



THE ROLE OF SLOVAK ÉMIGRÉS IN NORTH AMERICA IN THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SLOVAK NATION

M. Mark STOLARIK
University of Ottawa, Ottawa

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Slovak émigrés in North America have played a major role in the emancipation of their nation from foreign rule in the last century. Although this process was not always very smooth, due to the opposition of some of their neighbours, and also because of internal divisions among Slovaks, both at home and abroad, nevertheless in 1993 a democratic and independent Slovak Republic appeared on the map of Europe. While the proximate causes of the creation of the Slovak Republic are fairly well-known, the long-term role of émigrés in North America in this process are not yet fully appreciated. This paper is a first attempt to sketch the broad outlines of the role of political émigrés in promoting Slovak aspirations for independence.

From the 11th to the 19th century the Slovaks lived in the northern reaches of the multi-ethnic Kingdom of Hungary. While they seldom suffered from national oppression until the 19th century, they lacked the opportunity to build national institutions because they did not control their own destiny. The official language of the Kingdom was Latin, it was ruled by the Magyar nobility, and the vast majority of the people were peasants who were more concerned with their daily existence than with any national movements. In the 18th century, however, a small group of Slovak intellectuals appeared, and began to debate their national identity. Unfortunately, the Slovaks were divided by religion, and this affected the outcome of the debate. Roman Catholics, who represented the majority of the Slovak population, by and large, considered themselves to be a unique and distinct ethnic group based upon a common language, homeland ("Slovensko") and a feeling of kinship. Protestant Slovaks, who

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were a shrinking minority since the Counter-Reformation, used the ancient Czech Bible and language codification in their services and correspondence, and, therefore felt a close kinship with the Czechs. In the 19th century some of them would seek to create a "Czechoslovak" identity. A third group, largely nobles, agreed with Magyar arguments that, even though they spoke different languages, they were all a part of the Hungarian nation, which they increasingly equated with the Magyar ethnic group, and, therefore, they should assimilate into the Magyar language and culture for the greater good of Hungary.¹

Even though Slovak intellectuals codified their language in 1787 and 1846, and began to create a literature in this language, they continued to be divided on their political future. The majority became nationalists in the 19th century and dreamed of home-rule for the Slovaks in Hungary, or, failing that, complete independence. A smaller group kept alive the idea that they should unite with their linguistic relatives, the Czechs, in a re-arranged federalized Habsburg Monarchy. The third group, derisively labelled "Magyarones" by the other two groups, saw no independent future for the Slovaks, and accepted their eventual assimilation by the Magyars.²

Meanwhile, between 1870 and 1914 approximately 500,000 Slovaks emigrated to the United States and Canada in search of work. Among them were a few hundred intellectuals, largely clergymen, teachers, or aspiring writers, who had no future in Hungary because, from 1840 on the official language of the Kingdom was Magyar, and from 1867 on the Magyars tried to forcibly assimilate the Slovaks into the Magyar language and culture. These intellectuals helped to organize their countrymen into parishes, fraternal-benefit societies, and they also established a newspaper press for them. These émigré intellectuals pursued the same political programmes as their countrymen in Europe: the nationalists wanted home-rule within the Kingdom of Hungary; the Czechoslovaks union with the Czechs, and the Magyarones were satisfied with the "status quo." The nationalists were represented by the Slovak League of America, which was founded in Cleveland in 1907; the Czechoslovaks were largely members of the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol, established in Perth Amboy, New Jersey in 1896; and the Magyarones tended to be followers of a small group of Magyarone priests from Eastern Slovakia.³

When World War I erupted in 1914, the nationalists and Czechoslovaks sprang into action. Both groups urged their countrymen not to return to serve in the Austro-Hungarian armed forces, but rather to work for a better future for their relatives in Europe. By a better future, the nationalists under-

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stood home-rule within Hungary, and they published a Memorandum to this effect shortly after World War I broke out. The Czechoslovaks, on the other hand, hoped for a union with the Czechs. They responded positively to the urgings of the Czech professor of philosophy T.G. Masaryk, who was a leading exponent of "Czechoslovakism" at Charles IV University in Prague. Masaryk went into exile in 1914 determined to destroy Austria-Hungary and to create a new state upon its ruins. The Czechoslovaks in America linked up with like-minded Czechs and together they prevailed upon the Slovak League of America to forget about home-rule in Hungary and, instead, to work for the union of the Czechs and Slovaks in a new state. The leaders of the Slovak League agreed and, on October 22, 1915, they met with their counterparts in the Bohemian National Alliance and concluded the Cleveland Agreement by which they pledged to work for the destruction of Austria-Hungary and the creation of a federal Czecho-Slovak State, with full autonomy for the Slovaks.⁴ This Cleveland Agreement was a major victory for the Slovak Lutheran activist Štefan Osuský, who was subsequently sent to Europe to coordinate the work of the League with that of T.G. Masaryk and his followers. Osuský established himself in Geneva and after the war was rewarded for his service by being appointed Czechoslovak Minister to London in 1919 and in 1920 to Paris, where he remained until the fall of France in 1940.

T.G. Masaryk, meanwhile, who by 1918 had become the recognized leader of the Czechoslovak movement in exile, did not favour home-rule for the Slovaks. He felt that the Slovaks were a branch of the Czech nation who spoke a different dialect, and he wanted the new state to be strongly centralized. Therefore, when he came to the United States in the spring of 1918 to seek American recognition of his movement, and was confronted with the Cleveland Agreement, he declared it "out of date." Instead, on May 31, 1918, he concluded the new "Pittsburgh Agreement" with the Slovak League of America. In this watered-down agreement Masaryk was still forced to promise the Slovaks limited home-rule in the form of their own Diet, administration, courts, and the use of Slovak in public life. However, the Pittsburgh Agreement no longer used the word "federal" to describe the new state, there was no mention of the existence of a Slovak "nation" and the word "autonomy" was also left out.⁵

Masaryk's true motives in concluding the Pittsburgh Agreement became clear after the war had ended and Czechoslovakia appeared on the map of Europe. The new Constitution of this Republic, which was promulgated in 1920 by the Czech-dominated Parliament in Prague, proclaimed the

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existence of a unitary Czechoslovak nation, whose people spoke a Czechoslovak language, and Slovakia did not receive its promised autonomy. When asked to comment on the Pittsburgh Agreement by one of Czechoslovakia's Prime Ministers, Masaryk dismissed it as "one of many pre-revolutionary programs, made beyond the boundaries," and he added that "it was concluded to appease a small Slovak faction which was dreaming of God knows what sort of independence for Slovakia."⁶

In dismissing the wishes of Slovak nationalists in America, and subsequently in Slovakia as well, Masaryk and his supporters were putting the new Republic into jeopardy. The various Czech-dominated governments that ruled the new Republic recruited Slovaks of the "Czechoslovak" persuasion (largely Lutherans) to join their ruling coalition. American Czechoslovaks approved of this arrangement. Magyarones in both countries became increasingly irrelevant. Slovak nationalists, however, were left out in the cold. Organized in the Slovak People's Party, which was led by the Reverend Andrej Hlinka, the nationalists (largely Catholics) quickly latched upon the Pittsburgh Agreement in demanding autonomy for Slovakia over the next twenty years.⁷

American Slovak nationalists, still represented by the Slovak League of America, were joined in the crusade for autonomy by Canadian Slovak nationalists. In 1932 the latter organized themselves into the Canadian Slovak League and the vast majority of its members were also Roman Catholics. Both groups assisted nationalists in the homeland in their quest for autonomy. The two Slovak Leagues sent dozens of Memoranda to Masaryk and to the various Czechoslovak governments demanding autonomy for the Slovaks. Indeed, in the summer of 1938, the Slovak League of America sent an official delegation led by its president, Dr. Peter P. Hletko of Chicago, with the original of the Pittsburgh Agreement to Slovakia and demanded that the Agreement be incorporated into the Czechoslovak Constitution. A coalition of Slovak nationalist politicians finally proclaimed the autonomy of Slovakia in the city of Žilina on October 6, 1938, after the Munich Agreement had demoralized the Prague government and reduced the size of the Czechoslovak Republic by ceding the German-dominated Sudetenland to Germany.⁸ The Slovaks then elected their own Provincial Diet, which would make all laws governing their Province, and in this way finally achieved the autonomy that they had been seeking since the 19th century.

Once the Slovaks had achieved their autonomy within the re-named Czecho-Slovakia, American and Canadian Slovak nationalists were satisfied, but Adolf Hitler, the

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Chancellor of Germany was not. In his dream of creating a "Third Reich," Hitler was determined to include in it the Czech provinces of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, which for the previous thousand years had been a part of various German-dominated empires. Therefore, he set out to destroy what was left of Czecho-Slovakia, and he made use of certain Slovak nationalists to achieve his purpose.⁹ In the six months of the existence of the second Czecho-Slovak Republic, Hitler's agents met with certain extreme Slovak nationalists, and urged them to declare independence from the Czechs. After the Prague government heard of these meetings it proclaimed martial law in Slovakia in early March of 1939, and by so doing alienated a great many Slovaks. Taking advantage of this crisis, Hitler summoned the new leader of the Slovak People's Party (Andrej Hlinka had died in 1938), the Rev. Dr. Jozef Tiso, to Berlin, and urged him to declare Slovak independence or face occupation by the Magyars, who were allied with Germany, and who wanted to re-annex Slovakia to Hungary. Tiso refused to unilaterally declare independence. Instead, he returned to Bratislava, summoned the Provincial Diet into session, and explained to its members what options Hitler had given them. As a result, on March 14th, 1939, the Slovak Diet proclaimed the independence of Slovakia. Germany immediately recognized Slovak independence, and on March 15th occupied Bohemia-Moravia-Silesia and annexed these provinces to the Third Reich. Slovakia then became an ally of Germany, was guaranteed its existence, but had to subordinate its foreign policy to the Third Reich and its government became increasingly authoritarian as it adjusted to its domineering patron.¹⁰

American and Canadian Slovaks, meanwhile, were taken by surprise. In the United States Slovak nationalists initially accepted and supported the Slovak Republic, at least until the United States entered World War II in December of 1941. After that the nationalists had to suppress their support for Slovakia because the USA was at war with the Axis powers and their allies, which included Slovakia. In Canada, meanwhile, nationalists could never openly support the Slovak Republic because Canada declared war upon Germany shortly after Great Britain had done so in September of 1939. Indeed, Slovak nationalists in Canada quickly proclaimed their loyalty to the Dominion in order to avoid having to register as enemy aliens, and to escape possible incarceration, as had happened to several hundred Slovaks during World War I. Nationalist Slovaks in both the USA and Canada also raised millions of dollars for the Allied war effort in order to demonstrate their loyalty to their adopted countries. Czechoslovaks in both countries were initially dispirit-

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ed and dismayed by the breakup and disappearance of Czechoslovakia.¹¹

Once the United States had entered the war against the Axis Powers, however, the Czechoslovaks were heartened. Led by the Slovak Lutheran Vladimír Hurban, former Czechoslovak Ambassador to the United States, they openly supported a new liberation movement. It was headed by Dr. Edvard Beneš, the last president of pre-Munich Czechoslovakia, who had fled into exile in early October of 1938. Organized into various Czechoslovak National Alliances in the United States and Canada, these groups worked for the restoration of Czechoslovakia as it had existed before Munich.¹²

By now, however, certain prominent Slovak Lutherans, who had initially supported the first Czechoslovak Republic, broke with Dr. Beneš over the future shape of the Republic. Dr. Milan Hodža, the last Prime Minister of pre-Munich Czechoslovakia, and Dr. Štefan Osuský, the former Czechoslovak Minister to Paris, insisted that the resurrected Czechoslovakia could not be a centralized state, as before, but had to be federalized in order to satisfy Slovak aspirations for home-rule. Dr. Beneš, who was a student and follower of T.G. Masaryk, refused these demands. Just like Masaryk, he considered the Slovaks to be a branch of the Czech nation who merely spoke a different dialect. Therefore, both Milan Hodža and Štefan Osuský broke with Beneš and Osuský even denounced Beneš in several pamphlets published in London.¹³ After that both Hodža and Osuský moved to the United States and supported Slovak home-rule in any resurrected post-war Czechoslovakia. However, because most Slovak Roman Catholics in the United States supported Slovak independence after the war, Hodža and Osuský remained isolated from the community and died estranged from it.

The split between Edvard Beneš and prominent Slovak Lutherans heartened the Slovak Leagues in both Canada and the United States. As a result, the Slovak League of America, led by the Right Rev. Msgr. Francis Dubosh, sent a delegation to the founding meeting of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945 to plead for self-determination for the Slovaks in Europe. The Canadian Slovak League, led by Andrej Kučera, supported this move. However, Jan Masaryk, the son of T. G. Masaryk, and Dr. Beneš's envoy to San Francisco (and future Foreign Minister of post-war Czechoslovakia), managed to block it.¹⁴

After the war, when Czechoslovakia was restored by the Red Army, the struggle between nationalists and Czechoslovaks took on a new dimension. At the end of August, 1944 a

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dissident Slovak National Council, composed largely of Lutherans and Communists, and supported by elements of the Slovak Armed Forces, staged an uprising against the Germans and the Slovak Republic. It called for the restoration of Czechoslovakia, but this time on a federal basis, with full equality for the Slovaks.¹⁵ Klement Gottwald, leader of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, who had spent the war years in Moscow, and who enjoyed the full support of Joseph Stalin, even promised the Slovaks in the Košice Agreement of April 5, 1945, that the Slovaks would have full self-government in the form of the Slovak National Council in the resurrected Czechoslovakia. However, in three so-called Prague Agreements concluded in 1945 and 1946, the Slovak National Council's powers were quickly whittled down and subordinated to the central government in Prague. Edvard Beneš and the Communists supported this outcome for different reasons (Beneš because he did not recognize the existence of a Slovak nation; the Communists because they wished to exert centralized control over the whole country from Prague), but the result was the same—Slovak dissatisfaction with Prague centralism.¹⁶ This dissatisfaction grew after the Communist *žcoup d'état* in 1948, followed by the arrest and execution of some of Slovakia's Communist leaders, the persecution of the Roman Catholic Church by the new regime, and the promulgation of the extremely centralist 1960 Constitution of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic which completely emasculated the Slovak National Council and stripped Slovakia of its national emblem and its national flag.¹⁷

Slovak émigrés, meanwhile, even though they had common enemies in the Communists after 1948, remained divided in their efforts. Political refugees from the wartime Slovak Republic fled initially to western Europe and eventually to Argentina, Australia, Canada and the United States. They then established competing liberation movements: Dr. Ferdinand určanský, the first Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, who was removed from office in July of 1940 on Hitler's orders (he was too much of a Slovak nationalist for Hitler's taste), set up the Slovak Action Committee in Rome in 1946 in order to carry on the struggle for Slovak independence. His chief political rival was Karol Sidor, the former Deputy Prime Minister of the second Czecho-Slovak Republic, who had been sent to serve as Slovak Ambassador to the Vatican during World War II because he opposed Adolph Hitler giving Slovakia orders. Sidor helped to establish the Slovak National Council Abroad in 1948. určanský and his followers were more aggressive and radical than Sidor and his group, and for a while the two sides waged a

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press and pamphlet war against each other. Even though Sidor died in exile in Montreal in 1953, the two sides kept sniping at each other throughout the 1950's. Only when the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic promulgated its extremely centralist Constitution in 1960 did the warring factions decide to stop the hostilities. They finally got together in that year and created the Slovak Liberation Council. This Council was co-Chaired by určanský in Munich and by Dr. Jozef Kirschbaum, former Secretary-General of the Slovak People's Party, in Toronto, Canada. Kirschbaum had also been forced out of Slovak politics by the Germans in 1940 and ended up in the Slovak diplomatic service, stationed first in Rome and finishing his career as Slovak chargé d'affaires in Switzerland. However, the rivalry and bickering that had divided the two camps in the 1940's and 1950's caused so much bitterness that the Slovak Liberation Council had very little impact upon Czechoslovakia or western governments, to which it appealed for support of Slovak independence on numerous occasions.¹⁸

Meanwhile, many of the post-war political émigrés also quickly joined the two Slovak Leagues in North America and worked with them in their support of independence for Slovakia. In the United States the émigré historians and journalists Dr. František Hrušovský, Konštantín Čulen, and Dr. Jozef Paučo, were elected Executive Secretaries of the Slovak League of America from 1948 to 1975. In Canada it was Joseph Kirschbaum who helped to chart the League's political program.¹⁹

The Czechoslovaks, meanwhile, who fled their country after the 1948 Communist "coup d'état" also organized themselves, but, like the nationalists before them, could not maintain a united front. The largest group was led by Dr. Joseph Lettrich, a Lutheran, a leader of the 1944 Uprising, and former Chairman of the Slovak National Council after the war. He made his way to the United States in 1948 and established himself in New York City. There he helped to establish the Council for a Free Czechoslovakia, which rejected Slovak independence, but insisted upon the full equality of the Czechs and Slovaks in that state. However, some of his former colleagues rejected his leadership and political programme and established a competing Czechoslovak National Council in America. Indeed, since several Czech members of Lettrich's initial organization refused to recognize the Slovaks as equals, Lettrich led 17 of his followers out of the Council for a Free Czechoslovakia and established the Committee for a Free Czechoslovakia, which was re-named the Standing Conference of Slovak Democratic Exiles in 1963.

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After Lettrich died in 1968 the leadership of this organization was assumed by Dr. Martin Kvetko of New York, also a Lutheran and a former Minister of Agriculture in the post-war Slovak National Council.²⁰

After the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, some of the post-war political émigrés made a final attempt to unite the various factions active in the West. Grouping themselves around Stephen B. Roman, the Slovak-Canadian multi-millionaire, they established the Slovak World Congress in New York City in 1970. The following year they met once more in Toronto and agreed upon the political platform of democracy and independence for Slovakia. At the same time they elected the Greek-Catholic Stephen B. Roman as their president, the Lutheran minister and post-1968 political émigré Dušan Tóth as their Secretary-General, the ex-Communist Slovak Jew Eugen Löbl as a Vice-President, and the Roman Catholic J.M. Kirschbaum as Executive Vice-President. In this way the Congress sought to present itself as the representative of all factions of Slovaks the world over. However, Dr. Martin Kvetko and the Standing Conference of Democratic Exiles, among others, refused to join. Therefore, the Congress represented only those émigrés and organizations which supported Slovak independence, and, much as had the pro-independence organizations that preceded it, the Congress issued Memoranda and organized meetings all over the world calling for the overthrow of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia, and for the self-determination of the Slovaks.²¹

Meanwhile, once the Communists gave up their power as a result of the so-called "Velvet Revolution" in Czechoslovakia in November of 1989, the émigrés remained at odds over the political future of the Republic. Dr. Kvetko immediately returned to Slovakia and resurrected the post-war Democratic Party but failed to score any success with the voters. Representatives of the two Slovak Leagues, on the other hand, sent official delegations to Slovakia starting in the spring of 1990 and both groups began to urge Slovak politicians to assert themselves against Prague centralism. The Canadian Slovak League acted more energetically, largely because its leadership consisted of more recent political émigrés. In any case, both Leagues supported and encouraged the Slovak road to independence, and both rejoiced when it happened.²²

The Slovak World Congress, however, was initially divided over Slovakia's immediate future. Stephen B. Roman had died in 1988 (and Eugen Löbl even earlier), and that same year J.M. Kirschbaum was attacked for his support of

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the wartime Slovak Republic by one of Canada's oldest newspapers.²³ Therefore, the latter had to withdraw from an active role in the Congress. Thus, by default, the Rev. Dušan Tóth emerged as the dominant leader of the Slovak World Congress.

Once Czechoslovakia threw off the shackles of Communism in 1989, the Rev. Dušan Tóth sprang into action. He flew to Prague in December of 1989, expressed his enthusiastic support for the "Velvet Revolution", and became an advisor for Slovaks abroad to the newly-appointed Czechoslovak President Václav Havel. In this capacity the Rev. Tóth questioned the need for the continued existence of the Slovak World Congress. He also expressed his support for the continuity of Czechoslovakia, although in a federated form.²⁴

At the next convention of the Slovak World Congress in Toronto in May of 1990, the assembled delegates disapproved of Tóth's recent actions. Indeed, the delegates voted him out of office and elected the strong nationalist and ex-hockey star Marián Šastný as their next president. Šastný vigorously supported Slovak independence and the Congress, under subsequent leaders, continues to do so.²⁵ However, Helen Roman-Barber, the eldest daughter and successor to Stephen B. Roman's business empire, was dismayed by the outcome of the May Congress. She had sided with Tóth and supported the continued existence of Czechoslovakia. Therefore, in a circular letter addressed to all members of the Congress in the fall of 1990 she denounced the pro-independence stand of the Congress.²⁶ Furthermore, she withdrew the financial support of the Roman family for the Congress, and thereby crippled its effectiveness.

Nevertheless, the Slovak World Congress, backed by the Canadian Slovak League, and the Slovak League of America, among others, did continue to urge Slovak politicians to declare independence from Czechoslovakia. All three organizations were ecstatic when the rejuvenated Slovak National Council (the Slovak Parliament) proclaimed the sovereignty of the Slovak Republic on July 17, 1992, and thereafter the Czechs and Slovaks negotiated their "Velvet Divorce" as of January 1, 1993.²⁷ Whether or not appeals from abroad had any influence on Slovak politicians in voting for sovereignty remains to be determined.

Thus, the dream of émigré Slovak nationalists for their own state has finally materialized. Their efforts in liberating Slovaks in Europe before and during World War I are well-known and documented. Unfortunately, the activities of Slovak nationalists on behalf of autonomy or independence for their homeland in the inter-war period have not been

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adequately studied. Similarly, the story of Slovak émigré activities on behalf of their homeland after World War II, and its impact, if any, upon politicians back home, has not been adequately researched. Now that Slovak archives are finally open to serious researchers, historians will be able to study this important chapter in the history of the emancipation of Slovakia.

NOTES

¹ The development of Slovak national consciousness among intellectuals in the 18th century has been covered by Peter Ratkoš in "Postavenie slovenskej národnosti v stredovekom Uhorsku" (Slovak Ethnicity in Medieval Hungary), and by Ján Tibenský in "Ideológia slovenskej feudálnej národnosti pred národným obrozením" (The Ideology of the Slovak Feudal Nationality Before the National Revival), in Július Mésároš ed., *Slováci a ich národný vývin* (The Slovaks and their National Development), (Bratislava: Veda, 1969), 38-40 and 92-113.

² This period was well-covered by Peter Brock in *The Slovak National Awakening: an essay in the intellectual history of east central Europe* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 104pp.

³ I have covered this story in *Immigration and Urbanization: The Slovak Experience, 1870-1918* (New York: AMS Press, 1989), 69-109; 133-48; 184-211.

⁴ I also told this story in "The Role of American Slovaks in the Creation of Czecho-Slovakia, 1914-1918," *Slovak Studies*, VIII (Rome, 1968), 7-31; A more recent treatment appears in Gregory C. Ference, *Sixteen Months of Indecision: Slovak American Viewpoints toward Compatriots and the Homeland from 1914 to 1915 as Viewed by the Slovak Language Press in Pennsylvania* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1995), 7-261pp.

⁵ Stolarik, "The Role of ...," 42-54; see also Miloš Gosiorovský, "Slovenská otázka za prvej svetovej vojny" (The Slovak Question During World War I), in Mésároš, ed., *op.cit.*, 291-305; and Victor S. Mamatey, "Ešte raz o Pittsburgskej dohode" (Another Look at the Pittsburgh Agreement), *Premeny* (Flushing, New York), 20 (No.3, 1983), 35-42.

⁶ Jipi Hoetzl and V. Joachim (Introduction by), *The Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic* (Prague: 1920), 12, 47; and T.G. Masaryk, *The Making of a State: Memories and Observations, 1914-1918* (London: Frederick A. Stokes, 1927; reprinted by Howard Fertig, New York, 1969), 208.

⁷ For a history of the inter-war Czechoslovak Republic see Victor S. Mamatey, "The Development of Czechoslovak Democracy, 1920-1938," in Victor S. Mamatey & Radomír Luža eds., *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918-1948* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 99-166. The most recent treatment of the Slovak People's Party is James Felak's "At the Price of the Republic": *Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, 1929-1938* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 1994), XIV-253pp.

⁸ A partial list of memoranda sent by American Slovaks to Prague can be found in my "The Role of American Slovaks ..." *op. cit.*, 76-77;

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a short summary of the work of the Slovak League of America on behalf of the Pittsburgh Agreement was written by Karol Sidor in *Zásahy Slovenskej Ligy v Amerike do politického vývinu slovenského (1914-1939)* (Interventions of the Slovak League of America into the Political Life of Slovakia), in Mikuláš Šprinc, ed., *Slovenská Liga v Amerike štyridsatročná* (Scranton: Slovak League of America, 1947), 47-62; for the activities of the Canadian Slovak League on behalf of Slovaks in Europe see Anthony X. Sutherland, *The Canadian Slovak League: A History, 1932-1982* (Toronto: Canadian Slovak League, 1984), 33-47; for a history of post-Munich Czecho-Slovakia see Theodor Prochazka, "The Second Republic, 1938-1939," in Mamatey & Luža, *op. cit.*, 255-70.

⁹ For Hitler's thoughts about expanding Germany eastward see his *Mein Kampf*, translated by Ralph Manheim (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company: 1943), 654; for the role of Slovak separatists in destroying Czecho-Slovakia see Prochazka, *op. cit.*, 266-67.

¹⁰ Prochazka, *op. cit.*, and František Vnuk, "Slovakia's Six Eventful Months (October 1938-March 1939)," *Slovak Studies*, 4 (1964), 7-164.

¹¹ The activities of the Slovak League of America during World War II were summarized by Mikuláš Šprinc in "Slovenská Liga v Amerike od 1939 do 1947" (The Slovak League of America from 1939 to 1947), in Šprinc, *op. cit.*, 63-102; the Canadian story was covered by Sutherland, *op. cit.*, 38-39.

¹² For the World War II liberation movement see Edward Taborsky, "Politics in Exile, 1939-1945," in Mamatey & Luža eds., *op. cit.*, 322-42.

¹³ Hodža's differences with Beneš can be found in "Vyhlásenie československej vlády a Hodžova odpoveď nau" (The Proclamation of the Czechoslovak Government and Hodža's Reply), in Dr. Michal Múdry, *Milan Hodža v Amerike* (Chicago: Geringer Press, 1949), 50-59; Osuský's polemics with Beneš include the following: Štefan Osuský, *Pízená demokracie pri práci* (Solving the Problem of Democracy in Practice), (London: The Continental Publishers, 1942), 40pp.; *Triedenie duchov nastalo* (The Division of Souls has Started), (London: The Continental Publishers, 1943), 32pp.; and *Beneš a Slovensko* (Beneš and Slovakia), (London: The Continental Publishers, 1943), 32pp.

¹⁴ Šprinc, "Slovenská Liga ..." *op. cit.*, 89-90; Sutherland, *op. cit.*, 43.

¹⁵ For a short history of the uprising see Anna Josko, "The Slovak Resistance Movement," in Mamatey & Luža, *op. cit.*, 362-386.

¹⁶ The history of this period was covered by Radomír Luža in "Czechoslovakia between Democracy and Communism" in Mamatey & Luža *op. cit.*, 387-415.

¹⁷ The legal standing of Slovakia in the early years of Communist Czechoslovakia was treated by Jaroslav Chovanec and Peter Mozolík in *Historické a štátoprávne korene samostatnej Slovenskej republiky* (Historical and Legal Roots of Independent Slovakia), (Bratislava: Procom, 1994), 42-50.

¹⁸ This story has not yet been adequately studied in archival sources. We do have three different approaches to it: a pro-émigré treatment by Jozef M. Kirschbaum in "Die Kanadischen Slowaken und der Gedanke der Slowakischen Selbständigkeit," in Slowakei (Mün-

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chen), 20 (1983), 172-206; a Communist anti-émigré account by Ondrej Dányi (pseudonym?) entitled *Falošní proroci* (False Prophets), (Bratislava: Matica slovenská, 1978), 157 pp., and an attempt at objectivity by Jozef Špetko in "Slovenská exilová a emigrantská politika v rokoch 1945-1989" (Slovak exile and émigré politics in 1945-1989), *Historický časopis* (Bratislava), 39 (No.3, 1991), 241-60.

¹⁹ Jozef Paučo, "Under Dynamic Leadership," Slovakia (Middletown, PA), XVII (No.40, 1967), 104-112; Sutherland, *op. cit.*, 70.

²⁰ Špetko, *op.cit.*, 246-49.

²¹ Partly in response to Ondrej Dányi's diatribe, cited above, J.M. Kirschbaum wrote a history of the Slovak World Congress covering the years 1970-1980 entitled *Desať rokov činnosti SKS* (Toronto: Slovak World Congress, 1981), 236pp. Needless to say, the two books reached completely different conclusions. Špetko, *op. cit.*, p.249, reveals the rejection of the SKS by Matin Kvetko.

²² At the 50th Congress of the Slovak League of America held in Orlando, Florida in March of 1990, I was elected to the Executive Board of the League and also a member of a five-person delegation sent to Slovakia in May to try to steer the new Slovak government in the direction of home-rule within a federated Czecho-Slovakia, or else complete independence. Cf. "Historický 50 kongres Slovenskej Ligy v Amerike v Orlando, Fl." (Historic 50th Congress of the Slovak League of America in Orlando, Florida), *Slovák v Amerike* (Passaic, New Jersey), April, 1990, p.1 and "Bohatý program delegácie Slovenskej Ligy na Slovensku" (The Ample Program of the Slovak League of America in Slovakia), *Slovák v Amerike*, June, 1990, p.1; "Samostatná Slovenská republika skutočnosťou" (Independent Slovakia a Reality), *Slovák v Amerike*, January, 1993, p.1; and "Trnistou cestou k víťaznej samostatnosti" (The Thorny Road to Triumphal Independence), *Kanadský Slovák* (Toronto), January 2, 1993, p.1.

²³ "The Kirschbaum File," *The Whig-Standard Magazine* (Kingston, Ontario, December 10, 1988), 47pp.; outraged leaders of the Slovak community responded with several letters to the editor in *The Whig-Standard*, January 14, 1989, p.5.

²⁴ Dušan Tóth, "Torontský prejav" (Toronto Presentation), *Bulletin of the Slovak World Congress* (Toronto), XIX (No.86, March, 1990), 4-5.

²⁵ "Prejav Mariána Štastného" (Marián Štastný's Presentation), *Bulletin of the Slovak World Congress*, XIX (No.90, February, 1991), p.11.

²⁶ Circular letter by Helen Roman to all members of the Slovak World Congress, October 10, 1990, in the author's possession.

²⁷ "Deklarácia Slovenskej národnej rady o zvrchovanosti SR" (The Proclamation of Sovereignty by the Parliament of the Slovak Republic), *Slovák v Amerike*, August, 1992, p.1; "Slováci, radujme sa!" (Slovaks, Rejoice!), *Kanadský Slovák*, July 25, 1992, p.1; "Pozdrav slovenskému národu, jeho Národnej rady a vláde Slovenskej republiky" (Greetings to the Slovak Nation, its Parliament and the Government of the Slovak Republic), *Bulletin of the Slovak World Congress*, XXII (No.91, January, 1993), p.1.

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Uloga slovačkih iseljenika u Sjevernoj Americi u oslobađanju slovačke zemlje

M. Mark STOLARIK
Sveučilište Ottawa, Ottawa

Slovački iseljenici u Sjevernoj Americi odigrali su važnu ulogu u oslobađanju svoje zemlje od tuđinske vlasti u XIX. stoljeću. Iako ovaj proces nije uvijek tekao glatko, zahvaljujući suprotstavljanju nekih susjednih zemalja, a i zbog unutarnjih podjela među Slovacima i u domovini i u inozemstvu, ipak se 1993. godine demokratska i nezavisna Slovačka Republika pojavila na karti Europe. Dok su neposredni razlozi stvaranja Slovačke Republike uglavnom dobro znani, dugoročna uloga iseljenika Sjeverne Amerike u tom procesu nije do kraja ocijenjena. Ovaj rad prvi je pokušaj izrade obrisa uloge političkih iseljenika u promicanju slovačkih težnji za nezavisnošću.

Die Rolle slowakischer Auswanderer in Nordamerika bei der Befreiung der Slowakei

M. Mark STOLARIK
Universität Ottawa, Ottawa

Die slowakischen Auswanderer in Nordamerika spielten bei der Befreiung ihres Landes von der Fremdherrschaft im 19. Jahrhundert eine wichtige Rolle. Obwohl dieser Prozeß nicht immer reibungslos vonstatten ging, wobei die inneren Zerwürfnisse zwischen den Slowaken im In- und Ausland nicht wenig beitrugen, ist auf der politischen Karte Europas im Jahre 1993 die demokratische und unabhängige Slowakische Republik erschienen. Während die unmittelbaren Gründe für die Entstehung der Slowakischen Republik mehr oder weniger bekannt sind, steht eine Bewertung der historischen Rolle der nordamerikanischen Slowaken bei diesen Vorgängen immer noch aus. Dieser Artikel ist ein erster Versuch, die Rolle der politischen Auswanderer, die die Unabhängigkeitsbestrebungen der Slowaken propagierten, zu umreißen.