

Summaries

Meeting of the European Network of Official Authorities in Charge of the Secret Police Files and the 10th Anniversary of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw

► **Pavel Navrátil**

This report, included in the official part of the Collection, provides information about the journey of members of the Czech USTR (Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes) and ABS (Archive of the Security Services) to the meeting of the "European Network of Official Authorities in Charge of the Secret Police Files" held in Warsaw by the Polish IPN (Institute of National Remembrance) who, as the organisers, also prepared the opening ceremony of the exhibition entitled "...a akta zniszczyć" ("... and shred the files") and the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the IPN.

The text is accompanied with a tribute to Janusz Kurtyka, the former Chairman of the IPN, who died tragically at an air accident on a journey to the memorial ceremony in commemoration of the Polish army officers murdered in Katyn, Russia.

Report on the Activities of the Methodological Committee in the Archive of the Security Services

► **Světlana Ptáčnicková**

This report provides an overview of the two years of activity of the Methodological Committee as the operational and advisory body of the director of the ABS (Archive of the Security Services). Its main task is to issue statements regarding questions of methodology, assess the methods used to process the archival collections and the assessment of finding aids. The Committee has held five meetings in which a number of questions were discussed. It prepared for issuance the director's directive on "Processing of Archival Materials and Preparation of Finding Aids in the Archive of the Security Services", analysed the issue of registries and publication of finding aids, and the discrepancy between the structure of the so-called digital archive and the physical condition and organisation of the funds. The Committee also discussed the report of the "Expert Committee on the Issues of Protection of Archival Materials, Digitisation and Information Systems in the USTR and ABS" (so-called KODI Committee). The most important and ongoing task for the Methodological Committee in the near future is to define a "fund".

The Year 1968 and the Subsequent Normalisation in the Czechoslovak Uranium Mining Industry as Seen in the Materials of the State Police

► František Bártík

This article analyses the events of 1968 and the subsequent normalisation in the Czechoslovak Uranium Mining Industry enterprise (CSUP). It is almost entirely based on the materials produced by the former State Police (StB) which kept more than one subject file on this topic and used many tens of informers. As the whole analysis is based on the StB materials, it obviously presents the facts from the "StB's perspective".

During the liberalisation period in 1968, the management of the CSUP was changed and ing. Karel Bocek, appointed as the new director, sought to implement changes in the policy. Uranium ore, a raw material of military and strategic importance up to then, was to become a freely convertible commodity, enabling export to the so-called capitalist world. These plans came to an end when the allied forces moved in to occupy the country on 21 August 1968. The headquarters of CSUP in Příbram declared a strike under the slogan "Not a Single Gram of Uranium for the Occupants" which spread to the other sites of the Uranium Mines (UD) in Zadní Chodov and Dolní Rozinka. During the strike a detailed guide to the possible destruction of mining shafts and geological surveys or mining documents was prepared.

When the situation calmed down, ing. Karel Bocek was branded as the key strike organiser and the man responsible for the financial losses incurred as a result of strike. He was arrested and tried in absentia, because he had managed to flee abroad from the interrogation custody, and later worked abroad as a prominent expert in the industry, leading the State Police to spy on him. The events of 1968 became an argument for the indispensability of StB's surveillance over the uranium industry. This activity followed until 1990 when the subject files were closed by the Service for Protection of Constitution and Democracy.

The article contains a number of little-known amateur photographs which document and witness this turbulent period from a different viewpoint.

"VIKING Who Ran Aground"

Fiasco of the Czechoslovak Military Intelligence in Sweden in 1986

► Daniel Běloušek

This paper deals with the activities of the military intelligence service which worked (pro) This paper deals with the activities of the military intelligence service which worked in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (ČSSR) under the code name ZSGS (Intelligence Department of the General Headquarters of the Czechoslovak Army). The article follows its activities in Sweden in the harsh atmosphere of the bipolar world at the beginning of the 1980's. The Czechoslovak intelligence officers realised

that if international tensions were to escalate, all the residencies in NATO countries would be put out of action. In March 1984 the Czechoslovak government's presidium therefore approved the establishment of a residency in Sweden, then a neutral country, under the code name "VIKING", which could continue with agency work even if the international situation worsened.

The ZSGS's assumption that Sweden would be a relatively safe territory for intelligence activities proved to be wrong. In the middle of 1986 the Swedish government expatriated five Czechoslovak citizens, four of whom were diplomats and one was a foreign trade worker. In August 1986 the Swedish police arrested a Swedish citizen of Czechoslovak origin, Mirko Klöveberg, and accused him of passing on intelligence information. He maintained impersonal contacts with Alex Lennart Jarven, a major in the Swedish army directed independently from the Prague headquarters as an informer.

Successful Swedish strikes against the Czechoslovak military intelligence, which Prague was unable to react to in time, led to the total disintegration of the intelligence activities of ZSGS in the area as well as the actual closing down of the "VIKING" residency. At home this failure significantly impaired the position of the service against the competing Military Counterintelligence (VKR) which thus gradually succeeded in acquiring more and more of the activities from the competence of the military intelligence.

Operative Meetings of the Head Commander of Department I. Key Documents of the Headquarters of Czechoslovak Foreign Intelligence in 1989

► Pavel Žáček

During the last year of its existence, the Headquarters of the Czechoslovak Foreign Intelligence ("Department I.") was in a critical situation. Besides the adverse impact of the changes in the national political scene resulting from perestroika, the change of the Head Commander and a request for organisational and conceptual changes, the organisation had to cope with the fleeing of pplk. Vlastimil Ludvik- PANTUCEK. The documents prepared and mostly also discussed by the supreme body imply that the crisis could not be overcome with the existing managerial bodies. Despite indications of some systematic changes, more than anything else these documents reveal a state of helplessness. Both activity plans for 1989, which in fact were not approved by the Czechoslovak Minister of the Interior, continue to be based on overwhelming requests from the Soviet foreign intelligence services which the Czechoslovak satellite service was unable to fulfil. This is proven by the half-year assessment of the activities of Department I. and the subsequently proposed problematic concept. The troubles of the Communist foreign intelligence ended up with the abolition of the State Police at the beginning of 1990, as is witnessed by the published copies of important documents.

Shredding of Operative Files within the Military Counterintelligence after 17 November 1989

► Daniel Běloušek

Military Counterintelligence (VKR) was part of the structure of the Ministry of the Interior under the code name Department III. of the National Security Corps (SNB) from the mid-1950's until it was abolished in the middle of 1990. Like with other units of the State Police (StB), the destruction of operative files was governed by several instructions of Alojz Lorenc, the former 1st Deputy of the Minister of the Interior, issued in December 1989. The article describes especially the specific features of this process in Military Counterintelligence where, unlike in other units of the StB, large volumes of archival materials were preserved and enable us today to reconstruct the extent and means by which materials were liquidated shortly after the events of 1989. Documents from the administrative check upon the shredded files, carried out in February 1990 by genmjr. ing. Josef Cervasek, the last Head Commander of the Headquarters of the Military Counterintelligence, seem to be the most valuable.

Adolf Hruby and the "Narodni sourucenstvi" Organisation

► Andrea Ponecová

The social changes in the Czech lands and the establishment of "Narodni sourucenstvi" (NS, National Cooperation) made Adolf Hruby one of the leading politicians of the time. His name was published every day in the newspapers, his speeches were broadcast on the radio and his face often appeared in the film news at the cinemas. However, he only remained as Chairman of the NS for three months.

The establishment of "Narodni sourucenstvi" was an immediate reaction to the German occupation of 15 March 1939. Initially it emphasised the unification of the whole Czech nation under the patronage of the movement. Adolf Hruby's speeches and appeals on Czech citizenship, together with his organisational skills on the NS committee, did a great deal to recruit new members. He even interrupted his work as the Chairman of the Czech Agricultural Council for several weeks to be able to support the development of the NS. The role he played in the well-organised recruitment and nearly 100% success rate among the applicants recruited was a great contribution.

"Narodni sourucenstvi" itself was not a uniform movement. It involved both pro-active groups organised by Czech fascists and members of the anti-Nazi resistance. Many committee members, including Adolf Hruby himself, came from the former democratic parties and advocated somewhat defensive and retardant politics against the occupants, although outwardly they showed themselves to be loyal to the Reich. The situation changed to a certain degree on 17 May 1939 when President Emil Hacha appointed the second extended committee of NS with a higher percentage of Czech fascists. Their appointments resulted from their unceasing invectives against the NS. The organisation

was then seen as being more pro-active, and even Hruby's speeches began to sound more pro-Nazi.

Adolf Hruby withdrew from his office as Chairman of "Narodni sourucenstvi" at the beginning of June 1939, officially on the grounds of health issues. However, the true reason lay in the unexplained corruption case of Hruby and the editor of 'Der Neue Tag'. Hruby was replaced by the Deputy Chairman Josef Nebesky. The organisation gradually inclined towards German activism, especially after 1941 when the Germans identified and arrested most of the representatives of the national resistance in the country. The trust in NS began to decline and the organisation's power and influence as the only political movement with the Protectorate Bohmen und Mahren waned. We can say that although Adolf Hruby was not the Chairman of "Narodni sourucenstvi" for long, he was the most significant chairman in the history of the organisation.

"I'd like to continue my duty for the security of our state ..."

**Josef Gemrot – a Policeman, Paratrooper
and SNB Corps Member (1911–1955)**

► **Jiří Mikulka**

Josef Gemrot, a joiner by profession, became a member of the Czechoslovak State Uniformed Police in Moravska Ostrava in 1938. After the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia by the German armies, he left for Poland with his younger brother Fridolin in June 1939 to join the Czechoslovak foreign army when it was established. Together with hundreds of other refugees from the Protectorate they went to France in summer in the same year, joined the Foreign Legion and served in its North African garrisons. When World War Two began, Josef and Fridolin joined the emerging Czechoslovak troops in Agde, southern France, and after the defeat of the French armies in June 1940 the Czechoslovak soldiers headed for Great Britain. Josef Gemrot served in the 1st Czechoslovak Composite Brigade while Fridolin joined the RAF and later became a radar operator in the No. 68 Night Fighter Squadron. The older of the two brothers was one of the first to apply for training for commitment at the enemy's rear in 1941, and until 1943 underwent rigorous training, held under the auspices of the II. (Intelligence) Department of the exile Ministry of Defence in London, together with other future paratroopers who were in turns airdropped in Bohemia and Moravia.

In the middle of 1943 the intelligence officers appointed Josef Gemrot as the deputy commander of the CALCIUM group, which consisted of commander Jaroslav Odstrcil, Josef Siroky and Karel Niemczyk and which flew into Italy at the beginning of 1944. The group was airdropped near Cejkovice, Chrudim District, in the occupied Czechoslovak territory on the night of 3–4 April 1944. It did not succeed in obtaining assistance at the pick-up addresses and the paratroopers had to improvise. Within a few weeks they came into contact with the JARO resistance group (later renamed to

‘Rada tri’) and established connection with the Military Radio Headquarters in Great Britain via the ‘Zdenka’ station (subsequently renamed to ‘Milada’).

On 23 June 1944 J. Gemrot and J. Odstrcil were unfortunately caught off guard by a random raid of the Gestapo from Brno in Netin, near Velke Mezirici, in which CALCIUM’s commander was shot dead and the deputy wounded. After convalescence, J. Gemrot operated in a number of places on the Czech side of the Ceskomoravska Highlands and participated in the intelligence activities of the paratroopers’ group and, despite some discordance, in other activities with ‘Rada tri’, represented in the first place by Captain Karel Vesely-Stainer.

After the war, Lt. Josef Gemrot, receiver of many Czechoslovak war awards, applied in the summer of 1945 to join the newly established National Security Corps ("SNB") where he was transferred in March 1946. His extraordinary shooting skills and the special training he had received in Great Britain made him the commander of shooting courses in the training pool of the Regional Headquarters of SNB in Prague, and in July 1948 he was appointed as an armament officer. After the administrative reorganisation in January 1949 he served at the District Headquarters of National Security Corps (NB) 2 in Prague which was part of the newly established Regional Headquarters in Prague. However, his health began to deteriorate; he was diagnosed with cancer of the left ear and, after surgery, underwent a long course of treatment. In January 1950 he was discharged with a disability pension.

As a former soldier from the west, he attracted the attention of the State Police (StB) from the beginning of 1949, which did not cease even after he had moved, with his wife and two small sons, to Ostrava in August 1950. However, no radical action was taken against him, probably as he was in poor health. The former deputy commander of the CALCIUM paratroopers’ group, policeman, paratrooper and member of the SNB corps died in Ostrava on 11 August 1955.

A Guide to the Operative Files of Foreign Intelligence Headquarters

► Pavel Navrátil

The guide presents potential researchers with the types and structure of operative files produced by the Czechoslovak Foreign Intelligence between 1945 and 1990. The files of the Head Department of Foreign Intelligence were given a specific structure in 1966, which differed from the files produced by other departments, to reflect the specific needs of the foreign intelligence service.

The guide describes all the available types of files and the appropriate numbering sequences. Each file type was used to keep documents of the relevant type or for the designated purposes. There are subject files, informer files, officer name files, active measures files and other types. A brief overview of the basic file structure and types of sub-files is given for each file type.

Documents about Josef Belina, a Social Democratic Politician in Exile, in British Archives

► Sylva Šimsová

Josef Belina (1883–1948) was a social democratic politician and journalist. He was a machinist by profession. Before World War One he went to Switzerland to obtain experience in his trade, where he worked for the trade unions and in a social democratic press. When the Czechoslovak Republic was established he came back and worked for the Social Democratic Party together with Antonin Hampl. He was the secretary of the Union of Metal Workers and an editor of *‘Zajmy kovodelníku’* (Machinists’ Interests) magazine. In 1927–1933 he gave anti-Nazi speeches in Germany and later in Czechoslovakia.

At the beginning of March 1939 he flew to Great Britain to negotiate emigration for Czechoslovak workers from aircraft factories into the British Commonwealth countries and could not go back home during the German occupation of Bohemia and Moravia. He registered as a refugee in the Czech Refugee Trust Fund and was elected a member of the board of Czech Refugees. Later he became the leader of the Czech Refugee Trust Fund group of Czech social democratic refugees, a member of the Central Committee of Czechoslovak Social Democracy in Exile and a member of the committee of Czechoslovak trade unions. He worked closely with the exile government as a consultant to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1941 he was appointed as the chairman of the Czechoslovak Labour Exchange.

During the war, Belina made 87 speeches from England and the U.S. on the radio broadcasts for Czechoslovakia. He was in close touch with the British Labour Party and maintained regular correspondence with William Gillies. He also worked with the Special Branch for which he wrote a report in 1941 on the communist activity in Young Czechoslovakia, an exile organisation. There were many complaints regarding the communist activities at that time. The tension between the social democrats and communists was strained when communists were appointed as leaders of the refugee boarding houses and stood against the war after the Soviet-Nazi treaty was signed. Those communists who disagreed with the party line were intentionally leaked as Gestapo agents. The communists tried to exert as much influence as possible at that time, and did not see Belina’s straightforwardness in a favourable light at all.

Belina believed in cooperation among all nationalities, emphasising that Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians had always been equal members of the Czechoslovak Social Democracy. However, in exile the relationships between the Czech Social Democrats, the Sudeten Social Democrats grouped around Wenzel Jaksch and the Sudeten Social Democrats grouped around Josef Zinner were complicated.

During the War, Josef Belina published, at his own expense, 90 issues of the newspaper *‘Listy přátelům’* (Letters to Friends) and 29 issues of the *‘Czechoslovak Labour Bulletin’*. He also published three brochures on the oppression and resistance of Czechoslovak workers as an official documentary publication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and *‘Out of the Crisis’*, a book by Hampl. Each of his publications focused on the

activities of Communists among the refugees. He regularly sent reports thereon to his English friends, some of whom were reluctant to take his reports seriously.

The Czechoslovak Exile government was anxious to maintain an image of political unity, which played into the Communists' hands. As a result of this, Belina encountered problems returning home after the war, and eventually remained in London. He was accused of "having soaked up too much British fascism within the Labour Party".

After the War and until his death in London in 1948, he continued publishing '*Zprávy z domova*' / '*News from Central Europe*' and '*Londýnské listy*' / '*London Letters*'.

A–Z

► (by composite authors)

This feature contains news, information, comments and curiosities from archivists' work.

In this volume a few contributions mention senseless written reports produced by the members of the National Security Corps (SNB) in Brno in 1945–1946 in the daily event logs. They include secret instructions from the commander of the District SNB unit in Bystrice nad Pernštejnem in 1953 and the assessment of persons qualified as "security threats" by the SNB stations in the Brno-venkov district in 1949. They further contain some quotes from the personal files from the Regional Department of National Security (NB) in Ceske Budejovice from 1950 and examples of interventions of the Verejna bezpecnost (VB, the uniformed police) corps in the early 1950's against foreign visitors, against the ridiculing of state officials (for instance against a snowman resembling President Gottwald in a shop window) and their "struggle" to improve publican services, namely for better quality tap beer.

A more serious contribution describes issues relating to the education of the SNB corps after the 1948 coup when experienced non-communist policemen were fired and replaced with less able and less educated novices with the "proper" political background. The recruitment was fully under the control of the central headquarters which issued instructions to recruit "labour staff". As a result, education, both general and security, significantly declined in all command levels of the SNB, including graduates from the Ministry of the Interior's schools, which the Ministry tried to resolve by various means. Eventually, in the mid-1960's the Headquarters of the VB had to admit that recruitment directives must change if the situation was to improve, and attention must be paid to those primary school pupils who were able to continue their studies. This was an end to the "labour staff concept" in the Security corps.

Finally, a short report was included on the participation of the ABS (Archive of the Security Services) representatives in a study journey held by the Czech Archive Society on 7–9 October 2010 and entitled "Through the Labe Region to Jeseníky".

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