

OXFORD

INFORMERS UP CLOSE

STORIES
FROM
COMMUNIST
PRAGUE

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ONLINE APPENDIX

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ABBREVIATIONS

BRD	The Federal Republic of Germany, ‘West Germany’ (<i>Bundesrepublik Deutschland</i>)
ČEDOK	The Czechoslovak Travel and Transport Agency (<i>Československá Cestovní a Dopravní Kancelář</i>)
ČSM	The Communist Party Youth Union (<i>Československý Svaz Mládeže</i>)
ČSOK	The Czechoslovak Chamber of Commerce (<i>Československá obchodní komora</i>)
ČSSR	The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (<i>Československá socialistická republika</i>)
DDR	The German Democratic Republic, ‘East Germany’ (<i>Deutsche Demokratische Republik</i>)
DM	The German Mark (currency) (<i>Deutsche Mark</i>)
Kčs	The Czechoslovak Crown (currency) (<i>československá koruna</i>)
KSČ	The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (<i>Komunistická strana Československa</i>)
ROH	Revolutionary Labour Movement (<i>Revoluční odborové hnutí</i>),
StB	The State Security Police (<i>Státní bezpečnost</i>)
TNP	The forced labour camps (<i>tábory nucené práce</i>)
USSR	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VB	The Public Security (i.e. ordinary police) (<i>Veřejná bezpečnost</i>)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Agency work	Recruitment and management of StB informers
Charter 77	Civic dissident initiative named after a document (The Charter 77) published in January 1977, which critiqued the government for failing to implement some of its international human rights obligations.
Cadre screening	Official screening for employment and study purposes whereby Czechoslovak citizens were assessed for their social fitness based on their family background, political views, and public (and private) conduct and statements.
Conspirational apartment	Private residences or other premises which their owners or users provided to the StB for their meetings between officers and informers.
De-conspiration	A StB informer exposing the contact with the StB (and hence their informer status) to somebody else
Former people	Individuals or groups of individuals considered ‘enemy elements’ according to Secret Order of the Minister of Interior no. 1 of 3 January 1959. The StB compiled lists of the former people. Many were landowners, <i>petit bourgeois</i> , proprietors of small businesses, or <i>kulaks</i> .
Ideological diversion	Attempted undermining and distraction of the population through the use of anti-Communist ideas. According to the StB, such diversion was frequently attempted by foreigners from the capitalist West.
Informer	The term we use to refer to all categories of StB secret collaborators, including agents, informers (as one of the sub-categories used by the StB until 1972), residents, owners of conspirational flats, confidants, and candidates for secret collaboration). The typology of informers and its development in StB internal guidelines is discussed in Chapter 2 section III(b).
Junák	The Czechoslovak Scouts organization, which was in 1948 disbanded by the Communists. Some of its members were persecuted by the regime.

Kulak	Wealthy peasant or farmer who employed labor or possessed real estate and machinery.
Normalization	A relatively stagnant period of Communist rule in Czechoslovakia in the 1970's and 1980's.
Parasitism	A criminal offence stipulated in the 1956 amendment of the 1950 Czechoslovak Criminal Code. This offense, which endured on the books throughout the rest of the Communist era, in essence established a duty to work and was deployed to prosecute individuals who did not have a 'proper' job, such as those who did business without required permits, prostitutes or gamblers.
Person of interest	Individuals on the StB's radar screen either because the StB suspected them to be potentially hostile towards the regime or because the StB picked them for secret collaboration.
Prague Spring	A period of political liberalization amid Czechoslovak Communist governance in 1968 which was quashed by invasion from the Warsaw Pact armies on 21 August 1968
Reactionist elements	Individuals who (in reality or purportedly) failed to identify with the Communist regime
Realization	Implementation or termination of an operation by the StB. Can also refer to a realization of a person, meaning for instance their interrogation, prosecution, or arrest. Persons who StB informers had informed upon were at times 'realized'.
Samizdat	A form of dissident activity in which individuals reproduced censored and underground publications, often by hand or mimeograph, and passed the documents from reader to reader.
Stalinism	A harsh period of the Czechoslovak Communist regime between 1948-1956.
Velvet Revolution	A relatively non-violent transition of power and overthrow of the Communists in Czechoslovakia by mass protest in November 1989

INFORMER FILE-STORIES

BOHUMIL¹



Bohumil² was born in 1921 in Germany to Czech parents of a workers' origin. After the Nazis seized power, the family repatriated to Czechoslovakia, where Bohumil's father worked as a bookbinder, and his mother tended to the household.³ They had six children.⁴

¹ Position: Agent

File No.: TS-755716 MV

Registration No.: 3442

File created: 1965; File archived: 1985

Page count: 796 pages

A proposal to recruit Bohumil was made on September 23, 1965. He pledged his collaboration on February 16, 1966, and in 1985, his collaboration ended. Bohumil's file was subject to a total of four transfers across different divisions and supervisors within the StB; these transfers occurred in 1968, 1970, 1972, and 1975. Many documents in his file are noted as having been destroyed, and the only handwritten reports therein are related to when he visited his son who had emigrated to Switzerland in 1976.

² Bohumil can be translated as "God lover."

³ Other reports in Bohumil's file indicate that he was born in Austria, and that his father worked in a textile factory. We chose to label Germany as his birthplace because that is where his birth town (specified in the file consistently) is located. While these details are not particularly consequential, they indicate a broader methodological question we have grappled with regarding using secret police archives as sources. The Reports in the files are written by different people – these files are oftentimes left open for decades – and whenever someone makes such a "mistake," it is replicated by virtue of the repetitive recycling of large portions of the files. There is a substantial amount of Czech commentary written on the accuracy of StB files, but again, this discussion is politized and polarized: some say they are utterly unreliable; others disagree.

⁴ One of Bohumil's brothers was sentenced to 19 years' detention for political offences. He was imprisoned in Valdice, one of the highest security prisons in Czechoslovakia, but was conditionally released after serving only a five-year term. According to a report in his file, Bohumil barely interacted with his brother because "his brother

After Bohumil finished *gymnasium*,⁵ he pursued the study of theology. In the 1940s, he spent two years as an exchange student in Bern, Switzerland, and although he had the opportunity to remain in Switzerland, he returned to Czechoslovakia to become a pastor in the Unity of the Czech Brethren (*Jednota Českobratrská*), one of the Protestant churches in Czechoslovakia at the time. In the late 1950's, which corresponds to the time when he fell under the StB's purview, Bohumil was married.⁶ He had two children: a son and a daughter. His marriage was cast as "absolutely orderly." He appeared to take good care of his wife and children, and he also led an exemplary family life.

Bohumil was in his file described as highly intelligent, adept with people, and very devoted to his church and religion: he "[saw] preaching as his life mission." He was not politically affiliated and shied away from public engagement outside of his church. His passions and hobbies included his car and traveling. He was also described as "mild-mannered, inconspicuous, and fearful of authorities"; yet, when it came to his religion, a different kind of character emerged: he was a fervent and active advocate of his faith.

Immediately after the Communists assumed power in 1948, churches were classified as one of the biggest enemies to the building of a "progressive socialist society." Thus, from the infancy of the Communist regime to its very last days, churches were cast as "enemy number one" by the Communist state.⁷ Predictably, Bohumil's church became a target of state persecution. In the early 1960s, many of Bohumil's friends and fellow pastors were arrested, prosecuted, and imprisoned as enemies of the state on the grounds of having committed subversive activities.

Perhaps unsurprisingly then, the StB used its intense gaze to monitor Bohumil in the activities he conducted with his church. Bohumil was a very active pastor, and he focused on organizing, educating, and leading the youth of his congregation toward God and a life of religion. Therefore, throughout the second half of 1950s, the StB closely observed and used its informers to collect information on him.

In 1962, the StB opened a file on Bohumil named *Bratr*, the Czech word for brother. Documents from this file reveal that the StB saw Bohumil as a reactionary pastor, and that they earmarked him for prosecution. He was put under surveillance and suspected of *inter alia* "tendentious

[was] weird and [did] not maintain a lot of contact with his family." In 1956, the StB approached and interviewed Bohumil's brother about Bohumil.

⁵ The Czech word for the institution of learning that is roughly equivalent to high school.

⁶ His wife died in 1974.

⁷ Historian Peter Žáček, quoted in the documentary "Černý a Černější" (directed by J. Novák, 2007).

preaching against the political establishment,” “distributing defective religious literature,” and “keeping suspicious relations” with foreigners and “reactionaries.” Many informers, including his parishioners and youth group members, complained about him and described his allegedly anti-state and “defective” language. For example, an informer who regularly attended Bohumil’s twice-weekly services and Bible readings, quoted him as saying: “[The situation in Czechoslovakia] is a terrible situation. A man has to watch another man. One guards and watches another, everyone is afraid. [...] It is a sign of a huge decline.” Bohumil’s file contains numerous other substantively similar quotes, which suggests that he was an open critic of the Czechoslovakian government.

Notwithstanding the StB’s intense surveillance, the organization was seemingly unable, or unwilling, to gather sufficient evidence to prosecute Bohumil for his subversive activities. One potential theory for why the StB hesitated to bring charges is because it noticed Bohumil’s potential for becoming an effective informant.

In any event, Bohumil’s file was closed in 1963 as the “possibility of criminally prosecuting him is, at the moment insufficient, because there are no new findings as to whether Bohumil continues to currently partake in his hostile activities,” and “the fact that, in his sermons, he made ambiguous remarks and attacked the establishment of [Czechoslovakia] is not enough to conclude that he continues to engage in hostile activities.”

Nonetheless, the dance continued, and in July 1965, Bohumil was interrogated by a Regional Office of the Ministry of Internal Affairs where all of his prior, allegedly illegal, actions were laid out on the table for discussion. Initially, Bohumil fervently denied the accusations brought against him. However, following a lengthy interrogation, “[i]t occurred to him that during his preaching he expressed himself in such a way, that listeners could get an impression, that he was against the regime/establishment. Also, some quotes from the Bible were used in an inappropriate way, so the impression could have been made that the preaching is against the regime [...]” By the end of the interrogation Bohumil even apologized:

I am sorry that through my activities the youths in the Church were not led in the right direction. If I ever acted contrary to the laws, I declare that I am sorry for my actions and that in my future life and work I will do my best to get the trust, so that I could be a useful member of socialist society.

Bohumil’s file contained only the text of the interview as it was recorded, written, and signed by a man identified as Captain Josef Lenar. It is unclear how the interview was conducted, and why Bohumil seemed to have entirely changed his mind by the end of it. Perhaps Bohumil’s

repentance, apology, or another undocumented event that had otherwise occurred during the interrogations, resonated with the StB as Bohumil transitioned from an informed-upon to an information-gatherer.

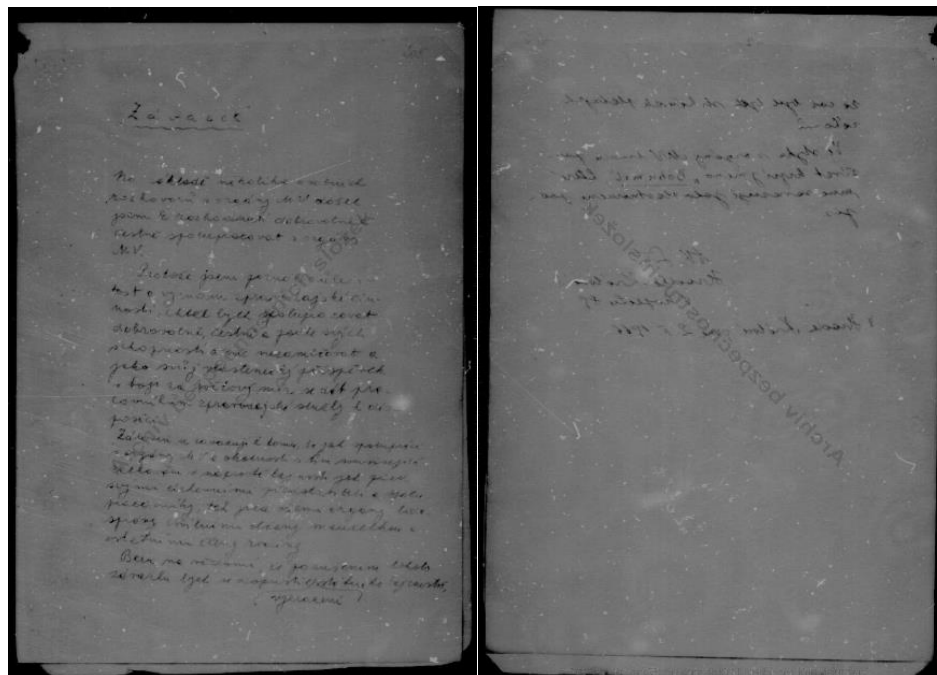
A proposal for preliminary contact with Bohumil as an agent regarding “the issue of non-Catholic churches” was filed in August 1965. The document noted that “[Bohumil] maintains contacts with all pastors of the Church, he participates at gatherings at its headquarters, is very well informed about its activities, [...] and maintains ecumenic relations with pastors and vicars/parsons of other non-Catholic churches.” Owing to this, and his extensive contacts abroad, Bohumil was suddenly perceived as a very suitable candidate for collaboration. The proposal set out his past “sins” against the state and the establishment. Referring to the earlier StB interview conducted with Bohumil, the proposal clarified that Bohumil acknowledged all his illegal activities, was aware of the possibility of losing his state permit to practice religion, and “asked which conclusion we would draw from the whole investigation and said that he would be very happy to stay at the service of the church.” Bohumil clearly realized that his passion – the church and practicing religion – was hanging by a thread, and that the StB could cut that thread anytime. The fear of losing his sense of purpose must have worn on him.

Bohumil’s recruitment process was very deliberate and careful. The StB called him for sequential interviews in which they asked probing questions to “test his honesty.” After eight such interviews, the StB decided to “recruit” Bohumil as a collaborator on the basis of “compromising materials.” Hence, it seems that Bohumil became an informant out of fear; although interestingly, other, later StB reports note that the basis of his collaboration was “voluntariness.” The StB informed Bohumil that “we will not draw any conclusions against his person, but we will give him a possibility to redress his misconducts by practical deeds.” According to the report of this meeting, he responded that:

He already made peace with our collaboration because, as a religious man, he believes that he is not doing anything wrong by helping us protect the establishment. [...] He said that after our first contact, he was internally biased against us and ready for anything. In the next contact, however, he changed his opinion, which was caused by our approach towards him. He was honest about the internal struggle that he underwent, and how we fostered his trust with our open and honest dealings with him. He also said that he had never been in touch with security organs before, [and] that he had always heard only bad things about us, but now he found out that it was not true, because we had every reason to deal with him differently, but instead we approached him as a human who has a place in the current society. He does not want to please us but says so because we want him to be honest with us. After he realized that we were not trying to deceive him, he started to convey information which we asked about really as he

knew it, even though he did not have to. He was also asked whether he [was] still willing to assist us. He agreed.

Bohumil neatly handwrote his pledge to collaborate in February 1966 – reproduced in full below – which emphasized his purported “patriotic” motivations to fight for world peace: “Because I came to see the importance of intelligence, I would like to cooperate voluntarily, honestly and according to my abilities, and keep nothing quiet; and as my patriotic contribution to the fight for world peace, I would like to be at the disposal of the employees of the intelligence agency.”



Bohumil instantly became, and remained, quite an active informer. He reported to the StB for 19 years. During that time, he was able to continue practicing religion, assume more responsibilities within his Church, and frequently travel abroad to the “capitalist West,” including to visit his son, who had emigrated to Switzerland in 1977.

Bohumil’s yearly StB evaluation reports characterized him as a punctual, conscientious, very serious, capable, active, and reliable informer. For example, the following assessment appears: “He handwrites the reports during the meetings, or brings typewritten reports to the meetings, where he either adds to them during the meetings, or brings them rewritten for the next meeting. He needs to be steered with care [,] and when giving him tasks[,], they need to be properly explained and discussed....” Despite such commendations, the StB was nevertheless suspicious of Bohumil, and they feared that he was going to deceive them, especially at the beginning of

their “relationship.” Thus, Bohumil was regularly monitored by other informers and other operational measures to ensure that the information he submitted was accurate. At times, the StB also feared that Bohumil would use one of his trips abroad to emigrate. However, according to one of the later StB reports, this fear evidently dissipated as “his emigration is ruled out because he is a patriot [and] pastor who sees his work to be conducted here among people. He condemns the emigration of others.”

Bohumil’s file contains some of his reports and records from various meetings with the StB in which he discussed the internal politics and relations in his Church. Occasionally, he expressed discontent with how things were going, the political situation, his local or foreign colleagues, friends, and even family members – most notably, his son.

Because Bohumil’s file only contains a handful of his reports and meeting records, the full extent and nature of his collaboration remains somewhat hazy; however, some scattered information is indicative. In 1970, a report stated that “he has so far submitted 73 ‘signals’ for processing of serious reliability.” In 1979, Bohumil submitted 31 largely handwritten reports. In 1981, he submitted 19 reports; in 1982 he submitted 18. Over time, the StB also instructed Bohumil to implement measures that would have an effect on the internal affairs of his Church, including ensuring that candidates with a positive attitude toward the regime were elected to its leadership.

Bohumil’s increasingly cozier relationship with the StB arguably brought him some personal benefits. Documents in his file indicate that, before Bohumil’s “pact with the StB,” he was not permitted to travel abroad to visit friends. Thereafter, however, Bohumil frequently travelled abroad with the StB’s approval and encouragement: be it in a professional capacity, as a representative of his Church for various congresses, meetings, or lectures;⁸ or for leisure, including to vacation in the Netherlands, or to visit friends and his son in Switzerland. When he traveled abroad, Bohumil was instructed to report all suspicious observations; some of Bohumil’s reports of these foreign “adventures” are also included in his file. Bohumil was also occasionally compensated for his “services” to the StB, including in the Christmas of 1969, when he was gifted a package valued between 150–200 Kčs, or in 1974 and 1975, when he was given a financial reward of 1000 Kčs.

While informing for the StB, Bohumil ascended the hierarchy of his Church. In 1967, he was elected to a leadership position. He resigned in 1983 due to his diabetes and old age. By the end of his collaboration, the frequency with which he traveled abroad, reported to, and met with the StB gradually decreased; he also gradually severed himself from his influential positions in the

⁸ Bohumil travelled to DDR (East Germany) in 1966, Sweden in 1967, Kenya in 1970, Belgium in 1971, among many other places.

Church. Perhaps his advanced age and deteriorating health rendered him progressively less useful as an informer. On this note, Bohumil's informing journey was much like that of other informers, as his relationship with the StB became more minimal as he aged.

Bohumil's file ends with an evaluation report regarding his collaboration for the year of 1984. It noted his serious health issues and the irregularity with which he met with the StB. In 1986, a proposal to end the collaboration was filed by his StB officer; it cited his lack of influence within the Church and his ill health for reasons in favor of termination.

In sum, Bohumil belongs among the group of many informers who were both informing and informed upon. Bohumil is also notable in that he started his journey as "an StB enemy" and ended up as "an StB friend." His relationship with the StB evolved from a hostile suspicion into a cozy symbiosis.

REDAKTOR⁹



Redaktor was born in 1933, into a family of manual workers residing in a mid-sized town in the Central Bohemian region of Czechoslovakia. Redaktor's father, who died in 1964, had been an active member of the Czech National Socialist Party (*Národní Socialisté*).¹⁰ His mother stayed at home and tended to the household.

Redaktor pursued a degree in higher education, and in the course of his studies, he was nominated for candidacy in the Communist Party by the local branch of the Czechoslovak Union of Youth - the Party's youth wing, in which he was quite active. After his studies, Redaktor was employed as a factory technician/administrative worker. He reportedly excelled at his job. As a testament to his achievement, he was given a badge and a diploma for "exemplary work in socialist competition." Redaktor was an active participant in various Communist-led

⁹ Position: Agent

File No.: 809203

Registration No.: 18747

File created: 1972; File archived: 1988

Page count: 320 pages

Redaktor's file contains several typewritten reports authored by Redaktor himself, as well as records of various meetings he had with the StB. Notably, only few documents in his file have been recorded as destroyed.

¹⁰ The National Socialist Party was a civic nationalist political party, which, despite its name, was not affiliated with the Nazis. Indeed, its members were persecuted during the Nazi German occupation of Czechoslovakia. Most of its members were active in the resistance movement. In the 1946 elections, the National Socialist Party was the second strongest party after the Communists.

organizations, and he ultimately ascended to a relatively high rank in the national youth movement.

Redaktor married a woman who was also an administrative worker, and together, they had one son. His file describes his family life as stable, and states that “he took good care of [his wife and son].” Redaktor is characterized in his file as an exemplary worker, and an intelligent, social, and talkative person, although he also had the tendency to be obtrusive. He indulged in politics, and his file reveals that he was devoted to public affairs. He strove to remain on good terms with the Party and largely adhered to the official line. He was a faithful and devoted citizen of Communist Czechoslovakia except for one incident in 1968 when authorities branded him as an anti-Soviet nationalist and expelled him from Party membership and public life.

Redaktor’s collaboration with the StB started after his exclusion from public affairs. It was his quest for reinstatement in the Party that seemingly made him such an active and eager informer. During his collaboration, Redaktor provided detailed private and personal information on his friends and foes against whom he seemed to have held grudges.

Redaktor also held a deep interest in the media, perhaps due to his love for politics. Upon the request of the Party, he became a well-known journalist in his home town; initially, he contributed to his factory’s outlet and then to a few local newspapers. In 1960, he was asked by the local Communist Party to become a full-time editor of a newly established local newspaper. Redaktor accepted this position and remained in it until he was fired in 1969. Redaktor’s file reveals that, after Operation Danube and the Warsaw Pact occupation, he had “published an article titled ‘Even Dogs Did Not Stay Aside,’ in which he reportedly thanked dogs for being against the occupation.” He was labeled a far-right opportunist, and in addition to being fired, was stripped of his positions in the Party and all other related organizations. He was deemed to have “entirely succumbed to anti-Soviet emotions and nationalist psychosis.” Nevertheless, he assumed a similar job at a local radio station, only to be fired again for the same reason. Eventually, he found employment in a different capacity at a local factory. In 1970, he was fully expelled from the Communist Party.

Redaktor consequently entered the regime’s period of normalization with a tattered and tarnished reputation. He strove to overcome this purge, rehabilitate himself, and to have his expulsion from the Communist Party revoked or rescinded. Indeed, Redaktor believed that his expulsion was manifestly unfair because he “only reposted other’s articles [,] [so] his punishment was too severe.” He greatly missed his journalistic involvement in public life, which was barred by his Party expulsion and employment terminations. He demanded that the Party conduct a proper investigation into his alleged offenses, emphasizing that he had had no chance to defend himself. He claimed that even the leading figures of the Party asked for a “sensitive approach to each

member of the Party, especially to those, who had worked hard for the Party before and were [accused of having] wrong opinions in a certain period.”

According to his file, Redaktor often complained about his expulsion to friends and colleagues. Perhaps unsurprisingly, some of these interlocutors were StB informers; their reports are included in his file. It was at this point that his personal encounters with the StB began. The StB were interested in his ongoing contacts with “far-right opportunists:” supporters of the pre-1968 reforms that Operation Danube and the subsequent normalization crushed. As a former journalist, Redaktor had maintained close relations with many local officials, activists, or otherwise important individuals. He thus became a candidate for secret collaboration.

Redaktor was consistently motivated by an acute desire for social and professional rehabilitation, as well as the resuscitation of his reputation. Among other goals, he was desperate to get his Party membership back; informing and snitching seemingly would aid in this process. Redaktor expressed his willingness to “make up” for his prior offenses, and accordingly, he pushed to be of use to the StB. In turn, the StB reeled in a valuable informant. Redaktor proved to be a very agile secret cooperative. Various reports indicate that, throughout his cooperation, he never refused a task; in fact, he proactively sought additional and more challenging assignments to demonstrate his fealty and allegiance.

Ironically, Redaktor never regained his Party membership; such a reinstatement would have likely severed him from the target groups against whom he was snitching and undermined his usefulness as an informer. Nevertheless, the StB helped Redaktor in several other ways, including: assisting him in his job search, or in his application for a travel visa to capitalist states. The StB even rewarded him with trips to France and Switzerland in recompense for his good cooperation.

Redaktor’s file also contains interesting details about his meetings with the StB. In the initial stages of his cooperation, when his recruitment was being planned, these meetings were held approximately two to three times per week in a forest or a similarly abandoned outdoor venue. Later, after the formal arrangement had been solidified, the meetings were either conducted outside or in secret apartments known as ‘conspiratorial flats.’ The StB noted that Redaktor was very concerned by the secrecy of the cooperation; his supervisor even remarked that he had quickly apprehended “conspiratorial instincts.” For example, Redaktor had proactively booked a remote table behind a wall for a meeting with his StB supervisor in a public restaurant.

Redaktor first met with the StB on May 31, 1972. In this initial meeting, the StB strategically refrained from directly inquiring into the possibility of cooperation, and thus, feigned a selective

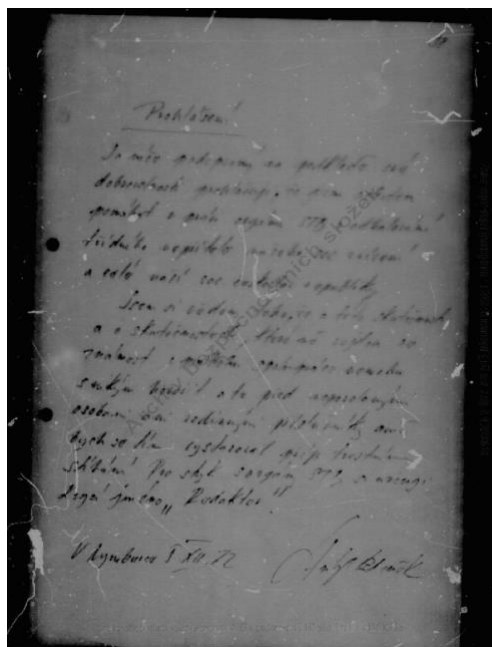
interest only in him and his “incorrect opinions and activities” from 1968. Redaktor expressed regret over his previous action, and at the StB’s request, he divulged many details about his activities in 1968 and 1969; he also disclosed information pertaining to his former colleagues and their personal opinions. After 1968, many of these individuals ended up being politically punished, much like Redaktor had been. For example, one man was prohibited from working as a teacher; another, a former Party official, was forced to work as a parking lot guard.

At the beginning of the cooperation, Redaktor behaved proactively. He provided the StB with all requested materials, especially those documenting his previous activities as a journalist. Indeed, the StB noted that Redaktor had highlighted his own previously published, problematic articles with a red pencil. Redaktor also provided the StB with a great deal of information on other people with similar political opinions, including the disclosure of their private affairs.

Redaktor continuously complained to the StB about what he perceived to be his excessive punishment for his previous offenses. In his complaints, he appeared to seek some kind of solace and expiation from the StB. He plaintively lamented that he had been misled and manipulated by other people in the district. He also did not hesitate to mention many of these people by name, while further describing their political views and sharing his personal opinions on them. At this juncture, the StB instructed Redaktor not to isolate himself from other people, but to stay among them and “to keep eyes and ears open,” because “there are still many people in our country, who are not all right.”

In December 1972, Redaktor’s cooperation with the StB formally started. The cooperation was presented as an opportunity for Redaktor to remedy his previous mistakes; this framing also corresponded to the narrative that first sparked his relationship with the StB. An StB representative then told Redaktor that he should not expect any positive interventions on their behalf regarding his employment, which he understood. On December 5, 1972, Redaktor handwrote his pledge to collaborate, which he titled “A Declaration”:

I, the undersigned, voluntarily declare that I am willing to help the work of the StB in revealing the class enemy of our socialist establishment and of our socialist Czechoslovak Republic. I am aware that I must not speak to anyone, be it unauthorized persons or family members, about this fact and also about facts that I will find out during my cooperation, otherwise I may be criminally prosecuted. For my contact with the StB I assume the codename “Redaktor.”



During his cooperation, Redaktor was reportedly very attentive, punctual, and proactive. His supervisors remarked that Redaktor did his best to please them, and that he was proud of his successes. Redaktor did not seem to shy away from naming and shaming people. Almost every report in his file contains quite a few names of individuals. He met with the StB quite frequently.¹¹

Redaktor liked to vacation abroad with his wife and son; specifically, the family enjoyed traveling by car and camping in the countryside. They took trips to Yugoslavia and western Europe, visiting France, Germany, Switzerland on at least three occasions. Upon his return, Redaktor always provided the StB with detailed reports recounting his experiences abroad; he reported everything from his random observations of a U.S. military facility, to a meeting he had with émigré Czechoslovaks.

¹¹ The number of meetings and written reports relevant to Zdeněk's cooperation varied on an annual basis. For example:

1979: 35 meetings, 11 reports

1980: 25 meetings, 24 reports

1981: 26 meetings, 21 reports

1985: 12 meetings, 5 reports

1987: 24 meetings, 21 reports.

However, his file did not provide an estimate of the total number of meetings conducted or reports submitted in the entirety of his cooperation with the StB.

Redaktor's file also reveals that, in 1977, the StB conceived of using him to snoop on members of the Charter-77 movement.¹² However, there are no further details regarding this plan. In 1978, Redaktor was rewarded for his cooperation in the amount of 200 Kčs. During the 1980s, he was given fiscal rewards once or twice per year, which usually amounted to a total of 600-800 Kčs annually. Redaktor received these rewards until his cooperation ended.

In 1980, the StB deployed Redaktor to report on the members and officials of the Catholic church in his region. One of the targeted individuals was a local priest, who had a niece who lived in France at the time. This priest told Redaktor that his niece would help Redaktor arrange his vacation to France, on the condition that Redaktor assisted her in traveling to Czechoslovakia. Redaktor agreed to this arrangement. He also reported the details of this exchange to the StB. Prompted by this information, the StB instructed Redaktor to follow the priest and to keep a close eye on his activities in his district. He was also instructed to monitor the ties the priest had to capitalist states. Redaktor later expanded his network of informing to other priests in the region.

In the late 1980s, Redaktor began suffering from health and personal problems. For example, on December 1, 1987, he showed up severely intoxicated to a meeting with his supervisor. Redaktor explained that he had lost his job, and that he had had an agreement with another potential employer – a manual labor job with a construction company – but for administrative reasons, the plan failed. Indeed, Redaktor's file reveals that he had been struggling with alcoholism for a while, and that his problems with alcohol worsened in stressful times, notably during periods of unemployment. He also mixed his alcohol with sedatives. Although Redaktor's employer suggested that he seek treatment, he refused, blaming others for things not working out for him. Indeed, a common theme emerges from Redaktor's file: in times of crises, whether personal or professional, he tended to dismiss any responsibility on his part, seek excuses, and blame others for his misfortune.

The StB was initially determined to make him stop drinking. After the December 1 meeting, his supervisor suggested that he should be awarded financially for his "good performance." The StB hoped that financial incentives would motivate him to continue working. In this regard, they acted paternally and amiably, as with many other informers. However, these efforts were to no avail: Zdeněk's health deteriorated quickly, and he also began to suffer physical side effects from

¹² Charter 77 was a civic dissident initiative. It was named after a document, The Charter 77, that was published in January 1977 in response to the arrest and trial of members of the music band Plastic People of the Universe. The document criticized the government for failing to implement some of its international human rights obligations and received 242 signatures from individuals hailing from a variety of backgrounds. The regime's reaction to The Charter was harsh. The Signatories were publicly criticized and labeled as "anti-state," "traitors," or "agents of imperialism." Some lost their jobs; some had children that were prohibited from studying; and some were exiled or prosecuted and tried.

combining drugs with alcohol. His driving license was suspended. The file also says that he became irrational; denialist in not admitting to his addictions; and, in terms of his relationship with the StB, “entirely illogical [as he] considers solving his problems by way of formal complaints to Party organs.” Still, his supervisor repeatedly tried to contact him, to bring him back, and even to motivate him financially, all without success.

In 1988, Redaktor stopped cooperating with the StB and began ignoring them. The StB made efforts to visit him at his workplace and to arrange meetings, but he did not show up. Furthermore, he was caught driving a car while his license was suspended. The StB ultimately decided to terminate the cooperation, citing Zdeněk’s alcoholism and health problems as the main reasons for the severance. They also noted that his behavior suggested a risk of de-conspiracy.¹³ Cooperation was formally terminated in late December, 1988.

Overall, Redaktor supplied the StB with extensive information about his colleagues and friends who opposed political developments during the normalization period that quashed the Prague Spring. He also did not hesitate to inform on Czechoslovak emigrants abroad. In his reports, he provided detailed descriptions of their lives and political opinions to the extent that he documented his findings with the use of quotations. As with many others, however, over time Redaktor’s mental health deteriorated to such an extent that the StB had to let him go, despite their attempts to save him from himself.

¹³ De-conspiracy entailed that an StB informer exposed the contact with the StB (and hence their informer status) to somebody else.

BARIUM¹⁴



Barium was born in 1926. His father was an army general and a member of the Communist Party until his death. His mother, who was an office worker, died when Barium was only 9 years old. His father re-married a paediatrician, who was also a Party member.¹⁵ Barium had two sisters: both without party affiliation, and each of whom was employed as middle-class worker or a homemaker.

Barium was a member of the Social-Democratic Party until 1948, when he joined the Communist Party after its merger with the Socialists. He then left the Party in 1952 for health reasons, suffering as he was with a lung ailment at the time. His file does not suggest that his career prospects were damaged in any way by this departure. Indeed, Barium was consistently applauded for his political devotion and correct opinions. Notably, he was praised for having been disadvantaged in 1968 for holding “Marxist-Leninist” positions during this period of ideological ferment and upheaval prior to normalization. Barium seemed to genuinely believe in socialist values and principles.

¹⁴ Position: Confidant; Agent.

File No.: 790247

Registration No.: 20480

File created: October 31, 1980; File archived: 1987

Page count: 464 pages

Barium’s file is written partially in Slovakian. His other cover name was “Lev” (lion in Czech).

¹⁵According to another report in the file his father was a factory, and later an office, worker and his mother a housewife.

Barium himself was twice married. He had one daughter with his first wife. The daughter later married an Indian citizen and proceeded to emigrate to Canada and then to India. Barium also birthed a son with his second wife. Unfortunately, and for reasons unknown, his second-born passed away as a child.

Barium was a trained chemist and a devoted environmentalist. He was employed at a state agency that controlled chemical waste and other potentially dangerous substances emitted by the Czechoslovak industry. In 1977, Barium spent three weeks in Switzerland at the World Health Organization. He also travelled and delivered lectures in West Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, among other places. Barium firmly believed that the technology of managing toxic waste in the West was at a much lower level than in Czechoslovakia.

Barium was also a productive researcher and academic. He registered 14 patents. What is more, he published in various international scientific journals, wrote two books, and delivered lectures to international audiences. His main concern was the protection of people, critical infrastructure, and the environment against misused or leaked dangerous waste. Barium was extremely committed to this protective goal, and his passion for protecting the environment was the main thread of his collaboration with the StB.

In contrast to many other informer files rife with tedium or juicy gossip, Barium's reports to the StB were very technical. At times they read like the transcript of a lecture, with Barium writing for the purpose of enlightening his StB officer on the ins and outs of environmental harms and protection. The StB apparently valued Barium's expertise, as his file portrays his relationship with the StB to be one of dignity, decency, mutual respect, and professionalism. There are no reports of affairs, excessive drinking, explicit or implicit threats, or blackmail.

As aforementioned, Barium was also deemed to be politically reliable even during 1968. He had adopted the "correct" stance toward the events of 1968. According to his file, in "the crisis years [of] 1968 [and] [19]69[.]" he was not "a bearer of rightist opportunism." He was also a member of several socialist organizations, and he delivered lectures on Marxism at The Socialist Academy. In personal summaries written or obtained by the StB, Barium was described as a reliable person with a stable family background, who was calm and intelligent by nature. At work, as well as during his period of collaboration with the StB, he was consistently defined as punctual, diligent, and reliable; one glowing StB report even describes Barium as a person "without flaws." He was direct; honest; social; friendly; had a good sense of humor; behaved "according to socialist morality" both in private and in public; was never out for profit or personal gain; and as a result of these qualities, was very well-liked. His weaker traits included his excessive gullibility and at times, his fulsome generosity.

Barium's relationship with the StB was unsurprisingly animated by his great environmental concerns. In late 1980, the StB found Barium perturbed about developments regarding the processing and disposing of industry-generated toxic waste. Barium knew that waste production was increasing every year and that accidents, including leaks of these toxic substances, had become too frequent in Czechoslovakia. Barium was further disquieted by the approach taken by Czechoslovak regulators. For example, in one of his first encounters with the StB, Barium complained about the proposed dissolution of his state agency – a research institute tasked with controlling potentially dangerous waste – and about the subsequent plan to transfer this responsibility to another state agency. This rendezvous incited the StB's interest in Barium, and in his file, the StB recorded this encounter as “a business meeting with Dr. [Barium's surname].” Barium was apparently not afraid of losing his job – or if he was, he did not mention it – but rather, he seemed genuinely fearful that Czechoslovakia may be left “unprotected.”

In a subsequent telephone conversation, Barium reportedly asked the StB for help in pressuring the relevant authorities to rescind their proposal to shut down the institute. Perhaps owing to his devotion to the cause, his openness to share, his vulnerability, and his calls for help, the StB decided to use Barium as a confidant in his field. He was expected to report on violations of safety rules, unreported accidents, and even possible acts of sabotage. Unsurprisingly, Barium's codename is the name for a recurrent toxic waste in the country.

Barium's first meeting with the StB took place in a restaurant in Prague in late February 1981. In this meeting, he disclosed various, recent violations of safety rules, which sometimes caused serious environmental disasters; agreed to meet in the future regarding these issues; and promised to provide proper documentation of such incidents. In response, the StB informed Barium that they would like to have future discussion regarding the issues of toxic waste and those plaguing his research institute exclusively with him, in the absence of his boss. Barium was also told not to tell anyone about these meetings. According to his file, Barium was most amenable to such a framework, owing to the fact he felt grateful and even indebted to the StB for their preservation of his research institute. That said, any causal connection between the preservation of his workplace and his cooperation with the StB remains unclear.

Barium was not asked to sign a pledge to collaborate and the meeting report does not even mention why (only in 1984 a “Commitment” to cooperate is given to and signed by Barium). It seems that Barium was almost a different type of informer, also in the eyes of the StB, especially during the first half of their relationship. His file does not contain much in the way of evaluations or lustration reports. Nor is it infused with suspicion, distrust, and information gathered by other informers regarding Barium himself. His reports on environmental/technical issues, which exist in the form of notes written by the StB, constitute the majority of the documents in his file.

Further meetings followed a very similar pattern to the first: Barium informed on violations of safety rules and shared technical details wherever possible. Although he seemed ideologically committed to Communism, his reports overwhelmingly focused solely on environmental matters.

When he informed on individuals specifically, the information he provided related to their negligence or offenses causing toxic waste incidents; he generally did not provide information on their political opinions or social standing. Occasionally, he mentioned “political topics,” but these were also related to his field. For example, he disclosed that local populations were disrupted and concerned about toxic leaks in their neighborhood. Overall, Barium did not inform on material dimensions or political critique. He adhered to the proper protocols on matters of toxic waste disposal. In a sense, such was his allegiance and ideology.

Barium provided oral and written reports. Oral reports were generally given for brief notification of recent incidents, and written reports were reserved for longer, technical reports. However, in subjectively urgent situations, Barium did not hesitate to call his StB contact by telephone. For example, in April 1981, he rang in the morning to report an ongoing leak of a toxic substance from a factory in the city of Kolín. Moreover, and as mentioned previously, the names that Barium included in his reports tended to be those of his colleagues, or of responsible employees from companies implicated in relevant illegalities. For example, he noted that an employee of a district municipality in Slovakia insisted that he could “solve” a local toxic leak by simply covering the leak with additional dirt, a solution that was both illegal and dangerous. In another case, Barium snitched on an employee who wanted to “solve” the problem of an illegal toxic dump by transferring it across state borders; this was also an illegal and rather expensive solution.

However, Barium did report on one individual relatively frequently: Mr. V.K., an engineer. In atypical fashion, Barium reported on information regarding V.K.’s personal family situation; his allegedly poor working performance; his biased preference for “Western products”; his minor transgressions at the workplace; and his scandalous, private love affairs. It appears that these reports were at least in part motivated by personal grudges and grievances; yet, even if so, this is the only such case in Barium’s entire file. He also reported that V.K. had erred in several research proposals, and that he allegedly “does not know/understand the job” due to his training as an electro-technician, not as a chemist-physicist. For this lack of understanding/education, V.K. was chastised for having failed to “correctly” distribute research funding. Perhaps it was not a personal grudge that motivated Barium’s uncharacteristic reporting style in this case, but the potential risks to salient research and environmental protection fostered by V.K.’s amateurism and professional ignorance. Despite Barium’s comprehensive reporting, it is unclear whether the StB ever took any significant steps against V.K..

In 1984, the StB reassigned Barium from “confidant” to “agent,” and updated his codename to “Lev,” meaning leo or lion.¹⁶ Barium chose this alias because it corresponded to his astrological sign. He agreed to deepen his cooperation due to the same environmental motivation and focus as before. To ‘celebrate’ this new phase of their relationship, the StB officer invited Barium to lunch in a luxury hotel named Splendid. The meeting report states that the pair talked about holidays and hobbies over lunch. The meal ultimately cost 174 Kčs, and Barium “positively accepted and evaluated the invitation.”

From 1980 to 1984, Barium had 52 meetings with the StB and gave 62 reports as a confidant. From 1984 to 1987, he had 30 meetings with the StB and gave 17 reports as an agent. These meetings were usually held in restaurants, and on occasion, in conspiratorial apartments. Barium’s transfer to the position of agent was preceded by the only in-depth investigation of his professional and personal background contained in his file. His daughter, who at the age of seventeen had met and married a citizen of India and subsequently left Czechoslovakia in 1972 with him, was subject to a particularly thorough inquiry.¹⁷ Nevertheless, Barium could not provide any further information on his daughter because, according to his file, he said that he did not maintain any contact with her. He was divorced, and she preferred contacting his former wife, who was also her mother; Barium was not even invited to her wedding.

Barium’s cooperation continued. As his recruitment formalized, his supervisor suggested that he focus more on the political dimension of his work; this included sharing knowledge from his business trips abroad for broader defense or commercial purposes. However, this more intense and extensive focus did not suit Barium particularly well. One of the reports from 1985 notes that his collaboration stagnated, mainly because of a “situation” at his workplace, and the uncertain future of his agency. The report noted that “this situation negatively influence[ed] [Barium]” and reflect[ed] on his collaboration.

The StB also asked Barium to meet them in one of its conspiratorial apartments. Given that he was accustomed to meeting in public places, this newer, more private setting made him feel awkward. Moreover, the fact that the meeting was to be recorded “threw him out of balance” and “influenced the way that he expressed himself.” Indeed, Barium told his StB officer that being recorded was “unpleasant,” and that he preferred to give his reports in writing instead. Whenever

¹⁶ In the subsequent text, we, however, stick to his initial codename Barium for reasons of clarity.

¹⁷ As a sidebar: the StB was interested in Barium’s daughter because she remained in sporadic touch with Czechoslovaks who had illegally emigrated to Canada and other capitalist states. The StB also realized that she helped bring some items of property, including paintings and minor artefacts, from Czechoslovakia to these emigrants. The StB contemplated recruiting her to obtain more information about these emigrants, but according to Barium’s file, her recruitment never occurred.

the StB subsequently asked Barium to step outside of his “environmental comfort zone” by informing on other issues of their interest, he appeared to shut down. One of the reports described his demeanour as “not very relaxed or open.”

Despite the StB’s entreaties, the content of Barium’s second phase of informing remained virtually unchanged, as he kept within the framework of his environmental preoccupations. For example, he mentioned that trade relations with the U.S. were damaged due to chemical pollution of Czechoslovak hops.

Barium also traveled internationally, including business trips to West Germany for seminars and conferences, and routine family vacations to Yugoslavia. While the StB did not facilitate these trips, on at least one occasion they agreed to smooth out some administrative formalities (for example, as to issuing passports). In fact, on one occasion, Barium directly asked the StB for help regarding his vacation to Yugoslavia: he sought administrative support to bypass the wait for visas and other administrative procedures. The StB noted, that in this moment, and “for operational purposes, it was not appropriate to refuse” his request for help. Barium did report back on the things he had learned while abroad, but these reports habitually lacked significant political dimension.

In 1987, Barium and the StB met for the last time. Their relationship officially ended after Barium transferred to another workplace, where he became a working pensioner and refocused his research on the methodologies of liquidating toxic waste. As such, he no longer concerned himself with any “negative incidents-that occurred.” Notwithstanding the dissolution of their relationship, both parties mutually agreed to a renewed cooperation in the event of its relevance. Thus, in this case, the informer-secret police relationship was not terminated because of illness, alcoholism, or mental health concerns. Rather, both parties amicably suspended their cooperation while acknowledging the possibility of its later renewal. The StB’s final evaluation report describes how Barium’s informing, notably the information he disclosed on unreported environmental accidents, led to the punishment of those individuals and factories deemed responsible. Perhaps Barium believed that he could use resources provided by national counterintelligence to effectively combat these threats. Indeed, he was convinced that the StB assisted in preserving his agency, and for this, he was deeply grateful.

Moreover, and unlike other informants, Barium rarely snitched on the political or personal views of specifically named individuals; he limited his descriptions to the technological and factual aspects of various environmentally-related incidents or risks. The StB treated Barium with respect and never mentioned anything compromising about him. Much like many other informers, the StB rewarded him with gifts; throughout his collaboration, Barium received the

following: 300 Kčs in 1981 and 1982; 225 Kčs in 1984; 125 Kčs in 1985; 345 Kčs in 1986; and 250 Kčs in 1987.

In sum, Barium is portrayed as a hardworking and quiet man. The StB always valued his punctuality and noted that his reports were consistently true and comprehensive. There was an uneventfulness, predictability, mutual respect, appreciation, and stillness about his relationship with the StB. They did not pressure him to step out of his comfort zone, although initially, they hoped that he would; they also trusted him and his expertise and seemingly respected his limits. Barium's motivations appear to have been ideological: he was motivated, in part, by the support of Communism and assuredly the state; however, he was overwhelmingly motivated by his desire to satisfy the proper standards of toxic waste disposal and management, and by his efforts to promote a broader environmental ideology.

MALÍŘ¹⁸



Malíř¹⁹ was born in 1938 in Prague. Prior to the Communist take-over in 1948, Malíř's father owned a small tailoring business; his mother worked in a factory. However, when Malíř began collaborating with the StB in the 1960s, both of his parents worked as attendants at the Academy of Musical Arts in Prague. Neither his mother nor his father was engaged in political or public life. In stark contrast to them, Malíř himself was very politically active: he had been a member of the Czechoslovak Socialist Youth Union (*Československý Svaz Mládeže*)²⁰ for years, and then formally joined the Communist Party during his studies.

After Malíř graduated from high school, he pursued the study of lithography. After a brief period of employment, he was accepted to the Academy of Fine Arts (*Akademie Výtvarných Umění, AVU*), and in 1964, he graduated with honors. Malíř was said to be a very talented and promising artist. Indeed, his talent and enthusiasm for the craft, coupled with his political views and engagement with the Party – and later with the StB – buoyed him further through his life as a successful and well-respected artist.

¹⁸ Positions: Informant; Agent.

File No.: 621489

Registration No.: 14684

File created: 1965; File archived: 1989

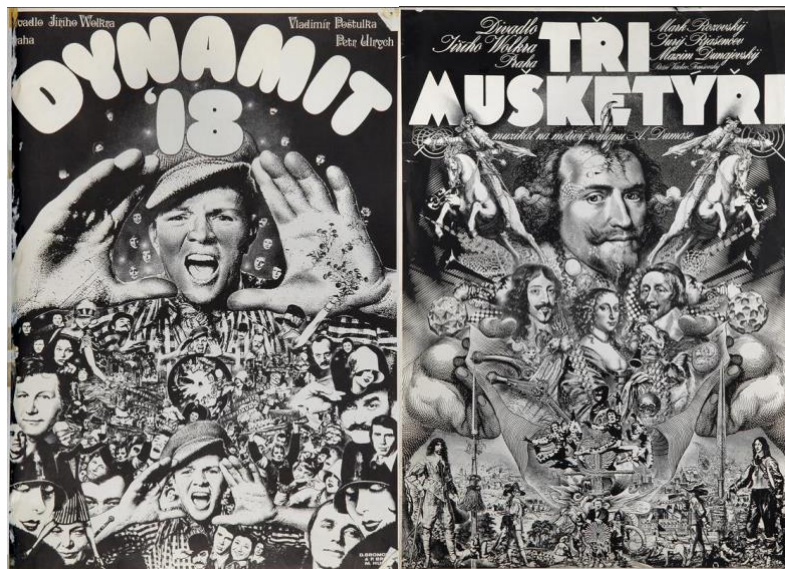
Page count: 234 pages

Malíř's file consists of two separate files, each corresponding to the two phases of his collaboration. His other cover names were "Olda"/ "Lád'a" or "Zombák." For clarity, we use only Malíř.

¹⁹ Malíř can be translated as "Painter."

²⁰ The Czechoslovak Socialist Youth Union was affiliated with the Communist Party.

Malíř fared well under Communism as an artist: he illustrated many books; created posters for plays, including for the Theater of Jiří Wolker in Prague, *Dynamit* (1976), and *The Three Musketeers* (1973) – the latter two pieces are reproduced below. He organized and participated in various art exhibitions within Czechoslovakia and abroad; and his work was the subject of many awards and prizes throughout his career. His art was dreamy, psychedelic, and loud, yet simultaneously realistic, geometrically balanced, politically uncontroversial, and indicative of an appreciation for detail and precision.



During his studies at AVU, Malíř married a fellow student – she herself was an aspiring artist – and the couple had two daughters together. Unfortunately, in the 1980s, Malíř’s wife was plagued with serious mental health challenges, including anxiety and depression, to the extent that Malíř needed to take care of her. His concern and care for his wife subsequently interfered with the relationship he had with the StB at the time.

Malíř is described in the file as intelligent, able to adjust to any situation, and interpersonally adept. According to the StB, he had “the right political opinions” and an extensive cultural and political sophistication. Malíř was further described as a decent, friendly, social, and well-mannered and hard-working man with a good reputation. He was reportedly on good terms with the other tenants in his house and “had never been seen drunk in public. The source [said] that he never even saw him drinking beer.”

The StB first contacted Malíř in April 1964 while he was studying at AVU.; they asked him to inform on other students, and to specifically divulge their political opinions and potential anti-

regime activities. Malíř agreed to these demands and reportedly became a very proactive and determined informer. And the StB greatly appreciated his efforts. An evaluation report describes Malíř as one of the “best” art-school-attending-informers in the country, although the number of informers who were enrolled in art school at the time is unclear.

Malíř’s reports were “not only absolutely true but also non-biased, neutral.”²¹ Furthermore, the StB stated that he was a proactive, intelligent person, who believed his informing to be his patriotic duty. In contrast to many other informers, of whom the StB was occasionally quite suspicious or skeptical, Malíř was apparently given adulation. An evaluation report states that “he can be trusted,” as he “considers the contact with the StB to be his moral and political obligation” and gets “the need to ideologically (positively) influence the (national) art.” But the StB, as it was, did not appear to fully trust anyone. A handwritten note added to Malíř’s formal recruitment proposal states that, notwithstanding his trustworthiness, “he shall be checked by other cooperatives [with cultural ties,] such as ‘Karel.’”

After months of testing the waters, the StB formally recruited Malíř in 1965. At the time of his formal recruitment, Malíř had many personal contacts with students, professors, and other artists; he also cooperated with various media outlets in his capacity as an artist, including magazines, newspapers, and even theatres. Accordingly, the StB wanted him to identify potentially “harmful ideological influences” within the artistic community. The StB also realized that Malíř could bring them tangible advantages through his travels to various exhibitions and art schools abroad, and through his frequent encounters with foreign artists during their respective visits to Prague.

As a result of Malíř’s proactive character and initiative, he was not required to sign a formal cooperation agreement. His cover name was “Malíř,” which unsurprisingly, translates to ‘painter’ in English.²² Malíř’s recruitment proposal states that he was recruited for “ideological reasons,” and that he perceived his collaboration with the StB to be “highly essential and responsible because it is necessary to fight against the internal and external enemy.” Malíř “share[d] [with the StB] opinions on ideological issues and underst[ood] that it [was] necessary for honest citizens to help the security organs.”

Indeed, Malíř was a very willing collaborator: he took initiative, and he was pro-active. For instance, he informed the StB of “defective” students against whom they were subsequently able

²¹ One of the other informers whose file we reviewed, Barium, was also praised by the StB for the accuracy and objectivity of his reports. In contrast to Malíř, however, Barium’s informing was mainly related to technical issues regarding toxic waste management, not “politically defective” individuals, whom Malíř allegedly identified and brought to the StB’s attention.

²² Another code name is also handwritten on the cover page of Malíř’s file – “Olda”; however, this cover name is scratched through.

to take “preventative measures.” Despite his affiliation with the Communist Party, Malíř was nevertheless respected by many diverse artists for his skill and talent; he was trusted by those with a negative attitude toward the regime. The StB leveraged him in this regard.

However, in early 1968, a rift emerged. In March 1968, Malíř’s StB officer drafted a proposal to end his collaboration stating that, even though Malíř was an active informant, his intelligence was “merely informative,” not operational. The report also stated that he had been awarded 225 Kčs for his cooperation thus far. No additional basis for termination was provided, apart from the following, rather cryptic sentence: “because [Malíř] was an active member of the Communist Party.” Interestingly, this proposal was not signed or approved by StB higher-ups, and it is unclear what occurred following the creation of this proposal, as Malíř’s file does not contain any documents or reports from the remainder of 1968 or 1969.

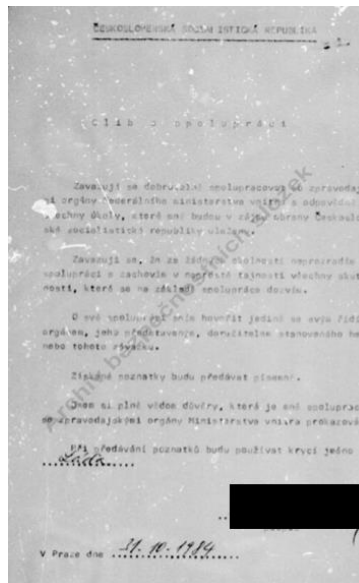
In 1970, a similar proposal to end Malíř’s cooperation was drafted by another StB officer. The proposal states that, after Malíř completed his studies, he did not attend his meetings with the StB and used the “excuse” that he was busy. The report states that this development “stems from 1968 when [Malíř’s] relationship to the StB fundamentally changed.” No details regarding this fundamental change have been specified, but one may surmise that this schism was related to political upheaval in the wake of Operation Danube. Interestingly, Malíř’s StB officer was also discharged from his post with the Ministry of the Interior at this time. As in the first, this second termination proposal referenced the value of Malíř’s financial reward: 100 Kčs. However, this time, Malíř’s collaboration was indeed terminated and his file was archived.

However, following this severance, the StB did not fully release Malíř from its grasp; nor did Malíř fully avoid the StB.

Over a decade later in 1983, another informer told the StB about Malíř’s interactions with members of Charter 77:²³ on allegedly more than one occasion, he had joined the Chartists at U Šupů, a wine bar in the center of Prague. Moreover, he was also accused of using his business trips to France to maintain relations with illegal Czechoslovak emigrants who resided there. Upon hearing this information, the StB decided to use Malíř to cull information on the Chartists, the illegal emigrants in France, and the artist community in Prague. In addition to these ‘targets,’

²³ Charter 77 was a civic dissident initiative. It was named after a document, The Charter 77, that was published in January 1977 in response to the arrest and trial of members of the music band Plastic People of the Universe. The document criticized the government for failing to implement some of its international human rights obligations and received 242 signatures from individuals hailing from a variety of backgrounds. The regime’s reaction to The Charter was harsh. The Signatories were publicly criticized and labeled as “anti-state,” “traitors,” or “agents of imperialism.” Some lost their jobs; some had children that were prohibited from studying; and some were exiled or prosecuted and tried.

Malíř was also said to be close to the head of the Jewish Community in Prague; the StB was interested in the Jewish community, its leaders, and its members. Thus, the StB resumed contact with Malíř as a candidate for secret collaboration and began meeting with him on a regular basis. On October 31, 1984, Malíř signed a pre-typed pledge to collaborate as a candidate of secret collaboration under the codenames “Lád’a” or “Zombák.”²⁴



Malíř’s motivations for collaborating were again classified as “patriotic.” Interestingly, the StB did not reference his previous collaboration, or the reasons for its termination. His file uses generic and formalistic language, stating only that Malíř was willing “to assist [the StB] in uncovering enemy activities in such a way that we [the StB] can preventatively influence individuals who engage in activities targeted against the socialist establishment in Czechoslovakia....” Despite reinitiating contact with Malíř, the StB nonetheless remained suspicious of him and his contacts among “anti-socialist groups,” and they consequently asked other informers to keep an eye on him. In similar fashion to his previous informer gig, Malíř appeared to be a promising informer at the outset but progressively trailed off and faded away over time.

In 1984, Malíř stepped into his old informer’s shoes, so to say, and the StB praised him for “high quality activity,” “taking initiative,” the “conscientious and timely fulfillment of tasks,” and subsequently assessed him as “serious and truthful.” Malíř informed on fellow artists and other colleagues from the art world, including his own boss at the ARTCENTRUM (art center), an art

²⁴ Immediately prior to his second recruitment in 1984, the StB met with Malíř ten times, and he submitted 22 reports. As in other cases of informers whose code name was changed during their cooperation, we use the first codename Malíř in the subsequent text.

historian, and Malíř's contacts abroad. He similarly provided rather detailed information on foreigners and emigré Czechoslovaks who visited him in Prague. He disclosed their identities, places of employment, political opinions, private addresses, and their phone numbers. On one occasion, when the ARTCENTRUM was working on a large project for the U.S., Malíř told the StB that one of his colleagues, who was supposed to travel to the U.S., was the husband of an oppositional artist.

According to another report from 1984, Malíř considered his exclusion from the Party as an:

Injustice, and he therefore withdrew from public and political life and fully devoted himself to art. [Malíř] realized that in the crises years and thereafter he did not act right. He [currently] wants to prove his positive attitude toward socialism in the CSSR, as well as his support for the regime, by honestly cooperation with the organs of the Czechoslovak intelligence in their fight against the internal and external enemy.

In as early as 1984, Malíř's putative enthusiasm and devotion toward fighting the enemies of the state lurking among artists and foreigners wore thin. At the same time, his wife fell ill, and he needed to take care of her. Malíř seemed to become distracted. The StB noted that some of his information was "not of StB relevance." At one point, it seemed as though Malíř had been reformed: he reported "that his wife [was] healthy again," and he provided the StB with a list of people whom he considered to be "[un]friendly toward [the] socialist establishment of the CSSR."²⁵ However, an StB report from 1986 sternly concluded that Malíř "up until today [...] did not convey any information about planned or ongoing criminal activities." In contrast to the plaudits that he had previously received, he was now evaluated as "average." In 1987, Malíř was yet again reported as having "conveyed only information not of StB interest." Throughout 1987, he was "progressively losing intelligence possibilities"; his activity decreased; he was "more focused on his [seriously sick wife], who has serious depression and fear of loneliness and cannot be left unguarded."

Therefore, in February 1989, the StB halted Malíř's collaboration and archived his file.²⁶ According to the StB's final report, Malíř was not given any financial or other significant rewards in this second phase of his cooperation, and the StB refrained from making any interventions in his favor. However, according to the former dissident, publicist, and

²⁵ The list of names is not included in Malíř's file; it is only the existence of a list that is mentioned in one of the reports.

²⁶ During the 1980s, 67 meetings between Malíř and the StB occurred in various restaurants or cafés.

underground musician, Vodrážka, Malíř's ties to the StB assisted him in his professional activities within the ARTCENTRUM and beyond.²⁷

Malíř's relationship with the StB began in the 1960s as an ostensibly well-oiled machine that ran out of steam over time. As a young and promising student of art, Malíř enthusiastically and fervently joined the StB informants' network. At the beginning of his 'informer trajectory,' he was described by his supervising StB officers as an active and engaged young Communist, who was devoted to the socialist cause and to the building of a socialist society. In the liberalizing years of the late 1960s – as repression slowly thawed and liberties increasingly, yet fleetingly, accrued – the young art student might have unsurprisingly felt affection for the regime. However, this allegiance seemingly slipped away; perhaps because he became more preoccupied with his art, or perhaps because of the unique political situation in the late 1960s. Whatever the cause, Malíř progressively became less and less useful to the StB, and maybe the StB also became less useful for him.

In 1970, Malíř was excluded from the Party for his 'passivity' and for his behavior during and following Operation Danube in 1968. In that same year, the StB also 'broke up' with him, so to speak. However, in 1984 the StB lured him in again. At that time, Malíř was an adult: a successful artist occupied with his work, family, and with taking care of his sick wife. Clearly, these preoccupations interfered with his renewed relationship with the StB. Moreover, it's possible that Malíř's youthful enthusiasm for, and allegiance to, socialism and regime ideology grew old, just as he did.

As was the case with many of the other informants whose files we have considered, Malíř's relationship with the StB underwent palpable changes over the course of time. However, here it was not one continuous, long or short-term affair: it had staccato dynamics. Malíř's relationship started and ended; then after a decade, restarted and re-ended again. Thus, twice, despite a promising start, the rapport between the two 'parties' did not seem to have been so fecund. Perhaps, here, the Czech folk saying "*Dvakrát do stejné řeky nevstoupíš*," meaning "One never should enter the same river twice," is quite apposite. In his youth, Malíř therefore was as an active, devoted, and willing weaver of the web of surveillance, yet as he matured, he left this web behind. Later, he got caught in this web all over again, only to once again abandon it. Ultimately, Malíř drifted away, and the StB let him go.

²⁷ See Mirek Vodrážka, *Výtvarné umění a jeho subverzní role v období normalizace*, Centrum pro dokumentaci totalitních režimů, Praha 2019, [ISBN 978-80-270-5668-2](#), p. 125.

EVA²⁸



Eva was born in 1936 into an upper-middle class, Catholic family. Before the Communist take-over of power in February 1948, Eva and her younger brother lived in “absolute sufficiency and luxury,” a fact repeatedly emphasized in her file. Eva’s father owned a wholesale store and two houses in the city of Příbram. Her parents’ marriage was not a happy one: her father allegedly had regular affairs with other women, and her mother despised him for this; however, they never divorced. They educated their children in the spirit of their religion, and in what the StB terms “a reactionary way.”

Eva’s tainted family background – especially her father’s actions and omissions, as well as his presences and absences – appeared to be the primary influences over the course of her life and her collaboration with the StB. Her father’s past was seemingly her curse, most noticeably at the beginning of her adult life and at the start of her collaboration, but then also later, when, ironically, Eva informed on her father and in return gained personal benefits from the StB.

Immediately after WWII, Eva’s father was accused of, detained, and charged for collaboration with the Nazis. He was ultimately found not guilty and released, although this verdict was not

²⁸ Position: Agent

File No.: 622129

Registration No.: 1996, 36431

File created: 1955; File archived: 1987

Page count: 584 pages

Eva’s file does not contain any handwritten reports apart from her initial and subsequent pledges to cooperate in 1955 and 1971, respectively. Her file consists mostly of reports from other informers about Eva herself, her evaluation reports, and some typewritten reports from her meetings.

accepted by the Communists, who considered him to be a Nazi collaborator nonetheless. Following the start of Communist rule, Eva's father's business was nationalized. In March 1948, he "illegally" escaped from Czechoslovakia and lived in West Germany and then France, but he returned to Czechoslovakia later that year. After a brief stint of employment at the store he previously owned, Eva's father ended up in one of the forced labor camps around Příbram. During a leave to attend his own father's funeral, he escaped from the camp and emigrated again, this time to Canada.

Eva's file contains a detailed description of her youth and troubled adolescence. Coming from a position of relative privilege and wealth, she hit rock bottom after her family was deprived of its wealth, which forced her to live with the stigma of being "a traitor's daughter."

From 1945, she had maintained close ties with members of the Junák movement.²⁹ Eva later confessed to the StB that, as an underage girl, she was molested and sexually abused by one of Junák's high officials at the time. She described him as "a bully and very violent," and her file euphemistically notes that they had had "repeated sexual intercourse, when [Eva] was not even 14 years old." The StB stated that this individual was a very bad influence and everything but loyal to the regime. He led a group of so-called "Golden Youngsters:" a group of youth that favored the "American" way of living, which included reading comic books, wearing US flags, and writing anti-regime slogans on buildings. Indeed, some "Golden Youngsters" were investigated and imprisoned in the 1950s as dangerous individuals and armed robbers.

Eva's file reveals that her economic status dropped precipitously after her parents' property was nationalized in 1948. After leaving middle school, she passed a special course for child nurses and subsequently worked as a nurse. In 1954, at the age of 19, Eva married to a veterinarian. The couple had one son together the following year, and later, they also had a daughter. When she was recruited by the StB, Eva's only source of income was an allowance provided to her by the state; at the time, her husband was performing mandatory service with the army. Her husband was an atheist with "a positive attitude towards the regime," and reportedly, he had a "very good influence on her."

Eva is described as a woman of "a pretty and nice appearance, so men [are] constantly interested in her." Her file states that, before her marriage, she behaved recklessly, especially with men, due to "her extreme youth and lack of parental supervision." Comparatively, her behavior was said to have become "very proper, not eccentric nor exaggerated" in the wake of her marriage.

²⁹ Czech Scouts organization, which was disbanded in 1948 by the Communists. Some of its members were persecuted by the regime.

Her main hobby was motorcycle riding, and at work, she was considered to be a reliable employee. She was also noted as having a good reputation and social skills.

During an interview with state authorities in 1955, Eva “voluntarily and on her own initiative” shared information regarding the criminal activities of a local priest that she had befriended. She disclosed that he had been listening to a foreign broadcast and let others, including Eva, listen too. This, and various other reports that she provided on her colleagues at work, prompted the StB to recruit her as an informant.

The StB realized very well that due to Eva’s ‘troubled’ past and family background, some “hostile elements” – namely former officials and members of the Junák movement – fully trusted her. Furthermore, the StB noted that her family maintained close ties with “former people,” including rich businessmen, prominent lawyers, and politicians from the city of Příbram and its surrounding neighborhood. However, the StB’s ambitions for Eva stretched beyond these social circles. After her maternity leave, she was to work as a nurse in a hospital in Příbram, where many of its doctors and employees allegedly opposed the regime. She was expected to inform on them, and last but not least, the StB was interested in her father’s friends and acquaintances.

Therefore, on June 9, 1955, the StB submitted a request that her informer’s file be created. The handwritten proposal neatly stated that “[Eva] made a request to cooperate with the organs of the Ministry of the Interior on the basis of voluntary decision.”

Dožádání
(o zavedení, přidání-neb-odstranění osobního svazku agenta-residenta-a informátora).

v Příbrami _____ Dne 9. června 1955

Je referent staršího Obuch Milan
(funkce, hodnost, místo operativního orgánu)

dučetního dne jsem prohlédl materiály osoby [REDACTED]

*) agenta, informátora, residenta, krycího jména „EVA“

SHLEDEL JSEM:

že jmenovaná si poctala žádost o spolupráci
s orgány MV na základě dobrovolného rozhodnutí.

a proto _____ ŽÁDAM.

1956 7 „EVA“
Osobní svazek č. [REDACTED]
(agent, resident, krycí jméno, iniciály)

It is not readily discernible whether Eva actively volunteered, or whether she was blackmailed into collaboration.³⁰ Given her family background, and her ‘reckless and irresponsible’ behavior in her youth, the StB assuredly had plenty of material to ‘compromise’ the 19-year-old Eva.

The StB was well aware that, at the time of her recruitment, she had an unenthusiastic attitude toward the regime, as she had been raised in a “very rich” Catholic family. During her adolescence she hung out with the ‘wrong individuals,’ and therefore, her cadre profile³¹ was tainted. Nevertheless, her StB officer remained optimistic about her potential as an informant, affirming that: “it is to be expected that on the basis of the progressive influence of her husband and on the basis of our contacts, [Eva] will become an ideological collaborator.”

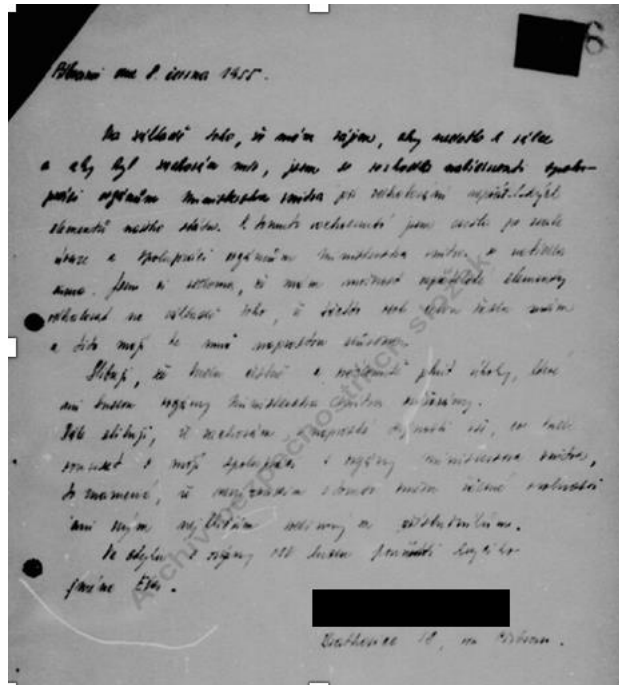
Indeed, Eva informed to the StB for the next 32 years, even on matters involving her family members. Her informing did not appear to be fueled by ideology or devotion. Rather, it seemed opportunistically motivated, stemming from her materialistic desire, and her desire to maneuver along the limited avenues provided by the regime for someone with Eva’s problematic past and family inheritance.

In June 1955, she handwrote her pledge to collaborate with the StB, reproduced below. She promised to maintain the confidentiality of her contacts, and to diligently fulfil every task assigned to her; she also confirmed therein that she would be using the codename “Eva.” As her motivation Eva wrote the following:

On the basis of my interest in preventing war and maintaining peace, I have decided to offer my cooperation to the organs of the Ministry of the Interior to uncover enemy elements against our state. [...] I am aware that I am capable of discovering enemies of the state, because I know many of them and they have trust in me.

³⁰ Certain reports in Eva’s file reiterate her voluntariness, and state that she was secured for cooperation on an “ideological” or “patriotic basis.” Yet, other reports state that she was recruited as a result of compromising materials. That said, it was commonplace for the StB to identify informants as volunteering to collaborate out of their allegiance to the regime or the communist cause, despite no such evidence existing in the record.

³¹ A cadre assessment was a practice of official screening for employment and study purposes whereby Czechoslovak citizens were assessed for their social fitness based on their family background, political views, and public (and private) conduct and statements.



Eva's trajectory as an informer was very much tainted by her past and her family background. Moreover, her 'defective' upbringing and lukewarm attitude toward the establishment prompted the StB to be quite suspicious of her. For example, on one occasion, the StB tested her honesty by staging an encounter between her and another informer; he had been instructed to extract information from Eva about her father. However, she was not very forthcoming to this inquiry, as she stated that she was not in touch with her father, and that she did not know where he was.

Another informer, who was her relatively close acquaintance at the time, reported that, after several meetings with Eva and her husband, the couple confirmed that they had indeed been corresponding with her father. They stated that he had sent them letters and postcards, albeit to a different address. Allegedly, her father had also promised to give her a car for her 24th birthday. There are many similar reports describing family visits or random encounters with Eva that revealed details about her father, and the regularity of their correspondence. One informer even claimed to have known Eva since she was "a little kid."

Her father's presence and absence suffuses both Eva's file and Eva's life in many different respects. For example, one report describes how her husband allegedly seduced a teenage girl. He reportedly told this girl that "he was ashamed of his wife because she is the daughter of [the name of Eva's father], who fled abroad." The StB also used Eva and the figure of her father to provoke his former friends, thereby resulting in their self-incrimination. On another occasion, Eva complained to the StB about how her husband did not receive a promotion because "his father-in-law is abroad," and because "he married a girl from a dubious family." She believed

that this type of conduct from an employer was “not right as her husband should not suffer because of her father.”

From the get-go, Eva seemingly used her cooperation with the StB as leverage to obtain things for her and her family, and to overcome the difficulties that her questionable cadre profile would have otherwise meant for her. She asked the StB for help in getting a promotion for her husband and with getting rid of one of her tenants. In return, she promised that she would submit more reports. Due to her tendency to act in “*a quid pro quo*” way, her informing accelerated and improved when she “need[ed] different advice or even interventions.” Thus, the StB conceived of using financial rewards to incentivize her cooperation, as at the time, her financial situation was dire. However, there is no indication that Eva received any such rewards.³² In later reports, her StB officer praised her for her relatively good attitude toward informing, but noted that, at times “she [gave] the impression that she [wanted] to personally benefit from her collaboration.”

Eva’s evaluation reports from the late 1950s and early 1960s state that, notwithstanding her lack of attendance at various meetings due to her preoccupation with childcare, pregnancy, or her job, she submitted “a couple of valuable reports.” Her evaluation further noted that she was a willing, bright, and intelligent cooperative, who conscientiously fulfilled her tasks; however, her cooperation was described as inconsistent and irregular. She accomplished some tasks and disregarded others, using her family as a justification for her performance. At the time, the StB appeared to empathize with her plight, as one report from 1958 stated that “she should be excused.”

In March 1961, Eva was redirected to the “issues of ‘fugitives.’” She was instructed to use the ties she had with capitalist states to inform on illegally emigrated Czechoslovaks abroad, and on their relatives or friends remaining at home. Notably, her father and mother were members of these target groups. The StB used Eva for “direct correspondence” with her father; to get information on his stay and movements abroad; and to extract information about his former connections in Czechoslovakia. However, Eva continued to meet with the StB on an irregular basis; her results were described as “average”; and she still wanted to reap personal benefits as a reward for her informing. Interestingly, other informants monitoring her believed her to be “absolutely credible and serious.”

In May 1966, Eva was permitted to travel to Switzerland to meet her father. The StB instructed her to observe and investigate his social status, political opinions, connections, and overall activities abroad. The StB trusted her enough “not to abuse [her] travels to Switzerland.” Her mission was well accomplished, as in October 1966, Eva was rewarded with 500 Kčs for her

³² By the end of her collaboration, Eva had become the recipient of regular financial compensation.

“interesting and valuable insights” on the activities of her father, and his high-level connections to the Vatican.”

The report from Eva’s visit abroad noted that her father was surprisingly “measured” with her; it turned out that he suspected that she was cooperating with the StB. He openly asked her about her collaboration, but she denied it. Eva stated that her father “conducted himself very sharply as an enemy of [Czechoslovakia].” He tried to convince her to stay in Switzerland, but she returned home. Eva subsequently warned the StB that her father was liable to try to persuade her brother to stay with him in Switzerland, but that this outcome was unlikely because he “[had] a kid and [was] expecting another. Nothing [could] be excluded though.”

In 1967, the StB became increasingly more suspicious of Eva. Her StB officer noted that “he cannot shake the feeling that she is in some instances not direct” and proposed to install a bug in her apartment. Her officer also remarked that she was unreachable, and that she continued to miss meetings. Eva explained that her phone had not been working, which apparently “[was] not true” according to STB investigation. Nevertheless, Eva was unafraid to again ask the StB for help; this time, she asked for assistance with travel arrangements to Austria for her husband and son.

The StB’s suspicions of Eva’s foul play continuously grew to the extent that a wiretap was ultimately installed in her apartment. These suspicions were well-founded: the wiretap revealed that she had ‘deconspired’ herself by confiding in her husband about her collaboration with the StB. This was especially problematic because he “[did] not have a good relationship with security services.” Moreover, it was discovered that Eva “disinformed” her StB officer, and thus her behavior toward the StB was not “serious.” For these reasons, and because it was possible that Eva had also told her father about her collaboration when she visited him in 1966, the StB terminated the cooperation in 1968.³³ Accordingly, the StB’s already-wavering trust in Eva was broken; but not for long.

In 1969,³⁴ the StB renewed its collaboration with Eva, and that year, they used her in an operation, which was focused on the former Junák movement. In October 1971, an internal proposal to renew collaboration with Eva was approved. Interestingly, the StB proposal slightly reframed the reasons for ending the relationship with Eva two years earlier: “the collaboration [...] was ended, because there had been family disputes between her and her husband, so [Eva]

³³ The StB did not inform Eva that her collaboration had been ended. Additionally, later reports noted that the “events of 1968 and 1969” were another reason for “the interruption.”

³⁴ The handwritten date in the file is difficult to read.

refused contact with us. Additionally, when trying to solve family problems, she deconspired herself to him, which she kept secret from her commanding officer.”

Eva’s husband had already emigrated to West Germany, also known as the Bundesrepublik Deutschland, or BRD, by the time her contacts with the StB had been renewed. The couple had also divorced but remained in touch. Eva also “sought out the StB’s help again” “in order to be allowed to travel to [BRD]”³⁵ so that she could inform on the activities of her former husband. In 1970, Eva indeed traveled to West Germany, where she also met up her father. She then saw her dad again in 1971 when she traveled to Switzerland.

Despite being hesitant about the degree of Eva’s directness and honesty, the StB stated that, the main reason her collaboration had been renewed is because she brought in “truthful” and “significant” information about her father, the church, and Junák activities in Příbram. The proposal also noted that “currently [,] [Eva] has more or less resolved all of her personal and financial issues, she lives an orderly life, and takes care of her two children.” She was further characterized as being “very practical in her behavior; [and] focused on money, which she places above her family and personal interests.” Thus, Eva “[wanted] to keep good relations [with the StB], which [allowed] her to travel abroad [to obtain] personal and material benefit.” Lastly, the proposal noted that she was not at risk of emigration due to her children.

Eva’s StB officer also remained cognizant of her peculiar situation: the information she disclosed to the StB regarding her father’s actions during WWII and his subsequent illegal emigration potentially “compromised” her in front of him. “[Eva] [was] very worried [that] if she emigrated, it would have had heavy consequences for her in the eyes of her father.” So again, her father’s tarnished past resurfaced, and together with her desire to make the most out of her situation, rendered her a sufficiently ‘suitable’ collaborator. Nevertheless, the StB again verified whether the information she had recently conveyed was truthful; it was. Therefore, Eva once again became an StB agent.

In this phase of the cooperation, Eva provided information on several target groups; the most important being: emigrants and their contacts in Czechoslovakia, representatives of the church, and the former members of Junák. Her file contains numerous typewritten reports of information that she provided, and in some instances Eva even asked to meet the StB on her own initiative. She also confided in them that she was thinking of leaving Czechoslovakia with her children to join her former husband abroad, or at a minimum, she considered sending her kids to school in Switzerland. She asked the StB to help arrange her permit to travel. She even told them that, if she was not allowed to travel abroad by ‘regular’ means, her former husband had identified a

³⁵ As noted in a later report from June 22, 1972.

person in BRD who had recently visited Czechoslovakia and met Eva, that was willing to 'marry' her, thus enabling her to enter West Germany.

It is interesting that Eva shared this potentially damaging information with the StB. A handwritten note, most probably by an StB superior officer, signed by the letter K, added to this report states:

My opinion since the beginning is clear – reject! the trip to BRD because the abovenamed is not using her contacts with us to pursue societal benefits, just her own – in this she has not changed a bit!

Stanoška 'argum' 2. Jak možná dále -
Můj stanovisko je od prvních zpráv - záměrné!
ciztva do NDR neboli záměrné následuje
stýkání a malou prospekt společností, myšlenky
stý - a to se nemůže ani ojet!

K.

Zpráva státního úřadu (suzkui) dnem 1. 1. 2008 dle ustanovení § 153 odst. 3 zák. č. 41/2005 Sb.

In 1972, another proposal for Eva's travel abroad to Switzerland was rejected; another handwritten note states: "Results and aim [will not] overtake risks. It is necessary to tell her that the directive of visiting an emigrant is clear [,] and our influence is not enough." Despite this rejection, Eva apparently tried to travel without the support of the StB as a private citizen, as the next document in the file is an order to stop her at the borders and prevent her departure from Czechoslovakia.

The StB remained interested in Eva's father. However, they no longer considered it wise to involve Eva in the operation as:

It is unrealistic and already in the past [;]using Eva to snoop on her father did not bring any results. In her person there are no guarantees of seriousness and reliability, she [again] revealed her contacts with the StB to her husband when visiting in BRD [...]. And [,] as she herself notes [,] she does not have any real possibilities in this respect [,] as [Eva's father] refuses any contacts with the whole family [,] and it seems that he suspects her of collaboration [with the StB].

The report notes that, if Eva was permitted to travel abroad, she could use this as an opportunity to emigrate; thus, she should no longer be used for tasks abroad and should be strictly limited to the internal issues of the Catholic church and the Junák.

At the beginning of the collaboration, the StB hoped to “educate” Eva to become a devoted, patriotic citizen and informant. However, as time passed, it seemed as though this mission had not been accomplished. For instance, a memorandum from the 1970s described her as “erratic/unsettled and emotional, selfish [,] and interested in material advantages.” At the time, Eva was collecting antiquities for her cottage in a small town in the Plzeň district. The memo reiterated that, even though her reports were proven to be truthful, she had “flaws [,] as she maintain[ed] collaboration mainly for her own profit.”

After Eva had been prohibited from traveling abroad, she appeared dejected, perhaps even jaded, and “her behavior changed.” A report from 1972 states that she “did not convey some information from her contacts, instead saying that she [did] not remember it anymore.” However, on other occasions, she seemingly took initiative. Despite these flaws, Eva still informed on enough interesting and truthful information to avoid being ‘canceled’ again.

Eva’s personal life was likely not easy in the early 1970s. At the time, her father was the subject of a public smear campaign in the Czech media regarding his collaboration with the Nazis during WWII and his contacts in the Vatican; in all likelihood, the StB played a role in the promotion of this campaign. This demoralizing publicity appeared to have negatively affected Eva’s relations with her neighbors and friends. An anonymous letter addressed to the USSR Embassy in Prague accused her, among others, of being hostile toward the establishment, owning excessive property, and maintaining contacts with illegal emigrants abroad. In this typewritten document, the anonymous author claimed that no one in Czechoslovakia was concerned about the “subversive and antisocialist convictions” of Eva and those named in the latter, and that “there was no one who would stop and think how possibly they can lead such a profitable and prosperous life which does not correspond to their legal income”. The anonymous author asked

for Soviet investigation of the matter. This letter must have been forwarded to the StB, as it somehow ended up in Eva's file.

Eva's daughter was not allowed to study at a school of her choice, and the StB refused to intervene in the matter.³⁶ Moreover, her son was detained for allegedly attempting to emigrate during a vacation he took to the Baltic sea.³⁷ These developments and frustrations cast a pall over Eva's collaboration. A report from 1974 states that Eva attended meetings "irregularly" and was "disinterested in [...] fulfilling the tasks" she was given, and her request for a trip abroad to Yugoslavia was again denied. Eva lost interest in the StB after the collaboration failed to bring her any tangible benefits.

In July 1974, Eva married a gynecologist. It seemed her life got back on track. An evaluation report from the end of 1974 seemed to have a much more positive tone: Eva had attended almost all of her requisitioned meetings, and her reports proved to be truthful. For the second time in her career as an informer, Eva also received financial rewards for her performance. In early 1974, she received 500 Kčs, and in August 1974, she received another 500 Kčs as a wedding present. In July 1975, she received 2,000 Kčs as a celebration of her 20-year-anniversary with the StB. In December 1975, she received 500 Kčs just prior to giving birth to her third child.

Following the birth of her third-born and her subsequent maternity leave, Eva's contacts with the StB were reduced. Nevertheless, her reports remained "of good quality," and, on two separate occasions, she was again rewarded with 500 Kčs. The StB also intervened and helped her "solve [unspecified] family issues." According to the reports, Eva was "active and [took] initiative," and completed her tasks "independent[ly]." However, true to her spirit, she "relatively frequently asked [the StB] for help in solving family and private matters."

In 1977, Eva was again given 500 Kčs "for fulfilling tasks [...] with initiative." Also around that time, talk of her father reemerged: a report from 1978 describes the confiscation of six postcards/letters from Austria. These letters were described as "containing text offending the addressees and Czechoslovak establishment," and were likely sent by Eva's father; her file does not specify exactly what happened with this information. In 1978, after her maternity leave ended, Eva received another financial injection from the StB for "substantially contributing to the realization of [yet another] operation [...]" During 1978, her meetings were "regular," and she conveyed useful information.

³⁶ Another report states that the StB "facilitated" the matter, so that she could graduate from a school for nurses.

³⁷ The StB consequently put him under surveillance, including the installation of a wiretap, but he later emigrated anyway.

In the following years, the intensity of Eva's contacts with the StB lessened, mostly because she became much busier at work. She also did not receive any financial rewards during this time, nor were any interventions conducted for her benefit. Importantly, in 1980, the Czechoslovak government allowed its citizens to travel abroad to visit their direct relatives without a permit. Perhaps Eva felt that, as of then -- at least for travelling -- she did not need the StB anymore, or not so urgently. She traveled to Switzerland again (twice)³⁸ and in 1985 she planned to visit her son, who meanwhile also had emigrated to BDR. In 1986, Eva attended her son's graduation ceremony abroad.

Even taking her frequent travels into account, evaluation reports from the 1980s stated that "[Eva] [spent] most of her time building her new family home." In these later reports Eva was also characterized as a "serious and long-term secret collaborator, who [had] a very warm relationship with her StB officer." Nevertheless, a report still remarked that she "[attempted] to [use the StB] to solve her personal issues." In 1985, Eva was given a financial reward to mark the anniversary of her 30-year collaboration. Over the course of these thirty years, her rapport with the StB ebbed and flowed in calm waves.

In 1987, a proposal to end Eva's collaboration was filed because, as she herself pointed out, her former StB officer most likely deconspired her, as "he contacted her family members and discussed with them family matters and the like." It was a very cryptic way to terminate the 32-year-long, relatively fruitful, mutually beneficial relationship. Eva's previous informing was very positively evaluated in her termination proposal.

Even though Eva began on shaky ground, she grew into a capable and conniving informer over the thirty plus years of her career. She engaged in a *quid pro quo* relationship with the StB and was a very willing collaborator, so long as she received material things and favors in return. When that did not happen, she paused and waited for 'better times' to come. Because the StB still obtained useful information from her during these times, they responsively played this game with her.

³⁸ The second time was in 1986 after her father died in order to take care of inheritance.

HÁJEK³⁹

Hájek was born in 1929. Hájek's father was initially employed as a locksmith, but following WWI, he began working for a bank. During WWI, Hájek's father volunteered for the Czechoslovak Legions and fought with the Allies. Sadly, he died in 1949 when Hájek was only 20 years old. Hájek's mother was primarily a homemaker, taking care of the household and the family; she also did small jobs as a seamstress. Hájek was an only child, and his mother clung to him, especially after his father died.

In 1948, Hájek finished *gymnasium* in Prague; and in 1952, he graduated university with a degree in economics. He did well in school: he enjoyed studying languages and playing sports, particularly soccer. In 1945, Hájek became an active member of the Junák,⁴⁰ where he rapidly ascended rank to become the leader of its local unit. He was said to have greatly enjoyed the Junák since "it fit his honest and friendly nature." He was also quite popular with his fellow scouts, some of whom remained his life-long friends; these friends and fellow acquaintances were one of the main reasons for the StB's interest in Hájek. However, Hájek was not keen to snitch on his friends.

Nor was he interested in politics. In fact, Hájek seemed to avoid everything and anything political, keeping mostly to himself and his family.⁴¹ During WWII, Hájek was described as "a proper Czech:" he did not participate in any youth activist organizations, nor did he join any political party or organization after the Communist take-over in 1948. His file notes that "[a]t his place of residence, he [did] not take part in any public or political events." Despite his passivity and disinterest in public affairs, his neighbors regarded him as trustworthy and believed that "he ha[d] a generally positive attitude towards the establishment." He was even seen as "progressive in some respects," although his file fails to specify how or in what ways.

After completing his compulsory military service, Hájek became employed at the Czechoslovak Chamber of Commerce (*Československá Obchodní Komora, ČOK*) in the department of foreign

³⁹ Hájek's file does not contain his picture.

Position: Confidant; Informant; Candidate for Secret Collaboration

File No.: 643796

Registration No.: 1233

File created: 1958; File archived: 1986

Page count: 200 pages

Hájek was never given agent status. Additionally, the length of his file is short compared to the thirty-year duration of his collaboration; it is also relatively scattered. A significant number of documents in his file are indicated as having been destroyed by the StB. His other cover name mentioned in the file is "Halaken."

⁴⁰ The Junák was a Czech Scouts organization disbanded by the Communists in 1948. Some of its members were persecuted by the regime. The Junák was 'replaced' by a pro-Party youth organization called the 'Pionýr.'

⁴¹ The only remotely political activity in which Hájek participated was his mandatory military service, which he completed immediately after his graduation. During his time in the army, he organized and actively took part in "a political training" of his fellow soldiers; he was praised and rewarded by his superior ten times for his engagement in this activity. This was the only public display of Hájek's "politics."

exhibitions. He was a polyglot, fluent in English, German, Russian, and French; thus, this was a perfect job for him, as it enabled him to exercise his language proficiencies and social skills. The ČOK evaluated him as a “thorough and talented employee, who [was] entrusted with important functions.” According to the StB, Hájek’s behavior had “petty bourgeois features, which were admired in the West,” resulting in very fruitful business contacts abroad.

Hájek was described as a quiet, intelligent, well-mannered, and reliable individual. In the advent of his collaboration with the StB, he did not visit “pubs or other defective places, nor did he seek company or friends.” He was devoted to his family, and he lived a secluded family life. His file describes his family members as “reactionary,” they are presented as not being model citizens of the Communist state. Much like Hájek, his wife did not partake in political or public life. At the place of their residence, “she [was] known for her reactionary opinions and her haughty behavior.” The couple shared a household with Hájek’s in-law; Hájek’s father-in-law was a Party member, but this membership was presented as stemming from “opportunism [...] in order to keep his job” after 1948. Hájek’s mother-in-law was not registered in any political party, and eschewed all public and political activities organized at their place of residence. Indeed, one of the first StB reports compiled about Hájek states that she “would rather be living in capitalism.”

Hájek and his extended family enjoyed the financial comfort he obtained through his job and frequent travels abroad. The rumor was that his wife had only married Hájek for his money: apparently, she broke off her previous engagement to “a boy she really liked” because Hájek presented her much better financial security. Indeed, he frequently gave his wife and family members impressive gifts, like dresses and fur coats, that he had purchased during his travels. So, even though Hájek “did not have a high salary, they had a very well-furnished apartment and all [family members] were luxuriously dressed.”

On September 5, 1958, the StB drafted a proposal to recruit Hájek as a cooperative “on a patriotic basis.” They assumed that, despite his and his family’s lukewarm relation to the regime, he would be willing to cooperate to protect, and even enhance, his already lucrative employment and tony social status. Indeed, collaborating with the StB was not likely to award Hájek with any additional travel benefits, as he already traveled frequently for his job; however, this collaboration was likely to increase Hájek’s probability that he attained his own desires and those of his family.

The StB were mainly curious about Hájek’s existing ties to former Junák members, as the StB assumed that he had changed his mind about his allegiance to these respective groups. His file reads: “After the Junák had been disbanded [,] [Hájek] did not try to carry on its mission nor was interested in it anymore.” He must have “understood the harmful influence of scouting on the youth.” However, the StB had misapprehended the situation. A handwritten note on the proposal adds “A possibility to use his travels abroad” suggesting another possible space to engage Hájek and ask him to inform from his travels. Ultimately, this was the only context regarding which Hájek was willing to make disclosures to the StB.

After some reflection, the StB realized that asking Hájek to inform on his friends and former scouts was a 'no-go.' An addendum to Hájek's recruitment plan from October 1958 stated that "the original conception of recruitment will be implemented, with the exception that [,] for now [,] we will not talk of scouting ... the candidate will be recruited for foreign issues and persons at ČOK traveling abroad."

Following Hájek's recruitment, the StB devised a plan to test him by requesting that he gather information on two of their other cooperatives. Whether this task was ultimately given to, or completed by, Hájek remains nebulous. Interestingly, notwithstanding Hájek's lukewarm affinity to the Party, he was nevertheless referred to as a "conscious and patriotic [...] citizen."

Drafted on November 7, 1958, the report on Hájek's recruitment meeting stated that his recruitment at the StB office took place "according to plan." The report noted that he came on time; shared "his right/correct" opinions on international affairs; positively evaluated Czechoslovak foreign policy; and "critically touched [only] upon certain aspects of foreign trade," such as its "rigidity and inflexibility compared to [...] capitalist [states]." Hájek willingly shared information on his business travels abroad, and even volunteered anecdotes when he disagreed with behavior of one of his colleagues who failed to act "tactically at the fair in the US, as he was offering slivovitz to Petr Zenkl".⁴² Moreover, after an StB officer "hint[ed]" at his potential collaboration, Hájek allegedly agreed in "general terms." Reportedly, Hájek appeared to understand the necessity of "conducting such preventative measures, which would stop criminal activities."

However, when push came to shove and the StB officer openly inquired about his willingness to collude, Hájek hesitated. "[Hájek] did not act dismissively [...] as [he] understood [collaboration] as a civic and patriotic duty." Nonetheless, he requested two days indulgence to make his final decision. He had to think about whether he was up for the task, as he wanted "to fully dedicate himself to [collaboration] as his own hobby." However, according to the report, the StB did not fancy his reluctance and "talked him out of it." Hájek also confessed to his recruiting officer that – in addition to doubting his ability to fully dedicate himself to the cooperation – he was anxious about what his life abroad would be like during the collaboration. His anxiety allegedly stemmed from his conclusion that the "K.K.K. in the U.S.A. is not far from removing in any way whatsoever people, who do not suit them or whom they find suspicious." The StB officer responded that he would not be given any tasks that could harm him. Allegedly, Hájek agreed to collaborate in the wake of these reassurances. However, he did not sign a pledge to cooperate, as he was afraid that he would be compromised abroad. Accordingly, he refrained from creating any paper trail.

⁴² Petr Zenkl was an exiled politician and chairman of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia, based in Washington, D.C.

On November 17, 1958, Hájek was registered as an informer under the codename “Halaken.” In contrast to the outcomes of the previous discussions within the StB, the issue of “the youth – Junák” was listed as Hájek’s priority.

However, the aspirational goals set for Hájek were never fulfilled, as he essentially collaborated on his own terms. He resolutely and openly refused to inform on his colleagues from Junák; in particular, he staunchly declined to disclose information about five of his closest, long-term friends. Yes, he was willing to share information from his numerous travels abroad, or on foreigners he had been working with in Czechoslovakia, but even in these instances, he supplied only what was necessary to keep the StB at bay. He came across as a reluctant and hesitant informer, and this characterization pervades his file.

As Hájek had traveled the world before and during his career as an informer, his StB file also ‘traveled’ through various internal divisions, sub-divisions, and commanding officers. These frequent transfers were assumedly due to changes in his target groups and focus, and likely because of his “not so satisfactory results.” Hájek encountered at least nine different commanding officers over time, although some of these transfers were because some supervisors had been suspended, or because they left the StB to travel.

Hájek’s reports were mainly “informative,” as opposed to operational. He steadfastly refused to report anything whatsoever about his closest friends. While the StB may have initially had some optimism regarding his utility in snooping on Junák’s members, this evaporated. For example, some StB evaluation reports noted with discontent that Hájek had no potential when it came to the Junák, as most of the former members were out of his reach: he either refused to inform upon them or did not maintain any contacts with them. However, once the StB realized that Hájek could obtain information from his business trips abroad and his contacts with foreigners, he became exclusively responsible for these matters. In this regard, Hájek conveyed “informative knowledge” and “expressed himself very positively,” and he fulfilled the tasks given to him.

In 1959, Hájek spent 270 days in the USSR prepping Czechoslovak national exhibitions. He returned to Czechoslovakia twice that year, and he met with the StB on both occasions. Hájek’s file does not provide any information regarding the content of these meetings. Moreover, because, at the time, Hájek was preoccupied with his job at ČOK, his file was transferred to the StB department that dealt with ČOK. His evaluation reports noted that Hájek had a “tendency to convey reports on professional problems and persons, connected to them, from [ČOK].” Information Hájek conveyed was checked by another informer with a “positive result.” No persons were “realized” based on his reports.

In 1964, due to an internal reorganization of ČOK, Hájek stopped organizing exhibitions abroad. Thus, the StB refocused him on his general business travels, particularly trips he took to the

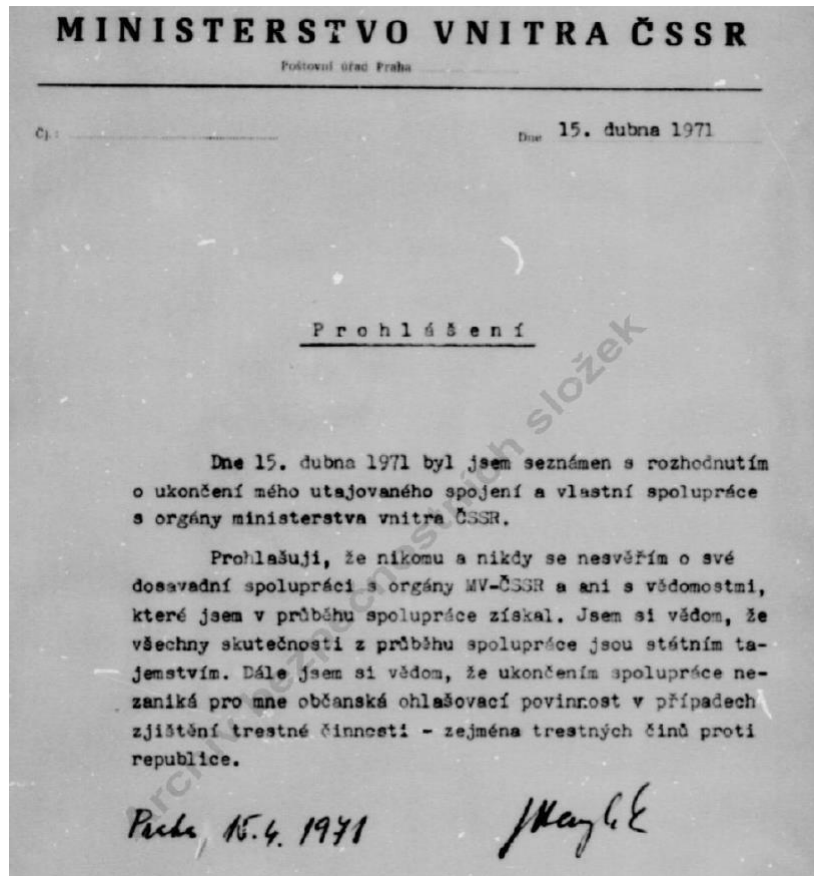
U.K., and his file was again transferred to another department. More specifically, Hájek was to observe British businessmen traveling to Czechoslovakia, a handful of people from the London Chamber of Commerce, and the individuals who were employed at the U.K. embassy in Prague. His overarching goal was to locate the individuals in these groups worthy of further follow-up by the StB; however, Hájek was not meeting the StB expectations. His reports “remain[ed] superficial and [did] not reach the necessary depth,” and his written reports were “incomplete.” Although Hájek fulfilled his tasks with precision, he “never went far” on his own initiative.

For instance, Hájek submitted a typewritten report regarding a business trip he took to Great Britain in 1963, where he, and an accompanying delegation, visited metallurgic industries. His report was very technical, dry, and descriptive, and it rendered only an exact itinerary. With respect to members of the delegation, the report states: “Their big interest was to save money as much as possible. Therefore, they waited for dinner or lunch invitations. Otherwise, they ate only chocolates and bananas.”

Perhaps due to his unsatisfactory performance, and the potential of exploiting his informer abilities on a different set of issues, Hájek’s file was again transferred back to the department dealing with ČOK. He was still viewed as a “reliable cooperative, but it [was] necessary for his commanding officer to be consistent and firmly request that he fulfill his tasks.” The StB “[did] not expect high results” from Hájek, but “he [was] willing to collaborate [,] and his contacts abroad [were] [...] certainly interesting.”

In 1968, Hájek’s file wandered again back to the department of foreign trade. In an evaluation report, his new StB officer noted that, despite the fact that the contact “has not lasted long, I recommend [keeping] him in the network. [...] In response to my direct inquiry today as to whether he wanted to collaborate, he answered that he considered it to be his duty [,] and that he was well aware that no state around the world could exist without this service.” Hájek was again tasked with focusing on the “British-Czechoslovak section of ČOK” and foreigners from England. The report also noted that Hájek had a “negative attitude about informing on our citizens.”

In December 1970, a proposal to end Hájek’s collaboration and archive his file was approved by the StB. This proposal noted his initial refusal to inform on members of the Junák as reasons for his termination. In addition, the proposal observed Hájek’s tumultuous journey through various StB departments and commanding officers; it further identified discrepancies within its internal procedures, and violations of its internal directive governing work with informants. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Hájek acquiesced to the severance. On April 15, 1971, he signed a declaration of confidentiality, which stated that he had been notified of the decision to end his cooperation; that he agreed not to reveal his cooperation, nor the knowledge he acquired in light of its status as a state secret; and that he was aware that his civic duty to inform upon criminal activities, especially crimes against the state, did not cease with the conclusion of his collaboration.



However, this formal declaration did not result in Hájek's tangible termination, as in June 1973, the StB conceived of interviewing him about his contacts with those employed by the U.S. Embassy in Prague. These individuals frequently sought out Hájek regarding U.S. business ventures in Prague, and they visited him throughout the year at ČOK.

Thus, Hájek was reinstated as "a candidate for secret collaboration." The StB met Hájek in a restaurant in Prague in August 1973. Hájek declared that he was "willing to inform on his contacts with foreigners, and on their interests, but that, as he had previously stipulated, he had no desire to convey information on people he [did] not know well." The StB reassured Hájek that they were particularly interested in foreigners, and he agreed to reignite the collaboration.

Other StB informers were tasked with assessing Hájek's reliability, and he seemingly passed the test. Based on "preliminary personal contacts and review of available materials" in September 1973, a proposal for the renewal of Hájek's collaboration was made; this time under the cover name Hájek. This proposal praised Hájek's political passivity as, in 1968, "he did not manifest any rightist tendencies or [...] opportunistic directions, which is proven by his positive recommendation for his current function." His new StB officer immediately suggested that Hájek be made into an "agent," but his superior appeared more circumspect of the idea. In the margins

of this typewritten proposal, he handwrote: “So far we have not verified whether he has a character commensurate to being an ‘agent.’ Therefore, do with him as with “D.”⁴³

Yet again, the StB seemed to be generally disappointed with Hájek. In 1977, an evaluation report stated that he was an “objective, intelligent [,] and open cooperative,” but that he “refuse[d] to inform on Czechoslovak citizens, specifically his former friends from the Junák.” Nevertheless, Hájek was said to have been “very willing to inform on foreigners.” There are hardly any other evaluation reports from this time period included in the file. Hájek’s file again was quite frequently transferred among different StB commanding officers (not clear for what reasons) and among different departments, noting that his “official contacts with US representatives render[ing] only marginal possibilities for their elaboration [of interest to the particular StB department]”.

In addition to his poor performance with the StB, Hájek was also plagued by personal and professional issues. At ČOK, he was transferred from the U.S.-U.K. department to the developing countries division, where he dealt with Asia in particular. Another informer reported that Hájek was transferred because he had discovered intimate details about the director of ČOK and other leading employees in the U.S. and the U.K.; thus, “he had to be dismissed.” Perhaps his bosses were conducting chicaneries that he became too close thereto; officially, the revocation stemmed from Hájek’s negligence at work and his lack of attendance at meetings; there were also rumors that he occasionally drank too much alcohol. Another informer’s report comments on his political passivity, and revealed that he was allegedly having numerous affairs with many different women, “which complicated his personal and family life.” Moreover, the informer said that, in his advanced age, Hájek began experiencing more health issues, and that this resulted in him drinking more: “[T]here are indications that Hájek is undergoing some sort of internal crisis.”

In 1978, a proposal to conduct an intelligence interview with Hájek noted that, “since 1975 [,] there had not been any contact” with him. Accordingly, the StB reevaluated whether he could be utilized for ČOK issues. This proposal also noted that, during his informing, Hájek’s “seriousness” would be monitored by another informer codenamed “Vlastimil.” In August 1978, this intelligence interview took place in the Belvedere Café in Prague. There, Hájek disclosed that his son was having issues with his admission to the Art Academy. It is unclear if Hájek mentioned this to elicit the StB’s assistance with this matter. The StB again asked Hájek to become more actively involved, and he agreed to the extent of his professional duties: “i.e.[,] questions pertaining to developing countries, particularly] in Asia [:] which foreigners from these countries deal[t] with ČOK, and what their interests-[were]. Under no circumstances [was] he willing to inform on his colleagues from ČOK and their interests, because *he would feel like a snitch* and could not look them in their eyes [emphasis added].”

⁴³ “D” meaning “důvěrník,” which translates to ‘confidant,’ a “lower” category of informants.

Thus, the pattern again continued. Hájek did not seem to have altered his personal principles, upon which he started collaboration in 1950's. The StB officer "explained" that they were primarily interested in foreigners, and that "[t]his [was] not about persecution of people, but about prevention of their criminality in relation to capitalist states." Hájek was reassured that he would only be required to indicate suspicious activities, and that he would thereby assist these colleagues by preventing their criminal prosecutions. According to the report, the StB encouraged him to "think it through properly and wait with his decision;" ultimately, Hájek agreed. However, despite this encouragement, an "Evaluation" reveals that Hájek was "reserved, mulling over every word and decision." Moreover, the StB characterized him as being "conceited and feeling underappreciated because his rich experience from when he worked on developed capitalistic states, such as the U.S. and Britain, [was] not being used."

It is uncertain if and how Hájek followed up on his promise to actively collaborate again. There are only two reports from two meetings included in his file. One report describes how, in 1978, Hájek apologetically arrived late to his meeting because he had been experiencing issues with his eyesight and was consequently on sick leave. He then confirmed that he was willing to collaborate "according to his abilities and possibilities."

On another occasion in March 1980, Hájek was tardy to his meeting because he was "busy at work." This report is quite notable because he seemingly violated his personal principles against involving and informing on his colleagues. He stated that he "got terribly angry with [a colleague of his], who acts very domineering [,] and bosses follow her." He elaborated that he "will be after her and for sure will find some information against her-that he will then convey to [the StB], so that [the StB] can liquidate her, meaning arrange for her dismissal from ČOK." He also disclosed that his boss allegedly stole a calendar from his desk and engaged in some, according to Hájek, suspicious financial machinations.

Clearly, things were going downhill for Hájek. In 1980, his evaluation report from work noted that his professional approach had radically changed in the wake of his transfer to the department for developing nations. It stated that "he limited himself only to following the directives and orders of his superiors," and that he took "almost no initiative." The report continued that "if [Hájek] does not radically change his attitude," he would be of no use to the office. Another entry also suggested that he be barred from traveling to capitalist states. Moreover, a group of his colleagues lamented his lack of discipline at work; his volatility; his "abnormal behavior"; and the fact that he routinely left the office whenever his superior was not present. Hájek did not agree with these conclusions and observations. His boss nonetheless transferred him to a different department focused more on internal economic affairs. Despite this transfer, his salary was to remain the same at 3,400 Kčs per month.

This downward spiral seemingly signified the end of Hájek's prosperous career, travels abroad, and his collaboration with the StB. There are no documents in his file from 1980 to 1986, but in April 1986, a proposal to archive Hájek's file was drafted. The proposal states that, following his

most recent transfer at work, he “lost possibilities” to inform on matters relevant to the StB. Because he was not expected to further “assume any positions of interest to the StB.” Hájek thus became useless to the StB.

During his whole informer trajectory Hájek was very forthright regarding what he was willing to reveal to the StB and what he was not. From the outset, he was very devoted to his friends, and he openly pledged that he would never betray them, despite the StB’s contrary desires. Later, extended this protected group to his colleagues, and in some instances during his dialogues with the StB he also mentioned all Czechoslovak citizens. By comparison, he was willing to disclose information about foreigners, although his collaboration in this context was rather circumspect and always on demand; he never took initiative. Hájek seemingly did not use his contacts with the StB to pursue any personal desires. This is likely because his job allowed him to lead a luxurious and fulfilling life that frequently included foreign travel. On only one occasion much later in his collaboration, did he discuss personal issues regarding his son’s difficulties in gaining admission to a university. Yet, even so, he seemingly did not ask the StB for assistance in the matter; perhaps, he suspected that the StB would not have been willing to help. Hájek’s file also indicates that, by the end of his life and professional career, he was troubled, experienced personal issues, professional demotion, and health struggles. Moreover, also toward the end of his life, he broke his personal promise to refrain from disclosing information on people close to him by informing on a colleague that he resented; he asked the StB to liquidate her.

In short, Hájek collaborated on his own terms, reticently and reluctantly, within his own limits. He never gave too much, and never seemed to have asked for anything; except at the end of his informer’s trajectory, where he likely tried to pull all the strings to keep himself professionally and personally relevant.

KONGRES⁴⁴



Kongres was born in 1931. His father was a professor at a gymnasium in Prague, and his mother was a housewife. Both of Kongres' parents were quite religious and regularly attended church. Neither was affiliated with any political party. In 1949, Kongres became a founding member of the Czechoslovak Youth Union, a Communist Party youth organization; otherwise, he was not very politically engaged. During his study of philology at Charles University, he was chided for his "low [political] activity"; he simply retorted that he did not have the time to be politically active because he had to also work for a living. Accordingly, Kongres worked as a translator for various foreign delegations while he was a student in university. As a young adult, he was considered to be "adventurous, with a tendency for practical jokes/pranks," and throughout his

⁴⁴ Position(s): Candidate for secret collaboration; Agent

File No.: 599667 (previously 787243)

Registration No.: 16701

File I created: 1957; File I archived: 1965

File II created: 1979; File II archived: 1987

Combined page count: 428 pages

The StB Archives contain yet another file on Kongres: File No.: 640120 Registration No.: 21487; File created: 1971 Page count: 38 pages. In this file, Kongres was a "a person of interest," meaning that he was investigated by the StB due to his connections with another person who was also under StB investigation. Kongres had been suspected of helping this other person to travel abroad. The information contained in this profile relies on all three of the above-mentioned files. Kongres' other cover name was "Galdos."

life, he undoubtedly pursued adventure and novelty. Moreover, he liked traveling, socializing, and seemingly marched to his own beat in his youth.

After graduating university in the mid 1950s, Kongres began teaching languages. According to his file, he was fluent in English, French, Spanish, Russian, and German. However, in 1957, Kongres found more stimulating employment at ČEDOK (The Czechoslovak Travel and Transport Agency, in Czech *Československá Cestovní a Dopravní Kancelář*), a Czechoslovak tourist agency, where he worked as a tour guide. In this position, he was able to frequently travel abroad and explore the world. He had reportedly visited every country in Europe, and many in the Americas and Asia. Accordingly, trips to the U.S., or Spain, or the United Kingdom were not exceptional.⁴⁵ Kongres also led an extroverted life when at home: he was a *bon vivant*, lived in the moment irrespective of the consequences, and he enjoyed partying. His file states that his “weak points [indeed were] women and alcohol.”

Kongres was thrice married. His first wife was also a translator, and they had one daughter together; his second wife, whom he had ‘befriended’ during his first marriage, was a stewardess, with “a questionable reputation” according to the StB; and his third wife was one of his colleagues from ČEDOK. He married his third wife in 1979 a month after he divorced his second wife. He and his third wife had one son together.

Kongres drank extensively. His file reveals that he was repeatedly prosecuted and punished for driving under the influence of alcohol or for “drunkenness.” He often came home tipsy or drunk; yet he never caused any domestic or public disturbances.

Kongres’ file includes a photograph of him in dark sunglasses, as if he wanted to hide himself, or perhaps, hide something from the StB. Indeed, in his relationship with the StB, he “misbehaved,” was occasionally evasive, and neglected to disclose crucial information. He seemed to “do his own thing,” especially during his first act with the StB.

Kongres’ first StB act started immediately after he began his job at ČEDOK in 1957. Because ČEDOK was the largest functioning, officially approved, travel agency in Czechoslovakia, it organized many of the private (legal) foreign contacts, trips, and travels to and from Czechoslovakia, including those that originated in capitalist states. Unsurprisingly, the StB closely followed ČEDOK and its employees, including Kongres.

⁴⁵ He travelled both for business trips and for leisure – for example, in 1979, he vacationed in Spain with his wife.

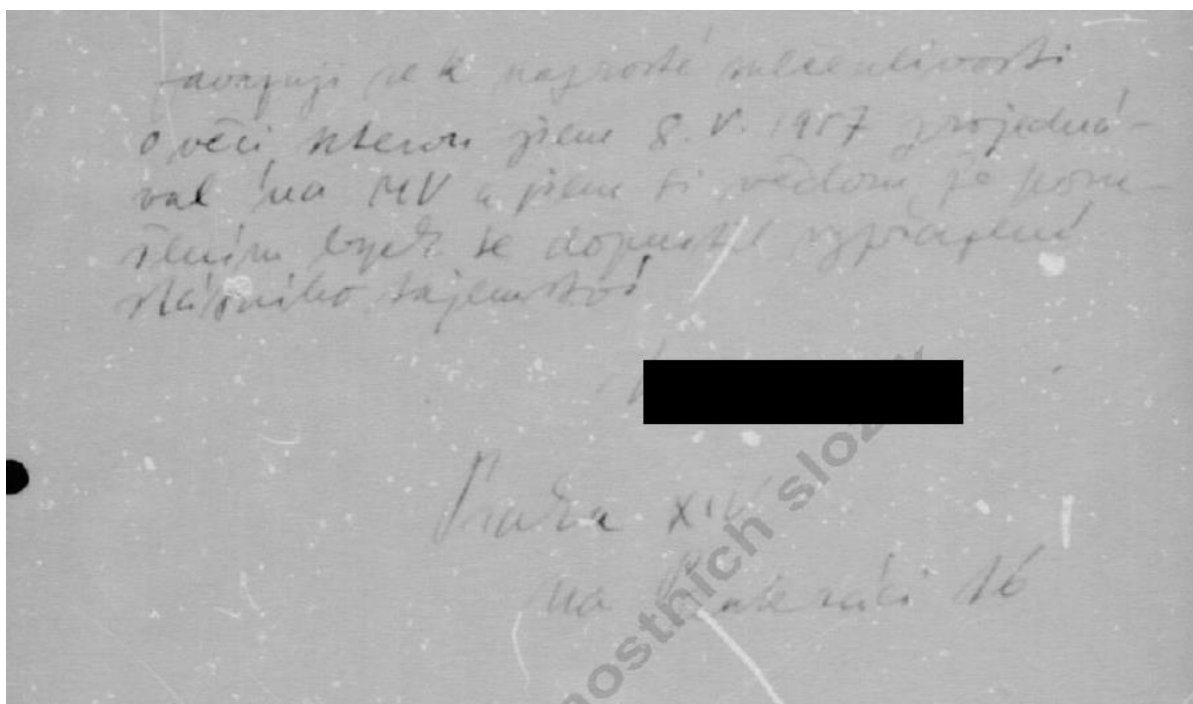
In 1957, the StB drafted a proposal to recruit Kongres as an informer under the cover name “Galdos.” The StB praised his language abilities, education, intelligence, and social skills, all of which portended a successful career as an informer. However, the proposal also notes that Kongres demonstrated rather arrogant, teenager-like behavior that “could be improved with good guidance.”

In May 1957, the StB met with Kongres to discuss his cooperation. The report notes that, at the outset, he was calm and composed, as he did not know what was at stake; however, after an StB officer explained “what the meeting was about,” he started to “prevaricate.” Moreover, after the officer “explained the [political] rightness of the cause,” Kongres “more or less understood the significance of cooperation.” He nevertheless hesitated, as “his nature would not allow him to approach people of interest to the StB and spy on them.” Kongres then invoked “his national pride,” stating that “even when foreigners he talked to had legitimate objections [against the Communist establishment], [he] always tried to explain the objections away to the benefit of the state to show that we value our state [,] and [that] we have national pride.”

Reportedly, the StB officers “explained everything”⁴⁶ to Kongres for a second time, stating that, regarding questions of state relevance, one should occasionally “let go of his principles.” A handwritten note in the margins of the report, likely authored by one of the StB higher-ups, asks: “Was it correctly explained?” Another note in different handwriting replies: “Certainly!”

According to his file, Kongres understood the explanation; was curious about his duties as an informer; and asked whether he would be able to express his opinions or whether he was required to fulfil every StB request irrespective of his potential reservations. After further unspecified explanation, Kongres stated that he had never been asked to make a decision of this magnitude, and therefore needed some time to think. The StB did not object, and asked Kongres to write down a pledge of confidentiality: “I pledge absolute confidentiality about a thing, which I discussed at the Ministry of the Interior on May 8, 1957, and I am fully aware that by breaking the pledge I would be disclosing state secrets.”

⁴⁶ It is unclear what that explanation entailed.



Despite his initial reluctance and doubt, Kongres ultimately agreed to cooperate. Subsequent StB evaluation reports state that he was recruited on a “patriotic basis.” That said, his initial hesitation did not evaporate.

Kongres was asked to inform both on foreigners coming to Czechoslovakia, and on Czechoslovaks traveling abroad on his guided trips. However, the reports he submitted in this period are not included in his file, thus the exact information he supplied to the StB at this time is unknown. On occasion, Kongres appeared to actively interact with the StB. In 1959, for instance, he met with his StB officer 34 times and authored “mainly informative reports.” He was evaluated as an “able and serious cooperative [,] with even better prospects for deepening contacts with employees of travel agencies and trip participants, particularly with females.” He also fulfilled all his tasks “willingly and with initiative.”

However, in 1962, an evaluation report noted that he “started off hesitantly,” and that there was “a [lingering] gap in his cooperation.” Moreover, it stated that, despite his intelligence and abilities, he “should express [...] more initiative and decisiveness, especially when judging the importance of information.” Apparently, Kongres kept secrets from the secret police. He failed to inform the StB that he “smuggled” a cheque to France for the boyfriend of a woman who had been under StB surveillance. This incident was vexing to the StB because, if Kongres had been honest, “the case could have been solved a year earlier.” He was reprimanded for his “unserious behavior” and informed of possible “consequences, if in the future, similar behavior were to be

repeated”; although the report never specified what these hypothetical consequences entailed. Nonetheless, the StB retained Kongres because he had “good prospects and effort.” Moreover, the report remarked that Kongres was aware that “it is about his existence.”

And it turned out that Kongres caused even more trouble for the StB and his colleagues at ČEDOK. For example, in November 1963, when he was employed as a tour guide in Moscow, he, two other female tour guides affiliated with another Czechoslovak state tourist company, and an employee of the Czechoslovak embassy, went to a party, became inebriated, and got into a car accident. To avoid punishment, the tour guides attempted to disguise the accident as an armed robbery. This machination did not work: the women and the diplomat were fired, with the latter being expelled from the Communist Party. For an unspecified reason, Kongres did not receive any severe sanction. Instead, he was merely moved to another less attractive and lower paid position within ČEDOK; however, in 1964, he was dismissed from this position as well. These dismissals might have been the result of poor working performance in other respects. For example, tourists sometimes complained that Kongres demanded extra money for necessary travel costs, but instead of using the money for these purposes, he kept it for himself and spent it at local shops. Moreover, another report submitted by his first wife states that Kongres allegedly had a secret bank account in Austria where he hid money to avoid surrendering it to authorities upon his return to Czechoslovakia.

In 1965, the StB ended Kongres’ collaboration. They explicitly mentioned his change in employment and his accompanying inability to travel as reasons for his termination. Moreover, the StB was unhappy with Kongres’ prior performance: he was described as “haughty”; “unhealthily self-confident” with “self-centered tendencies”; and he was found to have concealed facts from the StB on occasion. He was further described as utterly disinterested in collaboration, and as someone who always had many reservations. Thus, for the foregoing reasons, his file was closed, but not for long.

The tides turned later in 1965, as it was not the StB that sought out Kongres, but Kongres who sought out the StB; he had done so for the purpose of confiding in them about his personal and professional troubles. Kongres’ file contains a long, detailed report about a talk he had with an StB officer on this subject. Kongres complained about his workplace, poor career prospects, difficult family affairs,⁴⁷ his previous “mistakes,” and his inability to travel abroad. Moreover, he seemed to be particularly frustrated that his bosses did not approve his most recent plans to travel to the UK because he “was [allegedly] needed at his workplace.” Kongres also confided in the StB officer that his mother was the only person with whom he could talk about his problems and

⁴⁷ In 1965, Kongres and his wife divorced after she discovered that he was having an affair with a flight attendant who reportedly had a “bad reputation.” Following his divorce, he promptly took his lover on a vacation to Yugoslavia. The file says that Kongres admitted to “being a weak man, solely responsible for the end of the marriage.” Kongres apparently loved his daughter very much and his wife permitted him to stay in touch with her.

worries. He also reportedly missed “political life and talks” with friendly colleagues. As a result, he desired someone that he could openly share his problems with, and that could assist him in overcoming his woes. Additionally, Kongres thought that his trip to the UK was rejected because of the StB. In this respect, he was not wrong: the StB had disapproved of the travels because they feared that Kongres would illegally emigrate.

Long story short: Kongres was unsatisfied in all aspects of his life. He was certain that the StB was at least responsible for his professional stalemate, and he consequently came to them for support and perhaps help, although he did not request anything specific of them. In this regard, Kongres turned to the StB officer as a confidant and used him for therapy and friendship. Even though the StB asked to meet with Kongres again soon, they did not express any specific intention or promise to help; they were likely unsure as to what to expect from Kongres.

Kongres’s file does not contain any documents from 1965 to 1967. In 1967, Kongres began meeting with the StB on a more regular basis, where he was described as “an archived informer.” Around this time Kongres’ situation improved with the passage of time: in 1967, he re-married, and he became the head of the department for the U.K., Netherlands, and Scandinavia at ČEDOK. This new job was better suited to his skills, knowledge, and wishes, and it presented him with the prospect of regular travel to the West. When the StB inquired whether he was willing to cooperate from his new workplace, he replied: “This is certain.” He later elaborated that he did not have “the best memories” regarding his earlier cooperation, but that, presently, he came to believe that both sides would be mutually satisfied.

Kongres immediately reported several issues of interest to the StB, including those regarding problems at work with tourists from the Netherlands. He also provided a subjective personal evaluation of his counterparts. For example, he informed on the director of a Dutch travel agency and his wife, where he described the latter as an unpleasant woman whom he had caught lying on several occasions. Following that meeting, the StB appeared cautiously optimistic as to Kongres’ usefulness, and they decided “to register him as confidant” for the time being.⁴⁸

Although Kongres managed to keep his drinking under control, his problems with alcohol nonetheless persisted. He was caught driving drunk on several occasions, and his driver’s license was repeatedly suspended.

⁴⁸ At the time, confidants were individuals outside of the official StB network. They were not formally recruited, and therefore provided information to the StB on a voluntary basis.

In 1968, Kongres became a member of the Communist Party, but in 1970, he was expelled because of his negative attitude toward the 1968 intervention of the Soviet-led armies. The StB nevertheless repeatedly mentioned that – despite his personal opinions – he did not take any active part in any counter-events. The StB hypothesized that he was just “partly deceived, because of large exposure to western propaganda.” In the ensuing years, Kongres described his contrarian views as a “mistake” arising from when he was “manipulated by a far-right propaganda.” Apparently, his expulsion from the Party had no deleterious impact on him, as in 1971, he became a head of the department of congressional tourism in ČEDOK. He was secure and comfortable in this position.

In 1973, another StB department noted his friendly ties with a man previously imprisoned for alleged anti-state and anti-socialist activities. This StB branch therefore initiated a file on Kongres as “a person of interest” and investigated his possible involvement in hostile activities. However, nothing detrimental was found, and his file as an StB target was closed.

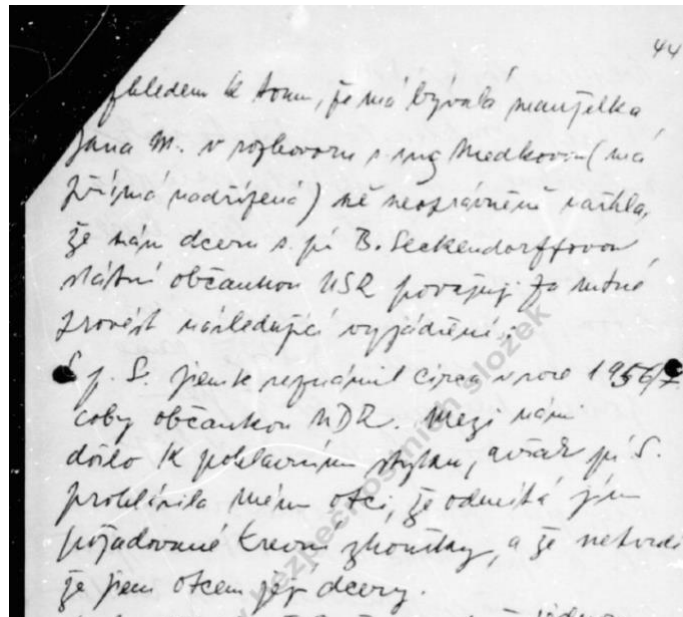
Instead of becoming further suspicious of Kongres as an individual, the StB appeared to gradually gain trust in him as an informer. In 1977, the StB interviewed him to officially “renew [his] cooperation.” During that interview, Kongres again reflected on his “mistakes” following 1968 and praised contemporary developments in Czechoslovakia. He condemned Charter 77 and its signatories. Kongres re-expressed his willingness to collaborate with the StB in the future, as he believed that the StB conducted “hard and responsible work.” However, Kongres’ file indicates that the StB did not take any official steps to renew the collaboration ‘on paper’ until at least 1979.⁴⁹ Kongres remained “only” as an outsider – a confidant – in the StB agency network. In 1979, a proposal to create his file as a candidate for secret collaboration was drafted; subsequent reports started to refer to Kongres as a candidate for secret collaboration.⁵⁰

In 1979, Kongres second wife discovered his new lover: one of his subordinate employees at work. Following their divorce, Kongres promptly married his new lover, and together they had a son. Rather unfortunately, Kongres’ second wife attempted to make his life difficult after their divorce. She ‘informed’ upon him to his boss at ČEDOK, claiming that Kongres allegedly had an illegitimate daughter in West Germany, and that he was in regular contact with her. Kongres’ file contains his handwritten reaction to his ex-wife’s allegations. He stated: “I got to know Mrs. S. [the mother of the daughter in West Germany] around 1956/1957 as a citizen of [DDR, East Germany]. We had sexual intercourse, but Mrs. S. declared to my father that she rejects that blood tests he required of her and that she does not claim I am the father of her daughter. She asked me, however, to meet with her yearly.” After Mrs. S. moved to West Germany, Kongres

⁴⁹ In October 1979, the StB told Kongres that “cooperation will be conducted on a higher level.” However, nothing officially occurred until 1980.

⁵⁰ Indeed, the report drafted in 1980 for the purposes of “renewing collaboration” (see below) states that, as of February 13, 1979, Kongres was a candidate for secret collaboration.

wrote “I was forced to break any contact with her.” According to Kongres, his ex-wife was aware of these details, and when he confronted her about why she had approached his boss, she admitted that “she did it in a state of nervous breakdown caused by [Kongres’ third] wedding [immediately following their divorce].”



44
 Jděli jsme k tomu, že má bývalá manželka
 Jana M. v rozhovoru s Ing. Medkovič (má
 křivou podřízeň) se rozvádí a říká,
 že nám dala s. p. B. Stekendorffova
 náhle občanku USA pověsila, že má
 zrovna náhodou vyjádření.
 S. p. Stekendorffova byla v roce 1975
 v obci MDR. Mezi námi
 došlo k politování, avšak s. p.
 protáhla svou otci, že odmítá
 vyjádření, která zhoršují, a že neví
 že jsou otcem její dcery.

Kongres had also planned to vacation in the U.S. around this time; indeed his ex-wife had planned the trip while they were still married. But because the StB suspected that Kongres would emigrate – although this was not explicitly confirmed by his ex-wife – they nevertheless asked her to cancel the ticket and use their recent divorce as justification for the cancellation. Thus, Kongres would be unable to board the plane and leave Czechoslovakia; however, this intended plan never materialized.

Kongres ultimately travelled to California and met with representatives of Ambassador College: an educational and religious group that first met in 1975 in the Czech city of Karlovy Vary. This group played a central role in Kongres’ informing.⁵¹ Apart from technical and organizational

⁵¹ Ambassador College representatives came to Czechoslovakia several times for various congressional events. The StB took issue with this organization because, on the one hand, they were known to be a partly-religious group from the West that was also potentially led by “Zionist-centers in the U.S.” Yet, on the other hand, their visits brought U.S. Dollars into the Czechoslovak tourist budget. Moreover, during these visits, members of the Ambassador College abided by Czechoslovak law and did not commit any crimes, except for minor infractions. For example, some of them attempted to exchange their American currency for Czechoslovak Crowns on the black market to secure a better deal. Given the petty nature of these infractions, the StB did not have a reason to react to their presence in Czechoslovakia. Additionally, Kongres’ file contains detailed technical documentation of some of the Ambassador College’s events, including a list of participants and reports related to meeting programs.

support, Kongres' branch of ČEDOK covered the "security" aspect of their events, including assisting the StB in monitoring foreigners, deterring potential criminality, and impeding the association's attempts to spread its principles.

Kongres proffered detailed information about Ambassador College's events. This included full lists of participants; the numbers of their hotel rooms; their specific food orders; and their professional backgrounds. Similarly, Kongres provided information on other events organized or supported by his department at ČEDOK. Curiously, Kongres provided little information about his immediate work colleagues, such as their political opinions, for example. Instead, he seemed to focus solely on the foreigners that he engaged with during his tourism work. For instance, he provided a detailed description of his encounter with the director of a tourist agency in Spain. Allegedly, this man was "a Frankist and a fascist," and for some reason, the StB was interested in him. Kongres also reported about international reactions to the trials of Charter 77 members and other similar political developments.

In 1979, a scandal occurred at Kongres' workplace. During a trip to Switzerland, a member of the delegation of Esperanto-learners illegally emigrated. Kongres was consequently furious with his colleagues, despite this incident having no direct impact on him.

In 1980, the StB finally formalized its relationship with Kongres on the basis of an assessment of his past satisfactory performance. Indeed, the StB suggested "upgrading the cooperation to a higher level." Kongres subsequently signed an official pledge to collaborate, thereby becoming an agent. Kongres further noted that he was "aware of the 'exposed'" nature of his workplace and that he appreciated his opportunity to consult with the StB.

Around that time, negative issues at his workplace began to multiply. He thought of leaving ČEDOK. Perhaps Kongres felt that putting an official stamp on his informing might benefit him when it came to finding a new job. Moreover, his relationship with his StB officer seemingly played an important role in his continued engagement with the StB. For example, Kongres' 'cooperation renewal pledge' had been scheduled for signature on his son's first birthday, so he invited his StB officer to join him in celebrating both occasions.⁵² During that meeting, Kongres emphasized the positive relationship he had with his supervisor and asked that he not be

⁵² This gesture led to disenchantment within the StB. This meeting was supposed to take place at a different location, but upon Kongres insistence, his StB officer agreed to meet him at the restaurant where he was celebrating his son's birthday. StB executive officers were not happy with this change. A handwritten note stated that Kongres' StB officer was to: "Make sure that similar cases will never repeat [...]" StB bosses were likely concerned that its relationship with Kongres was becoming too intimate and personal.

transferred to anyone else, if possible. When Kongres' supervisor changed later in 1980, he was reportedly surprised and concerned; yet he agreed to keep working.

As it had before, Kongres' informing in 1980 and 1981 focused on the following: foreigners that traveled to Czechoslovakia, and the meetings and initiatives of the Ambassador College. However, throughout the 1980s, Kongres' usefulness as an informer and the intensity of his collaboration gradually thinned out.

In December 1981, Kongres' driving license had again been suspended for six months for driving under the influence of alcohol. However, on this occasion, the StB intervened and asked the office responsible for implementing the suspension for a lesser sanction. In 1982, for the first and last time, the StB awarded Kongres with 1,000 Kčs "for his successful fulfilment of tasks and enterprising approach to cooperation in 1982." In 1983, Kongres reportedly supplied proof of his loyalty when his daughter from his first marriage considered emigration: he "talked to her as a father" and changed her mind. When another relative later emigrated, he "criticized him properly." However, in that same year, Kongres committed "a transgression" when he gave one of his contacts an encyclopedia without having first arranged the requisite papers for it to be taken through customs. Also in 1983, the StB noted that its meetings with him were relatively rare due to his frequent stays abroad. To this, his StB officer remarked that the "decrease in his initiative" could also be explained by Kongres' desire to leave ČEDOK.

In the 1980s, workplace conflicts between Kongres and his colleagues greatly escalated. The end of Kongres's file is not only filled with his own reports and evaluations of his cooperation by his StB officer, but also reports of others informing on Kongres himself. He was described by other informers as professionally competent and skillful, but also as someone who underestimated his colleagues, and was arrogant and unpleasant with despotic tendencies. A rumor stated that one of Kongres' subordinates committed suicide because of his arrogant behavior; perhaps the credibility of this contention was bolstered by the numerous anonymous letters sent to ČEDOK on the matter. Moreover, Kongres allegedly smuggled anti-socialist print and books and sold Western currencies and goods while he traveled. He was gradually pushed away from his position of employment with carriage over congressional tourism under the pretext of his old "mistakes," including the suspension of his membership in the Communist Party. Accordingly, he was forced to move to a less lucrative professional position,⁵³ although he was able to keep carriage over the Ambassador College.

Around 1985 and 1986, the frequency of Kongres' meetings with the StB decreased, along with the perceived quality of his performance. Interestingly, the StB partially attributed his

⁵³ Kongres believed that his colleagues' personal grievances spurred his financial demotion.

performative decline to a lack of supervision resulting from his StB officer's ill health and consequent leave of absence. Accordingly, Kongres' "formalistic approach" to informing, the lack of demonstrable initiative on his part, and his tendency to avoid his assigned tasks were not considered solely of his doing.

That said, Kongres was nevertheless swimming in choppy waters. An evaluation report from 1986 indicatively stated that his mental and physical health deteriorated due to his repeated illness and high professional pressure; however, he was praised for attempting to lower his alcohol consumption. The evaluation report also disclosed that Kongres sought employment outside of ČEDOK, and that he further expected the StB's help with this matter. However, instead of assisting him in his job search, the StB ordered a "deep review" of his behavior to determine whether he should be kept in the network; the StB deployed other informers to conduct this review.

Kongres's file reveals that the StB received the following documents: anonymous letters criticizing his excessively strict and arrogant behavior as a boss toward his subordinates; an informer's report describing his "irregular behavior at the workplace"; and another report detailing how he drunkenly boasted about his "contacts at the Ministry of the Interior" in front of his colleagues. He also reportedly began drinking more in general, began to accept "presents" in the form of bribes from business partners, and overtly favored his wife at his workplace. Nevertheless, in 1986, Kongres requested that the StB assist him by issuing him and his wife visas for their travel to the U.S. It is unclear whether the StB rendered any assistance in this matter, but given their increasing skepticism toward him, such a positive outcome is unlikely.

Subsequent reports reveal that Kongres' situation deteriorated further: he was frequently intoxicated at work; he reportedly attacked his subordinates; and he continued demanding and accepting bribes and gifts from business partners. Due to these problems and other tensions within the company, Kongres' business trips abroad were curtailed.

In 1987, the StB conclusively cancelled the cooperation. Apart from Kongres' poor performance, the severance resulted from his de-conspiracy and persistent workplace problems.⁵⁴ The StB's final report states that, in the 1980s, "[Kongres'] cooperation did not achieve necessary results

⁵⁴ Kongres' file does not provide a definitive count of the number of meetings he had with the StB. In the first phase of his cooperation, these meetings largely took place in restaurants, hotels, and cafés about once every two or three weeks. In later phases of his cooperation, the frequency with which these meetings occurred hinged upon Kongres' workload and business trip schedule. For example, in 1981, approximately twelve meetings occurred, and in 1982, fifteen meetings were held. In later years, the StB used both secret apartments and cafés to meet up.

and did not reflect [Kongres'] possibilities [...] [Kongres] did not show any initiative [and] selfishly used the excuse of being busy at work.”

Much like many other informers, Kongres' informing took many twists and turns. He had a hectic life, replete with travel, affairs, and parties, and he came across as the type of person who just wanted to have fun. As a young graduate, Kongres reluctantly agreed to inform, although he did not take the collaboration too seriously; instead, he caused trouble, and the StB consequently terminated him. However, when things started to go wrong in his private and professional life, he voluntarily approached the StB to share his feelings with them. Perhaps in doing so, he was simultaneously testing the waters to see whether they could help him 'get back on the horse.' As things in his private life began to settle down, Kongres' informing became more stable and predictable. This stability prompted the StB to successfully reinstate its relationship with him, until – yet again – his professional life slowly started to fall apart. However, Kongres simultaneously became increasingly disinterested in the StB, likely because the StB had no interest in personally assisting him.

Kongres was not devoted to any ideology or cause; he just enjoyed life, built his career, and made the most of it. At the inception of his career as an informer, he did not use the StB to fulfil any of his desires; he did not seem to be afraid of them; nor did he turn to them to ventilate resentments or grudges. When the StB approached him, he seemingly went along with their demands – albeit reluctantly – and over time, even defiantly. Nevertheless, he gradually warmed up to the StB. Perhaps he believed that the StB puppeteered his professional hiccups, or perhaps he reckoned that they would help him overcome his professional stalemate. In the latter sense, the StB was an evil necessary for the fulfillment of his desires and aspirations, such as travel and career development. As he aged, Kongres settled down – as did his career as an informer, but only until his life and relationship with the StB became unsettled again. However, when the StB failed to assist him in attaining his goals, he cynically grew disinterested with the relationship. Ultimately, his behavior became progressively more erratic and his utility declined to the extent that the StB crudely severed its cooperation with him without any graceful 'retirement' nor 'well-wishes.'

REZA⁵⁵



Reza was born in Iran in 1954. As an Iranian citizen, he came to Czechoslovakia in 1976 to pursue his studies. He had left Iran well before the Iranian revolution in 1979, although student protests against the Shah had already embryonically begun at the time of his departure. Reza initially underwent extensive language training in Dobruška, a small town at the northeast of Bohemia close to borders with Poland, and then enrolled at the University of Life Sciences in Prague. There he participated in a program that had been especially dedicated to training foreigners within the framework of “socialist partnership.”

Reza’s StB file is beguiling because he was a very young, foreign student who cooperated with the Czechoslovak security services; this cooperation was likely the result of feelings of gratitude and a related sense of obligation he seemed to have felt. Additionally, and more so than the other informer files we have reviewed, Reza’s file brings forward questions regarding the accuracy of the contents of the StB’s files and its informers’ reports. This leads directly to inquiries regarding their epistemological value and their reliability as sources of information. What ‘truth’ do the files contain? To what extent are they factual and accurate records of what was happening?

⁵⁵ Position: Candidate for Secret Collaboration

File No.: 801964

Registration No.: 33015

File created: 1980; File archived: 1988

Page count: 308 pages

Interestingly, and in contrast to other informers’ files we have reviewed, Reza’s file includes only two evaluation reports: one from when the proposal was made to “promote” him to an agent, and the other from when cooperation was terminated.

In this case, these questions surface because Reza's file and the recollections of one single side event of his story, as recorded by his StB officer, can be juxtaposed with a file and recollections of another informer, Mr. T. Mr. T. is a marginal figure in Reza's file. Mr. T. was employed as a custodian at various foreign embassies, and as a side job, he engaged in shady 'business deals' with foreign students; this is how he met Reza. Mr. T. and Reza did not appear to be in regular contact, and they were not considered to be friends, although they met and traveled together to West Berlin on one occasion. Like Reza, Mr. T. was also an StB candidate for secret collaboration, and his recollection of their trip to West Berlin – as recounted in his own file – largely diverged from that of Reza. The StB was seemingly unbothered by these discrepancies, and both stories were recorded in their respective files. Mr. T. was questioned once more by the StB as to his version of the events, but this did not provide any resolution; indeed, the matter was closed. Thus, these competing accounts of the past were filed and archived, thereby becoming concretized as the 'facts' and 'truths' of each file. Ultimately, what really happened remains a mystery.

As this anecdote indicates, the 'facts' reported in the files might not be 'factual' in the first place: either Reza or Mr. T., or both, were not telling the truth. The alternative versions of the same event were never reconciled by the StB; they exist in 'the reality' of the files, parallel, or in juxtaposition, to another. Perhaps, in this case, the information was not considered to be salient or relevant by the StB; or, perhaps, on a meta-level the StB was generally unconcerned with the factual truth of the information it recorded.

The StB primarily endeavored to gather, record, and internally report any information, whether factual or imaginary, true or invented, glossed by, or glommed onto other machinations or ulterior motivations. Information, be it facts or lies, was the StB's main currency, and gathering as much information as possible was its *raison d'être*. They collected and recorded anything and everything that could be potentially relevant and useful for fighting the enemies of the state, including, *prima facie* irrelevant and utterly random information. These efforts were likely and tenaciously undertaken to keep the organization going, and to prove to themselves that the internal system was functioning - that the StB officers 'did their job.'

Moreover, in the secretive and arbitrary system of social control embodied by the StB, any information could have been made 'relevant' after all. Thus, 'facts' and informers reports often remained uncorroborated; seemingly anything and everything considered worthy of reporting by an StB officer was written down and became part of the 'truth in the file.' The files reveal that follow-up investigations to confirm or refute the authenticity of the stories rarely occurred: hardly ever was there a quest to corroborate or check the reliability of the information that the StB received. More frequently, the reports contain a matter-of-fact statement by an StB officer

that the informer is reliable. StB officers judged an informer's reliability on the basis of varying criteria: be it because he or she has been in the network for a long time; because his or her previous reports generally corresponded to other informer reports or external sources; or simply because the StB officer felt like it.

It is also possible that an StB officer put 'words' into 'informer's mouth' when compiling a report of their meeting.⁵⁶ Given the lack of audio recordings from the meetings, and the fact that these meetings were held in secret and were solely between an StB officer and his informer, this possibility cannot be excluded. Therefore, the 'truths in the files' may be partially tainted as having been made up by informers or by the StB officers themselves; however, these 'StB truths' are not to be dismissed as irrelevant or inconsequential. If nothing else, they provide a very colorful picture of the internal workings of the secret, closed, and powerful organization. Furthermore, they shed light on the genre of information considered to be important and worthy by the StB; they demonstrate how the StB constructed its space within the Communist society; how it related to citizens; and how informers related, or should have related, to the StB. Lastly, they offer fascinating vignettes of Czechoslovakian life as it was lived during the Cold War and beyond.

One such vignette is Reza's. Reza was a member of a larger group of Iranian students residing in the Suchbátka dormitory in Prague. This group was comprised of modest students, who did not cause or encounter many tribulations during their stay and studies in Czechoslovakia. The StB also considered this group to be "politically progressive and solid" and positively oriented toward socialism. Additionally, Reza and his Iranian classmates perceived the contemporary political situation in Iran as "a struggle of the poor class against the rich class, which maintains its power thanks to money and military cooperation with the U.S.A."

Reza was "a very good student," and he graduated with a degree in engineering; later he was also admitted to postgraduate studies. The StB described Reza as "intelligent, well-mannered, social, and [someone that] liked to have fun. He [was] of good appearance and [did] not have trouble gaining contacts. He [was] interested in sport, chess, [and he] collect[ed] stamps and coins."

In early April 1980, Reza was interviewed in Prague by the Department for Foreigners at the Regional Office for Passports and Visas, the KOPV. In this interview, Reza expressed his

⁵⁶ In an informal conversation we had with a former StB officer, he rejected the possibility that the information currently contained in the StB files had been entirely fabricated. He stated that such blatant falsities would have been detected by the internal system – especially if they had consistently occurred over a long period of time. However, he did admit that hearsay, or information gathered in an informal manner – for example, from friends or if overheard in a pub – was recorded as if an informer had reported it, notably regarding information pertaining to the "general mood in the population."

willingness to cooperate with the Ministry of the Interior by informing on the personal lives and opinions of other foreign students in his dormitory. Moreover, he also commented on Iran's international and domestic politics; obtaining this kind of information was one of the StB's priorities with Reza. The StB also progressively, yet actively, encouraged him to establish contacts with various foreign student organizations, as at the time there was no association of Persian/Iranian students in Czechoslovakia.

Reza further elaborated on his background in this interview. The meeting report describes how his family had been living in Tehran, and that, after he graduated from high school, he served his time in the army, and then left for Czechoslovakia. Reza's mother passed away shortly after he arrived in Czechoslovakia. Despite having no intentions to visit Iran in the foreseeable future due to his academic obligations, Reza mentioned that he occasionally traveled to West Germany to shop. Moreover, he stated that he strongly desired to return to Iran after his studies, even though "he knew that conditions in Europe were much better than at home." In his own words: he did not want "to feel like a stranger everywhere." Yet, he admitted that the last time he visited his home in Iran, he missed the "Czech environment" to which he had become accustomed.

The interview report portrays Reza as "an intelligent student with a good overview of the international political situation," who was also forthcoming and replied to all inquiries without hesitation. Accordingly, Reza demonstrated a strong command of the Czech language since he had been in Czechoslovakia since 1976. Language competency matters: his file contains a note that the StB attempted to find additional cooperatives among the foreign student population, but in some cases, linguistic proficiency was a crucial obstacle.

Reza agreed to continue his relationship with the StB, but this agreement was only made after he "considered all circumstances." In his contemplation, he realized the nature of the contact and worried that, if revealed, others would hold it against him; thus, he explicitly requested that his cooperation remain a secret from his peers. Assuredly, this desire for secrecy did not phase the StB, as it aligned with their efforts to prevent 'deconspiration.'

In addition to 'testing the waters' with Reza, the StB used other informers to report on him. According to an informer named "Ziad:" Reza shared a room with a Syrian student, he did not talk a lot, and he had a Czechoslovak girlfriend who was studying economics. Ziad expressed the opinion that, because Reza "belonged to richer classes," he opposed the current developments in

Iran.⁵⁷ Interestingly, the StB believed that Reza came from modest origins, as he was dependent on a stipend from the Czechoslovak government and limited financial support from his family. Moreover, he had been the only one of his siblings to pursue higher education abroad: his sisters stayed at home, and his brother was an electrician. Importantly, this humble origin likely factored into the StB's interest in him.⁵⁸

Prompted by all this, on April 16, 1980, the StB submitted a proposal to create a file for Reza as a candidate for secret collaboration. He had been selected from among a group of foreign students due to his "positive" evaluation in his preliminary interview. From then on, Reza routinely met with the StB in various cafés and restaurants in Prague.

The StB's first "working" meeting with Reza took place on April 22, 1980. He reported that foreign students in his dormitory were relatively calm, notwithstanding the extensive political unrest in the Middle East at the time, notably regarding the presence of the invading Soviet army in Afghanistan. He reported specifically on Afghan students: they had endeavored to organize a public debate at the university, but "because they were not able to answer some questions from the audience" about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, other foreign students perceived the event to be unsuccessful. Furthermore, there were only five Afghan students, and some of them had been expelled for poor performance; Reza attributed their expulsion to the fact that they were older and struggled with their study obligations.

Reza also discussed the political tension lurking between Iran and Iraq. He specifically snooped on one Iraqi student in his dormitory who apparently used to disseminate Iraqi press clippings to other students. Reza did not speak Arabic, but nevertheless he claimed that, lately, students opined that the Iraqi leadership had turned away from the USSR and started to orient itself toward Saudi Arabia and the U.S.

Similar threads wove through the entirety of Reza's cooperation. He shared his intel on prominent political developments in the Middle East, and he informed on the students' politics, their daily lives, as well as their joys and worries. He reported on the political affiliations of other students in Suchdol, particularly those of the Ba'ath Party of Iraq; and about who had befriended whom, such as, for example, Palestinian students befriending Indian students. According to Reza's reports, the Iraqi Ba'ath students were the most politically active group in the dormitory, and they often disseminated the various propagandist materials they obtained

⁵⁷ In 1979, the Islamic Revolution by the Ayatollah Khomeini took place. Khomeini overthrew the pro-West Pahlavi dynasty and replaced it with an Islamic republic. The Revolution was supported by various leftist and Islamic organizations.

⁵⁸ Reza's file contains conflicting information regarding Reza's economic standing and social background. While the StB noted that Reza was "dispossessed" and "modest," Ziad's report contradicts this statement.

from their embassy. Reza also mentioned that Iraqi students often lived in private apartments, and that they only visited the dormitory to pursue their political activities. He also described the fact that they often drove luxury cars; indeed, cars became a prominent theme in his file.

Upon the StB's request, Reza proactively approached other Iranian students for the purpose of discussing politics with them. However, this endeavor was to little avail: generally, the Iranian student population was disinterested in socializing or in sharing their political opinions. Ultimately, one of the Iranian students had been accused of conducting unspecified anti-Iranian activities and was forced to leave Czechoslovakia. However, Reza mentioned that this student conducted "private petty businesses" and 'shady deals,' and these were the main reasons for his deportation; apparently, the student had been involved in illegal car sales.

Reza irregularly, though routinely, traveled to West Berlin or West Germany for various reasons, including to shop, pick up money his father sent to Iranians residing there, or visit friends.⁵⁹ Reza occasionally asked the StB to assist him in obtaining a return visa, and the StB supported him in this request; he also disclosed that he wanted to find a summer job in West Germany to pay for his study and living expenses. Reza's file further reveals that he complained about how Czechoslovak banks were allegedly unwilling to transfer money from his family to him. He specifically stated how, due to the bank's reluctance, he had been stranded in West Germany and had to borrow money to purchase a train ticket back to Czechoslovakia. Given his continuing financial struggle, perhaps the StB was correct to note his "modest" origins.

The StB's initial interest in Reza's surveillance of other students continued beyond his graduation and subsequent matriculation into postgraduate studies at the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in 1982.⁶⁰ His file indicates that he had asked the StB to help him with continuation of his studies. In response, the StB sent a request that the relevant authorities extend Reza's residence permit in Czechoslovakia. Moreover, Reza reportedly believed that the StB had played a positive role in his admission to graduate school; it is unclear whether this was really the case.

Understandably, the StB were ready to "exploit the situation to deepen the contacts." Reza "felt grateful" to them and his cooperation with the StB subsequently took an upward trajectory. He made a list of his contacts and "friends" at the dormitory, including students from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Greece, Poland, and Jordan, about whom he could provide information. Reza elaborated and admitted that he could use various excuses to get in touch with them, like inviting

⁵⁹ The amount of money, or the regularity with which Reza's family sent this money, is unclear; however, as his file suggests, Reza was struggling financially. Thus, his family's financial contributions were not assumed to be excessively high.

⁶⁰ Reza had intended to leave Czechoslovakia after he graduated from university in 1982, but instead, he stayed to pursue his graduate degree.

them to play cards, chess, or tennis; however, he stated that, preferably, he would simply invite them over and share meals with them. The StB acquiesced to Reza's preference, and due to his lack of disposable income, gave him 300 Kčs in furtherance of these activities.

Over time, Reza specifically reported on their political opinions and social behavior; for example, he mentioned the possibility of some students being affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood movement; notably, the StB was particularly curious about this movement. Moreover, he revealed that one student was allegedly expelled from the university and deported from the country for political reasons.⁶¹ Reza also mentioned that a few Palestinian students had left to fight in Lebanon, but that they had swiftly returned in the wake of their departure. Overall, Reza's dormitory was a relatively calm place. Accordingly, some reports from his meetings with the StB include only a statement that the meeting took place, and a perfunctory observation that no concerns or problems surfaced.

Reza's interactions with the StB were also framed by these foreign students' petty scams and racket businesses. Some of the wealthier students had reportedly profited from the resale of cars to other foreigners, including to Syrian soldiers contemporaneously based in Czechoslovakia for training. Moreover, Syrian students were generally mentioned in Reza's reports for their illicit business ventures; however, one Syrian student in particular had been suspected of "spying on [other students] for the Syrian embassy." Reza also snitched on another informer of Kurdish origin, who had allegedly cooperated with the Iranian embassy by feeding it with information on his fellow Kurdish students.

One larger international case was mentioned in his file. The case involved an Afghan student and his Cuban girlfriend: the couple had allegedly planned to emigrate to the West after graduation. According to the report, the StB informed the Afghan diplomatic mission about him.

The StB had also been concerned about the possible spread of Islam among Czechoslovak citizens, and a report from 1986 attests to this. In this report, Reza described how he had facilitated the marriage of an Afghan student and her Czechoslovak husband. He stated that he had served as a witness and testified to the groom's proficiency with the Quran at the Libyan Embassy, thereby encouraging religious authorities to approve the marriage.

The StB was also interested in the alleged propagandist activities of the Iranian Embassy in Prague. To this effect, Reza stated that the embassy did not expend much effort on propagandist activities; instead, the staff randomly disseminated press reports, which Reza then gave to the

⁶¹ It is unclear whether this expulsion was related to Reza's informing.

StB on more than one occasion. He also described how the staff at the embassy tried to support ‘their’ students in genuine ways and protect them from any politically-caused problems. Later, when the staff changed, Reza lamented that the replacement staff was uneducated and spent their time following religious traditions. In comparison, the Iraqi embassy was reportedly much more proactive and actively engaged with ‘their’ students.

Reza frequently mentioned that he did not have the money to spend on various things, like a car or his living expenses. On at least one occasion, he illegally performed manual labor in Germany to earn money; he also consistently sought part-time, summer jobs in Czechoslovakia. In his meetings with the StB, Reza occasionally brought up his personal issues, like traveling abroad and applying for postgraduate studies. He seemingly discussed these topics as a way of hinting that he yearned for the StB’s assistance, although he never put any significant or direct emphasis on obtaining these desires.

Reza was only given four financial rewards throughout the entirety of his cooperation; he was instead rewarded in mostly non-monetary ways. For example, his file contains multiple requests for visas or for the extension of his residence permit. In 1986, the StB filed a request to prolong Reza’s father’s and brother’s visas to Czechoslovakia. The request justified this extension on the grounds that Reza had not visited Iran while he was studying due to the complex political situation, and now he needed to decide whether to go back, stay, or travel to the West. The request concludes that “[e]xtension of the visas for his relatives will be presented [to Reza] as a form of reward for his cooperation.” It is unclear whether these various ‘favors’ were explicitly requested by Reza.

Reza was generally a proactive and obliging informer, and the StB appreciated his punctuality and determination. For example, on one occasion, he came to a meeting even though he was ill. At other times, he attempted to bring up fresh topics. For example, he informed the StB also about a Slovak girl who stayed at the dormitory without the requisite registration. He noted that “she has neither employment nor accommodation in Prague and stays with foreign students without selection.” On another occasion, he shared an anecdote about an Iranian tourist that he had met at the Iranian embassy. He described how this tourist had gotten drunk in Prague, and as a result of his intoxication, had his passport was stolen. The tourist then attempted to camouflage the incident under the guise of pickpocketing to avoid disclosing that he had consumed alcohol, an act forbidden for Muslims.

Despite these detailed disclosures, many reports from Reza’s meetings with the StB are very brief. They state either that there was no “news,” or that no “defective” behavior had occurred among the foreign students at his dormitory. On these occasions, Reza seemingly did not have much to report, or simply did not feel like doing it.

In 1983, the Embassy of Iran endeavored to contact Iranian students and researchers in Czechoslovakia for the purpose of obtaining information on Czechoslovak educational and research policies; Reza immediately informed the StB of this project. Around the same time, Reza had also reported on the activities of certain Iranian opposition groups founded and led by representatives of the former regime in Iran. Because he stood at arm's-length from these groups, his work mostly consisted of culling press reports and translating them into Czech for the StB. Thus, Reza's informing also involved the simple task of collecting materials accessible to him in the public space and sharing them with the StB, including translations if necessary. Whether such conduct indeed conforms to a definition of informing – or simply constitutes the act of researching public documents – poses an interesting semantic and definitional question.

In 1984, the StB considered upgrading Reza from a 'candidate for secret collaboration' to an 'agent.' At the time, the StB saw Reza as informing based on "ideological reasons, that [stemmed] from his progressive political opinions," and were further "manifested by his good relationship" with the StB. As of 1984, Reza had attended 33 meetings with the StB, and his StB officer believed that he would be "a good quality" agent. However, the formal request for Reza's 'upgrade' was returned by the StB head of the department, as he demanded additional information and formalities prior to granting his professional advancement. Thus, Reza was not promoted to agent status, and in subsequent reports, he is consequently referred to as 'a candidate of secret collaboration.'

As mentioned above, an interesting side figure in Reza's life was a Czechoslovak citizen, Mr. T.. A report from June 1981 states that Mr. T. beseeched Reza to help him buy a car in West Germany. Accordingly, the pair travelled to West Berlin and stayed in a student dormitory together in order to do so. Reza described Mr. T. as an irresponsible, money-grubbing character whom he had met at the dormitory while he was "doing business" with some other students. Ultimately, Mr. T. did not buy a car in West Germany, as he did not have enough money with him. However, he did spend the money he had on small gifts, cosmetics, chocolate, and bonbons for his kids. Reza also revealed that Mr. T. had had issues with East German authorities on their way to and from West Germany: both men had been stopped at the border.

Interestingly, Mr. T. was a candidate for secret cooperation with his own StB file;⁶² however, there is no indication in Reza's file that he, nor his StB officer, were aware of this fact. The StB was interested in Mr. T. because of his job as a custodian: he worked at multiple embassies and

⁶² Mr. T.'s file was created in 1981 under file number 725383, and StB registration number 34413; he used the code name "Vyukuk."

therefore had many foreign contacts. According to his file, Mr. T. had been previously convicted of theft of socialist property, yet nevertheless continued to engage in his 'shady businesses.'

Interestingly, Mr. T. gave the StB a slightly different story of him and Reza's trip to West Berlin. According to Mr. T., he had not known Reza prior to meeting him on the train. He stated that he himself had spent time in West Berlin at a military facility "with a sign of U.S. army." Mr T. revealed that, while at this facility, he was asked many questions and given tasks to do upon his return to Czechoslovakia. Mr. T. then recounted that he and Reza had traveled back to Czechoslovakia together, but they were stopped at the border; this is the only place where the narrative converges.

Mr. T.'s file reveals that he went to Berlin 'on official StB business' and was supposed to pick up and deliver some letters; however, these letters were never delivered to Mr. T.. Moreover, in one of his reports, Mr. T. described Reza as "a stranger" who sat in the same train car. He stated that, during customs and border control, Reza was identified as "an Iranian citizen, [and] a student of the university of Life Sciences." According to his file, Mr. T. called his StB officer after arriving in East Berlin and told him that "the stranger, Arab, most probably Iranian" was "also involved in the operation." It is not clear what this remark means.

The whole escapade and inconsistencies between the two stories do not receive further elaboration in Reza's file. Perhaps Reza's StB officer did not find it worthwhile or necessary to double-check the circumstances as reported, or perhaps he simply trusted Reza. However, the StB did suspect that Mr. T.'s rendition of events was false: they discovered that the details of Mr. T.'s story did not correspond with the observations of an East German police officer, nor with Reza's report of the trip, which was also included in Mr. T.'s file. Because of this conflict, the StB suggested that "a confrontation" between Reza and Mr. T. could be an effective way of getting to the heart of the matter. Mr. T.'s file does not contain any information as to whether that happened; it only includes his declaration that he shared "the truth" and was aware of any repercussions if he intentionally lied. Thus, the puzzle remained unresolved. Reza's file reveals that he ran into Mr. T. on more than one occasion in the years after their trip; however, these encounters were of minimal relevance to Reza, as the StB had instructed him simply to observe Mr. T.'s conduct and report back.

In 1987, Reza successfully completed his post-graduate studies and began working temporarily as a research assistant in Prague. Nevertheless, he was plagued with administrative issues about his residence permit. Because the issuance of his new Iranian passport had been delayed, the KOPV threatened to fine him and immediately terminate his stay. To make matters worse, if the authorities indeed fined him or terminated his stay, his impending trip to Romania would also be canceled. For these reasons – and upon Reza's plea for help – the StB intervened to resolve the

issue. They filed a request to extend Reza's residence permit and issued him a travel document for his trip to and from Romania.

In late 1988, Reza's cooperation with the StB was terminated, and his file was archived. Unsurprisingly, the manner of his termination reflected his relationship with the StB as a whole: it was uneventful, without drama, decline, or emotionality. Reza subsequently left Czechoslovakia, although his file never specified whether he returned to Iran as he had always planned or instead settled elsewhere.

Reza's was a simple, straightforward, and functional relationship with the StB; it was devoid of scandals, major gossip, grudges, and incidents of revenge. Reza performed to the best of his ability: he occasionally took initiative, and he never complained or asked for much. However, in their relationship, the StB also matter-of-factly accepted his offerings, never asked for much, nor groused about or faulted his work; they also recognized that, within the limits of his position, he was doing the best he could. Because Reza had never been classified as an 'agent,' the relationship stagnated to a certain extent, yet both parties remained nonetheless engaged with one another. Perhaps Reza thought that, without the StB, he would not have been able to fulfill his desire of living and studying in Czechoslovakia; indeed, the StB ultimately assisted him with various administrative affairs, including the issuance of travel visas and the extension of residence permits.

Reza's informing was seemingly sparked, and continuously fed, by a simultaneous sense of gratitude and a sense of obligation toward Czechoslovakia for having offered him educational opportunities. Despite these feelings of indebtedness, Reza nonetheless feared that his friends and fellow students would learn about his informing. Accordingly, he navigated this secrecy, which the StB would equally fancy as per their standard protocols.

KAREL⁶³



Karel was born in 1940, in Vsetín, a town in North-East Moravia; he did not have any siblings. His father had been employed as a middle school teacher, and his mother was an administrative worker. Although neither of his parents were politically active, in 1948, Karel's father formally became a member of the Communist Party. The family lived in Vsetín and Karel, as a working adult, despite his frequent travels within and outside Czechoslovakia, never relocated his home from Moravia.

In 1962, Karel graduated with honors from the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague with a degree in German; he was reportedly among one of the best students in his graduating class. After his two-year mandatory military service, Karel briefly worked as a high school teacher in Valašské Meziříčí – another Moravian town close to his birthplace. He then began working as a research assistant at the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. In 1966, Karel started working at the Faculty of Arts at Palacký University in Olomouc, and in 1968, he received a PhD in German studies. He was a prominent expert in German studies and a passionate researcher of the German language, although he had a strong interest in studying other languages as well. His file states that – in addition to German – he spoke English, Russian, and Finnish, and that he

⁶³ Position: Candidate for Secret Collaboration; Agent.

File No.: 789645

Registration No.: 21213

File created: 1981; File archived: 1987

Page count: 576 pages

Although Karel's file was officially created in 1981, it contains older documents from the 1970s. Karels' other code name used in the file is "Havel Jiří."

often worked as a translator; he also actively participated in the university's social activities. As a teacher, he was popular among his students.

In November 1971, Karel married a fellow graduate of German studies; however, in 1974, the couple promptly divorced for unspecified reasons. Interestingly, Karel informed on his wife-to-be prior to their marriage: she had reportedly held "incorrect" opinions during the events of 1968, and in a private conversation, she had even suggested that the couple emigrate to the West. Karel was in Bulgaria during the "critical period" of 1968, and when he returned to Czechoslovakia to begin teaching, he did so without any significant involvement in the turbulence of the time. In other words, Karel remained "loyal." He was thus considered to be politically "mature, well-read, and devoted to the socialist establishment." Despite this characterization, Karel's file does not give the impression that he was, to invoke Aristotle, a political animal. He did not seem to be politically active; he did not participate in any political events; and he was not a Party member. With respect to the latter, Karel's tepid relationship to the Party and the regime was ultimately the source of tension in his cooperation with the StB.

In late 1975, Karel remarried. Like his first wife, his second wife was also a former Germanist; they had two children together. Due to their geographically separate living arrangements, Karel primarily visited his wife and children on weekends; he lived in Olomouc, whereas his wife and children lived in Ostrava. In one of his reports, Karel noted that he was perfectly comfortable with this arrangement.

Karel is described in the file as "a quiet, but generally happy man, with a sense of humor; [when] interested in an issue, he [was] devoted and took initiative." He was said to have enjoyed sports, and was further described as a polite, intelligent, trustworthy, social individual, who excelled in the presence of company. He had "a natural talent for improvisation," and the StB stated that "his virtue was his logical thinking and his considered reaction in any situation, be it in private or in operational activities."

Karel was particularly passionate about his research and anything and everything German. He regularly traveled to different universities in West Germany for short-term research and study stays. For instance, in 1969/70, Karel spent a year at a university in Marburg. There, he attended lectures on modern German language, assisted at a local research institute, and taught Czech. He also imbibed German literature, be it popular or academic, and he seemingly took every opportunity to speak German and socialize with German speakers. Karel's passion for Germany, in conjunction with the contacts he had with foreigners in Czechoslovakia and abroad, triggered the StB's interest in him.

Karel's file contains a photograph of him where only half of his face is visible. The other half is hidden in a shadow: it is somewhat eerie, as if he were only halfway there. This half in, half out depiction represents Karel's relationship with the StB to a certain extent. Because of Karel's passion for Germans and Germany, the StB set altitudinous ambitions for him: they trained him to use various spy equipment, and they even deployed him to Austria so that he could inform there on a long-term basis; however, Karel did not seem to fully satisfy the lofty expectations that had been set for him. Indeed, he interacted with the StB, attended meetings, and submitted handwritten reports, but he never completed anything beyond that which was (absolutely) necessary. Moreover, the StB recurrently suspected Karel of dishonest and evasive behavior.

Notwithstanding these reservations, the StB nevertheless believed that, due to his foreign contacts within the West German Embassy, Karel provided them with information that they would not have otherwise had. In return, the StB gave Karel 'cover' to pursue his personal interests without repercussion, including collecting German books and socializing with foreigners from capitalist states. Thus, even though the relationship was replete with disappointment, both the StB and Karel seemed to have mutually benefitted from the serial informing and collaboration.

The earliest-dated document in Karel's file is from 1979; however, the re-stitching of various evaluation reports reveals that the StB approached Karel for the first time in July 1971, after he returned from Marburg. At the time, his code name was "Havel Jiří." The StB was mainly interested in the contacts Karel had in Germany, primarily including those he had with students and colleagues he had met there, and with visitors from capitalist states who came to see him at the university. At the outset, Karel's performance aligned with the StB's expectations for him, as his initial evaluation reports were very positive. He was described as "a serious collaborator" who "actively fulfilled given tasks," was "considerate" in fulfilling them, was "not hasty," and "acted strictly according to instructions." Moreover, he arrived punctually to meetings, took initiative, and was "imaginative."⁶⁴ Apart from these formalistic evaluations, the only other detailed information provided in Karel's file is that he was involved in an operation, in which the StB attempted to recruit an unidentified foreigner as a collaborator. The foreigner apparently declined the StB's request, and the operation was subsequently canceled.

Indeed, the StB must have been content with Karel's performance, as in 1975, they began preparing him for permanent resettlement in Austria. StB officers trained him intensely in the art

⁶⁴ No additional documents or reports are included in Karel's file from this period in time; thus, the 'praise' he received in this instance is solely based on content found in retrospective summary evaluations from the 1980s.

of defense techniques and secret communication and provided him with extensive political education; they also conducted psychological tests to determine his readiness for deployment. This training taught Karel to “be more self-critical/reflective, and to better accept and respond to criticism.” After all the probing, education, and training, Karel was deployed to Austria. However, much to the StB’s dismay, he returned to Czechoslovakia after only one month to tend to his sick mother; she had urged him to come back as her health had deteriorated. Karel did not consult the StB about his return and unilaterally terminated the mission on his own volition. The StB understandably considered this conduct to be “not serious” and “not disciplined” informer’s behavior, and they decided to stop the cooperation immediately. Karel’s file was archived in 1976, but there was more to his story.

In 1978, Karel began maintaining regular contacts with an employee in the cultural department at the West German Embassy in Prague. Without specific reason or motivation provided in the file, Karel approached his former StB officer and shared this connection with him. After a couple of meetings, the StB decided that Karel could be usefully resuscitated. In 1979, the StB renewed its cooperation with him as a candidate for secret collaboration.

Because Karel was an alumnus of the German Academic Exchange Service stipend program – the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* or D.A.A.D. – the contacts he had at the West German Embassy were initially professional, although they progressively became more acquaintance-like. Karel socialized with these contacts beyond the scope of their professional relationship, and many of them even visited him in Olomouc. During these visits, Karel hosted them, showed them around, and introduced them to his friends; one such friend included a painter, J.S.. Following this introduction, some of Karel’s contacts subsequently purchased J.S.’ art and commissioned him to paint portraits of them and their families.

Karel also regularly visited his contacts in Prague, where he wine and dined, stayed over at their apartments, and interacted with their families.⁶⁵ The StB endeavored to extract incriminating material on these individuals, and they frequently tasked Karel to inquire and inform on their extra-marital affairs, alcohol consumption, or any of their other vices. One report reveals that J.S. and Karel were very close friends; it describes how Karel regularly brought young students to J.S.’ atelier where J.S. then painted them nude. The report characterized J.S. as an elitist who liked praise and did not speak German very well; the StB considered him to be “a reactionary element.”

⁶⁵ Some reports in Karel’s file reveal that the Germans were concerned about whether their contacts would bring Karel into dispute with the StB.

Because of his trustworthy, informal contact with these West German Embassy employees, and because of the StB's interest in its operations – including the lives, joys, and worries of its diplomatic staffers – Karel re-inhabited the life of an informant.

Karel's file contains several detailed (some handwritten) reports that describe the meetings and outings he had with Embassy employees; however, the StB still wanted more. Indeed, the StB did not fully trust Karel's reporting; his file reveals that – despite his extensive reporting – the StB suspected that he was not disclosing the full extent of his informational discoveries. Thus, they employed various operational techniques to observe and verify his conduct. For example, in an extensive report from a meeting in April 1980, the StB expressed their general dissatisfaction with Karel's performance; allegedly, he had supplied them with very non-specific information about Embassy employees. During that meeting, Karel and his StB officer discussed his report from one of his gatherings with West Germans, where the StB had made him to wear a wire. However, Karel was visibly nervous about wearing a wire, and he subsequently made mistakes. Ultimately, the StB was unhappy with the result.

The report describes how Karel's StB officer was angry with him; frustrated with his passivity; put additional pressures on him; and reprimanded him for not following directions; his behavior disappointed both his StB officer and senior StB bosses. Karel's StB officer told him that, if he did not “truthfully report about the materials he was getting⁶⁶ [...] [the StB] [would] stop covering [him,] and he [would] bear the potential consequences.” Furthermore, his StB officer was puzzled “why, when push [came] to shove, [Karel] always [ran] away”; he also wondered why “Karel was so nervous – because of us – or because of them [?]”; and whether Karel collaborated with the StB to “legalize his stay at the Embassy or for personal benefit?” He reminded Karel that the StB did not fully trust him, as he “never report[ed] everything, [and] always [wanted] to take without giving.”

Karel's StB officer summarized his reporting thus far from his time at the Embassy as general and non-serious. The StB reasoned that, either: (i) “Karel knows more and does not want to talk”; (ii) “Karel knows more and must not talk”; or (iii) “Karel is not interested in knowing more.” His StB officer emphasized that there was “a general dissatisfaction with his results and a possibility of penalty (*postih*) from our side.”

Karel admitted to being fearful, but more so of the prospect that his StB collaboration would be discovered by the Germans; indeed, he was concerned that the West Germans had already found out about it. Karel's file pithily observes that “he fears [Germans] more,” yet he continues to cooperate with the StB because he “enjoys it. It brings [him] change and excitement, and he

⁶⁶ At the time, Karel had been exchanging German brochures and books with some of the Embassy employees.

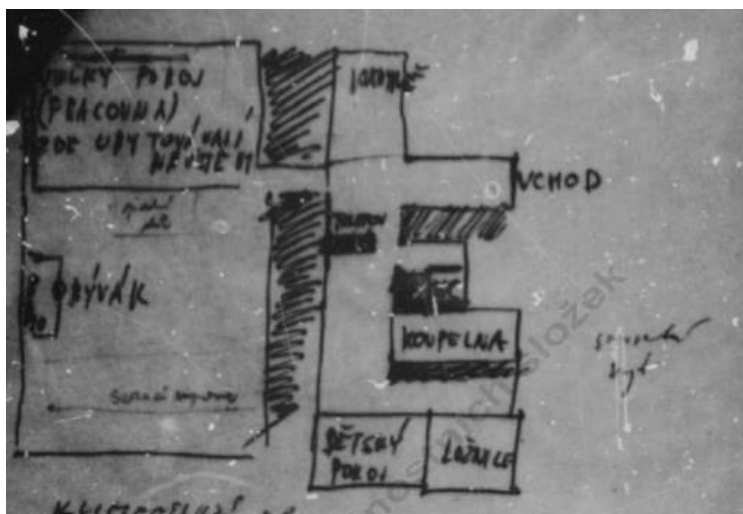
would not like it to end. One reason [for Karel's reluctance to end his cooperation with the StB] is the financial effect and possible prospects (concerning his stays abroad)." Karel's StB officer was apparently encouraged by this meeting, as he concluded his report by stating that "future contacts with [Karel] will be of better quality, and he will be a valuable contribution to the Czechoslovak counterintelligence." However, this optimism was seemingly too effervescent.

In October 1980, a report from another meeting stated that Karel's description of his encounter with a West German Embassy employee was, in "many respects [,] 'arid and brief,'" and that, even after further probing by the StB, Karel failed to share any relevant intelligence. Thus, his StB officer continued to worry that Karel had a different agenda, although he did not assume that Karel was involved in any anti-state activity, "as he was afraid of disclosure and public embarrassment." However, he did question his allegiance to the regime. He noted that Karel's political stance was unclear and his support for the socialist establishment uncertain. This was problematic given Karel's relationship to the StB and his job of educating younger generations, both of which implied that Karel's attitude should be "unequivocally positive." Moreover, Karel's StB officer stated that Karel did not seem to be "identified with the Party politics and this negatively influences his work with [the StB]." He also suspected that Karel sought only personal enrichment, particularly in the form of collecting German literature and securing opportunities for travel to West Germany.

Notwithstanding these reservations, Karel's important contacts abroad and at the West German Embassy rendered the StB reluctant to sever its ties with him. His file contains the following comment: "I propose to stay in touch with [Karel], however more formalistically [,]" and "to check [...] whether he is involved in other enemy anti-state activities."

Karel seemingly realized that his situation was precarious, as reports from late 1980 note that he became visibly nervous and uncomfortable in the StB's presence; perhaps he thought that upping his informer game would help. In 1981,⁶⁷ Karel provided the StB with multiple reports on the various meetings and encounters he had with Embassy staff. He even produced a sketch of the apartment where he had stayed while he was in Prague, as shown below; the apartment belonged to one of his German acquaintances. He later gave the StB the keys to this apartment and was subsequently awarded 1,500 Kčs for "his positive approach to cooperation."

⁶⁷ In February 1981, Karel's file was transferred to another StB department. The transfer report noted Karel's suboptimal results, relaxed attitude toward the cooperation, and his suspected recruitment by West German intelligence. Moreover, the transfer report notes that Karel had attended 140 meetings with the StB thus far. The StB also confirmed that Karel was in close touch with Embassy employees because of his desire for "personal enrichment by obtaining academic literature, magazines [,] and newspapers-for his research [,]" and "in particular [,] by securing [...] stays in Germany." In January 1982, Karel's file was "administratively" handed over to yet another StB department.



Karel's rapport with the StB nevertheless remained variable. Despite his generally subpar performance, he was constantly testing whether the StB would assist him with his personal matters. For example, in 1981, Karel showed up drunk to a meeting with the StB, where "at the beginning [of the meeting] [,] he refused the refreshments that had been offered to him, as he had been drinking [with two students] since the morning [,] and intended to continue doing so." Moreover, Karel was apparently "embittered" because he "did not expect to get a foreign exchange promise [,]"⁶⁸ as there was "a lack of foreign currency [,] and only persons that have not been abroad are allowed to travel." Thus, Karel inquired whether the StB could help him in that respect, and his StB officer replied that it was not possible without drawing attention to the fact that he was an informer.

Later in 1981, Karel tried his luck again: he asked his StB officer for help at the Ministry of Education. The Ministry was responsible for approving applicants for a D.A.A.D. scholarship, which afforded recipients with a three-month stay in West Germany. In this case, Karel's StB officer was not so dismissive: "...[our] help was not 100% promised [but also not declined] because such practice from the Ministry of the Internal Affairs is not probably usual."

The StB was reluctant to assist Karel in these affairs due to their continued suspicions of him. Karel's file contains numerous reports from other informers about him. Some of these informers must have been relatively close to Karel's friends from the Embassy: their reports contain

⁶⁸ In Czech, a *devizový příslib* was the permit required to officially obtain foreign currency for travel to non-socialist countries, including Yugoslavia; alone, this "foreign exchange promise" was insufficient for travel. Czechoslovak citizens who wanted to visit the West also needed a special administrative permission called *výjezdní doložka*, which may be loosely translated as "exit clause."

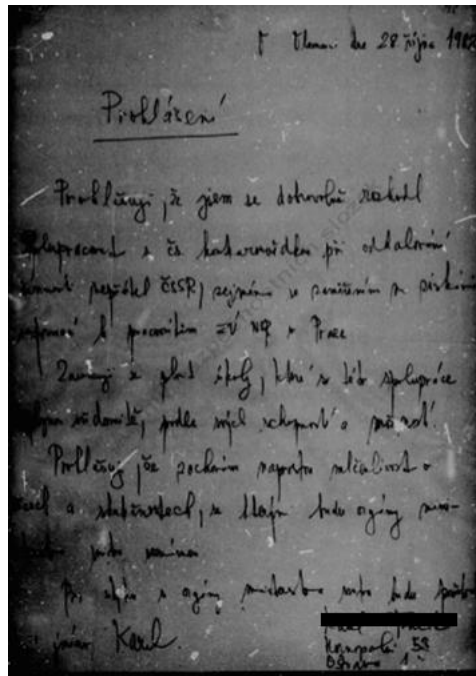
detailed descriptions of phone calls he had made to West Germany from the apartment of one his West German friends. Clearly, Karel was ensnared in a very thick web of surveillance and surveilling.

Despite the mistrust and Karel's non-cooperative posture, he nevertheless retained unique access to the West German Embassy; was still sufficiently forthcoming in that he filed handwritten reports; and met his StB officers at the agreed upon times. However, because the StB still suspected him of simultaneously informing to the Germans, the StB interacted with Karel in a way reminiscent of the saying "keep your friends close, but your enemies closer." Perhaps there was a performativity to all this.

In any event, the relationship deepened, and in October 1982, a proposal to 'promote' Karel into an 'agent' was drafted. The proposal reiterated how Karel had behaved evasively with the StB in the past, particularly regarding his dealings with "various German publications, which he gets for free from the Embassy." Karel's file further states that, at this juncture, he had asked to change his cover name from "Havel" to "Karel." Despite these changes, his main targets continued to be the various employees at the West German Embassy.

On October 28, 1982, Karel wrote a handwritten pledge to collaborate:

Declaration. I declare that I have voluntarily decided to cooperate with the Czechoslovak Intelligence in revealing activities of the enemies of Czechoslovakia, in particular, by gaining information on employees of the West German Embassy in Prague. I pledge to fulfill all the tasks stemming from the cooperation conscientiously, according to my knowledge and abilities. I declare that I will keep absolute confidentiality...



In 1983, Karel spent several months at the Institute for [the] German Language in Mannheim under the D.A.A.D. stipend program. In September 1983, the StB drafted and approved a proposal for Karel's travels to West Germany. Given Karel's situation at home, with his family, and professionally, the StB was not afraid of his potential emigration. As with other proposals drafted by the StB for similar purposes, they included interesting instructions for Karel as to how he was to behave when abroad. For example:

[I]n the event that he is recruited by foreign intelligence, he should listen to their conditions and explanations and accept; in the event that he is contacted by emigrants [,] he should gain information on their situation and opinions. If someone asks him to take a package to Czechoslovakia, he should resolutely reject. He should, however, accept any oral messages for individuals in Czechoslovakia. He should reject any proposals for emigration [,] and argue that he has family in Czechoslovakia to which he has strong emotional ties.

Even though Karel's file was replete with information regarding his contacts at the Embassy, it also contained information from his travels abroad. For example, when Karel lived in Mannheim, his dormitory faced a local U.S. base; thus, he provided the StB with a detailed description of at

least the exterior of the facility. He also informed on his colleagues at the institutions in Germany, particularly if they had relatives in Eastern Europe, and he shared information on Czechoslovak émigrés residing in Germany. One such example was J.G.: he kept in touch with the Chartists, and published and lectured on Czech literature in Germany.

Additionally, Karel's report on the German authorities' administrative procedures regarding the admission into the country of foreign researchers and lecturers was exceptionally detailed. The StB seemingly valued every piece of this information and considered it to be of "good quality"; this was in stark contrast to the information Karel had previously provided regarding his encounters with Embassy staff. Some of his reports provided the StB with intelligence that was presented to other relevant StB departments for the purpose of confirming its veracity; it was even given to Soviet military intelligence on occasion.

However, upon Karel's return from Germany in January 1984, border patrol officers confiscated his "defective [German language] literature [...]" including various books, brochures "with part of the authors being tendentious," *De Spiegel* newspapers, and copies of *Penthouse* magazine. To avoid any ramifications, Karel told the border patrol officers that he was an StB agent and even gave them his StB officer's phone number. These disclosures were obviously against StB policy, and Karel thus committed one of the gravest sins: he deconspired himself and his leading officer. The StB was livid. In the report that followed, they stated that Karel was not allowed to embark on "any other travels to West Germany or other capitalist states." Moreover, in a subsequent meeting, Karel's StB officer "fiercely rebuked" him, and strongly "recommend[ed] that such behavior should be avoided in the future." However, because Karel had fulfilled his tasks, took initiative, and alerted the StB to other potential targets among his new acquaintances during his time in Mannheim, his deconspiration seemingly did not result in any severe consequences. Karel was reportedly sorry about what had happened, and promised that it would never happen again. Here, too, we see how the StB treated some informants more leniently and compassionately than others.

Things began to settle down, and Karel's informing on West German diplomats simultaneously began to bear fruit due to the StB instructing him to befriend new employees. In 1985, the StB was concerned about the intentions of the Embassy, as they had started to intensely "propagate [G]ermanistics among Czechoslovak citizens, in particular youth." Therefore, the StB warned Karel that one of his contacts – the German cultural attaché – would certainly show greater interest in him; they also instructed him on how to tighten his contacts with the attaché. Additionally, Karel proposed that he sell the attaché some of his old German studies books, as the two had previously exchanged and shared literature. Moreover, Karel stated that the sale would help deepen their bond. Most probably, Karel had been meaning to sell these books anyway, and unsurprisingly, he used the cover of the StB to facilitate this endeavor. He told his

StB officer that if he had tried to sell the books through a secondhand bookshop in Czechoslovakia, it would have been “tedious and most probably unsuccessful.”

The StB acquiesced and told Karel that they would not “hinder” this deal on the following conditions: that Karel did not intend to personally profit from the arrangement by taking advantage of the ease and price of sale compared to that of selling books in Czechoslovakia; and that the books did not contain significant amounts of historically valuable material. Regarding the latter contingency, Karel reassured the StB that the books did not contain anything of significance to Czechoslovakia; interestingly, with respect to the former condition, later reports suggest that Karel did indeed profit from the sale. Ultimately, the sale proceeded as intended, and Karel got exactly what he wanted: the StB ‘officially covered’ one of his personal deals.

Karel’s contacts with the German attaché later intensified. As instructed by the StB, Karel confided in the attaché that, due to his frequent dealings with the Embassy, the StB had begun to show more interest in him. Thus, to play it safe, the pair agreed to use secret, coded language for their exchanges. Perhaps having a common enemy made the attaché feel closer to Karel, or perhaps the attaché was aware of the situation and simply played along. It is not clear which scenario corresponded more closely to reality. At the time, the StB appeared to be satisfied with Karel, and his evaluation reports from this period were generally quite positive, notwithstanding some lingering concerns. For instance, in January 1985, his evaluation report noted that, because he had primarily been meeting his German friends in the building of the Embassy, the StB had difficulty “consistently checking these contacts,” as they did not have access to the building and were not allowed to use any operational techniques inside.

In 1985, for instance, Karel gave a detailed description of “Kastan[‘s]” visit to Olomouc. Karel was rather forthcoming in his report: he described how Kastan and his wife visited the painter J.S., who then painted a portrait of Kastan’s wife. Karel recounted that the group discussed art together, and at around 10 pm, a student from the School of Philosophy arrived at the atelier. In his report, Karel described her as “an attractive woman around 30 [...]”; he had invited her because he thought she would “variegate” the evening. Karel revealed that he did not expect Kastan to “come with his wife.” According to Karel the group had a fun evening, and together, they drank four bottles of wine that he had bought. Throughout the evening, Kastan had been describing his diplomatic career, and allegedly disclosed that, so far “it has been best in Czechoslovakia, in all respects.” Kastan further described how the German Embassy regularly gave out various magazines – which it also published – to Czechoslovak citizens. Kastan had also brought some books for Karel. Karel promised to share them with his StB officer.

Unbeknownst to Karel, the StB monitored Kastan’s entire visit. The information Karel supplied to the StB appeared to correspond to information that was discovered by other operational

means, with one exception: Karel had reportedly told to his StB officer that he received three boxes of books from Kastan, but other reports stated that he had received five boxes. Again, Karel seemed to intentionally mislead his StB officer to for the purpose of pursuing his personal interests. Moreover, in this meeting, Karel also “absolutely openly, almost inappropriately, reminded his StB officer of [the] expenses he made for food and drinks in the atelier and asked whether he would be reimbursed.” This request – as well as Karel’s “manipulation” of the boxes of books – was not appreciated by the StB.

Once again, the StB became wary of Karel’s quest to personally benefit from his Embassy contacts; they were also concerned that he was being pursued by the Germans. During one of his visits to the Embassy, his personal agenda and contact book suspiciously became lost; moreover, unconfirmed sources revealed that his conversations with various Embassy personnel were allegedly being recorded. Thus, the StB suspected that the Germans were attempting to obtain compromising material that could then be used to prospectively recruit Karel into German counterintelligence. Therefore, the StB concluded that – from this point forward – Karel was to be rigorously checked and given “good quality and concrete” direction from the StB. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these checks confirmed that Karel mainly pursued his own personal interests while working for the StB.

A report from September 1985 noted that Karel “distorted some information,” and that he did not follow his StB officer’s instructions, as he had failed to contact his officer at the agreed upon time – in addition to other transgressions. Yet again, Karel’s conduct called his attitude toward the cooperation into question. Despite the StB providing him with continuous political and ideological education, Karel was basically using the StB – and the space provided by the cooperation – as a cover to play his own game. One report notes how, “due to [Karel’s] personal characteristics [,] [this education] did not lead to much positive influence with respect to his attitude toward collaboration.”

Karel simultaneously kept the StB in the loop regarding the situation at his school. He was a popular teacher among many students; hence, he was well informed of their political opinions. Every year, Karel gave the StB a list of those graduating from his department. He also gave his StB officer the names of his colleagues who, in the public imagination, had been suspected of collaborating with the StB. Even here, Karel endeavored to use his contacts with the StB for personal gain: he asked for help in getting approval for his nomination for a D.A.A.D. sponsored trip, as described above; and, in November 1984, he complained about an employee at his faculty who “boycotted” an international, academic exchange among the teaching staff for personal reasons – this boycott effectively blocked Karel’s future opportunities to travel abroad for research trips and conferences. The StB promised to “investigate possibilities of ensuring improvement in this regard”; however, it is unclear whether any affirmative steps were ever taken to do so.

Throughout his career as an informer, the StB invested a considerable amount of energy and resources into Karel. The StB taught him how to use various intelligence tools, like a wiretap; they also trained him in counterintelligence, including various espionage techniques and technologies. Despite this training, Karel was reluctant to use these mechanical tools, and he almost always found a way to circumvent their use, or he flatly ignored the StB's instructions. These vacillations further reaffirmed the StB's suspicion of Karel's foul play.

A report from September 1984 noted how Karel constantly tried to "outsmart" the StB. Ultimately, Karel had:

[E]xaggerated some information [,] and in its evaluation [,] he is using his knowledge of methods and aims of the StB, which he gained during his [previous contact with the StB]. By doing that, he attempts to make an impression of successfully fulfilling the tasks, by which he wants to create conditions for getting material rewards. It cannot be excluded that [,] by doing this [,] he is trying to divert the attention from the real nature of his contacts [at the Embassy], which might be motivated by material gains.

So, the StB used different intelligence techniques to monitor Karel. For example, on one occasion, the StB gave Karel a recording device and instructed him on how to turn it off; however, the device could not be turned off. Thus, it became a tool to control Karel himself. In May 1985, the StB launched another special operation. In this operation, Karel was given a special device: a bug that when carried on his body, would enable Karel to transmit conversation from meetings with his targets. Apparently, the StB gave him the bug to discourage him from pursuing his personal interests, such as obtaining books, during the mission; however, because Karel did so anyway, this attempt was unsuccessful.

The StB also deployed the techniques such as checking of his letters or the use of long-term wiretapping. Moreover, StB employees occasionally followed Karel around during public events, like exhibitions, for example. During one of their meetings, the StB secretly went through Karel's luggage to see whether he had anything to hide. They also conducted a comprehensive check into his character, hobbies, life, and social contacts in Olomouc, as well as his teaching, including the ideological influence he exerted on his students. The StB also asked that they be given a document from Karel's typewriter, which was likely given to them by one of his colleagues.

In late 1985, Karel embarked on another research stay in West Germany. An informer's report noted that his behavior had significantly changed upon his arrival back to Czechoslovakia: he became a closed person and avoided meeting other people. Moreover, another informant's report – most likely by one of his colleagues under the cover name “Roudnický” – stated that Karel had recently been rather distant, shared his office with two other professors, and did not express political views. As to his personal characteristics, “Roudnický” revealed that Karel had previously been infamous for his intimate contacts with students, but that he had “settled down” because he would likely be promoted to associate professor in 1989.

In 1986, Karel's German attaché friend left the Embassy upon the conclusion of his tenure, and Karel lost his closest contact there; unfortunately, the new cultural attaché was not as warm and forthcoming. Nevertheless, Karel continued to meet with the StB, although the intensity of the meetings had diminished. As they had been before, the StB continued to be wary of Karel's performance. For instance, an evaluation report from March 1987 again remarked that Karel “[did] not share all information”; that his intelligence was solely of “a general character”; and that he had a tendency only to “roughly” fulfill his assigned tasks.

In April 1987, Karel again lamented to the StB that he did not have the opportunity to travel abroad, as neither his university nor the local administration had given him permission to travel. He subsequently asked the StB for help, although they did not assist him in this matter: the report contains a boldly handwritten “NO” in the margins. He also noted that, if the StB was not willing to help him, he would try to solve the matter by privately traveling to Germany. To the extent that the StB was gradually giving up on Karel, Karel was also giving up on the StB. Perhaps he realized that the space the cooperation provided him to pursue his interests was increasingly shrinking. For example, one report from this period notes how Karel told his StB officer that, during his stay in Prague, “he was taking care of personal matters, which he was not willing to share with [his StB officer].”

At this point, Karel had effectively lost his contacts at the West German Embassy, his ability to travel abroad, and his relevance with the StB. His StB officer stated that he was clearly “reluctant to fulfill the tasks, mainly due to pursuing his own goals.” He also cryptically noted Karel's “quid pro quo” approach toward the cooperation, and the fact that the StB did not assist him with his travels abroad. Karel's StB officer ultimately proposed to “consider ending the cooperation without [Karel's] knowledge.”

In late December 1987, the StB terminated its cooperation with Karel on a less-than-positive note; its final report lists his “negative characteristics – un-seriousness, greediness, not fulfilling tasks, difficulties in his management, pursuing his personal interest in contacts with his targets.” In short, the StB seemed to have been disappointed in him. However, given Karel's passive and

relatively defiant attitude toward the StB – especially in the latter few years – he also seemed to have ‘had it’ with the StB.

Throughout his cooperation, Karel received a handful of financial rewards – particularly in later years – although the total amount of his rewards did not exceed 5,000 Kčs. On occasion, the StB also reimbursed him for certain expenses, such as travel and dinner bills.

Overall, Karel’s collaboration with the StB seemed to have been motivated by his devotion to his ‘craft’ of German studies, as well as his desire to pursue his personal goals and interests, some of which included frequent contacts with foreigners, dealing with foreign books, and travelling abroad. He appeared to be very acquisitional and utilitarian, yet simultaneously reluctant. His collaboration with the StB seemingly gave him the space to conduct his so-called “shady affairs” – in the eyes of the Communist security services – without any repercussions.

Karel’s file is replete with detail on the ins and outs of his relationship with the StB, and the hopes and disappointments experienced by both parties along the way. Assumedly, Karel was never really into his gig as an informer; he only did what was necessary to keep the StB entertained and on a leash. The StB also never fully trusted Karel: they were aware of his games and kept a close eye on him; he was also routinely informed upon by other informers. Despite his sub-par behavior, Karel nevertheless supplied information that the StB likely would not have otherwise acquired; therefore, both parties kept the wheel of their relationship turning for quite some time. Accordingly, informing became a pervasive theme in Karel’s life for many decades. Interestingly, and unlike other informers whose files we have reviewed, the StB invested a great deal in Karel. Given his initial ‘human capital’ – including his contacts, knowledge of foreign language, and social skills – perhaps their goal was to educate a ‘star informer’ which however never materialized.

JIRINA⁶⁹



Jiřina was born in Germany in 1908. Her parents were of Czech origin, but they both worked in Germany. Her mother was initially employed as a maid, but later, became a full-time homemaker. Jiřina's father was a shoemaker; he was also a member of a local workers' union.

Jiřina was raised in Dresden – she obtained her education and received her training to be a shop assistant there. Insofar as she traveled to Czechoslovakia each summer to visit her relatives, she became fluent in Czech. In 1930, she moved to Prague and began working at a local shop.

Her first husband, whom she married in 1932, was Jewish. He owned a shop in Prague and was consequently very well-off – Jiřina also assisted him with this business endeavor. The couple divorced right before WW II, although their divorce was reportedly a sham, undertaken to protect their property from the Nazis. Tragically, Jiřina's husband was taken to a concentration camp in 1941 and, according to Jiřina's file, he "never returned." Jiřina subsequently began residing with her sister in Prague. Her file indicates that both women were ultimately offered German citizenship, but they "refused and remained Czechoslovak nationals."

⁶⁹ Position: Informant. Confidant.

File No.: 732583

Registration No.: 2128 (inf.)/36422 (conf.).

File created: 1955; File archived: 1982

Page count: 210 pages

Jiřina's file does not contain any of her own handwritten or typewritten reports, nor does it contain any reports that document her meetings with the StB. Her file is exclusively comprised of the StB's yearly evaluation reports. Interestingly, only a couple of documents are explicitly mentioned as having been destroyed. Jiřina's other code name included in the file is "Illa."

In 1939, Jiřina bought a spacious home in the northern suburbs of Prague; she had allegedly purchased this home for 66,000 Kčs. Interestingly, this “fact,” which was decidedly of uncertain probative value, is repeated several times in her file. It is unclear whether she bought the house independently, or whether she and her late husband had started building/buying the home before the advent of the war.

As of 1944, Jiřina was employed as an agricultural administrative worker. In 1954, she married her second husband, Josef. Both Jiřina and Josef worked in the same factory in Prague in similar administrative capacities. In 1949, Josef was detained for alleged anti-state activities; however, he was released due to insufficient evidence against him. His sister was a member of the Communist party.

Jiřina was not politically active before WW II nor during the Nazi occupation; however, after the war, she became an active member of the Socialist Party. She allegedly opposed the collectivization process,⁷⁰ and this opposition brought her closer to the so-called “rich people.” “Rich people,” or “former people,” is a term used throughout the StB’s files to denote former business owners, private farmers, professionals, and other elites, who had previously owned private property and were wealthy during prior Republics. After the Communists confiscated large chunks of private property following their rise to power in 1948, these “former people” were ostracized and condemned in propaganda.

Moreover, Jiřina was a known member of the Sokol movement, which Communists disliked.⁷¹ The StB also took note of her perfect German and her deep interest in political literature – specifically, Western political literature. The StB also recognized her willingness to act in accordance with the current regime, but only when such conduct was presumably of potential benefit to her. She was further considered to be ideologically and politically passive toward the Communist party, and she did not have any ties to its local branch in her place of residence.

Jiřina’s file describes her as having good social skills and organizational capabilities, and as being ambitious, greedy for money, and eager to obtain personal gain. In addition to her post-WWII membership with the Socialist Party, she also held a position in a local self-government from 1945 to 1949. Accordingly, she was well informed about village life and its inhabitants. She was also willing to inform on anyone for whatever reason, regardless of their political

⁷⁰ Collectivization, initially implemented in USSR, was meant to reform agriculture and limit the power of individual farmers. Farmers were forced to give up their individual farms and join newly formed collective farms.

⁷¹ The Sokol movement was an all-age gymnastics organization that was based upon the principle of “a strong mind in a sound body.” It was founded in 1862 by Miroslav Tyrš and Jindřich Fügner in Prague, in the Czech region of Austria-Hungary. The Sokol – through lectures, discussions, and group outings – provided what Tyrš viewed as physical, moral, and intellectual training for the nation. During Communism, the Sokol movement was suppressed by the regime, with some of its members even being imprisoned or exiled during this time.

orientation; however, she often only informed on individuals against whom she held grudges or had personal issues with – for example, her tenants.

Indeed, Jiřina's problems with her tenants constitute the substantive bulk of her file. The Communist regime considered it inappropriate for individuals to have personal wealth. Thus, if a person owned a large house, the regime could forcibly move another family into the home. Such was the case with Jiřina – she owned a villa with extra rooms for “guests,” and the regime moved strangers into these rooms as her tenants. Understandably, she did not like this arrangement and had frequent problems with these uninvited inhabitants.

The StB was particularly interested in the relationships that Jiřina had with those that were disliked by the regime, or those that had a negative opinion of the establishment – like the “former people” in the village, or members of the Socialist party. Other attractive targets to be informed upon included residents of her neighborhood that belonged to religious sects, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Adventists, as the StB believed that these people maintained close relations with illegal emigrants abroad.

On April 26, 1955, Jiřina informed local police that her tenant, F. H., was a member of the Adventist sect. She told police that other Adventists frequently visited F.H.. Some of these visitors were residents of the village whom she knew, and she gave police their names – others were unknown to her. Furthermore, Jiřina reported that “suspicious items” were regularly brought to F.H.'s rooms in baskets or sacks that were sealed across the top with cut wood.

Jiřina's informing was demonstrative of her willingness and desire to assist the police with their investigation. As an aside, she simultaneously told them about her ongoing personal disputes with her tenants over the issue of sharing a common space, and she hinted that she would appreciate some help with this tumultuous situation.

Jiřina's first meeting with the StB took place in Prague on June 25, 1955. An StB officer disguised as a representative of a local housing committee approached her under the guise of assisting her in resolving the disputes she had with her tenants. Jiřina said that her tenants were “reactionists, who hate[d] everything progressive, without any positive attitude towards the people's democratic regime.”

Following this initial meeting, Jiřina was officially recruited a month later, on July 25, 1955. She was invited to a local municipality under the pretext of her housing issue, and – according to the report – while there, she severely criticized her tenants for their affiliation with the Adventist church. She admitted that she had indeed participated at religious ceremonies of the Adventists, but that she had left when she realized the “nonsensicality” of their religion. However, a later report states that she was actually a member of the group, but that she had disaffiliated following a personal disagreement with another member.

Jiřina then provided a description of each Adventist member known to her and discussed any ties he or she had to individuals abroad – for example, some members had relatives who had emigrated. According to the report, the StB officer directed the conversation to achieve two objectives: Jiřina's total disclosure of the Adventists' activities, and her suggesting that she cooperate with the StB out of her own volition. She reported that at least some of the Adventists supported fascism, and that they were waiting for the West to attempt to overthrow the Communist regime. Following this admission, the StB encouraged her to inform on the Adventists for patriotic reasons. She subsequently offered her cooperation without any explicit request to do so – just as the StB officer had intended.

At the end of the meeting, Jiřina handwrote a pledge to “voluntarily and from patriotic motives [,] collaborate in revealing class enemies-who disrupt the economic and political construction of our country,” and accordingly, she “would like to help create conditions for material and cultural progress of our people.” She then promised to keep the meeting, and the entire cooperation, secret. Lastly, she was given a cover name, to wit, “Illa.”

15
Praha, dne 27.7.1942

Administrátor mládeže a vřazce.

Já, Evuška Hrátková, budu dobrovolně a slavně
pohotově spolupracovat na oslabování činnosti
fascistického nepřítelů, který, navzdory tomu, je politicky
nepřítel naší vlasti.

K tomu rozhodnutí jsem dospěla po vřazce
že v naší práci StB bych měla sáhnout činnosti
fascistického nepřítelů.

Vím bych chtěla pomáhat aby byly vytrženy
podmínky pro rozvoj naší materiální a kulturní
správy v této věci.

Slibuji, že podle svých schopností a možností
budu spolupracovat, aby byl posílen nepřítel
našeho prosperujícího lidu.

Pro spolupráci souhlasím a tím jsem uzavřela
vřazku.

The StB was hesitant to accept Jiřina's purely patriotic motivations. An StB officer drafting the recruitment report mentioned that, despite her affirmed patriotic devotion, she seemingly pretended to be pro-regime when she spoke with him and with other officials most likely to strengthen her position and to obtain some personal gain.

Irrespectively, Jiřina's reports were positively evaluated by the StB throughout her collaboration, and she was described as clever, social, disciplined, and proactive – sometimes even too

proactive.⁷² Moreover, her StB officer stated that she was always punctual, came to meetings on time, and tried to achieve the best results possible. Like many other informers, her intel was cross-checked by another StB informers, and the truthfulness of her reports was confirmed. However, the StB were also wary of her perceived major motivation for informing, namely, individual gains. She often mentioned the private disputes she had with her tenants and demanded an immediate solution, such as moving them out of her house. Moreover, on one specific occasion, StB officers went to her home because she was too ill to attend their meeting together. Upon their arrival, Jiřina immediately tried to invite them in for a coffee to show them her “unbearable living situation” and again proceeded to complain about her tenants.⁷³

The StB did not usually give Jiřina money nor any substantial rewards. They specifically noted that it would not be good to award her with money, and she was only occasionally given gifts, such as books. Indeed, between 1956 and 1962 she was only given 330 Kčs – perhaps the StB intuited that she was likely to put her personal interests above theirs, and thus, were unwilling to provide her with more generous compensation.⁵ It is unclear exactly how much money Jiřina received. However, it is clear that, despite being given a relatively small amount, she greatly appreciated it, as she received a low pension of only 500 Kčs per month.

In 1957, Jiřina was transferred to another supervisor. Consequently, her primary objective as an informer changed: she was now deployed to report on foreigners – especially those of German origin; Jiřina’s fluency with the German language greatly contributed to this German-centric nature of her task. However, she occasionally informed on other foreigners, like compatriots in Brazil. Her other long-term targets included Czechoslovak citizens with German backgrounds; individuals who had supposedly cooperated with the Nazi institutions; and, “rich people” whose properties had been nationalized by the Communist regime and thus posed a potential threat to the state (according to the StB).

In 1958, Jiřina was invited to the United Kingdom by one of her former husband’s distant relatives, Zdeněk. Zdeněk had been a pilot in the British army during the war, and after the war, he remained in the UK “illegally.” Zdeněk and Jiřina had mutual friends – some of whom were of interest to the StB – like professional tennis player, Jiří. However, for unspecified reasons, Jiřina was not given a passport. Reportedly, notwithstanding that her desire to travel to the UK had a short-term impact on her willingness to cooperate because she expected the StB to have positively intervened in favor of her trip; they did not do so.

⁷² The report says: “She is too proactive. Sometimes she behaves not tactically. It is necessary to guide her and focus her attention on other people apart from those with whom she has personal issues.”

⁷³ It is highly anomalous that StB officers visited their informers at home due to obvious deconspiration concerns. The report from this particular meeting in Jiřina’s file notes, however, that “this visit of [StB officers] was not conspicuous because [Jiřina] lives in a remote area of the village [and] there was nobody on the street in the vicinity of [her] house.”

⁵ Another potential reason the StB hesitated to provide Jiřina with financial rewards could have been that they did not consider her to be a very useful informant.

Later that same year, Jiřina's chronic pain and rheumatism became so severe that it interrupted her cooperation. In 1959, the StB was actually inclined to cancel the entire collaboration; however, a report stated that Jiřina had asked them not to do so, and – pursuant to her file – she became active and useful again. Nevertheless, the StB emphasized that she was to be regularly and intensively supervised as a way to ensure that she provided them with good results.

In January 1960, Jiřina left her job in Prague and joined the local municipal services in her place of residence. This position gave her access to even more intel on her neighbors. She obtained information from meetings of the Adventist group, and she informed upon the German citizens that visited the town. Additionally, the frequency of her StB meetings increased during this time: she met with her officer two to three times per month – sometimes more, when necessary – at various restaurants and cafés.

In late 1960, her cover name was modified from “Illa” to “Jiřina.” No explicit reason was mentioned for this change; however, it could have plausibly been attributed to the formal renewal of her cooperation and her new supervisor.

In 1961, Jiřina's health problems interfered with her collaboration for a second time. She was nevertheless still considered to be a reliable and proactive person, and in July of that same year, she was given another target: her forementioned friend and professional tennis player, Jiří. Another division of the StB had “borrowed” her for this task, and her file confirms that she continued working and performing well. Some reports suggest that the StB thought Jiří had the potential to be contacted/recruited by a Western-based intelligence service, but little information on him was reported.

In addition, other informants with codenames “Jirka” and “Severová” were tasked to control Jiřina. According to their reports, she was indeed a trustworthy cooperative. Ultimately, her collaboration decreased in its intensity due to her ill health, and the 1961 official ban of two of her main targets – the Adventists and the Jehovah's Witnesses.

In 1963, Jiřina finally traveled to the UK to visit her first husband's relative. Her file does not contain any documents regarding the StB's active support for this trip, but her travel request was most likely supported by her colleagues and supervisors from her local municipality. Nevertheless, when she returned to Czechoslovakia, the StB obtained useful information from her with respect to the local Czechoslovak community. The report also includes many practical details, as described from Jiřina's point of view, including how salaries in the UK are comparable to the ones in Czechoslovakia; the various types of goods available in shops; and, curiously, how shops in the UK did not have queues. Other subjects discussed in the report include her dislike for very busy traffic, and the tense relations between Czechoslovaks and other migrant groups.

In late 1965, Jiřina's second husband became seriously sick with asthma. After his death, she was demonstrably eager to intensely collaborate again. Jiřina commanded how "the [StB] supervisors were very supportive" of her during such hard times. However, her ability to gather and report information remained somewhat limited due to her persistent health problems. She had already been retired at this time.

In 1966, she took another trip to the UK. The StB was satisfied with her visit, as she managed to bring further information about illegal Czechoslovak emigrants who had been living there. Following her successful trip, the StB sent her as a sort of *provocatrice* to another Czechoslovak citizen – also a friend of her UK-based relative – with the intent of obtaining information from him. Reportedly, she did well. Moreover, another report from 1966 describes the financial reward she received for her cooperation: 200 Kčs. Later reports describe how the StB were aware of her challenging financial situation; they consequently began to give her more frequent, unspecified presents and awards.

In the following years, the intensity of Jiřina's cooperation waned, mainly due to her increasing age and worsening health issues. However, until the end of her cooperation, she was reportedly agile and proactive: she maintained a perfectly regular and punctual routine when meeting with the StB, and she even invited them to her house for tea. Ultimately, her health problems were the only explicitly mentioned reason for the StB's unilateral termination of the collaboration.

Over the years, Jiřina informed on a variety of individuals. Initially, she informed upon those with whom she had had personal grudges or dislikes, but the scope of her "targets" gradually broadened to include religious sects, local residents, the "former rich people," and foreigners. Due to her linguistic ability, social skills, and employment with the local administration, Jiřina maintained constant contact with almost every resident in her town. Moreover, because of her social nature, she was kept abreast of almost all municipal events, as well as the personal problems of each inhabitant. As such, she was able to inform on them with ease.

In 1982, the StB finally terminated Jiřina's cooperation as a result of her old age; her reaction to this severance is not mentioned in her file. During her almost thirty-year "career" as an informer, she had at least 200 meetings with her StB officers and submitted over 300 reports. However, as was explicitly noted in her file, the StB had certain doubts as to her true motives, and they questioned the reliability or usefulness of the information she provided. Accordingly, Jiřina was never placed into the "higher" informer category: the "agent."

SONY⁷⁴



Born in Berlin in 1936, Sony grew up in a German lower-class family. His father was a manual laborer at a factory, and his mother was a homemaker. Neither parent was active in, nor belonged to, any political organization. According to his file, Sony finished high school without any employment prospects. So, upon his uncle's recommendation, he took a one-and-a-half-year long course to become a sales representative. Following this course, Sony found work at the Mehrwald company in Bremen. In 1957, Sony married a woman from East Germany who was six years older than him. She too hailed from a working-class background. They did not have any children. Sony was not wealthy at the start of his career: he earned an irregular and relatively low salary, a portion of which was also used to financially support his parents. However, he did own a house and a car. It is not clear how Sony, a young person with no financial means, acquired these assets.

Sony never joined any political party. Claiming that he hated militarism, he reportedly always distanced himself from the Nazi ideology. In fact, he refused to serve in the army, even after the WW II. Accordingly, he listed his official post-war residence as with his parents in West Berlin, even though he resided with his wife in Bremen, West Germany (according to his file Berlin residents were exempt from mandatory military service). Apart from condemning excessive

⁷⁴ Position: Foreign candidate for secret collaboration

File No.: 566432 / 772956

Registration No.: 11220

File created: 1960; File archived: 1982

Page count: 202 pages

militarization and his fear of a possible future war, however, Sony appeared, in general terms, to agree with the politics of Konrad Adenauer (the German Chancellor at the time) and lauded how people living in West Germany had high living standards. Sony's file contains contradictory information as to his political orientation, however. Whether it was due to his relative lack of means or his working-class background, Sony was also reputed to have a positive relationship with socialist ideologies. For example, he reportedly supported social democracy in West Germany. Pursuant to early reports included in his file, Sony concurred in the nationalization of big companies, but not of small entrepreneurs "such as barbers, shoemakers or tobacco sellers". Sony thought that "the socialist idea [was] just, and he agreed with it".

At the time of his recruitment by the StB in 1960, Sony worked as a sales representative for a mid-size enterprise. In his capacity as a sales representative, he was required to travel to countries in Eastern Europe (to the 'people's democracies'). He predominantly travelled to Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia. As a result of his frequent travels to Czechoslovakia, the country became somewhat of a home away from home for him. As a foreigner, he appeared to have grown quite fond of the country and its people.

Consequently, due to his amenable political views, his personality, and his personal and business interests in Czechoslovakia, the StB perceived Sony as an open and willing informant who would also be receptive to their ideological indoctrination. The StB had big plans for Sony. They wanted him to act as a double agent: he was to be recruited by West German intelligence and simultaneously act as 'a messenger' to the StB. Sony nonetheless seemed disinterested in the plan.

In his file, Sony is described as a young, intelligent, attractive "enterprising businessman who did not make differences among nations nor borders." According to the StB and the informers' reports included in his file, Sony enjoyed the company of young women and alcohol. His mantra was "to live and let live."

The StB became interested in Sony in the late 1950's. The description of how they met is a bit convoluted in the file. Upon one of his frequent visits to Czechoslovakia, he attempted to export a watch and some "materials" (documents) without the proper paperwork. His items were subsequently confiscated at the border. Following this failed exportation attempt, Sony was interviewed by a representative of the Ministry of the Interior in 1959. During that interview, he described how he had been previously contacted by "two men that introduced themselves as representatives of the Ministry of the Interior [most probably StB]." The men asked Sony about the confiscated watch, and "whether he was in touch with any Western intelligence service." Sony reportedly replied that he was primarily a businessman, and that he was not interested in politics because such interests could interfere with his business. Based on these preliminary

contacts, the StB concluded that Sony was willing to cooperate with them if his business interests remained protected, and if, similar to many other informants, the cooperation remained secret.

Thus began Sony's connection to the StB.

However, Sony's relation to the StB began to resemble a rather dysfunctional, distant relationship as it developed: two 'partners' who live far away from each other (Sony did not reside in Czechoslovakia), who only see each other occasionally and irregularly, yet who nevertheless have nothing to talk about. The StB wished to make use of Sony as a foreigner with interests in Czechoslovakia. That said, Sony's rapport with the StB was rather cool and business-like. The StB's grand ambitions for him never materialized – Sony did not share much with the StB. Instead, he kept them sufficiently interested to ensure that they would not significantly interfere with his personal and business affairs in Czechoslovakia. In this sense, he acted quite tactically.

During his initial meetings with the StB on February 1 and 2, 1960, Sony allegedly declared that "he [was] not a chauvinist and Germany did not 'grow to his heart'⁷⁵ to such an extent that he would not have been able to live without it." He said that Czechoslovakia was a beautiful country where "he felt very good, he liked to come, and would be willing to help [the StB]". Despite these proclamations, Sony fretted that his potential cooperation would be exposed by German intelligence. The StB assured him that his cooperation would not threaten "his security" nor "his business interests". According to the recruitment meetings report, Sony and the StB agreed that he would assist "the organs of the Ministry of the Interior [...] in the name of maintaining peace in Europe and preventing war."

The cooperation, therefore, 'officially' started in February 1960. According to later reports, Sony was recruited "[for] ideological reasons." Sony was soon given his first tasks: "(i) do not avoid contacts with West German intelligence – accept the cooperation, and upon arrival in Prague, immediately inform [the StB] [of the West German attempts to recruit him]"; and (ii) "observe business partners who come to 'People's Democracies' to determine if any one of them is a spy for the Western states, find out details regarding this espionage, and report it immediately [to the StB]." During the recruitment meeting Sony mentioned that he had never been contacted by Western intelligence services, but that he knew several individuals, some of them regular visitors of socialist states, who had been recruited (although he never mentioned the names of these individuals). The StB also envisaged a 'test of loyalty' for Sony: "a model, [Ms.V.] [who was Sony's acquaintance], was to introduce [Sony] to another informer, 'Karel'," who was to ask

⁷⁵ A Czech saying for someone or something that is not particularly dear to the speaker.

Sony to bring some items to someone in West Germany. The StB expected Sony to report ‘the incident’ immediately back to them. It is not clear from the file whether this ‘test’ ever occurred.

The StB’s primary objective was to connect Sony to West German intelligence, while simultaneously retaining him as a loyal informer. This appeared to be some sort of glamorous double-agent vision. Cognizant of the lofty nature of this vision, the StB was however content with Sony simply ascertaining and disclosing the identities of West German intelligence agents who traveled to Czechoslovakia disguised as tourists or businessmen. However, despite his verbally expressed willingness to do so, Sony never delivered. The 1961 StB Evaluation Report states that Sony “g[ave] worthless information – he refuse[d] to cooperate.”. As an explanation for his reluctance, Sony described how his father had allegedly been imprisoned in Berlin for his collaboration with East German intelligence services.⁷⁶ Sony “did not want to end up like his father and therefore refused to meet with us [StB]”. However, the StB considered this explanation to be “a pretext”, because, in the meantime, Sony became a co-owner of the company “KUNDE und SÖCKNECK.” According to the StB, following this co-ownership, he suddenly became rich: he bought a “luxurious car – Mercedes”, and he turned into “a capitalist.” “In consequence, his behavior and opinions changed.”

With no prospects of any meaningful outcomes, the StB terminated its cooperation (which, in reality, never started) in 1963. The proposal to end collaboration menacingly set out to further “monitor evidence of [Sony’s] hostile behavior – spreading enemy propaganda - with the aim to declare him *persona non grata* in Czechoslovakia,” if necessary.

Despite the apparent end of his relationship with the StB, Sony continued to travel and do business in Czechoslovakia. His file contains a number of documents that attest to minor misdemeanors regarding export violations or immigration laws. Including when, in August 1970, he attempted to export alcohol from Czechoslovakia without proper documentation, and when he failed to register as a foreigner with the Czechoslovak authorities upon his arrival.

In April 1974, Sony sent a letter to the Brno Customs Police, describing the behavior of Mr. R.,⁷⁷ a receptionist at the Hotel Intercontinental in Brno. Sony frequently stayed at this hotel. According to Sony, Mr. R. allegedly let guests believe that he was a high-level StB cooperative. In addition, Mr.R. dealt in foreign currencies and took ‘gifts’, i.e. bribes, from foreigners. The

⁷⁶ Some later reports in his file state that Sony’s father collaborated with the KGB.

⁷⁷ Mr. R. was most likely under investigation for his ‘deals’ with foreigners. Sony was also interrogated by the police on this matter. He explained that, during one of his stays at the hotel, Mr. R. asked Sony for a favor. This favor turned out to be a minor offense: he wanted to obtain a fake receipt for a bought/smuggled TV.

StB contacted Sony to discuss the matter. According to his file, Sony was surprised by this contact, as he “was expecting to be visited by Czechoslovak security organs, but in no way did he expect such high officials from the StB.” Sony nevertheless agreed to meet with StB officials to further discuss the matter.

This meeting took place in Prague’s Café Slavia. During this meeting, the StB talked about Sony’s letter and Mr. R.; however, they were mainly interested in determining whether Sony had any “intelligence abilities and possibilities to be further used for [their] aims.” They asked about his travels to Czechoslovakia, and whether he knew that businessmen coming to socialist countries were, prior to their departure, instructed by West German intelligence (the BND, i.e. *Bundesnachrichtendienst*). Sony responded that he had been coming to Czechoslovakia for fifteen years. Additionally, he emphasized that he “had a big interest in keeping good business contacts” (a sentence that is underlined in the report – obviously of interest to the StB as potential leverage). Sony also specifically noted that, in the near future, he planned to expand his business further east to the Soviet Union.

Regarding the BND, Sony shared that “he ha[d] heard of such sensitive issues from his business friends [many times].” He also confirmed that all business travelers were instructed as such, but that only some of them were interviewed upon their return. Sony shared some details regarding the instructions given to businessmen by German authorities, including a warning that “all hotel personnel work with the StB.” Sony must have been aware that, if he was not sufficiently open and friendly with the StB, they had the ability to disrupt his business activities in Czechoslovakia.⁷⁸ The StB then asked Sony whether he knew any people in direct contact with the BND. Sony responded “evasively” – he did not wish to talk about that subject at the moment, but stated that he would be more concrete next time. At the end of the meeting, the StB inquired whether, during his next visit to Czechoslovakia, he would be willing have “a friendly chat” with them again. Sony was receptive to that idea. He added that “he ha[d] a personal interest to remain on very good, amicable business terms with Czechoslovakia, ha[d] many good friends in Czechoslovakia, and [had] special sympathies for the country”.

Their next meeting took place in Sony’s room at the Hotel International in Brno in September 1972. The StB envisaged exploiting “mutual personal attachment and existing compromising material” as a method to deepen their relationship. The StB’s goal was to gradually accustom Sony to having regular contact with them during his stays in Czechoslovakia. However, this meeting was rather brief, and the parties ultimately ended up discussing Sony’s business. Upon the question of whether he made up his mind regarding prospective cooperation, Sony – according to the report from the meeting – reacted “very ambiguously, however it was obvious

⁷⁸ There is a document in his file that was made in preparation for the meeting with Sony. It indicated that, if Sony reacted “negatively,” the StB would make him aware that his contacts with Mr. R., who had reportedly been convicted for his illicit deals, could negatively influence his business activities in Czechoslovakia.

that he [took] future contacts as a given". This meeting, like many of the other meetings between Sony and the StB, was translated from German to Czech. Sony did not speak Czech, and, as the report of the meeting notes, one of the attending StB officers did not speak German. The StB's report describes that by "doing that [translating from German to Czech], [the StB gained time] [to] prepar[e] questions and check [Sony's] behavior." The StB evaluated the meeting as "positive" overall. Sony was calm and gave exhaustive responses to all questions. The StB officers commended the positive change in Sony's attitude towards them and concluded that his prospects as an informer had improved.

The parties planned their next meeting for November, when Sony was expected to be in Prague. However, traffic delays from a snowstorm caused him to arrive later than anticipated, and Sony missed the meeting. They subsequently met in February 1975 at the Hotel International in Brno. It was there that the StB referred to Sony as a foreign candidate for secret cooperation: Z-KTS,⁷⁹ cover name "SONY." According to a report of the meeting, Sony was very cordial and said that "after such a long parting he was looking forward to the meeting." Again, they talked about his business: Sony mentioned that he would like to expand his business to the USSR, but "had not managed to gain the right contacts there yet." They also discussed German businessmen that were occasionally interrogated by German intelligence after returning from abroad. Sony was still not very forthcoming on this issue – he admitted that he knew something about the topic but claimed that "these things are only [discussed with] good friends." He insisted that he would tell the StB more, but that he would only do so "later." During the meeting, Sony re-mentioned his father's arrest upon suspicion of working with foreign intelligence. However, in contrast to the 1960's, when he claimed he was petrified of the same fate, now, to the same question, "he answered with a smile that, such is life, and he did not have anything to be afraid of. [If he was contacted], he would be willing to share it with us [the StB]." This passage was highlighted in the typewritten report, and what is more, a big, black question mark was added in the margins. The StB must have found Sony's slightly casual answer suspicious, especially in contrast to his earlier stance on the matter.

Additionally, the StB was intrigued by particular aspects of Sony's business, which partially involved dealing with security equipment. Sony described "mini recorders (aka secret recorders)" that were not permitted to be sold in or exported from Germany. However, according to Sony, intelligence agencies all over the world had bought them discreetly. For example, Sony had been involved in a deal with Kuwait for such equipment. The StB was very interested in this matter, and Sony promised to demonstrate some devices for them next time. The StB appeared content with this proposition. The report notes that the "mutual personal relationship between the StB and [Sony] [was] strengthening, [Sony] fully trust[ed] the StB, [he...] showed initiative"

⁷⁹ "Z" standing for "zahraniční," meaning foreign.

However, as with many other informers, the StB was simultaneously collecting information on Sony. Perhaps to check the reliability and veracity of his information, but more likely to gather any compromising material to be used, if necessary. Sony's file contains a number of informer reports – most likely from hotel staff where he stayed. These reports described how Sony liked to hang out with “girls.” According to one informer from the Hotel Alcron in Prague, Sony “used to be very focused on girls, but in recent years his interest faded. His wife had similar contacts with men, but currently, she was sick with nerves.” Sony “frequently accepted visitors in his room – women in particular – who came to see him from places outside of Prague.” This informer also disclosed that Sony used to have “a big love in Prague, but [she had] had a car accident while driving under the influence of alcohol, and her friend [had been] killed in the accident.” According to the informer, “[t]he woman was convicted....” Another informer affirmed that Sony “[drank] a lot and like[d] girls [...] he slept with all the light women [*n.b.* a Czech colloquialism for sex workers] in Prague.” Another informant from Brno's Hotel International photographed Sony's personal notebook, which contained his contacts, and shared the pictures with the StB. Accordingly, the StB gathered gossipy information on Sony, ostensibly to be used against him if ever necessary. It seems, however, that this ‘intelligence’ was never used.

According to his file, Sony met with the StB again in February 1976 at Prague's Café Slavia. He arrived ten minutes late, apologized and was reportedly grateful that another meeting, which had been scheduled to occur during one of the business fairs he attended earlier that year, had been cancelled. He stated that “it would have been difficult to explain [his reason for leaving the hotel] to his wife who [had accompanied] him to Czechoslovakia ... it could have had negative impact on his family life.” Afterwards, Sony extensively discussed political developments with his StB officer, especially those related to the ongoing economic crisis in West Germany. According to the StB officer, Sony was “calm, very talkative; he openly talked about all the issues.” To the questions relating to the BND, which the StB repeatedly posed over and over, Sony ‘sang the same song,’ so to say – he was never approached by the BND, and if he was, well, he would let the StB know.

Their next encounter was in April 1976. This meeting was described as “absolutely informal and friendly.” At this meeting, Sony endeavored to pry information from the StB for a change. He asked why another German businessman was denied access to Czechoslovakia, and whether something could be done about his plight. The StB did not seem to like this ‘role reversal’ and left Sony's inquiry unanswered. The StB again expressed a keen interest in Sony's ‘spying equipment.’ The StB specifically inquired whether he would be able to procure certain “miniature recorders used for wiretapping, and miniature cameras equipped with ultraviolet light for nighttime usage.” Sony responded that “there are always possibilities,” and that he would try to bring samples to the next meeting. Indeed, in May 1976, Sony brought a special camera to the StB.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ The StB facilitated the import of this equipment by “creat[ing] necessary operational conditions.”

At that time, according to the evaluation report included in the file, Sony had only met with the StB eight times over a two-year period. Thus, their contact was rather infrequent.

In February 1977, Sony met with the StB in a conspirational apartment rather than in a café or a hotel room, as had been their custom. Sony positively embraced the setting. He “praised the furnishing and overall appearance of the flat.” Sony opined that, according to him, “meetings in such an environment are comparatively better than at a hotel because it is safer and possible to be much more open.” During the meeting, Sony inquired about his StB officer’s well-being – they had not seen each other for almost a year. The StB informed him that his former officer was no longer available, and that going forward, he would be dealing with different persons. Sony was reportedly embittered by the news. Nevertheless, he acted pragmatically: he inquired whether it would be possible for the StB to issue him a 3-month permanent visa, as his former StB officer did. For the first time in his career as an informer, Sony disclosed details about other German businessmen who had been approached by the BND. Sony provided the StB with two names; however, one person was already dead, and the other person was allegedly approached by the BND two years prior, so it is unlikely that either case provided the StB with any valuable information. The officer reported that Sony clearly “had a rather big interest in finally conclud[ing] the deal [regarding the special spying equipment], and [that] he [had also] agreed to open a private account in Czechoslovak currency.”

Later that afternoon, Sony and the StB met for a second time in order to arrange some travel requirements for Sony’s departure from Czechoslovakia. Sony arrived drunk. He apologized for his drunkenness, stating that he had to “toast with a customer.” In addition to briefly discussing his travel arrangements, Sony told his StB officer that, four years ago, he had been the sole survivor of a car accident in West Germany. By sheer luck, he had sustained only minor injuries. He reportedly said that, since the accident, he started drinking a lot and “enjoying the world.” The StB officer commented that Sony’s opinions he expressed during that meeting “were strongly influenced by negativity and a pragmatic worldview.”

Sony wanted to drive back to Prague (the meeting was in Brno) that same night, but the StB officer “strongly urged [Sony] to stay until the morning and journey to Prague the next day” after he had sobered up. It is unclear whether Sony spent the night in Brno. However, this anecdote again exemplifies how the StB would at times inhabit a parental role in attempting to educate and guide its informers through many aspects of life. The StB as ‘a father/mother figure’ comes repeatedly to the forefront with many informers whose files we have seen.

Sony and his wife divorced in 1978. A year later, he married a woman thirteen years his junior. Around the time of his remarriage, Sony's interest in "young girls" reportedly waned, and his visits to Czechoslovakia diminished. Consequently, Sony had even less opportunities to meet with the StB. Moreover, Sony's new wife often accompanied him on his travels to Czechoslovakia, and according to one of the reports, his wife was said to be very controlling. As a result, Sony did not want to go to a (secret) meeting with the StB, nor did he want to lie to her about where he was going.

Thus, the relationship between Sony and the StB gradually dissolved – both due to external circumstances, and a likely lack of will and commitment from either side. Neither was satisfied with the results of their endeavors, so, in February 1982, the cooperation was officially and permanently terminated. The StB cited the cooperative's "limited capabilities" as the reason for letting Sony go.

Sony was a foreigner who traveled to Czechoslovakia for business, and later, for personal reasons, insofar as he made 'good friends' there. While he did not reside in Czechoslovakia, he always found ways to come and go. Initially, the StB saw Sony as a very promising 'outsider' who appeared to be open to socialist ideology and willing to engage with them. They had high hopes for Sony; however, these ambitions never concretized. Sony entertained the StB solely to keep them on good terms, and he offered only as much information as was necessary to do so. He did not feel devotion, resentment, nor fear (save for being exposed or banned from Czechoslovakia) for the StB. He almost certainly was not aware of the salacious gossip they had compiled against him, but, by the same token, the StB never seemed to use such gossip against him – it remained buried away for those many years.

Sony appeared to have engaged with the StB to fulfill his desires of visiting and conducting business in Czechoslovakia. He likely realized that not engaging with the StB would be detrimental to his deal-making and business aspirations. Thus, throughout his cooperation, Sony remained dry, casual, and cold – he focused solely on his business and making deals. However, incongruencies seemed to arise between Sony's affirmed admiration for socialist ideology, and his lifelong aim of doing business behind the Iron Curtain. It is clearly worth considering whether the former was a convenient and strategic pretext – a smoke screen – for Sony's pursuit of his immediate capitalist gains. In his file, Sony's life was presented as a quasi 'modesty' to 'riches' story. But, it is tempting to contemplate whether his modest origins, as well as his admiration of socialist worldviews, were exaggerated or blown out of proportion by the StB officer who was recruiting him (for personal reasons, and for the sake of his role in the organization), or by Sony himself for reasons of his own.

LUDĚK⁸¹



Luděk was born in 1932 into a family of manual workers in Bělá pod Bezdězem, a small town in Central Bohemia. Following the 1968 invasion, Soviet soldiers were based in Bělá; this fact redounds to Luděk's informing journey. Luděk had a younger brother. Their parents were both non-partisan. After basic mandatory education, Luděk was trained as a locksmith. His training ended in 1950, and after a few short-term work gigs, in November 1953, Luděk commenced his mandatory military service. He started with courses for non-commissioned officers, and soon thereafter, he was named the leader of a group of soldiers responsible for telecommunications.

After finishing his military service, Luděk worked as manual labourer at various state-owned companies. From 1967 to 1970, he was a repairman at a military facility in Bělá. In 1970, he began work as an office employee at the cadre department⁸² of the Film Academy at Klánovice, a district of Prague.

⁸¹ Position: Agent; Confidant; Informer

File No.: 3492, 564136

Registration No.: 7216

File created: 1955; File archived: 1988

Page count: 222 pages

⁸² Cadre assessments were reports on opinions and the ideological stance of citizens. They were compiled by employees at human resources, or the so-called cadre departments, that every company was obligated to have. In the

Luděk was not affiliated with any political party, nor did he occupy any pertinent posts in social groups – he was just a regular member of the Czechoslovak Youth Union. He was nevertheless considered to be "politically responsible." For example, in 1968-69, the StB stated that he did not demonstrate any "antisocialist behaviour or thinking."

Luděk's file describes him as congenial, with a good working morale. As a soldier, he "fulfil[ed] his duties well" and was "disciplined." He was "intelligent, with good observation and reporting abilities." Moreover, he had the capacity to "adjust to all company." Some of his hobbies included "film screening, reading, motorbikes and sport (passively)."

In 1959, Luděk married his wife, a working-class woman of German descent, who also lived in Bělá. She was a member of the Communist party, and at the time, she was employed at a cinema in Bělá. It is likely that the couple met at this cinema, as Luděk had also worked there as film screening technician for a short period of time. They had two children together: a daughter and a son. The couple divorced in the late 1970's, and Luděk's wife and daughter emigrated to BDR, i.e. West Germany, in 1977.

Luděk's career as an informer began while he was in the army in the 1950's. His propensity for discovering and disclosing information sparked the interest of his superior officer, who subsequently recruited him to cooperate with military counterintelligence (*Vojenská Kontrarozvědka*, VKR).⁸³ Ever since then, Luděk actively snitched on his friends, neighbours and family. As documented in his file, he specifically told his StB officer that he "enjoyed it."

In 1955, military counterintelligence became interested in Luděk's friend and fellow soldier, Vladimír. Vladimír's family had re-emigrated to Czechoslovakia from France in 1946, but Vladimír nevertheless maintained close ties to his friends and relatives in France. Because Vladimír's "relationship to the regime was ambivalent," and he was reportedly "sorry he did not stay in France where he would like to return," the StB became interested in discovering more about him. Since Luděk knew him, along with others of whom the StB was suspicious, he seemed like the perfect choice for an informer. The StB further hoped that Luděk, who held rank as a lower officer (corporal/*desátník*), would gain the trust of his fellow soldiers.

1950's, one of the most important parts of such an assessment was the class origin and family background of a person. During normalization, the significance of class origin was replaced by the attitude of a person toward the Soviet occupation. Disagreement with the invasion could potentially end one's career.

⁸³ VKR, the military counter-intelligence, officially fell under the StB's jurisdiction.

A proposal to recruit Luděk was drafted in February 1955. He was considered “politically reliable” and had already “proved that he had a good relationship [with] military counterintelligence.” Moreover, he had approached his superior – out of his own volition – a couple of times beforehand. Ironically, his eagerness was also considered to be compromising material that the StB could manipulate and use to gain leverage. For instance, he helped investigate the occurrence of some minor offenses at his military base. As a result of his ‘private investigation,’ certain perpetrators of these offences were effectively revealed. On another occasion, he gave the VKR some anti-regime posters he had found in the military area. The StB believed that Luděk would not want such information to be revealed in front of his fellow soldiers and friends.

Luděk’s recruitment took place on March 18, 1955. He was invited to a secret, conspirational apartment. There, his superior, also a VKR officer, gave a lengthy disquisition about foreign spies who threatened and sabotaged the ‘building’ of the socialist system.⁸⁴ He then asked Luděk for his help in fighting against such enemies of the state.

According to the report on the recruitment meeting, Luděk agreed, and stated that he considered cooperation his duty “in order to fight against intruders of our building of the peace.” He also added, a bit oddly but perhaps revealingly, that he “really enjoys cooperation with the VKR, i.e. the fight against enemy elements.” This is a unique and unusual motivation compared to those found in other files.

Luděk handwrote his own pledge to cooperate.

Promise

I promise as a conscious member of the people’s democratic republic [of Czechoslovakia] that I will cooperate with the organs of the military counterintelligence voluntarily and devotedly. I promise that I will fulfil the tasks selflessly, with initiative and consciously. [...] I am aware that by revealing cooperation with the military counterintelligence I would reveal state secrets which would significantly harm the building efforts of our working people on their road to socialism [...]

⁸⁴ “*Budovat*”: to build, to construct; “*Budovatelé*”: builders; “*Budovatelské*”: building, builders, *adj.*, were words of the time. They were used in many contexts – with respect to peace, with respect to society, or, in general, with respect to any broader socio-political activity or effort. They are all derived from the verb *budovat*, which can be literally translated to mean ‘to construct, to build.’ However, the English translation does not capture the meaning and importance ascribed to “*budovatelské usilí*” – building, builders’ efforts – at the time.

StB 3402

StB: jako mladší člen StB. dom. republiky StB
 se bude spolupracovat s orgány voj. kontrarozvědky
 dobrovolně osídlení.
 StB: to nikdy na mě hlásně bude psát
 StB: iniciativně a mladě.
 jsem si rád, že spolupracu s orgány vojenské
 kontrarozvědky je státním tajemstvím.
 Před touto organizací nikomu ani mě volání
 ani nikomu nikdy v nepřítomnosti psát
 jsem si rád, že spolupracu s orgány vojenské
 kontrarozvědky bych mohl státní tajemství
 což by snížilo požadavek budovatelské práce, našeho
 pracovního místa na ústí k socialismu.
 Se spoluprací budu pokračovat ještě jinou: kladně
 S StB: dne 11. 11. 1955

Luděk's initial recruitment appeared to be motivated by certain ideological devotion, fear that was perhaps leveraged by the StB, and the "amusement" and "enjoyment" he derived from the act of informing. At the conclusion of this recruitment meeting, he had already written his first report, which he handed to his supervisor.

His file is sparse regarding happenings immediately following his recruitment. There are no reports submitted by Luděk nor records of his meetings with his StB officer. The file only contains yearly evaluation reports. However, these reports can be used to reconstruct bits and pieces of 'Luděk's informing puzzle.'

Upon exiting his military service in December 1955, Luděk continued informing and his file was transferred to a civilian branch of the StB. Luděk was tasked with keeping an eye on a variety of issues. He returned to Bělá, where he organized courses for *Svazarm*, a youth organization related to the army. Under the instruction of the StB, he focused his efforts on former members of the Junák organization and on youth in general.⁸⁵ Besides that, Luděk was asked to monitor youth from "rich" (*kulak*) families who could potentially adopt a critical attitude towards the regime.

⁸⁵ The Junák was the Czechoslovak Scouts organization, which was in 1948 disbanded by the Communists. Some of its members were persecuted by the regime.

Until September 1956, Luděk gave a total of six reports, three of which “were of state-security character.” Generally, Luděk’s StB officer evaluated him as a good informer. The StB remarked that the information he gave was reliable, correct, and useful. However, it was also noted that he demonstrated poor morale with respect to meeting his supervisors regularly and on time; the StB later attributed this shortcoming to his “phlegmatic nature.” That said, after some criticism, Luděk “promised that he would come to meetings regularly.” The evaluation report from December 1957 notes that Luděk submitted “a couple of good reports [on Junák],” but no further details are provided. Much like the previous year, his cooperation was positively evaluated by his StB officer.

In 1959, Luděk was also tasked with focusing on the so-called “golden youth:” namely, the descendants of former entrepreneurs and businessmen who the StB saw as “hostile towards our establishment.” Luděk’s cooperation was again seen in a positive light. However, his StB officer noted that “if he [did] not have concrete information, [he was] not interested in meetings.” On the other hand, if Luděk “[had] a report, he [was] very active.” In 1960, another ‘impediment’ arose: Luděk got engaged to his wife-to-be, and according to the StB, she frequently accompanied him, and at times, she did not let him go to meetings.

In the early 1960’s, Luděk had another target group: German-speaking foreigners, and Czechoslovak citizens with German origins who resided in his neighbourhood. He was given this target group because his new wife was of German descent and had extensive family and friends in Bělá with connections to Germany – many also had relatives in West Germany. More specifically, some of these individuals were reputed to have distributed illegal books and publications; some were suspected of illegally possessing weapons; and, the StB believed that some of them had allegedly cooperated with the Nazis during the occupation. Luděk’s informing was again praised by his StB officer – his reports were “concrete and some [even] alerted to [...] criminal activities.” In 1961, Luděk was rewarded with 100 Kčs for his ‘good work.’

In 1962, however, the StB started to become wary of the information Luděk provided. According to the evaluation report, he still suffered from “lack of punctuality” and skipped meetings due to his “phlegmatic nature.” Moreover, his German relatives did not fully trust him, and he did not even speak German. Therefore, he depended on his wife to accompany him and translate what was being said. Accordingly, the StB stated that Luděk only had “marginal possibilities” to secure reliable information from Germans. Also, in the other areas of interest to the StB, his “possibilities [to gain information] [were] limited due to his personal qualities and knowledge.” Nonetheless, his StB officer recommended keeping Luděk as an informer in the StB network.

Despite this positive recommendation, in September 1962, another StB officer lodged a complaint in apparent disagreement with the conclusion to retain Luděk as an informer. Luděk’s

file contains a handwritten note claiming that “the [positive] recommendation is inconsistent with the results of [Luděk’s] work” which rather attest to him being “selfish not phlegmatic.” The complaining officer stated that Luděk’s abilities were “overrated,” and a more guarded view on his cooperation was warranted.

Thus, the conclusions and the overall work of Luděk’s StB officer were fiercely questioned, and the StB’s engagement with Luděk was consequently re-evaluated. His cooperation was ultimately terminated in March 1963. The termination proposal notes that, during his cooperation, he submitted “115 reports of [mainly] informational character without any [significant] state-security relevance.” A handwritten note at the end of the proposal – seemingly written by the author of the complaint – provides an “unflattering” evaluation of Luděk. It stated that he did not have “counterintelligence abilities,” lacked initiative, and approached the cooperation indifferently.

These disparate opinions point towards another key element of the informing relationship: the secret police officer himself, and his individual idiosyncrasies, dynamics, attitudes, emotional compositions, and proclivities. The StB bureaucracy was not a monolith. It had many individual variations, even within a bureaucratic whole. Officers came and went, some were replaced, some were purged, some persisted, some sheltered, some disagreed with each other, and some cared for their informers paternalistically, while others were more dismissive. In the end, there was a great deal of movement and change in individual relationships over time, as well as a great deal of movement, change and individuation in the relationships between informers and their officers, like cosine waves.

Interestingly, Luděk kept reporting, even absent a formal informer relationship. He continued meeting with the StB, and as of 1972, was registered in the StB network as “confidant.” This is not atypical. Even in cases where such formal relationships were terminated, the StB would, at times, continue to check in with their erstwhile sources. In Luděk’s case, the StB recognized that, over time, he could “gain possibilities” to make connections with individuals of interest to them.

Luděk had divorced his wife, who, as of 1975, was seeing a West German national, Gerhard D.. In 1977, after Luděk’s ex-wife and Gerhard married, she legally emigrated to West Germany with Luděk’s daughter. This series of events was naturally of interest to the StB, but it was also of particular interest to them because Gerhard allegedly maintained “contacts with the Soviets.”

The information Luděk disclosed to the StB, however, went beyond his family affairs. Reports included in his file read like a chronicle of a village life, or like a salacious tabloid newspaper written at the local pub. Luděk told the StB about what was being talked about over beer,

including topics like his neighbors, acquaintances, their travels, their habits, their misdemeanors or their (extra-)marital affairs. Luděk very actively and with initiative fed the StB a steady diet of random information regarding the lives of his friends, foes and frenemies from his hometown and beyond.

He also managed to provide some putatively interesting, military-related information that he had obtained from a local drunkard. For example, he was told about vulnerable spots in the energy grid; this grid was considered to be critical military infrastructure due to the proximity of the Soviet base to Luděk's hometown. He also reported on his ex-wife's new husband, Gerhard, who was reportedly trying to form a close relationship with Soviet military officials. Luděk divulged that he observed Gerhard "bribing" border guards with cigarettes in exchange for his unproblematic border crossing. Luděk also told the StB about rumours of illegal weapon possession among locals, as well as trivialities regarding tensions arising among local resident families, or his views on their political opinions. The military base near Bělá, with which Luděk was familiar due to his earlier employment, served as an important conversational topic for local residents. In 1982, for instance, Luděk reported about a local man who drunkenly said that "he had to sign some cooperation with the StB and shall inform them on the local Soviets."

As per usual, the StB was simultaenously obtaining reports on Luděk from other sources. For example, they were told that he criticized the regime and possessed guns. Interestingly, it seems that these informers also got their 'intelligence' when drinking beer in a local pub.

In April 1976, Luděk reported on his ex-wife. She, and several other individuals in his neighborhood, had allegedly joined a sect called "*Judišská víra*"⁸⁶ and endeavoured to persuade friends to join the faith. Members of this faith believed that, in two years, the world would come to an end in a doomsday event, and only members of the sect would be saved. Luděk also shared how his wife was often visited by various men "for the purposes of sexual intercourse." Such discourse is a reminder of the gossipy junk that StB officers were listening to and recording.

By the end of the 1970's, Luděk's informing shifted to the German population in the area. He focused on ferreting out information about the ties this population had with persons located abroad. This shift in focus was likely attributable to his former wife's and daughter's emigration to West Germany in 1977. Despite their emigration, Luděk's wife and daughter would, on occasion, visit him in Czechoslovakia, and Luděk would similarly visit them in West Germany. His cross-border encounters piqued the StB's curiosities. For example, he travelled to West Germany for a few weeks in 1980 and 1981 upon invitation by his daughter.

⁸⁶ Documents in his file later referred to the sect as "Jehovah witnesses" or "Jehovists."

Luděk's daughter married a West German citizen, Klaus H.. Klaus was considered "a person of interest," i.e. potential target, for the StB because they suspected him of cooperation with enemy military counter-intelligence. Thus, the StB used Luděk to gain information on Klaus. They also planned to check on Luděk through other operational measures, such as checking his correspondence, or by following his car when he was around the military base.

Meanwhile, and likely unaware of the StB's suspicions against Klaus, Luděk reported on Klaus' movements and acquaintances in Czechoslovakia. For instance, Klaus told Luděk how one of his close friends in Czechoslovakia hid large sums of money (*Deutschmarks*) in his apartment; how he planned to export this money to West Germany and transfer it to his savings account there. Allegedly, this friend also secretly exported valuable antique items for profit. Luděk shared all of this information with the StB.

Most of the information Luděk supplied at this time pertained to his colleagues and neighbours – particularly, their occasional travels to the West, including their involvement in smuggling and other petty crimes – and their ordinary lives. One of them, Vladimír K., for instance, was, according to Luděk, in touch with some Czechoslovak emigrants during his legal trips to West Germany. Luděk reported on these, and also on Vladimír's conduct and habits, which included drinking alcohol, smoking – Luděk even disclosed the brand of cigarettes Vladimír preferred, and his evident lack of interest in women.

Luděk also snitched on his other acquaintances. Miroslav U., for instance, was reportedly a homosexual. In his report, Luděk used the pejorative homophobic term, "deviant" (*úchyl*), to describe him. According to Luděk, Miroslav traded in foreign currencies. He travelled abroad regularly, and Miroslav's father had been involved in unspecified anti-state activities. Miroslav had also been an old friend of Luděk's daughter, and after he had visited her in Germany in 1982, she reportedly suspended her contacts with Luděk and did not come to Czechoslovakia for Christmas, as she had originally planned. She did not provide any reason for her absence. Luděk was surprised at this turn of events as, prior to that point, he had had "an excellent relationship" with his daughter. He speculated that Miroslav must have told something "inconvenient" about Luděk to his daughter. In this instance, and perhaps others – as was the case with his divorced wife – personal grudges had the potential to compel Luděk to disclose unflattering information to the StB.

In 1983, after 11 years of being 'just' a confidant, the StB did another *volte-face* and brought their relationship with Luděk to the next level by officially renewing their cooperation with him. In other words, they re-recruited him as an agent. The recruitment report notes how, during his

‘confidant years,’ Luděk submitted “interesting state-security information, which initiated further screening of [some] individuals.” Ultimately, the majority of this information was verified to be “true.” Moreover, in his role as an StB confidant, he was always “communicative,” “willing,” and “responsibly fulfilled his tasks.” He had a “good relationship [with] [the Party] and [...] the socialist establishment.” Thus, as a result of these positive considerations, the StB decided to ‘intensify’ their cooperation with him.

During the period surrounding his re-recruitment, Luděk resided in Prague; it is unclear when he moved out of Bělá, though this was mostly likely right after his divorce. Despite his relocation to Prague, he kept his house in Bělá and frequently returned there. While in Prague, he worked as an office worker at the cadre department at a local film production company and school. He remarried and had another daughter. His son from his previous marriage also lived with him.

Luděk’s recruitment took place on June 10, 1983. According to his file, he agreed to renew the cooperation without any reluctance. Allegedly, he was complacent in his recruitment because he supported the socialist regime and identified with it. According to a later report in his file, he was recruited on the basis of “voluntariness,” and, in particular, because he had “good personal relations with his former StB officer,” who nonetheless retired in 1982. During the recruitment meeting, Luděk was reportedly calm, willingly responded to all questions, accepted all tasks without hesitation, and demonstrated initiative in his proposals on how to fulfil them.

The StB planned to use Luděk to check on persons who were traveling to West Germany; they also intended for him to check on his colleagues that were traveling to other capitalist states. The ultimate aim, however, was to “create suitable conditions” to plant him as a double-agent in the West German security services. The StB thought that, because Luděk had relatives and friends in West Germany, he had “natural possibilities to travel [there] on invitation;” and, because he also regularly travelled to the military objects of the Soviet army at Bělá, these circumstances could be used to persuade “an enemy counterintelligence” to recruit him. This ambitious aim was never realized.

A more immediate reason for Luděk’s recruitment was that he planned to travel to West Germany to visit his daughter. The StB wanted to find out more about her and her husband’s life there, and they were also interested in why the couple stopped traveling to Czechoslovakia. Moreover, the StB wanted to use Luděk to inform on people who crossed the border regularly – traders, relatives, and visitors – as well as on Czechoslovaks who lived in West Germany.

In the period after Luděk was upgraded to ‘agent,’ the bulk of his file was composed of yearly StB evaluation reports – reports or records of his meetings with the StB were included only

sporadically. In 1985, the StB noted that Luděk did not travel to visit his daughter because she had divorced Klaus and married “a Turk.” Luděk had not heard from her for some time, and thus, he did not get an invitation from her to visit. The file noted that, in the previous period, Luděk submitted 13 reports, some of which were of state security relevance. He took initiative, and his information was reliable and credible. However, similarly to his first stage of collaboration in the 1950’s, Luděk’s StB officer complained that he did not attend his regularly scheduled meetings. His nonattendance was ascribed to the fact that, in order to attend said meetings, he needed to commute from Prague to Mladá Boleslav, a bigger town close to Bělá.

In the summer of 1986, Luděk finally went to visit his daughter in West Germany; however, no relevant information surfaced from this trip. West German authorities demonstrated no interest whatsoever in Luděk, and this disappointed the StB. Since Luděk depended on his daughter’s invitations to travel, and because she lived in West Germany with limited means, the StB concluded, once again, that Luděk’s “possibilities from the perspective of his primary tasks” were limited.

Assumedly, contacts between the StB and Luděk were sparse in the beginning of 1987, or alternatively, his file simply does not contain any information as to what happened during this six-month period.⁸⁷

In August 1987, the StB decided to have “a control meeting” to evaluate Luděk’s future possibilities, and to ascertain whether he would be interested in future cooperation – his current StB officer was leaving for studies. At that meeting, Luděk said that he initially agreed to collaborate due to “the good personal relationship” he had with his former StB officer. He interacted with him during his ‘confidant era.’ He expressed that he had no interest in being “led by any new [StB officer].” Such loyalty is testament the relational aspect of informing – the individualities greatly mattered. Luděk’s cooperation therefore ended when the StB wanted to assign him to another supervisor, an offer which he summarily rejected.

Thus, Luděk’s cooperation officially ended in February 1988.⁸⁸ The proposal to terminate lauded Luděk’s past informing. It pithily notes that he simply did not wish to be transferred to another

⁸⁷ The last document in his file dates from January 1987. This document contains a proposal to introduce Luděk to a new conspirational flat.

⁸⁸ In the first phase of Luděk’s cooperation, which spanned from September 1957 – December 1958, about 30 meetings took place. In subsequent years, his file indicates that about 25 meetings occurred. The number of recorded notes Luděk submitted varies substantially – from five reports in 1958, to sixteen reports in 1959, to twenty-three reports in 1961. Altogether, he submitted 115 reports until his cooperation was suspended in the early 1960’s. The number of meetings and or reports that materialized after the renewal of his cooperation is not available. However, his file suggests that these meetings took place roughly every month.

StB officer. Luděk reportedly stated that, if the future need arose, his [previous] StB officer could contact him, and Luděk would do his best to try to help him out.

In the end, Luděk's long-term and staccato cooperation with the StB – both formal and informal – seemed to be animated by the simple fact that he liked being an informer, mixed in with some small-scale rewards,⁸⁹ loyalties, amiable intimacies with one particular officer, and allegiance to Communist values.⁹⁰ Luděk, however, wanted to inform on his own terms. The reports say that he was very agile and proactive when he had useful information in hand; but, when Luděk felt that nothing interesting was happening, it became quite challenging for his supervisor(s) to arrange to meet with him. At some points, Luděk's informing could have been motivated by personal grudges or getting even, especially when it came to his family members. Luděk did not hesitate to snoop on them, particularly after the family fell apart: he informed on his (ex)wife, daughter, and son-in-law, all of whom had moved to permanently settle in Germany. Overall, Luděk's personal nature perhaps indeed played the core role in his 'informer's career' - not only with respect to his 'targets' but also with respect to the close relationship he developed to a particular StB officer.

⁸⁹ He was given 50 Kčs in 1960 and 100 Kčs in 1961 – these funds were to partly cover his travel and other expenses.

⁹⁰ On this latter note, the StB described Luděk as a person of good ideological standing; that said, there are few documents attesting to this in his file. It is possible that Luděk was not a very political person, but rather, an individual who found the current regime suitable or palatable.

VELÍŠEK⁹¹



Velíšek was born in 1930. His parents were of modest origin; his father initially worked as a tailor, and his mother was a homemaker. Occasionally, she helped her husband with his tailoring. After the Communist takeover, Velíšek's father started working as a warehouse keeper in Prague. Although both of his parents were disinterested in politics, the StB saw each of them as "loyal citizens." According to Velíšek's file, during the Nazi occupation, both of his parents "behaved as Czechs." He did not have any siblings.

Velíšek always loved animals. Even though, at the time, he had only completed his basic education, he already knew that he wanted to career in agriculture; however, in order to do so, he needed to gain some practical experience first. Thus, prior to attending higher agricultural school, he worked on a farm for two years. In 1951, he decided to further deepen his knowledge, and he subsequently enrolled at a vet school. For his first two years, he studied in Košice, a city in the East of Slovakia. Then, he transferred to Brno, the capital of Moravia, in

⁹¹ Position: Agent
File No.: 645347
Registration No.: 3536
File created: 1957; File archived: 1971
Page count: 228 pages

the eastern part of Czech Republic. In 1956, Velíšek graduated, and he began work as a vet in Beroun, a small town close to Prague.

In 1953, while he was still a student in university, Velíšek married Jana. According to his file, his wife hailed from an affluent background – her parents owned a large farm in Moravia; such affluence was in direct contrast to Velíšek's modest upbringing. Jana's parents reportedly disapproved of their marriage, and as "kulaks" (former rich people), they had a negative opinion of the regime. Jana's brother was allegedly imprisoned for five years for unspecified reasons.

Velíšek and Jana had two children: a daughter, who was born in 1956, and a son who was born in 1958. When their daughter was born, the new family was living with Velíšek's parents.⁹² The entire extended family had "a good reputation" in their place of residence: Velíšek lived the quiet life of a family man – he took care of his wife, who became ill in the late 1950's, and his children. He did not drink excessively, nor did he attend many public events.

Politically, Velíšek did "not express [himself] [as] against the regime." Reportedly, "during a random chat with comrades [,] he show[ed] that the regime suited him [,] and that he ha[d] a positive attitude [towards the establishment]." As a young adult, he did not publicly participate in political life, but was nevertheless "politically trusted." He was a member of 'standard' social movements, such as the Revolutionary Labour Movement (*Revoluční odborové hnutí*, ROH), or the Czechoslovak Youth Union (*Československý svaz mládeže*, ČSM), but he did not attain any active positions within these organizations. The StB also believed in Velíšek's positive attitude towards the regime. They trusted that, since "he studied at university since 1951 [,] (...) it [was] additional, real proof that he was wholesomely educated according to (the values of) the current regime, thus his attitude [was] absolutely positive." Velíšek became a member of the Communist Party in the early 1960's.

However, not every aspect of Velíšek's character was squeaky clean. According to the StB, some of his close friends were considered "enemies of the people's democratic establishment." Reportedly, behind closed doors in private, Velíšek was a trenchant and critical observer of the economic situation in his home country. According to an informer, in 1957, Velíšek shared, while he was having what he thought was a private conversation, that living in West Germany – where he allegedly had some relatives – was more comfortable, and that wages were higher there as compared to the East. With regard to Czechoslovakia, Velíšek's file reveals how he felt:

⁹² They later obtained a company apartment in Beroun, where a state collective farm (*jednotné zemědělské družstvo*, JZD), for which Velíšek worked, was located.

For a majority of people there [we]re no such circumstances to be [even] compared to West Germany. [...] only a handful of people ha[d] good salaries. And people like [Velíšek] [could] not save any money from a normal salary and everything [was] very expensive.

Indeed, Velíšek seemed to have been increasingly drawn towards the pursuit of a comfortable lifestyle and financial possibilities in the West, especially later in life. Before that, however, he gave communist Czechoslovakia a try and managed to build himself a relatively successful career. However, his relative success did not prevent him from eventually experiencing financial troubles, and from consequently dreaming of a more lucrative job in the West.

Velíšek is described in his file as “a decent, kind-hearted and gracious person.” He was unpretentious and did not brag to others about his university title. Professionally, he was “dutiful and consistent,” and he was liked by his colleagues for his “goodwill.” He had a good rapport with people, but he did not like large groups. His hobbies included animals and motorcycles. According to an anecdote from his file, Velíšek once saved a sick dog that had been abandoned by its owner. He cured the animal and kept it as a pet. Interestingly, his file repeatedly mentions his stutter as a slight disadvantage to his potentiality as an informer.

The StB decided to recruit Velíšek in June 1957, almost immediately after he graduated from university and began his career as a veterinarian. The StB had its eyes on Jiří N., one of the *kulaks* – meaning, a former rich farmer – located in Velíšek’s district. Jiří was hostile to the regime and had been convicted for some economic offences against collectivization in the late 1940’s. Jiří was very publicly active before the Communists took power in 1948, after which, he was “eliminated from public life due to his obviously negative attitude.” Jiří was allegedly quite cozy with some Nazi collaborators during the Nazi Protectorate, and after WWII, he maintained friendships with “individuals equal to him,” i.e. former rich farmers. Jiří’s perturbing cadre profile spurred the StB’s interest in his activities. They specifically suspected that he sabotaged collective state farm property.⁹³ Thus, the StB decided to make use of Velíšek: his job placed him in regular contact with Jiří.

The StB had however even more ambitious plans for Velíšek. In addition to reporting on Jiří, he was tasked with reporting on other former farm-owners in the Beroun region, as well as on any other person with a potentially negative attitude towards the regime who also worked at the local state collective farm (*jednotné zemědělské družstvo*, JZD). The StB picked Velíšek mainly due to his vocation: as a vet, he was naturally in contact with all of the farm’s employees, and they were

⁹³ Jiří N. was allegedly responsible for the frequent deaths of piglets at the state collective farm where had worked since 1948.

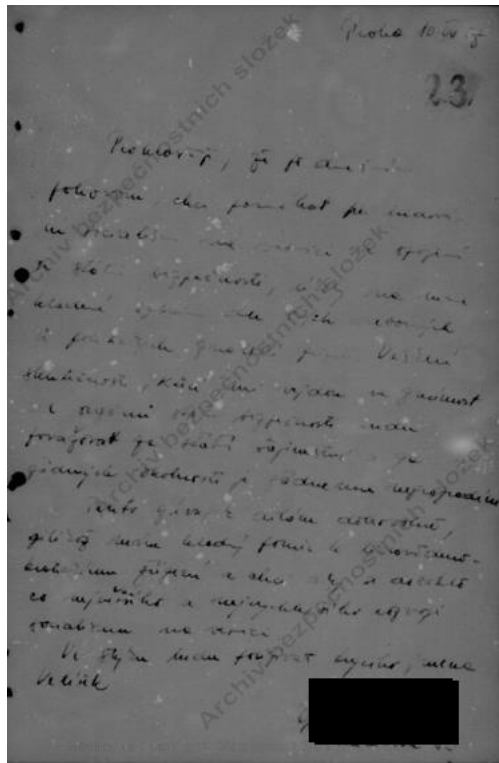
“dependent” on him. The StB further noted Velíšek’s “absolutely positive attitude towards the [...] regime.” According to his recruitment proposal, Velíšek had already been in touch with authorities, insofar as he had previously reported on the “irresponsible behaviour of farmers,” and he had discussed cases of tuberculosis that were spreading among the animals.

Velíšek’s recruitment took place on July 10, 1957. The report from his recruitment meeting notes how the StB interpellated Velíšek while he was at a local police station dealing with a traffic misdemeanour. There, an StB officer invited him for a talk “in the interest of his professional field.” The officer initially discussed the critical state of agriculture in Beroun; he then touched on the intentional spread of tuberculosis among livestock. Velíšek agreed with the officer’s assessment of the dire livestock situation in the region and lamented that “[authorities had] no interest in his opinion and advice.” The officer then, in an attempt to charm Velíšek, emphasised how veterinarians had a critical role in both agricultural development and politics. The StB clearly played on Velíšek’s sentiments and responsibilities as a professional veterinarian and animal lover. Velíšek further agreed – “with a smile” – with the StB assessment that many of his fellow-vets opposed or critiqued the regime. He added that, as such, it would be difficult to find another veterinarian with whom the StB could talk as “openly” as they could with him. Because the officer believed Velíšek to be “a citizen with a good relationship towards the regime,” he inquired as to whether he was amenable to defending the agricultural sector and the regime against alleged saboteurs. Velíšek said he was “willing to tell [the StB] about any phenomena he came across during his job.”

During that meeting, the StB also discussed Velíšek’s private life with him. Indeed, this became a thread throughout his whole period of cooperation. In this regard, Velíšek shared that, at that moment, his relationship with his wife was not at its best and discussed the allegedly negative attitude of his in-laws towards the state.

At the end of this first “official” encounter with the secret police, Velíšek handwrote his pledge to collaborate :

I declare, that after the today’s interview I want to help with building socialism in the countryside together with state security; I will fulfil exactly the tasks given to me, according to my professional and political knowledge. I will consider all knowledge with which I will become acquainted from the organs of the state security as state secrets and under no circumstances will reveal these to anyone. I am making this commitment voluntarily, because I have a positive attitude towards the people’s democratic establishment and I want to achieve the biggest and fastest development of socialism on the countryside. [...]



Velíšek's motivations in becoming an informer seemed dually based on his political stance and his professional devotion. According to what may be gleaned from his file, at the time of his recruitment, he seemed to have favorably regarded the regime, was devoted to his profession, was interested in rural improvement, and greatly loved animals.

Much like the other informers' files we have analyzed, Velíšek's file contains few reports from, or records of, meetings with the StB after his recruitment. However, other materials contained in his file, namely his yearly evaluation reports, provide a solid foundation for Velíšek's file-story. Velíšek's relationship with the StB ebbed and flowed. He started as an active and willing informer, but over time, he faded away for personal, political, professional, and other reasons.

According to an evaluation report from July 1962, in the first five years of his informing, Velíšek produced 188 reports and met with the StB 143 times. Initially, meetings were held outside, "in nature" where he worked. After a year of cooperation, their meetings shifted to a conspirational flat. Usually, Velíšek would write his reports during these meetings. He typically "wrote everything he found out" and took initiative, even if not specifically instructed on a particular matter. He was "a devoted cooperative," yet, despite this fruitful and intensive contact, the StB

still complained about his lack of discipline – he frequently missed meetings and did not demonstrate “the best time management.” Velíšek was also said to have conducted himself in a similar manner in his professional life, where “he always promise[d] something, yet [had to be] reminded multiple times to make it happen.” Thus, the StB used their meetings with Velíšek to guide him toward improving this shortcoming. These meetings also provided the StB with a continuous occasion to politically “educate” him. Perpetually cognizant of his erstwhile “praising of West Germany,” the StB was not hesitant “to explain [to Velíšek]” the “real” economic and political situation that was occurring there. According to his file, Velíšek considered cooperation his “patriotic task,” and he regarded “the rewards [he was being given] as a contribution to [his] family budget.”

And the StB’s ‘guidance’ extended beyond Velíšek’s work and politics – they wanted to steer him toward a more robust family life. According to his evaluation report from July 1962, he was encouraged to resolve the tensions he had with his wife, and to reorient himself back toward his family. The StB criticized the fact that he spent most of his free time repairing cars and motorcycles at home instead of taking his wife out. He was also accused of having affairs with other women, but no further details were provided on this allegation. However, this was conduct to which the StB openly disapproved. Here, yet again, the StB officers stepped into the role of a wise relative, a guiding hand, and a stalwart life coach, even regarding intimate family matters.

That said, perhaps the StB’s desire to preserve Velíšek’s family life was purely motivated by self-interest. The fact that his wife was born into a wealthy family was likely considered one of his most prized assets, fueling his contributory value to intelligence and surveillance. Velíšek was smart. He was able to connect disparate pieces of intel with other sources of information, and he seemed to have had a positive relationship with his StB officer at the time.⁹⁴ His stutter was his only noted flaw.

Velíšek informed on colleagues who evidenced a dilatory approach to work; he was deployed to ‘go after’ *kulaks*; he helped reveal several anti-state offenses, including allegedly ideologically motivated arson. As a result of Velíšek’s reports – and reports drafted by other informers – several individuals were arrested and convicted for such anti-state crimes. For instance, Velíšek provided information that was used in a case against a local landowner and farmer. At trial, Velíšek was called to testify as an expert witness in the veterinary field. Although the StB was concerned that his public testimony would lead to his deconspiration, he “did not cause any harm” and “answered the questions in a professional form.” Allegedly, the farmer’s wife thanked Velíšek for his testimony, not knowing that he may have provided information that negatively

⁹⁴ As an aside, Velíšek and his StB officer – who allegedly was also employed as a local policeman – had quite an intricate plan for staging emergency meetings. The pretext for such meetings was the alleged loss of official documents or identification cards. Velíšek would lodge a false report and go to his StB officer’s house in a nearby village to conduct the emergency meeting.

contributed to the investigation against her husband.⁹⁵ Thus far, Velíšek had proved himself to be an agile and reliable informer.

However, in 1962, Velíšek fell seriously ill. He started “vomiting blood, and there [was] a high probability that he had cancer.” As a result, the StB postponed any further meetings with him until after he had made a full recovery. Although there are no reports further detailing his illness, his symptoms assumedly abated around February 1963, when the StB began proposing meetings again. Regardless, Velíšek still did not attend. On one occasion, “after [Velíšek’s StB officer] waited at their agreed-upon meeting place for 20 minutes,” he went to Velíšek’s office to “check his attitude on meeting attendance.” There, he found him in a “convivial chat with his colleagues.” His officer then concluded that it was “obvious that lately this cooperative slacked off.”

In November 1964, after a series of unexcused absences, Velíšek’s StB officer openly confronted him, asking whether “he had any objections towards cooperation.” Velíšek said that he wanted to continue cooperating, but that he was very busy at work and at home. He stated that “he was not [a] master of his own time.” Velíšek subsequently promised to improve his attitude and said that he would “attempt to be punctual” in the future. Interestingly, he could not provide a satisfactory explanation for why he failed to contact his StB officer – as he had been instructed to do – after missing a meeting.

This anecdote illustrates how certain informers used considerable agency to navigate their relationship with the StB, and how the StB did not use – or did not have – leverage to make its informers comply with their requests, wishes, and demands. It is possible that this *laissez faire* attitude was related to the *zeitgeist* of the 1960’s, i.e. the liberalizing spirit of the era, or to the significance assigned to a particular relationship, informer, or importance of information the particular informer was providing the StB with.

Throughout the years, the StB continued to “guide” Velíšek in his conduct towards them and in his private life. For example, in 1964, Velíšek was on the verge of divorcing his wife. His officer reported that he “reasonably talk[ed] it over” with Velíšek, and, following this discussion and guidance, Velíšek reportedly dismissed the idea of divorce. Thus, his family circumstances “temporarily stabilized.” However, Velíšek later told his StB officer that his wife was not exactly his “soulmate.” Even the StB’s routine interventions and counsel could not prevent Velíšek from divorcing his wife.

⁹⁵ Unfortunately, Velíšek’s file does not provide more details on the case, nor the role that Velíšek played in its development.

Despite his lagging attendance, Velíšek delivered useful information to the StB. According to the November 1963 evaluation report, his reports were “truthful” and “of StB character.” For instance, he assisted in the pursuit of an individual suspected of collaborating with enemy counterintelligence. His efforts facilitated the characterization of this individual as “a reactionary” who listened to foreign broadcasts. This further confirmed the StB’s suspicion that this individual was plotting to “disrupt of the establishment.” Moreover, Velíšek continued to inform on his fellow veterinarians. His reporting even caused some of his colleagues to be “transferred to less responsible jobs.” He also snitched on his relatives. For example, Velíšek told the StB that, when some of his relatives were visiting Austria, they were allegedly being lured into emigration.

In 1964, Velíšek’s focus shifted toward a new target group. Because he was a hunter, he was encouraged to actively approach and follow foreigners who came to Czechoslovakia on hunting trips. These foreigners were mostly from West Germany and Austria. Upon visiting Czechoslovakia, they frequently stayed in Nižbor, a village located in Central Bohemia. This village was of particular importance to the StB: it was proximately located to a local military facility and housed many ethnic Germans – a population believed to pose a potential threat to the state. However, this new task proved to be somewhat challenging for Velíšek, and the information he gathered was unsatisfactory. The StB noted that he was socially inept around strangers, and, as such, he was not invited to join these foreigners on their hunts. So, the StB asked Velíšek to inform on his wife’s close friend instead: a West German national who frequently travelled to the West. He was also tasked with observing the military area around Nižbor, an area that was suspected to be of immense interest to Western counterintelligence.

In 1964, Velíšek became a candidate for membership with the Communist Party. He did not tell the StB about his potential candidacy – they were instead made aware of it by another informer. A report from 1969 indicated that the StB believed that Velíšek’s intended affiliation with the Party hinged upon the consistent influence and political education he received from them. However, according to an earlier report, the StB did not seem to be particularly excited about his candidacy: “prospectively it is not possible to count on [Velíšek] – as naturally he is obliged to activate [himself] in the sense of current establishment, which would not increase, rather decrease, the trust [in him] of persons of our interest – enemies.” The StB was wary that Velíšek’s open and public integration into Party structures, even if it was the result of their “good influence,” could deleteriously affect his possibilities and prospects as their agent.

In 1965, Velíšek told his StB officer that he had been promoted to the director of the veterinary hospital in Beroun. Thus, in 1965/early 1966, as a result of his increased administrative workload, his pending divorce, and his upcoming move to Beroun, his contact with the StB

adopted an even more “irregular” rhythm. Nevertheless, the StB firmly believed that Velíšek “was still interested to cooperate.” Moreover, around this time, he also started travelling to the West more frequently, while seemingly becoming more and more disillusioned with his own financial situation and future opportunities in Czechoslovakia.

In June 1965, Velíšek took a business trip with some of his colleagues to attend an international conference in Denmark on their experiences in cattle farming. Prior to departure, the StB asked Velíšek to closely observe his colleagues because some of them were of “defective character.” However, this trip did not yield anything of use to the StB, as these putatively suspicious individuals had apparently been barred from travelling by the Communist Party’s intercessions.

In the summer of 1966, Velíšek visited his aunt in Austria. She had been a resident of Austria since 1912, and she had fallen ill. The StB considered her to be a “decent and honest woman” because, apparently, she had refused to illegally sell large packages of restricted goods to her relatives in Czechoslovakia who wanted these goods for the purpose of further resale. The StB was even more interested in Velíšek’s cousins: they owned a construction company in Vienna and allegedly did business with Americans. Velíšek was told to unearth as much information as he possibly could, but he failed to discover anything of interest. Upon his arrival to Czechoslovakia, he drafted a report that was replete with musings about luxuries, opportunities given by a life in the West, and the flaws of the Czechoslovak economic system.

During Velíšek’s visit to Austria, one of his cousins took him to a veterinary faculty in Vienna and introduced him to some people there. Velíšek was surprised that they had “more roentgen machines [x-ray machines] than any of our human hospitals.” On another occasion, he saw “an attractive advertisement in an American bank recruiting agricultural experts to New Zealand, under very good financial conditions which hardly anyone [could] resist.” It seemed that Velíšek was very enticed by the sparkle and shine of Vienna and the West in general. He told the StB that, in Vienna, “Czechoslovak tourists [were] regarded as have-nots” because they went to the shabbiest bars and restaurants to save money. Despite his awestruck attitude, Velíšek was allegedly “disappointed” when he returned from Austria: his cousins were supposed to give him a new car, but they never did. Velíšek would later proceed to take two more trips to Austria.

In 1966, Velíšek married one of his lovers. She was 12 years younger than him, and she worked at the same veterinary hospital as he did. They had two children together. She was thought of as politically passive and untrustworthy. She was also described as “haughty,” “with no good attitude toward neighbors.” The StB considered her to be *bourgeoise*. According to one of their assessments, “she smoked in public, was meeting people from ‘higher circles,’ and looked down upon manual workers.”

Even though he was newly married, the StB was well aware of Velíšek's "proclivities" and consequently monitored him and his relationship. A report described his attitude toward women as "demanding" and evaluated his personal life as being "very bad." Unsurprisingly, Velíšek continued to have affairs, even after his second marriage. As a result, the StB planned, yet again, "to educate" him "to avoid past mistakes in his family life."

Additionally, Velíšek was experiencing financial troubles: relatively high alimony payments to his first wife and the accumulation of other debt⁹⁶ placed him under perennial financial pressure. He allegedly started borrowing money from his subordinates at work, thus ruining his professional reputation. In 1967, Velíšek's co-worker stated that he tried to privately sell fodder, *n.b.* illegally sell fodder, from the animal hospital where he was employed. The StB was aware that the weight of extenuating financial pressure was motivating him to conduct the illegal sale, and as a result, they tried to prevent him from completing the transaction. There is no mention as to how the StB intended to prevent this sale, but, in all likelihood, they would have planned to simply talk him out of it. It is not clear whether the deal indeed happened, or whether the StB was successful in their 'intervention.' Regardless, and by all appearances, the StB seemed to demonstrate considerable clemency and patience with Velíšek.

In April 1967, Velíšek provided the StB with information that led to the arrest of three individuals for theft of socialist property; his surveillance also allegedly prevented another individual from emigrating. However, "despite these merits," Velíšek's collaboration was erratic: his flakey tendencies persisted, and in spite of the StB's constant entreaties, these undesirable patterns did not improve. Consequently, the StB repeatedly demanded reassurance that he remained interested in cooperation "underlining the voluntariness of the contacts and [the fact] that [Velíšek] did not have to meet [the StB] if it was causing him inner struggles." He nevertheless "insisted on [further] cooperation."

Despite his insistence, Velíšek was elusive. Multiple reports in his file state that, starting at the end of the 1960's, the StB had to continually chase him, as he began to use his work and family life as an excuse for his routine absences. Additionally, in 1968, it became obvious that he was not very happy with contemporaneous political developments: he reportedly criticized the regime and openly advocated for the establishment of political opposition to the Communist Party. In

⁹⁶ His file contains a balance sheet that details his income and debt. The StB appeared to be keenly interested in this matter. Velíšek's balance sheet revealed the following debt: 45,000 Kčs in car debt that he was paying off at a rate of 700 Kčs per month, and alimony payments in the amount of 650 Kčs. These expenses were in addition to normal living expenses, such as rent, groceries, etc. His monthly income was 2,600 Kčs. Interestingly, he obtained few financial rewards from the StB. According a report in his file, throughout the entire period of cooperation, Velíšek was given a total of 2,071 Kčs in money and gifts. He was said to have happily accepted these rewards.

October 1968, after he failed to attend additional meetings, the StB finally got a hold of Velíšek. They inquired about his opinion on the occupation/presence of the Soviet armies in the country. Unfortunately, his answer was not noted in the report.

Velíšek's collaboration continued to idle. One report even warned of his and his wife's "potential emigration" following a meeting they attended at a passport office prior to their trip to The Netherlands. The StB thus asked Velíšek's close friends to keep an eye on him, and to specifically look for any signs of a planned emigration, "such as selling clothes." The StB did not approve of this situation, and they consequently had a talk with Velíšek, telling him that they "appreciate[d] his attitude, however [they] felt oblige[d] to share [their] opinion with him on his relationship to cooperation in 1968. [...] he had done all that he could for the republic [since 1957], however, in 1968 [his cooperation] stagnated." Velíšek responded that it was mainly due to different family circumstances and his narrowing possibilities for informing. He stated that his financial situation was the main reason he was slacking off, and that he had considered moving abroad to earn more money. He further clarified that he would only move abroad after seeking approval from the relevant Czechoslovak authorities. He did not want to "lose contact with his parents [...] [nor] be considered [to be] a traitor." He told the StB that "in any case [,] he would [be] [legally travelling abroad with his family]." He concluded by saying that, even if he moved out of Czechoslovakia, "we could always make appropriate arrangements." His StB officer replied that "the republic needs reliable people everywhere."

Velíšek's evaluation assessment from 1969 indicated that his indifferent attitude toward the StB did not change: he still missed meetings, the StB still pursued him, and his political opinions were unwaveringly unfriendly to the regime. Nevertheless, he steadfastly maintained his interest in continuing the informer relationship. His officer explicitly noted that, despite Velíšek's verbal reassurances, his concrete actions indicated otherwise. According to an internal StB document, Velíšek's first openly rejected collaboration in August 1968 and did not cooperate ever since.

Therefore, after years of stagnation, the StB terminated Velíšek's collaboration as a result of his "arrogant criticism towards the current politics of the Communist Party." After 1968, any and all meetings with Velíšek were solely about him "verbally attacking the armies of the Warsaw Pact." In 1970, he was excluded from the Party for "his actions." The preceding statements are indicative of his dissident attitude toward ongoing political developments, and according, to his StB officer, it had been a couple years since he had provided the StB with any valuable information. Therefore, as Velíšek seemed to have 'broken up' with the regime, the StB decided to 'break up' with Velíšek.

Velíšek's fourteen year-long collaboration exemplifies a journey of devolutionary amity: he embarked as a friend of a Communist regime that "suited him," and, over time, he transformed

into someone who was increasingly embittered and skeptical of the socialist establishment. He became progressively critical of the situation in Czechoslovakia, especially after he witnessed the higher standard of living abroad. Initially, he only revealed his disgruntlement in private – the StB had a network of informers that targeted Velíšek, and, as such, they were aware of his private disclosures. However, as time passed, he began to explicitly direct his complaints toward public spaces. His open bemoaning of the 1968 invasion of the Warsaw Pact armies was the final blow to his friendship with the regime.

Velíšek's relationship with the StB followed a similar track. While he began as a young and eager collaborator, he ended up as a reluctant, avoidant, and defiant informer. Once a devotee of the state, its ideology, his profession, and the protection of animals – the latter two constituting his primary motivations for informing – now, a man embittered and frustrated by the regime. Interestingly, in the later phases of their relationship, the StB was quite 'lenient' – despite Velíšek's lethargy and lack of commitment, he faced only little recrimination and retaliation from the organization. Based on this and other files we have seen it seems that treatment of different informers was not on par and there have been considerable variation in how, for instance, a 'defective' cooperation was handled by the StB. This variation could be ascribed to different time periods, an oscillation in the StB's 'ways,' and a disparity in the relevance and importance of each particular informer. Moreover, the personal style and personality of each StB officer was also determinative of such differentiation.

Most intriguingly, even as compared to the other files, the StB intentionally attempted to guide and educate Velíšek – not only politically, but also regarding his professional ethics and personal, matrimonial, and family matters. It was as if the StB saw itself as his relative, *parens patriae*, or even *in loco parentis*, to him.

ZUZANA⁹⁷



Zuzana was born in Olomouc in 1943. She had two brothers.⁹⁸ Her father worked in the energy sector and belonged to the Communist Party until his membership was terminated in 1970 following the post-1968 purges. Notwithstanding this termination, his employers nevertheless perceived him as an individual with “positive relations towards the socialist establishment” – this reputation persisted into the late 1970’s. The StB, however, registered him as “an enemy person,” although they did not actively pursue him. Zuzana’s mother was non-partisan and worked as a language teacher. She was considered “progressive [,] with correct political interpretations.”

After finishing high school in 1960, Zuzana attended the School of Electrical Engineering at the Czech Technical University. While there, she met a man named Vladimír H., a teacher, who later become an engineer. The couple married in 1964, and in 1965, Zuzana graduated with a degree in engineering. In 1971, she gave birth to a daughter. According to reports in Zuzana’s file,

⁹⁷ Position: Agent; Confidant

File No.: 710067

Registration No.: 19327

File created: 1980; File archived: Several times, most recently in 1984

Page count: 222 pages

⁹⁸ Her older brother worked as a technician for Škoda, a car company. He was a member of the Communist party. Her younger brother graduated from the Faculty of Medicine at the Charles University in Prague and worked as an assistant surgeon. He was non-partisan.

Vladimír H. was however not the father: Zuzana had had an affair during their marriage, and the father was actually a musician named Vladimír S.. Zuzana applied for divorce a year after Lucie was born.

After graduation, Zuzana was “placed” with an energy company for half a year. In 1966, she left this position and began working at a research institute, where she focused on energy sector economics and management. Her supervisors considered her to be a proactive, intelligent employee with favorable political standing. In 1969, she was sent on a six-month-long work-placement in Paris with “Electricité de France.” Then, in 1972, following her maternity leave, she started job at OZO TECHNOEXPORT – a state company that focused on international trade and the import of technical equipment into Czechoslovakia.

Zuzana had very good language skills – she mastered German, English, French, and Russian. For a short time, she taught these languages at a local school. Her involvement and interest in international business affairs, and her affinity for foreigners, both in a professional and personal capacity, sparked the StB’s attention.

Although Zuzana was not a Party member, her political orientations and opinions did not seem to raise any alarms. In university, as well as during her career, she was active in various political groups, including the Revolutionary Labour Movement (*Revoluční odborové hnutí*, ROH), or the Czechoslovak Youth Union (*Československý svaz mládeže*, ČSM). She was seen as having “a broad knowledge of the political and economic situation [,] and [she] always [drew] [the] correct conclusions.” Her employers regularly praised her proactivity, outstanding education, and good social skills.

Her file describes Zuzana as “an intelligent woman, who c[ould] [logically] evaluate a situation and make appropriate decisions.” Zuzana had “a sense of responsibility,” “good organizational skills,” and independence. Moreover, she was said to be able to “express herself very well” and “react promptly to any questions.” She was also a very social woman. Zuzana was reportedly concerned about her good reputation and her good appearance. As was gleaned from her file, she seemed to have particularly enjoyed the company of wealthy foreign businessmen, the “history of old Prague,” hiking, and skiing.

Zuzana was chatty, curious, and spontaneous in her interactions with the StB. She shared very personal and intimate details about herself, especially when she assumed that the StB was already aware of the facts being discussed. At times, she even asked them for advice; indeed, in certain moments, it almost seemed like she and her StB officer were good friends, gossiping over a glass

of wine. The fact that Vendula was actually intimidated into cooperation makes all this even more interesting.

Zuzana's relationship with the StB certainly did not begin on the best note. In 1975, operation "ZUZANA" was underway: Zuzana was suspected of privately meeting with 'Westerners' – whom she met at work – without notifying her employer. She was also suspected of violating other directives regarding the conduct of international business; her file contains informers' reports describing these transgressions.⁹⁹ Moreover, partner companies were allegedly able to bribe her and promise her favors in exchange for better trading conditions. In order to investigate these allegations, the Regional Department for Passports and Visas (KOPV) requested Zuzana for an interview. If the forementioned allegations were confirmed to be true, the KOPV was to remove the authorization she currently had to travel abroad (*výjezdní doložka*) – her precarious situation seemingly gifted the StB with an opportunity to badger her into cooperation.

Thus, on May 14, 1975, two StB officers interviewed her at the KOPV office in Prague. Interestingly, the report of the interview already referred to her as a candidate for secret collaboration.¹⁰⁰ The StB informed Zuzana that they would be using the interview as the basis to "decide whether she [would] be allowed to make a trip to a capitalistic state¹⁰¹ [or] whether she would [even] be allowed to travel abroad at all." The report further stipulated that the preceding decisions depended "on her attitude to the discovered circumstances."

Zuzana was strikingly forthcoming in her interview with the StB. She revealed intimate details about her private life, specifically describing how she indeed had been dating Bernd S., a citizen of either Austria or West Germany.¹⁰² She disclosed that she had met him in 1970 while she was still married, as he was a friend of her then-husband. She stated that Bernd occasionally visited her in Prague, that they did in-fact spend a holiday together in Bulgaria, and that they had planned to get married. She elaborated, stating that the marriage plans dissolved because of "[her] aversion to mothers-in-law based on experience from her former marriage." However, Zuzana continued that marrying Bernd was still a possibility, contingent on the explicit condition "that we [would] not live in a common household with his mother." She then admitted that she failed to fulfill the registration obligation regarding Bernd's visits. Furthermore, she divulged,

⁹⁹ She allegedly spent her holiday at a Bulgarian luxury resort that was patronized almost exclusively by the Austrians and the French to the extent that "practically even Bulgarians did not have access" to it. She vacationed with an Austrian gentleman who accompanied her and paid for her stay. This report was delivered to the StB by its Bulgarian counterparts.

¹⁰⁰ It is generally known that, on occasion, the StB kept files on individuals as candidates for secret cooperation without the implicated individuals being aware of the fact. It seems that this happened in Zuzana's case.

¹⁰¹ Zuzana's file does not state when and where she was intending to travel. Moreover, it does not specify whether she was already granted permission to travel abroad by the KOPV, or whether the evaluation was underway at the time of the interview.

¹⁰² Some reports in her file claim that Bernd was an Austrian; others claim that he was from West Germany.

entirely out of her own volition – the StB explicitly noted that they were not aware of the circumstances she described prior to her having described them – that she was also seeing other foreigners without registering them, such as Petr B., a German man that she went to restaurants with and invited into her home. She also discussed some scattered pieces of information from her workplace, including alleged cases of improper, special treatment given by her colleagues to foreign companies.

The StB report of the interview describes how all this was “in the end used in an appropriate way so that [Zuzana] practically offered cooperation by herself.” In essence, she was made to offer her ‘services’ to the StB. Zuzana handwrote her offer:

I, [...], gave on 14 May 1975 a testimony which touches upon unfulfilled registration duties regarding my meetings with foreigners. I did not hide anything in my testimony. I will not repeat my incorrect behaviour and as a proof of my honesty I want to help the organs of the Federal Ministry of the Interior in their work fighting the enemies of our socialist land.

Ja, [redacted] dala jsem
dne 14. května 1975 prohlášení
o svých neplněných povinnostech
registrovat zahraniční návštěvy a jiné
údaje, které jsem nehlavala. Já se
nepřiznávám k žádné nepravdě a jako
důkaz své upřímnosti chci pomoci
orgánům Federálního ministerstva
vnitra v jejich práci s nepříteli
našeho socialistického státu.

V Praze dne 14. 5. 1975
[redacted]

The StB officer “acknowledged” Zuzana’s ‘offer’ to collaborate. However, he qualified this acknowledgement by stating that “it [would] be decided later whether the offer would be accepted from our side.” With such an indecisive reply, Zuzana’s fate was kept hanging in the balance. Given her preparedness and initiative to inform, her StB officer decided not to revoke her permission to travel abroad and her passport. He proposed that he “continue meeting [Zuzana]” and “purposefully gain information to compromise her into depending on [the StB].”

Clearly, Zuzana was already convinced that the StB possessed a certain “Big Brother” quality. According to the report documenting the interview, she was “certain [the StB] knew it all” and that they “were for sure informed on everything.” Obviously, they did not know it all, as rather ironically, Zuzana disclosed information about herself of which the StB was unaware. In a sense, she was an informer informing upon herself. Moreover, she consistently – and perhaps naively – overestimated the StB’s prowess. For example, in later years, Zuzana assumed that the StB kept her under surveillance and randomly tested her loyalty by attempting to bribe her; this was never the case. However, the StB did not correct her mistaken beliefs. In the report from their first interview, an officer wrote that “I did not refute her idea of our absolute awareness” and stated “in the event that we accept her offer, she will find out over time that [,] even if she conveys information known [to the StB] [,] she will not be notified of what we know.”

As many others, Zuzana was “particularly interested” in keeping her cooperation absolutely secret from the outside world. Zuzana even went as far as devising a method to ‘explain away’ StB-induced absences from work to her employer and her family. Furthermore, she inquired whether she “[would] have to inform on her parents and brothers.” In response, the StB “tactically” reassured her that “the family is not in our interest.” However, quite soon after her first interview with the StB, she was asked to provide a list of all of her “close contacts” in Czechoslovakia. She complied with this request, and, despite her previous concerns, she voluntarily included family details, such as her brother’s lovers, as examples of these close contacts.

As time went on, Zuzana did not stop sharing intimate details of her private life with the StB. During a meeting in June 1975, she described a late-night, surprise call from Petr B.. She stated that she did not fancy this call, and that she had refused to meet with him. A couple of days later, she randomly ran into him again. He was very determined to get to see her. He reportedly attempted to meet under the guise of making a mutually beneficial business deal; however, she was disinterested. Zuzana then “asked for advice” on what to do, as if her StB officer were a close confidante or best friend. It seemed to her that Petr’s insistence on meeting outside of a professional space “indicate[d] that he wanted to have intimate /sexual/ contact” with her. She also asked the StB whether she should register Petr’s late-night call and visit with her employer,

as she was legally supposed to do. The StB advised her not to do so, as it “could give a false impression of more intimate unregistered contacts,” and that she should just wait and see how the situation evolved. They then also gave her ‘their five cents’ on how to handle Petr. Zuzana was advised that “[D]uring the next appropriate situation,” she should “proceed in such a way that [Petr] would not be offended [,] [and] explain the inappropriateness of his behavior [to him], [and] that she holds him in high esteem as a serious business partner.”

During this same meeting, she also talked about some of her emigrated friends, such as her close friend Petra. Petra married a West German citizen in 1969, and as a result, “solved in that way her difficult situation after [Petra’s preceding] divorce.” Zuzana shared details about how the marriage was fake, since Petra did not know her husband, nor did she speak German. Zuzana even stated that she “had to write love letters” for Petra. Furthermore, Zuzana discussed how the husband of her brother’s former lover did not live “according to moral principles of a citizen of [a] socialist state” – namely, he partied excessively with models, and popular opinion believed that “given all that he [got] away with, he must have been under the cover of the StB.”

Zuzana’s StB officer appreciated her openness. He reported that she behaved “naturally” and answered all questions “immediately and persuasively.” Moreover, he stated that her most valuable trait was that she was ready to “convey information on her own initiative.” Accordingly, she was seen as an “able, decisive and intelligent woman.” As such, her officer believed that Zuzana “would be active in her cooperation with the organs of the StB.”

Zuzana and the StB met again later that month. She told the StB, in confidence, how Petr B. was still insistent on meeting with her. She stated that, in his persistence, he planned a holiday with her mother in Sweden. She then elaborated, describing his plan: he intended to take his wife and kids to Spain, leave them there, and vacation with Zuzana, in Sweden, for a minimum of two days. Zuzana was not enthused by Petr’s proposition – she had no personal desire to meet with him, nor did she wish to meet with him out of respect for her mother who “was very principled.” Nevertheless, she agreed to maintain contact in the spirit of good business partnership.

She also described how another one of her business partners tried to bribe her, but she ultimately rejected the offer. Zuzana confessed that, at the time, she thought that the bribe was a provocation staged by the StB. Although she recounted this story “with a smile” when she met with her StB officer, he was not receptive to her hints and inquiries. He “tactically explained that they were not going to talk about this issue.” In fact, the matter had nothing to do with the StB, and simply exemplified Zuzana’s aggrandized impression of the StB’s tentacle-like reach.

In July, Zuzana arrived late to a meeting with the StB, and – to make matters worse – she had also failed to write a portion of the reports that she had previously agreed to write. She used her busy schedule as an excuse for her bi-fold blunder, and the StB considered this justification as truthful, given that she needed “to take care of her daughter,” and that she had taken various business trips in the weeks prior meeting with the StB. On one of those trips, Zuzana spent some time with Petr. During their shared time together, he not only “indicated [that] he loved her” but also, insisted on meeting her in Sweden despite her reservations. The StB “did not recommend that she give [Petr] the opportunity to personally encounter her in the absence of her mother.” She was thus advised to behave “with appropriate distance.” Zuzana said that, during her holiday, she had instead planned to meet Bernd S. for a short visit. She affirmed that “she maintain[ed] closer personal contacts [with Bernd] during his visits to Czechoslovakia.” Due to the apparent emotional bond between them, the StB did not “raise any requirements” for Zuzana with respect to her relationship with Bernd. Once again, a paternal or uncle/aunt-like support session, conversation, or interlocation appeared to emerge from the StB’s seemingly impassive discussion with one of its informers.

Zuzana was also curious as to whether the StB was finally going to accept her ‘offer’ to cooperate. When she pressed the issue, the officer responded curtly: her cooperation was still under consideration. He then proceeded to evaluate her behavior as being even “more open,” and noted that she assumed that “she was being controlled by us.” In his report from their meeting, the officer clarified that “[t]his assumption was not refuted.” Interestingly, Zuzana’s proposal for recruitment had been drafted already a month before this meeting - on June 13, 1975; thus, the StB’s deliberate concealment of her acceptance as a collaborator appeared to be nothing more than a ploy to keep her in suspense of their decision.

The StB believed Zuzana to be a worthy candidate for collaboration due to her job, her direct contact with businessmen from capitalist states, and because many individuals with “rightist opportunist” opinions were employed in her field. Consequently, the StB foresaw her as potentially fulfilling a triple purpose for them. Firstly, they were hopeful that she would inform both on Petr B. and on any “criminal activities” that occurred at her workplace. Secondly, they envisaged tasking her with “getting [the] trust” of those considered to be persons of interest to the StB – the “bearers of antisocialist tendencies.” Thirdly, they conceived of using her as an informer abroad in West Germany. Such a scenario would most likely have arisen in the event that Zuzana married a citizen of, and subsequently moved to, West Germany. Zuzana’s proposal for recruitment used Kafkaesque language to describe her motivation to collaborate. It stated that she agreed to cooperate because of “her voluntariness [,] conditioned by an awareness of violating current regulations on registering contacts with [Westerners], which, if enforced, would mean administrative sanctions [for Zuzana] and the impossibility of getting a suitable job.”

It was only on July 25, 1975 that the StB took mercy on Zuzana and let her know that they in the end decided to accept her offer to cooperate. She was reportedly “interested” and “relieved” to hear the good news. She also appeared to have been quite chatty throughout their meeting – as was her custom. For example, prior to having received the news of her new-found collaboration, she talked in great detail about one of her colleagues who “was not ashamed to require expensive gifts from foreign customers.” The StB then invited her to add her cover name and confidentiality clause to her previously written cooperation offer.

As a follow up to my previous declaration from 14 May 1975 today I have decided to use the cover name Zuzana in my contacts with representatives of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs. With this name I will sign all information I will be asked to deliver.

Again, I assure that I will keep in absolute confidentiality all questions that will be consulted with me.

O prosa dne 29.7.1975

Vzhľadom na to, že dňom 14.5.1975 som sa dohodla na spoluprácu s predstaviteľmi MVR pod menom Zuzana. Preto som tu podpísala všetky informácie, o čom sa píše v predošlom bode. Zároveň sa zaviazam, že zachová a neposkytnem žiadne informácie, ktoré by mohli byť škodlivé pre bezpečnosť štátu.

zpečnosť štátu

Despite the StB’s cognizance that Zuzana interacted with them primarily due to “the compromising” information, they did see her as a proactive and promising informer. Nevertheless, they tasked two other informers to keep an eye on her to ensure that she was being straight with them.

Four months later, in November 1975, Zuzana met with her StB officer in a café. She told him that she had fallen in love with a British citizen, Eduard L.. By the time Zuzana had made this disclosure, she had already known Eduard for a year. She confessed that she belatedly reported this relationship because she was “embarrassed to come forward, as some time ago, she was talking about how emotionally engaged she was with [...] [Bernd S.]” The StB “reprimanded [Zuzana] in an appropriate way for her belated reporting,” and the matter was closed soon thereafter. When other café patrons began to sit in “close proximity,” the meeting was forced to an abrupt end. It was decided that all matters were to be further discussed at their next meeting.

This subsequent meeting occurred later that same month, and – as was stipulated – Zuzana further described how she got to know Eduard. She stated that she first met him at a business fair in Brno in 1974, but that they only hit it off at another fair in 1975. She also added that Eduard used any opportunity to see her anytime he was in Czechoslovakia. In response to her disclosures, the StB “fiercely” reminded her that “whenever [Eduard] transfers from personal interest to questions of business or political character, it is [Zuzana’s] obligation to share that immediately.” They also made use of their “compromising” leverage by emphasizing that, in the event that Zuzana’s employer discovers these unregistered contacts, she should not expect their support in any way. She retorted that she was “fully aware of the consequences and [was willing to] bear them because she really loved this man.” Her officer, skeptical of her assertions, stated “I do not take seriously [Zuzana’s] claim of ‘true love’ considering her previous relationship with [Bernd S.] from BRD, which she had qualified [...] in a similar way.” He continued, “[Zuzana] is a woman searching for love after her divorce” even though, ultimately, it also turned out it was Zuzana who had cheated on her husband. Such statements suggest that her officer patronizingly dismissed her ability for romance, perhaps not openly to her, but at least for the internal purposes of the StB archives.

In 1976, the StB received a report from another informer, “Lipka”, who was Zuzana’s close colleague. The report detailed how he would consistently bring Zuzana expensive gifts from his travels abroad because he needed her to “support his opinions [at their workplace] and to treat his requests preferentially.” It also described the extent of Lipka and Zuzana’s friendship. Most notably, Zuzana was said to have confided in him about how security services had questioned her regarding her contacts with foreigners. This revelation would have been of particular importance to the StB because deconspiration was one of their major concerns; it constituted ‘the mortal sin’ of any informer. However, Zuzana’s transgressions did not end there.

Later that year, Lipka informed the StB about a business trip he and Zuzana had taken to Paris. Allegedly, she had gotten drunk with her colleagues, and one of them, Lubomír B., revealed to Zuzana that he was in touch with the StB; that he had signed a pledge to cooperate during his studies; that the StB wanted him to report on his roommate; and, that he greatly regretted doing so. In return, and in her intoxicated state, Zuzana reportedly revealed that she “was in touch with

the security.” Moreover, during this same trip, Lipka told the StB, the Czechs were given some ‘gratifications’ in the form of French Francs from their French business partners who had also paid for their hotels and invited them to fancy dinners.

On July 13, 1976, Zuzana and Lipka were back in Prague to meet with various West German businessmen. Lipka recounted that, during one such meeting, Zuzana was called outside. After an hour, she rejoined the group, and Lipka stated that, when she returned, he had already intuited and observed “that something unpleasant [had] happened to her.” She proceeded to invite him into the next room. Having intentionally left the door open to ensure that those in the vicinity could overhear the conversation, Zuzana began loudly and animatedly accusing Lipka that he was “an StB snooper,” that she “had not thought that of him,” that she “considered him to be a serious person,” and that “she was very disappointed in him.” Lipka inquired what happened. She explained that “she had been called out from the meeting under stupid pretenses, and had been asked by the organs of the StB about things they could have only known from [Lipka] because she had discussed them with a limited number of people [,] and that she had only told [Lipka] about her cooperation.” Lipka stated that she was very perturbed by the situation – she had only stopped talking because she was crying so much. He reportedly tried to refute all of her allegations, but was “of the opinion that [,] due to Zuzana’s being really upset [,] he did not succeed in this regard.” As a result, both Lipka and Zuzana were deconspired. Interestingly, the StB regarded this series of events as exemplifying unprofessional behavior on the part of the officers who had confronted and upset Zuzana during a business meeting.

Zuzana’s file does not contain any information as to what occurred following this ‘incident,’ only that, she was transferred to another StB officer in September of 1977. From then on, she seemed to have been significantly less forthcoming and interactive in her meetings with the StB, revealing only that she could not fulfill the tasks given to her for various reasons – “illness/abortion/, wedding.” However, Zuzana did promise that she would complete her tasks before their next meeting. Apparently, Zuzana had also gotten remarried. While her file does not contain any further information on her remarriage, given her new surname, she ostensibly married the alleged father of her daughter to whom she had given birth during her first marriage.

Following the report of the 1977 transfer meeting, there is a span of two and a half years where her file is devoid of content. In January 1980, a proposal to terminate cooperation with Zuzana was drafted. According to this document, the StB considered her cooperation “problematic since the beginning.” Zuzana was “hesitant in fulfilling the tasks and [her] attendance of meetings was bad.” She frequently missed meetings and only came up with excuses for her absence afterwards. According to the proposal, “the quality of her reports, despite repeated instructions, was low.” Zuzana brought some interesting information, but due to “her narrow specialization and the limited possibilities at her workplace [,] she was not able to [follow up to] broaden or add to [the record].”

On the one hand, Zuzana's relationship with the StB was evaluated as only "formal," meaning that it primarily existed on paper, with no actual substance delivered. According to the termination report, it was "obvious that [Zuzana] accepted (respectively offered) cooperation due to compromising materials." On the other hand, Zuzana's relationship to her StB officer was seen as "good and informal." She was "a very good companion who reacted to questions in a lively and spontaneous way." The termination proposal noted that her "impulsivity, emotionality, rather libertarian moral principles [,] and related personal problems meant that [,] from Zuzana's part [,] information discussed during the meetings became too intimate [,] and it was difficult to keep the dialogue within limits reflecting the aims of cooperation." This is a very noteworthy caveat that the intimacies with Zuzana have been 'too close.' At least at the beginning, Zuzana indeed came to the StB to share her personal worries and troubles, especially if she suspected that the information was already known to the StB, but they did not seem to particularly appreciate it.

However, and as was the case with many other informers, notwithstanding the subpar quality of her cooperation, the StB did not completely shut the door on the prospect of future collaboration. In March 1980, three months after her official termination proposal was drafted, the StB wrote a new proposal to engage with Zuzana as a confidant. Her file is not clear on what happened thereafter, and why this proposal was drafted. The proposal only notes that Zuzana would target Westerners with whom she met as part of her job and the import of certain goods to Czechoslovakia. However, yet again, it appears that Zuzana did not perform in accordance with StB standards, as in 1982, she was assessed as "unproductive," and "she [was found to have] delivered practically no results" throughout the two antecedent years. Her file was subsequently archived. However, she was not informed about the fact that her file would lay dormant and that her cooperation would be terminated. Essentially, this meant that, in case of any future needs, the StB could just approach her as if nothing happened.

Indeed, on April 9, 1984, yet another proposal to renew collaboration with Zuzana appeared. Apparently, the StB became interested in an Austrian company, Werner Pfleiderer, on which they believed Zuzana could provide valuable information. Furthermore, allegedly some of her colleagues opposed the mainstream political developments that had occurred after 1968 so Zuzana was to monitor them. Additionally, under this renewed collaboration, she was once again tasked with focusing on foreign businessmen. Later that month, the StB met with Zuzana to enlighten her on their renewed interest in her. According to a report from this meeting, Zuzana's attitude toward the StB's offer to reinstate contact was "very positive" – she even "reminisced about her former StB officers." However, she warned the StB that her possibilities to cull information were "limited," especially with respect to her colleagues at her workplace. Nevertheless, she said that "she was willing to provide information with respect to foreigners

[she encountered at work].” Accordingly, she volunteered to make a copy of all of the business cards she had received.¹⁰³

During that meeting, Zuzana also mentioned that, in 1984, she had been investigated for allegations of bribery. This investigation was based on an anonymous letter stating that she “brought home voluminous company bags and bribes,” and that “she was seen arriving home in cars with foreign registration numbers.” She resolutely denied the accusations, and said that “as any other woman [,] she took care of her household and therefore went [grocery] shopping.” She further stated that a foreign business partner would bring her home if she was going to be late from work; however, that was not a norm. Zuzana firmly claimed that the anonymous letter was “fabricated” by her jealous neighbors. Therefore, as it did in the 1970’s, compromising information arose about Zuzana, and the authorities manipulated it. It was as if she was being entrapped in a whirlpool of compromising materials. Interestingly, the StB did not seem to explicitly make use of this ‘dirt’ to re-recruit her. She seemingly offered information on her own accord, though she most likely erroneously assumed that the StB knew about such information anyway.

Zuzana’s moves and methods also repeated themselves in other respects. In August 1984, an informer’s report alerted the StB that she had spent two nights in a hotel in Hradec Králove with a West German citizen, Herbert R.. She assumedly was meeting Herbert on a long-term and more regular basis because the next document in her file is a report from a meeting with her StB officer that took place half a year later. At this meeting, Zuzana described how, earlier that month, she had spent time with Herbert, who was her business partner at work, at the mountains. She mentioned that she had known Herbert for roughly four years and had been meeting him privately. On the way back from their get-away, Zuzana and Herbert were stopped by the police for a traffic misdemeanor and fined 100 Kčs. Zuzana was afraid that her employer would find out as, yet again, she did not register contacts with Herbert. The StB advised Zuzana to notify her employer. Apparently, the StB must have promised an intervention in the matter to her benefit, as the report cryptically notes that “in exchange for this gesture [Zuzana] would have to improve her cooperation.” She reportedly “promised that she would drop contacts with foreigners outside of work” and “increase her [...] cooperation.”

However, it seems that neither of these promises were honored: her file does not contain any subsequent reports describing her cooperation. In September 1986, another informer again alerted the StB that Zuzana and Herbert maintained “private, even intimate” relations outside of their business activities as they “were seen kissing on a street.” The informer added that Zuzana was married to another man.

¹⁰³ She clearly completed this task successfully, as her file contains four pages of copied business cards.

Because of her noncommittal passivity, in conjunction with her continuing transgressions, on December 9, 1986, the StB decided, again – and for good this time – to terminate Zuzana’s cooperation. The StB was alerted that at work she “gave disproportionately preferential treatment to [Herbert’s company],” and there were even rumors that she was going to ask her current husband for a divorce. Therefore, the StB decided, as a result of her “un-seriousness and practically zero productivity during cooperation” to end their collaborative relationship. The termination proposal noted that contacts between Zuzana and Herbert should be pursued by a different department that was “to take its own measures.”

Zuzana’s relationship with the StB went full circle. Initially she was intimidated into collaboration because of her ‘illicit’ meetings with foreigners. However, over the years Zuzana did not change her ways. Her interactions with the StB ended on the same note. Whether anything ever happened to Vendula due to her continuing ‘misbehaviour’ remains unclear from her file.

Zuzana seemed to have lived a full life. She juggled many balls, including multiple, overlapping relationships, productive work demands, and taking care of her daughter. She also juggled adroitly in her relationship with the StB. Even though she was quite open and forthcoming with her private affairs, she seemingly only came forward with this information when she sensed – rightly or wrongly – that the StB already knew about her intended disclosures. At the outset, she indeed thought that the StB was an omniscient Big Brother. Whenever she came into contact with the StB, her *modus operandi* was to ‘volunteer’ a piece of information about herself. Judging from the documents that remained in her file, she did not report much on her colleagues or acquaintances, save for a few exceptions. Her informing was largely limited to herself and her ‘foreign affairs.’

At the beginning of her ‘StB gig,’ Zuzana feared repercussions from her transgressions, and thus, engaged with the StB quite enthusiastically and openly. She offered voluminous details on her private affairs and her own (mis-)doings. However, over time, her prominence faded away. Perhaps her fear dissipated. Perhaps she stopped caring. Perhaps she found other things to worry about. Perhaps she came to believe that the StB actually knew far less than she had thought they did. In turn, the StB was quite circumspect with Zuzana – and more and more so through time. She did not source any relevant information, and she said little of consequence or concern to national security. She seemed to enjoy talking about herself. She publicly deconspired herself and other StB informers. She persisted in a lifestyle – meeting foreigners privately, accepting gifts – that was considered to be unacceptable, yet she could not be redirected. The StB gave up on her after several attempts at a relationship, and she seemingly did not face any recriminations for this.

Zuzana's years of informing reveal the gossipy, intimate conversational content that infused some informer-StB relationships: her revolving affairs, her longing for men, using men and getting used by men, her unsatisfied yearning for love, her inner drama, and the intentional revelation of personal informational tidbits as a tactic to remain in sync with authorities.

VLASTIMIL¹⁰⁴



Vlastimil was born in 1934. His file-story reveals that he was of modest origins: both of his parents were manual workers. His father worked as a locksmith, and later as a chauffeur and mechanic, and his mother worked as a laborer in a publishing house. As of 1949, his father was employed as a cadre officer in the state planning office. However, in 1952, he left this job due to health reasons. His parents joined the Communist Party in 1945, but each canceled their active membership in 1959 as a result of their elevated age. Both were “actively engaged in Party politics,” and, prior to his retirement, Vlastimil’s father received a prize for his contributions.

Vlastimil had two brothers. His older brother was also a Party member, but, in 1950, his membership was terminated due to unpaid member fees. His younger brother had no political affiliation. In general, Vlastimil’s family lived peacefully in socialist society, with only one exception: his cousin had illegally fled the country and emigrated to Canada after 1968. No one from Vlastimil’s family was reportedly in touch with him, and Vlastimil did not know where and how his cousin lived.

¹⁰⁴ Position: Agent; Candidate for secret cooperation

File No.: 808963

Registration No.: 11688

File created: 1977; File archived: 1980

Page count: 270 pages. Another code name used in Vlastimil’s file is “Novák”.

In 1960, at the age of 26, Vlastimil married. His wife was from a working-class family, and she had been married before. She had a daughter from her previous marriage, who Vlastimil accepted as his own. In 1970, Vlastimil and his wife had a daughter of their own. The wife was a Party member, and according to Vlastimil's file, she remained politically passive, especially after her maternity leave in 1969. Accordingly, as a result of her passivity, her Party membership was terminated. Over the course of her life, she worked in various administrative positions: at a regional prosecutor's office, at the embassy of Czechoslovakia in Cuba, and later, as a secretary at the TechnoExport¹⁰⁵/ŠkodaExport¹⁰⁶ company, and the Odeon publishing house.

Vlastimil is described in his file as "intelligent;" "happy, direct, (self-)critical;" "friendly;" "full of energy," and "courageous." He had an orderly family life, and his neighbors saw him as polite. He was considered to be a good and reliable employee who was especially suited "for complex tasks." He was further described as someone precise and ambitious with good social skills. He was liked by his colleagues, and he enjoyed playing golf, watching TV, and reading books.

Unlike his parents, Vlastimil was eager to engage in higher education and worked hard in pursuit of this goal. In his professional life, he often fluctuated between manual labor and professional positions, with the nature of his profession hinging upon his present political stance. For example, in 1968, he was suddenly condemned to perform manual labor, even though, prior to his demotion, he had been an active Party member and trusted employee in foreign trade. He disagreed with the Party's standpoint regarding the Soviet occupation, and as a consequence of this disagreement, he was excluded from the Party and relegated to perform such labor. Fortunately, he quickly redeemed himself, rehabilitated his reputation, appealed the Party decision, and 'got back in the saddle,' so to speak.

Vlastimil became a Party member in 1959 when he was 25 years old. He seemingly was a relatively active member, and he had held Party posts within the TechnoExport/ ŠkodaExport companies. Upon his return from Cuba, and following the developments of 1968, he resigned from all of his positions in the Communist Party. Allegedly, and according to his resumé, this resignation was due to time constraints, resulting from a combination of work and school. In actuality, his disagreements with political developments might have actually prompted his decision to withdraw. In 1970, he was expelled from the Party¹⁰⁷ as a result of his alleged sympathies with the reformist movement. However, he later disputed the Party's initial assessment and appealed the decision. He maintained that, during 'the critical years,' he "never participated in any extremist actions" and "did not criticize the leading role of the Communist Party" – he only chided "certain issues related to the national economy." He stated that this "well

¹⁰⁵ In 1953, the Ministry of Foreign Trade's Decree No. 311/1953 established the TechnoExport Foreign Trade Corporation as an enterprise for the export and import of industrial plant equipment.

¹⁰⁶ In 1956, the ŠkodaExport company was established by the Ministry of Foreign Trade's Decree No. 148/1965 as a successor to TechnoExport. It was a foreign trade enterprise that focused primarily on the export and import of complete plant equipment, and of machines and equipment for power, metallurgical and engineering industries.

¹⁰⁷ Before this development, however, Vlastimil had been distinguished for his exceptional performance (*Únorový řád*), much like his father.

meant criticism was wrongly understood.” Consequently, in 1973, Vlastimil was readmitted to the Party and returned ‘to his old ways,’ so to say. He became an active member, and at his workplace, he held administrative functions within the Party hierarchy. Therefore, during the period of normalization, he was considered to be “politically mature,” reliable, and “applying the political stance of the Party in his everyday life in creative, lively [,] and interesting ways.”

Vlastimil’s changing political attitudes and inclinations also foretold his career path. After elementary school, he engaged in vocational training for electrical mechanics, after which he became employed at a company that tested electrical machines and generators. He was a determined, ambitious man, and he managed to pass his high-school graduation exam, the “*maturita*,” after only one year of study – the typical student required three years of study. He also enrolled in evening school to prepare for his future in higher education. In 1960, he began working for TechnoExport, and in 1961, he pursued his education further and enrolled in the University of Economics with a specialization in foreign trade. In 1971, he graduated with a degree in engineering.

During his university studies, Vlastimil spent two years in Cuba as an administrative employee for TechnoExport and then for the ŠkodaExport company. His boss in Cuba evaluated his professional performance, as well as his representation skills, “very positively.” In July 1968, Vlastimil returned to Czechoslovakia and joined ŠkodaExport as the head of its Latin American department. However, he left the company in 1972 because he “did not agree with conclusions and evaluation of the organization.” Although his file is rather nebulous on the subject, Vlastimil’s departure likely had to do with his critical stance toward developments in and following 1968. This would also explain why, after leaving ŠkodaExport, he worked as a bricklayer for the company that built Prague’s subway. Even as a manual laborer, he remained a hard-working employee – although his position was low, he was reportedly among the most talented in his group. Even though he eschewed participation in political life at the time, and was “careful in his political thinking,” his boss remained fond of him, describing him as a proactive person who used his economic education and organizational talents to improve the entire branch of the company. Vlastimil’s team even won an intra-company competition for best results achieved.

In 1974, following his rehabilitation and readmission to the Party, Vlastimil joined the Czechoslovak Chamber of Commerce (*Československá obchodní komora*, ČSOK) as an administrative worker in business and politics. From this point on, his career progressed onwards and upwards. His extensive language skills¹⁰⁸ and his administrative position with ČSOK enabled him to travel abroad to Portugal and Argentina for the purpose of meeting various trade representatives. From these trips, Vlastimil was already ‘informing’ – not to the StB but to his superiors at ČSOK. His file contains a number of reports written by Vlastimil describing in large detail meetings with his foreign counterparts, their political opinions, and their views on political developments in their countries. His job also permitted Vlastimil to attend various social events, including cocktails, receptions, or commercial hunts for businesspeople and representatives from embassies in Prague.

¹⁰⁸ According to his file, Vlastimil spoke Spanish, English, Portuguese, and Russian.

The StB's interest in Vlastimil was most likely the result of his regular interactions with capitalist states and their representatives. His file is relatively sparse with regard to the StB's initial contacts with him; however, one document from 1976 does refer to him as a candidate for secret collaboration. According to another informer's report from that time, Vlastimil was described as a model citizen. In fact, the StB had occasionally been meeting with Vlastimil as a result of his position within ČSOK. It is very possible that, at least initially, Vlastimil was oblivious to the existence of his StB file, and equally oblivious to the fact that he was being considered as a potential career informer.

The report from the StB's first meeting with Vlastimil is dated October 6, 1977. In this meeting, he told his newly assigned StB officer how he had spent five months in Angola as a trade representative, and that, upon his return to Czechoslovakia, he resumed his former position at ČSOK, which focused on Argentina, Portugal, and Spain. He also discussed how, during one of the official receptions at an embassy in Prague, he talked to the US ambassador's wife, whom he characterized as "very cunning." Vlastimil also complained about his job – particularly, his boss Mr. G.. Critiquing colleagues, venting about job conditions, and muttering disgruntlement about his work became continuous themes throughout Vlastimil's interactions with the StB. He stated that Mr. G. was reportedly too secure in his position – Mr. G. confided in Vlastimil that "he [G.] reached an age at which nothing could happen to him." Vlastimil commented how this attitude impoverished "work performance [...] because [G.'s] personal interests prevailed." Mr. G's frequent travels to capitalist states provoked conflicts with his subordinates because he did not allow them the privilege of travelling abroad so often. The information Vlastimil shared with the StB about his boss stemmed either from his aspirations for pure professionalism at his workplace, his desire for career growth, or from personal clashes with his superior. Be it as it was, he seemed to have resented his boss and begrudged some of his colleagues.

Vlastimil continued to complain about his workplace in their next meeting later that month. He revealed that there was widespread corruption among his colleagues involved in international trade, stating that they would travel to capitalist states to obtain expensive gifts. He did not share any names with the StB, but he mentioned that "this also applied to his boss," and that "the section dealing with the UK [was] the worst." Vlastimil also said that some of his colleagues had foreign accounts that had been set up by their foreign business partners. He stated that his colleagues then drew from these accounts during their family holidays, as the foreign exchange permits that had been granted by the Czechoslovak authorities would never have been enough to cover all of their expenses. The StB officer was content with Vlastimil who "directly explained the questions and criticized flaws on his own initiative." Vlastimil then expressed his willingness to meet regularly with the StB, and to provide them with information on developments within ČSOK – be it with respect to the foreigners they dealt with, or with respect to the activities of his immediate colleagues. At the end of this meeting, he promised to compile a written report on his coworkers from the UK department.

In November, Vlastimil arrived to his meeting with the StB on time despite not feeling well. He said that his wife was sick, and that he was also feeling a bit under the weather. He again told the

StB how, at certain ČSOK departments, the benefits being received from foreign partners were “uncontrollable.” He also delivered the report he had promised the StB at their previous meeting; unfortunately, this report is not included in his file.

In December 1977, Vlastimil again brought up his boss, Mr. G. Mr. G. was, according to Vlastimil, disliked by the whole department because of the uneven distribution of foreign travels. He also claimed that G. was of Jewish descent, yet he did not support other Jewish employees on this basis. He criticized how G.’s leadership “did not bring any profit neither for foreign trade nor for the whole society.” He mentioned a couple of other coworkers who abused business trips for personal purposes, such as for vacations. For instance, one colleague yearned to visit Finland, so he traveled to Finland under the guise of “learning [methods] of cheese production,” which clearly did not make much sense as “Finland did not have much experience in this field.” He also discussed how another colleague of his was “a poor representative of Czechoslovak foreign trade [...] as he was often drunk [,]” not only during his travels and meetings, but also at the workplace. According to Vlastimil, this coworker was only interested in “gaining and buying foreign things” for his personal use.

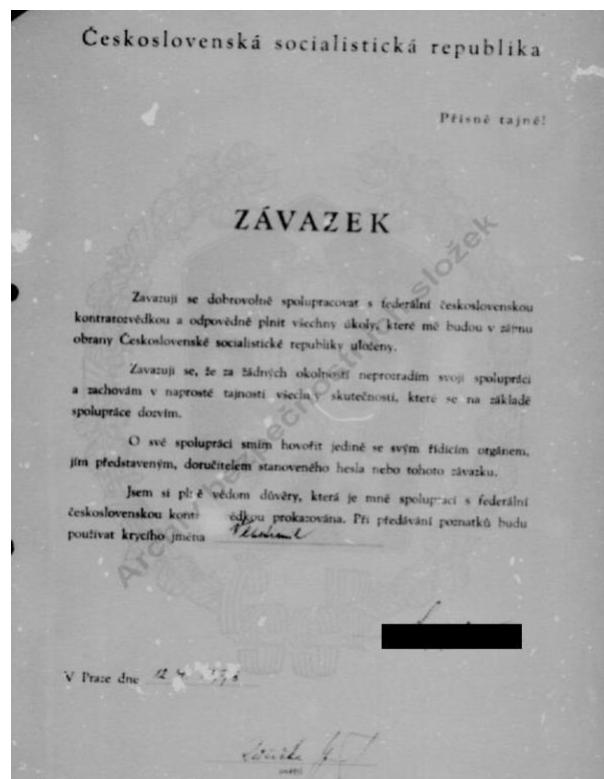
Following their meeting in December, Vlastimil and his StB officer agreed that they would reunite again only after the New Year, as Vlastimil was going to be taking an official business trip to Mozambique. In their meeting in January 1978, Vlastimil appeared to be somewhat less critical of his workplace, but nevertheless still mentioned how “some of his colleagues work there despite the fact that they lost their Party membership.” He opined that other colleagues “used their Party membership to obtain personal goals, career development or possibilities to travel.” He singled out a colleague who was “immature[,] acted inappropriately,” and “featherbrained.” Vlastimil attributed this behavior to his colleague’s questionable “political maturity.”

Following this stream of meetings, and considering Vlastimil’s open and enthusiastic attitude toward disclosing information about his colleagues, the StB formally recruited him as an agent. In March 1978, they drafted his recruitment proposal. They envisaged using him in an ongoing operation that targeted a former deputy of the Minister for Foreign Trade who was, according to the StB, “a bearer of rightist-opportunistic opinions.” Furthermore, they intended that Vlastimil inform on certain ČSOK colleagues, some of whom were persons of interest to the StB,¹⁰⁹ and some of whom he had mentioned before. The proposal noted how Vlastimil’s “sociable character” enabled him to be liked and trusted at his workplace, and therefore, “created preconditions” for fruitful informing. Because he occupied a senior position in his department, he also had considerable opportunity to inform on foreign partners. The StB believed that he would be quite pleased to accept their offer to collaborate, as in his previous role as a candidate, he always openly “criticized the flaws of his colleagues in ČSOK leadership and noted increasing corruption.” They wanted to cast the recruitment interview in such a way as to play on his professional ethics. They were going to “give him trust to help remove deficiencies [at

¹⁰⁹ It is unclear from Vlastimil’s file whether the StB started tracking these individuals as a result of the information Vlastimil shared, or whether they had been targets of pre-existing operations.

ČSOK], which he himself had criticized [,] and therefore [give him] an opportunity to contribute to their elimination.”

The official recruitment meeting took place on April 12, 1978. After a brief conversation regarding his family and job, Vlastimil reportedly agreed to cooperate regarding issues at ČSOK,” as he “considered it right because he [could] see for himself that everything [was] really not ok [at ČSOK].” For example, foreign travel was highly inefficiently organized at the time. Vlastimil then signed a pre-typed pledge to collaborate “without any remarks.” By signing the StB’s pledge, he “voluntarily committed to cooperate” and “to responsibly fulfill all tasks given to him in the interest of defending Czechoslovakia;” his pledge also contained the usual confidentiality clause and acknowledgement of his awareness of “the trust being given to him.”



During the recruitment meeting, Vlastimil also discussed new developments at ČSOK. He criticized how, during their recent business trip to the UK, his boss and the chair of ČSOK “were only meeting with Czechoslovak emigrants” and not “the real Englishmen.” Apparently, the ČSOK boss had also concluded questionable business deals while in the UK. Including, for example, an exchange of Czechoslovak wood for female panties from a department store, which was owned by a person who did not have an entry visa to Czechoslovakia and was almost bankrupt. Vlastimil also referenced a businesswoman, who had made large profits in the scale of 10 million Kčs per year from a business in Czechoslovakia, and who reportedly received preferential treatment at the borders every time she came to Czechoslovakia.

Much like the other files we have parsed, all of Vlastimil's reports – and the majority of his meeting records – were destroyed by the StB following his recruitment as an agent and are consequently absent from his file. However, based on the content of his evaluation reports, his cooperation seemed to go very smoothly. In August 1978, one such report noted how he had submitted handwritten reports, fulfilled his tasks, was interested in eliminating flaws in Czechoslovak economics, and had a good relationship with his StB supervisor. Overall, “there were no flaws.”

Meanwhile, Vlastimil continued to complain about inappropriate practices at ČSOK. In August 1978, for instance, he shared how his boss was nepotistic toward his wife and another female colleague. He also mentioned that another coworker had told him that, during a meeting with some Americans business partners, the Americans revealed a list of every Czechoslovakian that had applied for immigration to the US. The list contained 500 applicants, and the Americans picked 150 of which “they would immediately employ and financially secure.” Vlastimil's colleague told him that “[Vlastimil] would be surprised at which names [were] on the list”.

In August and October of 1978, Vlastimil's file was transferred twice between two different departments within the StB due to internal restructuring. According to the transfer document, his file contained 36 pages of handwritten reports in August and 61 pages in October. In October 1979, his file was again transferred to another StB officer “due to [yet another] reorganization.” By that time, Vlastimil had submitted 126 pages of handwritten reports; such an extensive collection of notes implies that he was quite an active informer. Moreover, because the StB had placed their total confidence in him, he was able to continue traveling abroad. A proposal from February 1979 regarding a trip to Portugal noted that “Secret cooperative VLASTIMIL is morally and politically mature and there is a guarantee he would not betray.”

Additionally, Vlastimil seemed to have had a cozy relationship with one of his StB officers. One report in his file notes that, following a lapse in meetings due to Vlastimil having taken a vacation, Vlastimil “was really looking forward to chatting [with his StB officer] about the situation.” In November 1979, the two men discussed how one of Vlastimil's daughters liked hunting and wanted to join a hunting club. Unfortunately, admission was difficult due to the high number of applicants. Vlastimil asked his StB officer, who also was a hunter, whether he “knew any officials” who could help him out. His StB supervisor promised to ask around and keep his eyes open. During that same meeting, Vlastimil revealed that he “was not really satisfied” with his job and wanted a change. He indicated that, while he could eventually go abroad, Vlastimil “did not feel like that” since his daughter was still attending school and “[going abroad] would only create problems.”

Eventually, in April 1980, Vlastimil left his position with ČSOK – allegedly due to conflicts with his boss – and subsequently found employment at the Secretariat of the Federal Czechoslovak Government (*Úřad předsednictva vlády ČSSR*) in the department of foreign affairs. He liked his new job but said that it “was too much,” despite earning a higher salary. He admitted that ČSOK was like “a resting room” compared to his new job. Moreover, he did not have the opportunity to travel abroad regularly under his new employer.

Vlastimil’s new-found contentment began to dwindle rapidly. Already later in April, Vlastimil lamented organizational deficiencies and his colleagues’ allegedly bad working performance – exactly like he had done at ČSOK. Vlastimil said that if he had known that his new job would prove to be “such a nuthouse,” he would have never made the change. He described how one of his colleagues had “made him angry” when he complained about Vlastimil to his bosses. Exactly like at ČSOK, Vlastimil was displeased with his new boss. Thus, complaining about the working performance of his colleagues, dissatisfaction with his supervisors, and poorly organized workplaces were recurrent threads in his narrative as an informant. Apparently, he had bounced “from a terrible mess” – ČSOK – to “a nuthouse” – the Secretariat – and always bemoaned incompetence and divulged the indiscretions of his coworkers. In the end, his utter dissatisfaction with his new colleagues prompted him to transfer to another department of the Secretariat. In 1981, he switched to the Department of Foreign Trade Relations.

Because of Vlastimil’s new job placement, his file was again transferred in September of 1980 – this time, to an StB officer that focused specifically on the Secretariat. According to the transfer report, Vlastimil had met with the StB 14 times from September 1979 to September 1980. These meetings resulted in the StB “gaining 4 reports of informational character” from him. When Vlastimil was introduced to his new supervisor, his old StB officer asked him “to continue to support our socialist establishment” and fulfill the tasks requested of him by his new StB officer. Vlastimil reportedly agreed with the replacement of his prior StB officer. He also promised to continue cooperating on any new tasks that the StB envisaged for him under the guidelines of the “protection of [the] Party[,] constitutional officials[,] and state secrets.” Accordingly, Vlastimil was to focus on contacts with foreigners and on “defective persons” at the Secretariat. His new StB supervisor noted how Vlastimil was a “conscious citizen with a good attitude toward [the StB],” “direct,” and with “no scruples to share.” Furthermore, and according to the StB, he took initiative and always noted flaws. Interestingly, as compared to other informers, his file does not contain many third-party-authored reports of which Vlastimil is the subject. Perhaps his behavior indeed was flawless. Regardless of the veracity of the preceding claim, the StB still verified Vlastimil by other means. For example, in 1981, they were checking his correspondence; however, they did not discern anything alarming.

On that account, it seemed that Vlastimil was performing well, yet again. In 1982, he was gifted two material rewards in the value of 85 Kčs for his good work. Vlastimil had submitted “serious” intelligence and brought forward relevant knowledge on persons of interest to the StB. According to an evaluation report from November 1982, Vlastimil had informed on his colleagues, on persons of interest to the StB, and on the movement of foreigners at the Secretariat. On his own initiative, he also discussed the “flaws of the Czechoslovak economic

situation.” Despite the StB having met with Vlastimil “irregularly” once a month, their relationship was “very good, honest [,] and friendly.”¹¹⁰

Unfortunately, Vlastimil’s file does not contain much information from the two years that followed; however, it does reveal that, in October of 1983, he was rewarded for his good results with a material gift totaling 200 Kčs. Vlastimil then received another award in November of 1984, this time in the amount of 140 Kčs.

In May of 1985, Vlastimil once again changed jobs: he left the Secretariat and became an advisor to the Chair of the Czech National Council. His new employment necessarily meant that his file was transferred to a new StB officer; this transfer took place in July 1985. After July 1985, his file only contains yearly proposals to reward Vlastimil for his good performance. For example, in 1988, he was given 800 Kčs for “a whole year of good cooperation.” There is no information whatsoever about what this “performance” entailed, nor about what he disclosed to the StB regarding his new workplace. According to his December 1986 evaluation report, he was described as always being punctual and as having “a very good relationship” with the StB. In his new job, he was tasked to focus on “persons of interest” to the StB and achieved “good work [work as to informing] results.”

Despite these scattered, positive evaluations of this phase of his informing, the StB nevertheless terminated Vlastimil’s collaboration in July 1989. According to the termination proposal, Vlastimil’s opportunities to amass “requested intelligence” at his new job were marginal, and the information he delivered did not “attain the character of secret collaborative.” Moreover, the termination proposal notes how, throughout the life-span of the cooperation, he had 122 meetings with the StB, and based on the information he delivered, 95 “agency records and information” were drafted. The termination proposal further described Vlastimil as a “responsible, conscientious” informer who took initiative. His informing reflected “his rich experience from foreign business, [his] language skills [,] and also [skills gained during] frequent meetings with foreigners.” He was also said to be “intelligent with a high level of economic and general knowledge,” punctual, and always fulfilled his tasks precisely. Thus, on this very positive note, the StB and Vlastimil parted ways after a 12-year long relationship.

Vlastimil was an ambitious man who skillfully built himself a successful career from a working-class provenance.¹¹¹ Despite personal, political, and professional hiccups following 1968 – when he was excluded from the Party and ‘demoted’ to a manual job - Vlastimil swiftly redeemed himself in the early 1970’s and climbed the Party and career ladder with celerity. Judging from the information that remained in his file, his active informing was seemingly motivated by his

¹¹⁰ By November 1982, Vlastimil had already started working at the new department of the Secretariat, and, as a result, his workplace was no longer in the main offices of the Secretariat. Due to this relocation, his StB officer wanted him transferred to another StB department, but it is unclear whether this transfer ever occurred.

¹¹¹ He was particularly successful during the period of normalization.

recurrent dissatisfaction at his numerous workplaces, and the resentment he felt toward some of his colleagues – either for being incompetent professionals, or for being persons that he simply did not like. Perhaps Vlastimil strove for professional perfection, and therefore, emphasized and observed the professional misdemeanor and flaws of his colleagues and bosses. Perhaps he simply had personal grudges and reservations against the persons he snitched upon. Be it as it was, he seemed to have resented many of his coworkers.

Nevertheless, the StB was satisfied with him and the information he proffered. Despite frequent file transfers among various departments and StB officers, he maintained a good rapport with all of his officers, and he performed his tasks well: his informing was not gossip nor personal. Interestingly, his file does not contain many reports by others on his behavior, which could indicate that he was indeed a model socialist citizen, or that he hid his flaws and misbehaviors well. His file reveals that he seemed to have led an orderly, conventional, and happy life. He was a rule follower: he liked rules and regulations, and perhaps sought comfort in bureaucracy and conformity. Accordingly, he had trouble dealing with people who did not follow the ‘rules,’ so he informed on them. Informing was how he got even, or how he made himself feel better about things. Thus, his position as an informer catalyzed the realization of his pristine bureaucratic standards: by informing on individuals who did not follow the rules, or those who skillfully made use of various grey zones for personal purposes, he strived to ensure workplace integrity.

DORA¹¹²



Dora was born in Prague in 1954. After completing her elementary school education, she enrolled in a training school for sales assistants. Dora only attended this school for three and a half years, and, as such, she failed to obtain her diploma. Ever since then, Dora frequently changed jobs, occasionally working in different capacities, such as a cleaner or a manual laborer in a factory. Most of the time, however, she was jobless.

Dora's collaboration with the StB began in 1978, when she was 24 years-old, single, and a mother to a three-year old daughter. Her daughter's father was reputedly a Swedish citizen, and Dora had litigated alimony and paternity recognition against him. According to one of the reports in her file, Dora was financially supported by her parents.

¹¹² Position: Candidate for secret collaboration

File No.: 731052

Registration No.: 29292

File created: 1978; File archived: 1982

Page count: 196 pages

Many documents from Dora's file have been destroyed. It appears as though she never became "an agent." Another cover name used in her file is "Tereza."

Dora's picture in her file shows a young woman, stoically smiling, gazing over a photographer's shoulder far into the distance; however, documents in her file paint a more sinister portrait of a troubled life. Her file is scattered, many documents are missing, and information is provided on a piecemeal basis. Notwithstanding the multiple missing pieces, the contours of her file-story surface: Dora comes across as a passionate person who had a lust for life and a blatant disregard for existing social conventions and rules. She lived a hedonistic lifestyle: she partied and drank a lot; enjoyed the company of men – particularly foreigners from the West; was regularly arrested by police for disorderly conduct, including for a personal assault; and, had a very troubled – and at times violent – relationship with her father, who seemed to have physically abused her.

Despite its scattered nature, Dora's file reveals many intimate and private details about her life. For instance, a police report from 1980 details how she ended up in the hospital, drunk and under the influence of pills. According to the included medical report, Dora had started drinking schnapps at noon and ended up in the hospital at midnight. Other than breakfast, she did not eat. According to the same report, her clothes were "orderly," the color of her face greyish, her behavior polite, her speech blurry, and her walk insecure. Public disclosure of personal details like these underscores a sizeable concern that accompanies newly unsealed archives, namely, the cruelty of revealing embarrassing details as part of the process of transitional justice.

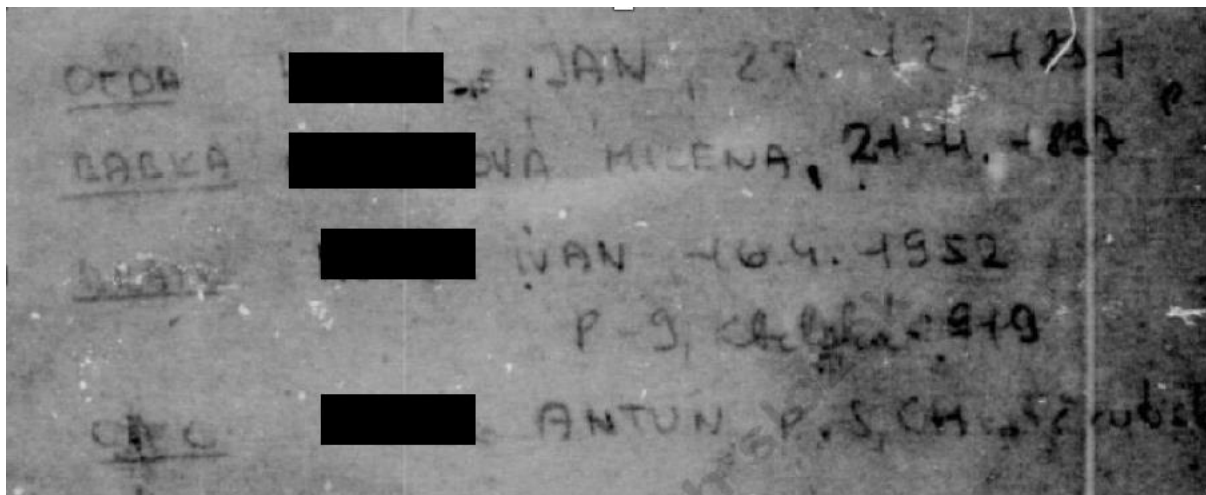
As aforementioned, the proposal to create Dora's file as 'an StB person of interest' was drafted in 1978. The proposal described Dora as someone who "kept relations to many tourists and businessmen-coming to Czechoslovakia from BRD" and who had "personal connections with employees at the BRD Embassy in Prague." No other reason was given. However, after canvassing her 200-page file, one can discern that Dora was a prostitute. During Communism, prostitution was prohibited. The 1950's Criminal Code stipulated an offence of 'parasitism' which was deployed to prosecute prostitutes and other jobless individuals. This offense persisted throughout the Communist era as all citizens were legally obliged to have a 'proper' job. The StB used prostitutes to gather intelligence on their clients in exchange for shielding sex workers from the police and criminal investigations. Dora was no exception.

Dora was particularly interested in foreigners from the "imperialist" West. She regularly met up with them in Prague's high-end hotels, such as the Hotel International or the Hotel Alcron. Accordingly, the StB was keen to get information on her clients, and they instructed her to "focus in particular on clients from BRD." However, the StB's seemingly pinpointed interests broadened over time, and they consequently engaged Dora in operations against representatives of the US Embassy, Finnish diplomats, Italian and Japanese tourists, Austrian businessmen, and Czechs living abroad. The StB regularly asked Dora to initiate contact with these types of individuals for the purpose of gathering information on and from them. For instance, in February 1982, the StB told Dora to start visiting a sauna in one of the Prague suburbs. This sauna was frequented by US and BRD embassy employees, and the StB wanted Dora to make their acquaintance – they even suggested that Dora bring one of her girlfriends along to maximize the results of this information-gathering process. Thus, Dora proposed bringing her friend Jaroslava,

who is “very pretty.” No subsequent report in the file clearly states whether these visits took place and/or whether they were fruitful.

On occasion, Dora also informed upon her acquaintances and friends. For example, in January 1981, she reported that her friend was going to marry an Austrian citizen. Dora stated that the marriage was arranged by another friend of theirs so that the bride-to-be could get Austrian citizenship, and then get divorced in 2-3 months and marry someone else. Moreover, according to Dora, the man paid to partake in that sham marriage was apparently homosexual and had only previously visited Czechoslovakia on two occasions.

According to individual meeting reports in her file, Dora had submitted numerous handwritten reports; however, all of them were destroyed by the StB before her file was archived in 1982. The only extant handwritten note lists the names and birthdays of her grandfather, grandmother, brother, and father. Her mother, however, is not mentioned:



As opposed to many other informers' files, which are filled to the top with information on and about them that had been gathered by other informers and the StB officers themselves, Dora's file contains only one such report. This report, authored by “Zuzana” – another informer who was seemingly a prostitute – revealed that Dora had the following reputation: she took a lot of money from foreigners; she was an alcoholic who misbehaved when drunk; she habitually incited conflicts among prostitutes; and, she did not take care of her toddler daughter.

All in all, Dora's relationship with the StB and the StB's relationship with Dora seems to have been very volatile, engaged and keen at times, cold and dismissive at others. In other words, her collaboration was akin to a wily cat and mouse game; Dora avoided the StB from time to time, while the StB chased her, insistent on further contacts. She missed many meetings, and kept her StB officer waiting and hanging, only to come up with excuses for her absence afterwards. On several occasions, Dora seemed to report sketchily and briefly that she had not met anyone of interest; or, she provided only very general, vague, or banal information without giving any

names or anything of substance. For example, in January 1981, she described her new “friend” from BRD without providing his name or any further details about him. However, Dora did state that this friend had allegedly made acquaintance with a Gypsy girl nicknamed “Brambora” – meaning “Potato” in Czech¹¹³ – in the Lucerna bar in Prague, and following this encounter, he intended to marry her. Dora did not provide any further details on the situation, even though the StB had asked her to inquire as to the name and identity of “Brambora.”

At other times, Dora provided the StB with more detailed information. She named individuals, described their family circumstances, age, the frequency of their visits to Czechoslovakia, among other personal details. Dora appeared to be well aware that she also benefitted from her collaboration. At one meeting, she stated that she really enjoyed collecting and reporting information to the StB. According to the reports filed by her officers, she realized that her relationship with the StB afforded her many benefits, and terminating it would have been “a great personal tragedy for her [,] as it would not be long until she [had] trouble with the Police again.”

Similarly, the StB’s relationship with Dora oscillated between appreciative and supportive on the one hand and reprimanding and demanding on the other. For example, the StB noted how Dora was punctual, willingly responded to questions, and engaged in conversation during meetings. She also actively attempted to gather any information possible, and she gave the impression that she was interested in future collaboration with the StB. On the other hand, Dora was reprimanded for her ‘irresponsible’ attitude toward them – her officer was unable to contact her on numerous occasions, and she failed to show up for meetings. The StB went as far as threatening to terminate the collaboration unless she behaved. In his sternly paternal role, Dora’s StB officer encouraged her to adjust her lifestyle toward more “responsible activities,” and that she “should avoid any public disturbances, excessive drinking and fluctuation in her jobs, which characterized her earlier behavior.” Dora was repeatedly reminded that she should find ‘a proper [day] job’ and take better care of her reputation.

Her file does not reveal any open threats or blackmail until the very end of Dora’s collaboration. In July 1982, the StB threatened to transfer her file to the Police. Dora told the StB that, due to her new relationship with her boyfriend, who was very jealous and insisted on accompanying her anytime she left the house, her work for the StB had become almost impossible.

Dora’s collaboration with the StB ended in September 1982 due to her ‘unserious attitude,’ ‘stagnating cooperation since 1981,’ and her provision of increasingly useless information. Despite the dissolution of Dora’s relationship with the StB, her cooperation with authorities did not come to an end. Her file concluded with a document officiating her ‘transfer’ to a criminal division of the VB, meaning ‘Public Security’ – the regular police during Communism. There, Dora was to continue her career as an insider and informer for potential criminal investigations. In the transfer, the StB and the VB agreed that her Dora’s new supervisor would not be permitted

¹¹³ ‘Brambora’ is at times used by close acquaintances (family, friends) in Czech to call a female named Barbora.

to use any information he had on her, including information that she had told the StB about herself, to criminally prosecute her. Thus, in all likelihood, Dora remained shielded and protected.

DVOŘÁK¹¹⁴



Dvořák was born in 1948. He was an electrical engineer by trade, having obtained his degree from the Technical University in Prague. He was married with two children – a boy and a girl. Dvořák's file presents him as a family man. Indeed, his extended family spent Saturdays and Sundays with his parents. Except for self-education, he had no other hobbies. As described in his file, Dvořák lived a proper life. He had a calm and cheerful character, and his civic and moral reputation was good.

Prior to his marriage in 1975, Dvořák spent time in West Berlin. There, he met a woman named Ms. V. and they had a romance. In-fact, one of the most poignant parts of his file is a pleading, love-struck request made to the office of the President of Czechoslovakia in January 1969.

¹¹⁴ Position: Agent

File No.: 766578

Registration No.: 7537

File Created: 1975; File Archived: 1985

Page Count: 300+ pages

Dvořák's file contains almost no self-submitted reports – many documents were noted to have been destroyed by the StB – only reports on his checks by the StB, rewards and permits to travel abroad were kept.

Dvořák desired to visit V., as she was ill and could not visit him. Presumably, his request was denied, and as the years passed, the love he had for Frau V. ‘went cold.’

A translated version of Dvořák’s letter is reproduced, in full, below:

... in the academic year 68/69 I was completely legally a regular student at the Technical University in Western Berlin. During my stay, my relationship to Miss [V.] [address redacted], whom I met in the summer of 1967, very much deepened.

Currently Ms. V. is seriously ill and therefore cannot visit me so often/practically almost not at all, as we would both wish for.

Ms. V. is now in a very serious situation, as it is still not excluded that she has a cancer. My visit would help her to overcome the worst depression.

Money for the journey was immediately sent to me to Prague. Therefore, I kindly ask you if you can review what can be done in this case. It also certainly is a complication that I would need to get to West Berlin more frequently than once a year, because as anyone can surely acknowledge it is very cruel for two persons to be separated for such a long time, in particular if one of them is not doing so well.

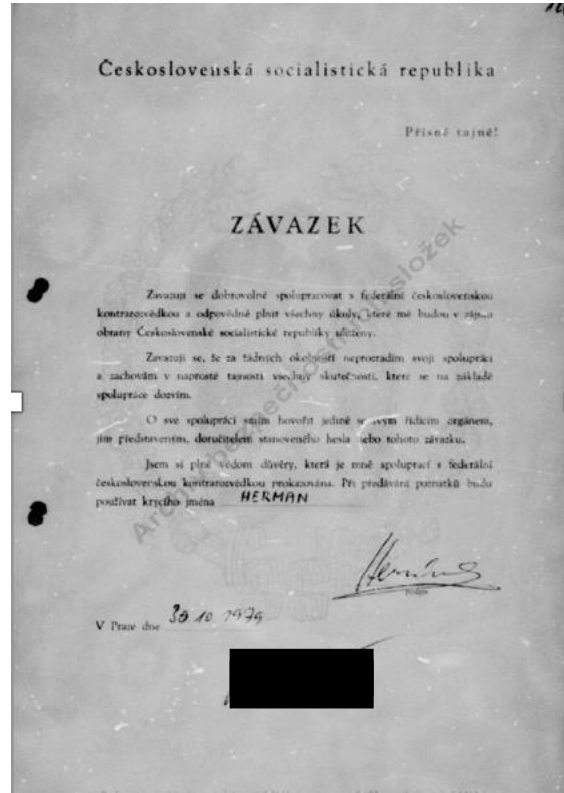
I realize that my request can sound suspicious, as if I would like to get out at any price. I do not deny it, as I really need to get to Berlin but only for a short visit.

I know that my request might not be suitable given the overall situation but I would not burden the Republic in any way and I think that even in the most complicated situation one should not forget ‘little’ human problems.

I sincerely hope that you will take my letter as seriously as it was written, I can prove all the facts. I would kindly ask you for a very swift reply and I would very much like to discuss this problem with someone competent/authorized. Thanks in advance. Success to peace.

Signature

Although the StB had had their eye on Dvořák as a prospective informer for quite some time, things only gelled once he began working for International Business Machines (IBM). In 1976, he signed a pre-made, typewritten pledge promising to cooperate “voluntarily, for patriotic reasons.”



The StB stated that the primary aim of this collaboration was to immerse Dvořák in issues of “Computer Technology;” his secondary focus was on the functioning of the IBM offices in Prague, and, more specifically, on Czechoslovak citizens and foreigners who came to those offices. In addition, the StB prized Dvořák’s technical expertise for its potential utility in assessing US licensing politics. Accordingly, another goal of their collaboration was to effectively use IT equipment for spying. Dvořák spoke and wrote English, German, and French.

Dvořák’s file also reveals that his father, Antonín, was a secret collaborator with the StB from 1955 to 1963. Antonín was “drafted” as the result of compromising material: in his capacity as a testing commissioner for motor vehicles, Antonín had issued an illegal permit to someone – this was a misdemeanor of dereliction of public duty. As such, coercion appeared to be the thrust behind Antonín becoming an informer. The final report from 1963 describes how, after he had found a new job and moved from Bratislava to Prague, the Ministry of the Interior lost interest in him and subsequently terminated his collaboration.

Dvořák's file contains very few of the reports he submitted. Rather, his file mostly contains reports on his own lustrations, rewards, and permits to travel abroad. His file is skeletal in places, full of tedious details in others, and curiously revealing all at the same time. His file-story is an overview of a life in and of the times.

Dvořák snitched to the StB, as well as to his bosses within IBM, about his colleagues. By the end of his stint at IBM, it was seemingly widely known that he was an informer. He also informed upon his wife's distant relatives in the DDR. He was a diligent informer, received a large number of financial emoluments, was frequently rewarded for his efforts, and routinely traveled abroad on business trips.

Much like many other informants, Dvořák was both a snitch and was snitched upon; he was an informer and was informed upon. However, it is rare for an informer's file to contain as many reports submitted by third parties as Dvořák's does. His file contains quite a large number of comments, leads, and information given by others about him.

For instance, an October 1979 report on Dvořák by another informer code-named "Vasak" indicates that during the Brno fair, Dvořák and Vasak worked at the IBM stand together for four days. Vasak characterized Dvořák as a social person with high expertise who clung to his family. Elsewhere in his file, Dvořák is described as a direct and principled individual who was also intelligent and tactful. He had a clear expertise for his job and this gave him self-confidence. He was additionally cast as calm, optimistic, and social.

However, by November 1985, a report by another informer "Vaneek" reveals that Dvořák's relationship with his IBM bosses had been steadily deteriorating. Dvořák had apparently begun drinking to excess, was unpresentable in public, arrogant at work, and his mental health had declined; as a result of this multi-faceted degradation, Dvořák was ultimately fired from IBM. Moreover, in December 1985, his StB officer proposed to also terminate collaboration with Dvořák. As he aged, Dvořák's mental condition deteriorated sharply – he even had to spend two weeks in a psychiatric hospital. Dvořák's collaboration with the StB definitively ended when he became mentally unstable.

Over the course of Dvořák's collaboration, 107 meetings took place, during which he had filed 157 reports. For his active attitude toward cooperation, and for having fulfilled the tasks delegated to him, he had been habitually rewarded in an amount totaling 11,000 Kčs. Dvořák's file also notes that the StB "conducted several 'interventions' for his benefit, including a travel

permit to Yugoslavia in 1984, a foreign exchange permit for the same trip, and travel permits to West Berlin in 1984.” That said, and as other information in his file suggests, Dvořák seemingly travelled abroad far more frequently – to France, the UK, and other. Dvořák’s immediate boss at IBM, noted that he was very money-oriented. In Czech, Dvořák was said to have been “after money as the devil.” Indeed, he seemed to have been motivated by ambition, getting ahead, and getting things – notably travel – which he seemed to fancy.