

**"I CAN'T STOP THE WHEELS OF FATE ..."***- The King of Czech Dance Music,**R. A. Dvorský, Before a Communist Court*

BY PETR KOURA

Rudolf Antonín Dvorský (1899–1966) was one of the most popular Czech swing and jazz singers. In 1929–1944 he directed the dance group *The Melody Boys*, one of the most successful music orchestras in Czechoslovakia and, later, in the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia. He founded and managed a successful music publishing house. Although jazz was described as a "perverse art" by the Nazis, Dvorský's art work was not greatly restricted under the Nazi occupation. In 1944 he contracted tuberculosis and had to disband his orchestra. After February 1948 jazz came to be deplored by the Communists just as it had been by the Nazis before – it was described as "decadent bourgeois art". R.A. Dvorský, whose publishing house was nationalised, therefore attempted to flee abroad in the summer of 1950 where he wanted to continue his editorial career with *Mills Music*, an American publisher. The escape was to be made using a Czech Airlines aeroplane which was to be hijacked by a group of Czech pilots, formerly RAF pilots. The plan failed because of a defect in the plane. The attempt came to light two and a half years later when one of the organisers, General Vilém Stanovský, a Czechoslovak W.W.I. legionnaire in France and a former prisoner at the Dachau concentration camp, was arrested. Stanovský was caught by the Communist secret security police through its officer lieutenant Arnošt Beneš, who pretended to be an agent of the western intelligence services. Stanovský never revealed the participants of the intended escape under interrogation – the investigation probably identified them through an informer assigned to Stanovský's prison cell. The state security police surveilled R.A. Dvorský and secretly photographed him; he was arrested in September 1953. He was convicted of attempting to desert the state and conspiracy to commit high treason and was sentenced to five years in prison in February 1954; later the sentence was cut to three and a half years on health grounds. In the prison he was, amongst others, reprimanded for breaking the ban on teaching English using messages written on pieces of paper. He was released in May 1960 and died on 02 August 1966.

**"WE HAVE GOT RID OF HORÁKOVÁ, WE WILL DO THE SAME WITH THE AMERICAN BEETLE!"***A Campaign Accompanying the Trial of JUDr. Milada Horáková*

BY PAVLÍNA FORMÁNKOVÁ

The slogan in the title, acquired from a temporary cinema weekly, provides a self-explanatory insight into the atmosphere of the Czechoslovak spring and summer of 1950 under the influence of two large-scale propagandist campaigns organised by the ruling regime. Even though two quite different facts were concerned – the trial of JUDr. Milada Horáková and twelve other "traitors" in the first case, and the outbreak of potato beetle in our fields in the other case – a set of identical features will be found in their mechanism. Moreover, the two campaigns closely followed each other. This essay describes the campaign accompanying the trial of JUDr. Milada Horáková. Based on archive materials, an attempt is made to reconstruct the several months spent preparing this campaign, its course and subsequent evaluation. It describes how "spontaneous reactions" to this trial were organised in regions and districts where following the instructions of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party public meetings were summoned where proclamations requesting the most resolute sentence for the "traitors" under trial were signed. The essay also proves that this propagandist campaign was aimed even at children and is an example of one of the saddest ways in which children were manipulated. Pupils at schools not only wrote resolutions

asking for a high penalty, but they were also inconspicuously interrogated on how their parents spoke about the trial at home. The essay also describes the role of the Czechoslovak press, radio, film and even theatre as part of the campaign, and how the western media informed about the process. The last part of the essay deals with pleas for mercy for those sentenced to the death penalty, sent to President Gottwald by individuals and organisations from the West, as well as those sent in by Czechoslovak people who took the courage to plea for mercy for Milada Horáková, Jan Buchal, Závěš Kalandra and Oldřich Pecl, which brought them immediately to the attention of the State Police. The campaign accompanying the trial of JUDr. Milada Horáková was one of the "grandest" propagandist campaigns of the Communist regime. The aim of the campaigns was to show how the Communists would treat their opponents, and that they would not hesitate to issue the death penalty in the case of a woman, moreover the mother of a young child. For an essay on a propagandist campaign with the potato beetle or the "American beetle" in the key role, see the next issue of this magazine.

**CHARTER 77 AS SEEN BY CZECH PRISONERS**

BY TOMÁŠ BURSÍK

The essay deals with the reactions of Czech prisoners to the Declaration of Charter 77 and to the steps taken by the official Communist powers towards the signatories of Charter 77. The imprisoned men and women were not a unified group. They were a very diverse sample of political prisoners as well as those punished for criminal offences and other crimes. Some of them were imprisoned repeatedly. The essay is based on the authentic resources and knowledge of some of the characteristics of general relationships. The archive materials mostly comprise the documents of the former Interior Security Section (later Department). They are the monthly collected reports of the former SNV (prison administration) Department which were sent to the Minister of Justice of the Czech Socialist Republic and the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party on a regular basis. The publication of the Declaration of Charter 77 abroad and the subsequent reaction of the Communist establishment provoked a strong reaction among the prisoners in the first weeks of 1977. Some of them compared it to the events of 1968 and gave vivid commentaries on the standpoints and opinions of celebrities and popular characters. Especially with the political prisoners, a strong interest in the development around Charter 77 is apparent. A special reaction was seen with the prisoners in the Class III prison in Valdice. They began perceiving themselves as further victims of the Communist regime, and tried to attribute their crimes as political. They tried to carry out various events supporting Charter 77 while still in prison. As time passed the interest Charter 77 among the imprisoned waned, with the exception being the political prisoners, especially those in the Plzeň-Bory prison.

**"SACHERGATE" – THE FIRST RECORD AFFAIR***Difficulties of the Post-communist Elite Not Only Concerning the State Security Files*

BY PAVEL ŽÁČEK

The Communist security forces, especially State Security as the political police, bequeathed us a specific heritage at the end of 1989, consisting of incomplete file records both of monitoring of "unwanted" or "hostile" persons and of the collaborating informers, and a relatively complete record system which was the key to how these operative documents were used. Since the very first moment it acquired political and constitutional responsibility, the newly emerging power was confronted with information held by the old guard of officers of the Federal Ministry of Interior. The complicated process of renewing the security staff and the need to clear the top state officials and legislative bodies, actually carried out by the representatives of the old regime under the well established

technology, resulted in a severe political conflict, to be seen at the highest levels as the pre-election conflict of the former OF (Citizens' Forum) and CSL (Czechoslovak People's Party). The political situation several months after 17 November 1989 prevented any pragmatic solution regarding the former State Security informers in the government or top leadership of political entities, some of which, to make it more complicated, were even actively involved in the democratisation process. The conflict actually led to a duel between Richard Sacher, appointed as the Minister of the Interior by Václav Havel, and the deputies Jaroslav Procházka and Viliam Ciklamini who backed their ex-communist colleagues from the UOUD (a predecessor of the intelligence services) including the director, Zdeněk Formánek. The re-activated officers of the former State Security Forces, appointed to a new intelligence service, checked various people's records as requested by some constitutional officials, and this process collided with the check initiated in the middle of March 1990 by the Minister of the Interior (and probably also by the President), as it was actually performed by exactly the same officers of the old regime at the Statistical Evidence Department under the Organisational Division of the Federal Ministry. The conflict inside the Ministry culminated in the withdrawal of two deputies of the Minister, the director of the UOUD and the transformation of the Organisational Division into the Coordination and Management Office of the Federal Ministry. Concurrently the record checks on constitutional officials were halted, their operative materials were relocated to a special section of the Statistical Evidence Department's archive fund (called "Fond Z") and subsequently in the vault room under the control of the Minister of the Interior. At the political level, the conflict resulted in a controversy between the Chairman of the Security Committee at the Parliament Chamber, Ladislav Lis, and Minister Richard Sacher, who was backed by President Havel. Although the situation led to a political stalemate, it sparked the public's interest in record checking as a kind of catharsis of the Czechoslovak public life, as well as some scandals which became associated with it.

### ORWELL'S YEAR IN KOPŘIVNICE

*"Conclusions from Repeated Violation of the A-oper-I-3 Directive by the Officers of the Regional Secret Police Department in Ostrava"*

BY PETR BLAŽEK

This historical essay deals with the circumstances and implications of the effort to get the Roman-Catholic priest Václav Altrichtr to collaborate with the State Police on 14 April 1984 in Kopřivnice. This case provides evidence that the Secret Police officers did not hesitate long before using brutality in their work as late as in the 1980's. As the priest was refusing to become a collaborator, the officers of the District Department in Nový Jičín, kpt. Oldřich Krkoška and pprap. Jiří Mlejnecký, threatened him with a butcher's knife, a fabricated accusation of rape and subsequent arrest. The annex contains the Instruction of the Head of Regional Office of Secret Police in Ostrava, plk. Josef Šobán, of the 8 October 1984, which demonstrates the control schemes of the secret police and the important role of the internal directives which defined the procedures for acquiring and directing State Police collaborators. This case is a memento of the failed attempts to investigate and condemn Communist crimes after 1989.

### "UNDERMINE TODAY'S REGIME AS MUCH AS YOU CAN!"

*Illegal publications of the Za pravdu resistance group (1949)*

BY PETR BLAŽEK

This critical edition of documents includes all the existing illegal publications of the Za pravdu ("For Truth") anti-Communist group which was active in 1949 in Prague,

České Budějovice and Vodňany. The documents are accompanied by the introductory historical essay which devotes attention to the lives of their authors. The two mimeographed issues of the Za pravdu magazine and several leaflets, saved in the investigation files of the State Police, contain not only political commentaries and emotional proclamations for resistance against the post-February regime, but also rather ironic movie and literary reviews. The tone of all the articles, however, was the same – the authors sought to expose the totalitarian regime, mocked the primitive Red propaganda and international failures of the Soviet Union and sarcastically commented upon speeches given by Communist leaders. In connection with the distribution of these prints, the State Police arrested an increasing number of people, most of whom were subsequently sentenced to many years' imprisonment. In the first trial, the State Court in Prague sentenced the writer Karel Pecka, Czechoslovak People's Party leader Antonín Řežáb, movie director František Šádek and actor and screenwriter Vladimír Valenta. Their arrest, according to the archive documents, was helped by the State Police collaborator Miloslav Cettl whose role in the case as a whole has not yet been sufficiently clarified. The printed materials of the Prague group also continued to be spread by friends of Karel Pecka – members of the Scout Group in České Budějovice, led by František Zahrádka, a young radio mechanic who cooperated with the former flight mechanic Silvestr Müller. In the summer of 1949 the group established cooperation with the American military intelligence service in Bavaria where they illegally guided refugees over the border. In September 1949 the group from České Budějovice was arrested by the military intelligence service and subsequently sentenced in a separate trial by the State Court in Prague. Silvestr Müller was sentenced to life imprisonment and died in an accident in a uranium mining camp in 1954, and most of the other nineteen people were sentenced to many years in prison. Although some of them were conditionally released before the end of the term, none of them was successfully rehabilitated before the end of the Communist regime.

### ACTION "BOJANOVICE" - NOVEMBER 11, 1976

BY PETR BLAŽEK AND VLADIMÍR BOSÁK

In the Archive of Security Forces were found hundreds of thousands photographs made by the Stalking Department of Ministry of Interior members. Now these represent unique historical resource to the history of Communiste regime in Czechoslovakia. Not only known and unknown occurrences, persons, buildings, streets are captured but also there is unique historical atmospehre. One of the reminding files has cover name "Bojanovice" with negatives of so far unpublished shots from the hallway of the Municipal People Court buliding in Prague where on November11, 1976 was acted revision of the first trial with art director of music group The Plastic People of the Universe and poet Ivan Jirous, the leader of the group DG 307 Pavel Zajicek, evangelical pastor and songwriter Svatopluk Karasek and saxophonist of The Plastic People of the Universe Vratislav Brabeneč. The court trial with underground musicans happend to be prologue to the birth of Charta77. This is proven by photographs on which, beside other persons, captured in the intimate dialogue are: Catholic philosopher Jiří Nemeč and the former member of the Central Committee of Czechoslovak Communist Party Frantisek Kriegel who as the only one refused to sign capitulant Moscow Protokol (after the Soviet occupation in August 1968). Together with photographs are published also transcripts of all archival documents which remind in the file "Bojanovice" . In accompanying text the focus is given not only to the court trial but also to the technique used in clandestine photography.