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STUDIE

Activities of the Czechoslovak Consulates in Katowice and Szczecin from 1970 to 1989[1]

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ANNA SZCZEPAŃSKA-DUDZIAK: Activities of the Czechoslovak Consulates in Katowice and Szczecin from 1970 to 1989

The aim of the article is to analyse the activities of the Czechoslovak consulates in Poland against the background of bilateral relations from 1970 to 1989 and to supplement the state of research on the Czechoslovak foreign service. On the one hand, the caesuras of the article are set by the realization of Husák's new vision of Czechoslovak foreign policy during the period of so-called normalization; on the other hand, they are closed by the transformations that led to the collapse of the communist system in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989. The activities of the consulates general in Katowice and Szczecin, their permanent underinvestment, staff shortages, and instructions transmitted from the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

1 This article is a fundamentally revised and expanded version of some parts of two chapters (II. *Szczecin w relajcach polsko-czechosłowackich w latach siedemdziesiątych*, pp. 144–149, and III. *Lata osiemdziesiąte. Od kryzysu do jesieni narodów*, pp. 197–216) from the monograph: Anna SZCZEPAŃSKA-DUDZIAK, *„Szczecin czechosłowackim oknem na morza i oceany". Szczecin w stosunkach polsko-czechosłowackich w latach 1945–1989,* Szczecin – Warszawa 2021.

affected the scope and effectiveness of the implementation of consular functions, among which the functions of information, reporting, propaganda, and, in the case of the consulate in Szczecin, also economic ones, were predominant.
Keywords: Czechoslovak diplomacy – consular relations – Polish-Czechoslovak relations – twentieth century

Introduction

The realization of welfare functions for the Czech and Slovak minorities and the protection of Czechoslovak economic and commercial interests in Poland was handled not only by the embassy but also by consular posts in Katowice and Szczecin. The first consular office of Czechoslovakia after World War II was the consulate in Katowice. Due to its border location, the Katowice office performed mainly welfare functions for the Czech and Slovak minorities and dealt with problems of economic cooperation in border areas.[2] The consul was responsible for contacts with representatives of the provincial and municipal authorities and the management of the office; they also handled education matters for the Czech and Slovak minorities, supervision of the work of Czechoslovak teachers, and care for Czechoslovak workers and reporting.[3] Despite the important role played by the Katowice consular office in mutual relations, in the spring of 1962, the foreign minister of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Antonín Gregor, notified the Polish foreign ministry of plans to temporarily close the consulate in Katowice, justifying the decision with economic interests. The office was closed on June 25, 1962.[4]

2 AMSZ (Archiwum Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych, Warszawa/Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw), team 16, binding 13, folder 212, card 30, Note from the Czechoslovak Embassy in Warsaw 10. 12. 1947; Věstník MZV (Bulletin of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs), 15. 11. 1947, no. 11: Inauguration of the Czechoslovak consulate in Katowice; Anna SZCZEPAŃSKA-DUDZIAK, *Warszawa-Praga 1948–1968. Od nakazanej przyjaźni do kryzysu,* Szczecin 2011, pp. 118–119; Ryszard TECHMAN, *Czechosłowacka sieć konsularna w Polsce w latach 1947–1992,* Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny 29, 2006, no. 1, p. 113.

3 AMZV (Archiv Ministerstva zahraničních věcí ČR, Praha/Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Prague), Secretariat of J. Masaryk and V. Clementis, box 182, no. 139/D/53, Systematization of work at the consulate in Katowice, 10. 08. 1953.

4 R. TECHMAN, *Czechosłowacka sieć*, p. 119.

The growing importance of Szczecin in Polish-Czechoslovak economic cooperation accelerated the decision to establish the Consulate General of Czechoslovakia in the city. On January 17, 1949, the exequatur of the President of the Republic of Poland was given to the first consul general of the Czechoslovak Republic in Szczecin, Adolf Kania J.D., a speaker of the Polish language who was familiar with Polish literature but also well versed in economic issues.[5]

The functions assigned to the Czechoslovak Consulate General in Szczecin were not as diverse as those of the Katowice post, which was located on the border and struggling to solve nationality problems. Namely they concerned protecting economic interests, seeing to proper use of the Czechoslovak trans-shipment area in the Szczecin port, and assisting employees of Czechoslovak enterprises. Meanwhile, the consulate's employees looked after the growing number of fitters and other workers with the Spedrapid or Metrans enterprises, as well as sailors of Czechoslovak ships and vacationers on the shores of the Baltic Sea.[6]

The aim of this article is to analyse the activities of the Czechoslovak consulates in Katowice and Szczecin against the background of Polish-Czechoslovak mutual relations in the 1970s and 1980s. Realization of the subject undertaken requires answering research questions concerning the following areas: the tasks set by the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the consular posts in Poland; the conditions and scope of the consular functions; and the role of the consuls in strengthening the Czechoslovak presence in Polish society.

It should be noted that, apart from the works of Jindřich Dejmek, the activities of the Czechoslovak foreign service in the period under discussion have not been thoroughly studied;[7] there has been little interest in the topic on the part of Czech and Slovak historians, and not much has been written about it. Apart from publications by Polish authors Ryszard Techman and Anna Szczepańska-Dudziak,

5 IDEM, *Adolf Kania – pierwszy konsul Czechosłowacji w Polsce w latach 1949–1951*, Słupskie Studia Historyczne 11, 2004, pp. 147–167.

6 AMZV, Konzulární odbor (Consular Department) 1945–1959 (further: KO/1, 1945–1959), box 187, Report of the consulate general in Szczecin, 10. 06. 1951 and 21. 06. 1951; AMZV, Zastupitelský úřad (Representative Office), Polsko, 1945–1955, box 90, Letter from the consulate general in Szczecin to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Trade in Prague, 17. 04. 1954.

7 Jindřich DEJMEK, *Československo, jeho sousedé a velmoci ve XX. století (1918 až 1992): vybrané kapitoly z dějin československé zahraniční politiky*, Praha 2002; IDEM, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. I: Nástin dějin Ministerstva zahraničních věcí a diplomacie (1918–1992), Praha 2012; IDEM, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. II: Biografický slovník československých diplomatů (1918–1992), Praha 2013.

which, however, do not cover the 1970s and the 1980s, the Czechoslovak consulate in Katowice has not been the subject of any broader study.[8] On the other hand, the present author has devoted far more space in her publications to the consulate general in Szczecin throughout its existence. The findings she presents in her monograph have been used in this article.[9]

In addition to the literature on the Czechoslovak consular service in Poland, studies devoted to bilateral Polish-Czechoslovak relations are noteworthy. With regard to the 1970s, these publications are scarce, which can be explained by the lack of access for researchers to many archival sources from the 1970s and 1980s held in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Archives of the Czech Republic, particularly those concerning economic matters and cultural cooperation.[10] Scholarly publications most often address Polish-Czechoslovak political relations during the crisis years of 1980 and 1981, the actions of the government apparatus and security services against the anti-communist opposition, and reactions to the process of the collapse of the communist system in 1989. Threads relating to the activities of the foreign service of both countries, as well as economic and cultural contacts, are almost completely ignored. From the point of view of the subject discussed herein, noteworthy works include those by Jan Rychlík, Petr Blažek, Michał Kamiński, Andrzej Kobus, Oldřich Tůma, Mirosław Szumiło, and Anna Szczepańska-Dudziak.[11]

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8 R. TECHMAN, *Czechosłowacka sieć*; IDEM, *Adolf Kania*; A. SZCZEPAŃSKA-DUDZIAK, *Warsaw-Prague 1948–1968*; EADEM, *Szczecin as the Home Port for Inland Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovak Presence in Szczecin from 1945–1989*, Studia Maritima XXXV, 2022, pp. 205–244; EADEM, *Krycí jména Pirát, Námořník, Želva. Československí námořníci ve Štětíně ve světle archivů československé bezpečnostní služby,* Sborník Archivu bezpečnostních složek 21, 2023, pp. 141–166.

9 See footnote no. 1.

10 Mirosław SZUMIŁO, *Stosunki polsko-czechosłowackie w latach 1972–1977*, in: J. Petráš – L. Svoboda (eds.), Bezčasí: Československo v letech 1972–1977, Praha – České Budéjovice 2018, pp. 238–251; A. SZCZEPAŃSKA-DUDZIAK,*„Szczecin czechosłowackim oknem",* pp. 141–172.

11 Jan RYCHLÍK, *Społeczeństwo czechosłowackie i Komunistyczna Partia Czechosłowacji a wydarzenia w Polsce w latach 1980–1981*, in: P. Blažek (ed.), Między przymusową przyjaźnią w prawdziwą solidarnością. Czesi – Polacy – Słowacy 1938/39–1945–1989, II, Warszawa 2009, pp. 207–228; IDEM, *Československo a změny ve východní Evropě na prahu událostí roku 1989*, Slovanské historické studie 31, 2006, pp. 196–210; IDEM, *Politické změny ve Východni Evropě před 17. listopadem a jejich ohlas v Československu*, Česko-slovenská historická ročenka, 2009, pp. 113–139; IDEM, *Dyplomacja czechosłowacka wobec sytuacji w Polsce w roku 1989*, Studia Środkoweuropejskie i Bałkanistyczne XXX, 2021, pp. 259–267; P. BLAŽEK, *Československo a polská krize 1980–1981*, Securitas imperii 20, 2012, no. 1, pp. 58–75; IDEM, *Akce „Sever". Státní bepečnost a krize*

Among the memoirs of diplomats, we find the recollections of the ambassador of the PRL (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa/Polish People's Republic) to Prague, Włodzimierz Janiurek, whose mission ended in January 1971,[12] and from the 1980s the memoirs of Václav Svatek, the cultural counsellor at the Czechoslovak embassy in Warsaw and later the head of the KIS (Československé kulturní a informační středisko/Czechoslovak Culture and Information Centre).[13]

It must be emphasized that the findings presented in this article should be verified as soon as historians gain access to the archive fund Consular Department in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic for the years 1970–1989 (currently it covers the period from 1945 to 1964).[14]

Polské lidové republiky 1980–1984, 1–2, Praha 2017; IDEM, *Czechosłowacja a kryzys w Polsce w latach 1980–1989*, in: P. Jaworski – Ł. Kamiński(eds.), *Świat wobec „Solidarności" 1980–1989*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 148–160; Anna SZCZEPAŃSKA, *Oficjalne relacje polsko-czechosłowackie w latach 1980–1989 w świetle raportów ambasady PRL w Pradze*, Przegląd Zachodniopomorski 4, 2010, pp. 67–82; EADEM, *Regaining Trust: The Work of Communist Poland's Foreign Service in Czechoslovakia in the 1980s*, Slovanský přehled 106, 2020, no. 1, pp. 89–112; EADEM, *Polish diplomacy towards the events in Czechoslovakia in 1989*, Studia Środkowoeuropejskie i Bałkanistyczne XXXII, 2023, pp. 105–125. EADEM, *Działalność Ośrodków Kultury i Informacji PRL i CSRS w okresie kryzysu i normalizacji relacji polsko-czechosłowackich w latach osiemdziesiątych XX w*., in: A. Szczepańska-Dudziak (ed.), Polsko-czeskie kontakty dyplomatyczne, gospodarcze i kulturalne w XX–XXI wieku, Szczecin 2017; Oldřich TŮMA, *The Czechoslovak Regime and the Polish Crisis*, Cold War International History Project Bulletin 11, 1998, pp. 60–63.; Andrzej KOBUS, *Czechosłowacja wobec narodzin, rozwoju i delegalizacji „Solidarności" (1980–1982)*, Toruń 2006; Prokop TOMEK, *Akce Krkonoše: československé vojenské souvislosti polské krize*, Historie a vojenství 66, 2017, no. 3, pp. 4–19; M. SZUMIŁO, *Polski kryzys 1980–1981 w dokumentach dyplomacji czechosłowackiej*, Warszawa 2021; IDEM, *Propaganda prasowa w Czechosłowacji wobec NSZZ „Solidarność" na przykładzie dziennika „Rudé Právo" (1980–1981)*, Res Historica 53, 2022, pp. 603–630.

12 Włodzimierz JANIUREK, *Nie wołać mnie z powrotem*, Katowice 1971.

13 Václav SVATEK, *Od Husáka k Havlovi aneb Čech ve Varšavě. Vzpomínky diplomata z let 1980–1992*, Praha 2009.

14 In the funds AMZV, KO/1-jmenná spisovna, 1967–1975, box 5 and KO/1-věcná spisovna, 1967–1975, box 7, which are available to the public, there are no consular reports; there is, among other things, information on consular agreements of the ČSSR (Československá socialistická republika/Czechoslovak Socialist Republic) with the People's Republic of Poland, Great Britain, Italy, East Germany, the USSR as well as rules for implementation of legal aid agreements.

The efforts of the new team of Gustáv Husák, aimed at normalizing relations with Poland and the other socialist countries as soon as possible, were the result of resolutions of the KSČ (Komunistická strana Československa/Communist Party of Czechoslovakia) plenum in November 1969.[15] The restoration of trust in relations with the countries involved in the intervention against the Prague Spring, a way out of isolation in relations with the West, participation in security efforts in Europe, were among the main tasks of the government's foreign policy adopted on July 1, 1970. A prerequisite for the realization of these goals was to carry out significant personnel changes in the Czechoslovak foreign service under the guise of reviewing posts, abolishing posts, reducing the diplomatic-consular service, and cutting costs.[16]

Official Polish-Czechoslovak relations in the early 1970s were returning to their pre-Prague Spring state and were maintained primarily in the form of working meetings of government representatives, including the foreign ministry, with the simultaneous exchange of high-level visits by party and state delegations. When Edward Gierek, who had experience working with his Czechoslovak comrades in Ostrava from his time as Secretary of the Provincial Committee of the PZRP (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza/Polish United Workers' Party) in Katowice, was appointed to the post of First Secretary of the Central Committee of the PZPR, it marked a new opening in Polish policy towards Czechoslovakia, with whom the new leadership was particularly keen on developing economic cooperation. This was the case after the events of December 1970 in the People's Republic of Poland, when First Secretary Gierek and the prime minister of the government of the People's Republic of Poland, Piotr Jaroszewicz, travelled to Prague in January 1971.[17] The talks between the Polish delegation and Gustáv Husák were intended

15 AMZV, Teritoriální odbory – Tajné (Territorial departments – Secret; further: TO-T), Polsko, 1970–1974, box 3, Evaluation of the results of consultations between the territorial departments of the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the People's Republic of Poland, from the point of view of embassy experience and plans for further cooperation Warsaw, 26. 01. 1970.

16 AMZV, Materiály do vlády (Materials to the Government), 1951–1983, box 33, Main tasks of foreign policy. Information of the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the presidium of the ČSSR government, 12. 06. 1970.

17 Mirosław SZUMIŁO, *Vedení Polské lidové republiky vůči normalizaci v Československu (1969–1971)*, in: J. Petráš – L. Svoboda (eds.), Jaro '68 nástup normalizace. Československo v letech

to emphasize the importance of mutual relations, and in the opinion of Czechoslovak diplomats were a confirmation that after the USSR, it was Czechoslovakia and East Germany that constituted Warsaw's most important political and economic partners. However, the main purpose of the visit of the Polish delegation was to explain the essence of the changes that had taken place in Poland and the intentions of the new leadership of the PZPR.[18]

Polish ambassador Włodzimierz Janiurek, who had been serving a mission in Czechoslovakia since 1966, encountered difficult and critical situations in Polish-Czechoslovak relations arising from the participation of Polish troops in the intervention against the Prague Spring. Concluding his stay in Prague, he was convinced that the Czechoslovak comrades trusted Gierek's team and accepted its economic program.[19] Distrust on the part of those in power in Czechoslovakia stemmed from the fact that they viewed the events of December 1970 through the prism of their own experience in 1968.

Polish-Czechoslovak relations received a positive boost in August 1971 when the prime minister of Czechoslovakia, Lubomír Štrougal, visited Poland. A protocol on economic cooperation was signed, and Poland promised to increase employment limits for Polish workers in the Czechoslovak labour market.[20] Changes in the stance of the KSČ toward Poland were so slow that Polish diplomats in Czechoslovakia felt distanced from the government and public representatives until the plenum of the KSČ Central Committee in October 1971, which produced a positive assessment of the policies of Gierek's team.[21]

Based on analysis of the collected research material, it appears that the primary sources of information on the events of December 1970 on the coast were

1968–1971, Praha – České Budějovice 2017, pp. 278–279; A. SZCZEPAŃSKA-DUDZIAK, *„Szczecin czechosłowackim oknem"*, pp. 141–154.

18 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1970–1974, box 3, Information from the ČSSR embassy in Warsaw on the state of Czechoslovak-Polish relations, Warsaw 04. 07. 1972.

19 AMSZ, Department I, 19/76, binding 3, Information from Ambassador W. Janiurek on Polish-Czechoslovak relations. The ambassador paid a farewell visit to President A. Svoboda on 11. 02. 1971; Ibidem, Report of the Polish embassy in Prague for 1970. L. Svoboda accepted 25. 11. 1971 letters of credence from Ambassador Lucjan Motyka. *Dokumenty k československé zahraniční politice 1971*, Praha 1971, no. 11–12; W. JANIUREK, *Nie wołać*, pp. 222–223.

20 AMSZ, Department I, 19/76, binding 3, Theses for talks with the ČSSR delegation, note from the PRL embassy in Prague to the foreign ministry in Warsaw, Prague 17. 11. 1971.

21 Ibidem, Paper by the Polish embassy in Prague entitled *Important Elements of the Socio-Political and Economic Situation and Polish-Czechoslovak Relations*, Prague 22. 09. 1971; Ibidem, Department I, 17/77, binding 3, Note from Department I of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning Polish-Czechoslovak relations, Warsaw 16. 11. 1972.

detailed reports sent by Consul General Alois Tvardík in Szczecin. These then served as the starting point for the Czechoslovak embassy in Warsaw and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare briefing notes, which in turn were further transmitted to the KSČ.[22]

In 1970, the Czechoslovak Consulate General in Szczecin was one of three posts of this rank within the socialist countries (Zagreb and Kyiv were the other two), and its standard functions consisted of information and reporting, propaganda, economic, welfare, and cultural affairs.[23] As in the first twenty years of activity, the consuls organized events related to successive anniversaries of the liberation of Czechoslovakia by the Red Army and the "victorious February" of 1948. Local media (press, radio, and television) were involved in propaganda and information activities, and press conferences and film screenings were organized. The consuls personally visited the workplaces in Szczecin (Warski Shipyard, "Gryfia" Repair Shipyard, Szczecin Ironworks, Port Authority, Dolna Odra power plant) and other cities in the consular district, thus expanding their network of personal contacts. With the support of the Czechoslovak Cultural and Information Centre in Warsaw, exhibitions, classical music concerts, and book fairs were organized. Year after year, cultural institutions in Szczecin hosted events as part of the Days of Culture or Decade of Czechoslovak Culture.[24]

Meetings of incoming and outgoing consuls with the First Secretary of the KW (Komitet Wojewódzki/Provincial Committee) PZPR in Szczecin and the Chairman of the Presidium of the Provincial National Council, with consuls of

22 NA (Národní archiv/National Archives), ÚV KSČ (Ústřední výbor Komunistické strany Československa/Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia), 1945–1989, Kancelář generálního tajemníka Gustáva Husáka (Office of the General Secretary Gustáv Husák), box 420, Information from the ČSSR consulate in Szczecin on the reaction of workers in Szczecin's workplaces to price changes, sent by the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the KSČ, G. Husák, Szczecin 21. 12. 1970. A. SZCZEPAŃSKA-DUDZIAK, *„Szczecin czechosłowackim oknem"*, pp. 143–145.

23 AMZV, Materiály do vlády, 1951–1983, box 33, Report of the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs on implementation of the resolution of the ČSSR government on proposals for savings in administration and management no. 54 of 19. 03. 1970, Prague, May 1970; Ibidem, Information on the deployment and number of employees of ČSSR diplomatic and consular representations abroad prepared by the director of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Diplomatic Protocol of the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vratislav Vik, Prague, 12. 06. 1970.

24 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1970–1974, box 10, Report on a meeting of ČSSR diplomatic staff in Warsaw devoted to preparations for the Decade of Czechoslovak Culture and Art, 09. 02. 1979; Ibidem, box 4, Information of the ČSSR Consulate General (CG) in Szczecin on the Days of Czechoslovak Culture in Poznań and Szczecin, 20. 03. 1973.

socialist countries, and with local journalists became tradition. One such meeting, which took place in December 1971, was attended by the new Consul General Jaroslav Janoušek, who was replacing Alois Tvardík in this position.[25]

The activity and effectiveness of carrying out the tasks of the consular office in Szczecin depended on a small staff and the support of the embassy and the staff of the delegations of Czechoslovak shipping and transport companies based in Szczecin. It should not be forgotten that in the mid-1970s, after the administrative reform in Poland, the consular district comprised twelve voivodeships (from Szczecin, Gdańsk, and Elbląg to Poznań, Gorzów, Konin, and Piła), which required establishing contacts with the new authorities, making regular visits to major urban centres, conducting information activities, and developing cultural cooperation and social contacts with schools and workplaces.

Consulate employees carried out routine visa activities and looked after and met with employees of Czechoslovak enterprises, sailors of Czechoslovak ships, and other citizens living permanently in the district. The guardianship functions were carried out with respect to Czechoslovak citizens vacationing at the Baltic Sea or transiting through Poland, which, especially in the summer, involved increased duties. In 1975, the consulate's operations were almost paralyzed. It was just as Alois Král was completing his mission,[26] and another member of the consular staff, consul Jan Wróbel, was injured in a car accident and was off duty for more than a month. When the new consul general, Miroslav Vinš, arrived in Szczecin in January 1976, it was his responsibility to carry out the tasks of the consulate with one vice-consul and two female employees.[27] Not surprisingly, given the shortage of qualified consular officers, the substantive value of the consulate's reports (71 reports sent in 1978) was not appreciated by superiors at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague. Poor assessments referred to the consulate's activities over several

25 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1975–1979, box 9, Information of ČSSR CG on visits to party representatives and state authorities of Szczecin, 29. 10. 1975; Ibidem, box 16: Information of ČSSR CG in Szczecin about the meeting of consuls of socialist countries, Szczecin 27. 06. 1986; Ibidem, box 7: Information of the ČSSR CG in Szczecin from a conversation with the consul of Cuba, H. G. Sepulveda, 07. 11. 1988; Ibidem, Information of the ČSSR CG in Szczecin from a conversation with the consul of East Germany, Heinz Hanish, 11. 11. 1988. More about Jaroslav Janoušek see: J. DEJMEK, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. II, p. 390.

26 More about Alois Král see: J. DEJMEK, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. II, p. 441; AMZV, Dokumentace teritorialních odborů (Documentation of territorial departments; further: Dokumentace TO), Polsko, 1945–1989, box 45, Information of the ČSSR consulate in Szczecin on the implementation of the objectives of the five-year plans in the consular district, 03. 02. 1975.

27 More about Miroslav Vinš see: J. DEJMEK, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. II, p. 652.

years from 1975 to 1979 and included an excessive focus on analysing the situation in Poland rather than providing information on the situation in the consular district. In addition, the extent of the consulate's social contacts with representatives of local circles, i.e. people not directly connected with the authorities, was considered insufficient.[28]

In bilateral Polish-Czechoslovak relations, the issue of reopening the Czechoslovak consulate in Katowice was a recurring one, with particular interest demonstrated by the Polish side.[29] The return of the consulate to Katowice, as well as the opening of a cultural and information centre, was announced in March 1971 by foreign minister Ján Marko during his visit to Poland, whereupon he asked the Polish side for a response to the proposal.[30] The establishment of another consular office in the People's Republic of Poland seemed to contradict the Ministry of Foreign Affairs's announcements about the need to reduce staffing at posts operating in socialist countries and the abandonment of plans to open a consulate in Leipzig.

After more than ten years, in the fall of 1973, the Czechoslovak consul returned to Katowice as the consul general, and it was Jaroslav Janoušek who was appointed to the post.

The first organizational activities of the new consul consisted of securing suitable premises, obtaining permission to connect a telephone, opening a bank account, and purchasing typewriters, which involved numerous visits to representatives of the local authorities, such as Governor Jerzy Ziętek and the mayor of Katowice. The consulate's temporary headquarters at 9 Szafranka Street did not provide adequate working conditions, so the Czechoslovak side sought to renovate the premises. The result of these efforts was the signing of an agreement on November 11, 1974, for Czechoslovakia to purchase the building at 21 Stalmacha Street.[31]

28 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1975–1979, Report on the implementation of the work plan of the ČSSR CG in Szczecin for 1975, Szczecin 16. 12. 1975; Ibidem, Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the ČSSR embassy in Warsaw, 12. 12. 1978; Ibidem, Report on the activities of the ČSSR embassy in Warsaw, consulates in Szczecin and Katowice for 1978; Ibidem, Report of the ČSSR CG in Szczecin for 1978, Szczecin 29. 01. 1979, and Report on the activities of the ČSSR embassy in Warsaw for the first quarter of 1979.

29 Information on the interest of Polish institutions in opening a consulate in Katowice provided to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague by Czechoslovak diplomats in Poland. AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1970–1974, box 3, Information from the ČSSR embassy in Warsaw on the current state of Czechoslovak-Polish relations, Prague 04. 07. 1972.

30 AMSZ, Department I, 19/76, binding 3, Note on the visit of ČSSR foreign minister J. Marko to Poland, Warsaw 06. 03. 1971.

31 AMZV, Dokumentace TO, Polsko, 1945–1989, box 44, Report of Consul General J. Janoušek on social contacts in 1974, Katowice 07. 01. 1975.

The move to the new consulate headquarters eventually took place on April 18, 1975.

Within the territory of the consular district, there was a considerable concentration of industry crucial for trade between PRL and Czechoslovakia. There were seven border crossings, which served not only for local passenger traffic but also for tourists travelling to southern Europe, and this required processing of additional visas and passports, some 3,500 of them each year. Because the district was on the border, the consulate carried out welfare functions for its citizens and the Czech and Slovak minorities, including students, and participated in events related to cooperation between various border areas.

In the autumn of 1977, the consulate in Katowice was headed by the Slovak Michal Malý,[32] who, compared to the other Czechoslovak consuls in Poland, had the least experience working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and had never before held a foreign post. This raises the question of the importance of this post for mutual relations and its role in Czechoslovak foreign policy, which seems to have been underestimated, since for five years the consulate was headed by an official with no experience working in the foreign service. It is also not surprising that the foreign ministry headquarters in Prague was not satisfied with the reporting and the lack of independent analysis and proposals for action on the part of the consuls with regard to the situation in the PRL and bilateral relations.

Staff shortages persisted in subsequent years and were all the more troublesome because, due to the administrative reform in the People's Republic of Poland, the consular district already comprised fifteen voivodeships and thus required greater activity in maintaining public contacts. During a visit to the consulate in March of 1979 by deputy foreign minister Dušan Spáčil, Malý spoke bluntly about the underestimation of the staffing situation at the Katowice office compared to the consulate in Szczecin. The consulate's staff was not replenished after the death of attaché Karel Kohl, and there was only one vice consul, Josef Jurke, working outside the consul general. In 1978 alone, Malý took part in 160 meetings focusing on activities in Katowice and Kraków, and from the beginning of his mission until March 1979, he managed to visit ten of the fifteen voivodeships in the consular district.[33] Soon, the consuls also took over the duties of the trade office, which after

32 More about Michal Malý see: J. DEJMEK, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. II, p. 483. In 1977, the positions of consul and advisor at the consulate were vacant.

33 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1975–1979, box 12, Report on the business trip of deputy minister Dušan Spáčil to the People's Republic of Poland 26. 03 – 28. 03. 1979; Report on a working

Hrabák had not been staffed since 1979, and the consulate's sparse staff lacked economic training.[34]

The least appreciated aspect of the consulate general's activities in Katowice was reporting, regardless of who headed the post. In 1975, 45 reports and 15 pieces of information were prepared and sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague, of which 24 were devoted to political issues, 12 presented information on coverage of Czechoslovak issues in the Polish media, three were simple consular reports, and only two addressed cultural topics. Of particular note is the scant presence or sheer superficiality of economic issues.[35] Sadly, in stark contrast to the first period of the consulate in Katowice, the reporting now contained almost no references to the topic of care for citizens and minorities of Czechoslovakia.

The Czechoslovak authorities were particularly interested in the situation within the PZPR and its personnel status and the changes that were taking place at various levels of government.[36] Reporting from the consulate in Katowice often provided accounts of conversations with the first secretaries of the KW PZPR, including Zdzisław Grudzień in Katowice, Józef Klasa in Kraków, Andrzej Żabiński in Opole, and Jerzy Gawrysiak in Rzeszów, and the governors Wit Drapich in Kraków and Jerzy Ziętek in Katowice. As mentioned previously, in addition to the courteous nature of the consul's cyclical meetings with local authorities, they were also a source of information on economic and political affairs, and especially in the 1980s they provided an opportunity to learn about personal feuds taking place behind the scenes within the PZPR.

Among the permanent elements of their work were accredited meetings in Kraków with the consuls of the USSR, East Germany, France, and the USA.[37] Opportunities for meetings and discussions arose on the consuls' business trips or during cultural and propaganda events held at the consulate headquarters. There

meeting between Spáčil and the director of the Second Territorial Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bedřich Illek, with diplomats and staff of the ČSSR consulate in Katowice.

34 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 6, Activities of the ČSSR Central Committee in Katowice to implement the provisions of the 14th Plenum of the Central Committee of the KSČ, Katowice 08. 04. 1980.

35 AMZV, Dokumentace TO, Polsko, 1945–1989, box 44, Report on the evaluation of the work of the ČSSR CG in Katowice for 1975, Katowice 11. 12. 1975.

36 Ibidem, Report of the ČSSR CG in Katowice on social contacts, Katowice, 07. 01. 1974; Report on a visit to Rzeszów voivodeship, Katowice, 08. 01. 1975; Report on a visit to Kraków voivodeship, Katowice, 08. 01. 1975.

37 AMZV, Dokumentace TO, Polsko, 1945–1989, box 44, Report of the ČSSR CG in Katowice on social contacts, Katowice 07. 01. 1974.

was analysis of the content published in many of the most important local newspapers, appearing in several hundred thousand copies, and obviously representing the position of the ruling PZPR. Monthly reports from the consulate containing information on the internal situation in Poland and numerical summaries of press releases on the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and their subject matter were regularly sent to the embassy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague.[38]

Czechoslovak films helped to reach Polish audiences. At the end of 1975, the consulate had 49 full-length films and 115 shorts in its film library, only some of which were rented.[39] The typical use of film for propaganda purposes consisted of screenings at press conferences and loans to clubs, community centres, and students. Among the popular and shared films were the comedy *Jáchyme, hoď ho do stroje*, directed by Oldřich Lipský, *Tři chlapi na cestách*, also by O. Lipský, and *Orlie pierko*, which was directed by Martin Hollý.

The consuls maintained contacts with translators of Czech and Slovak literature and academic lecturers Witold Nawrocki and Jan Stachowski, who solicited materials for teaching Czech at the University of Silesia.[40] There were also frequent conversations with the head of the Śląsk publishing house, whose activities were often featured in the reporting of the consulate general in Katowice. Here we find interesting information on translations of Czech and Slovak literature with illustrations and covers by Andrzej Czeczot and Stanisław Kluska (e.g. Jan Drda's Czech Fairy Tales 1978).[41]

1980–1989: From the Rise of "Solidarity" to the Autumn of Nations

The early 1980s brought about a deterioration in Polish-Czechoslovak relations resulting from the internal situation in Poland and the reaction of the communist authorities in Prague to the rise of Solidarity. The worsening economic and social

38 Ibidem, Information of the ČSSR CG in Katowice on the interest of the Polish media in the situation in ČSSR, December 1974; Report on meeting with Polish editors at the Consulate General, Katowice 05. 12. 1975.

39 Ibidem, Report on the use of film in the work of the Consulate General in 1975, Katowice 28. 11. 1975.

40 AMZV, Dokumentace TO, Polsko, 1945–1989, box 44, Report of the ČSSR CG in Katowice on social contacts, Katowice 07. 01. 1974; Report on visit to Rzeszów Voivodeship, Katowice 08. 01. 1975; Report on visit to Kraków Voivodeship, Katowice 08. 01. 1975

41 Ibidem, Information of the ČSSR CG in Katowice on the activities of the Śląsk publishing house in the area of translations of Czech and Slovak literature, Katowice 15. 05. 1975.

crisis in the People's Republic of Poland was also closely watched in the other Eastern Bloc countries and was the subject of analysis and discussion at meetings with the leaders of the USSR and other socialist countries. From the rise of Solidarity (Solidarność) in 1980 until the imposition of martial law in Poland, mutual relations between Warsaw and Prague were shaped by mistrust on the part of the KSČ leadership and anxiety about the direction of change in Poland and its impact on Czechoslovak society.

Information coming from Poland was instrumentally used by those in charge of Czechoslovak propaganda to shape the negative attitude of their own society toward Poland's internal problems and to blame the Poles for the deteriorating economic situation in the entire Eastern Bloc.[42] It was also soon to become apparent that Gustáv Husák, along with East German leader Erich Honecker, was one of the most ardent supporters of forceful solutions against Solidarity, which, in the interpretation of the KSČ leadership, was inspired by "imperialist forces" in the West.[43] The Czechoslovak authorities, followed by the media, reported on the confrontational nature of the trade unionists' actions, and the argument about alleged threats coming from Poland was used to explain the Prague government's decisions to strengthen the border with the PRL and restrict individual tourist traffic.[44] In December of that year, actions of a military nature were also taken, including preparation of the *Karkonosze* military exercises and participation in the so-called *Soyuz '80* exercises conducted by Warsaw Pact troops.[45] In August 1980, the Czechoslovak interior ministry launched the *Circle* operation to control the

42 A particularly negative role in the propaganda against Solidarity activities in Poland, which were called "counterrevolution", was played by the communist daily *Rudé právo*. Tomáš ZAHRADNÍČEK, Neustálený obraz. Solidarita v „Rudém právu" 1980–1981, Securitas imperii 20, 2012, no. 1, pp. 76–81; M. SZUMIŁO, *Propaganda prasowa*, pp. 603–630.

43 Wilfried LOTH, *Moscow, Praque and Warsaw: Overcoming the Brezhnew Doctrine*, Cold War History 1, 2001, no. 2, pp. 110–111; P. BLAŽEK, *Československo a polská krize*, p. 62.

44 J. RYCHLÍK, *Cestovní styk mezi Československem a Polskem v letech 1980–1989*, in: V. Jaksicsová – J. Hupka (eds.), Kapitolami najnovších slovenských dejín. K sedemdesiatym narodeinám Michala Barnovského, 2006, pp. 300–310; A. KOBUS, *Czechosłowacja*, pp. 67–68; A. SZCZEPAŃSKA-DUDZIAK, *Regaining Trust*, pp. 90–99.

45 Order of the Minister of National Defense of the ČSSR to the commander of the Western Military District to conduct exercises under the code name *Karkonosze*, top secret, Prague 05. 12. 1980. Łukasz Kamiński (ed.), *Przed i po 13 grudnia. Państwa bloku wschodniego wobec kryzysu w PRL 1980–1982*, vol. 1, Warszawa 2006, p. 281, document no. 94; Letter from Gen. Martin Dzúr to Gustáv Husák regarding joint exercises of the United Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact states, Prague, December 1980. P. TOMEK, *Akce Krkonoše,* pp. 4–19; O. TŮMA, *The Czechoslovak Regime,* p. 63.

opposition in Czechoslovakia and "protect" the workers' environment from the influence of Solidarity ideas. In June 1981, implementation of the *Sever* operation was launched, consisting, on the one hand, of analytical work on the situation in Poland, and on the other, of operational work – acquiring secret collaborators operating in the People's Republic of Poland, setting up wiretaps, controlling correspondence, and monitoring of Polish diplomatic missions.

The crisis in Poland also took its toll on the working and living conditions of the staff of the Consulate General in Szczecin, resulting in supply shortages and reduced security. Nevertheless, based on the local press and information obtained during social contacts, information notes were prepared once a week. For the embassy in Warsaw and the foreign ministry in Prague, the consulate's reporting was a source of information on the situation in the region, especially in Szczecin and Gdansk.[46] Interviews with provincial governors and party secretaries, journalists, and security officials formed the basis of the post's reporting. There were far fewer references to the opinions of those representing economic or cultural circles. This situation was to change slowly, and as social tensions in Poland grew, consuls began to look for new sources of information other than official party factors. Consul Vasil Suchý, having been in Szczecin since April 1980, took over the network of contacts created by his predecessors, but a few months later he was faced with the need to establish new contacts, as there were changes in leadership positions in the PZPR provincial committees within the consular district.[47]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague received information from the deputy commander of the SB (Służba Bezpieczeństwa/Security Service) in Szczecin on the possible preparation of forceful solutions by the opposition as well as on the eavesdropping techniques they were using. Noteworthy is information about lists of Solidarity activists drawn up by the SB for use in the event of a "Day X". As one might guess, this was a list of opposition activists who were to be arrested or interned.

The declaration of martial law was welcomed by the Czechoslovak authorities, and the progressive calming of the situation over time contributed to the gradual overcoming of distrust. Additional progress was made following a visit by

46 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 17, Letter from the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the ČSSR CG in Szczecin. Assessment of consulate activities in 1980, Prague 09. 02. 1981.

47 Ibidem, box 16, Report of the ČSSR headquarters in Szczecin on the political situation in the northwestern voivodeships of Poland after the Seventh Plenum of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), Szczecin 29. 12. 1980. More about Vasil Suchý see: J. DEJMEK, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. II, p. 588.

Wojciech Jaruzelski to Czechoslovakia in April 1982, which initiated a slow revival of party and institutional cooperation. But Prague still had doubts about some of the solutions adopted by Poland, namely those pertaining to the situation of the trade union movement and state-church relations.[48]

The declaration of martial law and the associated restrictions on movement did not prevent the consul in Szczecin, Suchý, to undertake a business trip to several cities in the consular district.[49] In a report sent on the situation in the district, the consul touched on a number of topics, including pervasive chaos, crime, illegal trade, and unauthorized production of alcohol. However, at the forefront of the consulate's official correspondence was an analysis of internal purges in the PZRP and personnel changes, which went hand in hand with the enormous passivity of party activists who remained in the shadow of the Polish army.

In the implementation of consular functions, a change in the previous focus is noticeable. Consuls reported less on the economic situation in the region and limited reporting on transport and communications cooperation. For the Czechoslovak foreign ministry, the priority was to obtain information on the actions of the PZPR leadership after the extraordinary Ninth Congress and the doings of the Church-supported opposition.[50] Seeking alternative sources of information that would allow verification of official government messages, the ministry pointed to the weekly *Solidarność*, a publication independent of the government, and expected embassy staff and consuls to provide periodic collective analyses of press materials. Czechoslovak sailors and employees of Czechoslovak enterprises, who, after

48 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 17, no. 01012/83, Report of the ČSSR embassy in Warsaw for 1982, Warsaw 11. 01. 1983. From September 1980 to November 1983, there were more than 60 meetings between representatives of Poland and Czechoslovakia, so it is difficult to speak of a complete halt in bilateral cooperation. However, a top-level delegation headed by G. Husák did not come to Poland until November 1983; see: Mieczysław WILK – Zygmunt KACPURA (eds.), *Informator o stosunkach polsko-czechosłowackich 1944–1989*, Warszawa 1991, pp. 66–79. The first visit to Poland by a ČSSR party-government delegation since 1980 took place between November 30 and December 1, 1983. A. SZCZEPAŃSKA, *Oficjalne relacje*, p. 73.

49 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 7, Information of the ČSSR CG in Szczecin on the development of the current political situation in the voivodeships located in the consular district, Szczecin 01. 02. 1982.

50 Ibidem, box 17, Work Plan of the ČSSR embassy in Warsaw for 1981, Warsaw 04. 02. 1981; Ibidem, Letter from the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the ČSSR embassy in Warsaw – Evaluation of the Activities of the Embassy and the ČSSR Consulates in Szczecin and Katowice for the First Half of 1981; Ibidem, Evaluation of the Implementation of the Plan of Activities of the ČSSR Embassy in Warsaw and the CG in Szczecin and Katowice, ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague 30. 02. 1983.

all, had their own contacts and private acquaintances in various circles, were completely ignored by the consuls.

Consul Zoltán Kramec,[51] in his reports, accused the Church of supporting the opposition and of strengthening its position through the so-called "parcel campaign", which involved distributing humanitarian aid flowing from the West to Poles. The consulate's information and reporting activities regarding the Catholic Church increased markedly in 1987 during the papal pilgrimage to Poland, when John Paul II visited Szczecin, and Consul Kramec informed his superiors about the opposition's preparations for direct terror actions.[52]

The new opening of the consulate's activities in Szczecin was to be the change of consul general, which took place in October 1988. Imrich Sedlák,[53] who was supported by one vice-consul, began his tenure with a conversation with Yuri Ivanov, the consul of the USSR, who was very negative about the actions of the PZPR, accusing its leadership of revisionism and right-wing opportunism.[54] Consul Sedlák's mission coincided with the turbulent final stage of the existence of the People's Republic of Poland. In its propaganda work, the consulate enlisted the help of employees of Czechoslovak enterprises in Szczecin and students of Wyższa Szkoła Morska with an eye to reaching a greater number of Szczecin residents directly. Propaganda materials were usually distributed to local cultural institutions, schools, universities, and workplaces. The consulate's work emphasized contact with the media, holding press conferences for editors of the regional press, radio, and television, while film screenings and exhibitions were organized for the wider public. The consuls understood the power of film in promoting culture but also in

51 More about Zoltán Kramec see: J. DEJMEK, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. II, p. 445.

52 AMZV, Dokumentace TO, Polsko, 1945–1989, box 57, ČSSR CG in Szczecin – Evaluation of contact and reporting activities for the second half of 1987, Szczecin 28. 12. 1987; AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 7, Information from the ČSSR CG in Szczecin about a meeting with First Secretary of KW PZPR, S. Miśkiewicz, about reactionary circles in the city, 24. 10. 1988.

53 According to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the working atmosphere at the consulate while Kramec was in charge was bad. After Kramec left Szczecin on 31. 08. 1988, Imrich Sedlák (like his predecessor, a forester from Slovakia and party secretary in Košice) took over as head of the consulate. More about Imrich Sedlák see: *Konzulární zastoupení Československa v cizině a cizích zemí v Československu v letech 1918–1974*, Praha 1974, pp. 59–60.

54 AMZV, Dokumentace TO, Polsko, 1945–1989, box 65, Information on a conversation between I. Sedlák with Yuri Ivanov, consul of the USSR in Szczecin on 10. 10. 1988; Ibidem, Report of the ČSSR CG in Szczecin for 1988; Czechoslovak consuls held similar meetings to discuss the situation in Poland with their counterparts from East Germany and Cuba; Ibidem, Report on an interview with the consul general of Cuba, Jose Antalo Villanueva, Szczecin 21. 11. 1988.

propaganda activities. Due to the lack of an adequate cinema room at the consulate and at the Centre for Culture and Information (a branch of KIS in Warsaw), which opened in 1981, cassettes were lent to educational institutions, cultural institutions, and military units.[55]

In the second half of the 1980s, the leaders of the People's Republic of Poland and Czechoslovakia viewed the perestroika process differently and, while reforming the political and economic system, put its assumptions into practice in different ways. The leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia officially accepted Mikhail Gorbachev's proposal to reform real socialism, but at the same time declared the need to adapt the perestroika assumptions to the specifics of each of the Eastern Bloc countries. Examples include even cosmetic changes at the pinnacles of power, such as the appointment of Miloš Jakeš, a supporter of the intervention against the Prague Spring and the man responsible for the purges in the KSČ, as General Secretary of the KSČ in December 1987. He succeeded Husák as KSČ First Secretary, who continued to serve as president of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. In October 1988, Štrougal stepped down as prime minister after 18 years and was replaced by Ladislav Adamec.[56] In addition to personnel changes, the Czechoslovak reconstruction was to include the economy, and even here the planned changes did not go too far, since the program document "Principles of Economic Mechanism Reform", which was adopted on January 9, 1987, referred to the assumptions of the economic reform of the 1960s, whereas on the political level it relied on the KSČ program of 1968.[57]

The increasingly pronounced disparity between the pace of systemic change taking place in the People's Republic of Poland and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, as well as the critical stance of the KSČ leadership toward the changes hap-

55 AMZV, Dokumentace TO, Polsko, 1945–1989, box 65, Information of the ČSSR CG in Szczecin on the use of films from the film library of the consulate and KIS, Szczecin 27. 12. 1988.

56 See also: Miloš JAKEŠ, *Dva roky generálním tajemníkem*, Praha 1996; Lubomír ŠTROUGAL, *Paměti a úvahy*, Praha 2009, pp. 42, 281–285; František KOUDELKA, *Husákuv pád 1987. Dokumenty k oddělení funkcí prezidenta ČSSR a generálního tajemníka KSČ a k nástupu Miloše Jakeše do čela KSČ*, Soudobé dějiny 7, 2000, no. 3, pp. 471–525; Petr HUSÁK, *Česká cesta ke svobodě*, t. I: Revoluce či co?, Praha 1999, p. 49; J. RYCHLÍK, *Československo v období socialismu 1945–1989*, Praha 2020, pp. 301–305; Jiří SUK, *Rozłam pomiędzy „totalitaryzmem" a „demokracją". Czechosłowacki rok 1989 – możliwości*, Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość 18, 2011, no. 2, pp. 17–23.

57 For more on the executive acts adopted in June 1987 and the assumptions contained therein for the operation of economic sectors, see: J. RYCHLÍK, *Československo*, pp. 301–305; Paweł UKIELSKI, *Czechosłowacja – implozja systemu*, in: Adam Burakowski – Aleksander Gubrynowicz – Paweł Ukielski, *1989. Jesień Narodów*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 195–198.

pening in Poland in 1989, had a negative impact on official political relations between Warsaw and Prague. The situation in Czechoslovakia during the period in question was aptly characterized in the memoirs of Václav Svatek, a Czechoslovak diplomat in the People's Republic of Poland, a cultural counsellor at the embassy in Prague, and later the director of the KIS. Svatek spoke of his country as a lonely fortress of real socialism. These critical words were aimed at the situation in Czechoslovakia, when after the roundtable and the June elections, the authorities in Prague did not draw any conclusions and did not sit down for talks with the democratic opposition.[58]

This personal confession, with which Consul Kramec concluded his last report from Szczecin in the days when the city was gripped by a wave of strikes and the Intercompany Strike Committee was established at the Szczecin Port (August 18, 1988), was a clear example of the lack of understanding of the market reforms undertaken in communist Poland.[59] Kramec regarded the social protests as a premeditated and Western-paid action organized by anti-socialist reactionary forces. The consul mentioned the nationwide scale of the social protests in passing, but it can be inferred that they made a very negative impression on him and caused disappointment. Even in its linguistic layer, the note prepared by Kramec referred to the ideological assumptions of the Leninist class struggle, and when confronted with them, the consul viewed the PZPR coalition partners of the ZSL (Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe/United People's Party) and the SD (Stronnictwo Demokratyczne/Democratic Party) as enemies. He accused PZPR members of being "bound by an umbilical cord to capitalism". One gets the impression that his consular mission ended in failure and personal defeat; there is even a sense of betrayal of the values that Kramec believed he was trying to promote in the interest of bilateral cooperation.

The position of the authorities in Prague was undoubtedly shared by Consul Sedlák, who seemed to be oblivious to the mood of Polish society and the consequences of his decisions. After the elections to the Sejm and Senate and the election of Jaruzelski as president, he continued to believe that the course of history could be reversed if only the party did not deviate from the principals of Marxism-Leninism and did not allow the strengthening of the position of the Church.[60] The rheto-

58 V. SVATEK*, Od Husáka k Havlovi,* pp. 124–147.

59 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 7, Information of the ČSSR CG in Szczecin on the political situation in the consular district in recent months, Szczecin 25. 08. 1988.

60 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 7, Information of the ČSSR CG in Szczecin on the political situation in the consular district, Szczecin 25. 08. 1989.

ric used by the consuls in reports sent from Szczecin echoed that of the hard-line wing in the KSČ, defending the old order and rejecting the concept of transforming the political system based on compromise between the PZPR and the opposition.

The activities of the Consulate General in Katowice in the early 1980s focused on carrying out the functions of information, reporting, propaganda, and developing a network of social contacts during the years of the crisis of confidence in Polish-Czechoslovak relations. Among the available archival sources on the activities of the consulate in Katowice, there is a clear predominance of social contacts. Issues relating to the performance of administrative functions and the protection of Czechoslovak citizens were hardly covered at all in the consulate's reporting in the 1980s.

In information sent to Prague on the situation in Poland, Consul Malý confirmed the theses about mistakes in the PZPR's policy towards the opposition and the internal resistance of hardline PZPR activists to the team of Jaruzelski. The consul's choice of interlocutors was, therefore, not accidental; they included General Jerzy Sateja and Katowice Voivode Henryk Lichoś, who was already losing his position and influence in the PZPR leadership.[61] There were two conversations with Sateja, the head of the provincial military staff in Katowice, held in December 1980 and in April 1981, respectively, when the general had already been dismissed from his post.[62] In both conversations, the general was highly critical of the policies of Jaruzelski's team, accusing it of political naiveté and tolerating the marriage of Solidarity with the Church, promoted ideologically with financial support from the West.

Seeking information on the situation in Poland within economic spheres, the consuls also met with representatives of large industrial plants.[63] However, these talks did not strictly address economic issues, despite the industrial nature of much of the consular district and its importance for bilateral economic cooperation. In August of 1981, the situation in the PZPR and internal factional fights in

61 Ibidem, box 6, Information from ČSSR CG in Katowice on the conversation between M. Malý and Voivode Henryk Lichoś, Katowice 29. 07. 1981.

62 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 11, Information on the conversation between Consul Malý and General Jerzy Sateja, Katowice 20. 12. 1980; Ibidem, Information on the conversation between Consul Malý and General Jerzy Sateja, Katowice 23. 04. 1981.

63 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 6, Information of the ČSSR CG in Katowice on the conversation between M. Malý and the director of Centrostal in Katowice, Rudolf Maron, on 31. 08. 1981, Katowice 03. 09. 1981.

the party leadership continued to be of interest to the consulate in Katowice. The consul's statement was clear: the disastrous situation in the People's Republic of Poland had been brought about by Solidarity, Polish nationalism, subjective and emotional attitudes towards the problems at hand, and, above all, by a denial of Marxist principals by a significant part of the Polish communists.

Consul Malý became acquainted with the situation in the consular district just after the declaration of martial law during a meeting attended by the First Secretary of the KSČ in Ostrava, Miroslav Mamula, the First Secretary of the PZPR in Katowice, Zbigniew Messner, and the Consul General of the People's Republic of Poland in Ostrava, Gerard Cieśla, which took place on February 4, 1982.[64] Messner confirmed the existing problems with the supply of foodstuffs to the market, but positively assessed the declaration of martial law and its possible impact on the implementation of necessary reforms, such as price changes and replacement of staff within the party.

One of the closest supporters and guests of the Czechoslovak consuls in Katowice was Professor Witold Nawrocki, a writer, translator, philosopher, and teacher at the University of Silesia and the secretary of the KW PZPR, who, thanks to his position and contacts, became an important source of information on political, cultural, and social life for the Czechoslovak consuls.[65]

One of the few consular reports reflecting the overall work of the consulate in Katowice is the 1982 report containing extensive information on all the functions performed by the consulate.[66] The bulk of the activities carried out by the consuls were related to tourist traffic, transit to southern Europe, unregulated property matters, the situation of Polish workers in Czechoslovakia, matrimonial matters, and the issue of choice of citizenship. The location of the office made it important from the point of view of Western tourism, i.e. foreign exchange tourists from Austria, West Germany, France, and Italy. Despite these conditions, the consulate had only one person working on consular affairs since October 1, 1982. This

64 Ibidem, box 11, Report on a conversation between M. Mamula, First Secretary of the KSČ in Ostrava, Z. Messner, First Secretary of the PZPR in Katowice, G. Cieśla, Consul General of the People's Republic of Poland in Ostrava, and Consul General of the ČSSR in Katowice.

65 AMZV, Dokumentace TO, Polsko, 1945–1989, box 55, Information of the ČSSR CG in Katowice on a conversation with Witold Nawrocki, Katowice 30. 12. 1982.

66 Ibidem, Report on consular, passport, and visa activities of the ČSSR CG in Katowice for 1982, Katowice 14.01.1983. The consular district comprised 15 voivodeships: Katowice, Częstochowa, Opole, Bielsko-Biała, Wałbrzych, Wrocław, Legnica, Jelenia Góra, Kraków, Tarnobrzeg, Przemyśl, Krosno, Nowy Sącz.

tiny staff managed to complete 1,429 activities in 1982, some 991 of which concerned visas. The legal basis for handling numerous cases was the 1972 consular convention and the agreement on legal actions in civil, family, and criminal matters (in 1983, there were 379 Czechoslovak citizens living in the consular district), enabling them to obtain assistance from attorneys or through intervention with local authorities. Among criminal cases pertaining to Czechoslovak citizens, illegal border crossings to capitalist countries predominated. Among legal and civil matters, most were those related to the choice of citizenship for newborn children of mixed marriages. Considerable problems were encountered in obtaining a marriage certificate at the Polish registry offices, a requirement for filing an application to leave Poland, which further generated correspondence with the consulate. Consular assistance to Czechoslovak citizens was essential during the period of martial law and the suspension of border traffic. At that time, the consulate issued documents allowing people to cross the border and extended the stay of individuals found under martial law to be visiting family in Poland.[67]

The consulate in Katowice also reported on the situation in the Solidarity movement and dealt more extensively with the opposition and the activity of the Church in the consular district. The information from the period just before the declaration of martial law, when the Second General Assembly of Delegates of the NSZZ (Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy/Independent Self-Governing Trade Union) Solidarity of the Silesia-Dabrowa region was held in late November and early December 1981, is particularly interesting.[68] The opinions of Consul Malý were unequivocally negative, and he used slogans taken straight from PZPR propaganda, calling the actions of the new NSZZ Solidarity leadership anti-party, anti-socialist, and pro-American, in addition to citing information he had received from the leadership of the SB and MO (Milicja Obywatelska/Citizen's Militia) about the embezzlement of money by the head of the Katowice Solidarity.

In the following years, the activities of the anti-communist opposition continued to be of interest to Consul Ján Kromka, who informed the embassy about the situation in the largest cities where the opposition was active, i.e. Wrocław and Kraków.[69] According to the consul, it was the Church that was responsible for inspiring young people to participate in demonstrations and carry out attacks on of-

67 Ibidem.

68 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 6, Information from the ČSSR CG in Katowice on the arrests of participants in the demonstrations, Katowice 09. 09. 1982.

69 Ibidem. More about Ján Kromka see: J. DEJMEK, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. II, p. 449.

ficers and PZPR headquarters. Of interest to the Czechoslovak consuls was the activity of the Church and its influence on Polish society. The consuls increased the intensity of their observations of state-Church relations during the subsequent visits of Pope John Paul II to Poland. In May 1983, the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs was informed in detail about the program of the visit and the places where the Pope would meet with the faithful, and the consul stated that every possible scenario had to be reckoned with during the visit, including victory on the side of extremist forces. The papal pilgrimage (June 16 –June 23, 1983) was routed through Warsaw, Częstochowa, Poznań, Katowice, Wrocław, Góra Ś. Anny, and Kraków, and there was also a walk in the Chocholowska Valley, where the Pope would meet with Lech Wałęsa. The so-call Pilgrimage of Hope took place during the final period of martial law and had a special meaning not only for the Jaruzelski staff but also for the whole of Polish society. Yet, in Consul Kromka's interpretation, the Pope was there in order to question the results of World War II during his stay in Wrocław, in Opole, and to question the positive effects of socialism, while in Kraków, John Paul II was to mobilize intellectuals and Christian social activists to criticize the foundations of Marxism.[70] The papal pilgrimage was of concern to the Czechoslovak authorities because of the possibility of an increase in the number of pilgrims crossing the Polish-Czechoslovak border.[71]

Consuls devoted much less space in their reports to cultural cooperation, but that does not mean that they did not appreciate or care about the presence of Czech and Slovak culture in their consular district. State-licensed cooperation and personal exchanges found their expression in the organization of Czech and Slovak Culture Week events in the border areas.[72] Meetings, film screenings, and press conferences were also organized during the period of martial law. The appearance of Czechoslovak issues in the Polish media, which were often inspired by the consulate in cooperation with the propaganda departments of the provincial committees of the PZPR in the consular district as well as with the editors of newspapers

70 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 6, Information from the ČSSR CG in Katowice on preparations for the visit of John Paul II, Katowice 18. 03. 1983; Ibidem, Information from the ČSSR CG in Katowice on preparations for the visit of John Paul II, Katowice 25. 05. 1983.

71 Ibidem, Dokumentace TO, Polsko, 1945–1989, box 55, Report on the conversation between consul Ján Pravotiak and the deputy head of the passport department of the voivodeship police headquarters in Katowice, Józef Papierniak, Katowice 30. 05. 1983.

72 Ibidem, Information on the Week of Czech and Slovak Culture in Bielsko-Biała voivodeship on 24. 01. – 29. 01. 1983.

and local radio stations, played an important role in the propaganda activities of the consulate.

In 1986, there was a change in the consul general in Katowice; Rudolf Remiš became the new consul, which, according to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, helped to improve the working atmosphere at the consulate.[73] The previous consul had extensive social contacts, while the new one had to conduct a series of familiarization visits after taking over, especially due to the fact that in the second half of the 1980s the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expected its consuls to deepen direct cooperation between voivodeships, cities, and businesses. The appointment of Remiš, who had no diplomatic experience, to the position of consul, did little to improve the quality of the reports being sent to the Czechoslovak embassy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The reporting of both the current consuls and their predecessors was criticized in Prague, and the Consulate General in Katowice ranked among the very worst of the Czechoslovak consulates in the world.[74] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague was also awaiting information on the activities of the environmental movements in the Polish-Czech borderlands and the anti-Czechoslovak protests in the People's Republic caused by the pollution of the Oder River.[75] The consulate's employees were also to be tasked with explaining the position of the government in Prague towards environmental problems, which in the consular district were the most controversial and caused social protests that could further aggravate problems in the mutual relations.[76] The head office expected that in 1989 the consulate in Katowice, would pay more attention to bilateral relations with Poland and actively influence the development of economic contacts (cooperation and specialization of production) and improve the movement of people at the border. In connection with a roundtable in Poland, there was increased

73 More about Rudolf Remiš see: J. DEJMEK, *Diplomacie Československa*, t. II, pp. 557–558.

74 AMZV, TO-T, Polsko, 1980–1989, box 18, Evaluation of the activities of the ČSSR CG in Katowice in 1986, Prague 13. 01. 1987; ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a letter to Ambassador Jiří Diviš, drew attention to the shortcomings in the implementation of the work plan of the Katowice consular post; Ibidem, ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs instruction to the ČSSR embassy in Warsaw, evaluation of the work of the CG in Katowice, Prague 12. 10. 1987; Ibidem, Letter from the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the ČSSR Consul General in Katowice, Rudolf Remiš, Prague 18. 01. 1988.

75 Ibidem, Instruction of the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague to the ČSSR CG in Katowice on the reporting and information activities of the post, Prague 07. 02. 1989; Ibidem, Instruction of the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague to the ČSSR CG in Katowice on..., Prague 17. 04. 1989.

76 Ibidem, Instruction of the ČSSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague to the CG in Katowice on..., Prague 05. 10. 1989.

interest on the part of the consuls in the course of the election campaign, and the mood among the public was improving. After the June elections, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended increasing contacts with Solidarity, the members of which were occupying more and more positions in the People's Republic of Poland and, according to Prague officials, were preparing to take over at the local government level. Economic reforms, especially privatization and the influx of Western capital and their impact on Polish-Czechoslovak contacts, were now to become the subject of particular interest.

It seems that the instructions coming from Prague did not improve the consulate's substantive activities, since in October 1989 the consul's analytical skills were also criticized. In his memoirs, published in 1998, Stanislav Suja, a long-time Czechoslovak diplomat to the United Nations and the USA and head of secretariat of Bohuslav Chňoupek, listed several Czechoslovak consulates enjoying prestige, among which was the office in Szczecin, but there was no mention of the consulate in Katowice.[77]

Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that the analysis of the activities of the Czechoslovak consulates in Szczecin and Katowice is difficult because of the imbalance in access to their reporting. In the case of Szczecin, we have much more extensive and substantively interesting source material, allowing us to look at the overall work of the consuls. In contrast to the consular office in Katowice, the consulate in Szczecin operated continuously and carried out more extensive consular functions, reinforced by the KIS branch in Warsaw, which opened in April 1981. Due to its location and the importance of Szczecin for the Czechoslovak economy, the development of trade and the expansion of the naval fleet, the consulate in this city assumed priority in Polish-Czechoslovak relations. More economic activity can be observed in the activities of the consuls in Szczecin with regard to improving transit cooperation and conditions for the use of Polish ports, which unfortunately were losing their position in Czechoslovak transit to East German ports.

77 Stanislav SUJA, *Po přečítaní spálit'*. Príhody a perličky z diplomacie, Bratislava 1998, p. 88.

Activities of the Czechoslovak Consulates in Katowice and Szczecin from 1970 to 1989

ANNA SZCZEPAŃSKA-DUDZIAK

An analysis of the activities of the Czechoslovak general consulates in Katowice and Szczecin in the period of 1970–1989 allows a multidimensional view of the role of the Czechoslovak foreign service in bilateral relations with Poland. Despite limited staff and financial resources, these posts performed administrative, information, economic and propaganda functions. The role of the consuls as intermediaries in the transmission of information on the internal situation in Poland, which became more important during periods of crisis – from the events of December 1970, through the emergence of Solidarity and the imposition of martial law, to the fall of communism in 1989 was particularly evident.

Despite the differences in the nature and scope of the activities of the two outposts, their activities reflected the dynamics of Polish-Czechoslovak relations during the period under study. The Szczecin consulate, due to the economic importance of the port and the presence of Czechoslovak enterprises, placed more emphasis on economic cooperation, while the Katowice post, located in the border region, had a broader range of functions, including social and cultural contacts. Underfunding and staffing problems limited their effectiveness and, in the case of Katowice, further hampered the realisation of political and economic goals.

The results of the research undertaken indicate that the activities of the Czechoslovak consulates in Poland constituted an important, although hitherto poorly researched, area of bilateral relations. The findings presented here broaden the knowledge of the functioning of the Czechoslovak foreign service and its role in the bilateral relations between the People's Republic of Poland and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. At the same time, many questions remain unanswered that require further analysis, especially those related to access to the archives of the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague. It is conceivable that more complete documentation would allow for an even deeper understanding of the political strategies pursued by Prague in its relations with Warsaw

and the real significance of the consulates in the pursuit of Czechoslovak foreign policy during the Cold War.