

Juraj Slávik: moja pamät' – živá kniha. Moje poslanie vo Varšave 1936-1937.

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Resumé

The first volume of memoirs of Juraj Slávik covers the period of 1936 – 1937, when Slávik in February 1936 accepted his post as a Czechoslovak Envoy to Warsaw. Slávik, who after WWI. served in high posts in Czechoslovak state administration and politics including minister of interior, entered new carrier as a diplomat.

The Czechoslovak-Polish relations during the interwar period were deeply influenced by the frontier disputes in Těšín territory and in Northern Slovakia (Spiš, Javorina and Čadca). Polish foreign policy also accused Czechoslovakia to support the international communist movement after the Czechoslovak-Soviet Treaty was concluded. The situation especially worsened, when Colonel Józef Beck entered the post of the Polish Minister of Foreign Affaires.

Slávik, who personally was very friendly towards Poland, soon discovered the difficulties of his situation, for example when his private journey to Moscow in May 1937 was misused by Polish foreign policy and press. He was accused that he preferred the Soviet Union to the Polish National Day and his memoires are very interesting to cover this affaire. The Polish foreign policy also launched anti-Czechoslovak propaganda after the book entitled Russian and Little Entente was published by Czechoslovak Envoy to Romania Jan Šeba. The Polish attacked also the highest representatives of the Czechoslovak Republic. The whole period was also overshadowed by mutual Czech-Polish conflicts in the border region of Těšín. However Slávik's memoirs are not entirely devoted to the Czechoslovak-Polish relations.

Slávik's memoirs are based on his political reports and telegrams prepared by him and sent from Warsaw to Prague. Slávik especially analyzed the internal Polish politics and showed how the Governmental circles established in 1937 organization called OZON (Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego). Opposition parties, especially Stronictwo Ludowe, however showed their strength by organizing mass demonstrations especially in the countryside. The ruling regime also strengthens its hard line policy in May 1936 by inauguration of new Prime Minister General Felicjan Sławoj-Składkowski.

Slávik in his memoirs also deals with the international situation, which was characterized by the Polish- French negotiations on the French credit and political support for new Polish regime. The Polish Foreign Policy had also to deal with other questions, especially with the relations to Germany and growing Nazi tensions in Danzig

Slávik's memoirs vividly show the relations within the diplomatic corps in Poland as well as different approaches of diplomats from different countries. Slávik is very good narrator and he uses his recollections on his personal meetings with Polish politicians and foreign diplomats. Slávik's memoirs are also very good example how important are real personalities for diplomacy.

Translation by J. Kuklík