

**Freedom's Voices:
Czech and Slovak Immigration to Canada during the Cold War**

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final versions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

During the Cold War, approximately 36,000 persons claimed Czechoslovakia as their country of citizenship upon entering Canada. A defining characteristic of this postwar migration of predominantly ethnic Czechs and Slovaks was the prevalence of anti-communist and democratic values. This dissertation follows Czech and Slovak refugees through the German invasion of the Czech lands and Slovakia's independence in 1939, the Second World War, the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in 1948, and the Warsaw Pact Invasion of 1968. Diplomats, industrialists, workers, democratic politicians, professionals, and students fled to the West in search of freedom, security, and economic opportunity. Many of these individuals sought to return home after Czechoslovakia was liberated from communism. This dissertation examines the interwar, wartime, and postwar immigration experiences of Czech and Slovak refugees through the lens of Canadian Czechoslovak institutions. In Canada, Czechs and Slovaks who professed a belief in a Czechoslovak identity formed their own organizations. In the Cold War era, the two most prominent Canadian Czechoslovak institutions were the Czechoslovak National Alliance and the Masaryk Hall. Both were later incorporated and renamed as the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada and the Masaryk Memorial Institute. Czechoslovak institutions in Canada faced opposition from nationalist Slovaks who opposed a common Czechoslovak identity. By focusing on political and institutional history, this study contributes to our understanding of Cold War immigration, and its influence on ethnic organizations and Canadian society. Although the admission, settlement, and integration of Cold War refugees was heavily influenced by federal and provincial authorities, Czech and Slovak newcomers joined Czechoslovak organizations and continued in their attempts to affect developments in Communist Czechoslovakia and Canadian foreign policy towards their homeland. During the Cold War, Canadian authorities further legitimized the Czech and Slovak refugees' anti-communist agenda and increased their influence in Czechoslovak institutions. Similarly, Canadian Czechoslovak organizations supported Canada's Cold War agenda of securing the state from Communist infiltration. Ultimately, an adherence to anti-communism, the promotion of Canadian citizenship, and the preservation of a Czechoslovak ethnocultural heritage accelerated Czech and Slovak refugees' socioeconomic and political integration in Cold War Canada. As a result, Canadian Czechoslovak organizations were instrumental in helping to shape a democratic culture in Cold War Canada.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to Kate. Along the way you shared my accomplishments and my setbacks. Your steadfast patience, advice, encouragement, sympathy, and most of all, love, helped bring this project to fruition. This work is dedicated to you.

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List of Abbreviations

AO	Archives of Ontario
CCBA	Canadian Czechoslovak Benevolent Association
CFC	Council of Free Czechoslovakia
CFCR	Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees
CGSA	Canadian Gymnastic Sokol Association
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIC	United States Army Counter Intelligence Corps
CNA	Czechoslovak National Alliance
CNAC	Czechoslovak National Association of Canada
CNCR	Canadian National Committee on Refugees and Victims of Persecution
CNR	Canadian National Railway
CPR	Canadian Pacific Railway
CSL	Canadian Slovak League
CUARF	Canadian United Allied Relief Fund
CWCF	Czechoslovak War Charities Fund
DEA	Department of External Affairs
DPSC	Department of Provincial Secretary and Citizenship
DPs	Displaced Persons
DOCRs	Defence of Canada Regulations
DSS	Department of the Secretary of State
FCENA	Free Central European News Agency
IB	Immigration Branch
ICR	Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees
IRC	International Red Cross
IRO	International Refugee Organization
JIB	Joint Intelligence Bureau
K 231	Klub bývalých politických vězňů
KAN	Klub angažovaných nestraníků
KGB	Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti
KOS	Kanadská Obec Sokolská
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
MHSO	Multicultural History Society of Ontario
MH	Masaryk Hall
MMI	Masaryk Memorial Institute
NCFE	National Committee for a Free Europe
OBZ	Army Security Intelligence Office
PCIRO	Preparatory Commission of the International Refugee Organization
PCSDE	Permanent Conference of Slovak Democratic Exiles
POW	Prisoner of War
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RG	Record Group
SGAC	Sokol Gymnastic Association of Canada
SSEA	Secretary of State for External Affairs

UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency
UNWCC	United Nations War Crimes Commission
USCC	Unitarian Service Committee Canada
USSEA	Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs
WAFCPP	Welfare Association of Former Czechoslovak Political Prisoners

Introduction

In 1949, František Braun and his wife arrived in Canada with only \$300 and some clothing. The Brauns left their home in Czechoslovakia and arrived in Canada as contract farm labourers with the help of a Czech Canadian farmer who sponsored them. Although unsure of what their new lives would bring amid feelings of returning home, the Brauns' first impression of Canada was that of happiness. During the Second World War, Braun fought for the Czechoslovak forces and believed in defending democracy. Although his homeland was a small European state, Braun believed that his fellow compatriots – individuals who fled the Communist takeover after February 1948 – could assist in fighting Communist aggression from abroad and succeed in liberating their homeland. After deciding to settle in Hamilton, Ontario without speaking a word of English, Braun acquired employment as a labourer working seven days a week while his wife began working in a chocolate factory. The couple were able to bring home \$51 per week in wages. On Sundays, Braun picked fruit to make another \$3-4. The Brauns believed that early struggles in a new land were reasonable since after all, they still had their freedom. As one of thousands of Displaced Persons (DPs) and labelled by the existing Czechoslovak community in Canada as a '1948er,' for arriving in the years after the Communist seizure of power, Braun recalled that "if you were honest and you did the work, then people treated you well." He noted that Canadian society did not understand the hardships of newcomers. According to him, the DP experience was difficult because Canadians did not recognize that newcomers like him were "going to help build-up the country." Over time, the Brauns worked hard, saved their earnings, and eventually sold their business to their son.¹

¹ Frank Braun, interview by Jana Cipris, 5 September 1978, interview CZE-5163-BRA, Czech Oral History Collection, Multicultural History Society of Ontario (hereafter MHSO), John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

Political refugees like the Brauns left Czechoslovakia out of a genuine fear of persecution for their democratic beliefs, a lack of economic opportunity, social mobility, and even out of a sense of adventure. Initially, many postwar Czech and Slovak DPs like the Brauns arrived in Canada with hopes of returning to their European homeland once it was freed from the clutches of Communism. Whether labelled as DPs as per government policy or later recognized as political refugees by Canadian and international law, ethnic Czechs and Slovaks comprised three percent of the 165,000 DPs that arrived in Canada between 1947 and 1953. In the first decade after the Second World War, newcomers from Czechoslovakia constituted one percent of all postwar immigration from 1946 to 1955.² In those years, many of the 13,211 immigrants from Czechoslovakia who claimed Czechoslovakian citizenship carried out daring escapes to the West only to later languish in Austrian, German, and Italian camps waiting for their opportunity to come to Canada. This group of postwar immigrants represents a unique experience in the history of postwar immigration to Canada and their involvement in Canadian society during the Cold War.

This study focuses on the movement of refugees from Czechoslovakia within a specific geographic and historical space. In examining the history of Czechoslovak sociopolitical institutions in Canada, we can better understand their impact on the immigration and settlement experience of Czech and Slovak newcomers to Canada. This study also sheds light on how Cold War refugees influenced the promotion of a Czechoslovak identity between ethnic Czechs and Slovaks in Canada. In the wake of the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February 1948, thousands of individuals fled the country due to a fear of persecution at the hands of the Communists due to their membership and participation in democratic political parties. Anti-

² Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1967 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller for Stationery, 1968), 21.

communist academics, clergy, politicians, professionals, students, and tradespeople were admitted to Canada after spending several months or years in refugee camps in Austria, Italy, and Occupied Germany – and later West Germany. Commonly referred to as the ‘1948ers’ or ‘48ers’ by the existing Czechoslovak community in the West, many 1948ers immediately joined or established organizations intent on promoting democracy in their old homeland in the hopes of returning home, while also instilling democratic values in successive generations of their community. In some cases, Czechs in Canada attempted to represent nationalist Canadian Slovaks regardless of their separate ethnic identities, thus furthering mistrust and division between both groups in Canada.³

In August 1968, Warsaw Pact forces invaded Czechoslovakia to suppress attempts at reforming and liberalizing Communist rule in the country during the Prague Spring movement. In the early years after the invasion, over 150,000 individuals fled the state seeking refuge in the West.⁴ Many of those who left were young, well-educated, and trained professionals. In a special program, Canada accepted nearly 12,000 Czechoslovakian refugees. Previous generations of immigrants from Czechoslovakia along with the existing Czechoslovak community in Canada referred to the refugees as the ‘1968ers’ or ‘68ers.’ In essence, the 1948ers first arrived in Canada from refugee camps scattered across Europe, and included individuals who were able to flee the brutal repression of individual freedoms and civil rights through torture, imprisonment, and even death at the hands of the Communist regime in the late 1940s and 1950s. Conversely,

³ Elena Jakešová and M. Mark Stolárik, “Slovaks,” In *Encyclopedia of Canada’s Peoples*, ed. Paul Robert Magocsi, 1168-1179 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 1178. The problem of ideological divisions between Czechs and Slovaks remains an issue between both ethnic groups in Canada.

⁴ Madelaine Hron, “The Czech Émigré Experience of Return after 1989,” *Slavonic and East European Review* 85.1 (2007): 54; Dinah A. Spritzer, “Children of ’68: Émigrés’ Kids Sound Off about Sexism, Their Countrymen’s Self-Esteem, and the Liabilities of a Czech Passport,” *Prague Post*, May 19, 2005, accessed 1 February 2010, <http://www.praguepost.cz/archivescontent/41029-children-of-68.html>. Until the early 1970s, approximately 225,000 Czechoslovakians permanently resettled in the West.

the 1968ers fled a country in the midst of a sociopolitical upheaval in which the Communist system was in the process of change. In hopes of getting rid of the proponents of Communist reform, Czechoslovakia's borders remained open in the early hours, weeks, and months after the invasion. Meanwhile, many 1968ers were already outside of the country when the Warsaw Pact invasion occurred and therefore avoided the brutal Soviet-inspired normalization of their country. As the 1948ers experienced the effects of persecution during the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia and the initial period of Stalinization, the 1968 wave of refugees lived through two decades of Communism and totalitarianism. Both refugee movements from Czechoslovakia consisted of educated and established professionals including: academics, clergy, doctors, intellectuals, lawyers, politicians, alongside students and tradespeople. The 1948ers initially struggled to integrate into Canadian society and to find suitable employment according to their academic training and professional experience. Many of the individuals who arrived in 1968 and after were often underemployed in their first few years in Canada. In comparison to the 1948ers, the 1968ers rapidly integrated into Canadian society and assumed positions in their respective fields.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Czechs and Slovaks continued to permanently settle in the West. This third wave of postwar immigration from Czechoslovakia did not flee their homeland in response to an immediate crisis, but chose to leave during the period of normalization. This wave consisted of academics, professionals, students, and skilled tradesmen in construction, manufacturing, and the service industries. These newcomers reinvigorated the anti-communist and pro-democracy identity of the Canadian Czechoslovak community and its organizations.

The role of Canadian Czechoslovak institutions in espousing a pro-Czechoslovak identity is of particular interest to this study because these organizations attempted to bring two distinct

ethnic groups together as part of a Czechoslovak civic nationalism. The promotion of a Czechoslovak identity in Canada followed in the footsteps of political events in Czecho-Slovakia after the First World War. In February 1920, Prague introduced a pro-Czechoslovak constitution which removed the hyphen that embodied a federation between the Czech and Slovak nations. The new constitution promoted a Czechoslovak civic nation and a Czechoslovak language.⁵

The history of Czech and Slovak immigration to Canada during the Cold War presents us with a unique opportunity to assess the similarities and differences, and continuities and changes between successive waves of immigrants from the same country through the lens of Canadian Czechoslovak community institutions such as the Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA) founded in 1939, and the Masaryk Hall (MH) founded in 1944. Both community institutions remain in existence today serving Canadian Czech and Slovak interests, albeit under different names.

Building on previous works by immigration historians and those with a particular interest in the Czech and Slovak experiences in Canada, this study will facilitate a greater understanding of Czechoslovak identity and its promulgation within the context of the Czech and Slovak immigration experience in Canada by constructing a broad-based institutional and political history that also incorporates an examination of the evolution of government action and other institutional gatekeeping throughout the Cold War period. This study explores the history of immigration from Czechoslovakia to Canada during the twentieth century and will make an

⁵ Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, "Whither Slovak Historiography after 1993?" *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 53.1 (March 2011): 45-46; Dušan Kováč, "Czechs and Slovaks in Modern History," In *Bohemia in History*, ed. Mikuláš Teich, 364-379 (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 371-376; Elizabeth Bakke, "Czechoslovakism in Slovak History," In *Slovakia in History*, eds. Mikuláš Teich, Dušan Kováč and Martin D. Brown, 247-268 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 252-262. The objective of establishing a Czechoslovak civic nationalism was constructed from two fabricated principles. First, the newly fabricated Czechoslovak nation-state was the "historical culmination" of earlier contact and collaboration between the Czech and Slovak nations who maintained similar languages and second, that the smaller Slovak nation would accept being merged with a larger Czech population to form a Czechoslovak nation.

original contribution to the field of Canadian immigration history by using a research methodology that spans both political and institutional history, thereby producing a work that is transnational in focus. In examining the impact of sociopolitical events in Czechoslovakia on the Czechs and Slovaks in Canada, an analysis of how successive waves of Cold War refugees from Czechoslovakia attempted to influence the Canadian government's response towards global communism will also be assessed. This dissertation also considers the role of federal and provincial authorities in the maintenance and preservation of ethnic heritage among Canadian Czechs and Slovaks who supported a Czechoslovak identity during the Cold War.

Guiding the enquiry is the question: what role did the immigration of anti-communist Czech and Slovak refugees play in defining Canadian Czechoslovak identity and Canadian foreign policy towards Czechoslovakia during the Cold War? This dissertation argues that the immigration of ethnic Czech and Slovak refugees to Canada was directly a consequence of Cold War politics. Czech and Slovak refugees transplanted their Old World ethnic and ideological divisions to Canada, whereby through contact with Canadian-born Czechs and Slovaks, successive waves of newcomers from Czechoslovakia, and the broader Canadian society, these same individuals successfully entrenched their anti-communism in Canadian Czechoslovak institutions where it also became an integral component of the Czechoslovak community's identity. As an essential part of the community, anti-communist refugees actively attempted to influence Canadian foreign policy towards Communist Czechoslovakia.

Although anti-communist newcomers were heavily influenced by federal and provincial authorities during their resettlement in Canada, they continued to actively protest against communism in Czechoslovakia, only to later integrate into Canadian society as citizens. In opposing the interwar ethnic left within Czechoslovak community institutions, anti-communist

refugees were able to promote what they believed were their community's interests including ethnic consciousness during the Cold War. These newcomers influenced the degree to which authorities were successful in undermining the old ethnic left in Canada and Soviet-led espionage in Canada. In Czechoslovakia, Communist authorities were successfully thwarted from manipulating Canadian Czechs and Slovaks into becoming agents for their old homeland.

The term "Cold War" was first used by British novelist George Orwell in October 1945, to condemn the war-like state of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following the end of the Second World War. Orwell criticized American imperialism and Soviet Communism and their respective influence in international affairs.⁶ In North America, the term "Cold War" was first used by American scholars in the late 1940s in an attempt to examine the postwar relationship between Moscow and Washington. As a result, the study of the Cold War in North America was initially led by American historians.⁷ Since the 1950s, three dominant interpretations on the origins of the Cold War have influenced scholars. Beginning in the late 1950s, scholars who supported an *orthodox* interpretation argued that the Soviet Union was responsible for the Cold War. During this period, historians' approach to the Cold War was swayed by the demise of the Allied wartime alliance, the expansion of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe and around the world, and the growth of McCarthyism in the United States. As a result, a majority of scholars believed that the Cold War was a direct result of a breakdown in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁸ In *Churchill-Roosevelt-Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought* (1957), historian Herbert Feis argued that after the

⁶ Odd Arne Westad, "The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century," In *Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I: Origins*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, 1-19 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3. See also George Orwell, "You and the Atomic Bomb," *Tribune*, 19 October 1945.

⁷ For a historiographical overview see Thomas G. Paterson, "Origins of the Cold War," *OAH Magazine of History* 2.1 (Summer 1986): 5-9, 18.

⁸ Peter Bastian, "Origins of the Cold War: Historiography," accessed 31 May 2013, http://www.anzasa.arts.usyd.edu.au/ahas/cworigins_historiography.html.

Second World War, the Soviet Union attempted to broaden its sphere of influence over neighbouring countries by extending its boundaries. According to Feis, the Soviet Union would also "...revert to their revolutionary effort throughout the world," and concluded that the Soviet Union was responsible for the "turbulence" of the early Cold War period.⁹ Thirteen years later, Feis published *From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950* (1970) in which he determined that the Soviet Union's refusal to join other states towards a "thoroughgoing system of international control" and its antipathy towards the West would establish a nuclear rival to the United States around the world.¹⁰

In the 1960s, many scholars began to question the established interpretation of the Cold War. They criticized American involvement in the Vietnam War, and the role of industry and capital in warmongering. Influenced by the emergence of the New Left movement, scholars who supported a *revisionist* approach argued that the Soviet Union was reacting to American expansionism in democracy and trade in Western Europe and other parts of the world. Many revisionist works portrayed the United States as imperialistic and driven by American capitalism. As a result, American foreign policy was led primarily by economic interests that sought to align Washington with states that could support its political and economic agenda. The confrontation with Moscow was not simply a reaction to Soviet aggression, but rather an attempt to promote capitalist trade and democratic values.

⁹ Herbert Feis, *Churchill-Roosevelt-Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 655.

¹⁰ Herbert Feis, *From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950* (New York: Norton, 1970), 412. Feis argued in his introduction that "to the Americans, their ability to raise, equip, and transport such great combat forces as they had and to provide Lend-Lease supplies to the allies was proof of the potentiality of the system of private capitalism and free enterprise. Our valor in combat was deemed proud proof of the vitality and capacity of the spirit of free men and women. Despite what the Russians did during the war, communism, in contrast, was judged to be an oppressive and less productive system." See page 5.

In *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1959), historian William Appleman Williams challenged the expected *orthodox* interpretation of the Cold War by arguing that “for in the most fundamental sense, the present crisis in American diplomacy is defined by the conflict within and between America’s ideals and practice.” According to Williams, the crucial point to be made was that “the idea that other people ought to copy America contradicts the humanitarian urge to help them and the idea that they have the right to make such key decisions for themselves. In some cases, the American way of doing things simply does not work for other people.” As a result, Williams believed that other states viewed American policy negatively since they could lose their economic and political self-determination.¹¹ Appleman concluded that the United States’ political and economic well-being was largely dependent on “human and material resources at home and in interdependent co-operation with *all* other peoples of the world.” Williams hoped that *détente* and *rapprochement* could one day occur between the world’s two superpowers.¹²

In *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima, Potsdam, the Use of the Atomic Bomb and the American Confrontation with Soviet Power* (1965), historian Gar Alperovitz asserted that American President Harry Truman implemented a foreign policy directive that aimed to diminish or end Soviet influence in Europe. According to Alperovitz, the introduction of the first atomic bomb by the United States in 1945 influenced its diplomacy with other states, and was directly

¹¹ William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1959), 13-15. Williams wrote that “other societies come to feel that American policy causes them to lose their economic as well as their political right of self-determination. Feeling that they are being harmed rather than helped, they are inclined to resort to political and economic measures in retaliation, which only intensify a problem that is very complex to begin with.”

¹² See William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1959), 209-210. See also Williams, *The Roots of the Modern American Empire: A study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society* (New York: Random House, 1969).

ted to forcing Moscow's acceptance of American plans for Europe.¹³ Seven years later, historians Joyce Kolko and Gabriel Kolko argued in *The Limits of Power: the World and United States Policy, 1945-1954* (1972) that Washington sought to restructure the world according to American economic and political needs so that American business could trade and profit without any restrictions or influence imposed by the Soviet Union. Essentially, American leaders assumed that they could establish a world of stable capitalist states with which to trade goods and import raw materials. By prohibiting leftists from government, conservative elites were able to establish "subservient, political control throughout the globe." As a result, the United States actively thwarted Third World development and independence when it conflicted with its own economic and political interests.¹⁴

A year later, historian Thomas G. Paterson published *Soviet-American Confrontation: Postwar Reconstruction and the Origins of the Cold War* (1973) in which he argued that the United States' failure to establish a world of peace and prosperity with the Soviet Union was due to Washington's ambition to use its influence to reconstruct the world according to its own needs. Paterson noted that in the spring of 1948, the United States and the Soviet Union were firmly entrenched in their spheres of influence and the world was "following the scenario Americans had wanted so much to avoid."¹⁵

In an attempt to demonstrate that the *orthodox* and *revisionist* interpretations were both partly accurate, but ultimately flawed, Cold War scholars began to advocate for a *postrevisionist*

¹³ Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima, Potsdam, the Use of the Atomic Bomb and the American Confrontation with Soviet Power* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965), 13.

¹⁴ Joyce Kolko and Gabriel Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 2, 709, 712-713.

¹⁵ Thomas G. Paterson, *Soviet-American Confrontation: Postwar Reconstruction and the Origins of the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 29. See also Thomas G. Paterson, "Introduction: American Critics of the Cold War and Their Alternatives," In *Cold War Critics: Alternatives to American Foreign Policy in the Truman Years*, ed. Thomas G. Paterson, 3-15 (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971).

approach arguing that the United States and the Soviet Union pursued their own agendas, often misunderstanding each other's policies during the Cold War. In the 1970s, *postrevisionist* scholarship attempted to demonstrate that the Soviet Union was predominantly occupied with its own security and protecting its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. Although these scholars could not rule out Soviet aggression towards the West, they maintained that the United States remained unsure of Soviet intentions, and therefore, held legitimate concerns regarding the Soviet Union. In *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (1972), historian John Lewis Gaddis acknowledged revisionist historians for stressing the role of economic interests in American diplomacy, but claimed their focus was too narrow. According to Gaddis, issues such as bureaucratic inertia, domestic and foreign politics, individual personalities, and American perceptions of Soviet policies and intentions ultimately influenced the course that Washington officials followed.¹⁶

Two decades later, historian Melvyn Leffler's *Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (1992) illustrated that Washington's foreign economic policy was based on the self-perception that it was a global "financial hegemon." Washington's multilateral trade with other states had brought about "unprecedented economic growth" and reinforced its own image as a global superpower. Leffler went on to assert that during the Cold War, American officials believed that economic success in industrial sectors of the global economy would further separate Moscow from its Eastern European satellite states and bring about freedom in these countries. According to Leffler, American officials also believed that Moscow would be forced to cooperate closely with the United States

¹⁶ John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), viii, 358-361. See also Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), and Gaddis, *Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005). See also Walter Lefeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1975* (New York: Wiley, 1976), 285-291.

and other countries on the world stage. When it came to the Third World, Leffler concluded that American officials “exaggerated the importance of the periphery, misconstrued the relationships between the Kremlin and revolutionary nationalist leaders, and overestimated the gains that the Kremlin could derive from developments in the Third World.”¹⁷

In *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (2005), historian Odd Arne Westad asserted that the United States and the Soviet Union intervened in the Third World because of ideologies inherent in their politics. Westad viewed the Cold War in the global south as a continuation of European imperialism and was often an extension of indigenous civil wars.¹⁸ Westad later asserted that the study of the Cold War would have to be situated within a broader history of the twentieth century. Future scholarship will need to turn away from exceptionalist studies of the Cold War, and focus on contextualizing Cold War history within larger sociocultural and political trends.¹⁹

In the first decade after the Second World War, a group of interdisciplinary scholars in the West including historians, political scientists, and sociologists began to study Czechoslovakia through the lens of the Cold War. Initially, many early works were published by former Czechoslovakian politicians and diplomats who sought to promote their opposition to Communism in their homeland. After the Communist takeover in February 1948, scholarship in Czechoslovakia supported a Marxist perspective emphasizing class struggle as dictated by the

¹⁷ Melvyn P. Leffler, *Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 23-24, 516; Melvyn P. Leffler, *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 124-130. See also Walter Lafeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1975* (New York: Wiley, 1976), 4-5, 285-291.

¹⁸ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 4-5.

¹⁹ Odd Arne Westad, “The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century,” 1-19.

Communist regime.²⁰ During the early Cold War period, studies pertaining to Communist Czechoslovakia broadly focused their attention on the establishment of the Communist regime in February 1948 and the emergence of the Prague Spring movement and subsequent Soviet-led invasion in August 1968.

Early works argued that Soviet foreign policy and the Communist movement in Czechoslovakia were responsible for the Sovietization of Czechoslovakia in 1948. An example of this early scholarship was Hubert Ripka's *Czechoslovakia Enslaved* (1950). As a former Czechoslovak government-in-exile official, Ripka dismissed the notion that postwar Czechoslovakia held a "pro-Russian attitude" after the Communists won the most seats in the May 1946 general election. Ripka argued that the "communization" of Czechoslovakia constituted an example of expanding Soviet influence in Eastern Europe. Integral to the emergence of state communism in Czechoslovakia was the country's geographic proximity to Moscow and Prague's "traditional friendship" with the Soviets. This led many Czechoslovakians to view their eastern neighbour as a defender against German fascism. Ripka concluded that the heightened Cold War tensions between the West and the Soviet Union, and the "dynamism of Soviet imperialism" led to the events of February 1948. The Communist takeover of power was an example of Soviet aggression and forced the West to oppose Soviet expansion in Europe and elsewhere.²¹

Nearly a decade later, former interwar Czechoslovakian diplomat and political scientist Josef Korbel argued in *The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia* (1959) that the Communists in Czechoslovakia rapidly exploited the socioeconomic and political situation to

²⁰ See Michal Pullmann, "Writing History in the Czech and Slovak Republics: An Interview with Michal Pullmann," *Social History* 37.4 (2012): 384-401.

²¹ Hubert Ripka, *Czechoslovakia Enslaved: The Story of the Communist Coup d'État* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1950), 8, 10-11, 331.

their benefit. According to Korbel, the Communists used the Munich Agreement of 1938, the German occupation during the Second World War, and the Soviet liberation in 1945 to rally support for their cause against Czechoslovakia's right-wing parties. As a result, homegrown Communists were able to undermine democracy in Czechoslovakia and install a Moscow-oriented Communist regime.²² Two years later, former secretary to the last democratic Czechoslovakian president Edvard Beneš and Professor of Government Edward Táborský published *Communism in Czechoslovakia, 1948-1960* (1961). Similar to Ripka and Korbel, Táborský believed that the study of postwar Czechoslovakia was significant in relation to other Communist satellite-states. According to Táborský, Czechoslovakia was the most industrialized and urbanized country in the region when compared to other Eastern European states which were largely agrarian and lacked industry. Táborský noted that after the Second World War the population's "pro-Russian" attitude was superficial given that Czechs and Slovaks were historically Western-oriented. As the last standing democracy in Eastern Europe on the eve of the Second World War, Czechoslovakia served as a unique example of how a "Western-oriented democratic community succumbs to Marxist-Leninist totalitarianism."²³

In *The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic* (1969), sociologist Zdeněk Suda viewed the Communist experiment in Czechoslovakia as a "validity test" of state Marxism. For other Soviet satellite-states in Eastern Europe, Communism was seen as a mechanism for rapid industrialization and modernization. For an industrialized Czechoslovakia, Suda concluded that Communism had failed to address the problems of an industrialized state, and as a result would

²² Josef Korbel, *The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia, 1938-1948: The Failure of Coexistence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 239-240.

²³ Edward Táborský, *Communism in Czechoslovakia, 1948-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), viii-ix.

fail as a mechanism for change and modernity on the international stage.²⁴ In *Czechoslovakia: A Short History* (1971), historian John Francis Nejez Bradley concluded that as nations, the Czechs and Slovaks were too small to exact influence on their much larger European neighbours. As a result, German and Soviet foreign policy easily imposed their political objectives in Central Europe during the Second World War and the initial stages of the Cold War. After February 1948, the Czechs and Slovaks were left to “...derive whatever benefits they could.”²⁵ A decade later in *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia* (1981), economist Martin Myant questioned whether the Communist takeover of power was the result of a political offensive on the part of the right-wing in Czechoslovakia or a long-term objective of the Communists as dictated by Moscow’s Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers’ Parties (Cominform). Myant placed the events of February 1948 in a Cold War context arguing that Soviet foreign policy and the strategy of the Communist Party were responsible for the fall of democracy and the Sovietization of Czechoslovakia.²⁶

With the publication of the first history of Slovakia in the English language, *Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (1995), political scientist Stanislav J. Kirschbaum noted that in the May 1946 elections which were won by the Communists with 38 percent of the total votes cast, Slovakia rejected Marxism as a solution to its lack of industrialization. Only 6.9 percent of Slovak voters supported the Communists. In his study of the Slovaks and Slovakia, Kirschbaum argued that they had become trapped in the struggle between Western democratic values and Soviet socialism. Unfortunately, the Second World War had placed Slovaks and Czechoslovakia

²⁴ Zdeněk Suda, *The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 1-2, 4.

²⁵ John Francis Nejez Bradley, *Czechoslovakia: A Short History*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1971), 196-197.

²⁶ Martin Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1948* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 5, 242.

in the Soviet sphere of influence.²⁷ In *Slovakia: From Samo to Dzurinda* (2001), political scientist Peter A. Toma and historian Dušan Kováč illustrated that while a majority of Slovakia did not support the Communists in the May 1946 general election, Slovak citizens were economically better off under Communist-led industrialization than in the interwar period in which Prague sought to maintain Slovakia as an agricultural province. Modernization continued regardless of the effects of a centralized economy.²⁸ In *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (2004), historian Hugh LeCaine Agnew noted that the struggle to preserve democracy in Czechoslovakia as it was incorporated into the Soviet sphere of influence ultimately failed. Agnew concluded that both internal and external factors such as the popularity of the Communist Party at home and Soviet foreign policy were responsible for the demise of the democratic system.²⁹

Following the events of the Prague Spring movement and the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, scholars turned their focus from the influence of Soviet foreign policy and domestic Communism in Czechoslovakia towards the events of 1968. In the spring of 1970, hardline Communists purged liberal-minded historians from institutions of higher learning and the Academy of Sciences due to their support of the Prague Spring movement two years earlier. Many of these same individuals were banned from publishing for years and forced into underemployment as labourers, drivers, janitors, and bookkeepers.³⁰ In the West, scholars continued to debate whether the Prague Spring movement was a revolution or a movement for

²⁷ Stanislav J. Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 231.

²⁸ Peter A. Toma, and Dušan Kováč, *Slovakia: From Samo to Dzurinda* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2001), 198.

²⁹ Hugh LeCaine Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2004), 232.

³⁰ Jiří Kořalka, "Historiography of the Countries of Eastern Europe: Czechoslovakia," *American Historical Review* 97 (1992): 1030; Joseph A. Mikuš, *Slovakia and the Slovaks* (Washington: Three Continents Press, 1977), 182-188; Pullmann, "Writing History in the Czech and Slovak Republics," 390-391.

reform. In *The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring* (1971), political scientist Vladimír Kusin argued that the Prague Spring movement was not a revolution, but was simply reform-minded. The movement for reform of the Communist system in Czechoslovakia was led by the intelligentsia who sought gradual changes. According to Kusin, the Prague Spring movement held support from all sectors of Czechoslovakian society including from within the ruling Communist party structure. A broad coalition of support for reform produced national unity which later became a political force. Kusin concluded that the Prague Spring movement's objective was not to destroy the Communist system, but to implement a new model of socialism.³¹

In *The Czechoslovak Reform Movement* (1971), political scientist Galia Golan claimed that the Communist regime's delay in de-Stalinizing Czechoslovakia was due in part to its disinterest in attacking Stalinism. As a hardline Communist satellite-state, Prague was slow to discredit Stalinism in the 1960s. Golan agreed with Kusin that the Prague Spring movement was reform-minded. The Communist regime sought to alter the political system because it failed to "provide the proper framework for socialist society..." The Prague Spring movement sought to adjust Communism to the realities of an industrialized state. As a result, reformers in Prague believed state socialism could be joined with democracy. Golan concluded that the reform movement in Czechoslovakia was not anti-Soviet in its outlook, but sought to deal with the socioeconomic and political problems brought upon by the Soviet model of communism installed in 1948.³²

³¹ Vladimír Kusin, *The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring: The Development of Reformist Ideas in Czechoslovakia, 1956-1967* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 142.

³² Galia Golan, *The Czechoslovak Reform Movement: Communism in Crisis, 1962-1968* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 2, 5-6, 326. See also Galia Golan, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia: The Dubček Era, 1968-1969* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973).

In *Politics in Czechoslovakia* (1974), political scientist Otto Ulč claimed that following the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia to suppress the Prague Spring movement, the neo-Stalinist restoration of hardline rule would fail to materialize since a broad coalition of society supported reform of the Communist system. By the 1970s, the Communist regime would become a “...weakened, exhausted system...possessing the characteristic of what may be termed a “post-totalitarian system...” Ulč agreed with previous scholars and concluded that Czechoslovakia’s future would continue to be determined by external forces.³³ Political scientist Zdeněk Křýštufek went further by arguing in *The Soviet Regime in Czechoslovakia* (1981) that the reform movement demonstrated how “deep and pervasive was the aversion to the existent political organization.” The reintroduction of freedom of the press, civil rights, and the elimination of censorship allowed Czechoslovakians to see their state without communist propaganda.³⁴

In *Czechoslovakia’s Interrupted Revolution* (1976), historian Harold Gordon Skilling viewed the Prague Spring movement differently than previous scholars. According to Skilling, the events of 1968 were more closely linked to revolution than reform. The Communist regime’s ability to govern had broken down. Skilling noted that “rulers could not rule and the ruled did not want to be ruled.” The Prague Spring movement’s attempt to increase civic freedoms and limit press censorship was in stark contrast to Soviet rule. Skilling concluded that in 1968, the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia was undergoing a revolution supported by liberal members within the Communist party and by a cross-section of society eager for change.³⁵ Two years later, political scientist Vladimír Kusin published *From Dubcek to Charter 77* (1978) in which he countered Skilling and argued that the Prague Spring movement was not a revolution

³³ Otto Ulč, *Politics in Czechoslovakia* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman, 1974), 149-150.

³⁴ Zdeněk Křýštufek, *The Soviet Regime in Czechoslovakia* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1981), vi.

³⁵ Harold Gordon Skilling, *Czechoslovakia’s Interrupted Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 834-835.

since individuals within and outside of the Communist Party initiated a “reformist alliance” to exact socioeconomic change within society. According to Kusin, reform Communists did not seek to end Communist rule and would have required more time before the Soviet invasion to establish a revolution.³⁶

In *Passive Revolution* (1979), scholar Jon Bloomfield argued that the Prague Spring movement was at best a “passive revolution” in which individuals outside of the Communist Party willingly participated in changing Communist rule, but were “...not its driving force.” Although Bloomfield took a middle approach to the objectives of the Prague Spring movement, he joined previous scholars in claiming that Czechoslovakia’s socioeconomic and political development remained largely dependent on external forces. As a Communist satellite-state, Czechoslovakia remained in the Soviet sphere of influence. Bloomfield argued that the events of 1968 signalled that Communist Party officials, intellectuals, students, and workers sought to implement policies that would not upset Moscow and were in accordance with its strategic requirements. As a result, the Prague Spring movement was no more than a passive attempt at revolution. Officials from within the Communist Party and ordinary citizens who sought change did not craft a strategy for the implementation of a new socialist system. Bloomfield concluded that the motivation for revolution “came from above and from abroad, and this had enormous implications for democracy in the future socialist state.”³⁷

With the fall of Communism in 1989, scholarship on Communist Czechoslovakia continued to use earlier works as “templates” while including newly accessible archival records. In *The Prague Spring and its Aftermath* (1997), political scientist Kieran Williams noted that

³⁶ Vladimír Kusin, *From Dubček to Charter 77: A Study of “Normalization” in Czechoslovakia, 1968-1978* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1978), 2-4.

³⁷ Jon Bloomfield, *Passive Revolution: Politics and the Czechoslovak Working Class, 1945-1948* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1979), 10-11.

after 1989 the concept of reform communism was all but dismissed due to the failure of *perestroika* (economic reform) in the Soviet Union.³⁸ With the release of Cold War archival materials in the West and in Eastern Europe, scholars have increasingly contextualized events in Czechoslovakia as part of a broader international Cold War history. In *The Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968* (2010), historian Gunter Bischof, historian Stefan Karner, and researcher Peter Ruggenthaler claimed that the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968 challenged governmental authority in the West and the East and ultimately led to the establishment of the policy of détente which restructured international order. Bischof, Karner, and Ruggenthaler supported a revisionist interpretation by arguing that the Warsaw Pact invasion stabilized Eastern Europe and permitted for the politics of détente to take root. Another effect of the events of 1968 was Moscow's imposition of the Brezhnev Doctrine which claimed that the Soviet Union had permission to defend socialism in its own sphere of influence.³⁹ During the Cold War, independent scholarship in Czechoslovakia was heavily undermined by Communist authorities who promoted Marxist thought in an attempt to establish an "official historiography." After February 1948, research institutions that did not support the regime's ideological values were purged of scholars who opposed a Marxist interpretation of the past.⁴⁰ Many of these individuals fled to the West where they could freely publish their works and actively oppose the Communist regime's "official" interpretation of the past. Many of these scholars were ardent

³⁸ Kieran Williams, *The Prague Spring and Its Aftermath: Czechoslovak Politics, 1968-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), ix. See Martin Myant, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1948-1988: The Battle for Economic Reform* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1-2, 262.

³⁹ Gunter Bischof, Stefan Karner, and Peter Ruggenthaler, "Introduction," In *The Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968*, eds. Gunter Bischof, Stefan Karner, and Peter Ruggenthaler, 3-34 (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2010), 4.

⁴⁰ Harold Gordon Skilling, "Review Article: Independent Historiography in Czechoslovakia," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 25.4 (1983): 519.

democrats and anti-communists who influenced Western understanding of the Cold War in Czechoslovakia.

In Canada, the Cold War is thought to have begun with Igor Gouzenko, a Soviet cipher clerk in the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa. On 5 September 1945, Gouzenko fled from the Soviet authorities with 109 documents which he later turned over to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The highly sensitive documents proved the existence of a Soviet spy ring in Canada. The Soviet cipher clerk's claim that Canadian Communists were handing over secret documents to Moscow was followed by national outrage. On 5 February 1946, under Order-in-Council P.C. 411, the Canadian government established the *Royal Commission to Investigate the Facts Relating to and the Circumstances Surrounding the Communication, by Public Officials and Other Persons in Positions of Trust, of Secret and Confidential Information to Agents of a Foreign Power*, commonly referred to as the Kellock-Taschereau Commission.⁴¹ Between October 1950 and June 1951, the RCMP handled 54,000 requests to screen civil servants and private-sector workers. Any deviance from postwar cultural norms of God, family, country, and democracy were immediately viewed as suspicious and often put under surveillance.⁴²

In *Double Standard: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration* (1987), political scientist Reginald Whitaker argued that the American and Canadian governments prevented Soviet spies and leftists from entering their countries while remaining passive to the admission of fascists and their sympathizers.⁴³ Leftists who fled conservative states were labelled as security risks. The Cold War manifested itself in everyday life through police checks and Royal Canadian

⁴¹ The Royal Commission was headed by two judges of the Supreme Court of Canada, Justice Robert Taschereau and Justice Roy Kellock.

⁴² Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 22-23.

⁴³ Reginald Whitaker, *Double Standard: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys Limited, 1987), 6-9.

Mounted Police (RCMP) security screening. Proponents of business attempted to thwart the immigration of noted leftists while ethnic communities – including Eastern European groups – attempted to suppress the leftist influence in their communities.

In this era of increasing sensitivity to the Communist threat from within and outside of Canada's borders, the federal government welcomed newcomers including refugees – those whom the United Nations defined as: being stateless, outside of their former habitual residence, or unwilling to benefit from the protection of their home country due to a fear of being persecuted on the grounds of race, religion, nationality, political view, or membership in a particular social group – and attempted to restrict individuals with Communist and socialist sympathies from entering the country. In *Cold War Canada: The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945-1957* (1996), filmmaker and journalist Gary Marcuse, and political scientist Reginald Whitaker asserted that the Canadian government cooperated with its American neighbor and accepted a series of ideological and political agendas that dictated which immigrants were admitted and restricted. The postwar consolidation of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe shocked Canadian officials as a democratic system in Czechoslovakia was usurped by local Communists supported by Moscow.⁴⁴ Canada sought to prevent Communists and their sympathizers from entering the country. Émigrés who fled Communist states were cautiously settled in Canada because they came from “refugee-producing states.”⁴⁵ Marcuse and Whitaker illustrated that in contrast to prewar immigrants who brought “Old World radicalism” with them to Canada, Cold War refugees from Eastern Europe brought liberal-conservative

⁴⁴ Gary Marcuse and Reginald Whitaker, *Cold War Canada: The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945-1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 5.

⁴⁵ Reginald Whitaker, “‘We Know They’re There’: Canada and Its Others, with or without the Cold War,” In *Love, Hate, and Fear in Canada’s Cold War*, ed. Richard Cavell, 35-56 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 45-46.

values that supported democracy and economic opportunity. In addition, Eastern European immigration brought an ardent anti-communism and “hatred” of Soviet domination of their homelands. Marcuse and Whitaker asserted that many of these same anti-communist newcomers attached themselves to conservative causes and promoted policies that sustained the Cold War.⁴⁶

In the first decade after the Second World War, Canada admitted close to a million immigrants. Many Canadians began increasingly concerned that newcomers from Eastern Europe would disrupt middle-class cultural norms. In *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality* (1997), sociologist Mary Louise Adams maintained that social workers and immigrant advocates encouraged ‘New Canadians’ to “abandon their own family structures in favour of those thought to be essential to the moral strength of the nation: single family households, presided over by a breadwinner father and stay-at-home mother.” Whether or not white, Anglo-Celtic, and Christian family norms were desirable to newcomers, many immigrants who faced discrimination and economic hardship upon entering Canada were continually labelled as “‘deviant’ and a threat to both ‘Canadianization’ and the institution of the family itself.”⁴⁷ Meanwhile newcomers from Eastern Europe were thrust into the ideological fight between democracy and Communism. As a result, Adams emphasized that dissent and difference of opinion were seen to weaken democratic values while Canadian officials promoted social cohesion and the superiority of the Western way of life.⁴⁸

In *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada* (2006), historian Franca Iacovetta claimed that the Cold War in Canada imposed new social and political restraints on free speech and other civil liberties, and criminalized homosexuality and other social

⁴⁶ Marcuse and Whitaker, *Cold War Canada: The Making of a National Insecurity State*, 18.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 38.

immorality. Political dissent was depicted as treasonous and a sure sign that an individual was loyal to the Soviet Union and Communism.⁴⁹ Social workers, professionals, bureaucrats, and politicians or ‘Gatekeepers,’ supported “a fundamentally conservative Cold War consensus” that promoted the middle-class values of conformity, obedience, and a belief in a capitalist society.⁵⁰ In essence, Iacovetta argued that these aforementioned ‘gatekeepers’ attempted to eliminate all Communist threats from within towards a democratic and Western way of life in Canada. The containment and eradication of Communist threats within Cold War Canada led to widespread fear and a “moral panic” that affected postwar immigration legislation including the 1952 Immigration Act which included restricting Communist sympathizers, homosexuals, and drug users and traffickers from entering the country legally.⁵¹ Iacovetta also examined the role of the federal government and ethnocultural organizations in trumpeting the myth of the heroic anti-communist freedom fighter from Eastern Europe who arrived in Canada to continue the struggle to liberate his/her homeland from Communism.⁵² Although an asset to Canada as a skilled immigrant, the anti-communist remained preoccupied with the struggle for the old homeland rather than integrating into Canadian society.⁵³ Individuals perceived as “freedom fighters” often succumbed to issues of personal immorality and even played both sides of the Cold War. As a result, the role of the anti-communist largely influenced how successful the state would be in undermining ethnic leftists.⁵⁴ The Soviet Union and its satellite-states used agents in Canada to

⁴⁹ Franca Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2006), 18.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵² Franca Iacovetta, “Making Model Citizens: Gender, Corrupted Democracy, and Immigrant and Refugee Reception Work in Cold War Canada,” In *Whose National Security? Canadian State Security and the Creation of Enemies*, eds. Gary Kinsman, Dieter K. Buse, and Mercedes Steedman, 154-170 (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2000), 158.

⁵³ Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada*, 105.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 134.

“infiltrate large ethnic groups” including the Czechoslovak and nationalist Slovak communities in the hopes of eliminating anti-communist activities.⁵⁵

In *Canada and the Cold War* (2003), political scientist Reginald Whitaker and historian Steve Hewitt concluded that the West “overreacted” in its response to the threat posed by the Soviet Union. Both scholars determined that in Canada the Cold War led to ...signs of panicked reactions, and excesses in pursuit of security that did liberal democracies like Canada no credit.”⁵⁶ In *Love, Hate, and Fear in Canada’s Cold War* (2004), editor Richard Cavell suggested that Canada’s Cold War effort was more “centralized” than its American neighbour and at times even anti-American.⁵⁷ In recent years, scholars of the Cold War have increasingly emphasized that Western states including Canada failed to distinguish between what were actual threats on the part of Communists and their sympathizers inside the country, and those from the Soviet Union and abroad. As a result, Canadian officials failed to “calculate coolly and rationally a measured and proportionate response.”⁵⁸

Previous historiography illustrated that Canadian authorities actively participated in the admission, settlement, and integration of anti-communist refugees during the Cold War. However, it is difficult to ascertain the level of influence that anti-communist newcomers had on Canadian officials and other non-governmental “gatekeepers” in undermining ethnic leftists in Canada and on foreign policy towards Communist Eastern Europe. The scope of participation, commitment, and success in fighting communism on the part of newcomers from Czechoslovakia also requires further analysis. Czech and Slovak refugees transplanted their

⁵⁵ Iacovetta, “Making Model Citizens: Gender, Corrupted Democracy, and Immigrant and Refugee Reception Work in Cold War Canada,” 158.

⁵⁶ Reginald Whitaker and Steve Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 2003), 241.

⁵⁷ Richard Cavell, “Introduction: The Cultural Production of Canada’s Cold War,” In *Love, Hate, and Fear in Canada’s Cold War*, ed. Richard Cavell, 3-34 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 5.

⁵⁸ Whitaker and Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, 241.

democratic politics and anti-communism to Canada during the Cold War. Many of these newcomers joined Canadian Czechoslovak institutions where, as self-appointed representatives of their community, they attempted to act as intermediaries between Czechoslovaks and Canadian society. These community brokers often maintained a transnational identity with a loyalty to the old democratic homeland and their new home, Canada. Cold War refugees from Czechoslovakia joined community organizations out of self-interest to increase their socioeconomic standing, promote their political views, and establish their roles as members of the Canadian Czechoslovak elite. In using their anti-communist background and status as Cold War refugees, newcomers bolstered their position in the Czechoslovak community and Canadian society by promoting anti-communist values through persuasive language including ‘fight,’ ‘struggle’ and ‘liberate’ in an attempt to use rhetoric to exemplify their wish to see democracy return to their old homeland. Often, rhetoric exceeded reality in which many anti-communist refugees sought to change Canadian public perceptions of Czechoslovakia and global Communism. It is important to note that much of the anti-communist Cold War rhetoric within the Canadian Czechoslovak community was also anti-Soviet in nature.

During the Cold War, Czech and Slovak refugees arrived in Canada at a time when the cultural norms of a nuclear family, Christian faith, loyalty to country, and democratic values were considered vital to the preservation of Canadian society. Individuals including newcomers from Czechoslovakia were viewed suspiciously if they diverted from these postwar cultural norms. A fear of being labelled as communists or Soviet spies, and put under surveillance played an influential role in how refugees from Communist Eastern Europe settled in Canada as they transplanted their old world values, and navigated the norms they found in their new homeland. An examination of the role played by Czechoslovak institutions and Canadian authorities in the

settlement of these newcomers will help determine what part of the newcomer's anti-communism was rhetoric – an attempt to embrace postwar Canadian cultural norms or Czechoslovak community interests – and what was reality.

This study also examines the evolution of Czechoslovak identity and how it influenced community institutions in Cold War Canada. During the Cold War, Czech and Slovak identity in Canada was not only shaped by their political ideologies and personal backgrounds, but also by their ties to an ethnic nationalism in Europe. Beginning in the 1920s, the politics of identity contested in Czechoslovakia were transplanted to Canada. State-sponsored Czechoslovakism was promoted by Prague's diplomatic representatives in Canada and opposed by nationalist Slovaks who defended a distinct Slovak ethnic heritage and homeland in Slovakia.

Scholars of immigration history frequently question how to use subjective markers of ethnicity. Group self-identification remains the standard measure of how to label an ethnic community.⁵⁹ In the early twentieth century, the study of immigration and ethnic groups in Canada suffered from a lack of a conceptual and theoretical framework. Following in the footsteps of American scholarship that viewed immigration as a 'problem,' early Canadian studies focused on the settlement of the Canadian West. As a result, the study of immigration and ethnicity as a separate field was largely overlooked and even ignored.⁶⁰ Prior to the Second World War, historians and sociologists began to question the role that ethnicity and 'race' played in Canadian society. Beginning in the latter-half of the twentieth century scholars have taken a vast range of approaches to the study of Canadian immigration history and ethnicity. The interdisciplinary nature required to study these issues also evolved throughout the twentieth

⁵⁹ Vadim Kukushkin, *From Peasants to Labourers: Ukrainian and Belarusian Immigration from the Russian Empire to Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 6.

⁶⁰ Dirk Hoerder, "Ethnic Studies in Canada from the 1880s to 1962: A Historiographical Perspective and Critique," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 26.1 (1994): 1-18.

century. As scholars were inherently linked to the time period in which they wrote, many works contained established ethnocentric views of the era and diminished, downplayed, or even degraded certain groups into racial and ethnic hierarchies.⁶¹

Since the 1960s, historians and sociologists have sought to promote cultural relativism where ethnicity was accepted as an “innate property of culture-bearing groups.” Hence, common ethnic identity was defined as a social construction involving “internal rules” of exclusion and inclusion around a perception of a common descent based on such factors as ancestry, language, religion, history, and territory.⁶² Profoundly influenced by American scholarship, the study of Canadian immigration history and ethnicity followed the reaction of scholars to Harvard historian Oscar Handlin’s influential 1951 Pulitzer Prize-winning thesis *The Uprooted*.⁶³ As a result, the history of North American ethnic communities in the sixties was viewed largely as a break with the past and stressed the uprootedness, alienation, and eventual assimilation of the immigrant to the greater society. In 1964, sociologist Raymond Breton published his influential work in which he demonstrated that by using information on the number of national churches, mutual benefit societies, and ethnic press, for example, an ethnic community’s rate of institutional completeness could be ascertained. Breton studied how ethnic institutions allowed immigrants to live their lives within their own ethnic cultures away from the receiving society.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Franca Iacovetta, *The Writing of English Canadian Immigrant History* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1997), 3. For example, see James Shaver Woodsworth, *Strangers at Our Gates or Coming Canadians* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1909), and John Murray Gibbon, *Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1938).

⁶² Kay J. Anderson, “The Idea of Chinatown: The Power of Place and Institutional Practice in the Making of a Racial Category,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77 (1987): 584.

⁶³ See Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People* (Little, Brown and Company, 1951).

⁶⁴ Raymond Breton, “Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants,” *American Journal of Sociology* 70:2 (1964), 193-205; Roberto Perin, “Clio as an Ethnic: the Third Force in Canadian Historiography,” *Canadian Historical Review* 64.4 (December 1983): 441-442. Perin notes that Breton’s thesis “said more about the geographical, social, or cultural isolation of the individual than about the institutions’ vitality was not immediately apparent to these theorists.”

In his findings, ethnic groups with a large concentration of ethnic organizations were classified as “high” and included among others: Germans, Greeks, French, Hungarians, Italians, Poles, and Russians. Ethnic communities that were considered to be “low” in terms of institutional completeness included: Belgians, Bulgarians, Danes, Dutch, Irish, Latvians, Romanians, and “Czechoslovaks.”⁶⁵

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, scholars of immigration and ethnicity such as historian Rudolph Vecoli who first refuted Handlin’s thesis no longer viewed the immigrant experience within the broader field of ethnic history as a rupture with the past, but rather as a continuity.⁶⁶ Scholars began to view immigrants and their experiences in the context of transplanted lives and asserted that they too held human agency in choosing and adapting to their settlement in North America.⁶⁷ Canadian scholarship on immigration and ethnic groups outside of an Anglo-Irish and French origin lacked a generation of scholars similar to Handlin, Vecoli, and American historian Marcus Hansen who could aptly examine the experience of ‘other’ groups in Canada. As a result, the study of the immigrant experience in Canada was derived from the emergence of social history and the study of the past “from the bottom-up” such as works on labour and ethnic communities.⁶⁸ Initially, the histories of ethnic communities that were produced in the three decades after Handlin’s *Uprooted* thesis were heavily filiopietistic in nature often promoting romantic visions of the old homeland, culture, language, and the success of community members in attaining social, political, and economic success in Canada. As a result, such works were not highly critical of the ethnic community under study because they were written from within – by

⁶⁵ Breton, “Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities,” 196.

⁶⁶ See Handlin, *The Uprooted*; Rudolph J. Vecoli, “*Contadini* in Chicago: A Critique of *The Uprooted*,” *Journal of American History* 51.3 (December 1964): 404-417, and John Bodnar’s *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1985).

⁶⁷ Franca Iacovetta, “Manly Militants, Cohesive Communities, and Defiant Domestics: Writing about Immigrants in Canadian Historical Scholarship,” *Labour/Le travail* 36 (1995): 220-225.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 220-225; Iacovetta, *Writing of English Canadian Immigrant History*, 5.

established members including academics and professionals often times in the author's second language.⁶⁹

Canadians envisioned their country to be different in its understanding of ethnicity and reception of immigrants than that of the United States. Canadians viewed their country as a “mosaic” in which ethnic groups were able to maintain their diversity, whereas American identity was formed from the fusion of diverse ethnic groups into a “melting pot.”⁷⁰ Historian Howard Palmer dispelled this notion in asserting that past American and Canadian immigration policies were similar in their objectives to restrict and to exclude certain immigrants based on ethnic or racial origin.⁷¹ As a result, Canada witnessed the promotion of three theories of assimilation over time: first, Anglo-conformity – Franco-conformity in the province of Quebec – attempted to merge an immigrant's culture with that of the dominant Anglo-Saxon and French groups; second, the melting pot sought to bring together the existing broader community with the ethnic community to establish a Canadian identity; and lastly, the notion of cultural pluralism or multiculturalism which permitted immigrants and ethnic communities to preserve their cultures and traditions from the old world while actively integrating in Canadian society as citizens.⁷² In

⁶⁹ Iacovetta, “Manly Militants, Cohesive Communities, and Defiant Domestics,” 222; Iacovetta, *Writing of English Canadian Immigrant History*, 3; Howard Palmer, “Canadian Immigration and Ethnic History in the 1970s and 1980s,” *International Migration Review* 15.3 (Autumn 1981): 472-473.

⁷⁰ In 1908, the term “melting pot” was first used as the title of a play by Israel Zangwell. The term “mosaic” gained popularity after publication of John Murray Gibbon's *The Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation* in 1938.

⁷¹ Howard Palmer, “Mosaic versus the Melting Pot?: Immigration and Ethnicity in Canada and the United States,” *International Journal* 31 (1976): 488.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 489-490; Irene Bloemraad, *Becoming a Citizen: Incorporating Immigrants and Refugees in the United States and Canada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 159-160; Will Kymlicka, *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), 44-45; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 14, 17; Will Kymlicka, “Canadian Multiculturalism: Global Anxieties, Local Realities,” 2009-2010 Roger Spalding Lecture, *St. Jerome's Lectures in Catholic Experience*, St. Jerome's University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, November 20, 2009. Kymlicka argued that before the Canadian government unveiled its official multiculturalism policy in 1971, Anglo-conformity desired that immigrants be indistinguishable in food, clothing, and language from other Canadians. Since

the early 1980s, historian Roberto Perin lamented the lack of space in historiography for immigrants to “...claim exclusively for themselves.” Perin asserted that the immigrant experience was separate to that of the ethnic community and proposed the use of “immigrant communities” or “immigrant cultures” instead of “ethnic.”⁷³ Perin noted that while the history of immigrant groups was missing or understudied in Atlantic Canada, in areas outside of major urban centres, and largely throughout British Columbia – which focused primarily on nativism – local or regional studies were essentially capturing the immigrant experience.⁷⁴

In recent decades, Canadian immigration scholarship has underrepresented or outright ignored the experiences of smaller and highly assimilable ethnic groups, since European ethnic groups are often simply appropriated as having rapidly integrated into Canadian society and therefore are overlooked. In the case of immigration from Czechoslovakia to Canada in the twentieth century, ethnic Czechs were not as ethnoculturally cohesive in terms of community establishment in North America as ethnic Slovaks who embraced the resurrection of their own organizations, parishes, and festivals in the new world. Only a minority of Czechs did not embrace Canada’s Anglo or Franco-conformity in the first several decades of the twentieth century.

For the purposes of this study, it is important to examine the similarities and differences between Czechs and Slovaks as separate ethnic groups in Canada. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, both groups settled in areas where other Central and Eastern Europeans resided due to a familiarity with their cultures. Czechs and Slovaks were numerically smaller in comparison to other European groups including the Ukrainians, Russians, Poles, Germans, and

1971, Canadians largely accept that ethnic communities want to maintain their cultural identities from the old world. Diversity in the name of multiculturalism has become a part of Canada’s national identity.

⁷³ Perin, “Clio as an Ethnic,” 202.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 217-218.

Hungarians. Historians Mark Stolárik and Elena Jakešová observed that the three pillars of Slovak life in Canada were the family, fraternal-benefit society, and the parish. Approximately, 80 percent of Slovaks are Catholic, 15 percent are Lutheran, and 5 percent are Greek Catholic. Prior to the First World War, Slovaks relied on the fraternal-benefit society to build parishes where mass was delivered in the Slovak language. With an increase in Slovak immigration after 1918, many national parishes were erected across Canada to serve local Slovak Catholic and Protestant communities. During the interwar period, many sojourners found their initial experience in Canada difficult and chose to live within their community. As a result, they did not learn English or French and never adapted to Canadian culture and customs. Subsequent generations of Slovaks often intermarried with other Slavic groups and with individuals of a similar religious background. For example, Slovak Catholics often intermarried with individuals from a French, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, or Polish background. Postwar Slovak immigrants arrived in Canada with a high level of education and experience and were able to quickly improve their socioeconomic status.⁷⁵

Postwar newcomers established community schools for their children where they were taught Slovak culture and history, and could learn the Slovak language. Catholic Slovak immigrants enrolled their children in separate schools, while Protestant Slovaks placed their children in public schools. In recent decades, Slovak Canadians continue to support local community institutions and press.⁷⁶ A majority of Slovaks in Canada espouse a distinct Slovak ethnic identity and culture. A minority of the Canadian Slovak community supports a common Czechoslovak identity with their neighbours, the Czechs.

⁷⁵ Jakešová and Stolárik, "Slovaks," 1172-1175.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

In comparison to the Slovaks, the Czechs have accepted a higher level of institutional assimilation. Historian Marek J. Jovanovic observed that Czechs in Canada often retained their ethnic identity, but did not actively participate in Czech or Czechoslovak institutions choosing to join non-ethnic Canadian organizations and groups. Prior to the Second World War, Czech immigrants often joined other national churches and organizations because their numbers were too small to establish their own institutions. Before 1939, Czechs preferred to join Slovak organizations or attempted to establish institutions that promoted a Czechoslovak identity which many nationalist Slovaks opposed. Relations between Czechs and Slovaks were often a microcosm of the political situation in Central Europe as both groups shared a common statehood. From 1918 until its dissolution in 1993, Czechoslovakia was home to both the Czech and Slovak nations. With the birth of the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic in 1993, Czechoslovak groups referred to themselves as ‘Czech and Slovak.’

A majority of Slovaks opposed a common Czechoslovak ethnic identity which caused friction and division between both communities. Compared to the Slovaks, Czechs had a higher rate of intermarriage and often moved out of ethnic neighbourhoods in an attempt to avoid being “ghettoized.”⁷⁷ Approximately 75 percent of Czechs in Canada are Catholic, while a minority belong to the Protestant churches including the Moravian Brethren, Lutheran, and Baptist Churches. During the twentieth century, many Czechs favoured intermarriage with individuals of an Anglo-German background.⁷⁸ After the Second World War, Czech immigrants brought a high level of education and experience to Canada which allowed them to rapidly improve their socioeconomic status compared to other groups who arrived in Canada during the same period.

⁷⁷ Marek J. Jovanovic, “Czechs,” In *Encyclopedia of Canada’s Peoples*, ed. Paul Robert Magocsi, 397-405 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 401-405.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Similar to the Slovaks, postwar Czech immigrants also established weekend schools for their children who would learn about Czech culture and history, and practice their Czech language skills. With the rise of public education, Czech immigrants increasingly placed their children in public schools. Community institutions which taught the Czech language and culture to successive generations decreased, as Czech parents taught their children at home or failed to pass on their culture and language. With an increase in the number of government-supported community services since the 1970s, many Czechs in Canada seldom support Czech or ‘Czech and Slovak’ institutions and the community press.⁷⁹

During the postwar period, only a limited amount of historical scholarship emerged on the Czechs and Slovaks in Canada.⁸⁰ In the 1950s and 1960s, works such as Konštantín Čulen’s *Slovaks in Slovakia and Canada* (1955) offered a general overview of Slovakia’s history and the Slovak experience in Canada from a nationalist perspective. Similarly, Mario Hikl’s *A Short History of the Czechoslovak People in Canada* (1955) produced a synopsis of the experience of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada from a Czechoslovak viewpoint.⁸¹ Not until the late sixties did a work of substantial scope appear. During Canada’s Centennial, Joseph M. Kirschbaum published *The Slovaks in Canada* (1967). Written from a nationalist perspective, Kirschbaum largely

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ For an bibliographic overview of sources on Czech and Slovak Canadians see: Andrew Gregorovich, *A Bibliography of Canada's Peoples: Supplement 1, 1972-1979* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1993); Andrew Gregorovich, *Canadian Ethnic Groups Bibliography: A Selected Bibliography of Ethno-Cultural Groups in Canada and the Province of Ontario* (Toronto: Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, 1972); Esther Jeřábek, *Czechs and Slovaks in North America* (New York: Czechoslovak Society of Arts & Sciences in America, 1976); Jovanovic, “Czechs;” Jakešová and Stolárik, “Slovaks;” George J. Škvor, “Czech-Canadian Periodical Publications: A Preliminary Checklist,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 1 (1969): 3-5; Nicholas J. Žekulin, “Czech-Canadian Periodical Publications: First Supplement,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 5:1-2 (1973): 31-33; Edward V. Behunčík, “Fortieth Anniversary Canadian Slovak League,” *Slovakia* 23.46 (1973): 38-52; Peter D. Chimbos, “A Comparison of the Social Adaptation of Dutch, Greek, and Slovak Immigrants in a Canadian Community,” *International Migration Review* 6.2 (1972): 230-244; Joseph M. Kirschbaum, *Slovak Language and Literature: Essays* (Winnipeg: Department of Slavic Studies, University of Manitoba, 1975).

⁸¹ Konštantín Čulen, *Slovaks in Slovakia and Canada* (Winnipeg: Canadian Slovak League, 1955); Mario Hikl, *A Short History of the Czechoslovak People in Canada* (Toronto: Across-Canada Press, 1955).

undermined the relationship that a minority of Slovaks played in Czechoslovak ethnic associations and activities in illustrating that a majority of Slovaks were nationalistic and their ethnic identity was separate to that of the Czechs.⁸² Prominent Marxist historian Josef V. Polišenský's *Canada and Czechoslovakia* (1967) promoted the historical relationship between Canada and Czechoslovakia in culture and trade at the time of the International and Universal Exposition (Expo 67) held in Montreal.⁸³ A year later, John Gellner and John Smerek's largely Czechoslovak-oriented *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada* (1968) demonstrated that Czechs and a minority of Slovaks in Canada adhered to a Czechoslovak ethnic identity.⁸⁴ The aforementioned works are now largely outdated and do not examine the admission and settlement of the 1968ers and individuals who entered Canada in the 1970s and 1980s.

In the mid-1980s, Anthony X. Sutherland examined the history of the largest and most influential nationalist Slovak organization in Canada in *The Canadian Slovak League* (1984).⁸⁵ With the fall of communism in 1989, no history of the Slovak people existed whereas works discussing Czechoslovaks were readily available.⁸⁶ As a result, those Slovaks who chose to participate with their Czech colleagues were predominantly known as Czechoslovaks due to their support for a common ethnic identity and were a minority within the Canadian Slovak community. Simultaneously, a majority of works published on Slovak immigration in North America and modern Slovakia have espoused a nationalist Slovak orientation in an attempt to challenge the widespread perception that Slovaks are members of a broader Czechoslovak identity. As a result, events in Czechoslovakia profoundly shaped how Canadian authorities and

⁸² Joseph M. Kirschbaum, *The Slovaks in Canada* (Toronto: Canadian Ethnic Press Association of Ontario, 1967).

⁸³ Josef V. Polišenský, *Canada and Czechoslovakia* (Prague: Orbis, 1967).

⁸⁴ John Gellner and John Smerek, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968).

⁸⁵ Anthony X. Sutherland, *The Canadian Slovak League* (Toronto: Canadian Slovak League, 1984).

⁸⁶ M. Mark Stolárik, "The Painful Birth of Slovak Historiography in the 20th Century," *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung* (Marburg) 50:2 (2001): 184-185.

the public perceived and understood Czech and Slovak identity. In many cases, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks were often referred to as Czechoslovaks. Many nationalist Slovaks who immigrated to Canada fought against their misrepresentation as Czechoslovaks in the hopes of raising awareness of a distinct Slovak ethnic identity and nation. Scholarship on the Czechs and Slovaks in Canada was initiated by these same immigrants from Czechoslovakia.

Approximately two decades later, Czech Canadian lawyer Josef Čermák published *Fragmenty ze života Čechů a Slováků v Kanadě* (Fragments from the Life of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada) (2000), and *It All Started with Prince Rupert: The Story of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada* (2003). Čermák attempted to finally produce a comprehensive history of the Czechs and Slovaks in Canada. His works illustrated the evolution of settlement and sociopolitical organization since the nineteenth century through a lens that promoted the notion of a Czechoslovak and later a “Czech and Slovak” community.⁸⁷ Due to a dearth of historians with a knowledge of the Czech or Slovak languages, ‘community insiders’ such as Čulen, Híkl, Kirschbaum, Gellner and Smerek, and Čermák produced works that examined the history of these communities. Meanwhile, recent historical scholarship beginning with Gerald Dirks’ *Canada’s Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism?* (1977), and later followed by Reginald Whitaker’s *Double Standard: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration* (1987), Freda Hawkins’ *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern* (1988), Valerie Knowles’ *Strangers at our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-1997* (1997), Ninette Kelly and Michael Trebilcock’s *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (1998), and Franca Iacovetta’s *Gatekeepers: Reshaping*

⁸⁷ Josef Čermák, *Fragmenty ze života Čechů a Slováků v Kanadě* (Zlin: Atelier IM, 2000); Josef Čermák, *It All Started with Prince Rupert: The Story of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada* (Prague: Atelier IM, 2003).

Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada (2006) have briefly mentioned the migration experience of individuals from Czechoslovakia within a broader study of Canadian immigration history.⁸⁸

This study of Czech and Slovak immigration to Canada primarily focuses on Toronto for two main reasons. First, beginning in the interwar period, Czechs and Slovaks began to settle in urban centres across Canada with Toronto and Montreal attracting sizeable Czech and Slovak populations. During the Cold War period, nearly half of all newcomers from Czechoslovakia chose to settle in Toronto or southern Ontario where established Czechoslovak and nationalist Slovak communities existed. Second, the largest and most influential Canadian Czechoslovak institutions during the Cold War, the Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA) and the Masaryk Hall (MH) were headquartered in Toronto. Although existing archival records and previously conducted oral histories contain information on Czechoslovak community life across Canada, these collections focus predominantly on Czechoslovak community activities in Toronto and southern Ontario.

Research conducted for this study included federal and provincial archival records and statistics, ethnic community archival fonds, previously-recorded oral histories, and mainstream and ethnic newspapers. Government records are a rich source of information on Canadian officials' role in the admission, settlement, and integration of newcomers. Records pertaining to the Immigration Branch, the Departments of External Affairs, National Defence, and the Secretary of State, and the Ontario Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship were consulted for this study. Ethnic community fonds also shed light on the social, cultural, and

⁸⁸ See Gerald E. Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism?* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977); Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988); Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-1997* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997); Whitaker, *Double Standard*; Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*.

political participation of citizens and newcomers to Canada. Institutional records donated by various Canadian Czechoslovak organizations such as the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC), Masaryk Memorial Institute (MMI), Canadian Czechoslovak Benevolent Association (CCBA), and the Sokol Gymnastic Association of Canada (SGAC) form a body of information from which we can ascertain the conditions and composition of membership, the level of participation in annual congresses and celebrations, and relations between other Canadian Czechoslovak groups, nationalist Slovak Canadian institutions, and local, provincial, and federal authorities.

These same organizations donated a significant amount of documentation to various national and provincial repositories. Often, these collections are cleansed of records which reflect negatively on individuals and groups within the Canadian Czechoslovak community. Documentation found in ethnic community fonds is often produced by ‘community insiders’ who claim to represent their entire community whether or not their ideological views are supported by a majority of community members. Similarly, these records contain donated papers, receipts, reports, minutes, letters, memoranda, and are often biased towards an organization’s sociopolitical ideology, aims, and objectives. Ethnic community fonds also exclude the ‘silent voice’ – members who did not actively participate in their community’s sociocultural and political activities. Therefore, ethnic community fonds give us a glimpse into the institutional and social history of the Czechoslovak community in Canada, but often exclude sizeable constituencies within the community who are not regular participants in its activities, nor do they create documentation which is later preserved as a part of the community’s archival record. Potential pitfalls in the use of institutional records from archival repositories include restricted access, privacy legislation, and accessioning or deaccessioning. The archival records of the

Canadian Slovak League held by Library and Archives Canada were largely unavailable for consultation due to accessioning.

Oral histories used in this study provided a rich source of information on ethnic Czech and Slovak immigration to Canada. The Czech and Slovak collections of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario contained interviews with newcomers to Canada spanning several decades of the twentieth century. The collections were comprised predominantly of postwar arrivals including the 1948ers and the 1968ers. Historians continually gather contextual information in an attempt to reconstruct an objective past. Oral history provides the historian with an individual's perception of reality. These same individual accounts of the past illustrate how memory remains an unstable aspect in the construction of narratives. Individuals often forget or even amend the past when recounting their experiences. As a result, an interviewee's memory of the past can change once he or she comes into contact with new information in the present.⁸⁹

Complementing the aforementioned archival and oral history sources are news clippings from mainstream Canadian English and French language newspapers including, but not limited to the *Globe and Mail*, *Le Devoir*, *Le Droit*, *La Presse*, *Montreal Gazette*, *Ottawa Citizen*, and the *Toronto Star*. The Canadian Czech and Slovak language ethnic press was also a vital source of information on ethnic Czech and Slovak refugees and the existing Czechoslovak community in Canada. Czech and Slovak language press included the Prague sponsored *Nová vlast'* (New Homeland) which ceased production in February 1948, the MMI's official organ, *Nový domov* (New Homeland), and Czechoslovak community papers, *Kanadské listy* (Canadian Papers), and *Naše hlasy* (Our Voices) which published its last issue in 1974. Canadian mainstream and ethnic

⁸⁹ See Alexander Freund and Laura Quilici, "Exploring Myths in Women's Narratives: Italian and German Immigrant Women in Vancouver, 1947-1961," *Oral History Review* 23.2 (1996): 19-43.

newspapers were primarily intended for commercial consumption and provided their leadership with regular documentation on current events at home and abroad. As sources, newspapers hold limitations including the promotion of an ideological bias. Ethnic newspapers can also promote an ethno-nationalist bias reflected in news coverage and reporting. These same newspapers often reflected the biases of their editors and served to include, exclude, or marginalize particular ideologies, political persuasions, and issues of class, gender, and ethnic identity. The aforementioned Canadian Czech and Slovak language newspapers promoted a Czechoslovak sociopolitical orientation, while diminishing nationalist Slovak aspirations for self-determination and independence. During the Cold War, these same newspapers espoused an anti-communist ideology and anti-Soviet bias.

This study takes a chronological approach to examine the history of Czechoslovak community institutions in Canada and the immigration of refugees from Czechoslovakia to Canada, placing significant events within the context of the Cold War. Each chapter provides varying degrees of emphasis to questions of ethnic identity, sociocultural involvement, political ideology, and relations between successive waves of newcomers from Czechoslovakia, and between refugees, and Canadian society. Each chapter demonstrates how historical events profoundly influenced the significance of Canadian Czechoslovak institutions.

Chapter One discusses interwar immigration from Czechoslovakia and the existence of an interwar Czechoslovak community in Canada prior to the arrival of diplomats and politicians, anti-Nazi Sudeten Germans, and a transplanted Bata Shoe Corporation before the German invasion of the Czech lands (Bohemia and Moravia). During the Second World War, Czechs, Slovaks, and Subcarpathian Ruthenians organized into a Czechoslovak alliance in order to assist in the liberation of their homeland from German occupation and to provide relief to their fellow

compatriots. Chapter Two focuses on the postwar plans of the Czechoslovak community institutions in Canada with a particular emphasis on the resurrection of a democratic Czechoslovak state, postwar relief, the promotion of Canadian citizenship, and the preservation of ethnic heritage. Chapter Three describes the reaction of the Czechoslovak community organizations to the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February 1948 and its preparations and resettlement of political refugees who fled to Canada in search of safe haven. Chapter Four explains how community tensions and ideological divisions within the Czechoslovak community increased over efforts to return democracy to the old homeland and the desire to instill postwar values of Canadian citizenship within the community. Chapter Five examines the Canadian government's response to the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the subsequent refugee crisis which led to the admission and settlement of close to 12,000 Czech and Slovak refugees. Chapter Six discusses the role of Czechoslovak community groups in the continued struggle against communism, the promotion of human rights in Canada and abroad, and the continued effort to assist refugees who arrived in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Cold War immigration experience of individuals and families from Czechoslovakia is a microcosm of a much larger movement of refugees to Canada. These unique experiences are an invaluable resource in the study of immigration and ethnic history in Canada. This dissertation sheds new light on the reasons behind the immigration of Czechs and Slovaks to Cold War Canada and their settlement experience through the lens of Czechoslovak community institutions. In examining Canadian governmental records, Czechoslovak and nationalist Slovak community files, Czech and Slovak-language ethnic press, and oral histories, this study furthers our understanding of the Canadian governmental response to immigration from Czechoslovakia and its influence on the activities of Canadian Czechoslovak organizations during the Cold War.

At the same time, this study also assesses the role of Canadian Czechoslovak groups in the Cold War relationship between Canada and Communist Czechoslovakia.

Successive waves of anti-communist Czech and Slovak refugees including František Braun arrived in Canada with the hope of seeing democracy return to their homeland and one day returning home. Through a series of complex exchanges with Canadian society and the existing Czechoslovak community that were characterized by continuity and change, Czech and Slovak immigrants joined local organizations such as the CNA and MH in the hopes of furthering their anti-communist and humanitarian agenda. At the same time, Canadian Czechoslovak community institutions were influenced by the arrival of the 1948ers, 1968ers, and later refugees and joined lobbying efforts against communism in Czechoslovakia. Initially supportive of the newcomers' anti-communism, older members of these Czechoslovak organizations later opposed attempts to move their institutions towards the political goal of returning democracy to Czechoslovakia. While the 'struggle' against communism gave Czech and Slovak newcomers who supported a Czechoslovak identity a sense of purpose, over time successive waves of refugees turned their focus towards Canadian citizenship and the preservation of Czechoslovak ethnic heritage and language for future generations. In the case of František Braun and his wife, their experiences were defined by a complex interplay between Old World identities and those being forged in the New World.

Chapter One:

Between People of Whom We Know Nothing: Farm Labourers, Enemy Aliens, and Allied Citizens

Martin Bursík arrived in Quebec City on 22 August 1930. Along with his sister, they made the twenty-two day journey from Czechoslovakia to Canada in order to work as agricultural labourers who sought to return home with their accumulated savings. The Bursíks chose to come to Canada primarily because they already had a brother and sister-in-law residing in the country who were able to pay for their transatlantic journey. Bursík recalls that his voyage to Canada included other young adults from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland. He arrived in Blenheim, Ontario where his brother worked and immediately began picking tomatoes on a farm. Although he could not speak English, Bursík attempted to use his knowledge of German in the hopes that he could communicate with others. Immigrants from Moravia often came with very little finances and material possessions. As a result, these same immigrants depended on a sense of community with each other and worked jointly to solve individual and group needs. Bursík was paid \$3-\$6 a day for picking tomatoes and general farm labour. Bursík recalls that a typical 100 acre farm in the late 1920s cost approximately \$6-10,000 to purchase. Many Moravian Czechs including Bursík bought farms after a decade of working as farm labourers in Canada.¹

Before the turn of the twentieth century, immigrants from Czechoslovakia settled in Western Canada due to its abundance of available land. They were joined by Czech immigrants from the United States who had initially settled in Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas, and by Slovak immigrants from Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. A majority of these newcomers to Canada were agriculturalists and

¹ Frank Všetula, interview by Jana Cipris, 27 August 1980, interview CZE-7940-VSE, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto. Martin Bursík was interviewed as part of Všetula's oral interview.

industrial labourers who settled in areas where other Eastern European immigrants resided. In 1884, a Czech community was established in Kolin, Saskatchewan and later followed by settlements at Derald, Glenside, and Dovedale. A majority of these settlements were founded by Czech immigrants from Europe. During this period, Slovak immigrants from the United States settled in the Crow's Nest Pass of Alberta and British Columbia where they were engaged in mining. By the 1890s, small Slovak communities existed in Bellevue, Blairmore, Coleman, Frank, and Lethbridge in Alberta, and Fernie, Michel, and Natal in British Columbia. A decade later, Slovak colonies were also established at Esterhazy, Kaposvar, and Kenaston in Saskatchewan. In 1900, a Czech colony was established at Prague, Alberta by Czech immigrants from the United States. Meanwhile, in Edmonton, a small community was established which included a number of professionals and artisans. Prior to the First World War, Winnipeg served as the centre of the Czech community in Canada, while Fort William in Ontario was home to the largest Slovak community in Canada.²

Further east, small communities of Czech miners were established at Haileybury, Fort William, and Kirkland Lake, all in Northern Ontario. Meanwhile, industrial workers settled in cities including Windsor, Kingston, and Toronto. The 1911 Census gathered information on 7,204,838 persons and indicated that approximately 1,800 Czechs and 851 Slovaks resided in Canada. It is entirely possible that some Slovaks were counted as Czechs or Hungarians since

² Elena Jakešová, "Slovak Emigrants in Canada as Reflected in Diplomatic Documents (1920-1938)," *Slovakia* 35.64-65 (1991-1992): 25; Elena Jakešová, *Vystahovalectvo Slovákov do Kanady* (Bratislava: Vydavateľ'stvo Slovenskej Akadémie vied, 1981), 63; Royden Loewen and Gerald Friesen, *Immigrants in Prairie Cities: Ethnic Diversity in Twentieth Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 38. The first Czechoslovak mutual aid association was established in Winnipeg in 1913 as the *Canadian Czechoslovak Benevolent Association*, see Edna M. Bosley and Canadian Czechoslovak Benevolent Association (hereafter CCBA), *Pamatník Kanadsko-Československé jednoty, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1913-1963* (Winnipeg: National Publishers, 1963). In the late 1920s, Winnipeg became the largest Czechoslovakian settlement in Canada with over 400 families residing in the city. Czechoslovakia's Consul General, F.V. Květoň observed that Winnipeg's Czechoslovak community was largely comprised of tailors and shoemakers, and that the city served as a "winter station" for agriculturalists to retire in once the farming season was over.

ethnic Slovak immigration to Canada from the United States and Austria-Hungary significantly outnumbered Czech immigration in the interwar period.³

During the 1920s, Czech and Slovak immigrants continued to settle in Western Canada as agriculturalists in search of available land, while labourers moved to central Canada in search of industrial employment. Czech immigrants from Moravia joined a labour scheme agreed upon by the Sugar Beet Grower's Association of Canada and the Czechoslovak International Institute (*Československá Zahraničová Instituce*) which brought over farm labourers to work in the Sugar Beet industry in Lethbridge, Alberta and Chatham, Ontario.⁴ During the interwar period, many Slovaks moved to mining towns in Northern Ontario and Quebec including Kirkland Lake, Sudbury, Timmins, Arvida, and Val d'Or. With the rise of industry and urbanization, Czechs and Slovaks increasingly migrated to Ontario and Quebec looking for employment and opportunity. In Montreal, the Czechoslovak and nationalist Slovak communities together numbered some 3,700 individuals, while Toronto attracted approximately 2,500 individuals. Czech and Slovak immigrants also settled in the southern Ontario communities of Hamilton, Kitchener, Oshawa, St. Catharines, Welland, and Windsor where many were employed in industry.⁵

Immigrants residing outside of urban areas in the late 1920s predominantly arrived in small groups from the United States. They sought employment in industry, mining, and railway construction in the hopes of accumulating enough capital to purchase land for agricultural work.⁶ Many immigrants from Czechoslovakia were initially denied entry into Canada because the

³ Jovanovic, "Czechs," 399; Jakešová and Stolárik, "Slovaks," 1169-1171.

⁴ Jovanovic, "Czechs," 400.

⁵ Ibid., Jakešová and Stolárik, "Slovaks," 1171.

⁶ John Murray Gibbon, *Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1938), 314.

“quota was full.”⁷ These same prospective immigrants simply waited a year in order to come to Canada. Often, the heads of households were forced to journey to Canada alone as they could not afford to bring their spouses and dependents during their initial resettlement. Immigrants from Czechoslovakia often required a substantial bank loan to successfully fund their journey to Canada.⁸

From 1918 to 1945, immigration from Czechoslovakia to Canada was predominantly of Slovak origin. Individuals and families that identified themselves as historically belonging to an ethnic Slovak nation accounted for approximately four-fifths of all immigration from Czechoslovakia.⁹ From 1920 to 1923, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics classified ethnic Czechs and Slovaks as “Czecho-Slovaks” for the purposes of recording immigrant admission by ethnic origin. For the years 1923-1926, Czech and Slovak immigrants were classified as “Czechoslovaks.” From 1926 to 1945, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics identified 5,716 immigrants as having Czech “racial origins” upon entering Canada. These same Czechs included immigrants who claimed to be “Bohemian” and “Moravian” or individuals from the historic provinces of Bohemia and Moravia. In comparison, the bureau identified 23,718 immigrants as

⁷ Martin Yankovic, interview by Lubomyr Luciuk, November 11, 1977, interview UKR-6278-YAN, Ukrainian Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

⁸ Ibid.; Joe Choroš, interview by David Judd, 12 July 1977, interview CZE-1514-CHO, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto. In the case of Martin Yankovic, he attempted to come to Canada in 1926, but the quota for immigrants was full. On 1 March 1927, he successfully arrived in Halifax. Yankovic originally came to Canada because he could not find work to feed his family. Yankovic acquired a \$7,000 Czechoslovak Crown bank loan – on top of his own personal funds of \$500 Czechoslovak Crowns – to help pay for his trans-Atlantic journey to Canada. Once the bank loan was paid, Yankovic brought his wife and children to Canada. Similarly, Joe Choroš came to Canada from Czechoslovakia in the mid-1920s. With the help of his father, Choroš received a bank loan for \$6,000 Czechoslovak Crowns (approximately \$500 Canadian Dollars) and moved to Alberta for work.

⁹ Jakešová, “Slovak Emigrants in Canada as Reflected in Diplomatic Documents (1920-1938),” 9; Jakešová and Stolárik, “Slovaks,” 1170. Figures also illustrate that 35,358 Slovaks came to Canada during the 1920s and a further 4,294 up until 1937. Canadian census figures prior to 1920-1921 did not distinguish Czechoslovak immigrants into their respective ethnic groups as they were recognized as citizens of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and labelled as “Austro-Hungarians.” Until 1926, ethnic Czech and Slovak immigrants from Czechoslovakia were simply counted as “Czechoslovaks,” and the groups were not differentiated.

having Slovak “racial origins.” Consequently, during the period 1931 to 1945, 9,577 immigrants gave their nationality as Czechoslovakian.¹⁰

This chapter discusses how immigration from Czechoslovakia from 1918 to 1945 influenced the establishment and composition of a “Czechoslovak” community, and the subsequent interaction between Czech and Slovak immigrants who arrived in Canada during these years. Czech and Slovak immigrants viewed their own arrival and settlement in their new country as a difficult experience because they were not offered any form of assistance from the Canadian government or from Prague’s diplomatic officials. Czech and Slovak immigrants who came to Canada in the 1920s and early 1930s sought economic opportunity. Immigrants who arrived in Canada in the years directly before and during the Second World War fled the emergence of fascism and the occupation of their homeland in Central Europe. Beginning in the interwar period, “three principal groups” of Czechoslovakian immigrants existed in Canada. The largest group comprised the Slovak nationalists who only permitted Slovaks to join their organizations and advocated for Slovak autonomy in a federalized Czechoslovakia. A smaller group of Slovak leftists including communists and socialists joined with Canadian Czechs to constitute a Czechoslovak community that advocated for a single Czechoslovak national identity and defended the existence of a Czechoslovak Republic.¹¹

Ethnic and political identities divided immigrants who arrived from Czechoslovakia to Canada during the period 1918-1945. Immigrants such as Martin Bursík were left to rely on

¹⁰ Canada, Department of Trade and Commerce (hereafter DTC), Dominion Bureau of Statistics (hereafter DBS) *The Canada Yearbook, 1938* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1938), 197-198; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1942* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1942), 156; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1943-44* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1944), 180; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1945* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1945), 171; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1946* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1946), 185. Immigrants who self-identified their racial origins as Bohemian and Moravian were included in this study as Czechs. During this period, 973 immigrants claimed their racial origin as Bohemian, while 175 immigrants claimed their racial origin as Moravian.

¹¹ Gregory S. Kealey and Reginald Whitaker, eds, *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The War Series (Vol. 2), 1942-1945* (St. John’s: Committee on Canadian Labour History, 1989), 380-383.

themselves and their fellow compatriots for assistance. During the Second World War, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks who supported a common Czechoslovak ethnic community identity vehemently fought against their status as ‘enemy aliens’ after their homeland was invaded by Nazi Germany and ceased to exist. Canadian Czechoslovaks joined the Allied war effort by enlisting in the military, raising funds, and sending relief parcels to Czechoslovak forces overseas. As a result, Canada later recognized its Czech and Slovak populations as Allied citizens. The Canadian Czechoslovak community successfully liberated its homeland from fascist domination. After the Second World War, interwar immigrants such as Martin Bursík were an integral pillar of the Czechoslovak community in Canada and influenced the reception and resettlement of Czech and Slovak refugees into their community institutions.

Beginnings of a Czechoslovak Community in Canada

During the interwar period, Slovak immigrants arrived in Canada from two separate locations. Many Slovak immigrants came to Canada from economically underdeveloped eastern Slovakia. For these immigrants, their service in Czechoslovakia’s Army allowed them to gain an education and many arrived in Canada as “loyal Czechoslovaks.” Other Slovak immigrants arrived from the United States having also served in the Austro-Hungarian Army prior to the establishment of Czecho-Slovakia in 1918. The latter immigrants were predominantly nationalistic and avoided fraternizing with individuals who promoted a Czechoslovak identity because they remained suspicious of “Czechoslovak democracy” in their homeland.¹²

¹² Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, Ms. Coll. 6, John Reeves Papers, Box 8, Item 3 (Buzek, Karel - Official consul of Czech government in exile in 1940s Canada. Interview. Tape.).

In 1924, the Czechoslovak Mutual Benefit Society was formed in Montreal.¹³ For many of the Czechs and Slovaks in the city, the society was simply a sociocultural association in which they could meet other individuals of Czech or Slovak background. The organization later established a branch in Toronto in 1927. The society's official organ *Nová vlast'* (New Homeland) claimed that membership was over 90 percent Slovak. The paper ceased to exist a few years later due to financial difficulty and a lack of membership. A significant portion of the paper's readership were nationalist Slovaks who did not support a Czechoslovak identity and political ideology. These same individuals left to join or establish independent nationalist Slovak groups.¹⁴

Although interwar Slovak immigration substantially surpassed the small influx of Czechs arriving in Canada from Czechoslovakia, a substantial wave of immigrants from the Czech province of Moravia came to Canada in search of work.¹⁵ On 11 June 1925, František Všetula arrived in Canada at the age of fifteen. As an inexperienced agricultural worker he wanted to save his future wages in the hopes of one day returning to Czechoslovakia.¹⁶ After arriving in Chatham, Ontario, he went to work with other Czechs in the fields. A majority of the Moravian farm labourers arrived in Canada without any previous knowledge of the English language. With a sizeable community taking shape in the region, a meeting was held on 12 December 1928 at Chatham's St. Joseph's Hall for all interested "Czechoslovaks." Approximately 350 people were

¹³ Čermák, *Fragmenty ze života Čechů a Slováků v Kanadě*, 22.

¹⁴ Canada, Department of the Secretary of State, *The Canadian Family Tree: Canada's Peoples* (Don Mills: Corpus Information Services, 1979), 55. Initially, the few Czechs in the organization sought to make it a Czechoslovak society. However, the majority of Slovaks turned it into a Slovak Benefit Society. The Society was unstable due to the widespread unemployment of its members, and as a result, the organization ultimately failed because many of its members in Montreal were transitory. They moved to Montreal to look for work and left just as quickly when work could not be found.

¹⁵ The Czech lands are comprised of three separate provinces: Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia. These three provinces constituted the Czech lands within Czechoslovakia.

¹⁶ Frank Všetula, interview by Jana Cipris, 27 August 1980, interview CZE-7940-VSE, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

in attendance to discuss the future of their community. Subsequently, a Czechoslovak musical band named after Saints Cyril and Methodius was created and later played traditional Czech and Slovak music across southern Ontario and the United States. Meanwhile in Chatham, Moravian parents organized their children into a theatre group and taught them ethnic songs as a reaction to what they perceived as a lack of parental responsibility in Canadian society.¹⁷

Frank Konečný arrived in 1930 at the age of twenty-two. He chose to come to North America because he already had a sister in Canada and the United States. In describing his initial view of Canada, Konečný noted that as a child he was a fan of Jack London's books which in his eyes "romanticized" the country. Apart from literature, Konečný could only recall that Canada was "big."¹⁸ He spoke no English and used his understanding of Polish in an attempt to communicate with fellow farmers from Central Europe. Many Moravian Czechs initially came to Canada to work as sugar beet farmers with the intention of signing short-term labour contracts, while saving their wages and returning home to Czechoslovakia after two or three years of work. According to fellow immigrant Antonín Vajdík, many of the Czechs who worked in the sugarbeet farm industry were well liked "because they did a better job" than some of the other workers from Mexico and the United States.¹⁹ Those farmers who chose to stay in Canada due to the Great Depression were later able to purchase farms with their accumulated wages. Approximately 3,000 Czechs from southern Moravia eventually settled in the Chatham area of southern Ontario without any help from the Canadian government. Moravian farmers including František Všetula, Antonín Vajdík, Martin Bursík, and František Konečný settled around

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Chatham and worked in the sugar beet farming industry where they were left to depend on themselves and their fellow compatriots for financial and social assistance.

A year later, Canada closed its doors to immigration in order to prevent further strain on its economy. Order-in-Council P.C. 695 of 21 March 1931 limited immigration to American citizens, and British subjects from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa “who possessed sufficient means to maintain themselves until employment was secured.”²⁰ Wives, unmarried children under the age of eighteen, or fiancées of men already residing in Canada were also admissible, meanwhile agriculturalists with “sufficient means to farm in Canada” were also permitted entry.²¹ Because of these restrictions, the number of immigrants from Czechoslovakia seeking to come to Canada stabilized. Even as Canada’s gates were closed, Czech and Slovak immigrants with capital and agricultural experience were permitted to enter Canada. However, Order-in-Council P.C. 695 forced immigration from Czechoslovakia to stabilize with only a slight increase or decrease each year. At only twenty-one years of age, Marie Gabriel came to Canada with her husband to pursue farming. The Gabriel family came from an agricultural background in Moravia and ultimately settled in Kenora, Ontario on 26 November 1932. Marie reared twelve children while her husband supported the family by working in the local flour mill.²²

As individuals and families from Czechoslovakia searched for land and economic opportunity, authorities in Prague insisted that their consulate in Canada unite all ethnic Czechs

²⁰ Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *House of Commons Debates: Official Report, Third Session – Twentieth Parliament, Volume 3* (Ottawa: King’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1947), 2644.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 2644; Canada, DTS, DBS (*The Canada Yearbook, 1934-35*) Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1935), 138. Figures for the years immediately prior to 1931 combine ethnic Czechs and Slovaks into a single group. In 1931, Canadian-born Czechs and Slovaks totalled 8,437 individuals. Approximately, 84.7 percent (7,148) of these individuals had parents who were foreign-born.

²² Marie Gabriel, interview by Jana Cipris, 19 July 1978, interview CZE-5166-GAB, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

and Slovaks into a cohesive Czechoslovak ethnic identity regardless of their sociopolitical or religious affiliation – in an effort to spread Czechoslovakism as an ideology to compatriot communities across Canada. Canadian Slovaks who professed a belief in a distinct Slovak ethnic identity avoided participating in Czechoslovak associations. Similarly, Czechoslovakia's Consulate General in Montreal viewed nationalistic Slovaks as “anti-Czech” and even “treasonous.”²³

In Canada, the Czech and Slovak ethnic press played an influential role in the politics between proponents of Czechoslovakism and those advocating for a separate Slovak national identity. In 1934, a weekly newspaper entitled *Nová vlast* was inaugurated in Montreal to inform Czechs and Slovaks of community news in Canada and events in their homeland. Through financial contributions from the Consulate General in Montreal, the publication became the semi-official organ of Czechoslovakia's representatives in Canada.²⁴ Even as many interwar immigrants from Czechoslovakia settled in Canada primarily to work in agriculture and industry, Consul General František Pavlásek lamented that Slovaks in Canada transplanted many of the ideas behind the nationalist and autonomist ideology of the *Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana* (Hlinka's Slovak People's Party) including the slogan: “Slovakia for the Slovaks.”²⁵ In 1937, Pavlásek observed that:

...there are only a few Czechs here, and they are mostly assimilated, and a majority of them have withdrawn from public life due to permanent attacks...loyal Czechoslovak thinking, ever representing the democracy and the Czechoslovak national unity, represents in some colonies but a minority.²⁶

²³ Jakešová, “Slovak Emigrants in Canada as Reflected in Diplomatic Documents (1920-1938),” 22, 33.

²⁴ Jakešová, *Vystahovalectvo Slovakov do Kanady*, 117.

²⁵ Jakešová, “Slovak Emigrants in Canada as Reflected in Diplomatic Documents,” 33-34; Gellner and Smerek, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 80.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

Prague's Consul General in Montreal astutely recognized the ideological cleavages between Canadian Czechs and Slovaks. In effect, both ethnic groups were divided between those loyal to a single Czechoslovak nation-state, Slovak autonomists who sought home rule for Slovakia, and Slovak communists.²⁷

Democratic Sudeten Germans and the Bata Shoe Corporation Arrive in Canada

As Prague attempted to transplant its national policies onto Czech and Slovak immigrants in Canada, events in Central Europe soon forced many more Czechoslovakian citizens to seek refuge in Canada. In 1938, with the emergence of Nazi Germany as a threat to Europe's continental security, 1.5 million Czechoslovakian troops were deployed to the borders with Austria, Germany, Hungary, and Poland.²⁸ Leaders of the governments of France (Édouard Daladier), Great Britain (Neville Chamberlain), Italy (Benito Mussolini), and Germany (Adolf Hitler) met in Munich in September 1938 in an attempt to appease Hitler's desire for territorial expansion. As British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain proclaimed "peace in our time," Czechoslovakia was not invited to the conference and felt betrayed by the French with whom Prague had signed a treaty of alliance and friendship in 1924, and a treaty of mutual assistance in 1925.²⁹ The British and French governments advised Czechoslovakia's President Edvard Beneš

²⁷ Jakešová, "Slovak Emigrants in Canada as Reflected in Diplomatic Documents," 34. In 1936, the pro-Czechoslovak communists split into two groups: the Slovak communists who supported autonomy for Slovakia, and the Czechs who supported a national Czechoslovak identity.

²⁸ "Československo připravené k obrane," *Nová vlast'*, September 29, 1938, 1; Igor Lukeš, *Czechoslovakia between Stalin and Hitler: The Diplomacy of Edvard Beneš in the 1930s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 237. In September 1938, the *Montreal Herald* published the story of Vladimír V. Hortig, a 41-year old Czech Canadian taxi driver who claimed: "I'm waiting for a recruit office to open and you can bet my name will top the list." Hortig went on to state that "the best thing for us Czechs to do is join the Canadian militia." See Gus Garber, "Joining Up, 1938," *Montreal Herald*, 26 September 1938.

²⁹ Edvard Beneš and Milan Hauner, *Fall and Rise of a Nation: Czechoslovakia, 1938-1941* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 2004), 12; Lukeš, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 34.

to concede to Hitler's demands for the annexation of the predominantly German-speaking *Sudetenland* to Nazi Germany.³⁰ Prior to the conference with Adolf Hitler in Munich, British Prime Minister Arthur Neville Chamberlain infamously stated:

How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks here because of a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing. It seems still more impossible that a quarrel which has already been settled in principle should be the subject of war.³¹

An agreement was reached overnight on 29-30 September 1938 in which Western Europe acquiesced to Hitler's demands in exchange for continental peace. In Canada, Czechs and Slovaks who professed a belief in a common Czechoslovak ethnic identity became convinced that the Munich Agreement forced upon their old homeland brought their "national and ethnic durability" into question.³²

Prior to the Munich Agreement, Czechoslovakian nationals left their homes in search of economic opportunity and a better quality of life. However, in the fall of 1938, 80,000 Czechs and democratic Sudeten Germans fled the heavily German-populated *Sudetenland* as political refugees who feared the emergence of fascism and a German invasion of Czechoslovakia. With news of the outcome of the Munich conference reaching Canada, a public outcry led secular refugee lobbies to pressure Ottawa to find a solution to the plight of these refugees. The Canadian National Committee on Refugees and Victims of Persecution (CNCR) actively joined

³⁰ Canada, Department of External Affairs (hereafter DEA), *Documents Relating to the German-Czechoslovak Crisis September, 1938* (Ottawa: J.O. Patenaude, 1938), 10-11; Ronald M. Smelser, *The Sudeten Problem, 1933-1938: Volkstumspolitik and the Formulation of Nazi Foreign Policy* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1975), 3-13.

³¹ "Prime Minister on the Issues," *The Times* (London, England), 28 September 1938, 10.

³² Marek Jovanovic, "Creating a New Bohemia: the Czechs in Canada, 1880-1990" (M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1999), 3. Canadian Czechoslovaks believed that the two-decade old independence of their homeland from the Austro-Hungarian Empire was extinguished.

the struggle to resettle anti-Nazi Sudeten German refugees in Canada.³³ Railroad immigration agents attempted to help 10,000 Sudeten Germans and 20,000 Czech refugees who were temporarily sheltered in camps on the outskirts of Prague. These refugees were primarily farmers, glass and textile workers, and traders. With the Depression raging at home, Ottawa refused to be seen directly examining and admitting immigrants. The federal government used Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and Canadian National Railway (CNR) agents to avoid making “direct contact” with prospective refugees and also permitted these agents to examine and select potential immigrants.³⁴ As Canadian immigration authorities moved slowly to resettle the Sudeten Germans and Czechs, approximately 1,200 Sudeten German families arrived in Canada aided by diplomats from Czechoslovakia’s Consulate General in Montreal.³⁵ Sudeten German refugees arrived in Canada on ships including the SS *Montcalm*, a Canadian Pacific steamship which departed Southampton, England on route to Pier 21 in Halifax.³⁶ The Sudeten German refugees were taken from Pier 21 by train to Montreal before heading west towards their final destination. A majority of the refugees were resettled in agricultural land districts administered by the railway companies. Subsequently, the CPR relocated the Sudeten refugees in the vicinity of Tomslake, British Columbia. In the spring of 1939, 518 settlers arrived in Tate Creek, near Tomslake. The CNR concentrated its resettlement efforts around St. Walberg, Saskatchewan.

³³ Knowles, *Strangers at our Gates*, 147-148. Approximately, 80,000 anti-Nazi Sudeten Germans fled Germany’s annexation of the Sudetenland.

³⁴ Dirks, *Canada’s Refugee Policy*, 75-76.

³⁵ Jan Raška, “Mistrusted Strangers at Home: Czechs, Slovaks, and the ‘Enemy Aliens’ Registration Issue,” *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 38 (2009): 98.

³⁶ Dirks, *Canada’s Refugee Policy*, 83-85; Hanns F. Skoutajan, *Uprooted and Transplanted: A Sudeten Odyssey from Tragedy to Freedom, 1938-1958* (Owen Sound: Ginger Press, 2000), 121-123.

Thirty families arrived in St. Walburg where they were each given a farm in disrepair and 160 acres of land.³⁷

With Czechoslovakia severely truncated following Hitler's annexation of the *Sudetenland*, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks attempted to hold a parade in support of democracy in Montreal on 1 October 1938. As Mayor of Montreal, Adhémar Raynault issued a proclamation cancelling the parade's permit out of fear that the demonstration was under "Communist influence." The mayor claimed that:

...there has been question of certain public manifestations liable to raise controversies and provoke incidents which it is preferable to avoid, the City of Montreal cannot now permit public manifestations against the gigantic work accomplished by the representatives of the Great Powers who to the great relief of pacific nations have made superhuman efforts to remove at least for the time being, the horrors of war.³⁸

Approximately, 4,000 demonstrators from various anti-fascist societies and international labour unions in attendance to support "democracy in Czechoslovakia" gathered at St. James Market to listen to speeches from English, French, German, Czech, Slovak, Russian, Ukrainian, Romanian, and Polish presenters.³⁹ Four days later, Edvard Beneš officially resigned from office as President of Czechoslovakia, leaving the country without a *de jure* head of state. In Slovakia, the nationalist Hlinka's Slovak People's Party joined other Slovak political parties in Žilina to agree to terms on Slovakia's pending autonomy from Prague. On 6 October, the ruling Hlinka's

³⁷ Hanns Skoutajan, interview by Rose Wilcox, 24 November 1978, interview CZE-0017-SKO, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto; Hanns Skoutajan, interview by Steven Schwinghamer, 22 October 2003, interview 03.10.22HS, Oral History Collection, Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 (hereafter CMIP21); Jonathan F. Wagner, "British Columbia's Anti-Nazi Germans: The Tupper Creek Refugees," *BC Studies* 39 (Autumn 1978): 6-7; Jonathan F. Wagner, *A History of Migration from Germany to Canada, 1850-1939* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 172; Helen Raptis, "Teaching Student German Refugees at Tate Creek, British Columbia, During World War II," *Historical Studies in Education* 24.2 (Fall 2012): 31, 34.

³⁸ "Mayor Says Reds Exploited Parade: Bans Czech Demonstration on Street – Two Arrested" *Montreal Daily Star* 70:234 (3 October 1938), 1, 11.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Slovak People's Party declared national autonomy in Slovakia.⁴⁰ With the support of Prague, a government was established in Slovakia under the leadership of Monsignor Jozef Tiso.⁴¹ Following widespread public outrage over the appeasement of Hitler, General Jan Syrový was introduced as *de facto* president of Czechoslovakia. On 28 November, due to Slovakia's declaration of autonomy, Prague renamed the country as Czecho-Slovakia to emphasize a federation between the Czech lands and Slovakia. For the next three months, the Second Czecho-Slovak Republic was secretly undermined by Adolf Hitler and members of the conservative and nationalist Hlinka's Slovak People's Party. On 30 November, a new cabinet was officially appointed with Emil Hácha as Czecho-Slovakia's president.⁴² On 11 March 1939, Prague dismissed the Slovak parliament and arrested approximately 300-400 individuals it believed were conspirators against the Second Republic. A majority of those arrested were Slovak intellectuals, students, and social leaders.⁴³ On the eve of Nazi Germany's invasion of the Czech lands, former Slovak Prime Minister Jozef Tiso summoned the dismissed Slovak parliament in Bratislava to declare Slovakia's independence and alignment with Nazi Germany.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Věra Olivová, *The Doomed Democracy: Czechoslovakia in a Disrupted Europe, 1914-1938* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972), 263-264.

⁴¹ Kirschbaum, *A History of Slovakia*, 180-181; Yeshayahu Jelinek, *Parish Republic: Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, 1939-1945* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1976), 17-31; Mary Heimann, *Czechoslovakia: The State that Failed* (New Haven: Yale: University Press, 2009), 87-89. On 15 October 1938, Subcarpathian Ruthenia received autonomy from Prague in an attempt to quell further unrest in the state.

⁴² Agnew, *Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, 206-208; Edvard Beneš, *Paměti: Od Mnichova k nové válce a k novému vítězství* (Praha: Orbis, 1947), 82. Although the appointment of Emil Hácha as President was constitutionally invalid since the Members of Parliament representing the constituencies within the Sudetenland were no longer part of the state and were necessary to make the vote valid, Edvard Beneš had in fact recognized Hácha as President. In their correspondences, Hácha admitted to Beneš that he was "making the best of it" as Czecho-Slovak President during Hitler's continued encroachment into Czecho-Slovakia's affairs.

⁴³ Joseph M. Kirschbaum, *The Truth and Legends about the Origin of the Slovak Republic* (Cleveland: The First Catholic Slovak Union, 1974), 6; Agnew, *Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, 208. Monsignor Tiso was replaced by Karol Sidor as Prime Minister of Slovakia. Slovakia's dismissed Prime Minister Jozef Tiso met with Adolf Hitler in Berlin where he was instructed to either proclaim Slovak independence or be partitioned by Hungary and Poland.

⁴⁴ George F. Kennan, *From Prague after Munich: Diplomatic Papers, 1938-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 82-83; Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada*, 154-155. Over two dozen states including Great Britain and the Soviet Union recognized an independent Slovakia and established diplomatic relations with Bratislava. On 15

Czech anxiety over events in Central Europe intensified in the spring of 1939. Shortly before midnight on 14 March 1939, Hácha arrived in Berlin and informed Hitler that Prague would respect Slovakia's declaration of independence. Hitler subsequently informed the Czechoslovak president that the following morning Nazi Germany would invade the Czech lands. A day later, on 16 March 1939, Hitler proclaimed the Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.⁴⁵ Subsequently, many politicians, businessmen, clergy, and social leaders fled the country. The Second Czechoslovak Republic dissolved less than six months after it was created.⁴⁶ In early 1939, a Czechoslovak National Committee was established in London, England by democratic political figures that fled the German invasion. Edvard Beneš became the Committee's president, Štefan Osuský as foreign minister, General Jan Ingr as defence minister, and Edvard Outrata as finance minister. The Czechoslovak National Committee lobbied Western governments for recognition as Czechoslovakia's official government.⁴⁷ Czech and Slovak politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen fled from fascism in their homeland. Similarly, Prague's diplomatic officials sought residency as immigrants in Canada.

Czechoslovakia's Consulate General in Montreal initiated correspondence with Ottawa in the hopes that the Liberal government could accommodate its diplomats. Dr. Frey, a senior diplomat at the Montreal consulate who earlier helped thousands of Sudeten Germans obtain new homes in Canada was informed by Canadian diplomat Lester Bowles Pearson that there was "no

March 1939, Subcarpathian Ruthenia also declared independence, but was ignored by Nazi Germany. The region was subsequently occupied by Hungary.

⁴⁵ Chad Bryant, *Prague in Black: Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 28-29.

⁴⁶ Kirschbaum, *Truth and Legends about the Origin of the Slovak Republic*, 1-8. Czechoslovak President Emil Hácha also acquiesced to Hitler and ceded the Czech lands to Nazi Germany after signing a document that authorized Nazi Germany's complete occupation of Bohemia-Moravia on 15 March 1939.

⁴⁷ Beneš and Hauner, *Fall and Rise of a Nation*, 27. Beneš did not leave Czechoslovakia until 22 October 1938. Having conceded a third of Czechoslovakia's territory to Nazi Germany, Beneš left Europe for the United States where he engaged in a lecture tour. In early 1939, the former Czechoslovakian president resettled in London, England where he established a Czechoslovak National Committee.

hope for his entry” as Ottawa sought individuals with agricultural training.⁴⁸ However, Canadian immigration authorities did permit the resettlement of Czechoslovakian officials with specific business interests and capital. Ottawa later permitted 100 Czechoslovakian officials to enter Canada as “temporary refugees.”⁴⁹

In the aftermath of the German invasion of the Czech lands and the declaration of Slovak statehood and alignment with Nazi Germany, approximately 186,000 refugees fled Czechoslovakia. Canada became a beneficiary of this movement of people when two industrial plants were re-established in Canada.⁵⁰ A munitions plant originally part of the Škoda Works in Plzeň, Bohemia was built at Sorel, Quebec. Simultaneously, the Bata Shoe Company from Zlín, Moravia was re-assembled as a company town named Batawa near Frankford, Ontario.⁵¹ Even though the Canadian shoe industry opposed the relocation of the Bata Shoe Company to Canada, the Canadian and Newfoundland press supported the plan.⁵² In December 1938, Tomáš J. Baťa arrived at Canada House in London. After speaking with an immigration official, Baťa discovered that he would not be permitted to immigrate because Ottawa officially sought agriculturalists. Once the immigration official in question discovered Baťa’s position as an industrialist, the Czech businessman was requested to meet with Canada’s High Commissioner

⁴⁸ Raška, “Mistrusted Strangers at Home,” 98.

⁴⁹ Ibid.; Donald H. Avery, *Reluctant Host: Canada’s Response to Immigrant Workers* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1995), 137. These same “temporary refugees” arrived in Canada with capital, business experience, and personal networks gained through contact with prominent businessmen and Western diplomats.

⁵⁰ Gerhard P. Bassler, *Sanctuary Denied: Refugees from the Third Reich and Newfoundland Immigration Policy, 1906-1949* (St. John’s: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1992), 28.

⁵¹ Tomáš J. Baťa, interview by Rose Wilcox, 8 April 1978, interview CZE-543-BAT, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto; Antonín Čekota, *The Battle of Home: Some Problems of Industrial Community* (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1944), 49-50. Čekota was a Czech employee of the Bata Corporation who resettled in Batawa near Frankford, Ontario with the first wave of workers in 1939.

⁵² Čekota, *Battle of Home*, 129. Bassler noted that the local press in St. John’s, Newfoundland reasoned that the incoming businesses “...might utilize local animal hides and seal skins...”

in London, Vincent Massey.⁵³ In his meeting with Massey, Baťa discovered that only through an Order-in-Council could he be legally permitted to enter Canada. Subsequently, Baťa was asked for his Czechoslovakian passport in which the immigration official – with Massey’s approval – signed the passport with: “Admit the bearer as a visitor.” Baťa received no official stamp and later realized that Canada’s immigration bureaucracy was not “efficient” or “progressive,” but rather selective and informal.⁵⁴

Upon arriving in Canada, Tomáš Baťa travelled to Ottawa to meet with Frederick Charles Blair, director of the Immigration Branch, regarding visas for 250 Bata employees and their families. In his meeting with Blair, the Czech industrialist was told that Canada would admit them.⁵⁵ Later in June 1939, Blair reneged on his early promise to Baťa and only offered to admit 100 families due to “political difficulties.”⁵⁶ With the CNCR lobbying on his behalf, Baťa and 82 employees were eventually permitted to come to Canada and re-establish themselves and their industrial enterprise.⁵⁷ After discussions with other Bata Corporation executives, it was decided that the company’s research and development, and engineering departments would be safely relocated to North America due to political uncertainty in Central Europe after the Munich

⁵³ At the age of twenty-four, Tomáš Baťa fled Czechoslovakia for Switzerland before arriving in England and meeting Canadian diplomatic and immigration officials.

⁵⁴ Tomáš J. Baťa, interview by Rose Wilcox, 8 April 1978; Thomas J. Bata and Sonja Sinclair, *Bata: Shoemaker to the World* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Company Limited, 1990), 50-51. Baťa arrived in New York City aboard the Queen Mary in April 1939 and was locked-up on Ellis Island for possessing a Czechoslovak passport. American authorities could not send people back to a country that did not exist, especially when they did not recognize Germany’s occupation of the Czech lands. According to Baťa, American authorities locked up approximately 300 Czechs on Ellis Island. Washington later received word that Baťa had spent a few hours in detention on Ellis Island. Once news of his detention made the press, Baťa and the remaining Czechs were all let go. Baťa arrived in Canada via Buffalo, New York.

⁵⁵ Bata and Sinclair, *Bata*, 58; Baťa, interview by Rose Wilcox, 8 April 1978.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 63; *Ibid.* According to Baťa, F.C. Blair indicated that the Immigration Branch would admit 100 families since it was “...my mandate from the cabinet subcommittee.” In March 1940, Baťa constructed a company town alongside 600 workers in Batawa, Ontario.

⁵⁷ Knowles, *Strangers at our Gates*, 148. Knowles estimated that Baťa and fellow refugees established 56 industries in Canada in the first three years of the Second World War which produced goods valued at \$22 million. Similarly, these re-established industries employed nearly 5,000 individuals.

Agreement. Frankford, Ontario was chosen as the site for the company town, Batawa, because it was near a major transportation route to large markets across Canada and the United States.⁵⁸

Employees of the Bata Shoe Corporation continued to arrive in Canada throughout 1939. One group came to Canada after spending several days in the United Kingdom. Along with her fellow workers, Milada Čechová arrived in Canada aboard the *Antonia*. Upon taking a train to Montreal before her final destination of Batawa, Čechová found that many Canadians were unemployed and “on relief.” The Bata workers found food and small products cheap to purchase. Čechová and her fellow workers were given \$20 per week in wages of which \$2 went to pay the rent for company housing. Many of the Bata workers did not feel as though they had it as hard as the immigrants who arrived after them because they came to Canada with secure employment while other immigrants from Czechoslovakia were forced to find work and acquire savings.⁵⁹

In the case of Leon Koerner, who served as Czechoslovakia’s timber controller in the 1930s, Lester Bowles Pearson successfully helped him to settle in Vancouver in 1939. Koerner arrived in Vancouver as a Czech refugee of half-Jewish ancestry. His business capital and expertise in the forestry industry were immediately used to purchase Alaska Pine and Cellulose Limited which later produced 75 percent of the ammunition and ration boxes used by the Commonwealth forces during the Second World War.⁶⁰ Leon Koerner and his wife arrived in

⁵⁸ Baťa, interview by Rose Wilcox, 8 April 1978. Baťa recalls that his father was pro-American, but did not know much about Canada. The younger Baťa read about Canada as a child in England. He later chose to relocate his company to Canada because he believed it was a good balance between Great Britain and the United States.

⁵⁹ Milada Čechová, interview by Jana Cipris, 20 June 1978, interview CZE-5288-CEC, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto; Antonin Ronza, interview by Jana Cipris, 18 July 1978, interview CZE-8360-RON, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

⁶⁰ McKenzie Porter, “Leon Koerner’s One-Man Giveaway Program,” *Maclean’s* 69 (4 August 1956): 9, 34. Koerner brought more than \$1 million in capital to Canada and quickly amassed a business fortune worth \$5-10 million. Upon arriving in Vancouver, Koerner bought a derelict lumber mill in New Westminster, British Columbia and originally hired forty-five men to saw hemlock. During the Second World War, Koerner acquired a neighbouring company and produced 75 percent of the ammunition and ration boxes used by Commonwealth forces in the war.

Vancouver “with an acute case of depression” due largely to events back in Central Europe. Both of Koerner’s grandmothers were Jewish and his family’s property was confiscated by the German authorities. The former timber controller’s first impression of Canadian society was pessimistic in nature. According to Koerner, Vancouver’s social and business elites were unwelcoming and remained closed to him. In business, the local timber companies feared his vast wealth and experience, while the city’s socialites spurned his “foreign features, formal clothing and heel-clicking manners.”⁶¹

With Order-in-Council P.C. 695, the Canadian government severely restricted immigration only permitting immigrants with capital including Bat’a and Koerner to enter the country. In 1933, one-third of the Canadian population was out of work. The percentage of unemployed workers slowly improved in subsequent years. Scholars illustrated that in fact “...the depression also afforded the Canadian government officials with a dramatic opportunity to complete a process of restriction begun in the boom years of the 1920s.”⁶² As director of the Immigration Branch, F.C. Blair, who was anti-Semitic, fervently supported restricting immigration so that under his direction less than 5,000 Jews were admitted to Canada during the 1930s and 1940s.⁶³ While Jewish immigration was restricted, exceptions did exist as some individuals of Jewish descent were successful in settling in Canada. With rising levels of anti-Semitism in Czechoslovakia, Hanna and Mimi Fischl, two Czechoslovakian sisters of Jewish origin sought safe haven in Canada where their uncle, Louis Fischl owned and operated a glove

⁶¹ Ibid., 34-37. When describing his resettlement in Canada after the Nazi occupation of the Czech lands, Leon Koerner stated that he and his wife felt “very humble here in Canada, and very proud of living here. Long ago we regarded the circumstances that drove us to Canada as God’s curse on our former good fortune. Now we know they were God’s blessing. We feel we must make amends for having misjudged him.” After February 1948, Koerner used his business success to send thousands of food parcels to acquaintances behind the Iron Curtain in Czechoslovakia.

⁶² Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1982), 4-5.

⁶³ Ibid., x, 73-74, 93-94. Frederick Charles Blair was director of the Immigration Branch from 1936 to 1944.

factory. The Fischls were granted refugee permits by the British authorities to enter the United Kingdom – on their way to Canada – on the condition that they did “...not enter any employment other than as a resident in service in a private household.”⁶⁴ On 4 June 1939, the Fischls left England aboard the *Alaunia* whose passengers consisted of a group of Sudeten German Social Democrats, a Jewish family, and British citizens. After ten days crossing the Atlantic, the *Alaunia* stopped in Quebec City where Canadian immigration authorities boarded the ship for medical examinations and passport control before heading to its final destination of Montreal.⁶⁵

Upon reaching Canada, Hanna Fischl recalled that in order to qualify as a Canadian immigrant, she had to declare herself to be nondenominational, about which she wrote: “I had no problem with that. I never did feel particularly Jewish.”⁶⁶ Fischl became a member of the United Church of Canada on the advice of her uncle who viewed the church as a “strictly Canadian institution.”⁶⁷ The Fischl sisters were able to settle in Canada due largely to Louis Fischl’s capital and his transplanted glove factory in the country. In looking to save his nieces from looming war in Europe, Louis Fischl indicated to Canadian immigration authorities that his nieces were skilled workers and essential to his business. Immigration Branch director F.C. Blair may have overlooked the Fischls’ Jewish background because of Ottawa’s desire for capital and new business, and their standing as nondenominational Czechoslovakian immigrants.

According to official government estimates, 317 Czechs and 291 Slovaks arrived in Canada as immigrants in 1939. Over the next three years only 112 Czechs and 82 Slovaks were

⁶⁴ Hanna Spencer, *Hanna’s Diary, 1938-1941: Czechoslovakia to Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 79. On 13 February 1939, Hanna Fischl was granted her long-awaited refugee permit to travel to the United Kingdom.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 109-111.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 113. As a secular Jew from Czechoslovakia, Hanna Fischl questioned whether anti-Semitism in Canada would be religiously-based once it became known that she had a Jewish background or would it be similar to anti-Semitism in Europe which was not based on religion. She wondered: “Will it be different here? Obviously, Canada is not free of it either.”

permitted to enter Canada as immigrants.⁶⁸ Although Canada's door to prospective immigrants remained officially closed, individuals fleeing fascism in Europe whether diplomats, industrialists, or workers were able to find a safe haven in Canada through personal relationships and professional contacts where they could re-establish their political and businesses networks, employment, and ultimately, their lives. The immigration of the Koerners, the Fischls, Tomáš J. Baťa, and 82 Bata Shoe Corporation employees in 1938-1939 strengthened the Canadian Czechoslovak community after the German occupation of the Czech lands. Under Baťa's leadership, a company town named Batawa was established near Frankford, Ontario, and it is estimated that his industries employed close to 5,000 employees and produced goods valued at \$22 million.⁶⁹

From 'Enemy Aliens' to 'Allied Citizens:' Canadian Czechoslovaks Come Together

In response to the German occupation of the Czech lands and Slovakia's alignment with Germany, nationalist Canadian Slovaks led by the Canadian Slovak League were forced to mitigate their support for Slovakia's independence and its status as an enemy state. At the same time, the Canadian Czechoslovak community publicly opposed fascism in the old country and took a number of actions that promoted their anti-fascist and democratic stance. On 7 April 1939, Prague's Consul General in Montreal with the assistance of the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) refused to surrender his consulate to German diplomatic representatives. On 16 April 1939, Consul General František Pavlásek addressed a gathering of Czechoslovaks at the Bonsecours Market in Montreal assuring his audience that the homeland would be freed from

⁶⁸ Canada, DTS, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1943-44*, 180.

⁶⁹ See footnote 56.

Nazi domination.⁷⁰ Czechs and Slovaks who professed a belief in a unified Czechoslovak identity sensed that further action was necessary on their part. On 7 May 1939, a group of Canadian Czechs, Slovaks, and Subcarpathian Rusyns (Ruthenians) met in Toronto to discuss the formation of a national organization which would promote Canadian Czechoslovak interests and work to liberate their Nazi-occupied homeland. On 19 June 1939, the National Alliance of Slovaks, Czechs, and Subcarpathian Ruthenians in Canada was formally inaugurated. Attending the organization's first meeting were 140 delegates from across Canada. Štefan Rudinský, a Slovak immigrant from Montreal was elected as president, and Karel Buzek, a Czech immigrant from Toronto became the Alliance's national secretary.⁷¹ On 24 June, the Alliance held its first annual congress in Toronto's Church of All Nations. On 7 April 1940, Toronto's National Alliance of Slovaks, Czechs, and Subcarpathian Rusyns (Ruthenians) merged with Montreal's Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA).

Across Canada supporters of a Czechoslovak identity joined forces to coordinate the second Czechoslovak liberation movement's war and relief efforts in Canada.⁷² The newly enlarged CNA recognized the Czechoslovak National Committee in London as the legitimate political representative of the former Czechoslovak state. Incidentally, the Canadian government was the last British Dominion to officially recognize the Beneš-led national committee as the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in October 1940. During the Second World War, Czechs and Slovaks who remained foreign nationals residing in Canada and who were not naturalized were subject to national security measures. For nationals of states that no longer existed due to

⁷⁰ "Czechs Will be Free Again" *Montreal Daily Star*, April 17, 1939, 5; Čermák, *Fragmentsy ze života Čechů a Slováků v Kanadě*, 31.

⁷¹ Gellner and Smerek, *Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 105; Čermák, *It All Started with Prince Rupert*, 163. On 30 April 1939, Czechs, Slovaks, and Subcarpathian Rusyns (Ruthenians) met in Montreal to organize the founding meeting to take place on 7 May 1939 in Toronto.

⁷² "Sjednotenie našej odbojovej práce v Kanade" *Nová vlast'*, April 11, 1940, 2.

the German invasion, occupation, or annexation, the federal government viewed these same individuals as potential security risks. As a result, Ottawa instituted the *Defence of Canada Regulations* (DOCRs) which attempted to classify foreign nationals including Czechs and Slovaks in Canada as “enemy aliens.” Immigrants from former Czechoslovakia who had yet to be naturalized as Canadian citizens witnessed their civil liberties become severely restricted. Under the DOCRs, foreigners residing in Canada were denied *habeus corpus*, legal representation, and a court date. As the principal instrument of Ottawa’s drive to secure the state from potentially subversive individuals, the RCMP was able to detain and arrest persons of interest and seize their property and assets.⁷³ Similarly, Ottawa requested foreign legations to aid in the selection of their nationals who were trustworthy residents. On behalf of the lobbying efforts of Czechoslovakia’s Consulate General in Montreal, individuals who were registered as “enemy aliens” were permitted to receive new documents indicating their amended status as “Liberated Enemy Aliens” and were also entitled to receive a *Certificate of Exemption* as nationals of a friendly Allied nation.⁷⁴ On 12 October 1940, Ottawa officially recognized the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in London. Two months later, the CNA registered some of its members in an effort to demonstrate to Canadian officials that the Czechoslovak community was loyal to Canada.⁷⁵

On 1 April 1941, a delegation from the CNA testified before the House of Commons committee responsible for overseeing the DOCRs. The CNA’s president Štefan Rudinský and

⁷³ Reg Whitaker and Gregory S. Kealey, "A War on Ethnicity? The RCMP and Internment," In *Enemies Within: Italian and other Internees in Canada and Abroad*, eds. Franca Iacovetta, Roberto Perin, and Angelo Principe, 128-147 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 129. An Order-in-Council of 4 June 1940 permitted individual RCMP officers to become “justices of the peace” in an effort to fight illegal organizations and subversion across Canada.

⁷⁴ “Kanadská vláda oznamuje registrovanie Čechoslovákov,” *Nová vlast*, November 2, 1939, 1; “Registrácia Čechoslovákov ako priateľský národ,” *Nová vlast*, November 9, 1939, 1.

⁷⁵ “Registrácia,” *Nová vlast*, December 12, 1940, 4.

national secretary Karel Buzek were assisted by Arthur W. Roebuck, Member of Parliament for the Ontario riding of Toronto-Trinity where many Canadian Czechs and Slovaks resided.

Rudinský and Buzek called on Canadian officials to consider individuals of Czechoslovak origin as loyal Canadians. The delegation went on to claim that many members of the Czechoslovak community could not secure employment due to the stigma of having registered as “enemy aliens.”⁷⁶ The nationalist Canadian Slovak League (CSL) also lobbied federal authorities in an effort to prevent Canadian Slovaks from registering as “enemy aliens.” On 9 April 1941, Minister of Mines and Resources, Thomas Alexander Crerar informed the local CSL branch in Flin Flon, Manitoba that an amendment was made to the DOCRs, “...to the effect that these regulations shall not apply to persons who are nationals of and, were born in, Czechoslovakia, which means, for purposes of this regulation Czechoslovakia as it existed on the first day of January 1938.”⁷⁷ In April 1941, Ottawa issued an Order-in-Council recognizing Czechs and Slovaks as Allied peoples rather than as supporters of Nazi Germany. Nationalist Slovaks who defended the existence of an independent Nazi-aligned Slovak state were forced to moderate their support for Slovakia since Canada was at war with Germany and her allies. The CNA’s lobbying efforts during this period were largely influenced by its membership which by 1942 grew to 86 branches and 6,500 members.⁷⁸

As Czechoslovak politicians attempted to secure the future re-establishment of a Czechoslovak state, Canadian Czechoslovaks who were finally recognized as Allied peoples

⁷⁶ “D’alšie veľké víťazstvo Československej veci v Kanade,” *Nová vlast*, April 3, 1941, 1.

⁷⁷ Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada*, 410-411. See Document No. 4: Registration of Slovaks as Enemy Aliens, letter from T.A. Crerar, Minister of Mines and Resources to Nel Lovecký, Esq., President, CSL, Flin Flon, Manitoba, 3 April, 1941, and Document No. 5: Reply of the Department of Justice on the Registration of Slovaks, letter from T.A. Crerar, Minister of Mines and Resources to Nel Lovecký, Esq., President, CSL, Lodge 4, Flin Flon, Manitoba, 9 April, 1941.

⁷⁸ Gellner and Smerek, *Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 106.

turned their focus towards the creation of an ethnocultural association in Toronto.⁷⁹ On 11 December 1943, the CNA agreed to commence teaching at its newly established Czechoslovak school. Nineteen students were registered with an average age of twelve and half years. Initially, poor attendance at the language school was blamed on a lack of public awareness of the school's existence. The school taught reading, writing, and speaking in both Czech and Slovak languages, and included geography and the history of Czechoslovakia as subjects. After school, an hour was dedicated to physical education led by a member of the patriotic calisthenics organization: the Toronto Sokol Gymnastic Union.⁸⁰

Along with the CNA, the Masaryk Hall (MH) in Toronto rallied to the cause of liberating Czechoslovakia. The MH was created by charter in 1944, and as an organization it was led by a twelve-member volunteer board of directors and an executive committee with three members. Prior to the purchase of a hall in Toronto, MH held its meetings at the Church of All Nations. On 28 November 1944, a meeting of Czechoslovak groups was held at Toronto's Church of All Nations which raised \$9,000. By 4 December, Sokol Toronto began to use the hall built from an old tin structure – previously an old skating rink – and could accommodate approximately 1,000 people for its patriotic calisthenics exercises.⁸¹ In January 1945, Masaryk Hall was incorporated and given a charter by the province of Ontario. The organization moved into its own space and elected Slovak Rudolf Koreň as its president, and two Czechs – Karel Buzek as secretary and Jan

⁷⁹ Korbel, *The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia, 1938-1948: The Failure of Coexistence*, 85. In 1943, Edvard Beneš flew to Moscow to meet Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and prominent Czech and Slovak Communists who had fled east after the Nazi invasion of the Czech lands and the Slovak proclamation of independence. The former Czechoslovakian president and the Soviet leader signed a treaty of mutual cooperation between both governments.

⁸⁰ Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Masaryk Memorial Institute (hereafter MMI) Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 5, file "Masaryk School – Reports, 1942-1949; Students' Lists, 1942-1951; Misc., n.d.," memorandum from Prokop V. Havlík, "Zpráva o československé škole za školní rok 1943-1944 – sestavená k valně hromadě Sdružení ČSL, 16 January 1944.

⁸¹ Karol (Karel) Štark, interview by Jana Cipris, 28 August 1980, interview CZE-8359-STA, Slovak Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

Mráček as treasurer. In its original memorandum to members, MH declared that it would use all incoming funds to improve its programs and facilities and provide a cultural and educational centre for Czechoslovak Canadians. Among its principal activities were the following: English-language instruction, arts and crafts, the obligations of Canadian citizenship, financial relief and social assistance, physical training, the acquisition of Canadian and Czechoslovak literature and art, and the establishment of a Czechoslovak community centre for the region of Toronto.⁸²

During the 1944-1945 school year, twenty-eight students attended Czech and Slovak classes on Saturdays at MH's Masaryk Supplementary School. Classes were organized around thirty half-days held on Saturdays. Of the twenty-eight students who took Czech and Slovak classes, four attended only once. The oldest student was nineteen years of age, while the youngest was only five years of age. The average age of students who attended classes was fourteen years.⁸³ In his end of the year letter to the parents of children who attended the Supplementary School, instructor Prokop V. Havlík requested that parents spend one hour per week with their children practicing how to read and write in their maternal language so that they did not become *neodnárodnily* (losers of their ethnic nationality).⁸⁴

On 24 February, MH advertised its activities across Toronto and the rest of Canada which garnered 148 donations for a total contribution of \$13,472.72. By April, MH's fundraising and membership drive attracted 293 members and gained a total of \$16,301.90.⁸⁵ Ten months later, on 29 December 1946, members gathered to witness a symbolic burning of their hall's mortgage

⁸² Rudolf Nekola, *A Gem for the Canadian Mosaic* (Toronto: Masaryk Memorial Institute, 1957), xiv; "About Us," Masaryk Memorial Institute, accessed 1 August 2011, <http://www.masaryktown.org/index.htm>.

⁸³ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 5, file "Masaryk School – Reports, 1942-1949; Students' Lists, 1942-1951; Misc., n.d.," letter from Prokop V. Havlík to unknown, 1-2.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸⁵ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file "Annual Reports, 1948, 1949, 1953, 1954," *Výroční zpráva - Masarykova domu - rok 1948*, 3.

certificate indicating that the outstanding mortgage of \$11,925 was paid.⁸⁶ The establishment and growth of MH offered the Czechoslovak community in Canada with a sociocultural institution from which it could promote Czechoslovak identity and continue to work towards the liberation of their old homeland from fascism. Canadian Czechoslovaks were outraged by the demise of the Czechoslovak Republic after only two decades of independence. The German occupation of their old homeland illustrated to Czechoslovaks in Canada that the preservation of their ethnocultural heritage remained an important necessity. The introduction of a Czech and Slovak language school, financial and social assistance, and a patriotic calisthenics program permitted Canadian Czechoslovaks to ensure that their ethnocultural heritage was passed on to successive generations.

Relief Work for a Resurrected Czechoslovakia

Many Canadian Czechoslovaks were members of the MH and the CNA. Both organizations worked together in an effort to support the Allied war effort. The CNA was instrumental in establishing the Czechoslovak War Charities Fund (CWCF) which later became a constituent organization under the auspices of the Canadian United Allied Relief Fund (CUARF). The CWCF collected funds to be sent to the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in London and for relief including medicine, clothing, and foodstuffs which was sent to Czechoslovak troops fighting across Europe and North Africa. As national secretary of the CNA and an executive board member of the Canadian United Allied Relief Fund (CUARF), Karel Buzek was an instrumental figure in the development of fundraising efforts to liberate the Czech lands and Nazi-aligned Slovakia from fascist oppression, and relief work for a future resurrected

⁸⁶ Ibid.; "Masarykov dom," *Nová vlast*, February 20, 1947, 4.

Czechoslovak state. Buzek informed the CNA's executive committee on 15 February 1945 that its Czechoslovak War Charities Fund (CWCF) would be guaranteed \$450,000 by the Canadian government through CUARF. In addition, CWCF's own fundraising campaign garnered a further \$72,779 for a total of \$522,779. Ottawa allowed the CWCF to use \$3,345 – or less than two-thirds of one percent – to support its administrative costs.⁸⁷ Buzek also indicated to the CNA executive committee that CUARF would order \$450,000 worth of goods considered to be of the upmost necessity to the Czechoslovak Red Cross in London, England – which was spearheading a first aid action to compatriots currently under German occupation. The CWCF funds were used to purchase milk, flour, cooking oil, dried fruit and vegetables, cans of fish, cigarettes, hospital and medical supplies, bedrolls, clothing from government stores for infants and young children, and Red Cross relief packages.

Ethnic associations across Canada were not permitted to officially establish independent fundraising campaigns for their homelands in Europe under the War Charities Act. As a result, the CNA's Czechoslovak War Charities Fund became a member of CUARF. The CNA's executive committee was forced to inform the Czechoslovak Red Cross in London that its fundraising duties were organized under the guidance of CUARF and the Canadian Red Cross. The CNA advised the Czechoslovak Red Cross that it would be seeking a grant from monies previously collected to establish a Collection for National Liberation for which the CNA could send more financial support to the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile led by Edvard Beneš and to the Czechoslovak Red Cross as they prepared to re-establish a postwar Czechoslovak state with funds gained from the Allied war effort.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ LAC, Czechoslovak National Association in Canada (hereafter CNAC) Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 4 “Minutes – Executive Committee, 1945,” Zápís, č. 3/45, 15 February 1945, 1.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 2.

Supporting the Allied War Effort and Resurrecting the Czechoslovak State

With Soviet forces gaining ground in Eastern Europe in the spring of 1945, an agreement was facilitated between the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in London under the leadership of ex-President Edvard Beneš and exiled Czechoslovak communists in Moscow to create a national front government. Following the Soviet liberation of Slovakia, the Third Czechoslovak Republic was established in April 1945. A government was installed in Košice, Slovakia on 4 April. A National Front coalition comprised of three socialist political parties: the National Socialists, who composed the largest contingent; the Social Democrats; and the Czechoslovak and Slovak Communists. Two non-socialist parties, the Catholic People's Party in Moravia, and the Democratic Party in Slovakia were also included in the coalition. On 5 April, the National Front of Czechs and Slovaks (Czechoslovak Government) published its Košice Program calling for a swift end to the Second World War and the expulsion of Czechoslovakia's ethnic Sudeten German and Hungarian populations, along with all other Nazi collaborators. Simultaneously, land and industry belonging to German collaborators in the Czech lands and to proponents of the pro-Nazi wartime Slovak state were confiscated by presidential decree and appropriated to the civil population. With Soviet troops liberating the majority of land under German control, the Czech and Slovak populations viewed the Soviet Union favourably.⁸⁹ Meanwhile, over 10,000 ethnic Slovaks displaced by the war including conservative and fascist proponents of the wartime independent Slovak state fled to the West seeking refuge in Displaced Persons (DPs) camps in

⁸⁹ Eugen Steiner, *The Slovak Dilemma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 77-83; Yeshayahu Jelinek, *Lust for Power: Nationalism, Slovakia, and the Communists, 1918-1948* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1983) 79-85; Toma and Kováč, *Slovakia*, 158-159; Agnew, *Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, 223-224; Bradley, *Czechoslovakia*, 168-169.

Austria, Germany, and Italy. These DPs refused to support the resurrection of a Czechoslovak state.⁹⁰

In a meeting of the CNA's Joint Committee held on 12 April 1945, Cyprián Slimák representing the Slovak-language Communist paper *Ludové zvesti* (People's News) wanted the CNA to lobby the Canadian government to lessen restrictions on the purchase of goods and telegrams to a newly liberated Slovakia even though Canada's war effort continued.⁹¹ Slovak communists within the Czechoslovak community in Canada supported the liberation of Slovakia from its alignment with Nazi Germany and advocated for the reconstruction of a war-torn Slovakia. In Canada, the RCMP Security Bulletins indicated that the force was cognizant of events in Eastern Europe and the new Czechoslovak and Soviet relationship:

The Czechoslovak government of Benesh [sic] has sold out completely to the USSR. One need only note that while a Soviet ambassador has gone with Benesh [sic] from Moscow to Kosice, Britain and the United States have been notified – by the Soviets, not the Czech government – that their ambassadors will not be admitted at present. Benesh [sic] is evidently no longer an independent statesman, but a puppet of the Kremlin. The significant exclusion of American forces from operating on Czechoslovak territory also tells its own story.⁹²

In the spring of 1945, the Canadian Red Cross informed the CNA that it prepared forty crates of clothing destined for the Czechoslovak Red Cross in London. The CNA's executive committee received news from the Czechoslovak Red Cross that the socioeconomic situation in the Czechs lands and Slovakia was desperate. Children and the elderly were singled out as

⁹⁰ Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada*, 155.

⁹¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 9 "Minutes – Executive Committee – Drafts, 1944-1945," Zápísnica, 12 April 1945, 1. Originally founded in 1936 as *Hlas ľudu* (Voice of the People), the pro-Communist Slovak-language paper was later renamed to *Ludové zvesti* (People's News) in 1941. The paper was funded by the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia after 1948.

⁹² Kealey and Whitaker, eds, *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins*, 319.

individuals who urgently requiring clothing. As a result, Czechoslovak Red Cross officials in London were to send the shipment of clothing to the open Port of Galatz (Galati) in Romania. However, Canadian Red Cross officials were hesitant to send the shipment because its safe arrival could not be guaranteed.⁹³ Meanwhile, the CNA's own Clothing Action under the leadership of Gustav Přístupa sent forty-eight crates of clothing across the Atlantic. Clothing donations were received from Canadian Czechs and Slovaks in Batawa, Owen Sound, Belleville, Oshawa, Dresden, Hamilton, and Montreal.⁹⁴

From 6 February to 26 June 1945, the CWCF collected \$14,043.02 in donations. From this amount, \$609.76 was used towards the purchase of material to support the CNA's Clothing Action. The remaining \$13,433.26 was to be used by CUARF for the procurement of relief goods for Czechoslovakia.⁹⁵ During the summer of 1945, Czechs and Slovaks across Canada donated funds to the CWCF with specific requests for their money to be donated to the Czechoslovak Red Cross based in London, children in Czechoslovakia, and to the *partizani* (partisans) who were in the midst of helping to liberate the Czech lands and Slovakia from Nazi domination. One of the largest donations bequeathed to the partisans occurred in Windsor, Ontario where CNA members donated \$2,900 in May 1945.⁹⁶ Donations collected for Slovak partisans were sent by the CNA to the Czechoslovak Military Mission in Ottawa where a *Fund for Partisans in Slovakia* was organized.⁹⁷ Women's Committees within local CNA branches

⁹³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 4 "Minutes – Executive Committee, 1945," Zápis, č. 5/45, 5 April 1945, 2.

⁹⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 4 "Minutes – Executive Committee, 1945," Zápis, č. 6/45, 21 May 1945, 1.

⁹⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 4 "Minutes – Executive Committee, 1945," Zápis, č. 9/45, 15 February 1945, 3.

⁹⁶ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 18, file 6 "C.N.A. Czechoslovak War Charities Fund, 1945," letter from A.H. to Rudolf Kočí, č.j. 2105/45 4 May 1945.

⁹⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 21, file 66 "Czechoslovak Military Mission in Montreal, 1945," letter from Karel Buzek to Lieutenant-Colonel Ján Ambruš, Czechoslovak Military Attaché, č.j. 85a/45 28 February 1945.

also donated funds to impoverished children in the homeland. For example, the women's committee of the CNA branch in Batawa, Ontario donated \$143 to Czechoslovak children.⁹⁸

Although Canadian Czechoslovaks generously supported the Allied war effort, many donations continued to be destined to charities and organizations based on the ethnic or geographic background of the donor. Donations were also sent to religious groups such as the Catholic Church and secular non-governmental organizations including the Czechoslovak Red Cross.

A majority of fundraising continued to be sent to the CWCF as a consolidated charity under CUARF. In the spring and summer of 1945, CUARF purchased \$217,046.82 worth of goods from the \$450,000 allocated to the CWCF. As a result the fund's quantity of relief shipments grew to include 1,686 crates consisting of 834 crates of citrus extract, 351 crates of disinfectant, 313 crates containing milk powder, 84 crates consisting of cigarettes, 50 crates including warm leather boots, 48 crates with high socks, 3 crates of shaving blades, 2 crates of dried beans, and 1 crate of playing cards for hospital patients. In Montreal, these supplies were loaded onto the shipping vessel *Chertsey* and destined for the Romanian port of Constanta (Constantza) before arriving by rail in Czechoslovakia.⁹⁹ Across Canada, 1,200 clothing committees were established to seek clothing donations for Europe. The National Clothing Collection allocated 250,000 pounds of clothing to Czechoslovakia. Accordingly, the CNA requested that all of its branches across Canada cooperate with their local clothing committees in order to reach Czechoslovakia's allocation of donated clothing.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 18, file 6 "C.N.A. Czechoslovak War Charities Fund, 1945," letter from A.H. to Rudolf Kočí, č.j. 1733/45 12 April 1945.

⁹⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 4 "Minutes – Executive Committee, 1945," Zápis, č. 8/45, 23 August 1945, 1. With the German port of Bremen under renovation, Soviet army trains were used to ship supplies from the port of Constanta in Romania to East Central Europe.

¹⁰⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 4 "Minutes – Executive Committee, 1945," Zápis, č. 9/45, 20 September 1945, 1; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 8 "VI Congress, 1945," letter from Karel Buzek to Professor J. J. Zmrhal, 12 November 1945; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 8 "VI

As fundraising for the Allied war effort continued, Nazi Germany formally surrendered to the Allies on 7 May 1945.¹⁰¹ A few days later the CSL called for the revival of an independent Slovak state rather than the re-establishment of a Czechoslovak Republic which would thwart nationalist Slovak demands for autonomy. Political appeals were sent to delegates meeting at the founding convention of the United Nations in San Francisco. On behalf of Canadian Slovaks, the CSL, Slovak Catholic Sokol, First Catholic Sokol Union, and the National Slovak Mutual Benefit Society called on delegates to support the independence of the Slovak nation from Czechoslovakia. The lobbying of nationalist American and Canadian Slovaks was largely ignored due to the Allied recognition of the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in London, England as the legitimate representative of a resurrected Czechoslovak state. Slovakia's wartime status as a Nazi-aligned state severely hampered any attempts at Western recognition.¹⁰²

In an August 1945 report in the RCMP Security Bulletin under the heading of "Friction," Canada's national police force became increasingly aware of the cleavages that events in Central Europe reproduced within the Czechoslovak and nationalist Slovak communities in Canada. Although the RCMP depicted the relations between ethnic Czechs and Slovaks as containing "some friction," they were conscious of the divisions within the previous waves of Czech and Slovak immigration to Canada. The RCMP was aware that historically "three principal groups" existed in Canada. The "Slovak nationalists" – who only permitted Slovaks to join their organizations – did not cooperate with Slovak leftists, or the Czechoslovaks. The RCMP went on

Congress, 1945," letter from Karel Buzek to Professor H. Gordon Skilling, 13 November 1945. By November 1945, the National Clothing Collection amassed over 11 million pounds of clothing destined for Czechoslovakia.

¹⁰¹ The end of the Second World War or 'Victory in Europe' Day is celebrated on 7 May in Commonwealth countries, 8 May in European Allied nations, and 9 May in the republics of the former Soviet Union. The Act of Surrender was signed in Reims, France on 7 May 1945 and ratified in Berlin, Germany on 8 May 1945.

¹⁰² Paul McKay, *The Roman Empire: The Unauthorized Life and Times of Stephen Roman* (Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited, 1990), 13; Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada*, 412-413. See Document No. 6: Resolutions of Canadians of Slovak Origin to the Canadian Delegates to the World Security Conference, San Francisco, California, 11 May, 1945, Toronto.

to assert in its bulletin that the "... factions get along fairly well at present, only occasionally the class-conscious leftists criticize the "bourgeois" National Alliance."¹⁰³ Although the RCMP understood the sociopolitical cleavages between the Czechoslovak and nationalist Slovak communities in Canada, they erroneously overestimated the size of the CNA. The RCMP believed that the Czechoslovak organization held 10-12,000 members and more than 200 branches across Canada. In reality, the CNA's membership peaked in 1945 with 92 branches and approximately 10,000 members.¹⁰⁴ Left-leaning Sudeten Germans also joined the CNA forming two branches in Tupper Creek, British Columbia, and St. Walburg, Saskatchewan.¹⁰⁵

In terms of a security assessment and threat to Canada, the RCMP and Canadian immigration authorities were vigilant to the possibility that many 'undesirables' were attempting to hide their Nazi or communist affiliations by joining the CNA. The Security Service's "O" Division discovered that an alleged refugee from Czechoslovakia was attempting to conceal his true identity as a Sudeten German with membership in the *NSDAP* (National Socialist German Workers' Party). The individual in question was a German citizen and as a result was subsequently interned. A RCMP wartime Security Bulletin noted that "it can almost be taken for granted that there are other Nazis hiding in Canada in the disguise of Czechoslovakian refugees."¹⁰⁶ Nazis, fascist sympathizers, and Communist spies did attempt and eventually succeeded in entering Canada in the years immediately after the Second World War.

In October 1945 on behalf of the Czechoslovak government, František Pavlásek requested that Canadian authorities consider all passports issued by the former Nazi-aligned

¹⁰³ Kealey and Whitaker, eds, *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins*, 380-383.

¹⁰⁴ Jovanovic, "Czechs," 402. Finding Aid MSS1179 located at Library and Archives Canada (<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/digital-initiatives/012018-10007-e.html>) indicates that the CNA reached a pinnacle with 92 branches.

¹⁰⁵ Čermák, *It All Began with Prince Rupert*, 163.

¹⁰⁶ Kealey and Whitaker, eds, *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins*, 71.

Slovak state as invalid documents, and that any “alien” presenting such a document should automatically be refused admission to Canada.¹⁰⁷ Prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, Slovakia aligned itself with Germany following Hitler’s invasion and annexation of the Czech lands creating a Reich Protectorate on 15 March 1939. Neither the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in London nor Ottawa recognized the Slovak “puppet regime.” The Department of External Affairs (DEA) noted that many individuals who obtained Slovakian passports had in fact escaped from Czechoslovakia through Austria in an attempt to avoid postwar trials for treason against the state. The DEA indicated that many of these passport-holders could “apply for admission to Canada.” According to officials in Ottawa, the Slovakian passports did not meet Canada’s Passport Regulation requirements as held in P.C. 3016. Subsequently, Canadian officials looked to their Immigration Branch counterparts to refuse admission to any individual with such a travel document.¹⁰⁸

On 29 October 1945, the Commissioner of Immigration informed District Superintendents across the country of the DEA’s advice regarding Slovakian passports.¹⁰⁹ On 2 November 1945, a memorandum was sent from the Immigration Branch’s Western District Superintendent in Winnipeg informing inspectors that the DEA advised that “a number of aliens [were] travelling on passports issued by the former Slovak State or Tiso Government.” On 7 November 1945, the Pacific District Superintendent in Vancouver informed officials at the Immigration Branch in Ottawa that the DEA’s advice regarding Slovakian passports would be

¹⁰⁷ LAC, Immigration Branch (hereafter IB) Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” memorandum: Political Adherents to Tiso Regime in Slovakia – Admission to Canada, 27 June 1946, microfilm reel C-10436.

¹⁰⁸ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” memorandum from Western District Superintendant, Look Out No. 10: Immigration Inspectors – Western District, 2 November 1945, microfilm reel C-10436.

¹⁰⁹ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” memorandum from Commissioner of Immigration to District Superintendents, 29 October 1945, microfilm reel C-10436.

passed along to officers at all border ports.¹¹⁰ Additionally, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Norman Alexander Robertson, indicated in a letter to Minister of Mines and Resources, James Allison Glen, that Canadian diplomats in Washington also received representations regarding the forthcoming admission of anti-Nazi Sudeten German refugees to Canada.¹¹¹ Czechoslovakia's diplomatic representation attempted to thwart the admission into Canada of nationalist Slovak politicians who actively fought the re-establishment of a pro-Czechoslovak state.

With the Second World War over and relief and reconstruction efforts in progress, Canadian Czechoslovaks gathered at the CNA's Victory Congress in Toronto on 24 November 1945. In a resolution passed at the meeting, delegates expressed their loyalty to their homeland and thanked the Allied forces, and in particular their Soviet "brothers" for their "invaluable help" in supporting the struggle to liberate their homeland.¹¹² In his report from the Victory Congress, CNA national secretary Karel Buzek described the tremendous role that Canada's 40,000 "Czechoslovaks" played during the war. In highlighting the sacrifices made across the country to support the liberation of Czechoslovakia from Nazi domination, Buzek illustrated that even in small towns such as Margo, Saskatchewan where five to ten Czechoslovak families settled during the Great Depression, two young pilots lost their lives for both of their homelands "old and new." According to Buzek, no mobilization or draft forced them to join the Czechoslovak Air Force in Europe; they simply could not sit idle through the war. In essence, they gave their

¹¹⁰ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," memorandum from Pacific District Superintendent to Commissioner of Immigration, 7 November 1945, microfilm reel C-10436.

¹¹¹ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," letter from Norman Alexander Robertson to Hon. James Allison Glen, 8 December 1945, microfilm reel C-10436.

¹¹² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 6 "VI Congress, 1945," Resoluce VI. Sjezdu – Vítězného Kongresu Češkoslovenského národního sdružení v Kanadě, 24.-25. XI. 1945.

lives for freedom.¹¹³ Buzek concluded that the approximately 40,000 Canadians of Czech and Slovak heritage sent over 11,753,000 cigarettes to Czechoslovak soldiers serving in England, 7,250,000 cigarettes to their compatriots on the Soviet front, and approximately 2 million cigarettes to their forces in Yugoslavia via London. Among the CNA's various wartime funds to send food, clothing, and material goods to troops in Europe and to victims of German oppression in their homeland, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks raised a total of \$330,922.00 or \$65 per Czechoslovak household in Canada.¹¹⁴ Incidentally, the CNA's Toronto branch donated the single largest amount of \$58,676.19 to the war effort, while members in remote Farmington, British Columbia were able to collect \$18 dollars.¹¹⁵

With the CWCF as a member fund of the Canadian United Allied Relief Fund, over \$9 million dollars were allocated for aid to the people of twelve Allied countries.¹¹⁶ The CWCF was allocated \$450,000 in 1945 for the purchase of goods to be sent to victims of war in the Czech lands and Slovakia. In November 1945, \$364,420.88 of that initial allocation had already been spent on aid.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 6 "VI Congress, 1945," Zpráva ústřední tajemníka, br. K. Buzka, na vítězném kongrese Čs. N.S. 24.-25. Listopadu 1945, 1.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 2; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 6 "VI Congress, 1945," Celkový finančný výkaz administratívneho fondu od založenia ČSNS v Kanade od júna 1939 do 31. októbra 1945. The CNA's various war funds included the Cigarette Fund (\$20,671.18), Parcel Fund (\$1,081.77), and Dispatches to USSR Fund (\$9,230.09) raised \$30,983.04 for the war effort. Similarly, the CWCF garnered \$209,212.42, the United Fund for Czechoslovak Soldiers brought in \$19,735.50, the Canadian Aid to Russia Fund \$11,859.29, while membership in the Czechoslovak Red Cross garnered \$1,806.50. The CNA Radio Fund for broadcasting to the homeland received \$1,897.71, and donations to the CNA's Administrative Fund totalled \$55,427.54. Donations to the CNA Administrative Fund were used to purchase stamps, telegrams, and to support publications such as the pro-Czechoslovak *Nová vlast* newspaper in Canada.

¹¹⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 6 "VI Congress, 1945," Celkový finančný prehľad odbočiek od založenia ČSNS do 31. októbra 1945, 1-2.

¹¹⁶ The Canadian United Allied Relief Fund's members included the Belgian War Relief Fund, Chinese War Relief Fund, Czechoslovak War Charities Fund, Danish Relief Fund, Canada-France Relations Committee, Greek War Relief Fund, Canadian Friends of Luxembourg Fund, Netherlands Relief Fund, Norwegian Relief Fund, United Polish Relief Fund, Yugoslav Relief Fund, and the Canadian Aid to Russia Fund.

¹¹⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 6 "VI Congress, 1945," Zpráva ústřední tajemníka, br. K. Buzka, na vítězném kongrese Čs. N.S. 24.-25. Listopadu 1945, 2. While the United States donated \$1,090,000

In a letter to Colonel P.L. Browne, director of the Voluntary War Relief section of the Department of National War Services in Ottawa, Buzek indicated that CUARF's allocation of \$450,000 to the CWCF for 1945 was divided into six categories: foodstuffs (\$157,002.05), medical and surgical supplies (\$121,222.44), freight charges (\$85,603.33), new clothing (\$56,798.92), Canadian Red Cross buying services (\$22,500), and comforts (\$6,873.26).¹¹⁸ Browne advised that his department would grant the CWCF a special permit to continue to send foodstuffs to Czechoslovakia. Relief parcels containing food were not permitted to contain sugar or sugar-related commodities due in part to the length of time that packages from Canada to Czechoslovakia remained in transit. War charities such as the CWCF required special government permits in order to ship large food, clothing, and medicinal stores to Czechoslovakia after the end of the Second World War.¹¹⁹

With conflict in Europe over, Canadian Czechoslovaks continued to focus their attention on sending aid to Czechoslovakia. In his address to delegates at the Czechoslovak National Alliance's Victory Congress, in November 1945, vice-president Jan Gažo, a Slovak from Windsor, Ontario, called on the members in attendance to move the organization towards a three-point plan. Gažo believed that continuous aid to Czechoslovakia, maintenance of ethnic heritage for future generations, and the promotion of Canadian citizenship would firmly entrench the CNA's existence in the immediate postwar years.¹²⁰ Czechs and Slovaks across Canada heeded

towards relief aid to a defunct Czechoslovakia, citizens across Canada donated over \$450,000 which is proportionally more than their American counterparts.

¹¹⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 6 "VI Congress, 1945," volume 16, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence – English Letters, 1946," letter from Karel Buzek to Colonel P.L. Browne, 2 April 1946.

¹¹⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 18, file 6 "C.N.A. Czechoslovak War Charities Fund, 1945," letter from Colonel P.L. Browne to Karel Buzek, 22 December 1945. Applications for export permits for goods with a value exceeding \$100 dollars were required to be accompanied by a money order or cheque for \$2 dollars in favour of the Receiver General of Canada.

¹²⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 8 "VI Congress, 1945," Zázpisnica z Vítazného Kongresu = VI. Výročného sjazdu Československého národného združenia v Kanade, 24-25 November 1945, 3.

Gažo's call and CNA branches across Canada continued to donate funds and goods to the relief effort. Many members remained active in the dialogue regarding where their financial and material support should go. In December 1945, Moravian Catholics donated \$200 dollars to the CNA's aid efforts and requested that their donation be specifically sent to relief efforts in Moravia. Half of the funds donated were destined for the Czechoslovak Red Cross, while \$50 dollars each were to be allocated to the relief efforts in the town of Hodonín and for orphanages in the towns of Hroznová Lhota and Veselí nad Moravou.¹²¹

The CNA executive also desired to assist their homeland. During an executive committee meeting of the CNA in December 1945, committee member Matuš Pavlík argued that funds could be collected to honour the service of all Czechoslovak volunteers during the Second World War. Pavlík suggested that proceeds could be used for the purchase of food which would then be sent to impoverished civilians in Czechoslovakia.¹²² Meanwhile, Czechoslovakia's legation in Canada lobbied the federal government to have demobilized and returning Canadian Czech and Slovak volunteers recognized equally with their Canadian counterparts for veteran benefits. In Canada, 782 men applied for the Czechoslovak forces overseas. The applicants for duty from Canada consisted of 314 Slovaks, 270 Czechs, 112 Canadians, 62 Sudeten Germans, 20 Subcarpathian Rusyns, and 4 Hungarians. After the cessation of hostilities in 1945, Colonel Karel Lukáš, Prague's Military and Air Attaché in Canada indicated in a letter to the CNA that only 230 individuals eventually joined the Czechoslovak forces overseas with 157 men enlisting in the Czechoslovak Army and 73 men in the British Royal Air Force. The 230 successful

¹²¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 11, file 229 "Head Office Correspondence – Chatham, Ont., Branch No. 7, n.d., 1945," letter from John Botek to Karel Buzek, 3 December 1945; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 11, file 229 "Head Office Correspondence – Chatham, Ont., Branch No. 7, n.d., 1945," letter from Karel Buzek to John Botek, 29 December 1945.

¹²² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 21, file 70 "Czechoslovak Government Ministries, 1946," letter from Czechoslovak Minister of Labour and Social Welfare to Karel Buzek, I 2679/126, 3 December 1945.

applicants from Canada consisted of 139 Slovaks, 79 Czechs, 6 Sudeten Germans, and 6 Subcarpathian Rusyns.¹²³

Conclusion

Immigrants who arrived from Czechoslovakia during the interwar period did not receive the same level of social and financial assistance as subsequent waves of postwar refugees. For many Czech and Slovak immigrants, the absence of Canadian or Czechoslovakian government support and Czechoslovak institutions capable of assisting in their immigration and initial settlement in Canada greatly influenced the interwar newcomer's identity in their new country. During the 1920s and 1930s, many Czechs and Slovaks who supported a Czechoslovak identity viewed themselves as independent, hard-working, and self-made since they could only depend on themselves and their fellow immigrants for material and financial support.

Important to our understanding of interwar Czech and Slovak immigration to Canada is how newcomers during this period influenced the emergence of Canadian Czechoslovak institutions. Beginning in the 1920s, three groups of Czechoslovakian immigrants existed in Canada. The largest group was comprised of nationalist Slovaks who only permitted ethnic Slovaks to join their institutions and advocated for Slovak autonomy within a federalized Czechoslovakia. A small group of Slovak leftists joined ethnic Czechs in promoting a common Czechoslovak ethnic identity and supported the Czechoslovak Republic.

The Canadian Czechoslovak community remained small prior to the arrival of farmers and labourers from interwar Czechoslovakia. As a result, sizeable and far-reaching Czechoslovak

¹²³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 21, file 66 "Czechoslovak Military Mission in Montreal, 1945," letter from Colonel Karel Lukáš, Czechoslovak Legation Military and Air Attaché in Ottawa to CNA, Toronto, Čj. 447/45, 4 December 1945, 1. While 782 men initially applied, 106 were deemed unfit to join.

institutions with member branches across Canada did not exist. Many interwar Czech and Slovak newcomers were largely responsible for establishing Czechoslovak groups and associations that postwar arrivals from Czechoslovakia later joined. Interwar Czech and Slovak immigrants transplanted their Old World ethnic and ideological divisions to Canada which they embedded into newly established Czechoslovak institutions. Tensions between the proponents of a Czechoslovak identity and nationalist Slovaks also resurfaced in Canada. An example of these Old World tensions was the establishment and demise of the Czechoslovak Mutual Benefit Society first formed in Montreal in 1924. A small group of Czech members sought to turn the organization into a thoroughly Czechoslovak institution to which a majority of Slovak members disapproved. The society ceased its activities in 1927 after its mostly Slovak membership left Montreal and established or joined other Slovak groups.

Interwar Czech and Slovak immigrants were responsible for the establishment of Czechoslovak institutions such as Toronto's National Alliance of Slovaks, Czechs, and Subcarpathian Ruthenians, which later merged with Montreal's Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA) in 1940. Established in 1944, Masaryk Hall (MH) worked closely with the CNA as both institutions shared many of the same members. Both organizations were immediately joined by a small group of immigrants who arrived in Canada during the Second World War. From 1939 to 1945, 1,009 immigrants gave their racial origin as Czech – including Bohemian and Moravian – compared to 420 individuals who claimed their racial origin as Slovak.¹²⁴ During the same

¹²⁴ Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1942*, 156; Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1943-44*, 180; Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1945*, 171; Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1945*, 185. Immigrants who self-identified their racial origin as Bohemian and Moravian were included in this study as Czechs. In all, 401 individuals claimed their racial origin as Bohemian, while another 54 immigrants claimed their racial origins as Moravians.

period, 2,232 individuals claimed Czechoslovakian nationality.¹²⁵ Individuals who arrived during the war combined with earlier immigrants from Czechoslovakia were instrumental in welcoming arrivals from postwar Czechoslovakia into their ethnocultural groups and associations in the hopes that they would assist in promoting the preservation of Czechoslovak culture and Canadian citizenship. Interwar immigrants would come to view successive waves of Cold War refugees from Czechoslovakia with dismay due to the availability of government support for their settlement in Canada and the 1948ers and 1968ers' virulent promotion of an anti-communist identity.

¹²⁵ Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1938*, 199; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1939* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1939), 162; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1940* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1940), 154; Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1942*, 158; Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1945*, 172; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1948-49* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1949), 180.

Chapter Two:

A Three-Point Plan: Promoting Postwar Relief, Citizenship, and Ethnic Heritage in Canada

In December 1946, Masaryk Memorial Hall (MH) introduced a magazine entitled *Bobřík* (Beaver) for children of “Czechoslovakian origin in Canada.” The magazine taught youngsters about Czechoslovakia’s history through trivia, games, and stories. As president of MH, Gustav Přístupa asked young readers “to be like the small, hard-working animal – working for its new homeland, Canada – but not forgetting our old homeland, Czechoslovakia.”¹ On behalf of the organization’s members, Přístupa pressed Czech and Slovak children to show confidence, industriousness, admiration for their homelands – old and new – and a desire to distinguish themselves and the Czechoslovak community in Canada. Přístupa concluded by asking children to help preserve the ethnic heritage and customs their parents brought with them to their new country.²

Czechs and Slovaks in Canada successfully assisted in resurrecting a Czechoslovak state in 1945. During the Second World War, the Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA) reached a pinnacle of 92 branches and a membership nearing 10,000 individuals. In the immediate postwar period, Czechoslovak organizations such as the CNA suffered from a decline in membership and financial support as many of its supporters turned their attention towards their own integration into Canadian society. The CNA never reached the same level of financial support and membership as it had during the Second World War. Although Canadian Czechoslovaks rejoiced at the liberation of their old homeland from Nazi domination, they continued to recognize that postwar relief was an immediate concern in a re-established Czechoslovakia. Following the

¹ LAC, Jan Dočkálek Fonds, MG 30 C148, volume 1, file “Bobřík, 1946, 1947,” *Bobřík: Časopis Masarykovy Mládeže v Kanadě* 1 (December 1946): 1.

² *Ibid.*

CNA's Victory Congress in November 1945, Czechs and Slovaks as members of a broader Czechoslovak group in Canada looked to CNA vice-president Jan Gažo's three-point plan for direction on how to better improve life for their compatriots in Central Europe, and continue to promote integration into Canadian society for all Czechoslovaks.

This chapter assesses how Canadian Czechoslovak institutions addressed the needs of a resurrected Czechoslovak state in the immediate postwar period, by means of Gažo's three-point plan which went as follows. First, Czechs and Slovaks in Canada continued to fundraise in an effort to send postwar relief in the form of medicine, clothing, and foodstuffs to their compatriots devastated by six years of German occupation. Second, Canadian Czechoslovak community leaders within the CNA and MH actively promoted the development of Canadian citizenship among Czechs and Slovaks even as many prewar immigrants began to consider returning to Czechoslovakia after six years of war and separation from relatives and friends in the old country. As non-denominational and anti-communist institutions, the CNA and MH welcomed individuals of various backgrounds including Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish members whose origins connected them to Czechoslovakia. Many of these same individuals were Canadian Czechs and Slovaks who regarded with suspicion the increasing Communist influence in the old country. Third, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks also turned their attention towards the preservation of a Czechoslovak ethnic heritage with the establishment of MH in Toronto in 1944 as a charitable sociocultural organization which could better promote the preservation of ethnic heritage for future generations. These three pillars of the community's immediate postwar agenda entrenched the existence of the MH and the CNA, and solidified the Czechoslovak community's ethnocultural identity within postwar Canada.

Postwar Relief for a Resurrected Czechoslovakia

Recognizing that social and economic conditions in Czechoslovakia were dire in the months following the end of the Second World War, the CNA's executive committee was regularly updated regarding the relief situation in their homeland. On 3 December 1945, Czechoslovakia's Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare wrote to the CNA head office in Toronto indicating that improving food consumption on the part of small children was the ministry's top priority. According to Prague, children up to six years of age had an average caloric intake of 1,428 calories, below the required consumption of 1,600 calories. Meanwhile, children and adolescents between the ages of six and twenty years of age consumed an average of 1,907 calories instead of the recommended 2,650 calories to maintain general health. Due to an increasing need for food and medication, and relief packages arriving slowly to Czechoslovakia, the ministry indicated that many children and youth suffered from malnourishment and tuberculosis.³

In early 1946, CNA members called on their leadership to renew the wartime *Cigarette Fund* which successfully sent donated cigarettes to Czechoslovak forces in England, Russia, and North Africa during the Second World War. Czechoslovak National Alliance members sent goods to Czechoslovakia's civilian population including cigarettes. In an executive committee meeting held on 10 January, CNA national secretary Karel Buzek noted that approval for such a scheme had to come from Ottawa. Subsequently, Canadian authorities informed the CNA that Czechoslovak servicemen no longer qualified for cigarette parcels from Canada since the war was over. That same month, the Post Office Department notified the CNA that postal services between Canada and Czechoslovakia "had just been resumed" and Canadians were now free to

³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 5 "Minutes – Executive Committee, 1946," Zázpisnica, Číslo 1/1946, 10 January 1946, 3.

send parcels –subject to customs regulations for tobacco in Czechoslovakia.⁴ It was also noted that the American government already permitted a cigarette service for war-torn Europe. Although the Canadian government lifted restrictions on the shipment of individual parcels with a maximum weight of four pounds and permitted the shipment of foodstuffs up to eleven pounds, Ottawa lagged behind the American government in permitting the shipment of relief goods including cigarettes to Europe.⁵ As a result, the CNA struggled to meet its previous obligations and a growing demand for the shipment of consumable products. Various organizations continued to assist the CNA in meeting its obligations. The Canadian United Allied Relief Fund (CUARF) offered to ship clothing and footwear from Canadian military stores at a rate of five dollars per pair of footwear, \$1.25 per pair of pants, and \$2.50 per shirt. Canadian Commercial Enterprises of Toronto offered to facilitate the purchase of relief goods in Denmark to be sent to Czechoslovakia. The Bata Corporate offices in Copenhagen indicated to the CNA that butter could be purchased at 60 cents per pound. As a result, a shipment of 2,000 pounds of butter with a value of \$1,200 was to be sent to Czechoslovakia.⁶

As a result of this development, the CNA and its member branches resorted to purchasing smaller quantities of relief goods and sent them from Denmark to Czechoslovakia through the Czechoslovak War Charities Fund (CWCF) which was a member fund of CUARF. With funds from the CNA, the Canadian Red Cross purchased \$26,000 worth of vitamin tablets, viosterol (oil-based vitamin D), citrus concentrate (vitamin C), sulfate, penicillin, sweaters, coats, and

⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 18, file 15 “Parcels to Czechoslovakia, 1946,” letter from F.E. Jolliffe, Acting Director of Administrative Services, Post Office Department to Karel Buzek, 4 January 1946.

⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 5 “Minutes – Executive Committee, 1946,” Zázpisnica, Číslo 1/1946, 10 January 1946, 1-2.

⁶ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, Zázpisnica, Číslo 2/1946, 28 January 1946, 2; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, Zázpisnica, Číslo 4/1946, 14 March 1946, 2. Incidentally, Danish authorities refused to grant authorization for such a large shipment. With an order for Danish butter lacking the necessary clearances, the Czechoslovak Red Cross in Prague then informed the CNA that it would now receive such products from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).

socks.⁷ By March 1946, goods were being sent to the Czechoslovak Red Cross in Prague and to the Slovak National Council (*Slovenská národná rada*) in Bratislava.

In a letter to the *Toronto Daily Star*, Karel Buzek who also served as the executive director of the CWCF expressed his gratitude to all Canadians for their donations of money, food, and clothing to the Canadian Red Cross, the National Clothing Collection, and the Czechoslovak War Charities Fund. At the end of 1945, \$1,067,000 worth of relief goods was shipped to Czechoslovakia. Buzek informed the paper's readers that in some parts of Czechoslovakia, the destruction was so severe that government and voluntary agencies could not adequately manage the situation on the ground. The CNA's national secretary used the example of thousands of children who remained "undernourished, insufficiently clad, many of them homeless orphans" and insisted that parcels of food and cigarettes for families could still be ordered through the CWCF.⁸

As relief organizations continued to send aid packages to war-torn Europe, Canadian Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King announced a food conservation program designed to increase Canadian shipments of vital foods overseas to Europe. In a letter to organizations and individuals involved in collecting donations for war-ravaged Europe, the Minister of National War Services asked Canadians to:

...reduce their ordinary requirements of these vital foods and substitute in their diets the canned and packaged foods which would be donated in voluntary food collections, it will make it possible for the Food Boards of the Government to take delivery of all essential food products at the most

⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, Zápisnica, Číslo 4/1946, 14 March 1946, 1.

⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence – English Letters, 1946," Karel Buzek, "Need Still Great," *Toronto Daily Star*, 20 April 1946, 6. The Canadian United Allied Relief Fund (CUARF) purchased a further five million units of penicillin and 550 tons of flour that were later sent to Czechoslovakia. Since shipments of penicillin under the auspices of UNRRA were not freely distributed, Canada's consignment of goods was released among the socially disadvantaged. See LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 5 "Minutes – Executive Committee, 1946," Zápisnica, Číslo 7/1946, 18 June 1946, 1.

effective source and to deliver them to the authorities which can most effectively distribute them where the need exists.⁹

The Canadian government hoped that its citizens would support the Food Conservation Program by purchasing less wheat products, flour, meats, cheese, and eggs, while avoiding unnecessary waste and only purchasing these items for immediate needs. Ottawa also encouraged the establishment of residential gardens that would lead to the substitution of vegetables for many of these now vital foods.¹⁰

In the fall of 1946 a delegation from the CNA arrived in Czechoslovakia to assess the destruction caused by the Second World War. The delegation began its tour of the country in Bratislava, Slovakia and completed its visit in Prague. During its stay in the country, the delegation witnessed the wartime destruction of property, nationwide protests, and visited with the injured, sick, and infirm in hospitals across the country. In eastern Slovakia, the delegation viewed first-hand how Canadian relief goods – arriving first in 1945 – were put to use before American aid appeared. As chair of the CNA’s auditing committee, Prokop V. Havlík informed members of the executive upon his return from Czechoslovakia that it was “completely pointless” for Canadian Czechoslovaks to send money to their relatives and friends due to the low value of Czechoslovak currency. Although one Canadian dollar was worth approximately 50 Czechoslovak Crowns, Havlík argued that more could be bought with a dollar in Canada than with 50 Crowns in Czechoslovakia due to high prices and demand back in the old homeland. Havlík advised his compatriots to send clothing, footwear, and cigarettes instead. In addition,

⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 8 “Head Office – General Correspondence – English Letters, 1946,” letter from Office of the Minister, Department of National War Services to Karel Buzek, 16 April 1946.

¹⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 8 “Head Office – General Correspondence – English Letters, 1946,” letter from Hon. James Joseph McCann, Minister of National War Services to Karel Buzek, 16 April 1946.

Havlík argued that in a newly resurrected Czechoslovakia, cigarettes continued to be a valuable gift.¹¹

A subsequent delegation to Czechoslovakia led by CNA president Rudolf Koreň and national secretary Karel Buzek met with a ministerial committee at Prague Castle, the official residence of President Edvard Beneš. One of the many issues discussed was the large number of missing or undelivered aid packages that compatriots in Canada were sending to Czechoslovakia. Government officials in Prague claimed that they were not responsible for these parcels. Many needy recipients were being forced to wait for ships docking at the German port of Hamburg, or its Polish counterpart at Gdansk for the release of cargo, and for trains to deliver these goods to the country. Czechoslovakian officials informed the CNA delegation that many packages were improperly labelled, while others simply did not arrive at their intended destination.¹² Many within the Czechoslovak community across Canada sent packages to their families and friends, and to the elderly and orphaned. In 1947, aid packages could not weigh more than six kilograms. An individual package could contain one of the following items: one pound of tobacco (for \$2.25), 600 cigarettes (for \$4.00), 300 cigarettes (for \$2.25), or 120 cigars. The shipment of these packages was processed by the CNA head office on Richmond Street in Toronto.¹³

In an attempt to raise funds for infirm and afflicted compatriots in Czechoslovakia, on 11 September 1947, the central executive committee of the CNA informed the readership of *Nová vlast'* that it was commencing a campaign to raise \$10,000 for postwar relief. In an attempt to instigate internal political divisions, Slovak communists in Canada countered this initiative by claiming in their official organ *Ludove zvesti* (People's News) that the CNA's campaign was a

¹¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 6 "Minutes – Executive Committee, 1947," Zápisnica, Číslo 1/47, 7 January 1947, 1.

¹² "Intervencia delegácie ČSNS vo veci dárkových balíčkov," *Nová vlast'*, 9 January 1947, 3.

¹³ "Dárkové zasielanie do ČSR," *Nová vlast'*, 2 January 1947, 3

deliberate attempt to fill its own coffers.¹⁴ The CNA countered the Slovak communist claims by indicating to readers that the organization received annual membership dues of \$1.00 since its founding in 1939. All other collected funds were for various projects such as the *Cigarette Fund*, or to aid Czechoslovakia's orphans and Displaced Persons (DPs).¹⁵ The CNA's executive committee noted that monies collected during the Second World War effort and counted at the CNA's Victory Congress in November 1945 equalled \$330,922. Of this sum, \$209,212.42 was given to the CWCF, \$30,983.04 was used to purchase travelling passes for Czechoslovak troops in Europe and North Africa, and \$19,735.50 was given to the committee for all Czechoslovak groups to which the *Ludové zvesti* newspaper was a member. The CNA also raised funds to help its compatriots who did not have the financial means to insure themselves. Those of old age who were no longer eligible for life insurance were now able to access funds for medical reasons.¹⁶

On 13 November, Czechoslovakia's Consul General in Montreal Josef Kotrlý explained why the CNA was seeking donations for its various projects and why a fund for Canadian Czechoslovaks run by the same organization was necessary. Kotrlý informed Canadian Czechoslovaks in *Nová vlast'* that there were approximately 40,000 Czechoslovaks living in Canada with only a small portion of this group maintaining Czechoslovak citizenship. The overwhelming majority of individuals within the community were Canadian citizens or without citizenship since they lost their Czechoslovak citizenship and had yet to become naturalized

¹⁴ "K akcií Čs.N.S.," *Ludové zvesti* 4 October 1947, 4.

¹⁵ "Ústředný výkonný výbor Československého národního sdružení, "Vol'a l'udu Rozhoduje," *Nová vlast'*, 16 October 1947, 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 3. The latter amount was collected through contributions on the part of CNA members who gave \$9,188.17, and readers of *Ludové zvesti* who contributed \$10,547.33. The central executive committee acknowledged that *Ludové zvesti* was responsible for fundraising over \$10,000 for the CWCF. The Canadian United Allied Relief Fund bestowed over \$550,000 and parcels of clothing to the people of Czechoslovakia.

Canadian citizens.¹⁷ The Consul General went on to argue that not every Czechoslovak acquired financial or professional success after immigrating to Canada. According to Kotrlý, many individuals succumbed to accidents, unfortunate occurrences, and medical issues that left them and their families devastated. Kotrlý used several examples to illustrate why such a fund within the community was necessary – including that of a war veteran recently released from service that suffered an accident and could not provide for his young wife and child. Others lost property, while some sought to return to Czechoslovakia, but did not have the financial means to do so. Those Czechoslovaks not yet naturalized and who were in dire need of assistance looked to the Consulate General for support. Kotrlý claimed that the Czechoslovak community in Canada had the ability and resources to help compatriots in need – including those individuals without Canadian or Czechoslovak citizenship who were not entitled to consular aid.¹⁸ The Consul General concluded his remarks in *Nová vlast* by arguing that it was the duty of compatriot groups in Canada to provide social services to fellow immigrants from Czechoslovakia. Kotrlý firmly believed that the CNA along with other Czechoslovak community organizations in Canada collected donations openly from the public for a social fund for all Czechoslovaks.¹⁹

During Christmas season in 1947, a campaign letter was sent out to CNA members, friends of the organization, and the general public to inform them that its popular *Cigarette Service* would be discontinued and that any future orders would require time for proper packaging and for delivery. Matuš Pavlík, treasurer of the *Cigarette Service* sent a letter to the

¹⁷ Josef Kotrlý, “Csl. Gen. kosulat o sbírce Kanadské dary na Kanadské potřeby,” *Nová vlast*, 13 November 1947, 2, 4.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2. Under Canadian and Czechoslovak law, Prague’s diplomatic and consular officials were only able to provide support for citizens of Czechoslovakia and their dependents.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

CNA head office in Toronto explaining that according to his estimates, the service's prices of \$3.20 for 600 American cigarettes and \$4.00 for 600 Canadian cigarettes were actually losing the organization crucial funds. As a result of his assessment, Pavlík asked for the CNA's assistance in helping the service pay off all outstanding costs before the final shipment date of 31 December 1947.²⁰ Although the *Cigarette Service* was terminating its activities, the CNA continued to fundraise for Czechoslovakia. One of the Alliance's most important aims during the immediate postwar period was for all CNA branches across Canada to assist in raising \$10,000 to help elderly Czechoslovaks in Canada, compatriots back home, and recent arrivals in Canada. The CNA believed that this fundraising drive would highlight the organization's postwar plan of encouraging Canadian citizenship among its members, the continuation of a Czechoslovak heritage in Canada, and to continue financial and material support for a newly freed Czechoslovak state.²¹ During the Second World War, the Canadian Czechoslovak community successfully raised over \$330,922 for the Allied war effort. In two years since the end the war, the Canadian Czechoslovak community continued to raise awareness for postwar relief of Czechoslovakians and the reconstruction of their homeland. Community organizations including the CNA and the CWCF initially struggled to meet their obligations of sending parcels of clothing, food, cigarettes, and medication to Czechoslovakia due to Canadian government postal restrictions. While demand for relief items such as consumable products remained high, the Canadian Czechoslovak community continued to raise funds to purchase and ship parcels to Czechoslovakia in order to meet the needs of a population devastated by six years of war.

²⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 30, file 11, "Miscellaneous – General, n.d., 1941-1945," letter from Matuš Pavlík to CNA head office, Toronto, December 1947. Pavlík also noted in his letter to the CNA head office that they were losing 1-2 percent of all parcels in shipping destined for Czechoslovakia.

²¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 30, file 1-2 "Clippings, n.d., 1941-1946," "Canadians All: Over 75 Societies in Toronto Work to Help Immigrants Become Better Citizens," *Globe and Mail*, 4 June 1946.

Immigration, Repatriation, and the Promotion of Canadian Citizenship

During the first two years after the Second World War, Canada's immigration controls remained firm. Although labour organizations largely opposed the opening of Canada's gates to immigrants from Europe in an attempt to protect their workers, proponents of business and industry along with humanitarian organizations advocated for a more generous immigration policy which would respond to the DP crisis in Europe. Although the CNA continued to facilitate the purchase and shipment of relief goods to Czechoslovakia, it also assisted prospective immigrants in reaching Canada's shores. In 1946, persons who desired to immigrate to either Canada or the United States corresponded directly with Czechoslovak and nationalist Slovak organizations in North America. Czechs and Slovaks abroad lobbied the CNA for support in gaining entry into Canada. In one case, Staff Sergeant Karel Juzl of the Czechoslovak forces overseas described himself as a "farmer by occupation who desires to come forward to Canada." The Immigration Branch informed the CNA that a provision existed in the Immigration Act "for the admission to Canada of bona fide agriculturalists who have sufficient means to commence farming in Canada." District Superintendent J.D. McFarlane instructed the CNA to advise Juzl to visit the London office of the Canadian Immigration Branch whereby officials could determine if the applicant was admissible under the regulations.²² Ultimately, Juzl was successful in gaining entry into Canada and later disembarked from the SS *Ile de France* in Halifax on 26 February 1946.²³

²² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence – English Letters, 1946," letter from J.D. McFarlane, District Superintendent to Karel Buzek, 1 February 1946.

²³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence – English Letters, 1946," letter from A.D. Adamson, A/Immigration Inspector-in-Charge to Karel Buzek, 27 February 1946.

A day later, the Department of Mines and Resources – which remained responsible for the Immigration Branch – notified the CNA that its regulations permitted the entry of visitors “who are in good health and in possession of an unexpired passport” issued by the country of their citizenship and carrying a visa issued by a Canadian diplomatic official in Europe.²⁴ Prospective non-immigrants were to have their papers examined at a Canadian port of entry.²⁵ Canadian Czechs and Slovaks used the temporary entry regulations to bring their relatives to Canada for stays lasting from a few weeks to one year.²⁶ On 28 May 1946, the Canadian government issued Order-in-Council P.C. 2071 permitting Canadian citizens to sponsor their close relatives including parents, siblings, and orphaned nieces and nephews. At the same time, Czechs and Slovaks who wished to immigrate to Canada from Czechoslovakia or one of the DP camps in Western Europe continued to wait as Canadian immigration controls remained tight. The Canadian public began to mount considerable pressure on the Canadian government to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Europe by opening the country’s doors to immigration.

With the Second World War over and a Czechoslovak Republic firmly established, many Canadian Czechs and Slovaks entertained the idea of returning to the old country. Although economic opportunity, a better standard of living, and the threat of German invasion brought many Czech and Slovak immigrants to Canada, a desire to reconnect with relatives and friends or even to repatriate led an unknown number of Canadian Czechoslovaks to return to Czechoslovakia in the early postwar years. For Canadian Czechoslovaks who wished to visit or resettle in Czechoslovakia, the Department of External Affairs (DEA) enclosed a document

²⁴ The Department of Mines and Resources was responsible for the Immigration Branch from 1 December 1936 to 17 January 1950.

²⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 8 “Head Office – General Correspondence – English Letters, 1946,” letter from A.D. Adamson, A/Immigration Inspector-in-Charge to Karel Buzek, 27 February 1946. Canadian officials noted that in the absence of a Canadian diplomatic officer, a visa issued by a British diplomatic official would be accepted.

²⁶ Ibid.

entitled *Memorandum to Persons Travelling to Continental Europe* with every passport application to future travellers from Canada.²⁷ With Europe in the midst of rebuilding its vital infrastructure including transportation networks, Canadian officials informed prospective travellers that "...approval of your [passport] application does not accord any priority with regard to transportation to Europe, nor can any responsibility be undertaken with regard to return transportation."²⁸ Ottawa indicated that passengers from Canada could find "a few seats" for sea-rail service between London and Paris "without too much difficulty."²⁹ The Canadian Ambassador in France, Brigadier Georges Philias Vanier confirmed that continental travel was to be considered "very difficult and accommodation hard to secure."³⁰ Canadian travellers were to expect their itineraries to include delays and difficulties.

In 1946, Czechs and Slovaks throughout Canada applied to travel companies including Cunard White Star Limited (Donaldson Atlantic Line) for Atlantic passage via Great Britain to Czechoslovakia. Prospective travellers were assisted in filling out their applications by the CNA head office in Toronto which examined each application. In many cases, applicants born in Austria-Hungary at the turn of the twentieth century never became naturalized Canadian citizens. One such applicant was 55 year-old Jozef Šimkovič, a married gardener from Fort Erie, Ontario who on 21 March 1946 indicated on his travel application with the Cunard Line that he wished "to settle permanently in Czechoslovakia." Cunard officials indicated that Simkovic's state of health was "good" and that he was prepared to leave "as soon as possible." Farmers and labourers also wanted to return to their homeland. On 30 March 1946, John Somr, a 49 year-old

²⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 23, file 93 "Immigration and Travel – Cunard Line, 1945-1946," DEA, Memorandum to Persons Travelling to Continental Europe, n.d., 1.

²⁸ Ibid., 1

²⁹ Ibid., 1

³⁰ Ibid., 2

married farmer from Tupperville, Ontario indicated that he wished to settle permanently in Czechoslovakia. Antonín Heindl, a 54 year-old married labourer residing in Toronto, Ontario also sought to return to Czechoslovakia. In many cases, applicants were middle-aged men who previously arrived in Canada looking for economic opportunity, but who later yearned for their families back in Central Europe. In some instances, farmers and labourers from Czechoslovakia never intended to remain permanently in Canada. While many applicants resettled in the old country, others simply desired to reconnect with family back in Czechoslovakia, including Steve Kulkoský, a 59 year-old married coal miner from Bellevue, Alberta who earlier became a naturalized British subject. In his travel application, Kulkoský revealed that he longed to visit his wife and family in Orava, Slovakia.³¹

As Canadian Czechs and Slovaks continued to re-connect with relatives and friends in Czechoslovakia and were able to bring their loved ones to Canada for visits, they also watched the popular emergence of the Communist movement in their homeland during the elections of May 1946. In the Czech lands, the Czechoslovak Communists under Klement Gottwald garnered 40.17 percent of all votes. In Slovakia, the Democratic Party under Jozef Lettrich achieved 62 percent of all votes. Altogether, the Communists in Czechoslovakia – including the Communist Party of Slovakia – gained 38 percent of all votes cast throughout the country and were the largest party in parliament.³² The Communist movement was more popular with Czech voters,

³¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 23, file 93 “Immigration and Travel – Cunard Line, 1945-1946,” Jozef Šimkovič, Application for Eastbound Atlantic Passage, 21 March 1946; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 23, file 93 “Immigration and Travel – Cunard Line, 1945-1946,” John Somr, Application for Eastbound Atlantic Passage, 30 March 1946; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 23, file 93 “Immigration and Travel – Cunard Line, 1945-1946,” Antonín Heindl, Application for Eastbound Atlantic Passage, 1 June 1946; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 23, file 93 “Immigration and Travel – Cunard Line, 1945-1946,” Steve Kulkoský, Application for Eastbound Atlantic Passage, 19 October, 1947.

³² Joseph Rothschild and Nancy M. Wingfield, *Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe Since World War II* [Third Edition] (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 91; Karel Kaplan, *The Short March: The Communist Takeover of Czechoslovakia, 1945-1948* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), 58; Josef Korbel,

while Slovaks predominately favoured the Democratic Party as a broad coalition of non-Communists. The May 1946 election results in favour of the Communists in the Czech lands were due to a “bitter disillusionment” that many Czechs felt towards the West and Munich Accords of 1938. After approximately six years of fascist occupation, many Czech voters were grateful towards the Allies and in particular the Soviet Union for their liberation.³³ Subsequently, Edvard Beneš remained in office as president of Czechoslovakia, meanwhile Gottwald became prime minister. The May 1946 election results brought together four political parties into a National Front coalition government. The Communists retained the premiership and nine cabinet posts meanwhile other parties shared the remaining seventeen ministries. The Communists consolidated their power over influential ministries including: Interior, Information, Agriculture, Social Welfare, Internal Trade, and Finance. In Ottawa, Canadian diplomats noted that the Communists under Gottwald left “no doubt therefore that they are in a strong position” since they also maintained control over the police and the internal security service.³⁴ Many Canadian Czechoslovaks became increasingly alarmed by their homeland’s flirtation with communism.

Since Josef Kotrlý’s appointment as Czechoslovakia’s Consul General in Montreal in 1946, Slovak members of the pro-Communist Independent Mutual Benefit Federation of Toronto visited his office demanding to be recognized as official advisors of the Consulate General. The

Twentieth-Century Czechoslovakia: The Meaning of its History (New York: Columbia University, 1977), 234-237; Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1948*, 126-129. The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSC) and the Communist Party of Slovakia (KSS) won 93 and 21 seats respectively, for a total of 114 seats in the 300-seat Czechoslovakian parliament in Prague. Universal suffrage did not extend to ethnic German and Hungarian citizens of Czechoslovakia who were disenfranchised after the Second World War.

³³ Mark Kramer, “Stalin, Soviet Policy, and the Consolidation of a Communist Bloc in Eastern Europe, 1944-53,” In *Stalinism Revisited: The Establishment of Communist Regimes in East-Central Europe*, ed. Vladimir Tismaneanu, 51-102 (Budapest: CEU Press, 2010), 69.

³⁴ Canada, DEA, *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, volume 13 (Ottawa: Communication Group Publishing, 1993), 924. See file DEA/6993-B-40, memorandum Extension of Czechoslovak Loan, 15 November 1947. Toma and Kováč, *Slovakia*, 170-171; Kaplan, *The Short March*, 61; Tad Szulc, *Czechoslovakia since World War II* (New York: Viking Press, 1971), 32.

federation's secretary and member of the Labour Progressive Party of Canada, Cyprián Slimák insisted that he be permitted to screen all persons claiming Czechoslovakian nationality, and demanded that decisions on their identities be deferred to him.³⁵ Slimák requested that Czechoslovakian passports be provided to individuals without any identification papers. Kotrlý noted that in one case, individuals of German and Hungarian descent arrived at the Consulate General demanding passports. When asked for references to ascertain their identities, the individuals gave the name of Tim Buck, the national leader of the Labour Progressive Party.³⁶

During his tenure as Czechoslovakia's representative in Montreal, Kotrlý reported to Vladimír Clementis, the Communist Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in Prague. Kotrlý claimed that Clementis "injected himself and directed foreign legations and consulates." Subsequently, domestic Communist sympathizers attempted to subvert the Consulate General and turn it into a front for Communist propaganda.³⁷ The Czechoslovakian Consul General alleged that Slimák attempted to turn his office into a space for the dissemination of Communist literature, films, and other materials that the Labour Progressive Party of Canada received from Prague. Following Kotrlý's protests, Communist authorities sent all their propaganda via diplomatic mail to Czechoslovakia's legation in Ottawa, thus avoiding any opposition from

³⁵ Joseph Kotrlý, "Former Czech Consul Tells of Red "Web"" *Halifax Chronicle Herald*, 26 March 1948, 8. On 26 February 1948, Cyprián Slimák left Canada by air for Czechoslovakia. Slimák's wife Mary and children, Milan and Helen, left Canada for Czechoslovakia aboard the S.S. "Radnik" on 25 June 1948. Canadian officials were made aware through a British United Press dispatch, dated 19 March 1948, that Slimák was appointed as editor-in-chief of the Czechoslovakian Communist newspaper *Pravda* in Bratislava. In 1949, Slimák was given a Czechoslovakian consular appointment at Budapest, Hungary. See LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 8560, file 12467-D-40, part 1.1, "RCMP reports re re-admission of Canadians from Czechoslovakia - Individual cases," letter from N.O. Jones, Inspector, RCMP to Registrar, Canadian Citizenship Registration Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, 19 September 1957.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Kotrly in Montreal.³⁸ In detailing his experience with Communist sympathizers in Canada and Communist Party authorities in Prague, Kotrly observed:

There is a small group sometimes of simple and honest people who support Communism. It is mostly due to a minority complex. These people arrived in Canada. They did not speak the language. They could never integrate themselves into the civic, into the national, yes, into the intellectual and artistic life of the country. They did not always find the necessary human approach on the part of the Canadians. That will explain to a large extent why the Communist approach to the insecure, through grouping them around benevolent associations, was a devilishly clever and successful approach.³⁹

Exacerbating the frustrations felt by Prague's diplomats in Canada and the CNA was Canada's failure to establish a permanent legation in Prague. The Canadian government delayed opening an office in Czechoslovakia because it required additional personnel in its diplomatic corps. A Canadian presence in Czechoslovakia resumed on 24 March 1946 when Ronald Macalister Macdonnell was appointed chargé d'affaires in Prague.⁴⁰

On 4 April 1946, Senator Arthur W. Roebuck delivered a speech on the floor of the Canadian Senate. In his speech, the Canadian senator introduced a motion to establish a committee of inquiry into "the problem of immigration." Roebuck questioned whether Canada was to remain "for an indefinite period a third-rate power, wielding at most a secondary influence in world councils and depending for our existence as a nation upon the favour and forbearance of more populous states..." or would Canada ... "open the vast treasure-trove of our resource-laden wilderness" to immigration in order to become "one of the most pregnant and

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Joseph Kotrly, "Communists Move in Canada in a Secret Manner," *Halifax Chronicle Herald*, 29 March 1948, 5.

⁴⁰ John Hilliker and Donald Barry, *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume II: Coming of Age, 1946-1968* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 12. On 8 September 1944, Ottawa's diplomatic presence in Czechoslovakia was terminated when chargé d'affaires, Pierre Dupuy, concluded his mission. See *Heads of Post List*, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (http://www.international.gc.ca/departement/history-histoire/heads_of_posts_search-en.asp).

powerful of nations.”⁴¹ The newly established Senate Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour considered several issues including: the desirability of admitting immigrants to Canada; the type of immigrant which should be preferred, with reference to their origin, experience, and other characteristics; the availability of immigrants for admission to Canada; the resources, infrastructure, and national capacity to effectively “absorb, employ, and maintain” new immigrants; and future regulations for entry into Canada.⁴²

As Canada’s Senate examined the future of Canadian immigration policy, a federal Cabinet Committee on Immigration Policy convened in May 1946 decided that the RCMP would become responsible for screening prospective immigrants overseas. The Committee noted that the RCMP “should investigate the records and backgrounds of applicants.”⁴³ The Committee sought to prevent Communist agents, sympathizers, and leftist agitators from entering the country against the labour needs of the business community and the market.⁴⁴ Fears that an increase in immigration could prevent returning Canadian soldiers from finding employment were eased only gradually due to the aforementioned security pressures despite the lobbying of the Minister of Reconstruction, Clarence Decatur Howe. As a result, the Cabinet Committee was slow to view an increase in immigration as advantageous to Canadian society and its economy.⁴⁵

⁴¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 10 “Senate Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour, C.N.A. memorandum, committee reports, etc., n.d.1944, 1946,” Canada, Debates of the Senate, Official Report, *Speech of the Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck, Senator, on Immigration in the Senate of Canada, Ottawa, on Thursday, April 4, 1946* (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, Printer to the King’s Most Excellent Majesty, 1946), 1.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Alvin Finkel, “Canadian Immigration Policy and the Cold War, 1945-1980,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 21.3 (1986): 54.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 54-55. On 5 March 1947, the Liberal Minister of Mines and Resources, J.A. Glen, informed the federal Cabinet that “there was no provision of law for rejection” on the ground that an individual was a communist. The Liberal Cabinet agreed to ignore this measure and decided instead that the Immigration Branch should refuse admission to any prospective immigrant who after a security review was deemed to be a Communist.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 54.

The RCMP's operations were overseen by an interdepartmental group known as the Security Panel which consisted of senior civil servants, military intelligence officers, and RCMP officials. The Security Panel maintained a permanent secretariat in the Privy Council Office.⁴⁶ The interdepartmental Security Panel's mandate was to advise the federal government on the vetting procedures of prospective civil servants. However, this agenda was soon broadened to include immigrant vetting since Canada closed its immigration offices in Europe in the 1930s. With British authorities indicating that they would no longer examine prospective immigrants for entry to Canada, the Security Panel proposed that the RCMP become responsible for the security screening of immigrants seeking to enter the country from overseas.⁴⁷

As Canada's postwar economic recovery began to take shape, businesses and ethnic associations increasingly lobbied the federal government to allow for more immigrants to resettle in Canada. The federal government opened the country's doors to forestry workers, garment industry workers, and farm labourers. Immigrants who were deemed admissible, but did not fit into these categories – such as entrepreneurs and professionals – were required to sign one-year agricultural labour contracts in order to enter Canada. The Department of Labour's priority was to relocate young, single, and physically healthy Displaced Persons (DPs) – individuals forced to migrate due to socioeconomic or political displacement as a result of the Second World War – to Canada.⁴⁸ Under the department's labour schemes, workers were admitted into the country for one or two-year work contracts. Those who sponsored incoming DPs had to guarantee that they

⁴⁶ Whitaker, *Double Standard*, 18-19.

⁴⁷ Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 22-24; Howard Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry: The Truth about Nazi War Criminals in Canada, 1946-1956* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 35-36. Adams illustrates that the RCMP issued 5,466 names to the panel in the first three months of its operation. Of 217 reports requiring further assessment only twenty-seven cases were deemed 'legitimate security risks.' Margolian notes that in the summer of 1946, RCMP officers were stationed in Canadian immigration offices across Europe and were charged with refusing entry to any individual "... who, from their own history and background would be unlikely to adapt themselves to the Canadian way of life and to our system of democratic government."

⁴⁸ Mark Wyman, *DP: Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951* (Philadelphia: Balch Institute Press, 1990), 190.

had the financial and residential means to support them for the length of their labour contract.⁴⁹ On 28 May 1946, the Canadian government issued Order-in-Council P.C. 2071 which permitted Canadian citizens to sponsor their close relatives including brothers and sisters, parents, and orphaned nephews and nieces.

A month later, Senator Arthur W. Roebuck wrote to national secretary Karel Buzek informing him of the CNA's hearing before the Senate Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour. The committee set aside one hour to hear the CNA's representatives submit their brief. The Canadian senator indicated to Buzek that the committee previously contacted progressive and conservative Ukrainian and Polish groups. When it came to Czech and Slovak Canadians, Roebuck did not know them "to be split so markedly in this way." In his letter to Buzek, Roebuck asked whether the CNA represented "practically" all Czechs and Slovaks in Canada. The Canadian senator was keenly aware of domestic ethnic political sensitivities and enquired whether there would be any protests from individuals if only the CNA was invited to witness before the committee. Roebuck believed the CNA to be an "appropriate" Canadian ethnic association and desired to hear their brief to the committee.⁵⁰ In his reply to Senator Roebuck's questions, Buzek indicated that should the committee wish to hear representations from members with various political orientations, the Senate committee could contact the Czechoslovak Joint Committee, an umbrella of various groups cooperating in postwar relief matters. The CNA national secretary also sent the senate committee names of successful Canadian Czechoslovak farmers who were available to speak including Alfred Mráček of Dodsland, Saskatchewan and Joseph Gaschnitz of Nacmine, Alberta. The names of successful industrial workers were also

⁴⁹ Milda Danys, DP: *Lithuanian Immigration to Canada after the Second World War* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1986), 213-214.

⁵⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence – English Letters, 1946," letter from Senator Arthur W. Roebuck to Karel Buzek, 12 June 1946.

submitted and included Stan Kvarda of Batawa, Ontario.⁵¹ The Senate Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour later requested that the Czechoslovak Canadian delegation discuss the widening of the categories of relatives that were permitted to enter Canada.

On 24 July 1946, the Senate Standing Committee on Labour and Immigration invited informed parties dealing with immigration to testify.⁵² The standing committee heard presentations on the selection and resettlement of immigrants from a retired staff officer with the Allied military government in Europe, representatives of the Czechoslovak National Alliance in Canada alongside the Association for the Advancement of Finns in Canada, and the Finnish Organization of Canada.⁵³ On behalf of the CNA, president Rudolf Koreň and national secretary Karel Buzek testified before the committee.⁵⁴ In his testimony before the Senate standing committee, Buzek noted that the CNA's mandate was to provide assistance to Czech and Slovak refugees who requested it. The CNA sought to help newcomers in adapting to Canada while putting an emphasis on psychological resettlement.⁵⁵ Buzek lamented the severed contact between Czechoslovaks in Canada and their families back home, especially since transatlantic transportation companies had yet to begin bringing individuals to Canada for which a voyage had already been paid for. In his testimony to the committee, Buzek was keenly aware that

⁵¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence – English Letters, 1946," letter from Karel Buzek to Senator Arthur W. Roebuck, 17 June 1946.

⁵² The Senate standing committee also heard presentations from Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur J. Hicks (Trois-Rivières, Quebec), formerly a staff officer with the Allied military government in Europe; Sven Stadius (Toronto, Ontario), representing the Association for the Advancement of Finns in Toronto; Gustaf Sundquist (Toronto, Ontario), secretary of the Finnish Organization of Canada.

⁵³ John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 69-70. Porter noted that some ethnic groups in their testimony to the Senate Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour attempted to illustrate "...the progress their groups had made since they first arrived..." and their important contribution to Canada.

⁵⁴ "Vyslanec Dr. F. Pavlásek odchádza do Československo," *Nová vlast*, 4 July 1946, 1. Prague's ambassador in Canada, František Pavlásek informed Senator Roebuck that after twelve years in Montreal as consul-general and as Czechoslovak minister in Ottawa, he would be retiring from his diplomatic post and returning home.

⁵⁵ Canada, Parliament, Senate, *Proceedings of the Standing Committee on Labour and Immigration: Session of Wednesday, July 24, 1946* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1946), 216. Buzek indicated that the CNA's postwar slogan was "United in Peace."

transportation had to be reserved first for Canadian troops returning home, while he argued that “Canada could lose some of its most recent immigrants, because the same efforts have not been made to bring over their families whom they have not seen in fifteen years or more.” The CNA’s national secretary claimed that it was very likely that husbands and wives already in Canada would return to Czechoslovakia to reconnect with their families.⁵⁶

On behalf of Czechoslovak Canadians, Karel Buzek recommended to the Canadian Senate Standing Committee on Labour and Immigration that Canadian authorities initiate measures to rapidly reunite recently arrived DPs with their families back home in Europe. Specifically, the CNA called on Ottawa to “accord these families priority on the transports immediately after the families of members of the Canadian Army.” Buzek indicated that Canadian immigration authorities should also be stationed in Prague to expedite the process.⁵⁷ The CNA delegation’s second recommendation was that a larger quota be set for parents and individuals seeking to enter Canada so that Canadians could reunite with their relatives from Czechoslovakia. Buzek acknowledged that many Czechs and Slovaks required “donations of foreign capital” to reunite with family and friends in Canada and as a result, the situation seemed inadequate.⁵⁸ The CNA’s third recommendation called on Canadian immigration authorities to discontinue dividing prospective immigrants into privileged and non-privileged groups based on ethnicity. Buzek stated that this method of classifying immigrants was in his opinion “...at the very least disgusting and exploitative.” The CNA could not understand how Germans were

⁵⁶ Ibid., 217.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid. In his testimony before the Senate standing committee, Rudolf Koreň stated that “we know of cases where the undersecretary of state and the naturalization division sought to find out why some families of certain individuals are still in Czechoslovakia. It is because they could not deposit the money required when it was possible to have the rest of their families come over. Now that the war is over, they seek to have their families with them. In some cases, there are fathers who have yet to see their children – they left before they were born. Many of these individuals have lived in solitude for ten or twenty years and they have had enough. If we cannot do anything for them, then they will be forced to return.” See page 220.

considered “privileged,” while other groups with a similar cultural background such as the Czechs and Slovaks were considered to be inferior.⁵⁹ In its final recommendation, the CNA called on the Canadian government to appoint “impartial administrators” to oversee the admission of prospective immigrants, and that a “consultative committee” should be implemented to act as an information service within the immigration branch.⁶⁰ In claiming to represent the Canadian Czechoslovak community in Ottawa, the CNA was also concerned with the admission of nationalist Slovaks who supported the Nazi-aligned Slovak state during the Second World War.

After the Second World War, approximately, 8,000 Slovaks fled their homeland attempting to “escape the vengeance of Beneš and the Communists.”⁶¹ Within this wave of émigrés were intellectuals, priests, politicians, professors, lawyers, and journalists who resettled in North America.⁶² In 1946, the Czechoslovak government in Prague charged former wartime Slovakian Foreign Minister, Ferdinand Ďurčanský, with having been on the Nazi secret service payroll and promulgating anti-Semitic laws in Slovakia during the Second World War. The United Nations War Crimes Commission (UNWCC) accepted these charges and listed him as a war criminal. Prior to the court decision and sentencing due to his status as an enemy of the state, Ďurčanský fled Czechoslovakia for Italy. Prague convicted Ďurčanský *in absentia* for war crimes and sentenced him to death. In Rome, he aggressively searched for compatriots and the necessary resources required to stage a coup d’état in Czechoslovakia.⁶³ The former wartime Slovakian

⁵⁹ Ibid., 217-218.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 218.

⁶¹ Gilbert L. Oddo, *Slovakia and Its People* (New York: Robert Speller & Sons, Publishers, 1960), 340.

⁶² Ibid., 340.

⁶³ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, 195-196.

cabinet minister founded the Slovak Action Committee (later renamed Slovak Liberation Committee).⁶⁴

Another former wartime Slovakian official that Czechoslovak authorities attempted to convict for high treason was Karol Sidor. As the former commander of the Hlinka Guard, the militia unit of the ruling Hlinka's Slovak People's Party during the Second World War, Sidor fell out of favour with Nazi authorities and was removed from Slovakia's cabinet. Sidor was subsequently transferred to Rome as Slovakia's ambassador to the Vatican. Prague attempted to convict Sidor, but he remained outside the country's borders. Sidor subsequently become a political distraction to the Vatican and he was relocated outside of Europe.⁶⁵

In a letter to the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Prague's Minister to Canada, František Pavlásek, indicated that authorities in Czechoslovakia established a list of "politically notorious" individuals from the wartime Nazi-aligned Slovakian government to which Czechoslovak officials did not want Canada to grant admission.⁶⁶ Pavlásek went on to state that if after the war some of these aforementioned persons were successful in entering Canada, "...my Government would request that they be held as war criminals for the purpose of being handed over to the Czechoslovak authorities."⁶⁷ In his reply to the Czechoslovakian Minister to Canada, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Norman Alexander Robertson, indicated that the potential entrance of followers of the Slovak "Tiso Regime" would

⁶⁴ Sutherland, *The Canadian Slovak League*, 66.

⁶⁵ Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, 197-198; Oddo, *Slovakia and Its People*, 340; James E. McKenzie, *War Criminals in Canada* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited, 1995), 64-65.

⁶⁶ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," memorandum from Norman Alexander Robertson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to William Lyon Mackenzie King, Prime Minister, Political Adherents to Tiso Regime in Slovakia – Admission to Canada, 27 June 1946, microfilm reel C-10436.

⁶⁷ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," letter from Dr. F. Pavlásek, Czechoslovakian Ambassador to Canada to Norman Alexander Robertson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, No. 672/46, 16 April 1946, microfilm reel C-10436.

be given “careful consideration.” The Under-Secretary of State later raised the issue with officials at the Immigration Branch.⁶⁸ In an internal memorandum entitled *Political Adherents to Tiso Regime in Slovakia – Admission to Canada*, Canadian officials reassessed the validity of travel documentation from Slovakia. With the adoption of P.C. 2070 on 28 May 1946, the Immigration Branch could no longer legally bar holders of Slovakian passports from entering the country strictly based on their travel documentation as they had been able to do with Passport Regulation P.C. 3016 of 29 November 1938. Order-in-Council P.C. 2070 confirmed that a travel document which established the identity of the holder “may be accepted” in lieu of a passport.

The list of “politically notorious” supporters of the wartime Slovak state was cross-examined by the Canadian government with the UNWCC’s lists. Only one name – “Sonnenwand” – was found to be on both lists. In light of this result, Ottawa decided that a majority of persons found within Pavlásek’s list would be considered as “suspected political offenders,” and not as war criminals. Since Canada was not at war with Czechoslovakia, these same individuals would not be viewed as “enemy aliens.”⁶⁹ Canadian officials were undecided whether to deny admission to alleged political criminals. External Affairs bureaucrats understood that these same persons would not constitute desirable immigrants. Conversely, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Norman Alexander Robertson did not wish to establish a precedent by which these same political criminals would be denied entry into Canada. It was noted that

⁶⁸ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” letter from Norman Alexander Robertson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Dr. F. Pavlásek, Czechoslovakian Ambassador to Canada, 28 June 1946, microfilm reel C-10436.

⁶⁹ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” memorandum from Norman Alexander Robertson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to William Lyon Mackenzie King, Prime Minister, *Political Adherents to Tiso Regime in Slovakia – Admission to Canada*, 27 June 1946, microfilm reel C-10436. On 15 March 1939, Czechoslovakia ceased to exist as a state following the Nazi invasion of the Czech lands of Bohemia-Moravia. Simultaneously, a Nazi-aligned independent Slovak state came into existence.

Ottawa was “under no international obligation with respect to political fugitives and, moreover, our Extradition Agreement with Czechoslovakia specifically excludes political criminals.”⁷⁰

The Canadian government chose to follow the American and British governments’ formulation of policy with regards to war criminals and politically undesirable individuals. Simultaneously, Ottawa decided not to adopt a concrete plan for politically unsuitable immigrants until a “first case arises in practice.”⁷¹ The DEA sought further consultation with the American and British governments as to their legal procedures regarding the admission of political criminals. The Canadian High Commission in London indicated that the British government would “attach all due importance” to any report from the UNWCC that a sufficient case already existed to justify bringing a suspected war criminal to trial. The British government also sought detailed evidence that a *prima facie* case existed against an individual wanted by an Allied government for actively supporting “a state at war with his own country.”⁷² British officials suggested to the Canadian High Commission in London that Ottawa should request Prague to satisfy its concerns whether a Czechoslovakian national was in fact guilty of “treachery involving active assistance to the enemy.”⁷³

On 25 October 1946, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Norman Alexander Robertson, wrote to Arthur L. Joliffe, director of the Immigration Branch, to inform him that

⁷⁰ Ibid. Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs Norman Alexander Robertson reported to Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King who also served as Secretary of State for External Affairs (for a third term) from 23 October 1935 to 3 September 1946. King was replaced as Secretary of State by Louis St. Laurent on 4 September 1946.

⁷¹ Ibid. It was noted that no Canadian legislation existed to deal with the extradition of war criminals or political criminals. As a result, Prague was left to wonder whether any of its political opponents were successfully in Canada. Prague was forced to wait until Ottawa became aware of its first specific case of a war criminal or political undesirable from Slovakia attempted to enter Canada.

⁷² LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” Despatch A. 815 from H.R. Horne, Acting High Commissioner to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 September 1946, microfilm reel C-10436.

⁷³ Ibid.

Washington could not deny admission to any prospective immigrant from Czechoslovakia based simply on the fact that Prague labelled the person as a “quisling” or enemy of the state for their wartime activities. The American government used international law to fairly assess any prospective immigrant with a Czechoslovakian passport.⁷⁴ According to the Canadian Chargé d’affaires in Washington, a refusal to grant a visa had to be strictly based on American law. Therefore, the American immigration authorities could refuse a visa to any individual who Prague viewed as a political criminal or enemy of the state. However, United States law did allow for the deportation of ‘enemy aliens’ including suspected war criminals, but did not cover nationals of countries who were declared by that government to be traitors.⁷⁵ After receiving reports from Canadian diplomats regarding their consultations on the admission of suspected war criminals and political traitors to the United Kingdom and the United States, the Immigration Branch notified the DEA that the Immigration Act did not contain any authority to refuse entry to Canada to a suspected war criminal nor did it allow for such individuals to be removed by deportation proceedings. Accordingly, the director of the Immigration Branch indicated to the DEA that immigration officers would follow the Branch’s instructions and consider travel documentation that established the identity of the holder in place of a passport as insufficient to be admitted to Canada.⁷⁶

As Prague attempted to repatriate former members of the wartime Slovakian government to face judicial charges against the state, the Czechoslovak government notified the CNA and its branches across Canada that it was also promoting the “re-emigration and repatriation of

⁷⁴ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Director of Immigration Branch, 25 October 1946, microfilm reel C-10436.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 10, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” memorandum from A.L. Joliffe, director of Immigration Branch to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, file No. 653, general no. 18, 5 November 1946, microfilm reel C-10436.

compatriots” back home. Prague attempted to fill vacancies left in the economy by those who fled in 1939 and also by the postwar mass expulsion of Sudeten Germans and Hungarians that began in 1945.⁷⁷ For individuals seeking to return to Czechoslovakia, registration forms could be requested from the Czechoslovak General Consulate in Montreal. The CNA head office also stored the forms and provided advice to prospective returnees.⁷⁸ In his 2 January 1947 issue, *Nová vlast* editor Martin Dudák claimed that 300 “compatriots” who were active in the Czechoslovak community in Canada returned to Czechoslovakia the year before. Dudák expected that the community would lose another 100 individuals who desired to be reunited with their families back home. According to the editor, it was incumbent upon the existing community to shore up its membership while continuing its efforts to provide help to orphans and families back in the homeland.⁷⁹

Nová vlast continued to bring attention to the issue of community members permanently returning to Czechoslovakia. Canadian Czechoslovaks also paid attention to the introduction of a new citizenship law that changed their legal identity. On 1 January 1947, the Canadian Citizenship Act came into effect. Previously, Canadians were recognized as British subjects. Canada became the first Commonwealth country to enact a separate Citizenship Act.⁸⁰ Canadian citizenship was to be conferred on any individual born or naturalized in Canada who was deemed eligible by the federal government. The editor of *Nová vlast* argued that new Canadians from

⁷⁷ Jaroslav Vaculík, “Reemigrace zahraničních Čechů a Slováků v letech 1945-1948,” *Slezský sborník* 93:1-2 (1995): 54.

⁷⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 5 “Minutes – Executive Committee, 1946,” *Zápisnica*, Číslo 10/1946, 22 November 1946, 1.

⁷⁹ “Uvaha k starému a novému roku,” *Nová vlast*, 2 January 1947, 1.

⁸⁰ Immigrants who served in the First or Second World War qualified for naturalization after one year of residency. Similarly, women were given their own nationality status. Although dual citizenship was not permitted, applicants could substitute twenty years of residency in Canada for knowledge of English or French. The Canadian Citizenship Act of 1947 also repealed the Chinese Immigration Act (commonly referred to as the Chinese Exclusion Act) of 1923. However, the 1947 Act did not open Canada’s gates to non-European migration until all ethno-racial restrictions were removed from Canadian immigration policy with the ‘Points system’ in 1967.

Czechoslovakia would quickly transplant their loyalty to their country of resettlement and would build a “future here with their children.”⁸¹ In the 16 January 1947 issue of *Nová vlast*, the Czechoslovak Consulate General in Montreal informed the paper’s readership that individuals who fled Czechoslovakia after 1 September 1938 would be permitted to repatriate back to their homeland by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (UNRRA). However, those who left before this date would not be recognized and would not be considered for repatriation.⁸² On 13 February 1947, Czechoslovakia’s new ambassador to Canada, František Němec arrived to assume his post replacing František Pavlásek who left in July 1946.⁸³ With Němec’s guidance, the Consulate General in Montreal advised fellow compatriots in Canada that only the wives and children of Czechoslovaks who chose to become naturalized Canadian citizens could be permitted to leave for Canada and be reunited with their families. Consul General Josef Kotrlý noted that officials would grant travelling documents to those individuals with relatives who were Canadian citizens. Canadians of Czech or Slovak descent were to have their citizenship documents translated into Czech and forwarded to authorities in Prague for verification.⁸⁴

In an attempt to assuage demands for a liberalized immigration program, on 1 May 1947, Prime Minister Mackenzie King outlined his Liberal government’s immigration policy to the House of Commons. In his speech to fellow members, Mackenzie King revealed that his government would “foster the growth of the population of Canada by the encouragement of

⁸¹ “Novi Kanadskí občania,” *Nová vlast*, 2 January 1947, 2.

⁸² “Oznameni o repatriaci a pasech,” *Nová vlast*, 16 January 1947, 1.

⁸³ “Vitame noveho csl vyslanca v Kanade,” *Nová vlast*, 13 February 1947, 1-2. After the resignation of František Pavlásek in 1946, Prague’s delegation in Ottawa was led by Chargé d’affaires Karel Sakh. Newly appointed František Němec previously fought General Franco and the Nationalist forces on the side of the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War. In 1940, Němec was named minister of social welfare for the Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in London.

⁸⁴ Josef Kotrlý, “Jen manželky a děti připustene do Kanady,” *Nová vlast*, 20 February 1947, 1.

immigration.”⁸⁵ Ottawa would continue to carefully select immigrants “as can be advantageously absorbed in our national economy.” Moreover, Mackenzie King indicated to the House of Commons that Canada’s policy regarding immigration had to be specifically related to the social, political, and economic situation resulting from the Second World War. The Liberal Prime Minister illustrated that immigration to Canada would fall into two categories: measures designed for immediate application, and a long-term program.⁸⁶ Canadian immigration policy was to critically assess the “urgent problem of the resettlement of persons who are displaced and homeless, as an aftermath of the world conflict.”⁸⁷ Mackenzie King admitted that the resettlement of refugees and DPs constituted a “special problem.” Although Canada was a member of the United Nations (UN), the International Refugee Organization (IRO), and actively participated in the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (ICR), it was not obligated to accept any specified number of refugees or DPs. However, Mackenzie King felt that Canada had a “moral obligation to assist in meeting the problem, and this obligation we are prepared to recognize.”⁸⁸ Ottawa was willing to aid its Western allies in resettling millions of refugees and DPs that remained in camps across war-ravaged Europe.⁸⁹ Of utmost importance to the Liberal government was that prospective immigrants be carefully selected and the numbers of admitted persons be adjusted to the “absorptive capacity” of the country.⁹⁰ As a result, the Canadian prime minister argued that entry into Canada was not a “fundamental human right.”⁹¹ Immigration was

⁸⁵ Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *House of Commons Debates: Official Report, Third Session – Twentieth Parliament, Volume 3* (Ottawa: King’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1947), 2644.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 2645.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 2644. Mackenzie King asserted that “because of the limitations of transport, the government decided that, as respects immigration from Europe, the emphasis for the present should be on the admission of the relatives of persons who are already in Canada, and on assisting in the resettlement of displaced persons and refugees.”

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2645.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 2646.

subject to the control of Canada's parliament. However, Mackenzie King noted that discriminatory provisions within immigration legislation should be removed.

In an effort to appease his opponents who claimed that the Liberal immigration policy remained discriminatory, Mackenzie King indicated that his government initiated further action to repeal the Chinese Immigration Act.⁹² Conversely, with the Chinese Immigration Act still in place, and Japanese immigration to Canada restricted since Japan fought against the Allied powers in the Second World War, Mackenzie King argued that “the people of Canada do not wish as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population.”⁹³

In May 1947, the Canadian government issued an Order-in-Council permitting the relatives of Canadian citizens or legal residents including fiancés, spouses, and unmarried children to apply for entry into Canada. For applicants wishing to work in agriculture, the CNA noted those families or unmarried and single men with a minimum of \$2,000 in capital could be admitted into Canada and resettled onto their own farm. If applicants already had guaranteed work on a relative's farm, it was only necessary to possess a minimum of \$1,000 in capital. The CNA's head office in Toronto welcomed the submission of documents including: a Canadian citizenship certificate, Landing Card, bank statements, and a letter indicating residential status which its staff would review in an attempt to help its members' relatives achieve entry into Canada.⁹⁴ Although the Canadian government was willing to assist European DPs in settling in

⁹² Ibid. Mackenzie King illustrated that Chinese residents of Canada could now be naturalized as Canadian citizens. Once they were naturalized, they would be able to bring their spouses and any children under the age of eighteen to Canada. On 14 May 1947, Canada repealed the Chinese Immigration Act.

⁹³ Ibid., 2646; Reginald Whitaker, *Canadian Immigration Policy since Confederation* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991), 14. Immigrants from the British Isles and Western Europe were preferred, while immigrants from central, eastern, and southern Europe were considered as second-class immigrants to the previous group.

⁹⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 6 “Minutes – Executive Committee, 1947,” Zápísnic, Číslo 4/47, 27 May 1947, 3.

Canada, its process of selection and restriction was guided by economic, ethnic, and political considerations. Department of Labour officials were sent overseas to select applicants for settlement, while Immigration Branch representatives routinely rejected prospective immigrants based on ethnic and political prejudices including Jews and left-wing or Communist sympathizers who were additionally labelled as ‘undesirables,’ and ‘security risks.’

Preserving Ethnic Heritage for Successive Generations

During the 1930s and 1940s, 9,577 immigrants who claimed Czechoslovakian nationality arrived in Canada. Many Czechs and Slovaks who settled in Canada in search of employment and a better quality of life returned home to be reunited with their families back in Central Europe. Those Czechs and Slovaks who immigrated to Canada with young families or wanted to start their own family in a new land focused their attention on preserving their ethnic heritage for future generations. An example of how Czechs and Slovaks fostered heritage and citizenship values in younger generations was the MH’s *Masarykův klub mládeže* (Masaryk Youth Club) in Toronto. On 17 March 1946, the first meeting of the Masaryk Youth Club was held inside Masaryk Hall. At the club’s first meeting twenty-three adolescents were in attendance. Czech and Slovak youth discussed a variety of activities they wished to organize within the club including: a basketball team, ethnic dancing, trips and outings, music and singing, and an amateur talent night in which to showcase drama and musical performances. Membership dues in the club were set at 25 cents per month for those sixteen years of age and over, and 10 cents per month for youth under sixteen years of age.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 5, file “Youth Club – Minutes, 1946, 1948, 1949; Membership Lists, n.d.,” minutes, 17 March 1946.

In an attempt to grow youth interest in Czechoslovak activities in Toronto, the Masaryk Hall's executive committee sent its president Gustav Přistupa to meet the members of the youth club. In his meeting with the club on 24 March 1946, Přistupa informed them that if they could find 150 members by April or May 1946, Masaryk Hall would pay for a trip to the Thousand Islands in Ontario or wherever the members of the club were interested in visiting. The youth agreed that each member in attendance had to attract five new members. According to the youth, new members did not have to be of Slavic descent, but had to learn a few words so that they could understand what was occurring at meetings. At the same meeting, sixteen new members joined an existing group of twenty-three individuals.⁹⁶

On 7 April 1946, the Masaryk Youth Club met to discuss the group's planned activities. It was decided that a trip to Niagara Falls would be preferable over the Thousand Islands. Czechoslovak youth decided to also organize football and tennis groups, and a basketball team that would compete against other groups. The youth club maintained a treasury with a value of \$47.82. The club's members agreed that it would be beneficial to their finances if they could hold one concert per month. Přistupa asked the members present "which of our boys never drink?" The youth replied that only a few of them never drank alcohol, while "all except one" smoked cigarettes. The executive committee responsible for MH actively engaged youth in an attempt to foster Czechoslovak identity and culture. Simultaneously, the committee sought to watch over its young members as they came of age in postwar Canadian society.⁹⁷ On 4 May 1946, club members decided that a concert would be held on Mother's Day later that month. Each mother would receive a flower free of charge and the club would cover the cost. The club's

⁹⁶ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 5, file "Youth Club – Minutes, 1946, 1948, 1949; Membership Lists, n.d.," minutes of Masarykův club mládeže, 24 March 1946.

⁹⁷ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 5, file "Youth Club – Minutes, 1946, 1948, 1949; Membership Lists, n.d.," minutes, 7 April 1946.

girls were responsible for the serving of food and drinks at the concert and for decorating the hall. Czechoslovak women were engaged to provide cakes and pastries.⁹⁸

As Toronto's MH focused its attention on the promotion of ethnic heritage in younger generations and as postwar relief activities decreased in frequency, the CNA sent out questionnaires (*dotazníky*) to its branches throughout Canada in the hopes of gaining further information on the size and activities of each Czechoslovak community. For 1947, members in Winnipeg wrote that their community consisted of 750 individuals of whom 400 were of Slovak origin and the other 350 were Czechs. The teaching of either the Czech or Slovak language was deemed unsustainable due to the small amount of Czech and Slovak youth in Winnipeg. Czechs and Slovaks in Winnipeg believed that their ethnic identities were "respected" by the local press and prominent city officials.⁹⁹ In Kingston, Ontario, members indicated that 53 persons of Slovak origin and five individuals with a Czech background resided in the city and were primarily employed as factory workers. Relations with the greater Kingston community were deemed as "*velmi dobré*" (very good).¹⁰⁰ In Oshawa, Ontario, members revealed in their questionnaire that many of their brethren were employed as factory workers and relations with their fellow citizens who they identified as "60 percent English and 40 percent mixed" with the latter consisting of "Slovaks, Poles, Ukrainians, Italians, and Germans" were in fact only "*obstojně*" (tolerable). The responses suggested that interethnic relations among individuals from Central and Eastern Europe contained hostility due in part to the transplanting of old world

⁹⁸ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 5, file "Youth Club – Minutes, 1946, 1948, 1949; Membership Lists, n.d.," minutes of Masarykův club mládeže, 4 May 1946.

⁹⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 2, "Questionnaires, 1947," Dotazník (Winnipeg), n.d., 1947.

¹⁰⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 2, "Questionnaires, 1947," Dotazník (Kingston), n.d., 1947.

tensions. However, CNA members in Oshawa believed that their relations with municipal officials and the press were relatively “good.”¹⁰¹

Throughout the 1940s, the largest concentration of Czechs and Slovaks resided in Montreal. The city was home to 3,000 Canadians of Slovak origin and 250 Czech Canadians. Many Czechs and Slovaks were employed as industrial and construction workers, craftspeople, and entrepreneurs. Czechoslovaks operated a Slovak language Supplementary School with a teacher hired from Czechoslovakia. This ethnic institution was tasked with promoting a pro-Czechoslovak history of the homeland and instilling the Slovak language in youth.¹⁰² Montreal Czechs and Slovaks were divided between Czechoslovaks and what the questionnaire noted as nationalist Slovak “*separatisti*.”¹⁰³ As a result, three ethnic newspapers were regularly read by Montreal’s Czechs and Slovaks. Nationalist Slovaks followed the Canadian Slovak League (CSL) and its official organ, the weekly *Kanadský Slovák* (Canadian Slovak) with a national circulation of close to 2,000; meanwhile Slovak communists – who until 1937 supported Czechoslovakism – sponsored the weekly *Ľudové zvesti* which garnered nearly 2,500 readers each week. The remaining Czechs and Slovaks in Montreal and across Canada sustained the pro-Czechoslovak *Nová vlasť* newspaper with a weekly national circulation of approximately 2,500 readers.¹⁰⁴

In his final end of year editorial in *Nová vlasť* in 1947, Martin Dudák claimed that the “public life” of the Czechoslovak community witnessed many changes. While many immigrants who initially settled in Canada returned home to Czechoslovakia, Dudák’s assertion that this

¹⁰¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, “Questionnaires, 1947,” Dotazník (Oshawa), n.d., 1947.

¹⁰² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 31, file 11, “Montreal Branch – Slovak School – Student Lists, Agendas of Meetings, etc., n.d., 1947,” Návrh stanov organizácie, n.d., 1.

¹⁰³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 2, “Questionnaires, 1947,” Dotazník (Montreal), n.d., 1947.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

wave of returnees decreased the community's numbers in Canada is exaggerated. An influx of postwar DPs greatly outnumbered those individuals who left for the old country. Many Czechs and Slovaks chose to return to Czechoslovakia after spending several years separated from relatives and friends. Although these same immigrants initially came to Canada in search of economic opportunity and a better standard of living, the resurrection of a Czechoslovak state after the Second World War saw many Czech and Slovak immigrants return permanently to Czechoslovakia in the early postwar years. Consequently, Dudák lamented the loss of individuals that he believed would be hard to replace and as a result "hard to come back from." He claimed that middle-aged immigrants were preoccupied with attaining greater property and standing for themselves, while the community's youth were being left behind in terms of their own knowledge of their Czechoslovak heritage. In his editorial, Dudák argued that young people were nowhere to be seen at national holiday celebrations or other cultural events, nor did they attend Czech and Slovak language schools.¹⁰⁵

After fourteen years of service to the Czechoslovak community in Canada, *Nová vlast'* published its final issue on 5 February 1948.¹⁰⁶ The newspaper succumbed to a lack of finances since individual subscriptions began to drastically decrease after the end of the Second World War. The paper also became a victim of community politics. In early 1948, the CNA sought to bring the Montreal-based publication to its headquarters in Toronto. The organization subsequently withdrew \$1,400 from the newspaper's reserves to fund the transfer to Toronto where it could finally have greater control over content and publication. The CNA executive committee later informed Dudák that it would repay the loan once the newspaper was re-

¹⁰⁵ Martin Dudák, "Na Prahu Nového roku," *Nová vlast'*, 25 December 1947, 1.

¹⁰⁶ Miroslav Vitula, "Z historie českých a slovenských krajanu v Kanadě do roku 1939," *Časopis Matice Moravské* 118.1 (1999): 108.

established in Toronto and resumed publication. The editor of *Nová vlast'* claimed in his final issue that the CNA reimbursed the newspaper only \$42. Although the paper had no debts for the years 1946 and 1947, it was effectively forced to cease activity in February 1948 as the CNA's executive committee failed to repay its loan and the paper no longer had funds to continue.¹⁰⁷ With the demise of *Nová vlast'*, the Canadian Czechoslovak community lost an important pillar of its community. As an important Czechoslovak-oriented newspaper in Canada, it faithfully reported on sociopolitical events in Czechoslovakia, and kept Czechs and Slovaks in Canada aware of community activities across the country. The ethnic newspaper also vigorously supported the preservation of a Czechoslovak cultural heritage and Czech and Slovak language retention. Canadian Czechoslovaks did not have to wait long for another important institution to preserve and promote Czechoslovak culture in Canada. Several months later, MH members established a centre for Czechoslovak community life on the outskirts of Toronto.

Masaryktown: Establishment of a Centre for Czechoslovak Community Life in Canada

At the end of the Second World War, members of Masaryk Memorial Hall (MH) resolved to establish a cultural and educational centre on the outskirts of Toronto. In a meeting held 12 March 1948, the MH's membership condemned the "rape of the Czechoslovak Republic" at the hands of the Communists. Many of the Hall's members were also active in the patriotic calisthenics organization, *Sokol* (Falcon) Toronto which held its meetings inside MH. On the recommendation of MH executive committee member Prokop V. Havlík, Sokol Toronto

¹⁰⁷ "Nova Vlast' po 14 rokoch končí svoje poslanie medzi našim ľuďom v Kanade: Posledne číslo, ktoré sa dostáva do rúk čitateľov," *Nová vlast'*, 5 February 1948, 1, 4. At a meeting of the CNA's executive committee held on 28 July 1946, *Nová vlast'* editor Martin Dudák left \$3,500 of his pay in the newspaper's account, and only requested \$500 to be able to print the paper without any debts. After some debate at the meeting, Dudák was informed that the CNA wanted to move the paper from Montreal to Toronto before 1 January 1948.

became the first group in Canada to directly abandon relations with Communist Czechoslovakia. The members of MH agreed that they would work to illustrate that a tragedy had taken place in Czechoslovakia while attempting to strengthen Czechoslovak life in Canada.¹⁰⁸

On the eastern outskirts of Toronto, MH purchased property in Scarborough to build a cultural and recreational facility for Czechoslovaks in Toronto and those visiting from across North America. The parcel of land which would one day incorporate Masaryktown – and named after Czechoslovakia’s first president, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk – was purchased on 15 June 1948 and unanimously approved by MH’s membership in a meeting held on 18 October 1948. Masaryktown’s founding purpose was to “provide [a] recreational centre for games, entertainments, cultural education, and summer holidays for all Canadian citizens of Czechoslovak origin and their friends.”¹⁰⁹ Czech and Slovak members also sought to build a facility whereby it would be possible to house and care for senior citizens and those unable to work within the Czechoslovak community. The northern half of Masaryktown was divided into individual lots of 60 by 100 feet for which an individual would pay 200 dollars as rent for a lease of 99 years. Each lot could eventually be willed to a lessee’s children. Each lessee was expected to erect a cottage on their property with an area of 320 square feet. The cottage was required to hold two windows and one door, be painted every three years, and contain a working toilet and septic tank. During the summer of 1948, the committee responsible for maintaining the newly acquired land sent out letters to its membership informing them that farm land had been purchased. The MH committee noted that it bought 62 acres of land for \$14,500 so that all

¹⁰⁸ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file “Annual Reports, 1948, 1949, 1953, 1954,” “Výroční zpráva, Masarykova domu, rok 1948, 2, 4; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file “Miscellaneous – Bingo,” Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated and the Bingo Games, 3 April 1965, 1.

¹⁰⁹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 1, file “Rules and Regulations, n.d.,” “Rules and Regulations Applicable to All Members and Non Members while on Property of Masaryktown.”

Czechoslovaks could have a place to rest and relax away from the stresses of city life.¹¹⁰

Although it was not built specifically in response to the Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia, Masaryktown became a meeting point for anti-communists and democrats as a centre of Czechoslovak community life on the outskirts of Toronto.

On 11 July 1948, MH held its first annual Czechoslovak Day on the grounds of the newly purchased Masaryktown in Scarborough, Ontario. Individuals and families from Kitchener, Guelph, Hamilton, and Niagara Falls came to the celebration of Czechoslovak heritage and culture. Sokol branches from Batawa, Toronto, Cleveland, and Detroit attended and demonstrated various calisthenics exercises, while local, provincial, and federal guests gave speeches.¹¹¹ With Masaryktown – opened to all visitors, its membership was requested to volunteer two or three hours of work to prepare the land. Members were requested to bring various landscaping tools with them.¹¹² While Czechoslovaks in Toronto looked towards their newly acquired land as a ‘little Czechoslovakia,’ many residents who lived in the vicinity of Masaryktown opposed its establishment. In the 15 July issue of a local newspaper, *The Enterprise*, residents complained to the local city council about Czechoslovak children raiding nearby orchards and gardens. In a letter to *The Enterprise*, a regular visitor to Masaryktown noted that intolerance and hatred could be heard and seen from local residents who opposed a Czechoslovak institution near them. One resident was heard shouting: “I’ll send the dog after

¹¹⁰ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file “Annual Reports, 1948, 1949, 1953, 1954,” “Výroční zpráva, Masarykova domu, rok 1948, 4.

¹¹¹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file “Czechoslovak Day, 1948,” poster of Československý den, 11 July 1948; Karol (Karel) Štark, interview by Jana Cipris, 28 August 1980. The idea behind Czechoslovak Day can be attributed to Antonín Daičar, a CNA leader in Batawa, Ontario. The very first Czechoslovak Day was organized in Kitchener, Ontario. A day later, on 11 July 1948, Masaryk Memorial Hall hosted its own Czechoslovak Day attended by groups from the United States, Ontario and Quebec.

¹¹² LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file “Correspondence 1948,” letter from Výbor Masarykového Domu to F. Smajkal, 10 June 1948. Members were asked to bring with them an axe, hoe, and rake. Similarly, the Masaryk Memorial Hall committee sought the services of a farm worker who could do work on the entire property for a monthly wage.

them!” The letter asked readers to treat Czechoslovak children with respect as they would “...grow up to be first class Canadian citizens.” The letter noted that “even though they are children of immigrants, they also have the right to the sun, fresh air, and water.”¹¹³

A significant component of Masaryk Memorial Hall’s agenda was to promote the maintenance of Czechoslovak ethnic heritage and the retention of Czech and Slovak languages. Ethnic schools were one structure in which ethnic organizations could attempt to preserve their cultural heritage. According to Aloysius Balawyder; “Ethnic schools not only taught Slavic children their history and language, but also arranged concerts, displays, and festivities. Latent nationalist sentiments were stirred up in the hearts of young and old as they listened to Slavic songs, or watched Slavic dramas and Slavic dances.”¹¹⁴ Meanwhile, these ethnic organizations promoted Canadian citizenship amongst its members. The teaching of English (and French in the province of Quebec) was urged to embed Canadian traditions in ethnic communities. Canadian Slavic groups frequently organized national days and invited distinguished representatives of Canadian society such as their local members of parliament, mayors, government ministers, bishops, and even prime ministers.¹¹⁵ At Masaryktown in Scarborough, calisthenics were organized by the local patriotic *Sokol* (Falcon) unit. Important dates such as the birthday (7 March) of Czechoslovakia’s first president, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, and the birth of the First Czechoslovak Republic (28 October) were celebrated annually. In a circular letter to all branches, the CNA informed its members that it would work in cooperation with the MH to further build Masaryktown, the Masaryk Youth Club, Supplementary School, and Library. The CNA would continue efforts to expand the Czech and Slovak-language School to other locations

¹¹³ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, letter from unknown to *The Enterprise*, 20 June 1948.

¹¹⁴ Balawyder, “Canadian-Slavic Cultural Nationalism and the Canadian Government’s Reaction,” 200.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

across Canada where Czechoslovaks wished to establish such an institution. The CNA viewed the growth of the Masaryk Youth Club as an important medium in which Czechoslovak youth would recognize their citizenship obligations. It was deemed vital that Czechoslovak youth across Canada organize a national congress.¹¹⁶

On 8 September 1948, the MH invited Prime Minister Mackenzie King to a memorial service to be held on 12 September in memory of Czechoslovakia's last democratic president Edvard Beneš. The hall's president Gustav Přistupa indicated that it would be a great honour to Canada's Czechoslovaks to have the prime minister in attendance as one of their "closest Canadian friends."¹¹⁷ The Prime Minister's Office replied by thanking the hall for its invitation and informing them that Mackenzie King was unable to attend as he was in the midst of preparing to head the Canadian delegation at the General Assembly of the United Nations.¹¹⁸

Conclusion

The Second World War served as a pinnacle in the sociopolitical organization of Canadian Czechs and Slovaks who professed a belief in a common Czechoslovak identity. As the largest Czechoslovak organization in Canada, the Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA) successfully brought awareness of the German occupation of the Czech lands and Slovakia's alignment with Germany to the Canadian public. The organization's members were instrumental in fundraising to support the Allied war effort and relief work to resurrect a democratic

¹¹⁶ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 5, file "Masaryk School – Reports, 1942-1949; Students' Lists, 1942-1951; Misc., n.d.," Oběžník, 12 October 1949, 1; Nekola, *A Gem for the Canadian Mosaic*, xiv.

¹¹⁷ LAC, William Lyon Mackenzie King Papers, MG 26 J1, Primary Correspondence, 1948, volume 441, file Pegler-Quirke, 403015-16, microfilm reel C-11050.

¹¹⁸ LAC, William Lyon Mackenzie King Papers, MG 26 J1, Primary Correspondence, 1948, volume 441, file Pegler-Quirke, 403017, microfilm reel C-11050.

Czechoslovakia. The CNA reached a highpoint of 92 branches across Canada and approximately 10,000 members.

Important to our understanding of Czech and Slovak immigration to Canada in the early postwar years is how Canadian Czechoslovak institutions such as the CNA and Masaryk Memorial Hall (MH) responded to political developments in a newly re-established Czechoslovakia and to Canadian foreign policy towards their old homeland. Czechs and Slovaks who supported a Czechoslovak identity in Canada fundraised through the CNA's Czechoslovak War Charities Fund (CWCF) in an effort to send funds, clothing, foodstuffs, and medicine to their old country ravaged by six years of German occupation.

After the Second World War, a number of Czechs and Slovaks returned to a newly re-established Czechoslovakia in order to be closer to their families, friends, and ethnic culture. The emigration of Canadian Czechs and Slovaks affected Canadian Czechoslovak institutions including the CNA as it began to lose members and branches to emigration. After the successful liberation of their homeland, many Czechoslovaks in Canada turned towards domestic issues including Canadian citizenship and the preservation of Czechoslovak heritage for successive generations. As a result of this general decline in community interest, many of the CNA's branches across Canada closed due to a lack of activity rather than emigration. The organization would never again reach the same level of financial support and membership as it had during the war years.

Although many Czechs and Slovaks returned to Europe after the Second World War, immigrants from Czechoslovakia continued to resettle in Canada. After six years of devastation, Czech and Slovaks arrived in Canada in search of economic opportunity and a better quality of life. Their immigration was directly tied to events in Central Europe. During 1946-1947, 572

immigrants claimed their nationality as Czechoslovakian upon arriving in Canada. Similarly, 400 individuals claimed their racial origin to be Czech, 111 individuals indicated they were Slovaks, 58 persons claimed they were Bohemians, and a further 12 individuals claimed to be Moravians.¹¹⁹ While immigration from Czechoslovakia remained small during this period, postwar immigrants from a newly established Czechoslovakia continued to transplant their Old World ethnic and ideological divisions including an adherence to democratic values. In Canada, Czechs and Slovaks who supported a Czechoslovak identity continued to oppose nationalist Slovaks and their drive for an independent Slovak state.

During the early postwar years, Czech and Slovak newcomers encountered previous immigrants from Czechoslovakia and Canadian-born members of the Czechoslovak community who influenced their new identity in Canada. Czech and Slovak immigrants who supported a Czechoslovak identity joined Canadian Czechoslovak institutions including the CNA and MH. These organizations received new postwar arrivals and turned their focus towards postwar relief to rebuild Czechoslovakia, attaining Canadian citizenship, and the maintenance of ethnic heritage for future generations. These three pillars of the CNA and MH's immediate postwar agenda entrenched their postwar existence.

The wartime experience of postwar arrivals also influenced Canadian Czechoslovak institutions which increasingly promoted democratic values and advocated against totalitarianism. The postwar agendas of Canadian Czechoslovak-oriented organizations such as the CNA and the MH would be heavily influenced by the Communist seizure of power in February 1948 and the subsequent wave of political émigrés fleeing their homeland.

¹¹⁹ Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1947* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1947), 133; Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1948-49*, 179. Immigrants who self-identified as Bohemians and Moravians used historic ethnic identifiers for the Czech lands (Bohemia and Moravia).

Chapter Three:

Preparing for Their Arrival: The 1948ers and Liberation of the Homeland

As a Bata Employee who fled Zlín, Czechoslovakia prior to the German invasion of the Czech lands in March 1939, Karol Štark settled with the company in Batawa before moving to Kitchener, Ontario where he was able to save his earnings and acquire a mortgage for a six-room home for his family. As chair of the local Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA) branch from 1948 to 1954, Štark travelled frequently to Toronto and Hamilton where larger Czech and Slovak populations resided. In Hamilton, for example, 60-100 individuals regularly attended the local CNA branch's meetings. Local branches were instrumental in promoting Czechoslovak culture with activities that included regularly scheduled dance and theatre events, classes for language retention, and book publication in Czech and Slovak languages. Many of the existing CNA members were immigrants themselves and could not afford to financially assist newcomers from Czechoslovakia. However, prewar immigrants such as Štark were important to many newly arrived Displaced Persons (DPs) who sought their assistance in finding accommodations and employment.¹

Marie Flossman and her family left Czechoslovakia after the Communists confiscated their mill property and deemed them to be enemies of the working class. Marie's brother was a senator whose political immunity was lifted when he refused to join the Communist Party. The Flossmans left Czechoslovakia without their possessions in an attempt to demonstrate that they were not in the process of illegally leaving the state. At the border, West German authorities sent

¹ Karol (Karel) Štark, interview by Jana Cipris, 28 August 1980; Louis Urban, interview by Jana Cipris, 10 August 1978, interview CZE-5171-URB, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto. I use the term Displaced Persons (DPs) for individuals who fled their homes due to the Second World War. Similarly, the use of the term refugee denotes individuals who after February 1948 fled Czechoslovakia out of a genuine fear of persecution for their democratic beliefs and who could not return.

the family to a DP camp under American administration. The Flossmans later arrived in Canada in 1950. Once in Canada, Marie was employed picking fruits and vegetables, while her husband worked as a farm labourer for 65 cents per hour in Chatham and later Burlington, Ontario. Their eldest son was employed in a Toronto hotel earning \$20 per week to help support the family. Upon moving to Burlington without the knowledge of English, the Flossmans improved their standard of living by working for other Czechs, Slovaks, and Eastern Europeans who could communicate with the family. The Flossmans relied on the local branch of the CNA and the “Czech colony” of immigrant farm labourers and their families who initially worked in Western Canada prior to relocating eastward to Burlington and Hamilton. The Canadian government did not provide the Flossmans with financial assistance in finding accommodations or employment.² In preparation for the arrival of Czechs and Slovaks who fled Communist Czechoslovakia, CNA branches across Canada planned programs for their local Czechoslovak community and for newcomers to their area. Among the organization’s goals were the continued maintenance of ethnic heritage and assistance to political refugees from Czechoslovakia.³

After the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February 1948, the country resided in the Soviet sphere of influence. With the Allied powers ceding the country to Moscow in the hopes of preventing further Communist expansion, the American policy of Cold War Containment became a controversial topic among Canadian Czechs and Slovaks, and remained a powerful symbol of the suppression of democracy and freedom of rights. Canadian Czechs and Slovaks who were proponents of a Czechoslovak identity turned their focus from postwar reconstruction of Czechoslovakia and providing relief to their compatriots who suffered through

² Marie Flossman, interview by Jana Cipris, 29 May 1978, interview CZE-5533-FLO, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

³ Karol (Karel) Štark, interview by Jana Cipris, 28 August 1980.

the Second World War, to assisting those who fled oppression at home. Referred to by the Communist government press as the *utíkali* or those who ‘ran away,’ approximately 55,000-80,000 Czechoslovakians fled to the West in the two years after the Communist seizure of power.⁴ The CNA was instrumental in establishing the Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees (CFCR) whose mandate was “to assist displaced and refugee persons of Czechoslovak origin” arriving in Canada with obtaining employment, housing, and facilitating their settlement and integration into society. Many of the CNA’s members also played an active role in Toronto’s Masaryk Memorial Hall (MH) which provided short-term financial assistance to Czechs and Slovaks, and signed affidavits for prospective DPs and – after February 1948 – refugees to enter Canada on one-year farm labour contracts.

This chapter examines how refugees who left Czechoslovakia in the wake of the Communist takeover – including individuals who languished in DPs camps in Austria, Italy, and Occupied Germany for years – found the pre-existing Canadian Czechoslovak community sympathetic to their plight. These same political refugees became commonly referred to as ‘1948ers’ or ‘48ers’ for their emigration was ultimately tied to the Communist seizure of power. In Canada, many of these anti-communist refugees who were members of democratic political parties in Czechoslovakia joined Czechoslovak groups such as the CNA and the MH seeking to focus their agendas on humanitarianism and the liberation of their homeland from communism. These same individuals began to represent “Czechoslovaks” as their legitimate constituents. Their agenda was opposed by a minority of conservative and nationalist Czechs and by the

⁴ Justine Faure, “Les exilés tchécoslovaques de 1948: un exil politique au service de la politique étrangère américaine,” *Materiaux pour l’histoire de notre temps* 60.1 (2000): 61; Hron, “Czech Émigré Experience of Return after 1989,” 54; Bořivoj Čelovský, *Emigranti: Dopisy politických uprchlíků z prvních let po “Vítězném únoru” 1948* (Ostrava: Tilia, 1998), 142; Jan Filípek, *Reflections and Perspectives: Czechoslovaks after Forty Years in Exile* (Palm Springs: Palm Springs Publishing Company, 1988), 1-2; Híkl, *Short History of the Czechoslovak People in Canada*, 19.

nationalist Slovak community.⁵ Older members of the Czechoslovak community such as Karol Štark were informally referred to as “oldtimers” or “old-fashioned” because they emphasized domestic issues including Canadian citizenship, English and French-language instruction, and the maintenance of ethnic heritage. Ultimately, these agendas led to intergenerational conflict and ideological differences between the older members of the CNA and the MH and the newcomers from Czechoslovakia.⁶ Existing scholarship largely overlooks and simplifies the events of February 1948 and their consequences. The immigration of 1948ers consisted primarily of democratic and anti-communist politicians, diplomats, intellectuals, clergy, professionals, workers, and students whose reasons for leaving were not homogeneous. Karol Štark recalls that the 1948ers came to Canada with a better level of education than previous waves of immigrants from Czechoslovakia.⁷ While some individuals fled the possibility of torture, imprisonment, and a lack of social mobility, others chose to leave out of a sense of adventure and opportunity.⁸

Communist Seizure of Power: Canada and the Plight of Czechoslovakia’s Diplomats

⁵ LAC, Department of the Secretary of State (hereafter DSS) Fonds, RG 6, accession 1986-87/319, box 87, file 9-334-1, memorandum from Jean Boucher, Director, Citizenship Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration to Deputy Minister, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, 23 March 1961.

⁶ Karol (Karel) Štark, interview by Jana Cipris, 28 August 1980; Aloysius Balawyder, “Canadian-Slavic Cultural Nationalism and the Canadian Government’s Reaction,” *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 16:1-2 (1989), 202-203; Gellner and Smerek, *Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 109; Bosley and CCBA, *Pamatník Kanadsko-Československé podporující jednoty*, 27. On the eve of the Communist seizure of power, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks continued to send donations to non-governmental relief agencies and religious groups involved in the postwar rehabilitation of Czechoslovakian society. Parcels sent to Czechoslovakia were entrusted to relief organizations including the Czechoslovakian Red Cross or the Catholic Church since the Communist authorities could exploit this aid for their own propaganda. For example, Moravian Czechs in Chatham continued to donate funds to Catholic charities such as a children’s home under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Prague. Approximately 3,000 abandoned children resided in the Archdiocese’s children’s home. Nearly 5,000 elderly and infirm individuals without financial means were under the care of the Catholic Church. See LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 34, file 2 “Chatham Branch – Correspondence, 1947-1949, 1967,” letter from Monsignor Eduard Oliva to Karel Lacina, 4 March 1948.

⁷ Karol (Karel) Štark, interview by Jana Cipris, 28 August 1980.

⁸ For an example see Franca Iacovetta, “Freedom Lovers, Sex Deviates, and Damaged Women: Iron Curtain Refugee Discourses in Cold War Canada,” In *Love, Hate, and Fear in Canada’s Cold War*, ed. Richard Cavell, 77-107 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 84-86.

In January 1948, Canadian Chargé d'affaires in Prague, Ronald Macalister Macdonnell noted in his correspondence with Ottawa that "Communist parties everywhere in their drive to obtain power, regard control over the police forces of a country as one of their main objectives."⁹ Macdonnell went on to explain that in Czechoslovakia the Communists "realized this aim to a very considerable extent, a fact which obviously has bearing on the struggle for power between Communists and the non-Communists."¹⁰ Canadian diplomats in Prague were well aware of the early manoeuvrings of the Communists for a police-state. Although the diplomatic reports sent back to Ottawa by Canadian officials in Prague were consistent and insightful, they remained tentative and hopeful that the political situation in Czechoslovakia could be resolved with a "typical Czech compromise or [would result in] a Communist resort to action."¹¹

On 20 February, twelve cabinet ministers resigned in protest over Communist intransigence and the party's control of the national police. Unlike the National Socialists and the People's Party, the left-leaning Social Democrats took a neutral position and criticized the tactics of both sides. President Beneš refused to accept the twelve resignations and remained steadfast against subsequent demands for new elections.¹² The political crisis in Czechoslovakia attracted

⁹ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 5874, file 50165-40, part 1.1, "Czechoslovakia – Political Situation – General File," R.M. MacDonnell, Chargé d'affaires, Canadian Legation, Prague to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 9 January 1948, 1. See also LAC, W.L. Mackenzie King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1940-1950, MG 26 J4, volume 248, despatch no. 3 from Canadian Legation, Prague, 8 January 1948, microfilm reel H-1478, C-166701-166704.

¹⁰ Ibid. Ronald MacAlister MacDonnell was appointed Chargé d'affaires to the Canadian Legation in Prague in March 1947.

¹¹ Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (hereafter DFAIT), Documents on Canadian External Relations (hereafter DCER), volume 14, chapter 12, Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Middle East, part 1, Czechoslovakia, 1047, file DEA/7121-40, R.M. MacDonnell, Chargé d'affaires, Canadian Legation, Prague to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 23 February 1948, despatch 37, accessed 1 May 2012, <http://www.international.gc.ca/departement/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=10735>. The Canadian Chargé d'affaires went on to note that there were "...many alarming rumours flying about Prague to the effect that the Communists are ready for a coup. On the other hand, the Communists judged by the standards which their party has followed in other Eastern European countries, have been restrained or at any rate have not been as violent in their language as they could have been."

¹² Ibid.

the attention of the Canadian public. The 21 February 1948 edition of *Saturday Night* magazine carried an article written by Alec Harrison entitled “Can Beneš Save the Czechs from Iron Curtain?” Harrison depicted Czechoslovakia’s President Edvard Beneš as a passionate defender of his country. On 24 February 1948, Canada’s Chargé d’affaires in Prague, Ronald Macalister Macdonnell wrote to Ottawa that with a rise in arrests, strikes, accusations and the further arming of police, the best possible outcome on the eve of the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia was that “the non-Communists can retain enough strength and courage to remain a real, if weakened, Opposition.”¹³ In Macdonnell’s view, any future elections would witness non-Communists supporting the Communist movement in an effort to avoid retribution.¹⁴

On 25 February, Czechoslovakia’s president, fearing sociopolitical unrest accepted the twelve resignations and acknowledged a new Communist-led cabinet with Communist leader Klement Gottwald as prime minister. In all, the Communists held thirteen of the twenty-four cabinet posts.¹⁵ As president, Beneš was previously responsible for Czechoslovakia’s capitulation to Nazi Germany without a fight in 1938 and for accepting Communist demands in February 1948. Beneš erroneously believed that closer ties between Prague and Moscow, himself and Stalin, would allow Czechoslovakia’s democratic independence to coexist with the Soviet

¹³ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 5874, file 50165-40, part 1.1 and 1.2, “Czechoslovakia – Political Situation – General File,” R.M. MacDonnell, Chargé d’affaires, Canadian Legation, Prague to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 24 February 1948, 1.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Korbél, *Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia, 1938-1948*, 214-215; Bloomfield, *Passive Revolution*, 207-208; Zbyněk Zeman and Antonín Klimek, *The Life of Edvard Beneš, 1884-1948: Czechoslovakia in Peace and War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 268-270; Bradley, *Czechoslovakia*, 176-178; Myant, *Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1948*, 207; John Crane and Sylvia Crane, *Czechoslovakia: Anvil of the Cold War* (New York: Praeger, 1991), 315.

Union after the Second World War.¹⁶ The following day in a dispatch to Ottawa, MacDonnell indicated that “the iron curtain has begun to descend.”¹⁷

Canadian newsprint outlets actively reported daily events during the Communist seizure of power. The Associated Press wrote “thus for the first time in its 20 years of life as a state and nine years after the Nazi invasion, Czechoslovakia was virtually under complete Communist rule.”¹⁸ Democratic parties resigned in an attempt to catch the Communists off guard and later called for a general election. The Communists demanded that Beneš let them form a new government. The Communists’ threat of a general strike – the first in the country’s history – and a massive 50,000-strong demonstration in central Prague forced Beneš to acquiesce. The Associated Press also noted that “it was all a “Cold” operation, no bloodshed, no barricades; only a few fist fights here and there.”¹⁹ Similarly, the Canadian Press reported that the Czechoslovakian embassy in Ottawa was shrouded in silence. Reporters could not reach Prague’s minister in Canada, František Němec who avoided making any official comments on events back home. After dining with Major James Coldwell, leader of the left-leaning Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, František Němec asked his close friend if he would be willing to secretly store the papers of the wartime Czechoslovak Government-in-Exile in London. Němec informed Coldwell that he was being watched by Communist authorities who had stationed an operative on his staff at the legation. The Ottawa police later placed a cordon

¹⁶ Gregory F. Campbell, “Empty Pedestals?” *Slavic Review* 44.1 (1985): 1; Ripka, *Czechoslovakia Enslaved: The Story of the Communist Coup d’État*, 290-295; Edward Táborský, *President Edvard Beneš: Between East and West, 1938-1948* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1981), 228-229; Táborský, *Communism in Czechoslovakia*, 22.

¹⁷ Canada, DFAIT, DCER, volume 14, chapter 12, Europe, the Soviet Union, and the Middle East, part 1, Czechoslovakia, 1048, file DEA/7121-40, despatch 41 from Chargé d’affaires in Czechoslovakia to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 February 1948, accessed 1 May 2012, <http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=10736>.

¹⁸ Associated Press, “Czech Reds Seize Power, Control Police,” *Globe and Mail*, 25 February 1948, 1.

¹⁹ Associated Press, “Czech Communists Rule; Subdue Student Protest,” *Globe and Mail*, 26 February 26, 1948, 2.

around the legation after the Communist takeover in Prague.²⁰ Canadian diplomats also refused to comment on events in Central Europe, but noted that it “appeared unlikely” that Ottawa would withdraw her recognition of the Czechoslovakian government following the Communist takeover.²¹

The *Ottawa Evening Citizen* published an editorial entitled “Strangling Czech Liberty” in which it argued that the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia with less than 40 percent of the popular vote was a “political crime beyond condemnation or even excuse...” The paper defended the coalition government formed after the May 1946 national election in which socialism through democratic means was slowly being achieved. The paper accurately noted that to view the Communist seizure of power as a Soviet plot merely oversimplified the situation in Czechoslovakia.²² Beneš formally installed the Communist government informing them that “the decision to accept you is personally difficult for me.” Although Beneš did not immediately resign, the Associated Press argued that “tension in Prague had given way to apathy. Most Czechs shrugged and appeared to have accepted the situation.”²³

Refugees fleeing the border on the heels of the Communist takeover of the country were left in utter dismay at the turn of events. Wenzel Kuttig and his wife muttered that “it just can’t be true” and “our country will be ruined” upon being told that Beneš officially installed the Communist government. The Kuttigs arrived at Dorval airport in Montreal as part of a group of 85 immigrants from London and were en route to their son’s farm in British Columbia. Along

²⁰ “1948 Secret Revealed: Czech Papers in Coldwell Bedroom,” *Globe and Mail*, 30 March 1955, 1.

²¹ Canadian Press, “‘Not In’ or ‘Not Available,’ Czech Minister Won’t Talk,” *Globe and Mail*, 27 February 1948, 3; “Dr. Nemeč Still Out,” *Ottawa Evening Citizen*, 27 February 1948, 1.

²² “Strangling Czech Liberty,” *Ottawa Evening Citizen*, 25 February 1948, 30. The *Ottawa Citizen* was known as the *Ottawa Evening Citizen* at the time of this editorial.

²³ Associated Press, “Stalin Moves on Finland; Czech Reds Crack Down: Prosecutions are Started in Slovakia,” *Globe and Mail*, 28 February 1948, 1. On 7 June, Edvard Beneš resigned from office clearing the way for Klement Gottwald and the Communists to complete their domination of Czechoslovakia.

with other refugees from Czechoslovakia, the Kuttigs were handed cigarettes and beverages by airport officials in an attempt to ease their arrival in Canada. Due to events in Czechoslovakia, the couple remained skeptical when informed by airport officials that a peaceful and quiet life was available in Canada.²⁴

In Ottawa, František Němec resigned his diplomatic post on 3 March 1948 in response to the political events in Czechoslovakia. The former diplomat asserted that “I am an anti-Communist. I subscribe to freedom of speech, freedom of worship and freedom of the press.”²⁵ Following in the footsteps of the Czechoslovakian minister, four other embassy officials resigned from their diplomatic posts to coincide with the resignation of the Czechoslovakian ambassador to Washington.²⁶ Němec’s resignation was read aloud in the House of Commons by Canadian Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent. Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament for Kamloops, Edmund Davie Fulton noted that Němec’s decision was “proper and courageous.” Canadian officials could only conclude that Němec acted in his own best interest rather than waiting for his recall to Prague. Němec and his wife were to remain in Canada as Czechoslovakian citizens. Incidentally, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester Bowles Pearson, indicated during a press conference that the former Czechoslovakian minister would be considered as a Canadian immigrant. Pearson asserted that Němec would “be considered in the same way as we would consider a Czech applying for immigration visas from Czechoslovakia.”²⁷ Němec later telephoned Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent who personally

²⁴ “Couple sudète sorti de l’enfer tchécoslovaque: M. Et Mme. Kuttig ont quitté Prague mercredi dernier – Les élections: un affreux truquage” *Le Devoir*, 1 March 1948, 10; untitled, *Globe and Mail*, 2 March 1948, 13.

²⁵ Warren Baldwin, “Czech Ottawa Minister Quits to Protest Action of Reds in Homeland,” *Globe and Mail*, 4 March 1948, 17.

²⁶ Canadian Press, “À Prague” *Le Devoir*, 3 March 1948, 1; “Two Czechoslovakian Envoys Quit: Protest Coup in Homeland,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, 3 March 1948, 1.

²⁷ “Czech Minister Asks to Stay Here,” *Montreal Daily Star*, 4 March 1948, 4; “More Czechs Quit,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, 4 March 1948, 1; “Czech Consul Will Quit If Benes Out,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, 4 March 1948, 1.

took up his case in cabinet.²⁸ The Czechoslovakian Consul General in Montreal, Josef Kotrlý informed members of the press that he cabled a letter of resignation to his superiors in Prague. Unlike Němec, the former consul general was more direct in his assessment of the situation facing Czechoslovakian diplomats in Canada:

I would like to inform you all that this afternoon I sent a cable to my government in Prague to let them know that I will be quitting my post as consul general here in Montreal in protest over the communist and dictatorial politics of Czechoslovakia. I have always been a democrat and fought in the underground against the Nazis. I am very sad to see my people fall under tyrannical oppression. I and my colleagues have not received any money or financial support from anyone. We are all poor. We have families and are obligated to work in order to live.²⁹

In light of the Communist seizure of power, the federal government maintained the status quo in its relations with Czechoslovakia. However, St. Laurent noted before the House of Commons that approximately \$1.4 million trade credits were left untouched by Prague and these funds could be removed in light of the Communist party's takeover.³⁰ With legations in other Soviet-bloc capitals, Canadian officials viewed their diplomatic missions in Eastern Europe as official "listening posts" able to relay vital information back to Ottawa. As a result, the Canadian government continued to monitor the situation in Czechoslovakia.³¹ On 16 March 1948, Order-in-Council P.C. 1108 formally permitted former Czechoslovakian Minister in Canada, František Němec, commercial attaché Karel Bala, first secretary Karel Moudrý, including their families

²⁸ Canada, DFAIT, DCER, volume 14, chapter 9, Immigration, part 3, Refugees from Eastern Europe, 800, file DEA/233-A (S), memorandum from Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 22 March 1948, accessed 1 May 2012, <http://www.international.gc.ca/departement/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=10540>; Donald Avery, *Reluctant Host : Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1995), 158-159.

²⁹ "Démission du consul général de Tchécoslovaquie" *Le Devoir*, 6 March 1948, 3-4.

³⁰ Baldwin, "Czech Ottawa Minister Quits to Protest Action of Reds in Homeland," 17. Czechoslovakian Consuls in Toronto (Horace Hume Van Wart) and Winnipeg (Maitland Steinkopf) later resigned their diplomatic posts.

³¹ "Canada Still to Send Envoy to Prague; Dominion Won't Sever Relations or Cut Off Loan to Czechs," *Vancouver Sun*, 4 March 1948, 3; Canadian Press, "Attitude canadienne," *Le Devoir*, 27 February 1948, 1. Through the *Export Credit Insurance Act* (1946), Prague obtained a loan of \$19 million from the Canadian government.

and some members of the embassy's clerical and domestic staff to remain in Canada.³²

Subsequently, officials in Ottawa granted non-immigrant visas for periods ranging from three to twelve months to five other Czechoslovakian diplomats and their families.³³

Émigrés and Exiles: 1948ers Flee Czechoslovakia

After entrenching one-party rule in Czechoslovakia, the Communist authorities used party propaganda in an attempt to politically humiliate and disclaim individuals who recently left or who were in the midst of fleeing the oppressive regime. Prague was able to produce a new class of criminal who was disloyal to the state: the illegal emigrant – “an individual who left the country without permission.” Communists refused to define those who fled in the aftermath of February 1948 as ‘exiles’ because it implied that they left their homeland due to political reasons such as being expelled for democratic leanings. Conversely, ‘émigrés’ left their country to improve their socioeconomic position.³⁴ Family members left behind were blacklisted by the Communist regime for their ties to ‘enemies of the state,’ and ‘criminals,’ and forced to live with their relatives. Children were denied access to university studies because of their bourgeois or democratic family background and were only later permitted to learn a trade.³⁵

³² Canada, DFAIT, DCER, volume 14, chapter 9, Immigration, part 3, Refugees from Eastern Europe, 801, file PCO/volume 66, memorandum from Secretary of State for External Affairs to Cabinet, 7 May 1948, accessed 1 May 2012, <http://www.international.gc.ca/departement/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=10541>.

³³ Ibid; Whitaker, *Double Standard*, 77-78. Canadian officials granted visas to Dr. Jan Smerek in Italy, Ludwig Dvořák and Miloš Krupka in Turkey, and Dr. Celestin Šimr in Belgium. Canadian news outlets shed light on the transition of Czechoslovakian officials in Canada from public to private life. As a twenty-year veteran of the Czechoslovakian Army, Colonel Jaromír Petzold served as the Czechoslovakian military attaché in Ottawa. After resigning, Petzold represented business firms for only half of the \$800 per month salary he was entitled to as a Czechoslovakian diplomat. See Canadian Press, “Diplomat prefers \$24 Desk Job to \$6000 Life with Communists,” *Čas*, 13 July 1949, 8.

³⁴ František Hašek, interview by Jana Cipris, 20 July 1978, interview CZE-5199-HAS, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto; Josef Škvorecký, “Bohemia of the Soul,” *Daedalus* 119.1 (1990): 111-112; Filípek, *Reflections and Perspectives*, 60-61.

³⁵ Hašek, interview by Jana Cipris, 20 July 1978; Milan Gregor, interview by Tara Ring, 3 August 2002, interview 02.08.03MG, Oral History Collection, CMIP21.

In the spring of 1948, the federal Cabinet approved a proposal to provide unofficial assistance to anti-communist democratic Czech and Slovak refugees. In May, the Canadian government became aware that over 10,000 individuals had crossed the Czechoslovakian border into the American and British zones of Occupied Germany. Canadian officials estimated that 200 refugees arrived in the West each day. Close to 10,000 of these political refugees were temporarily settled in the American Zone, followed by 300 Czech and Slovak refugees in the British Zone. Approximately, thirty refugees made their way into Austria. The federal government viewed the resettlement of Czech and Slovak refugees in Canada as advantageous since this movement of people "...would bring to our shores a considerable number of people who share our ideals and who, over the years, would contribute richly to our national life."³⁶ Canadian representatives in Europe viewed the resettlement of refugees from Czechoslovakia as the "cream of the crop."³⁷

Under the direction of the International Refugee Organization (IRO), refugees from Czechoslovakia were registered in receiving camps and given shelter, food, and financial support before being permanently resettled in the West. According to the IRO, political refugees were individuals who fled Czechoslovakia between 1 February 1948 and 1 October 1950.³⁸ In early June 1948, the Preparatory Commission of the International Refugee Organization (PCIRO)

³⁶ LAC, W.L. Mackenzie King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1940-1950, MG 26 J4, volume 248, memorandum, Possible Movement of Czech Democratic Refugees to Canada, n.d., microfilm reel H-1478, C166715; LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, vol. 662, file B83052, part 1, "Czechoslovak displaced persons (lists)," telegram from Canadian Delegation, Preparatory Commission of the International Refugee Organization, Geneva to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, 14 May 1948, 1, microfilm reel C-10597.

³⁷ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, vol. 662, file B83052, part 1, "Czechoslovak displaced persons (lists)," telegram from Canadian Delegation, Preparatory Commission of the International Refugee Organization, Geneva to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, 14 May 1948, 3, microfilm reel C-10597.

³⁸ Čelovský, 142. Čelovský asserts that in 1949, 700 Czechoslovaks joined the French Foreign Legion. In 1953, hundreds of Czech and Slovak political refugees returned to Communist Czechoslovakia as the five year agreement on refugee status concluded. For more on Czech and Slovak refugees and IRO eligibility, see Gerard Daniel Cohen, *In War's Wake: Europe's Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 51-57.

informed the Canadian Immigration Mission in Karlsruhe, Germany that permission would have to be obtained from the United States military government before Czech and Slovak refugees could be interviewed. The refugees were situated in six permanent camps under the jurisdiction of the United States Army. The six refugee camps consisted of Dieburg (385), Burg (447), Orb (Wegscheid) (380), Wasseraifingen (460), Unterjettingen (583), and Schwabach (802). The refugee camps comprised a total of 3,057 refugees. Within these camps were refugees with various types of professional occupations, while children constituted twelve percent of the entire refugee population.³⁹

On 12 June 1948, Czech Canadian industrialist Tomáš Baťa met with Canadian officials and informed them of his recent trip to Europe. Baťa estimated that there were approximately 500-700 desirable immigrants among the Czech and Slovak refugees in Occupied Germany. He claimed that a majority of the individuals had previous agricultural experience and should be admitted into Canada. Among this group of refugees were engineers, chemists, draughtsmen, and a few artisans. Baťa implored Canadian officials to give careful attention to refugee selection and screening as “...those selected for coming to Canada as among the refugees are those who are deserting their wives and families, some have made off with the cash box and there are undoubtedly some who have been placed by the Communists.”⁴⁰ Ten days later, the Canadian Immigration Mission in Karlsruhe sent a telegram to the Immigration Branch in Ottawa informing officials that refugees from Czechoslovakia were being processed at the Regensburg

³⁹ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, vol. 662, file B83052, part 1, “Czechoslovak displaced persons (lists),” letter from R.J. McPherson for Robert J. Corkery, Chief, Department of Repatriation and Resettlement, Preparatory Commission of the International Refugee Organization, Geneva to Canadian Immigration Mission, Karlsruhe, 7 June 1948, microfilm reel C-10597; LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, vol. 662, file B83052, part 1, “Czechoslovak displaced persons (lists),” memorandum for file, O. Cormier, Consul General, Canadian Immigration Mission, Karlsruhe, 8 June 1948, microfilm reel C-10597; Filípek, *Reflections and Perspectives*, 35.

⁴⁰ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, vol. 662, file B83052, part 1, “Czechoslovak displaced persons (lists),” memorandum from Commissioner of Immigration, Overseas Service to Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, 18 June 1948, microfilm reel C-10597.

and Schwabach reception centres, and then screened by the United States Army Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) before being sent to one of the permanent refugee camps in the American Occupied Zone. Canadian officials noted that many of the Czech and Slovak refugees were of the “professional and clerical type [and] therefore [a] low percentage would qualify for existing group movements” to Canada.

On 29 June, Secretary of State for External Affairs, Louis St. Laurent, informed the Minister of Labour, Humphrey Mitchell, that the American government recently passed legislation admitting approximately 2,000 Czech and Slovak anti-communist democratic refugees. St. Laurent remained concerned that the Americans would “...skim off the cream” of this wave of refugees. The Secretary of State for External Affairs demonstrated his sympathy with the plight of Czech and Slovak refugees by declaring:

These Czechs [and Slovaks], who have fled from the Communist dictatorship in Czechoslovakia, are people who have demonstrated that they are free men [and women] and are on our side of the line in the fight against Communism. There are other people like them behind the iron curtain and in countries which are susceptible to indirect Soviet aggression through the use of fifth columns. There is little that we can do to help them in their struggle against Communism. Should we not, therefore, do all we possibly can for those who escape from behind the curtain. This would demonstrate to those who have to remain behind that our sympathy is not merely a matter of fine phrases. A generous attitude by us to the admission of these people to Canada might have quite important international political consequences in the present cold war...if we make clear to our own people and to people abroad that we are making the gesture in spite of the fact that it is going to cause us difficulties, at least in the short run.⁴¹

The Canadian government continued to stall in its reception of refugees from Czechoslovakia. Officials in Ottawa chose to defer action until they received a report from

⁴¹ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, vol. 662, file B83052, part 1, “Czechoslovak displaced persons (lists),” letter from Louis St. Laurent, Secretary of State for External Affairs to Humphrey Mitchell, Minister of Labour, 29 June 1948, 2, microfilm reel C-10598.

Canadian immigration officers in Europe who were assessing the possibility of resettling Czech and Slovak refugees in Canada.⁴² Preliminary inquiries by officers of the Canadian Immigration Mission found that each refugee's health appeared good and many were interested in settling in Canada. The Czech and Slovak refugees were "for the most part white-collar workers, trade unionists, civil servants, teachers, professional men and the like. All share this common characteristic; they have chosen the path of uncertainty and probable privation rather than submission. They have themselves demonstrated the sturdiness of the faith which is in them."⁴³

In the years following the February 1948 Communist takeover, nearly 20,000 Czechs and Slovaks settled in the United States and a few thousand in Canada. Among this group of political refugees were members of democratic Czechoslovakia's leading social and political figures including former party leaders, members of parliament, clergy, intellectuals, and military officers.⁴⁴ North America and in particular the United States was seen as the final destination of choice for many of the exiles who sought official recognition and financial support for their struggle to liberate Czechoslovakia from Communist rule.⁴⁵ At the same time, the American government actively solicited displaced democratic exiles for information on the Communist-bloc and sought "auxiliaries" for its countless intelligence activities. The military authorities in

⁴² LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, vol. 662, file B83052, part 1, "Czechoslovak displaced persons (lists)," letter from Louis St. Laurent, Secretary of State for External Affairs to Humphrey Mitchell, Minister of Labour, 29 June 1948, 1-2, microfilm reel C-10598.

⁴³ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, vol. 662, file B83052, part 1, "Czechoslovak displaced persons (lists)," telegram from Canadian Immigration Mission, Karlsruhe to Immigration Branch, Ottawa, 22 June 1948, microfilm reel C-10597; LAC, W.L. Mackenzie King Papers, Memoranda and Notes, 1940-1950, MG 26 J4, volume 248, memorandum, Possible Movement of Czech Democratic Refugees to Canada, n.d., microfilm reel H-1478, C166715.

⁴⁴ Faure, "Les exilés tchécoslovaques de 1948," 61; Híkl, *Short History of the Czechoslovak People in Canada*, 13.

⁴⁵ Bořivoj Čelovský, *Politici bez moci: První léta exilové rady svobodného Československa* [Politicians without Power: The Early Years of the Exile Council of Free Czechoslovakia] (Šenov u Ostravy: Tilia, 2000), 14.

the American Zone of Occupation in Germany were instructed by the State Department to pay particular attention to refugees fleeing Czechoslovakia.⁴⁶

In an attempt to promote his government's covert operations against the Communist-bloc, American ambassador to Prague, Laurence Steinhardt sent diplomatic bags to the residences of prominent democratic politicians and professionals in order to safely deliver their most prized possessions to the American Zone by way of a diplomatic flight. As a right-wing member of parliament who witnessed the early purges against the democratic political class, Jiří Škvor decided that he would leave his homeland. The former parliamentarian believed that Communist rule would eventually succumb to the country's strong democratic tradition. However, when it became clear that the Communists were solidifying their grip over Czechoslovakia, he left his wife and young son and fled across the border into the American Occupied Zone of Germany, where he eventually obtained political asylum.⁴⁷ Many of those prominent figures important within the democratic movement in Czechoslovakia were housed by the United States on the outskirts of Frankfurt in an old nursery school labelled "Alaska House." Similarly, the

⁴⁶ Faure, "Les exilés tchécoslovaques de 1948," 61; Prokop Tomek, "The Highs and Lows of Czech and Slovak Émigré Activism," In *Anti-Communist Minorities in the U.S.: Political Activism of Ethnic Refugees*, ed. Ieva Zake, 109-126 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 114; Hašek, interview by Jana Cipris, 20 July 1978. As political refugees secretly crossed the Czechoslovakian border into the American Occupied Zone of Germany, the American military claimed it did not have the requisite funds or the means to adequately care for the new arrivals fleeing Communism. The American military government subsequently applied to the International Refugee Organization (IRO) for assistance. The military government's regulations prevented the settlement of individuals in its camps who were not in Occupied Germany prior to 2 April 1947. See David M. Nichol, "First Czech Refugees Arrive in Germany," *Ottawa Evening Citizen*, 3 March 1948, 13.

⁴⁷ Dushan Břesky, "Czech Poet in Canada: Pavel Javor's Life and Work," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 10.1 (1978): 78. Škvor's initial feeling of relief for having found safety in the West was later replaced with depression as thoughts of his family and homeland began to consume him. As a former democratic parliamentarian, Škvor could have received better treatment within the "Golden Cage." Once he was permitted to emigrate, Škvor chose to resettle in Canada instead of the United States where he would have been a part of the Czechoslovak democratic resistance. Upon arriving in Canada, Škvor signed a labour contract and immediately departed for Medicine Hat, Alberta where he became a cowboy earning one dollar per day. Once his initial labour contract expired, Škvor moved to Montreal where he later became a professor of Slavic languages and literature at the University of Montreal.

Czechoslovakian refugees renamed the school as the “Golden Cage.”⁴⁸ As so-called “*agenti chodci*” (walking agents), anti-communist refugees joined the American intelligence network and worked clandestinely in the borderlands between Czechoslovakia and Occupied Germany delivering messages between the West and the anti-Communist underground.⁴⁹

A majority of the anti-communist Czech and Slovak refugees biding their time in the American Occupied Zone of Germany chose the United States as their primary choice for resettlement. However, only a select few would be granted admission if they could demonstrate that they were “immediately employable.” Canadian immigration and labour teams travelled across Europe to the DP camps in an attempt to assess and select prospective immigrants based on their respective skills and abilities. From their headquarters in Karlsruhe, Germany, the Canadian Immigration Mission dispatched four teams to Germany and another two teams to Austria.⁵⁰ The nationalist Canadian Slovak League (CSL) was concerned that Canadian immigration officials were ignorant to the plight of thousands of ethnic Slovaks scattered across Europe’s DP camps. In a letter to O. Cormier, Consul General of the Canadian Immigration Mission in Karlsruhe, Germany, general secretary of the CSL, Fero J. Zeman indicated that Slovaks were a separate nation and should not be identified as Czechoslovaks, Hungarians, or Germans “because some of these happened to be born when Slovakia was not free.”⁵¹ Zeman argued that the Slovak refugees were “comparable to our best Canadian citizenry” and should

⁴⁸ Faure, “Les exilés tchécoslovaques de 1948,” 61. Faure notes that American Ambassador to Prague, Laurence Steinhardt refused to directly assist leading democratic figures and used secondary measures instead to assist in their escape to the West.

⁴⁹ Škvorecký, “Bohemia of the Soul,” 116; Jan Filípek, *The Shadows of the Gallows* (Palm Springs: Palm Springs Publishing Company, 1985), 261-262. Filípek notes that Communist agents disguised as refugees also frequented the camps in an attempt to discover the identities and final destinations of Czechoslovakian citizens.

⁵⁰ Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1948-1949*, 174.

⁵¹ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 11, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” letter from Fero J. Zeman to O. Cormier, Consul General of Canadian Immigration Mission, Karlsruhe, 19 February 1949, microfilm reel C-10436.

thwart attempts at ethnocultural assimilation by not accepting credentials from ethnic Czechs or Czechoslovakian officials. Zeman asked that the Canadian Consul General in Karlsruhe treat Slovak refugees who sought admission to Canada as democrats and Christians.⁵²

In the years directly after the Second World War, Canadian immigration authorities counted ethnic Slovaks as “Czech” or “Czechoslovakians” when it came to their country of last permanent residence. From 1948 to 1949, 3,984 newcomers to Canada identified their nationality as Czechoslovakian. Similarly, 3,626 individuals claimed “Czech” as their racial origin. Meanwhile, 4,713 gave Czechoslovakia as their last country of residence.⁵³ Canada accepted over 4,000 predominantly Czech refugees residing in camps Schwabach (near Nuremburg), Bad-Orb (Wegscheid), and Regensburg (near Dieburg).⁵⁴ Within this initial wave of 1948ers were approximately 1,500 Slovak refugees who settled in Canada. These individuals were a mixture of former government officials and intellectuals divided between nationalist Slovaks and Czechoslovaks. Although they disagreed over Slovakia’s political future, they were united by their hatred for communism.⁵⁵ Within this group of Slovak refugees were former officials of the wartime Slovak state and intellectuals who became active in the nationalist Canadian Slovak community. As nationalist Slovak refugees, they advocated for Slovak identity and an independent democratic Slovak state.⁵⁶ While the United States refused to open its gates, Canada was forced to deal with the arrival of former officials of the Nazi-aligned wartime Slovak state

⁵² Ibid. In his letter to Cormier, Zeman suggested that the Canadian Immigration Mission in Karlsruhe avoid falling “prey to Czech or other slick “pan-Slav” actually Asiatic-Semetic [sic] Communism in fact – which claims that Slovaks are collaborators and fascists.”

⁵³ Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1951* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1951), 143, 145-147.

⁵⁴ Jovanovic, “Czechs,” 400.

⁵⁵ Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada*, 212-213; M. Mark Stolárik, *Slovaks in Canada and the United States, 1870-1990: Similarities and Differences* (Ottawa: Chair in Slovak History and Culture, Department of History, University of Ottawa, 1992), 15.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

originating from a resurrected Czechoslovakia.⁵⁷ Czechoslovakian authorities viewed the nationalist Slovak DPs as fascists and Nazi collaborators, and sought their repatriation as enemies of the Czechoslovak state.⁵⁸ American and Canadian authorities were aware that many of these individuals were former Nazi collaborators during the Second World War.⁵⁹ Many of the remaining Slovak DPs desired for the Czechoslovak Republic to continue to exist and joined Czechoslovak groups in Canada including the CNA and the MH.⁶⁰ Canada remained a preferred secondary choice for settlement and many of these DPs found immigration to the country to be more accessible than the United States. Czech and Slovak DPs were permitted entry into Canada

⁵⁷ Ibid., 28; Sutherland, *Canadian Slovak League*, 65-66; Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, 196-199; David Matas and Susan Charendoff, *Justice Delayed: Nazi War Criminals in Canada* (Toronto: Summerhill Press Limited, 1987), 57-58; McKay, *Roman Empire*, 16. Former wartime Slovakian politicians included Ferdinand Ďurčanský, former Slovakian foreign minister; Jozef Kirschbaum, former leader of the Hlinka Guard – paramilitary wing of the Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party; Karol Murin, former personal secretary to wartime Slovakian president Jozef Tiso; and Karol Sidor, formerly Slovakia’s ambassador to the Vatican. Canadian authorities initially denied admission to Sidor, however, Vatican representatives in Canada appealed directly to Liberal Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent in the hopes of gaining a positive outcome. Louis St. Laurent forwarded Sidor’s file to Canadian immigration officials who rightly ignored any plausible “executive preference,” and considered Karol Sidor a “security risk.” The RCMP easily justified its security assessment as it had an extensive file detailing Sidor’s writings and speeches from the 1930s and 1940s as head of the Hlinka Guard. Conversely, St. Laurent did not believe that Sidor’s file was the reason for his predicament with Canadian authorities, but surprisingly blamed Canadian immigration officials for the delay in Sidor’s case. Security screening of Sidor and his family was subsequently ignored, and he and his family were permitted entry into Canada in November 1949. Canadian authorities viewed Sidor’s admission into Canada as an “endeavour to combat subversive elements among all Slovaks in Canada.” At the Canadian embassy in Argentina, Ďurčanský applied for a visa and passed existing screening procedures established to prevent such individuals from entering Canada. Canadian officials in Argentina did not receive a report on Ďurčanský until he had already left the country. As a result, authorities in Montreal were not aware of his background. Ďurčanský arrived in Montreal from Buenos Aires on December 15, 1950. With Ďurčanský in Canada, the RCMP heavily scrutinized his involvement with the nationalist Slovak community. Having failed to achieve any substantial support and constant RCMP monitoring forced Ďurčanský to permanently leave Canada in March 1951.

⁵⁸ Kirschbaum, *Slovaks in Canada*, 157-160.

⁵⁹ McKenzie, *War Criminals in Canada*, 64-65; Margolian, *Unauthorized Entry*, 196-199; Whitaker, *Double Standard*, 139-144. In the case of Kirschbaum, the American government refused entry on the grounds that he was previously a Nazi collaborator. In November 1949, Canadian authorities accepted him as an immigrant and he landed in Halifax.

⁶⁰ Stolárik, “Slovak League of America and the Canadian Slovak League in the Struggle for the Self-Determination of the Nation,” 29.

due to their university education, high technical training, and willingness to sign one-year farm labour agreements.⁶¹

Czech and Slovak refugees who arrived in Canada in the aftermath of February 1948 were largely forced to accept unskilled and menial jobs, and in some cases, to sign agricultural labour contracts for a term of one or two years.⁶² A significant portion of 1948ers turned to the city in the hopes of finding employment. In Hamilton, for example, Czechs and Slovaks often boarded in the homes of Eastern European immigrants who arrived in Canada prior to 1939. With the help of members from the existing Czechoslovak community, who were referred to as oldtimers, many newcomers found work in local factories or steel plants. The newly arrived Czech and Slovak refugees chose to stay in the city due to a belief that they would be able to save their earnings more quickly than out west on farm labour contracts. Many of the 1948ers arrived in Canada without agricultural skills and desired to settle in urban centres where they could also seek assistance from the local CNA branch and Czechoslovak community.⁶³

With Czechoslovakia's borders open, Canadian Chargé d'affaires, R.M. MacDonnell informed his superiors that individuals seeking immigration and temporary visas to enter Canada occasionally paid 50,000 Czechoslovakian Crowns or 1,000 Canadian dollars to acquire legal documentation permitting them to leave Czechoslovakia. In other cases, MacDonnell indicated to Ottawa that visa applicants "merely hint[ed] at this type of corruption."⁶⁴ From January to

⁶¹ Igor Lukeš, "Czechoslovak Political Exile in the Cold War: The Early Years," *Polish Review* 47.3 (2002): 333. Lukeš noted that Canada also required these Czechoslovakian DPs to submit to a physical exam that included "sit-ups and a distance run." Interestingly, New Zealand was willing to receive forty young men from Czechoslovakia with evidence of a "high sperm count."

⁶² Škvorecký, "Bohemia of the Soul," 121. The 1948ers differed from subsequent waves of immigrants because their social experience in Czechoslovakia only included the initial period of Communist rule.

⁶³ Ana Lanc, interview by Jana Cipris, 1 August 1978.

⁶⁴ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 11, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," Ronald MacAlister MacDonnell, Despatch No. 99, 5 May 1948, microfilm reel C-10436.

April 1948, the Canadian Legation in Prague issued 326 immigration visas and 27 visitor visas.⁶⁵ On 5 August 1948, MacDonnell informed Ottawa that the Czechoslovak government continued to permit emigration to Canada without any recourse even though legal documentation proved too costly for most Czechoslovakians. The Chargé d'affaires noted that in the last few months there was no "change in the attitude of the Czechoslovak authorities," and as a result, the average of immigrant visas issued continued to increase.⁶⁶ Although Czechoslovakia's borders remained open, most Czechoslovakian citizens could not secure the necessary documentation from the Communist authorities in Prague to leave the country for the West. For individuals who could afford to pay corrupt officials for travel documentation, they were able to leave Communist Czechoslovakia for the West. In many instances, these same émigrés were forced to settle in refugee camps in Austria, Occupied Germany, and Italy.

Preparing for their Arrival: Establishing the Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees

As early as March 1948, Department of External Affairs (DEA) officials considered the plight of "democratic anti-Communist refugees" and sought to enlist the interest of an "unofficial group of humanitarians" who would be supported by "outstanding refugees" who already settled in Canada including the last democratic Czechoslovakian Ambassador to Canada, František Němec.⁶⁷ Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Escott Reid, indicated to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Louis St. Laurent, that Senators Adrian Knatchbull–

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 11, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," Ronald MacAlister MacDonnell, Despatch No. 186, 5 August 1948, microfilm reel C-10436.

⁶⁷ Canada, DFAIT, DCER, volume 14, chapter 9, Immigration, part 3, Refugees from Eastern Europe, 800, file DEA/233-A (S), memorandum from Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 22 March 1948, accessed 1 May 2012, <http://www.international.gc.ca/departement/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=10540>.

Hugessen and Cairine Wilson could be persuaded to help form such an organization. Reid went on to argue that:

The communists and fellow-travelers did a magnificent job in the thirties in organizing public sympathy and support for anti-fascist refugees. If liberalism is to demonstrate that it is a dynamic creed, liberals should show at least the same degree of enthusiasm and ability on behalf of democratic anti-communists.⁶⁸

A month later an application for incorporation of the Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees (CFCR) was sent to Louis St. Laurent by a group of petitioners led by CNA national secretary Karel Buzek, Senator Cairine Wilson, and Bernard Keble Sandwell, Editor-in-Chief of *Saturday Night* magazine.⁶⁹ The newly established fund's objectives were "to assist displaced and refugee persons of Czecho-Slovak origin" who were legally admitted to Canada in obtaining employment, housing, and facilitating their settlement and integration into Canadian society. The fund also sought to aid newcomers who required financial assistance. The CFRC was also instrumental in locating relatives and friends of these newcomers in the hopes that reunification would further help Czech and Slovak DPs and political refugees in resettling in Canada. The fund carried a political agenda that attempted to "assist with information and educational materials so that the democratic heritage of such persons can be combined and integrated with that of Canada at the earliest possible date."⁷⁰ The CFRC desired to promote the "democratic heritage" of those Czechoslovaks who fled the Communist takeover after February 1948. The fund solicited financial contributions including subscriptions, donations, and money to procure

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, Volume 4042, file 10515-40, part 1, "Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees – Establishment and Activities of," letter from W.P.J. O'Meara, Assistant Under-Secretary of State to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 22 April 1949.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

food, clothing, blankets, and medicine for the health and well-being of individuals in Austrian, German, and Italian DP camps.⁷¹

As Canadian Czechoslovaks sent funds and relief to refugee camps in Europe, Czechs and Slovaks continued to arrive on Canadian shores. On 23 April 1949, under the guidance of International Refugee Organization (IRO) Escort Officer, Arne Hansen and the ship captain, MacMillan, the turbine steamer USAT *General Leroy Eltinge* carrying 841 refugees arrived at Pier 21 in Halifax. The ship supported the International Refugee Program by transporting refugees from Bremerhaven, Germany to Canada. Among the newly arrived group were 113 Czechoslovakian citizens. These same individuals were recruited for work as contract labourers on Canadian farms.⁷² In their ten days aboard the USAT *General LeRoy Eltinge*, the Czechoslovakian refugees published a ship newspaper, *The Voice of New-Canadians, Ship's Newspaper – USAT General LeRoy Eltinge*. The newspaper reported that Communist authorities back home published news of the ship's departure in which the "capitalist pirate, Captain MacMillan, supported by the Norwegian bandit Arne Hansen, captured 841 fascist refugees in Bremerhaven so that instead of repatriating them to their homeland, where under communism there was better living and happiness, directed the ship to Halifax in Canada."⁷³ Less than a week after the arrival of 113 Czechoslovakian refugees, officials in Ottawa approved the incorporation

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² CMIP21, Image Collection, DI2013.793.20a, "Czechoslovakia – George Brady – General LeRoy Eltinge – Info 1;" Josef Čermák, interview by Rose Wilcox, 29 March 1977, interview CZE-0014-CER, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto; Čermák, *It All Started with Prince Rupert*, 190.

⁷³ CMIP21, Image Collection, DI2013.793.22b, "Czechoslovakia – George Brady – General LeRoy Eltinge – Newsletter in Czech 2."

of the CFCR without any security objections. Canadian officials viewed the new organization as “semi-officially inspired” since Senator Cairine Wilson was a director.⁷⁴

Along with the newly established CFCR, the CNA also continued to aid in the settlement of Czech and Slovak DPs and political refugees. Subsequently, the CNA was instrumental in providing assistance to Canadian Czechs and Slovaks who wished to bring their families and friends to Canada. In one case, Mike Nikodem of Smithville, Ontario applied to the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR)’s Department of Colonization seeking to relocate Jozef Brunovský and his family to Canada. Nikodem’s application was initially denied because Brunovský fought for the wartime Nazi-aligned Slovak state during the Second World War.⁷⁵ Due to Nikodem’s lack of English language skills, he solicited the assistance of CNA national secretary, Karel Buzek who informed the Immigration Branch that Brunovský was drafted into the wartime Slovak Army, but later deserted to join the partisan movement and took part in the 1944 Slovak National Uprising against the Germans and their Slovak collaborators. After receiving a letter from A.H. Creighton, District Superintendent of Colonization for the CPR, Buzek informed Nikodem that a “provision existed that granted admission to persons in this class where it can be established that such service was under compulsion.”⁷⁶ Buzek advised Nikodem that definitive evidence be submitted to the immigration authorities in order for the decision to be reversed.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4042, file 10515-40, part 1, “Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees – Establishment and Activities of,” memorandum from G.G. Crean, Defence Liaison Division to United Nations Division, 3 May 1949.

⁷⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 13, file 302 “Head Office Correspondence – St. Ann’s, Ont., Branch No. 68, n.d., 1949,” letter from Mike Nikodem and Jan Krejčík to Immigration Branch, Department of Mines and Resources, Ottawa, 31 March, 1949.

⁷⁶ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 13, file 302 “Head Office Correspondence – St. Ann’s, Ont., Branch No. 68, n.d., 1949,” letter from Karel Buzek to Jan Krejčík, 26 March, 1949.

⁷⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 13, file 302 “Head Office Correspondence – St. Ann’s, Ont., Branch No. 68, n.d., 1949,” letter from A.H. Creighton, District Superintendent of Colonization to Karel Buzek, 25 March, 1949.

As Canadian Czechs and Slovaks sought to relocate their relatives and friends to Canada, officials in Ottawa were charged with selecting refugees who would become Canadian citizens and “useful” to the Canadian economy. Successive federal Liberal governments under Prime Ministers William Lyon Mackenzie King and Louis St. Laurent viewed the movement of Europe’s DPs and anti-communist refugees to Canada as constituting a significant contribution to the development of postwar Canada. Subsequently, Ottawa implemented an Immigration-Labour Committee to which representatives from the Departments of Mines and Resources, Labour, External Affairs, and National Health and Welfare were appointed. This committee assessed and defined the necessary labour requirements and what type of refugee should be resettled in Canada.⁷⁸

With both the CNA and the CFCR’s resettlement activities gaining wider public attention, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks began corresponding with Karel Buzek regarding the feasibility of admitting close relatives and friends into Canada. Buzek informed his compatriots that they would need to fill out forms for prospective immigrants who would enter Canada as farm labourers engaging in assured farm employment. The CNA worked to arrange signed affidavits in which farmers who sought contract labourers were contacted for their signatures. The CNA also worked closely with the last democratic Czechoslovakian ambassador to Canada, František Němec, in the hopes that his political contacts could help to accelerate the process of admitting successful political refugees.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1950* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1950), 183. Canadian industry was to guarantee that it could offer one year labour contracts to prospective DPs, ensuring that the standard wage for this type of labour was respected, and also provide accommodations upon the newcomer’s arrival.

⁷⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 13, file 282 “Head Office Correspondence – Kitchener, Ont., Branch No. 25, n.d., 1949,” letter from M.F. Kousal to Karel Buzek, 20 January, 1949; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 13, file 282 “Head Office Correspondence – Kitchener, Ont., Branch No. 25, n.d., 1949,” letter from Karel (Karol) Štark to Karel Buzek, 14 March, 1949.

On 1 June 1949, a Czech-language newspaper entitled *Čas* (The Time: Independent Democratic Weekly for Canadian Czechoslovaks) published its first issue in Trenton, Ontario. The newly established paper served democratic and anti-communist Czechoslovak Canadians. Editor Jan Dočkálek informed the paper's readers that "it has now been three years since I finished my service with the Czechoslovak forces overseas. I have come to Canada to run a paper for Czechoslovak Canadians. I wanted to establish a paper for democratic Czechoslovaks since one did not exist at the time."⁸⁰ *Čas* was supported by the influential émigré organization, Council of Free Czechoslovakia (CFC) based in Washington. In meetings with the council's leadership in Windsor, Ontario and Detroit, Michigan, it was agreed that a pro-democratic newspaper was necessary in Canada.⁸¹ In the paper's inaugural issue, the Mayor of Trenton, Ontario, Ken J. Couch, claimed that a thriving Czechoslovak community existed in his town. The Mayor expected that the members of the community would become "Good Canadians, if they are not so already." Couch believed that Czech and Slovak Canadians would retain their "native skills, their native culture which will fortify them and add to the cultural life of our community as well." Couch asserted that *Čas* would aid these same individuals and the city of Trenton in better understanding each other.⁸²

Anti-communist Czechs and Slovaks continued to promote their democratic ideals and protest against Communist oppression in their homeland. On 26 June 1949, the CNA held its seventh congress and adopted a resolution in which individuals could not be members of the organization if they supported the Communist movement, acted on behalf of the Czechoslovak government, or maintained relations with Prague. Many of the delegates in attendance were

⁸⁰ Jan Dočkálek, "Na Cestu," *Čas*, 1 June 1949, 2.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ken J. Couch, "A Letter from the Mayor of Trenton," *Čas*, 1 June 1949, 8.

recently arrived refugees who joined the congress' call on the UN to use its powers to establish "a free democratic election in Czechoslovakia... [to] be held under its supervision and control."⁸³

A month later, the organization closed its Montreal Branch for alleged activities that were sympathetic to the Communist cause. In its 27 July 1949 issue, the pro-democratic weekly *Čas* argued that Communist sympathizers within the Montreal Branch "refuse to vote for anti-communist measures, do not support Czechoslovak refugees, and maintain relations with Czechoslovak government representatives. They also publish their propaganda in compatriot Czechoslovak papers to the detriment of the community."⁸⁴

Anti-communist Czechs and Slovaks continued to work against the Communist authorities in Czechoslovakia. In assisting the anti-communists, *Čas* called on Czechoslovaks in Canada to support their countrymen who were fleeing the Communist regime. The pro-democratic weekly argued that many of these same individuals were skilled agriculturalists who could only be "a very great asset to Canada." Czechoslovak Canadians were subsequently asked to follow the example of other ethnic groups and aid the resettlement of their countrymen by providing them with labour contracts. *Čas* argued that Czechoslovak Canadians would be doing their national duty and providing newcomers with the opportunity for a new life in Canada.⁸⁵

In late August 1949, twenty-four university students boarded the *Charlton Sovereign* and the *Heinzelman* as part of a group of 302 DPs classified as Catholic orphans, close relatives, students, and miners. These students were permitted to enter Canada on one-year International Students' Service Scholarships to institutions across the country. After an eleven-day trans-

⁸³ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4018, file 10254-40, part 1, "Council of Free Czechoslovakia – Activities and Reports," letter from Karel Štark, President and P.V. Havlik, Secretary, CNAC to unknown, n.d.

⁸⁴ Prokop V. Havlík, "Z Čs. N.S. v Kanadě Do Montrealu Que.,!" *Čas*, 27 July 1949, 1.

⁸⁵ "To Our Readers" *Čas*, 8 August 1949, 8. The weekly went on to argue that "if you can help even a single one of these refugees then contact this paper and signify your willingness to sign a Labour Contract for one of these DPs. God will amply reward you for it."

Atlantic journey, the students arrived at Pier 21 in Halifax and spent three days in the city. On 9 November, the students arrived by train in Montreal where they were greeted by the local press. Five students were to remain in Montreal to attend McGill University, Université de Montréal, and Macdonald College. The remaining nineteen DPs were to attend other schools. Although immigration regulations required adults to commit to one-year labour contracts, the university students were the first group of individuals to have this requirement waived. Within the group of twenty-four students were three individuals of Czechoslovakian origin who were previously incarcerated as political prisoners. Miroslav Doseděl and Václav Opřátko were to study natural sciences and chemical engineering, both at the Université de Montréal. Nicholas Thuroczy, an ethnic Hungarian of Czechoslovak origin was to study agronomy at Macdonald College.⁸⁶

As Canadian immigration officials continued to admit Czech and Slovak DPs and post-1948 refugees, DEA officials discussed the value of maintaining Canadian diplomatic missions in Prague and Warsaw. In a confidential memorandum, officials within the DEA's European Division argued that consular work pertaining to immigration accounted for the majority of the legations' workload. The replacement of the mission in Prague with a consulate would not reduce costs and could seriously deprive the mission of its influence in the local diplomatic community and with the Communist authorities. Officials in Ottawa noted that should a change be made, the Prague and Warsaw offices would lose their diplomatic "...protection, rations, customs and other privileges...necessary to maintain any sort of tolerable living in "Transcurtainia.""⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Beth Paterson, "24 D.P.s, Bound for Universities, Voice Joy at Arriving in Canada," *Montreal Gazette*, 9 September 1949, 3.

⁸⁷ Canada, DFAIT, DCER, volume 15, chapter 1, Conduct of External Relations, part 4, Diplomatic and Consular Representation, section E, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia, 14, file DEA/10926-40, memorandum from European Division to Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, "Arguments for and Against

Communist Tactics and the Immigration of Czechoslovakians to Canada

In January 1950, DEA officials learned that the Communist authorities in Prague were implementing increasingly hostile tactics against Western government representatives. In the case of the Canadian legation, locally engaged staff were arrested or prevented from working. Unsubstantiated charges were filed against two Canadian non-commissioned officers, Sergeant Reginald Danko and Corporal J.G. Vanier.⁸⁸ In order to protect Canadian representatives, Ottawa arranged with the Chief of the Air Staff for the return of Danko and Vanier to Canada. On the recommendation of Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Arnold Danford Patrick Heeney, the Canadian government expelled bookkeeper Richard Berhmann and assistant clerk Hugo Bohounak, two members of the Czechoslovakian Legation in Ottawa as *persona non grata*.⁸⁹ Canadian diplomats stationed in Eastern Europe informed Ottawa of evidence that a “concerted drive, probably part of a general Russian strategy” was underway to interfere in the activities of Western diplomatic missions.⁹⁰ It was noted that the strategy effectively sought out

Maintaining Canadian Diplomatic Missions in Satellite Countries,” 18 November 1949, accessed 1 May 2012, <http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=8626>.

⁸⁸ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, accession 1977-78/84, volume 2493, file 10463-W-40, “Annual Review of Events in Czechoslovakia by the Canadian Minister at Prague,” circular document no. C27 /51 Annual Review of Events in Czechoslovakia – 1950, from Secretary of State for External Affairs to Minister of External Affairs, 30 March 1951, 6; Warren Baldwin, “Ottawa Reprisal Seen as Czechs Oust Pair,” *Globe and Mail*, 23 January 1950, 1; Canadian Press, “Ottawa Delays Retaliation Move against Czechs,” *Globe and Mail*, 24 January 1950, 3; Frank Flaherty, “Two Czech Employees Have to Leave Canada as Expulsion Reprisal,” *Globe and Mail*, 3 February 1950, 3; Canadian Press, “Ousted Czech Sorry to Leave,” *Globe and Mail*, 7 February 1950, 2.

⁸⁹ Canada, DFAIT, DCER, volume 16, chapter 1, Conduct of External Relations, part 1, Diplomatic and Consular Representation, section C, Czechoslovakia, 5, file L.S.L./volume 8, memorandum from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Prime Minister, 24 January 1950, accessed 1 May 2012, <http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=7026>; Baldwin, “Ottawa Reprisal Seen as Czechs Oust Pair,” 1; Canadian Press, “Ottawa Delays Retaliation Move against Czechs,” 3; Flaherty, “Two Czech Employees Have to Leave Canada as Expulsion Reprisal,” 3; Canadian Press, “Ousted Czech Sorry to Leave,” 2.

⁹⁰ Canada, DFAIT, DCER, volume 16, chapter 1, Conduct of External Relations, part 1, Diplomatic and Consular Representation, section D, Iron Curtain Missions: Assessment, 7, file DEA/10926-40, memorandum from Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 2 March 1950, accessed 1 May 2012, <http://www.international.gc.ca/department/history-histoire/dcer/details-en.asp?intRefid=7028>. See

the arrest and false accusation of Western diplomatic personnel in order for local Communist authorities to be able to blacken their reputations. As a result, Western diplomats including Canadian representatives stationed in Prague worked in "...a growing atmosphere of fear, suspicion, frustration, and isolation in which the westerner simply has no place. He becomes in short an enemy alien." Canadian representatives in Prague informed DEA officials in Ottawa that legations in Eastern Europe should not close due to Communist intervention because they were important in safeguarding Canadian legal and financial interests, and the immigration of relatives of Canadian citizens.⁹¹

Canadian Czechoslovak leaders were increasingly frustrated by the tactics used by Communist authorities. For example, visa applicants in Czechoslovakia were required to collect far more documents than were required by the Canadian legation for a visa to be granted. Three types of passports were attainable from the Communist regime; diplomatic, business relations, and emigration (*vystěhovalecství*).⁹² After February 1948, the acquisition of a valid passport for travel abroad became increasingly hard to attain. Excluding Communist officials, passports were rarely granted to the average Czechoslovakian family in order to prevent emigration aboard.⁹³ In his correspondence with officials in Ottawa, Canadian Chargé d'affaires in Prague, John Arnold Irwin mentioned the case of a fourteen year-old orphan, Anna Sukelová. Since September 1948, Sukelová attempted to obtain a passport from the Communist authorities in order to be reunited with her uncle in Canada. In two years, Sukelová collected twenty-two official documents from various Communist government offices and agencies. Once she had received a "promise of visa"

Enclosure 1 – Notes on Functions of Canadian Posts in Poland and Czechoslovakia, 28 February 1950. See Enclosure 2 – Memorandum: Usefulness of Iron Curtain Missions, 28 February 1950.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Josef Kubánek, interview by Jana Cipris, 14 July 1978, interview CZE-5291-KUB, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

⁹³ Táborský, *Communism in Czechoslovakia*, 474.

from Canadian officials, the Communist government summarily refused her application for a passport.⁹⁴ Initially, individuals were required to submit along with their passport application: an identity card, proof of citizenship, police registration card, and a marriage certificate, if applicable.⁹⁵ Legal emigration to Canada from Czechoslovakia drastically slowed in March 1949 when the Canadian Legation was able to grant 68 visas to Czechoslovakia's citizens. A year later, only ten visas were issued.⁹⁶ Canadian Chargé d'affaires John Arnold Irwin stated that correspondence between Czechoslovakians and the Canadian legation was still large in volume, but began to steadily decrease as the Communist authorities clamped down on official emigration.

In a memorandum entitled "Czechoslovak Immigration," Canadian immigration officials were hesitant to support a plan by the CFC to vet the background and desirability of prospective immigrants submitted to Canadian officials by the council. Former Czechoslovakian ambassador to Canada, František Němec informed immigration officials that the council was offering the services of former Czechoslovak Brigadier-General František Dastich to aid immigration officers in analyzing the background and desirability of prospective immigrants to Canada.⁹⁷ Immigration bureaucrats noted that acquiring reliable security information on behalf of Czechoslovakians was increasingly difficult for Canadian security officers to obtain. Officials in Ottawa ultimately refused to get involved in the internal political divisions between former Czech and Slovak

⁹⁴ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 11, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," memorandum from J.A. Irwin to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 4 May 1950, microfilm reel C-10436.

⁹⁵ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 11, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," memorandum from Benjamin Rogers to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 4 June 1952," microfilm reel C-10436.

⁹⁶ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 11, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," memorandum from J.A. Irwin to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 4 May 1950, microfilm reel C-10436.

⁹⁷ František Dastich was promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General on 1 May 1945. He later worked as a Czechoslovakian military diplomat in Budapest and Berlin. On 31 December 1948, he resigned to protest the Communist takeover of his homeland. He later settled in the United States and was active in the Council of Free Czechoslovakia.

politicians within the CFC, and refused Němec's request to send a representative from the council overseas to assist in the selection of Czechoslovakian citizens for immigration to Canada. Conversely, Canadian officials believed that the council could be valuable in steering suitable and desirable immigrants to Canadian visa offices in Germany.⁹⁸

The Canadian Immigration Branch worked in cooperation with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to implement an immigrant security vetting process known as "Stage B."⁹⁹ This additional security step took place once an applicant was interviewed by a visa officer and underwent a medical test in Europe. In 1948, the RCMP stationed Stage B officials across Europe and began assessing individual security clearances in the hopes of keeping Communist agents and their sympathizers from entering Canada. By 1950, twenty percent of immigrants whose entry to Canada was rejected due to a suspicion of Communist sympathies appealed to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. Of these appeals, only twenty percent were eventually permitted entry into Canada. As a result, 96 percent of individuals labelled as security risks by Immigration officials and RCMP officers never entered Canada.¹⁰⁰ During this period, Canadian military intelligence indicated that the threat of a Soviet-led attack remained probable. In its assessment of possible "forms and scales" of offensive operations against Canada, the Department of National Defence indicated ten situations in which the Soviet-bloc could attack Canada. The first scenario listed in the intelligence analysis considered "subversive activities of all kinds, from anti-war propaganda to strikes and acts of sabotage" as the most likely threats.¹⁰¹ Canadian military authorities identified communist subversion from within as the greatest threat

⁹⁸ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 11, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953," memorandum on Czechoslovak Immigration, 22 December 1950, microfilm reel C-10436.

⁹⁹ Finkel, "Canadian Immigration Policy and the Cold War," 54.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹⁰¹ Canada, Department of National Defence, Directorate of History and Heritage, Kardex, 112.3M2 (D329), "Fort Churchill, Jul. 48 / Oct. 51," Appendix A: Extracts from Current Intelligence Appreciation of Forms and Scales of Attack Covering Period 1949/50.

to national security. Similarly, in Ottawa, the Joint Intelligence Bureau (JIB) concluded that Czechoslovakia remained an asset to the Soviet Union as long as the satellite state continued to import raw materials from the West. The bureau noted that Czechoslovakia remained an “easy partner in the Red Bloc” as there was “ample evidence to show that Soviet ideology on the one hand and the cold logic of industrial necessity on the other may rapidly become conflicting elements in the formation of future policy.”¹⁰² Intelligence authorities were aware that Prague was suffering from a “deficiency in manpower” with the expulsion of the Sudeten German and Hungarian minorities. As a result, the agricultural, mining, and technological industries were in decline. Prague commenced efforts to alleviate this problem by campaigning to attract Czechs and Slovaks living abroad to return to their native country.¹⁰³ Under the direction of the Ministry of the Interior, the OBZ (Army Security Intelligence Office), and the Ministry of National Defence, Czechoslovakian agents were sent overseas in a concerted effort to blackmail Czech and Slovak immigrants in Canada to return home.¹⁰⁴

In the summer of 1951, the United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Status of Refugees and Stateless Persons adopted the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*. The convention defined the term “refugee” which was to be applied to DPs who fled their countries out of a genuine fear of persecution. Since the term “Displaced Person” remained open to interpretation, the Convention established that a refugee was any individual who “as a result of

¹⁰² LAC, Department of National Defence (hereafter DND) Fonds, RG 24, file 762-215, “Canadian Joint Intelligence Bureau Information on – Czechoslovakia,” memorandum Joint Intelligence Bureau – Ottawa JIB (Can) 19/48 – Czechoslovakia: Realignment within the Soviet Sphere of Influence, 1 May 1948, microfilm reel C-11642, 1. The intelligence report noted that if Prague severed its ties with the West it could not prevent a progressive reduction in Czechoslovakia’s standard of living.

¹⁰³ LAC, DND Fonds, RG 24, file 762-215, “Canadian Joint Intelligence Bureau Information on – Czechoslovakia,” Annex I – World War II Developments, 17 May 1948, microfilm reel C-11642, 3.

¹⁰⁴ LAC, DND Fonds, RG 24, file 9490-34-82, “War Office Reports on Czechoslovakia,” memorandum of conversation with Arnošt Heidrich (former Secretary General of the Czechoslovak Foreign Office), n.d., microfilm reel C-11653, 2.

events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.”¹⁰⁵ The RCMP feared that the 1951 Convention would hinder Ottawa’s ability to deport persons who were considered security threats. As a result, the Canadian government did not become a signatory to the 1951 Convention because it guaranteed asylum as an international human right. Canada used the Convention instead as a framework for the admission and denial of individuals to the country. Similarly, Ottawa continued to use an ad hoc approach whereby Orders-in-Council were used to grant refugees’ entry to Canada.¹⁰⁶ Even with the establishment of the 1951 Convention, Czech and Slovak refugees in Austria, West Germany, and Italy remained at the mercy of Canadian immigration officials and the RCMP who enforced security screening over the refugees’ rights to asylum.

Canadian immigration authorities continued to fear the infiltration of Communist agents within the wave of refugees who continued to arrive in Canada. Conversely, Canadian Czechoslovak organizations continued to receive grievances from newly arrived refugees regarding their relocation to Canada. On 23 May 1951, MH president Gustav Přístupa wrote to the Canadian Department of Labour insisting that the hall received several complaints from recently arrived Czechs and Slovaks indicating that upon reaching the government hostel at Ajax, Ontario – on the outskirts of Toronto – they were “not sufficiently fed, and after mealtimes

¹⁰⁵ Michael Lanphier, “Canada’s Response to Refugees,” *International Migration Review* 15.1-2 (1981): 113-114. Canadian government used these Orders-in-Council to admit approximately 40,000 DPs by 1948. The United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees came into force on 22 April 1954.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. In June 1969, Ottawa ratified the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

remained hungry.” The main complaint of the refugees was that food servings were too small. Přistupa recommended that instead of giving each refugee two slices of bread, a loaf could be left on the table for everyone to eat according to their need. The MH president noted that “it doesn’t seem right that, in a country such as Canada, anyone should go hungry, especially for the lack of bread.”¹⁰⁷ The Department of Labour replied that it was surprised by the contents of the letter and claimed that Ottawa operated the hostel for over four years without any complaints. The department noted that its official policy guaranteed that meals served to newcomers were of “...good quality and sufficient in quantity.”¹⁰⁸ Newly-arrived refugees from Czechoslovakia were later welcomed by Reverend Jaroslav Zeman and a group of parishioners from the Czechoslovak Baptist Board in Toronto where they were each given two dollars, a Czech-language bible and other religious literature.¹⁰⁹

Although many refugees from Czechoslovakia found their initial experience in Canada to be lacking, other refugees were heroically welcomed to Canada as anti-communist freedom fighters. On 11 September 1951, Czech engineer František Jarda raced a train belonging to Czechoslovak state railways from the western town of Cheb, passed the border town of Aš, and into Selb, West Germany. The train carried 111 passengers, mostly students and spa patients. Seventy-seven individuals later returned home including several train employees, six children, two soldiers, and a policeman who were not aware of the Czech engineer’s plan to flee to the West. According to Jarda, he brought his wife and two children along on his daring escape to the West because it was “no longer bearable to live in an Eastern European state. We made plans for

¹⁰⁷ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file “Correspondence, 1951,” letter from Gustav Přistupa to Mr. Dowson, Department of Labour, 23 May 1951.

¹⁰⁸ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file “Correspondence, 1951,” letter from W.W. Dawson, Department of Labour to Gustav Přistupa, 28 May 1951.

¹⁰⁹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file “Correspondence, 1951,” volume 7, file “Miscellaneous – Parkdale Baptist Church, Toronto – Anniversary Booklet, Invitations, n.d., 1960, 1967,” Booklet, 25. Výročí československého baptistického sboru v Torontě, n.d. Interestingly, Jaroslav Zeman was of Polish origin.

our flight for a long time. We bought food and clothing – everything we could.”¹¹⁰ Jarda was later offered employment by the Shoe production magnate Tomáš J. Baťa, whom the *Globe and Mail* reported as having admired “the ingenuity, resolution and courage of the engineer.”¹¹¹

The Freedom Train incident illustrated to Canadian Czechoslovak institutions including the CNA and MH that the need to help refugees was of paramount importance. Many more Czechs and Slovaks desired to flee Communist oppression in Czechoslovakia and were forced to attempt daring and life-threatening escapes in order to reach freedom in the West. The refugees from the Freedom Train not only garnered praise and increased the morale of the Czech and Slovak refugees already in Canada, but they also fascinated a Canadian public that increasingly began to understand the efforts of these refugees against the Communist regime. As a passenger aboard the Freedom Train in Czechoslovakia, Karel Ruml chose to settle in Canada because the federal government offered to accept him, more quickly than other western countries.¹¹² For the thirty-three Freedom Train passengers who wished to remain in the West, Canada became a desired destination because they viewed a prolonged stay in temporary housing in the Ludwigsburg refugee camp as “dangerous” – perhaps because Communist agents were known to infiltrate holding centres and attempt to repatriate individuals back to Czechoslovakia. Although the United States remained preferential to Canada in the eyes of the Freedom Train refugees, American authorities expected them to become active in propaganda activities against their Communist homeland to which these refugees were less than favourable.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Canadian Press, “Czech Engineer Races Train to Freedom from Iron Curtain: Brake Lines Cut in Dash to Germany,” *Globe and Mail*, 12 September 1951, 1; Čermák, 194. The American legation in Frankfurt helped to process the refugees from the Freedom Train. American authorities later discovered that train No. 3717’s brake lines were cut to prevent any state employee from stopping the train before it reached the West.

¹¹¹ “Czech Who Fled Reds with Train Offered Job Here,” *Globe and Mail*, 15 September 1951, 1. Baťa cabled Jarda to inform him that “in appreciation of your courage you have a home and job in Canada if you want.”

¹¹² Karel Ruml, *Z deníku Vlaku Svobody* (Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2001), 123.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

Canadian officials in West Germany informed the Freedom Train passengers wishing to resettle in Canada that they would be subjected to a health exam while Canadian labour commission officials classified successful candidates for labour contracts. In the case of Karel Ruml, officials confirmed upon him the status of a woodsman (*dřevorubec*).¹¹⁴ František Jarda, Karel Ruml, and the other Freedom Train refugees arrived in Halifax aboard the Norwegian ship *Goya* from Bremerhaven, West Germany to a hero's welcome. The Freedom Train incident captured the hearts of many Canadian readers who became enamored with their courageous act of defiance against Communist tyranny. Canadian authorities transported some of the refugees to Ajax, Ontario by train prior to resettling them in Toronto where Ruml was later employed in an insurance company. Ruml began his career in Canada by sorting documents in a company basement for \$27 dollars per week.¹¹⁵ He recalls the financial difficulty of resettlement and starting over in Canada:

I lived in a small bedroom in an old home on Summerhill Ave., nearly 5km from City Hall. Breakfast with the room cost \$25 a week which left me with \$2 a week for everything else. I ate as much porridge as I could fit inside me every morning, otherwise I only bought the cheapest groceries, usually bread and sardines. In the first few months, I often went hungry. Toronto was a spread out major city and I walked everywhere because I did not have enough for the tramway or the bus.¹¹⁶

Many Czech and Slovak newcomers to Canada had difficulty in facing the harsh Canadian climate because they were often ill-equipped to handle their first Canadian winter. Ruml remembers that he was unprepared for winter since “almost every day after walking all the way

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 123-124. Ruml recalls chatting in French with the Canadian consul in West Germany which could only have increased his chances for selection to Canada.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 126. The Freedom Train refugees arrived in Halifax to a throng of journalists and the general public. Ruml recalls that he was “hurried onto a train and arrived in Toronto thirty-two hours later where another news conference with journalists awaited us.”

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 126-127.

downtown, I worked in a cold basement in soaked shoes and pants that had been sullied by the dirty snow and salt from the street.”¹¹⁷

Integrating Refugees into the Canadian Czechoslovak Community

Czech and Slovak Refugees from Czechoslovakia who resettled in urban centres often found friendship within the local Canadian Czechoslovak community. In Toronto, Czech and Slovak refugees often visited MH located in the European quarter below Queen Street. Instead of finding cooperation and goodwill among Czechoslovaks, Ruml found intra-ethnic animosity as prewar Czechs or ‘oldtimers’ who arrived prior to 1948 largely ignored the newest members of their transplanted community. Many older members within the Czechoslovak community donated time and money to assist postwar immigrants, and were aware that recent arrivals languished in European holding camps – sometimes for years. However, Ruml claimed that these earlier immigrants often did not extend their hand in friendship and cooperation, but remained inhospitable.¹¹⁸

Czech and Slovak refugees continued to seek assistance from Canadian Czechoslovak organizations. Masaryk Memorial Hall continued to support the settlement of refugees from Czechoslovakia. In one case, Czech refugee Zdeněk Štřelec wrote to MH from Casablanca, Morocco seeking help in coming to Canada. Štřelec spent time in a DP camp in Germany prior to agreeing to Morocco’s offer to accept him. Štřelec hoped to make Canada his new home if a democratic and independent Czechoslovakia could not be resurrected.¹¹⁹ In another case,

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 126-127.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 127. Ruml lamented that previous waves of immigrants from Czechoslovakia “went out of their way to ignore the poor newcomers.”

¹¹⁹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file “Correspondence, 1951,” letter from Zdeněk Štřelec to Gustav Přistupa, 31 October 1951.

Antonín Sevelka, his wife Věra, and their son, Anthony wrote to MH president Gustav Přistupa for help in leaving their DP camp in Germany for Canada. On behalf of the Sevelka family, MH sent applications for admission to the Immigration Branch. Canadian officials informed the hall that the proposed immigrants would be included on immigration lists furnished to officers overseas where arrangements could be made for their examination.¹²⁰

Masaryk Memorial Hall also provided assistance to Czechs and Slovaks already living in Canada. In one case, Ladislav Libý of Chicoutimi, Quebec lost his vision after a chemical explosion occurred at the ornament factory where he worked. On his family's behalf, a letter was written to MH in the hopes that financial assistance could be secured for his medical care and re-integration into society.¹²¹ The hall provided compatriots with financial loans of varying amounts, for example, \$500 or \$1000 with an interest rate of six percent payable twice per year.¹²² However, given the dire situation of Czech and Slovak refugees in Austrian, German, and Italian camps, MH continued to make the resettlement of these individuals a priority. By the fall of 1951, Gustav Přistupa personally signed 652 affidavits for overseas Czech and Slovak refugees who were seeking to be admitted to Canada.¹²³

Refugees such as František Jarda and Karel Ruml arrived in Canada after years spent in holding camps or through daring escapes to the West. Canadian Chargé d'affaires in Prague, Benjamin Rogers informed Ottawa that persons seeking to immigrate to Canada were no longer officially permitted to leave by Communist authorities. In 1951, the Canadian legation issued

¹²⁰ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, 1951," letter from A.D. Adamson, Immigration Inspector-in-charge to Gustav Přistupa, 24 April 1951.

¹²¹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, 1951," letter from Zdeněk Němčeck to Gustav Přistupa, 15 December 1951.

¹²² LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, 1951," file "Correspondence, 1952," letter from Masaryk Memorial Hall to OPAL Manufacturing Co. Limited, 1 June 1952.

¹²³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 1, file 8 "Minutes – Executive Committee, 1948-1953," Zápisnica zo širšieho výkonného výboru ČSNS v Kanade, 14 October, 1951.

only twenty-one visas. On 1 January 1952, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague assumed control of issuing Czechoslovakian passports and effectively restricted access to official emigration. Rogers noted that only one visa was issued that year to an individual with a Czechoslovakian passport for emigration to Canada.¹²⁴ Canadian diplomatic representatives in Prague informed government officials in Ottawa that immigration to Canada from Czechoslovakia had “hit a complete standstill.” Communist authorities refused to grant exit permits to prospective immigrants who already had a close relative or family in Canada. Initially, Canadian officials were left to believe that each decision to refuse an exit permit was based on merit. However, Canadian diplomats soon realized that Czechoslovakian authorities refused to grant passports for travel to Canada en masse. Unofficially, Canadian officials began to suspect that Communist authorities were discriminating against applicants when passports for West Germany were considerably easier to acquire than for Canada.¹²⁵

While Czechoslovakia’s citizens were finding it impossible to obtain a passport in order to leave, Canadian officials were in the process of officially affirming what had been standard practice in Canadian immigration policy. The 1952 Immigration Act granted the minister of immigration far-reaching powers to set regulations that enforced the legislation. As a result of ministerial discretion, individuals and groups could now be refused entry into Canada based on factors such as nationality, geographic origin, custom and tradition, unsuitability to climate, or

¹²⁴ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 617, file 916207, pt. 11, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia, 1947-1953,” memorandum from Benjamin Rogers to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 4 June 1952, microfilm reel C-10436.

¹²⁵ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4150, file 232-AX-40, part 1, “Immigration to Canada from Czechoslovakia,” letter from Canadian Legation, Prague to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 3 July 1953.

inability to assimilate into Canadian society. Homosexuals, drug addicts and traffickers were added to the prohibited classes.¹²⁶

Fighting Allegations of Communism with the Canadian Czechoslovak Community

In March 1952, the conservative-leaning *Toronto Telegram* alleged in a front-page series entitled “Communists gain in ‘front’ groups of many tongues,” that the CNA had “some degree of association with the (Communist) Labour Progressive party.” The Alliance’s executive vehemently denied the allegation and their connection to communism. In a letter to the newspaper, executive members including; president Karol Štark, vice-president Antonin Daičar, treasurer Gustav Přistupa, and secretary Prokop V. Havlík asserted that the CNA was “one of the strongest anti-Communist groups in the country.” The executive went on to note that every member of the organization had publicly pronounced their loyalty to Canada and pledged to fight communism. After the allegations were published the executive feared for the safety of its membership who could be wrongly associated with communist activities in Canada and deemed to be disloyal Canadians or even Communist spies.¹²⁷ Canadian Czechoslovaks continued to fight allegations within the Canadian press that they were associated with communism. A year later, Canadian Czechoslovaks were embroiled in a controversy at Toronto City Hall as Czechoslovaks and nationalist Slovaks openly contested each community’s commemoration of the past.

¹²⁶ Harold Troper, “Canadian Immigration Policy since 1945,” *International Journal* 48.2 (1993): 262. The 1952 Act instituted appeal boards composed of federal officials who presided over deportations cases. The 1952 Act came into effect on 1 June 1953.

¹²⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 5 “Toronto Branch No. 24 – Miscellaneous, n.d., 1944-1945, 1955,” letter from Karel Štark, Antonín Daičar, Gustav Přistupa, and Prokop V. Havlík to the Publisher, *The Toronto Telegram*, 1 April 1952. The Communist Party of Canada was banned in 1940. In 1943, the Labour-Progressive Party was founded as its successor. The letter also pointed to the 1950 visit of approximately 500 CNA members to Parliament Hill where they were met by Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent.

Commemorating the Past: Tensions Between Czechoslovaks and nationalist Slovaks

As the Canadian Czechoslovak community continued efforts to assist their compatriots scattered in refugee camps across Europe, they were also forced to deal with heightened tensions between Czechoslovaks and nationalist Slovaks. As a site of commemoration, Toronto's City Hall cenotaph was often used to pay homage to Canada's participation in the First and Second World Wars. On 3 May 1953, controversy erupted when members of the nationalist Slovak community dressed in traditional clothing placed a wreath at the cenotaph to commemorate wartime Slovak president, Monsignor Jozef Tiso and General Milan R. Štefánik. Czechs and Slovaks who supported a common Czechoslovak ethnic identity and were subsequently critical of the independent wartime Slovak state noted that its leaders including Tiso were responsible for collaborating with Nazi Germany and were complicit in the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians. The following day, the *Toronto Daily Star* published an image of the ceremony with a caption that incorrectly informed its readers that Tiso was formerly a "president-martyr of Czechoslovakia."¹²⁸ The CNA sent a letter to the newspaper, the Royal Canadian Legion, and Mayor Allan A. Lamport, vehemently opposing the wreath and arguing that its presence wrongly "couples the names of a patriot and a traitor." In the letter, CNA president Karol Štark argued that Jozef Tiso was a "pronounced Nazi collaborator," meanwhile the "Slovak state, of which this group of 'Democratic Slovaks' is an ardent follower was Hitler's ally, fighting side by side with the German armies against the Canadian soldiers during the last war, and against those who lost their lives for the cause of freedom and whole glory we remember when passing the

¹²⁸ "Democratic Slovaks Honor Former Leaders," *Toronto Daily Star*, 4 May 1953, 14.

cenotaph at the Toronto city hall.”¹²⁹ In light of the cenotaph controversy, city officials sought to prevent the cenotaph from becoming a site of transplanted “European factional difficulties.”¹³⁰

On 16 May, executives of eight Canadian Slovak organizations assembled in Toronto to craft a resolution which was sent to Mayor Lamport in an attempt to drive back the accusations made by the CNA in the *Toronto Daily Star*. Members of the Canadian Slovak League, First Catholic Slovak Union, First Catholic Slovak Ladies’ Union, Slovak Catholic Sokol, Slovak Liberation Committee, Slovak National Council Abroad, Slovak Legion, and the Union of Slovak Journalists Abroad accurately asserted that Tiso was not a “puppet president” because he was elected by members of the Slovak Parliament in October 1939. The executives in attendance illustrated in their resolution what they perceived as the “malignancy of a small group which wishes to continue in its domination and oppression of the Slovak people.” They considered the CNA’s accusations as “racial discrimination” and contrary to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.¹³¹

Conclusion

In early 1948, Canadian diplomats in Czechoslovakia astutely recognized that the Communist Party was solidifying its control over the state’s affairs. Several weeks later, the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February 1948 was met with caution on the part of Canadian officials who sought to maintain relations with the Communist authorities and keep their legation in Prague open as a “listening post.” The fall of democratic Czechoslovakia into the Soviet sphere of influence increasingly concerned Canadian authorities who were in the

¹²⁹ “Czechs Say Wreath Tribute to Traitor,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 16 May 1953, 2.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ LAC, Canadian Slovak League (hereafter CSL) Fonds, MG 28 V47, volume 2, file “Correspondence,” Resolution to his Worship, Allan A. Lamport, Mayor of the City of Toronto, and to the Controllers of the City of Toronto, n.d., 1-3.

midst of securing the state against Soviet infiltration and homegrown Communist sympathizers. Franca Iacovetta explored the role of the Canadian state in spreading a “sense of moral panic” in which public and non-governmental officials warned citizens of the influx of dysfunctional and immoral immigrants who could weaken Canada’s predominantly Christian, democratic, and middle class society.¹³² According to this perspective, Canadian authorities were concerned with the potential of immoral, sexually deviant, and weak families entering the country. Combined with a sociopolitical climate in which government officials actively increased the public’s fear of communism, the Liberal government of Prime Minister Mackenzie King welcomed Europe’s Displaced Persons (DPs) and anti-communist refugees as constituting a significant contribution to the development of postwar Canada.

In cooperation with the Canadian government, Czechoslovak institutions were instrumental in resettling Czech and Slovak DPs and anti-communist refugees. The CNA and MH’s members were predominantly older immigrants who felt it was their duty to help their compatriots. Older members of the Czechoslovak community referred to the newcomers as the ‘1948ers,’ while the recent arrivals referred to members of the existing community as ‘oldtimers’ or ‘old-fashioned.’ Canadian Czechoslovak organizations signed affidavits for farm labour contracts, found accommodations, other employment, basic goods, clothing, translation services, and provided financial and social assistance to newcomers from Czechoslovakia. From 1948 to 1954, 12,374 newcomers to Canada identified their nationality as Czechoslovakian. Similarly, 10,353 persons gave Czechoslovakia as their last country of residence.¹³³

¹³² Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 203.

¹³³ Canada, DTC, DBS, *Canada Yearbook, 1951*, 143, 145-147; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1952-53* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1953), 169-170; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1955* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1955), 168, 170-171; Canada, DTC, DBS, *The Canada Yearbook, 1956* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1956),

After February 1948, the immigration of ethnic Czechs and Slovaks to Canada was directly a consequence of Cold War politics. Anti-communist Czech and Slovak refugees transplanted their Old World ethnic and ideological divisions to Canada. Older compatriots were surprised by the behaviour of many of the newcomers who only wished to discuss their political party affiliations back in Czechoslovakia. The oldtimers became aware that a small group of individuals came to Canada with the notion of re-establishing their political allegiances in exile before eventually returning to a Czechoslovakia liberated from communism.¹³⁴ A small number of 1948ers sought to promote their anti-communist and democratic politics in Canada by attempting to use the MH as a front for their anti-communist activities. When it became clear that many oldtimers in the Czechoslovak community did not share their ideological aspirations, the hall was labelled as a private company for private gain.¹³⁵ Essentially, the Czech or Slovak political refugee was a vital component in the Canadian government's attempts to eliminate domestic leftists and prevent Communist infiltration. These same refugees served as a legitimizing force for conservative and anti-Soviet politicians, bureaucrats, and non-governmental organizations who sought to promote fear of the Soviet Union and communism at home. Similarly, the newcomers proved to be a source of embarrassment to Communist authorities in Eastern Europe once they began to agitate for a return of democracy in Czechoslovakia. The 1948 wave of political refugees from Czechoslovakia enhanced Canada's democratic identity during the Cold War.¹³⁶

182, 184-185. Similarly, 10,402 individuals claimed Czech as their racial origin. Slovaks were not counted as a separate group.

¹³⁴ Karol (Karel) Štark, interview by Jana Cipris, 28 August 1980.

¹³⁵ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file "Annual Reports, 1948, 1949, 1953, 1954," Riaditelská Rada Masarykového domu v Toronto, 1953-1954, 6.

¹³⁶ Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 291-292.

The 1948ers were convinced that they would return to Czechoslovakia in a few short years. Similarly, many of these refugees believed that parliamentary democracy would return to their homeland in less than five years since “communism could not last” in a country with a strong democratic tradition.¹³⁷ This mindset prevented many refugees from rapidly assimilating. As one 1948er declared: “if they had known that they would stay permanently then they would have assimilated more rapidly.”¹³⁸ In the coming years, the 1948ers learned that their initial temporary stay in Canada would in fact become their new permanent home. Through encounters with previous immigrants from Czechoslovakia and Canadian-born members of the Czechoslovak community, many of the 1948ers claimed to no longer view themselves as exiles, and thus sought to heal the rifts in the Czechoslovak community between themselves and the oldtimers. The 1948ers were profoundly shaped by the Communist seizure of power in February 1948. In joining Czechoslovak institutions such as the CNA and MH, the 1948ers successfully entrenched their anti-communist agenda and democratic values in Canadian Czechoslovak institutions. As members of Czechoslovak institutions in Canada, many 1948ers steered these organizations in an attempt to actively influence Canadian foreign policy towards Communist Czechoslovakia.

¹³⁷ Vít Wágner, interview by Jana Cipris, 26 August 1980, interview CZE-7955-WAG, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

Chapter Four:

Community Tensions: Divisions between Canadian Czechoslovaks and Communist Czechoslovakia

“How an Immigrant Girl Fell in Love with Canada” garnered much attention when *Maclean’s* published the story in April 1960. In the article, Czech refugee Marika Robert described her experience in coming to a new country and her integration into Canadian society.¹ Upon arriving in Montreal aboard the *Columbia* in 1951, Robert pondered: “How many years have I got to assimilate and become part of that great future?” In the *Maclean’s* article, Robert describes her initial problems in finding accommodations as a single female and newcomer to Canada. Robert met dozens of “landladies” who were wary of the issues that newcomers such as an unmarried woman could bring into their traditional environment. Many of these property-owners informed her that no male visitors would be permitted in her room, followed by questions including, “Do you have pets? Are you a Roman Catholic? Do you use the toilet at night?”² Canadians willing to rent out rooms to newcomers insisted that no cooking, smoking, bathing, or staying in the room during the day would be permitted.³

Many newcomers to Canada in the postwar era initially struggled to find employment and became destitute thus often causing difficulty for their landlords. Robert eventually found accommodations in a house with multiple rooms or ‘cells’ and a communal bathroom while she looked for employment. Robert also lamented the complexity of the immigrant setting in which intra-ethnic dynamics heavily influenced her experience. She noted that immigrant communities and society at large could be divided between old and new immigrants, political and economic

¹ Marika Robert, “How an Immigrant Girl Fell in Love with Canada,” *Maclean’s* 73 (23 April 1960): 25-27.

² *Ibid.*, 40, 45.

³ *Ibid.*

immigrants, Western immigrants and immigrants from the Iron Curtain, and that each group envied the other's immigration experience.⁴ According to Robert:

The new immigrant is a person who has lost everything except his accent. In the eyes of others he is that strange animal with an unpronounceable name and a way of speech that is either cute or irritating depending on his age and sex. Liked by some, disliked by many, the immigrant is a statistical figure, the subject of arguments, interviews and articles. He is also the hero of a tragicomical adventure which few Canadians understand and which after a certain time he himself is apt to forget.⁵

After nine years in Canada, Marika Robert claimed to feel as an equal member of Canadian society:

I think I am finally part of it all: part of the skyscrapers and slums, the superhighways and department stores, the lack of aesthetic beauty and the abundance of comfort...after almost a decade in Canada I have only vague recollections of the years when every move seemed to be an experience: when my days were filled with nightmarish and hilarious discoveries.⁶

Although many refugees from the across the Iron Curtain continued to recognize and maintain their ethnic identity through adherence to a common nation, language, religion, history, and territory, they also became Canadians. During the Cold War, Czech and Slovak refugees like Marika Robert began to self-identify with Canadian society and its culture and customs after realizing that they had acquired a new way of thinking, vocabulary, habits, tastes, and interests – all while preserving their ethnic heritage.⁷

During the early 1950s, refugees who fled Czechoslovakia after the Communist takeover of 1948 continued to arrive in Canada. Profoundly influenced by the events of 1948, later

⁴ Ibid., 46.

⁵ Ibid., 25.

⁶ Ibid., 24.

⁷ See Lucie Pelikánová, "Oskar Sýkora ml., DDS, PhD – Zubní lékař a doktor filosofie v jednom dni [Oskar Sýkora, Jr., DDS, PhD – Dentist and Doctor of Philosophy in One Day]," In *Neviditelné oběti komunismu*, eds. Jakub Hodbod, Jan Goll, and Václav Ulvr, 60-69 (Liberec: Gymnázium F.X. Šaldy v Liberci, 2006), 61-62; Bořivoj Čelovský, *Šel jsem svou cestou* (Opava: Vademecum, 1996), 89-95.

refugees were often more determined in their anti-communist stance because they experienced the early years of Communist oppression and/or spent a significant amount of time in refugee camps in Austria, West Germany, and Italy. In the following years, few Czechoslovakian citizens were granted travel documents and officially permitted to leave the Communist regime. The Stalinist authorities in Prague restricted individuals and families from leaving the country, thus forcing many to attempt dangerous and life-threatening border crossings to the West in search of freedom and opportunity.

This chapter examines how Czech and Slovak refugees who came in the years after the Communist seizure of power in 1948 continued their efforts to liberate Czechoslovakia into the 1950s and 1960s. From 1947 to 1953, refugees from Czechoslovakia accounted for three percent of all European refugees who resettled in Canada.⁸ During the 1950s, many 1948ers turned their focus towards resolving ideological divisions and personality conflicts between themselves and the oldtimers within the pre-existing Czechoslovak community in Canada. Prague's surveillance and infiltration of Canadian Czechoslovak organizations including the Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA), Communist repatriation propaganda, and the tragic events surrounding the failed Hungarian Revolution of 1956 demonstrated to the 1948ers that Communism in Czechoslovakia would not be easily defeated. The 1948ers' return home would be delayed. Eventually, many 1948ers, disillusioned by the liberation movement, joined with the pre-existing community and began to emphasize Canadian citizenship through the preservation of ethnic heritage and the promotion of cultural activities. In this period, two major Canadian Czechoslovak organizations: the Czechoslovak National Alliance and the Masaryk Memorial Hall (MH) were incorporated – with the former receiving a federal charter from the Canadian

⁸ Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 5; Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 313.

government. The CNA and MH became centres of advocacy in the struggle to liberate Czechoslovakia and reunite Canadian Czechs and Slovaks with their relatives in Czechoslovakia. Many 1948ers left family and close relatives behind following their escape to the West. Subsequently, the 1948ers' efforts to visit Czechoslovakia without legal difficulties and be reunited with their loved ones were hampered by the Communist authorities in Prague. Authorities viewed the 1948ers as illegal émigrés and the emigration of their relatives to Canada as an "internal matter." During the 1950s and 1960s, very few individuals and families arrived in Canada from Czechoslovakia since few were able to officially emigrate.

Prague's Appeal for the Repatriation of Compatriots

In May 1955, the head of Czechoslovakia's legation in Ottawa, Bedřich Hruška, purchased advertising space in Canadian newspapers requesting recently arrived refugees from Czechoslovakia to "come home." The advertisement stated that individuals guilty of a "criminal offence" for leaving Czechoslovakia illegally "under the influence of propaganda" would be pardoned if they returned within six months after the 9 May amnesty.⁹ The question of refugees returning home during the Communist era was a contentious issue within the Canadian Czechoslovak community. Although some individuals did return to their homeland after initially resettling in Canada, their numbers were negligible and their reasons were largely ideological rather than financial or personal. The Communist scheme ultimately failed as fewer than 1,000 refugees returned home from the West. The Communists quickly turned to an extensive campaign of propaganda attacks aimed at émigrés in the West. Soon after, agents for the *StB*

⁹ Bruce MacDonald, "Can't Protest Czech Ad Giving Amnesty – Ottawa," *Toronto Daily Star*, 14 June 1955, 2; Canadian Press, "Pearson Sure Czechs Here Won't be Led Astray by Ad," *Globe and Mail*, 16 June 1955, 11; V.G. Staff, "Scorn Red Amnesty," *Toronto Daily Star*, 25 June 1955, 6.

(*Státní bezpečnost* – State Security) attempted to convince these same individuals to return to Czechoslovakia and defend themselves against these attacks.¹⁰ Communist authorities used disinformation as a useful tactic in spreading lies and creating divisions between the anti-communist 1948ers. In Ottawa, legation officials later claimed that 80 individuals returned to Czechoslovakia from Canada during the amnesty campaign, while the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and anti-Communist Czechoslovak leaders in Toronto believed that the figure was much smaller with less than ten individuals returning to Czechoslovakia.¹¹ An overwhelming majority of those who returned to Czechoslovakia after the Second World War were Canadian Slovaks who were politically active in left-wing organizations including the Slovak Benefit Society of Canada, the Independent Mutual Benefit Federation, the Communist Party of Canada, and its successor, the Labour-Progressive Party of Canada.¹²

Refugees from Czechoslovakia who entered Canada after the 1948 Communist takeover did so at a cost to their families, relatives, finances, and properties. They were labelled as “illegal emigrants” and their networks of family, friends, and business contacts back home were subjected to police surveillance, interrogations, and even torture. In an effort to repatriate those who had fled and subsequently embarrassed the Communist regime, diplomatic officials and Czechoslovakia’s *StB* were employed to coerce, blackmail, sabotage, and spy on refugees in Canada. On 28 October 1955, the *Toronto Daily Star* published the sensational story of a Soviet-

¹⁰ Tomek, “Highs and Lows of Czech and Slovak Émigré Activism,” 123. Tomek noted that the “regime’s actions were determined by an attitude defined in a 1953 document entitled “The indicative report on subversive activities of the Czechoslovak emigration against Czechoslovakia.” The document identified all émigré activity against the Communist state as “hostile.” For more information on the *StB* and its intelligence activities, see Ladislav Bittman, *The Deception Game: Czechoslovak Intelligence in Soviet Political Warfare* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Research Corporation, 1972).

¹¹ Eric Geiger, “Red Espionage Ring is Bared in Ottawa by Toronto Czech: Gets Orders to Spy on 20 New Canadians from Ottawa Czech Legation,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 28 October 1955, 5. Geiger claimed in his article that approximately 500 Czechs and Slovaks returned home during the summer of 1955, “yet not one remained” there.

¹² See LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8560, file 12467-D-40, part 1.1, “RCMP Reports Re Re-Admission of Canadians from Czechoslovakia – Individual Cases.”

led espionage network operating in Toronto. In the piece entitled, “Red Espionage Ring is Bared in Ottawa by Toronto Czech: Gets Orders to Spy on Twenty New Canadians from Ottawa Czech Legation,” reporter Eric Geiger interviewed Jiří (George) Stembura, a 29 year-old Czech refugee living in Toronto who claimed to have been “commissioned” as a secret Communist agent by Prague.¹³ Stembura was asked by officials within Czechoslovakia’s embassy in Ottawa to spy on 6,000 recently-arrived refugees from Czechoslovakia, as well as twenty prominent members of the Czechoslovak community in Toronto. Any intelligence that Stembura provided would be used to “lure or blackmail” these refugees into returning to their homeland. Unbeknownst to embassy officials in Ottawa, Stembura was one of the twenty they sought to spy on in the Greater Toronto Area.¹⁴

In his initial interview with a *StB* intelligence official in Ottawa, Stembura used a false identity (Milan Jina) and was offered cigarettes and cognac. Stembura claimed to have met with third secretary Antonín Dvořák and attaché Lubomír Sefrna in the legation basement. During this meeting, Stembura was informed that “Canadians were barbarians, who knew little of culture

¹³ Geiger, “Red Espionage Ring is Bared in Ottawa by Toronto Czech: Gets Orders to Spy on 20 New Canadians from Ottawa Czech Legation,” 1, 5; Eric Geiger, “Spy Recruiting Said ‘Warning’ of Reds’ Intent,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 31 October 1955, 25-27. The twenty individuals who Stembura was to spy on were refugees who fled Czechoslovakia after the February 1948 Communist takeover, and were considered to be leaders of anti-Communist Czechoslovak groups in Canada. Geiger noted in his article that the names of the twenty individuals were on file with the Czechoslovakian legation in Ottawa as “dangerous enemies” of Prague. First on the list to be spied on was Ota Hora, a former democratic member of parliament living in Ottawa. Hora was employed as an accountant with the Canadian government, and was later reunited with his wife and son in 1950. He became an influential member of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia in Canada and regularly broadcasted on Radio Free Europe to Czechoslovakia. Other prominent community figures on the list included Jiří (George) Čorn, Gustav Přistupa, Maria Gajda (Czech language radio broadcaster from Toronto), Jaroslav (Jerry) Janda (secretary-general of the Middle Class Party of Czechoslovakia), Jiří (George) Hlubuček (Our Voices publisher), Josef (Joseph) Čermák (UT law student, anti-communist newspaper publisher), Ladislav Brudek, František (Frank) Třešník (secretary of union of journalists-in-exile), Jindřich (Henry) Zodar, Ivan Jelek (CNA secretary), Karel Buzek, and Josef (Joseph) Brousek. Most others were also involved in compatriot politics.

¹⁴ Geiger, “Red Espionage Ring is Bared in Ottawa by Toronto Czech: Gets Orders to Spy on 20 New Canadians from Ottawa Czech Legation,” 1, 5. Stembura was asked to track the personal interests, acquaintances, finances, and political participation of the twenty individuals whose names appeared on the embassy list. On 12 November 1955, Stembura was to meet a *StB* courier at the northeast corner of King and York Streets in downtown Toronto.

and cared less” about the plight of Czechoslovakia’s refugees.¹⁵ In order to commence his deception, Stembura fooled legation officials by asking for information on how to return to Czechoslovakia.¹⁶ In response to his request, these same Communist officials informed him that Canada could offer nothing to refugees such as himself except “unemployment and starvation.”¹⁷

While Czechoslovakia’s Communist authorities were attempting to recruit members of the Czechoslovak community to spy on each other in Canada, they were also keen on acquiring access to sensitive information pertaining to Canadian defence plants and government agencies. Legation officials informed Stembura that Prague sought sensitive information from sources including the A.V. Roe plant in Malton, Ontario.¹⁸ On 30 October 1955, an outraged group of nearly 200 anti-Communist Czechoslovak Canadians gathered in Toronto and elected a committee of four prominent community members to draft and present a memorandum to the Department of External Affairs (DEA) in Ottawa. On behalf of the anti-communist Czechoslovaks, the memorandum pressured the Canadian government to expel Czechoslovakian diplomats Dvořák and Sefrna.¹⁹ Although many Czechoslovaks across Canada approved of Stembura’s activity in exposing a Communist spy ring, others including Prokop Havlík, a former treasurer of the CNA questioned Stembura’s intentions. In an editorial entitled “*Vyzvědačství*”

¹⁵ Eric Geiger, “Barred, Soundproof Ottawa Cellar Used to Discuss Czech Spy Plot,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 29 October 1955, 1, 4.

¹⁶ Ibid. Stembura spoke with Third Secretary Antonín Dvořák and attaché Lubomír Sefrna in the legation basement.

¹⁷ Geiger, “Red Espionage Ring is Bared in Ottawa by Toronto Czech: Gets Orders to Spy on 20 New Canadians from Ottawa Czech Legation,” 1, 5.

¹⁸ George Stembura, “Czech Asked to Get Data for Blackmail of AVRO Employees,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 30 October 1955, 1-4.

¹⁹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file “Correspondence, 1955,” letter from Gustav Přístupa to Honourable M. Pearson, DFAIT, 14 November 1955; ¹⁹ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4018, file 10254-40, part 1, “Council of Free Czechoslovakia – Activities and Reports,” memorandum from Václav Peřina, L. Vánra [sic.], J. Jonák, and V. Trnka to Lester Bowles Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs, 31 October 1955; Eric Geiger, “Czechs Fight Reds, Ignore Threat, Blackmail, Blacklist,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 31 October 1955, 25. The four prominent committee members were Karel Buzek (former Czechoslovakian consul in Toronto), Václav Peřina, Josef Čermák, and Jaroslav Sehnoha (prewar Czechoslovakian ambassador to France and India). Buzek later congratulated Stembura on exposing the embassy officials and asserted that “this really shows the cruel and sinister methods used by the commies.”

(Spying) in the Canadian Czech-language paper *Nový domov* (New Homeland), Havlík argued that Communist authorities vetted the background of every person they considered for espionage work. Although Havlík conceded that embassy officials could have believed that Stembura was in fact Milan Jina, in his view, it remained unlikely that *StB* operations in Canada were “greatly inaccurate and shabby” and therefore Havlík questioned the accuracy of Stembura’s story.²⁰

The initial news of an alleged spy ring within the Czechoslovak community in Toronto divided individuals between those who questioned its authenticity and others who believed the threat to community life and Canadian national security was real. Oldtimers within MH opposed the expulsion of the diplomats because they feared that relations between Ottawa and Prague would suffer as a result and cause “undesirable diplomatic entanglements.” According to the executive of MH, the memorandum was based on unsubstantiated claims made by George Stembura whose truthfulness the hall was not convinced of. In its letter to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester Bowles Pearson, MH illustrated that it was comprised of Czechoslovaks “...who have a strong anti-communist feeling,” but noted they desired to prevent any tensions between Ottawa and Prague. Masaryk Hall continued to accept recently arrived political refugees as members regardless of the political differences between old immigrants and the 1948ers. Divisions between members of MH continued to simmer in the summer of 1955 when it became public that many of the 1948ers were allegedly attempting to influence others with their party ideologies, and seize control of Czechoslovak organizations in order to align them with their anti-communist agenda. Consequently, MH severed ties with many of these recent political

²⁰ Prokop V. Havlík, “Vyzvědačství,” *Nový domov*, 5 November 1955, 3. Havlík noted that the *Toronto Daily Star* fell prey to sensationalism when it published photos of some of the twenty prominent Czechoslovak anti-Communists. According to him, if spying was conducted properly the general public would have never found out. He also pointed out that the publication of images of some of the twenty compatriots in the *Toronto Daily Star* was ill-advised since all of the information in Stembura’s story had yet to be “fully exposed and verified by the proper authorities.”

refugees because of their political activities which were influenced by old party ideologies and transplanted from Czechoslovakia.

As president of MH, Gustav Přístupa informed Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester Bowles Pearson, that the hall was vigilantly watching Ottawa's steps in securing Canada, "for the preservation of peace, and the revival of self-destiny for all nations. We are very grateful to you for your efforts, from which the land of our origin will certainly benefit to the extent that its citizens will gain the opportunity, without reprisal, to freely express themselves for a democracy of the type which we enjoy in our homeland, Canada, and will be able to, in this way break out of the iron jaws of their communist dictatorship."²¹ In representing the viewpoint of many oldtimers, Přístupa condemned the irresponsibility of the group of 200 anti-communist Czechoslovaks and the Canadian Press for publishing their story which brought unnecessary attention to the Czechoslovak community in Toronto.²²

Although members of the Czechoslovak community across Canada disagreed over the authenticity of Stembura's claims and the viability of the anti-communist memorandum to Ottawa, officials at the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Foreign Affairs protested what they perceived as a breach of diplomatic immunity.²³ According to Prague, the subsequent press campaign that alleged its diplomats in Canada engaged in improper activities in connection to the repatriation campaign was false. The alleged recruitment of George Stembura as a spy forced Prague to assert that it was "engaged only in normal consular assistance to Czechoslovaks."

²¹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, 1955," letter from Gustav Přístupa to Honourable M. Pearson, DFAIT, 14 November 1955.

²² Ibid.

²³ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, accession 1977-78/84, volume 2493, file 10463-W-40, "Annual Review of Events in Czechoslovakia by the Canadian Minister at Prague," Despatch No. 154 Annual Review for Czechoslovakia for the Year 1955, from Chargé d'Affaires, Prague to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 March 1956, 10-11. Relations between Czechoslovakia and Canada remained cordial throughout 1955 even as the Communist authorities opposed the West and its military alliance, NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization).

Canadian officials minimized Prague's complaints by stifling further publicity and expressing their desire to maintain good relations.²⁴ The repatriation campaign resulted in the return of approximately three dozen Czechs and Slovaks from Canada. Soon after arriving in Czechoslovakia, a minority of these returnees applied to return to Canada and were summarily denied. The Canadian legation in Prague notified Ottawa that exit visas for Canada remained difficult to acquire since the number of successful applicants rose insignificantly from four in 1954 to seventeen in 1955. Canadian Chargé d'affaires in Prague, John McLaurin Teakles indicated that the majority of successful applicants were "aged relatives of persons in Canada."²⁵

As Communist authorities continued to deny allegations of espionage and the blackmail of Czechs and Slovaks into dubious repatriation schemes, Soviet satellite states continued their efforts to lure anti-communist refugees back home. Communist authorities in Prague attempted to thwart their compatriots' increasing influence on Western-Communist relations and ability to embarrass the Communist regime in their home country. In the summer of 1956, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Jules Léger, read a statement before the House of Commons External Affairs Committee indicating that Communist governments were attempting to lure refugees back across the Iron Curtain where they would be effectively "better silenced."²⁶ The *Globe and Mail* indicated that only a few individuals fell victim to this Communist operation. However, the Communist authorities employed a scheme whereby first-class mail was sent from Europe often pretending to be written by relatives of those who escaped to Canada. These 'letters' from relatives were orchestrated by local repatriation authorities in Eastern Europe. Prague became increasingly aware of the potential political influence the 1948ers

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Canadian Press, "Easier to Seal Lips: Reds Sending Appeals for Refugees' Return," *Globe and Mail*, 22 June 1956, 15.

received in Canada and sought to thwart their role in anti-Communist propaganda. On behalf of Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester Bowles Pearson, Léger argued that Ottawa could not prevent this type of Communist scheme from occurring, but noted that any interference on the part of foreign governments in Canada should be brought to the attention of the federal government.

In the months following Stembura's claims that the Czechoslovakian legation attempted to enlist him as an undercover agent, the RCMP counter-espionage branch began to investigate claims that the Soviet embassy in Ottawa attempted to intimidate its former citizens into returning behind the Iron Curtain. Soviet authorities were behind suspicious letters allegedly written by close relatives to Canadian residents in an attempt to force their return. Pearson indicated that there was no course of action for Canadian authorities to take as "there was no censorship of the mails in Canada." Consequently, the federal minister noted that any evidence of the intimidation of Canadians or the improper conduct on the part of officials representing foreign governments should be sent to the authorities.²⁷ Canadian authorities and anti-communist 1948ers remained vigilant to the threat posed by the Communist government in Czechoslovakia.

In July 1956, Masaryktown held its ninth Czechoslovak Day. At the annual celebration, members of MH discussed the reunification of families separated by the Iron Curtain. They resolved that the Canadian government should negotiate with the Communist authorities in Czechoslovakia to release all persons who wished to leave the country and be reunited with their families in the West. Individuals who chose to leave were also to be fairly compensated for their

²⁷ Robert Taylor, "Soviet Envoy Expelled as Spy Tries to Buy Super Jet Data," *Toronto Daily Star*, 24 September, 1956, 1-2.

properties.²⁸ Canadian Czechoslovaks demanded that valid passports be issued for those persons who desired to leave as long as they asked for permission to immigrate to Canada or be released from their Czechoslovakian citizenship. The resolution included a request for the Communist authorities not to persecute emigrants seeking to leave the country and individuals whose poor health prevented them from leaving the country.²⁹ The DEA instructed the Canadian legation in Prague to write letters on behalf of persons who sought to immigrate to Canada and were found to be admissible. The prospective immigrant then presented the letter to the Communist authorities informing them that a Canadian visa would be granted to the applicant provided that an exit permit and medical screening were successfully completed. Negotiations between the DEA and Prague centred on Czechoslovakians with dual citizenship and “pure Czechoslovaks” whose relatives resettled in Canada prior to the Communist takeover in 1948. After further discussion with Communist officials, the Canadian Legation in Prague forecasted “little hope” of family reunification for persons who left Czechoslovakia “illegally” after February 1948. The Communist regime in Czechoslovakia actively prevented 1948ers whom it believed worked to embarrass Prague from being reunited with their families.³⁰

Several months later in the fall of 1956, the CNA held its annual congress in Montreal. At the gathering, CNA executive member, Josef Broušek informed delegates that an agent of the *StB* spent the last five years collecting information on fellow compatriots in Toronto. As an executive member of the local CNA branch in Toronto, 55 year-old Dr. Bruno Dostál infiltrated the work of anti-Communist Czechoslovaks in Canada. As part of his operation,

²⁸ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4150, file 232-AX-40, volume 1, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia,” memorandum, Masaryk Memorial Hall, Inc. 212 Cowan Avenue, Toronto 3, Ontario, Canada, n.d.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4150, file 232-AX-40, volume 1, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia,” memorandum from Lester Bowles Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs to Hon. J.W. Pickersgill, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, 30 July 1956.

Dostál was employed by the University of Toronto as a librarian. After suspicions were raised about his activities, Dostál returned to Czechoslovakia in October 1956 after he was suspected of spying on behalf of Prague. Information regarding his departure was confirmed when the Communist paper, *Hlas domova* (Voice of Homeland) in Prague published an interview with Dostál following his return to Czechoslovakia.³¹ Subsequently, outraged delegates representing thirty anti-Communist and pro-democratic groups in Canada issued a statement warning Czechoslovak Canadians “to be on guard against Red agents who may try to intimidate you.” Communist infiltration was increasingly seen as highly dangerous to Czechoslovak community institutions and to Canada’s national security.

Delegates at the annual CNA congress in Montreal also discussed the rift among the organization’s membership.³² On the agenda of the two-day annual meeting in 1956 was how to heal the divide between those individuals who wanted to turn towards the promotion of Canadian citizenship and those who wanted to focus the organization’s agenda towards returning democracy to Czechoslovakia. The discovery of another attempt by Prague to spy on its former citizens in Canada put further pressure on CNA members to deal with Communist infiltration within the Canadian Czechoslovak community. Newly-elected CNA president and the last democratic Czechoslovakian minister in Canada, František Němec identified the situation as the “most deplorable and damages the good name thousands of loyal Czech[oslovak]-Canadians have earned for themselves in this country.” The annual meeting unanimously approved a motion that called on the organization to re-establish unity among its membership. The CNA subsequently passed a resolution expressing the loyalty of its members to Canada and their willingness “to give our lives in the defence of our new homeland against

³¹ Eric Geiger, “‘Anti-Red’ Goes Back Secretly to Prague,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 13 October 1956, 29.

³² Eric Geiger, “Claims Czech in Toronto Was Spy for Five Years,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 22 October 1956, 2.

any enemy.³³ For some members, Communist participation within their organization led them to renounce their membership. Upon hearing of Dostál's activities, Josef Ludvík, a member of the CNA's Toronto Branch headquartered at MH requested that the organization's head office immediately revoke his membership and his name from its member listing. Ludvík informed the CNA that as a political refugee and anti-communist he could no longer remain a member since a Communist was able to infiltrate the organization before returning to Czechoslovakia.³⁴

A week later, Czechoslovaks in Ottawa were to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of the Czechoslovak Republic, but the festivities were hindered by a demonstration in support of the Hungarian revolution. Local members of the CNA joined Hungarian Canadians and other individuals whose homelands were behind the Iron Curtain to protest the Soviet invasion of Hungary. The demonstration engaged old immigrants and recent arrivals from Eastern Europe to present a resolution to Minister of External Affairs, Lester Bowles Pearson demanding that Canada assist the Hungarian freedom fighters.³⁵ In the *Globe and Mail*, former CNA executive and Czechoslovakian consul in Toronto, Karel Buzek indicated that the recent uprisings in Hungary and Poland begged the question whether Czechs and Slovaks had reached a moment to strike for freedom against the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. The former national secretary of the CNA noted that "...we who are fortunate to have our homes in Canada must make it clear on their behalf, leaving no doubt, that our brothers and sisters in the old country

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ See LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 6 "Head Office – General Correspondence, 1950-1954," letter from Josef Ludvík to Československé národní sdružení v Kanadě, odbočka c. 24 Toronto, 21 October 1956. Ludvík was a CNA member since 10 September 1950; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 7 "Head Office – General Correspondence, 1955-1957," letter from Jan Polanský and Jan Kalla to Karel Buzek, 1 November 1956; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 7 "Head Office – General Correspondence, 1955-1957," letter from Karel Buzek to Jan Polanský, 7 November 1956.

³⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 32, file 2 "Ottawa Branch – Minutes, 1970-1977," Pozvánka na valnou hromadu ottawské odbočky Československé národního sdružení v Kanadě, CNA, Ottawa Branch, 14 January 1957, 1-2.

will not tolerate being a Soviet protectorate forever.” Buzek informed the *Globe and Mail*’s readership that the Canadian Red Cross was one of the first humanitarian organizations to send aid to Hungary and that Canadians ought to get involved. Buzek desired that local ethnic groups meet in a conference to “secure more help for those who fight today, as well as for those who will fight tomorrow.”³⁶

In Czechoslovakia, the Communists maintained a substantial following across all sectors of society and controlled all aspects of daily life. Most Czechoslovakian citizens could do little to change the political situation in their country. Since Czechoslovakia remained a Communist satellite-state with a relatively higher standard of living than its counterparts in Eastern Europe, opposition towards the regime from within was often more measured, if not more apathetic. As a result, the uprisings that swept through Poland and Hungary in 1956 did not occur in Czechoslovakia. However, they served to awaken the country’s intellectuals who would later commence a process of reforming the Communist system from within.³⁷

Canadians of Eastern European origin were shocked by the Communist infiltration in their organizations and dismayed by the Hungarian revolution. Across Canada, many Czechoslovaks struggled to promote the return of democracy in Czechoslovakia due to decreasing memberships as community members continued to turn towards the maintenance of ethnic identity and the promotion of Czech and Slovak culture. In Winnipeg, nineteen members of the local CNA branch met in the hall of the Canadian Czechoslovak Benevolent Association (CCBA) to renew their branch and continue their efforts against communism. With cooperation

³⁶ Karel Buzek, “Czech People Still Seek Freedom,” *Globe and Mail*, 7 November 1956, 6.

³⁷ Kusin, *The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring*, 26-27.

from the CCBA, and Western reports of daily Soviet repression in Hungary, the Winnipeg Branch was revitalized with over 105 members at the beginning of 1957.³⁸

Resolving Community Tensions

During the first decade of the Cold War, relations between Canada and Czechoslovakia suffered due to political events in Eastern Europe. An increase in international tensions due in part to the workers' uprisings in East Germany in June 1953, Poznan, Poland in June 1956, the failed Hungarian Revolution of October 1956, and the subsequent emergence of hardline communist control caused a further setback to relations between Communist Eastern Europe and the West. Canadian diplomats informed officials back home that Prague maintained a "cautious policy" of developing better relations with the West.³⁹ Within the Czechoslovak community, the failure of the workers' uprisings in East Germany and Poland combined with the demise of the Hungarian Revolution illustrated to anti-communist 1948ers that their attempts to help return democracy to Czechoslovakia would last longer than a few years. In the minds of many 1948ers, settlement in Canada was seen as temporary until their homeland was liberated from Communist rule. Sensing that their stay in Canada was becoming permanent due to events in Eastern Europe, many 1948ers began to turn their attention towards settling ideological differences between oldtimers and recent arrivals within the Czechoslovak community. Many of the differences between both groups in the Czechoslovak community revolved around the leadership and direction of the *Sokol* (Falcon) movement in Canada and the appropriation of its title.

³⁸ Bosley and CCBA, *Pamatník Kanadsko-Československé podporující jednoty*, 37.

³⁹ LAC, DEA, RG 25, accession 1977-78/84, volume 2493, file 10463-W-40, "Annual Review of Events in Czechoslovakia by the Canadian Minister at Prague," Circular Document No. A. 35/57 Annual Review for Czechoslovakia, 1956, from Secretary of State for External Affairs to Heads of External Affairs Posts Abroad, 21 March 1957, 5.

As a patriotic voluntary organization established in Prague in the nineteenth century, the Sokol movement promoted patriotism and calisthenics for its educational, spiritual, and physical benefits. The movement's annual meetings were known as *slets* (flights).⁴⁰ In interwar Czechoslovakia, the movement was firmly rooted in democratic principles and remained "above politics."⁴¹ Sokol members were instructed to be the "first line of defense for freedom and democracy, not only in Canada and Czechoslovakia, but for the whole world through their physical and moral power, for peace and freedom should be the common property of all peace-loving and free democratic peoples of every land."⁴²

On 4 June 1957, former MH president Gustav Přístupa met with officials within the Department of the Secretary of State in Ottawa to give his version of the misunderstandings surrounding the use of the name Sokol by both groups. Přístupa indicated to the federal officials that a Sokol association existed in Toronto for years prior to the arrival of postwar Czech and Slovak refugees in Canada. Přístupa claimed that, the new arrivals were welcomed into the pre-existing Czechoslovak community, yet many shunned any guidance offered by the oldtimers.

⁴⁰ The *Sokol* movement was one of the most influential Czechoslovak organizations in Canada. Pre-Second World War immigrants from Czechoslovakia established branches across Canada. The Sokol movement was established in 1862 in Bohemia by Miroslav Tyrš. The first Canadian Sokol unit was formed in Frank, Alberta in 1912, with a subsequent unit in Michel, British Columbia in 1913. A branch was opened in Montreal in 1929. See Gibbon, *Canadian Mosaic*, 320.

⁴¹ Nolte, *Sokol in the Czech Lands until 1914*, 1, 3, 181-182.

⁴² LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 6, file "Sokol – Slets, 1950, 1955, 1964, 1965," pamphlet Canadian Sokol Festival, Montreal 1955; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 6, file "Sokol – Slets, 1950, 1955, 1964, 1965," pamphlet, You'll be Spending Wisely When you Advertise in the ... Canadian Sokol Slet (Festival) Publication; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 6, file "Sokol – Statutes, n.d.," memorandum Navrh: Stanovy Ústředí československého Sokolstva v zahraničí, n.d.; Gellner and Smerek, *Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 112. With the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in 1948, the Sokol movement was banned due to its potential as a vehicle for anti-communist subversion. In 1950, the Sokol movement was reconstituted as the Czechoslovak Sokol Abroad with five member districts bringing together Czechs and Slovaks in Western Europe and North America. On 5 July 1952, the Sokol Gymnastic Association of Canada (SGAC) was founded as a district of the Czechoslovak Sokol Abroad. Canadian Czechoslovaks took part in upholding the Czechoslovak Sokol Abroad's mandate of promoting calisthenics, informing the public of conditions in Czechoslovakia and the struggle against communism, while assisting in the resettlement of Czechoslovakian refugees in the West.

Among the wave of postwar arrivals were political refugees fleeing Communism who later established an organization named Sokols in Exile in 1949. Although Přístupa and his fellow members in Toronto briefly joined the group, they soon resigned as they considered themselves Canadians of Czechoslovakian extraction rather than Czechoslovaks in exile.⁴³ Canadian officials noted that “...one group considers themselves to be Canadian citizens and the purpose is to perpetuate Czechoslovakian customs so as to embody these customs in the Canadian way of life, whereas it is alleged that the newer group wishes to preserve Czechoslovakian customs and culture in the hope of their eventual return to their native land.” Přístupa informed Canadian officials that in his opinion, the 1948ers would forgo their desire to return to Czechoslovakia and seek to remain in Canada once they spent a certain number of years in their new country. The former MH president was keen to acknowledge that once the 1948ers began to identify with Canadian society conflicting interests would be reconciled among members of the community.⁴⁴

Přístupa’s successor as MH president, Prokop V. Havlík lamented the divisions in the Canadian Czechoslovak community and specifically within the Sokol movement. Havlík sought to stabilize Toronto’s Sokol unit at MH. In the mid-1950s, the Toronto Sokol unit’s membership levels began to concern oldtimers and community leaders who feared that not enough Canadian Czechs and Slovaks were joining the Canadian Gymnastic Sokol Association. Havlík feared that numbers were dwindling because ethnic Czech and Slovak youth were not joining the Sokol

⁴³ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 6, file “Sokol – Correspondence, 1947-1967, 1975,” letter from A. Alex. Cattanach, Department of the Secretary of State to Messrs. Robertson, Lane, Perrett, Frankish & Estey, Barristers, 10 June 1957.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

movement, turning instead to other Canadian pursuits.⁴⁵ Conversely, the 1948er-led Sokol Gymnastic Association of Canada (SGAC) which previously left the Canadian Sokol movement joined the Czechoslovak Sokol Abroad to fight Communist rule in Czechoslovakia. Many postwar immigrants chose to join the latter group and involved their children as young members. In May 1958, the SGAC opened its own Sokol facility in Toronto and boasted 158 members, all partaking in calisthenics, sports, and cultural activities.⁴⁶ A men's volleyball team competed provincially and a table tennis team played throughout the city.⁴⁷ The opening celebration was attended by several officials including Jay Waldo Monteith, Minister of National Health and Welfare, W.J. Dunlop, Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario, and Vladimir Kaye, National Liaison Officer for the federal Department of Citizenship and Immigration.⁴⁸

In an attempt to diminish the influence of the old ethnic left across Canada, and promote their efforts against communism, federal and provincial politicians courted the ethnic vote. This courtship helped integrate "New Canadians" into society, and more importantly, civic life where they were increasingly co-opted into joining political parties, lobby groups, voting blocs, patronage appointments, and patron-client relationships.⁴⁹ Beginning in the 1950s, a large portion of Canadians who arrived after the Second World War were ardent anti-communists and

⁴⁵ LAC, SGAC Fonds, MG 28 V136, accession 1982-0550, volume 1, file "Windsor Branch," letter from Prokop V. Havlík to Kostkovic, 13 September 1958.

⁴⁶ Ivanov, *Čech v Kanadě*, 154-155. In Ivanov's biography of Jiří Corn, a 1948er and leading member of the Toronto Sokol II and SGAC, Corn's wife Slava discusses how their children were only permitted to speak Czech at home in an attempt to retain their Czech identity and culture. The Corns were active in Canadian Czechoslovak organizations and community events in Toronto.

⁴⁷ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file "Sokol Bulletin, 1958, 1964, 1965," SGAC – Bulletin, 14 April 1958. From 13 August 1957 to 31 January 1958, SGAC fundraised \$9,138.69 from members and \$1,021.00 from non-members. For a period of five years, the association borrowed \$3,500 from its members and a further \$900 from non-members. Additionally, \$4,400 was given to the SGAC by members. With fundraising the SGAC purchased land for \$7,500 and redeveloped its building to host activities at 1621 Dupont Street for \$33,224.22.

⁴⁸ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file "Sokol Bulletin, 1958, 1964, 1965," SGAC – Bulletin, 6 May 1958.

⁴⁹ Christian P. Champion, "Courting "Our Ethnic Friends": Canadianism, Britishness, and New Canadians, 1950-1970," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 38:1 (2006), 24.

tended to align themselves to the political tenets of the Progressive Conservative Party and the Liberal Party. The Conservatives actively sought out the anti-communist ethnic vote in an attempt to displace the vote for the left which dominated prewar ethnic politics in Canada. Postwar Displaced Persons (DPs) and refugees brought with them fresh memories of their persecution at the hands of the Communists in their home country. After 1948, ethnic Czechs and Slovaks were no strangers to Communist-led purges, imprisonment, harassment, surveillance, blackmail, and the suppression of individual and religious freedoms. As a result, the postwar anti-communist refugee identified predominantly with the Conservative Party brand while some immigrants viewed the Liberal Party as somehow linked to social democracy movements in Europe.⁵⁰

In hopes of raising support for the federal Liberal Party, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration John Whitney Pickersgill, Minister of Finance Walter Edward Harris, and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Defence Paul Hellyer joined the Czechoslovak Day celebrations and Sokol festival at Masaryktown. After attending the festivities, Pickersgill published his thoughts about the Sokol movement in Canada in MH's official organ, *Nový domov* stating that the movement

...stressed the development of physical culture and the fostering of democratic principles," and claimed that "in a Sound Body there Dwelleth a Sound Soul...in Canada the Sokol tradition lives on, continuing to mould sound minds...bodies, producing the type of citizens who uphold the high principles on which the freedom and happiness of our country rests. If the real strength and the basic resources of a nation is its people, then activities such as Sokol are making an essential contribution to the development of Canada.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Ibid., 30.

⁵¹ J. W. Pickersgill, "Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Sokol Toronto," *Nový domov*, 24 November 1956, 1.

In illustrating his support for the activities of MH and Sokol members, Walter Edward Harris wrote a letter to MH congratulating Sokol Toronto on the twenty-fifth anniversary of its founding which was subsequently published in *Nový domov*. Harris informed the newspaper's readership that he first visited MH and Sokol Toronto on the grounds of Masaryktown on 5 December 1954. In his letter, Harris made the following comment:

...members and their children have benefited from the physical and moral education program, of your organization. The Sokol idea is a great one, demanding constant activity and perseverance [sic], but giving in return, the satisfaction of knowing that this effort is of great benefit to sister and brother members. The activity and growth of the Sokol Organization in Canada shows that Canadians of Czechoslovak origin have brought with them to this country, the best qualities from the land of their birth, and are putting them to practical use in the their adopted country, Canada.⁵²

In hoping to gain the support of the Czechoslovak community in Toronto, Harris and his wife became the first non-Czechoslovakian members of Sokol Toronto. In extending his best wishes to the members of Sokol Toronto on their milestone anniversary, Minister of National Health and Welfare Paul Martin indicated in *Nový domov* that he was also well acquainted with the programs of the Sokol movement across Canada. The federal minister noted that in 1955 he and his wife became members of the Sokol Windsor branch. Martin went on to argue that the significance of the efforts of the Sokol movement in Canada were two-fold: first, in helping new Canadians to "build healthy bodies and sound minds," the Sokols were making an important contribution to the well-being of its members and Canadian society as a whole. Second, the federal minister believed that the Sokols were instrumental in preserving and strengthening health activities in Canada.⁵³

⁵² E. W. Harris, "Minister of Finance, Ottawa, Hon. E.W. Harris," *Nový domov*, 1 December 1956, 1.

⁵³ Paul Martin, "Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Sokol Toronto," *Nový domov*, 24 November 1956, 1-2.

Communist Tactics and Family Reunification Cases

As transplanted party politics and ideological differences continued to shape relations between 1948ers and the pre-existing Czechoslovak community and its institutions, Canadian diplomats in Prague continued to suffer from Communist “intransigence” when it came to solving the longstanding issues pertaining to family reunification and Canadian consular affairs. Communist authorities in Prague continued to prevent the emigration of Czechoslovakians to Canada or their visits to the West. As a result, Canadian officials could not process the high demand for visas without the applicant possessing the proper travel documents.⁵⁴ In September 1958, the DEA was advised by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) that they previously received information indicating that Prague intended to permit the reunification of three or four children with their parents in Canada. Officials in Ottawa indicated that the *StB* corresponded with the Czech and Slovak parents in Canada. The children in question were left behind by their parents after fleeing from Communist Czechoslovakia. In one case, a Czech couple applied to the International Red Cross (IRC) in Geneva in the hopes of finding international support for their fight to be reunited with their child. Their son of twelve years of age was left in Czechoslovakia after the Communists seized power. On behalf of the Czech couple, the International Red Cross petitioned Prague to permit the reunification of their son with his parents. Authorities in Prague previously denied permission for the son to visit Canada. In an attempt to repatriate the parents, Communist officials informed the International Red Cross in Geneva that children should not be without their parents and that nothing was stopping them

⁵⁴ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, accession 1977-78/84, volume 2493, file 10463-W-40, “Annual Review of Events in Czechoslovakia by the Canadian Minister at Prague,” Circular Document No. A. 19/58 Annual Review for Czechoslovakia, 1958, from Secretary of State for External Affairs to Heads of External Affairs Posts Abroad, 24 February 1957 (sic.), 6.

from returning to Czechoslovakia to be with their son.⁵⁵ In 1958, Communist authorities in Prague permitted thirty-three individuals to immigrate to Canada compared to only thirteen the previous year. The issuance of travel visas remained steady as approximately 400 Canadians were able to visit Czechoslovakia compared with only 275 the year before. Many of these individuals were officials, business representatives, and persons with friends and family in Czechoslovakia.⁵⁶

Although the Communist authorities were permitting individuals to enter the country, very few Czechoslovakians were able to secure the necessary documentation to leave the country legally. Individuals who left Czechoslovakia following the events of February 1948 remained separated from loved ones. In some cases, prominent anti-communist refugees solicited the services of their local Czechoslovakian consular office in the hopes that a close relative could be permitted to emigrate. On 7 January 1958, Bořivoj Čelovský, a 1948er who worked for Statistics Canada, approached the Czechoslovakian legation in Ottawa to enquire about bringing his ageing mother to Canada. The legation's third secretary Milan Kleník – who also served as the local *StB* officer and was codenamed “Kolda” – informed him that his mother could be brought over for a favour. “Kolda” asked Čelovský to infiltrate and monitor Czechoslovak organizations in Canada.⁵⁷ Čelovský agreed to cease engaging in exile politics and swore that he viewed his emigration as “unfavourable.”⁵⁸ After visiting the Czechoslovakian legation where he was given the *StB* codename “Red,” Čelovský informed the RCMP Special Branch of his meeting with the

⁵⁵ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4150, file 232-AX-40, volume 1, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia,” memorandum from Defence Liaison (2) Division to DEA, Consular Division, 22 September 1958.

⁵⁶ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, accession 1977-78/84, volume 2493, file 10463-W-40, “Annual Review of Events in Czechoslovakia by the Canadian Minister at Prague,” Circular Document No. A. 23 /59 Annual Review for Czechoslovakia, 1958, from Secretary of State for External Affairs to Heads of Posts broad, 13 February 1959, 5.

⁵⁷ John Sawatsky, *Men in the Shadows: The RCMP Security Service* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1980), 174-176.

⁵⁸ Bořivoj Čelovský, *Moje střetnutí s rozvědkou StB* (Ostrava: Tilia, 2003), 34.

Czechoslovakian diplomat and agreed to become a double-agent.⁵⁹ While driving around the Ottawa Valley and the Outaouais region of Quebec, Kleník received regular reports from Čelovský about his activities. “Red” was given bottles of liquor and pretended to become intoxicated while discussing his activities. Čelovský also pretended to be an alcoholic in public in the hopes that his activities would be masked as those of an unreliable drunk.⁶⁰ Soon enough, the local Czechoslovak community in Ottawa began to suspect he was a Communist. Čelovský remained a double-agent for a period of three years. During this time, “Red” was required to sign an oath of allegiance to Czechoslovakia. Two months after commencing his deception, the *StB* visited his mother in Ostrava and asked her to request a visit to Canada. The Communist authorities used the visit of Čelovský’s mother to Canada as part of a scheme to follow Kleník in order to make sure that “Red” was clean.⁶¹ On 30 July, Čelovský’s mother arrived in Canada and he no longer felt any desire to remain a double-agent, but continued to pretend he was an alcoholic and a traitor to Canada in order to deceive the *StB*.⁶² Following Čelovský’s deception, the *StB* sent him a letter pretending to be from his ex-wife in which she demanded that he pay spousal support. This initiative was meant to cause further tension between him and his family in the hopes that he would become more dependent on the *StB*.⁶³ Similar to Čelovský, other 1948ers attempted to bring their close relatives to Canada. If this option remained closed, a few

⁵⁹ Čelovský was given the codename “František Svoboda” (Frank Freedom) by the RCMP Special Branch.

⁶⁰ Čelovský, *Moje střetnutí s rozvědkou StB*, 48. Čelovský writes that “my presence at StatsCan became more pronounced as coworkers began to notice my tiredness/exhaustion which they attributed to alcoholism. My wife was not happy with the late night excursions after having told her about some of the excursions.”

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 35, 90. Kleník returned to Czechoslovakia for a vacation in 1958 and did not return. The RCMP deemed the reason for his departure as reckless behaviour in public. He was replaced by Miloslav Čech, codenamed Čada, as the resident *StB* intelligence officer in the Czechoslovakian legation in Ottawa. In the fall of 1960, he returned to Czechoslovakia on vacation and never returned to Canada. In 1967, he was named *persona non grata* by the Canadian government and asked never to return for unacceptable conduct with the Czechoslovak community.

⁶² Čelovský demanded a symbolic salary of one dollar per year and official status with the RCMP, so that in the future his story could be corroborated, and his image rehabilitated as that of a loyal Canadian citizen. The RCMP refused to grant him official status.

⁶³ Čelovský, *Moje střetnutí s rozvědkou StB*, 49.

individuals cooperated with the *StB* in the hopes that they could secure financial support, better accommodations, or a loan for their relatives to purchase an automobile in Czechoslovakia.⁶⁴

As Canadian Chargé d'affaires in Prague in 1960, Arthur Julian Andrews wrote to Ottawa that "relatives in Czechoslovakia are one of the most important sources of pressure which can be brought to bear on persons living in Canada and this advantage will only be relinquished either in the face of considerable concessions or a threat."⁶⁵ In the spring of 1960, the Canadian legation suspected that Communist authorities were interfering with its mail or intimidating recipients of mail from the legation. In his correspondences with Ottawa, Andrews argued that the legation should limit its communication with applicants to persons with a "fair chance of obtaining permission" to leave the country – in order to protect legation staff and Czechoslovakian applicants. Andrews concluded rather pragmatically that applicants with relatives who left Czechoslovakia "illegally" after February 1948 should be avoided as their chances of success were minimal.⁶⁶

Beginning in 1960, Canadian Czechoslovaks were also introduced to a new form of blackmail by Communist authorities in Czechoslovakia. The RCMP informed the DEA that the *StB* "developed a technique for infiltrating illegal agents into Western countries" which was not previously seen by Canadian intelligence officials. According to the RCMP, the illegal agent gained entry to Canada by submitting a letter to the Canadian embassy in Prague. In the letter, the writer claimed that he or she was the illegitimate child of a Canadian woman living in

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 90-94.

⁶⁵ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4150, file 232-AX-40, volume 1, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia," numbered letter 266 from Arthur Julian Andrew, Chargé d'affaires in Prague to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 24 March 1960; Hilliker and Barry, *Canada's Department of External Affairs, Volume II*, 173. On 24 March 1960, the federal government appointed John Alexander McCordick as Canadian Minister in Prague. He presented his credentials to the Czechoslovakian government on 17 June 1960.

⁶⁶ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4150, file 232-AX-40, volume 1, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia," memorandum from DEA, European Division to DEA, Consular Division, 21 April 1960.

Czechoslovakia by an unknown father. The writer then requested Canadian citizenship after claiming that the Communist authorities refused him or her Czechoslovakian nationality. The RCMP noted that the mother of the applicant died prior to seeking a Canadian passport.⁶⁷

Dismayed by Communist tactics in their homeland, Czechoslovaks in Canada enthusiastically supported the implementation of a Canadian Bill of Rights by the Conservative government of Prime Minister John George Diefenbaker on 10 August 1960. The Canadian Bill of Rights attempted to entrench individual freedoms including religion and speech with the right to life, liberty, and security. The CNA's Ottawa Branch endorsed the new law and argued in a letter to Diefenbaker that:

We – New Canadians from behind the Iron Curtain – fully appreciate the importance of the new Act, safeguarding the human dignity and political rights of each citizen. In the changing world of today, with all its revolutionary convulsions, your steadfast pursuit of the legalization of the high ideals of individual freedom remains a statesmanlike deed that only the history will fully evaluate.⁶⁸

Discord between Canadian Czechs and Slovaks over the CNA's Federal Charter

Coinciding with the incorporation of Masaryk Memorial Hall into Masaryk Memorial Institute (MMI) on 16 July 1960, the CNA was given a federal charter and incorporated as a non-for-profit organization on 28 September 1960.⁶⁹ The organization's name was changed to the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC).⁷⁰ Among the newly chartered

⁶⁷ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 8560, file 12467-D-40, part 1.2, "RCMP reports re: re-admission of Canadians from Czechoslovakia – Individual cases," memorandum, Attention: Defence Liaison Division (2), from Superintendent W.H. Kelly, Assistant Director, of Security & Intelligence to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 9 June 1961.

⁶⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 32, file 7 "Ottawa Branch – Correspondence, 1950-1960," letter from Jaroslav A. Brouček to J. Diefenbaker, Prime Minister of Canada, 23 August 1960.

⁶⁹ CNAC, *Charta, stanovy, jednací šrád* (Hamilton: CNAC, 1961), 6

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*; Bosley and CCBA, *Pamatník Kanadsko-Československé podporující jednoty*, 28. Under the seal of the office of the Secretary of State, the CNAC was given a federal charter and incorporated as a non-for-profit

organization's goals were to "develop the highest standards of citizenship" for Czechoslovak Canadians through the establishment and participation in ethnocultural and patriotic activities. This agenda served to further Canadian citizenship in individuals of Czechoslovak origin in the following ways: act in all matters pertaining to the rights and welfare of Czechoslovak Canadians and those individuals coming to Canada from Czechoslovakia; aid in the improvement of socioeconomic and cultural conditions of Czechoslovaks in Canada and the rehabilitation of immigrants and refugees from Czechoslovakia; promote "tolerance, understanding, and goodwill" between all ethnic groups in Canada while maintaining and defending freedom and democracy in Canada and promoting democracy elsewhere in the world. Lastly, the CNAC was also responsible for instilling cultural and linguistic heritage and traditions among its members and the broader Czechoslovak community in Canada.⁷¹

The CNAC's standing committees included a Committee on Refugees, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation – "to take charge of the programme to aid Czechoslovak refugees and others seeking asylum in Canada from persecution abroad and to assist them in establishing themselves in this country." The committee was also responsible for "aid to Czechoslovaks elsewhere where such aid shall be deemed necessary for their rescue and rehabilitation." The other committees included the Public Relations Committee, a Research, Press, and Archives Committee, and an Organization Committee.⁷² On 11 March 1961, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Ellen

organization. The operations of the organization were to be carried out across Canada, but its head office was to be situated in Montreal. The CNAC's business was to be carried out "without pecuniary gain to its members and that any profits or other accretions to the Corporation shall be used in promoting its objects."

⁷¹ CNAC, *Charta, stanovy, jednací šrád*, 4-5; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 32, file 7 "Ottawa Branch – Correspondence, 1950-1960," memorandum, Československému národnímu sdružení v Kanadě bylo chartou vydanou federální vládou v Ottawě zákonně povoleno používat všech práv a výsad pro tyto účely, n.d.

⁷² CNAC, *Charta, stanovy, jednací šrád*, 10-11.

Fairclough presented the federal charter to the newly incorporated Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC) at a ceremony in Hamilton.⁷³

Not all Canadian Czechs and Slovaks approved of the federal charter and incorporation of the CNAC with a mandate to represent Canadians of Czechoslovak origin. Individuals who opposed the federal charter did so because of personality clashes and refugee politics originating in the party politics of interwar Czechoslovakia. Clerical, right-wing, moderate, and centre-left parties were re-established in exile by prominent individuals who were members of these government parties in democratic Czechoslovakia. In Canada, these groups re-assembled and began to speak for “Czechoslovaks” as their true representatives. Many of the 1948ers joined the CNAC. In the case of the latter, its membership was opposed by conservative and nationalist Czech and Slovak groups who previously accused Edvard Beneš and his followers of cooperating with the Soviet Union during and immediately after the Second World War.⁷⁴ Nationalist Canadian Slovaks opposed the CNAC’s federal charter because it gave the organization a mandate to represent all ethnic Slovaks and Czechs.

As the largest ethnic Slovak organization in Canada, the Canadian Slovak League (CSL) was incorporated and granted a federal charter on 26 June 1954.⁷⁵ In March 1960, the CSL protested to the Department of the Secretary of State arguing that Canadian Slovaks were already represented on a similar mandate with the incorporation of the CSL. The organization argued that providing a federal charter to the CNAC would further confuse the Canadian public

⁷³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 32, file 7 “Ottawa Branch – Correspondence, 1950-1960,” memorandum, Československému národnímu sdružení v Kanadě bylo chartou vydanou federální vládou v Ottawé zákonné povoleno používat všech práv a výsad pro tyto účely, n.d.

⁷⁴ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1986-87/319, box 87, file 9-334-1, memorandum from Jean Boucher, Director, Citizenship Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration to Deputy Minister, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, 23 March 1961.

⁷⁵ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 8437, file 10254-40, part 2 “Activities of Czechoslovakians in Canada and Abroad: General,” letter from Paul A. Demers, for Acting Director, Companies Division, DSS to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, 6 April 1960.

regarding the differences between Czechoslovaks and Slovaks, and would provoke protests on the part of Canadian Slovaks. The CSL concluded that its members no longer lived in Czechoslovakia, and therefore “there is no ground for using the name of a foreign state for “protecting or educating” Canadians of Slovak origin.⁷⁶ Nationalist Canadian Slovaks did not want the CNAC to use “Czechoslovak” as part of its organizational name.

As proponents of a Catholic and conservative faction of 1948ers who were removed from the local CNA branch in Hamilton, Václav Vostřez and František Hašek opposed the CNAC’s mandate and contested its executive’s claim to represent all Czechs and Slovaks. As a former member of the right-wing and pro-business Agrarian Party in interwar Czechoslovakia, Vostřez disapproved of the centre-left and moderate party politics of many of the CNAC’s members and among the 1948ers themselves.⁷⁷ Canadian officials were aware of the inter-organizational politics between Czech and Slovak groups. Ottawa recognized that the MMI did not fundamentally oppose the CNAC’s federal charter application as its leadership sought to steer the organization away from transplanted refugee politics and focus its resources on Canadian issues.

⁷⁶ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 8437, file 10254-40, part 2 “Activities of Czechoslovakians in Canada and Abroad: General,” letter from John Lucas, President and Frank Kvetan, Secretary, CSL to Companies Division, DSS, Ottawa, 7 March 1960.

⁷⁷ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1986-87/319, box 87, file 9-334-1, memorandum from Jean Boucher, Director, Citizenship Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration to Deputy Minister, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, 23 March 1961. In the 1963 federal election, Vostřez ran for the Social Credit Party in the riding of Hamilton East. See “Steel City Campaign Promises to be Hot One: Ellen Keeps Home Fires Burning,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 19 March 1963, 7. Ideological differences within the Czechoslovak community continued to come to the fore and were not exclusive to the Sokol movement in Canada. In 1957, an internal split between members of the CNA’s Hamilton Branch culminated with the ouster of branch president Václav Vostřez. As branch president, Vostřez was subsequently expelled from the CNA and the Hamilton Branch was reorganized. Vostřez and fellow CNA members František Hašek and Zdeněk Zimmer represented a Catholic and conservative faction of 1948ers who subsequently founded the Czechoslovak Association of Czechs, Slovaks, and Sub-Carpatho Ruthenians based in Hamilton. Vostřez published the Czech-language bulletin, *Brázda* (The Furrow: Bulletin of the Anticommunist Conservative Exile from Czechoslovakia).

Ideological clashes continued to be present between members of the Sokol movement in Canada. On 31 May 1961, representatives of the SGAC and the Canadian Sokol Organization (*Kanadská Obec Sokolská* (KOS)) who were at odds with each other for years over the direction of the Sokol movement in Canada met in Toronto. Ervin Sypták and MMI president Prokop V. Havlík represented the KOS and were joined by Jan Waldauf, Karel Jeřábek, Jiří Corn, and Louis Vávra of the SGAC. Corn raised four issues in the meeting that he believed needed to be addressed: first, joint attendance in public for both groups; second, joint representation – athletic unity and working together on gymnastic issues in Canada; third, objections to a federal charter and incorporation for both organizations; and fourth, resolution of the differences in organizational names for both groups. Havlík replied by informing the representatives of the SGAC that the Sokol unit based at MMI and Masaryktown would continue to operate there and would not relocate its activities. Consequently, Louis Vávra noted that the hundredth anniversary of the Sokol movement was to occur in 1962 and that it was in the interest of all Czechoslovaks to hold a united *Slet*. Vávra envisioned a united *Slet* that included oldtimers – who supported the Sokol movement’s calisthenics and the preservation of Czechoslovak cultural heritage, and the 1948ers – who also emphasized Sokol’s non-partisan democratic values. Havlík replied that the annual Czechoslovak Day and *Slet* would continue under any conditions because “they have a tradition that cannot be disobeyed.” Both groups agreed to continue discussions on how to find a “*modus vivendi*” within Toronto’s Czechoslovak community.⁷⁸ Although both parties sought reconciliation, SGAC and KOS remained separate groups. On 20 May 1962, the SGAC hosted

⁷⁸ LAC, SGAC Fonds, MG 28 V136, accession 1982-0550, volume 2, file “Windsor Branch,” Zázpis o schuzce zastupcu KOS a Kanadského sokola, okrsku Čsl. sokola v zahraničí, konane dne 31 května 1961 v sokolovne na Dupont Street, 1 June 1961.

its fourth annual *Slet* at the Central National Exhibition displaying gymnastics, group calisthenics, track and field, and folk dancing.⁷⁹

In December 1964, KOS published its first magazine, *Sokol – Toronto News Letter*. As the original Toronto Sokol unit housed at MMI, the group sought to inform its members and the greater public about its physical fitness and social program. The KOS hosted dances, hallowe'en parties, and its annual *Slet* in July at Masaryktown.⁸⁰ With increasing cooperation between rival Sokol institutions in Canada, KOS ceased to exist two years later. Sokol units across Canada joined the SGAC which became known as Sokol Canada.⁸¹

According to its membership, the incorporation of the CNA into the CNAC in the fall of 1960 greatly increased its mandate to effectively speak on behalf of the Canadian Czechoslovak community. The organization took a leading role in the establishment of ethnocultural and patriotic activities, and lobbied the Canadian government to assist the Canadian Czechoslovak community in its efforts to promote democracy in Communist Czechoslovakia. A small group of conservative Canadian Czechs and the nationalist Canadian Slovak League opposed the CNAC's federal charter because they believed that the Czechoslovak-oriented organization did not speak for them. In attempting to steer clear of identity politics, the CNAC sought to focus its activities on domestic issues.

⁷⁹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file "Sokol Bulletin, 1958, 1964, 1965," Canadian Sokol: Official Publication of the SGAC, No. 1, 15 January 1962.

⁸⁰ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file "Sokol Bulletin, 1958, 1964, 1965," Sokol –Toronto News Letter, December 1964, 1-2; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file "Sokol Bulletin, 1958, 1964, 1965," Sokol – Toronto News Letter, January 1965, 1, 5. The annual KOS *Slet* was held on 4 July 1965.

⁸¹ The Czechoslovak Sokol Aboard held its second *Slet* during Expo 67 on 1-2 July 1967 on St. Helen's Island in Montreal. Sokol units from Canada, Austria, England, Western Europe, Africa, South America, and Australia attended the event. Organizations including the American Sokol Organization, Sokol U.S.A., District Abroad Sokol in U.S.A., and the CNAC participated in the event. See LAC, Josef Hlavka Fonds, MG 31 H101, volume 1, pamphlet, Sokol Slet: Gymnastic Festival Festival Gymnastique, Montreal – Canada – July 1 & 2 Juillet – 1967.

Assisting Newcomers from Czechoslovakia and the Promotion of Canadian Citizenship

As Canadian Czechoslovaks began to resolve ideological tensions between members within the Sokol movement; many of these same individuals were also members of the CNAC and MMI. The CNAC's various committees worked alongside MMI due to its experience in financially supporting immigrants from Czechoslovakia. The Women's Council of the CNAC regularly corresponded with MMI to guarantee that newcomers were accommodated in Canada. Established in 1960, the Women's Council of the CNAC secured accommodations, clothing, food, employment, language courses, and access to new schools for refugee families. Incidentally, newcomers were grateful for the early support these groups offered them. However, many refugees – while thankful for community support – felt they had overused community resources and refused additional support out of fear of losing their independence or ability to make decisions for themselves or their families.⁸² In many instances, the Women's Council was the intermediary between newcomers and the existing Czechoslovak community in Toronto and across Canada. In recognizing the needs and desires of refugee families, volunteers from the council individually assessed each refugee family on their own merits to determine whether they required clothing, employment, and residence, or simply financial support to send their children to summer camp at Masaryktown.⁸³ The Women's Council was also instrumental in sending donations and clothing to Czechs and Slovaks in refugee camps in Austria, West Germany, and Italy.⁸⁴

⁸² LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, January-June 1963," letter from Ruth Petříčková to Prokop V. Havlík, 1 March 1963; Jovanovic, "Czechs," 402.

⁸³ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, August-December 1963," letter from Ruth Petříčková to J. Kubík, 19 September 1963.

⁸⁴ Čermák, *It All Started with Prince Rupert*, 200-201. In 1964, the Women's Council of the CNAC received the Chatelaine Award for Service to the Community. The council also published *Czechoslovak Recipes – Women's Council of the Czechoslovak National Association* which contained a selection of Czechoslovak recipes including Mrs. Chmel's *Piškotova babovka* (sponge cake), Mrs. Štěpáne's Cottage Cheese Squares, Mrs. Gunther's Mocha

In December 1962, MMI members were captivated by news of a young Czech stowaway's escape to Canada. After spending three days in the freezing fuselage compartment of an outbound Cubana Airlines plane from Prague, fifteen year-old stowaway Miloš Navrátil disembarked in Gander, Newfoundland where Canadian immigration officials noticed the adolescent did not possess any travel documents. Subsequently, the Cubana Airlines employees were forced to admit that the boy was a stowaway. Canadian immigration officials enquired whether he wished to remain in Canada and seek asylum or continue to Havana. Navrátil replied that he had a great uncle in Ottawa and that he wished to remain in Canada.⁸⁵ News of the teenage stowaway spread quickly as several Canadian newspapers reported his story to Canadians. Immigration officials took Navrátil from Gander to Pier 21 in Halifax where he was processed. Later, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) requested further information from Canadian immigration officials to determine whether Navrátil could be considered as a convention refugee.⁸⁶ In a letter sent a week later from MMI to the Acting Superintendent of Immigration at Pier 21, Prokop V. Havlík informed immigration officials that an anonymous Canadian Czechoslovak donated \$100 dollars to Navrátil. The president of MMI also demanded that Navrátil "as an escapee from a country ruled by communists, should be in the category of opponents to the communistic rule" and be permitted to remain in Canada. Havlík claimed that should the young stowaway's relatives not be located, MMI would assume

Chip Torte, and Mrs. Lev's Chocolate Chiffon Roll to which they "hope[d] you will be successful in trying them out and that your family will enjoy the good results." See Edith Feldman, ed., *Czechoslovak Recipes – Women's Council of the Czechoslovak National Association* (Toronto: CNAC, 1963), 1-32.

⁸⁵ "Santa Claus Won't Miss Young Czech Stowaway," *Toronto Daily Star*, 24 December 1962, 1; "A New Home for a Stowaway," *Globe and Mail*, 14 February 1963, 3, "Freezing, Fearful Flight Described By Czech Boy," *Toronto Daily Star*, 14 February 1963, 25.

⁸⁶ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 8437, file 10254-40, part 2, "Activities of Czechoslovakians in Canada and Abroad: General," message from Canadian Permanent Mission, Geneva to DEA, 2 January 1963.

responsibility for him.⁸⁷ Two months later, Miloš Navrátil was taken in by Jaroslav Tichý and his wife in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.⁸⁸ As an important Canadian Czechoslovak organization, MMI was instrumental in providing assistance to newcomers from Czechoslovakia. The plight of Miloš Navrátil illustrated that MMI successfully lobbied Canadian authorities to have the fifteen year-old stowaway legally admitted into Canada as an individual who fled from communism in his homeland. Masaryk Memorial Institute also guaranteed Navrátil's safety and provided assistance in locating accommodations and basic necessities upon his arrival.

In an effort to assist recently arrived refugees, non-Czechoslovakian groups often donated funds to MMI for its activities at Masaryktown. The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints donated \$25 dollars which was later allocated to Jan Machálek, a fifteen-year-old boy who recently arrived in Canada with his widowed mother after residing in West Germany as a refugee. In gratitude for the contribution, Havlík invited the church to send a young child, of eight to twelve years of age, to spend two weeks at Masaryktown during the annual children's summer camp.⁸⁹ As a charitable organization, MMI carried out many of its activities at its centre of Czechoslovak community life, Masaryktown, in Scarborough on the outskirts of Toronto. Although established to provide financial, cultural, and educational support to "Czechoslovak people," it did not restrict its programs to individuals and families of Czech or Slovak origin. Masaryktown held annual children's summer camps where families paid a small fee, while orphans and underprivileged children were admitted free of charge. The Masaryk Memorial Institute permitted other groups to use the grounds at Masaryktown including the local

⁸⁷ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, June – December 1962," letter from Prokop V. Havlík to Mr. Casselman, Acting Superintendent of Immigration, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Pier 21, 28 December 1962.

⁸⁸ "Freezing, Fearful Flight Described By Czech Boy," *Toronto Daily Star*, 14 February 1963, 25.

⁸⁹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, June – December 1961," letter from Prokop V. Havlík to Frank Clifton, President, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 5 October 1961.

Scarborough police club, Catholic Aid Society, and the Toronto Young Men's Christian Association Camping Branch. The latter group often voluntarily contributed to the MMI building fund which collected funds for property maintenance and the future construction of a community residence for elderly Czechs and Slovaks.⁹⁰ Similarly, individuals and families were welcomed by MMI to use Masaryktown's grounds and swimming pool for a nominal fee of five dollars. Guides were provided to supervise children's activities and to train adolescents in gymnastics and other physical pursuits.⁹¹

Czechs and Slovaks in remote communities across Canada also solicited MMI for short-term financial support or long-term charity due to unemployment, disability, and illness. A questionnaire sent to respondents asked whether the individual in need was employed, their salary or wage, behaviour on the job, level of honesty, and whether they were married and had children. In one case, MMI was unable to easily reach a compatriot in northern Ontario and sent a "Questionnaire [sic.] for charity" to the local postmaster in town to verify the individual's character and whether they were a "good risk" for a loan. The local postmaster in Renabie, Ontario replied by stating that the individual seeking a short-term loan was "a very good worker, does not miss a shift, never drinks." The applicant was deemed to be honest and conscientious. When asked if there was any illness or accident which made it necessary for assistance, the postmaster replied: "no – s.o.s. children's teeth – Mrs. E. is a very good wife and housekeeper – but they have never enough money for a dentist (for example)."⁹²

⁹⁰ On 1 January 1957, the Scarborough Police force merged with several other local police forces to form the Metropolitan Toronto Police force.

⁹¹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, September – December 1959," letter from Yaroslav Hueber, counsel for the appellant, to unknown, n.d.

⁹² LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, January-March 1964," Questionnaire [sic.] for charity, 11 March 1964; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, January-March 1964" letter from unknown to Mrs. A. Fisher, Postmaster, Renabie, Ontario, 10 March 1964; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28

Supporting Czechoslovak Ethnocultural Heritage in Canada

In his 1964 annual report to the membership of MMI, assistant treasurer Edward Ovsenný discussed the organization's future and its "cultural purpose." Ovsenný asked "why does MMI continue to exist? Are not most of us assimilated into the 'Canadian way of life'...especially the second generation? Why are we of the board of directors, striving so strongly to keep a bit of the old world culture alive in this modern New World community? What good is it? Who now needs it?" Since the treasurer's annual report contained only financial information about the corporation, Ovsenný sensed that communal reflection was necessary in order to decide upon the institute's future role in Canada as a centre of Czechoslovak community life. In 1964, the assistant treasurer argued that European culture and way of life contributed to the Czech or Slovak immigrant's experience in Canada. However, time and assimilation made it more difficult for the institute to attract second-generation youth as members. Ovsenný proposed that MMI adapt to the changing interests of young parents. If MMI did not directly engage youth and young adults, its purpose would be "doomed to a slow denegration."⁹³

In the summer of 1963, the Canadian government announced that it would examine the state of biculturalism and bilingualism across Canada and recommend any necessary actions to improve the relationship between English and French Canada and recognize the cultural contributions of other ethnic groups in the country. On 19 July 1963, the Liberal government of Prime Minister Lester Bowles Pearson established a Royal Commission to evaluate the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada. The *Royal Commission on Bilingualism and*

V110, volume 3, file "Correspondence, January-March 1964," letter from W.A. Moore, Manager, Renabie Mines Limited to MMI, 16 March 1964.

⁹³ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file "Annual Reports, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1970," Výroční zpráva za rok 1964, 2.

Biculturalism was implemented to recommend how the federal government could develop the country based on an equal partnership between Anglophones and Francophones.⁹⁴ As part of its mandate, the Royal Commission also took into account the cultural contribution of other ethnic groups in Canada. On 10 October 1963, commission co-secretaries Neil M. Morrison and Paul Lacoste welcomed ethnic groups to submit briefs to the Royal Commission.⁹⁵ As the local Member of Parliament for the Toronto riding of Parkdale in which the original Masaryk Hall resided, Stanley Haidasz, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, invited Czechoslovaks in Toronto to submit a brief to the Royal Commission and to participate at the public hearings of the commission.⁹⁶

As a national ethnic organization which claimed to represent the Czechoslovak community across Canada, the CNAC submitted a brief to the Royal Commission detailing its observations and recommendations.⁹⁷ Similar to other ethnic groups, the Czechoslovak contribution to the commission was later labelled as “generally cautious, even-handed and largely supportive of the Commission’s role.”⁹⁸ The CNAC’s brief indicated that the association believed that “the maintenance and strengthening of a united, though not necessarily uniform Canada to be a goal towards which they are prepared to work and contribute their share.”⁹⁹

⁹⁴ André Laurendeau, editor of *Le Devoir* and Davidson Dunton, president of Carleton University chaired the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. The Royal Commission is often referred to as the Laurendeau-Dunton commission or the Bi-Bi Commission.

⁹⁵ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file “Correspondence, August-December 1963,” Memorandum to Institutions from Neil M. Morrison and Paul Lacoste, Co-Secretaries, Royal Commission on Biculturalism and Bilingualism to Prokop V. Havlík, 10 October 1963.

⁹⁶ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file “Correspondence, August-December 1963,” letter from Stanley Haidasz, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Health and Welfare to Prokop V. Havlík, 22 October 1963.

⁹⁷ The CNAC’s brief to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was submitted on behalf of its members by Antonín Daičar, president; Jiří G. Corn, secretary general; and Jaroslav A. Bouček, chairman of the CNAC special committee.

⁹⁸ Richard Heyman, “Making a Scene about Language Rights,” *Canadian Journal of Education* 4:1 (1979): 58-59.

⁹⁹ CNAC, *Brief to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism by the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada* (Toronto: CNAC, 1963), 1.

Although the CNAC recognized the “special position” of the English and French languages in Canadian society, it felt that Canada of the early 1960s was a product of a multitude of ethnic groups. As the CNAC remained sympathetic to the political and cultural aspirations of French Canadians, it argued that these aspirations had to be compatible with Canadian unity and the work of the federal government. As a result, CNAC members approved of any necessary constitutional changes to support French Canadian demands if they did not “jeopardize Canada’s integrity.”¹⁰⁰ In discussing the role of French Canadian minorities outside of Quebec, the CNAC recommended that rights be given to “minority” schools, involvement in government, and that the use of French be guaranteed when dealing with federal authorities.

The CNAC used the example of interwar Czechoslovakia where Sudeten German and Hungarian minorities, for example, were assured linguistic rights for their own schools and for all judicial and administrative offices in districts where an ethnic minority represented a minimum of twenty percent of the local population. The brief noted that “the European experience in linguistically mixed areas is that the acquisition of an additional language is the result of either economic necessity or the close daily contact of two interdependent ethnic groups, and that attempts to increase the knowledge of the second language by force or propaganda are generally unsuccessful.”¹⁰¹

When it came time to discuss multiculturalism, the CNAC appreciated that Canada did not force its ethnic communities to rapidly integrate, and as a result supported a much slower process of assimilation. Ethnic Czech and Slovak children in Canada were able to learn English or French as a second language to their benefit. However, instruction in ethnic languages other

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. The CNAC brief went on to note that “it is our opinion that much more now depends on the efforts of the French Canadians themselves to enjoy fully the advantages of their existing autonomy within a larger political and economic unit, rather than on constitutional changes.”

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 2.

than English and French was to be left to “private initiative” of the parents or ethnic community, and supported by public funds.¹⁰² The CNAC supported government funding of multiculturalism, but sought to remain responsible for its implementation at a local level – in the home and the ethnic community. Consequently, the CNAC argued that Canada’s cultural evolution would be strengthened if individuals with diverse ethnic backgrounds were represented in public organizations including the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Canada Film Board, and federal and provincial departments with portfolios in cultural and educational affairs.¹⁰³

In having sold half of its Masaryktown property to alleviate a difficult financial situation a decade earlier, MMI funded a voluntary English-language school, its weekly newspaper *Nový domov*, a community library, a local Sokol unit, and the annual children’s summer camp at Masaryktown.¹⁰⁴ During this period, \$416,813.46 was raised from bingo games as revenues to be used to maintain these services for the Czechoslovak community in Toronto.¹⁰⁵ Thirty-nine percent of bingo funds were used for relief and assistance – support for the needy, elderly, or disabled, and for the future construction of an old age home in Masaryktown. A quarter of all

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ In a letter to provincial officials, MH noted that expenses at Masaryktown for the 1958 year were \$10,624.28, while the organization’s income was only \$5,333.35. The counsel noted that the grounds at Masaryktown were “kept in a perfect condition and enhance the Township” which as a result was one of the most identifiable landmarks in the area.¹⁰⁴ In the fall of 1959, MH contacted provincial officials in Ontario regarding its level of property taxes. On behalf of MH, Counsel Yaroslav Hueber requested that township officials review the level of property taxes that the charitable organization paid. According to the counsel, lower taxes would allow the MH to increasingly divert its revenues into activities that were beneficial for all of Scarborough’s residents. See LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 3, file “Correspondence, September – December 1959,” letter from Yaroslav Hueber, counsel for the appellant, to unknown, n.d.

¹⁰⁵ Prior to its incorporation and subsequent name change, Masaryk Memorial Hall found itself in a difficult financial position as it struggled to pay its bills and also provide assistance to recently arrived refugees from Europe. In 1956, MH sold half of Masaryktown by tender and its financial difficulties disappeared. The hall received a small income from various activities held at its location on Cowan Avenue. The hall’s board of directors were aware that without proper kitchen facilities, profits would remain small. The board discussed the possibility of applying for a liquor licence which would have dramatically increased its revenue, but ultimately decided against selling liquor on its premises. The hall’s executive chose to concentrate its funding efforts on holding dances and renting the hall to various churches to play bingo. See LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file “Miscellaneous – Bingo,” Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated and the Bingo Games, 3 April 1965, 1.

funds were allocated for the cultural, recreational, and entertainment activities including the annual children's summer camp at Masaryktown. Meanwhile, nearly twenty-two percent was put towards physical training involving the local Sokol unit. Eleven percent of funds were used to support "Obligations of Canadian Citizenship" such as literature and art pertaining to Canada.¹⁰⁶

In early 1964, MMI informed the Canadian Czechoslovak community that it was allotting \$1,250 towards a scholarship fund. The institute envisioned that students would receive prizes if they met the following conditions: Czech, Slovak, or Carpathian Ruthenian ancestry; high school matriculation with first or second class honours; and enrolment in university studies. Applicants submitted a written composition on the theme of "Constructive Citizenship – a Conscious Responsibility" pertaining to either the family, Czechoslovakian ethnic group, or to a town, city, country, or the world. Submissions were to remain between 250 to 750 words and could be written in Czech, Slovak, Carpathian Ruthenian, English, or French. Seven prizes were allocated for the competition. A first prize of \$500 dollars was established with the seventh prize winner receiving \$20. Submissions were judged by a scholarship committee comprised of the institute's executive officers and Czech and Slovak Supplementary school teachers, and the editorial staff of *Nový Domov*.¹⁰⁷

In order to fund the scholarship program and its other community activities, the institute continued to hold twice-weekly bingo games to raise funds and sought to licence and supervise the games to prevent undesirable individuals from seizing control of its fundraising structure. Local authorities were aware of the bingo games and only banned them once it became clear that they were becoming frequent. Players were charged one dollar as an entrance fee and \$3.35 for

¹⁰⁶ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file "Miscellaneous – Bingo," Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated and the Bingo Games, 3 April 1965, 6-14.

¹⁰⁷ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 5, file "Scholarships, 1962-64," "University Scholarship Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc.," *Nový domov*, 16 May 1964, ?.

bingo cards.¹⁰⁸ As a result, 66.7 percent of the income generated from the games returned to participants in the form of prizes, while 5.05 percent was paid to staff the games, a further 28.25 percent was left as gross profit. The revenue from these bingo games was used to fund cultural, educational, and welfare activities. Similarly, funds were used to improve MMI's facilities.¹⁰⁹ The institute's bingo games were shut down by local police after a court order instructed local authorities to confiscate the organization's bingo blower machine.¹¹⁰ In court, the institute pleaded guilty to operating an illegal gaming establishment and was handed a \$2,000 fine.¹¹¹ The institute continued to search for ways to generate revenue in order to continue to provide cultural programs and financial assistance to the Czechoslovak community in Toronto and across Canada.

Increasingly, community members became concerned with maintaining a Czechoslovak ethnocultural heritage in Canada as younger members of the community were assimilating into Canadian society, and were no longer participating in community activities. In an effort to support its activities including a children's summer camp, scholarship program for students, community library, newspaper, and local Sokol group, MMI held fundraising activities such as bingo games in an effort to maintain its financial viability. As the Canadian Czechoslovak community worked to support its goals to preserve its ethnocultural heritage for younger generations, its membership engaged the Canadian government to increase family reunifications and to undermine the Communist government in Czechoslovakia.

¹⁰⁸ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file "Miscellaneous – Bingo," Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated and the Bingo Games, 3 April 1965, 2.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹⁰ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file "Correspondence, January-19 May 1965," letter from Prokop V. Havlik to Arthur Maloney, 19 May 1965.

¹¹¹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file "Correspondence, January-19 May 1965," letter from D.C. Trowell, Vice-President, CKEY 59 Radio to Arthur Maloney, Barrister for MMI, 18 May 1965. Counsel Arthur Maloney represented MMI in court. Magistrate C.A. Thorburn fined the institute \$2000 for operating an illegal gaming establishment.

Permitted to Travel: Czechoslovakians Come to Canada

Early in the 1960s, the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia began to rewrite its emigration regulations whereby the reunification of families would be facilitated.¹¹² Individuals who left Czechoslovakia “illegally” after February 1948 were permitted to return for a visit without difficulties as long as they did not engage in activities detrimental to Czechoslovakia.¹¹³ Officials in Ottawa asked their legation staff in Prague to confirm whether the DEA’s practice of submitting individual cases to the Communist authorities was harming each applicant’s chances of success, and whether submitting a list of names was preferable.¹¹⁴ Karel Vojáček, the head of the Consular Department within the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed Western diplomats that Prague eased its visa restrictions and allowed Czechs and Slovaks travelling on a Canadian passport to enter Czechoslovakia. Canadian citizens were no longer to be considered as Czechoslovakian citizens who could be detained for illegally leaving the Communist regime. More importantly, Czechs and Slovaks who left the country more than a decade ago were to be granted a visa, excluding individuals who actively opposed the Communist regime. As a result of this change, Czech and Slovak parents residing in Canada could now reunite with the children they left behind, while couples could legally emigrate and be

¹¹² LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 5009, file 232-AX-40, volume 2, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia,” numbered letter 317 from John Alexander McCordick, Canadian Ambassador to Czechoslovakia to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 8 May 1963. On 28 June 1962, the federal cabinet decided to raise its legation in Prague to the status of an embassy and to extend the Czechoslovakian government the same privilege. See LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 4150, file 232-AX-40, volume 1, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia,” memorandum for the minister from Norman Alexander Robertson to Hon. Howard Charles Green, Minister of External Affairs, 19 July 1962; LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 8948, part 1, file 20-Czech-1-4, “Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy,” memorandum, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, 11 April 1964, 3; Hilliker and Barry, *Canada’s Department of External Affairs, Volume II*, 173.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 5009, file 232-AX-40, volume 2, “Immigration from Czechoslovakia,” numbered letter C-58 from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to John Alexander McCordick, Canadian Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, 29 May 1963.

married abroad. Czechoslovakian diplomats hoped that the lessening of emigration and travelling restrictions would bring about friendly relations between East and West.¹¹⁵ Canadian

Ambassador to Prague, John Alexander McCordick assessed the new consular conditions:

It is evident that the Czech[oslovakian]s have come to the conclusion that their former policy was costing them much in the image they created abroad and was not compatible with the campaign they were mounting to attract large numbers of tourists to this country, especially from among Czechs who had settled elsewhere in the last 30 years or so.¹¹⁶

In August 1965, a Canadian Parliamentary Delegation landed in Czechoslovakia for an inaugural visit. The delegation was invited by Czechoslovakia's National Assembly. Prague's earlier step to allow Czechs and Slovaks with Canadian citizenship to visit their old homeland, and for families to be reunited remained a hollow gesture. Canadian parliamentary representatives raised the issue of family reunification with Communist politicians indicating that since 1961 only 260 Czechoslovakians were able to legally immigrate to Canada. Communist officials informed Canadian representatives that Prague viewed emigration as an internal matter in which Canada could not interfere. On 2 May 1966, Canadian delegation members submitted a list of thirty applicants to the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the hopes of reuniting Canadian citizens with their relatives in Czechoslovakia. An additional list of twenty-five names was sent a month later. Communist authorities in Prague viewed the gesture as another "negative issue" in which Ottawa had no jurisdiction to interfere.¹¹⁷ As Canadian officials lobbied Prague for the reunification of families, the Department of Manpower

¹¹⁵ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 5009, file 232-AX-40, volume 2, "Immigration from Czechoslovakia," numbered letter C-513 from John Alexander McCordick, Canadian Ambassador to Czechoslovakia to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, 18 September 1963.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 8948, part 1, file 20-Czech-1-4, "Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy," memorandum, Confidential: Czechoslovakia, August 1966, 3.

and Immigration introduced a White Paper calling for the introduction of new liberalized immigration regulations that eliminated racial and geographic discrimination. Refugees who held ideological beliefs in opposition to those of the Canadian government – including Communism – would continue to encounter difficulty in gaining entry to Canada.¹¹⁸

Communist authorities in Prague ignored Canadian demands for family reunification and actively promoted the repatriation of Czechs and Slovaks back across the Iron Curtain as they increased espionage activities in Canada. Although a majority of the individuals who returned behind the Iron Curtain were communists predominantly of ethnic Slovak origin, a few did return as spies. The RCMP Directorate of Security and Intelligence observed that the Soviets were using “evasive countersurveillance techniques” by arranging to meet their agents outside of urban centres.¹¹⁹ On 3 October 1965, Victor Myznikov, a KGB (*Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti* – Committee for State Security) officer within the Soviet embassy in Ottawa used “hitchhiking” as a means to meet one of his agents in Brockville, Ontario. Once there, Myznikov handed his contact two papers. The KGB officer returned to Ottawa, while his contact departed for Toronto and later flew back to Edmonton via Thunder Bay.¹²⁰ Born in Canada to parents of Slovak origin, Mike Mihalcin, Jr. moved back to Czechoslovakia with his family after the Second World War. In 1961, he returned to Canada with his wife and child as a *StB* spy. The Mihalcins resettled in Edmonton under their real names. Upon discovering Mihalcin, the RCMP Special Branch believed they had made a significant discovery because to them he showed

¹¹⁸ Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *House of Commons Debates: Official Report, First Session – Twenty Seventh Parliament, Volume 8* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1967), 8651-8654; Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 228-229.

¹¹⁹ In 1962, the RCMP’s Special Branch was renamed the Directorate of Security and Intelligence. In 1970, the Directorate became the Security Service.

¹²⁰ John Sawatsky, *For Services Rendered: Leslie James Bennett and the RCMP Security Service* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1982), 220-223.

“signs of a deep penetration agent.”¹²¹ The RCMP Special Branch nicknamed their surveillance of Mihalcin as “Operation Kitbag” and codenamed him as “Elf.”¹²² Canadian security officials waited for the *StB* sleeper agent to make his first move in Canada.

While Canadian authorities watched for Communist spies, and Canadian diplomats continued to pressure Prague for the reunification of Czechoslovakians with their Canadian relatives, the CNAC held its eighteenth congress in Hamilton on 16 April 1966. A particular focus of the agenda was the problem of compensation to Canadians for property nationalized in Czechoslovakia. Members in attendance resolved to request that the Canadian government insist that Prague agree to pay compensation to persons who were Canadian citizens at the time that their property was nationalized by the Communist authorities.¹²³ In a letter to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Paul Martin, CNAC president Antonín Daičar and secretary general Jiří Corn argued that international law “afflicts an injustice on persons who were not citizens of the espousing state at the time when the property damages were suffered. It would appear that these persons do not enjoy the same protection as other Canadian citizens.”¹²⁴ Congress delegates were concerned with Prague’s refusal to transfer estate inheritances and proceeds from the sales of assets in Czechoslovakia to their beneficiaries in Canada. Subsequently, attendees urged Ottawa to adopt a “policy of reciprocity” by denying the transfer of proceeds from sales

¹²¹ Ibid. Mike Mihalcin Jr. moved back to Czechoslovakia with his family in December 1946. They were granted Canadian passports on 28 August 1946. During the Second World War, Mike’s father was an active member of the Slovak Benefit Society of Canada and participated in the Independent Mutual Benefit Federation in Hamilton in April 1944. The RCMP believed that he was also a member of the Labor-Progressive Party in Fort William, Ontario. Mike Mihalcin Jr. was born 5 April 1931. See LAC, DEA Fonds, RG 25, volume 8560, file 12467-D-40, part 1.1, “RCMP reports re re-admission of Canadians from Czechoslovakia - Individual cases,” letter from N.O. Jones, Inspector, RCMP to Registrar, Canadian Citizenship Registration Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, 19 September 1957.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 15 “XVIII Congress, 1966,” letter from Antonín Daičar and Jiří Corn to Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, 5 December 1966, 2.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 3.

of property in Canada to their inheritors in Czechoslovakia.¹²⁵ A year later on 1 April, CNAC members met in Ottawa to discuss further lobbying efforts regarding compensation claims for the nationalized property and the renunciation of Czechoslovakian citizenship.¹²⁶

Perhaps sensing that the world's attention would soon be focused on Canada and learning of the Czechoslovakian President's upcoming visit to Montreal in May, the CNAC informed Canadian officials that it would not take part in nor support any protests that could damage or embarrass Canada. On behalf of their membership, CNAC president Antonín Daičar and secretary general Jiří Corn indicated that under normal circumstances they would have asked their members to demonstrate in protest of Novotný's visit to Canada. However, both men desired to "do our duty as loyal citizens of Canada on the occasion of its centenary and so we appeal to all Slovaks and Czechs to be composed and dignified and permit a correct reception of Mr. Novotný and his entourage."¹²⁷

On 14 May, Canada's Governor General Roland Michener welcomed President Antonín Novotný to Canada for his five-day official visit to Ottawa, Quebec City, and the International and Universal Exposition in Montreal (Expo 67) to discuss bilateral trade, cultural affairs, and technology.¹²⁸ In a press conference held in Ottawa, Czechoslovakia's president was asked

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Although the CNAC's membership was energized to seek a favourable outcome for these issues, the organization gained 58 new members while losing twenty-eight individuals who departed, relocated or were deceased. In all, the CNAC welcomed an increase of thirty individuals among its ranks. The CNAC was now comprised of twelve branches – all in urban centres, except for Batawa, Ontario. See LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 15 "XVIII Congress, 1966," Československé národní sdružení v Kanadě centennial kongres, Ottawa, Ontario – 1. Dubna 1967, 12.

¹²⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence, 1967-1968," letter "Why Canadian Czechs and Slovaks will not Demonstrate against Mr. Novotný, President of Czechoslovakia and Canada's Guest at Expo 67," from Antonín Daičar and Jiří Corn to Unknown, Secretary of State for External Affairs, n.d., 3.

¹²⁸ Canadian Press, "Michener, Pearson Welcome Novotny," *Globe and Mail*, 15 May 1967, 11; Canadian Press, "Czech President to Talk Trade during Visit," *Toronto Daily Star*, 15 May 1967, 3. From 27 April to 29 October, Montreal played host to the 1967 International and Universal Exposition. Commonly referred to as Expo 67, the event brought 62 countries and their representative exhibits to Canada during its centennial year.

whether political prisoners built some of his country's displays at the Expo in Montreal. Novotný could only reply that it was entirely possible. A small commotion erupted when Lubor Zink, a 1948er, and *Toronto Telegram* correspondent asked the president whether Ottawa and Prague concluded a secret agreement to suppress defections among Expo 67 personnel who desired to stay in Canada.¹²⁹ Perturbed by the question, Novotný subsequently denied any knowledge of a secret agreement between both countries and labelled Zink a spy who was "engaged in these activities himself."¹³⁰ Zink's conservative stance and anti-communism shone through when he continued to question the Communist leader by asking about the status of individuals in the "so-called free socialist society" of Czechoslovakia.¹³¹ The exchange between Novotný and Zink made national headlines and was also followed by the international press. Zink went on to receive dozens of letters from Canadians and compatriot organizations overseas including *České slovo* (Czech Word: Newspaper of the Czechoslovak Exiles), whose editor praised Zink's direct questioning of the Czechoslovakian leader.¹³² Two days later, the Czechoslovakian president arrived in Montreal and visited his country's pavilion at Expo 67 where he was enthusiastically greeted by a fifty-five year old, William Valeš who alongside Novotný was imprisoned at the Mauthausen concentration camp during the Second World War. Similarly, Novotný was

¹²⁹ United Press International, "Czech Chief Calls Newsman a Spy," *Toronto Daily Star*, 15 May 1967, 2.

¹³⁰ Lewis Seale, "Seek New Wheat Pact in Czech-Ottawa Talks," *Globe and Mail*, 16 May 1967, 10.

¹³¹ United Press International, "Czech Chief Calls Newsman a Spy," 2.

¹³² LAC, Lubor J. Zink Fonds, R11600-0-6-E, volume 2, file 1 "Correspondence, June 1967," letter from Dr. Petr Zenkl, Chairman, and Dr. Matej Josko, Vice-Chairman, CFC to Lubor J. Zink, 24 May 1967; LAC, Lubor J. Zink Fonds, R11600-0-6-E, volume 2, file 1 "Correspondence, June 1967," letter from J. Josten, Managing Editor, Lady of Lambeth to Colin Welch, Deputy Editor, *Daily Telegraph*, 22 May 1967; LAC, Lubor J. Zink Fonds, R11600-0-6-E, volume 2, file 1 "Correspondence, June 1967," letter from J. Josten, Managing Editor, Lady of Lambeth to Joška Pejskar, Editor, *České slovo*, 4 June 1967; LAC, Lubor J. Zink Fonds, R11600-0-6-E, volume 2, file 1 "Correspondence, June 1967," letter from Alois Stana to Lubor Zink, 7 June 1967.

confronted by Gerry Kernc, a Montreal resident who slipped the president a letter seeking help in getting his 23 year-old twin daughters, Ludmila and Marie from Prague to Expo 67.¹³³

As Ambassador and General Commissioner for Czechoslovakia's participation at EXPO 67, Miroslav Galuška informed Canadians that it was Prague's ambition in Montreal to bring "new foundations for a yet wider development of mutual contacts in the years which are to come." Galuška hoped that both countries' involvement in the exhibition would result in a "mutual acquaintance, a contribution to international cooperation and to the consolidation of world peace."¹³⁴ The Communist authorities desired an increase in economic trade with Canada to aid their stagnant economy. Prague was interested in importing wheat, metals, chemicals, asbestos, hides, and seeds from Canada. Conversely, Czechoslovakian officials sought to export ham, beer, jewelry, glass, sports equipment, furniture, among other goods.¹³⁵ The Communist government hoped that trade would increasingly lead to peaceful coexistence between both countries.¹³⁶

In May 1967, the DEA informed Canadian citizens that Ottawa was entering negotiations with the Czechoslovakian government over outstanding claims by individual Canadians against Prague. Potential claims were limited to issues involving nationalized property, rights, interests, and debts with the Communist government after February 1948. In its *Notice Concerning Claims of Canadian Citizens against Czechoslovakia*, the department could not guarantee that individual and business claims would be submitted to Prague, and requested that the attached questionnaire

¹³³ Martin O'Malley, "Concentration Camp Crony Greets Czech President at Expo," *Globe and Mail*, 17 May 1967, 9; Richard Snell, Smiles, Tears, as Czech Chief Meets Pal from Prison Camp," *Toronto Daily Star*, 16 May 1967, 2; "War Camp Crony Greets Czech Chief," *Toronto Daily Star*, 17 May 1967, 3; Star Photo, "Czechoslovakian President," *Toronto Daily Star*, 17 May 1967, 3.

¹³⁴ Polišíenský, *Canada and Czechoslovakia*, 10.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

be submitted to Ottawa with supporting evidence before 1 September 1967.¹³⁷ , The CNAC lobbied Ottawa to pressure Czechoslovakia's visiting president, Antonín Novotný and delegation officials during their visit to Expo 67 in Montreal. The CNAC demanded that the Canadian government request that Prague permit Czechoslovakian nationals to visit Montreal for Expo 67, especially individuals whose expenses were to be paid by Canadian residents. The CNAC demanded that Canadian claims for property nationalized by the Communist authorities be settled and called on the Canadian government to include claims from persons who became Canadian citizens after the nationalization of their property. The reunification of Czechoslovakian families and Prague's acceptance of the renunciation of Czechoslovakian citizenship by naturalized Canadian citizens were included in the CNAC's lobbying efforts before Ottawa.¹³⁸

As Czechoslovakia's Expo 67 representatives promoted cordial relations between both countries, *StB* spy Mike Mihalcin flew to Montreal to meet Anatoli Shalnev, a Soviet citizen attached to the Soviet pavilion. Both men met on Park Avenue where Mihalcin received a shortwave radio and tuner to be able to listen to coded Soviet intelligence broadcasts. Soon after, the RCMP finally brought Mihalcin in for questioning. During his interrogation, "Elf" admitted that he was a Soviet spy who received coded information. Mihalcin claimed that his shortwave radio broke soon after acquiring it and therefore, he ignored all Soviet information and espionage activity. Whether the RCMP found Mihalcin's story credible is debatable, but he was later released on the belief that too much time elapsed for him to have been a productive and useful double agent. During his interrogation, Mihalcin informed the RCMP Security Service that he

¹³⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 2 "Hamilton Branch No. 34 – Correspondence, 1967-1968," DEA, Notice Concerning Claims of Canadian Citizens Against Czechoslovakia, May 1967.

¹³⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence, 1967-1968," letter from Antonín Daičar and Jiří Čorn to Paul Martin, Secretary of State for External Affairs, 10 May 1967, 2-3.

became disillusioned with Soviet Communism after his return to Canada, and as a result, simply chose to ignore further Soviet information and activity.¹³⁹

Even as the CNAC lobbied the Canadian government to assist in efforts to reunite Czechoslovakian citizens with their relatives in Canada, and compensation for nationalized property, the organization also submitted its recommendations to the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on Immigration. The Special Joint Committee examined the proposed new immigration regulations and the introduction of the points system which removed geographic and racial discrimination and focused on linguistic ability, previous education, and employment experience in the selection of immigrants. The CNAC argued that membership in the Communist Party should not preclude an applicant from gaining entry into Canada from Eastern Europe. The association noted that in many cases, individuals were coerced into joining the party out of fear of losing their employment and the persecution of close relatives. Known democrats and their relatives were denied promotions and access to higher education which often also included subsequent generations. The CNAC recommended that the federal government permit Eastern Europeans to seek asylum and be recognized as refugees regardless of whether they were admissible according to the proposed points system.¹⁴⁰

For those Czechoslovakian citizens who were granted passports by Communist authorities to travel to Expo 67, many were finally able to visit their families in Canada.¹⁴¹ Approximately one-fourth of persons legally permitted to travel outside of Czechoslovakia

¹³⁹ Sawatsky, *For Services Rendered*, 220-223; 273-274.

¹⁴⁰ Canada, Parliament, *Proceedings of the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on Immigration* (Ottawa: Supply and Services, 1968), 806-807. Canada waived these requirements with the introduction of its special program for Czechoslovakian refugees in light of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968.

¹⁴¹ Lida Havrlant, interview by Rose Wilcox, 16 March 1978, interview CZE-0544-HAV, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

headed west.¹⁴² In certain cases, individuals chose to request asylum once in Canada. A majority of these individuals chose to resettle in Toronto. The MMI undertook a large action for these newcomers by assisting them as they were processed by the local office of Department of Manpower and Immigration in Toronto. The newcomers were each loaned a maximum of \$140 per week from the Czechoslovak Credit Union to meet their basic living expenses. As the waiting period for Landed Immigrant Status was long, MMI contacted Canadian officials and arranged for individual work permits on behalf of their recently arrived compatriots. As chairman of MMI's Immigration and Public Relations Committee, František Novotný negotiated with Canadian immigration officials on behalf of Czechoslovakian immigrants and signed guarantees for individuals requesting political asylum.¹⁴³ In certain cases, Ottawa attempted to deport some of the asylum seekers back to Czechoslovakia due to their political backgrounds as Communist Party members. After lobbying the federal government, MMI was able to prevent their deportation. The asylum seekers became known in Toronto as the 'Expo Émigrés.' Once their immigrant status was ascertained, the institute contacted the Ontario Department of Education and arranged for six month English-language courses with financial assistance consisting of \$35 for single adults and \$75 for families.¹⁴⁴ In his report to the membership of MMI, Novotný indicated that he attempted to secure accommodations and employment for these refugees with Czechoslovak families and businesses in Toronto. The cultural officer also claimed that finding accommodations and work for these new arrivals was difficult in the greater Toronto

¹⁴² Korbel, *Twentieth-Century Czechoslovakia*, 276.

¹⁴³ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file "Correspondence, July – December 1967," letter from Ervin Sypták, MMI president and H. Kubík, MMI office manager to unknown, 24 August 1967.

¹⁴⁴ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file "Annual Reports, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1970," Výroční zpráva za rok 1967 – Zpráva referenta pro občanství a styk s úřady.

community due to the language barrier between English-speaking Torontonians and the newcomers from Czechoslovakia.¹⁴⁵

In the months following Expo 67 and the arrival of the Expo Émigrés, members of Toronto's Czechoslovak community began discussing the feasibility of establishing a Czech and Slovak literature course to be held at a Canadian university. Three Czechoslovak organizations agreed in principle to work together in making a postsecondary university course a reality. The MMI, CNAC, and Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees (CFCR) approached the University of Toronto due in part because the city was home to a sizeable community from Czechoslovakia. The University of Toronto was chosen to host the Czech and Slovak undergraduate course for the "promotion of knowledge of our literature in Canada among university students planning to enter an academic or diplomatic field." In addition, the proposed course was to enable subsequent generations of Czech and Slovak Canadians to study the language and literature of their ethnic heritage.¹⁴⁶ All three pro-Czechoslovak organizations in Canada, undertook fundraising efforts to contribute \$12,000 per year for a period of three years to support the salary of an instructor. After 1970, the University of Toronto agreed to finance the course from its own sources for another period of three years.

The three Czechoslovak Canadian organizations hoped that the Czech and Slovak language course would remain viable and become a permanent offering at the university. In reaching out to members of the Czechoslovak community in Canada, the CNAC detailed its efforts in a letter to business magnate and prewar Czech immigrant Walter Koerner in Vancouver. In seeking Koerner's help, CNAC president Antonín Daičar and MMI president

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence, 1967-1968," letter from Antonín Daičar and Jiří Corn to Walter Koerner, 3 June 1968.

Ervin Sypták argued for the importance of teaching Czech and Slovak literature in Canada. Both Daičar and Sypták noted that since Polish, Russian, and Ukrainian were already being taught at the University of Toronto, “our literature should not remain a Cinderella among them.” Simply, a Czech and Slovak course was necessary for the preservation of a Czechoslovak cultural heritage in Canada.¹⁴⁷ Nationalist Canadian Slovaks opposed the establishment of a Czech and Slovak course due to its promotion of a unified ethnic Czechoslovak identity. A year later, the University of Toronto partnered with MMI, CNAC, CFCR, and together subsidized a Chair for Czechoslovak Studies for a period of three years. Czechoslovak culture, language, and identity could now be studied at a Canadian university. With the beginning of classes in 1968, a majority of students enrolled in the course were second-generation Canadian Czechs and Slovaks, many of whom arrived with their parents after 1948 and could speak or write in their native language. As a result, classes primarily focused on Czech and Slovak literature and grammar.¹⁴⁸ By the early 1970s, a Czech and Slovak language and literature course continued to attract students, while additional funding in the form of subsidies for a Chair in Czechoslovak studies was discontinued. The Chair in Czechoslovak studies collapsed amid increasing opposition from the Canadian Slovak community.

Conclusion

During the 1950s and 1960s, Czech and Slovak refugees continued to arrive in Canada. Many of these newcomers languished in Austrian, German, and Italian refugee camps for years

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file “Annual Financial Statements, 1970-1973,” Combined Financial Statements: Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated, Toronto, 30 November 1973, 16; Ian Willoughby, “Professor Lubomír Doležel – Now Retired Doyen of Czech Studies in Toronto,” *Radio Prague*, 3 May 2010, accessed 10 October 2012, <http://www.radio.cz/en/section/one-on-one/professor-lubomir-dolezel-now-retired-doyen-of-czech-studies-in-toronto>.

prior to their resettlement in Canada. In Prague, Canadian diplomats informed officials in Ottawa that travel visas and emigration passports were increasingly hard to obtain. Throughout the 1950s, fewer Czechoslovakians were able to legally leave their homeland. Without travel documentation, Czechoslovakian citizens seeking to leave the Communist regime were forced to carry out daring escapes to the West. Since leaving the state was deemed illegal, Communist authorities in Prague labelled individuals as “enemies of the state,” and “illegal émigrés.” Many of these newcomers joined Canadian Czechoslovak organizations. The political refugees of the 1950s and 1960s united with those who came immediately after the February 1948 Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia and attempted to promote the return of democracy in their homeland.

Perhaps no single event in the first two decades of the Cold War influenced Czech and Slovak political refugees more than the tragic failure of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. The Soviet-led suppression of the uprising in October 1956 demonstrated to the 1948ers and the existing Czechoslovak community that Communism in Eastern Europe would not be easily defeated, and their return home would continue to be delayed. The events of 1956 heightened anti-Soviet sentiment among 1948ers and many individuals became disillusioned with their anti-communist efforts. Czech and Slovak refugees who supported a Czechoslovak identity began to turn their attention towards their own community in Canada. As a result, oldtimers and 1948ers met to settle individual personality clashes and ideological differences. The subsequent rapprochement permitted members of the CNA and MH to work together and provide financial and social assistance to compatriots across Canada. The 1948ers increasingly focused their attention towards domestic issues including the obligations of Canadian citizenship, the maintenance of ethnic heritage, and the promotion of Czechoslovak cultural activities such as the annual Sokol *Slet* and Czechoslovak Day held at Masaryktown on the outskirts of Toronto.

The arrival of Czech and Slovak political refugees who espoused anti-Soviet and anti-communist sentiments were reinforced by Canadian officials who continued to warn the Canadian public of the impending threat posed by domestic Communist sympathizers and Soviet agents to the country's predominantly Christian, democratic, and middle class values. In the 1950s, Canadian newspapers heightened public anxiety over the immigration and settlement of immoral, sexually deviant, and mentally ill Europeans and claimed that these individuals were threats to Canadian democratic and moral values. Franca Iacovetta demonstrated that social workers, professionals, and public officials actively examined and treated "deviant" European newcomers including men who were deemed "sexual predators or wife abusers," and "morally damaged women" in an attempt to bring them in line with Canadian Cold War ideology.¹⁴⁹ Although Canadian officials remained vigilant towards the arrival of immoral and sexually delinquent Eastern European political refugees, federal and provincial officials visited community events in the hopes of promoting their anti-communist and democratic values, and to secure the vote of the Canadian Czechoslovak community. Cooperation between Czech and Slovak refugees and public officials provided the Canadian government's anti-communist agenda with greater legitimacy since many of the 1948ers had witnessed political persecution at the hands of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia.¹⁵⁰

The increasing collaboration between Canadian officials and Czech and Slovak anti-communist refugees led to greater recognition in Ottawa. In 1960, the CNA and MH were incorporated and their names changed to the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC) and the Masaryk Memorial Institute (MMI). The CNAC received a federal charter to assist Canadians of Czechoslovak origin and preserve Czechoslovak heritage in Canada.

¹⁴⁹ Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 203-205, 233-234.

¹⁵⁰ Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 291-292.

Canadian Slovaks represented by the nationalist Canadian Slovak League opposed the CNAC's mandate as it promoted a common Czechoslovak ethnic identity between Czechs and Slovaks.

The immigration of Czech and Slovak political refugees from Czechoslovakia in the 1950s and 1960s was directly a consequence of Cold War politics. These anti-communist newcomers transplanted their Old World ethnic and ideological divisions to Canada, where through contact with existing members of the CNAC and MMI, they entrenched their anti-communist agenda, and democratic values within Canadian Czechoslovak organizations. As members of the CNAC and MMI, the 1948ers actively lobbied the federal government in an attempt to influence Canadian foreign policy towards Czechoslovakia. The 1948ers influenced how successful the *StB* was in manipulating Czechs and Slovaks into becoming agents for their old homeland, and how effective Canadian authorities were in combatting Soviet espionage on Canadian soil. With the *StB*'s infiltration of Canadian Czechoslovak institutions including the CNA's Toronto Branch in 1956, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks worried about public perceptions regarding their allegiances during the Cold War. As a result, many individuals denounced groups where such infiltration had taken place and even destroyed their memberships and links to these organizations.

Between 1956 and 1967, 672 individuals claimed Czechoslovakia as their country of former residence after arriving in Canada. Similarly, 851 individuals claimed Czechoslovakia as their country of citizenship upon entering the country. Each of these figures represents approximately six percent of all immigration from Czechoslovakia during the period, 1946 to 1967.¹⁵¹ Not only were few individuals arriving in Canada from Czechoslovakia, few were

¹⁵¹ Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Canada Immigration Division, *Immigration Statistics 1967* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery 1968), 20-21. From 1946 to 1967, 11,532 individuals claimed

permitted to emigrate legally as Communist authorities restricted the movement of people abroad. Canadian Czechs and Slovaks and their relatives in Czechoslovakia remained divided between West and East, Czechoslovaks and nationalist Slovaks, democracy and communism, freedom and oppression.

Czechoslovakia as their country of former residence. During the same period, 14,062 individuals claimed Czechoslovakia as their country of citizenship upon entering Canada.

Chapter Five:

A Small Gold Mine of Talent: Canada's Response to the Prague Spring Refugees

As recent newlyweds with stable employment and accommodations, Libor and Jiřina Rořtík believed they had a bright future together in Czechoslovakia. Following the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 to suppress the liberalization movement known as the *Pražské jaro* (Prague Spring), the Rořtíks no longer desired to remain in their homeland now under Soviet occupation. They decided to begin new lives in the West. In searching for an opportunity to apply for an exit visa from the Communist authorities in Prague, the Rořtíks requested a close relative who worked in the sugar industry in Cuba to invite them for a visit. In going to Havana, they left their family, friends, and material possessions behind in Czechoslovakia. They believed that Canada openly invited immigrants and was a country of vast human and natural resources. On their return flight from Cuba to Czechoslovakia, the Rořtíks were aware that the flight from Havana to Prague included a stopover in Gander, Newfoundland and Shannon, Ireland. On 6 December 1968, the Rořtíks disembarked from their plane in Gander and immediately requested political asylum in Canada as refugees from Communist Czechoslovakia.¹ The Rořtíks began their new lives in Canada with only ten American dollars and some personal effects from Cuba. Dressed for the tropical climate of the Caribbean, the Czech couple arrived in the middle of winter and Canadian immigration officials transported them to a local hotel where they received vouchers for breakfast. After their transportation to Pier 21 in Halifax, the Rořtíks were medically cleared and interviewed by Canadian immigration officials, who later accepted the couple as political refugees and allowed them to leave the

¹ Canadian Press, "Czechoslovaks Given Status as Immigrants," *Globe and Mail*, 14 December 1968, 4. Libor Rořtík and his wife Jiřina were joined by Josef Kocián, Miroslav Kantarský, and Miroslav Tadle in their request for political asylum in Gander. All five individuals were given landed immigrant status in Canada.

detention centre in Halifax and begin a government language program in the city. After successful completion of weekly language tests, the Roštíks received a weekly allowance of \$35.²

The Soviet-led Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia on 20-21 August 1968 forced thousands of Czechoslovakian citizens to flee the country. Many others including the Roštíks were outside of the country in the preceding weeks before the invasion. Along with those Czechoslovakians in the midst of leaving the country in the months after the invasion, they were forced to make a difficult decision – whether to return home or seek political asylum elsewhere. Since many Czechoslovakians refused to live in a country occupied by Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops, their only alternative was to cross the border into Austria or West Germany. In one instance, a Czech refugee walked approximately six hours through the Šumava Mountains and across the border into West Germany.³ During the confusion arising from the Soviet-led invasion, Czechoslovakian border officials permitted individuals and families to leave. Persons who arrived in Austria were registered and given accommodations and food tickets. In many cases, individuals lacked money as Communist officials back home seized most of their funds prior to crossing the border.

Many Prague Spring refugees arrived in the West with only their personal effects and clothing – often two pieces of luggage – demonstrating to the Communist authorities that they only intended to leave the country for a ‘vacation.’ Similarly, many refugees could not inform

² CMIP21, Story Collection, S2012.121.2058, “Story 2058 with Libor and Jirina (Irene) Rostik.”

³ Jiří Fabšic, interview by Jana Cipris, 23 June 1978, interview CZE-5289-FAB, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto. Fabšic recalls that upon arriving in Canada, he was amazed by the vastness of the country. His first impression of Winnipeg was that the city was “awful.” The structure of the city was “strange.” Fabšic thought that if he had enough money for another flight he would have taken it. He enjoyed the midwest atmosphere of the city, and Portage Street reminded him of Cowboy Western movies. Eventually, Fabšic warmed to the friendliness of Winnipeg’s population and how they were willing to help him.

their close relatives and friends of their emigration out of fear for their safety.⁴ Many refugees maintained contacts in the West who wrote letters of invitation in order for them to successfully acquire an exit visa. Friends and contacts in Western Europe also wired money to Czechoslovakian refugees as they slept in school gyms and later government-provided accommodations while waiting to learn whether they would remain in Central Europe, or resettle in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United States, or Western Europe.⁵ Referred to by the Communist government press as the *vycestovali* or those who ‘travelled out,’ approximately 150,000 individuals resettled in the West after the Warsaw Pact invasion. The *vycestovali* formed a majority of approximately 225,000 Czechoslovakians who fled their homeland for the West since the Communist seizure of power in February 1948.⁶

Previously, in the fall of 1956, Canadian immigration officials initiated an emergency resettlement program for fleeing Hungarians during the Soviet invasion of their homeland. At the time, the Canadian government believed that the Hungarian refugees would be a sole exception to the practice of immigration admission to Canada.⁷ Twelve years later, sensing that a humanitarian response was necessary to the plight of the thousands of refugees who were in the midst of fleeing the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Canadian government instituted a special program for Czechoslovakian refugees – from September 1968 to January 1969 – and

⁴ For many Czechoslovakian citizens, their religious, political, or bourgeois backgrounds forbid them and their children from attaining promotions in the workplace or attending university. After the Warsaw Pact invasion, emigration became a viable option for a better life. See Ivan Stražnický and Marta Stražnický, “After the Prague Spring,” In *The Land Newly Found: Eyewitness Accounts of the Canadian Immigrant Experience*, eds. Norman Hillmer and Jack L. Granatstein, 281-284 (Toronto: Thomas Allen Publishers, 2006), 282.

⁵ Hana Semerád, interview by Jana Cipris, August 1978, interview CZE-8352-SEM, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto; Hana Brzobohatý, interview by Jana Cipris, 8 July 1978, interview CZE-5162-BRZ, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

⁶ Hron, “Czech Émigré Experience of Return after 1989,” 54; Spritzer, “Children of ’68.” Until the early 1970s, approximately 225,000 Czechoslovakians permanently resettled in the West.

⁷ Harold Troper, “In Search of Haven,” In *Safe Haven: The Refugee Experience of Five Families*, ed. Elizabeth McLuhan, 1-18 (Toronto: Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario, 1995), 9.

resettled close to 12,000 Czechoslovakians. It is estimated that over 80,000 Czechoslovakian citizens were abroad during the events of August 1968.⁸ In response to the crisis, the Canadian Czechoslovak community re-established the Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees (CFCR) and worked alongside the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC), Masaryk Memorial Institute (MMI), and various federal and provincial departments to successfully resettle Czechoslovakian refugees in Canada.

This chapter discusses how the existing Czechoslovak community in Canada and various government departments assisted in the resettlement of approximately 12,000 Czechoslovakian refugees during 1968-1969. The newly arrived refugees were referred to as ‘1968ers’ or ‘68ers’ by the existing Canadian Czechoslovak community since their emigration was a direct outcome of the Warsaw Pact invasion. Similar to the 1948ers who fled the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia, a large wave of educated and skilled refugees arrived in Canada in this later migration. Many of the 1968ers were multilingual with some knowledge of English, French, German, or Russian. Additionally, most of the 1968ers were members of the professional and technical classes comprised of academics, doctors, engineers, journalists, lawyers, scientists, and tradespeople.⁹ Unlike the 1948 immigrants, the 1968ers had spent approximately twenty years living under Communism and experienced first-hand the effects of totalitarianism including imprisonment. Once in Canada, the 1968ers yearned to continue their professions – without Communist interference – and were predominantly underemployed in their early years in Canada. However, in comparison to other immigrants who arrived in the late 1960s, the 1968ers were quickly employed in their respective fields and maintained a higher duration of

⁸ Eva Marha, “Czechs/Slovaks,” In *Safe Haven: The Refugee Experience of Five Families*, ed. Elizabeth McLuhan, 19-64 (Toronto: Multicultural Society of Ontario, 1995), 61.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

employment and income than other new immigrants.¹⁰ Many 1968ers were also active in promoting the establishment of émigré publications and publishing houses in the West including *Sixty-Eight Publishers* in Toronto under the guidance of well-known authors Josef and Zdena Škvorecký.¹¹ The 1968ers assisted in reinvigorating Canadian Czech and Slovak organizations. Within the Canadian Czechoslovak community, the 1968ers joined CNAC branches across Canada and the MMI in Toronto, and continued to lobby the Canadian government to pressure Czechoslovakian authorities to permit family reunification and safeguard human rights back home.¹²

Scholars remain divided over the reasons for Canada's decision to resettle approximately 12,000 Czechoslovakian refugees. Some scholars argued that economic considerations and self-interest played a major role in the federal government's decision to resettle young and well-educated professionals who could make an immediate socioeconomic impact. Conversely, others claimed that Cold War politics led Ottawa to temporarily suspend its immigration regulations in an attempt to embarrass the Soviet Union for ideological reasons.¹³ Advocates for the rights of refugees criticized the federal government for playing into Cold War politics in choosing to

¹⁰ Jarmila L.A. Horná, "The Entrance Status of Czech and Slovak Immigrant Women," In *Two Nations, Many Cultures: Ethnic Groups in Canada*, ed. Jean Leonard Elliott, 270-279 (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Ltd., 1979), 272, 277-278. Czech and Slovak refugee women were far more underemployed than their male counterparts. In some instances, immigration officials refused to admit these women into English or French language courses. According to Horná, the lower rate of suitable employment and income among Czech and Slovak women was due in part to Canada's occupational structure of unequal pay and opportunities for women as compared to men.

¹¹ Škvorecký, "Bohemia of the Soul," 122-123; Škvorecký, "A Country after My own Heart," *Maclean's* 87.3 (1974): 24-25, 74-76; Mark Sarner, "Portrait of a Political Exile: Why Josef Škvorecký, Czechoslovakia's Preeminent Novelist, is Very Much at Home in Cabbagetown," *Toronto Life* (1977): 38; Josef Škvorecký, "At Home in Exile: Czech Writers in the West," *Books Abroad* 50.2 (Spring 1976): 308-313. For information on *Sixty-Eight Publishers* and Czech and Slovak émigré publishing houses in the West see: Jana Prokop, "Bibliography of Czech Dissidents," *Nationalities Papers* 11:1 (1983): 93-99. Among the many émigré publishing houses, CCC (Czechoslovak Cultural Club) in Munich, *Index* in Cologne, *Konfrontation* in Zurich, and *Sixty-Eight Publishers* in Toronto were the most prominent.

¹² Sam Solecki, "Reflecting on Exile: An Interview with Josef Škvorecký (1989-1992)," In *The Achievement of Josef Škvorecký*, ed. Sam Solecki, 1-14 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 7.

¹³ Troper, "In Search of Haven," 9; Troper, "Canadian Immigration Policy since 1945," 271-272; Whitaker, *Double Standard*, 6-9; Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 233-234, 255; Victor Malarek, *Heaven's Gate: Canada's Immigration Fiasco* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985), 102; Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration*, 38, 384.

permit individuals and families fleeing Communism in Eastern Europe to enter Canada whereas persons escaping right-wing regimes were often ignored.¹⁴ However, recent scholarship suggests that Ottawa believed it had to intervene on humanitarian grounds, bringing well-educated refugees to Canada who did not pose a security threat to Canadian society. Similarly, Ottawa did not want to embarrass the Soviet Union and unnecessarily heighten Cold War tensions.¹⁵

The Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia and Canadian Reactions

Throughout the 1960s, Czechoslovakian youth participation in Communist-led organizations was in a state of decline. In the latter half of the decade less than 1 million students remained as members of the Communist-supported Czechoslovak Union of Youth. Membership in the Communist Party became increasingly unpopular with less than one-half of one percent of Czechoslovakian youth choosing to remain active in the party. Increasingly, adolescents were joined by disillusioned university students, workers, agriculturalists, clergy, and intellectuals who felt that reform of the political system and stagnant economy was a priority to combat the deceptions, rigidity, and authoritarianism of communist rule in their country.¹⁶ Liberal elements across society outwardly criticized the party and its general secretary Antonín Novotný for failing to reform Czechoslovakian society and its economy.¹⁷ Within the Communist Party itself, reformers decided to seize on the opportunity to confront years of hard censorship and economic

¹⁴ Troper, "Canadian Immigration Policy since 1945," 271-272.

¹⁵ Laura Madokoro, "Good Material: Canada and the Prague Spring Refugees," *Refuge: Canada's Periodical on Refugees* 26.1 (2009): 168.

¹⁶ For an overview of each constituency's role in the reform movement in Czechoslovakia, see Vladimír Kusin, *Political Groupings in the Czechoslovak Reform Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), and Jaroslav Krejčí, *Social Change and Stratification in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

¹⁷ Jeremi Suri, "The Promise and Failure of 'Developed Socialism': The Soviet 'Thaw' and the Crucible of the Prague Spring, 1964-1972," *Contemporary European History* 15.2 (2006): 133-158; Galia Golan, "Youth and Politics in Czechoslovakia," *Journal of Contemporary History* 5:1 (1970): 4; Otto Ulč, *Politics in Czechoslovakia*, 28-29.

decline. In January 1968, Antonín Novotný was replaced as First Secretary of the Communist Party by the Moscow-educated Slovak reformer Alexander Dubček.¹⁸ In assuming office on 5 January, Dubček declared that under “socialism with a human face,” communism in Czechoslovakia would be liberalized. In March, Novotný was replaced as president by General Ludvík Svoboda. After purging the Stalinist hardliners from the leadership of the party, the reformers within the upper echelons of the Communist Party attempted to combine a process of democratization of individual rights with a liberalization of the economy. On 5 April, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia released its Action Program detailing how the country would institute its own form of socialism instead of following the Soviet model.¹⁹ In the following months, press censorship decreased, writers who wrote in opposition to the regime were rehabilitated, and political reforms were instituted. In May 1968, press censorship was completely abolished, religious groups were free to exercise their faith, and personal freedoms were entrenched.²⁰ This period of Communist liberalization in Czechoslovakia became known as the *Pražské jaro* (Prague Spring).²¹

In Prague, Canadian diplomats viewed the Communist regime’s changing of the guard as a “revolution from the top.” In correspondences shared between Commonwealth governments, Alan Renouf, Australian Ambassador in Belgrade, argued that with Dubček in power the Slovaks

¹⁸ On 22 March 1968, Antonín Novotný resigned as President of Czechoslovakia. Eight days later, General Ludvík Svoboda was elected as President.

¹⁹ Skilling, *Czechoslovakia’s Interrupted Revolution*, 217-221; Hans Renner, *A History of Czechoslovakia since 1945* (London: Routledge, 1989), 55-59; Benjamin B. Page, *The Czechoslovak Reform Movement, 1963-1968: A Study in the Theory of Socialism* (Amsterdam: Gruner, 1973), 64.

²⁰ Cynthia Pačes, *Prague Panoramas: National Memory and Sacred Space in the Twentieth Century* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 211; Korbelt, *Twentieth-Century Czechoslovakia*, 285-286; Myant, *The Czechoslovak Economy, 1948-1988*, 157; Suda, *The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic*, 115-117; Zdeněk Suda, *Zealots and Rebels: A History of the Ruling Communist Party of Czechoslovakia* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1980), 322-323.

²¹ For a chronology of the Prague Spring movement, see Zdeněk Hejzlar and Vladimír V. Kusin, *Czechoslovakia, 1968-1969: Chronology, Bibliography, Annotation* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1975).

could command a greater share of the national wealth in the development of Slovakia and for political concessions to lead to home rule.²² Renouf added that “...Czechoslovakia is finally throwing off the remnants of Stalinism and is moving into a new era where the younger, more modern Communists will set the pace.”²³ Canadian Ambassador to Prague, Malcolm Norman Bow wrote in his correspondence with Ottawa that while Dubček was the first Slovak to lead the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, his outspoken support for “democratic centralism” and his defence of the pro-Czechoslovak central government in Prague against Slovak demands for greater political autonomy is in part why he was chosen as first secretary.²⁴ Canadian diplomats were hopeful that a reformist leadership would be able to negotiate terms for family reunification which remained a contentious issue between Ottawa and Prague. After multiple meetings between parliamentarians on both sides, 142 Czechoslovakians were permitted to immigrate to Canada in the first quarter of 1968. Similarly, Canadian and Czechoslovakian officials were in negotiations over outstanding Canadian property claims against Czechoslovakia which totalled more than \$200 million. Ottawa did not release this figure to the Communist authorities.²⁵ Although Czechoslovakians were hopeful that the Prague Spring movement would bring about much needed change, neighbouring Communist states including East Germany, Poland, and the

²² LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, “Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia,” telegram from Alan Renouf, Ambassador, Australian Embassy, Belgrade to Australian Department of External Affairs, Canberra, 23 January 1968, 1.

²³ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁴ LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, “Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia,” telegram from Malcolm Norman Bow, Ambassador, Canadian Embassy, Prague to Marcel Cadieux, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, 11 January 1968, 2.

²⁵ LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, “Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia,” confidential memorandum from DEA to Peter Walker, Government House, Ottawa, 21 June 1968, 2-3.

Soviet Union viewed the changes with fear as they could spread and weaken the stability of their hardline and conservative regimes.²⁶

During the summer of 1968, Canadians were in the midst of a federal election campaign after nearly five years of Liberal minority government under Prime Minister Lester Bowles Pearson. Newly elected as Liberal Party leader, Pierre Elliott Trudeau indicated on the campaign trail that Canada had to reassess its foreign policy position.²⁷ Upon winning his first majority mandate in the 25 June federal election, Trudeau remained convinced that Soviet Communism was dangerous and a threat to international peace similar to aggressive anti-Communism on the part of conservative American politicians.²⁸ Beginning in the summer of 1968, the Liberal government of Prime Minister Trudeau began to alter Canadian foreign policy by attempting to follow its own moderate course between previous governments' acceptance of nuclear weapons as part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the West's aggressiveness towards Moscow.

During this period, the CNAC carefully followed political developments in Czechoslovakia. The organization's executive informed Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp that they welcomed the liberalization movement taking place within the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Executive members Antonín Daičar and Jiří Černý argued

²⁶ LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, "Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia," telegram no. 126 from Malcolm Norman Bow, Ambassador, Canadian Embassy, Prague to Marcel Cadieux, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, 14 February 1968; LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, "Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia," memorandum from Arthur Redpath Menzies, High Commissioner, Canadian High Commission, Canberra to Marcel Cadieux, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, DEA, Ottawa, 18 April 1968, 1; LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, "Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia," confidential memorandum from DEA to Peter Walker, Government House, Ottawa, 21 June 1968, 1-2.

²⁷ John English, *Just Watch Me: The Life of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1968-2000* (Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2009), 49; 57-58; 61.

²⁸ *Ibid.* Trudeau indicated his unease with Canada's past acceptance of nuclear weapons as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). He subsequently demanded that a review be undertaken.

that while liberalization was occurring internally, Czechoslovakian citizens were benefitting with increased individual rights and freedoms. The CNAC hoped that the liberalization of Czechoslovakia would result in the democratization of the country's institutions, and personal freedoms would be fully returned to the populace. Subsequently, the CNAC, well aware of Moscow's continued intervention in Czechoslovakia's internal affairs, requested that Canada apply pressure on the Soviet Union through diplomatic channels to prevent Moscow's influence.²⁹ Canadian officials carefully watched events in Czechoslovakia unfold and remained silent on the Prague Spring movement in an effort not to heighten tensions with Moscow. According to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Marcel Cadieux, "it would not be in the best interest of Czech people to make official public comment at this time."³⁰

The Department of External Affairs (DEA) participated in discussions with its Western partners over the future of NATO and unilateral troop reductions in Europe. With France's departure from the organization two years earlier, NATO maintained a common policy for Czechoslovakia and refused to outwardly support Prague out of fear of antagonizing Moscow.³¹ In the middle of June, a group of intellectuals urged Ludvík Vaculík, a writer and prominent reformist member of the Communist Party, to draft a declaration in support of socialism through democratic means. The letter, entitled *Two Thousand Words*, argued that the socialist system had to learn from its failures, and reform would humanize the Communist regime.³² Fearing that

²⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence, 1967-68," letter from Antonín Daičar, CNAC president and Jiří Corn, CNAC secretary general to Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, 26 July 1968.

³⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence, 1967-68," message from Marcel Cadieux, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to Czechoslovak Democratic Organizations in Canada, Toronto, 7 August 1968.

³¹ Geraint Hughes, "British Policy towards Eastern Europe, and the Impact of the 'Prague Spring', 1964-1968." *Cold War History* 4.2 (2004): 124.

³² Zbyněk Zeman, *Prague Spring: A Report on Czechoslovakia, 1968* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), 152-153; Szulc, *Czechoslovakia since World War II*, 341-346; Křýštufek, *The Soviet Regime in Czechoslovakia*, 143;

Prague's liberalization reforms would spread, the Communist governments of Bulgaria, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the Soviet Union met in Warsaw on 14-15 July, and decided to issue a 'Warsaw Letter' which demanded that Prague reinstitute censorship and suppress independent political groups or face a military intervention. Subsequently, the five Communist governments proceeded to conduct a press campaign against Czechoslovakia's reformist leaders and stationed Warsaw Pact troops along the country's borders. In Western capitals, the prospect of an invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact member-states was seen as unlikely and any intervention in Czechoslovakia by Western governments was ruled out.³³

On 29 July, Czechoslovakia's Communist leadership met with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in Čierna nad Tisou, Slovakia where the Soviets impressed upon their counterparts that further reforms would come with grave consequences.³⁴ The Soviets demanded that Prague remove reformers from key party positions, reinstitute press censorship, and ban all political clubs including *KAN* (*Klub angažovaných nestraníků* – Club of Committed Non-Party Members) and *K 231* (*Klub bývalých politických vězňů* – Club of Former Political Prisoners) which were founded during the Prague Spring.³⁵ Several days later, Communist officials from Bulgaria, East

David W. Paul, *Czechoslovakia: Profile of a Socialist Republic at the Crossroads of Europe* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981), 83; Zdeněk Mlynář, *Nightfrost in Prague: The End of Humane Socialism* (New York: Karz, 1980), 139-140.

³³ Hughes, "British Policy towards Eastern Europe," 124-125; Williams, *The Prague Spring and Its Aftermath*, 97-100.

³⁴ Golan, *The Czechoslovak Reform Movement*, 323-324; Golan, *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia*, 230-232; Jiří Valenta, *Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968: Anatomy of a Decision* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 71-85.

³⁵ Pavel Tigríd, *Why Dubcek Fell* (London: Macdonald and Company, 1971), 93; Williams, *Prague Spring and Its Aftermath*, 100-103. The Club of Committed Non-Party Members or *KAN* was founded during the Prague Spring by 144 prominent intellectuals and members of society as an independent organization that promoted social justice, human rights, and reform of the Communist system in Czechoslovakia. The club was disbanded following the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Club of Former Political Prisoners or *K 231* was founded in March 1968 and comprised approximately 80,000 members across Czechoslovakia. Members were individuals who were sentenced under paragraph 231 of the criminal code for (anti-socialist) crimes against the state. The organization represented former political prisoners, and fought for their social and political rehabilitation under Communist regime. See Zvi Y. Gitelman, "Public Opinion in Czechoslovakia," In *Public Opinion in European Socialist*

Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the Soviet Union met in Bratislava and agreed that they would defend Communism from reform.³⁶ With Dubček advocating for patience, the Soviet Union could no longer accept attacks by the local population against Czechoslovakia's Communist Party and ordered the Warsaw Pact to invade the country.³⁷ On the night of 20 August, approximately 170,000 soldiers and 4,600 tanks from Bulgaria, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the Soviet Union crossed into Czechoslovakia as part of Operation Danube and sought to quell the Prague Spring and its reforms.³⁸ Operation Danube's main objective was to assist conservative Communist Party officials in seizing power from reformist members in order to reinstitute a hardline Communist government in Czechoslovakia.³⁹

As news broke of events in Czechoslovakia on 20 August, Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp informed the press that the movement of Warsaw Pact troops into the country "...was very disappointing and there's bound to be a great setback to the growing confidence in Europe and progress toward an East-West détente." As Sharp remained confident that the invasion was not a threat to world peace since Czechoslovakia was not resisting the Soviet-led advance, Canada remained without an ambassador in Prague as Malcolm Bow

Systems, eds. Walter D. Connor and Zvi Y. Gitelman, 83-103 (New York: Praeger, 1977), 96; Barbara Wolfe Jancar, *Czechoslovakia and the Absolute Monopoly of Power: A Study of Political Power in a Communist System* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1971), 203-204; and Vladimír V. Kusin, "A Note on K 231," *Soviet Studies* 24.1 (July 1972): 77-85.

³⁶ Jeffrey Simon, *Warsaw Pact Forces: Problems of Command and Control* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 50.

³⁷ Valenta, *Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia*, 85-92.

³⁸ Suri, "Promise and Failure of 'Developed Socialism,'" 153; Hughes, "British Policy towards Eastern Europe," 126.

³⁹ Korb, *Twentieth-Century Czechoslovakia*, 301-308; Williams, *Prague Spring and Its Aftermath*, 112; Mark Kramer, "The Prague Spring and the Soviet Invasion in Historical Perspective," In *The Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968*, eds. Gunter Bischof, Stefan Karner, and Peter Ruggenthaler, 35-60 (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2010), 48-51; Karen Dawisha, *The Kremlin and the Prague Spring* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 319-320; Paulina Břeň, *The Greengrocer and His TV: The Culture of Communism after the 1968 Prague Spring* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 27-28; Jiří Pelikán, ed, *The Secret Vysočany Congress: Proceedings and Documents of the Extraordinary Fourteenth Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 22 August 1968* (London: Allen Lane, 1971). Williams noted that initially 165,000 Warsaw Pact soldiers invaded Czechoslovakia on 20-21 August 1968. Meanwhile, Kramer indicated that the figure was 170,000.

concluded his duty in Czechoslovakia and returned home to Canada.⁴⁰ On 21 August, with Canada's Prime Minister enjoying a vacation on the beaches of Spain, Soviet Ambassador to Canada, Ivan Shpedko informed acting Prime Minister Paul Hellyer of the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia. Shpedko informed Hellyer that the Soviets sent troops into Czechoslovakia in order to "rescue socialism."⁴¹ Meanwhile, a delegation of nine Czechoslovak community leaders representing the CNAC, MMI, Permanent Conference of Slovak Democratic Exiles (PCSDE), and the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences issued a joint statement on the events of 20-21 August. The statement expressed that Canadians of Czechoslovakian origin were "deeply shocked by the rape of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet and Warsaw Pact armies."⁴² The four organizations argued that after the Munich Conference of 1938 and the Communist takeover of 1948, Czechoslovakia deserved the international community's support. Representatives of the four organizations met with Hellyer and Sharp and presented a memoir on events in Czechoslovakia.⁴³ On behalf of Canadians of Czechoslovakian origin, the representatives demanded that strong measures be taken by the Canadian government including: formulating a declaration condemning the invasion of Czechoslovakia and its brutality against the local population; submitting a protest before the UN over the aggression of Warsaw Pact states in Czechoslovakia; proposing a resolution at the UN Security Council to create an international peace force to be deployed in Czechoslovakia; using diplomatic channels to ascertain the

⁴⁰ "Invasion Disappointing to Sharp, 'No Immediate Threat to Peace,'" *Globe and Mail*, 21 August 1968, 1-2. On 6 December, Minister of External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp announced the appointment of Thomas Blake Burrill Wainman-Wood as the new Canadian Ambassador to Prague. Wainman-Wood replaced Malcolm Bow who was appointed to lead the department's disarmament division. See Canadian Press, "Wainman-Wood Gets Czech Post," *Globe and Mail*, 7 December 1968, 12.

⁴¹ Victor Mackie, "Ottawa Blasts Russian Move: Czech Crisis Forces Trudeau to Cut Short Holiday Trip," *Winnipeg Free Press*, 21 August 1968, 1, 4.

⁴² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file "(Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975)," untitled resolution, CNAC, MMI, PCSDE, and the Czechoslovak Society for Arts and Sciences, n.d.

⁴³ Marcel Desjardins, "Retour subit de M. Trudeau," *Le Droit*, 21 August 1968, 1; Greg Connolley, "Intervention is Denounced," *Ottawa Citizen*, 21 August 1968, 1.

freedom of individuals arrested by the Soviets during the invasion; and ensuring the safe departure of Czechoslovakians with Canadian citizenship and their return to Canada while also facilitating the admission of Czechoslovakian refugees fleeing their homeland.⁴⁴ After their meeting, representatives of the CNAC later informed the press that the Secretary of State for External Affairs' remarks to them seemed "exceptionally bland."⁴⁵

Fernand Beauregard, a journalist for *La Presse* wondered whether Canada would act. He argued that the Warsaw Pact invasion provided the federal government with an "excellent occasion to demonstrate in what direction our foreign policy is to go." It was Beauregard's contention that Canada's foreign policy was anemic and passive and now could become proactive in the face of an international crisis. Addressing the press in Ottawa on 21 August, Sharp issued a statement explaining that the "Canadian government views the invasion of Czechoslovakia with shock and dismay. We condemn this use of force. All Canadians feel the deepest concern for the courageous people of Czechoslovakia in this hour of trial."⁴⁶ The Secretary of State went on to suggest that the invasion and subsequent occupation of the country "constitute[d] a flagrant breach of the principle of non-intervention to which the Soviet Union itself professes to subscribe." The Secretary of State for External Affairs indicated that the federal government was in talks with other members of NATO and the United Nations to which he added that NATO sought to maintain an enduring accommodation between the West and the

⁴⁴ Marcel Desjardins, "Le Canada en faveur d'un vote de blame contre l'URSS – Trudeau," *Le Droit*, 22 August 1968, 1-2; Frank Jones, "'A Whole Generation Will Die' Czech Says," *Toronto Star*, 22 August 1968, 4.

⁴⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file "(Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975)," untitled resolution, CNAC, MMI, PCSDE, and the Czechoslovak Society for Arts and Sciences, n.d.; W.A. Wilson, "Canada Urges UN Censure," *Montreal Daily Star*, 21 August 1968, 2; Connolley, "Intervention is Denounced," 1.

⁴⁶ LAC, Josef Hlavka Fonds, MG 31 H101, volume 1, letter from Don MacKenzie, Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister to Joseph Hlavka, 27 August 1968; LAC, CCBA Fonds, MG 28 V125, accession 1984-0377, volume 2, file "Canadian Czechoslovak Benefit Association," letter from Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs to J. Hamata, President, CCBA, Winnipeg, 30 August 1968; Mackie, "Ottawa Blasts Russian Move: Czech Crisis Forces Trudeau to Cut Short Holiday Trip," 4.

Eastern Block. Sharp concluded the statement by indicating that Ottawa remained in contact with its embassy in Prague and would ensure the safety of all Canadian citizens in Czechoslovakia.⁴⁷

The minister argued that Czechoslovakian refugees would receive the same welcome as the Hungarian refugees of 1956. Beauregard wondered whether Sharp's condemnation would bring about action.⁴⁸ The press in attendance inquired whether Dubček would be granted political asylum in Canada to which Trudeau replied that the question was premature. The Prime Minister acknowledged that Canada's ability to act in Eastern Europe would be limited, but that supporting the reformist leaders of Czechoslovakia would remain a priority.⁴⁹

Canadian officials consulted with their NATO partners to examine the invasion. Similarly, Canada cooperated with other states to draft a resolution condemning the Warsaw Pact. Trudeau informed the press that any actions by NATO would not be influenced by the Warsaw Pact and that Canada would revisit its membership in the organization.⁵⁰ The following day, Canada along with Brazil, Denmark, France, Paraguay, Senegal, the United Kingdom, and the United States introduced a draft joint resolution at the UN Security Council condemning the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia. The resolution called on the five Warsaw Pact countries that participated in the invasion – Bulgaria, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the Soviet

⁴⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file "(Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975)," Statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, 21 August 1968.

⁴⁸ Fernand Beauregard, "Le Canada va-t-il passer aux actes?," *La Presse*, 22 August 1968, 1; Wilson, "Canada Urges UN Censure," 1.

⁴⁹ Robert Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion: Canada and the World, 1945-1984* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 284.

⁵⁰ English, *Just Watch Me*, 57-61; Costas Melakopides, *Pragmatic Idealism: Canadian Foreign Policy, 1945-1995* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998.), 93; Greg Connolley, "Our Means of Giving Help to Czechs are Limited – PM," *Globe and Mail*, 22 August 1968, 3. Canadian Press, "Trudeau Has Two Choices in Action on Czech Crisis," *Toronto Star*, 22 August 1968, 1. The article noted that in 1968 Canada contributed 6,000 soldiers and 6,000 airmen as part of its commitment to NATO.

Union – to “...withdraw their forces and to cease all other forms of intervention in Czechoslovakia.”⁵¹ The draft resolution mirrored the measures advocated by the CNAC.

On the 22 August, the CNAC received condolences from the Trans-Canada Alliance of German Canadians expressing their shock and dismay at the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. The Alliance also condemned the participation of East German forces in the invasion whose government “seemed to fear most the affects [sic.] of the freedom movement...”⁵² On behalf of German Canadians, the alliance expressed its wish for Czechs, Slovaks, and Germans to “live together as good neighbours.”⁵³ Similarly, the Central Organization of Sudeten Germans in Canada, which represented former citizens of Czechoslovakia, condemned the Soviet occupation. The organization hoped that “freedom will not be wiped out but will rise until your people have achieved their goals.”⁵⁴

Over 200 members of the Czechoslovak community in Toronto and Hamilton organized a convoy of buses and cars to transport them to Ottawa where they demanded a recently returned Prime Minister Trudeau for assistance in ending the Soviet occupation of their homeland. The

⁵¹ Paul Kidd, “Immediate Withdrawal Demanded,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 22 August 1968, 1; Mackie, “Ottawa Blasts Russian Move: Czech Crisis Forces Trudeau to Cut Short Holiday Trip,” 1; “Soviet Troops Seize Reform Leaders, Fire on Czechs in Prague Streets: Didn’t Ask Reds Prague Tells UN,” *Globe and Mail*, 22 August 1968, 1-2; “Situation in Czechoslovakia: Initial Proceedings,” Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, United Nations, accessed 1 August 2012, http://www.un.org/en/sc/repertoire/66-68/Chapter%208/66-68_08-14-Situation%20in%20Czechoslovakia.pdf. The Soviet Union opposed consideration of the resolution question – the withdrawal of the Warsaw Pact from Czechoslovakia – but was defeated 13-2 when the Security Council voted to put the question on its agenda. Council members voted ten votes for, two against, and three abstentions. One of the two votes against came from the Soviet Union, who as a permanent member of the council vetoed the draft resolution.

⁵² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 8 “Head Office – General Correspondence, 1967-68,” message from Henry Weisbach, president and Karl Heeb, Secretary to Jiří Corn, CNAC secretary general, Toronto, 22 August 1968. In 1952, The Trans-Canada Alliance of German-Canadians was founded. In 1984, its successor organization, the German-Canadian Congress was founded.

⁵³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 8 “Head Office – General Correspondence, 1967-68,” message from Henry Weisbach, president and Karl Heeb, Secretary to Jiří Corn, CNAC secretary general, Toronto, 22 August 1968.

⁵⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 8 “Head Office – General Correspondence, 1967-68,” message from Henry Weisbach, president and L. Lowit, Secretary to Jiří Corn, CNAC secretary general, Toronto, 22 August 1968.

bus and car convoy left from MMI's doors in the early morning of 22 August. President of MMI, Ervin Sypták claimed that the Canadian Czechoslovak community was in "complete turmoil" and he feared that while women and children were permitted to leave the country, the communist authorities would prevent men from leaving with them.⁵⁵ Other members of the Czechoslovak community such as Jarmila Jelínek of Hamilton did not discount the use of force to protect Canadian citizens or to free her homeland from Soviet occupation, stating that "the Canadian government should support armed intervention."⁵⁶ The bus and car convoy decorated with Canadian and Czechoslovakian flags arrived at Parliament Hill in the afternoon. Czech and Slovak Canadians from Toronto and Hamilton held flags and placards that stated: "Nazis 1938, Russians 1968," "Russians Leave Czechoslovakia," and "Soviet Murderers are Capable of Killing Every Good Idea." The demonstrators were later joined by Trudeau, Sharp, Hellyer, and Minister without Portfolio Paul Martin, Sr.⁵⁷ Similarly, in Winnipeg, a silent vigil was held at the cenotaph in Memorial Park to show solidarity with the people of Czechoslovakia. One of the vigil's organizers, Jack Stevenson, a professor of philosophy at the University of Manitoba, indicated to the press in attendance that the vigil would continue for twenty-four hours.⁵⁸

At the time of the invasion, the Canadian Embassy in Prague maintained a staff of thirty individuals including their families, and 73 Canadian citizens were registered with the

⁵⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 3 "Hamilton Branch No. 34 – Correspondence, 1968," Oběžník, J.G. Corn, secretary general, CNAC, Toronto, 10 September 1968, 3; "Metro's Czechoslovak Community Plans Convoy to Take Plea to PM," *Globe and Mail*, 22 August 1968, 8; "150 Metro Czechs Will Ask PM for Tough Line on Crisis," *Toronto Star*, 22 August 1968, 1.

⁵⁶ "150 Metro Czechs Will Ask PM for Tough Line on Crisis," 1.

⁵⁷ "Demonstrace," *Nový domov*, 24 August 1968, 2; Burt Heward, "Czechs Ask More than Talk," *Ottawa Citizen*, 23 August 1968, 17; Rick Mackie, "Uneasy Truce between Protestors, Police Marks Night Demonstration," *Ottawa Citizen*, 23 August 1968, 17; David Smithers, "Invasion Beginning of the End for Russia, Says Ex-Czech MP," *Ottawa Citizen*, 23 August 1968, 17.

⁵⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 16 "Minutes – Head Office and Branches, 1969-1974," letter, Sestry a bratři, from CNAC Branch Winnipeg to unknown, n.d.; "Vigil Set At Cenotaph for Czechs," *Winnipeg Free Press*, 22 August 1968, 4.

embassy.⁵⁹ The Canadian Embassy was led by Chargé d'affaires Charles Cole.⁶⁰ Canada had yet to name a new ambassador to Prague. In Ottawa, the Czechoslovakian Embassy continued to condemn the Soviet-led invasion. Chargé d'affaires Alois Drhlík informed the press that “we cannot be very optimistic” as his homeland had entered a dark period.⁶¹

Over the next two days, a local protest was held outside the Soviet Embassy by Czechs and Slovaks from Ontario and Quebec. A majority of the approximately 200 protestors were Czechoslovakian immigrants who carried placards and signs expressing to the Soviets to “Go Home,” “Give Us Back Our Liberty,” “What Happened to Humanity Soviet Imperialists,” and “Soviet Murderers Get Out from Czechoslovakia,” while others illustrated that “Truth Prevails, Even Soviet Murderers Won’t Come to Kill an Ideology.” The protestors marched and sang Czechoslovakia’s national anthem while hurling insults at those inside the embassy. Soviet press secretary Vladimir Makhotin was heckled and spit at as he left the grounds. The protest lasted almost two hours before poor weather ended the demonstration.⁶² That afternoon, demonstrators left the Soviet Embassy and congregated before the Czechoslovakian Legation, once again singing their old homeland’s national anthem before two diplomats came to greet them. The demonstrators desired to bring attention to their cause and to lobby the Canadian government to

⁵⁹ Beauregard, “Le Canada va-t-il passer aux actes?,” 2; Pierre-C. O’Neil, “Le Canada condamne l’agression russe: M. Trudeau est attendu ce matin dans la capitale,” *Le Devoir*, 22 August 1968, 1; Desjardins, “Le Canada en faveur d’un vote de blâme contre l’URSS – Trudeau,” *Le Droit*, 22 August 1968, 1; Wilson, “Canada Urges UN Censure,” 1; W.A. Wilson, “Canada Leads Demand for Red Withdrawal,” *Montreal Daily Star*, 22 August 1968, 1; Connolley, “Intervention is Denounced,” 1; Mackie, “Ottawa Blasts Russian Move: Czech Crisis Forces Trudeau to Cut Short Holiday Trip,” 1.

⁶⁰ “Invasion Disappointing to Sharp, ‘No Immediate Threat to Peace,’” 1-2.

⁶¹ O’Neil, “Le Canada condamne l’agression russe: M. Trudeau est attendu ce matin dans la capitale,” 9; Desjardins, “Le Canada en faveur d’un vote de blâme contre l’URSS – Trudeau,” 1; Wilson, “Canada Urges UN Censure,” 1.

⁶² “Les tchèques protestant durement et ne ménagent pas leur mots,” *Le Droit*, 23 August 1968, 2-3; “Hands Tied: Trudeau,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, 23 August 1968, 1; “Demonstrace,” *Nový domov*, 24 August 1968, 8; Kirk Smith, “Silent Sincere Pickets Protest at Soviet Embassy,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 22 August 1968, 54; Canadian Press, photo “‘You Murderers,’” *Ottawa Citizen*, 23 August 1968, 3; Canadian Press, photo “Thoughts of Homeland Bring Tears,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 23 August 1968, page unknown.

admit Czechoslovakian refugees who were in the midst of fleeing their homeland. Charge d'affaires Drhlík and third secretary Erhard Salomon were inundated with questions regarding their personal political ideologies and the situation in Czechoslovakia. Both diplomats stated to the crowd that they supported the Prague Spring movement to liberalize the country.⁶³

In Winnipeg, over 300 individuals formed a procession up Memorial Boulevard to place a wreath with the words "Freedom At All Cost" at the cenotaph. Although fifteen different ethnic communities were represented in the procession, a majority of the individuals in attendance were members of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee. Winnipeggers carried placards including: "Warsaw Pact-Russian Control; End Soviet Aggression; Today Czechoslovakia – Tomorrow the World."⁶⁴ Premier of Manitoba Walter Weir addressed the crowd stating, "it is fitting that your protest against the ruthless and unwarranted invasion of Czechoslovakia by Russia and its satellites should end at the cenotaph for it is here that every year the citizens of Winnipeg pay tribute to those who gave their lives in the supreme sacrifice in the name of freedom..."⁶⁵ In Montreal, approximately 800 individuals gathered at the local cenotaph in Dominion Square to lay a wreath for deceased freedom fighters. The crowd then proceeded to shout "Dubček, Dubček" as they made their way to the Soviet consulate where they attempted to present a petition to a consulate official demanding the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia. In illustrating their opposition to Soviet imperialism, demonstrators remained at the Soviet consulate for days even successfully breaking the legation's windows. A short walk away, Montrealers gathered at the Czechoslovakian consulate where they were greeted by two

⁶³ Canadian Press, "Czech Ottawa Envoys Back Dubček Reforms" *Montreal Daily Star*, 23 August 1968, 1; "Hands Tied: Trudeau," 1.

⁶⁴ Heather Chisvin, "Czech Freedom Wreath Placed On Cenotaph," *Winnipeg Free Press*, 23 August 1968, 3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

legation officials who thanked the demonstrators for their support.⁶⁶ In an editorial in his own newspaper, *Le Devoir* director Claude Ryan argued that the Soviet Union witnessed a humiliation due to its invasion of Czechoslovakia. To the people of Czechoslovakia, Ryan wrote:

Above any material plan, is the moral lesion she is receiving from the Czechoslovak people. They are weak and not powerful. Practically no one in the world that deplors what has been done to them can come to their help. But the calm, pride, and unity that is found in them during their inner test during this struggle is eloquent. It is the force of rights that continues to be there and affirms itself even when violated. If man is spirit, this force will finish by retaking one day trump over all else.⁶⁷

Within the Czechoslovak community in Canada, only a small number of individuals were adherents of Communism. Throughout the twentieth century, Communists within the community established groups that promoted social justice, progress, and peace, all in the hopes of attracting members to the Communist movement. As a lifelong Communist, Jozef Duriančík published the Slovak-language weekly *Ludové zvesti* (People's News).⁶⁸ Founded in 1933 with a circulation of 2,500, the socialist newspaper espoused "progressive" and "democratic socialist" ideals. The Communist weekly remained loyal to the Prague government, never attacking or disagreeing with its policies including the promotion of Czechoslovakism in Slovakia.⁶⁹ The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia profoundly disturbed the editor who in an interview with the *Toronto Daily Star* indicated that "I don't know what I am anymore. I don't know what to do." The invasion

⁶⁶ Canadian Press, "Montreal Czechs Protest," *Winnipeg Free Press*, 24 August 1968, 8; "Slovaks to March Tonight," *Montreal Star*, 23 August 1968, 3; Canadian Press, "200 Montreal Students Picket," *Ottawa Citizen*, 22 August 1968, 54.

⁶⁷ Claude Ryan, "La force morale du peuple tchécoslovaque," *Le Devoir*, 24 August 1968, 4.

⁶⁸ LAC, CSL Fonds, MG 28 V47, volume 2, file "Clippings," Mark Starowicz, "A Proud Czech Communist Who Isn't So Proud Any More" *Toronto Daily Star*, 23 August 1968, 4; Joseph M. Kirschbaum, *The Ideological Orientation of the Canadian Slavic Press* (Toronto: Inter-University Committee on Canadian Slavs, 1971), 301-302.

⁶⁹ Kirschbaum, *Ideological Orientation of the Canadian Slavic Press*, 301-302.

shook Duriančík's Communist values "...to the core of my spirit."⁷⁰ In preparing his first issue since the invasion, the communist Slovak editor attacked the Soviet Union for its "aggression" and "brutality." Duriančík concluded that the people of Czechoslovakia would overcome their new reality and would continue their struggle for freedom and national independence.⁷¹

Meanwhile, the official organ of the nationalist Canadian Slovak League, *Kanadský Slovák* (Canadian Slovak) condemned the Soviet-led invasion and argued that "not to have one's own state is a question of life and death."⁷²

On 28 August, Mitchell Sharp informed the CNAC that he was closely following the situation in Czechoslovakia on an hourly basis. The Secretary of State for External Affairs reassured the organization's executive by stating that Ottawa would "take all useful action within its power."⁷³ While Canadian officials watched events in Eastern Europe closely, protests continued to be held in urban centres across Canada by local CNAC branches. The largest demonstrations were held in Montreal and Toronto. In the latter, a protest against Soviet aggression in Czechoslovakia was held on 29 August. The demonstration was organized by prominent members of the Canadian Czechoslovak and nationalist Slovak communities. Under the chairmanship of George Ben, a Slovak, and Member of Provincial Parliament for the constituency of Humber in Toronto's west end, a march took place from the Ontario Legislature to Nathan Phillips Square at Toronto City Hall. Premier of Ontario John Robarts and Mayor of Toronto William Dennison spoke before a large crowd of over 5,000 individuals. A resolution

⁷⁰ In 1926, Duriančík came to Toronto from Czechoslovakia at the age of seventeen. He later joined others who advocated for workers' rights during the Great Depression.

⁷¹ LAC, CSL Fonds, MG 28 V47, volume 2, file "Clippings," Mark Starowicz, "A Proud Czech Communist Who Isn't So Proud Any More" *Toronto Daily Star*, 23 August 1968, 4.

⁷² Sutherland, *Canadian Slovak League*, 82. See *Kanadský Slovák* 31 August 1968, 7 September 1968, and 14 September 1968.

⁷³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 8 "Head Office – General Correspondence, 1967-68," message from Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp to Antonín Daičar, CNAC president and Jiří Čorn, CNAC secretary general, Toronto, 28 August 1968.

was signed by Canadian ethnic organizations representing all twenty-five nations under Soviet domination in demanding justice for Czechoslovakia. The CNAC was joined by the CSL in its defence of Czechoslovakia. The Czech-language weekly *Naše hlasy* (Our Voices) published an editorial entitled “Our Answer to the Soviets: No More Talks! Get Out! Save Dubček, save Czechoslovakia,” and promoted the public demonstration. The anti-communist paper argued that “...Czechoslovakia is fighting for her life – help her! Tell the competent authorities of Canada to do the best minimum they can do: sever all commercial, cultural and diplomatic, yes, diplomatic relations with the Moscow murderers!”⁷⁴

With the cooperation of twenty-five ethnocultural organizations including the CNAC, MMI, CSL, and Sokol Canada, the protest was successful in uniting support for a democratic Czechoslovakia.⁷⁵ The aforementioned groups signed a declaration condemning “the brutal armed Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia abetted by groups of puppets of its Warsaw Pact allies.” The organizations called on Ottawa to continue to voice the country’s displeasure with recent events. The declaration also called on Canadian officials to:

resist Czechoslovakia being reduced to colonial status by requesting the General Assembly of the United Nations to condemn Soviet aggression in Czechoslovakia, advocate for an immediate Soviet withdrawal from Czechoslovakia, aid in establishing an independent and democratically elected government in Czechoslovakia, promote the use of international sanctions against the Soviet Union, and to request world’s democratic states to open their doors to the “victims of the Soviet imperialistic aggression and domination.”⁷⁶

⁷⁴ LAC, SGAC Fonds, MG 28 V136, accession 1982/0550, volume 1, editorial “Our Answer to the Soviets: No More Talks! Get Out! Save Dubček, save Czechoslovakia,” *Naše hlasy*, n.d.

⁷⁵ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file “Correspondence, 1968,” letter from George Ben and Jiří Corn, Committee Organizing Protest Against Soviet Aggression in Czechoslovakia to Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated, Toronto, 3 September 1968.

⁷⁶ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file “Correspondence, 1968,” untitled declaration, Toronto, 29 August 1968. The twenty-five organizations who signed the declaration were the following: CSL, CNAC, MMI, Slovak Canadian Professional & Businessmen’s Association, Canadian Polish Congress, Canadian Veterans 601 (Czechoslovak Branch), Hungarian Canadian Federation, Byelorussian Canadian Alliance, Latvian National

The protest in Toronto also pressured Ottawa to advocate for the implementation of free elections in all Soviet-satellite states under the auspices of the United Nations, and to demonstrate support for self-determination and the sovereignty of nations in Communist Eastern Europe.⁷⁷ The Warsaw Pact invasion of 20-21 August 1968 shocked and dismayed Canadian Czechs and Slovaks. Thousands of individuals were outside of Czechoslovakia's borders at the time of the invasion. Joined by compatriots who fled their homeland in the wake of the Soviet-led occupation, they became political refugees and sought resettlement in the West. The Canadian Czechoslovak community lobbied Ottawa to defend democratic reforms in Czechoslovakia and to permanently settle Czechoslovakian refugees in Canada.

“Cream of the Crop:” Canada and the Special Program for Czechoslovakian Refugees

In responding to pressure from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Austrian government, Ottawa formed a special inter-departmental committee of representatives from External Affairs, Manpower and Immigration, National Health and Welfare, and the Solicitor General – who represented the security concerns of the RCMP – to facilitate the implementation of a special program for Czechoslovakian refugees.⁷⁸ The special program allowed for immigration regulations to be relaxed as requirements for the possession of

Federation in Canada, Estonian Central Council in Canada, Sokol Canada, Association of Czechoslovak Sportsmen of Western World, Serbian Cultural Club “St. Sava,” United Steel Workers of America Toronto Area Council, Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences, Canadian Loyalist Movement, Armenian Community Centre A.R.F., Bratstvo Ukrainci Katoliku, Serbian National Committee, Serbian Cultural Club “Bishop Dr. Nikolan,” Ukrainian Canadian Committee Toronto Branch, Ukrainian National Federation of Canada, Slovenian National Federation of Canada, Rumanian National Front, and Permanent Conference of Slovak Democratic Exiles.

⁷⁷ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file “Correspondence, 1968,” letter from George Ben and Jiří Černý, Committee Organizing Protest Against Soviet Aggression in Czechoslovakia to Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated, Toronto, 3 September 1968.

⁷⁸ Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *The Immigration Program* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1974), 108-109; Dirks, *Canada's Refugee Policy*, 233; Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 363.

a travel permit were waived and medical examinations and criminal record checks were concluded in Canada. The Canadian government sponsored chartered flights to bring refugees to Canada. Once in Canada, these newcomers were assisted by the Department of Manpower and Immigration through financial assistance for accommodations and living expenses, medical and dental coverage, and English and French-language training under the auspices of the Canada Manpower Training Program to effectively support refugees as they entered the workforce.⁷⁹

On 4 September 1968, officials in Ottawa instructed their immigration teams in Vienna and Belgrade to assist the Czechoslovakian refugees residing in those countries with the same special treatment the Hungarians received in 1956. In addition to relaxing the stringent immigration regulations, Canadian officials permitted the refugees to have their medical examinations after arriving in Canada instead of in Austria and Yugoslavia. For the Czechoslovakian refugees who were staying in camps, Canadian immigration officials in Belgrade received approximately 500 inquiries and 100 immigration visa applications by the end of the first week of September.⁸⁰ Although Ottawa instructed its diplomats and immigration officials to give special treatment to the Czechoslovakian refugees similar to the Hungarians twelve years earlier, Canadian officials in Belgrade had difficulty in acquiring permission from Ottawa to hire a bus to transport refugees to Vienna where they could be further processed. Similar to immigration officials in Vienna, Canada's Embassy in Belgrade suffered from a lack of instructions from Ottawa on how to deal with the refugees. Tim Creery, a journalist from the *Ottawa Citizen* arrived in Belgrade on 5 September only to remark that the warm welcome

⁷⁹ Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *Immigration Program*, 109. For a brief account of a Manpower Counsellor's experience in resettling 1968ers in Trail, British Columbia, see Bernard Brodie, "Czechoslovakia 1968: The Canada Manpower Perspective," *CIHS Bulletin: The Newsletter of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society* 35 (December 1999): 2-6.

⁸⁰ Greg Connolley, "Govt. Denies Any Delays in Speeding Czechs Here," *Ottawa Citizen*, 6 September 1968, 1.

extended to Czechoslovakian refugees to resettle in Canada "...turned out to be a shameful hypocrisy as penniless Czechoslovaks give up the effort, unable to wait any longer."⁸¹ In early September, Canadian officials were able to find accommodations for twenty-three refugees who wanted to come to Canada. The Canadian Embassy in Belgrade covered the cost of the accommodations by using its own funds allocated for the legation's rent. Creery noted that at the time of the Warsaw Pact invasion approximately 50,000 Czechoslovakians called Yugoslavia home. Several weeks later, due to high unemployment, only 5,000 remained in the country. Many refugees left for Austria, while others tried their luck with embassies in Western Europe.⁸² In Vienna, Canada maintained only one immigration officer at its embassy. With informal cooperation of embassy staff, John Zawisza was forced to implement "local solutions as fast as possible. I realized that the only way to go was to develop a "Case Processing Plan" to handle the applications we were receiving as rapidly as possible."⁸³

In Canada, the CNAC held its annual congress in Batawa, Ontario on 7 September. The association's central council resolved to invite each member to donate a minimum of five dollars on behalf of their families to one of the three major Canadian Czechoslovak organizations – the CNAC, MMI, or CFCR – and also requested they fundraise among their Canadian friends.⁸⁴ On learning that the Canadian government would open its doors to refugees from Czechoslovakia, the CNAC advised its members that each refugee should be registered as an "open immigrant" to shorten the waiting period for their applications to be processed. The federal government also immediately supplied health insurance to individuals in this category whereas normal immigrant

⁸¹ Tim Creery, "Red Tape Holding Up Immigration," *Ottawa Citizen*, 6 September 1968, 25.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ John Zawisza, "The Czechoslovakian Refugee Movement, 1968," *CIHS Bulletin: The Newsletter of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society* 46 (July 2005): 5. Zawisza distributed a "dummy" Czech translation with the English and French versions of the Immigrant Application Form in order for the applicant to understand its details.

⁸⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 3 "Hamilton Branch No. 34 – Correspondence, 1968," Oběžník, J.G. Corn, secretary general, CNAC, Toronto, 10 September 1968, 1-2.

applicants had to wait six months before becoming eligible. Ottawa informed the CNAC that it would attempt to process refugees within two-weeks of receiving their applications for resettlement in Canada. Refugees that wanted to be sponsored as immigrants by relatives or friends in Canada would prolong their wait because an application for their sponsorship would have to be filed in Canada.⁸⁵

On 8 September 1968, the first group of Czechoslovakian refugees arrived in Canada.⁸⁶ Three days later, on 11 September, a group of 54 refugees arrived in Montreal from Vienna aboard the first chartered flights arranged by the Canadian government. The Department of Manpower and Immigration housed the refugees at the Queen's Hotel in the city. Two days later, the group was assisted by federal officials in finding accommodations and employment.⁸⁷ As Canadian officials in Europe continued to process applicants on a priority basis, the federal government relaxed its immigration procedures to expedite the resettlement of these refugees. Ottawa increased its staff in Vienna and funded the refugees' air transportation and resettlement expenses. Once in Canada, the Czechoslovakian refugees received assistance from the Canada Manpower Centres along with universities and private organizations for language training, employment, accommodations, and other services.

On 13 September, Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Alan MacEachen handled questions from Members of Parliament pertaining to Canada's response to the Warsaw Pact invasion during Question Period. Before the House of Commons, MacEachen replied to a query from Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament for Fundy-Royal, Robert Gordon Lee

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, "28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers' Congress, military deserters, etc.," Question Period response from Allan MacEachen, Minister, Department of Manpower and Immigration, n.d., microfilm reel C-10688.

⁸⁷ Clair Balfour, "Going to Like Canada, Czech Refugee Says," *Globe and Mail*, 13 September 1968, 4.

Fairweather, that Canadian officials overseas were instructed to “treat Czechoslovakian refugees on a priority basis. A relaxation of procedures has been undertaken so that refugees interested in coming to Canada may be processed as speedily as possible.”⁸⁸ Subsequently, Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament for Calgary, Douglas Scott Harkness asked the Minister of Manpower and Immigration about the cost involved in resettling refugees to which MacEachen replied that there was no way to ascertain the amount spent on each refugee. The minister went on to note that each incoming refugee would be treated as an individual case whereby the Canadian government would help to pay their transportation and settlement costs. MacEachen later informed the Leader of the Official Opposition, Robert Stanfield that instructions to relax immigration procedures were sent to Europe a week earlier.⁸⁹ Stanfield later argued in his reply to the Prime Minister’s Speech from the Throne that the Minister of Manpower and Immigration reacted rather slowly to the crisis in Czechoslovakia. In participating in partisan politics, the Progressive Conservative Opposition Leader indicated that Ottawa’s response left “...a pretty good indication of the detachment of this government with regard to the problems of Czechoslovakian refugees. I say, Mr. Speaker, that Canadians are not at all proud of their government in this regard...”⁹⁰

Before the House of Commons, Prime Minister Trudeau disagreed with Stanfield and indicated to Canadians that his government’s efforts were successfully resettling Czechoslovakian refugees in Canada. Trudeau illustrated to the House that over the weekend, 280 refugees arrived in the country with 267 of them requiring government sponsorship. In the

⁸⁸ Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *House of Commons Debates: Official Report, First Session – Twenty Eighth Parliament, Volume 1* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1969), 18-19. On 12 September 1968, the twenty-eighth Canadian Parliament was summoned to meet for official business. A day later, the Liberal government began to answer questions from the Official Opposition regarding the Czechoslovakian refugee crisis.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 60.

coming days, the Canadian Prime Minister noted that two more chartered flights would arrive in Canada bringing another 266 individuals into the country. Embassy staff in Vienna conducted over 150 interviews daily in order to process refugees quickly. The Minister noted that 2,374 Czechoslovakians inquired about entering Canada and 901 individuals summarily applied.⁹¹ The next day, Allan MacEachen announced that a team of four experts would be sent to Vienna to select and assist highly skilled and valuable refugees such as artists, musicians, scientists, and intellectuals in their resettlement in Canada.⁹² The federal government sent Arnold Walter, a former head of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto; J.D. Babbitt, secretary for international relations at the National Research Council; Guy Gagnon, coordinator of bilingualism for the Department of Manpower and Immigration; and Andrew Rossos, a professor in the Centre for Eastern European Languages at the University of Toronto.⁹³

On 15 September, the first group of 203 refugees destined for Toronto and southern Ontario arrived after a nine-hour flight from Vienna. *Globe and Mail* reporter Peter Whelan noted that the group was “well dressed as any planeload of passengers getting off flights from Montreal or New York.” Canadian immigration officials believed that the country was receiving “a small gold mine of talent.” The group of refugees arriving from Austria, France, Italy, Switzerland, West Germany, and Yugoslavia were rapidly processed through customs and were sent out to several hundred Canadian Czechs and Slovaks waiting in the airport to help them resettle in their new country. Immigration authorities accommodated refugees with temporary

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 67-68.

⁹² John Kraglund, “New Conductor Becomes a Refugee: Ancerl in Toronto a Year Early,” *Globe and Mail*, 13 September 1968, 1; Jo Carson, “Blacky Had to Stay in Prague,” *Globe and Mail*, 24 September 1968, 10. Karel Ancerl arrived in Toronto with his wife, Hana, and children to lead Toronto’s Symphony Orchestra as its new conductor. He was to officially take up his position in September 1969.

⁹³ Canadian Press, “Special Team Sent to Help Czech Refugees,” *Globe and Mail*, 18 September 1968, 8; Dirks, *Canada’s Refugee Policy*, 234; Charles Murrow, “Sacrifice and Bravery as the Prague Spring Ends,” *CIHS Bulletin: The Newsletter of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society* 46 (July 2005): 15.

stays at three local Toronto hotels before they were to be sent to various locations including: Hamilton, Oshawa, Kitchener, and Sudbury – all in Ontario; Halifax, Nova Scotia; and Montreal, Quebec.⁹⁴ The MMI organ, *Nový domov* claimed that 80 percent of the refugees had already secured accommodations in Canada and employment in positions similar to their chosen fields in Czechoslovakia.⁹⁵

In late September, Immigration officials at the Canadian Embassy in Vienna estimated that they received approximately 2,400 applications for immigration visas since 21 August. Averaging roughly 80 applicants per day, Canadian officials were inundated with requests to come to Canada since the United States did not have a special program in place for Czechoslovakian refugees fleeing their homeland. According to the international news agency *Reuters*, an American diplomat in Vienna stated that the embassy was “handling refugees as we have done for the last 20 years.” Incidentally, many of the refugees did not have a clear choice as to where they would resettle in the West. In one instance, Ivan and Marta Stražnický visited the Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand embassies hoping officials would help make the decision easier for them. Ivan recalled that they “chose Canada strictly on superficial things. We chose Canada because of the way we were treated at the embassy. With the Australians and New Zealanders, you had the impression that they thought you might be allowed to come to that country. But in the Canadian embassy, there were no reservations – “of course, come over. No problem. Welcome.””⁹⁶ As the Americans sought to take 600 refugees without placing an emphasis on the Czechoslovakians crossing the border into Austria, a Canadian immigration

⁹⁴ Peter Whelan, “203 from Czechoslovakia Combine Joy and Sorrow,” *Globe and Mail*, 16 September 1968, 1-2; “Přiletěli: Víťame Československé uprchlíky do Toronta a celé Kanady,” *Nový domov*, 21 September 1968, 1; Joe Bissett, “The Czechoslovakian Refugee Movement, 1968,” *CIHS Bulletin: The Newsletter of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society* 46 (July 2005): 1-4.

⁹⁵ “Přiletěli: Víťame Československé uprchlíky do Toronta a celé Kanady,” *Nový domov*, 21 September 1968, 1.

⁹⁶ Marha, “Czechs/Slovaks,” 34; Stražnický and Stražnický, “After the Prague Spring,” 284.

official noted that “for us it is an unprecedented opportunity to get the finest type of person in a huge variety of fields.” The chartered flights that carried 203 refugees to Toronto included doctors, dentists, judges, architects, engineers, and designers.⁹⁷ Canadian officials struggled to identify where to send the refugees. After placing each immigration visa applicant through a twenty-minute interview to assess their level of education and work experience, they were informed about Canada and that employment in their chosen field could not be guaranteed upon arrival.⁹⁸ One of the fortunate 203 refugees was Bedřich Procházka, a 59 year-old former judge and diplomat. Along with his wife and daughter, they left everything behind and fled Prague by train to Vienna where they eventually boarded a chartered Air Canada flight to Toronto. A day later, Procházka visited a Canada Manpower Centre to find housing and employment as a technical translator. He had previously worked at the Canadian Embassy in Vienna as a translator. The Procházkas spoke four languages and their reasons for choosing Canada were simple. They had friends and family in the country and Canadian officials “...came forward to welcome the refugees.”⁹⁹

On 19 September in the House of Commons, MacEachen rejected a claim made by Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament for Prince Edward-Hastings, George Hees, that Canada was simply choosing to resettle “the cream of the crop” in sending a special four-member immigration team to Vienna to specifically select refugee “specialists.”¹⁰⁰ The minister argued before the House of Commons that the federal government’s special program for Czechoslovakian refugees provided free air transportation and temporary financial assistance to

⁹⁷ Reuters, “Rush of Czech Refugees Handled in Crash Program,” *Globe and Mail*, 16 September 1968, 17.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ After 20 Hard Years, Former Czech Judge Seeks Fourth Career,” *Globe and Mail*, 17 September 1968, 5.

¹⁰⁰ Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *House of Commons Debates: Official Report, First Session – Twenty Eighth Parliament*, 60.

all refugees regardless of their background. The Minister of Manpower and Immigration went on to note that the four-person team was to provide Canadian officials in Vienna with expert advice on the availability of employment opportunities for scientists, musicians, artists, and other professionals.¹⁰¹

In early October 1968, a meeting was held in Ottawa by representatives of the Departments of External Affairs and Manpower and Immigration to assess whether the Canadian government should continue its special program for Czechoslovakian refugees. Canadian diplomats informed their immigration colleagues that after the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia, Moscow expected the reformist regime to crumble. The subsequent demise of the reformist movement did not materialize and was attributed to Czechoslovak unity in support of the government.¹⁰² Canadian diplomats noted that one method the Soviets would use to gain advantage was to leave Czechoslovakia's borders open in the hopes that reformers and their supporters would leave the state. These same individuals questioned "how long Dubček can continue this balancing act, how long Soviet tempers can be held in check, or whether the inconclusive situation can endure indefinitely is difficult to predict, but the odds are certainly in favour of Moscow's eventually gaining its way."¹⁰³ In assessing the situation, DEA officials indicated that individuals and families were pragmatic in waiting to see whether the political climate worsened before applying for refugee status. Similarly, individuals inside the country waited for news that the borders would be permanently closed before leaving for the West. Ottawa was keenly aware that the reformist government under the leadership of Alexander

¹⁰¹ Canadian Press, "Czech 'Cream' Allegation is Denied," *Globe and Mail*, 20 September 1968, 4.

¹⁰² LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, "Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia," memorandum to the minister from R.B. Curry, Assistant Deputy Minister (for Deputy Minister) to Allan MacEachen, Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, 15 October 1968, 1.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

Dubček did not want to lose its liberal supporters and for Czechoslovakia to suffer a “brain-drain” of its intellectual and professional classes. The federal government remained sympathetic to this situation and decided to accept rather than recruit refugees to Canada.¹⁰⁴ Canadian diplomats presumed that approximately 1,000 Czechoslovakians fled each day to Western Europe.

Western governments replied differently to the exodus of Czechoslovakians from their country. Australian authorities waived their normal immigration procedures to give priority to Czechoslovakians without any quota. Successful applicants would have to wait approximately ten weeks. Conversely, the American government did not institute a special program for refugees from Czechoslovakia, but rather permitted individual applicants to obtain a conditional entry visa from the American Consulate in Frankfurt after a period of three to five months. South Africa agreed to process refugees within a week of applying, while Sweden agreed to accept 1,000 refugees. Austria did not initially place any limits on the number of refugees it would accept. Over 5,500 Czechoslovakians resided in Switzerland of which only ten percent had applied for asylum. The Swiss government later required all refugees to decide whether they would seek asylum or return to Czechoslovakia.¹⁰⁵ In Norway, fifty Czechoslovakian refugees maintained contact with their homeland through the Czechoslovakian Ambassador in Oslo. They received newspapers from their homeland and were able to send messages to relatives through the embassy.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 2.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁶ LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, “Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia,” message from George Kinnear Grande, Ambassador, Canadian Embassy in Oslo to DEA, Ottawa, 9 January 1969.

European countries that were states of first refuge did not pressure Canada to expedite its special program. However, the Austrian government informed Canadian officials that they were neglecting other non-Czechoslovakian refugees residing in refugee camps across the country. Ottawa decided to place one of its immigration officers in Vienna to process non-Czechoslovakian refugees. Meanwhile, DEA officials informed the Department of Manpower and Immigration that the Dubček government appreciated the non-interventionist and humanitarian role that Canada was undertaking by accepting refugees. Consequently, DEA officials argued that “cancellation of the program would be seen as pressure on Czechoslovak citizens at home and abroad to make their decision for or against the courageous contention of their leaders that they can save something of value from the wreckage of the invasion.”¹⁰⁷ Canadian diplomats also argued that an end to the special program would cause a strong public reaction against the federal government by a majority of the population which was sympathetic to the Czechoslovakian refugee dilemma. Although ethnic groups in Canada were supportive of the special program, Polish Canadians demanded that the special measures made available to these refugees be extended to other national refugees in Western Europe.

Immigration officials in Ottawa justified maintaining the special program for Czechoslovakian refugees by indicating that a steady flow of 1,000 to 2,000 Czechoslovakians left their homeland each day. However, officials later questioned how many refugees the federal government would be able to accept without placing a heavy burden on the economy or government spending. By mid-October, Ottawa spent close to \$1 million on the resettlement of Czechoslovakian refugees. Bureaucrats were sensitive to the possibility of public criticism over heavy expenditures for allowances and language training especially from unemployed and

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 4.

seasonal workers including earlier immigrants who came to Canada independently and without government assistance.¹⁰⁸

In late August 1968, a federal interdepartmental committee recommended to the Canadian government that immigration regulations be relaxed in order to resettle thousands of Czechoslovakian refugees who fled the Soviet-led invasion of their homeland. On 4 September, Canadian immigration officials overseas were instructed to process refugees who wished to permanently settle in Canada. The possession of travel documentation and medical and criminal checks were waived. Similar to its settlement of Hungarian refugees in 1956-1957, the Canadian government realized that it had the opportunity to select university students, highly skilled tradespeople, and educated professionals from the refugees who were now in Austria, Yugoslavia, and other European countries. Ottawa instructed its officials to provide special treatment to Czechoslovakian refugees which ultimately accelerated their immigration to Canada. The special program's initial success in bringing Czechoslovakian refugees to Canada was applauded by a Canadian public that supported a humanitarian response to the refugees' plight. Critics of the special program, which included Progressive Conservative Members of Parliament, questioned the costs of bringing thousands of refugees to Canada and the preferential treatment the 1968ers received. Early difficulties in relaying instructions to Canadian officials in Europe were overcome by local solutions and the processing of refugee applications rapidly increased. In the fall of 1968, the special program proved to the federal government and the Canadian public that the settlement of thousands of Czechoslovakian refugees in Canada was the right choice. Canada gained highly skilled and educated immigrants who wished to begin new lives in Canada.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 6.

Public and Private Cooperation: Securing Accommodations, Financial Assistance, and Language Training for Refugees from Czechoslovakia

As the federal government and provincial authorities worked to establish an effective and comprehensive resettlement scheme as a component of the special program, the CNAC moved to secure temporary accommodations for recently arrived refugees in Toronto. In early October, Alex Havrlant, a Czech lawyer and vice-president of the association, asked the Toronto Board of Education about the use of expropriated properties which were slated for demolition the following year. The CNAC successfully leased two properties on Marmaduke Avenue for \$50 per month in rent for each house.¹⁰⁹ The MMI published an informational brochure entitled *První směrnice pro nové příchozí* (first guide for newcomers) which informed recent arrivals from Czechoslovakia where to find accommodations, employment, government programs, and social assistance.¹¹⁰ The guide advised newcomers to Toronto not to stay at a hotel for more than two or three days so that MMI could assist them in finding an apartment. Single adults and couples without children were informed that if they secured apartments on their own, Canadian authorities would find this situation unfavourable since they were allocating public funds towards their initial settlement, and would be forced to cover any previously agreed upon rental agreement on the part of refugees. However, couples with young children would have their first month's rent paid by the federal government and would receive a loan to cover their last month's

¹⁰⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 9 "Head Office – General Correspondence, September – December, 1968," letter from Alex Havrlant, CNAC vice-president to Board of Education, City of Toronto, Ontario, 7 October 1968; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 9 "Head Office – General Correspondence, September – December, 1968," letter from Alex Havrlant, CNAC vice-president to Jiří Corn, CNAC vice-president, Toronto, 17 October 1968. The CNAC's rent covered the property taxes on the buildings, while they subsequently paid all heating and utility charges.

¹¹⁰ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 7, file "Miscellaneous – Information for Newcomers, n.d.," brochure, *První směrnice pro nové příchozí*, MMI, Toronto, n.d.

rent. The federal government provided loans to newcomers who wished to rent apartments in the city and were to be given approximately \$25 for single adults and \$35 for married couples.¹¹¹

To secure employment, newcomers were instructed to visit a local Canada Manpower Centre and to register with the Technical Service Council. New arrivals were expected to have their personal documents translated and foreign work experience certified. For example, a minimum of three years of experience was needed for hairdressers, and five years for mechanics and electricians. Refugees were informed that the minimum wage for workers was set at \$4.25 per hour, whereas carpenters made \$4.15, electricians \$4.70, construction workers \$2.75, house painters \$3.45, and installation workers made \$4.67. Masaryk Memorial Institute also advised newcomers that registration with a union could cost upwards of \$150.¹¹²

Initially, many refugees from Czechoslovakia struggled to acquire employment upon arriving in Canada. For a minority of individuals including 53 year-old Igor Helfert, securing work came quickly even though it was not in his chosen field of law and diplomacy. The former lawyer and diplomat was employed as a plant worker assembling vinyl-sashed windows. Helfert understood that he was fortunate to acquire work and accommodations within two weeks of arriving in the country: “I must say that the treatment with us is excellent.”¹¹³ Many Czechoslovakian refugees were aided in their resettlement by friends and family already living in Canada. For others, the process was slow and unsettling. As a thirty-two year-old electrical engineer from Prague, Jiří Taranovský and his wife knew no one upon arriving. Refugees such as the Taranovskýs were put up by the Department of Manpower and Immigration in local hotels such as the Ford Hotel in Toronto’s Chinatown and the Waldorf Hotel in Hamilton’s Jackson

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Loren Lind, “A Penniless Czech Finds a Place to Live and a Job in Toronto,” *Globe and Mail*, 25 September 1968, 37.

Square. In Hamilton, Jarmila Lenk and her children arrived several weeks after her husband. They moved into his one-bedroom unit in a boarding house where the landlord gave them a hotplate so that the family could cook meals. Once they were able to pay the rent, they moved into a one-bedroom apartment with \$110 per month in rent and bought a bed and some furniture.¹¹⁴ After leaving the Ford Hotel in Toronto, Marie Vejvalková and her husband received train tickets from Canadian authorities for their final destination of London, Ontario. After arriving, the local Manpower and Immigration office found accommodations, cheap furniture, linens, plates, and cutlery for the Vejvalkovás leaving them in “seventh heaven.”¹¹⁵ Some refugees found their own accommodations after a short stay in a government-funded hotel. In one instance, a Czech couple found a place to stay in the home of a Ukrainian couple in which the use of the kitchen and washroom was communal. Ludmila Kotáčková and her husband paid \$10 per week in rent and they attended English-language classes in the evenings. The Czech couple hoped they would secure employment prior to the arrival of their first child.¹¹⁶

Canadian immigration officials also furnished recently arrived refugees with a list of rental units – in many cases these lists included rundown properties such as undesirable basement apartments. Similarly, government assistance provided the refugees with twenty-four dollars per week. Refugees who did not have pre-established contacts in Canada were assisted by local Czechoslovak organizations such as the CNAC and MMI in obtaining furniture and clothes. The latter often attempted to persuade newcomers to stay temporarily with “Anglo-Saxon

¹¹⁴ Jarmila Lenk, interview by Jana Cipris, 15 August 1978, interview CZE-5170-VEJ, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

¹¹⁵ Marie Vejvalkova, interview by Jana Cipris, 5 June 1978, interview CZE-5531-VEJ, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

¹¹⁶ Ludmila Kotáčková, interview by Jana Cipris, 28 May 1978, interview CZE-5529-KOT, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

families” rather than in ethnic Czech or Slovak homes because that way they could quickly learn about Canadian culture, customs, and the English language.¹¹⁷

Since a majority of Czechoslovakian refugees desired to resettle in Ontario where sizable Czech and Slovak populations existed, the provincial government believed that the needs of the incoming refugees from Czechoslovakia would be adequately met through a temporary special program and the establishment of a provincial action committee comprised of representatives from the Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, Department of Trade and Development (Immigration Branch), Department of Labour (Apprenticeship Branch), Department of Education (Arts and Technological Branch), and the Department of University Affairs. The functions of the provincial interdepartmental committee were to establish contact with the Czechoslovak community and the refugees themselves to determine their needs in the following ways: to communicate to provincial and federal agencies and departments the special needs of the refugees; to cooperate closely with the federal Department of Manpower and Immigration in securing accommodations, employment, and counselling for refugees; to recommend to local and provincial authorities the necessary language and citizenship training that refugees required upon arrival; and to work closely with immigrant aid and social services agencies that work closely with refugees from Czechoslovakia. The Ontario government attempted to acquaint the refugees from Czechoslovakia with proper business practices to assist them in succeeding in their professions in Canada.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Lind, “A Penniless Czech Finds a Place to Live and a Job in Toronto,” 37.

¹¹⁸ Archives of Ontario (hereafter AO), Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship (hereafter DPSC) Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” memorandum re: Suggested Provincial Action and Programs Designed to Ease the Adjustment Problems of Czechoslovak Refugees from D.R. Colombo, Director, Citizenship Branch to Robert Welch, Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, 17 September 1968, 2-3.

On 8 October 1968, an unidentified constituent in the Toronto area riding of York Mills wrote to Ontario's Minister of Labour Dalton Bales regarding three Czechoslovakian refugees who arrived in Toronto three weeks earlier. The two young men and one woman were promised six months of schooling in English, with a small living allowance, by Canadian immigration officials in Zurich, Switzerland prior to leaving for Canada. The men were sent to the Cooksville area of Toronto with no directions or money and were given cards which read "Czechoslovak refugee – No English." One man was a welder by trade while the other was a university student. After reporting to a local Manpower office, they obtained employment as workers in a plastics factory for \$1.75 per hour and moved to downtown Toronto where they shared accommodations with Italian and Polish immigrants. Both refugees had yet to be paid and had already received a letter from the federal Department of Manpower and Immigration informing them that \$28 was due each month for their assisted passage to Canada. Conversely, the young woman received \$60 from the Manpower office for expenses as she attempted to secure employment after unsuccessfully attending several job interviews. The letter to the minister argued for more spaces in English-language classes so that these three refugees and their compatriots could acquire employment befitting their training and experience.¹¹⁹

The Ontario Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship investigated the available language training facilities in the province and concluded that programs for immigrant children were more than adequate while English language programs for adult newcomers were lacking. Referrals to language training programs at Adult Training Centres consisted of forty persons per week. As a result, a long waiting list of newcomers seeking English language training – excluding refugees from Czechoslovakia – caused a waiting period of over six months.

¹¹⁹ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file "Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees," letter from unknown (redacted) to Dalton Bales, Minister, Department of Labour, 8 October 1968, 1-2.

The federal budget for English as a Second Language training under the Manpower Retraining Agreement was already overspent by three months.¹²⁰ The Ontario government was aware that if settlement allowances were terminated for refugees without knowledge of English, they would necessitate applications for welfare as the refugees had no previous work experience in Canada and could not qualify for unemployment insurance. Experts at the Adult Training Centre noted that a majority of the recent arrivals from Czechoslovakia required twenty-two weeks of full-time language training to “function effectively in our society.”¹²¹ Consequently, many Czechoslovakian refugees were admitted into English classes sponsored under the Ontario Manpower Retraining Program.¹²²

In discussions between the ministers responsible for the Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship and the Ministry of Social and Family Services, Robert Welch informed his colleague, John Yaremko that many of the refugees from Czechoslovakia requested financial assistance while they attended English-language training on a full-time basis. Although financial assistance was only available to the unemployable, Welch noted that many ethnic groups across the province were concerned with the “preferential treatment” that Czech and Slovak refugees were already receiving in their initial settlement in Canada.¹²³ Welch agreed that these refugees were receiving more assistance than previous waves of newcomers as English-language training was being offered daily at Adult Training Centres across the province, and several days per week through school boards. Similarly, free tuition was offered to refugees who

¹²⁰ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” memorandum from J.S. Yoerger, Deputy Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship to Robert Welch, Provincial Secretary and Minister of Citizenship, 18 October 1968, 1.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹²² AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” letter from Robert Welch, Provincial Secretary and Minister of Citizenship to unknown (redacted), 1 November 1968, 1.

¹²³ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” memorandum re: Czechoslovakian Refugees from Robert Welch, Provincial Secretary and Minister of Citizenship to John Yaremko, Minister, Ministry of Social and Family Services, 19 November 1968, 1.

wished to enroll in a university program along with a full living allowance for up to six weeks after their arrival.¹²⁴ Provincial officials were aware that very few Czechoslovakian refugees were unable to find work after arriving in Canada. However, Robert Welch remained concerned that a reasonable level of assistance was given to all newcomers instead of establishing a precedent in which Ontario could not extend assistance to future arrivals.¹²⁵

In the House of Commons, George Harris Hees, Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament for Prince Edward-Hastings in Ontario, rose before his fellow members on 8 October to ask the prime minister whether Canada's delegation to the United Nations was instructed to join France and the United States in calling for a Soviet withdrawal from Czechoslovakia. When Trudeau replied that he did not know, Hees continued his questioning by asking whether the Liberal government was "waiting for the countries surrounding Russia to make the first move?"¹²⁶ In seizing upon the newspaper coverage of the plight of five refugee Czechoslovakian dentists attempting to practice their profession in Canada, on 9 October, Robert Norman Thompson, Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament for Red Deer in Alberta and Opposition Critic for Employment and Immigration asked the Minister of Manpower and Immigration whether the federal government was investigating their situation.¹²⁷ The dentists from Czechoslovakia were qualified to practice their profession in their homeland, but were now being prevented from

¹²⁴ Ibid., 2. On 22 September, the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations submitted a plan to the Prime Minister's Office for the resettlement of Czechoslovakian students to Canada in order so that they could continue their university studies. See "Aid Urged for Czech Students," *Globe and Mail*, 23 September 1968, 5.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, "28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers' Congress, military deserters, etc.," House of Commons Debates, 925, 8 October 1968, microfilm reel C-10688.

¹²⁷ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, "28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers' Congress, military deserters, etc.," memorandum to the minister from unknown to Allan MacEachen, Minister, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, n.d., microfilm reel C-10688; Joe Bissett, "The Czechoslovakian Refugee Movement, 1968," *CIHS Bulletin: The Newsletter of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society*, 46 (July 2005): 4. Thompson also enquired whether the government was granting asylum to Czechoslovakian nationals who were leaving their employment as technical advisers in India and other countries in order to resettle in Canada.

opening a practice in Ontario for a period of eighteen months in order to attend a mandatory retraining program.¹²⁸ MacEachen replied in the House of Commons that he was aware of the situation and the provinces and provincial associations maintained the right to set health care standards according to the Canadian Constitution. Thompson wondered whether the Czechoslovakian dentists were told of the situation in Canada prior to immigrating. MacEachen replied that Canadian immigration officials overseas “attempt to explain to all immigrants the conditions that will prevail in their new country.”¹²⁹ Following the media coverage of Question Period in the House of Commons, officials within the Department of Manpower and Immigration requested Canadian immigration offices overseas to provide Ottawa with any information available concerning the counselling of Czech and Slovak professionals and any advice given to dentists as to any retraining they may need to complete after arriving in Canada.¹³⁰

The Canadian government accepted Czechoslovakian nationals temporarily residing in any country for admission. Similarly, Czechoslovakian nationals who were already in Canada as visitors and asked to remain permanently in the country were also accepted and would be joined by Czechoslovakian refugees overseas in beginning new lives in Canada. In October 1968, twenty-two Czechoslovakian refugees were admitted from India “on the same basis as other

¹²⁸ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, “28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers’ Congress, military deserters, etc.,” memorandum to the minister from R.B. Curry, Assistant Deputy Minister (for Deputy Minister) to Allan MacEachen, Minister, Department of Manpower and Immigration, 15 October 1968, microfilm reel C-10688, 2. Canadian officials understood that while dental school graduates with diplomas from American, Australian, British, and New Zealand institutions were permitted to take licencing tests in the province of their residence. Graduates from all other countries were required to study two or more years at a Canadian dentistry school.

¹²⁹ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, “28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers’ Congress, military deserters, etc.,” Hansard – Oral Question: Immigration – Retraining Requirement for Czechoslovak Dentists, 986, 9 October 1968, microfilm reel C-10688.

¹³⁰ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, “28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers’ Congress, military deserters, etc.,” memorandum to the minister from L.E. Couillard to Allan MacEachen, Minister, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, 10 October 1968, microfilm reel C-10688.

Czech[oslovakian] refugees such as those who have come here via Vienna.”¹³¹ The aforementioned refugees were Czechoslovakian nationals who, while working on an aid project in Ranchi, India, decided they could not return home after the Warsaw Pact invasion. The Czechoslovakian aid workers sought refugee status and visas from the Canadian immigration team in New Delhi.¹³² Immigration officials in Ottawa were concerned that the Canadian public would believe that Czechoslovakian technicians in India or any other country were “induced...to abandon their employment and come here.” Refugees who fled the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia were to be accepted “without any geographic distinctions” regarding the country from which they placed their applications to permanently resettle in Canada.¹³³ A day later, the group of twenty-two Czechoslovakian refugees arrived from India.

In mid-October, Canadian immigration officials informed Ottawa that each Czechoslovakian refugee received a standard twenty minute interview and was counseled on what to expect after arriving in Canada. Officials assessed an applicant’s personal background and indicated any difficulties they might have upon arriving in Canada. Each applicant signed a

¹³¹ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, “28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers’ Congress, military deserters, etc.,” memorandum to the minister from unknown to Allan MacEachen, Minister, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, n.d., microfilm reel C-10688.

¹³² LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, “28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers’ Congress, military deserters, etc.,” memorandum for the prime minister “Czech refugees from India – Possible Question in the House” from Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp, Ottawa, 7 October 1968, microfilm reel C-10688. Canadian External Affairs officials noted that some of the Czechoslovakian refugees in India were running out of money, and as a result, stayed in New Delhi longer than expected before returning to Ranchi. Canada’s High Commissioner was instructed to approach Indian officials in the hopes that they could expedite the resettlement of the Czechoslovakians. The Canadian High Commission wanted to avoid any press leaks which could embarrass both governments. However, exit permits which had already been granted were rescinded. Ottawa believed that New Delhi may have given Prague’s embassy an opportunity to “persuade the refugees to remain at work.” The hotels in which the refugees were staying were guarded by police,

¹³³ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, “28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers’ Congress, military deserters, etc.,” memorandum to the minister from unknown to Allan MacEachen, Minister, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, n.d., microfilm reel C-10688.

statement of preparedness to undertake alternate employment. Professionals such as medical doctors and dentists signed the following statement:

I fully understand that my acceptance in the medical profession in CDA [Canada] is at the sole discretion of the licencing authority in the province in which I wish to work or practise. I further understand that acceptance by the licencing authority in any province or provinces in CDA [Canada] is not / not an assurance of acceptance in other provinces.¹³⁴

Canadian officials in Vienna informed Ottawa that the above statement was written in the Czech language to avoid any confusion on the part of the applicant. Furthermore, the immigration team in Vienna replied that they had in their possession Jan Vávra's signed statement. The team advised Vávra that as a dentist he would be expected to be a dental technician in the coming weeks and months prior to meeting the professional requirements in his province of residence. Canada's European Regional Director of Immigration in Geneva wrote to Ottawa indicating that every Czechoslovakian professional was carefully informed of the difficulties they might encounter in Canada and the fact that they may not be able to practice their profession or trade and must be willing to accept alternative employment until they were able to return to their industry through re-certification.¹³⁵

As of 14 October, Canadian immigration authorities in Europe received 8,207 enquires for immigration to Canada of which 6,344 or 77.3 percent resulted in applications. The largest number of applications was filed with Canadian immigration officials in Vienna. However, 38

¹³⁴ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, "28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers' Congress, military deserters, etc.," message from Canadian immigration team in Vienna to Department of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, 15 October 1968, microfilm reel C-10688. Medical doctors were initially advised that they could expect to become medical technicians upon resettlement in Canada.

¹³⁵ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, "28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers' Congress, military deserters, etc.," memorandum to the minister from R.B. Curry, Assistant Deputy Minister (for Deputy Minister) to Allan MacEachen, Minister, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, 16 October 1968, microfilm reel C-10688.

percent of all refugee applicants in Vienna did not attend their scheduled immigration interview and cancelled their flights, thus forcing the Canadian immigration team to find other successful applicants to keep each chartered aircraft full of refugees on their way to Canada.¹³⁶ The Department of Manpower and Immigration initially sought to resettle between 500-1,000 individuals from refugee camps in Austria and Yugoslavia.

The Canadian government continued to charter flights to meet the demand. In the first eight weeks since the Soviet-led invasion, fourteen flights arrived in Canada spreading refugees without a preference to every region of Canada. The federal government established a fund with a value of over \$2 million to support the charter flights. Many of the 1968ers were enrolled in language courses, temporary and permanent employment, and special courses designed to teach the newcomer about Canadian customs and lifestyle. More than 1,900 of these same individuals were receiving government assistance to support daily costs until they received their first pay cheque.¹³⁷

In late October, it became clear to the Ontario government that the federal Department of Manpower and Immigration was adequately handling the resettlement of Czechoslovakian refugees. Federal authorities agreed to provide refugees with a six-month English-language course at local Adult Training Centres for refugees entering universities or new employment.¹³⁸ The Provincial Secretary and Minister of Citizenship, Robert Welch, informed Premier John P. Robarts that departmental representatives met with Ervin Sypták, President of MMI, Jiří Corn and Alex Havrlant of the CNAC, and Rudolf V. Fraštický of the PCSDE to determine the extent

¹³⁶ LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, "Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia," memorandum to the minister from R.B. Curry, Assistant Deputy Minister (for Deputy Minister) to Allan MacEachen, Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, 15 October 1968, 2.

¹³⁷ "7,000 Refugees Seek Canadian Visas with No Sign of a Letup," *Globe and Mail*, 24 October 1968, 9.

¹³⁸ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file "Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees," memorandum from Robert Welch, Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship to John P. Robarts, Premier of Ontario, 30 October 1968, 1.

of the problems that Czech and Slovak doctors, dentists, engineers, lawyers, accountants, and skilled tradesman were encountering in acquiring English-language training and recognition of their foreign credentials. Provincial officials later recommended to Ottawa that it expand its programs to include professionals as opposed to limiting them to unskilled and semi-skilled refugees.¹³⁹

In addition to the linguistic difficulties that the newcomers faced, many of them were professionally certified in their chosen fields, but faced challenges in having their credentials approved in Canada. Amongst the recent arrivals were a group of dentists who sought to commence their practices in Canada. In the province of Ontario, the Federation of Labour lobbied the provincial government to assess each incoming dentist's skills and knowledge with a practical examination under the auspices of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons instead of forcing them to enter a university dentistry program for more schooling.¹⁴⁰ The *Globe and Mail* indicated that David Archer, president of the Ontario Federation of Labour sent Premier Robarts a letter criticizing the college's insistence on Canadian training for the Czechoslovakian dentists prior to being fully licenced. Archer suggested that the college was "engaged in discriminatory practices because of country of origin."¹⁴¹ Similar to the Czechoslovak dentists, a group of thirty medical doctors were to sit through special examinations administered by the Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons. For the refugee doctors whose English-language abilities were good

¹³⁹ Ibid. On 14 October, a meeting was held in the offices of the Ontario Provincial Secretary and Minister of Citizenship, Robert Welch, with representatives of Toronto's Czechoslovak community. Provincial officials later noted that 300 locations in Toronto alone were open and ready to receive refugees for language training. See AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file "Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees," memorandum from J.S. Yoerger, Deputy Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship to Robert Welch, Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, 21 October 1968.

¹⁴⁰ "Tests Urged to Evaluate Czech Dentists," *Globe and Mail*, 21 October 1968, 5.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

and were able to pass the examination, the college indicated that they be permitted to undertake one or two-year internships at hospitals across the province.¹⁴²

Incidentally, officials in Ottawa could only locate the name of one of the dentists, Jan Vávra residing in Hearst, Ontario.¹⁴³ Vávra was offered employment as a dentist, but could not accept the position because he had yet to complete his Canadian training. The newly arrived Czechoslovakian refugee claimed he would only need one year to improve his English-language capabilities and become acquainted with the types of drugs, medical instruments and materials, and terms used in North America. Similar to other newcomer dentists from Czechoslovakia, Vávra did not understand why he should be forced to attend university dentistry courses for a period of two years.¹⁴⁴

By the end of October, Canadian Czechoslovak organizations were in the process of raising funds for the Prague Spring refugees. The MMI raised several thousand dollars, while the CFCR recently re-established due to the refugee crisis raised over \$10,000 to assist individuals arriving in Canada. The Bata Corporation issued 500 vouchers to the CFCR. Each voucher was worth seven dollars and was to be used to purchase footwear and other items from the company. In cooperation with the CNAC, the fund distributed the vouchers to local branches across the country.¹⁴⁵ For example in Winnipeg, 100 vouchers from the Bata Corporation with a value of \$700 dollars were allocated to newly arrived refugees in the city. Similarly, the Star Slipper Company managed by Czech immigrant Vojtěch Škubal donated forty-five pairs of men's winter

¹⁴² "Review of Rules Set for Czech Dentists," *Globe and Mail*, 23 October 1968, 8.

¹⁴³ LAC, IB Fonds, RG 76, volume 691, file 568-3-23, part 4, "28th Parliament, First Session, House of Commons, Unnumbered Questions – Czech refugees, Polish seamen, Black Writers' Congress, military deserters, etc.," letter from Head of Immigration Secretariat to J. Bissett, Director, Foreign Branch, Department of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, 10 October 1968, microfilm reel C-10688.

¹⁴⁴ "Review of Rules Set for Czech Dentists," 8.

¹⁴⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 3 "Hamilton Branch No. 34 – Correspondence, 1968," oběžník, J.G. Corn, secretary general, CNAC, 28 August 1968, 1.

boots, and the Fortune Shoes Company donated 60 pairs of women's boots, twenty-two bathroom towels, and eight wool blankets.¹⁴⁶ In Edmonton, forty-eight pairs of men's boots, 60 pairs of women's boots, and 55 vouchers were delivered to the most deserving newcomers.¹⁴⁷ In all, the CFCR received \$8,600 in footwear vouchers from the Bata Corporation, \$5,000 from Antonín Ronza of Susan Shoe Industry Limited of Hamilton for footwear, towels, blankets, and bedding, \$5,000 from J. Škubal of Fortune Footwear Limited, and \$1,000 each from Joza Weider of Collingwood, Ontario and lumber magnate Leon Koerner of Vancouver.¹⁴⁸

As Canadian Czechoslovak organizations continued to raise funds for the Prague Spring refugees, members of the Canadian Czechoslovak community held celebrations across the country to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of Czechoslovakia on 28 October 1918. The celebrations were held a day early and were attended by prominent members of local, provincial, and federal government and ethnocultural associations. Even though Liberal Senator Andrew Thompson did not attend the festivities, he sent MMI a telegram congratulating the organization on its work in resettling Czechoslovakian refugees.¹⁴⁹ Former Mayor of Toronto Nathan Phillips and his wife were in attendance along with representatives of the Canadian Polish Congress, the Court of Canadian Citizenship, Immigrant Settlement Services within the Canada Manpower Centre, and the City of Toronto.¹⁵⁰ In Hamilton, Ontario which initially

¹⁴⁶ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 16 "Minutes – Head Office and Branches, 1969-1974," letter, Sestry a bratři, from CNAC Branch Winnipeg to unknown, n.d.

¹⁴⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 16 "Minutes – Head Office and Branches, 1969-1974," letter, Zpráva o činnosti odbočky Edmonton, from Eric Z. Schoengut, president, CNAC Branch Edmonton to unknown, n.d.

¹⁴⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file 2 "Reports, n.d., 1968-1973," report, Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees in Canada, n.d.

¹⁴⁹ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file "Correspondence, 1968," telegram from Senator Andy Thompson to Masaryk Memorial Institute, 26 October 1968.

¹⁵⁰ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file "Correspondence, 1968," letter from Ervin Sypták, MMI President and Jan Stríček, MMI Secretary to Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Phillips, 29 October 1968; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file "Correspondence, 1968," letter from Ervin Sypták, MMI President and Jan Stríček, MMI Secretary to Charles White, Supervisor of Immigrant Settlement Services, Canada Manpower Centre, Toronto,

received approximately 270 refugees, mayor Victor Copps proclaimed 28 October as ‘Czechoslovak Day’ in the city and the national flag of Czechoslovakia was raised at city hall for one week.¹⁵¹

By 1 November, over 3,000 Czechoslovakian refugees were already resettled in Canada. Fifteen charter flights organized by the Canadian government brought over 2,625 of these refugees. In the same period, 1,534 refugees reported to the Canada Manpower Centres across the country. In the ten weeks since the Warsaw Pact invasion, 600 refugees from Czechoslovakia secured employment with less than half in the profession of their choice. All refugees who reported to the Canada Manpower Centres were eligible to receive resettlement assistance from the federal government.¹⁵² In mid-November, Ontario’s College of Dental Surgeons bowed to public pressure and agreed to allow Czechoslovakian refugee dentists to practice in the province if they successfully passed a licencing examination to be held the following May.¹⁵³ The college’s decision directly impacted the five Czechoslovak dentists who were already living in

29 October 1968; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file “Correspondence, 1968,” letter from Ervin Sypták, MMI President and Jan Stríček, MMI Secretary to L.E. Fox, Clerk of the Court, Court of Canadian Citizenship, Toronto, 29 October 1968; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file “Correspondence, 1968,” letter from Ervin Sypták, MMI President and Jan Stríček, MMI Secretary to Controller Margaret Campbell, City Hall, Toronto, 29 October 1968; LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file “Correspondence, 1968,” letter from Ervin Sypták, MMI President and Jan Stríček, MMI Secretary to Mr. and Mrs. Z. Jarmicki, President, Canadian Polish Congress, Toronto, 29 October 1968.

¹⁵¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 4 “Hamilton Branch No. 34 – Correspondence, 1969,” Zpráva odbočky Hamilton za rok 1968-69, Frantisek Braun, president and Eva Kraus, secretary, CNAC, Hamilton Branch, 28 April 1969.

¹⁵² LAC, DEA Fonds, volume 8948, file 20-Czech-1-4, part 3, “Political Affairs – Policy and Background – Internal Policy Trends – Czechoslovakia,” memorandum to the minister from R.B. Curry, Assistant Deputy Minister (for Deputy Minister) to Allan MacEachen, Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Ottawa, 15 October 1968, 1-2.

¹⁵³ Loren Lind, “Czechs Fail Dentist’s Test for Ontario,” *Globe and Mail*, 26 May 1969, 1, 5. In examinations held on 14-15 May 1969, sixteen Czech and Slovak dentists failed a special licencing test after public pressure forced Ontario’s Royal College of Dental Surgeons to reconsider its ruling that the Czechoslovak refugees’ past education and experience were ineligible. The sixteen refugee dentists claimed that their failure to pass the examination was due to the fact that they were not permitted to practice Canadian dental techniques after arriving in the country. The group of dentists remained divided over their future. Some of the dentists agreed to take the exam again in November, while others considered immigrating elsewhere or enrolling in a two-year dentistry program at a Canadian university. Canadian dentistry graduates received their licences upon graduation. Licencing examinations were for the benefit of incoming dentists from other countries.

Ontario and any others who applied for a licence to practice in the province before 1969. The college succumbed to public pressure due to its previous decision to force incoming dentists to return to school for two years which appeared to discriminate against newcomers from Czechoslovakia. As a result, the refugee dentists were placed in the same category as dentists from Commonwealth states and Scandinavia and had their qualifications and experience accepted. As a result, they were only required to pass a licencing examination. The college encouraged the five dentists – three in Toronto and two in Windsor – along with Jan Vávra to increase their English-language proficiency and to shadow local dentists at their offices.¹⁵⁴

Canadian authorities were aware that the flow of applications from Czechoslovakian refugees overseas was in gradual decline since the middle of October when approximately 1,500 individuals arrived in a single week. A month later only 472 refugees arrived in Canada. The special program for Czechoslovakian refugees remained in effect long enough for the refugees to decide whether they should resettle in Canada or remain in Europe. By the end of 1968, approximately 8,000 refugees arrived in Canada while another 2,000 resettled in Canada before the special program for Czechoslovakian refugees ended in January 1969. The Canadian government spent over \$4.7 million on the program by 31 December 1968. Czechoslovak refugees owed \$1.3 million in transportation loans to the Canadian government. The *Globe and Mail* noted that Ontario was the principal destination for more than half of all refugees. The province of Quebec was the second most-preferred choice after Ontario followed by Alberta, Manitoba, and British Columbia. A majority of the refugees resettled in urban centres within the

¹⁵⁴ “Czech Dentists Offered Test in Ontario,” *Globe and Mail*, 13 November 1968, 5.

aforementioned provinces.¹⁵⁵ In all, the federal government's special program cost between \$8-10 million to ultimately repatriate close to 12,000 refugees.¹⁵⁶

Termination of the Special Program and the Resettlement of Czechoslovakian Refugees

When the special program for Czechoslovakian refugees was terminated on 10 January 1969, Czechoslovakian refugees who applied to enter Canada were considered under normal immigration regulations. Refugees continued to be eligible for governmental assistance if they could meet the required conditions. For example, in order to participate in the Department of Manpower and Immigration's Occupational Training Program for Adults, individuals had to be members of the workforce for an uninterrupted period of three years.¹⁵⁷ In late October 1968, Vladimír Malík and his parents arrived in Malton, Ontario. They were permitted entry to Canada as visitors for a period of six months. Less than two months later, Vladimír and his parents applied to permanently stay in Canada. Although his parents decided to return to Czechoslovakia, Malík was successfully granted landed immigrant status on 6 March 1969. Due to the fact that Vladimír was sponsored after the end of the special program for Czechoslovakian refugees, Malík was not eligible for financial, residential, and language training assistance.¹⁵⁸

While some Czechoslovak refugees missed the special program deadline or could not satisfy the required conditions to enter a training program, they also balked at the lack of choice in language training. In February, a group of 120 refugees wrote to Prime Minister Trudeau to complain over the lack of choice between English and French-language courses in

¹⁵⁵ "Haven Granted to 10,000, Czech Program to End," *Globe and Mail*, 4 January 1969, 1.

¹⁵⁶ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file "Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees," article, Canadian Press, "Door Closing on Czech Refugees," January 4, 1969.

¹⁵⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 11 "Head Office – General Correspondence, April-July 1969," letter from R. Talbot, Director, Technical Services, Ontario Region, Department of Manpower and Immigration to Jiří (George) Corn, Secretary General, CNAC, Toronto, 2 May 1969.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Montreal. The refugees who arrived in the city received an unwelcome introduction to the politics of bilingualism. Forced to deal with the complaint, officials within the Department of Manpower and Immigration investigated the grievance that refugees were being prevented from taking English-language classes. The group initially agreed to enrol in a five-week French-language course to be followed by fifteen weeks of English-language instruction. The refugees were frustrated that they were only being offered a twenty-six week course equally divided between English and French.¹⁵⁹ The group of refugees argued that “in spite of the many proclamations about free choice of either of your two languages spoken in Canada, this choice has been unequivocally denied to us.” They went on to note in their letter that “we entertain doubts whether we shall be granted the opportunity to obtain English instruction at all.” The Quebec Ministry of Education denied claims that they refused to permit the teaching of English to the refugees. The ministry argued that the newcomers should acquire a “sufficient knowledge” of the French language prior to learning English in order to live and work in the province.¹⁶⁰ In essence, Czechoslovakian refugees in Quebec were caught in the middle of a simmering language conflict.

For over two centuries, the language of business and social integration in the province of Quebec remained predominantly English. In 1965, the Royal Commission on Biculturalism and Bilingualism recommended that English and French become Canada’s official languages, bilingual districts be created in areas where 10 percent or more of the population is either English or French, and that parents have the right to send their children to schools in the

¹⁵⁹ Canadian Press, “Check [sic.] Claims Czechs Denied English Course” *Globe and Mail*, 21 February 1969, 25.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

language of their choice in regions where sufficient demand existed.¹⁶¹ As a result of the Royal Commission's findings, Francophones in Quebec began to further assert their language rights in the public sphere of society. On 27 June 1968, Francophone residents of the Montreal suburb of Saint-Léonard successfully lobbied the local school board to recognize French as the sole language of education. Forty percent of the residents of the Montreal suburb were Italian immigrants who preferred to have their children educated in English. Following a series of school occupations and protests, the language debate forced the Quebec government to act. On 3 September 1969, the Union Nationale government of Jean-Jacques Bertrand passed Bill 63 – Quebec's first language law. Bill 63 entrenched parents' right to choose their children's language of instruction. The newly passed law was seen as heavily favouring Anglophone and Allophone (neither English nor French speaking) groups.

With the termination of the special program for Czechoslovakian refugees, six Canadian Czechoslovak organizations based in Ontario distributed a report entitled "Suggested Provincial Action and Programs designed to Ease the Adjustment Problems of Czechoslovak Refugees," to the Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship in Toronto. Since more than half of the admitted refugees from Czechoslovakia resettled in Ontario, the CNAC, CFCR, MMI, PCSDE, Women's Council of the CNAC, and the Czechoslovak Branch No. 601 of the Royal Canadian Legion sought to raise awareness of the "special problems" involved in their integration. The report argued that existing programs were designed for sponsored or open-placement immigrants and that "refugees cannot be easily fitted into the two above categories as

¹⁶¹ Canada, Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Final Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Chairs A. Davidson Dunton, André Laurendeau, Jean-Louis Gagnon, accessed June 6, 2013, [http://www. http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pco-bcp/commissions-ef/dunton1967-1970-ef/dunton1967-70-eng.htm](http://www.epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/pco-bcp/commissions-ef/dunton1967-1970-ef/dunton1967-70-eng.htm). The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism also recommended that Ontario and New Brunswick be made bilingual provinces, while Ottawa should become a bilingual city.

they have had hardly any time to consider immigration to a new country. Their decision to leave their own country is a move to[wards] survival and not a plan to settle in another country.”¹⁶²

Existing provincial and municipal agencies and services dealing with the resettlement of newcomers were more diverse than those which existed during the movement of Hungarian refugees in 1956.¹⁶³ In one instance, the Ontario government issued a cheque in the amount of \$1,000 to support the International Services of London, Incorporated and its work in the field of newcomer integration.¹⁶⁴

The report applauded existing social services and immigrant aid services in their ability to aid refugees in making a smooth transition to Canadian life. The six Canadian Czechoslovak organizations recognized the work of the federal Department of Manpower and Immigration for implementing a special program which provided for the reception, financial assistance, and counselling of refugees from Czechoslovakia. In cooperation with provincial and municipal authorities, “every possible means of assistance” was given to newly arrived refugees. The formation of an intergovernmental and interdepartmental committee was instrumental in facilitating the exchange of information necessary for the aforementioned resettlement program. The six Czechoslovak organizations indicated that in their opinion “the effectiveness of settling refugees is to a large extent due to interest, initiative and hard work on the part of many

¹⁶² AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” memorandum re: Suggested Provincial Action and Programs Designed to Ease the Adjustment Problems of Czechoslovak Refugees from D.R. Colombo, Director, Citizenship Branch to J.S. Yoerger, Deputy Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, 11 February 1969, 1.

¹⁶³ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” memorandum re: Suggested Provincial Action and Programs Designed to Ease the Adjustment Problems of Czechoslovak Refugees from D.R. Colombo, Director, Citizenship Branch to Robert Welch, Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, 17 September 1968, 1.

¹⁶⁴ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” letter from Robert Welch, Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship to John L. Montcrieff, President, International Services of London, Inc., 29 January 1969.

voluntary agencies, ethnic groups, professional associations and individual citizens.”¹⁶⁵ For example, the community of Cornwall, Ontario received twenty refugees and supported their resettlement by providing employment and housing. Local agencies realized that the refugees from Czechoslovakia were professionals and tradesmen, but lacked winter clothing and footwear. Similarly, a small number of refugees were settled in summer cottages in Northern Ontario where women’s organizations outfitted the newcomers with winter clothing and other necessities.¹⁶⁶

Throughout 1969, refugees from Czechoslovakia continued to arrive in Canada. With the termination of the special program, Canadian officials treated these refugees under existing immigration regulations. After receiving their visas from Canadian immigration officials overseas, a group of seventeen Czechoslovakian doctors arrived in Canada from France, Germany, and Italy in the latter half of 1969. Unlike their professional colleagues who arrived prior to 10 January 1969 and were required to complete a screening test prior to assuming internships at various hospitals across Ontario, the newly arrived doctors were required to also complete a foreign medical graduate exam. Although the aforementioned doctors were specialists in their fields including anaesthesia, epidemiology, gynecology, pathology, pediatrics, surgery and tuberculosis, their level of English comprehension was minimal. As a result, provincial authorities did not permit these medical professionals to assume internships. A *Toronto Life* article published in March 1969 entitled, “Toronto’s Czechs: How Successfully

¹⁶⁵ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” memorandum re: Suggested Provincial Action and Programs Designed to Ease the Adjustment Problems of Czechoslovak Refugees from D.R. Colombo, Director, Citizenship Branch to J.S. Yoerger, Deputy Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, 11 February 1969, 2.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 3. In Edmonton, Alberta, approximately 200 refugees settled in the city and received assistance from the local branch of the CNAC. The Canada Manpower Centre, in cooperation with the Alberta Department of Education, enrolled the newcomers in a ten week English-language course. See LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 9 “Head Office – General Correspondence, September-December 1968,” article “Language Main Problem as Czechs Settle Down,” *Edmonton Journal*, 18 October 1968, 3.

They Have Settled In,” showcased the newcomer experience of an established surgeon with twenty-three years of professional experience. Anton Haninec was one of approximately 100 doctors who were interviewed in Toronto by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario. Haninec passed an oral clinical knowledge examination and was permitted to apply for a junior internship at a local hospital. The experienced surgeon found an internship at the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital as a clinical clerk, a position normally filled by a fourth-year medical student. Haninec indicated that “you see, at 48, a man has a decision to make...I have another 20 or 25 years of good work to do and I did not want to do it under Communism. That was my decision and now it is my responsibility to make it the right decision.”¹⁶⁷ Similar to Haninec, a majority of the doctors were in their forties and resettled in Canada with their families. On their behalf, Ruth Petříček, president of the Women’s Council of CNAC informed provincial officials that these individuals were informed that Canada needed medical professionals and that they were encouraged to come to Canada. Petříček hoped that health officials in Ontario would afford the same privileges to the seventeen medical professionals as those doctors and dentists who arrived a year earlier.¹⁶⁸

By late spring 1969, over 12,000 Czechoslovakian refugees had successfully settled across Canada. The Czechoslovakian refugees relocated throughout the country including western Canada; Winnipeg received approximately 1,000 refugees and Calgary gained 700 individuals.¹⁶⁹ Traditionally strong centres of immigration such as Toronto, Hamilton, and

¹⁶⁷ Wessely Hicks, “Toronto’s Czechs: How Successfully They Have Settled in, *Toronto Life* 3.5 (March 1969): 43.

¹⁶⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 14, file 13 “Head Office – General Correspondence, January-June 1970,” letter from Ruth Petříček, President, Women’s Council of CNAC to W.J. Copeman, Queen’s Park, Toronto, 12 January 1970.

¹⁶⁹ Loewen and Friesen, *Immigrants in Prairie Cities*, 65-66. Loewen and Friesen illustrated that previous scholarship depicted Eastern European refugees including the 1956 Hungarians and the 1968 Czechoslovakians “as a group distinct from both the second- and third-generation farm families they met in the city and from the early-century migrants who

Montreal – where sizeable Czech and Slovak populations resided – received the bulk of the newcomers with Toronto receiving approximately half of all recently arrived refugees.¹⁷⁰ With an influx of Czechoslovakian refugees to Canada, Czechoslovak organizations such as MMI and CNAC benefitted greatly as their memberships increased. In 1968, the CNAC comprised 825 members with 214 in Toronto and 182 in Montreal. These two branches accounted for 48 percent of all members. In March 1969, the CNAC boasted a membership of 1,303 individuals. New CNAC branches were established in Halifax, Nova Scotia and St. Catharines, Ontario.¹⁷¹ In Kingston, Ontario the arrival of 170 refugees also brought about the establishment of a new branch.¹⁷² Many of the 1968ers chose to join a local CNAC branch in their city of settlement for assistance in finding employment, accommodations, and for a sense of community.¹⁷³

With the culmination of the special program for Czechoslovakian refugees in January 1969, Canadian-born Czechs and Slovaks including those who fled fascism in 1938-1939 and Communism in 1948 fundraised and assisted the resettlement of the newly arrived refugees in Canada. In Toronto, the Women's Council of the CNAC raised \$2,700 and assisted refugees with finding employment, housing, clothing, and any issues pertaining to resettlement. The

preceded them to Canada.” Refugees who came after 1945 were often professionals from urban backgrounds seeking economic opportunity from a “booming resource –extraction economy in the West.”

¹⁷⁰ Margaret Mironowicz, “It’s Been a Long, Hard Road to their New Home,” *Toronto Star*, 26 September 1973, B3.

¹⁷¹ Vít Wágner, interview by Jana Cipris, 26 August 1980, interview CZE-7955-WAG, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

¹⁷² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 14 “Minutes – Head Office and Branches, 1969-1974,” news release, z Ústředí ČSNS, CNAC press service, Toronto, n.d., 1.

¹⁷³ LAC, Josef Hlavka Fonds, MG 31 H101, volume 1, Československého národního sdružení v Kanadě – XXI. Kongres J.A. Komenský, 1592-1670, Chateau Laurier, 3.-4. květná 1969 – Ottawa, 16. In a letter to CNAC branches, executive members Jiří Corn and Emil Talacko requested members across the country to meet and create a plan on how to effectively assist the Czechoslovakian refugees in finding employment after they completed their language training classes. The CNAC advised members to work with local groups such as the Rotary Club, the Lions Club, and the Kiwanis Foundation. On 3-4 May 1969, the CNAC held its twenty-first annual congress with federal Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Alan MacEachen in attendance. Corn and Talacko requested that each branch send as many delegates as possible in order to make the event a success. See LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 17 “XX Congress, Batawa, 1968,” letter, Oběžník č.5, from J.G. Corn and E. Talacko, CNAC Head Office, Toronto to CNAC Branches, Members of CNAC Central Council, Affiliated groups in Canada, and the Compatriot Press, 28 March 1969.

council continued to assist elderly and infirm Czechoslovakian refugees who remained in camps in Austria, Italy, and West Germany. In Ottawa, the local CNAC branch acquired winter clothing for refugees and assured that they were enrolled in twenty-four week English-language classes. The Montreal Branch furnished refugees with blankets, bed sheets, utensils, kitchenware, furniture, footwear, and children's accessories. The branch also organized an information service for newcomers, aided in translating their documentation, and local Canadian Czech and Slovak doctors provided medical assistance and medication. In Edmonton, the local CNAC Branch sent \$50 dollars to refugees in Austria. Prior to the Christmas season, presents were also distributed to fifty Czech and Slovak children. In Winnipeg, a Christmas pavilion for newcomers was held in which 380 individuals attended and the branch paid \$620 for the event. Throughout the year, 389 individuals received new clothing and bedding.¹⁷⁴

On 27 May 1969, the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia announced a general amnesty for individuals who fled the state illegally in the aftermath of the Warsaw Pact invasion or whose travel permits had expired. Czechoslovakian citizens had until 15 September to return home or normalize their status at a Czechoslovakian embassy or consulate.¹⁷⁵ A few days after Prague's announcement, Canada became a signatory to the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees on 4 June 1969, eighteen years after its establishment in Geneva. Prior to formally accepting the United Nations Convention, Canada maintained a stance of non-commitment when it came to providing the world's refugees with sanctuary. The Canadian government did not wish to be forced by international law to accept all convention refugees into the country. Instead it chose to use the convention as a framework for the selection and

¹⁷⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 19 "XXII Congress, Winnipeg, 1970," Zpráva sociální referentky – Ústředí Československého národního sdružení v Kanadě, Ruth Petříčková, social officer, CNAC Head Office, 1969.

¹⁷⁵ Marha, "Czechs/Slovaks," 61.

resettlement of refugees.¹⁷⁶ Two weeks later, on 19 June 1969, Paul Martin, Leader of the Government in the Senate reported to the upper chamber regarding the recent visit by a Canadian senatorial delegation to Czechoslovakia. The Canadian senators spent three and a half days in discussions with Czechoslovakian government ministers, members of the National Assembly, and the heads of the governments of the Czech and Slovak states.¹⁷⁷ In Martin's view, Czechoslovakians were forced to address a change in the sociopolitical climate of their country after August 1968. A "new modus vivendi" was required which could allow the people to save their liberalizing reforms without threatening their partnerships within the Warsaw Pact and with the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁸ The delegation condemned the Soviet-led aggression and refused to accept the notion that a state or a group of states had the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of another state. The senatorial delegation recognized Czechoslovakia's delicate position and attempted to express its views without worsening the situation.¹⁷⁹

On 6 July, the twentieth celebration of Czechoslovak Day was held at Masaryktown. Approximately 5,000 Czechs and Slovaks attended the festivities including the annual Sokol *Slet* in which over 200 individuals participated. The gathering included an address from Mitchell Sharp. In his speech, the Secretary of State for External Affairs claimed that the Czech and Slovak peoples "...stand as an example to all nations of the indomitable spirit of man that enables him to maintain the ideas of freedom and individual dignity in the face of overwhelming force."¹⁸⁰ Sharp argued that the Prague Spring movement and its slogan of 'Socialism with a

¹⁷⁶ Lanphier, "Canada's Response to Refugees," 113-114.

¹⁷⁷ On 27 October 1968, the Constitutional Law of Federation (*Ústavní zákon o československé federaci* (in Czech) and *Ústavný zákon o česko-slovenskej federácii* (in Slovak)) was adopted which transformed Czechoslovakia into a federation between the Czech lands (Czech nation) and Slovakia (Slovak nation).

¹⁷⁸ Paul Martin, "Canadian Senators Visit Czechoslovakia," *External Affairs* 21.8 (1969): 311-312.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 313.

¹⁸⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file "(Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975)," press release, Czechoslovak Day in Toronto, CNAC, Toronto, 6 July 1969.

Human Face' was a direct result of twenty years of Stalinization and the brutal repression of freedoms. The liberalization of Czechoslovakian communism was "...not the work of Western so-called imperialist infiltrators, it was a genuine outpouring of the very soul of the people of Czechoslovakia."¹⁸¹

In the fall of 1969, the Canada Manpower Centre informed the Ontario Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship that refugees from Czechoslovakia were encountering difficulties in securing employment in their chosen fields. In particular, nurses and medical professionals struggled due to long delays in having their qualifications certified. In many instances, clearances were dependent on reports from Czechoslovakia whereby the Communist authorities often replied that the applicant did not exist in their files. The Canada Manpower Centre expressed concerns that Canadian federal and provincial authorities were sending confidential information to Prague to which the Communist authorities could "use for their own perhaps questionable purposes."¹⁸²

Standing before the House of Commons on 4 November, Minister of Manpower and Immigration Allan MacEachen informed his fellow Members of Parliament that the federal government resettled more than 11,200 individuals during the special program for Czechoslovakian refugees costing Canada over \$11 million. Of this total, approximately \$3 million was spent on English and French-language training for over 7,000 refugees. As a result, over 80 percent of the refugees were placed in "gainful employment" resulting in what the minister identified as a "happy combination of compassion and good economics." MacEachen

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file "Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees," memorandum from J.S. Yoerger, Deputy Minister, Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship to D.R. Colombo, Director, Citizenship Branch, 28 October 1969.

went on to note that Czech and Slovak refugees were successfully contributing to the country's economy and culture.¹⁸³

In the mid-1970s, the Department of Manpower and Immigration conducted a study on the economic and social adaptation of refugees from Czechoslovakia. The study included 813 Czech and Slovak refugees who were identified as “slightly older, better educated, more frequently married and more predominantly comprised of professionals and craftsmen.”¹⁸⁴ An overwhelming majority – 85 percent – of the respondents were enrolled in language courses since their arrival in Canada in comparison with only 50 percent of all immigrants in the same period. Four-fifths of respondents indicated that they took English-language training, whereas 41 percent of individuals took French-language classes primarily in Quebec.¹⁸⁵ Only twenty-nine percent of Czechs and Slovaks participated in social clubs and service groups. For those individuals who did participate, 67 percent of them were members of groups patronized by Canadians from all backgrounds. The study concluded that Czech and Slovak refugees were beginning to identify more with being Canadians and were relinquishing their European identity. Two-thirds of the 813 respondents indicated that they felt more attached to Canada than their homeland of Czechoslovakia.¹⁸⁶ In terms of economic adaptation, many of respondents from Czechoslovakia required extensive language training and fought a public perception that they lacked the proper qualifications for employment in their chosen fields. Over the three year period of the study, Czech and Slovak refugees were able to increase their monthly earnings by forty percent from \$518 in 1968-1969 to \$726 per month in 1971-1972. The average yearly income

¹⁸³ Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *House of Commons Debates: Official Report, Second Session – Twenty Eighth Parliament, Volume 1* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer for Canada, 1970), 524-525.

¹⁸⁴ Ron Heatley, *Czechoslovakian Refugee Study: A Report on the Three-Year Study of the Economic and Social Adaptation of Czechoslovakian Refugees to Life in Canada, 1968-1969 to 1971-1972* (Ottawa: Manpower and Immigration Canada, 1975), 1.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

also increased from \$6,620 to \$10,349, and their rate of unemployment remained at only ten percent.¹⁸⁷

Individuals who entered Canada during the special program for Czechoslovakian refugees were able to attain a higher level of employment duration and income than the average immigrant. Over 70 percent of the households were in the 15-44 years of age range with more than twelve years of formal education and one-third were in the skilled or professional fields. With the inclusion of less than 10 percent of all Czechoslovakian refugees from the special program in the study sample, its conclusions remained incomplete. The study illustrated that Czechoslovakian refugees openly identified with Canadian identity and Canada as their new home more than the average immigrant who settled in the country in the same period. Consequently, the Czechoslovakian refugees or 1968ers were more readily incorporated into the socioeconomic structure of their local community.¹⁸⁸

Conclusion

The Canadian special program remained the most generous of all non-European countries since its intake was approximately 11,200 refugees of the more than 14,000 individuals who were permitted to resettle in the country from Czechoslovakia in 1968-1969. The Australian government also waived its immigration regulations, but refugees were met with a ten-week delay whereby the authorities only offered assisted passage. The American government did not relax its immigration procedures, but allowed refugees to secure a conditional visa after a

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 3; Lanphier, "Canada's Response to Refugees," 114; Bernard Brodie, "The Czechoslovaks of 1968/69," *CIHS Bulletin: The Newsletter of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society* 26 (May 1997): 6; Ed Ziegler, "The Adaptation of Czechoslovak Refugees in Canada, 1969-1972," *CIHS Bulletin: The Newsletter of the Canadian Immigration Historical Society* 54 (October 2008): 5-7.

¹⁸⁸ Heatley, *Czechoslovakian Refugee Study*, 2; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *Immigration Program*, 109; Canada, Department of the Secretary of State, *Canadian Family Tree*, 56; Lanphier, "Canada's Response to Refugees," 114.

waiting period of three to five months.¹⁸⁹ In total, Canada permitted 14,374 individuals who claimed Czechoslovakia as their country of citizenship to enter the country during 1968-1969.¹⁹⁰ Of this total, the largest groups of Czechoslovakians came from Austria, 7,902; Czechoslovakia, 2,595; West Germany, 1,635; Switzerland, 744; France, 599; Great Britain, 235; and Italy, 204.¹⁹¹ Many Czechoslovakian refugees arrived in Canada having never returned home prior to the Soviet invasion of August 1968.

The Prague Spring refugees were admitted to Canada due to their university education, technical skills training, and professional experience – and were seen as a large pool of talent for Canada’s economy. Mired in an economic downturn, the Canadian government did not hesitate to select individual refugees fleeing Communism from Canadian offices across Europe or from the Czechoslovakian citizens already in Canada as visitors who later applied to remain permanently in the country. The Canadian government treated the refugees equally. Public pressure from newspaper editorials and ethnic organizations including the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC) and Masaryk Memorial Institute (MMI) for a compassionate humanitarian response to the plight of the 1968ers forced the federal government to act. As a member of NATO, Ottawa was aware that the reception of the 1968ers – similar to the 1956ers from Hungary – would embarrass the Soviet Union. A combination of altruism, duty, and public pressure dictated Canada’s response. Even as Canadian authorities were vigilant to the possibility of Communist agents arriving in the country, federal officials were keen to resettle anti-communist refugees from Czechoslovakia who would further legitimize the state’s

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 13.

¹⁹⁰ Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics 1969* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer for Canada, 1970), 22.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 10-11; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *Immigration Statistics 1968* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer for Canada, 1969), 10-11.

opposition towards Communism and Soviet espionage during the Cold War. As Czechoslovakia lost an entire generation of intellectuals and professionals, Canada gained well-educated and experienced individuals who would make a significant social and economic contribution to the country far outweighing the \$11 million spent to resettle them in Canada.¹⁹²

Over the next two decades, many 1968ers who supported a Czechoslovak identity followed earlier refugees from Czechoslovakia and joined Canadian Czechoslovak institutions. In the case of the CNAC and MMI, both organizations were revitalized with new members, many of whom supported the 1948ers' anti-communist and anti-Soviet agenda. The Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia strengthened the anti-communist identity of many 1948ers and Canadian-born members of the Czechoslovak community. The events of August 1968 also heightened anti-Soviet sentiment as witnessed by the post-invasion demonstrations held at the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa and in major cities across Canada. The arrival of the 1968 wave of refugees from Czechoslovakia also helped to reinforce the 1948ers' efforts to influence Canadian foreign policy towards the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. In the years after the arrival of the 1968ers, Canadian Czechoslovak institutions continued to advocate for family reunification, the return of democracy, human rights, and the elimination of censorship in their old homeland.

¹⁹² Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration*, 38, 384; Malarek, *Heaven's Gate*, 102. Malarek argued that economic considerations outweighed any humanitarian concerns in Ottawa's decision to resettle the 1968ers.

Chapter Six:

Strengthening the Community: Continuing the Struggle against Communism and Preserving Ethnocultural Heritage

During the turbulent months after the Warsaw Pact invasion in August 1968, Czechs and Slovaks were presented with an opportunity to seek freedom in the West. For some, the desire to leave would have to wait. In 1969, Ladislav Šolc and his wife wanted to visit Austria, but the borders closed before they could leave. In the fall of that year, Communist authorities in Czechoslovakia closed the country's borders. With a newborn child, the Šolcs were left to wait nearly a decade before they were able to leave the country. In choosing to leave family and friends behind, Iva Rousová faced scrutiny from her loved ones over her decision to immigrate to the West. Rousová was told by those most important to her that in the West, she would be treated as a foreigner and ostracized for not speaking English. In separate circumstances, the Šolcs and Rouses packed their belongings and left by car for Hungary and later Yugoslavia in 1978. After reaching Yugoslavia, both couples requested asylum as refugees from Czechoslovakia. Under an agreement between Belgrade and Prague, Czechoslovakian citizens were to have their travel passports seized by Yugoslavian officials. In the case of Rouses, they were forced to sign a document stating that they would return to Zagreb in Croatia by a certain date and time and their passports would be returned. They never saw their passports again.¹

In order to be properly recognized as refugees in accordance with international law, the Rouses claimed asylum in Yugoslavia before attempting to enter Austria as their safe third country. Iva and her husband hid their savings in their clothes and feared for their lives as they knew they would be sent back to Czechoslovakia if their savings were found in their luggage.

¹ Ladislav Šolc, interview by Jana Cipris, July 1980, interview CZE-8360-SOL, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto; Iva Rousová, interview by Jana Cipris, circa 1978, interview CZE-8353-ROU, Czech Oral History Collection, MHSO, John M. Kelly Library, University of Toronto.

During a long weekend, the family spent a night in prison as visa offices were closed and they could not be relocated in time to a refugee camp. The family was later visited by a Yugoslavian Interior Ministry official who photographed them and demanded their signatures. The Rouses were given twenty-four hours to report to the Traiskirchen refugee camp on the outskirts of Vienna. With little money left, the family crossed the border into Austria and stayed in Traiskirchen for two weeks where they were assisted by Catholic organizations. Eventually, Iva and her husband were granted work permits while Austrian authorities provided them with basic accommodations, food, clothing, and funds of \$100 per month. After a waiting period of over four months in early 1978, the Rouses were accepted to Canada. The Šolcs also reached Austria and stayed at the Badkirchen refugee camp where Austrian authorities provided the family with accommodations and food. Since Canada was their first choice for permanent settlement in the West, the Šolcs were later flown to Canada once the refugee camp was full to capacity.²

In the spring of 1978, the Šolcs arrived in Montreal and spent the night in a government provided hotel. The following day, the family flew to Hamilton where a Canada Manpower official brought them to a local hotel and assisted in the family's initial settlement by providing funds for food, rent, and household items. The Canadian government provided the Šolcs with funding for their first five months in Canada, while Ladislav enrolled in English language classes. Meanwhile, the local Canadian Czechoslovak community found employment for Ladislav's wife. Several months later in November 1978, Iva Rousová and her family arrived in Montreal from Vienna via Brussels. Once in Canada, the family was medically examined and cleared to work. The Rouses were accepted by the Canadian government much sooner because Iva's husband knew English and German, and had guaranteed employment with Havlik – a

² Ibid.

machine parts company in Preston, Ontario. The Canadian government furnished the family with hotel accommodations and food in Toronto prior to their relocation to Preston.³

In recalling his immigration experience, Ladislav Šolc claimed that Canada did not appear to be a comfortable place as everything seemed foreign. He found everything hard at first and wanted to leave Canada, but the thought of learning a new language or culture elsewhere seemed daunting. Šolc's immigration experience was difficult at first. In the months following his immigration to Canada, Šolc found adequate employment for himself and accommodations for his family. As a result, he believed that Canadians were humble and hard-working. According to him, they did not boast about themselves as did nationalists in Europe.⁴ After a few years in Canada, the Šolcs considered themselves to be Canadians.

Iva Rousová recalled that many refugees waited upwards of eight months to come to Canada due to a lack of guaranteed employment or a sponsor. Much to her surprise, Rousová found that Canadians were more helpful than her compatriots back home whom she identified as "envious, dishonest, and distrusting in public." Local residents in Preston assisted the family in finding an apartment and furniture. After two years in Canada, Rousová quickly learned to live in freedom and recalled that she earned everything she wanted, whereas back home in Czechoslovakia, she would have gotten nowhere in the same period. The Rouses saved \$30 per month to pay Canadian authorities for their resettlement. In reminiscing about their immigration experience, Iva believed that Canada did not owe the couple anything and they were thankful for

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

being granted admission. According to her, the couple owed Canada.⁵ Similar to the Šolcs, the Rouses quickly became Canadians.⁶

This chapter examines how the Canadian Czechoslovak community responded to political developments in their homeland, its continued reception of Czechoslovakian refugees, its anti-communist lobbying efforts, and the preservation of its democratic identity and ethnocultural heritage in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC) became increasingly concerned as a significant portion of the Canadian public actively demonstrated against American foreign policy in Vietnam which many Canadian Czechoslovaks believed was combatting Communism. The CNAC protested against the Communist authorities' elimination of individual freedoms and human rights, and the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. The association lobbied the Canadian government and members of parliament continued to oppose the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. The CNAC was concerned that Ottawa's expanding relationship with the Soviet Union could give the Canadian public the perception that Communist states contained acceptable political systems and safeguarded human rights and individual freedoms. Although many Canadian Czechoslovaks retained vivid memories of life under fascism and later communism, the international community's promotion of détente troubled many anti-communist Czechs and Slovaks who believed that Canada would be pressured into legitimizing Moscow's intervention in Czechoslovakia. The CNAC pressed the Canadian government to expedite family reunification cases, lobbied for the removal of restrictions on the visits of relatives, and demanded that Prague remove Czechoslovakian citizenship from individuals who later received Canadian citizenship to prevent their detention when visiting Czechoslovakia. Whereas a majority of 1948ers refused to

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

‘normalize relations’ with the Communist authorities, many 1968ers who spent upwards of two decades under communism believed they were “apolitical.” Many 1968ers wanted to regularize their status as ‘illegal émigrés’ who fled the country ‘without permission.’

During the 1970s and 1980s, Czechoslovakians who fled from the Communist regime to the West were later referred to by the Communist government press as having *se vypářily* or ‘self-evaporated.’ Unlike the 1948ers and 1968ers, these newcomers did not leave Czechoslovakia after a specific crisis, but rather left Czechoslovakia during a period of ‘normalization.’⁷ This wave of immigration from Czechoslovakia included academics, professionals, and skilled tradesmen in construction, manufacturing, and the service industries. Canadian Czechoslovak organizations including the CNAC and Masaryk Memorial Institute (MMI) were revitalized by the arrival of a third wave of Cold War refugees who strengthened the anti-communist and democratic identity of these prominent organizations.

As the relationship between Canadian Czechoslovaks and the Communist government in Prague remained strained, community members began to discuss the need to preserve their ethnic heritage and democratic identity for successive generations. During the Cold War, the Canadian Czechoslovak community’s identity was directly tied to its struggle against communism. Many individuals within the community were removed from their homeland for decades and continued to support the liberation of Czechoslovakia. After the Warsaw Pact invasion, many 1948ers and 1968ers feared that they would never see the return of democracy in their old homeland and supported the preservation of the Czechoslovak community’s ethnocultural heritage in Canada. The arrival of Czechoslovakian refugees from the Warsaw Pact invasion galvanized the Canadian Czechoslovak community and breathed new life into community groups across the

⁷ Hron, “Czech Émigré Experience of Return after 1989,” 54.

country. In the immediate years after the events of 1968, organizations including the CNAC and MMI continued to struggle with a lack of financial security. With the Canadian government's introduction of an official multiculturalism policy in 1971, ethnocultural groups were able to support their activities and institutions with grants and subsidies under the aegis of multiculturalism which promoted the country's diverse ethnic cultures and identities. With federal and provincial support, the Canadian Czechoslovak organizations successfully funded projects including Czech and Slovak supplementary schools, and community radio and television broadcasts that preserved Czechoslovak ethnic heritage and democratic identity, but also promoted Canadian multiculturalism. These ethnocultural activities assisted in contesting public apathy among community members and improved good citizenship. The Department of the Secretary of State which was responsible for citizenship and multiculturalism programs believed that its funding program would allow the Canadian Czechoslovak community to move from a less known position to greater public visibility whereby its contribution to Canadian multiculturalism could be better appreciated. Many Canadian Czechs and Slovaks were increasingly concerned with how immigrants from Czechoslovakia were integrating in Canadian society.

Continuing the Struggle against Communism and Settling Refugees in the 1970s and 1980s

Founded during the Prague Spring movement, the *Sociální sdružení bývalých Čsl. Politických vězňů (Kanada)* (Welfare Association of Former Czechoslovak Political Prisoners in Canada – WAF CPP) brought together Czech and Slovak victims of Communist persecution who resettled in Canada. The arrival of the 1968ers energized the association which immediately sought cooperation with compatriot organizations in Canada. On 4 January 1970, the association

formed a working committee in order for decision-making to be a collective effort.⁸ Thirteen days later, the WAF CPP elected members into a provisional committee which directed the association's agenda.⁹ As the largest and most influential Czechoslovak organizations in Canada, the CNAC and MMI led advocacy and resettlement efforts on behalf of the 1968ers. With the arrival of many refugees who were victims of political persecution in Czechoslovakia, the WAF CPP engaged both organizations to promote its agenda of supporting former political prisoners and commemorating the victims of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. With the immigration of over 14,000 individuals from Czechoslovakia in 1968-1969, Canadian Czechoslovak organizations were bolstered with new members.

In the spring of 1970, the CNAC held its twenty-second annual congress in Winnipeg. A resolution was adopted by delegates in attendance demanding that all foreign troops withdraw from Czechoslovakia, and free elections be held under international supervision. The congress also declared that the Soviet Union's Brezhnev Doctrine was incompatible with international law since it permitted Moscow to intervene in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia.¹⁰ Similarly, the aforementioned resolution demonstrated the association's concern with public reaction over events in Czechoslovakia and the Communist world. As an anti-communist organization, CNAC members in Winnipeg were concerned that a significant portion of the Canadian public actively

⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 34, file "Welfare Association of Former Czechoslovak Political Prisoners – Minutes, 1970-1973," letter from Milo Komínek, secretary, WAF CPP to CNAC, Toronto, 27 January 1970.

⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 34, file "Welfare Association of Former Czechoslovak Political Prisoners – Minutes, 1970-1973," letter from Milo Komínek, secretary, WAF CPP to members, Toronto, 26 January 1970.

¹⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 19 "XXII Congress, Winnipeg, 1970," Resolution of the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada, n.d., 2. Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev first declared this new foreign policy at the Fifth Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party on 13 November 1968. This new policy was used to limit a Soviet satellite state's independence from Moscow, and to eliminate any efforts at democratization or liberalization of society, the economy, and the political state. The doctrine was used retroactively to justify Soviet-led invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. See Robert L. Hutchings, *Soviet East European Relations: Consolidation and Conflict, 1968-1980* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 42-44.

demonstrated against American imperialism and carried anti-American slogans in protests across the country. Although the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia did not draw the same amount of outrage in comparison to events in Vietnam, the CNAC later argued that these protests against American imperialism were not a reaction to the endangerment of democracy, but were planned actions aimed at disrupting democratic society.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the escalation of the Vietnam War led many Canadians who opposed American intervention in southeast Asia and elsewhere to demonstrate across the country. In an era of increasing social protest, marches, peace conferences, and university sit-ins, many Canadians voiced their concerns over Western imperialism and Canada's involvement.¹¹ Between 1965 and 1974, approximately 50,000 to 125,000 American war resisters arrived in Canada seeking refuge from American authorities. Many of these individuals and their family members were skilled and university educated, and joined efforts to oppose American involvement in Vietnam and elsewhere.¹² Canadian authorities permitted American war resisters and their families to enter Canada, but remained concerned how this wave of newcomers would influence relations between Ottawa and Washington. In an effort to defend the country against Communist sympathizers and individuals engaged in anti-American social protest, Canadian officials tasked the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) with gathering information and surveilling influential war resisters.¹³

As former citizens of a country under Communist domination, CNAC members remained supportive of American-led attempts to defend democracy in their homeland and elsewhere.¹⁴

¹¹ Whitaker and Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War*, 170-171.

¹² *Ibid.*, 173-174.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 19 "XXII Congress, Winnipeg, 1970," Resolution of the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada, n.d., 3.

Disturbed by misleading reports on the Vietnam War published in Canadian newspapers, Vladimír Krajina, a CNAC member and professor of Botany at the University of British Columbia wrote to Prime Minister Trudeau suggesting that these media reports carried a “deliberate overemphasis of antiwar protests mostly organized under the influence of Communist or pro-Communist elements either in Europe or in North America.”¹⁵ On behalf of CNAC members in Vancouver, Krajina indicated that Czechs and Slovaks in the city were worried over the “continuous brain-washing of the Canadian public” as public opposition to American foreign policy grew and sympathy for the Soviet cause led Moscow to continue to support the Vietnam War, and hamper any attempts at peace. Krajina requested that the Canadian government pressure media outlets to insure that a balance in news coverage be maintained. The professor of botany feared that a rise in anti-American press coverage could lead to a Communist victory in the Cold War. Along with Krajina, CNAC members could not understand why so many individuals opposed the American presence in Vietnam – which they viewed as temporary – as opposed to the permanent Soviet occupation of Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.¹⁶

As political prisoners who witnessed Communist brutality, members of the WAF CPP joined the CNAC in supporting Western efforts to defend democratic and human rights in Czechoslovakia and the Communist world. Several months after the annual congress in Winnipeg, WAF CPP requested the use of MMI’s facilities to host its own national congress. The event coincided with the annual Czechoslovak Day held on the grounds at Masaryktown. The group of former political prisoners was permitted to officially participate as a member

¹⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 19 “XXII Congress, Winnipeg, 1970,” letter from Vladimír Krajina to Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, Ottawa, 11 May 1970, 1.

¹⁶ Ibid., 1-2. Krajina used the example of the World Council of Churches’ condemnation of American involvement in Cambodia to illustrate the level of “brainwashing” that similar organizations had reached, and to show who would suffer the most if a Communist victory occurred.

compatriot organization and laid a wreath to the memory of tortured, executed, and deceased political prisoners of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia.¹⁷ Three months later on the second anniversary of the Soviet-led invasion, the organization released a proclamation demanding the immediate withdrawal of Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces from Czechoslovakia, and that a democratic election be held to elect a new government.¹⁸

In 1960, Jean Lesage and the Quebec Liberals were elected after nearly two decades of governance under Maurice Duplessis and his staunchly anti-communist and conservative Union Nationale. The election of the provincial Liberals was followed by a rapid process of modernization and secularization known as the Quiet Revolution. Until the 1960s, Quebec was dominated by conservative political elites and the Catholic Church who played a vital part in Canada's Cold War consensus. The Quiet Revolution led many Quebecers to question the role of the Catholic Church in society and the federal government in the province. By the end of the decade, many Quebecers became increasingly critical of American-led intervention overseas and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. While the Quebec government called on Ottawa for greater control over the province's affairs, separatists demanding independence were divided into two factions: those who sought to use the existing democratic system to achieve their aims joined the Parti Québécois, and nationalists who turned to armed struggle.¹⁹

In the fall of 1970, the CNAC turned its anti-communist lobbying efforts towards events in Canada due to a fear that democracy was under attack. In October, the kidnapping of British

¹⁷ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file "Correspondence, 1970," letter from Milo Komínek, Secretary, WAFICPP to MMI, Toronto, 27 May 1970. The institute acknowledged the request in a letter and asked for a facility use fee of twenty-five dollars and a list of the association's delegates who were to attend the festivities. See LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file "Correspondence, 1970," letter from Manager, MMI to WAFICPP, Toronto, 9 June 1970.

¹⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file "Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975," Proclamation from A. Daičar, CNAC president, and J.G. Corn, CNAC secretary general, Toronto, 21 August 1970.

¹⁹ Whitaker and Hewitt, *Cold War Canada*, 178-179.

Trade Commissioner James Cross and the assassination of Quebec's Minister of Transportation Pierre Laporte by members of the Marxist and nationalist *Front de libération du Québec* forced the Canadian government to implement the War Measures Act and suspend *habeus corpus* – giving police far reaching powers of arrest. In its correspondence with the Prime Minister's Office, the CNAC indicated its support of the federal government's position towards domestic terrorism. The organization supported Ottawa's temporary powers to protect democracy under the War Measures Act, but demanded that it remain vigilant of citizens' rights. The CNAC further advocated for the enactment of legislation that would "...deal with actions of any radical groups in Canada whose aim is to create chaos, destroy democracy and introduce dictatorship."²⁰ Heavily influenced by past events in Czechoslovakia, the CNAC argued that "...the destruction of a democratic society can be achieved by small, usually well-organized minority groups. These groups, using intimidation, accusations and terror are usually assisted by professional revolutionaries and supported from abroad." As a result, the Canadian Czechoslovak organization viewed the *Front de libération du Québec* as a movement that used violence to attack democratically elected governments under the guise of Marxist revolution.²¹

A month later, the Free Central European News Agency (FCENA) based in London, England reported that Communist authorities in Prague were in the midst of blackmailing 70,000 émigrés. In citing an official Czechoslovakian government document in the possession of the British government, the FCENA claimed that Prague established a Legal Advisory Centre to address the departure of these émigrés to the West since an overwhelming majority of the 1968ers resettled in Australia, Canada, France, Great Britain, New Zealand, Switzerland, and

²⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 15, file 14 "Head Office – General Correspondence, July-December 1970," letter from Antonín Daičar, President and Jiří G. Corn, Secretary General, CNAC to Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister, Ottawa, 27 October 1970.

²¹ Ibid.

West Germany. The news article indicated that Prague officially admitted to the departure of approximately 51,000 individuals after the Warsaw Pact invasion. Similarly, FCENA argued that Soviet KGB (*Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti* – Committee for State Security) advisers were behind a plan to raise foreign currency for Eastern Europe.²² The Communist scheme to blackmail refugees from Czechoslovakia consisted of letters sent by post indicating that “prosecution has been initiated against you for the criminal act of abandoning the Republic according to...the Criminal Code.” In addition, the letters sent to unsuspecting refugees by lawyers representing a Legal Advisory Centre stated “that established facts do sufficiently justify the conclusion that you have been...staying abroad illegitimately with the intention to take up permanent residence there.”²³ In the letter, state appointed “legal counsels” subsequently noted that the costs of the legal proceedings and those of a “defence in court” were the sole responsibility of the defendant who was required to send a deposit of 700 Czechoslovakian Crowns in Canadian funds within fifteen days. Should the defendant fail to send the required deposit, the letter warned that a lawyer was “entitled to accept payments by your close relatives in Czechoslovakia.” Although the in-absentia trials were a farce, they were continually followed by threats and pressure.²⁴

On 1 December 1970, the Toronto Area Co-Ordinating Committee of Czech and Slovak Democratic Organizations, representing twelve separate Czechoslovak groups in the city, issued

²² AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” article “Prague Starts Blackmailing 70,000 Exiles: Trials for Unauthorized Departure to be Paid in Foreign Currencies by Refugees or Relatives – Solicitors Letters Despatched All Over the World – KGB Advisers Behind Foreign Currency Drive,” *F.C.I. – Free Central European News Agency*, 18 November 1970.

²³ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” letter from JUDr. Nittel, Prague to Otakar Šindelář, Niagara Falls, Ontario, 20 October 1970.

²⁴ *Ibid.*; AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” flyer from Toronto Area Co-Ordinating Committee of Czech and Slovak Democratic Organizations to unknown, 1 December 1970; AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” flyer entitled Ethnic Scene from Ethnic Liaison Council to unknown, December 1970.

a letter calling on fellow compatriots not to become victims of the “Communist scheme” and to “leave letters from state-appointed Czechoslovak lawyers unanswered.” The committee recognized that a small minority of recent arrivals could succumb to communist pressure out of fear that a close relative in Czechoslovakia would be persecuted.²⁵ Similar measures against those who fled after February 1948 were never instituted, and FCENA believed that the plan by Moscow and Prague to obtain foreign currency was devised to seek “political justice” in a Czechoslovakia that was undergoing “normalization” after the Warsaw Pact invasion.²⁶

The committee hoped that with the federal government’s involvement the situation could be remedied. The twelve Canadian Czechoslovak organizations believed that two issues justified Canadian governmental involvement. First, the committee argued that refugees from Czechoslovakia were being subjected to “moral as well as economic pressure” at the hands of the Communist authorities which made their resettlement in Canada difficult. Second, Prague’s “scheme” to blackmail these newcomers could potentially remove several million dollars from the Canadian economy. While the second issue was unrealistic, it may have been meant as a pressure tactic by these twelve groups to force Ottawa’s involvement. The coordinating committee hoped that its demands would prevent further moves by Prague against the Canadian Czechoslovak community and recently arrived refugees from Czechoslovakia.²⁷ A month later

²⁵ Ibid. The twelve groups consisted of the Club of Newcomers of Czech and Slovak Origin in Canada, Czechoslovak Baptist Church, Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees and Information Service, Permanent Conference of Slovak Democratic Exiles in Canada, Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 601 (Czechoslovak), St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Wenceslaus Roman Catholic Church, Soccer Club “Sparta,” Sokol Gymnastic Association of Toronto, Union of Czechoslovak Protestants in Canada, Union of Czechoslovak Sportsmen Abroad – Toronto Branch, and the Welfare Association of Former Czechoslovak Political Prisoners (Canada).

²⁶ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” “Prague Starts Blackmailing 70,000 Exiles: Trials for Unauthorized Departure to be Paid in Foreign Currencies by Refugees or Relatives – Solicitors Letters Despatched All Over the World – KGB Advisers Behind Foreign Currency Drive,” *F.C.I. – Free Central European News Agency*, 18 November 1970.

²⁷ AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” flyer from Toronto Area Co-Ordinating Committee of Czech and Slovak Democratic Organizations to unknown, 1 December

the CNAC branch in Vancouver sent a letter to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp requesting assistance against Prague's blackmailing scheme.²⁸

Amid Prague's attempts to pressure its compatriots, the CNAC held its twenty-third annual congress on 8-9 May 1971 in Niagara Falls, Ontario. During the congress, delegates resolved to defend the identity and sovereignty of the Czech and Slovak peoples. Similarly, members in attendance agreed to continue to protest Communism's elimination of individual freedoms and human rights, the Soviet military domination of Czechoslovakia and its controversial Brezhnev Doctrine – which permitted Moscow to intervene in the internal affairs of its Communist satellite-states. Delegates demanded that the Canadian government and members of Parliament continue to oppose the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. Delegates were concerned that Ottawa's expanding relationship with the Soviet Union could give the Canadian public the perception that Communist states contained acceptable political systems that also safeguarded human rights and individual freedoms. The CNAC pressed Canadian parliamentarians to continue to “expose the propaganda tactics of totalitarian regimes” and preserve democracy in the world. Fearing that many student groups and labour organizations held pro-communist sympathies, the Niagara Falls congress called on the federal government to limit the amount of press given to labour and university groups who attempted to raise awareness of social justice issues only to “spread social unrest, thereby weakening Canadian unity and our democratic institutions.” Similarly, the congress concluded by demanding that Ottawa terminate access to postal services on the part of Communist states who attempt to blackmail Czech and

1970; AO, DPSC Fonds, RG 8-5, barcode B229098, file “Citizenship – Czech and Slovak Refugees,” flyer entitled Ethnic Scene from Ethnic Liaison Council to unknown, December 1970.

²⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 16 “Minutes – Head Office and Branches, 1969-1974,” letter, Zpráva o činnosti za období 1970-71, from M. Schiller, officer, CNAC Branch Vancouver to unknown, 7 March 1971.

Slovak refugees. The CNAC concluded by arguing that any Communist diplomat found to be harassing refugees in Canada should lose their accreditation and be removed from the country.²⁹

In May 1971, Pierre Elliott Trudeau became the first Canadian Prime Minister to officially visit the Soviet Union. On 19 May, Trudeau and Soviet premier Alexei Kosygin signed a protocol obligating both countries to hold annual meetings on sociocultural, economic, and political developments. Much to the dismay of Eastern European communities in Canada, the Liberal government sought greater cooperation between both countries. Fearing Soviet demands and opposed to any rapprochement between Ottawa and Moscow, the CNAC called on the Canadian government to demand full reciprocity in its dealings with the Soviets. The organization reminded the Canadian Prime Minister that it would be a mistake to assume that Soviet leaders would ignore communist doctrine, permanent revolution, and world domination. The association argued that détente could not occur until Moscow acknowledged that the Warsaw Pact invasion in 1968 was in violation of the United Nations Charter.³⁰ The CNAC also demanded that the Brezhnev Doctrine promoting Soviet intervention in the internal affairs of other states be repudiated. In talks between Moscow and Ottawa, the CNAC's membership stood with Ukrainian Canadians who sought the release of intellectuals whom the Soviets viewed as terrorists. Although they were dismayed by Trudeau's friendly relations with the Soviet Union, many members of the Canadian Czechoslovak community supported the Canadian Prime

²⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 20 "XXIII Congress, Niagara Falls, 1971," Resolution of XXIII Congress of CNAC – 1971, J.G. Corn, president, and Alex Havrlant, secretary general, CNAC, n.d., 1-2.

³⁰ Ota Hora, "Attitudes towards Canadian Foreign Policy – "It is Time to Unite All Forces against Soviet Imperialism and Its tyranny, *Nový domov*, Toronto, June 19, 1971,"" In *Immigration and the Rise of Multiculturalism*, ed. Howard Palmer, 204 (Vancouver: Copp Clark, 1975), 204.

Minister's wish not to compare Ukrainian intellectuals with *Front de libération du Québec* terrorists.³¹

The Canadian Czechoslovak community was deeply concerned with Trudeau's official visit to the Soviet Union. Many individuals within the community believed that Canada's rapprochement with the Soviets could lead to an appeasement of Moscow's occupation of Czechoslovakia and suppression of individual freedoms and human rights. In an attempt to reassure the community, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Albert Edgar Ritchie informed the CNAC that Ottawa would not renounce its condemnation of the Warsaw Pact invasion.³² Upon learning that Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin would officially visit Ottawa in mid-October 1971 to hold talks with Canadian officials, the CNAC lobbied the Prime Minister's Office and Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp to never recognize the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia and to advocate for the Soviet withdrawal from Czechoslovakia.³³ In addition to its lobbying efforts in Ottawa, the CNAC initiated a postcard campaign to remind officials and prominent Canadians of the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. Approximately, 16,000 postcards containing the words: "21 August, Invasion of Czechoslovakia, Day of Soviet Shame" were sent to all Canadian parliamentarians, senators, provincial premiers, Supreme Court justices, national press outlets, television and radio stations, and members of the United Nations Security Council. Individual CNAC branches were instructed to send postcards to their

³¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 15, file 16 "Head Office – General Correspondence, May-August 1971," letter from Jiří G. Corn, President and Alex Havrlant, Secretary General, CNAC to Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister, Ottawa, 17 June 1971.

³² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 21 "XXIV Congress, Kitchener, 1972," Československé národní sdružení v Kanadě – 24. Kongres – Inn of the Black Walnut, King & Benton, Kitchener, Ontario, 13 May 1972, 4.

³³ Ibid., 5; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 21 "XXIV Congress, Kitchener, 1972," Československé národní sdružení v Kanadě – 24. Kongres – Inn of the Black Walnut, King & Benton, Kitchener, Ontario, 13 May 1972, 5. On 26 November 1971, Mitchell Sharp replied in a letter that Ottawa had not altered its position on Czechoslovakia since August 1968. In discussions with Premier Kosygin and the Soviet delegation, the Canadian government did not support or excuse the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

locally elected officials and media outlets by 15 August 1971 to ensure they reached their destinations prior to the anniversary of the Soviet-led invasion. All remaining postcards were sent to politicians and officials in Communist Czechoslovakia and across the world.³⁴

Similar to previous years, the CNAC published a proclamation on the anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. On behalf of its members, the organization demanded that all Canadians condemn the Brezhnev doctrine as it was dangerous to international peace and promoted the intervention in the internal affairs of other countries. The CNAC subsequently demanded that any understanding between Ottawa and Moscow could not be based on the acceptance of the 1968 Soviet-led invasion. As a result, the organization argued that Canada should not negotiate with the Soviets unless full reciprocity was assured. As part of its struggle against communism, the CNAC continued to promote free elections and the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia before the Canadian government.³⁵ On 23 October, approximately 2,000 individuals representing Canadians of Czechoslovakian, Estonian, Hungarian, Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Ukrainian origin held a demonstration in Vancouver against Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin's official visit to Canada. Approximately, 300 Canadian Czechs and Slovaks participated. The following day, representatives from the CNAC's Vancouver Branch visited the University of British Columbia and participated in a discussion with students on the implications of Kosygin's visit to Canada.³⁶

In the fall of 1971, the CNAC became concerned with how Canadian citizens of Czech and Slovak origin were being treated by Czechoslovakian representatives. At Czechoslovakia's

³⁴ Ibid., 4. LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file "(Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975)," proposal, Vydání pohlednic k 21. srpnu 1968, CNAC, n.d.

³⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file "(Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975)," Proclamation of the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada, Toronto, 21 August 1971.

³⁶ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 25 "Congress of Western Canada Chapters, Edmonton, 1972," Czechoslovak National Association of Canada, Vancouver Branch in Československé národní sdružení v Kanadě – I. Kongres západních provincií – Edmonton, Alta, 8-9 April 1972, 2-3.

embassy in Ottawa and Consulate General in Montreal, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks were harassed by Czechoslovakian diplomats with supplementary questioning. The CNAC appealed to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mitchell Sharp to intervene in order to prevent further harassment of Canadian Czechs and Slovaks who simply wished to acquire tourist visas in order to visit their relatives and friends in Czechoslovakia. In January 1972, Sharp informed the CNAC that the DEA discussed the issue with Czechoslovakian representatives in Ottawa and received assurances that in the case of Czechoslovakian refugees who were now Canadian citizens, only one visa application form was necessary. Czechoslovakian diplomats claimed that “supplementary questions” were asked in only specific cases and were not considered a normal routine. Since Communist authorities did not recognize dual citizenship, legation officials aggressively interviewed visa applicants who never officially rescinded their Czechoslovakian citizenship after settling in Canada. Sharp argued that CNAC members should ascertain their status in their old country in light of the fact that many 1948ers and 1968ers were found guilty of leaving the country without permission and were thus considered ‘illegal émigrés.’³⁷ The Secretary of State for External Affairs went on to argue that any 1948er or 1968er wishing to visit the old country would come under a certain amount of risk since the Communist authorities no longer recognized their Canadian citizenship or residency. In his letter to the CNAC, Sharp believed that:

Any person of Czechoslovak birth who has not obtained a release from his Czechoslovak citizenship, or otherwise obtained the blessing of the Czechoslovak authorities for his emigration abroad, is at least theoretically vulnerable, should he choose to visit his homeland since Czechoslovak law

³⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 15, file 17 “Head Office – Correspondence, January-June 1972,” letter from Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs to Alex Havrlant, secretary general, CNAC, Toronto, 13 January 1972, 1.

does not recognize the concept of dual nationality. In other words, the simple possession of a Canadian passport is not enough.³⁸

In the immediate years after the Warsaw Pact invasion, many 1968ers became permanent residents who later attained Canadian citizenship. Much to their disbelief, Communist authorities during the period of normalization refused to recognize their new citizenship and treated Canadian Czechs and Slovaks as individuals who left the state illegally and without permission. Communist diplomats viewed Canadian Czechs and Slovaks as fellow Czechoslovakian citizens who were subject to their laws and prosecution.³⁹

Members of the CNAC's western Canadian branches held a Congress of Western Provinces in Edmonton on 8-9 April 1972. The delegates from Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver were joined by representatives of the Alberta Department of Culture, Youth, and Recreation and the Canadian Department of the Secretary of State to discuss relations between the West and Communist Eastern Europe. The delegates resolved that any negotiations between Canada and the Soviet Union should not recognize any "spheres of influence" as permanent. The delegates resolved that independence and liberty were guaranteed to even the smallest states and Czechoslovakia's independence and human rights had to be safeguarded from Soviet intervention. The CNAC members demanded that the international community help to restore these values. The congress' resolution noted that Czechoslovakia's struggle for liberty was shared with other Eastern European countries.⁴⁰ A month later, the CNAC held its twenty-fourth annual national congress in Kitchener, Ontario where delegates accepted the western Canadian branches' conclusions.

³⁸ Ibid., 2.

³⁹ Ibid., 3.

⁴⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file "(Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975)," Resolution, Association nationale tchécoslovaque du Canada, Toronto, 14 May 1972.

Although events in Eastern Europe preoccupied congress delegates, they were also concerned with the preservation of democracy in Canada. Eighteen months after the October Crisis in Quebec, the CNAC continued to believe that Marxist and separatist radicals including the *Front de libération du Québec* still posed a threat to Canadian democracy. In using Czechoslovakia as an example, CNAC president Jiří Corn drafted a letter to the editors of Quebec newspapers arguing for the preservation of democracy, social progress, and cultural diversity in Canada. Corn observed that recent “revolutionary elements” attempted to destroy the country’s sociopolitical system while a majority of Canadians remained silent. The CNAC president argued that a majority of Quebec society was also apathetic and warned them to remain “vigilant, not to let themselves be mislead [sic.] or threatened by an organized minority.” According to Corn, recent events in Quebec indicated that a “recognizable pattern” appeared similar to Czechoslovakia where outside agitation removed freedom and democracy. Corn concluded by urging Quebecers to safeguard Canadian democracy and hoped that Francophone Quebec would one day attain its national and socioeconomic goals in peace as part of a united Canada.⁴¹

In partnership with eleven other ethnic organizations, the CNAC’s Montreal Branch sent a *Mémoire de la communauté ethnique de la province de Québec* to Premier Robert Bourassa. In their memorandum, the eleven organizations illustrated their concerns over the events of the October Crisis and the anarchy created by “subversive elements.” The ethnic organizations representing Estonian, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, and Ukrainians in Quebec argued that the province was in danger of being toppled by revolutionaries who would destroy the political institutions of the province before assuming power for

⁴¹ LAC CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file “(Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975),” letter to the editor from J.G. Corn, CNAC president, Toronto, 14 May 1972.

themselves. In promoting an anti-communist agenda, the twelve groups called on Bourassa to re-establish public order to prevent an undemocratic seizure of power and impede the rising influence of labour unions and leftist politics.⁴² Similarly, the ethnic organizations proposed that the Government of Quebec bring to justice all individuals who commit crimes against the state, individuals, property, and the press; illustrate before Quebecers new threats and expose their ultimate goals; revoke the right to strike for all civil servants under provincial jurisdiction; ban all unions from partisan politics and force union leaders who seek a political life to resign from their union; ban unions from funding political parties; inform Quebecers of the salaries of union executives; bluntly inform Quebecers when legislation supported by unions is not in the best interest of union members; educate the population on our democratic system of governance; and for members of the national assembly to take part in public consultations to explain the results of negotiations with unions.⁴³

The lobbying efforts of many individuals within the Canadian Czechoslovak community to see democracy return to their old homeland were further galvanized by the fifth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. The anniversary illustrated to many community members that Communism in Czechoslovakia would not be easily defeated as the Soviet occupation continued for the foreseeable future. In 1973, the CNAC issued a letter to international leaders convened in Ottawa for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference. The organization viewed the Commonwealth as a “coherent family, each member

⁴² LAC CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file “(Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975),” *Mémoire de la communauté ethnique de la province de Québec* from Polish Congress of Quebec, Ukrainian Canadian Committee (Quebec Section), Alliance of Hungarian Associations, Canadian Slovak League (Montreal Branch), United Croats of Canada, Hellenic Canadian Community of Montreal, Romanian Association of Canada, Baltic Federation in Canada (Quebec Branch), Grand Committee of Churches and Hungarian Associations, Social Culture Club Giovanni Caboto, Order of Italo-Canadians, and the CNAC (Montreal Branch) to Robert Bourassa, Premier and the Government of Quebec, 14 May 1972, 1.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

seeking its own quality of life for all people in its own way” as it promoted democracy against communism. In the letter, CNAC president Jiří Corn indicated that the process of Soviet-led “normalization” after the Warsaw Pact invasion was successfully completed since Czechoslovakia was now a “twentieth century Soviet colony.” Corn called on the Commonwealth leaders meeting in the Canadian capital to use their influence in world affairs to aid millions of Eastern Europeans to regain their democratic rights, and for each Communist satellite state to become independent of the Soviet Union.⁴⁴ In its efforts to raise awareness for the struggle for democracy and human rights in Czechoslovakia, the CNAC printed postal seals to inform Canadians that “the efforts of the Czech and Slovak people to gain personal freedom and more political independence were crushed. Five years later, the people of this unfortunate country are still suffering under Soviet domination.”⁴⁵ Canadians could purchase a set of eight seals for one dollar. The association hoped that the seals would promote international solidarity.

In addition to the seal campaign, Czechs and Slovaks across Canada held vigils on the fifth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion. In St. Catharines, Ontario, a motorcade involving 62 automobiles and 100 individuals protested the invasion, and culminated with a half-hour ceremony at the city’s cenotaph. Local residents representing Czech, Slovak, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Polish, and Ukrainian communities were led in a prayer “for all captive peoples behind the Iron Curtain” by the Very Reverend Mykola Komar of Saints Cyril and Methodius Ukrainian Catholic Church.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 14 “Ottawa Branch No. 89 – Miscellaneous, 1970-1976,” letter from J.G. Corn, president, CNAC to Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference, Ottawa, 7 August 1973.

⁴⁵ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 3 “Pamphlets, Programs, and Brochures, n.d., 1969-1974,” postal seals “21 August, Day of Soviet Shame,” CNAC, Toronto, 1973.

⁴⁶ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file “Correspondence, 1973,” photo, “Moment of Prayer for Captive People,” *St. Catharines Standard*, 21 August 1973.

In Ottawa, a holy mass was celebrated at the Church of the Dominican Fathers to remember all Czechoslovakians who died in resisting the Soviet-led invasion and those who continued to be persecuted by the Communist regime for their political and religious beliefs. Later that morning, the CNAC's central council held an emergency meeting with representatives of other Eastern European nations to draft a resolution that was later presented to the federal government. The resolution called on Canadian parliamentarians to consider the consequences of the Soviet Union's Brezhnev Doctrine which permitted Moscow to defend socialism against democratization and capitalism by intervening in the internal affairs of its Communist satellite states. In previous years, the branch demanded that Ottawa attempt to obtain a Soviet withdrawal of this new doctrine and the restoration of independence and personal freedoms in Czechoslovakia. Canadians of Czechoslovakian, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, and Ukrainian descent demanded that the Soviets withdraw from Czechoslovakia, respect the concept of self-determination for the nations of Eastern Europe, the free movement of people, and that Moscow adhere to reciprocal agreements pertaining to cultural, legal, financial, and trade exchanges between the international community. On the evening of 21 August, individuals representing Ottawa's Eastern European communities joined a motorcade-led procession towards the Soviet Embassy.⁴⁷

As Czechs and Slovaks in Canada observed the fifth anniversary of the Soviet-led invasion of their homeland, the Canadian Czech-language monthly *Kanadské listy* (Canadian Papers) published details surrounding the death of a young 1968er in Melbourne, Australia. A

⁴⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 14 "Ottawa Branch No. 89 – Miscellaneous, 1970-1976," letter from O. Hora and J. Kouba, CNAC Branch, Ottawa to Press Gallery, Parliament Hill: Assignment Editors, 13 August 1973; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 14 "Ottawa Branch No. 89 – Miscellaneous, 1970-1976," letter from K. Hrubý, chairman, CNAC Branch, Ottawa to unknown, 20 August 1970, 2; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 14 "Ottawa Branch No. 89 – Miscellaneous, 1970-1976," letter from O. Hora and J. Kouba, CNAC Branch, Ottawa to Press Gallery, Parliament Hill: Assignment Editors, n.d., 2.

twenty-seven year-old J. Kulstrunková jumped from the sixth floor of an apartment building after throwing her five year-old son and three-year old daughter from the same location. The Czechoslovakian Consul General in Montreal, Dr. Andruš – who retained jurisdiction across Canada for the issuance of travel visas for Czechoslovakia – antagonized the local Czechoslovak community by suggesting that community organizations and the ethnic press were responsible for émigré suicides. Andruš went on to controversially argue that the ethnic press “scares everyone with nonsensical threats, who then persuade themselves that in their exit to Canada they committed a mistake, and that is why they want to return to Czechoslovakia.”⁴⁸ As president of the CNAC’s Montreal branch, Victor Žičha replied to Andruš’ assertions stating that the statutes of the CNAC called for the promotion of goodwill, understanding, and tolerance among compatriots. Žičha also argued that the CNAC protected the rights of Canadians of Czechoslovak origin and recent arrivals, advanced the social, economic, and cultural conditions of Canadians of Czechoslovak origin, and cooperated with fellow organizations that assisted newcomers.⁴⁹ Žičha claimed that the CNAC was a non-partisan organization, and as a result, was above politics. Accordingly, the Montreal branch president noted that newcomer suicides were indeed a tragedy, but they were not the result of compatriot organizations or politics since Czechoslovak organizations in Canada assisted newcomers in adjusting successfully to life in Canada.⁵⁰ In Montreal, the local CNAC branch provided assistance in finding accommodations, employment, and basic necessities. Additionally, the branch held weekly citizenship courses in its cultural centre where newcomers learned about Canadian geography, history, and citizens’

⁴⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 7 “Grant Applications – Secretary of State, 1974-1975,” article, Victor Žičha, “Proč ještě nejste členem ČSNS,” *Věstník: československých spolků v Montreale* 10.4 (December 1973).

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

rights. For those who desired to become Canadian citizens, the branch offered advice on how to proceed.⁵¹

In the summer of 1974, a twenty-five year old cook from Czechoslovakia made national headlines when he jumped ship and later declared asylum in Canada on 4 July. Jan Morcinek served as a cook aboard the *Bratislava* which regularly crossed the Atlantic Ocean arriving at various American ports prior to its final stop in Port-Cartier, Quebec before heading for Leningrad in the Soviet Union. In realizing that this was his last chance to obtain freedom, Morcinek jumped into the St. Lawrence River and swam ashore. After arriving in Montreal, the young cook requested political asylum. However, Canadian authorities did not recognize his situation and argued that since he arrived aboard the *Bratislava* – from Czechoslovakian territory – he should be duly deported. On Morcinek’s behalf, the CNAC appealed his case to the Supreme Court of Canada. The organization sought donations from Czech and Slovak Canadians to cover his daily expenses and legal costs which were in excess of \$5,000. The CNAC branches in Toronto, Montreal, and Hamilton were able to raise \$2,000. In assisting Morcinek, CNAC president Louis Urban informed members that if they could not support the young refugee, he would certainly face time in a Communist prison back in Czechoslovakia. Czechs and Slovaks were asked to assist a fellow refugee who similar to them had made a sacrifice not to live under the Communist regime.⁵² The *Toronto Sun* illustrated that Morcinek’s family was blacklisted for supporting Alexander Dubček’s reforms during the ill-fated Prague Spring movement. On 24 March 1975, Canadian authorities ordered Morcinek’s deportation from the country. In an

⁵¹ “Kursy státního občanství,” *Věstník: československých spolků v Montreale*, 10.3 (November 1973): 3.

⁵² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 14 “Ottawa Branch No. 89 – Miscellaneous, 1970-1976,” letter from Louis Urban, president, CNAC and Zdeněk Otruba, secretary general, CNAC to CNAC membership, 9 October 1975; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 14 “Ottawa Branch No. 89 – Miscellaneous, 1970-1976,” memorandum “Případ Morcinek,” from CNAC, Toronto, n.d.

attempt to prevent his own return to Czechoslovakia, Morcinek requested political asylum in West Germany which delayed his deportation home.⁵³ Canadian Czechs and Slovaks continued to raise awareness of Morcinek's plight in the hopes that the Canadian government would alter its decision to deport the young cook to certain imprisonment in Czechoslovakia.

The following spring, delegates attending the CNAC's twenty-seventh annual congress in Toronto resolved that Canadian policies were increasingly susceptible to communist infiltration under the guise of détente – which delegates argued supported Soviet imperialism and totalitarianism. Delegates were also disturbed by the Western desire to decrease political tensions in Europe which they believed would lead countries such as Canada to recognize the status quo in Eastern Europe. Similarly, CNAC members attending the annual congress condemned all opposition to the United States' role in safeguarding democracy in Eastern Europe and other parts of the world. Although the CNAC was opposed to violence as a means to achieve the independence of Czechoslovakia, the organization argued for continuous support for NATO to counterbalance the Warsaw Pact and its increasing military capability. Delegates at the annual congress in Toronto also agreed to promote an immigration policy that permitted entry to individuals who would strengthen Canadian democracy as opponents of communism against individuals who agitated against Canada's democratic political system.⁵⁴ The delegates concluded their congress by resolving that the CNAC was concerned with the “downfall of the world's political morals and by indifference to our devotion to defend freedom and democracy.”

⁵³ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 14 “Ottawa Branch No. 89 – Miscellaneous, 1970-1976,” article, Peter Worthington, “Deportation to Certain Jail,” *Toronto Sun*, 11 December 1975, 11.

⁵⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file “Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975,” Resolution of the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada, XXVII Congress of the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada, Toronto, 25 May 1975, 1-2.

According to the association's members, faith in democracy would ultimately maintain each individual's rights and freedoms.⁵⁵

Many Canadian Czechs and Slovaks retained vivid memories of life under fascism and later communism. After immigrating to Canada, many Czechs and Slovaks considered it their duty to assist Czechoslovakia in regaining its independence. Although CNAC members were opposed to the use of military force to achieve political sovereignty for their old country, détente remained a controversial issue. In fearing that the Canadian government would be pressured by the Soviets to accept Moscow's right to interfere in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia, the CNAC proclaimed that it supported the Canadian government's policy of détente with the Soviet Union if the agreement represented the mutual coexistence of peoples, nations, political ideologies, and cultures in a spirit of equal reciprocity.⁵⁶ The CNAC pressed the Canadian government to expedite family reunification cases, lobby for the removal of restrictions on visits of relatives, and demand that Prague automatically remove Czechoslovakian citizenship from individuals who later received Canadian citizenship to prevent their detention when visiting Czechoslovakia. On behalf of Canadian Czechs and Slovaks, the CNAC requested that Ottawa pressure the Communist authorities in Prague in order for material reciprocity with regards to government benefits, pensions, and inheritances at exchange rates beneficial to the 1948ers and the 1968ers.⁵⁷ Communist authorities in Prague agreed to pay \$3.25 million to settle claims against the state from Canadian Czechs and Slovaks whose properties were nationalized by the

⁵⁵ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁶ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file "Proposals and Resolutions, n.d., 1968-1975," Proclamation of the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada on Détente, J.G. Corn, CNAC president, Toronto, May 1975, 2.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 3; J.G. Corn, "President's Address to 27th Congress of the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada Held on the 24 May, 1975 at the Four Seasons Sheraton Hotel, Toronto, Ontario," *Naše hlasy*, 31 May 1975, 4. In his presidential address to congress delegates, Jiří Corn claimed that in 1968 approximately 60,000 Czechs and Slovaks sought refuge in the West. As a result, nearly twenty percent of these refugees chose Canada as their new home.

Communists after February 1948. In 1975, the funds were deposited with the Foreign Claims Commission in Ottawa which agreed to hold an initial amount of \$1 million in compensation. Prague agreed to forward yearly payments of \$500,000 until the aforementioned amount was reached. Once all claims from Canadian Czechs and Slovaks were received and processed, repayments were first made to individuals with claims below \$1 million.⁵⁸

In July-August 1975, thirty-five states including Canada and Czechoslovakia signed a declaration to formalize détente and improve relations between the West and Communist Eastern Europe. The resulting Helsinki Accords indicated that state sovereignty, non-intervention in a state's internal affairs, and respect for human rights were formally agreed to by all signatories. With the signing of the Helsinki Accords on 1 August 1975, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights came into force on 23 March 1976.⁵⁹ Six months later, the Helsinki Accords were legalized in Czechoslovakia.⁶⁰ Throughout the 1970s, the issue of human rights in Czechoslovakia was increasingly discussed by opponents of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia, and by Czech and Slovak compatriots and journalists in the West.⁶¹ In drawing attention to International Human Rights Day held every 10 December, *Toronto Sun* columnist Peter Worthington drew further attention to Jan Morcinek's plight. Worthington argued that because of the Morcinek family's support for the Prague Spring movement, the young cook was guaranteed to be

⁵⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 24 "Congress XXVII, Toronto, 1975," Československé národní sdružení v Kanadě – 27. Kongres T.G. Masaryka, 24-25 May 1975, 6.

⁵⁹ Vladimír V. Kusin, "Challenge to Normalcy: Political Opposition in Czechoslovakia, 1968-1977," In *Opposition in Eastern Europe*, ed. Rudolf L. Tokes, 26-59 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 51.

⁶⁰ Janusz Bugajski, *Czechoslovakia: Charter 77's Decade of Dissent* (New York: Praeger, 1987), 10.

⁶¹ Jiří Pelikán, *Socialist Opposition in Eastern Europe: the Czechoslovak Example* (London: Allison & Busby, 1976), 105. Pelikán argued that détente and improved relations did not ultimately weaken Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, but "strengthened its most revolutionary dogmatic elements and enabled them to justify the policy of repression, of dogmatic rigidity and of isolationism."

incarcerated in his homeland if deportation proceedings were allowed to go forward.⁶² The journalist concluded that it was wrong for the Canadian government to "...send those who request humanitarian asylum *back* to certain prison and punishment. Yet that is what our government is doing to Jan Morcinek, and Lord knows how many other cases. And no one raises a voice in protest..."⁶³ In the spring of 1976, the *Toronto Star* noted that the Canadian government and courts did not find the young Czechoslovakian to be "a genuine refugee because he's not threatened with "persecution"" back in his homeland. The *Toronto Star* argued that Morcinek did not possess a criminal record, was physically healthy, and gainfully employed. Although the Canadian press attempted to demonstrate that repression in Communist Eastern Europe forced many individuals to seek political asylum in the West out of a genuine fear of persecution if returned home, Canadian authorities viewed Morcinek as inadmissible because he entered the country illegally. Morcinek was to be sent to a third country whereby he could apply to legally enter Canada.⁶⁴

Increasingly, the harassment of opponents of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia, the abuse of political prisoners, and the intimidation and blackmail of Czechs and Slovaks in the West was documented in light of these abuses at the hands of the Communists. On 6 January 1977, a charter was publicly released in Czechoslovakia criticizing the Communist authorities for their human rights abuses and for failing to enforce human rights conditions found in the Helsinki Accords and two aforementioned international covenants. With 242 signatories ranging from former reformist Communist Party members to dissident artists and intellectuals including

⁶² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 14 "Ottawa Branch No. 89 – Miscellaneous, 1970-1976," article, Peter Worthington, "Deportation to Certain Jail," *Toronto Sun*, 11 December 1975, 11. According to Czechoslovakian law, Morcinek was liable to be found guilty of section 103 of the Penal Code ("detracting from the dignity" of the republic) for which he could receive a five-year prison term, and section 283 ("absenting himself without permission to a foreign country") for which he could receive a seven-year prison term.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ "Such Ship-Jumpers Need a Break," *Toronto Star*, 7 April 1976, B4.

reformist Communist Ludvík Vaculík, playwright Václav Havel, and actor Pavel Landovský.

The informal *Charta 77* (Charter 77) movement was a loose collection of predominantly Czech individuals who defended individual human rights in Czechoslovakia. In Slovakia, the *Slovenska organizácia na ochranu ľudských práv* (Slovak Organization for the Protection of Human Rights) was established to defend the human rights of the local population.⁶⁵ On 6 January, Vaculík, Havel, Landovský were arrested by the Communist secret police for attempting to present their document to the Federal Assembly in Prague. A day later, the charter appeared in the Western press with West Germany's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Great Britain's *The Times*, France's *Le Monde*, and Italy's *Corriere della Sera* publishing the opposition document.⁶⁶

While the Communist authorities viewed *Charta 77* and *Slovenska organizácia na ochranu ľudských práv* as illegal movements that were hostile to state-sponsored socialism, Czechs and Slovaks outside of the country and Western media outlets followed the human rights movements closely helping to increase public opinion in support of human rights in Czechoslovakia.⁶⁷

Throughout the 1970s, the Canadian government remained vigilant to attempts by Communist authorities in Prague to intimidate former citizens who resided in Canada. The federal government expressed its opposition to the Czechoslovakian Legation in Ottawa over allegations from Canadian Czechs and Slovaks who claimed Prague offered amnesty to

⁶⁵ Kirschbaum, *History of Slovakia*, 242. On 27 April 1978, VONS (*Výbor na obranu nespravedlivě stíhaných* – Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted) was established by a group of Charter 77 signatories. The committee supported persons harassed by the police and prosecuted by the Communist legal system. The committee assisted defendants in finding financial aid and legal representation.

⁶⁶ Kusin, "Challenge to Normalcy," 52; Bugajski, *Czechoslovakia*, 11; Leff, *Czech and Slovak Republics*, 61.

⁶⁷ David W. Paul, *The Cultural Limits of Revolutionary Politics: Change and Continuity in Socialist Czechoslovakia* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1979), 34-35; Ladislav Holy, *The Little Czech and the Great Czech Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 29. The Chartists remained neutral towards the ideology, never endorsing or condemning it. This was largely due to the belief by signatories of the charter that adherence to basic human rights under a socialist or non-socialist form of government was irrelevant. However, Chartists noted that a socialist state was more likely to be responsive towards ensuring human rights which would be alienable from the population. See Kusin, *From Dubcek to Charter 77*, 308.

individuals who chose to return to Czechoslovakia. Prague's amnesty plan amounted to blackmail since most Canadian Czechs and Slovaks declined the offer to return whereby the Communist authorities sought retribution against relatives and friends in Czechoslovakia. Prime Minister Trudeau attempted to reassure Czechoslovakian refugees by stating that they could not be forced to act against their will as "the Czech[oslovakian] embassy has no power over Canadians." In responding to the amnesty plan, Trudeau stated: "I think this is unacceptable treatment of Canadian citizens. I don't think they should be subject to blackmail."⁶⁸ In the mid-1970s, the Communist government in Czechoslovakia reversed its policy preventing émigrés from visiting the country to see relatives and friends. Including the 1948ers, many of those who came after the events of 1968 were now Canadian citizens and were under the legal jurisdiction of Canadian representatives overseas. Many of the 1948ers and 1968ers increasingly suffered from psychological stress involved in not having seen their loved ones for years and in some cases decades. As the 1948ers and 1968ers successfully settled in Canada, many individuals became divided over their willingness to seek legalization for their immigration to the West from the Communist authorities in Prague. A majority of 1948ers refused to cooperate with Prague because any relations would strengthen the Communists' political legitimacy and authority. Conversely, many 1968ers considered themselves apolitical and were willing to pay the Communist government's fees to have their names 'normalized' under Czechoslovakian law for "leaving the country without permission."⁶⁹

Under the Communist plan called 'normalization of relations,' Canadian citizens paid between \$300-2,500 to be able to travel to Czechoslovakia without the threat of prosecution. In normalizing their relations with Prague, refugees officially requested a presidential pardon for

⁶⁸ Canadian Press, "Ottawa Cautions Czechs," *Zpravodaj*, January 1978, 2.

⁶⁹ Škvorecký, "Bohemia of the Soul," 127; Hana Semerád, interview by Jana Cipris, August 1978.

their ‘crime’ and permission to permanently reside abroad. In some cases, many 1948ers and 1968ers in the West were pressured to pay for their earlier education which was initially funded by the state.⁷⁰ Accordingly, the refugee could then receive “emigration passports” permitting them to visit Czechoslovakia legally. The Communist scheme amounted to an extortive drive for much-needed foreign currency for a faltering national economy.⁷¹ Similarly, Communist authorities also sent *StB* agents to visit compatriots in Canada in order to maliciously inform them that a close relative was ill and required their return to the old homeland. The *StB* agent would produce a form to ‘normalize relations’ which the compatriot who was under pressure would then sign. Unbeknownst to the Canadian, the *StB* agent would return to Czechoslovakia with ‘proof’ that the refugee was a Communist spy. The *StB* pressured Czech and Slovak refugees in the West to become spies, information gatherers, and even extorted money from them.⁷² Communist officials in Prague continued their attempts to repatriate former citizens who they believed left the state illegally without permission. In an effort to suppress the negative portrayals of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia on the part of many 1948ers and 1968ers, *StB* agents and Czechoslovakian diplomats were sent to the West to engage in propaganda and ‘normalization of relations’ campaigns through the use of blackmail.

In Canada, many individuals within the Canadian Czechoslovak community continued their anti-communist activities in spite of Prague’s efforts to pressure their compatriots in the West to regularize their standing with the Communist authorities. A major initiative was the continued resettlement of refugees residing outside of Czechoslovakia. In 1979, the Canadian government established three designated classes of refugees for the Indochinese, Latin

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ “Emigrantské cesty do staré vlasti” from *České slovo* in *Kanadské listy*, 15 April 1984, 1; Anthony Bailey, “Letter from Prague,” *New Yorker* 55 (23 July 1979): 77.

⁷² “Emigrantské cesty do staré vlasti,” 1.

Americans, and Eastern Europeans. Individuals who did not fit the United Nations (UN) Convention's definition of a refugee could still be admitted into Canada through one of the three classes. The most open criteria applied to the Eastern European Self-Exiled Persons class which dictated that individuals only had to prove that they were outside their country of citizenship and wanted to permanently settle in Canada.⁷³ In the summer of 1980, the CNAC and the Minister of Employment and Immigration, Lloyd Axworthy signed an agreement establishing a quota for all Czechoslovakian refugees outside of the Iron Curtain who wanted to resettle in Canada. The Canadian government agreed to set the quota at 3,400 individuals per year. The basis of the agreement permitted the CNAC to sponsor political refugees with the assistance and cooperation of the department. Subsequently, Ottawa guaranteed that the sponsorships would be accepted.⁷⁴ During the 1970s, 2,172 individuals claimed Czechoslovakia as their country of last permanent residence upon entering Canada. A majority of these newcomers – 1,189 or 54.7 percent chose to resettle in the province of Ontario, followed by Quebec, British Columbia, and Alberta.⁷⁵

In the early 1980s, Canadian immigration officials in Europe witnessed an increase in the number of Czechoslovakian refugees residing in Austria, France, Italy, and West Germany. The Canadian government maintained an annual quota of 500 immigration visas for all refugees in

⁷³ Kelley and Trebilcock, *Making of the Mosaic*, 406.

⁷⁴ Ota Hora, "Úvahy Při podepsání dohody mezi kanadskou vládou a Československým národním sdružením v Kanadě o sponsorování politických uprchlíků z Československa," *Naše hlasy*, 2 August 1980, 2.

⁷⁵ Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1978 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1980), 5; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1979 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1981), 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1970 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971), 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1971 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1972), 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1972 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1974), 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1973 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1974 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975), 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1975 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1976), 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1976 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1977), 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1977 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1978), 5.

West Germany. As a result, a majority of Czechoslovakian refugees were left to ponder their fate. Individuals who could prove that they had close relatives living in Canada, or had an ability to speak English or French and had secured employment would become the fortunate few who were admitted to Canada. From July 1982 to June 1983, Canada offered 750 visas to refugees in West Germany. Eastern European refugees who initially requested political asylum in West Germany were not eligible to resettle in Canada.⁷⁶

In the mid-1980s, the Canadian press increasingly highlighted the many defections that were occurring during routine flight stopovers in Canada. Once on Canadian soil, Czechoslovakian citizens requested political asylum after leaving their planes at Montreal's Mirabel International Airport and Gander's International Airport in Newfoundland. In quoting Canadian immigration officials, the *Montreal Gazette* claimed that one defection occurred every week. Czechoslovak State Airlines (*Československé státní aerolinie*) offered 'direct' flights to Cuba from Prague. The aircraft used on these flights had a maximum range of 4,900 miles, short of the necessary 5,300 miles for a direct flight between Prague and Havana. If poor weather occurred, Czechoslovak State Airlines often landed in Gander.⁷⁷ Given the distance between Havana and Prague, the fact that no Communist country existed in North America, and that the American government prohibited direct flights to Cuba, aircraft originating in Czechoslovakia were forced to refuel in Canada. Czechoslovak State Airlines used the Mirabel or Gander International Airports for its stopovers. In order for Czechoslovakian citizens to be permitted to board a plane to Cuba for a 'vacation,' they were often individuals who were

⁷⁶ "Noví uprchlíci stále přicházejí," *Kanadské listy*, 15 October 1982, 6. Refugees were expected to claim asylum in their second country (prior to arriving in their country of permanent resettlement which served as a safe third country). In this case, West Germany was to serve as a second country from which individuals and families could apply for asylum in Canada.

⁷⁷ David R. Francis, "Flying to Freedom via a Canadian Fuel Stop. Czechoslovak 'Vacationers' Heading to Cuba Defect in Montreal," *Christian Science Monitor*, 2 December 1986, accessed 2 August 2012, <http://www.csmonitor.com/1986/1202/ofect.html>.

vetted by the Communist authorities. Many of those permitted to leave the country on ‘vacation’ were ordinary members or apparatchiks who were pressured to show their allegiance to the state and joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.⁷⁸

During the 1980s, the number of defections between Gander and Mirabel was virtually identical. According to the *Toronto Star*, Canadian immigration officials and RCMP officers at Mirabel were so used to weekly defections from Czechoslovak State Airlines Flight 576 that they walked through the transit area searching for passengers seeking to defect. The local Czechoslovak community affectionately referred to the defectors as the *Kubanci* (Cubans).⁷⁹ As president of the CNAC’s Montreal branch, Victor Žícha met defectors at Mirabel International Airport to offer immediate assistance including translation, Canadian currency, and transportation to a local hotel where other defectors were temporarily residing. Upon arriving in Canada, Žícha and the branch aided newcomers in securing housing, employment, and language classes.

In the mid-1980s, Czechoslovakians in Quebec numbered approximately 6,605 individuals. Czech Quebecers accounted for 1,525 persons, Slovak Quebecers 1,395 individuals, with 1,160 identifying themselves as “Czechoslovaks.” The remaining 2,520 persons were counted as having multiple origins. A majority of these individuals (88.7 percent) resided in Montreal.⁸⁰ Approximately, 68.8 percent of the population was foreign born. In its study of the Czechs and Slovaks in the province, the Quebec Ministry of Cultural Communities and Immigration noted that prewar immigration from Czechoslovakia was characterized by

⁷⁸ William Barrett, “Czechs Defect to Canada on Planes that ‘Never Land at Mirabel,’” *Montreal Gazette*, 29 October 1985, A1.

⁷⁹ Rick Davey, “Czechs Fly to Freedom through Montreal Airport,” *Toronto Star*, 20 January 1986, A11.

⁸⁰ Lidia Ribeiro, *Profils des communautés culturelles du Québec* (Québec: Gouvernement de Québec, Ministère des communautés culturelles et de l’immigration, 1991), 4; John Kralt, *Atlas of Residential Concentration for the Census Metropolitan Area of Montreal* (Ottawa: Multiculturalism Directorate, 1986), 26. According to the 1986 Canadian Census, 4,920 Czechs and Slovaks resided in Montreal.

young adult farmers, specialized workers, and entrepreneurs. Subsequently, the 1948er generation was comprised of educated urbanites that were qualified in liberal arts professions. The 1968ers were also primarily professional urbanites in the professions of engineering, health, and teaching. Meanwhile, the recent immigrants of the 1970s and 1980s were more diverse in their backgrounds including professionals in teaching and the natural sciences, while others were skilled in the construction, manufacturing, and service industries. Many of these recent newcomers arrived in Canada as immigrants in the independent class or as refugees.⁸¹ The CNAC maintained a special fund to assist resettlement efforts. Czech Canadian shoe magnate, Tomáš Baťa assisted the CNAC and newcomers by providing funds, winter clothing, and footwear. The CNAC continued its efforts to resettle Czechs and Slovaks throughout the decade. Relatives wishing to bring their family members to Canada had to agree to a sponsorship with the CNAC for a period of one year. The organization was also willing to assist the community in resettling entire families if a ten-year sponsorship agreement was concluded.⁸²

In 1985, Prague celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the Soviet liberation of Czechoslovakia to end the Second World War. In their continued efforts to entice émigrés back to Czechoslovakia, Communist authorities declared a general amnesty for all refugees in the West to return home “without prejudice.” The Canadian Czech-language newspaper, *Kanadské listy* argued that Czechs and Slovaks in the West could foreseeably return home as citizens of Western states since they were protected by their adoptive countries’ diplomatic representatives. Controversially, the newspaper argued that:

⁸¹ Ribeiro, *Profils des communautés culturelles du Québec*, 1-2.

⁸² Miloš Šuchma, “Imigrační situace a možnosti naší pomoci,” *Věstník* 1.1 (January-February 1986): 1.

It is a lie that the tens of thousands now in refugee camps in West Germany and Austria will even blink an eye over the decision to return for they never fared worse than their neighbours. Those that left in the 1940s and 1950s were sought out by the government, pressured, or could not coexist in Communist Czechoslovakia. Those that have recently left Czechoslovakia do not even warrant asylum or emigration anywhere. They did not leave a desperate situation and often fell into desperate situations in the West.⁸³

Very few individuals returned to Czechoslovakia for ideological reasons. Among the main reasons why they chose to return home were a sense of nostalgia, poor health, lack of employment or economic success, and personal or family reasons.⁸⁴ Czechoslovakians, young and old continued to flee the Communist regime. For many individuals and families leaving their homes for the West, absolute secrecy was a vital part of their preparation. Often times, close relatives were not informed of a family member's emigration in order that they could truthfully deny any knowledge of the event before the Communist authorities. Many Czechoslovakians continued to struggle with the moral ramifications of leaving behind siblings, parents, and even children. In the case of young families, many applied for exit visas because crossing the border illegally with a child in tow was too risky. In the summer of 1985, Marta Procházka decided to leave Czechoslovakia with her young family. Communist authorities approved exit visas for the family to take a 'vacation' in Yugoslavia. On 23 July, the Procházkas crossed the border into Hungary and then Yugoslavia.⁸⁵ In their attempt to reach Austria, the family was turned away and forced to visit the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Belgrade in the hopes that they could be legally accepted as Convention Refugees. After several weeks of waiting in Yugoslavia, the Procházkas received their UN documentation and were able to reach the Traiskirchen Refugee Camp south of Vienna, Austria. Once in the West, Marta

⁸³ "Problemy exulantu," *Kanadské listy*, 15 April 1984, 6.

⁸⁴ Filípek, *Reflections and Perspectives*, 62.

⁸⁵ Marta Procházka, "An Absurd Way of Life: "A Very Unusual Feeling," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 25.2 (1993): 127-128.

recalled that fellow Czechs and Slovaks in the camp were not helpful, but Canadian Embassy officials remained accommodating as the Procházkas sought to begin new lives in Canada.⁸⁶

Similarly, Czech refugee Ivo Moravec wondered how many individuals would be admitted into Canada from the refugee camps in Austria. Initially, Moravec was issued a grey passport by the Communist authorities in Prague and remained valid only for travel to Yugoslavia. After making his way to a refugee camp across the border in Austria, Moravec pondered an important question: how selective would Canadian immigration officials be?

They prefer families and decent people. What professions do they favour? None. We're disadvantaged my friend. They don't seem to care about higher education too much. If you were a tradesmen, carpenter, welder, locksmith, plumber, technician, perhaps the door would be open wider. It's tougher with a university degree in Canada.⁸⁷

On 23 August 1986, demonstrations were held across the Western World to commemorate victims of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, and in particular to raise awareness of Soviet crimes and human rights violations. Commonly referred to as “Black Ribbon Day,” the CNAC participated in the popular movement to illustrate that millions of Eastern Europeans were subjugated behind the Iron Curtain.⁸⁸ Canadian Czechoslovaks actively promoted awareness of Czechoslovakia’s abuse of human rights and suppression of democratic values.⁸⁹ As a major component of its struggle against communism, the CNAC continued efforts to resettle Czechoslovakian citizens in Canada in order to further embarrass

⁸⁶ Ibid., 129-130.

⁸⁷ Ivo Moravec, *Tightrope Passage: Along the Refugee Route to Canada* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1997), 52-54.

⁸⁸ “Black Ribbon Day 1986,” *Věstník* 1.5 (September-October 1986): 1. Black Ribbon Day commemorations were held in major cities across Canada. In Toronto, the event was attended by Mayor Arthur Eggleton and Edmonton-Strathcona MP David Kilgour.

⁸⁹ John Hašek, “Dedication of K-231 Monument,” *Věstník* 4.4 (July 1989): 1; MMI Incorporated, “Monument,” accessed 29 March 2012, http://masaryktown.ca/?page_id=437; Čermák, *It All Started with Prince Rupert: The Story of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 273.

the Communist authorities in Prague, and to provide safe haven to individuals and families. In bringing attention to Czechoslovakian defections in Canada, the *Christian Science Monitor* claimed that from 1982 to 1986, approximately 350 Czechoslovakians defected on Canadian soil.⁹⁰ In its official *Věstník* (bulletin), the CNAC sought assistance from the Canadian Czechoslovak community to further sponsor refugee families and single adults. In a March 1987 issue, the organization solicited sponsors to help resettle a 24 year-old seamstress, 28 year-old electrician, and a 33 year-old jeweller-watchmaker, all residing in refugee camps in Italy. Additionally, the *Věstník* sought sponsors for a young couple: a 23 year-old electrician-mechanic, and a 22 year-old laundry maid. The *Věstník* claimed that the aforementioned Czechoslovakian refugees in Italy were willing to take any employment offered to them in Canada. The CNAC added that “without our collective help they may all remain in European refugee camps for several years.”⁹¹ By the end of 1988, CNAC branches across the country answered the request and sponsored 182 Czechoslovakian refugees. A portion of the 182 refugees sponsored were due to arrive in the new year.⁹²

In the summer of 1989, Canadian immigration authorities at Montreal’s Mirabel International Airport intervened to prevent further Czechoslovakian defections. In the first six months of the year, 251 Czechoslovakians requested refugee status in Canada, an increase of 80 individuals from the same period a year before. Sensing that the number of cases was rising substantially, the Canadian government sought to curb the number of defections in an effort to prevent any political controversy arising from what appeared to be an uncontrolled

⁹⁰ Francis, “Flying to Freedom via a Canadian Fuel Stop.”

⁹¹ “Pomožte nám sponzorovat tyto rodiny a jednotlivce,” *Věstník* 3.2 (March 1987): 7.

⁹² “Statistika sponzorovani odbočkami v roce 1988,” *Věstník* (March 1989): 6. The CNAC’s Toronto Branch sponsored 96 refugees followed by thirty in Vancouver, fifteen each in Edmonton and Kitchener-Waterloo-Guelph, twelve in Ottawa, seven in Hamilton, five in Montreal, and two in Winnipeg.

immigration system. The Montreal office of the Immigration and Refugee Board granted refugee status to approximately two-thirds of all cases permitting newcomers including the Czechoslovakians to stay in Canada.⁹³ During the 1980s, 9,855 individuals from Czechoslovakia permanently resettled in Canada. Nearly half – 47.6 percent or 4,690 persons chose to relocate to Ontario. From 1983 to 1989, 5,660 Czechoslovakians were admitted to Canada as refugees. During the same period, 558 individuals were admitted as independents, 472 under the Family Class, 105 under the Assisted Relative Class, and three under the Entrepreneur Class. Persons admitted under the Refugee Class represented 83.3 percent of all newcomers from Czechoslovakia.⁹⁴

With the efforts of the CNAC and the MMI, Canadian Czechoslovaks continued to actively resettle fellow compatriots in Canada. For others within the community, the promotion and commemoration of the victims of Communist persecution remained a priority. Within the WAFCPP, an internal rift occurred between former political prisoners. Several of the association's members established their own group, *K-231 in Exile* to continue their agenda of honouring and preserving the memory of political prisoners and victims of the Communist

⁹³ Peggy Curran, "Immigration Moves to Stop Czechs Landing at Mirabel," *Montreal Gazette*, 27 July 1989, B1.

⁹⁴ Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1980 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1982), 10; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1981 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1983), 10; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1982 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1984), 18; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1983 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1985), 18, 62; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1984 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1986), 50; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1985 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1987), 49; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1986 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1988), 49; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1987 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1989), 51; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1988 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1990), 51; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1989 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1991), 51. In 1990, Canada eliminated the Eastern European Self-Exiled Persons refugee class first established in 1979.

regime in Czechoslovakia.⁹⁵ As members of *K-231 in Exile*, former Czechoslovakian political prisoners in Canada commissioned the creation of a monument to honour the victims of Communist persecution in their old homeland and to also commemorate victims of Communism throughout the world. On 2 July 1989, a statue of a tortured man crucified on a sickle and hammer and symbolizing Soviet oppression was unveiled. The monument, *Crucified Again*, was created by Czech Canadian artist, Josef Randa of Winnipeg and erected on a donated piece of “free Czechoslovak land” at Masaryktown. Over \$32,000 was raised from Czechs and Slovaks in the West to commission the statue in Toronto.⁹⁶

On 17 November 1989, Communist riot police suppressed a student-led demonstration protesting against the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. Two days later, a broad spectrum of Czechoslovakian society joined in a series of popular demonstrations against one-party rule. Initially, a crowd of approximately 200,000 individuals in Prague swelled to half-million only twenty-four hours later. The popular demonstrations that swept the country were led by students and dissidents who formed *Občanské fórum* (Civic Forum) in the Czech lands and *Verejnost’ proti násiliu* (Public against Violence) in Slovakia. On 27 November, a two-hour general strike was held across the country followed a day later with the Communist government’s announcement that it would formally dismantle the one-party state. During the protests that were sweeping across Czechoslovakia, members of the CNA returned to their old homeland in an effort to assist the reform movement.⁹⁷ Three representatives including John Hašek – a 1948er who fled Communist imprisonment with his family to the West – arrived with approximately \$25,000 raised by Canadian Czechs and Slovaks to assist Czechoslovakia in its transition to

⁹⁵ Hašek, “Dedication of K-231 Monument,” 1; MMI Incorporated, “Monument;” Čermák, *It All Started with Prince Rupert*, 273.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ As previously noted, the CNAC became the Czechoslovak Association in 1984.

democracy.⁹⁸ Only a few weeks later, on 10 December, President Gustáv Husák appointed the first non-Communist government since February 1948 and resigned from office three days later. Shortly thereafter, Civic Forum and Public against Violence announced that Václav Havel would be their candidate for President of Czechoslovakia.⁹⁹ On 28 December, Alexander Dubček was elected speaker of the federal parliament and a day later, Václav Havel became the first democratic president of Czechoslovakia since 1948. The sweeping changes in Czechoslovakia in the fall of 1989 were referred to in the Czech lands as the *Sametová revoluce* (Velvet Revolution) and in Slovakia as the *Nežná revolúcia* (Gentle Revolution).¹⁰⁰ The events of November and December 1989 ultimately returned parliamentary democracy to Czechoslovakia after four decades of Communist one-party rule.

Marking the Mosaic: Preserving Ethnic Heritage and Identity in the 1970s and 1980s

In November 1970, representatives of the Masaryk Memorial Institute (MMI) enquired with the Department of the Secretary of State's Citizenship Branch if any federal funding was available to support its sociocultural programs. As president of MMI, Bedřich Čecha informed Canadian officials that his organization desired to expand its activities even as operating costs continued to increase significantly.¹⁰¹ Citizenship Branch officials informed MMI that previous

⁹⁸ Mark Bastien, "Czech-Canadian Rewarded in Returning Home to Help," *Edmonton Journal*, 13 December 1989, A17. In the 1990s, Edvard Outrata returned to his homeland. He originally arrived in Canada as a 1968er and later became director general of informatics at Statistics Canada. Upon returning to his homeland, Outrata served as President of the Czech Statistical Office, and later as a Czech senator from 2000-2006. See Paul Wilson, "Bohemia in Ottawa," *Saturday Night* 120 (February 2005): 38-44.

⁹⁹ This choice naturally sparked outrage in Slovakia which wanted to install a Slovak (Dubček) as President of the federal republic. He later became speaker of the lower house of parliament.

¹⁰⁰ As an English language translator for the dissident movement, Rita Klímová coined the term "Velvet Revolution." A trained economist, Klímová became Czechoslovakia's last ambassador to the United States prior to the dissolution of the country in 1992.

¹⁰¹ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1986-87/319, box 87, file 9-334, part 1, "Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc.," letter from Bedřich Čecha, MMI president and J. Václav Šauer to the Secretary of State, Ottawa, 13 November 1970. Masaryk Memorial Institute's operating costs increased to over \$85,000 annually in 1970.

funding of cultural organizations was conducted on an experimental basis as a pilot project. The branch indicated that future funding of ethnocultural groups and their projects would depend on the federal cabinet's response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Financial assistance remained limited to individually assessed projects and their respective merits.¹⁰² Although MMI was initially unsuccessful in attaining federal funding to support and expand its services for the Canadian Czechoslovak community, the organization's sponsorship of the Czechoslovak Studies program at the University of Toronto no longer required a subsidy as the program became self-sufficient.¹⁰³

As MMI continued to secure funding for its programs and services including issuing short-term loans and scholarships, maintaining Masaryktown, and finding accommodations and employment for newly arrived refugees, many smaller Czechoslovak organizations perceived the institute to be withholding funds from the community as a strict "money supplier to other "Czechoslovak" organizations." This perception within the community hampered MMI's ability to secure its own financial future. Groups that sought to use the organization's facilities believed the organization was stealing from them by asking for rental fees. However, these fees were used to pay for the organization's taxes and renovations. In his Executive Member's Report to the MMI community for 1970, W. Bartánus declared that it was "time to realize that we all have to work together, forget our political disputes and rather cultivate the great supply of Czech and Slovak talents, respect one another and most of all work together as a unit to elevate Czech and Slovak culture." Bartánus controversially argued that Masaryktown should be sold in order to

¹⁰² LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1986-87/319, box 87, file 9-334, part 1, "Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc.," letter from Stan Zybala, Assistant Chief, Ethnic Participation Division, Citizenship Branch, Department of the Secretary of State to Jindra Zoder, Toronto, 29 March 1971.

¹⁰³ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file "Annual Reports, 1972-1974," Jerry (Jaroslav) Forest, Treasurer's Report 1972, Výroční zpráva za rok 1972, n.d.

establish a financially self-sustaining Czechoslovak centre. Since many Czechs and Slovaks in Toronto and southern Ontario only attended the annual Czechoslovak Day, Bartánus believed that Masaryktown cost the community in excess of \$12,000 annually for one occasion. Bartánus claimed that Masaryktown remained a symbol of a “rather expensive sentimentalism” and that selling Masaryktown and the old Masaryk Hall would permit the organization to establish a new community centre that reflected the needs of the community.¹⁰⁴

Beginning in early 1971, the Citizenship Branch of the Ontario Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship published a monthly newspaper, *Newcomer News* with the goal of assisting adult immigrants in English-language classes acquire the necessary reading skills. The monthly government newspaper also informed newcomers of recent events that could assist them in their resettlement in the province. As the Provincial Secretary and Minister of Citizenship, John Yaremko informed MMI that English-language teachers and newcomers to the province found the *Newcomer News* useful as demand for the publication steadily increased. The minister requested MMI to include copies of the monthly newspaper in its own weekly, *Nový domov*. In cooperating with the ethnocultural communities in Ontario, the popular bonus supplement was delivered to thousands of new Canadians across the province on a regular basis. Yaremko argued that Ontario’s ethnic press – of which *Nový domov* was a member – provided “a bridge of understanding between the cultures of their readers and that of our way of life, and could be a very effective means for this wider distribution of *Newcomer News*.”¹⁰⁵ As the editor

¹⁰⁴ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file “Annual Reports, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1970,” W. Bartánus, Executive Member’s Report, Výroční zpráva za rok 1970, n.d.

¹⁰⁵ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file “Correspondence, 1971,” letter from John Yaremko, Provincial Secretary and Minister of Citizenship to H. Zoder, *Nový domov* Editor, Toronto, 20 October 1971.

of *Nový domov*, Henry Zoder later informed Yaremko that he accepted his proposal and could include 1,000 copies of *Newcomer News* in his weekly.¹⁰⁶

As Ontario's provincial government sought the cooperation of its ethnocultural communities in the hopes of assisting immigrants and recently arrivals with their integration, the CNAC focused its attention on the size of its membership. In the spring of 1971, the organization requested its local branches to determine the age of its membership and how many of them were active. In Ottawa, the local CNAC branch consisted of only 57 members of which only one person came to Canada prior to 1939. Another ten individuals arrived during the Second World War and before the Communist takeover in 1948, another thirty-one members resettled in Canada from Czechoslovakia during the Communist period, and fifteen individuals arrived following the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia. A majority of the branch's membership was between thirty and fifty-five years of age.¹⁰⁷ Although a large number of 1968ers joined Canadian Czechoslovak organizations including the CNAC and MMI, a significant portion of Czechoslovaks remained outside of community life. Older and more recently established branches suffered from a lack of newcomer involvement. In Batawa, where a significant portion of its membership arrived prior to the Second World War, many community members no longer frequented scheduled CNAC meetings, while newcomers largely ignored the CNAC's activities. Similarly, a newly established Halifax branch suffered from a lack of members and financial

¹⁰⁶ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 4, file "Correspondence, 1971," letter from Henry Zoder, *Nový domov* Editor to John Yaremko, Provincial Secretary and Minister of Citizenship, Toronto, 8 November 1971.

¹⁰⁷ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 15, file 17 "Head Office – Correspondence, January-June 1972," Dotazník from CNAC to CNAC Ottawa Branch, 26 May 1971.

support. Although the branch held events such as a cookout in Point Pleasant Park, it suffered from the frequent relocation of its members to other parts of Canada.¹⁰⁸

Even as the Czechoslovak community's preeminent organizations struggled to remain financially viable, Canadian Czechs and Slovaks actively lobbied their municipal and provincial governments for grants and subsidies for their community activities under the aegis of multiculturalism in Canada. On 8 October 1971, Prime Minister Trudeau declared before the House of Commons that multiculturalism was an official government policy. The political directive affirmed that all Canadian citizens were equal regardless of their ethnic origin and religious or linguistic background. The Multiculturalism Policy confirmed that the country had no official culture, and that English and French remained the country's two official languages. Canadian citizens of all ethnic, religious, and linguistic backgrounds were considered equal.¹⁰⁹ In the summer of 1972, the CNAC's Calgary branch participated in the Alberta Cultural Heritage Conference at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. The conference dealt with the acculturation of cultural groups in the province. In its brief to the conference, the Calgary branch argued that no cultural group "should have any privileges which could not be given to all groups, regardless of their numerical strength or length of their establishment in Canada or Alberta." The branch sought to promote tolerance, understanding, and cooperation between ethnic groups and pressured the provincial government to enact legislation that embodied the aforementioned

¹⁰⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 16 "Minutes – Head Office and Branches, 1969-1974," letter from K. Jatel, CNAC Branch Batawa to Emil Talacko, 7 March 1971; LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 2, file 16 "Minutes – Head Office and Branches, 1969-1974," letter, Československé národní sdružení v Kanadě pobočka v Halifaxu, N.S. – Zpráva o činnosti za rok 1970, from M.J. Máčalík, CNAC Branch Halifax to unknown, 3 April 1971. The branch held approximately twenty-five dollars in its bank account and could not afford to send a representative to the annual CNAC congress.

¹⁰⁹ Michael Dewing, "Parliament of Canada, Background Paper: PRB09-20E, Canadian Multiculturalism," accessed 7 November 2012, <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/prb0920-e.htm#2-The%20Formative>; Miriam Verena Richter, *Creating the National Mosaic: Multiculturalism in Canadian Children's Literature from 1950 to 1994* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi B.V., 2001), 37.

ideals.¹¹⁰ The brief suggested that two proposals be implemented. First, the branch argued for the establishment of a multicultural centre in Calgary as a “keystone” of efforts to support ethnic groups in the region. The branch believed that such a centre could lease space to diverse ethnic organizations in order for them to possess the necessary facilities for an ethnic library, dining room, theatre, and physical activity space. In return, ethnic groups would be able to hold regular meetings and schedule cultural events promoting diversity in Calgary and throughout Alberta. The CNAC branch hoped that the provincial and municipal authorities would work with the Canadian government to build the proposed centre.¹¹¹ Second, the branch maintained that evening classes for every language spoken in Alberta be equally funded in order to promote fairness and equality between large and financially stable ethnic groups and those such as the CNAC branch which could not cover the costs of the language classes. During the conference, the branch representatives concluded that “we feel that the basic right to be taught one’s parental language should be extended to all Albertans, regardless of [the] numerical strength of their cultural group. This move would strengthen the feeling of equality among all Albertans.”¹¹²

As Canadian Czechoslovaks in western Canada lobbied for further government funding of ethnocultural activities, the Czechoslovak community in Toronto also suffered from a lack of funds for its activities. In his annual report to the MMI community, treasurer Jaroslav Forest argued that the institute’s membership demonstrated a “lack of involvement” in the affairs of the organization. Forest noted that while MMI may not have been able to provide the facilities that members desired, the amenities that did exist including Masaryktown were underused. It was

¹¹⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 4, file 2 “Reports, n.d., 1968-1973,” report, Brief to be Presented to the Alberta Cultural Heritage Conference, June 16-18, 1972 University of Alberta in Edmonton by Czechoslovak National Association of Canada – Calgary Branch, n.d.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

Forest's contention that "if the club was to survive, we must alter our thinking and establish new goals, goals which are better suited to the attitudes and requirements of today." The institute also suffered from a lack of funds.¹¹³ In November 1972, the institute's board of directors established the Masaryk Old Age Fund. The fund was financed through community donations and fundraising activities including bingo evenings.¹¹⁴ On a Saturday afternoon in November, the Women's Council of the CNAC in Toronto held its annual charity bazaar and Christmas Fair at Masaryk Hall. The bazaar was open to the public and consisted of Czech and Slovak pastries and refreshments including goulash and soup, delicatessen hors d'oeuvres, jams, jellies, handicrafts, and cooking books. A new edition of the council's *Czechoslovak Recipes* originally published in 1963 was also available for purchase.¹¹⁵

In a speech before guests at the Manitoba Legislature in Winnipeg in the spring of 1974, CNAC president Jiří Corn requested individuals in attendance to cast their vote in the upcoming federal election and to remain proud of their newly received Canadian citizenship. The CNAC executive noted that new citizens had a duty to cherish their mother tongues and the culture of their old homeland. Corn argued that Canada's ethnocultural mosaic "encourages you to maintain the best from your culture and habits while being a good and honest Canadian citizen. You should integrate into the Canadian society and way of life by maintaining the best from your past and adopting the best from your present Canadian society."¹¹⁶ The CNAC president concluded his remarks by suggesting that the new Canadian citizens in attendance should

¹¹³ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file "Annual Reports, 1972-1974," Jerry (Jaroslav) Forest, Treasurer's Report 1972, Výroční zpráva za rok 1972, n.d.

¹¹⁴ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file "Annual Financial Statements, 1970-1973," Combined Financial Statements: Masaryk Memorial Institute Incorporated, Toronto, 30 November 1973, 16.

¹¹⁵ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 3 "Pamphlets, Programs, and Brochures, n.d., 1969-1974," pamphlet, charity bazaar of the Women's Council of the CNAC, Toronto, 4 November 1972.

¹¹⁶ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 33, file 14 "Ottawa Branch No. 89 – Miscellaneous, 1970-1976," Speech, Remarks Delivered by J.G. Corn on the Occasion of Citizenship Day in Winnipeg, Manitoba on 29 May 1974 in Parliament Buildings, Winnipeg, Jiří Corn, CNAC president, 29 May 1974.

participate in all aspects of Canadian society, and value the freedom and democracy available to all in Canada.¹¹⁷

That same month, the CNAC held its twenty-sixth annual congress in Hamilton, Ontario. Delegates in attendance at McMaster University were informed that their organization's membership was rapidly aging with an average age for members of sixty years. The average age of Batawa's 88 members was 63 years. Conversely, the smallest branch of Kingston, Ontario which comprised thirteen members held an average age of forty years. The CNAC's fourteen branches included 1,485 individuals with an average age of fifty years. Branches with smaller memberships included Calgary, Halifax, Kingston, and Windsor – each with less than fifty members and an average age in the late forties. In larger metropolitan centres of Toronto, Montreal, and Hamilton, the average age of CNAC members remained in the mid-fifties. These statistics illustrated that a majority of the association's members were ageing. The association was confronted with the necessity of finding new and young members who would assist in renewing the CNAC.¹¹⁸

Although the CNAC's aging membership concerned branch leaders and its executive in Toronto, the organization continued to promote ethnic heritage and worked to preserve Czechoslovak identity in Canada. In attempting to meet a public demand for Czech and Slovak-language materials, the CNAC corresponded with Zdena Škvorecký – who along with her husband Josef Škvorecký established the Czech émigré publishing house, *Sixty-Eight Publishers* – to determine the financial viability of producing a Czech language text. Škvorecký informed the CNAC that the dissident publishing house's readership would be interested in the publication

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 3, file 23 “XXVI Congress, Hamilton, 1974,” Československé národní sdružení v Kanadě – 26.Kongres “Bedřicha Smetany” – McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, 11 May 1974, 25.

of a Czech-English dictionary. In her view, 2,000 copies could be printed and *Sixty-Eight Publishers* would act as a distributor to its established clients and all interested Czechs and Slovaks in the West.¹¹⁹ The project was later titled *Dictionary of Stereotyped, Metaphorical and Idiomatic Expressions*. Under the authorship of *Nový domov* editor Břetislav Kroulík, the dictionary's purpose was to list commonly used English-language expressions and to convey their Czech equivalent. The CNAC argued that the dictionary was necessary because many newcomers from Czechoslovakia struggled to understand English idioms that were widely used in the Canadian workforce. In seeking support for the project from the federal Citizenship Branch, CNAC member and Brock University professor Victor Fic argued that understanding these idioms prepared immigrants to secure employment in their chosen fields and eliminated the "anxiety and emotional trauma of the people who are technically competent but whose competitiveness on the job market is badly handicapped by [a] lack of idiomatic English will be greatly reduced."¹²⁰

The CNAC applied to the federal government for funding since the dictionary project fell under the Third Language Teaching Aid classification within the Multicultural Grants Program. Grants from the program were available for projects that promoted diversity in Canada through the dissemination of cultural heritage. Similarly, activities that assisted in an ethnocultural group's development were also considered. Prospective projects were required to secure financial support from the local community and to assist immigrants in fully participating in

¹¹⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 7 "Grant Applications – Secretary of State, 1974-1975," draft letter from Zdena Škvorecký to CNAC, Toronto, n.d. Draft is attached to letter from J.G. Corn, president, CNAC to *Sixty-Eight Publishers*, Toronto, 29 May 1974.

¹²⁰ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 7 "Grant Applications – Secretary of State, 1974-1975," draft letter from Victor M. Fic, professor, Department of Politics, Brock University, St. Catharines to J. Jaworski, Canadian Citizenship Branch, Department of the Secretary of State, Ottawa, 18 October 1973.

Canadian society.¹²¹ In its grant application, the CNAC indicated that it was comprised of over 8,000 members between eighteen and seventeen years of age. The association received approximately \$2,702 in membership dues, \$5,206 in private donations, \$4,880 from federal departments and agencies, and \$31,386 from other activities for a total of \$44,174. Conversely, the CNAC claimed \$37,825 in expenditures.¹²² As a small and financially sound organization, the CNAC indicated in its submission to the Citizenship Branch that its proposed dictionary would consist of approximately 300 pages of idioms, phrases, and metaphorical expressions in the Czech and English languages.¹²³ The objective of the dictionary project was to improve each Canadian Czech and Slovak's knowledge of the English language and benefit professionals including translators and writers who required a consistent source for terminology.¹²⁴ The total cost for the publication of the Czech-English dictionary was \$18,100. The CNAC allocated \$9,500 to the project and requested that the Citizenship Branch approve \$8,600 in federal funding.¹²⁵ In April, the Citizenship Branch informed the CNAC that it could only financially support the publication and distribution of books that were of interest to a significant portion of Canadians. Citizenship Branch officials believed that the dictionary project was limited in terms of how many Canadians would benefit from its publication and the branch withheld funds. Alternately, officials in Ottawa informed the CNAC that funding for a publication pertaining to

¹²¹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 7 "Grant Applications – Secretary of State, 1974-1975," Guidelines for Submissions for Grants under the Multicultural Programme, Canadian Citizenship Branch, Department of the Secretary of State, Bernard Ostry, Assistant Under-Secretary of State, Ottawa, n.d., 1.

¹²² LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 7 "Grant Applications – Secretary of State, 1974-1975," Citizenship Branch, Secretary of State Grant Application Form for Czechoslovak National Association of Canada, Jiri G. Corn, president, CNAC, Toronto, 12 June 1974, 2, 4. Expenditures included \$1,200 for part-time salaries, \$534 for travel, \$4,591 for office rent, and \$31,500 for cultural gifts and support for other initiatives.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 5. From the estimated \$18,100 in total costs for the dictionary's publication, \$10,200 was to go to materials, \$5,600 to honoraria, \$1,500 to publicity, \$600 for typing, and \$200 for travel.

an ethnocultural group's history in Canada was readily accepted.¹²⁶ Without federal funding, the CNAC project lay dormant for almost a decade. In 1985, the Czech-English dictionary was finally published.

Czechoslovak groups and CNAC branches across Canada continued to attract grants from the Canadian government under its strategy of promoting multiculturalism through the preservation of ethnic culture and identity. On 3 October 1974, the CNAC's Montreal Branch with a \$1,000 federal grant from the Department of the Secretary of State began a regular weekly radio broadcast in the Czech and Slovak languages. The purpose of the radio program was to provide a public service to the approximately 8,000 Czech and Slovak residents in Montreal.¹²⁷ The program offered important news of concern to the Czechoslovak community in Quebec including new laws and regulations in an effort to "fight public apathy and to improve good citizenship." Broadcasts also contained interviews with prominent Czechs and Slovaks including Czech American film director Miloš Forman. The weekly radio broadcast over CFMB 1410's airwaves became popular with members of the community and led many Czechs and Slovaks in Montreal to organize public events including lectures, exhibits, and shows for the Czechoslovak community. Eventually, the broadcast introduced its listeners to twenty-four one-minute announcements on multiculturalism in Canada.¹²⁸ In the spring of 1979, the CNAC's Montreal branch conducted a survey involving a random sample of 350 Czech and Slovak Canadian families. Approximately, 176 households indicated that the radio broadcasts were beneficial to

¹²⁶ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 23 "Head Office – Correspondence, January-May 1975," letter from Stan Zybala, Multicultural Program, Canadian Citizenship Branch, Department of the Secretary of State to Anthony Daičar, CNAC, Batawa, 17 April 1975.

¹²⁷ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 13, file 9264-B, "Czechoslovak National Association of Canada: Ethnic Broadcast in Czech and Slovak Language," Czechoslovak Broadcast CFMB Radio 1410 Report 1978, Prepared for the Department of Secretary of State, Multiculturalism and Citizenship Branch, Victor G. Žiča, 6 June 1979, 1.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.* The program ran commercial-free except for government announcements pertaining to multiculturalism and national unity.

them. A smaller number of negative replies indicated that the program's 23:30 broadcasts were too late in the evening and left many listeners advocating for an earlier timeslot. Approximately, 75 percent of respondents indicated that they tuned-in regularly. Younger listeners desired "modern Slovak or Czech music," while older members of the community preferred classical or folklore music. When it came to preference of news, many 1968ers confirmed that they listened attentively to the news from Czechoslovakia rather than domestic events, whereas members of the older 1948er generation maintained a preference for Canadian news information.¹²⁹ The Montreal branch concluded that approximately 2,000-2,500 individuals listened regularly to its radio broadcasts. Since a majority of the Czechs and Slovaks in Montreal consisted of intellectuals and skilled workers, the Czechoslovak community lacked small business owners who could financially sponsor the thirty minute radio program. Unable to find sponsors for the radio program, the CNAC turned to the Department of the Secretary of State for funding:

As ardent Federalists we see that our new home – Canada – is in grave danger. We are shocked with the political orientation of our provincial government and with articles appearing in some French newspapers advocating elimination of Multiculturalism. Thus, as it is our fervent desire to keep Canada together, we must intensify our efforts to convince every member of our community to work as [an] ambassador of good will [sic.], informing his French friends and acquaintances about the immense pitfalls that will be the inevitable consequence of separation of Quebec from the rest of Canada.¹³⁰

In its assessment of the CNAC radio broadcast, Canadian officials concluded that the Montreal branch was active and responded to the needs of the local Czechoslovak community. The program comprised of twenty-five broadcasts per year and discussed the cultural heritage of Czechoslovaks in Quebec in the areas of literature, music, and theatre. Canadian officials

¹²⁹ Ibid., 2-3.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 4. From 1972-1973 to 1978-1979, the Montreal branch of the CNAC received annual grants of \$1,000, with an exception occurring in 1976-1977 when the branch received \$1,500.

believed that funding the “Ethnic Broadcast in Czech and Slovak Language” project would promote further understanding of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada, national unity, and multiculturalism in the province of Quebec at a time when the separatist *Parti Québécois* was firmly in power.¹³¹

In Ottawa, the local CNAC branch sponsored a television program, *Czechoslovak Television Kaleidoscope – Life of Ethnic Czech and Slovaks in their New Homeland*. The program was broadcast once a month and focused on Czechoslovak culture, community news, and Canadian adaptation and multiculturalism. The community television show collected material on the immigration and settlement experience of Czechs and Slovaks in Canada to raise awareness of their past historical and political circumstances for future generations, and showcased how these individuals integrated into Canadian society. Included in the interviews were representatives of the Multiculturalism section of the Department of the Secretary of State who also assisted in funding the program with an annual grant of \$1,200 for necessary supplies. Similar to other broadcast installments, the recorded interviews were preserved for future generations. For children in the local Czech and Slovak language school in Ottawa, the television show included information on Czechoslovakia’s geography and history. Community members also televised discussions with individuals from other ethnic communities to illustrate their shared experiences in Canada. In their evaluation of the television program, Canadian officials

¹³¹ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 13, file 9264-B, “Czechoslovak National Association of Canada: Ethnic Broadcast in Czech and Slovak Language,” letter from Steve E. Paprocki, Minister of State for Multiculturalism to Dr. Victor Žicha, CNAC, Montreal, 14 August 1979. See attached “Grant Assessment Form” in French.

concluded that *Czechoslovak Television Kaleidoscope* was of outstanding quality and served as an example for other ethnocultural groups in Canada.¹³²

With a grant from the Canadian government, Toronto's MMI established a community library on the grounds of Masaryktown which became a popular destination for individuals and families searching for Czech and Slovak-language history books and traditional literature.¹³³ The federal grant of \$800 assisted the institute in repairing old books and purchasing newer Czech and Slovak-language manuscripts.¹³⁴ In 1974, the institute applied for federal funding from the Immigrant Settlement Programme under the auspices of the Department of Manpower and Immigration to establish an information office for the Czechoslovak community in Canada. The institute later joined other Czechoslovak community groups in Toronto and created a cultural pavilion for the Metro Toronto Caravan festival. Initially, established in 1968 as a festival celebrating different cultures throughout Toronto, the international caravan brought the world to Toronto's Canadian-born Anglo-Saxon community. Located at different sites in various ethnic neighbourhoods and presided over by a "mayor," pavilions were often located in church basements and community halls that displayed ethnic foods, crafts, clothing, and music. As the chosen site of the Czechoslovak community's cultural pavilion, Masaryktown opened its Golden Prague restaurant and garnered praise from Torontonians.¹³⁵

¹³² LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 52, file Czechoslovak Television Kaleidoscope - Life of Ethnic Czech and Slovaks in their New Homeland, letter from Jim Fleming, Minister of State for Multiculturalism to Arnošt Wagner, Producer, Czechoslovak Television Kaleidoscope, Ottawa, 17 June 1980. See attached "Grant Application Form" and "Grant Assessment Form."

¹³³ The CNAC received \$2,320 from the federal Department of the Secretary of State to organize an art exhibition in Toronto. See LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 29, file 7 "Grant Applications – Secretary of State, 1974-1975," Citizenship Branch, Secretary of State Grant Application Form for Czechoslovak National Association of Canada, Jiří G. Corn, President, CNAC, Toronto, 12 June 1974, 3.

¹³⁴ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 16, file 23 "Head Office – Correspondence, January-May 1975", press release from Stanley Haidasz, Member of Parliament for Parkdale (Ontario), Ottawa, 27 January 1975.

¹³⁵ LAC, MMI Fonds, MG 28 V110, volume 2, file "Annual Reports, 1972-1974," S.P. Viezner, Secretary's Report, 1974, Výroční zpráva za rok 1974, 29 May 1975; Peter Small, "Caravan Founder Changed the City," *Toronto Star*, 8 August 2001, B1, B4.

In the late 1970s, MMI received \$1,000 per year in federal funding from the Department of the Secretary of State's Supplementary School Assistance Program. Canadian officials used the program to enhance the learning of diverse languages and to promote multiculturalism.¹³⁶ The institute informed federal officials that any acquired funds were to subsidize its Czech and Slovak language schools in an effort to preserve Czech and Slovak cultural and linguistic heritage in younger generations. During the 1978-1979 school year, four separate classes of students were organized with a total enrolment of forty-five students. Similarly, each student received 64 hours of annual instruction.¹³⁷ The institute's Czech and Slovak Supplementary School also instructed students in Czech and Slovak grammar, literature and drama, Czechoslovakia's geography and history, music and choir, dance, religious studies, and gymnastics.¹³⁸ As part of the Sokol movement, the school concentrated its efforts on the instruction of Czech and Slovak language, grammar, and gymnastics. Classes were held every Saturday for five hours for a period of thirty-five weeks. Similarly, in Ottawa, the supplementary school comprised of some thirty children in three different grades. Classes were held at a Lutheran church in the Meadowlands area of the city.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 47, file 0760-C, "Citizenship Sector – Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc. – Teaching Czech," letter from Jim Fleming, Minister of State for Multiculturalism to Karel Jeřábek, MMI president, 13 February 1981.

¹³⁷ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 6, file 9887-C, "Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc. Czechoslovak Supplementary School," Grant Assessment Form, 24 December 1979; LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 6, file 9887-C, "Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc. Czechoslovak Supplementary School," letter from Steve E. Paposki, Minister of State for Multiculturalism to Jaroslav Forest, MMI, Czechoslovak Supplementary School, Toronto, 6 February 1980. For the 1979-1980 school year, the Minister of State for Multiculturalism approved a grant of \$713.

¹³⁸ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 47, file 0760-C, "Citizenship Sector – Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc. – Teaching Czech," Grant Application Form – Multicultural Program – Secretary of State, 22 October 1980. The Czechoslovak Supplementary School allocated one hour per week to language instruction, 0.5 to literature and drama, 0.5 to geography and history, 0.25 hours to music and choir, one hour to dance, 1.5 hours to religious studies, and 4.25 hours to gymnastics.

¹³⁹ LAC, CNAC Fonds, MG 28 V111, volume 32, file 2 "Ottawa Branch – Minutes, 1970-1977," Pozvánka na valnou hromadu ottawské odbočky Československé národního sdružení v Kanadě, 1977, 6; LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 47, file 0760-C, "Citizenship Sector – Masaryk Memorial Institute Inc. –

The Supplementary School Assistance Program also assisted smaller and less urban Czechoslovak groups. On 9 January 1980, officials from the Department of the Secretary of State informed the Czechoslovak Canadian Cultural Society of Southern Alberta that the organization's new Czech [and Slovak] Language School received \$260 for the year. As a local instructor of Russian at the University of Lethbridge and a graduate of Slavic languages from the University of Alberta, Libby Jonas served as the school's Czech and Slovak teacher. The society's language school held weekly evening classes in which two hours were allocated to language and grammar instruction and one hour to music.¹⁴⁰ The school offered separate Czech and Slovak language classes with Czech students outnumbering their Slovak counterparts, three-to-one. Canadian officials noted that the recently established language school was "well organized and offering an excellent opportunity for Czech heritage language retention."¹⁴¹ A month later, the department granted the CNAC's Kitchener-Waterloo branch \$348 for its language school due to the group's status as a "very small struggling community which greatly appreciates the support..." Funds were allocated for supplies and to supplement a teacher's income that was received from the local school board. Students enrolled in weekly classes and spent one hour on language instruction, thirty minutes on literature and drama, fifteen minutes on

Teaching Czech," Grant Application Form – Multicultural Program – Secretary of State, 22 October 1980. By the beginning of 1980, the supplementary school consisted of 80 students in grades ranging from kindergarten to grade four. Thirty students were beginners, while the remaining fifty students were evenly split between juniors aged seven to ten years of age, and intermediates who were ten to fifteen years of age. Along with an annual federal grant and a donation from MMI, the school received no other funding and maintained a small deficit.

¹⁴⁰ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 4, file 9750-D, "Czechoslovak Canadian Cultural Society of Southern Alberta – Czech Language School," letter from Steve E. Paprocki, Minister of State for Multiculturalism to Libby Jonas, Czechoslovak Canadian Cultural Society of Southern Alberta, Lethbridge, 9 January 1980. See attached "Grant Assessment Form." The society was incorporated on 11 October 1978.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. See attached "Grant Assessment Form."

geography and history, fifteen minutes on music, and thirty minutes on language orientation games.¹⁴²

The CNAC and MMI were not the only influential organizations to promote awareness of Czechoslovakia. In seeking to raise knowledge of Czechoslovak culture and history, the Ottawa chapter of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences proposed a project entitled “Cultural Integration of Czechoslovak Immigrants to Canadian Cultural Atmosphere and Role of Ethnic Organization” to officials in the Department of the Secretary of State. Founded in Washington in 1958 as an international cultural organization with chapters throughout the Western world, the society promoted the dissemination of knowledge pertaining to Czechoslovakia, and Czechs and Slovaks in the world. In Ottawa, the local chapter comprised of intellectuals and professionals many of whom were 1948ers and 1968ers. The Ottawa chapter received a grant of \$935 from the Department of the Secretary of State and established a resource library for Czechoslovak studies. The local chapter also created an informative public program comprised of guest lectures, films, and panel discussions on various topics pertaining to Czechoslovakia and Czechoslovak studies. In assessing the validity of sponsoring the society’s project, Canadian officials noted that the society was a “well respected and established group of Czechoslovak scholars” whose public lectures, literary evenings, and panel discussions were “usually well attended.”¹⁴³ The department hoped that its grant would permit the society to move “from a less parochial and

¹⁴² LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 4, file 9882-C, “Czechoslovak Canadian Cultural Society of Southern Alberta – Czech Language School,” letter from Steve E. Paprocki, Minister of State for Multiculturalism to Martin Jelinowicz, CNAC, Kitchener-Waterloo, 6 February 1980. See attached “Grant Assessment Form.”

¹⁴³ Members and invited speakers presented on a wide-range of topics including human rights and the Madrid Conference, walking through Prague, Slovak poetry, the James Bay Hydro Project, Stress and Auto-Biofeedback, and the society’s past, present, and future.

isolated stance into a more public and accessible position” whereby its contribution to multiculturalism and Canadian society could be better appreciated.¹⁴⁴

In a similar fashion, the CNAC branch in Winnipeg applied for federal funding for its project, “Presentation of Czechoslovak Literary Heritage to [the] Canadian Public.” In November 1980, the Department of the Secretary of State approved a grant of \$2,250 which permitted the branch to organize a lecture and panel discussions at the Winnipeg Public Library. The discussions examined the role of exiled writers, the status of Czech and Slovak Canadian literature, and public awareness of the field in Canada. The lecture coincided with a display of Czech and Slovak books and their English translations published in Canada by Czech and Slovak Canadian authors.¹⁴⁵

Members of the Canadian Czechoslovak community actively engaged in promoting multiculturalism and the preservation of Czech and Slovak languages and culture for its members and for future generations. With funding from the Canadian government, local groups established radio and television programs, community libraries, Czech and Slovak language classes, public exhibitions and lectures, and panel discussions. Many Czech and Slovak Canadians were increasingly concerned with how immigrants from Czechoslovakia were integrating in Canadian society. On 18 May 1983, the CNAC hosted a conference on the “cultural and social integration of immigrants from Czechoslovakia” in Toronto. The conference brought together community leaders, private citizens, and Canadian Czech and Slovak

¹⁴⁴ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 52, file 0305-C, “Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences – Cultural Integration of Czechoslovak Immigrants to Canadian Cultural Atmosphere & Role of Ethnic Organization,” letter from Jim Fleming, Minister of State for Multiculturalism to Jaromír Smrčka, Ottawa, 10 October 1980. See attached “Recommendation for Approval Form.”

¹⁴⁵ LAC, DSS Fonds, RG 6, accession 1989-90/157 GAD, box 52, file 0081-D, “Czechoslovak National Association of Canada – Winnipeg Branch – Presentation of Czechoslovak Literary Heritage to Canadian Public,” letter from Jim Fleming, Minister of State for Multiculturalism to J.M. Dobrovolný, CNAC, Winnipeg, 5 November 1980. See attached “Grant Application Form.”

professionals and scholars. Among the many participants, sociologist Jarmila Horná presented her findings from a survey of Czech and Slovak immigrants in Alberta. Horná concluded that a majority of the respondents to her survey indicated that they felt a “distinctive and undeniable dual ethnicity” of being Canadian and Czech or Slovak. Respondents also indicated that they compartmentalized their identity by identifying with being Canadian in the public sphere – including employment, church, social gatherings, and as Czechs or Slovaks in the private sphere at home and with family and friends.¹⁴⁶

Postwar Czechoslovakian immigrants in Canada including the 1948ers and the 1968ers preferred the urban and middle-class background of English Canada. Horná’s study asserted that a majority of Czechoslovakian immigrants in Alberta preferred participating in the arts and purchasing literature and music, while their desire to provide an education in the Czech or Slovak languages to successive generations diminished.¹⁴⁷ Once in Canada, Czechoslovakian adults were preoccupied with English language courses and college or university studies in order to improve their socioeconomic position. As a result, less time was spent by a majority of respondents in the home. Czech and Slovak immigrants rarely attended public meetings or ethnic association events because they were not formally invited.¹⁴⁸ Horná’s study of Czech and Slovak immigrants in Alberta indicates that many newcomers from Czechoslovakia were primarily concerned with their own socioeconomic status in Canada. As a result, many immigrants did not participate in ethnic associations or civic organizations because they felt uninvited and also placed an emphasis on improving their language skills and level of employment through further studies.

¹⁴⁶ Horná, “Social Problems in Integration of Immigrants from Czechoslovakia,” 35-38.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 39-40.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 41-42.

Conclusion

Canadian Czechoslovak organizations opposed the period of normalization that followed the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. Similar to the outrage caused by the Soviet-led invasion, normalization continued to heighten anti-Soviet sentiment among the 1948ers and the 1968ers in the years that followed. As two prominent Canadian Czechoslovak institutions, the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC) and Masaryk Memorial Institute (MMI) were joined by other groups including the Canadian Czechoslovak Benevolent Association (CCBA) in condemning the return of hardline Communist rule in Czechoslovakia.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Czechoslovakian citizens continued to arrive in Canada from Communist Eastern Europe. Czech and Slovak newcomers who supported a Czechoslovak identity joined the CNAC, MMI, and CCBA and supported attempts by these organizations to raise awareness and defend individual freedoms, human rights, and democracy in Czechoslovakia. The CNAC continued to lobby the federal government for the removal of restrictions on the visits of relatives, and demanded that Prague remove Czechoslovakian citizenship from individuals who later received Canadian citizenship to prevent their detention when visiting the old country. When the 1948 and 1968 waves of refugees refused to normalize relations with Prague after having left the country 'without permission,' Czechoslovakian diplomats and *StB* agents increasingly used pressure tactics including propaganda, coercion, and blackmail to force an outcome favourable to the Communist regime. As new members of the CNAC and MMI, refugees who arrived in Canada during the period of normalization in Czechoslovakia supported the 1948ers agenda of defending democracy and rights in Czechoslovakia and defending democratic values against a vocal minority of Canadians who opposed what they perceived as Western imperialism towards the Communist world.

In the immediate years after the events of 1968, the CNAC and MMI continued to struggle with a lack of financial security as memberships fluctuated. Both institutions increasingly recognized that the preservation of Czechoslovak heritage for future generations was of vital importance. As a result, many members within the CNAC and MMI continued to turn towards domestic issues. With the Canadian government's introduction of an official multiculturalism policy in 1971, Canadian Czechoslovak institutions were able to support their activities with federal grants and subsidies under the aegis of multiculturalism which promoted the country's diverse ethnic cultures and identities. Canadian Czechoslovak groups successfully funded projects including Czech and Slovak supplementary schools, and community radio and television broadcasts that preserved Czechoslovak heritage and identity, and also promoted Canadian multiculturalism. These government supported ethnocultural activities assisted in contesting public apathy among community members and improved Canadian citizenship. Similarly, government funding allowed for the Canadian Czechoslovak community to move from a less known position to greater public visibility whereby its contribution to Canadian multiculturalism could be better appreciated.

The arrival of over 11,200 individuals during the special program for Czechoslovak refugees in 1968-1969 galvanized the Czechoslovak community in Canada. The newcomers helped to revitalize the CNAC and MMI's ageing membership. The Czechs and Slovaks who arrived in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s were considerably more diverse in their backgrounds when compared with the 1948ers and 1968ers who were predominantly educated and skilled professionals. The third wave of Cold War refugees from Czechoslovakia were professionals including academics and scientists, but were also skilled in the trades including the construction, manufacturing, and service industries. From 1983 to 1989, 83.3 percent of Czechoslovakians

were admitted into Canada as refugees. Approximately half of all Czechoslovakian newcomers resettled in Ontario followed by Quebec, British Columbia, and Alberta. The immigration of Czechs and Slovaks from the Warsaw Pact invasion to the fall of communism was directly a consequence of Cold War politics. Czechs and Slovaks who supported Czechoslovakism transplanted their old world ethnic ideological identities to Canada where they joined prewar immigrants and the 1948ers in entrenching their anti-communist and democratic agenda into Canadian Czechoslovak organizations including the CNAC and MMI. As a result, both the CNAC and MMI maintained an anti-communist Cold War identity which continued to support Canada's Cold War agenda. As Canadian Czechoslovak organizations, the CNAC and MMI actively lobbied the federal government in an attempt to influence Canadian foreign policy towards their old homeland and domestic politics in Canada. Ultimately, the CNAC and MMI were ethnic organizations that influenced Canada's democratic culture during the Cold War.

Conclusion

In early 1990, officials within the Czechoslovakian President's office held discussions with Canadian diplomats in the hopes that former compatriots in Canada could play a decisive role in Czechoslovakia's reorientation from Communism to Western democracy. Both groups agreed that as Czechoslovakia's first democratic head of state since 1948, Václav Havel had to spend at least one night in Canada. On 18 February 1990, the recently elected Czechoslovakian president arrived in Canada for a two-day visit – with an evening in Ottawa before departing for Toronto. Havel's objective was to encourage the special relationship between Canada and Czechoslovakia before departing for Washington.¹ Vital to this relationship were the Czechs and Slovaks who permanently settled in Canada during four decades of Communist rule. Canadian diplomats asserted that these individuals were an “important human bridge” between both countries.² In the case of the 1968ers who spent two decades under Communist domination, a Canadian diplomat stationed in Prague during the Velvet Revolution stated:

These people had sought asylum from political persecution. They had left family and friends behind from scratch in a faraway country about which they knew little. What made these immigrants different from most was the fact that they were practically barred from any contact with their homeland. Virtually all had assumed that this break was final. These people were among the most surprised at the suddenness of the change.³

¹ Robert Grant McRae, *Resistance and Revolution: Vaclav Havel's Czechoslovakia* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1997), 199.

² Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1990 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1991), 9, 51; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1991 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1992), 51; Canada, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, *1992 Immigration Statistics* (Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1994), 55. In 1990, the Canadian government admitted 1,151 UN Convention refugees from Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakians were the eighth largest refugee group by country of origin admitted into Canada that year. From 1990 to 1992, 2,965 Czechoslovakians were permanently admitted to Canada. During this period, persons admitted under the Refugee Class represented 54.2 percent of all newcomers from Czechoslovakia. The 2,965 individuals permanently admitted to Canada consisted of 1,608 individuals admitted as refugees, 683 under the Family Class, 338 as independents, 325 under the Assisted Relative Class, and 11 as self-employed.

³ McRae, *Resistance and Revolution*, 201.

After meeting the local Czechoslovak community in Ottawa, Havel flew to Toronto where he received a honorary doctorate of law. Before a capacity crowd of approximately 2,000 Canadian Czechs and Slovaks at the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall, the dissident now turned Czechoslovakian president declared that a "democratic federation" would exist between Czech and Slovak nations in a democratic Czechoslovakia. Havel argued that Czech statehood had to be separated from Czechoslovak statehood in order for an equal federative union to take hold between the Czech and Slovak nations.⁴ During Havel's official visit in Toronto, individuals within the Canadian Slovak community voiced their aspirations for greater autonomy for Slovaks in Czechoslovakia. Among jeers and whistles from a capacity crowd of Canadian Czechs and Slovaks, Revered Dušan Toth – who represented the World Slovak League – argued for Slovak equality and minority rights in Czechoslovakia. Many of the individuals in attendance were also members of the Czechoslovak community and were annoyed by Toth's comments. They simply wished to hear their 'hero of hope' and new Czechoslovakian president address the crowd. The *Globe and Mail* concluded rather astutely that the Czech[oslovak] and nationalist Slovak communities remained "disputatious" compared to their brethren in Czechoslovakia who were consumed by a new found democracy.⁵

Several months later in June 1990, Czechoslovakia held its first parliamentary election in forty-four years. During the summer of 1992, Czech and Slovak politicians negotiated the future of Czechoslovakia. Czech politicians favoured a continued federation between the Czech lands and Slovakia, while Slovak leaders sought greater sovereignty over Slovakia's affairs.

⁴ Nomi Harris, "'Hero of Hope' Draws Tears, Cheers, in Metro," *Toronto Star*, 20 February 1990, A2; "Czechoslovakia, Quebec Sign Co-Operation Deal," *Toronto Star*, 20 February 1990, A2; Peter Adler, "Czech President Asks for Business, not Charity," *Toronto Star*, 19 February 1990, A14; Čermák, *It All Started with Prince Rupert*, 199-200.

⁵ Paul Koring, "Echo of Ethnic Bitterness Greets Havel at Ottawa Meeting of Czechoslovaks," *Globe and Mail*, 19 February 1990, A1, A2; McRae, *Resistance and Revolution*, 201; Harold Gordon Skilling, *The Education of a Canadian: My Life As a Scholar and Activist* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 372-373.

Although a majority of Czechoslovakia's citizenry initially disapproved of any breakup of the state, Czech and Slovak politicians mutually agreed to a *Velvet Divorce* in the fall of 1992. On 1 January 1993, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic became independent states. That same year, the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC) recognized this political shift in Central Europe and was renamed the Czech and Slovak Association of Canada.⁶

From the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February 1948 to the fall of the Communist regime in December 1989, approximately 550,000 individuals or 3.5 percent of the total population emigrated from Czechoslovakia.⁷ During the Cold War, events in Czechoslovakia led to three distinct waves of emigration to the West. The Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February 1948 caused approximately 55,000-80,000 individuals to flee their homeland in the two years after the Communist seizure of power.⁸ Communist authorities in Prague introduced a new class of criminal who they deemed was disloyal to the state: the 'illegal emigrant' or "an individual who left the country without permission." Prague refused to accept that individuals who left Czechoslovakia during and after the Communist takeover could refer to themselves as 'exiles' – because it implied they were forced to leave on political grounds. As a result, Prague viewed those who left their homeland as 'émigrés' because their immigration to the West was to improve their socioeconomic position.⁹ Similarly, relatives and friends of the 'illegal émigré' were often blacklisted for their ties to 'criminals' and 'enemies of

⁶ Canada, Statistics Canada, *2006 Census of Population, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 94-580-XCB2006001*, accessed 27 November 2012, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/rel/Rp-eng.cfm?LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GID=0&GK=0&GRP=1&PID=92623&PRID=0&PTYPE=89103&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2006&THEME=80&VID=0&VNAMEE=&VNAMEF=>. According to the 2006 census, 193,950 Canadians claimed "Czech and Slovak origins." Similarly, 98,095 asserted Czech as an ethnic origin, while 64,150 claimed Slovak as an ethnic origin, and a further 36,970 Canadians claim Czechoslovakian origins.

⁷ Hron, "Czech Émigré Experience of Return after 1989," 47.

⁸ Faure, "Les exilés tchécoslovaques de 1948," 61.

⁹ František Hašek, interview by Jana Cipris, 20 July 1978; Škvorecký, "Bohemia of the Soul," 111-112; Filípek, *Reflections and Perspectives*, 60-61.

the state,' and were prevented from attending university studies, gaining employment in their field of expertise, and lived with family due to their bourgeois or democratic backgrounds.¹⁰

Referred to as the *utíkali* or those who 'ran away' by the Communist press in Czechoslovakia, the 1948 wave of immigration to the West was comprised of former government ministers, members of parliament, state bureaucrats, local officials, military officers, clergy, professionals, artists, students, workers, and agriculturalists. Although this wave of immigration included persons from all facets of society and class, a majority of these individuals were from urban areas, well-educated, and held upper or middle-class socioeconomic status.¹¹ The existing Czechoslovak community in Canada referred to these émigrés as the 1948ers for their immigration to Canada was a direct result of the Communist takeover. The 1948ers arrived in Canada after spending weeks, months, and years in refugee camps in Austria, Italy, Occupied Germany, and later West Germany. They firmly believed that their resettlement in Canada would be temporary. With the assistance of the Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA), Masaryk Hall (MH), and the Canadian Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees (CFCR), many Czech and Slovak refugees were admitted into Canada after signing one-year manual farm labour contracts. Initially, they struggled to have their European university degrees and professional qualifications recognized before Canadian federal and provincial authorities. As a result, many 1948ers found work, but were underemployed in their first few years in Canada.¹² In reestablishing themselves in the West, many 1948ers found a sympathetic public and a Czechoslovak community waiting to assist them in their resettlement.

¹⁰ Hašek, interview by Jana Cipris, 20 July 1978.

¹¹ Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1967 Immigration Statistics*, 20-22; Howard Palmer, *Ethnicity and Politics in Canada since Confederation* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991), 18-19.

¹² Čermák, *It All Started with Prince Rupert*, 197; Čermák originally cites: Dita J. Zemánek, "Czeching Out and Czeching In: The Czech Immigrant Experience in Canada" (B.A. thesis, Acadia University, 2002).

In Canada, many 1948ers joined Czechoslovak organizations including the CNA and MH in an attempt to defend Czechoslovak democracy, and hoped their return home would come in a few short years. The 1948ers referred to members of the existing Canadian Czechoslovak community as “oldtimers” or “old-fashioned” since they promoted Canadian citizenship and the maintenance of a Czechoslovak cultural heritage above the newcomers’ agenda of returning democracy to Czechoslovakia. Relations between the 1948ers and the oldtimers were heavily influenced by ideological and personality clashes.¹³

Scholars have held to a dominant view of the period involving the Communist takeover and the 1948ers – arguing that this wave of emigration from Czechoslovakia to the West left their homeland in an attempt to defend postwar Czechoslovak democracy by re-establishing their anti-communist agenda in the West. Similarly, the 1948ers are predominantly viewed as heroic anti-communist fighters and defenders of the “...inherent democracy of the Czech[oslovakian] people and their institutions...”¹⁴ With a sense of alienation from the Communist regime, many 1948ers were able to continue their efforts to defend democracy against their homeland’s oppressive form of government through the creation of an “émigré subculture” which could be found in the postwar Canadian Czechoslovak community.¹⁵

In Czechoslovakia, many of the 1948ers were members of democratic political parties representing centre-left, moderate, and conservative ideologies prior to the Communist takeover. In coming to Canada, political refugees from Czechoslovakia re-established their political groups

¹³ Balawyder, “Canadian-Slavic Cultural Nationalism and the Canadian Government’s Reaction,” 202-203; Stark, interview by Jana Cipris, 28 August 1980; Gellner and Smerek, *The Czechs and Slovaks in Canada*, 109; Bosley, and CCBA, *Pamatník Kanadsko-Československé podporující jednoty, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1913-1963* [Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Canadian Czechoslovak Benevolent Association], 27.

¹⁴ Hron, “Czech Émigré Experience of Return after 1989,” 54; Bradley F. Abrams, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Nation: Czech Culture and the Rise of Communism* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 2-3.

¹⁵ Jaček Z. Adolf, “Adaptation of East European Refugees and Political Émigrés in Toronto, with Special Reference to Immigrants from Poland and Czechoslovakia” (PhD diss., York University, 1977), vi-vii.

in exile while envisioning a return to their old homeland after its successful liberation from Communism. Those who came after the February 1948 Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia, joined existing groups – including the Czechoslovak National Alliance and the Masaryk Memorial Hall – that could promote their nationalistic and democratic political ideologies while remaining patriotic to the old country. These organizations became mechanisms by which political refugees from Czechoslovakia could fight to liberate their homeland from communism. Similarly, many Czech 1948ers represented Czechs and Slovaks in Canada as their “Czechoslovak” constituents thereby fusing Czech nationalism with Czechoslovak identity against the opposition of nationalist Canadian Slovaks and the Canadian Slovak League (CSL).

The Canadian government was well aware of the ethnic and political cleavages between Czechs and Slovaks.¹⁶ Although it is questionable as to what impact political refugees had on the formulation of Canadian foreign policy, their organizations promoted democratic ideals and the maintenance of ethnic identity through cultural activities such as Czechoslovak Day or the *Sokol Slet*. Following the brutal suppression of the Hungarian Revolution by the Soviet forces in the fall of 1956, many Czech and Slovak political refugees who were proponents of a Czechoslovak identity and ideology began to turn their focus towards humanitarianism and the promotion of Canadian citizenship within the Canadian Czechoslovak community. Nationalist Slovaks represented by the CSL and a minority of conservative Czechs opposed the latter group’s agenda of representing all Czechs and Slovaks as “Czechoslovaks.”¹⁷ Moderate and conservative political refugees largely influenced the demise of the homegrown ethnic left during the Cold War period. With support from the federal government, Communist adherents and socialist

¹⁶ LAC, DCI Fonds, RG 6, accession 1986-87-319, box 87, file 9-334-1, memorandum from Jean Boucher, Director, Citizenship Branch, Department of Citizenship and Immigration to Deputy Minister, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, 23 March 1961.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

sympathizers were labelled as national security risks and agents of Moscow, and were not permitted to enter Canada.¹⁸ For the 1948ers who successfully settled in Canada, their early immigrant experience was heavily influenced by their lobbying efforts before the Canadian government which they hoped would assist in returning a parliamentary democracy to Czechoslovakia. These anti-communist political refugees refused to become victims of events in their homeland and retained their own agency by actively denouncing the Communist regime in Prague and continued to assist fellow refugees in their resettlement in Canada.¹⁹

Two decades later, a more sizeable wave of refugees left Czechoslovakia in the wake of the failed Prague Spring reforms, the Warsaw Pact invasion, and the subsequent Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. Referred to as the *vycestovali* or those who ‘travelled out,’ by the Communist Czechoslovakian press, approximately 150,000 individuals resettled in the West. Until the early 1970s, approximately 225,000 Czechoslovakians permanently resettled in the West in the months following the Soviet-led invasion.²⁰ In Canada, these same refugees came to be known in the local Czechoslovak community as the 1968ers. These newcomers to Canada largely viewed their resettlement in the West as permanent since they believed that the failed Prague Spring movement and the normalization of Czechoslovakia were also permanent. Three factors influenced Czechoslovakian immigration to the West after the Warsaw Pact invasion: dismay over the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia and the crushing of the

¹⁸ Palmer, *Ethnicity and Politics in Canada since Confederation*, 19.

¹⁹ Adolf, “Adaptation of East European Refugees and Political Émigrés in Toronto,” vii. In 1977, Jacek Z. Adolf completed his groundbreaking doctoral dissertation on the adaptation of Czechoslovakian and Polish immigrants in Toronto. Adolf’s research was based on a sample of 2,776 respondents which represented all male heads of households in Metropolitan Toronto. In his research, Adolf found that political émigrés from Eastern Europe illustrated their own pattern of adaptation as immigrants. In comparison with non-political immigrants from Eastern Europe, Adolf concluded that political émigrés maintained lower levels of economic adaptation, linguistic acculturation, social integration, while preserving higher levels of secondary social participation, and satisfaction with life in Canada. Adolf argued that the émigré strongly rejected his/her role as a “pawn of history” and continued to deny the “determinism of historical laws invoked by his former oppressors to justify his oppression.”

²⁰ Hron, “Czech Émigré Experience of Return after 1989,” 54; Spritzer, “Children of ’68.”

Prague Spring reforms; concern over the future of the country under Soviet occupation; and improvement of an individual's socioeconomic situation.²¹ Many 1968ers who were outside of their homeland prior to the invasion initially wavered on permanent immigration in the West and waited to see what would happen in Czechoslovakia before making a final decision.

In Canada, refugee advocates criticized the federal government for playing into Cold War politics as Ottawa ignored the plight of refugees from right-wing regimes and implemented a special program for Czechoslovakian refugees that permanently resettled close to 12,000 individuals.²² Scholars argued that Ottawa believed it had to intervene on humanitarian grounds after the Warsaw Pact invasion, bringing well-educated refugees to Canada who did not pose a security threat to Canadian society. Similarly, Ottawa desired not to embarrass the Soviet Union and unnecessarily heighten Cold War tensions.²³ However, Ottawa's self-interest also played a major role in the resettlement of Czechoslovakians.

Public pressure from the Canadian public, newspaper editorials, and the Canadian Czechoslovak community for a response to the Warsaw Pact invasion forced Canadian officials to act. During the special program for Czechoslovakian refugees, implemented from September 1968 to January 1969, the Canadian government sponsored chartered flights, and provided funds for immigrant expenses. Under the auspices of the Canada Manpower Training Program, newcomers were assisted in finding accommodations and employment, and received English and French language training. The Canadian special program remained one of the most generous responses to the plight of the Warsaw Pact refugees in the West. The special program for Czechoslovakian refugees admitted a large group of educated and skilled refugees to Canada.

²¹ Kusin, *From Dubček to Charter 77*, 171.

²² Troper, "Canadian Immigration Policy since 1945," 271-272.

²³ Madokoro, "Good Material," 168.

Many of the 1968ers were multilingual with some knowledge of English, French, German, or Russian. Similar to the 1948ers, the 1968 wave of refugees consisted of professionals and skilled tradesmen including academics, clergy, doctors, engineers, journalists, lawyers, scientists, students, and tradespeople. Contrary to the 1948ers, these newcomers spent approximately two decades under communism and experienced first-hand the daily effects of totalitarianism including harassment and imprisonment.²⁴

Both the 1948 and 1968 waves of Czech and Slovak immigration to Canada were directly tied to events in Eastern Europe. Many 1948ers believed that the 1968ers were more readily assisted in their initial settlement and even given an “easier path” to full integration by the federal and provincial governments, and local organizations.²⁵ Individuals who arrived in Canada due to the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February 1948 were accepted and were employed due to their acceptance of a one-year farm labour contract. Beginning with the mass influx of over 37,500 Hungarians in 1956-1957, the Canadian government was better equipped to accept and resettle close to 12,000 Czechoslovakians during the special program from September 1968 to January 1969. The 1948ers’ negative perceptions of successive waves of immigration from Czechoslovakia were inaccurate as many newcomers initially struggled to find accommodations and employment. In the immediate years after their arrival, the 1968ers were also underemployed in their respective fields, but were more readily able to attain the necessary additional certifications and training in order to qualify as professionals in their respective professions.

²⁴ Horná, “Entrance Status of Czech and Slovak Immigrant Women,” 272, 277-278. See footnote 592.

²⁵ Čermák, *It All Started with Prince Rupert*, 197; Čermák originally cites: Dita J. Zemánek, “Czeching Out and Czeching In: The Czech Immigrant Experience in Canada” (B.A. thesis, Acadia University, 2002).

During the 1970s and 1980s, a third wave of émigrés left Czechoslovakia for the West. The Communist press in Czechoslovakia referred to these individuals as having *se vypařily* or ‘self-evaporated.’ The reasons behind this wave of academics, professionals, and skilled tradesmen leaving their homeland were not directly tied to a specific event. Individuals and families fled their homeland during the period of normalization which stemmed from the failed Prague Spring reform movement.²⁶ A relatively common experience for Czechs and Slovaks who fled Czechoslovakia in the 1970s and 1980s was to acquire a travel passport from the Communist authorities in Prague and take a ‘vacation’ to Yugoslavia via Hungary. Czechoslovakians who left their homeland arrived in Yugoslavia as refugees with hopes of reaching the West. After requesting political asylum in Yugoslavia, their identification was often seized as per an agreement between Belgrade and Prague. Although many Czechoslovakians were made to wait before reaching the West, they eventually arrived in Austria where they were sent to refugee camps prior to their resettlement in Canada.

During the Cold War period, a significant portion of 1948ers and 1968ers, and those who arrived in the last two decades of the Cold War refused to join Canadian Czechoslovak community groups and organizations out of a genuine fear of reprisal at the hands of the Communist regime in Prague. Canadian Czechoslovaks were aware that Czechoslovakian diplomats and *StB* (*Státní bezpečnost* – State Security) agents conducted espionage and blackmail campaigns in an effort to pressure their compatriots to return home through ‘repatriation campaigns’ or to ‘normalize relations’ with the Communist authorities. Although only a small minority within the Canadian Czechoslovak community regularized their status as ‘illegal émigrés’ who left Czechoslovakia ‘without permission,’ a majority of individuals did

²⁶ Hron, “Czech Émigré Experience of Return after 1989,” 54.

not resolve this issue with Prague. Unlike the 1948ers, the 1968ers and the most recent wave of arrivals in Canada were more likely to be ‘apolitical’ and although they supported the 1948ers’ anti-communist agenda, most did not actively join efforts to influence political developments in Czechoslovakia or Canadian foreign policy towards their old homeland. Often, Czechoslovakian immigrants feared that by joining community groups that carried an anti-communist agenda, they would further antagonize officials back home preventing them from seeing relatives and friends again. In some instances, Czech and Slovak immigrants refused to seek out their relatives and friends because they feared for their safety in Czechoslovakia as the Communist authorities scrutinized correspondence between ‘illegal émigrés’ in the West and their contacts at home.²⁷

During four decades of the Cold War, the Communist regime promoted the myth that emigration was an act of betrayal against the state and the Czechoslovak nation. For those who fled from Communism, their fellow compatriots in Czechoslovakia often resented them for leaving their homeland due to an “...old myth which dictates that it is a sin to leave your country of birth.”²⁸ Czechoslovakians who settled in Canada during the Cold War, and later returned to their old homeland decades later, often recalled that compatriots distrusted them because of a perception fueled by émigrés themselves and the Communist regime that suggested they lived a better life in the West. Those individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice to leave their friends, families, and way of life behind did so at a high cost to their relatives and friends. Czechoslovakians who fled communism for the West were considered to be traitors and their relatives and friends were denied university studies, career advancement,

²⁷ Adolf, “Adaptation of East European Refugees and Political Émigrés in Toronto,” 205, 281.

²⁸ Procházka, “An Absurd Way of Life,” 133.

and travel abroad.²⁹ Émigrés were often individualistic and many avoided Czechoslovak organizations in Canada because they did not want to be told what to think and how to act. As a result, these same organizations found it difficult to attract Canadian Czechs and Slovaks even though many of them consistently read Canadian Czech and Slovak language newspapers and magazines for community news.³⁰

From 1946 to 1989, 26,231 persons claimed Czechoslovakia as their last permanent residence upon entering Canada. From 1946 to 1982 and 1985 to 1989, 36,196 persons claimed Czechoslovakia as their country of citizenship upon entering Canada.³¹ As a microcosm of a much larger movement of Eastern European refugees to Canada after 1945, the experiences of Czech and Slovak refugees and existing Canadian Czechoslovak institutions are an invaluable resource to the study of immigration history and ethnicity in Canada. Beyond this study, further research needs to be conducted. Additional oral histories with refugees who arrived in Canada during the three aforementioned periods of Cold War immigration would greatly supplement existing community archival records and various governmental sources. An emphasis should

²⁹ Hron, "The Czech Émigré Experience of Return after 1989," 51.

³⁰ Procházka, "An Absurd Way of Life," 133.

³¹ Canada, Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *The Canada Yearbook, 1969*, 21; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1970 Immigration Statistics*, 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1971 Immigration Statistics*, 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1972 Immigration Statistics*, 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1973 Immigration Statistics*, 5; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1974 Immigration Statistics*, 5, 19; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1975 Immigration Statistics*, 5, 22; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1976 Immigration Statistics*, 5, 145; Canada, Department of Manpower and Immigration, *1977 Immigration Statistics*, 5, 136; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1978 Immigration Statistics*, 5, 86; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1979 Immigration Statistics*, 5, 89; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1980 Immigration Statistics*, 172; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1981 Immigration Statistics*, 388; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1982 Immigration Statistics*, 552; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1983 Immigration Statistics*, 18, 62; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1984 Immigration Statistics*, 50; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1985 Immigration Statistics*, 45, 49; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1986 Immigration Statistics*, 45, 49; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1987 Immigration Statistics*, 773; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1988 Immigration Statistics*, 47, 51; Canada, Department of Employment and Immigration, *1989 Immigration Statistics*, 47, 51. Figures for the years 1983 and 1984 are not available in the Department of Employment and Immigration's annual *Immigration Statistics*.

be placed on documenting the oral histories of individuals who arrived in Canada during the 1970s and 1980s, as their immigration experience is often overshadowed by the larger movement of Displaced Persons and political refugees of the first three decades of the Cold War. The scope of espionage activities by Czechoslovakia's *StB* in Canada also requires further study since very little is known about the extent of *StB* operations, forms of espionage, and Communist infiltration in Czechoslovak organizations in Canada. An assessment of how cultural markers including holidays, food, folklore, music, and religion have influenced Czech and Slovak refugees' identity in Canada would contribute to our understanding of Czech, Slovak, and Czechoslovak identity during the Cold War. An examination of the archival records held in the Czech Republic and Slovakia with a particular emphasis on files pertaining to Canada and its Czechoslovak community would provide further insight into Communist Czechoslovakia's relationship with its compatriots in Canada.

Guiding this study was the following question: what role did the immigration of anti-communist Czechs and Slovaks play in defining Canadian Czechoslovak identity and Canadian foreign policy towards Czechoslovakia during the Cold War? This dissertation argued that the immigration of ethnic Czechs and Slovaks from Communist Czechoslovakia was directly a consequence of Cold War politics. The Communist takeover of February 1948, Warsaw Pact Invasion of 1968, and the following period of normalization observed thousands of Czechoslovakian citizens leave their homeland in search of safe haven from a totalitarian regime. In three successive waves of immigration, ethnic Czechs and Slovaks who supported a Czechoslovak identity transplanted their old world ethnic and ideological divisions to Canada. In joining existing Czechoslovak institutions such as the CNA and MH – and later renamed the CNAC and MMI – Czech and Slovak refugees interacted with older members of the community,

and the Canadian public whereby they successfully entrenched their anti-communism and democratic values into community organizations, and as a vital component of the Czechoslovak community's identity in Canada. The 1948ers, 1968ers, and those who arrived in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s rapidly influenced the sociopolitical composition of the Czechoslovak community in Canada. As members of the CNAC and MMI among other Czechoslovak organizations in Canada, Cold War refugees from Czechoslovakia brought attention to political developments in Czechoslovakia and actively attempted to shape Canadian foreign policy towards their old homeland. As a part of the federal government's Cold War agenda, Czechoslovak organizations influenced Canada's democratic culture.

Several conclusions can be drawn from this study of Czech and Slovak immigration to Canada during the Cold War. After 1945, Canada was in the midst of profound social and economic change as DPs (Displaced Persons) and political refugees were resettled in the country. Federal authorities were well aware of the need to assist European states in alleviating postwar displacement. At the same time, the Canadian government was concerned with the immigration of Eastern Europeans who it feared might hold leftist sympathies, or were members of dysfunctional and immoral family units. Across Canada, public and non-governmental officials encouraged a moral panic which heightened the Canadian public's anxiety towards the Cold War. As the political representatives of a predominantly white, Christian, and conservative society during the Cold War, these officials claimed that Eastern European newcomers from Communist states could compromise the moral and social character of Canadian society. As a result, Canadian citizens became increasingly alarmed by the potential of immoral, socially dysfunctional, sexually deviant, and politically divergent European newcomers arriving in Canada.

Canadian authorities were instrumental in the admission, settlement, and integration of Czech and Slovak refugees during the Cold War. Federal officials from the Immigration Branch, Departments of External Affairs, National Health and Welfare, and the Solicitor General – who was responsible for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) – engaged these newcomers who adhered to anti-communist and democratic values in an attempt to solicit their political support which would further legitimize their Cold War agenda of securing the state against Communist influence from abroad, and to limit the influence of interwar Czech and Slovak ‘leftists’ in Canada. Federal and provincial cabinet members and government bureaucrats promoted Canadian citizenship and democratic values when visiting, for example, Masaryk Hall’s (MH) Czechoslovak Day celebrations at Masaryktown. The interactions between Canadian officials and the Czechoslovak community through its institutions which included the Czechoslovak National Alliance (CNA) and the MH (Masaryk Hall) – both later incorporated and renamed to the Czechoslovak National Association of Canada (CNAC) and the Masaryk Memorial Institute (MMI) – helped to further legitimize the Czech and Slovak newcomers’ anti-communist agenda and increased their influence in community organizations.

Many of the Cold War newcomers from Czechoslovakia joined community organizations such as the CNAC and MMI in an effort to establish themselves as intermediaries between the Czechoslovak community they hoped to represent and mainstream Canadian society. Within the CNAC and MMI, many 1948ers later joined by the 1968ers maintained transnational identities in which they attempted to promote anti-communist and democratic values in the hopes of one day witnessing democracy return to their old homeland. In helping to minimize Communist infiltration within Canadian Czechoslovak organizations, Cold War refugees attempted to illustrate to Canadian officials that they were also loyal to their new country’s Cold

War agenda. In essence, many of the 1948ers and 1968ers joined community institutions out of self-interest in the hopes of ameliorating their socioeconomic status in Canada, promote their political views, and firmly establish themselves as members of the Czechoslovak community elite. The use of their position as Cold War refugees from Czechoslovakia and their anti-communist background ultimately bolstered many newcomers' position within the Czechoslovak community and the broader Canadian society.

The refugees who resettled in Canada after the February 1948 Communist takeover, the August 1968 Warsaw Pact Invasion, and the subsequent period of normalization did not only influence the anti-communist and democratic agenda of Canadian Czechoslovak institutions such as the CNAC and MMI, but were also shaped by the ethnic organizations they joined. Cold War refugees from Czechoslovakia who espoused a Czechoslovak identity sought assistance from community institutions in the form of accommodations, employment, financial loans, language translation, and social activities. Newcomers joined the Czechoslovak associations out of a sense of community and a common ethnocultural understanding.

At the same time, many individuals within the existing Canadian Czechoslovak community were influenced by the anti-communism of the newcomers and supported the return of democracy in Czechoslovakia. Beginning with the 1948ers, Czech and Slovak refugees who transplanted their democratic politics and anti-communism to Canada used persuasive language such as "struggle," "liberation," "movement," "combat," and "fight" to illustrate their opposition to the Soviets and the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. This use of rhetoric often exceeded reality since the newcomers had little or no real influence over developments in Czechoslovakia or Canadian foreign policy towards Czechoslovakia. However, the refugees' anti-communist rhetoric did attempt to alter Canadian perceptions of the Czechoslovak community in Canada,

their homeland in the Eastern Bloc, and aligned them with the conservative Cold War consensus advocated by public and non-governmental officials in Canada.

Over four decades of the Cold War, the publication of editorial submissions to mainstream news outlets and the ethnic press, letter-writing campaigns to federal, provincial, and municipal politicians and bureaucrats, public demonstrations before parliament, legislatures, and city halls across Canada, and protests before the Czechoslovakian and Soviet Embassies, all served to exemplify forms of self-justification on the part of many 1948ers, 1968ers, and those who arrived in Canada during the 1970s and 1980s. Within these three successive waves of immigration from Communist Czechoslovakia, Czech and Slovak refugees may have sought to dispel rumours and allegations of leftist sympathies or Communist involvement in the old homeland or in Canada. At the same, with evidence of *StB* infiltration of Czechoslovak organizations in Canada such as 55 year-old spy Rudolf Dostál's activities within the CNA's Toronto Branch in 1956, or that of Czech refugee Bořivoj Čelovský who spied on the Czechoslovak community in order to bring his mother to Canada in the 1950s, it is entirely possible that Czech and Slovak refugees attempted to shield their pasts or true allegiances from the Czechoslovak community, Canadian officials, and the broader Canadian society. Many prominent members within the Canadian Czechoslovak community may have hid their true intentions in order to craft an income from their activities opposing the Soviets and the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. In some cases, individuals that could be labelled as 'professional Czechoslovaks' may have benefitted financially and politically from their role as prominent members of an Eastern European community in Cold War Canada.

Prewar immigrants and their Canadian-born relatives opposed attempts by the 1948ers to steer their organizations towards political issues in Czechoslovakia including the liberation of

Czechoslovakia from communism, but were sympathetic to events in Czechoslovakia. The Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 illustrated to Canadian Czechoslovaks that a movement for democracy in the Eastern Bloc could be easily suppressed. As a result, oldtimers and the 1948ers increasingly turned towards promoting Canadian citizenship and preserving Czechoslovak ethnic heritage for successive generations. Their attempts were opposed by the nationalist Canadian Slovak community which advocated for a distinct Slovak ethnic identity.

A decade later, the Warsaw Pact invasion in August 1968 shocked and dismayed many individuals within the Canadian Czechoslovak community. The Soviet-led invasion offensive heightened anti-Soviet sentiment among members of the Czechoslovak community in Canada. The subsequent resettlement of close to 12,000 Czechoslovakians reinvigorated community institutions including the CNAC and MMI. The 1968ers lived through two decades of Communist rule and many of them eagerly joined the 1948ers and their agenda of returning democracy to Czechoslovakia. At the same time, the 1968ers feared for their families and in some cases sought to ‘normalize relations’ with the Prague government. Joining Canadian Czechoslovak organizations gave many postwar Czech and Slovak immigrants a sense of purpose where they could attempt to influence developments in their homeland and Canadian foreign policy towards Communist Czechoslovakia by lobbying Canadian officials. The 1948ers and 1968ers’ anti-communist identity may have also hid a strong anti-Soviet attitude as witnessed by placards and signs – expressing to the Soviets to “Go Home,” or “Soviet Murderers Get Out from Czechoslovakia,” – used during the post-invasion protests held across Canada in August 1968 and with subsequent anniversaries of the invasion.

As normalization was implemented in Czechoslovakia after the events of 1968, Czech and Slovak refugees continued to arrive in the 1970s and 1980s, and were also well-received by

Canadian authorities, government agencies, and local Czechoslovak associations. With federal, provincial, and privately administered programs for newcomers, more recent Czech and Slovak refugees were often able to find temporary accommodations, clothing, funds, and employment from mainstream Canadian organizations rather than local Czechoslovak groups. These programs helped more recent Czech and Slovak newcomers to retain a significantly high level of assimilation into Canadian society.³² Following the introduction of a Multiculturalism Policy by the Canadian government in 1971, Czechoslovak organizations successfully applied for federal funding to support their community libraries, radio and television programs, supplementary language schools, publications, conferences, and community exhibitions.

With an increase in governmental funding for refugee settlement and an increase in organizations and programs that served the needs of newcomers, many Czech and Slovak refugees turned towards public programs. As a result, newcomers were less involved in the 1948ers and 1968ers' anti-communist agenda and preferred to support the preservation of Czechoslovak heritage in Canada for successive generations. Over time, Czech and Slovak refugees began to change their perceptions of themselves and Canadian society thereby becoming Canadians themselves. Ultimately, an adherence to democratic values, promotion of Canadian citizenship, and the preservation of Czechoslovak heritage accelerated Czech and Slovak refugees' socioeconomic and political integration in Cold War Canada. In Czechoslovakia, Communist authorities were successfully thwarted from manipulating the Czechoslovak community in Canada into becoming agents for their homeland. As Cold War newcomers in Canada, Czech and Slovak refugees played an important role in raising awareness of human rights abuses, censorship, lack of socioeconomic advancement, and daily life under the

³² Jovanovic, "Czechs," 404.

totalitarian regime in their old homeland. Ultimately, Canadian Czechoslovak institutions held little influence over developments in Communist Eastern Europe or Canadian foreign policy towards the Eastern Bloc. However, through their efforts to promote democratic values in Canada and Czechoslovakia, the CNAC, MMI, and other Czechoslovak organizations in Canada, were instrumental in helping to shape a democratic Canadian society during the Cold War.

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UNPUBLISHED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

SLOVAKIA

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