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SUMMARY OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK PROVINCIAL PRESS

(4 - 10 May 1960)

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SUMMARY OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK PROVINCIAL PRESS

Source Coverage: 4 - 10 May 1960

This report is based on selected issues of provincial Czechoslovak newspapers published during the period 4 - 10 May 1960. The statements within brackets are those of the researcher.

Source Abbreviations

JP = Jihoceska Pravda (Ceske Budejovice)
NS = Nova Svoboda (Ostrava)
P = Pochoden (Hradec Kralove)
Pra = Pravda (Plzen)
Pru = Pruboj (Usti nad Labem)
R = Rovnost (Brno)
VN = Vychodoslovenske Noviny (Kosice)

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PART I. THE GOVERNMENT

Implementation of Government Policy on a Regional and Local Level

[See PART II. THE COMMUNIST PARTY.]

[Researcher's Note : In the week of 4-10 May 1960, the Czechoslovak provincial newspapers under review here devoted some 80 percent of their space to comments, feature articles, pictures, poems, and so forth, marking the 15th anniversary of the "liberation of the country by the Soviet Army." This material, centrally supplied to the regional editors, was used extensively, at the expense of many of the other, usual items. This explains the scarcity of hard information in this report.]

Commemorative meetings celebrating the 15th anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia by the Red Army were held in Hradec Kralove, Pardubice, and other towns of East Bohemian Kraj. (P, 7 May 60, p 3)

PART II. THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Indoctrination and Propaganda

[Frantisek KUBA, a secretary of East Bohemian Kraj committee of the KSC, said in a leading article commemorating the 15th anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia from Nazi occupation] :

"If we were still under the influence of the United States of America, what would be our fate ? The US today is strengthening the growth of German militarism. The US promoted the establishment of a new German Bundeswehr [armed forces] and its integration within the aggressive NATO community in which former Nazi generals have reached the highest position. Moreover, American reactionary circles go so far as to arm German militarists with the most modern US war equipment....."

"There can be no doubt about the fact that were it not for the great foresight of our Communist Party and our working people, our country - as one of those situated in the center of the European crossroad - would today live in the shadow of

the threat of revanchism, and that in subsequent imperialist machinations, the expansionist demands of the German imperialists and militarists would have [sic] prevailed once more. Our nation, however, in 1945 had already uncompromisingly decided for an alliance with its liberator, the Soviet Union, and it held to its conviction steadfastly despite all traps, such as the Marshall Plan and other so-called "offers" made by our bourgeoisie and the West." (P, 7 May 60, p 1)

If the US plane shot on 1 May 1960 over Soviet territory were the only incident of this kind, one might even believe the first official American explanation that the plane was on a meteorological mission. However, too much irrefutable evidence shows that the flight was but a part of the large US espionage program in which the Americans unashamedly engage. The 1 May flight was part and parcel of the "open-skies plan" which President Eisenhower attempts to impose on the world as a bi-lateral US-USSR agreement. At times, military circles in the US practice this open-skies plan unilaterally. [The article then continues to quote from UPI and the New York Herald Tribune to the effect that the "Tiros-1" satellite is to be used for military espionage.] (NS, 7 May 60, p 4)

The Pentagon is confused - the American flyer talks - such, in brief, is the situation after the second announcement by Nikita S. Khrushchev at the closing session of the Supreme Soviet. As is well known, the US Ministry of Defense at first maintained that a plane on meteorological mission has been lost over the Soviet Union. That was when Washington did not know that the pilot of the plane was alive and talking. Today, of course, these cheap excuses have been exposed for what they are. The truth is that a plane on a spying mission 2,000 kilometers deep in the USSR has been shot down. (Pra, 8 May 60, p 2)

Correct guidance of election campaign agitation must result in further successes in our industrial and agricultural production. Therefore; Party organizations in North Moravian Kraj must tie their agitation work to specific tasks of our economy. In the coal mines, the slogan is "For a steady tempo in plan fulfillment"; in metallurgical plants, the motto is "The reserves in our metallurgical industries are inexhaustible".

A major area to which the present agitation campaign must apply itself is the task of achieving a decisive upturn in agricultural production. The slogan here is : "More and cheaper production", and it concerns every working person, not only in the countryside but in the cities as well.

Achievement of all these goals must become an inseparable component of all political agitation, and agitators themselves must be in clear as to what they are agitating for and what specific results will accrue to each community by fulfillment of political tasks. (NS, 4 May 60, p 1)

Town and villages of North Moravian Kraj live in happy expectation of the forthcoming 12 June 1960 elections. A total of 69,000 Party functionaries and other citizens are at work at the moment in North Moravian Kraj alone. Public meetings are a daily occurrence. The kraj is to elect 36 deputies for the National Assembly and 150 deputies for the Kraj People's Council.

Since October 1959, an agitation center has been at work in Nove Hodolany, North Moravian Kraj, with 150 agitators serving some 3,500 people. These agitators were schooled especially for pre-election propaganda tasks, and now they themselves influence citizens by organizing discussion evenings, political exhibitions, and friendly, persuasive chats.

In the commune of Stara Bela, North Moravian Kraj, 150 agitators work among 2,045 registered voters. (NS, 7 May 60, p 1)

Currently, in the pre-election period, some 18,000 agitators, based in 1,166 agitation centers, are at work in East Slovakian Kraj. Over the weekend, the agitators visited more than 200,000 families all over the kraj. (VN, 7 May 60, p 5)

North Bohemian Kraj is doing well in the election campaign. As of 1 May 1960, the number of agitation centers in the kraj approached 800, and 30,000 citizens became members of agitation collectives. They go among the people to talk to them about present economic tasks, the new constitution, and about the candidates for local and parliamentary election. (Pru, 5 May 60, p 1)

We are far from asserting that the 1920 Consitution, which prevailed through the entire period of the pre-Munich bourgeois republic, was anti-democratic. But even the most democratic bourgeois state cannot bring so much to the working people as our People's Republic can. What was mere fiction in the democratic language of the bourgeois consitution, our new constitution is transforming into reality. For instance, Article 20 provides that the economic policy of the state aim at reducing working hours without curtailment of wages. Bourgeois consitutions do not even attempt to present such perspectives, because they would remain a dead letter and would only tend to

irritate the people. But in our country this will become a reality in the near future. (Pru, 5 May 60, p 2)

On 5 May 1960, the daily Nova Svoboda published in Ostrava, North Moravian Kraj, celebrates the 15th anniversary of its existence. From its very beginnings, it was a paper very different from all others published in Ostrava. It did not follow them into the bourgeois sensationalism, which soon replaced the feigned gratitude to the Soviet Army and equally feigned professions of friendship with the USSR. Nova Svoboda remained a true defender of the people's interests. It was often ridiculed by lovers of cheap sensationalism, who said that it was not a newspaper but a production conference on paper. These people said that the readers had enough to do in their work, that when reading their newspaper they wished to "escape" from their daily work. But our people never wanted to escape anywhere - and why should a newspaper belonging to the people try to "escape" ?

So far as is known, it has never happened in the history of such a paper - as for instance, the New York Times - that it prints a letter from an unemployed person. Instead, it devotes much space to speculations on the stock exchange. And why, then, in this country where everyone can find work and where work is the primary life-interest of all people who want to live better, should we not print letters and articles from and about the working people and their work ? (NS, 5 May 60, p 1)

An exhibition entitled "Fighting Man, Succeeding Man, Victorious Man", depicting 15 years of the development of Czechoslovakia, was opened in Plzen on 9 May 1960. In pictures, drawings, charts, and films, the growth of happy Czechoslovak life is depicted. Moreover, a machine industry and an agriculture exhibition complete the picture. A delegation of the kraj committee of the United Socialist [Communist] Party [of East Germany] from Gera attended the opening ceremonies. Jan PELNAR, chairman of the kraj People's Council in Plzen, delivered the main address. (Pra, 10 May 60, p 1)

A number of shortcomings in the organization of work can be eliminated by proper distribution of Communists to all work places. The success of this Leninist method is attested by the experience of many industrial plants in West Bohemian Kraj, including the "V.I. Lenin" Works in Plzen and the Ejpovice ore mines.

The same principle must guide cadre policy in agriculture.

It cannot be tolerated that all Communists are concentrated in animal production and none in grain and other plant production. In some places it will be necessary to re-assign Communists, even to other villages. Only in this way will the Party organization be assured of influencing all sectors of work. At the same time, assignment of a specific task to each Party member will ensure a higher level of activity among Communists. (Pra, 4 May 60, p 2)

All schools of Hodonin Okres, South Moravian Kraj, are organizing special meetings at which pupils and their teachers jointly express their gratitude to the Party and government for making textbooks and school aids available free of charge.

Pupils of the Third 8-year school in Hodonin gave their gratitude a tangible expression by pledging to collect 23 tons of scrap and 780 kilograms of medicinal herbs before the end of the [1959-1960] school year. They also pledged to compile an agitation program for the election campaign and to send presents to members of the Pioneer organization in the USSR. Similar pledges were made by pupils of other schools. (R, 5 May 60, p 1)

The book-burning Jesuits are no longer around us but the Vatican seems bent on continuing their tradition. Its official organ presently published a list of movies which Catholics are permitted to see, and also of those not recommended or forbidden by the Vatican. The "permitted" films consist mainly of American-style adventures. Apparently there is no objection if the Catholic film-viewer's spiritual fare consists of murder, violence, and a "happy ending". The ban imposed by the Vatican is directed primarily against progressive films, such as those made by Vittorio Gassman. Again, as in the Middle Ages, the Church attempts to dictate what the faithful may and may not see. (Pra, 4 May 60, p 2)

People's libraries in Znojmo Okres, South Moravian Kraj, are contributing their share to the election campaign and to the agitation drive. Many of them have organized talks with citizens, in which our life is compared to that of the pre-Munich period and life in other countries, where capitalists are still in power. Librarians aid in establishing agitation centers, provide literature for agitators, and so on. A number of agitation centers have been set up directly on library premises. (R, 6 May 60, p 3)

The "Karl Marx" Museum was opened in Karlovy Vary, West Bohemian Kraj. The opening ceremony was attended by a CC CPCS

delegation which included Academician Ladislav STOLL and Jindrich VESELY, director of the Institute for the History of the KSC. The museum is located on Karl Marx Street, formerly Zhukov Street, in Karlovy Vary. (Pra, 6 May 60, p 1)

The "Theater of the Border Guards" opens today in Cheb, West Bohemian Kraj. Two performances of Smetana's "Bartered Bride" are scheduled for the opening day : one for those who helped in the work on reconstruction of the theater building, and the other for model workers from Cheb factories. However, there were 8,000 applications for tickets from among the general public, and because of this great interest, the "Bartered Bride" will be performed once more toward the end of the month May 1960. The new theater has 474 seats. (Pra, 7 May 60, p 2)

Comrade Anton MRKOS, director of the Meteorological Institute at Lomnický štít, East Slovakian Kraj, was a member of the Soviet Antarctic expedition. He told about his work and experience in the Antarctic at a meeting of the local National Committee in Starý Smokovec. Also present at the meeting was USSR consul general SHULGIN from Bratislava, who conferred an honorary citation of the Soviet Academy of Sciences on MRKOS. (VN, 5 May 60, p 1)

Alexander Nikolayevich SABUROV, Hero of the Soviet Union, former partisan commander, and major-general of the Soviet Army, visited East Slovakian Kraj for the celebrations of the 15th anniversary of the liberation of Czechoslovakia. (VN, 7 May 60, p 5)

A delegation of trade unionists from Poland, Great Britain, Cuba, and Brazil, who attended the First of May rally in Prague, came to North Bohemian Kraj for a visit. The foreign trade unionists visited the state health resort in Teplice and several industrial enterprises, where they talked to members of Socialist Labor Brigades. (Pru, 5 May 60, p 1)

Four Algerian students visited Opava, North Moravian Kraj, as guests of the young people of the town. They were warmly received everywhere. (NS, 8 May 60, p 6)

PART III. ECONOMIC INFORMATION

In 1959, the Soviet Union exported to Czechoslovakia 4,760,000 tons of iron ore, 51,000 tons of non-ferrous metals, 50,000 tons of cotton, and 1,800,000 tons of grain. In the same year, the Soviet Union delivered machinery in the value of 235,800,000 rubles.

Speaking of grain, Hradec Kralove and Pardubice Krajs combined received (in 1959) 113,188 tons of grain from the Soviet Union. In 1960, the figure will be some 177,000 tons. Actual production in these krajs was 140,480 and 146,180 tons respectively. In these two krajs, 815 Soviet tractors of the DT-54 traction type are currently in use, in addition to other Soviet-made agricultural equipment. (P, 7 May 60, p 2)

The "Agrostroj" plant in Pelhrimov, South Bohemian Kraj, has developed into a major manufacturer of farm machinery. Over the past 10 years, its output has increased 17 times, and by 1965 it will be treble of what it is today. The plant will turn out 22,000 combines for cutting and processing ensilage crops over the next few years, in addition to many other types of farm machinery. (JP, 5 May 60, p 1)

The "Chemosvit" engineering plant at Svit, East Slovakian Kraj, manufactures machines for continuous production of viscose cord fiber. These machines were not manufactured in Czechoslovakia before. Eight of them are already in operation in the "Severoceske Chemicke Zavody" (North Bohemian Chemical Works) in Lovosice, North Bohemian Kraj, replacing "discontinuous" machines imported from abroad. Additional machines, which bring substantial savings in production costs of viscose cord fiber, will be supplied to this and other chemical factories for the manufacture of tires, conveyor belts, and transmission belts. (VN, 5 May 60, p 2)

Test drilling has begun on the proposed new dam on the Ohre River, West Bohemian Kraj. The dam will provide water for the towns of Cheb and Frantiskovy Lazne, and possibly also the power plant at Tisova. (Pra, 6 May 60, p 3)

A world record in mechanized coal mining was established on 7 May 1960 in the "Dukla" mine near Dolni Sucha, North Moravian Kraj. In 31 days, a group of miners hauled 36,613 tons of coal. (NS, 8 May 60, pp 1-6)

Vsetin, in North Moravian Kraj, is one of our towns which

have benefited substantially by the industrial expansion of the postwar years. Almost all of the large "MEZ" plant (Moravské Elektrotechnické Zavody; Moravian Electrical Engineering Plant) was built after the war. In addition to its original line of electric motors, last year [1959] the plant took over from the "V.I. Lenin" Works in Plzen the manufacture of traction engines for mine locomotives used to remove overburden in open coal pits. With the growth of its industries, the town itself has grown, and since 1945 almost 2,000 apartments have been built by the state, in addition to 700 family homes. Throughout the Third Five-Year Plan period, 303 new apartments are to be constructed each year. (NS, 4 May 60, p 2)

In order to fulfill the production tasks set forth by the Third Five-Year Plan, the "Československé Naftové Doly" (Czechoslovak Oil Wells) in Hodonin, South Moravian Kraj, was faced with a choice between two courses of action. Either it was necessary to purchase new drilling equipment or to modernize the existing equipment, which is behind the world standards.

Employees of the enterprise chose the second course, and after successful experiments made in 1956, they are now proceeding to convert their drilling equipment to electrical operation. This, however, will require a host of other improvements as well, among them acquisition of portable and easily assembled feeder cable sets and securing of a priority supply of electric power from the network. (R, 5 May 60, p 3)

The iron ore mines and dressing plants at Ejpvovice near Rokycany, West Bohemian Kraj, provide a good example of the progress achieved in our country in the last 15 years. The first drills were sunk here in 1952, and the next year the first ore was removed by surface mining. The first furnace in the dressing plant was fired on 1 October 1955, and the last - 10th - furnace was fired on 6 June 1956.

But expansion of the plant goes on, and today it is the largest of its kind in Europe. During the last five years alone, 579 modern new apartments were constructed for its employees; this year [1960], 85 will be added. (Pra, 6 May 60, p 1)

What will the Third Five-Year Plan bring to the people of East Bohemian Kraj? In the first place, thousands of new jobs. The total number of persons employed will increase by 60,800 and 36 percent more women will be employed than in 1960. Total cash income per capita will rise from 6,543 koruny

in 1960 to 7,897 koruny in 1965. Personal consumption will rise by 36-38 percent, compared to the nationwide average of 30 percent.

Now, in 1960, there are 39 electric washing machines for each 100 households; in 1965, there will be 82. The number of refrigerators for each 100 households will increase from 5 to 23, and TV sets from 3 to 28. There are now, in 1960, 13 passenger cars per thousand of population; in 1965 there will be 35. (VN, 5 May 60, p 2)

"Although we almost literally have to work on our laps", said comrade LUKES from the "V.I. Lenin" Works in Plzen, "We do have something of an assembly-line production here". He was referring to the production of trolley buses, about 25 of which are made each month despite the fact that workshops are scattered all over town and have only obsolete equipment.

But trolley bus production will be transferred some time in late summer 1960 to Ostrov - near Karlovy Vary, West Bohemian Kraj - where a new plant is under construction. There, many more units will be produced, to satisfy the growing demand for trolley buses - particularly abroad. The long-standing rivalry between the trolley bus makers in Plzen and those in the "Tatara" plant in Prague-Smichov was recently decided by a government test which was in favor of the Plzen product. (Pra, 5 May 60, p 1)

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