

Newsletter - Fall 2001

America United

The world changed on September 11, when the United States of America was attacked by terrorists. These attacks were an attempt through violence, death, and destruction to undermine our freedom and values.

The mission of American Friends of the Czech Republic (AFoCR) has been and always will be to advance the ideals of a free society through the rule of law and mutual security. We see today nations throughout the world, who believe as we do, joining us in this struggle against international terrorism. The outpouring of support from around the world has been immeasurable, and none more strong than from the citizens of the Czech Republic. The U.S. Embassy in Prague was showered with flowers, notes, and candles for the victims of the September 11 attacks.

Many of AFoCR's Board and Advisory Board members have spoken publicly on this issue through television interviews, newspaper interviews, and editorials. The AFoCR website (www.afocr.org) has many of these articles posted.

The following topics have been discussed:

- Approaches to stopping the terrorists
- Coalition of countries fighting all forms of terrorism
- Destroying the networks that support terrorists and their acts
- Role of U.S. and Czech Republic citizens in the war on terrorism

AFoCR board members and advisors who have spoken out on terrorism include:



Proposed Statue
of TG Masaryk

Zbigniew P. Brzezinski, former National Security Advisor to President Carter
Milton Cerny, president of American Friends of the Czech Republic
General Wesley K. Clark, former Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe
Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE), ranking member on Senate Foreign Relations Committee
Dr. Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of State in the Nixon Administration
Senator Dick Lugar (R-IN), former Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
John Shattuck, former U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic

Words of support and assurance have come from President Vaclav Havel, Prime Minister Milos Zeman, and Foreign Minister Jan Kavan promising to do whatever it takes to support the United States in this fight against terrorism.

Masaryk Memorial Moving Ahead

American Friends of the Czech Republic (AFoCR) has been working closely with Czech and Slovak organizations, both in the United States and the Czech Republic, to erect a statue in Washington, D.C. honoring the first president of Czechoslovakia, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. There have been several important accomplishments in the last few months that have made the dream of a statue in Washington, D.C. closer to reality. Some of these accomplishments are:

- _ Letter of support for the project received from President George W. Bush.
- _ Legislation (H.R. 1161) for placement of a statue in Washington, D.C. approved in the United States House of Representatives on October 2 and in the United States Senate on October 17. President George W. Bush officially signed the legislation on November 5, 2001.
- _ Negotiations with the National Park Service and the National Capital Area Commission to place the statue in the World Bank Park-three blocks from The White House on Pennsylvania Avenue.
- _ Negotiations with the General Director of the National Gallery in Prague to purchase the Masaryk Statue created by Vincene Makovsky in 1937. This statue will be a gift from the Czech Republic to the United States.
- _ Initiated a fund raising program for the construction, installation, and maintenance of the memorial statue.
- _ Creation of a Masaryk endowment fund for educational purposes and scholarships in coordination with Czech universities and non-governmental organizations.

The strong ties of friendship between the United States and Czechoslovakia that were created by President Woodrow Wilson and T.G. Masaryk over 80 years ago continue to be strong today. T.G. Masaryk used the principles of democracy, civil rights, and freedom that he learned in the United States to create a new nation in the heart of Europe based on these ideals. By honoring T.G. Masaryk, we also honor the United States.

Prime Minister Zeman Addresses AFoCR on Terrorism

During Prime Minister Zeman's visit to Washington, D.C. to meet with President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell, he also met with members of AFoCR and leading representatives of the Washington community at an AFoCR luncheon in his honor. In his speech to the luncheon guests, Prime Minister Zeman asserted that Mohammed Atta may have plotted an attack on the U.S. funded "Radio Free Europe" in Prague. The Prime Minister described the efforts of the Czech Republic to combat international terrorism and stated that the Czech Republic is willing to help the U.S. in any way it can. He acknowledged his recognition and support of AFoCR in their efforts to build important relationships with the Czech Republic. He specifically expressed his support of the Masaryk project and stated that he had visited the potential site and was "impressed".

Minister Kavan Addresses AFoCR

On October 1, 2001, Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jan Kavan, addressed the AFoCR Board at a AFoCR sponsored luncheon in Washington, D.C. The Minister's presentation was centered on the prospects for further NATO enlargement and EU membership. Minister Kavan said we are witnessing an important new coalition of all cultures rallying to support the United States in a joint effort to exterminate terrorism. He reiterated the Czech government's pledge to join fully in support of this cause. In addition to the necessary military operations, he said this new coalition must work to address the root causes of terrorism - the factors that drive some to the edge of frustration and despair.

The Minister listed EU membership as the Czech Republic's highest foreign policy priority, and hoped to achieve no later than early 2004. EU membership is an important step toward reintegration into western civilization, with which the Czech Republic shares values and historical experience. The minister believes public support for EU membership is about the same as it was for NATO membership at a similar stage in the process. Support will steadily increase, he said, as the EU negotiations mature, the public more fully understands the issues, and Czech politicians enter re-election campaigns.

Message from the President

The world is a different place today than it was before September 11, 2001. A year ago we were celebrating the Civil Society Vision at a dinner honoring Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in New York City. That day I traveled to the New York City Harbor to see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island in order to experience what my forebearers saw as they came to America from the Czech lands. I remember looking up at the twin towers hovering over that point of entry to freedom and opportunity.

Today, the towers have been destroyed by terrorists and the scourge of biological warfare, and worse, has cast a pall over our country. But the American experience is more than buildings and a rich economy. It is about people, freedom, and opportunity. Make no mistake about it, we are in a war to preserve our civilization against those

evil forces that would destroy what we have created under democracy and the rule of law - but they cannot and they will not succeed.

In this newsletter and our website, we are expressing the fact that we are united not only here in the United States, but also with nations like the Czech Republic in rooting out those forces that would destroy the vision of the civil society.

That vision is being expressed by the Memorial to T. G. Masaryk who not only led the Czechs from tyranny into the light of a nation built on democratic ideals, but whose whole life and being was based on the ideals of a free society protecting humanity under the rule of law. Truly, our bond with the Czech Republic runs deep through the democratic ideals of Masaryk and Havel who have based their philosophy on the principles of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Wilson - that a government must operate under the rule of law and the consent of the governed.

Masaryk Statue Endorsements

"As the states of Central Europe have regained their democracy and full independence, it is good to be reminded of the humanist and modernist contribution of President Tomá_s G. Masaryk."

James D. Wolfensohn President of the World Bank

"Nothing could be more appropriate than a monument to Masaryk, one of history's foremost democrats, in the capital of the world's leading democracy." Madeleine K. Albright Former U.S. Secretary of State

"In my opinion, the personality of Tomá_s Garrigue Masaryk deserves genuine regard_(I) wish the project every success and I promise that I will follow its progress attentively and support it with all my power." Vaclav Havel President of the Czech Republic

"A memorial to honor T.G. Masaryk in Washington, D.C. would serve as a suitable reminder of the impact American ideals and principles have had on the spread of freedom to nations such as ours." Alexandr Vondra Former Czech Ambassador to the United States

"The project will realize a dream for generations of Czechs on both sides of the Atlantic...I wish your project great success and I pledge my full support to your effort." Martin Palous Czech Ambassador to the United States

"T.G. Masaryk's accomplishments have assured him a lasting place in the history of Czechoslovak-American relations that merits commemoration with a memorial in Washington, D.C." Representative Henry J. Hyde (R-IL) Chair of Foreign Relations Committee

AFoCR Hosts Congressional Delegation in Prague

On Saturday evening, August 11, 2001, AFoCR facilitated a dinner reception in Prague for an important congressional delegation visiting the Czech Republic. The delegation consisted primarily of key members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and was led by the Committee's Chairman, Hon. "Billy" Tauzin (R-LA). Others included the Committee's ranking minority member, Hon. John Dingell (D-MI); Vice Chairman, Hon. Richard Burr (R-NC), and two subcommittee Chairmen, Hon. Joe Barton (R-TX), and Cliff Stearns (R-FL). Also on the delegation were Hon. Ed Bryant (R-TN); Hon. Nathan Deal (R-GA); Hon. John Sweeney (R-NY), and Hon. Karen McCarthy (D-MO). Accompanying these members of Congress were key staff representatives of congressional leadership offices and military escorts.

Officers of the American Embassy in Prague briefed the delegation on matters such as Czech-American relations, NATO, preparations for European Union membership, and Czech politics and economics. The dinner reception AFoCR organized was held at the U.S. Ambassador's residence and gave the delegation an opportunity to discuss Czech-American commercial ties with leading representatives of American corporations doing business in the Czech Republic, as well as representatives of Czech companies. AFoCR received generous donations to help fund the event from Pfizer, Boeing Corporation and Marriott International.

Other business participants in the evening included the American Chamber of Commerce, Bovis Lend Lease, CONOCO, ECKG Kladno, Ford Motor Company, GE Capital Bank, GTS Group, Ingersoll Rand, McDonalds, Bombay Company, DelPharma, and CzechInvest.

The U.S. Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Keith Eddins, hosted the dinner reception and other officials from the embassy's Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) and Political Section participated. Mr. Richard Steffens of the FCS was instrumental in making the necessary arrangements for the function and continues to work closely with AFoCR to identify other ways in which AFoCR can contribute to enhancing Czech-American relations and Czech commercial development.

Notable Americans with Czech Roots

Jaromir Jagr

A native of Kladno, Czech Republic, Jaromir Jagr is the star right wing for the Washington Capitals hockey team. Jaromir is a twelve-year veteran of the NHL, playing first for the Pittsburgh Penguins until he was traded to the Capitals on July 11 of this year. He has scored over 400 goals in his NHL career and has been an unstoppable force in the game of hockey since he began to play in Kladno. Jaromir wears the number 68 on his jersey in memory of his grandfather who died in 1968 during the Prague Spring.

Jaromir still spends most of the off-season at home in Kladno, where he likes to practice with the local children. He enjoys giving back some of the attention he received as a child and feels that spending time in the Czech Republic helps him

nourish his sense of identity. Throughout his eleven years in the States, he has lived with his mother because he loves her cooking.

Jaromir led his team to two Stanley Cup championships in 1991 and 1992 and is on his way to becoming one of the top five NHL scorers in history. He also received the Hart Trophy in 1999, the highest individual honor in hockey.

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis

The first, and currently only, U.S. Supreme Court Justice of Czech ancestry, Justice Louis Dembitz Brandeis was a progressive jurist who helped draft social welfare and labor legislation, and pioneered legal principles that protect the right to privacy. President Wilson appointed Louis Brandeis to the Supreme Court bench in 1916 where he served dutifully until his retirement in 1939. Historians regard him as a Supreme Court Justice who made an important, enduring contribution to the law.

The Brandeis family came to America from Prague as a result of the turmoil following the Revolution of 1848. Louis Brandeis was born in Louisville, Kentucky in 1856. This group of Czech immigrants, later referred to as the "48ers," was described in a book written by a relative of Justice Brandeis as bringing to this country "a certain strain, a certain quality and flavor recognized as distinctive. Their lives were knit up into the fabric of the nation. What they contributed is a part of the American heritage."

Justice Brandeis had the great opportunity to meet Thomas Masaryk, and he subsequently became one of many to encourage the American government in 1918 to support the creation of the Czechoslovak Republic. Masaryk referred to Brandeis in his book, "The Making of a State," as a confidant of President Wilson.

Excerpts from Slovo, a publication of the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library. Photo: Brandeis University Library, Special Collections Department, Harris & Ewing Photographers.

Dominik Hasek

Born in Pardubice, Czech Republic, Dominik Hasek is the goaltender for the Detroit Red Wings hockey team. Dominik was recently traded from Buffalo to Detroit in July of 2001. He played on the gold-medal winning Czech Republic winter Olympic team in 1998. During his career in the NHL, Dominik has won five Vezina Trophies, two Hart Trophies, and has played in five NHL All-Star games. Dominik is believed by many to be the premier goaltender currently in the NHL.

In his spare time, Dominik established the Dominik Hasek Sport & Scholarship Fund in May 2001. This unique fund was created to help underprivileged children in the Buffalo, NY area. Dominik has one sister and one brother, who both play professional soccer at home in the Czech Republic.



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