

# CZECH the NEWS

## Newsletter of the Embassy of the Czech Republic

Fall 2005

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## President Klaus Tours Northeastern US

*In Washington, the President Reaffirms US-Czech Relations*

The visit by Vaclav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic, demonstrated warmth of relations between the Czech Republic and the United States. The political highlight of the six-day, three-city official visit to the US was when the President met high officials of the US administration including: Vice President Richard Cheney and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. To both of them, Vaclav Klaus voiced the position of the Czech Republic as “firmly pro-American.”

President Klaus and Vice President Cheney spoke about the situation in the Middle East, transatlantic ties, and the current state of the Ukraine, as well as the European Union’s accession talks with Turkey.

In an interview with the Czech newspaper *Mlada Fronta Dnes*,

President Klaus described his meeting with Richard Cheney saying it was a “very friendly and personal encounter, which proved the good relations of our country with the USA and my own bond with the Vice President, whom I have known for many years.” With Secretary Rice, President Klaus discussed a wide array of foreign policy issues, focusing on US priorities such as the

spreading of democracy and support for countries in transition. Another topic of discussion was the incongruence between bilateral visa policies (the so-called “asymmetry”). The President pointed out high fees on US visas, which may cause problems, especially for students. Also in Washington, President Klaus



President Klaus met Senator Lugar while visiting Washington, DC.

met with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar (R-Indiana) and Senate Majority Leader William Frist (R-Tennessee).

President Klaus began his trip on September 19 in New York City, where he met Mayor Michael Bloomberg. While in New York, the President stopped at the Czech National Building in Manhattan to see its reconstruction progress first-hand.

*(continued on page 2)*



President Klaus gives an interview during his US tour.

## Czech Republic Provides Humanitarian Support

The Czech Republic has brought 14 tons (almost 30 thousand pounds) of materials that the US government has accepted from a humanitarian aid offer of the Czech Republic. The aid included 14 large tents, 600 camp beds, and 24 thousand blankets worth over 1 million CZK (over 40 thousand USD), bringing the total actualized assistance from the Czech Republic to almost five million CZK (200 thousand USD).

The aid transfer started with a load on a NATO Boeing 707 presented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Cyril Svoboda to the US Ambassador to Prague, William Cabaniss. The delivery was completed on

September 19, 2005, and complemented by a pumping crew of 12 experts equipped with two heavy duty Sigma pumps.

Coinciding with the arrival of the pumping crews, the municipality of Prague approved CZK 16 million (650 thousand USD) for recovery and reconstruction due to disaster-related damages of buildings and infrastructure in New Orleans. The Prague city government would like priority given to repairs of historical archives, book collections and the city’s official documents.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has agreed to work with three nongovernmental organizations on additional

Katrina recovery efforts. Announcements in regards to specific goals will be made in cooperation with the groups, which include ADRA (a humanitarian aid and relief organization), Emergency Corps - Czech Republic (Zachranný sbor Ceska republika, private enterprise) and International Committee of Czechs Living Abroad (Mezinarodni koordinacni vybor zahraničních Cechu).

The Government of the Czech Republic has allocated the amount of 25 million Czech crowns (more than 1 million dollars) to help alleviate the aftermath of hurricane Katrina in the USA.

## Message from the Ambassador

Dear readers,  
As the summer has slowly but surely ceded to the fall, my tenure as the Czech Ambassador to Washington is also coming to a closure. The state reception on the occasion of the Czechoslovak Independence Day (October 28, 1918) will be one of the last events which I will have the honor to host here in the capital city of Washington, on behalf of my homeland.

During my tenure as Ambassador, I have witnessed tremendous development in a few corners of the globe. In my own region, the Czech Republic

and other central European states have become full-fledged members of the European Union, thus finishing off their effort of more than a decade to anchor themselves firmly into the most significant political and economic union on the planet. Eastern Europe has seen the "orange revolution," generating hope for a better future for themselves and in more distant parts of the Euroasian continent as well. Meanwhile, the Middle Eastern region has gone through an extremely important period of democratization, which will hopefully

pave the way for further expansion and confirmation of democratic changes in the greater Middle East.

The fall edition of our newsletter features articles on the presidential visit of Vaclav Klaus to Washington, New York City and Boston, an overview of Czech assistance to the victims of hurricane Katrina, as well as an attractive set of other news from the US and the Czech Republic.

I wish my successor good luck in his responsible task of cultivating the already flourishing Czech-American relations



Photo courtesy of Petr Amos

and to all of you, farewell.  
Yours,

*Martin Palouš*  
Martin Palouš

## President Klaus Tours Northeastern US (continued...)

(continued from page 1)  
As a social highlight of his trip to the United States, Vaclav Klaus opened the exhibition: "Prague, The Crown of Bohemia, 1347-1437" at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, on September 20, 2005. Organized in cooperation with the Prague Castle Administration, the exhibition features more than 200 unique pieces of gothic art gathered by the Luxembourg dynasty, the era's rulers of Central Europe. Its breathtaking range contains paintings, sculptures, manu-

scripts, illumination, embroideries, goldsmiths' pieces and stained glass drawings on loan from various institutions across the Czech Republic, other European countries and the United States. For example, it includes the statues of Saints Prokopius and Sigmund that were replicated as immortal guards of Prague's Charles Bridge towers. The Metropolitan Museum will host the exquisite exhibition through January 3, 2006. Afterwards, it will travel for a three-month show at the Prague Castle,

opening February 17, 2006. As part of his tour, the President's itinerary included a discussion with Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney and lectures at two prominent American universities. At Harvard University in Cambridge, MA, the President presented a speech titled "The Czech Republic and the EU after the French and Dutch Referendums" and answered audience questions about EU history and his views about its future. The event, hosted by Harvard's Center for European

Studies and co-sponsored by Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, drew an audience that was double the size of the venue's capacity. At Brandeis University in Waltham, MA, Vaclav Klaus gave a morning lecture, participated in a student-faculty panel discussion, and answered questions. The Rosenberg Institute Distinguished Lecture that Mr. Klaus delivered was titled "Why Europe Must Reject Centralization." The President finished his day at Brandeis with a tour of the campus.

### The European Union

**Poll says Czechs mostly oppose idea of EU as a political union**

A majority of Czechs are against the EU crossing its economic role and becoming a political union, according to a poll conducted by the STEM polling agency. Four-fifths of those surveyed said that the European Union should remain an economic space and allow the free movement of goods and people. One-fifth of those surveyed said they support further integration. While the poll did not show different support by age or gender, support for EU as a political union was correlated with higher education levels of respondents.

**Czech Republic to ratify European constitution by end of 2007**

The Czech Republic should voice its position on the European constitution by 2007, according to a government decision announced by Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek. The Prime Minister said that he had accepted President Vaclav Klaus's offer to stage a political debate about the EU. While no official decision has been made whether the matter will be decided by a referendum or a parliamentary vote, Prime Minister Paroubek said that a public debate about the EU, the Schengen process, and the currency union should take place.

### Foreign Minister Svoboda: Terrorism threatens Europe

Terrorism of an unknown extent threatens the continent, said Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda at a meeting of Czech ambassadors in Prague. Minister Svoboda said that it's important for Europeans to start to realize the threat. "[Europeans] tried to convince themselves that it is a phenomenon which the United States prompted itself by its behavior in the world," dangerously diverting from the Euro-American alliance, the Minister said. He further noted that a new balance between freedom and



security will have to be found for an effective fight against terrorism. As part of Czech Republic's introduction and reinforcement of anti-terrorist measures security of foreign representations, the Prague metro, transport points and civilian airports has been strengthened.

## Svoboda Speaks at General Assembly of the UN

New York – Minister of Foreign Affairs Cyril Svoboda addressed the United Nations at the body's General Assembly on September 21, 2005. The Foreign Minister commented on the UN Summit and tackled the issues of poverty, security, reform of the United Nations, and spreading of democracy.



The Minister began his address by pointing out to continuing strife with poverty, especially in Africa, and the paradox of an increasingly globalized world with the growing divide between impoverishment and wealth. He said that "Millions of our fellow human beings in Africa and elsewhere are trapped in absolute poverty, with little or no access to education, medical and other services, deprived of dignified existence. In their neighborhoods, or in other parts of the world, fascinating technical achievements and thriving economies enable large numbers of people to enjoy an unprecedented high quality of life. Some may simply conclude that there are several distinct worlds on this planet. But while the gaps may be still widening, let us be sure that we all live in only one, increasingly interconnected world. There is no way to separate the rich and the poor or different ethnic groups. And the responsibility for our future is equally indivisible."

Cyril Svoboda also reiterated the fragility of international security: "Moreover, we are repeatedly reminded that this world is, despite all the advancements, still very fragile and vulnerable. What is the common feature of 9/11, Bali, Madrid, Beslan, Baghdad or London terrorist attacks, floods in China or in Central Europe in 2002 and again in 2005, drought in parts of Africa, the Indian Ocean tsunami or devastating hurricanes in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico? They all expose - in their own way - the vulnerability and fragility of our civilization. Developed or developing, big or small, we continue to be vulnerable to the forces of nature, as well as the forces of evil. Fortunately, the worst of situations tend to awak-

en the best in human character: after any such disaster or terrorist attack we have seen raising waves of solidarity on a global scale. We have seen renewed determination to fight evil." The Minister noted the positive momentum achieved by the body, saying that a reformed UN "can play a central role" in creating better safety by "simply fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals."

Further in his address, Minister Svoboda discussed the Summit in regards to the future of the UN, viewing the result to the reform a "challenge [that] was enormous" with "sober optimism." The Minister said,

**"While the gaps may be still widening, let us be sure that we all live in only one, increasingly interconnected world. "**

~ Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
Cyril Svoboda

"Last year, many of us spoke of reform, and reform has indeed been one of the most frequently used words since. There was much expectation in the air, much sincere effort to bring about the change, as well as many brilliant contributions to the debate: the report of the High-Level Panel, the Sachs report, the report of the UN Secretary General entitled *In Larger Freedom*. After rounds of discussions we could say we knew the diagnosis and we knew the *medicaments*. Therefore, we were hoping that the Summit would add the most needed ingredients - the political will and the means of delivery."

Minister Svoboda argued for renewed efforts to nurture and develop democracy around the globe. He stated: "At the

Summit, we reached an agreement that human rights machinery needs strengthening and redesigning. Indeed, it was probably the first time at such a major event that human rights have been placed on equal standing with issues like development or security. But many pieces of the puzzle have yet to be put in place. In shaping the future Human Rights Council, we have to make sure that the progressive features and experience of the Commission are not lost - while avoiding its weaknesses and what particularly did not work: securing cooperation from countries like Belarus, Cuba, Myanmar, Zim-babwe or others who repeatedly failed to respond adequately to human rights concerns of the international community."

Furthermore, Minister Svoboda noted the "Peacebuilding Commission," and endorsed the twin concepts of "responsibility to protect" and "human security" which bring new hope to many people facing lawlessness and oppression." However, the Minister supported implementation of findings presented in the Volcker report, saying that "[the welcomes] the emphasis the Summit has put on the UN management and its call for efficiency, effectiveness and accountability."

The Minister's speech built on a statement by UK Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jack Straw, who represented the British Presidency of the European Union, delivered on September 17, 2005. Urging immediate action in areas where consensus has been reached, Straw spoke about issues of development, peace and security, human rights, and strengthening the United Nations.

### News Brief



#### President Klaus to teach at the University of Economics

*Mlada Fronta Dnes* daily reports that President Vaclav Klaus will begin two-hour lectures every Monday in October for 30 students. Designed for students of the highest merit, the syllabus will include texts by Milton Friedman, Robert Holman, and the seminars of the Czech Centre for Economics and Politics, a civic association which Klaus founded in 1998 with the aim to promote and support the ideas of the free market and liberalism. Ending with an exam by Klaus, the course will focus on discussions about economic thinking. A 1960 alumnus, Klaus held a position of professor at the University.

#### More Czech soldiers going to Afghanistan

The Czech Army plans to send more soldiers to Afghanistan for deployment within the multinational East-North contingent in 2007-08, Defense Minister Karel Kuehnl announced. Built in Szczecin, Poland, the contingent will also include Polish and Slovak soldiers, according to the minister. Kuehnl said earlier that the number of Czechs in Afghanistan would rise next year to 80. The 50 Czech soldiers already in Afghanistan are in a team with Danes and Germans in the north of the country or serve in Kabul where they protect the airport and provide meteorological service.

## News Brief



### Paroubek promises funds to universities, wants reforms

Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek promised further money for Czech universities but also demanded reforms improving graduates' position on the labor market in address to Human Capital and Investment in Education conference held in Prague. Further in his address, Paroubek stressed lifelong education and pointed out that 20 percent of manpower was replaced in the advanced countries in the past ten years, while 80 percent of all work equipment changed at the same time. He said that continuous education will be a necessity rather than a matter of choice in the future.

### Fundraiser for New Orleans

Prague jazz musicians Ondrej Konrad and Jiri Hala raised money for the city of New Orleans at a benefit concert held September 28, 2005. Led by Konrad and Hala, two musicians with special affection for the city, the five-hour benefit concert featured a number of Czech jazz musicians. The Czech-US ensemble featured New Orleans jazz musicians Brian Seeger, Cassandra Faulconer and John Gros and Czech drummer Frantisek Hoenig. All proceeds will benefit renovations of a music school devastated by the floods.

## The Czech Republic Attracts FDI Worth One Billion Dollars in First Half of 2005

A total of 70 new foreign and domestic companies will invest one billion USD in the Czech Republic in the foreseeable future. Thanks to these investment projects, there will be almost eight thousand new jobs created in the country.

According to a new survey by Ernst & Young, the Czech Republic is the seventh most attractive country in the world for investors. The survey also shows that most investment coming to Europe is in the automotive and high-tech industries. This also corresponds to the structure of the most recent investment coming to the Czech Republic.

"About one third of investment projects already consist of investments in technology centers and business support services. The improving structure of projects is also exhibited in individual sectors. Within the automotive sector, the amount of production with high added value and complex production processes is on the rise – e.g. engine control units, air-conditioning units and other precision engineering components," noted Radomil Novak, CEO of CzechInvest.

The majority of investors, either in manufacturing or R&D, came traditionally from Germany (20 projects), followed by investors from the USA and the Czech Republic (10 projects each), while Great Britain placed third. Besides the automotive sector, which is traditionally strongest in direct investment, most projects are in electronics, engineering and chemical industries.

One of the newest projects is a new customer service center for Central and Eastern Europe, which is being built by German Lufthansa in Brno, or American Computer Associates International, which is setting up a software development centre in Prague. There are also incoming investors from Japan such as automotive bearings producer Daido, which is building in Brno, and Muramoto, supplier of components for plasma television sets, which is headed for Central Bohemia in the city Zebrek.

Throughout its existence, the national development agency CzechInvest has taken part in more than 500 investment projects worth more than 18 billion dollars. Thanks to



Prague, Czech Republic

these investments more than 100,000 direct jobs should successively be created in the Czech Republic. In manufacturing, the most is invested traditionally by companies from Germany (27%) and Japan (20%). Companies residing in the Czech Republic occupy third place with 11%. In addition to traditional sectors, e.g. automotive (45%) and electrical engineering (16%), we are seeing more and more investment in innovation and modern branches (microelectronics, precision engineering).

*Submitted by CzechInvest, Investment and Business Development Agency of the Czech Republic*



## Budgeting and Expenditures

The CR posted a **GDP growth of 5.1% in the second quarter** of 2005. Exports rose in real prices by 7.6%, compared to a drop in imports of 0.1%. The export boom, which is attributed in large part to the auto industry, is expected to continue. Prime Minister Paroubek said the 5.1% rise in GDP in the second quarter is the result of the cabinet's economic policies and shows that investment incentives and support for small and midsize enterprises are working. He said that the strategic vision of growth of 7-8% is turning out to be realistic. Member of Parliament Jan Schwippel of ODS (Civic Democrats, the largest opposition party) said that the growth is coming at the cost of higher public debt. Without the huge budget deficit, he said, the CR would be growing only half as fast. Industry Minister Milan Urban said the Czech economy is a tiger that has gotten out of its cage.

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The CR posted its **first-ever trade surplus** for the month of July. Exports exceed imports by CZK 1.2bn. Car exports from TPCA are starting to have a bigger impact.

The state budget stood at a surplus of CZK 10 billion at the end of August, which Finance Minister Sobotka said was the best August figure in 10 years. Sobotka said that the final deficit could be below CZK 50bn, compared to the plan of CZK 84bn. The state debt rose by CZK 25.4bn in the second quarter, to CZK 643.6bn, or to 22.8% of GDP. Analysts said the figure does not mean much, because it does not include the debt of public institutions. When it is included, the total public debt is 37.4% of GDP. The budget deficit for 2005 might be as much as CZK 30bn below the planned figure of CZK 84bn.

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The CR's **external debt rose by CZK 44bn** in the second quarter, to CZK 1.07 trillion, according to the CNB (Central Bank). This is 38% of GDP, the highest level since 2001. Corporate borrowing now accounts for 61% of the external debt and is on the rise.

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The cabinet **approved the 2006 state budget**. It calls for record spending of CZK 958.8 billion, a rise of 5.6% over the 2005 figure. Revenue should rise next year by 7.2%, to CZK 884.4 billion, for a deficit of CZK 74.4 billion. The spending figure was increased yet again after the coalition partners decided to waive a previously agreed-upon cap on expenditures.

## Members of Arlington Church Help Rebuild a Partner Church in Karlovy Vary

**F**ourteen members of the Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church of Arlington, Virginia, traveled to Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic, from September 23 to October 3, 2005. They helped reconstruct its sister St. Lukas Methodist Church, established in 1875 as an English-speaking institution.

Built in the Anglican style, it served its own congregation and the many tourists visiting Karlovy Vary until the Second World War. After the War, the small congregation had a difficult time maintaining the church, its beautiful rotunda and painted frescos. The church closed in 1996, when its roof was in extreme disrepair.

With the help of Mt. Olivet United Methodist, the church will serve the community again. To repair the roof and restore the historic church, the team of the two churches worked with the city of Karlovy Vary to obtain \$30,000 and raised almost \$10,000 from its congregation.

As a symbol of the suffering of both nations and individuals as well as the cooperation between nations, the American team brought a honey locust tree. American and Czech members of the two congregations together planted the tree as a decoration of the church's front

lawn. "The thorns of the tree symbolize the suffering of Jesus Christ, and also those who suffered during both World Wars and communist totalitarianism. The name and heritage [of the tree], on the other hand, symbolizes the collaboration between nations. This tree originates in North America, and its Latin name relates to the name of former Director of the Botanic Garden Berlin Johann Gottlieb Gleditsch," said Miloslav Cech, chaplain of St. Lukes.

Milton Cerny, the American-born former president of American Friends of the Czech Republic (AFoCR), added in Czech: "Our congregation has already provided \$9 000 for the

repair of the roof of St. Lukas church. We will be very happy, when the church will again shine in its original form."

When Deputy Mayor Monika Makklehova met with the volunteers and Milton Cerny, the officials assured the volunteers of the city's support in

rebuilding the church thereby enabling it to attract English-speaking tourists to the area. The Mt. Olivet group painted the temporary sanctuary of St. Lucas and the 200-yard fence surrounding the church. In the evenings, the Americans taught English to a group of about 30 residents of Karlovy Vary. They



Milton Cerny assists in rebuilding the church in Karlovy Vary.



Photo courtesy of Milton Cerny

They came to help...to restore the Church of St. Lukas at Zamecky vrch, the only building of the new gothic era in Karlovy Vary. The Church received help from the Americans of its partnering Methodist Church in Arlington, VA. The American team painted the fence around the building. They also helped mount a large metal cross onto the roof, which is in serious disrepair and, therefore, closed to the public. Two years ago, the cross collapsed through the roof and had to be completely reconstructed.

also discussed the United States and the group's volunteerism with local high school students. The Americans found their experience with the Czech people in Karlovy Vary bonding. Of the 14 volunteers, only Mr. Cerny has Czech roots. The others had a love for and interest in the Czech Republic. Milton Cerny encourages other Czechs to support this project, to which the American Friends of the Czech Republic contributed one thousand dollars.

## Czechoslovak Christmas Bazaar

**F**or over a quarter century, the Czechoslovak Christmas Bazaar has been held in the metropolitan area. Sponsored by the Washington, DC chapter of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU), It has become a yearly tradition, eagerly awaited by the public and local Czech and Slovak communities.

There are many booths selling authentic ceramics, glass, embroideries, prints, handicrafts, collectibles, Czech books, and above all the famous delicious Czechoslovak Christmas

cookies and Christmas bread (vanocky). The baked goods are always sold within an hour. There is always a hot lunch serving typical dishes such as pork roast, cabbage and dumplings (vepro, knedlo, zelo), and the famous Prague sausages.

The bazaar will be held at the River Road Unitarian Church, 6301 River Road, Bethesda, MD on Saturday, November 12, 2005 from 12 to 4 pm. For more information call (703) 281-2570.

## News Brief

### Vondra named a candidate for international envoy to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ministry of Foreign Affairs has nominated diplomat Alexandr Vondra for the post of International High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. "Vondra is an experienced diplomat with good contacts in the security area and in the area of trans-Atlantic relations," according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Vondra served as Czech Ambassador to the United States (1997-2001), the Commissioner for NATO's Prague Summit (2001-2002), and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (1993-1997, 2002-2003). Prior to 1993, Vondra advised former president Vaclav Havel on international affairs. Vondra is currently the president of the Czech Euro-Atlantic Council.

### Contractor selected for new Radio Free Europe base

Orco Property Group will build new headquarters for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) in Prague. In a process taking up to two-and-a-half years, RFE/RL will leave its current offices at the former Parliament building near Prague's Wenceslas Square for the new location, which is contracted with a 15-year lease and an extension option every ten years. The radio station seeks to move by the end of 2007, when its lease at the former Parliament building expires.



Photo courtesy of the Czech Tourist Authority

A beautifully decorated Christmas tree stands in the Old Town Square in Prague, Czech Republic.

## Business Buzz

President Satoshi Takae of **Toyota-Peugeot-Citroen Automobile (TPCA) of Kolin** said the carmaker **plans to produce 100,000 vehicles this year**. This is 50,000 fewer than had been expected. Instead of contributing an expected CZK 20-30bn to Czech exports, its contribution will be closer to CZK 13bn. Takae said that production is restricted by the capacity of suppliers. He also said higher fuel prices could help sales of TPCA's small cars. He criticized the state and Kolin for not meeting their promises in terms of worker housing.

Prime Minister Paroubek announced after meeting with Czech National Bank Gov. Zdenek Tuma and Finance Minister Bohuslav Sobotka that he will support **adoption of the euro in 2010**. So far, the CR has given dual dates of 2009 or 2010. The final decision on when to adopt the common currency will be left to the next government. Paroubek said he did not want to tie the next cabinet's hands. Analysts welcomed the decision, because the target date is now clear. However, some investors could see the delay as a bad signal. As it now stands, the 2010 date would make the CR one of the last new EU members to adopt the euro. Petr Zahradník of Ceska sporitelna said that investors will be drawn more to those countries that adopt the euro, because it will act as an investment incentive.

## Alexej Borkovec turns 80

**S**asa Borkovec was born in Prague on October 17, 1925. After the Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia and receiving his degree (Ing) in Chemical Engineering from Czech Technical University, he escaped to Germany where he worked for the International Refugee Organization until he emigrated to Bolivia in 1951. In 1952, he came with his wife Vera to the USA, received his M.S. and Ph.D. (1955) from Virginia Technical University, worked for Dow Chemical Company in Texas, then taught 3 years at Virginia Tech and at Hollins College. In 1961, he joined the U.S. Department of Agriculture where he worked for 30 years as a Research Scientist and Director of the Insect Reproduction Laboratory, which he founded.

He has been a member of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences since its



Photo courtesy of Mr. Annual

inception. He was elected SVU Vice President in 1976, and served as President of SVU Washington many times: in 1967-68 when he hosted Vaclav Havel, then a dissident playwright. Since the "Velvet Revolution" the Washington chapter has focused largely on cooperation with the Czech Embassy and giving assistance to the homeland when needed. An example of the first was the chapter's fundraiser to provide the Embassy with a Petrof concert piano; examples of the second are the chapter's

collection of money for flood relief in the Czech Republic in 1997 (Moravia and Eastern Bohemia) and in 2002 collecting money for the flood-damaged Prague's National Theatre (Narodni divadlo).

Sasa Borkovec continues working for the SVU as well as for his life-time hobby of collecting, growing, lecturing and writing about alpine flowers.

We certainly wish Mr. Borkovec all the best. May he be blessed with continued good health.



### Support Cultural Programs at the Czech Embassy

**BENEFIT:**  
**December 15, 7:30 pm**

To highlight the end of the cultural season, the Embassy presents its annual Dinner with Arts and Absinth Benefit featuring dancer Veronika Svabova. Taste absinth, Czech beer, a selection of delicious Czech food and desserts as well as watch a terrific performance.

Svabova will be performing dance solos incorporating sound, light and music to create a lively and changeable environment. She is not only a phenomenal dancer but also a talented actress.

## Czech American Calendar of Events

**W**e thank all of you who have actively responded to the current initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Department for Cultural Relations and Czechs Living Abroad) and the Editors Board of the *Ceske Listy* newsletter by providing information regarding your events. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

The *Ceske Listy* newsletter began publishing this calendar-of-events series a few months ago and – due to a favorable general response to this initiative – the editors would be happy to continue this activity and include the relevant updates in each individual issue of the newsletter. For this, they need your help. Please provide them with the following information: date, place and title of the event, its brief characteristics, and contacts to organizers.

The lists of events planned for the coming months, including those projected for the summer of 2006, are highly welcome as soon as possible, with all further notices preferably

placed at least six months in advance so that they could be included in the individual issues of the *Ceske Listy* newsletter.

The information should be sent to the following addresses: [vladimir\\_chaloupka@mzv.cz](mailto:vladimir_chaloupka@mzv.cz), [recinsky@chello.cz](mailto:recinsky@chello.cz) (In the subject line, please write *Ceske Listy* Calendar Series).

As you probably know, the Czech Embassy website ([www.mzv.cz/washington](http://www.mzv.cz/washington)) also lists events organized by Czech-American communities all over the US. If you could kindly "cc" us when sending the messages to Prague, we would really appreciate it.

Please use both of these contacts:  
[cul\\_washington@embassy.mzv.cz](mailto:cul_washington@embassy.mzv.cz)  
[czech\\_events@yahoo.com](mailto:czech_events@yahoo.com)

Thank you for your assistance with this project which should help those interested in Czech foreign activities to monitor the events, participate in them and spread the news all around the world.

## New Book about Czechoslovak Refugees

*Ceskoslovensti uprchlici ve studene valce*  
*Dejiny American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees* by  
*Vojtech Jerabek, Stilus, Brno 2005, hardcover, 296 pages*



In 1948, after the communist coup d'état, approximately 25,000 people fled Czechoslovakia. Most of them took shelter in refugee camps in Germany and Austria. Hunger, cold, and desperation were the reality in these camps because Czecho-slovak emigres were not classified as political refugees by the United Nations.

A new wave of escapees after the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 was more intense than in 1948. The Czechoslovak communist regime forced approximately 180,000 - 600,000 people into exile from 1948 to 1989. Their story has not been told until now.

The author of this book Vojtech Jerabek is one of the few remaining witnesses of the birth of the „American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees“ (AFCR) which was founded by Czechoslovak ambassador to the

United Nations Dr. Jan Papanek in 1948. The AFCR united international efforts to help Czechoslovaks and also served refugees throughout Western Europe and around the world.

The AFCR campaign helped 140,000 refugees of all nationalities, mostly to Czechoslovaks, to find a new home in the West during the Cold War, making it the most effective program organized solely by Czechoslovaks in exile. The American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees was strongly supported by Czech and Slovak countrymen and Americans including Eleanor Roosevelt, James Shotwell, Andrew Valuchek and many distinguished intellectuals and public officials.

Vojtech Jerabek worked from 1950 to 1990 for the American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees, Inc. (AFCR) in its New York head-

quarters on 1776 Broadway. He describes the refugee question from its beginning after WWII here to the 1990s. He dedicated almost all his life to helping other refugees. Former lieutenant colonel of the Czechoslovak army intelligence Vojtech Jerabek, who escaped from his beloved fatherland in 1948, describes the life of refugees and US policy of their reception in his admirable 88 years.

The book was published under the auspices of the Czech branch of Amnesty International as a part of the edition of the Institute for Contemporary History in Prague, directed by Jiri Pernes. It is written in Czech with English summary and approximately 100 original historical documents.

The book can be ordered at [www.stiluspress.com](http://www.stiluspress.com) (Contact: [pisatko@centrum.cz](mailto:pisatko@centrum.cz)).

## Jiri Parma passes away at 82

Jiri Parma died September 12, 2005, at the age of 82 in Bedford, PA. He was born in Cesky Tesin December 6, 1922.

During his long and prolific lifetime, Jiri Parma provided dutiful service to the Czech people both in the United States and Europe. He fought both against the Nazis during the Second World War and against the progress of communism after the war, leaving Europe only after the well-being of his family was directly threatened.

Mr. Parma gave back to the United States by working for the American military and rising to the position of Washington Navy Yard's Director of Finance in 1992. For his contribution to the end of the Cold War, the Department of Defense awarded Parma with the Commander's



Medal in June 2005. At the ceremony, a representative from the Pentagon said that Jiri Parma “performed his duties no less than perfect.”

Jiri was a man of sports as well. Almost three decades ago, he started a ski race called “Baca Cup.” This event, organized near Parma's cottage at Blue Knob, PA, is open to Czechs, Slovaks, Americans and whoever else may be interested in

participating. Baca Cup soon gained fame outside of Bedford, PA, where Jiri Parma and his wife Ute retired after having lived in Washington, DC. Over the years, many Czechs in the Washington, DC area gained a good friend in Jiri, who enjoyed hosting visits at their mountain home in Pennsylvania and became acquainted with quite a few members of the Embassy in Washington, DC, as well. Jiri will always be remembered as a patriot, a sincere person and always a good-natured man.

Jiri Parma leaves behind his wife Ute Parma, who is of German origin, and their two daughters, Susanne Parma and Dasha Fletcher, brother Vladimir Parma, sister Ludmila Dobes and five grandchildren.

## Czech Embassy Events

### reading

Iva Pekarkova  
November 3, 7:00 pm  
Admission: free

### film screening

*My Sweet Little Village*  
(*Vesnicko ma strediskova*)  
November 9, 7:00pm  
Admission: free

### concert

Malostansky Choir  
November 17, 7:30 pm  
Admission: \$10

### film screening

*A Night at the  
Karlstejn Castle*  
(*Noc na Karlstejne*)  
November 30, 7:00 pm  
Admission: free

### opera

An Evening of Czech  
Opera with Dagmar White  
December 1, 7:30 pm  
Admission: \$15

### svaty mikulas & concert

St. Nicholas Party / Czech  
and Slovak Heritage Choir  
December 4, 4:00 pm  
Admission: free

### exhibition opening

Blanka Sperkova  
December 8, 7:00 pm  
Admission: free

### benefit

Dinner with Arts &  
Absinth with dancer  
Veronika Svabova  
December 15, 7:30 pm  
Admission: \$40

### film screening

*The Prince and the  
Evening Star*  
(*Princ a Vecernice*)  
December 21, 7:00 pm  
Admission: free



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Czech Airlines and the  
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## New Book: Czechs and Slovaks in America

By Miloslav Rechcigl, Jr.  
Boulder, CO: East European  
Monographs, 2005. 317 p.  
Distributed by Columbia  
University Press

On the occasion of his 75th birthday, the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU) has just published a volume of selected writings of Miloslav Rechcigl, Jr., who is the Society's current President. It comprises general surveys, essays, reflections and personal insights of the author relating to the history and the contributions of Czech and Slovak immigrants in America and their descendants.

The material covered is based on Rechcigl's extensive research, which he began soon after his arrival in the US in 1950. It encompasses a wealth of information about the Czech and Slovak immigrants in

America, from the time of the first known Bohemian who put his foot on American soil toward the end of 16th century, some thirty-five years before the arrival of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, MA in 1620, to date.

Dr. Rechcigl has always been very intrigued by the life and accomplishments of Augustine Herman, the first historically known Bohemian to permanently settle in America - the eminent Maryland and Virginia pioneer map maker, the Bohemian Jesuit missionary work in Latin America in the late 17th century, the Moravian Brethren's Diaspora and their cultural contributions to America, and the immigration and achievements of the Jewish pioneer settlers from the territory of the former Czechoslovakia, which is reflected in the monograph. Covered are also numerous contributions of Czechs and Slovaks to the

growth and development of the United States.

Apart from American ethnic history, Rechcigl has become an authority on Czech American bibliography and genealogy which is the reason why the editors have also included his writings in this area. It complements the rest of the material remarkably well and enriches its contents and the utility of the volume as a documentary reference. The writings are based on the heretofore unpublished author's manuscripts, as well as on his selected periodical articles and book chapters that have been, for the most part, brought up to date. The volume is supplemented with Rechcigl's biographical sketch and his fascinating and provocative self-assessment "What makes him tick" from his yet unpublished Memoirs, and the listing of his writings relating to the subject of this

monograph, as well as articles about him.

The monograph is a tribute to Mila Rechcigl for all his work of almost fifty years which he has devoted to building SVU, an international society aimed at the advancement of the Czech and Slovak studies worldwide and the fostering of intellectual collaboration with the Czech and Slovak Republics, which extends to almost fifty years of his professional life and to his extraordinary scholarship relating to the history and contributions of Czechs and Slovaks abroad. We highly recommend this timely and unique publication to anyone who is interested in the history and contributions of Czech and Slovak immigrants in America. The book is an important source of information much of which has not been generally known.

~Contributed by SVU

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