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ATTACHMENT 3

Address by General PRCHALA at the Press Conference on the occasion of the constituting of the Sudeten-German-Czech Federative Committee on 20 December 1950 in Bonn.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It would be wrong to make the attempt to reorganize Europe and improve the mutual relations between the nations of Europe without a thorough revision of the old nationalisms.

We Czechs, like citizens of all other nations, were taught that our people are the best in the world, that they never did wrong, and that only our neighbors were ever at fault. Such a nationalism is best characterized by the British saying: Right or wrong, my country. This nationalism, however, is a misinterpretation of one's love for one's fatherland; for injustice remains injustice and cannot be justified by the fact that it was my people that did the wrong. If we wish for a sound nationalism and better relations between the European peoples, we have at first to be critical toward our own people. This is the only way leading to an understanding with other peoples.

Czechoslovakia was established after the late Dr. BENEŠ, on the occasion of the peace conference in 1919, solemnly pledged that Czechoslovakia would be organized on the pattern of Switzerland. However, this promise was never made good. The Sudeten Germans were incorporated as a minority in the Czechoslovakian Republic against their will; the Slovaks who, on the basis of the Pittsburgh Agreement which promised them complete autonomy, agreed to live jointly with the Czechs in one state, never were given their autonomy and failed to receive Carpathoruthenia, which, according to the Peace Treaty, was to be an autonomous part of the Republic of Czechoslovakia. All solemn promises and obligations toward the non-Czech peoples of Czechoslovakia were jettisoned by the unelected Czech National Assembly when, in 1920, a constitution was adopted which guaranteed the Czech people preponderance in a Czechoslovakian centralized state.

We, the members of the Czech National Committee in London, are fully aware that our people committed serious abuses to guarantee to itself superiority in Czechoslovakia. This Czech imperialism found an inglorious end, however, when, in 1938 Czechoslovakia surrendered without firing a shot and the Czechs were forced to live for six years in a Nazi protectorate. The attempt to restore Czechoslovakia in 1945 is a black spot in the history of our country. During these thorny days, fanatical young people, urged on by bloodthirsty emigres and Soviet Bolsheviks, took revenge on the Sudeten-Germans for all the abuses which the Nazis committed toward the Czech people. As a Czech who fought for the independence of his people during the years of 1927 to 1920 and as a Czech patriot, I am

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ashamed of all that wrong which was inflicted upon my fellowmen in my fatherland in 1945 and, particularly, for the inhuman eviction of the Sudeten Germans, during which hundreds of thousands were deprived of their lives. Since we have met in Paris in 1940, we the members of the Czech National Committee in London are adversaries of the Czech nationalism in whatever form and democratic disguise it may appear. We are fully aware that Czechoslovakia meant a betrayal of all these ideas - e.g., the right of self-government - in the name of which it was founded. We also know that the Czechoslovakia of that time was a betrayal of the ideas and doctrines of our great politicians, such as HAVLICEK and PALACKY, who more than 100 years ago fought for a federalization of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy. We are conscious of the blunders committed and especially of the catastrophic consequences they had for the Czech nation. Therefore we sought for an understanding with the Sudeten Germans and are happy to have found it. We consider the establishment of the Czech-Sudeten-German Federative Committee as a first contribution through which to make possible the living together of our two peoples in our common homeland. We also consider it a contribution for the establishment of a new and better Europe and a first step on the way to a new democratic world.

Not hatred but mutual respect, not egotism but friendly cooperation, not falsehood and deceit but honest action, shall guide us in our cooperation.

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