

SITUATION REPORT

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1. Gustav Husak's Visit to Iraq

In response to an invitation from Iraqi President Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, Czechoslovak President Gustav Husak and his wife arrived in Baghdad on 30 May 1977 on an official visit. Husak was accompanied by CSSR Deputy Premier Josef Simon, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Bohuslav Chnoupek, and other officials. At the Iraqi President's official residence, the Palace of Baghdad, the mayor of the Iraqi capital handed the Czechoslovak President a golden key to the city as a symbol of the respect of the Iraqi revolutionary government for the Czechoslovak people. In a short speech, the mayor described the visit as a great honor for all the inhabitants of the city, and expressed his conviction that this visit would contribute to a further expansion of co-operation between the two countries. In his reply, Husak said that the two countries were connected through common aims in the struggle against imperialism, for the freedom and independence of nations, for common progress, etc. He, too, expressed the conviction that his visit would contribute toward strengthening and deepening the friendship of the two countries and nations (Radio Hvezda, 30 May 1977).

On the day the Czechoslovak president departed for this visit, the Czechoslovak press published articles dealing with the history of the relations between the two countries. Rude Pravo (30 May 1977), for example, wrote that it was the general belief of political circles and the public that the visit would substantially contribute toward a boosting and buttressing of the existing ties of friendship and all-sided co-operation which, as far as the Iraqi side is concerned, began to develop very actively after the present leadership of the state came to power in July 1968. Rude Pravo quoted from the Iraqi newspaper As-saur, which emphasized the common struggle of the people of the two countries against imperialism and colonialism.

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According to the Czechoslovak media, the press, radio, and television in Baghdad gave broad coverage to the Czechoslovak visit and stressed the common interests of the two countries in the struggle for peace and the peaceful co-existence of nations. They also pointed out that the co-operation of the two countries, along with that with other socialist states, contributes toward strengthening Iraq's position in the struggle against imperialism, Zionism, and reactionaries, and for a better future for the Iraqi people and all Arabs. An editor of the Bratislava Pravda, Julius Lorinc, sent to Iraq, further quoted the Iraqi press as drawing attention to the latest attacks against the process of détente and against the socialist states on the part of imperialistic centers which, it said, do not contribute in any way toward creating an atmosphere conducive to gradual elimination of discriminatory measures vis-à-vis the socialist and other countries (Radio Hvezda, 30 May 1977).

Husak's visit to Iraq was preceded by a week-long visit by CSSR Minister of the Interior Jaromir Obzina (21-28 March 1977) who conferred there on mutual relations and on co-operation between the Czechoslovak and Iraqi Ministries of the Interior. Obzina was returning a visit to Czechoslovakia by the Iraqi Minister of Interior in August 1976, who met not only Obzina, but also Husak on that occasion and discussed with the latter questions concerning further intensification of the mutual co-operation of the two countries "in a friendly and cordial atmosphere" (Radio Prague, 25 August 1976).

Official relations between the Czechoslovak Republic and the Kingdom of Iraq were established in 1933, but only the Czechoslovaks sent a diplomatic representative. Up to 1948, the Czechoslovak ambassador in Tehran also filled that post. During World War II, the Iraqi government did not regard the diplomatic relations as interrupted. On 14 August 1958, bilateral relations were established at ambassadorial level (Dokumentacni Prehled CTK, 4 August 1976), after the monarchy had been overthrown and a republic proclaimed in Iraq on 14 July 1958.

The CSSR's co-operation with Iraq in the economic, trade, scientific, and technological fields began to develop on the basis of a long-term trade agreement concluded on 14 December 1958, and of an accord on economic and technical co-operation of 9 March 1972. In 1958, the value of Czechoslovak exports to Iraq was a mere 13,000,000 foreign currency crowns (Mlada Fronta, 30 May 1977). The 1972 agreement served as the basis for Czechoslovakia's assistance to Iraq in working out economic and technical studies for future industrial projects in Iraq, in delivering, installing, and commissioning machinery, equipment, and industrial facilities, in the training of Iraqi specialists, and in broad co-operation in industrial and agricultural development. The Czechoslovak government has extended to Iraq a long-term credit under that agreement, amended and supplemented by a protocol signed on 18 December 1972. The protocol covers, in particular, some other deliveries, projects, and services. On the

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same day, the two countries signed a new long-term trade and payments agreement, which contains a most-favored-nation clause.

The development of trade relations between Czechoslovakia and Iraq between 1965 and 1976 is shown (in million Kcs) in the following table.

Table 1

	1965	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Czechoslovak exports	95.6	294.5	444.9	203.4	322.9	455.3	529.7	595.0
Czechoslovak imports	4.4	3.8	2.9	1.3	116.5	113.3	92.0	123.3
Turnover	100.0	298.3	447.8	204.7	439.4	568.6	621.7	718.3

Source: Czechoslovak Foreign Trade No.6/1976; Prace, 30 May 1977 (for 1976).

The principal Czechoslovak exports to Iraq include power-generating equipment, compressors, building and road-making machinery, printing machinery, tires, inner tubes, trucks, tractors, machine tools, weaving looms, knitting machines, steel tanks, lighting fixtures, pumps and pumping stations, ball bearings, TV sets, fittings, wood products, office supplies, rolled products, chemicals, tools, glass, ceramics, and costume jewelry. Czechoslovakia imports mostly fresh, dried, and processed dates and cigarettes (Czechoslovak Foreign Trade No.6/1976 -- English version).

The substantial increase in imports from Iraq, which started in 1973, is accounted for by imports of Iraqi oil to Czechoslovakia, following a three-year contract for delivery of a total of 2,200,000 tons of oil concluded at the ninth international trade fair in Baghdad in October 1972 (Dokumentacni Prehled CTK, 27 December 1972). The actual quantities supplied by Iraq in the individual years are not known, but their value, expressed in thousand Kcs, is shown below:

Table 2

Czechoslovak Imports from Iraq

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Total	1.3	152.5	113.9	92.0	123.3
of which oil	--	147.0	11.6	90.3	?
Source: <u>Zahranicni Obchod</u> Nos.10/1973, 9/1975, 9/1976.					

The data for 1973 differ in Tables 1 and No.2 (taken from different sources) regarding the amount of total imports; there also is a major discrepancy as regards total exports in 1974, which Zahranicni Obchod (No.9/1975) gives at 361,600,000 Kcs (compared to the 455,300,000 Kcs given in Czechoslovak Foreign Trade No.6/1976). Otherwise, the figures stated in the two sources tally.

Praca (30 May 1977) provides detailed information on facilities Iraq has built with Czechoslovak aid. These include a footwear factory at al Kufah, a plant for the production of pressure vessels in Baghdad, eight flour mills, six pumping stations, six water-processing plants, brickworks, a ceramics factory, and a textile mill in Mosul.

According to other sources, a refinery in Basra is one of the most important Czechoslovak deliveries. Its size and extraordinarily exacting character puts it among the biggest and most complex precision plants ever supplied in the history of Czechoslovak foreign trade. The project comprised the production and transportation of equipment and other materials from Czechoslovakia and other European and overseas countries valued at 62,000,000 dollars. The first part, with a capacity to process more than 3,000,000 tons of crude oil annually, started operating in 1964. After this satisfactory start, another contract for a second refinery unit, with an annual capacity of 3,000,000 tons valued at 24,000,000 dollars, was concluded on 25 February 1976. This time, the construction and assembly of the installation was carried out by Iraqi firms, on the basis of Czechoslovak documentation (Czechoslovak Foreign Trade, No.1/1977 -- English version, and Dokumentacni Prehled CTK, 4 August 1976).

In addition to the agreements listed above, there have been a long-term trade and payments agreement of 18 December 1973, and a protocol on the exchange of goods for 1976 of 13 January 1976. As far as the cultural sphere is concerned, there was a first agreement on cultural co-operation of 7 May 1959, and a plan for cultural co-operation for the years 1974-1976 of 12 July 1974.

Many Czechoslovak newspapers have referred with satisfaction to Iraq's foreign policy orientation, which aims at co-operation with the

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socialist countries. Satisfaction has also been expressed about the fact that the past few years have seen bilateral relations in the political field also intensify. Praca (30 May 1977) mentioned in this connection the visit of the Czechoslovak foreign minister to Iraq in 1973 and the visits of his Iraqi counterpart to Czechoslovakia in 1969, 1971, and 1973, as well as the 1974 visit of the Iraqi governmental and Ba'ath party delegation to Czechoslovakia, during whose stay a protocol on co-operation between the CPCS and the Iraqi Ba'ath party was signed (Mlada Fronta, 30 May 1977).

The Czechoslovak dailies also devoted attention to Iraq's great oil wealth, which places it among the four largest oil exporters of the Middle East. The Iraqi deposits are estimated to be 25,000 million tons. Last year, Iraq produced 113,000,000 tons of oil, which yielded the country more than 8,000 million dollars. In the past, Iraq successfully fought to gain control of this wealth, the dailies reported, a struggle that ended in 1972 with the take-over of the "infamous" Iraq Petroleum Co. (Praca, Mlada Fronta, and Zemedeľské Noviny, 30 May 1977; Rude Pravo 31 May 1977).

On 2 June 1977, Gustav Husak ended his four-day official visit to Iraq, returning with his delegation to Prague. Prior to his departure, he gave an interview to the Iraqi information media and afterward also to reporters from Czechoslovak Television. The political aspect of the visit -- emphasis on the good relations, not only at government level, but also with the Iraqi Ba'ath party -- predominated in both instances. He noted with satisfaction the position of Iraq in the anti-imperialistic front, which Czechoslovakia, with the same outlook, fully supports. Husak also mentioned the meetings engaged in by the two Czechoslovak ministers, Josef Simon and Bohumil Chnoupek. Only in the second part of the interview, as an afterthought, did he state that "some economic agreements have been concluded." The Czechoslovaks apparently wanted Iraq to increase deliveries of oil. The fact that this is an urgent problem for the Czechoslovak economy emerges from the statement that "it was decided to establish a joint committee or commission for economic and scientific-technological co-operation" for the purpose of speeding up co-operation in the economic sphere, so that representatives of the two countries could meet more frequently at ministerial level to discuss problems and, apparently, to reach concrete agreement on and finalize various projects. In the economic sphere, as Husak said, there is "a quite a long mutual prospect for co-operation."

The communiqué issued in the two capitals on 3 June 1977 was worded in similar spirit. And again, the importance of a steady strengthening and development of the ties of friendship and co-operation between the CPCS and the Socialist Party of Arab Revival (Ba'ath), "which are important factors in the development of Czechoslovak-Iraqi relations," were emphasized first. At the end of the communiqué, an invitation to Iraqi President Ahmad al-Bakr to visit Czechoslovakia, which was accepted with pleasure, is mentioned.

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2. Frantisek Tomasek Named Cardinal

After a lapse of three years, Czechoslovakia again has a cardinal. On 2 June 1977, Pope Paul announced that Msgr. Frantisek Tomasek, the Apostolic Administrator of Prague, had been made a cardinal at the May 1976 papal consistory. His appointment at that time, however, has been kept in pectore, possibly in order not to harm the Church in Czechoslovakia or the prelate himself.

Stepan Cardinal Trochta, bishop of Litomerice, Bohemia, died on 6 April 1974 and Tomasek's predecessor in Prague, Josef Cardinal Beran, died in Rome on 17 May 1969. He had lived there since early 1965, after he had been promoted to leave the country following his elevation to cardinal. His long years of imprisonment under both the Nazi and the communist regimes have made him a symbol of unflinching devotion to the Church and to the faith in adversity.

Frantisek Tomasek differs from his predecessor formally in that he is not, or not yet, a residential bishop of Prague, but only apostolic administrator of the diocese. As a personality, he is not a militant priest of the stature of the late Cardinals Beran and Mindszenty or of Cardinal Wyszynski. He appears to be doing the best possible for the faithful in a very difficult situation. Though inclined to compromise, he draws a line between conciliation and collaboration. Thus, in contrast to the majority of his bishops, he is not a member of the regime-sponsored organization of Catholic clergy Pacem in Terris. A certain lack of vigor which might be attributed to Tomasek may well be a result of his advanced age.

Frantisek Tomasek was born on 30 June 1899 in Studenka, near Novy Jicin, in Moravia. A farmer's son, he graduated from the Novy Jicin high school and subsequently studied at Olomouc University, where he received the degree of doctor of theology in 1922. In the same year he was ordained in Olomouc, where he then taught religion at the local Theological Faculty until the Czech universities were closed by the Nazis in 1939.

In 1949, Tomasek was consecrated bishop by Pope Pius XII with a seat in Olomouc and the title of bishop of Butus. That, it will be recalled, was a period of ruthless religious persecution in the country. On the night of 23-24 July 1951, Tomasek was arrested and detained in an internment camp. After his release in 1954, the regime did not allow him to take up his duties in Olomouc, but isolated him in the tiny parish of Moravska Huzova, where the future cardinal was forced to spend the next 10 years.

In 1965, after Cardinal Beran was forced to leave Czechoslovakia for the Vatican, Tomasek was appointed apostolic administrator of Prague, with the approval of Czechoslovak authorities. He went to the Vatican fairly frequently, and there had been rumors since May 1976 that he had been made cardinal in pectore. Under great stress and confronted with the regime's unyielding intransigence, Tomasek was carrying out his heavy burden of duty in the Czechoslovak capital with little publicity.

His last reported contact with the Czechoslovak authorities took place on 30 May 1977, when he was received by the federal Deputy Prime Minister Matej Lucan. On that occasion, Tomasek allegedly declared his readiness to contribute toward good relations between the Czechoslovak state and the Roman Catholic Church (Radio Prague, May 30). Actually, this meeting may well have been connected with Tomasek's impending public elevation to the status of cardinal and conceivably also with the problem of filling the vacant post of Archbishop of Prague (for the state of the Czechoslovak episcopate, see Czechoslovak Situation Report/2, Radio Free Europe Research, 19 January 1977, Item 3).

Radio Prague announced Bishop Tomasek's elevation to the rank of cardinal in a two-sentence news item at noon on June 2.

3. A Quarter of a Century of the Socialist Academy

The preparations for the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Socialist Academy, an institute of learning for the masses which is an independent member of the National Front, have commenced under the watchful eyes of the regime press. The idea to found it as a successor to the prewar organization was first presented at an April 1952 gathering of party officials, propagandists, and representatives of the communist intelligentsia, headed by the then Minister of Science and Art Zdenek Nejedly and Minister of Enlightenment and Information Vaclav Kopecky, both of whom were hard dogmatists. The academy was founded on 21 June 1952 and was then named the Czechoslovak Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge.

In its propaganda activity and political education for adults, the present academy has followed in the tradition of the prewar Socialist Academy of 1936, which was a CPCS institute of learning for the people. At that time, it was headed by Zdenek Nejedly. The purpose of the Socialist Academy was similar to that of the present institution: to try to awaken socialist awareness in the people by offering them courses of instruction. The academy was disbanded in 1939. In 1946, it was re-established and lasted as a party institution until 1952.

At the third congress of the society, it was decided to change its name to the Socialist Academy. Up to 1969, the Socialist Academy was a state-wide organization, but when the federative re-arrangement of the state took place, the Czech Socialist Academy was established in the Czech Lands, and the Slovak Socialist Academy in Slovakia, in March 1969. In 1971, its name was changed once again to the Socialist Society for Science, Culture, and Politics, in which, in the Czech Lands, the Czech Socialist Academy and the Left Front -- an organization of old veteran dogmatists headed by Professor Jaromir Lang -- were merged.

At congresses in Prague and Bratislava in May and June 1973, the proposal was submitted that the two national institutions should pursue their activities under the joint designation of the Socialist Academy of the CSSR. The setting up of a state-wide organization was

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concluded by the constituent congress of the Socialist Academy of the CSSR, held in Prague on 23 and 24 June 1973 (Documentacni Prehled CTK No. 18, 4 May 1977).

Commentaries on the 25th anniversary of the Socialist Academy primarily emphasized that this institution, through its propaganda activity and instruction in politics, had contributed to the forging of firmer links between the working intelligentsia, the working class, youth, and other working people (Tvorba No. 21, 25 May 1977). CPCS First Secretary and President of the Republic Gustav Husak also underscored the importance of the Socialist Academy in the sphere of providing political education for the working masses, when, on the occasion of the jubilee session of its CC in May, he awarded the Order of Labor to the Academy and conferred the same title upon its leading officials, Vladimir Ruml and Pavel Pasek.

From its inception, the Socialist Academy has had as its main goal the political education of adults. This goal was pursued by party propagandists giving courses on party policy, science, culture, and the arts. Given these goals, the Socialist Academy has become one of the main institutions of communist extramural education in politics. In the countryside it has been operating under the name of the People's Academy, while in the cities it has appeared mostly as the People's University.

The curriculums in the countryside differ from those in the cities. With the exception of the years 1967-1969, the emphasis was, and is again, on deepening the Marxist Weltanschauung of those taking the courses. The curriculums have always conformed to the current line of the CPCS. The directors of the Socialist Academy have, from the beginning, attributed great importance to systematic atheistic propaganda in this effort to deepen the political Weltanschauung of its students, both in the countryside and in the cities. These lectures and courses have always been based on the Soviet model. In addition to ideological courses and lectures, language courses, preparatory courses for enrollment at secondary schools, drawing, music, and social lessons are also offered. The courses on scientific communism include lecture cycles: the history of philosophy, philosophical aspects of the scientific-technological revolution, elementary questions of scientific atheism, and a cycle devoted to atheistic education. Extensive courses on political economics and on state and law are a special category. As part of the 30-year celebrations, there is now a cycle of courses on culture that includes lectures on Russian and Soviet literature, on the October Revolution, etc. Lectures on the natural and technical sciences are yet another independent branch. In the summer months, language courses are offered to young people.

At the present time, the Socialist Academy has more than 35,000 members who specialize in the social sciences. In 1976, it arranged 24 seminars for more than 3,500 lecturers and some 250,000 lectures on all aspects of Marxism-Leninism (Documentacni Prehled CTK No. 18, 4 May 1977).

The regime press highly praises projects and events organized by the Socialist Academy, but in particular emphasizes that the

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Socialist Academy has become the main center exerting new ideological influence on the working masses since the consequences of right-wing opportunism have been overcome.

The Socialist Academy is not to be confused with the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. The former is the counterpart of institutions known in the West as adult education classes. Nevertheless, because of the nature of its courses and its entire educational-societal structure, it is a propaganda organization consistently following the directives and line of the CPCS.

4. Foreign Minister Chnoupek in Greece

Two documents are the concrete results of Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Bohuslav Chnoupek's official visit to Greece from June 5 to 8. He and his Greek counterpart, Dimitrios Bitsios, signed, on June 6, an agreement on international road transport which regulates both the transfer of passengers and freight, as well as transit traffic through the territories of the contracting states. Also signed, though by lesser officials, was a protocol to the existing cultural agreement, with provisions about expanded co-operation in the spheres of education, science, the arts, the mass communication media, and sports in the years 1977-1979. In a press statement, the two ministers described the relations between Czechoslovakia and Greece as "very good." Chnoupek did not miss this opportunity to add these two documents to the Czechoslovak statistics on the "implementation of the principles of Helsinki."

The signing of these agreements was preceded by a two-hour conference between Chnoupek and Bitsios on bilateral and international issues. The ministers agreed that there were "no unsolved problems" between their respective countries, and expressed themselves in favor of expanding co-operation in all fields. According to Radio Hvezda (June 6), Bitsios was particularly interested in a "substantial increase" of trade with Czechoslovakia. There is indeed room for an increase, considering that, with an annual turnover of something over 300,000,000 Kcs, Greece figures low, in 27th or 28th place, among Czechoslovak trading partners (for statistics on trade exchange between 1948 and 1975, see Czechoslovak Situation Report/5, Radio Free Europe Research, 11 February 1976, Item 4). Czechoslovak exports consist mainly of engineering products, especially metal-working machines, textile machines, tractors, cars, rolled materials, textiles, glass, porcelain, and dairy products. In exchange, it imports from Greece agricultural and food products and semiprocessed materials for leatherware and the food industry. The value of Czechoslovak imports exceeds that of exports, and it would seem that Greece would have to increase its purchases in Czechoslovakia first, if it wants to expand mutual trade.

Although the exact agenda of the talks has not been made public, it is known that the two ministers discussed the impending Belgrade conference, which they said should not become a scene of polemics but of negotiations. Other topics may have been the problem of Cyprus, where Czechoslovakia has always supported the Greek standpoint, the

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situation in the Middle East, and Czechoslovakia's participation in a second Balkan conference. Behind Bulgaria's efforts to include Czechoslovakia and Hungary in the list of participants is a suspected Soviet scheme to broaden its influence in the Balkans and it was perhaps in this connection that Chnoupek had met with Soviet Ambassador in Prague Vladimir Matskevitch before his departure for Athens (Radio Prague, June 3).

Admittedly, the overt results of Chnoupek's visit to Greece are not spectacular. One should recall, however, that until 1975 bilateral relations between the two countries had been confined to the economic sector, with little contact in the political sphere. It was only at the July 1975 Helsinki conference that Chnoupek contacted Bitsios and invited him to visit Czechoslovakia. Bitsios's stay in Prague in February 1976 resulted in the signing of a governmental agreement on cultural co-operation. The Greek and Czechoslovak foreign ministers also agreed that bilateral co-operation should extend to other fields, and also mentioned in this context the facilitation of international road transport which, as mentioned above, has now been translated into a formal agreement. Nevertheless, as was noted by a Radio Prague commentator (June 4), there is still "vast room" for the expansion of bilateral relations between the two countries.

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