

## SUMMARY

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## The first post war trumped-up trial in Slovakia: Štefan Chalmovský et al.

Matěj Medvecký

At the end of the 1940s and in the first half of the 1950s, many court proceedings were held in which the accused were tried for the attempts to break the Czechoslovak Republic and to restore the Slovak State from the period of the Second World War. In the case which went down in history under the police name “Štefan Chalmovský et al.”, the first generation of security officers – communists literally tried trumping up an illegal group. The same officers of the intelligence-security component of the Ministry of the Interior then made use of the gained experience in trumping up the extensive “People’s Party underground” and subsequently in revealing a “subversive conspiracy”, which is now regarded as a certain dress rehearsal before the communist coup in Czechoslovakia. In the present study, I will attempt to show how the employees of the Ministry of the Interior managed to create extensive military underground out of a small group of supporters of the People’s Party regime. The destruction of the group ended with the arrest of dozens of people. I consider the whole case as a certain archetype of similar events in the following decade.

### Slovak exiles in Italy, 1945–1949

Petr Kubík

In summer 1945, Italy became one of the main sanctuaries of Slovaks who were connected with the wartime Slovak Republic. In post-war Italy, there was a certain duplication of power – on the one hand, authorities of the Allies and, on the other hand, Italian authorities, which did not look with favour on extraditing refugees back to their home countries. Beginning at the end of the summer of 1945, groups of Slovak refugees facing prosecution in Czechoslovakia flowed to Italy, using different ways from Bavaria and Austria. Among them was Ferdinand Ďurčanský, a Slovak politician who became the most active representative of Slovak exiles from 1945 to 1947. Karol Sidor, a former Slovak ambassador to the Holy See, still worked – albeit unofficially – in Rome, trying to help the arriving refugees. Beginning in the winter of 1945/46, Czechoslovak official authorities increased the intensity of efforts to arrest Slovak exiles, demanding, for example, the extradition of F. Ďurčanský, who had been accused of war crimes. However, these efforts for the extradition of certain Slovak refugees and activists from Italy gradually foundered due to the reluctance of Italian authorities. In the autumn of 1947, Ďurčanský’s group gradually moved away from Italy, mainly to Argentina. Karol Sidor and his colleagues stayed in Italy until 1949, but they also moved away, mainly to the USA and Canada. After that, only a small group of Slovak Catholic activists stayed in Italy, mostly priests in the Vatican. Apart from Austria and Bavaria, Italy was an important country for post-war Slovak exiles.

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This period is also reflected in memoirs of several significant refugees such as J. Okál, M. Šprinc, and J. Kaššovic, but no comprehensive historical study on this topic has been written yet.

### Territorial sections of the State Security Service in Slovakia from 1948 to 1953

Jerguš Sivoš

The study deals with the creation, organizational structure, and staffing of senior posts within territorial sections of the State Security Service (ŠtB) in Slovakia from 1949 to 1953. It covers the organization of the ŠtB in Slovakia in 1948, efforts to centralize security, and the creation of regional security structures in 1949. It captures gradual organizational changes, putting them into context of political events or political-Party decisions. The study follows the expansion of spheres of interest of the ŠtB, as well as the corresponding staffing levels of the ŠtB in Slovakia. It also focuses on commanders of regional sections of the ŠtB, their withdrawals from offices, and replacement of top security officers in Slovakia in the period in question. The study also contains a gallery of selected ŠtB commanders in Slovakia (based on the available space in *Securitas Imperii*).

### „Our working people did not let the body of Klement Gottwald go off“: A paper on the history of a Prague mausoleum

Luděk Vacín

The present paper deals with the mausoleum of Klement Gottwald, the first communist president of Czechoslovakia, whose embalmed body was on display at the National Memorial on Vítkov Hill in Prague for almost nine years (late 1953–early 1962). It addresses the extravagant mythology that evolved among the people within days of Gottwald’s death. The myths claim that the body had been decomposing right from the start, and that this was the actual reason for the eventual closure of the mausoleum. These rumours are currently taken as fact by the Czech media, by Wikipedia (the Czech, English and German versions of the entry “Klement Gottwald”), and even by some scholars. The article shows that while the original rumour reflected the resentment of the Czechoslovaks towards the “Oriental” tradition of embalming communist leaders, it did not have anything to do with the reality of maintaining Gottwald’s body. The myths are disproved using hitherto overlooked archival sources, as well as the testimonies of those who were in charge of the body’s preservation. The discussion begins with a chronological overview of Gottwald’s embalming to disprove the basic premise of the mythology, that the preservation work was done too long after his death and failed. Next, the organization and tasks of the

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mausoleum's non-medical staff are addressed in order to show how the mausoleum actually operated. This part is followed by an excursus into some extraordinary events, such as lab appliances failing to work, and the solutions adopted by the responsible personnel. Both the relevant archival documents and the memories of eyewitnesses unequivocally confirm that the body was intact and handled with utmost care throughout the mausoleum's history. In conclusion, the paper analyzes the context and circumstances of the closure of the mausoleum. It shows that the decision to terminate the project was a political step inspired by Moscow, and that no considerations apart from ideological and economic ones were involved. As usual, fact eventually proves to be more interesting than myth.