

Notes

The principal source of official documentation relating to the early days of the diamond fields is a British Parliamentary «Blue Book», South Africa, XXI, Griqualand Diamond Fields & c., 1871–73, containing «Correspondence respecting the affairs of the Cape of Good Hope», which was presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty (Queen Victoria) on 17th August, 1871. The report of the discovery of diamonds is contained in a dispatch dated 4 August 1870 from Lieut. Governor C. Hay to the Earl of Granville, pp. 28, 29.

² O. Doughty *Early Diamond Days*, [1963], p. 3

³ A. F. Lindley, *Adamantia: The Truth about the South African Diamond Fields*, [1873], map facing p. 16, A. H. Hornsby: *The South African Diamond Fields*, [1874], map facing p. 8

⁴ E. Walker: *A History of Southern Africa*, [3rd ed., 1959], pp. 327–340

⁵ E. Rosenthal quotes the «Rules for the Vaal River Diamond Fields Alluvial Claims», in: *River of Diamonds*, pp. 67, 68:

⁶ C. J. Beyers [ed.]: *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, V, pp. 600, 601, W. S. Robertson: «President S. Parker», in: *Pretoriana* (Festival Edition), April–August 1966, pp. 48–51

⁷ «Blue Book», op. cit., p. 37

⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 33–35.

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 29–31.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 31

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 32

¹² *The South African Diamond Fields*, pp. 7, 8

¹³ Lindley, *Adamantia*, pp. 115, 116.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 234, 235, 260, «Blue Book», op. cit., p. 37.

¹⁵ «Blue Book», op. cit., p. 92.

¹⁶ D. E. Schaefer: «Diamonds, Diggers and Dreams», in: *Lantern*, XXXVI, 4, October 1987, p. 10.

¹⁷ «Blue Book», op. cit., p. 59

¹⁸ *Transvaal Archives Depot*, SS 129, R1 126/70, pp. 356, 357

¹⁹ J. T. McNish *The Road to Eldorado*, [1968], p. 181.

The flag is illustrated on p. 186.

²⁰ B. Roberts. *Kimberley Turbulent City*, p. 32.

²¹ McNish, op. cit., p. 186

²² *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, V, pp. 600–601

²³ *Kimberley Turbulent City*, p. 47

²⁴ *Old Kimberley*, p. 5.

²⁵ E. Atwell: «From Rolling Stone to President», in: *Looking Back*, [Journal of the Historical Society of Port Elizabeth], XX, March 1982, pp. 24–27.

²⁶ *Suid-Afrikaanse Biografiese Woordeboek*, V, pp. 600–601, «The Late Mr Stafford Parker», in: *South Africa* [London], 17 April 1915, p. 123.

²⁷ *Standard Encyclopaedia of South Africa*, VIII, pp. 453–454

A NEW COUNTRY, OLD SYMBOLS: FLAGS AND ARMS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Aleš Brožek

Czechoslovakia was born out of the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918. It united several nations but two were the most populous – the Czechs in the west and the Slovaks in the east – and this fact was reflected in the country's name. When the question of a national flag for a new country arose, the traditional flag of Bohemia (white over red) had to be rejected just in the first selection. It was too similar to those of Poland and of Austria. Therefore a new flag pattern was designed. A white over red flag with a blue triangle at the hoist was then officially adopted by a law of 30 March 1920. This flag contained the Pan-Slavic colours as both nations were Slavs. There was no official symbolism of colours and the design of this flag, but it was later believed that the blue triangle stands for Slovakia. The aforementioned law determined greater, medium and lesser arms as well as the president's flag which carried the greater arms in the centre and had flame-like borders.

The national flag of Czechoslovakia was in use till 1939 when the first partition of Czechoslovakia took place. Bohemia and Moravia became a «protectorate» of the German Reich under a German governor, Slovakia declared its independence and introduced her traditional flag of white over blue over red by a law of 23 June 1939. The Czechs tried to change only the arms and wanted to keep the Czechoslovak flag for the pro-

tectorate saying that the blue triangle stood for Moravia whose arms contain a blue shield.² When this flag design was rejected by pro-German politicians, two variants of the flag for the protectorate were submitted to the protector for approval. The first variant consisted of white over red with a blue vertical stripe at the hoist instead of a blue triangle. The other variant was a white over red over blue tricolour. The latter was approved and adopted together with lesser and greater arms and with the flag of the state president by a law of 19 September 1939.

The Czechoslovak flag was still used by the Czechoslovak government in exile and flew on battlefields abroad where Czech and Slovak soldiers died. After 1945 it was readopted and it remained unaltered even after 1948 when a communist regime was set up. When Czechoslovakia achieved socialism, «the first step on the way to communism», in 1960 (at least in ideas of Czech and Slovak communist leaders), the national arms together with the flag of the president were changed by a law of 17 November 1960, but not the national flag.

During the «Velvet Revolution» in November 1989 the Czechoslovak flag played a prominent role in mass demonstrations against the communist regime. Thousands of national flags, large and small, were displayed daily both by the Czechs and Slovaks who were in opposition to the communists. However, relations between these two nations grew worse in the following months. They were also reflected in discussions among Czech and Slovak members of the Federal National Assembly after president Václav Havel suggested the eli-

mination of the word «socialist» from the country's name and the use of the simple name Czechoslovak Republic on 23 January 1990. Slovak members expressed their feelings that Slovakia would not be «visible» in this name and favoured the name Czecho-Slovak Republic. The hyphen was not acceptable to the Czechs because it recalled the country's name used shortly before the first partition of Czechoslovakia took place in 1939.

The new country's name was finally changed to the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic by a law of 20 April 1990. Another law of the same day introduced new arms and the presidential flag. Both laws were properly discussed in the Slovak National Council and the Czech National Council before they were approved by the Federal National Assembly. In addition to it both councils adopted laws on the symbols of the Slovak Republic and of the Czech Republic respectively. Thus, the law of 13 March 1990 laid down greater and lesser arms of the Czech Republic and the historic white over red flag of Bohemia. However, this flag was not very popular and flew very seldom, e.g. during elections in 1990 and 1992. Relations between Czechs and Slovaks were also disturbed with memoranda and manifestations organised by Slovak separatists demanding an independent Slovakia on 26 August 1990, 14 March 1991, 28 October 1991 and 14 March 1992. Slovak flags of 1939–1945 were often displayed at this time and Czechoslovak flags were ostentatiously burnt.

When a coalition of the Civic Democratic Party and of the Christian Democratic Party won elections in the Czech Republic and the movement for Democratic Slovakia won those in the Slovak Republic in June 1992, it was clear that the end of Czechoslovakia was in sight. Representatives of winning parties agreed after many negotiations that the existence of Czechoslovakia would cease on 31 December 1992 and that the manner of dissolution would be given in a law to be approved by the national and federal parliaments.

The question of national symbols for the Czech Republic began to be solved in the Czech government on 29 July 1992. The government took up the main ideas of the future constitution and assumed that national symbols would be regulated by the constitution. The ministers of education and of culture were entrusted to prepare a report on new symbols. This report was discussed at the meeting of the government on 19 August 1992. Two variants of the Czech flag were suggested: a white over red bicolour and a white over red bicolour with a light blue triangle at the hoist extending one third of the flag length. It was recommended to place the Premyslide eagle or the Bohemian lion on the first variant of the flag to make it different from that of Poland and Monaco. There were many variants for lesser and greater arms, as well. One design of lesser arms showed the Bohemian lion bearing a shield halved Moravia and Silesia as an inescutcheon.

It was clear that the report and accompanying drawings were not discussed with heraldists and vexillologists. Therefore Jirina Pavilková, chairman of the Heraldry Commission at the Czech National Council, sent a letter to the Czech Prime Minister on 26 August 1992. She informed him of the activity of the commission and of its willingness to help the government with professional suggestions. The Heraldry Commission

considered the text elaborated by two Czech ministers on its meeting on 11 September 1992. Speaking of the national flag for the future independent Czech Republic, all members expressed their love of and respect for the national flag of Czechoslovakia and their resolution to keep it for the future as well. Everybody agreed also with the idea to go on using greater and lesser arms of the Czech Republic which came to force in 1990 because they corresponded with heraldic rules and because of economic reasons.

A draft law on national symbols of the Czech Republic was prepared by Karel Müller, a member of the Heraldry Commission and a heraldic expert, for the next meeting which took place on 23 October 1992. He changed the heraldic description of greater and lesser arms of the Czech Republic only a little. The national flag of the Czech Republic was described as identical with the existing flag of Czechoslovakia. The flag of the Czech president was inspired by that of the Czechoslovak president. It consisted again of a white square field with greater arms in the centre, the silver inscription «Veritas Vincit» in Latin on a red ribbon and white, red and blue flames along the borders. Members of the Heraldry Commission changed the Latin inscription into Czech because there was no reason for words in Latin in the flag (the Latin text only had been used on the flag of the Czechoslovak president in 1990 because it was less complicated than putting Czech words on the reverse side and Slovak ones on the obverse side of the flag).

When the Minister of Education, one of the authors of the report prepared for the Czech government, attended the meeting, members of the Heraldry Commission explained to him the priorities of the present Czechoslovak flag and the impropriety of the colour change of the triangle or of its length. However, a variant of a light blue triangle instead of a dark blue triangle was added to the draft law after the discussion with the minister. Several flag proposals which were sent to the Czech National Council were shown to participants of the meeting [Fig. 1]. They were of different quality and of different style. Some of them were only a small modification of the Czechoslovak flag. Since the question of the national flag seemed to be solved, these proposals were not considered. Finally, it was decided that members of the Heraldry Commission, namely Jirí Louda and the author of this article, would prepare a preamble to the draft law and that members of the Heraldry Commission would discuss it on its next meeting on 6 November 1992.

Though there was an agreement among the members of the Heraldry Commission not to change arms and flags, Zbysek Svoboda, a vexillologist and a member of the commission, offered to design the presidential flag in a new pattern at the meeting on 6 November 1992. He showed four original presidential flags from the period of 1920–1990 which are deposited in the Army Museum in Prague and brought out their imperfection to the attention of present members from his vexillological point of view. He pointed out that presidential flags unlike national flags are comparatively often changed in European countries and explained his own design which was worked out by the artist Jirí Sebek. It contained quartered arms of Bohemia (twice), Moravia and Silesia separated by white stripes, thus for-

ming a central white cross. The Crown of St Wenceslas was placed in the centre of the cross. The motto «PRAVDA VITEZI» (truth prevails) was placed horizontally either with its Latin translation or without it on the cross bar [Fig. 2]. This design of the presidential flag was rejected after long arguments by all members. They criticised among other features the use of a crown and they did not like the way how the flag was designed. A suggestion by Z. Svoboda to mention the national colours in the order of white, red, and blue in a special article of the law was, however, accepted.

The members of the Heraldry Commission then discussed the text of the draft law and of the preamble (another text of preamble was supplied by Z. Svoboda). They decided not to mention the variant of the Czech flag with a light blue triangle for fear that existence of flag variants might inspire members of the Czech National Council to put forward their own flag proposals and discussions on this law would be more complicated.

The following facts why the Czechoslovak flag should become a national flag for the Czech Republic were given in the preamble:

- The blue of the triangle in the Czechoslovak flag was not taken only from the arms of Slovakia but also from those of Moravia and of Carpathian Ruthenia.
- The Czechoslovak flag was used first largely by Czech soldiers who fought on the side of the allies in World War II.
- The Slovak Republic rejected the Czechoslovak flag and introduced another flag in its constitution of September 1992.
- The validity of the Czechoslovak flag would expire after the extinction of Czechoslovakia, the flag would become «free» and the Czech Republic would have the right to use it.

After J. Pavlíková had informed journalists that the draft law had been prepared by the Heraldry Commission and that the Czech Republic would fly the Czechoslovak flag as its national flag, many Slovak politicians were roused to anger. As it happened at the time when members of the Slovak National Council discussed the constitutional law on the extinction of Czechoslovakia, they approved it with a supplement saying that neither republic might use the symbols of Czechoslovakia after her extinction. This supplement became a part of Article 3 of the afore-mentioned constitutional law and was approved even by Czech members of the Federal Assembly on 25 November because they wished a peaceful division of Czechoslovakia into two independent states by 1st January 1993. In the meantime, newspapers, radio and television expressed different opinions on the future flag of the Czech Republic. We can only regret that there is no space to mention them in detail. Many Czechs believed that the Slovaks wanted to dictate the design of the Czech flag. On the other side the Slovaks feared that the Czech Republic might profit from the Czechoslovak flag in the future because this flag might symbolise that the Czech Republic was a successor of Czechoslovakia.

The draft law on the Czech symbols was discussed in committees of the Czech National Council and then taken up in the common session of the Czech National

Council on 17 December 1992. It was not easy to foresee which political parties would vote for it and which against it. However, members of the Czech National Council did not wish to be limited either by the voting of their colleagues in the Federal Assembly or by the standpoint of the Czech government which recommended changing the Czech flag a little in order not to infringe the constitutional law of 25 November 1992. They unanimously approved the law on the Czech symbols³ after a very short discussion in the form as it was prepared by the Heraldry Commission.

The official design of the actual flag of the President of the Czech Republic is shown in [Fig. 3]. This standard contains the official greater coat-of-arms of the Czech Republic (quartered in 1 and 4 of Bohemia, in 2 of Moravia and 3 of Silesia), while the lesser arms consist of the Bohemian lion alone. The official seal is shown in [Fig. 4]. The cherished flag with a blue triangle continues to fly in the Czech Republic.

Illustrations

- Figure 1 from «Prager Wochenblatt», Jahrgang II, Nr. 41, Prague, 1992.
- Figure 2 by Petr Exner and Roman Klimeš.
- Figures 3 and 4 from «Ústava a státní symboly», Ostrava, 1993.

Notes

- ¹ Aleš Brožek, «A contribution to the development of the Czechoslovak state flag», in: «Proceedings of the 8th International Congress of Vexillology», Vienna, 1979, pp.108-112.
- ² M. Hlinomaz, «K problematice státních symbolů pomnichovské ESR a tzv. Protektorátu», in: «Archivní časopis», 37, 1987, No 2, pp 79-89.
- ³ An authors' collective, «Ústava a Státní Symboly», Česká Republika 1993, [ze dne 16. Prosince 1992], Ostrava, 1993. [Fig. 4] is contained in plate 4 of this volume.

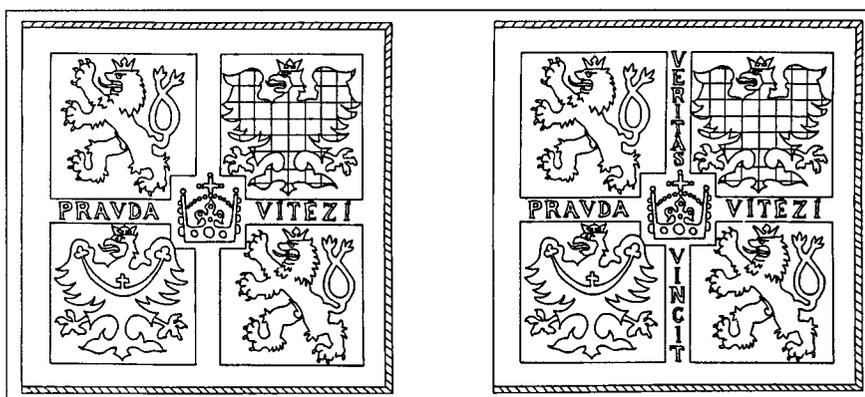


Fig. 2
Rejected designs for a presidential flag, 1992

Fig. 1

Neue Flaggenentwürfe

PRAGER WOCHENBLATT

Jahrgang II, Nr. 41 Prag, 2.-9. November 1992

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Das PRAGER WOCHENBLATT hat in Nr. 7/92 berichtet, daß durch die Bild- und Farbgleichheit der russischen und der slowakischen Flagge ein Problem entstanden ist. Der Nationalrat der Slowakischen Republik hat es durch die am 3. September verabschiedete Verfassung gelöst - die weißblaurote Trikolore trägt linksseitig das slowakische Wappen.

Mit dem nahenden Zerfall der tschechoslowakischen Föderation stellt sich auch die Frage des Namens sowie der Hoheitszeichen des tschechischen Staates. Die bisherige Flagge der tschechischen Teilrepublik der ČSFR - zwei gleichbreite Längsstreifen, weiß und rot - könnte zu Verwechslungen mit Polen führen. Dem Tschechischen Nationalrat sowie der tschechischen Regierung gehen deshalb verschiedene Vorschläge für die künftigen Hoheitszeichen zu, annehmbare bis historisch und flaggenkundlich zweifelhafte Darstellungen.

Als Vorbereitung für die Entscheidungsfindung der Abgeordneten zum Tschechischen Nationalrat hat seine aus führenden Heraldikern und Vexillologen bestehende

Heraldische Kommission bei ihrer Tagung am 23. Oktober entsprechende Entwürfe vorbereitet. Ihre Empfehlung geht einmütig dahin, die bisherige tschechoslowakische Flagge zu übernehmen. Diese wurde 1919 und 1920 von hochqualifizierten Fachleuten entworfen, geht von der Flagge Böhmens aus und hat das Blau aus dem mährischen Wappen als linksseitigen Keil hinzugenommen. Seine Interpretation als Symbol der Slowakei ist späteren und völlig inoffiziellen Ursprungs. Diese Flagge ist Symbol einer großen Tradition, sowohl aus der Zeit des antifaschistischen Widerstandskampfes als auch der "samtenen Revolution" von 1989.

Deshalb gehen von ihrem Urbild auch zwei dem Tschechischen Nationalrat vorliegende Entwürfe aus - der eine mit drei, Böhmen, Mähren und Schlesien symbolisierenden Sternen, der zweite mit einem dem mährischen Adler entlehnten geschachtelten Zweikeil.

Die Kommission empfiehlt die Beibehaltung der alten Flagge. Die Entscheidung liegt bei den Abgeordneten. Möge sie vernünftig sein!

Aleš Brožek

below: Fig 3

Original design of the flag of the president of the Czech Republic, December 1992

right: Fig. 4

Original design of the seal of the Czech Republic, December 1992.

