

# Humphreys College

## NEWSLETTER SUPPLEMENT

SPRING QUARTER

JUNE 2013

### MEET YOUR TEACHER FORTY YEARS IN EDUCATION PART IV: THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM (1986-1989)

*This academic year coincides with three anniversaries: forty years of teaching—the first half in former Czechoslovakia, the second half in the United States, and the last decade at Humphreys College. Those 40/20/10 anniversaries inspired the following Q & A exchange between Dean Jess Bonds and Humphreys' Librarian Stanislav Perkner.*

*The previous parts of the interview are available in the following issues of the Humphreys College Newsletter Supplements:*

Part I, *Coming of Age in Cold-War Europe*, Summer 2012:

[http://www.humphreys.edu/pdf/newsletter/newsletter\\_2012\\_summer\\_supplement.pdf](http://www.humphreys.edu/pdf/newsletter/newsletter_2012_summer_supplement.pdf)

Part II, *At Charles University in Prague (1972-1990)*, Fall 2012:

[http://www.humphreys.edu/pdf/newsletter/newsletter\\_2012\\_fall\\_supplement.pdf](http://www.humphreys.edu/pdf/newsletter/newsletter_2012_fall_supplement.pdf)

Part III, *My Indiana Summer (1986)*, Winter 2013:

[http://www.humphreys.edu/pdf/newsletter/newsletter\\_2013\\_winter\\_supplement.pdf](http://www.humphreys.edu/pdf/newsletter/newsletter_2013_winter_supplement.pdf)

**Q: In September 1986, the Indiana Summer was over. How did you feel after your six-month initiation to the American way of life? Did you believe that you would be able to return?**

A: I felt triumphant. Finally, I not only read about the West; I experienced it up close and personal. Some Czechoslovak colleagues envied me. My students at the School of Journalism of Charles University in Prague were eager to hear my first-hand account. A student assembly, initiated by the university chapter of the Socialist Youth Union, was well attended, though student questions were rather guarded. The Velvet Revolution, accompanied by a student revolt against the neo-Stalinist regime in Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, was still three years ahead. Most Czechs and Slovaks, especially the youth, had grown tired of the old ways; however, the feelings of resignation to the pro-Soviet rule prevailed.



*Charles University in Prague was established in 1348.  
I graduated in its Grand Hall 41 years ago.*

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**Q: In retrospect, however, Gorbachev’s historic reforms in the Soviet Union started at the same time you enjoyed your first American experience.**

A: First I learned about Gorbachev’s policy of economic restructuring—*perestroika*—in the Indiana University Russian and East European Institute during my 1986 Bloomington fellowship. It was the second year of Gorbachev’s rule. So far, he had talked about the need to *democratize* the party-and-state system and accelerate the process of cautious economic changes. At first, everybody saw it as another empty slogan, a mere linguistic exercise in futility. It took another year before *perestroika* became an official ideology of the Soviet government and triggered to substantial reforms. Ultimately, they led to the end of the Soviet Union and the Cold War.

**Q: Besides *perestroika*, many Americans learned another Russian word: *glasnost* – openness.**

A: This information transparency stemmed from Gorbachev’s *perestroika*; by 1987, the *glasnost* became its driving force. A month after my return to Prague, Gorbachev and President Ronald Reagan met in Iceland. The Reykjavik Summit surprised everybody. Was it a beginning of a global political thaw?

**Q: Taking into account that your country was still occupied by the Soviet troops—for twenty years, by then—how strong were your liberation hopes?**

A: Gorbachev’s reforms met with the support of the ordinary Czechs and Slovaks and restraint among the old Communist Party elites. The reforms resembled the 1968 Prague Spring ideals: meaningful economic measures reviving a competitive environment along with the media censorship ban. The 1968 Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia lost its official “justification,” as it was presented by Brezhnev’s neo-Stalinist leadership. However, Gorbachev did not initiate any relevant steps toward removal of the Soviet army from my country. He was very slow in renouncing the Brezhnev Doctrine that established the Soviet Union the right to intervene militarily in Warsaw Pact countries. In the fall of 1989, even Gorbachev’s progressive appointee, Minister of the Foreign Affairs Eduard Shevardnadze, argued that the military-political stability in Central Europe must not be challenged. On the geopolitical map, Czechoslovakia remained a buffer zone squeezed between West Germany and the Soviet Union. Ultimately, he accepted the so-called Sinatra Doctrine, as it was jokingly dubbed by Gorbachev: to allow the Soviet bloc countries to do it “their way.” By summer 1991, the last member of the occupation force left Czechoslovakia.



**Q: How did the late-1980s Soviet reforms influence your own work at the School of Journalism?**

A: Most of us younger educators felt encouraged. I specialized in international broadcasting. Obviously, I tried to give more classroom time to British, French, German, and American radio history but it had to be still disguised as a “criticism of Western journalism.” After my return from Bloomington, only once I received a warning from the dean that my lectures on the American media were too “positivistic”; it was a code for “factual.” The dean claimed that he responded to students’ complaints and advised me to present my facts in a proper ideological context. Although such a criticism was disquieting, it was not unexpected or particularly worrying in the changing political climate. In the early 1970s, shortly after the Soviet invasion, it could cost me my job. In the 1950s, it could have placed me in prison, as could be attested by Milan Kundera’s famous novel *The Joke* (1967).



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**Q: After your return from the United States, did you personally believe that the Soviet rule over Eastern Europe was heading to its end?**

A: Not at all. I rather expected commonsense reforms: the government would encourage small business; state enterprises—key industries—would return to the world market by welcoming foreign investors; the Communist Party would accept political pluralism and allow free elections; media and education censorship would be lifted alongside the lines of Gorbachev's *glasnost*. I also hoped that university students and teachers would be encouraged to see the world behind the Iron Curtain, as it had become common toward the end of the 1960s, prior to the Soviet invasion of August 1968. But I certainly did not expect the Soviet Union to go away. Almost nobody did.

**Q: Yet, none of your expectations materialized. The tectonic changes that terminated the Soviet rule in Eastern Europe and ended the 40 years of Cold War occurred later: in the late 1980s and early 1990s. What caused this slow-motion development?**

A: In 1988, a couple of years after my return from the first stay in the United States, I was summoned to serve an obligatory party-apparatus internship. Because of my academic background, I found myself in an extremely interesting place: the Mass Media Department of the Communist Party Central Committee. Formally, I was supposed to participate in counter-propaganda planning; however, nobody asked me to do a single thing. Instead, I had a unique opportunity to see the country's true power center as it was approaching its final crisis.

**Q: That sounds fascinating... and a little dangerous; can you provide a few examples?**

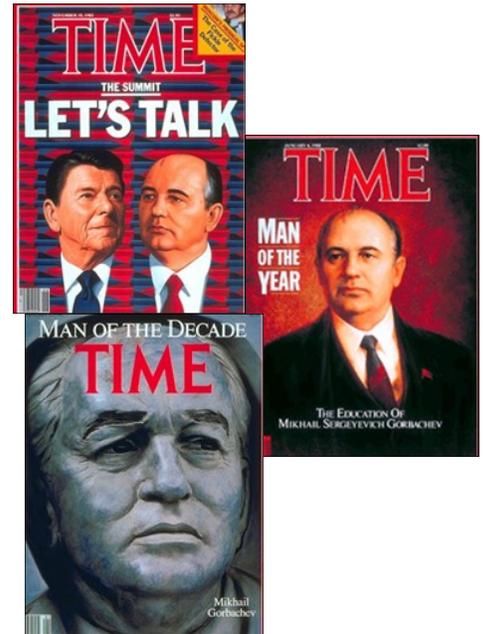
A: The constitutions of the Soviet bloc countries included a provision about the "leading role of the Communist Party." In reality, it meant that the governmental officials of all levels—from prime minister to the elementary school principal or cooperative farm manager—were obliged to follow the party line. The Soviet-instructed parties made all important decisions; yet, all legal responsibility rested on the shoulders of the government officials. It was the daily practice of party officials—the *apparatchiks*—to provide "advice and consent" to their state subordinates. For example, editors-in-chief of all mass media outlets were approved in their positions by the party apparatus, regardless of their political party membership. In Czechoslovakia, all national-media editors were obliged to attend regular meetings at the Communist Party's Central Committee headquarters. There, they would receive general instructions concerning their coverage of current events. I recall that Czech-born émigré Martina Navrátilová, who won the women's singles title at Wimbledon a record nine times and became a United States citizen in 1981, was declared a 1986 International Tennis Federation (ITF)

Champion. The Czechoslovak media could not ignore the news but the editors were instructed to reduce it to a simple notice and bury it elsewhere inside the newspaper copy. The Central Committee meetings served also as a place for the pillorying of those editors who lowered their ideological guard.

**Q: Was this practice considered media censorship?**

A: No, not officially. It was labeled as the application of the leading role of the Communist Party in the media. In Czechoslovakia, the direct—preliminary—censorship was abandoned in 1968 and never reestablished in its original form. Instead, it was replaced by the self-censorship mechanism. A journalist

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who would violate the party line would lose his or her job. Moreover, after 1968—upon urgent requests from the Soviet occupiers—the Czechoslovak government instituted a new ministry. Its official name was the Press and Information Office. Its goal was to analyze the media content. Its weekly bulletins served the party leaders to eliminate and punish any dissident.

**Q: I suppose some in the general public knew about those chilling practices?**

A: Obviously, readers and listeners were aware of the party control of the media content and personnel policies, though the specific mechanism of the self-censorship and ex-post-factum censorship was not publicized. Observing those bizarre measures from inside was an eye-opening experience even for me. The constitutionally-sanctioned party leadership was practiced everywhere, including schools, industrial production, and foreign affairs. Luckily for me, several times a week, I had a chance to leave the party headquarters to teach my university courses. After a year, I could return to my regular job at Charles University.

**Q: Did you observe any positive responses among party leaders towards Gorbachev's reforms?**

A: Characteristically, the top party leader (its secretary general) held also the top governmental position of the Czechoslovak presidency. Obviously, this Byzantine “partocracy” resembles both caesaropapism and theocracy as systems in which state and church (here: political party) merge into one power center. President Gustáv Husák assumed this dual role after the August 1968 occupation of Czechoslovakia. He was installed by another autocrat—Leonid Brezhnev—to “normalize” the post-invasion situation; he remained there for almost 20 years. Husák was a Machiavellian politician who understood that the implementation of the Czechoslovak varieties of *perestroika* and *glasnost* would mark the end of his career. As I had a chance to witness it first-hand, top party bosses blocked any substantial changes. A few younger leaders bore some hope. As top party prominents aged (none of them were willing to retire!), a few younger functionaries awaited their opportunity to launch inevitable reforms. One of the rare products of their willingness to experiment was a 1988 decision that led to my School of Journalism deanship. The election of deans to schools (medicine, philosophy, mathematics, physics, and natural sciences—thirteen of them all together) was an ancient custom dating back to the Middle Ages, when Charles University was established. The School of Journalism was asked to run that election in the spring of 1989 as a national experiment.

**Q: I assume you threw your hat into the ring.**

A: Obviously, the academic election was a popular idea. I felt I had nothing to lose. I was in my early forties, ready to go, especially when Rector Zdeněk Češka encouraged me to do so. In June 1989, students, faculty, and staff members gave me about 80% of their votes. It was more than enough to defeat my main contender. My predecessor, a Gustáv Husák's appointee who served as dean for two decades, gladly retired to his beloved native village in Moravia.

**Q: Why did you say that the previous dean retired gladly?**

A: Dean Vladimír Hudec was one of the millions of Czech and Slovaks, a member of my parents' generation, who generally accepted the post-WWII Soviet domination of the country. A substantial part of Czechoslovakia was liberated by the Soviet Army in 1945. As a result of the 1938 Munich Accords, the Western allies let Hitler break and then occupy pre-war democ-



*The Berlin Wall, a symbol of the Cold War, as viewed from West Berlin in 1986. Its demolition started in November 1989*

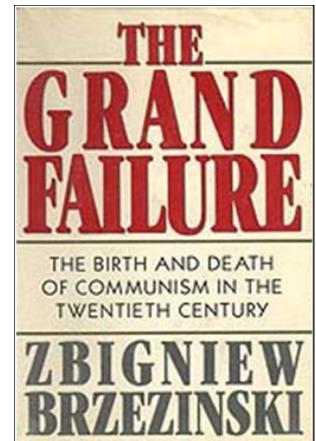
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atic Czechoslovakia in a foolish attempt to appease the German *Führer* and Italian *Duce* Mussolini. On the one hand, Dean Hudec's generation grew partly critical of the so-called real socialism, though it was cautious in accepting pro-Western reforms. On the other hand, my generation, growing up after WWII, did not care so much about the Western-allies betrayal in Munich as about the post-1945 economic boom of the free world. It was very difficult, if impossible, to explain to us why Mercedes or BMW were faster and more comfortable than East-German Trabants, made of plastic. Why free-market economy provided a surplus of affordable houses and apartments, unlike the state-run economy of the Soviet-bloc countries. Why Ivan Lendl, a tennis star born in Moravia, should not leave his native land when its economic system did not allow him to invest his money? Why Prague and Bratislava were full of Western tourists while our side of the borders with Germany and Austria was hermetically sealed. Obviously, my generation tended to see the Gorbachev-type changes as inevitable, whereas our parents hesitated.

**Q: Did you, or anybody else you knew at that time, envision the total collapse of the Soviet bloc?**

A: I recall just two trustworthy statements of that nature. My good friend Stanislav Černý served many years as a Czechoslovak Press Agency correspondent in Paris, France. He had reached this conclusion a few years before the 1989 Velvet Revolution. Otherwise, it was only the former National Security Adviser to President Carter, Polish-born Zbigniew Brzezinski who predicted the end of the Soviet bloc. In his 1988 book *The Grand Failure*, he still gave the Soviet Union a few decades to exist; he envisioned five scenarios: political pluralization, continuing crisis, renewed stagnation, military coup or the explicit collapse of the entire regime. Brzezinski could not square Gorbachev's faith in the one-party rule with the enormous complexity of the Soviet Union problems and its display of militant expansionism, including the military interventions in Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1968), and Afghanistan (1979-1989).



**Q: In June 1989, you were elected the Dean of the School of Journalism at Charles University. If I count it correctly, it was five months before the Velvet Revolution. I assume that you could not just continue the previous dean's routine.**

A: The summer after the dean's election gave me an opportunity to prepare an academic reorganization plan. After observing various models in Finland, Germany, India, and the United States first-hand, I argued that journalism itself needed to be taught and researched in the context of the well-established social sciences and humanities, especially history, political economy, sociology, psychology, philosophy, literature, and linguistics. During the previous two decades, Journalism Studies degenerated into a catechism of the totalitarian state propaganda. And in 1989 that totalitarian state started to crumble before our eyes.

**Q: What did you learn about communication studies during your 1986 Indiana University stay?**

A: It was an invaluable experience. Coincidentally, Bloomington's School of Journalism had been (as it still is) nationally known for its systematic research of the profession, led by David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit; their *The American Journalist* was published during my Bloomington stay. At the University of Minnesota, I visited Edwin Emery, who studied the history of American media education all his life. My adviser Owen V. Johnson helped me to understand varieties of journalism programs. I also realized that the original 1960s model of my alma mater, at Charles University, was an imperfect attempt to apply the German and Anglo-American patterns of journalistic training. After all, I earned my master and first doctorate degrees at the School of Social Sciences and Journalism. The School of Journalism, established in the early 1970s, was a post-1968 product of the Sovietization of higher education in occupied Czechoslovakia. Similar university-level schools had existed in East Germany, Bulgaria, Cuba, and other countries under the Soviet sphere of influence. Towards the end of the Cold War, Dean Yassen N. Zassoursky, of the Moscow State Univer-

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sity's School of Journalism, organized annual international conferences that attempted to modernize the academic programs and encourage meaningful cooperation. I happened to attend the last of those sessions in 1989.

**Q: You have a knack for being in the right places at the right times. Did you truly believe that you could single-handedly redesign your academic program on the Western models?**

A: Of course, it would have been foolish, but the systemic changes were in the air.... By 1989, everybody, including many Communist Party *apparatchiks*, started to realize that reforms could not be avoided. (Even after my return to the university, I stayed in touch with some of them – a small group of us would meet regularly in one of the downtown taverns, a typical Prague place, to drink beer and talk politics.) To secure the acceptance of my reform plan, I had to consult first with the most powerful member of the school's Board of Trustees: the Head of the Mass Media Department of the Communist Party's Central Committee. Luckily, Otto Čmolík was not well-versed in anything academic. My sketchy explanation of the necessary changes made sense to him. Once he spoke positively about the plan, the other board members followed suit. Needless to say, all of that took place prior to the November 1989 events that toppled the Communist Party rule in Czechoslovakia.

**Q: What happened to your plans after the Velvet Revolution?**

A: My first day in the dean's office—at the beginning of September 1989—symbolized the upcoming changes in the country. First thing, I decided that a recalcitrant student M. P., who allegedly engaged in “anti-socialist activities,” would not be expelled from the school. My predecessor dumped that decision on me... Before lunch, I hosted a rather informal “coffee session” (no minutes!) with a small group of the U. S. Embassy officials delegated by Ambassador Shirley Temple-Black. Across the street, in the National Theatre Restaurant, I had a lunch with Jan Zelenka, the departing General Director of Czechoslovak Television, who would like to earn a university professorship as his retirement sinecure. In the afternoon, I hosted a rather formal meeting with the high-brass representing the Central Political Administration of the Czechoslovak Army; we agreed to sign a cooperation protocol soon. That evening, I dined in the Paris Avenue Journalism Club with an official guest of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a Washington, D.C.-based publisher; both of us really enjoyed Pilsner beer. However, before I had left my office that day, I had made my first organizational decision: Xeroxing permit-signing rights would be delegated to the administrative secretary of the school. (Nobody had a clue that in Bloomington, Indiana, I needed just a coin to make my own Xerox copies—even in any post office!) In Czechoslovakia, the authorities were paranoid: What if somebody made copies of “antisocialist literature”? Therefore, the deans only were authorized to sign a brief application form for each document copied—and secure an extra copy of that document, attached to the application form.

**Q: Incredible. I assume that the Velvet Revolution of 1989 changed all that overnight...**



*Prague, November 1989:  
The first days of the Velvet Revolution*

A: One of the first demands of the striking students in the middle of November was unrestricted access to the Xerox machine that was locked behind the fiscal office.

**Q: “Striking students”?**

A: The set of events, known as the Czechoslovak Velvet Revolution of 1989, started as a series of protests among Prague university students. During Friday evening, on November 17, the police force brutally assaulted a peaceful protest march in downtown. It all happened in the very neighborhood of the School of Journalism, Academy of Performing Arts, and the National Theatre. My daughter Eva, then a student of the School of Medicine, Charles University, ended up in a hospital

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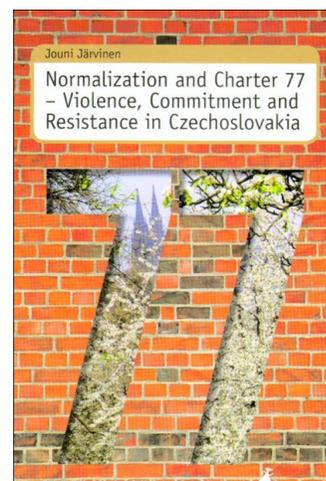
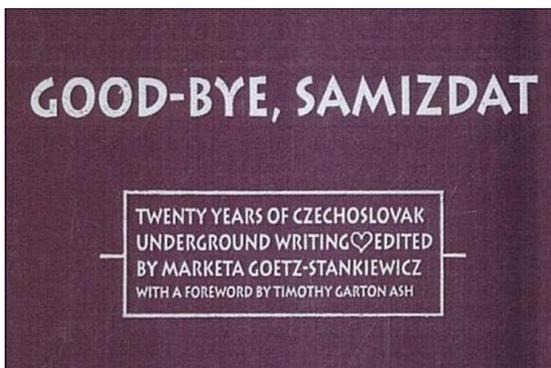
with a broken collar bone. On Saturday, student leaders announced a week-long protest strike. On Sunday, Prague theaters started to host numerous meetings of the spontaneously formed Civic Forum movement. Students of my school joined the nationwide occupation strike to support the Civic Forum agenda.

**Q: What was the role of Václav Havel, the future Czechoslovak president, during those events?**

A: My generation remembered Havel (1936-2011) as a young essayist and an avant-garde playwright in the 1960s. He experimented with the Theatre of the Absurd, joining Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco, Friedrich Dürrenmatt, and Edward Albee. After 1968, he was silenced in his own country, though his works were performed in the United States and elsewhere in the West. A decade later, we heard about Havel as one of the signatories of the *Charter 77* manifesto, along with philosopher Jan Patočka, politicians Zdeněk Mlynář and Jiří Hájek, and novelist Pavel Kohout. *Charter 77* was an informal

civic initiative criticizing the pro-Soviet government. His dissident activities landed Havel in prison.

His *Letters to Olga* (1988) documented Havel's longest imprisonment (from 1979 to 1983). Some of his works circulated in Czechoslovakia via *samizdat* – a Russian expression for illegal self-publishing. In the fast development of November 1989 events, with the vocal support of the West—and without any visible intervention from Gorbachev's Moscow—Havel emerged as an informal leader of the Civic Forum. It led to his presidency. He served as the last president of Czechoslovakia (1989-1992) and the first president of the Czech Republic (1993-2003), after the separation of the Czech lands (Bohemia and Moravia) from Slovakia.



**Q: Here you were—a freshly elected chief administrator of the main journalistic school, in the eye of the political storm!**

A: On the one hand, I soon realized that my days at the helm of the School of Journalism were numbered. On the other hand, I wholeheartedly welcomed the change. My Indiana Summer convinced me that a free-market economy and liberal democracy would work beautifully in my country. The rector and the Board of Trustees accepted my academic reform plan and asked me to stay there up to the next academic election, though I was ready to step down.

**Q: When did you leave?**

A: During the opening weeks of the Velvet Revolution, Havel gained enormous popularity by a slogan about the Truth and Love that must prevail over Lies and Hate. However, this paraphrase of Mahatma Gandhi's credo was exposed to the rapid ultraconservative challenges after Havel's election. It was the beginning of the sometimes unregulated privatization accompanied by vitriolic propaganda campaigns and witch hunts. Obviously, the university deanships were not to be left to "old guard boys," however qualified. In the fall of 1989, I was by far the youngest among them. In a fast succession, I would see new faces attending the rector's meetings: a new dean of the School of Philosophy, the School of General Medicine, and the School of Law.... Rector Zdeněk Češka resigned in December 1989, three weeks before the one-candidate presidential election of Václav Havel. Once, in January 1990, the university-wide Civic Forum had selected one of Havel's fellow dissidents to serve as the



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December 14, 1989: The Velvet Revolution is in full swing... Photo © Czechoslovak Press Agency

university's rector, I submitted my resignation. As expected, several months later, the new rector finally accepted it. Interestingly enough, the rector justified the acceptance of my previous resignation letter by a direct order from Havel. The president was, as the rector told me, surprised to see that "the old dean" of the School of Journalism was still there.

**Q: How did you cope with the loss of the prominent academic position?**

A: It was a great relief for me. Some radical students demanded immediate personnel changes – not only in my school. Numerous academic programs of Charles University experienced departures of many educators and researchers – up to 40 percent of its previous staff. Some of those departures were politically, rather than professionally, motivated. I was not willing to participate in any extralegal purges of my faculty members – and then to be fired at the end myself.

**Q: Who replaced you in the dean's position?**

A: Temporarily, the rector appointed another political dissident from Havel's circle to occupy my seat. Later on, Čestmír Suchý won the election; I had decided not to run. Suchý was a respected radio commentator in the 1960s and a victim of politically-motivated purges after the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. He was an outstanding reporter and a man of high integrity. For two decades, after 1968, he was forced to work as a window washer and a factory laborer. Because he had no academic experience, he wished I would stay at the school as his vice dean – at least temporarily.

**Q: Evidently, you chose to pursue different plans.**

A: Toward the end of the 1990 spring semester, I had decided to leave the university – after five years of studies and almost twenty years as an educator and researcher. Moreover, some yellow journalism outlets choose to prevent my participation in the new dean's election by launching a nasty libelous campaign. I had published several responses but the media environment grew extremely commercialized. There was little room for a reasonable debate of any sorts. It did not sell the copy as fast as *ad hominem* attacks.

**Q: What happened to the School of Journalism?**

A: To simplify the reorganization, the rector decided to close the School of Journalism. It was a legally permissible method that did not violate the otherwise strict Labor Code. Interestingly, I remembered that the same method was used in 1971 to close my alma mater—the School of Social Sciences and Journalism—and replace it by the School of Journalism. In other words, after two decades, history enclosed another cycle. The new School of Social Sciences started to operate on the premises of the School of Journalism in June 1990. Its programs included political sciences, economics, sociology, and international relations. Just a handful of political survivors carried on a fraction of the former communication studies, led by linguist Jan Jiráček and historian Barbara Köpplová. The rest of my former colleagues lost their jobs. Some of them were old enough to retire. It completed another round of professional purges in my country – those of 1918, 1939, 1948, 1968, and now 1989. Some of them were politically motivated. Hopefully, it was the last round.



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**Q: Who won the next dean’s election?**



*My successor Čestmír Suchý,  
Dean of the School of  
Journalism at Charles  
University between 1990 and  
1991*

A: As expected, the winner was practically oriented Čestmír Suchý; students preferred his plan to build the journalistic program as a rather technical discipline. His main contender was Karel Mácha, my former philosophy professor, who lost his university job after 1968. He chose to escape politically-motivated harassment by leaving Czechoslovakia in 1979. Mácha built his new successful career as a professor of social philosophy in West Germany and in the United States. Before the 1990 dean’s election, while I was still at the university, Mácha sought my informal advice. I shared with him my original reorganization plan. He used it to develop his own, very ambitious project. In my view, it might appear too academically demanding to prospective journalists. As dean-voters, they simply preferred Suchý’s project as a less-thorny way to obtain a graduation diploma. After his defeat, Mácha returned to exile in Germany and ultimately retired in Munich. Despite his victory, Čestmír Suchý resigned soon—in 1991. He was replaced by the noted sociologist Miroslav Petrušek. He served as the dean of the new School of Social

Sciences the following six years. In my view, communication studies and journalism were not in the center of his attention. On the other hand, the school has gained respect for its sociological and international studies. Moreover, the university communication studies program lost its monopoly. Since the early 1990s, it has had to compete with numerous private schools, most of them of substandard academic quality.

**Q: Did you see your departure from Charles University as a challenge or an opportunity?**

A: To be frank, the resignation did not make me happy. Would all my research efforts, publications, and academic experience come to an end? It was the main reason I accepted the long-standing offer from the International Organization of Journalists. Between summer 1990 and fall 1991, I served as a Director of its International Institute for the Training of Journalists in Prague. For many years, the IOJ sponsored similar schools not only in Czechoslovakia but also in Germany, Hungary, Cuba, Vietnam, and Nigeria. The new job offered an opportunity to stay in my professional field. Additionally, I could travel and—last but not least—practice my colloquial English, which had started to rust since my 1986 fellowship in Indiana.

**Q: By now, you “have practiced your English“ in California for more than twenty years. Did you think about immigration after leaving Charles University?**

A: I was seriously contemplating another longer stay in the United States in the event of my defeat in the 1989 deanship election. I assumed that the new dean would not block it. Some of my American friends, including historian Daniel Miller and communication professors Burton Paulu and Philip Gaunt, had encouraged me to apply for the Wilson Center



Jakub Končelík (b. 1975), the current dean of the School of Social Sciences. His impressive agenda stresses research-based education. His publications include *Press Regulation between 1939 and 1945: Analysis of German Protectorate Press Meetings*; *The History of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Czech Media*; *The Media and the Prague Spring*; *The Tabloidization of the Czech Daily Press*; and *Czechoslovak Media and Journalists in August 1968*

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Prague, January 11, 1994: Václav Havel and Bill Clinton are enjoying dinner and a beer with Prague-born Madeleine Korbelt Albright at the popular Golden Tiger Pub

Fellowship in Washington, D.C. “Unfortunately,” I happened to win the election.... After almost two years with the IOJ and several „preparatory trips“ to the United States, I found myself—finally—in California.

**Q: In retrospect, did you intend to settle in the United States permanently?**

A: Not at all. After two decades of hard work and the dramatic events of the Velvet Revolution, I arrived to rest and do some light guest lecturing. All of that changed when the U.S. State Department granted me a permanent residency status in 1992. Rather unexpectedly, the green card opened another chapter of my professional career and personal life.

*Will be continued in Summer 2013*

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## Humphreys College Newsletter *Supplement*, June 2013

Stanislav Perkner, Editor, [sperkner@humphreys.edu](mailto:sperkner@humphreys.edu)

Cynthia Becerra, Co-Editor, [cbecerra@humphreys.edu](mailto:cbecerra@humphreys.edu)

Leslie Walton, Executive Editor, [lwalton@humphreys.edu](mailto:lwalton@humphreys.edu)