“WE WANT THE LIGHT! WE WANT TO STUDY!”
Demonstration of Students from Praha-Strahov University Campus on 31 October 1967
BY JAROSLAV PAŽOUT

In the evening of 31 October of 1967 the lights went out again across the whole of the Strahov campus. This resulted in a spontaneous demonstration by students to protest against the emergency situation in the residential part, already long neglected. The demonstrators faced intervention by the Public Police forces whose action, verging on brutality, resulted in many injuries, some of them severe. The police intervention, as well as the reaction taken by the relevant authorities, outraged university students and the general public. For students, who were the biggest critics of Antonín Novotny’s regime, the Strahov events became the turning point. The following weeks in the universities of Prague were spent in fervent discussion on the further existence of organisations of the Czechoslovak Union of Youth, whose show of loyalty to the regime was discredited by them in the eyes of the students. From the end of 1967 students actually began to establish a new system of self-government outside the Union’s organisations. The Strahov events, together with the failure to resolve the economic crisis, harsh disputes with the Slovaks and conflicts with the cultural scene, documented the incompetence of Antonín Novotny’s regime in facing up to the state’s problems, and eventually contributed to his dismissal from his position as the chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia at the beginning of January 1968.

OPERATION “LYAUTEY”
BY PETR CAJTHAML

This study describes a propaganda campaign in Rude právo, the central daily of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, in June 1969. A series of articles informed on an alleged secret scheme hatched by the British intelligence under the cover name of Lyautey, which aimed at removing Czechoslovakia from the Soviet bloc. The campaign was based on the documents the Soviet KGB’s headquarters sent to Czechoslovakia in 1966. Documents, the authenticity of which cannot be verified, give the impression of being the original material of the British intelligence service. They describe the general plans of the British intelligence service in the first half of 1950’s and some particular operations aimed at impairing Soviet-Chinese relationships. The propaganda campaign intentionally exchanged the target area of the documents which were the basis and claimed they were a British plan to disrupt Czechoslovak-British relationships. The series of articles was prepared by the Press Department of the Ministry of the Interior from texts provided by the State Security forces. The publication of the alleged plan of the British intelligence was part of a broader campaign to present the 1968 Prague Spring events as a result of the operations of western intelligence services and thus to justify the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact armies in August 1968. The series published in Rude právo was assessed as very effective, and the Operation Lyautey motif was later often used as one of the arguments in the Czechoslovak state security propaganda. “Operation Lyautey” then became a universal cliché which was used to illustrate the methods and targets of the western intelligence services. The last part of the study presentionally exchanged the target area of the documents which, with a bit of perverse imagination, were reminiscent of the stripes on the American flag. The posters and press cartoons often depicted the beetle with small human heads wearing Uncle Sam’s top hat or an American soldier’s helmet. The study also mentions diplomatic notes exchanged between the USA and Czechoslovakia. It also touches upon some cases of people sentenced for treason and sent to prison for many years because of their alleged dissemination of the beetle, thus striving to “subvert our people’s democratic establishment”. The largest campaign was held in 1950; however, the “American beetle” which was “intentionally brought to our country by the American imperialists” was fought against in Czechoslovakia throughout the whole of the 1950’s.

FEBRUARY 1948 AND THE PERSECUTION OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS EMPLOYEES
BY IVANA KOUTSKÁ

Although the Communist Party strove to seize power over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MZV) in 1945–48, they failed due to the unquestionable credit of Czechoslovak diplomacy in the effort to free the country from the U.S.S.R. Although the Chancellories of the foreign representations, however, were under the control of the Intelligence Department of the Ministry of the Interior from 1945, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to hold the foreign representations. This study describes the organisation and conduct of the propaganda campaign both in the state line and the party line. This study describes the organisation and conduct of the propaganda campaign both in the state line and the party line.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST “THE AMERICAN BEETLE” AND ITS POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES
BY PAVLÍNA FORMÁNKOVÁ

The 1950’s in Czechoslovakia were marked by countless massive propagandistic campaigns organised by the Communists. They were supposed to assist in strengthening the communist government and defame their opponents. The campaigns attacked those respecting the democratic values of the First Republic, those involved with the Western resistance, Catholic church representatives, farmers, businessmen as well as small businesses, artists whose work was found objectionable by the communist culture leaders, and also “western imperialists and their agents and collaborators from the treacherous emigration”. Paradoxically enough, the key role in one of the campaigns was even played by an insect, in particular the Colorado potato beetle (*Doronyphora de- cimlineata*). The infestation of the potato beetle, seen in Europe in 1950, was used by the propaganda in the Czech Republic, East Germany and Poland. It was described as an intentional act carried out by American imperialists who planted the pest beetle artificially “with the assistance of clouds and winds” to destroy our economy. This study describes the organisation and conduct of the propoganda campaign both in the state line and the party line. This study describes the organisation and conduct of the propaganda campaign both in the state line and the party line.
withdrawing officers from their offices, such as retirement age or reorganisation. Former diplomats were replaced by the dedicated comrades whose social behaviour often caused severe diplomatic conflicts. A total of 205 officers were dismissed from February 1948 to 1 October 1949 according to the archives of the MZV. Diplomats who resigned from their offices as representatives of embassies in non-communist countries became leaders and organisers of foreign resistance against the Communist totalitarian regime. They protested against the communist government and tried to organise a plot to seize power in Plzen. Vesely, besides his important role as chairman of the Jihlava Region and in the districts of Trebic, Moravske Budejovice and Bice, had been the deterrent force for the whole country. This was especially in the campaign in Rude pravo, the party daily. The study does not deal with the as yet unclear questions of the role of these people in Czechoslovakia but is focused on the internal activity of the communist regime against the church. At first it is the activity of the so-called Church Sections (cirkveni referat) both in the Jihlava Region and in the districts of Trebic, Moravske Budejovice and Bice. The church played a key role in this primarily agricultural region, and resistance against collectivisation went in hand with the strongly religious nature of the region. The Babice case thus eventually strengthened repression against the church. This study focuses on the system of work of the Church Sections as offices striving to systematically restrain the influence of the favourite clerics, eventually intended to weaken the church itself. The procedure taken against the church and specific members of the clergy was also strengthened by the fact that some of the districts in the Jihlava Region were border districts. The study describes the reports from the Church Secretaries immediately prior to, and especially shortly after, the Babice murder. These reports, amongst other things, imply the fact that the public in the broad region, and particularly in Babice, was well aware of the everyday presence of the State Security before the act, and the communication implies the continued function of the problematic clerics, some of which (Paril, Drbola and Bula) were later executed. It is a brief contribution to the well-known Babice case, trying to describe the system of work of the communist machinery in its fight against the church, thus helping to describe the Czechoslovak society of the 1950’s.

“The Role of the Church Departments at the Regional Council in Jihlava and the District Council in Moravske Budejovice in the Babice Case in 1951” BY MICHAL STEHLÍK

This study attempts to view the Babice case of 1951 from another perspective than it has usually been seen. The murder of three communist officials in Babice on 2 July 1951 triggered large-scale repression against the farmers and clergy, especially in the Jihlava Region and in the districts of Trebic, Moravske Budejovice and Bice. The church played a key role in this primarily agricultural region, and resistance against collectivisation went in hand with the strongly religious nature of the region. The Babice case thus eventually strengthened repression against the church. This study focuses on the system of work of the Church Sections as offices striving to systematically restrain the influence of the favourite clerics, eventually intended to weaken the church itself. The procedure taken against the church and specific members of the clergy was also strengthened by the fact that some of the districts in the Jihlava Region were border districts. The study describes the reports from the Church Secretaries immediately prior to, and especially shortly after, the Babice murder. These reports, amongst other things, imply the fact that the public in the broad region, and particularly in Babice, was well aware of the everyday presence of the State Security before the act, and the communication implies the continued function of the problematic clerics, some of which (Paril, Drbola and Bula) were later executed. It is a brief contribution to the well-known Babice case, trying to describe the system of work of the communist machinery in its fight against the church, thus helping to describe the Czechoslovak society of the 1950’s.

“PROKOP DRTINA IN PZEN: AN ATTEMPT TO ORGANISE A REACTION POWER SCHEME”

A Look into One Rumour behind the Reorganisation of the Ministry of the Interior, 1947–1948

BY PAVEL ŻÁČEK

From the autumn of 1947 the top officials of the Ministry of the Interior, led by the communist Vaclav Nosek, organised their machinery. The headquarters of the executive security forces were unified under the “Security Group” (Skupina bezpečností), commanded by colonel F. Janda and his deputy, department counsel J. Vesely, at a time when the intelligence and state security units in the Ministry already played an important role in the political struggle and persecution of the political opponents of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. In mid-December 1947 the “Security Group” was transformed into the “Department III: Security” (Odbor III. Bezpečností), under the continuing command of colonel Janda. His deputy and also the chief of Group III/A was J. Vesely. Besides his important role as chairman of the Jihlava Region and in the districts of Trebic, Moravske Budejovice and Bice, had been the deterrent force for the whole country. This was especially in the campaign in Rude pravo, the party daily. The study does not deal with the as yet unclear questions of the role of these people in Czechoslovakia but is focused on the internal activity of the communist regime against the church. At first it is the activity of the so-called Church Sections (cirkveni referat) both in the Jihlava Region and in the districts of Trebic, Moravske Budejovice and Bice. The church played a key role in this primarily agricultural region, and resistance against collectivisation went in hand with the strongly religious nature of the region. The Babice case thus eventually strengthened repression against the church. This study focuses on the system of work of the Church Sections as offices striving to systematically restrain the influence of the favourite clerics, eventually intended to weaken the church itself. The procedure taken against the church and specific members of the clergy was also strengthened by the fact that some of the districts in the Jihlava Region were border districts. The study describes the reports from the Church Secretaries immediately prior to, and especially shortly after, the Babice murder. These reports, amongst other things, imply the fact that the public in the broad region, and particularly in Babice, was well aware of the everyday presence of the State Security before the act, and the communication implies the continued function of the problematic clerics, some of which (Paril, Drbola and Bula) were later executed. It is a brief contribution to the well-known Babice case, trying to describe the system of work of the communist machinery in its fight against the church, thus helping to describe the Czechoslovak society of the 1950’s.

“IT’S THE BEST TIME TO DO AWAY WITH THEM…”

The Role of the Church Departments at the Regional Council in Jihlava and the District Council in Moravske Budejovice in the Babice Case in 1951.

BY PAVEL ŽÁČEK

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