

RADIO 50 PRAHA

1936

1986





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- 1 - The Editorial Board in session
- 2 - News Department
- 3 - Winner of Radio Prague's opinion poll from Egypt interviewed by a Radio Prague reporter
- 4 - An Italian-language programme in the making
- 5 - Operator at the Main Control Panel
- 6 - Audio Control Centre for Arabic broadcast



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"Human speech is just as direct and unmistakable an expression of our spiritual life as the beat of our heart is a sign of our physical life." The outstanding Czech writer Karel Čapek once wrote. Yes, language is a great gift. It stood at the birth of Man being as old as human civilization itself. But the spoken or written word is more than a richness. It is also very powerful. It can be both a link and an abyss. As there are tilled fields and battlefields, to quote another distinguished Czech writer Vladislav Vančura, words, too, can be either productive or destructive. This applies all too obviously to dialogue between people and between states, too.

I stress this point in particular because I address myself to you on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of Radio Prague, the Foreign Language Broadcasts of Czechoslovak Radio. For a whole half-century, this radio station has been spreading its message from the very heart of Europe, from what we are in the habit of calling Golden Prague, bringing information about the life and work of the Czechoslovak people, their views on the major events of our time. And it is a historical fact that this voice from Prague, has always been exclusively a voice of peace. This is true of the first years of Radio Prague's existence, when it mobilized people to protest and to resist the danger of fascism in Europe. And this is true also of the post-war years when on Europe's burnt out fields and heaps of rubble a new faith in life and human values was sprouting up. It is not only peace but the survival of mankind that is at stake in the present era of space exploration.

All of Radio Prague staff have always regarded the microphone as a mighty weapon, helping them to fight for the ideals of justice, freedom, social progress and peace, for the benefit of mutual understanding and fraternal relations among nations.

I can assure you, dear friends and Radio Prague listeners, that in pursuing these noble aims the Foreign Language Broadcasts of Czechoslovak Radio will always side with all progressive and honest people irrespective of nationality, colour, political persuasion or religious belief, who wish to live a life of creativity, a life in peace on this beautiful planet of ours and who are ready to fight for this.

I assure you most sincerely that the Czechoslovak Radio Foreign Language Broadcasts will remain for ever a voice of peace speaking out loudly from Prague!

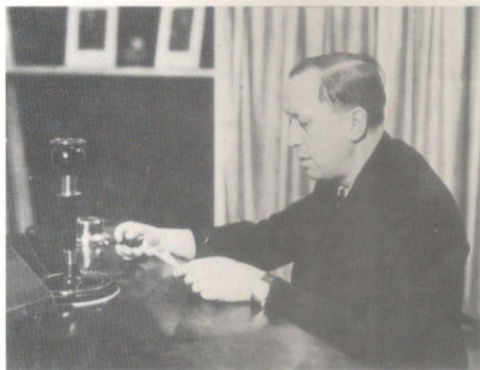


PhDr. JÁN RIŠKO
Director General
Czechoslovak Radio

50 Years of Radio Prague



Following World War One Czechoslovakia ranked among the pioneers of radio broadcasts in Europe and the miracle of the first radio broadcast in Czechoslovakia took place on May 18, 1923. Two years later, on June 18, 1925, Czechoslovakia's delegates took part in the London Conference of European Countries on Radio Broadcasting and became co-founders of the International Broadcasting Union with headquarters in Brussels.



Karel Čapek at Radio Prague in 1937

Radio Prague External Services began regular broadcasts on August 31, 1936, thirteen years after the first broadcast in Czechoslovakia, at the difficult time of growing tension in European relations, the time of the rising Fascist power in neighbouring Germany. The overture to the Second World War was just beginning. All these events were reflected in Radio Prague programmes, which readily and convincingly presented Czechoslovakia's stances in the many-sided, complicated and often rather dramatic developments and determined the place of Radio Prague in the worldwide struggle between the forces of war and peace.

Yet the pre-war tradition of Czechoslovakia's External Services did not last long. The voice of Radio Prague was violently silenced at the same time when Hitler's occupiers entered the streets of Prague. A sad and tragic period of Nazi occupation followed.

The liberation of Czechoslovakia in May 1945 was soon followed by the familiar signature tune of the Czechoslovak External Services — an extract from *Vltava* by Bedřich Smetana. And then, all of a sudden — there was peace in Europe. Radio Prague broadcast programs on the first achievements in the new construction and equal relations between countries with different social systems.

Czechoslovak External Services wrote the chronicle of those historic times on their radio waves. They were spreading the truth on the decision of our people to begin construction of a socialist society, a community of equal citizens where there will be no exploiters and exploited, a just society, really humane. This irreversible decision has been embodied also in the new Radio Prague signature tune — motivated by a march composed by Jan Seidl with words by Bedřich Bobek: "Forward left, forward, not a step back!" Right on the Fifty Years Anniversary of Radio Prague the composer recollected: "What people accept as their own, is always in good hands. Those eight bars of the signature tune will probably outlive everything else I have written."

In the difficult days of the cold war forced upon the world by the American imperialism, Radio Prague listeners soon began to appreciate in their letters its unrelenting effort to side with all peace initiatives in the world and to raise its voice against injustice, violence and war. And it was at that time when our listeners spontaneously started to refer to Radio Prague as to Voice of Peace.



Interprogramme Editorial Offices



Letter Department where listeners' mail is processed

Today Radio Prague broadcasts represent 50 daily broadcasts with the overall volume of 39 programme hours. These are beamed on 22 frequencies in 12 languages. The goal of Radio Prague is to assist with people's orientation in the complicated web of the present international-policy relations as well as in the internal political situation of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, to spread in the whole world the attitudes of the Czechoslovak people to all important issues of the day.

Naturally, Radio Prague devotes particular attention to the views and requests of the listeners from abroad. It has been registering all letters since 1953. That is why it is possible to say with quite an accuracy that it took 17 years before the first millionth letter arrived. The second million followed in further nine years and the three millionth letter arrived in 1985 after six years and nearly a month.

Behind every letter there is an individual with his personal opinion and questions that require answers. Thus in many cases our listeners become co-authors of the series provisionally called Listeners' Tribune. On the basis of questions from many people in various countries Radio Prague presented information for example on the gradual adoption of the legislature to the benefit of the working people in Czechoslovakia as e.g. on compulsory school attendance, free for all, for only an educated man can live a really dignified life. There were reports on one of the first laws — the law on general and free medical care which did not stop even before such huge financial obstacles as was the

case of the anti-polio vaccine bought from the United States, where it was invented by professor Salk and which was compulsory and free for all Czechoslovak children. This was not a usual thing for a long time even in the home-country of the inventor and in many other West European countries. Radio Prague answered a lot of other queries. For example, why the first atomic power station and the first atomic ice-breaker were put into operation in the USSR and why the United States was the first to use atomic weapons, which killed people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In many cases Radio Prague listeners keep commenting on many international issues and they voice their personal opinions. Their views often become part of the programmes broadcast in Radio Prague. They are thus permanent source of inspiration and an inexhaustible source of suggestions and topics for the programmes portraying truthfully life in socialist Czechoslovakia and evaluating international events. In 1985 Radio Prague received well over 163,000 such letters.

Also large polls of Radio Prague have a long established tradition. For example in 1962 there was a large exhibition of post stamps in Prague. There are many philatelists in the world and that is why Radio Prague turned to them with the question what they thought about our stamps. Hundreds of letters arrived. "I think that Czechoslovak stamps are the best in the world" — wrote our listener Aziz from Morocco. "It happens to me quite often that I say — this must be a Czechoslovak stamp — without seeing



Winners of Radio Prague's opinion poll on an excursion to the National Theatre, at that time under reconstruction

the name of the country. I can immediately recognize the artistic rendering and execution of your stamps" — Mr. Nils Yong from the United States said. "If a postal stamp was to be magnified and pinned up the wall, it would certainly be a Czechoslovak stamp" — Mr. Rump from the FRG wrote.

1967 was the twenty fifth anniversary of the Nazi annihilation of Lidice. Radio Prague asked listeners in Latin America to write where and when they first encountered the name of this Czech village. 280 letters arrived from various countries of Latin America. Their writers knew not only the tragedy of Lidice but fifteen girls and women even quoted their own names — Lidice. Majority of letters came from Cuba, but many were from Colum-

bia, Mexico, San Salvador, Brasil, Uruguay and other countries. Prague Spring music festival is very well known all over the world. In our poll on this international music venture we asked our listeners to tell us how they encountered Czech music. Edith Allet, the twenty-two year old teacher, who won the poll, wrote: "One day in May our music mistress came in the class. It was a small secondary school in the very heart of France. She asked us to carefully listen to a small record. And so I came to know Smetana's Vltava. Today I came in my class and asked my students to carefully listen to the small record hoping that they too will in future enable other people to discover this composition and love it as much as we do."

Radio Prague polls are furnished with various prizes and the most attractive is the free, all expenses-paid holiday in Czechoslovakia. In this way the poll winners have possibilities to confront the contents of our broadcasts with the reality of life in Czechoslovakia.

Radio Prague public relations are not confined to letters and competitions only. They are much more diversified and really rich. In 1960 Radio Prague fans in Cuba have established a club called "Cuban Club of Radio Prague Listeners". Their foundation proclamation says: "We would like to express our thanks to Radio Prague for its dissemination of true information in the world on what has been going on in Cuba and the whole Latin America and for its efforts to promote consolidation of unity between people, races and nations.". 25 years have passed since and now there are 1 800 such clubs in the world. About 330 of them are especially active. They keep informing us regularly on their activities, hold lectures and exhibitions on the occasion of Czechoslovakia's state holiday, discuss Radio Prague programmes, send us their comments, queries and suggestions. And not only that. They organize for example sports matches under the banner Radio Prague Listeners' Club. Female clubs begin to appear, as the African Woman Club, whose chairwoman wrote to us: "We women do not want to give birth to the children who would be growing up in fear of wars. We do not want to see our sons and fathers dressing military uniforms. As mothers we wish our children to grow up in peace-



Members of a Listeners' Club in Casablanca

full atmosphere. That is why our club is supporting the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and other socialist countries who have been fighting by their peace initiatives for the preservation of peace in the world."

Radio Prague Listeners' Clubs are a special feature of Radio Prague External Service. Many of them establish contacts between each other and they exchange experience and organize joint ventures.

Since 1981 Radio Prague lends its frequencies also to the broadcasts of the World Federation of Trade Unions, which associates 206 million working people from all continents. Regular programme "This is WFTU Calling" broadcasting in nine languages twice every week has found its devoted listeners. This is another opportunity of meeting people from various nations, who share one common conviction — that the struggle for the rights of the working class has far from ended.

Radio Prague is impossible to imagine without music. Music is said to bring nations closer, to speak right to the heart, it reflects cultural riches of nations. Radio Prague frequencies deliver works of the greatest Czech and Slovak music personalities as were Bedřich Smetana, Antonín Dvořák, Leoš Janáček, Bohuslav Martinů, but it acknowledges also our listeners' re-

quests for folk-lore, brass bands, top foreign as well as Czechoslovak singers and groups of popular and jazz music. Radio Prague is simply trying to register and embrace all that wide spectrum and depth of the music tradition of our nations, the level of music life in the present socialist society and at the same time to contribute through music to the struggle for peace and understanding among people in the whole world.

The Final Helsinki Act on security and cooperation in Europe, adopted in 1975, binds all signatories to carry out policy of peace and good neighbourly relations. An inseparable part of this policy is information both as a source of knowledge and as an expression of mutual respect. That applies the more at present when the world is experiencing a very difficult period of its history. The struggle between forces of peace and forces of reaction and war has unusually sharpened. It is a complex and hard struggle. Nevertheless the Czechoslovak public is convinced



Artur Rubinstein interviewed by a Radio Prague reporter

that the forces of peace will be more powerful than those of war, that despite of the deteriorated international situation peace will prevail. To contribute to this historic goal of mankind has always been the main programme mission of Radio Prague External Services.

Radio Prague Listeners Speaking

José Antonio B., Columbia (1984)

I wrote my first letter to Radio Prague in 1966 and then thanks to a scholarship I graduated in chemistry in Czechoslovakia. I am now working as a senior lecturer at the National University of Columbia. I was the first Columbian to have studied at the Slovak Technical College in Bratislava. Now you know there is one of your listeners here who trembles with excitement when you travel through Czechoslovakia in your programmes.

Luigi C., Italy (1984)

I have just come back from my holiday in Czechoslovakia and I am listening to Radio Prague full of languor for friends I left there. I must admit I have never met such friendship as in Czechoslovakia.



Chairman of a radio-club in France

Ashok K., Malaysia (1984)

We all are people living on this planet and have the same right to live here as those who are looking for war adventures. When we all rise and stand up for peace they will have to realize that we are force to be counted with. One of the ways how to spread peace are broadcasting stations like Radio Prague.

Ashley C., South Africa (1984)

Your station was the first station of a communist country I ever heard and the first socialist country I am writing to. Your station must have a broad following for your broadcasts are fine and interesting.

Neville K., Australia (1984)

I would like to send my greeting to the Lidice inhabitants on the occasion of the anniversary of that unlawful act of the Fascist Germany on June 12, 1942. During my visit to Czechoslovakia last year I visited also the Lidice memorial. I was deeply shocked by a short documentary and photos of people brutally murdered. Let's believe in a world of peace and in disarmament.

Achim K., FRG (1985)

Important event in international policy developments was the joint proposal of the CSSR and the GDR presented to the FRG for a chemical weapons free zone in Central Europe. I would like to appeal in this way as a member of the Duisburg-South Peace Council to the Federal Government to consider these constructive proposals of the socialist countries. For me as a Radio Prague listener it is natural to promote peace.

Terry M., (1985)

I would like to thank for the hospitality I and my friend experienced when visiting Prague in 1984. Our visit has dispelled a lot of myths we heard before. First of all Prague is not a boring place but to the contrary. People are friendly and helped us around everywhere. We have found out people in Prague are dressed well as people in the West. And finally we were impressed not to see any homeless.

M. Amidou O., Ivory Coast (1985)

I was impressed by the way you are promoting peace in the world. It is the only way of solving international conflicts and save relations between nations on our planet.

Besigire F. I., Uganda (1985)

At present I am founding a Radio Prague Listeners' Club. So far we have fifty members, all of them university students of the same year.

Héctor Pardo S., Chile (1985)

Thank you on behalf of those who are fighting for our country for the reports and commentaries on Chile. The information and analyses I listen to every day give picture of unheard of sacrifice of our people in the struggle for liberation.

Jean R., Madagascar (1985)

I am a professor at a secondary school, twenty five years old. I would like to receive your programme schedule, brochures and magazines on Czechoslovakia. I must admit so far I have heard about your country only very little. As I teach history and geography I will forward my knowledge of Czechoslovakia to my students and friends.

Juan Carlos Gallegos J., Mexico (1985)

I thank you as all Mexicans for the help Czechoslovakia sent to Mexico after the earthquake. This fact shows who our real friends are.



Exhibition mounted by the Moroccan Listeners' Club „Peace”

Pablo Ch., Uruguay (1985)

I used to be your listener in 1979-1980 when my country suffered under Fascist tyranny. Your programmes were one of those rare opportunities how to get information on the events our news media kept secret. Very valuable were the programmes on solidarity with our country because they supported our anti-Fascist resistance. Now I listen again to your broadcasts.

Luiz Guzmán D., Puerto Rico (1985)

The international situation demands a close cooperation of all peace promoters. Both Europeans and we in the Caribbean are facing the threat of war. The reports coming to Puerto Rico are false and twisted. If it were not for your programmes I would not know what was happening in the world.

Paveen W., Sri Lanka (1985)

I am glad I have become a Radio Prague Club member. I learned a lot about Czechoslovakia and the life of your people.

Ramón M., Honduras (1985)

I wish to add my voice to the solidarity with nations fighting for freedom namely with our brothers fighting in Salvador and Chile as well as in Nicaragua who is threatened by the North American intervention.

Ghanyshyam D. A., Rainbow Listeners' Club, India (1985)

Members of the club regret that they were not able to see the film that was made in the Czechoslovak-Indian coproduction „The Bitter Fall with Mango Fragrance” that was devoted to the Czechoslovak-Indian friendship and India's leader Nehru.

Muhammad Masso A., Pakistan (1985)

I am a new listener of your English broadcasts. Your programmes are interesting because they inform us on international situation.

Rosa María F., Spain (1986)

You in Czechoslovakia are lucky for you don't know the problem of unemployment which frightens our young people in Spain. my brother and I we have got in just that situation and you cannot imagine how we envy the socialist countries.

Karsten R., Great Britain (1986)

News media in the West rarely inform on the peace movement and even less so on the peace movement in socialist countries. It is only Radio Prague which enables me to get true information on your country, on the work of your people for peace in the world.



A shack belonging to a Radio Prague listener

How Do You Receive Us?

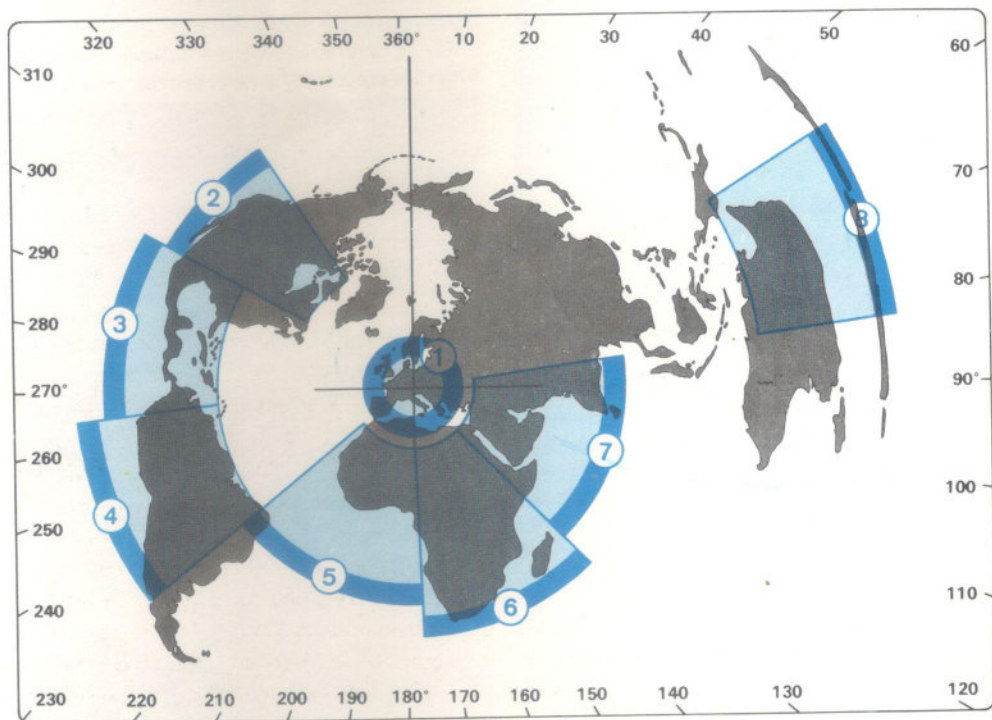
Since its very beginning Radio Prague External Services were in correspondence with those of our listeners who were interested in the technical side of the radio reception. The Czechoslovak 30 kW shortwave transmitter founded in 1936 at the Poděbrady resort distributed QSL certification cards bearing the Radio Prague OLR call signal emblem as a confirmation and thanks for listeners' reception reports. Some of them received QSL cards on the reception of the programmes even before the official opening of the station at the end of August 1936.

In 1965 our station founded Monitor Club for the listeners who were interested in regular

technical information.

New members would receive a diploma with space for annually issued stickers. Monitor Club members are entitled to free membership cards and forms for reception reports for Radio Prague and other foreign stations. There is also a permanent competition running for the largest number of QSL cards from various stations in various zones of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU, UIT) which divided the world map for international broadcasting purposes.

Listeners interested in radio broadcasts - often referred to as DX-ers - send us their letters and reception reports from many countries of the



Full details, including exact frequencies and wave-lengths, are contained in our broadcasting schedule available on request in English, French, German and Spanish. The map shows the territory estimated to be covered by Radio Prague broadcasts. The main services are listed in the table below according to regions.

world although they are not Monitor Club members. For them we are continuously renewing the choice of Radio Prague QSL cards with various subjects. But they all carry also the original OLR call signal emblem originally used by Czechoslovakia's External Services. We have organized many competitions for Radio Prague DX-ers and many foreign languages departments are broadcasting special programmes for them.

Radio Prague has no transmitters abroad. With the exception of Europe and the nearest of North Africa and East Asia we must always count with the radio energy of our transmitters to be travelling to our listeners by a multiple reflection or bounces between the Earth ground and ionosphere in the upper layers of the atmos-

mitters at the beginning of this decade. Starting in summer 1982 four 250 kW transmitters have been gradually put into operation along with range of high gain synphasis antennas. In view of better economy of the shortwave frequencies two or more transmitters broadcast on one frequency.

Yet no technical improvement – including an increased performance of the transmitters – can succeed if it is not used in suitable conditions for radio waves propagation. Generally conditions keep changing during the dusk and dawn, on the turn of the seasons and in dependence on the activity of the Sun. So far most difficult is to forecast the long time changes that appear approximately in eleven years cycle. During these cycles the size and number of darker spots or patches that suprised astronomers on the Sun surface are changing too. It has been established that the frequency of these spots is connected with the quantity of the energy necessary for the creation of ionosphere. During the maximum period when the spots are large in size and quantity, the ionosphere is strong and capable of reflecting the radioed energy in a large span of the shortwave bands. Whereas in the minimum period the number of solar spots is small, the ionosphere is weak and conditions for short-wave transmissions are unfavourable.

We regret to say that the Fifty Years Anniversary of Radio Prague in 1986 falls to the minimum activity period. The last maximum period of the sun spots together with the generally favourable conditions for the shortwave reception was recorded on the turn of 1979-1980.

We would like to end our technical information on a more optimistic note. The unfavourable minimum period is limited in time and improvement that follows is quicker than the former decline. And what is more important, according to some forecasts the improvement is expected already in the course of 1987.

Most of you can, however, listen to our programmes today and might as well write to us how you have received Radio Prague in 1986.

Region	GMT	Meter bands
1	0600 - 1300 1630 - 2130 1700 - 0100	49, 41, 31 49, 41 49, 233, 1
2	0100 - 0200 0300 - 0400	49, 41, 31, 25
3	0100 - 0500	49, 41, 31, 25
4	2130 - 0100 0200 - 0300 0400 - 0500	49, 41, 31, 25
5	1730 - 2130	41, 31, 25, 22, 19
6	1400 - 1730	31, 22, 19, 16, 13
7	1400 - 1630	31, 25, 22, 17
8	0730 - 0900	25, 16, 13

phere.

The set up and planning of Radio Prague seasonal schedules are close to the terms set by the International Radiocommunication System. Summer schedule comes in force with the first May Sunday while the winter period starts on the first November Sunday.

Amidst the crowded conditions and a strong technical competition of the shortwave transmitters Radio Prague has modernized its trans-



1 - Club run by BANA KIMOUR
KALUBI from Zaire - Radio
Prague opinion-poll winner

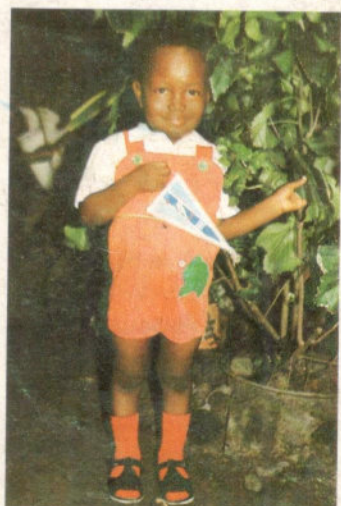


2-3 - A considerable number of
Radio Prague listeners are
Radio-hams

4 - Children of Radio Prague
Listener Club members also
listen to Radio Prague



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