

## MEMORANDUM

on the recent political trial in Prague.

On Thursday, June 8, 1950 there ended in Prague a political trial of thirteen Czechoslovak patriots. There were four sentences of death, five of the accused received prison sentences for life and the rest from 15 to 25 years. These victims include three women.

The staging of the trial and the course it took followed the pattern of those that could be seen in other big trials in Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary and, prior to these, in the Soviet Union; free people in the West cannot imagine what these trials are like. Men and women of good education, lofty character and great moral worth - as known to us here and to the overwhelming part of the nation at home - were described by the prosecution as "loathsome agents of Western imperialists, criminal warmongers and murderers". The trial was conducted in a way that is an absolute denial of fairness and justice.

The accused had statements drawn from them by undue suggestion in which they, with broken voices, called themselves wreckers, traitors and spies. Their statements were accompanied by remarks of the procurators - two of whom were from the ranks of uneducated workmen - about "hatred of the people and the State, about the efforts of the accused to cause war, the slaughter of women and children, etc." They were condemned as traitors, their "high treason" being that they did not agree with the Communist ideology of the State and society, that they cultivated the idea of a United Europe, the possibility of free elections in Czechoslovakia, the renewal of democratic freedom as understood in the West, compensation for the nationalisation of property, etc.



The trial was a cynical propaganda show. In the course of the proceedings, workers and farmers were brought into the court room from every part of the country, and the trial was so conducted as to evoke their hatred for the accused, for opponents of the regime at home and abroad, as also for England and America. To heighten the effect on the audience at the trial one corner of the court room was arranged as a flood-lit exhibition of murderous weapons which the accused were alleged to have been collecting. The Communist procurators and judges intended thereby to convince the sight-seers that the accused were just common bullies and criminals.

Actually facing the real criminals were people in the dock whose sole weapons were at all times the power of the spirit, the verity of ideas and programmes. The condemned women had spent the major part of their active lives in efforts aiming at the emancipation of Czechoslovak women in public and social life, in efforts for the spread of social justice and progress and the heightening of ethical values in the family, public life and human society as a whole.

These women were

Dr. Milada Horakova, 49 years of age, former Member of the post-war Parliament of Czechoslovakia, President of the Council of Czechoslovak women, Member of the International Council of Women. During the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia she was imprisoned for four years in a concentration camp. Now sentenced to be hanged.

Frantiska Zeninova, 69 years of age, former Member of the Czechoslovak Parliament from the inception of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, deputy chairman of the National Socialist Party (chairman Dr. Petr Zenkl). Throughout her life she fought for the social betterment particularly of the working and middle classes. She received a sentence of 20 years rigorous imprisonment - aggravated on every anniversary day of the judgment by solitary confinement and a hard bed.

Anna Kleinerova, 45 years of age, former Member of the post-war Czechoslovak



Parliament and head of the Society of Friends in Czechoslovakia. During the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia imprisoned for four years in a concentration camp. She now received a sentence of imprisonment for life.

The men condemned were people who used to be in the vanguard of cultural and moral efforts of the Czechoslovak nation for its better living and social conditions.

<u>Dr. Zdenek Peska,</u>	former Member of the Czechoslovak post-war Parliament, professor of Law at the Caroline University of Prague, one of the greatest authorities on Constitutional Law. During the Nazi occupation interned for three years in a concentration camp. Now sentenced to 25 years rigorous imprisonment.
<u>Vaclav Dundr,</u>	71 years of age, former senator of the pre-war Czechoslovak National Assembly. A metal worker, father was a miner. Became General Secretary of the Social Democratic Party. During the Nazi occupation interned in a concentration camp. Now sentenced to 15 years rigorous imprisonment.
<u>Frantisek Preucil,</u>	a bookseller and publisher and former Member of the post-war Czechoslovak Parliament. Received a sentence of imprisonment for life.
<u>Dr. Josef Nestaval,</u>	Member of the Municipality of Prague, for 5 years in a Nazi concentration camp, now received a sentence of imprisonment for life.
<u>Dr. Josef Hejda,</u>	journalist and national economist, manager of the Kolben-Danek Engineering Works, now imprisoned for life.
<u>J. Buchal,</u>	police officer, sentenced to death.
<u>Dr. O. Pecl,</u>	industrialist, sentenced to death.
<u>Z. Kalandra,</u>	professor and publicist, a Communist up to 1936, when expelled from the Party for having criticised it, sentenced to death.
<u>Dr. B. Hosticka,</u>	barrister, 28 years rigorous imprisonment.
<u>Dr. J. Krizek,</u>	barrister, former legal adviser to the British Embassy in Prague. 22 years rigorous imprisonment.

Can anyone believe that men with such prominent antecedents could, unless forced by some frightful means of compulsion - speak of themselves as having



betrayed the people, that they had prepared the murdering of women and children, that they as Socialists, had worked against the interest of workers, that they were ending their lives as traitors and spies, etc.?

The stage on which the sacrificial part was played by the condemned, has nothing in common with the carrying out of justice as understood in the West. The procurators and the courts have become the dread instruments of dictatorship.

Profoundly moved, with unutterable grief in our hearts at the fate of the innocent people who have become the victims of Communist violence we, Czechoslovaks in exile, fervently appeal to the conscience of the free world that in view of the fact that Communist bestiality is planning shortly to select additional victims of its terror amongst the best of Czechoslovakia's sons and daughters, it should mobilize all moral forces and condemn these tragic perversions, for the regime which is at the back of these tribunals is a mendacious and brutal body of wreckers with which no reconciliation is possible.

London, June 10, 1950.

Vaclav M a j e r ,  
former Czechoslovak Minister  
of Food.

Dr. Jaroslav S t r a n s k y ,  
University Professor, former Czechoslovak  
Minister of Education.

Dr. Ladislav F e i e r a b e n d ,  
former Czechoslovak Minister of  
Finance.

Dr. Samuel B e l l u s ,  
former Slovak Commissioner for  
Information.

Dr. Martin K v e t k o ,  
former Slovak Commissioner for  
Agriculture.

Gen. Alois L i s k a ,  
former Officer Commanding the Czechoslovak  
Armoured Brigade in W. Europe.

Ing. Dr. Stepan B e n d a ,  
former Member of the Czechoslovak  
Parliament.

Dr. Vilem B e r n a r d ,  
former Member of the Czechoslovak  
Parliament.

Dr. Bohumir B u n z a ,  
former Member of the Czechoslovak  
Parliament.

Eduard F u s e k ,  
former Member of the Czechoslovak  
Parliament.

Vaclav H o l u b ,  
former Member of the Czechoslovak  
Parliament.

Dr. Jan Stransky,  
former Member of the Czechoslovak  
Parliament.



Jarmila U h l i r o v a ,  
former Member of the Czechoslovak  
Parliament.

Jaromira Z a c k o v a - Batkova,  
former Member of the Czechoslovak  
Parliament.

Jiri P o k o r n y ,  
Major of the Czechoslovak  
Army in W. Europe.

Pavel V i b o c h ,  
former Member of the Czechoslovak  
Parliament.

Dr. Jan P a u l i n y - T o t h ,  
former Envoy Extraordinary.

Jan S r p ,  
former Head of the Presidium,  
Czechoslovak Ministry of Agriculture.



WE ESPECIALLY RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING NAMES TO  
WHOM YOUR APPEAL COULD BE ADDRESSED

Mr. Trygve Lie, Secretary General  
United Nations  
Lake Success, N.Y.

Ambassador Herman Santa Cruz, President  
Economic and Social Council, United Nations  
Manhattan Building,  
New York City

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Chairman  
Commission on Human Rights  
United Nations

Mlle. Marie Helen Lefaucieux, Chairman  
Commission on the Status of Women  
United Nations

Delegations to the United Nations

Mr. Klement Gottwald  
Praha - Hrad  
Czechoslovakia

Premier Joseph Stalin  
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

International Red Cross Committee  
Geneva, Switzerland.