

## SUMMARY

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An aristocrat, diplomat and poet in the service of the republic:  
The story of Count František Bořek-Dohalský from Dohalice  
(1887–1951)

Zdeněk Hazdra

This study looks at the life of František Bořek-Dohalský from Dohalice, a member of the aristocratic Bořek-Dohalský family from Dohalice, who deviates considerably from commonly held notions about the nobility in modern Czech history as well as from the ranks of the aristocracy itself. Despite the abolition of privileges and the noble status in 1918, the Dohalský family positively accepted the establishment of an independent Czechoslovak state in the autumn of 1918. They identified with its ideals and became part of the governing civilian elite. František entered the service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and worked as a diplomat at the embassies in London and Vienna. In Austria, he was caught off balance by the advent of fascism and the subsequent *anschluss* with Nazi Germany.

In September 1939, he signed the so-called “National Declaration of the Czech Nobility” in which he aligned himself with opposition to the occupying power and declared full allegiance to Czech customs and aspirations along with approximately 80 other aristocrats. He joined the anti-Nazi resistance together with his two brothers – Zdeněk, a journalist with the *Lidové noviny* newspaper, and Antonín, St. Vitus’ canon and archbishop’s chancellor (whom this article also devotes attention to). He was imprisoned for his democratic convictions and spent three years at Dachau concentration camp. Both his siblings, however, did not survive the war. Antonín perished in Auschwitz in September 1942, and Zdeněk was executed in Terezín’s Small Fortress (Malá pevnost) in February 1945.

After being released from captivity, František Bořek-Dohalský returned to diplomacy and became Czechoslovakia’s ambassador in Vienna. Naturally, as a result of the communist putsch in February 1948 and the establishment of a communist monopoly of power, his work for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs soon came to an end (although it also ended because of his poor health). The impact of communist persecution also weighed very heavily on the life of František’s son Jiří, who was a clerk in the Office of the President of the Republic. He was sentenced to 17 years imprisonment in a politically motivated trial. František did not live long enough to hear the verdict imposed on his son. He died in Prague on 3 January 1951. The fate of František-Bořek Dohalský and his family illustrates a unique union between a noble family and democratic ideals. The members of this family also did not hesitate to lay down their lives for these ideals during periods of totalitarian rule.

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## Story of Hugo Salm-Reifferscheidt and His Family: A Case Study in Confrontation between Aristocracy and Totalitarian Regime

Dita Jelínková

The presented study is based on primary archive research, which reflects on the story of the aristocratic Salm-Reifferscheidt family from Rájec (Raitz), focusing on the 1930s, the Second Czechoslovak Republic and the era of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The pivotal moment in the history of this family came with their declaration of German nationality in 1930, which subsequently resulted in their being pressurised by the Nazi authorities to adopt German nationality and citizenship of the Reich after the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939. The study recounts the efforts of Hugo Salm-Reifferscheidt (1893 – 1946) to resist this pressure, which he succumbed to after four months. Despite this, however, he did not avoid enforced Nazi administration, which was replaced by Czech national administration soon after liberation from Nazi authority. The study also looks at the fate of the Salm-Reifferscheidt family after 1945 up to its departure from Czechoslovakia.

A report by Division General Ing. Alois Vicherek on events from the Czechoslovak mobilisation up to 4 March 1941. An unknown archive document in the light of the facts.

Ladislav Kudrna

In the spring of 1941, the Division General Ing. Alois Vicherek wrote a report, which made its way to both his superior officer, the division general Sergěj Ingr, and the man heading the Czechoslovak foreign campaign, president Edvard Beneš. This *Report* recorded in detail the events that had occurred since the announcement of a general Czechoslovak mobilisation on 23 September 1938 up to 4 March 1941. General Vicherek provided a new viewpoint on key events in modern Czechoslovak history. It is necessary to point out that this comes from a man who was “on the other side of the tracks” when he was working on his text. It is probably because of this that he fell into disfavour with his superiors, and this document was not preserved in the official reports of the Ministry of National Defence. This important material for Czechoslovak historiography was discovered by Mgr. Martin Juřica when he was working on his thesis about General Alois Vicherek. The *Report* was given to him by Vicherek’s second wife Marie Vicherková. Thanks to this, we now know that a Soviet military mission arrived on the territory of Czechoslovakia after the declaration of the mobilisation. This mission consisted of the deputy commander of the Soviet military air force Yakov Vladimirovich Smushkevich and an unknown air force colonel. The Soviet officers offered the Czechoslovak side a total of 700 aircraft, but they also demanded details about air defences, the distribution of airfields, the numbers of aircraft and

squadrons. In Pardubice, one of the Soviet officers flew a Czechoslovak Avia B-534 fighter plane. With respect to the progress and outcome of the Munich Crisis, it is not apparent whether this was simply a calculated measure on the part of the Soviets, i.e. we [might] give you aircraft if you provide us with all the details about your air force. General Vicherek also did not omit the difficult situation in Cieszyn region in 1938 as well as the course of the German occupation in March. Other important information includes the General's account of the possibility of using Czech pilots in the German civilian air force. The *Luftwaffe* commander, Hermann Göring himself came up with this offer. A description concerning the monetary funds of the Ministry of National Defence, which could not be saved for the resistance, is also noteworthy. There is also no lack of information on Vicherek's extensive resistance activities in the occupied Czech lands. Understandably, the "feud" with his rival General Karel Janoušek, which was concluded to Vicherek's detriment in Great Britain, is also not omitted. Part of the study comprises profiles of both protagonists, as well as an extensive Appendix covering the key personalities in the events of that time appearing in Vicherek's texts.

## The history of the German People's Court (*Volksgesichtshof*) in Berlin

Lukáš Vlček

This study deals with the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the People's Court (*Volksgesichtshof* – VGH) in Nazi Germany in 1934. It describes its position in the Nazi justice system and the gradual rise in its importance. In the introductory section, a list is provided of the crimes which this court judged (particularly treason and the betrayal of the country). At the same time, a description is also given of its internal structure and staffing. An important part of the study acquaints readers with the judicial decisions of the VGH, including the fact that Czechs were the second most numerous ethnic group among the condemned after Germans themselves. The actual procedures followed for a trial before the VGH are also not neglected – from arrest, interrogation by the Gestapo and arraignment to the defence of the case and the verdict. The text also includes a passage on Czech patriots who were tried by the VGH during the war.

## The organisational development of the German regular police force on the territory of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, from the end of the military administration through to the reorganisation in the autumn of 1939

Jan Vajskebr

The basic structure of the German regular police force was established on the territory of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia in the course of the first six months

of the occupation. The person entrusted with creating this structure was Jürgen von Kamptz, who was appointed as commander of the police of the *Reichsprotektorat* in May 1939. Police operational groups, which had operated on the territory during the military administration and for several weeks after its termination, were restructured at the beginning of June 1939 into two regiments, one for Bohemia and one for Moravia. During the deployment of police units in the Protectorate, the practice of having the greatest concentration of divisions was observed. As opposed to Germany, individual companies were not deployed in a dispersed manner, but an entire battalion (with just a few exceptions) was always concentrated in one place. In this way, the occupying government maintained maximum striking power in the event of major unrest. This concept could only be implemented thanks to the reactivation and rearmament of Czech, or rather Protectorate, police and the so-called government force, which took on a number of police duties. At the turn of July and August 1939, officers as well as rank and file police were also replaced by men from police divisions in Germany.

The construction of the organisational structure of the *Ordnungspolizei* in the Protectorate, however, was severely disrupted by German aggression towards Poland, which many police units from the Protectorate were also involved in. The territory of Moravia and its police came under a military administration and another portion of the divisions were used to guard railway links. Even after the entire territory of the Protectorate once again came under the control of the office of the *Reichsprotektorat*, the regular police in the territory were reduced by a third. The police command therefore had to accede to the “wartime” redeployment of divisions, which again emphasised covering crucial garrisons.

As early as October 1939, however, another reorganisation occurred, which gave a definitive form to the structure of the regular police in the Protectorate. Regiments and battalions were renamed and their composition was changed so that they roughly mirrored the set-up that existed in the summer of 1939. The method of supplementing new police units reflected wartime realities, i.e. it switched from a fully professional police corps to a mass organisation with a high proportion of reservists. The creation of new police units resulted in the massive reinforcement of the regular police, but at the same time it substantially reduced their standards in terms of qualified personnel and the quality of their equipment.

Shortly after their reorganisation, the German uniformed police got an opportunity to show their readiness for action. They played one of the key roles in mass demonstrations and their subsequent repression in October and November 1939. In general terms, it is possible to state that the concept chosen for uniformed police units in the Protectorate was successful. It was maintained until 1944, when *Ordnungspolizei* units were substantially reinforced and restructured in connection with the expansion of the partisan war, which prefigured the end of the Nazi domination of the Czech lands.

## For the instruction and protection of German children! The establishment of KLV camps in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia

Radka Šustrová

The process of establishing the first *Erweiterte Kinderlandverschickung* camps (KLV) in the years 1940-1941, which primarily consisted of selecting locations and individual facilities as well as ensuring basic living conditions, was one of the pivotal moments in the creation of a KLV network in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Particularly in view of the suitable local conditions (a common border, an occupation regime, relatively good supplies in comparison with the Reich and a feeling of security), the Protectorate structure created a very strong, supporting mechanism during the evacuation of children from towns and cities threatened with aerial bombardment. Subsequently, in the middle of 1941, two important camp centres were formed in Poděbrady and Teplice nad Bečvou, which can be considered as the culmination of this process.

The author pays special attention to two basic conditions for ensuring that children could reside in this environment in the long term. The construction of a health-care system was in response to constant problems with the children's health. Illness and epidemics in the camps also promoted efforts to improve the children's diet with food supplements and a more varied choice of foods.

In the final part of the text, the author deals with the establishment of a camp complex in the spa town of Poděbrady which allows one to observe the implementation of the project at a local level. A regional survey not only reflects on the procedure used while acquiring facilities suitable for KLV and the circumstances that accompanied this process, but also looks at the interest of Czech tradesmen in cooperating on the renovation of buildings while one of the central KLV sites throughout the Reich was being established.

## A dangerous person and an undesirable reactionary – the life story of Father František Štverák

Stanislava Vodičková

This study presents a vivid portrait of a “forgotten” figure in the home-based Czech anti-Nazi resistance – Father František Štverák (1909-1956) from the Prague archdiocese. His five-year odyssey around prisons and concentration camps resembles the fate of many persecuted opponents of the Nazi regime, not just from the ranks of the Catholic Church.

The study reveals the method of resistance employed by members of the illegal National Defence (*Obrana Národa*) military organisation, which began to be formed around generals and higher-ranking officers of the former Czechoslovak Army imme-

diately after the Nazi occupation of Bohemia and Moravia. Štverák also participated in this group's diversionary operations.

After Štverák's arrest, we are able to observe the brutal interrogation practices of the Gestapo, the work of the Nazi state judiciary, everyday life in Gestapo prisons as well as in the Dachau and Sachsenhausen concentration camps as part of a punitively disciplined group (which Štverák incredibly managed to survive for two years with some short interludes). Using the fate of other imprisoned priests in the disciplined group (Štverák's fellow prisoners in "protective custody") as an example, we can look at the typical way in which the Nazis treated the Catholic clergy, particularly German, Czech and Polish Catholic priests.

The study continues with Štverák's life after the end of the war. By doing this, we can look at the renewal of the Prague archdiocese in the post-war period. Of equal interest is a description of the trial by a military tribunal at the Dachau concentration camp in the autumn of 1945, which Štverák had been invited to by American investigators as a witness to testify on the Nazis' treatment of prisoners in punitively disciplined groups in the concentration camps at Dachau and Sachsenhausen. The short period when a pre-totalitarian regime was in existence came to an end with the establishment of a communist dictatorship. At this juncture, the study focuses on the persecution of Štverák after the communist putsch in February 1948 and his imprisonment for five years, which contributed significantly to his premature demise. The interrogation methods employed by State Security (StB) officers, the show trial prepared by the communist state judiciary and the unlawful incarceration of Štverák at the Želiv internment camp strongly evoke the methods used by the Nazi regime to deal with inconvenient people from the ranks of the Catholic Church. In its wider context, this study contributes to research on the persecution of the Catholic Church, both during the Nazi occupation and subsequently under the communist regime.

**Vlasov's Russian Liberation Army from a German perspective :  
The anabasis of the First Infantry Division of the Armed Forces of the  
Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia (VS-KONR)  
in the spring of 1945**

Pavel Žáček

The establishment of the Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia (KONR) as a political platform for the anti-Stalinist opposition as of November 1944 and the operations of the Armed Forces of the Committee for the Liberation of the People's of Russia (VS-KONR), particularly the First Infantry Division of the VS-KONR (the 600<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Russian) Division in German terminology) are historically linked with Prague. The testimony of the German liaison commander Helmut Schwenninger is a specific document on this division's deployment on the Oder front and its subsequent advance into the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. In a suc-

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cinct, diary style, he describes the actions and behaviour of the Russian commanders, including Lieutenant General Andrey Andreyevich Vlasov and the division commander General Sergei Kuzmich Bunyachenko. In view of the fact that he accompanied the staff of the First Infantry Division in Kozojedy (29 April-3 May 1945) and in Suchomasty (4-8 May 1945), and was with it during its subsequent surrender to units of the Third U.S. Army, he also became a witness to its dealings with the command of the Army Group Centre, especially Field Marshall Ferdinand Schorner, and with representatives of the Czech resistance movement. He also witnessed its tragic end, when a substantial portion of its officers fell into the hands of the Red Army and SMERSH units.