

Dk -Dialog

Vol. XIX, No. 1 (English version)
Prague, March 2013

This *Bulletin* is for the internal purposes of the *Democratic Club*.

The *Democratic Club (Dk)* is a non-partisan political organization whose aim is to support democracy and democratism in society in general and to oppose all anti-democratic attempts to subvert the established order. The *Dk* publishes a Czech version of *Dk-Dialog* irregularly, usually four times a year. The English version is designed to inform readers about the activities of the *Dk*, in particular about its official views. The English version is published irregularly, usually once or twice a year. However, no issue was published in 2011. The primary purpose of the English edition is to provide information for *Club's* members who do not read Czech about the *Club's* activities and chiefly about its official views. The translations from the Czech issues have on occasion been published previously, but we prefer original contributions for the English edition.

We would like to remind you that the *Democratic Club* does not have any other financial sources than the membership fees (see the financial report at the General Meeting by František Filaun). Therefore you will find money order in this issue of our bulletin. This order can be used in Czechia. To send the money form abroad you should use the number listed at the end of this bulletin or to send them in Cash (only in this case you will get the receipt). The minimal amount was settled at 100 CZK (5 US \$) yearly for members without their own income (students, household wives, pensioners) and 3 per mile yearly for other members with their own income with the minimal amount of 500 CZK (25 US \$). Do not forget to mention your membership number (you can find it usually at the cover above your address). Members of the age over 80 pay the fees freely.

Dear colleagues, we would like to enlarge the *Dk* membership in all countries in the world and especially in countries with only a few members (up to now we have members in more than 30 countries). Therefore we include to this mail the **Introductory information** about the *Dk* which could be used for this purpose (It is also on our web sites as well as application form). We welcome everybody who agrees with the key ideas which he/she has to approve with the signature on the application form. At the same time, we would like to

receive written contributions to Dk-Dialog about problems of democracy and democratism in your countries. Do not forget to announce us any change of your home address and let us know your e-mail address for our quick contact.

I - Official Views of the *Democratic Club*

Position of the Democratic Club No 50

To the dismissal of the Ministr Jiří Pospíšil

The Democratic Club was taken a back by the dismissal of Jiří Pospíšil from the office of the Minister of Justice. We do not consider the given reason for this step persuasive, i.e. his high demand for the budget of his resort. We question whether his dismissal might have been related to his fight against corruption and for the rectification of the conditions in our justice system. Therefore we are asking the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic to inform the public about the real reasons of this dismissal, and possibly reverse this decision.

Prague, June 29, 2012

Position of the Democratic Club No 51

On supporting the fight for human rights throughout the world

The Democratic Club listened with alarm to the Prime Minister's words at Brno Machinery Fair, who condemned the support by Czech citizens of the Russian lady punkers and of Dalai Lama's fight for Tibetan autonomy as harmful for Czech exports. While we realize the bad taste of the punkers' behaviour as well as the material substance of the anxiety concerning some of the export items, we nevertheless consider such support correct and necessary. We realize that the collapse of autocratic regimes in our country as well as in the other countries was considerably influenced by foreign support of the revolt and resistance against these regimes, and we feel ourselves obliged to in this way help those fighting for similar aims now. Therefore, we request the Czech Government to support the position of adhering to all international contacts norms, and we call on political parties in civic society and also on the Media to support the fight for human rights everywhere.

Prague, September 18, 2012

Position of the Democratic Club No. 52

On passing of the South Bohemia schools system management to Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia

As the media have informed recently, the newly elected South Bohemia Region Council have appointed a representative of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia the Council member responsible for the schools system.

This decision of the top Region Body from one of the important Czech Republic regions makes us extremely alarmed even when it is not in conflict with the state of law of the Czech Republic. Namely it passes the principal influence on the appointments and recalls of school headmasters and on the general education programs and the application of these in the education programs of schools i.e. on the contents of tuition proper, into the hands of Communists. This is opening the path to Communists for adaptation of tuition in the lines of Communist ideology: for the interpretation of history, of the economic and social processes, for the life values scale formation of children and youngsters and their attitudes to the world.

We are appealing therefore

- to South Bohemia Region Representatives to reconsider the decision concerned;
- to South Bohemia Regional President, to hinder the significant influence of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia on the appointments and recalls of headmasters and any political purges in the schools;
- to current headmasters and unions in the schools, to defend the level of democracy reached by their active citizen attitudes and to openly report all tendencies of its limitation or the tuition indoctrination;
- to the parents of pupils, to pay attention to the tuition of their children and to protest against any tendencies of distorting history and to keep employing all the chances offered by the contemporary democracy of ours to make the public aware of such tendencies; according to our experience, such tendencies will certainly appear;
- to democratic political Parties and movements, not to admit the development of such a situation in the region.

In none of the Czech Republic regions gained the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia the absolute (more than half) majority of votes. The democratic Parties coalitions have to be preferred even in situations where it is not an ideal solution. A coalition with Communists means a starting point for democracy liquidation.

Democracy ripens over a long time and slowly. It requires several generations in order to create sufficient mechanisms within the society for its own defense. Our democracy is too fragile so far, the manifestations of its fragility are perceived by everyone. The more desirable it is, to give it space enough, for it to be able to ripen, to cultivate itself and to strengthen in the decades following. The more urgent it is, to prevent Communist ideology to attain a significant influence on the formation of children's and youngsters' attitudes to the world and on the information that they obtain at school. The school system is a neuralgic point in every society from the viewpoint of democracy's perspective.

Prague, November 27, 2012.

Position of the Democratic Club No. 53

We support Karel Schwarzenberg in presidential elections

We are addressing hereby the members and friends of the Democratic Club as well as the Czech Republic citizens with an advice to give their vote to Karel Schwarzenberg in the second round of the presidential elections. He proved through his life entire, to be a strong moral personality with undoubtedly significant merits for Czech Republic, before November 1989 through his support of political exile and dissent as well as after November by his support to Czech democracy renewal and to Czech foreign policy. K.S. will be a noble representative of Czech abroad and a guarantee at the same time of the way of the Republic towards strengthening of democracy and legal order at home.

This recommendation was not sent in the time of the first round of the election, because other candidates were presented at that time, who also could be good presidents. But since these were not successful in the competition, we address them as well, to give the recommendation to their own electors (if they have not done so, so far), to give their votes to Karel Schwarzenberg in the second round.

Prague, January 16, 2013.

The position of Democratic Club No. 54

On the punishment to Radio Česko for the so-called unbalanced commentary

As it has been communicated by the media, the Czech Radio council and the director of Czech Radio news service punished the chief editor of Radio Česko for the commentary on presidential elections having taken the part of one

of the candidates; the commentary is said to be unbalanced. We consider this decision and punishment strange, at least. Commentaries, as the law has it, are to be different from the news. A commentary always expresses its author's standpoint which means, it cannot be "balanced". Balance only can be secured by a summary of commentaries over a shorter or longer period by means of selection of commentators covering a full spectrum of views of the contemporary society.

We are alarmed by this decision and afraid that it means an attempt to limit the freedom of expression and to return to political censorship. Also the fact that, the decision had been taken based on a notice by Štěpán Kotrba, a former Communist Party member since 1986, is considered alarming.

We therefore request abolition of the punishment and a public apology to those punished.

Prague, February 16, 2013.

II - *Democratic Club (Dk)* in questions and answers (06)

What are the examples of elements of democratism?

It follows from the previous question and answer (5) that the summary of elements of democratism shows some discrepancies where it concerns the kinds of these elements and their functions in relation to democracy. These differences are responsible for a whole number of thinkable suborders of elements of democratism.

For our simple explanation it will suffice to say that among the elements of democratism the most important are those, whose presence defines whether the given social system is actually a democracy. These fundamental (constitutive) elements are both equality of human individuals, and the sovereignty of these individuals (rule of the people). If these elements of democratism are not applied, then it is no democracy after all. It concerns the elements of democratic nature.

Another significant group is formed by elements which by themselves do not determine whether the given social system is a democracy, yet without them democracy couldn't properly function for some length of time; they are essential elements of democratic nature to which belongs the way of forming social will in elections and plebiscites, protection of human and political rights and freedoms and further the rule of law.

From the point of view of the *Democratic Club*, special significance has the group of guarantee elements of democratism, i.e. those that guarantee or at least help that democracy which has already, isn't threatned, and that it should

enable the growing measure of been attained democratism. Here we should mention especially an important element, which is the democratic orientation of human individuals. Next come institutional elements like division of state powers, separation of political power from economic power, pluralism of political partizanship, work of political civilian groups (to which typically belongs *Democratic Club*], part of the activity of courts, reciprocal incompatibility of some political functions, limitation of function periods, inadmissibility of repeated eligibility etc.

We could also mention elements, which might be called symbolic elements of democratism. These are characteristic of the democratic system, yet they don't determinate its characteristic postulates or exert any guarrancy. This concern for example state holidays, memorial days, monuments and names of public places connected with outstanding democrats, publishing literature with democratic themes, etc.

Josef Srbený

Message of the United Nations Secretary-General On the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination this year focuses on using the power of sport to end the blight of racism. It is an opportunity to highlight the sharp contrast between the positive values of sports and the despicable incidents of racism that scar even some professional competitions.

Sport is a universal activity that can reaffirm our fundamental human rights. Combating racism lies at the heart of the United Nations Charter. The international community has an obligation to work for equality and non-discrimination, and we can advance progress by promoting these values through sports.

Each year we mark this Day on the anniversary of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre. We can never forget the 69 unarmed and peaceful demonstrators who were killed by South African police as they protested the country's unjust apartheid laws.

Apartheid has long since been dismantled and there have been other important advances in the struggle against racism. These include treaties and declarations, the development of an international framework to combat racism, and national protection systems by numerous States.

Despite much progress, racism remains a pervasive menace to individuals and ethnic and religious groups worldwide. It is a threat to stability and a grave violation of human rights.

We must join forces to end racism, and sport can help reach this goal. On this International Day, let us recommit to ending racial discrimination and realizing our vision of justice, equality and freedom from fear for all.

21 March 2013

Ban Ki-moon

Information from the VIIth General meeting of the *Democratic Club*

Report about the course of the General Meeting

The VIIth General Meeting occurred on December 8th, 2012 in Prague 2, Jungmannova street 17 (CEVRO Institute). The deliberation was conducted by Pavel Černý. Waiting on the quorum, the session started by memories of old members. Then the General meeting was open by election of necessary commissions: mandatory (Ondřej Wagner as a chairman, Frantisek Filaun and Ivan Turnovec), electoral (Vladimír Šust as a chairman, Ivan Kaplan, Marie Neudorfová and Ema Františka Plzákova) and for draft resolution (Jan Friedlaender as a chairman, Petr Jirásek and Zdeněk Pavlík).

The meeting continued by the report of the *Club's* president Miroslav Novák, of the chairman of *Club's* political committee Jan Friedlaender; on behalf of Dk-Dialog redaction spoke Zdeněk Pavlík, about web sites of the *Club* Ivan Turnovec and about *Club's* regularly monthly meetings Ondřej Wagner; financial report presented Frantisek Filaun. The discussion continued after the break with refreshment with the following speakers: Miroslav Novák, Jan Friedlaender, Zdenek Pavlik, Zdeněk Uhlíř, Ivan Turnovec, Ladislav Háva and Jana Šimková.

Pavel Černý informed present participants about the members who passed away since the VIth General Meeting three years ago and asked participants to honor them by the minute's silence. There were 29 following members (in the alphabetical order): Jiří Bouška, Jiří Čerkasov, Henry David (USA), Jiří Duchoň, Vaclav Frei, Slavoj Hontela, Josef Janoušek, Jaroslav Jílek, Vladimír Jílek, Kalev Katus (Estonia), Josef Kmoníček, Františka Kmoníčková, Petr Košek, Štěpánka Marešová, Viktor Medkov (Russian Federation), Stanislav Mikuš, Ladislav Mucha, Božena Nováková, Otakar Osmančík, Václav Poštolka, Mojmir Povolny (USA), Jan Rybka, William Serow (USA), Josef Srbený, Drahomíra Svobodová, Zdeněk Šrein, Ferdinand Třebický, Karel Vaněček, Olga Vidláková, Vojtěch Vyhnal and Jaroslav Zahradník.

The presented reports were approved in the following stage of the meeting. The electoral commission announced the result of election of the *Club's* Central Committee and of the *Club's* Central Auditorial Committee. From 83 voting members were 45 present and 38 (35 %) voted by mail. The presented

draft resolution of the VIIth General Meeting was accepted without discussion. Finally Miroslav Novák in the conclusion word expressed the wish for the success of further *Club's* activities.

Milan Aleš

From contributions of participants

Miroslav **Novák** spoke about the difficult situation of the *Club* after the unexpected resignation of the previous president Božena **Škvařilová** in December 15, 2011. He was elected to this function only in February 14, 2012 at the 3rd meeting of the Central committee. During these last 10 months he succeeded in the consolidation of the *Club* activities. We continued every month in regular meetings of members in Prague devoted to actual questions of actual contemporary political situation; the meeting started usually with a specific introductory word of selected content. We continued also in the issuing of official statements (positions) to political problems of the country. As a main task for the future we see the rejuvenation of the membership. New members only insignificantly exceeded the number of members which have passed away. Opinions have arisen that the *Club* has not succeeded to be medially visible, but we are not any think tank or the coercive organization, but an association with the aim at the support of democracy and democratism by official statements. I would like finally to express my gratitude to CEVRO Institute for providing us with premises for meetings and secretariat.

The president of the *Club's* political commission Jan **Friedlaender** summarized the work of the commission since the previous VIth General meeting. Six official statements were issued (No. 46 – 52). They were all published in Dk-Dialog (both in Czech and English versions), as well as various reactions on them (only in the Czech version); some of them were published also in other media (e.g. Český dialog). Zdeněk **Pavlík** spoke on behalf of the redaction of Dk-Dialog. He underlined the main purpose of this bulletin – to substitute to members the presence at the meetings, because some of them cannot take part in them due to time or distance problems. Therefore it is important that this bulletin goes out in the printed form. Some old members do not have access to internet. Ondřej **Wagner** mentioned the content of regular meetings and Ivan **Turnovec** spoke about *Club's* web sites which are under reconstruction. He asked for any suggestion on his mail address ivan@turnovec.cz

František **Filaun** reported about the *Club's* financial situation between the VIth and VIIth General meeting. At the beginning of the period (1. 11. 2006) the amount of money was 27 710 CZK, at the end of this period (21. 10. 2012) it was just 36 229 CZK. The intake was 108 825 CZK (almost 100 % from

member's fees) and the expenditure 100 307 CZK. The postage and the printing expenditure were the main items (26 and 25 % respectively).

Results of election of the Central Committee and Central Audit Committee

According to the report of mandatory and election committee the following members were elected (in the alphabetic order, the first figure is the number of votes, the second figure is the order):

to Central Committee: Pavel Černý (30, 10-12), Jan Friedlaender (52, 2-3), Soňa Chalupová (45, 5-6), Petr Jirásek (33, 9), Zdeněk Kalvach (44, 7-8), Jiřina Kocourková (45, 5-6), Miroslava Mašková (30, 10-12), Miroslav Novák (52, 2-3), Edvard Outrata (28, 14-16), Zdeněk Pavlík (72, 1), Leona Stašová (30, 10-12), Alena Šubrtová (50, 4), Ivan Turnovec (44, 7-8), Ivan Vávra (28, 14-16), Lucie Vítková (28, 14-16), Ondřej Wagner (29, 13); **as alternates to Central Committee:** Milan Aleš (27, 17-18), Branislav Bleha (25, 20-21), Petr Hlaváček (26, 19), Helena Jankovská (25, 20-21) and František Povolný (27, 17-18);

to Central Audit Committee: František Filaun (50, 2), Hubert Maxa (57, 1), Magdalena Mikesková (39, 4), Jan Müller (38, 5), Eva Švandová (46, 3); **as alternates to Central Audit Committee:** Břetislav Fajkus (20, 7) and Eduard Souček (30, 7).

The voting of the *Dk* president

At the first meeting of the Central committee in February 26, 2013, Miroslav Novák was elected as the president of the *Club* and Pavel Černý and Zdeněk Kalvach as two vice-presidents of the Central Committee. At the same meeting the proposal of the new elected president of the composition of Executive committee was approved: the committee consists of 5 members, Miroslav Novák as the president, Pavel Černý, Helena Jankovská, Valentýn Plzák and Jana Šimková as members.

Resolution of the Seventh Plenary Session of the *Democratic Club*

The Plenary Session

- I. approves the Report by the retreating *Dk* Committee as presented by Miroslav Novák, Jan Friedlaender, Ivan Turnovec, Zdeněk Pavlík and Ondřej Wagner, and the Report on the *Dk* economy as presented by František Filaun and it takes due note of the Report by the Mandate and Election Committee;
- II. assigns the Central Committee to deal, after preliminary consultation with the Executive Council, with the following problem areas :

- 1) to convoke not later than end of February 2013 a meeting of the newly elected Central Committee;
- 2) to pay attention to member meetings, especially as to technical conditions and moderation;
- 3) to pay attention to the contents of the Dk-Dialog, its distribution and supplies outside the Club;
- 4) to consider a gradual translation of the Dk-Dialog to the electronic form;
- 5) to deal with the foreign Dk activities;
- 6) to consider a possible new pronouncement of the fundamental Dk documents until the end of the 1st half of 2013;
- 7) to try and renew the Democratic Seminar and to expand the discussion on democracy and its quality factors employing the Seminar; to apply lectures, too, to this end, round tables and conferences;
- 8) to prepare continued Questions and Answers on the Democratic Club employing the Political Commission with the aim of editing a Collection of Papers;
- 9) to try and continue the Czechoslovak Democrats series of lectures in co-operation with the Kampa Museum;

III.recommends to the newly elected Central Committee to deal, according to the merits of the occasion, either using its own powers or, employing the Executive Council,

- 1) to maximize the efforts in recruiting new members, especially among the youth, and in involving them in the Club activities and functions;
- 2) to consider employing the Club website for addressing the public; to set up a paragraph at the same, referring to the Club activities;
- 3) to try and publish the Club standpoints in the public media;
- 4) to establish the function of Secretary within the Executive Council and assign Col. Šimková to this function;
- 5) to define the number of Central Committee Members at 16 on the outcome of the elections, the number of Candidates at 5 and the number of the Central Audit Committee members at 5 with 2 candidates;

IV.calls on all the Club members,

- 1) to contribute to the opinion clearing as concerns democracy and democratism within the Club, as well as in Club discussions, by asserting their own views;
- 2) to try and co-operate with the public media and to contribute this way to a higher popularity of the Club and its views in the public;
- 3) to facilitate recruiting new members and rejuvenating of the Club and its managing bodies, by means of addressing the members' milieu, especially the youth.

V. The Plenary Session further resolves

- 1) to send a salute to col. Jan Srnec;
- 2) to express thanks to col. Zdeněk Pavlík for his many years standing for the Club.

Victor Michailovich Medkov (1945 – 2008)

On November 4th, 2008, long time member of the Democratic Club Victor Medkov passed away. Born after the World War II on November 28th, 1945, he did not reach the age of sixty three. He studied economy, but he was from the beginning of his professional life interested in social questions. The possibility to devote fully to sociology and demography was open only in 1990's, when the communist ideology broke down. Victor dedicated all his life to science. He worked at the Faculty Economy, the Laboratory Population Study (1971-1992) and Sociological Faculty of Moscow State University, the Department of Sociology of the Family and Demography (1992-2008).

Victor published nearly one hundred and seventy scientific papers. He continually wrote books, articles, textbooks, academic and training programs. Among them are the books *The second child* (1987), *The demographic processes in Russia in XXI century* (2002), *Sociology of the Family* (1996), *Family and Religion: sociological inventory* (2009). He was also the author of one of the best textbooks on demography in Russia which survived many editions (Demography.2002 - 2010).

Much time and effort he has devoted to teaching, he loved to work with students and they visited his classes with great interest. He was a scholar and teacher of a very high level. Intelligent, kind, responsive man, he enjoyed authority among his colleagues and students. In scientific controversies he has always acted promptly, calmly and with great dignity, had the ability to defend and explain his point of view, but also to listen to alternative voices. He was also very much interested in the political life and therefore he jointed the *Democratic Club* in 1996. After Yaroropolk Guzevatyi passed away, he became the main representative of *Dk* in the Russian Federation. Victor was only sixty three years old when he left the world. His friends and colleagues miss him very much.

Anatoly I. Antonov, December 2010

D e m o c r a t i c C l u b (Dk)

is a nonpartisan political organization (founded in 1948, legalized in 1990), whose aim is to support democracy and democratism;

understands the necessary existence of political parties and movements in a democratic society;

- recognizes** a need for existence of nonpartisan political organizations to assist in forming democratic society, independently of political parties;
- follows** how the democratic principles has been applying in the organization of state and society, and in the activities of political parties;
- takes steps** against all expressions of non-democratic actions;
- issues** official views on subjects of current political concern from the point of view of democratic principles;
- organizes** discussion meetings and lectures on current political issues;
- publishes** Dk-Dialog for its members;
- offers** its members a chance to participate actively in political life without commitment to a particular political program;
- does not promise** its members any functions, power or special treatment;
- welcomes** among its members anybody who supports democratic principles regardless whether he or she is or is not a member of any democratic political party or movement.



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