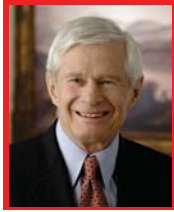


AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Fall 2017

NEWSLETTER

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Fred Malek Appointed Wilson Center Board Chairman

AFoCR Chairman Fred Malek was recently appointed by President Trump as Chairman of the prestigious Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars in Washington. The Wilson Center, chartered by Congress as the official memorial to President Woodrow Wilson, is ranked as one of the top ten think tanks in the world by the University of Pennsylvania. It is dedicated to tackling global issues through independent research and open dialogue.

"I am lucky to have a third extremely capable Chair appointed by the White House, during my tenure at the Center," said President and CEO Jane Harman. "Fred has long supported the Center in many capacities and earned the Wilson Award for Corporate Citizenship in 2004. Beyond that, Fred and his wife Marlene are dear personal friends."

Mr. Malek commented "The Wilson Center prides itself for being a "living memorial" for our nation's 28th President, and I am grateful to continue that legacy with my appointment to serve as its Chairman. I am honored to join my dear friend Jane Harman at the Center, and I look forward to partnering with her *(continued on page 3)*

Frederic V. Malek West Point Visitors Center Opens



*Fred Malek with
wife Marlene
Malek at Ribbon
Cutting Ceremony
at West Point,
October 27, 2017*

In October the West Point Association of Graduates hosted the official ribbon-cutting for a new visitors center to serve the Academy. The 31,000 square-foot facility is named for its lead donor, Frederic V. Malek, a graduate of the class of '59, who chairs the AFoCR Board of Directors. In addition, a significant portion of the funding came from class reunion gifts from eight classes along with a major contribution from The Boeing Company and the estate of Margaret A. Zipp in memory of her husband Lt. Col. (R) Charles W. Zipp, '53. The \$400 million fundraising effort lead by Mr. Malek was the largest ever undertaken on behalf of the United States Military Academy.

The public opening will be held in December 2017, and the new facility annually will welcome more *(continued on page 3)*

DEMOCRACY IS WINNER IN CZECH ELECTION

By Tom Dine

On October 20, 2017, Czechs went to the polls in a national parliamentary election to elect a new government. There were several noteworthy outcomes:

No. 1 -- Democracy was the winner. This was the ninth time since fair and free elections returned to the Czech lands, free democracy beating repressive communists in 1989.

No. 2 -- Andrej Babiš, the populist tycoon, and his Euroskeptic political party, the ANO ("Yes") party, was the contest's victor. ANO's pluralistic margin is 78 seats (out of 200) in the Chamber of Deputies. Babiš is the main contender to become the country's prime minister after coalition negotiations take place and goals and policies are agreed to among coalition partners. Runner up rivals include the Civic Forum (ODS), the anti-establishment Czech Pirates Party, and the anti-EU Freedom and Direct Democracy party, each with about 11 percent. The Communists came in fifth with 7.8 percent. The Social Democrats, the center-left establishment party that finished first in the previous election, came in sixth with just 7.2 percent, and the Christian Democrats, the center-right establishment party, won 5.6 percent of the vote, just enough to qualify for seats in parliament.

No. 3 -- Voters expressed with their ballots their discontent with established parties and a desire for a leadership change in Prague. But a significant result of the election was the voters exclaiming they want continuity in the country's western-oriented foreign affairs. This point was made clearly by Prague's current ambassador to Washington, Hynek Kmoníček, a skilled, experienced, highly cultivated diplomat, in an article that appeared in the *Washington Times* on October 25th. "(T)here is one area where Czechs expressed little desire for dramatic change -- foreign policy," he wrote.

Kmoníček emphasized, "The critical importance of membership in NATO and the irreplaceability of the EU." Regarding NATO, the Ambassador noted that Mr. Babiš campaigned on "a clear commitment to increase defense spending," thus sending the same but different message to Vladimir Putin in Moscow and Donald Trump in Washington.

Andrej Babiš does not want the Czech Republic to exit the European Union, repeatedly stressing on the campaign trail that unimpeded access to the European single market is essential to maintaining the health of the growth-oriented, solid Czech economy, which has the lowest unemployment rate in the EU. "We have," stated Babiš, "six thousand German companies here, investing with us and employing people." Babiš is opposed to the Czech Republic adopting the euro. Doing so, he believes, would constrain national sovereignty and competitiveness. "I want the Czech koruna and an independent central bank. I don't want another issue Brussels would be meddling in."

 Letter from

AFoCR President Tom Dine



**“The Stuff
of
Heroism”**

In the course of the 20th century, the sweetness and sadness of life were poignantly reflected in Czech history.

Sweet was liberation and gaining sovereign independence from the Austrian Empire 99 years ago under the leadership of Tomáš G. Masaryk. His achievement remains a stunning legacy of triumph over adversity. Sweetness returned in 1989 when Václav Havel rang his keys in Wenceslas Square reopening democracy's door, after 41 years of stifling Communist rule.

Sadness was twice losing independence – along with freedom and democracy -- to the two evil, brutal regimes of German Nazism in March 1939 and Soviet-directed and dominated Communism in February 1948.

Risking one's life in order to resist these two authoritarian moments in history is the stuff of devotion to principle and purpose, of enormous inner strength, of heroism. A powerful new, full-length film, "Milada," depicts such an effort. Milada Horáková, dissenter, parliamentarian, and feminist, as well as outspoken champion of human rights and freedom of thought and expression, was caught in this mid-century moment. A premier showing of "Milada" took place at the E Street Cinema in Washington, D.C., on November 16, 2017, at which the director David Mrnka, and Horáková's daughter Jana Kinsky, attended and spoke, along with Czech Ambassador Hynek Kmoníček. The movie's gripping narrative is now available to the American viewing public to see and to absorb on Netflix.

When asked why the Nazi Germans arrested and imprisoned her in a concentration camp, Horáková replied crisply, "Because they could." The Germans from 1933 to 1945 were without democratic ideals and processes; they were without morality. She reminded citizens that modern, sophisticated societies can be overwhelmed by unjust dictatorial rule, enforced by military and police forces. "The wolf never stops

eating," Horáková reminds her family and colleagues upon exiting the Nazi camp.

Essentials for a wolf-like government are suppressing the separation of political powers, the free press, and free and fair elections. The Nazis and the Communists controlled information. After the end of the Second World War, as Horáková observes in the film -- and it is true today -- people, when told what they want to hear, easily believe half-truths and lies. These were stock in trade for the Communists. Horáková, the ultimate patriot and patron of women, along with other believers in democracy, was charged in 1950 with so-called treason against the state. Fear, insecurity, and naiveté were pervasive. The masses went along as complicity reigned.

Her execution by the Communist government in Prague shook democratic societies and renowned individuals across the globe. Winston Churchill, Albert Einstein, and Eleanor Roosevelt wrote letters urging the Prague court not to execute an honest, legitimate dissenter.

Although her bright, heroic life ended far too soon, with this film, Milada Horáková has ultimately won the struggle against totalitarian ideologies and rule, against political propaganda and evil.

Thomas A. Dine
President, AFoCR



(l to r) AFoCR President Tom Dine, Milada Horáková's daughter Jana Kinsky, AFoCR Director Phil Kasik, and Film Director David Mrnka at the Landmark E Street Cinema in Washington, D.C., 11/16/17, the Anniversary of the Eve of the Velvet Revolution 11/17/89

Fred Malek Appointed Wilson Center Board Chairman

(continued from page 1)

to continue providing thought leadership and scholarship to the policy communities in the U.S. and abroad. I have worked closely with the Wilson Center for decades and know firsthand the fantastic work it does informing the nation's public policy debates by bringing together preeminent scholars and experts to tackle the biggest global issues. The Wilson Center is a trusted voice for our leaders across government, business and academia, giving the public the tools and opportunities to join the conversation."

Frederic V. Malek West Point Visitors Center Opens

(continued from page 1)

than one million visitors from around the world, share the West Point story in a compelling way, and inspire new generations to serve the U.S. Army and our nation by honoring the many remarkable leaders that have formed the Long Gray Line.

After the October ribbon-cutting Mr. Malek commented, "All my adult life, I've used as my personal and ethical code, the motto of my alma mater, West Point. It is three simple words that have a most profound meaning: "Duty, honor, country." These words have shaped my character, way of thinking, and ultimately my entire life. I'm hopeful that everyone who passes through the Malek West Point Visitors Center will leave with a profound sense of pride in the United States Military Academy and a clear understanding of why West Point is a national treasure."

The thousands of annual visitors to the United States Military Academy at West Point include prospective cadets, friends, relatives, and the general public. The new facility will enable them to learn about the significant contributions this institution has made to our great nation.



*Fred Malek is
Congratulated
at West Point
October 27,
2017*

Czech National Day Celebration at Masaryk Memorial October 26, 2017 *(photos by Lillis Werder)*



AFoCR Annual Directors' Meeting at Bohemian National Hall, NYC, November 9, 2017 *(photos by Lillis Werder)*

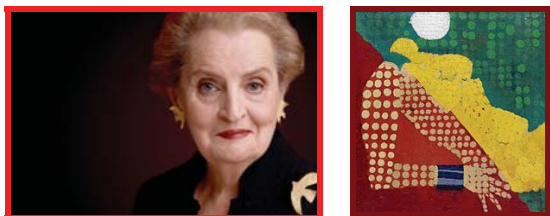


AFoCR Directors Gail Naughton, George Drost, Barbara Gibian, and Patty Stack

Czech Ambassador Hynek Kmoniček

AFoCR Directors Robert Doubek, Hana Callaghan, Bill Cabaniss, Richard Schubert, and Roger Kodat

NCSML to Host Discussion “68.77.89”



Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Painting by Otakar Slavik, 1968 (photo credit: cogreatwomen.org)

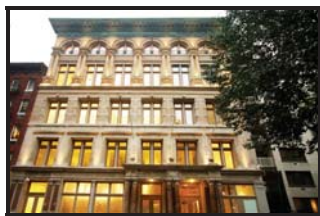
The National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, will host a panel discussion titled “**68.77.89 Arts, Culture and Social Change**” on Friday, March 16, 2018, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington, DC. The Honorable Madeleine K. Albright, a member of the museum’s National Advisory Council, will participate on the panel.

In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Prague Spring and the Warsaw Pact invasion, the panel will discuss 1968, 1977, and 1989 as key periods in the dissident movement in Czechoslovakia and how these events contributed to the collapse of the oppressive communist regime. The panelists will describe their experiences and offer their thoughts on the essential lessons, given 50 years of perspective, which young people might apply in understanding their own roles in supporting democracy and freedom today.

Included will be the announcement of the “**68.77.89 Arts, Culture and Social Change**” curriculum for high school students created by the Museum.

Following will be the opening reception for the exhibition “**Artists Caught Behind the Iron Curtain**” from the collection donated to the museum by Lee Freeman, who befriended the Prague artist community during the 1960s – 1980s and amassed a significant contemporary art collection.

Annual Meeting Held in NYC



The annual meeting of AFoCR’s Board of Directors was held at Bohemian Hall in New York City in November. As the first item, Chairman Fred Malek welcomed Czech Ambassador Hynek Kmoniček, who addressed the meeting as guest speaker. The Ambassador spoke insightfully on the recent election in the Czech Republic and its significance to transatlantic relations. Subsequently, the Directors received reports on the Masaryk relandscaping project, the upcoming visit of Czech parliamentarians to Washington, and plans for moving forward on projects in the new year, including a gala award dinner in November and other projects to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of Czechoslovakia in 1918.

Officers elected to serve in 2018 will be Fred Malek - Chairman, Tom Dine - President, Patty Stack – Vice President, Kristyna Driehaus – Vice President, Phil Kasik – Executive Vice President, Barbara Gibian – Treasurer, and Robert Doubek - Secretary.

Dr. Jan Švejnar Delivers Freedom Lecture at Woodrow Wilson Center



Dr. Jan Švejnar, Professor of global political economy at Columbia University (photo credit: columbia.edu)

Dr. Jan Švejnar, a distinguished Czech-born professor of global political economy at Columbia University, provided valuable insights into the Czech Republic and its standing in the world economy as he delivered the Freedom Lecture at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, DC, on November 7th. Using various data sets, Professor Švejnar painted a vivid picture of the Czech Republic’s relative economic standing in the world, with a particular focus on comparing data with other European Union members. A common theme is that the Czech Republic benefits most when it maintains an open and active trading policy, particularly with its European counterparts.

While a small economy within the global context (the Czech GDP is only 0.26% of global GDP), the country’s economic productivity measured on a per capita scale is marginally stronger, ranked 26th out of all 35 OECD countries. The Czech Republic has taken many sound steps in the past few decades, and has weathered European periods of recession quite well. It has also attracted sizable foreign investment.

Czech economic data shows several positive trends that bode well for its future development in the midst of a competitive European environment. An important strength is the country’s fiscal management. Compared to other European countries, it has one of the lowest public debt levels (as a percentage of GDP), while enjoying better than average growth rates during the past few years. In addition, Czech unemployment is the lowest in the EU, at 2.4%.

Key areas for further development in the Czech economy include upgrading an increasingly aging transportation infrastructure, improving the quality of domestic higher education, and investing more aggressively into research and development. In addition, Dr. Švejnar stressed the importance of enhancing efficiency within the Czech government bureaucracy.

The Freedom Lecture is an annual event hosted at the Woodrow Wilson Center that features either a distinguished Czech or Slovak speaker. AFoCR President Tom Dine was joined by Friends of Slovakia President Ted Russell to present Dr. Švejnar with our thanks.



AFoCR President Tom Dine with Dr. Jan Švejnar at Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C. (photo credit: Czech Embassy)

Masaryk Memorial Restoration Begins



Landscaping Underway at T. G. Masaryk Memorial in Washington, D.C. (photos by Roger Kodat)

After almost a year of planning and fundraising, work began in November at the T. G. Masaryk Memorial in Washington to replace and improve the landscaping that surrounds the iconic statue. Not only will all trees and shrubbery be replaced, but an automatic underground irrigation system will be installed to provide a reliable source of water for the plants in all weather. Washington summers are hot with frequent droughts, and the new system will ensure that the new plantings will thrive.

The new plantings are much more suited to the urban environment, and their selection was a cooperative effort between AFoCR and the National Capital Region of the National Park Service, the support of which AFoCR appreciates. AFoCR Directors Phil Kasik and Roger Kodat have spearheaded this project.

The project is planned for completion by March 2018, in time for the annual Masaryk birthday ceremony. Funding for the project has been provided by a grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and donations made in memory of Michael Rokos, a founding Director of AFoCR, who passed away in August 2017. The Embassy of the Czech Republic in Washington facilitated the Ministry grant.

In recent years, Mike Rokos had been responsible for organizing the annual ceremonies at the memorial. Mike brought flags and flowers and invited the local Czech community, including friends and colleagues from the Baltimore area. At the annual Czech National Day ceremony at the memorial in October, Kasik, who is AFoCR's Executive Vice President, noted that this renewal project is a fitting memorial to Mike, and placed flowers in his memory.



Beautiful New Plantings at the Masaryk Memorial (photos by Phil Kasik)

AFoCR Confers with U.S. Representatives at Chicago Dinner



U.S. House of Representatives Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (l) and AFoCR Vice President Kristyna Driehaus (r)

On October 22, 2017, AFoCR Vice-President Kristyna Pellouchoud Driehaus had the opportunity to share thoughts on U.S. relations with the Czech Republic with U.S. House of Representatives members Nancy Pelosi (CA), Adam Schiff (CA), Jan Schakowsky (IL), Bill Foster (IL), and Raja Krishnamoorthi (IL). The occasion was a dinner hosted by Ambassador Fay Hartog-Levin, a former U.S. envoy to the Netherlands (2009-2011), at her Winnetka, Illinois, home.

During the evening, Reps. Pelosi, Schiff, and Schakowsky shared their perspectives. Rep. Pelosi specifically recalled the February 1990 address to a joint session of the U.S. Congress by newly elected Czech President Václav Havel and emphasized how his words concerning democratic values and the pursuit of a civil society continue to ring true today and how the fight for democratic values is never finished. She also noted AFoCR's success in placing a bust of Havel in the U.S. Capitol building and the importance of AFoCR's continuing projects, such as the congressional exchange program. Rep. Schiff agreed regarding the benefits of the exchange program.

IN MEMORIAM The Reverend Michael G. Rokos



AFoCR Director and past President the Rev. Michael G. Rokos, of Baltimore, MD, died on Wednesday, August 30, 2017. He was 71.

He was a graduate of the Johns Hopkins University and the Virginia Theological Seminary. As an Episcopal Priest he served parishes in the Dioceses of Maryland, Washington, and Delaware and had a private practice in psychotherapy.

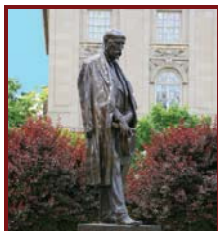
Michael's paternal line has its roots in the Czech lands. His great-grandfather, Josef Klečka, was among the earliest immigrants to the U.S. after the Civil War, and the names Rokos and Klečka became among the most significant names in the very large Czech community in Baltimore.

Michael continued the family tradition of leadership in the American Czech community. He served as President of the Czech and Slovak Heritage Association of Maryland, a Director of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences, and President of Sokol Baltimore as well as the Bohemian National Cemetery Association in Baltimore.

He was a loyal, proud, and long-term Director of AFoCR, and a great supporter of Czech/U.S. relations. He will be missed. He is survived by his husband, Gene-Michael Addis. Contributions to AFoCR in his memory will be utilized for the restoration of the Tomáš G. Masaryk Memorial in Washington.

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*Tomáš G. Masaryk
 Memorial in
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*Candles Lit in Memory of
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