



50X1-HUM

Sunday, 30 Jan 1949



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Dear Friends,

Here is some news from home:

An attempt at armed uprising has actually been made, during the Christmas holidays at that, as good communists get leaves then. The whole putsch was prepared in Prague, in Milovice, and, I think, in Pardubice as well. It might have succeeded, but it was betrayed by a certain colonel who has been ~~executed~~^{liquidated} for the deed. This indicates that after all the arrests a remnant of the organization remains, dedicated to the punishment of ^a ~~the~~ traitor. The communists are afraid of this. How great their fear is can be seen from the fact that the whole Hradecny guard, including the SNB, was arrested one fine morning, and the Hradecny was closed all day. The arrested persons were reportedly sent to Slovakia at once, where their trail vanishes, and it is conjectured that they are already in Russia.

Perhaps you know that the student group that was arrested with bundles of anti-communist literature was betrayed by one of the students, but he did not live to see Christmas. The police did not catch the people who killed him.

Students of institutes of higher learning are having a very bad time. They were all checked and a great number were expelled who were about to graduate. Those who did not want to join the party were all thrown out peremptorily.

Lawyers are also in a bad way; they must all sign a paper, in addition to joining the party, to the effect that they will give their entire office ~~and property~~ to the newly founded Lawyers' Union. Their number is to be restricted to a minimum. They must also agree to pay their entire dues in ^X six months, and pay from 2,000 to 40,000 crowns into a fund from which the entire expenses of the Union are paid.

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Doctors are in a similar plight; they are victims of a system whereby any one who does not work in a factory ^{or} office is consequently an entrepreneur and has no right to food cards, but if he does not wish to starve to death, he will have to pay 700 to 1,000 crowns per month for them out of his own pocket. The so-called free market is a big swindle intended only to extract as much money as possible from the people to finance the Five-Year Plan. At no time during the German occupation was our country so badly off economically as it is now. They are trying to get raw material and machinery from the West, and what the USA is no longer willing to give us they are looking for in Italy, France, Sweden, and Switzerland. They are chiefly looking for ball bearings, aircraft, and automobile spare parts. Russia sold us two planes of the Ilyushin type for 25 million crowns and 15 million ^{[sic] possibly crowns worth?} spare parts. However only one plane is in Prague and it has not been definitely turned over to us.

Morale among the working people is very low, both in factories and offices, and there is general dissatisfaction. There is anxiety in the Hradcany as to the outcome of the Five-Year Plan, and by now there is no one in Czechoslovakia who would not doubt its success.

I am only thankful that I have managed to avoid joining the communist party.

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