

HISTORY OF CENTRAL EUROPE

End of Democracy

CZECHOSLOVAKIA AFTER WW II

- ◉ Foreign policy - E. Beneš and others - advocated an alliance with the West and the East (continue of policy - exile) but they knew - USSR will be the main power factor in CE
- ◉ E. Beneš and J. Masaryk - Czechoslovakia - bridge between East and West - they didn't expect so fast division of the world and such development of USSR - consolidation of the Stalinist dictatorship and imperial policy
- ◉ CSR - not only communist party, democratic parties following Western concept of democracy but they couldn't rely on effective alliances with the West - dependence on the USSR
- ◉ J. Masaryk: „... I flew to Moscow as the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs and return as Stalin's henchman...“

POSTWAR POLITICAL ORDER

- ◉ government at the local level = National Committee
- ◉ National Front of Czechs and Slovaks - Association of parties had representation in exile and to participate in the liberation
- ◉ Majority of approved parties - socialism
- ◉ New political order rely on Kosice government program - foundation of the People's Democratic regime
- ◉ differed from parliamentary democracy - guaranteed the Constitution of 1920
- ◉ non-communist parties didn't want to admit - KGP - a lot of changes to parliamentary democracy

KGP

- Czech and Slovak National Interests - Munich
atonement, war damage and suffering
- Social and socializations steps - nationalization and land reform
- CSR: two equal nations
- punishment of war criminals, collaborators and betrayers
- Czechoslovak citizenship lost: Germans and Hungarians, who ran afoul of the Republic
- X citizenship was given to those who actively fought against fascism
- property transferred under national administration and then was confiscated and nationalized

KGP

- ◉ advantage of the Communist Party in government
- ◉ legislative power in the hands of the **President** – decrees had to be signed by government and it was agreed once The National Assembly is established - decrees must be retrospectively approved, 89

NATIONALIZATION AND LAND REFORMS

- ⦿ Banks, insurance companies, key industries and mines and industries with more than 500
- ⦿ Planned economy
- ⦿ Private sector and craft small
- ⦿ Land reform (decree June 1945) - land of Germans or of collaborator - landless, peasant - in the borderlands

BENEŠ 'S DECREES

○ 89

○ concerned: constitutional government, restoring the national economy and public finances, the establishment of new universities, **nationalization and the expulsion of German and Hungarian**

minorities - there is not any decree ordering the expulsion - expulsion accordingly article XII of Potsdam Conference and decision of Allied Control Council, **decrees concerning citizenship and property**

○ prosecution of crimes committed during the

war - People's Court and the national courts in Praha and Bratislava

PROBLEMS OF POST WAR ECONOMY

- ration supply not only food but also textile for tailors
- Lack of food
- 1947 - disastrous drought - threat of food crisis
- Prerequisite for economic recovery
 - Monetary reform
 - Payroll reform
 - child benefit
 - Xmas benefits
 - extension of paid leave
- Volume of industry $\frac{1}{2}$ compare to before WWII
- URNA - food, clothes, help to industries, drugs,...

EXPULSION OF THE GERMAN POPULATION

- May 1945 - wild expulsion (15,000 - 30, 000)!!
 - displacement and expulsion of German populations, Saxon, Austria - 660, 000



WILD EXPLUSION

- ◉ Againsts human right
- ◉ not concern only the notables of the Nazi regime in Sudeten County or in the Protectorate - in general related to all Germans
- ◉ Main actions: adventurers, looters and thugs who wanted to enrich and to vent anger - masive violence

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6IFfQdM7EI&feature=related>

POTSDAM CONFERENCE AND EXPULSION

- ◉ August 1945 - transfer of German population from Czechoslovakia and Poland, expulsion of Hungarian population was not agreed
- ◉ Related President's Decrees - revoke citizenship, National Administration of firms, confiscation of land
- ◉ immovable property, valuables
- ◉ Personal luggage 30 - 50 kilos
- ◉ Organized transfer - 1946 - Allied Control council. 2, 256,000
- ◉ 1947 - 48 - Additional transfer - family reunification - 80, 000

HUNGARIAN QUESTION

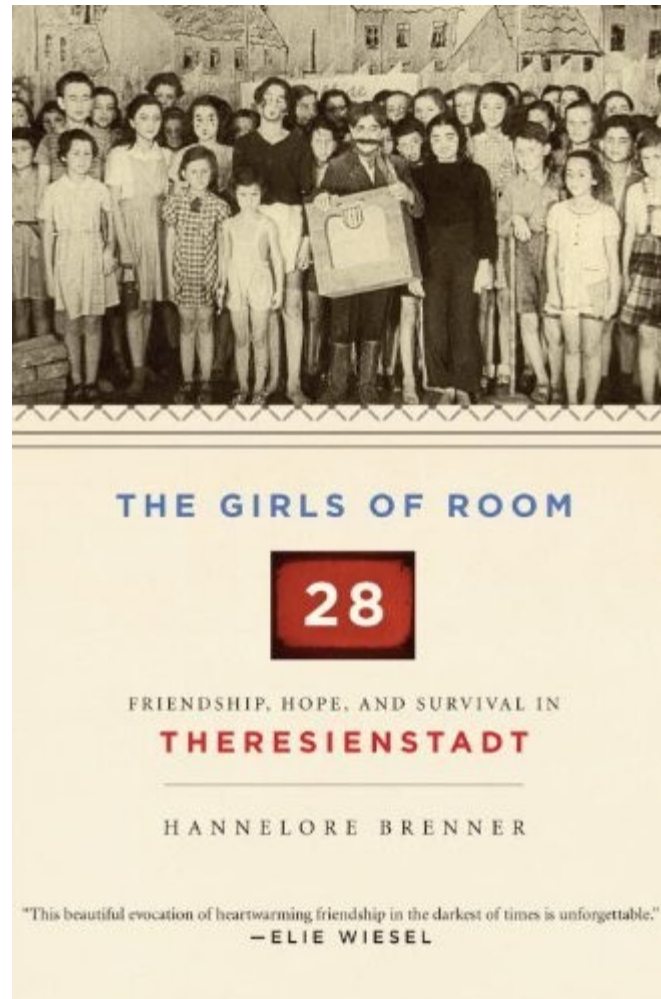
- ◉ In Slovakia 600, 000 Hungarians
- ◉ West powers did not agree with the transfer but 1946 - Czechoslovakian - Hungarian Agreement on exchange of populations
(only 73,000 to Slovakia and quite a lot of Romas)
- ◉ Population exchange didn't work out - reslovakization and transfer to border area

JEWISH POPULATION

- ◉ **1939 - 118, 310 x 1945 14, 045!!!!!!!!!!!!**
- ◉ Open asylum policy, pro - Jewish state policy
- ◉ Anna Hanusová - Flachová



- ◎ BRENNER, H.: *The Girls of Room 28: Friendship, Hope, and Survival in Theresienstadt*. New York 2009.



JEWISH POPULATION

- ◉ CSR - trying to solve transfer of Eastern Jews (Poland) and strong support for the establishment of an independent state in Palestine
- ◉ UN - CSR supported establishment of Israel and provided military aid
- ◉ Integration of jewish population to czechoslovak society - difficult - as many of Jews - german nationality
- ◉ Antisemitism
- ◉ return of property to persons of Jewish origin

JEWISH POPULATION

- ◉ disappointment, Israel, injustice, coup d`Etat 1948
- ◉ Since 1947 - departure of Jews from CSR
- ◉ After April 1949 only 500 Jews in CSR

ROMA POPULATION

- 1/4 of Romas victims from Czech lands
- controlled assimilation

READINGS

- ◉ Feis, H.: *Between War and Peace: The Potsdam Conference*. Greenwood Publishing Group, 1983.
- ◉ Roberts, G.: *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939-1953*. Yale University Press, 2006.
- ◉ Kaplan, K.: *The Short March: The Communist Takeover in Czechoslovakia, 1945-1948*. C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 1987.
- ◉ Zeman, Z.: *The Life of Edvard Beneš, 1884-1948: Czechoslovakia in Peace and War*. Clarendon Press, 1997.

THE DEFEAT OF DEMOCRACY

- 1946 - last democratic election - Constituent National Assembly
- Only parties united in National front
- restoration of the structure of state power, the formation of CNA, which should prepare a new constitution
- Parties: Communists (1,000,000) - chairman K. Gottwald
 - National Socialists (520, 000) - P. Zenkl, middle class, continuity - T.G. Masaryk and E. Beneš
 - The People's Party - J. Šrámek
 - Social Democrats - Z. Fierlinger
 - Democratic Party - J. Letrich - Slovakia,...

ELECTION 1946

- Czech lands:

- Communists - 40%

X

- Slovakia:

- Democratic Party - 62% x Communists - 30%



GROWING POWER OF LEFT

- ◉ Negotiations on forming a government - a lot of disputes led by National Socialists (wanted democracy)
- ◉ Communist - Ministry of Interior Aff.; Ministr of Foreign Aff. J. Masaryk; Ministr of national Security L. Svoboda; deputy of Prime Minister P. Zenkl
- ◉ Main goal: 2 two-year economic plan and the new constitution
- ◉ Growing political tention - non cummunist parties profiling as an anti-communist
- ◉ 1947 - drought
- ◉ Ration supply
- ◉ Reduction of the supplying - growing black market
- ◉ Slovakia - real poverty
- ◉ Soviet Union help - 600,000 tons of grain x propaganda - Soviets saved Czechoslovakia again...




2

Naše talíře budou v bezpečí, až vyhubíme poslední mandelinku. A svět, ten si oddychne, až budou také zneškodněni poslední nepřátelé míru

SEKORA, ONDŘEJ:
1950.

potato beetle

COMMUNISTS

- ◉ propaganda and publicity campaigns, mass protests, staged affair and assassination attempts, some of the policy component - provocation and espionage + close ties to the Soviet Union  effort to influence opinion about situation in CSR
- ◉ convergence process of democratic forces began late - lack of unifying personality



MILLIONAIRE DOSE

- ◉ Communists - mass POPULARITY
- ◉ Extra income for the state budget
- ◉ 6,000,000,000 Czechoslovak crown (76 304 993 000 Kčs), CP - big success



BEFORE FEBRUARY 1948

- Non communist opposition hope - new elections planned for spring 1948
- Main aim - preservation of democratic principles
- 1947/1948 - dispute about anything in National Front, in government, national committee,....2 blocs
- 19th February 1948 - Valerian Zorin Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of USSSR - arrived to Praha. He Prompted K. Gottwald, if need, asked for Soviet military aid (soviet army was ready - slovak/hungarian borders)
- K. Gottwald refused direct military intervention

COUP D'ETAT 1948

- specific suggestions to the government crisis
 - Corps of state security
- Non communists criticized the investigation procedure in some political affaires - protesting at government meeting, but no reaction from min. of Interior - these ministers refused to participate next gm
- 20th February 1948 12 ministers (3 non communistic government parties) resigned
- They hoped that: President will not accept their resignation. They expected new election of resignation of CP
- They wanted to resolve the government crisis Parliamentary ways x CP started counterattack

COUP D`ETAT 1948

- CP - 21st February organized manifestation - Old Town Square, Praha
- pressure on President
- Only 2 actions supporting democracy - university Students in Praha - marches and support to President
- President E. Beneš accepted demission of 12 ministers, affraid of civil war, military intervantion from USSR and neverending pressure of CP

25TH FEBRUARY 1948

- President Edvard Beneš accepted demission of the ministers and the new government was accepted (Gottwald's proposal), majority Communists = mission completed
- Action Committee
- June 1948 merging: Communists and SD
- May 9th new constitution , E. Beneš refused to sign
- End of May - parliamentary election - manipulated
- E. Beneš resigned and died
- New President Klement Gottwald, prime minister Antonin Zápotocký
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNFMmgE8etY>