

Summaries

STUDIES

Towns and villages destined for destruction

► Dana Vedra

The paper summarizes the current state of knowledge and the research done on this neglected topic – the so-called forced internal migration in Czechoslovakia, with a special focus on Moravia.

The study is divided into several independent chapters. The first chapter looks into the existing sources and how they can be used for interpretation. The next chapter defines the main trends in research on internal migration caused by the establishment of military shooting ranges since the end of World War II until today. Thanks to the sources, we can also formulate questions that may contribute to our understanding of the work and stabilization of new self-governing institutions and people working for them. Official sources include a lot of information that can contribute to new research that aims to explain the development of the Third Republic before the coup d'état in February 1948. Also interesting is the observation of the changes in agriculture, since in some cases collectivization was under way even before February 1948. An independent chapter is dedicated to the Benešov region as a specific phenomenon within the forced internal transfers of population in Czechoslovakia. The last chapter provides an analysis of the existing research on the military training area in Moravia. At the end of the study, the author suggests future directions of research, among which she finds most promising the study of analogous processes abroad and the use of interdisciplinary approaches that would lead to a more comprehensive understanding of forced transfers in Central Europe.

From Dražanské Hills to the Alps and the English Channel to the Garden of Bohemia. The life of Karel Vlček, a member of foreign resistance during WWII

► Jiří Mikulka

The paper looks into the life of serviceman Karel Vlček. He was born on 1 December 1913 in Krásensko (near Vyškov). After primary school he trained as a butcher. In

1935–1937, he served in the army with the 4th communication battalion in Prešov, after which he stayed in the military as a non-commissioned officer in active service. After the German occupation and the dissolution of the Czechoslovak army, he joined the newly established Government Army of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. In 1940, he joined the 11th battalion in Rychnov nad Kněžnou. He guarded railroad tracks, built bridges and removed windfallen trees. The majority of the Government Army was transferred to Italy in the second half of May 1944 to carry out safety and auxiliary tasks. Vlček and the 11th battalion went to Piedmont, where they were supposed to guard a section of the railroad. They managed to contact partisan units and some Czech soldiers joined the partisans. In June 1944, Vlček joined the partisan group Monte Lera. His unit was forced by the Germans to march to France, where they reinforced the Czechoslovak Independent Armoured Brigade Group, which laid siege to Dunkirk at the beginning of October 1944. In October 1944, Vlček was accepted to the Czechoslovak Foreign Army and became part of the signal corps of the armoured brigade. After he returned to Czechoslovakia, he decided to continue to serve in the army. In 1947–1948, he studied in an application course for communications officers. This was also when he became a member of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. After 1949 he worked in various communications units. Being a former member of the Government Army, he faced many problems in the army. However, he was an indispensable serviceman and was allowed to stay in the military. He retired from the army in February 1969. Karel Vlček died on 20 November 1989 in Litoměřice.

Military-Political Training Institute of the Border Patrol Units and Internal Warden Units in Koloděje – An outline of organization and activity

► Pavel Vaněk

The article gives a basic outline of the organizational structure and educational activity at the Military-Political Training Institute of the Border Patrol Units and Internal Warden Units in Koloděje. The graduates were trained to work as deputy commanders for political affairs in companies of the Border Patrol Units and Internal Warden Units and politically shape conscripts. The paper follows the institute's history from its establishment in 1952 until it was shut down in autumn 1955. It primarily focuses on the circumstances in which it was set up, since at the beginning there were very few officers in the Border Patrol Units who had the required political education. This is also why most of the students were soldiers doing their military service with the Border Patrol Units who pledged to remain in the military for several years after the completion of the course. The 11-month, or shorter, courses were composed of subjects of which 70% were ideologically

focused on party-political work, political economy, an ideologically oriented course in Czechoslovak history and the history of communist parties (Soviet and Czechoslovak communist party). One subject was also aimed at better orientation in the current international situation. In addition to the description of the syllabus of each subject, a passage is also dedicated to the teaching staff, their previous career and their acquired level of education, which often did not go beyond the level of the courses taught at the institute.

Sailors targeted by the secret service. A story of StB collaborator Jaroslav Vršecký

► **Matouš Rusnák**

The paper describes the story of a sailor of the Czechoslovak Elbe-Oder Waterway (ČSPLO), Jaroslav Vršecký, who was recruited in the mid-1950s by the StB as collaborator to provide information from the port of Hamburg. However, western secret services had their offices in Hamburg too, and one of them, the British secret service, also recruited Vršecký for collaboration. The article focuses on his life from the moment he started working for ČSPLO, his collaboration with the StB and the British secret service to his trial and prison sentence. Using the available archival materials (primarily from the Security Services Archive) and the literature, the paper offers some insight into the recruitment strategies of the two enemy services. The western security services believed in friendly atmosphere and seriousness, while the StB used kompromat and blackmail. It also informs about the tasks the secret collaborators were given and what their life in a communist prison facility looked like.

Vladimír Fleissig (1919–1988). An artist turned secret service agent

► **Karel Konečný – Monika Suková**

The presented study explores the life of Czech artist and industrial designer Vladimír Fleissig (1919–1988). Already when he was growing up, Fleissig was searching for ways to escape poverty. When he was a forced labourer in Germany during World War II, he took the opportunity to develop his skills and competencies, which he was planning to use later on in his professional life. He also believed that applying for the Reich's citizenship would help his career. At the end of the war, when Fleissig was in France, he established contact with the French resistance movement and supplied it with information about the German aviation industry. After he returned to Czechoslovakia, he worked for different employers.

He found a steady job in the mid-1950s, when he was granted a permission to work as a freelance artist and designer. At the end of the 1950s, Czechoslovak security services were sure that his work was affected by his contacts with people with links to Austria and West Germany. Together with them he was involved in organizing illegal financial operations and smuggling of luxury goods. In 1959, he was forced to sign a collaboration agreement with the StB. In the 1960s, he started secretly passing on information on his peers and friends. In his work, he focused more on cooperation with colleagues and institutions in Germany and received invitations to participate in lectures and exhibitions on industrial design in Germany. He continued his active collaboration with the State Security until his death in January 1988. In the late 1970s, West German security service contacted him, believing he was an able expert; Fleissig informed his superior organs in Prague about the contact. The thick file of the State Security contains information about his nearly 30 trips to West Germany. In addition to the file kept by the Security Services Archive, the sources for the paper include partial finds in the collections of the Prague City Archives and a search of period newspapers. The sources document Fleissig's creative activity and shift towards restoration of historical monuments.

A hold-up at a nursery in Brno-Bohunice in October 1985, or the story of Ondřej Všeťečka

► Radek Slabotínský

In the early morning hours of 24 October 1985, Ondřej Všeťečka attacked the building of a nursery in Brno, carrying a gun, and threatened the employees and the children. In this way, the troubled youth wanted to force his way to Austria, where he hoped to find a better life and escape the conflicts with his parents and at school. However, the hold-up was a failure; after a short skirmish, Všeťečka was disarmed and arrested by the members of the National Security Corps and taken to custody in Brno-Bohunice, where he was interrogated. The case was given to State Security investigator Karel Veselý, who prosecuted Všeťečka on several charges. After a thorough investigation, Všeťečka's act was reclassified as an act of terrorism. The investigation uncovered the motives behind the act and it also pointed at the unsatisfactory work of the then regime with the so-called at-risk youth. The investigator believed Všeťečka's act was a threat to society and consequently the court hearing was supposed to be a warning for anyone who might plan a similar act in the future. Všeťečka was unconditionally sentenced to 3.5 years in prison and he was very probably released only after he served the whole sentence. However, the prison sentence did not have the desired educational effect on him and Všeťečka did not change his behaviour after he was released. The

events linked to the fall of the communist regime and the return to democracy opened up new possibilities for him. However, he made the worst possible use of them. Instead of leading a decent life, he became a gambler and a drug abuser. This lifestyle later led to his premature death.

The phenomenon of desertion abroad in the Czechoslovak People's Army: Attempts by conscripts to cross the state border in 1983–1989

► Lukáš Smolka

The study focuses on military conscripts who tried to desert to a foreign country in the 1980s. In the introduction, the terms used in the text are defined and the extent of the study is discussed together with possible future research topics. The main part of the study is divided into two parts. In the first part, the author raises a number of questions, for example about the motivations the conscripted men had for desertion, in which army units they served, to which country they tried to flee, or whether they had a previous criminal record. Subsequently, the author tries to find answers to these questions in archival documents, primarily in documents stored in the Administrative Archives of the Czech Armed Forces in Olomouc. The results of the research are presented in the form of text, tables and charts that shine more light on this topic. The second part of the study focuses on three specific cases of desertion. The first case concerns two conscripts who arrived in Yugoslavia through South Bohemia, Slovakia and Hungary, but ended up in Czechoslovakia. The second case is a story of a conscript who was able to cross the border to Austria, only to return to Czechoslovakia a few hours later. The last case is about a soldier who tried to send letters from prison to the US embassy, the Princess of Liechtenstein or the members of Charter 77.

MATERIALS

Hubert Hipka in the documents deposited in the Security Services Archive

► Radim Krupica

Hubert Ripka was an important, yet almost forgotten personality in the Czechoslovak history of the 20th century. Before WWII, he worked as a journalist, during WWII he became a member of the government in exile in London, in 1945 he was appointed minister of foreign trade and after a dramatic flight from

Czechoslovakia he cofounded the Council of Free Czechoslovakia in 1948. The paper aims to present to the readers the archival material concerning Ripka deposited in the Security Services Archive. After a short introduction that includes information about how the archival collection is distributed in the individual sections of the Security Services Archive, the main part of the text describes the most significant archival units from the point of view of the amount of records concerning Ripka. The archival documents are dated mostly in two periods: 1945–1948, when he served as the minister of foreign trade (including materials documenting his escape abroad), and Ripka's second exile until his death in 1958. In this regard, the documents concerning Ripka's flight in 1948 and the secret service records that provide description of the start of his activity in exile are most valuable. Although the most important and largest archival collection linked to Ripka is deposited in the National Archives, the documents stored in the Security Services Archive can also contribute to research into his life and work. Since the vast majority of the documents originated from the activity of the communist secret service, the sources must be properly scrutinized.

Central information and statistics files in the collection of the State Security Investigation Headquarters (1951–1980)

► Michal Cicvárek

The article presents the central information and statistics files in the collection of the State Security Investigation Headquarters (StB) and its predecessors in 1951–1980. The file drawers, in which the file cards were stored, stood for many years on the shelves of the depository in the archive's building on Na Strouze Street, where the department of the Collections of the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Security Services Archive has been located since 2008. After a gradual sorting and archiving, their structure and connection and links to other card registers of the Security Investigation Headquarters in the building were established. Together they form a unique information system of the investigations conducted by the State Security in 1949–1980 in former Czechoslovakia, which is extraordinarily well preserved. It contains basic information that can be used primarily in case the StB file has not been preserved. The files belong to collection A3: State Security Investigation Headquarters. The article also contains an outline of the individual registers and their manipulation structure. Also scans of some of the cards including information on their usage are attached.

The article provides description of the *Investigation files 1949–1960*, their original storage, structure, the design of the file cards, type of recorded information and historical background of their origins and creation. After this follow the *Files of*

reports on completing investigated cases 1961–1963, which, in line with the spirit of the early 1960s, contain a wealth of information that could be used for sociological studies on persons investigated by the State Security. However, the large format cards with an attached smaller card and the scope of the included information resulted in the rather short period when they were in use.

In the years 1964–1980, the information duty and statistical reporting of the State Security investigation were in operation and they evolved dynamically in the course of history and events and due to the introduction of computers. The *Files of statistical cards of StB investigation*, created in 1964–1972 for cases of leaving the country illegally by emigration after 21 August 1968 until the end of 1980, and the *Files of statistical cards of StB investigation SK1/SK2*, introduced in 1972 and in use until the end of 1980, are also described. This last register was designed for computer processing, which was done by the SVIS computer system launched in 1973. In 1981, this system fully replaced the existing card registers.

REPORTS

30th Seminar on Czech-Slovak Relations in Liberec (Liberec, 16–17 August 2021)

Jaroslav Pažout

Open Doors Days at the Security Services Archive (Prague-Kanice, 9 June 2022)

Iva Kvapilová, Zuzana Marková

International Scientific Conference on Armed Forces and the Czechoslovak State: Second Czechoslovak Resistance – Soldiers, actors, participants and their adversaries (1939–1945) (Brno, 20 September 2022)

Lukáš Lexa

Tea at the Archive (Prague, 17 November 2022)

Veronika Chromá