detected a majority of the resistance activities, infiltrating the groups and arresting their members later. Fabricated trials followed and sentences ranged from tens of years in prison to death penalty in several cases. Such a severe

punishment is in a stark contrast with the factual impact of the resistance in Kutná Hora and Čáslav areas in many cases.

THE FATAL MISSION OF MORAVEC'S COURIER

Adam Hradílek, Petr Tichý

Miroslav Dvořáček was a Flying Academy student who wanted to be a fighter pilot. But he was expelled from the army together with many others soon after the communist coup d'état because of his lack of loyalty to the new regime. He decided to go into exile and joined the legendary General Moravec, the chief of Czechoslovak intelligence during the World War II and the leader of the post-war anticommunist resistance. As an agent he crossed the border back to Czechoslovakia, but before he could fulfil his mission, he was arrested and spent fourteen years in jail. It would be just one of countless stories of this type that took place in Czechoslovakia in the 1950's if not for the involvement of Milan Kundera, a writer of worldwide acclaim who as a young student made a fateful mark on Dvořáček's life. It was him who informed the police about Dvořáček, after Iva had confided to her boyfriend who then told Kundera.

THE INSPECTORATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR IN 1968 AND THE PURGES IN THE MINISTRY'S STRUCTURES AFTER AUGUST 1968

Milan Bárta

After the tanks of the Warsaw Pact armies had ended the attempt at reforming communism, the great 'settling of accounts' started across the entire society. This study focuses on the development of the changes at the Ministry and especially among the Inspectorate employees during 1968, describing initially the reformists' attempts at purging the Ministry and directing it towards "socialism with a human face" that came to a halt as a result of the 1968 invasion. Then the pendulum swung back, bringing along much more radical purges, which resulted in a total stoppage of any reformatory movement at the Ministry (arguably the most important sector for the communist regime), which conformed to the new "normalization" power. Statistics indicate that almost 4,000 people were forced to leave the Ministry between 1969 and 1974 and many of those stayed were transferred to less important positions.