

Alfred Baber Sands

Correspondence - General

Gypsies / RomA  
1996-98

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GYPSIES / ROMA

read 24. VII-98

The Dr. Rajko Djurič Foundation  
Čelakovského sady 12  
120 00 Prague 2  
Czech Republic  
tel/fax (420/2) 24 23 34 78  
email ROI@MS.ANET.CZ

Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Bader  
Hotel Suite 622  
924 East Juneau Avenue  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
53202 USA

Prague, July 9, 1998

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Bader,

To Inyague Lindille  
I'll call you to  
discuss. Best wishes

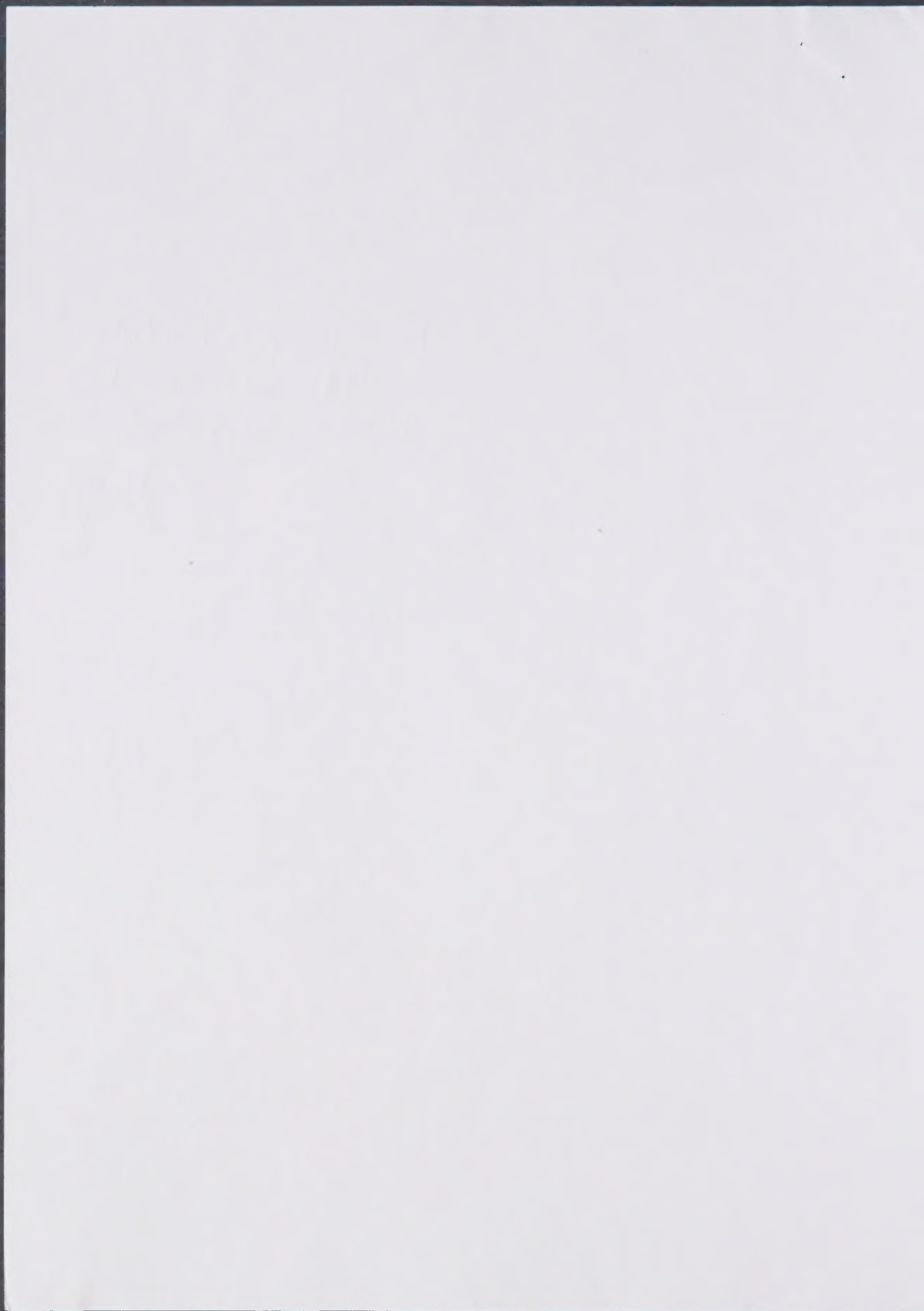
Anna  
7/98

I must apologize for taking the liberty to write to you in this manner, but the situation is extremely urgent. You have been in the past one of the very few people who have shown understanding and sympathy, and I am indeed ashamed to have to address you under such circumstances, but there is no one else to whom we can turn. As a result of the political events of the last two days, our funding for the Romani Secondary School of Social Work has collapsed, and there is a very real threat that the school will not be able to open at all.

Obviously, we have been fundraising ever since the school was granted accreditation, and have lined up a certain amount of funds and gifts in kind (computers, reconstruction funds, textbook support etc.). Our main support was, however, to come from the state. Part of this money was to come through the Ministry of Education (about 30% of our operating costs), and the rest was promised to us by Minister Vladimír Mlynář in the form of a lump-sum start up grant. This grant was supposed to cover the cost of purchasing a school/dormitory building, plus the operating costs for one year, a total amount of some 250 000 USD.

However, due to the onset of early elections in the Czech Republic, the unexpected agreement between the two strongest and hitherto irreconcilable parties, and the resulting change of government, we were told today that this promise will not be upheld. We thus find ourselves two months before the school year is to begin without the funds to open. The money from the Ministry of Education is still available, but this alone cannot save the school.

For us this is a disaster, for the students a tragedy. Due to the timing of this announcement, we are left in the situation where 50 students with all the prerequisite qualifications for high school study will be left with nowhere to go. By this time of year they have already had to formally reject any other chances they may have had, and thus have literally nowhere else to turn. This means in effect that they will be left in the same situation as most Roma in this country - with an elementary education, and limited or no job prospects to look forward to.

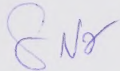




As the only Romani Foundation in the Czech Republic which is focused on ensuring the right of Roma to education, the Rajko Djuric Foundation is assailed by requests of Roma from the whole country. At the same time it is also a focus of attention for many Czechs. Our failure to ensure schooling would thus have far-reaching negative consequences, not only for the fifty children directly involved, but also for the fate of Romani education in the Czech Republic as a whole. The loss of trust by both Roma and Czechs could lead to the rejection by both sides of education as a potential solution, which would indeed be a disaster.

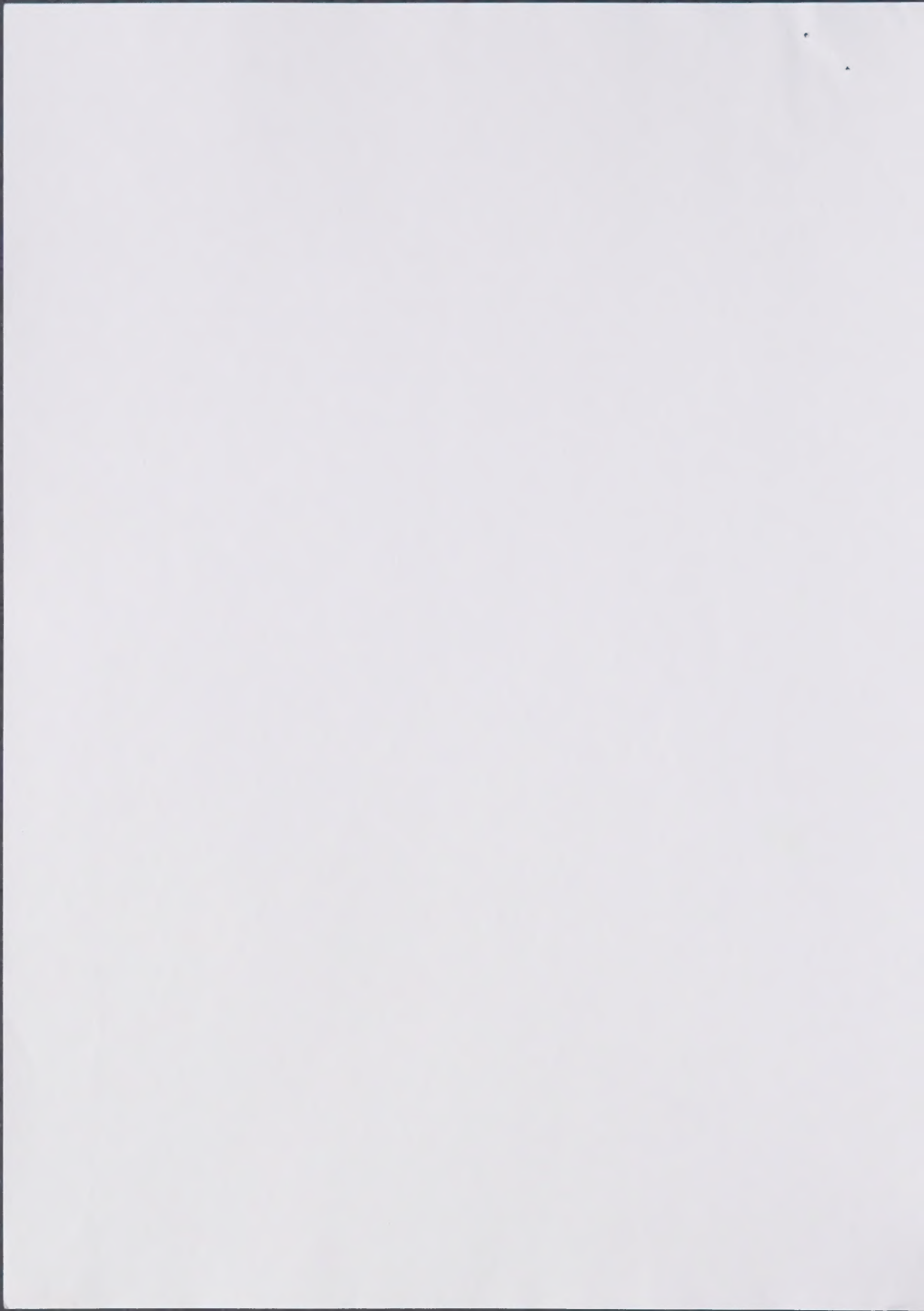
We are therefore asking for your assistance. We must have an answer by the end of July, or the school will be unable to open. With your help, we can take a significant step towards greater tolerance within Czech society, and the overcoming of its prejudices. If we manage together to open this school, we will considerably help the Roma in solving their own social problems. In this context, we would like to ask you if the school could have the privilege of bearing your respected name.

With our greatest respect,



Sean Nazerali

The Dr. Rajko Djuric Foundation





Maškarutno Romano Khetanipe

*International Romani Union*

E Rromani Unia

ओ म्अशकअरऊतन्ओ ररओम्अन्ओ खऐतअन्डप्पे

Manchaca, Texas 78652-0822. Tel 512-295-4858, Fax 512-295-4772, Voicemail 512-471-1701  
e-mail xulaj@mail.utexas.edu, national page number 1-800-991-2435

◆President: Dr. Rajko Djurić

◆U.S. Representative: John Nickels

◆UN Praesidium Head: The Hon. Ian F. Hancock

◆Liaison: Sam Connick

*Permanent Legal Counsel: Sebastian M. Rainone and Joseph Nicola, Attorneys-at-Law (Philadelphia)*

14 April 1998

Good to meet you both;  
here is the article I mentioned  
which criticized the Romani  
Union (of which Djurić is  
president — see p. 28)

Thanks for your support,  
it is deeply appreciated.

Ian Hancock

Member: United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECO-SOC No. EE-3377 [DPL/Ros.])  
Special Consultative Status (Category ID), Non-Governmental Organizations (No. D-9424)  
Committee on UNICEF (No. EE-2973), The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF No. FF-3380)  
Founded 1971; permanent UN representation since 1979







# THE FOUNDATION FOR A CIVIL SOCIETY

## FAX TRANSMITTAL COVER SHEET

To: Albert Kanab  
 Fax: 617-630-0960

From: A. Dwayne Linville, Program Assistant *APL*

Date: November 6, 1997

Re: Assistance for Roma of Eastern Europe

Dear Mr. Kanab

Greetings!

Thank you for your mail yesterday and for your commitment to contribute \$25,000 to the FCS Roma Initiative for 1998 based upon the stipulations which you provided:

- Dr. Bader provide at least \$25,000 in "matching funds" for 1998
- FCS provide direct grants to organizations or at least simulate the proposal process for grants from this fund, so that deserving organizations who may not have extensive experience in proposal-writing would not be "dispeled" by the process
- FCS make an effort to support some programs dealing with secondary education of Roma

At the end of 1998, FCS will supply you with a full narrative and financial report as to the expenditure of these funds. Please let me know of any specific reporting requirements which you may have. Upon your approval of the report, we would then like to request from you the additional funds to continue the Roma Initiative for an additional period of two years, as discussed in our previous conversations.

I would also like to thank you in advance for your generous pledge of \$5000 to support FCS' administrative costs in connection with this grant. With this contribution, the full \$25,000 pledged will be used for the Roma Initiative and reported to Roman organizations in the Czech Republic.

In terms of funding Roman NGOs in Slovakia, I have been in touch with my colleagues in our Bratislava office and will have a full report for you before our meeting in December that will include a more extensive list of Roman organizations and a list of the main needs of the Roma community and ideas for programs and projects. As I mentioned to you in my phone message of yesterday, Wendy will be leaving the country on December 11, and so I hope that we can schedule a meeting with you and Mi Scott sometime earlier in that week. Please let me know what is best for you.

Thank you again for your generous contribution. Your support will certainly make a significant difference in the hardships which Roma are currently experiencing in the Czech Republic. I look forward to speaking with you again soon.

cc: Wendy Luers  
 Tom Scott



Dr. Alfred Bader  
2961 North Shepard Avenue  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211  
U. S. A.

January 12, 1998

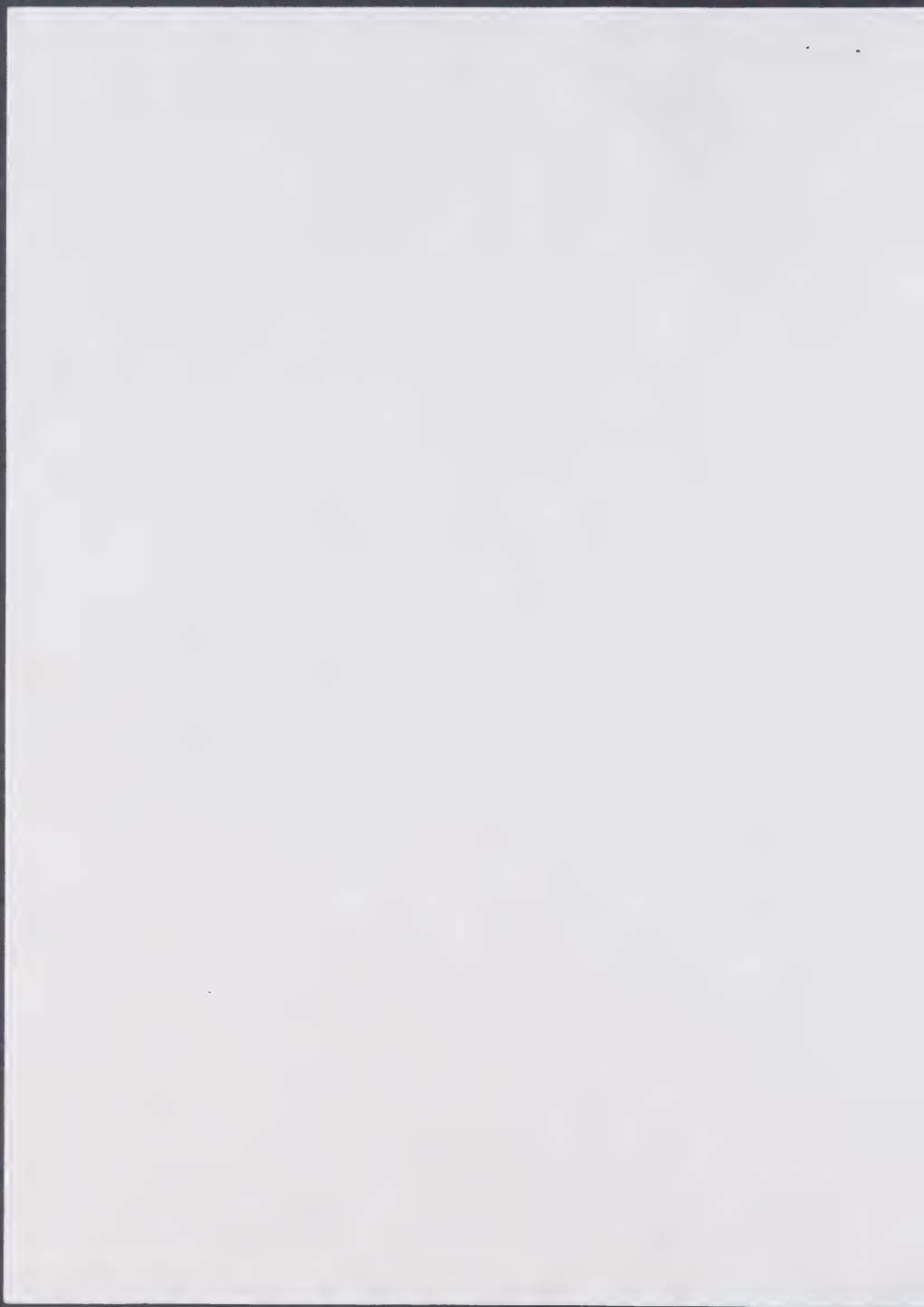
Dear Alfred,

First I must apologize for the delay but I have been really busy writing all the progress reports on my project and grants. Now everything is sent out and I have time to start other things. I have also tried to prepare pure 2-amino-4-chloro-5-methoxypyrimidine for Coelacanth but I have some troubles with it. The first step, i.e. preparation of 2-amino-4-hydroxy-5-methoxypyrimidine, was OK but I have troubles in the second step both in upscaling the reaction and with purification. I will still try to do it but I have already spent several days on it without success.

I also promised to send you my opinion on the problem of gypsies in the Czech Republic (the minority is now termed „romove“ and not „cikani“, which is translated as gypsies, but I do not know the correct translation). As you know, some much more actual political problems emerged here and therefore the problem with this minority is not so visible. Before I start a short summary of my attitude to this matter I must tell you that I myself am not sure about it. However, I am sure that I am not a racist and I hope that my prejudice to this minority is really negligible. I even believe that all the society here is not racist and that only a negligible amount of people have such an attitude to other races such as Jews, Chinese, Vietnamese, and black people. A little bit different thing is with gypsies. Most of the society agree that the situation of this minority should be improved but, on the other hand, most people do not like them very much, mainly for their behavior which, of course, have a historical reasons. Under communists the governments tried to solve the problem of gypsies by spreading them throughout the country and therefore gypsies from Slovakia were moved to the Czech part of the country. They were offered new flats and relatively well paid manual jobs and therefore they did not feel any need for better education of their children. Since the government supported larger families and since gypsies usually had lots of children, some of them found that the easiest way to live is to get social support and live from it. It was compulsory to be employed and therefore some gypsies who tried to get money from pick-pocketing or prostitution were easily prosecuted. After the revolution everything changed. The manual jobs are not so well paid, social support for the families is not progressively higher for more than 2 or 3 children and therefore it is not possible to live on these sources. Now there are lots of gypsies, especially in Prague, who are organized in groups to steal money from tourists. Also many girls work as prostitutes both in Prague and near the borders with Germany (of course not only gypsies but they prevail). This prostitution gangs are well organized and are usually led by gypsies, not by a Mafia. All this is true but it is difficult to estimate which percentage of them are involved in these activities. Of course, ordinary people do not like the situation and their attitude to gypsies is not very good. It is true that even gypsies which used to work hard are often unemployed now. They are not usually qualified or trained for more sophisticated jobs and their salary requirements are much higher than those of workers from Ukraine, Belarus or Russia. This situation must be very stressful for them but I really do not know how to solve it.

Of course, the preceding part described the situation from the point of view of a non-gypsy person. They definitely have a different one. Most of them believe that they are systematically suppressed, that their human rights are not observed, etc. I must admit, that in isolated examples this is probably true. It is also true that there are some young militant people (mostly skinheads) who are fighting against the gypsies, from time to time some gypsies are injured and several even died. Unfortunately, for the reasons described above some otherwise peaceful people agree with it. Even legal prosecution of such „fighters“ is very slow and sometimes the punishment is not adequate. On the other hand, most of the reasons claimed by gypsies applying for an asylum in Canada or England seems to be exaggerated.

I think that this is enough to describe my view of the situation. Generally, I must say that gypsies are a difficult problem to solve but nobody knows how. All attempts failed and therefore any reasonable project could be good. I am sure that the





solution must be based on education of young gypsies but I think that it is very difficult to suggest anything without a thorough knowledge of the situation and understanding of the mentality of this minority. There are several gypsy organizations each accusing the others for misusing the state supports and I think that in general no one has a bigger support from most of the gypsies. Therefore, if you would like to establish a project to help gypsies, do not rely on any official organization without a thorough investigation.

In my last letter I asked you to promote our journal Collection of Czechoslovak Chemical Communications to your chemist friends. We are especially interested in original articles and timely reviews on nearly any area of chemistry. As I mentioned in my previous letter, we are able to publish important articles in a very short time (exceptionally even in two or three weeks), the authors are provided not only the reprints but also electronic form of the article (PDB files of Adobe Acrobat Reader 3) free of charge.

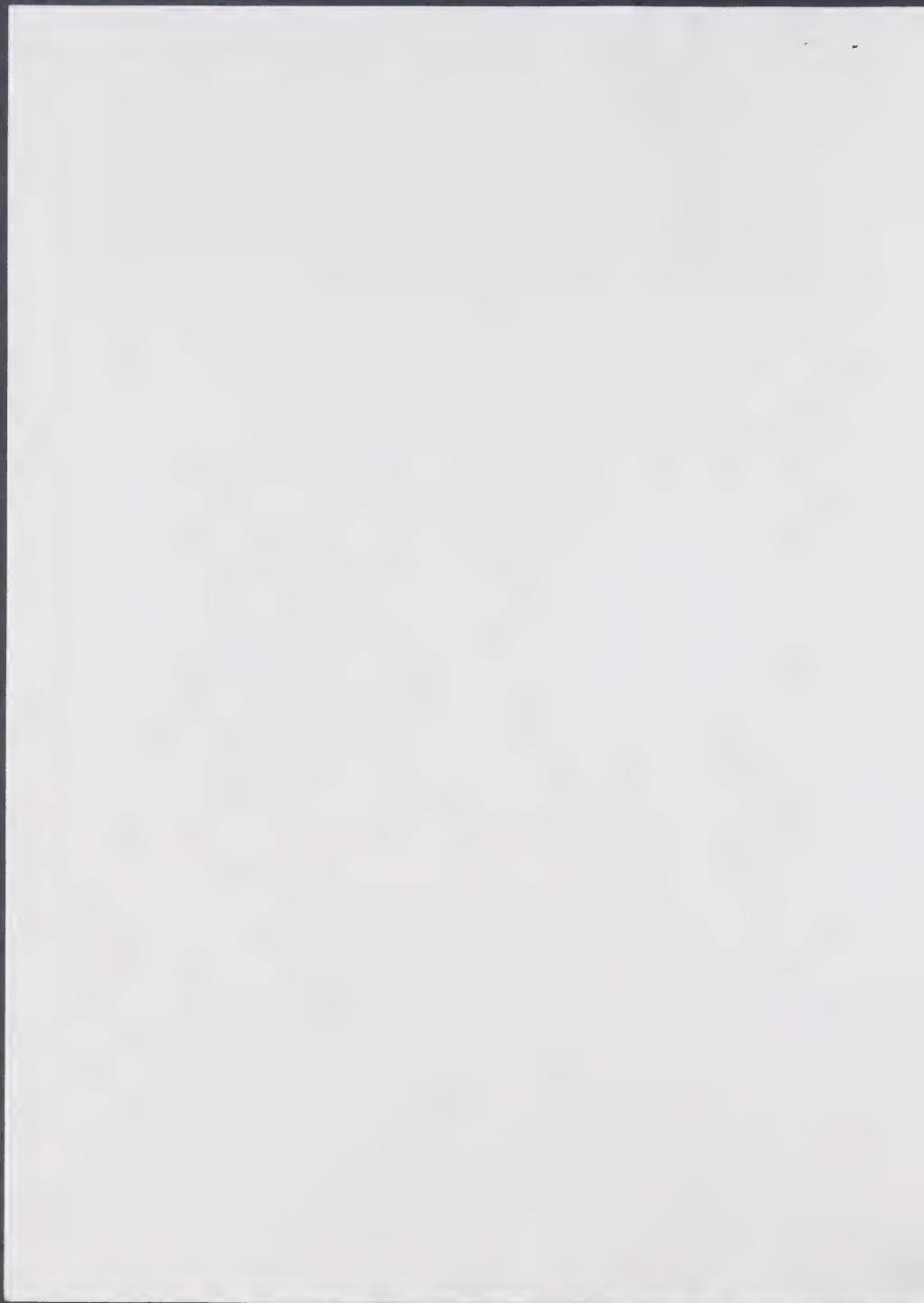
Give my best regards to Isabel.

Yours,

Stan Radl



PS.: I have duly received the payment for the last samples.



Dear Stan:

I am sorry that a trip East has delayed my replying to your most interesting and helpful letter of January 12th.

First of all, I am happy that you have received the last payment from Aldrich due to you.

I am sorry that you are having such difficulties with one pyrimidine preparation for Coelacanth, but knowing you, you will probably succeed.

Coelacanth is interested in two more nitrogen heterocyclics, one of which - or perhaps even both - might be of interest to you even though the quantities are in kilo lots. If you are not interested could you ask Dr. Mandel, who has done such a good job for Coelacanth so far.

What you tell me about the Gypsies coincides very closely with my own experiences and what I have heard from many others. That does not mean, however, that we should not try to help them as much as we can nor does it mean that all or even the majority of the Gypsies act miserably.

I am reminded of how my mother by adoption, a wonderful woman and a believing Jewess, thought about Eastern European Jews, particularly from Galitzia. They were dirty, unreliable, and sometimes even dishonest. They came from terrible situations in Eastern Europe and eventually the Nazis tried to kill all of the Jews. Similarly the Nazis tried to kill all of the Gypsies.

There is, of course, a fundamental difference between Gypsies and Jews. We feel very comfortable with steady jobs in any western society. The Gypsies have a totally different culture

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and many of them do not want steady jobs. But they are human beings and I think we should try very much to help them educationally. Equally important is educating all people about the evils of skinheads.

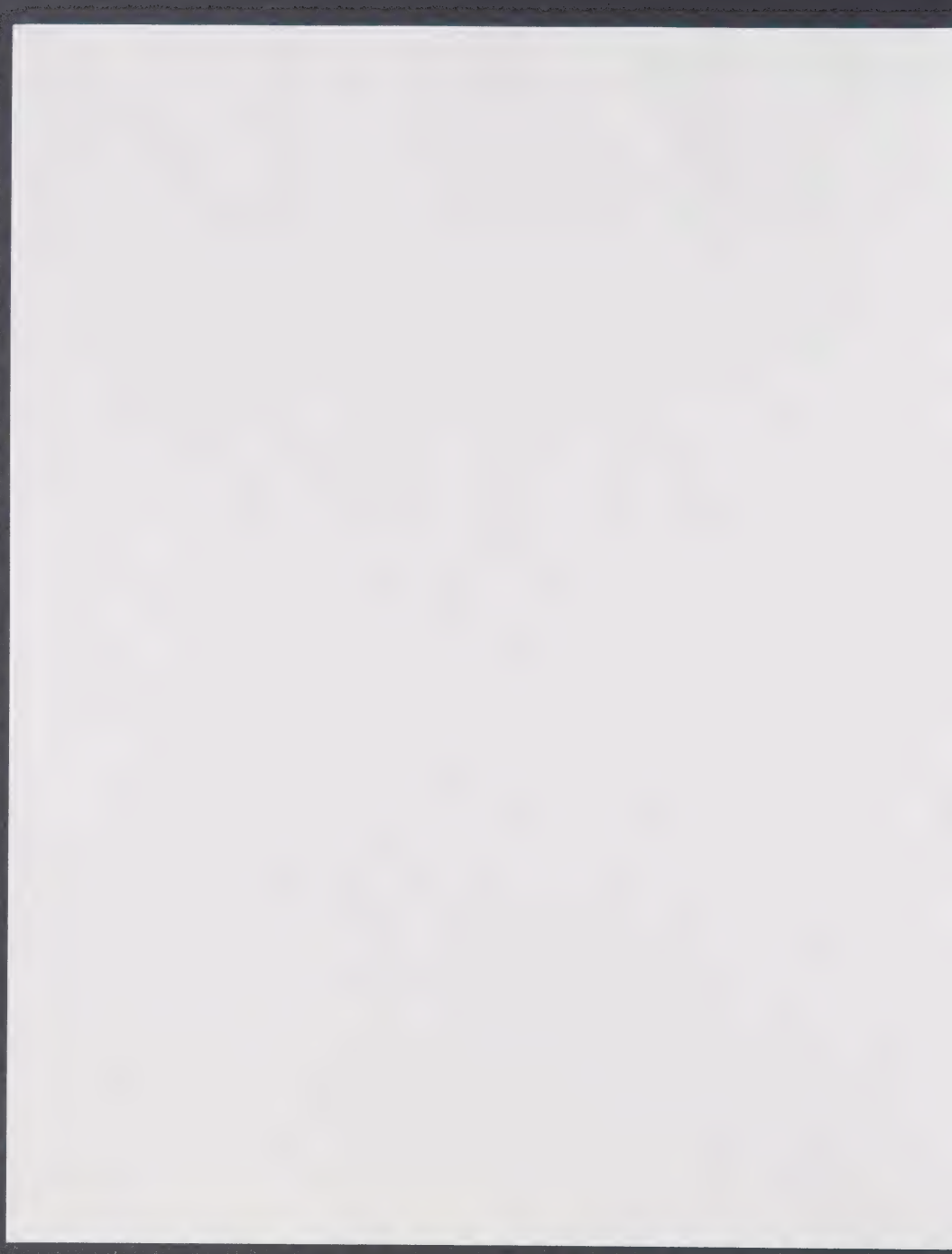
As you will see from the enclosed, Isabel and I have given some thousands of dollars to help a Gypsy school. Perhaps you know my old chemist friend, Ing. Vladimir Matous in Pardubice, whom I asked to check up on the school that we are helping and his report, enclosed, will be self-explanatory.

Isabel and I much look forward to discussing all this with you in more detail when we see you in June.

Fond regards from house to house, as always,

AB/nik

Enclosures







Dr. Alfred Bader  
924 East Juneau, Suite 622  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202  
Phone: 414/277-0730  
Fax: 414/277-0709

*A Chemist Helping Chemists*

February 2, 1998

**Dr. Stanislav Radl**  
Pertoldova 3380  
143 00 Prague 4  
CZECH REPUBLIC

Dear Stan:

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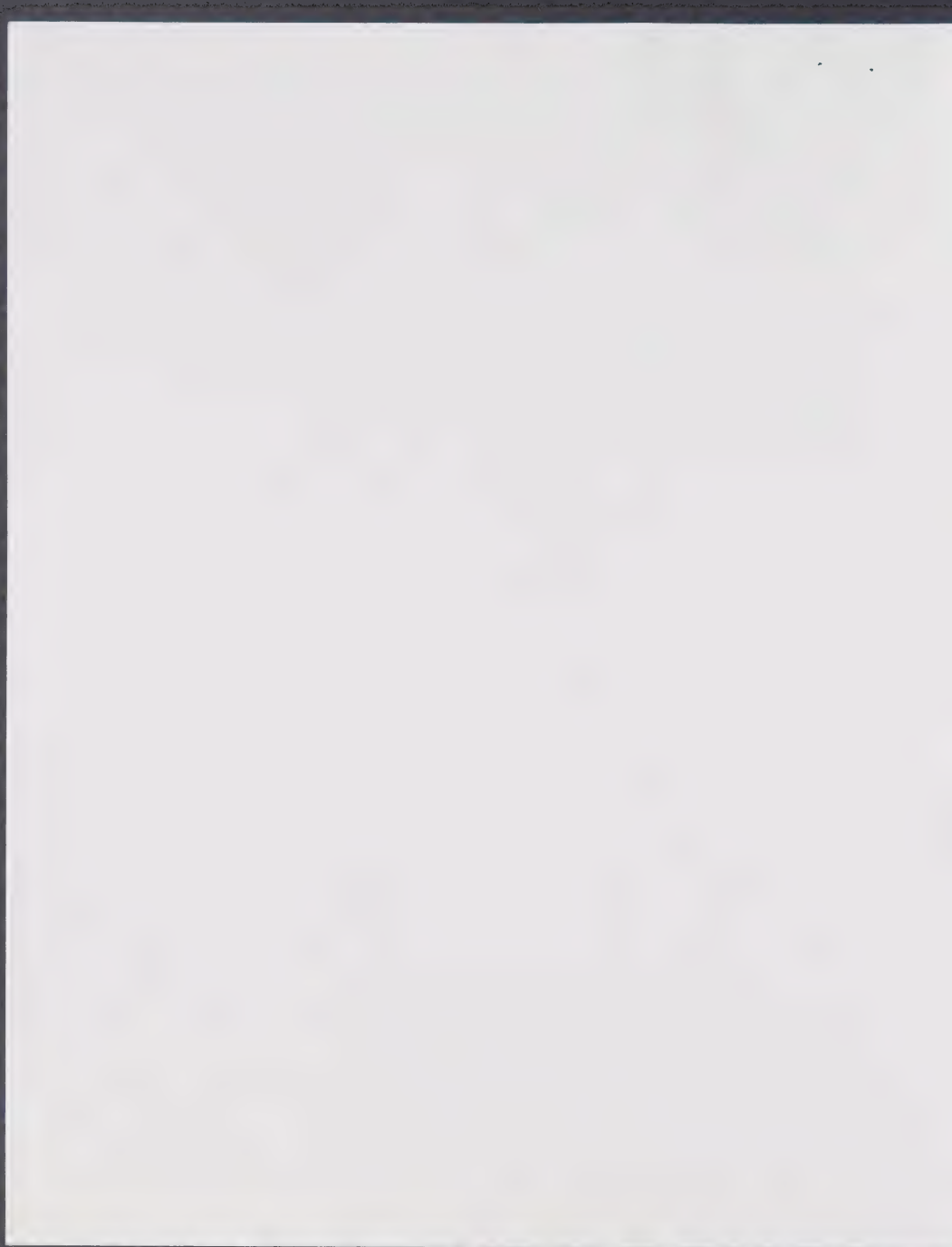
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Dr. Stanislav Radl  
February 2, 1998  
Page two

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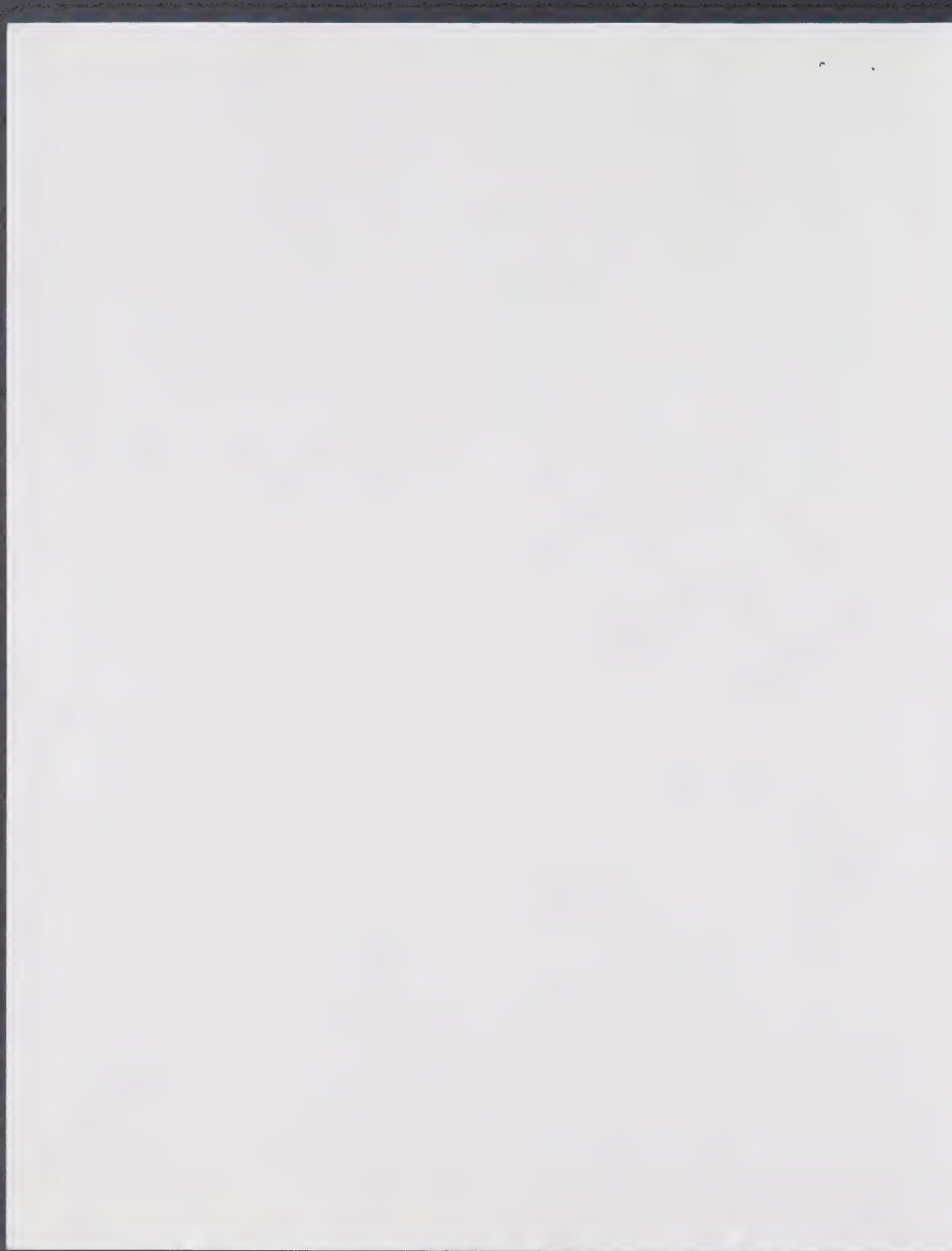
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Fond regards from house to house, as always,

AB/nik

Enclosures







ALFRED BADER FINE ARTS

DR. ALFRED BADER

ESTABLISHED 1961

February 13, 1998

**Dr. Eva Kushner**  
*President Emeritus*  
Victoria University  
73 Queen's Park Crescent  
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1K7  
CANADA

Dear Eva:

I feel very guilty not having replied sooner to your important and most interesting letter of December 24. As you perhaps know we have been travelling a great deal and I did not want to reply to such an interesting letter just briefly with a thank you note.

Now, Isabel and I also want to congratulate you on the great honour which you just received.

We have given a good deal of thought to the problems of the Gypsies and it certainly is one of the most difficult problems mankind has encountered.

I am particularly aghast at the documentation which you have sent me that the Czechs did sterilize quite a few Gypsy women without their consent. Perhaps, as I have said before, I just look at Czechs with too rose coloured glasses.

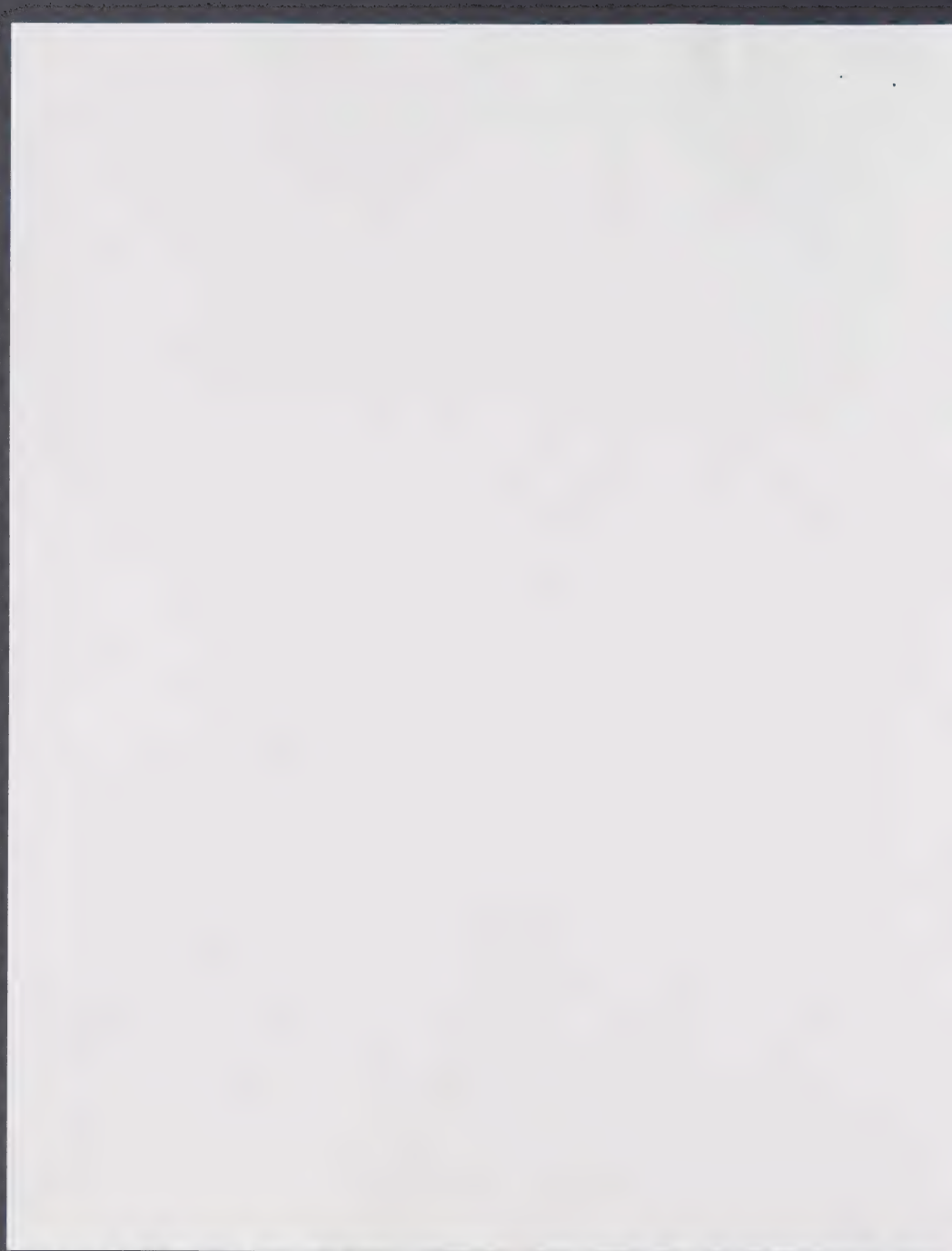
As you will see from my correspondence with the Foundation for a Civil Society, we have become involved with that very good Foundation and with a very decent and thoughtful Lebanese American, Mr. Kaneb, to try and help the Romas through education. My correspondence with Mr. Kaneb will be self-explanatory.

This year he and we are spending about \$25,000 each to help the education of Gypsies. But probably equally important is the education of ordinary Czechs, not to stand by idly when skinheads attack the Romas.

Also as you will see from the enclosed, I have corresponded with a good chemist friend of mine who is a very decent person and he wrote to me very frankly what he thinks about the Romas.

I think that your time is much too valuable to become involved with an essay prize or with the Royal Society of Canada concerning itself with the Romas.

*By Appointment Only*  
ASTOR HOTEL SUITE 622  
924 EAST JUNEAU AVENUE  
MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN USA 53202  
TEL 414 277-0730 FAX 414 277-0709





Dr. Eva Kushner  
February 13, 1998  
Page two

Of course we do hope that our educational efforts focussing on social work by Romas in the Czech Republic will help. We will see and, of course, let you know.

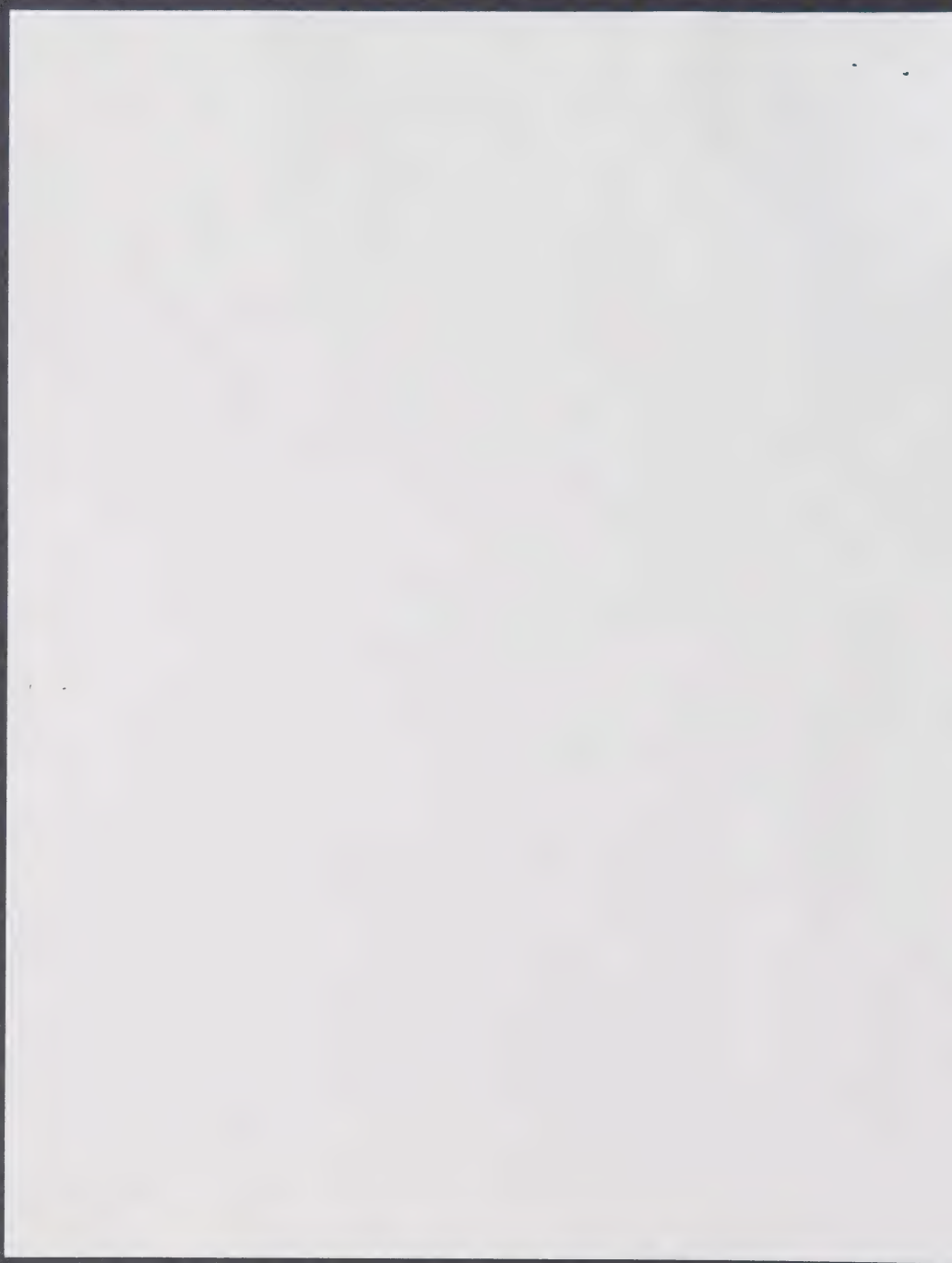
You know that some years ago Isabel and I were seriously considering establishing some major awards in Canada, but frankly, Eva, we just do not have the strength. The problems that Queen's encountered at Herstmonceux have been tremendously draining and, of course, unforeseen and now we hope that these are behind us.

What Isabel has been considering is a project that might be much less draining - namely to donate the funds to Victoria University to build an Isabel Bader Theatre on the campus. Isabel and I have a wonderful rapport with Roseann Runte, just as we have had with you, and if Isabel proceeds with this project we hope that it will be both truly constructive and not draining our energy.

With fond regards from house to house, as always,

AB/nik

Enclosures



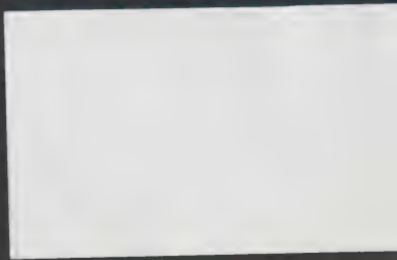


I thought this would cheer you  
up! Love

**Prof. Eva Kushner**

Pratt 322  
Victoria College  
73 Queen's Park Cr.  
Toronto, Ont., Canada  
M5S 1K7  
Tel. (416) 585-4532  
Fax (416) 585-4531

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Fax (416) 978-6867



# Gypsy newcomers confident of future

◆ From Page A1

(Those who declare themselves refugee claimants at airports are subject to a quicker approval process and can generally get the right to work sooner.) Ms. Malkova and Mr. Haluska keep themselves busy studying English and looking for a place to live. With an extended family (not their own) of eight, they are looking for a house. Welfare will give the two of them \$500 for their share of housing costs.

"Some of [the houses] are very dirty and some of them, the landlords don't want to take 10 people," Ms. Malkova said.

At the peak of the Gypsy influx earlier this year, about 800 lived in emergency shelters. That number is down to fewer than 300. On at least one occasion, it may have seemed the old hatreds followed them: About 20 suspected neo-Nazi skinheads protested in front of the motel rooms Aug. 26, with placards urging motorists: "Honk if you hate Gypsies." Eight people have since been charged under Canada's antihate laws.

Many Gypsies have fanned out into the city; a few have been so homesick they have returned to the Czech Republic.

One family left behind a three-bedroom town house in Toronto's Jane-Finch neighbourhood; two other Gypsy families, plus a single woman, have moved in.

They do not want to give their full names, fearing reprisals

against their relatives back home. One is a couple, Zlatka and Josef, with three teen-agers; the other is a couple, Margita and Ladislav, with a daughter who lives in a motel room with her husband. Hana, a middle-aged woman, also lives in the town house.

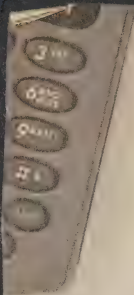
Zlatka serves tea and a plate of cookies. She pours Mr. Haluska a small glass of Scotch whisky. The home is neat and appears newly furnished; they pay \$1,300 a month for it.

They have been in Canada three months — they came just before the door closed — and in their 12 days in the town house have not met many neighbours. A woman from Holland helped Zlatka once in her kitchen, and she met a Yugoslavian-Canadian she hopes will become her friend.

"All of us, we would like to show the Canadian people, we would like to do the best that we can to show them that we are good," Ladislav said in Czech, with Ms. Malkova translating.

Ladislav recounts how he and Margita became lost on their way to a hospital for tests required for their refugee applications. They asked a couple if they knew the way. The couple drove them to the hospital and helped them find their way inside.

"I was very happy," Margita said, "and I was crying with pleasure. I didn't know that there were people like that in the world."



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## **OPTIMISM / Vista**

*of future buoys*

*penniless Roma.*

# Hope is Gypsies' greatest asset

BY SEAN FINE  
The Globe and Mail  
Toronto

**C**HRISTMAS in a welfare motel: For a young Gypsy couple from the Czech Republic, there is homesickness, but also a sense that life is about to begin.

"This motel is clean. It's good. It's the start of a new life," said David Haluska, 21, who came to Toronto with his girlfriend Marcela Malkova as tourists two months ago and then applied for refugee status.

Both have a head start on that new life: Unlike most of the 1,000-plus Gypsies who came here from the Czech Republic in the past year, they speak English. They also have high-school diplomas. Leaving brothers, sisters and parents behind, they came here after Canada closed the door to most of their brethren by imposing visa restrictions. Because they had jobs, as waiting staff in Planet Hollywood in Prague, they were able to obtain visas.

And they are young, and believe good things lie ahead.

"Here is freedom for people," Ms. Malkova, who is also 21, says in an interview in their cramped motel room, which has a colour television, a telephone and a small fridge and looks onto noisy Kingston Road and an ugly strip mall. (It's \$33.12 a day, plus \$4 for the phone, tax and \$17 for food and personal needs — altogether \$58.10 to taxpayers.) "Freedom of expression, freedom of speech. You can do whatever you want if you know how to do it."

Mr. Haluska is hoping to land a restaurant job. "I want to work as waitress."

Ms. Malkova's English is better. She once worked as a manager in a modelling agency back home, until she told the boss she is a Gypsy; then she was fired, she says. She hopes for similar work here.

She is tall, dark-haired and fair-skinned, confident, articulate; he is short, swarthy and soft-spoken.

Restaurants play a big part in the stories he tells: His father owns a restaurant back home and he hopes, someday, to own one here. Back home they were often turned away by restaurants; they were even attacked by eight people once in a restaurant (Planet Hollywood, which hired them, never discriminates against anyone, they said). In Toronto, the first restaurant Mr. Haluska tried as a customer was Planet Hollywood.

Staff served him as they would anyone else. He felt, he says, that "I am person. I am not animals."

They have not been able to obtain social-insurance numbers yet, and therefore cannot work.

**Please see Gypsy / A8**



Francis the pig, but the people of Red Deer decided that he will remain ever in the public eye.

It's been almost eight years fleet-footed Francis enjoyed brush with greatness. It's no feat for animal that began as one of the thousands that make Red Deer, a city of 60,000 about a 90-minute drive north of Calgary, a major pork-processing centre in Alberta's largest, with the recent

## Alanna Mitchell in Calgary

purchase of Maple Leaf Meats in Edmonton.

An ordinary pig would have arrived at the slaughterhouse, ushered to the killing floor and met its fate. Francis, however, had other ideas.

Perhaps sensing what was to come, he jumped the gun, and a foot-high fence as well, and slid into the river valley that runs just north of Red Deer's downtown.

A fevered chase ensued. But Francis, being unusually agile as well as a terrific jumper, dodged his pursuers — for quite some time. He spent several months on the lam, escaping capture through the spring, summer and fall of the fall. Foraging for food as he went, he cannily kept a few miles ahead of the increasingly desperate posse on his trail.

Along the way, he became a North American folk hero. Newspapers, radio programs and television news stories across Canada and the United States carried regular updates on the fate of Francis Bacon, as he popularly became known.

"He brought international attention to Red Deer," recalls John Ferguson, general manager of the downtown business association.

Thousands began to cheer for the pig, hoping he could continue to outsmart his red-faced human hunters and defy his fate. Classes of thoughtful pupils across the continent sent letters to C/A Meats, the processor from which Francis had escaped. Each, recalls baffled C/A owner John Wester, contained the same message: "Don't kill the pig." People also sent cheques and begged him to keep Francis at large.

On a couple of occasions, Francis tempted fate. Lured by some bait, he found himself snared in a trap but managed to get away before it was too late.

Finally, the weather did him in. Snow came to Red Deer and Francis began to leave tracks. Finally, a life specialist caught him in the sights of his tranquillizer gun.

Tragically, the dart perforated Francis's bowel. Peritonitis set in, and, within days, his fans were mourning. "It was kind of a sad ending to the glorious escape of Francis the pig," says Mr. Ferguson.

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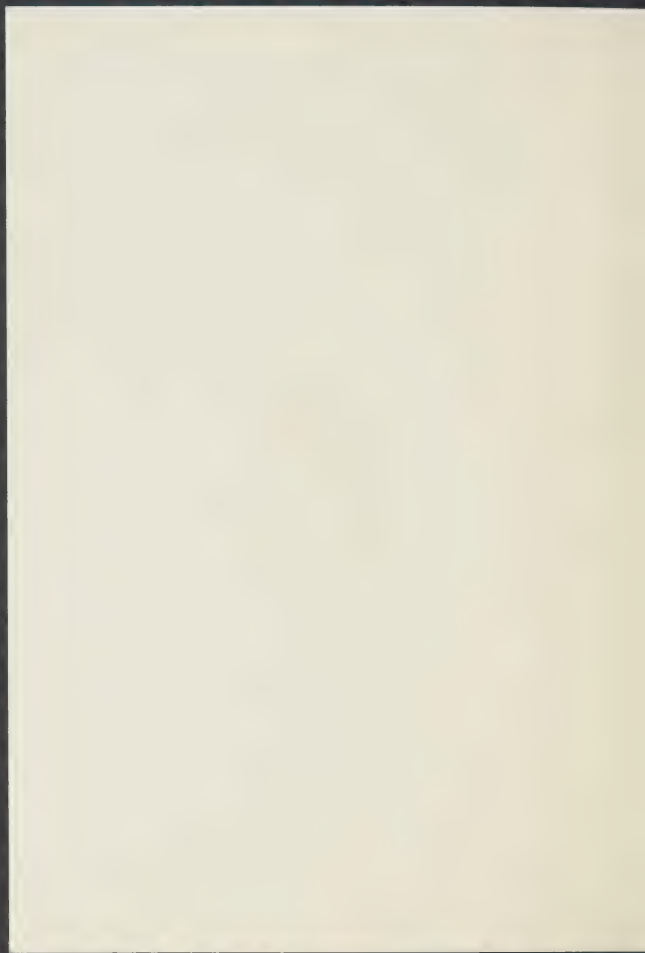
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Ever and Dawn

Смилно Радноу  
1924





# VICTORIA UNIVERSITY

In the University of Toronto

President Emeritus

December 24, 1997

Dear Isabel and Alfred,

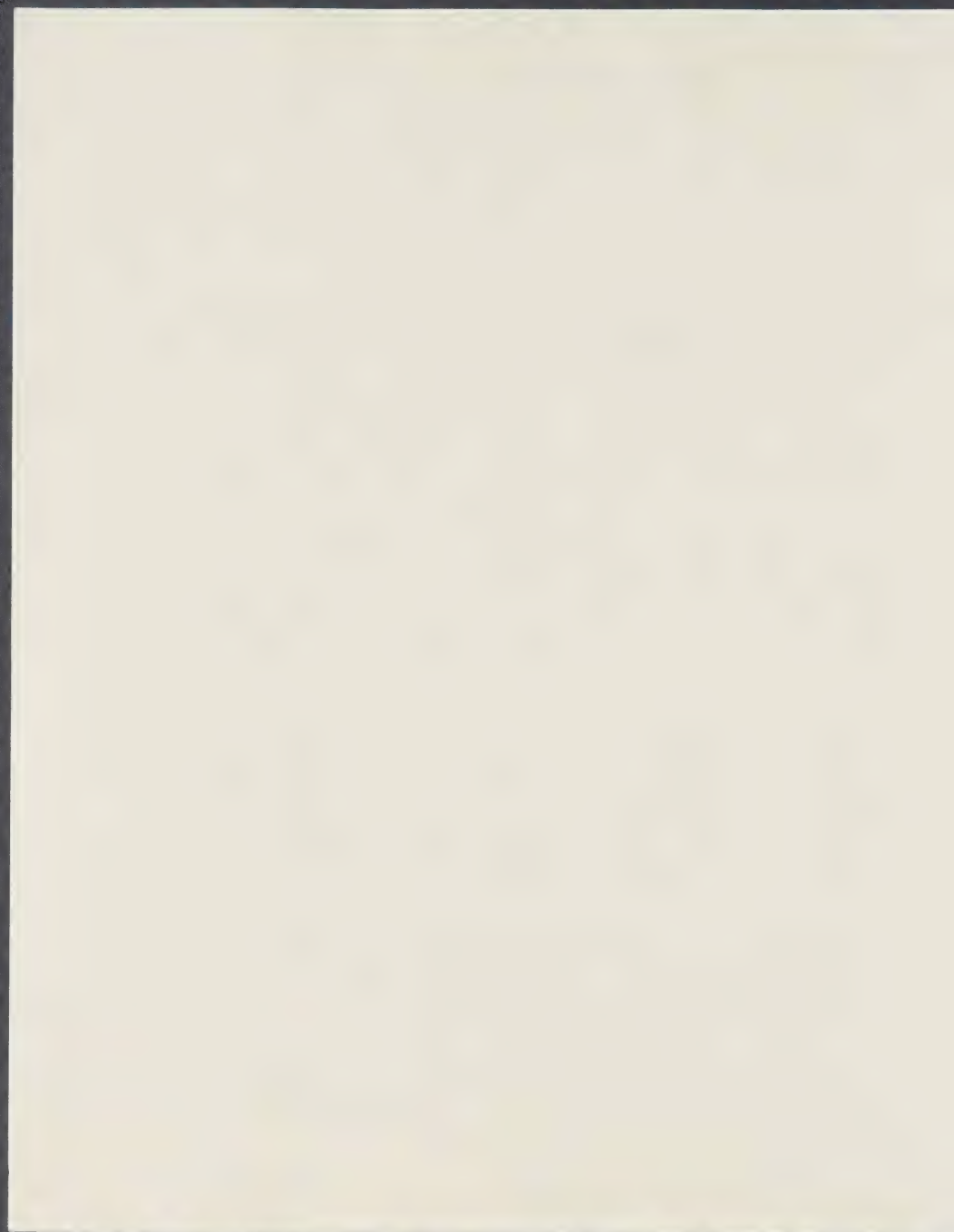
I am sorry to have let so much time elapse before reacting to the enclosed, as you had asked me to do. But, come to think of it, you were in England and I was in France (doing research) and then on grandmother assignment in Princeton.

Thank you so much for raising my awareness of the Romany issue in general and the Canadian immigration situation in particular. I must confess I was only very superficially acquainted with both. What I remember from my Czech childhood is that the Romas were always considered "cikáni", gypsies; and in Southwestern France where I lived from the Fall of 1939 till the Fall of 1945 they were "les romanichelles", camping on the edge of towns. Distrusted in both countries; considered not perhaps utterly dangerous, but unstable. I may have told you that my cousin Lída who is an Auschwitz survivor told me of their presence there which means that they too were slated by Hitler for liquidation. But everywhere - even in concentration camp - they were "the Other". Alterity also means attraction; I remember a Czech love-song by a Czech man to a gypsy woman. In short, a lot of stereotyping and mythology was - and evidently still is - attached to the Romas.

The Czech immigration law episode is deeply disturbing: many of them cannot become Czech because born in Slovakia, now a separate state. It's a form of apartheid, isn't it? Ways must be found through human rights structures to put pressure on the Czech Republic to change that aspect of the law. I must say that, personally, I do NOT go as far as to say that the existence of a criminal record should not be a reason for refusal of immigration; but there should be mechanisms to ascertain that a record of petty crime is not deliberately mounted into a reason for refusal of citizenship.

The Czechs' racial prejudice against these people is deeply rooted. One should not idealize the Czechs, I am sorry to say. Under Nazism, then Communism many of them were victims and/or heroes; but some of them are quite capable of strong ethnic hatreds (including hatred of Slovaks). They complain about the skinheads yet they tolerate their presence...

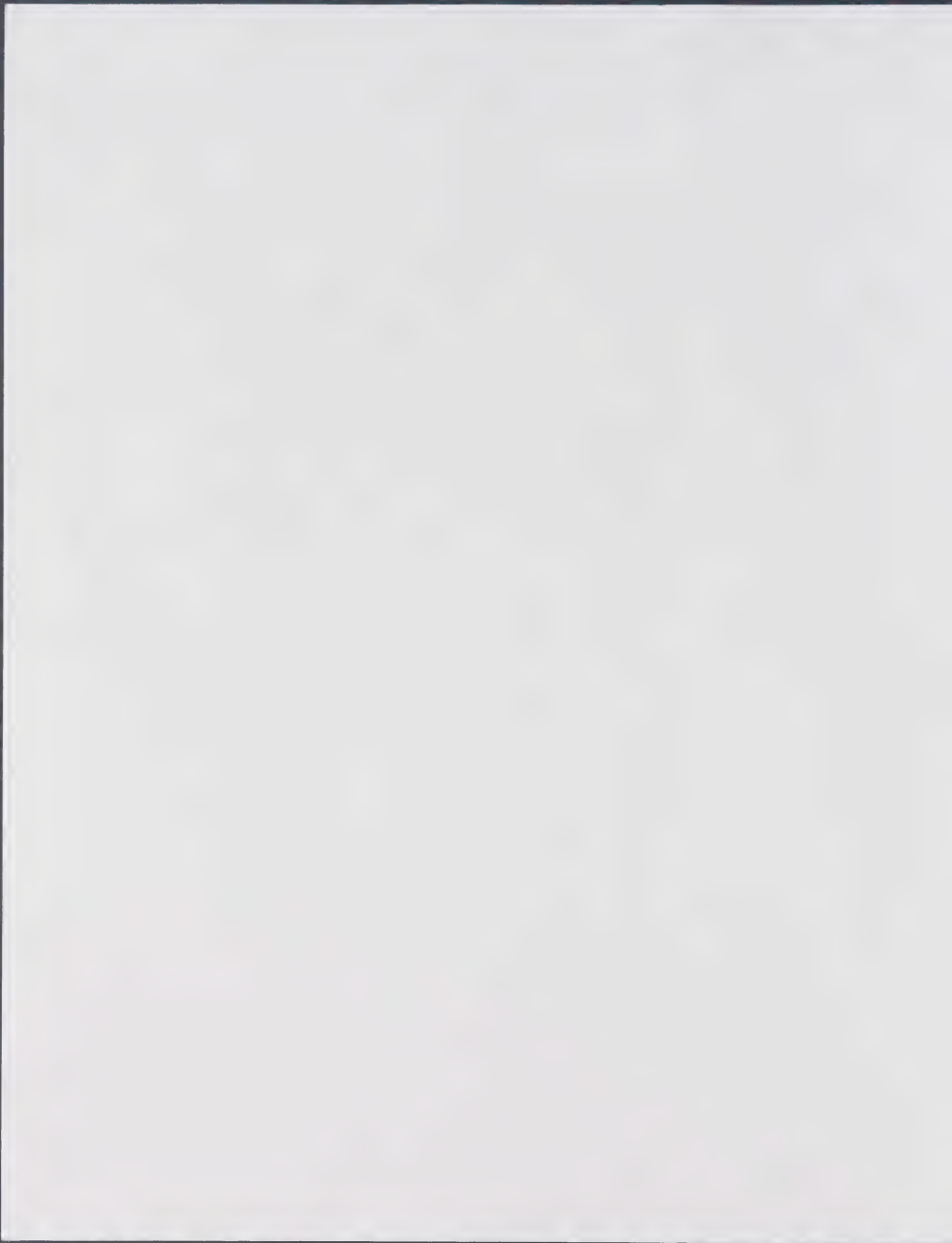
You have certainly put the issue on my agenda, so to say. There are two very small things I could do to raise awareness of all this among Canadians. Both would require time I do not have but that is pretty usual with important social issues, so tell me



whether the following ideas seem useful to you. 1. My tiny Literary Research Foundation of Canada could run a contest for the best essay on the issue with either a modest prize for the winner or prospect of publication or both. That would be a way to reach many people and instruct them about the Romas. (Have I ever told you about the Foundation? Probably not, because I did not want to exploit our friendship to try and raise money from you for the projects of the Foundation). 2. I chair a committee on "Freedom of Scholarship and Science" of the Royal Society of Canada which is basically the Society's human rights committee. In cooperation with an international network of Academies we try to protect or free from torture, imprisonment etc...people who are persecuted because of peaceful expression of dissenting opinions in various countries with nasty régimes; like Amnesty International, but concentrating on scientists etc... for the sake of efficiency. I would not mind presenting the Roma problem to my committee - perhaps with the idea of helping the Roma intellectuals who are trying to turn the situation around. What do you think? And are there things YOU wanted me to do or to help with?

Affectionately

<sup>Eva</sup>  
Eva Kushner



Prague Post

# Immigrating to Canada not as easy — or as rosy — as portrayed

■ Romanies can't expect to get on a plane and live happily ever after, officials say

By John Chipman

With thousands of Romanies (Gypsies) inquiring about immigrating to Canada, the man behind the broadcasts that triggered all the interest admitted even he is shocked by the enthusiastic response it has wrought.

"I had no idea it would cause such an explosive reaction," Josef Klima said of the Aug. 6 broadcast *Ne vlezte ani* (with your own eyes) on TV Nova. Klima said he expected to create some debate over the plight of Romanies in the Czech Republic and maybe generate some interest in Canada among Romanies, but he did not expect anything like what's happened.

The documentary has been widely criticized for providing only a superficial glance at Canadian life and skimming over the mis and hoas of the immigration process.

"That program gave an unobjective view," lamented Lucie Cernáková, spokeswoman for the Canadian Embassy, adding that Klima didn't even contact any Canadian officials. "We want people to realize that it won't be as easy as just getting on a plane in Prague and landing in Canada where you are immediately looked after and live happily" ever after.

Klima traveled to Toronto last month with a Romany family from Osirava that was emigrating to Canada. The 25-minute documentary follows the family for their first week on foreign soil, as they visit with



**Radek Conka, center, and family members buying Air France tickets to Canada at Prague's Ruzyně Airport.**

friends and relatives who have already emigrated.

"We met only satisfied people. The only complaint we ever heard was they were homesick," Klima said.

He admitted he didn't speak to any immigration officials. Klima said he planned to meet with immigration officials, but became discouraged after witnessing the bureaucratic

process involved in just getting his film crew into the country. In the end, he said, there was time to concentrate only on the Romany family. Klima added that he hopes to talk to officials if he eventually does a follow-up documentary on the Romany family.

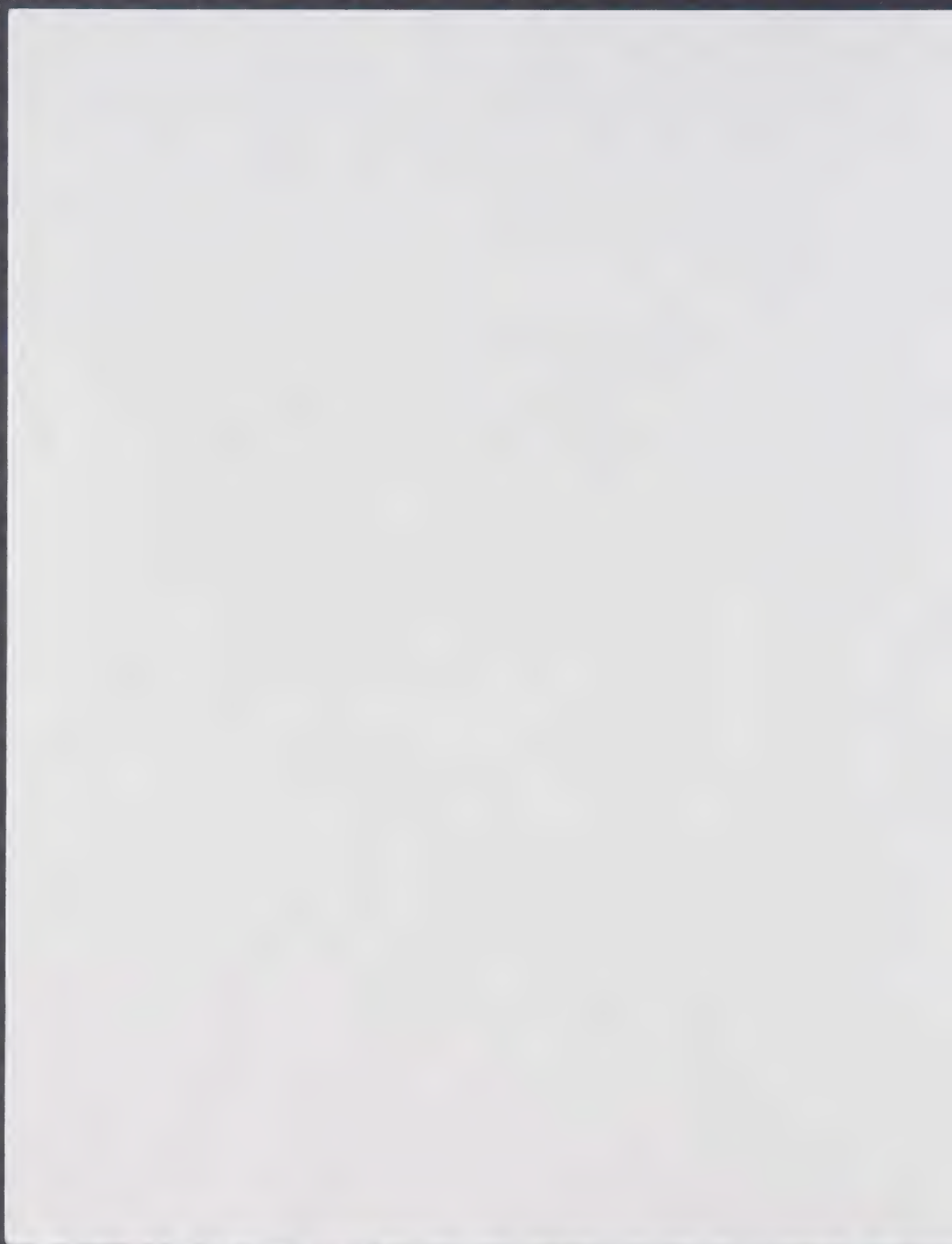
"It's important to have balance, and this certainly didn't have balance," says Milan Smid, a journalism professor at Charles

University in Prague. Smid points out that the only person Klima spoke to about the immigration process was George Kubeš, an immigration lawyer who provides legal service for, and receives fees from, emigrants.

"But TV Nova can't be blamed," Smid said. "There was already fertile soil there for this. If there weren't, it wouldn't have created such a stir."

JULIE EBERSHAW/Prague Post





debate surrounding Swiss behavior during and after World War II. Was Swiss "neutrality" at the time truly neutral?

Switzerland's uncovered role in harboring Nazi finances in its banks has provoked a much larger question that may prove decisive for Europe's future: How will the interpretation of a nation's past mold its future? In this context, Goethe's famous dictum, "Tell me who your friends are, and I shall tell you who you are," can be transposed to describe the behavior of nations: "Tell me the way in which you deal with your past, and I shall tell you who you are."

There are many ways to face the past, but one rule applies in all cases: It is much more difficult to confront a grayish past than a purely bright or dark one. In other words, it is probably easier to be British or German than to be Swiss. For the Germans, dealing with the past has paradoxically been rather easy. Obviously, there was no redeeming value in the Nazi period. Postwar Germans could only wish to make a radical break from such a totally barbaric era that ultimately brought much suffering and destruction to the Germans themselves. One can argue that because the Germans have confronted their past, they are more "vaccinat-

ed for the British to confront their wartime past, which was, after all, their finest hour.

However, if one considers most European nations, the color that prevails from the war years is gray, albeit in varying shades. The French, led by Charles de Gaulle, their greatest 20th-century statesman, have tended to rewrite their past in a positive manner. De Gaulle made them believe that because he was great, they were great also. This rewriting of history was later complemented by François Mitterrand. By recognizing his own involvement in the Vichy regime prior to his role in the Resistance, Mitterrand was implicitly saying that the majority of Frenchmen who had supported the Vichy regime were really not that bad because he had been among them. Such ambiguous messages could have only one consequence: More than 50 years after the end of the war, France has still not completely come to grips with its resistance/collaborationist past.

Nations can either recognize their pasts, rewrite them or hide them. Would it be too severe to say that the third option has characterized Austria? Kurt Waldheim's amnesia of his own wartime past epitomized his country's existentialist attitude toward its Nazi years. Nations with tragic histories, or with unclear

respective pasts. These lessons strengthen the case of those who advocate moralism in foreign policy, as opposed to those who champion a stance of absolute realpolitik. Just as with individuals, it pays for countries to recognize their sense of guilt toward others and to openly say, "I am sorry." The recent apologies from the British government to the Irish for Britain's responsibility in the famine of 1846-49 may do more for British-Irish relations than many a political negotiation. By contrast, Japan's inability to acknowledge its responsibility in the suffering and plundering of occupied Asian countries has greatly hampered its regional role in Asia. Thus, it is worthwhile, even in stark realpolitik terms, to take into account the historical and political emotions of others.

The debate that has begun with Switzerland will soon engulf other neutral countries, such as Sweden, Spain and Portugal, not to mention Turkey. The painful national confrontations that lie ahead can only lead to a more unified and prosperous Europe.

—The writer is the deputy director of the French Institute of International Relations in Paris, as well as editor of *Politique étrangère*

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## Romanies need equal opportunity

By Jud Nirenberg

As someone who has worked closely with the Romany [Gypsy] community for years, I have been receiving a lot of calls lately about the Romany "exodus" and the causes of it. I would like to now offer some explanation. There are two immediate causes of the Romanies' desire to leave, which I'll get to later, as well as a third cause that is less immediate but the most important. That third cause is the existence of a segregated society.

Let's start with cause three, then: Romanies are not equal citizens in the Czech Republic. The racism they face, in fact, is staggering. According to one survey published last year, one-third of Czechs believe that it would be a good idea to move all Romanies to a certain place and isolate them. In other words, 33 percent of those surveyed believe that some of their fellow Czechs should be selected by race, moved from their homes to a special ghetto or reservation and imprisoned there. Another one-third of respondents said that skinheads should be given more leeway to "solve" the Romany problem. That means that one-third of the Czech people think genocide, when it applies to Romanies, is beneficial.

According to studies, 65 to 75 percent of Romanies are placed in "special schools" before they reach puberty. Unless we accept that three-quarters of Romany children are born mentally challenged, this clearly shows there is a segregated school system in the Czech Republic. Justifications are not requested, thank you — only rectification. There is only one reason for three-quarters of nonwhite children to be in schools for the mentally retarded, and the reason is not a legitimate one.

In this context of bigotry and unequal education, the unemployment rate for Romanies is unknown; unofficial statistics vary from 30 to 70 percent, in a country where unemployment for whites is at about 3 percent. Czechs often suggest that the high unemployment rate is the result of Romanies being culturally opposed to work. This is a myth. While Romanies have always been less involved than whites in agriculture, there was never any time in history when Romanies' money or food simply fell from the sky. Romany tradition is one of entrepreneurship; the Romanies' communist lifestyle was one of state-enforced manual labor. Idleness is both foreign to, and humiliating for, Romanies. The reason Romanies do not work is because they have no education and are victimized by overt job discrimination. I cannot count the number of Romanies I have met who report going to a job interview only to hear that the employers' policy is "sorry, but no Gypsies."

Romanies are personae non gratae at every level. A recent study of restaurants by a Romany activist found that 40 out of 65 restaurants refused to serve Gypsies. No restaurateur in the Czech Republic, however, has ever been found guilty of racial discrimination in a court of law.

In a country where Romanies are not given any chance to work or live like others, and where children are separated to underscore that their futures will not be bright, many Romanies want to flee to a distant country they have never seen — where they have no friends and cannot speak the language. Should we be at all surprised?

Now for the less important, but more immediate, causes. Cause two: The recent flooding left many Moravian Romanies

homeless. These are unemployed or working-poor families who *must* rely on the state for new housing. The state's response has been highly inadequate. Romanies living in such housing do not believe that the state will soon help them leave the ghetto-shelters in which they've been placed. This makes emigration seem timely.

Finally, cause one, which is the least significant: A recent television documentary showed Canada as a Romany paradise, without explaining the realities of the chances for successful relocation there. The journalist who put the program together, Josef Klima, has become a convenient scapegoat for the whole situation. He does, in fact, deserve some blame. It was irresponsible reporting and did not show the full story. Klima should have known that television has a tremendous influence, and one should not show half a story to desperate people. But did he segregate the schools or society? Did he refuse to hire Romanies and then call them lazy thieves?

I have heard a lot about a certain television program and the exodus it caused. I hope that the Czech government will not think that going after one journalist will mean justice for the Romanies when basic inequalities in the Czech Republic remain. I hope that strong Romany voices like Emil Šuka, Ivan Veselý, Ladislav Bojda, and the rest will not allow themselves to be distracted by the more essential roots of the crisis by such "explanations."

—The writer lived in the Czech Republic for more than two years, working at a Romany organization, the Dr. Rajko Djuric Foundation; he now works in Budapest at the Regional Roma Participation Program

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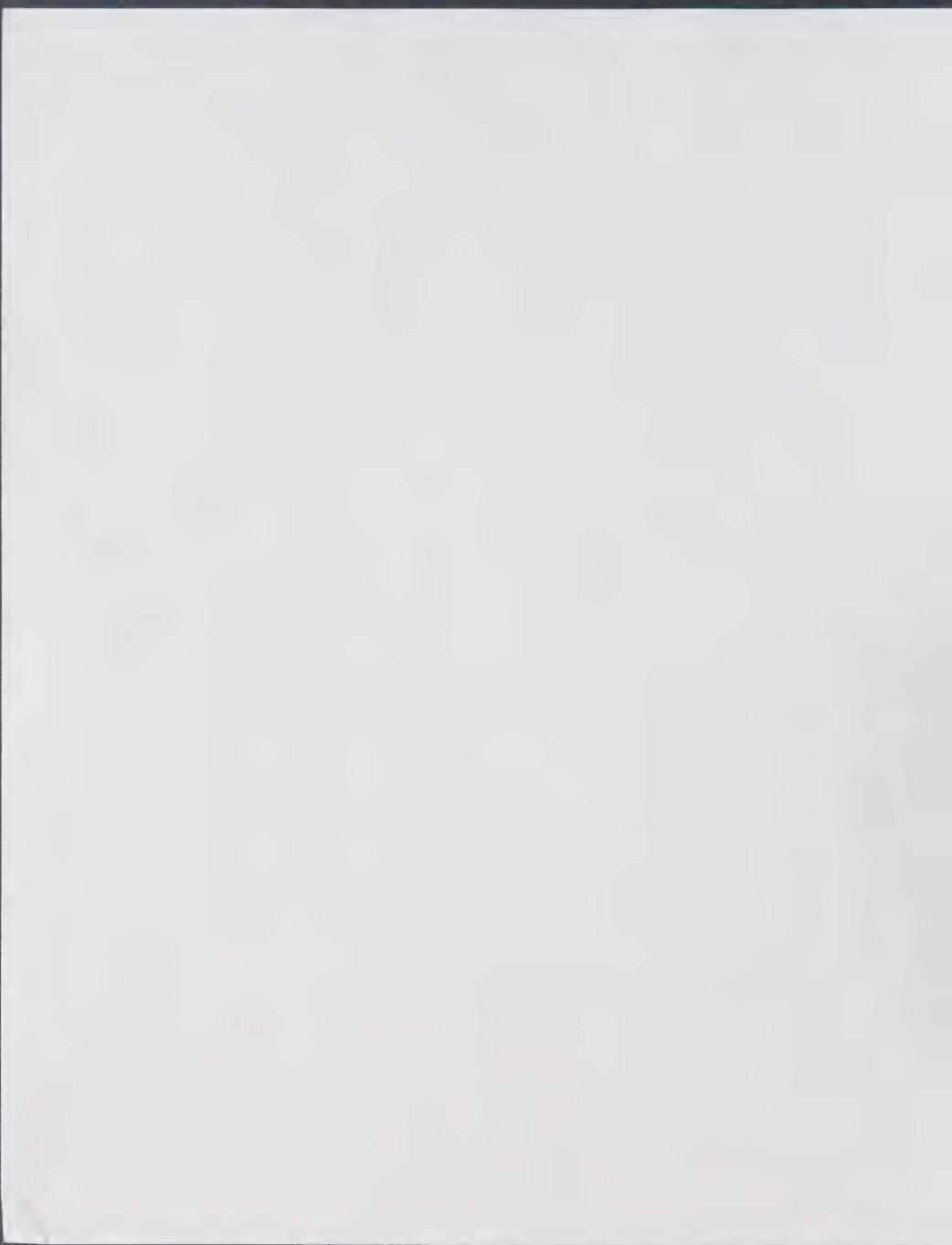
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Summer  
tourists'  
guide

# PRAGUE POST

INSIDE

"world we live in and the world around us"

September 17 — 23, 1997 40 Kč

## Smuggling case Judge tells cops



HEATHER FAULKNER/The Prague Post  
er Scherbinin goes into court to receive an eight-year sentence.

ws following the sentencing and said he will appeal his conviction.  
ng "I definitely do not like the ruling of the court. I feel innocent. I am a consultant on the role of a consultant on this case. I was not interested in the origin of the uranium because I wasn't trading it. I was only being asked

Belarus and outlined plans for smuggling the uranium. In June 1994, the two men imported from Poland containers with 2,730 grams of enriched uranium with the intention of transporting it to Germany. The uranium was brought into the Czech Republic on a train in metal containers and then hidden for about six months in

## Expert: Gov't ducks blame on Romanies

By Michele Legge

The author of a government report critical of state policy toward Romanies (Gypsies) living in the Czech Republic sharply criticized the Cabinet for glossing over the problems and refusing to acknowledge government failures in solving them.

But others say that despite the Cabinet's rejection of the report, the government is finally showing signs that it is beginning to give the issue the attention it deserves.

Viktor Dobal, deputy to Minister Without Portfolio Pavel Bratinka and author of the report, declared that he will resign over the rejection of his study and added that the Cabinet apparently wanted him to sugarcoat its failings.

"Screw the government," Dobal declared. "I tried very hard to point out what positive steps the government had taken. But I found out that previous obligations [aimed at improving Romany conditions] were not fulfilled. I am afraid that government doesn't really want to solve this issue."

The state-commissioned report contains an analysis of the position of Romanies in Czech society and recommends changes within the Romany and wider Czech community to alleviate the group's socio-economic handicaps. It was compiled over six months, but gained more attention recently following an exodus of Czech Romanies to Canada prompted by a TV documentary screened in August that depicted an easy, racist-free life there.

Bratinka, who is also chairman of the National Council for Minorities and the initiator of the report, said the Cabinet was not pleased by the negative tone and nonstandard style of the report, which drew information from nongovernmental sources.

"According to the Cabinet, the report was written from the other side of the river," Bratinka said. "What was missing were descriptions of what the government has done in the matter, and its effects. But I think these issues need to be addressed by pouring clear wine in a glass. The Cabinet has to face how things really are."

See ROMANY on Page A4

## Top ODS man airs failings of his party





# Survive Romany Realists



of Brčko Sept. 14.

CTK

to boycott threats from Zagreb and Belgrade.

Several observers and commentators say that the real challenge will begin after the votes are counted. The results of the voting is likely to reverse numerous gains made in the war and the subsequent ethnic cleansing. It will be up to international peacekeeping troops to place the newly elected officials in power, and international troops will be left to implement the results of the vote.

— Compiled by Ross Larsen from Reuters and other sources.

exchange proposal violated a friendship treaty between the two countries.

As expected, Mečiar's proposal drew sharp criticism from Slovak political parties representing the interests of ethnic Hungarians, according to Czech news agency ČTK.

## CONT. from Page A1

Tomáš Chalupa, spokesman for Prime Minister Václav Klaus, announced after the Cabinet's Sept. 10 session that the Cabinet does not feel it contains concrete examples and concrete solutions.

No other Cabinet minister was available for comment on the matter at press time. On Friday, Sept. 17, the Cabinet will discuss the establishment of a mini-secretariat, recommended in the report, which would act as mediator between Romanies and the state.

Bratinka, who is with the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA), the junior member of the ruling three-party coalition headed by Klaus, refused to say whether he believes the government is seriously committed to solving Romany issues.

However, he said he feels obliged to follow the Cabinet's orders and will thus enlarge the material with reports from other ministers. He expected this task would be completed by the end of October.

Ivan Gabal, a member of the board of the Czech Helsinki Committee, which has been vocal in its criticism of the government's stance on Romany issues, was confident that the Cabinet recognized the necessity to deal with the problem. He said he believes the prime minister is aware that he can't afford to play down the problem.

Furthermore, Gabal, who reviewed an earlier draft of the report, said he agreed that it had not sufficiently addressed the relevant issues, and said it had even taken a paternalistic approach to the problem.

"The government has to look at particular, long-term policies, and bring significant changes. From this point of view, this first report did not sufficiently offer solutions," he said.

Ondrej Giňa, a Romany leader who is a member of the council and who contributed to the report, said he remained optimistic about the government's will to address the problem.

"The most important thing is that they have started to pay attention," he said. "Now the government has to solve how to elaborate and work out the technical details involved in solving the problems."

Approximately 800 Czechs have applied for asylum in Canada this year, according to reports from Canadian immigration officials and Czech news agency ČTK. In 1996, there were 189 claims for asylum filed by Czechs.

A researcher from the Canadian Refugee and Immigration board will arrive in Prague on Friday, Sept. 19, for a two-week stay to do research on the situation of the Romany community in the Czech Republic. The researcher will use results of the study to determine the fate of the Romanies who have applied for asylum in Canada, said Canadian Embassy spokeswoman Lucie Černáková.

## ODS

CONT. from Page A1

tion to the publication of the material in the media before it had been discussed internally. But Macek defended his going public.

"I thought it was better to make it public because this is not secret material," he told *The Prague Post* Sept. 11, adding that he had first sent the document to all the members of the ODS executive committee.

Macek denied press reports that he had toned down the original version of his document and deleted sharp criticism of Prime Minister Václav Klaus, the ODS chairman. And he refused to portray Klaus as the prime culprit in the party's fall from political grace.

"Klaus was not the only one responsible for the direction of privatization," he said. "There were at least 10 other ODS leaders, including myself."

Klaus himself remained uncharacteristically reserved, saying that he agreed with only some of Macek's conclusions and was surprised that the media had received the

when the ODS executive council meets Sept. 26 in Znojmo, southern Moravia, to discuss his comments. "It is normal party life to do something and then get attacked for it," he said.

According to Jonathan Stein, a political analyst at the Prague-based Institute for EastWest Studies, Macek deserves praise, not censure, for his analysis.

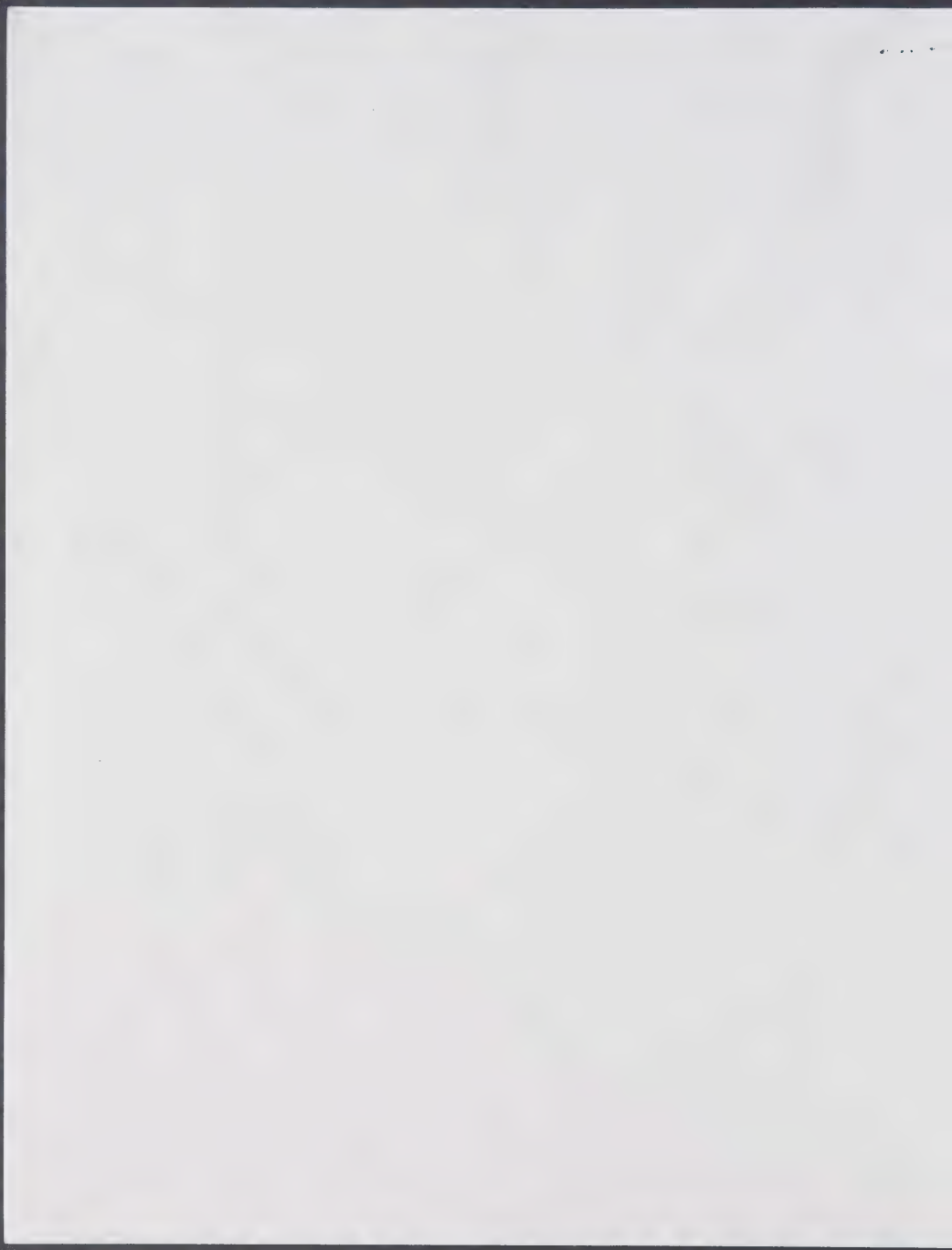
"This is good criticism," Stein said. "It confirms that criticism made outside the party is beginning to sink in."

Stein called the Macek critique "an important step for the ODS. The question now is, what do they do with it and how much support will it have?"

Stein said that Macek's suggestions stand a good chance of being accepted by ODS members. "There's probably a sizeable group within the ODS that feels that self-criticism is necessary, and we will probably see some personnel changes."

One of these changes may be the removal of Klaus, Stein said. "The consensus is that he's finished. The question is when. This may be a first step."

One ODS source, however, suggested that





12 years ago in  
Prague Post  
8-14, 1992

former chairman of the state-owned daily and the key figure of the 1968 "Prague Spring" remains in intensive medical care after a stroke and broken ribs.

Some call a drive to the state-owned daily into an independent press a victory for the Slovak government at a criminal investigation in connection with the state-owned daily.

They have cheered the coming of the Slovak nation and the end of a repressive, totalitarian regime. The republic's substantial press freedom has been a source of pride and a source of expression for the people. They express fears that the state-owned daily will be taken over by the government.

# Proposals on Romany action goes to Cabinet

By Michele Leggio

Romany (Gypsy) leaders hope that a report by the state's Council for Nationalities and Ethnic Minorities will be a springboard for government action toward alleviating discord between Czechs and Romanies.

The report recommends creating a government-affiliated mini-office that would act as mediator between Romanies and the state. It also focuses on the need to further amend the country's controversial citizenship law, improve multicultural education and take steps to support Romany national identity.

The government-commissioned report was compiled over six months by Viktor Gohal, head of the council and deputy to Minister Without Portfolio Pavel Branka. It analyzes socio-economic issues within the local Romany community, and critiques the attitude of state officials working with the minority. The report also provides specific suggestions to relevant ministers, which, if undertaken, could ease long-running problems within the Czech Romany community.

The Cabinet is scheduled to appraise the report on Wednesday, Sept. 10. "This report is very important for us," said Ondrej Gifa, a Romany leader who

is also a member of the council. "We hope the government will take it seriously and approve the steps."

Gifa hopes that the state will adopt the report's most crucial measures. He emphatically supported the creation of the mini-office. "There are currently no Romany representatives in government. Premier Vaclav Klaus pledged support for the mini-office proposal when he met with Romany leaders in August. In that month, problems within the Czech Romany community were spotlighted worldwide when many Czech Romanies broadcast in a TV documentary showing a racist-free, easy life for Romanies in that country. About 100 Czech Romanies applied for asylum in Canada in August, according to Canadian immigration officials. In 1996, 189 Czechs applied for refugee status in Canada.

Opposition leader Milos Zeman has also voted support for the report's proposals.

Gifa urged the state to adopt measures aimed at clamping down on the widespread segregation of Romany children into special schools, and encouraging job training for Romanies. The council's report, Gohal said, addresses how to return to Romanies their sense of national identity by sup-

porting their national press and cultural activities. "This is rather important because when people know that they belong to a community they're proud of it," Gohal said.

Attitudes of the majority toward Romanies also need reshaping, Gohal said. The report recommends that police recruits be screened for traces of racism, and that the media be encouraged to publish more positive takes on Romany issues.

Despite recent assertions from Deputy Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda that the Czech government is not planning to change its citizenship law, the report also suggested a liberalization of this law. "Our recommendation is that everybody who has been granted permanent residency in the Czech Republic since Dec. 31, 1992, could get Czech citizenship," Gohal said. He said it would be a big change in the law, "but it is not accepted yet."

The Czech citizenship law came under recent scrutiny from the Council of Europe for being one of the toughest on the continent, and for discriminating against Romanies. Although amendments to the law in 1996 loosened restrictions, this country is the only one that demands a clean criminal record as a prerequisite for citizenship.

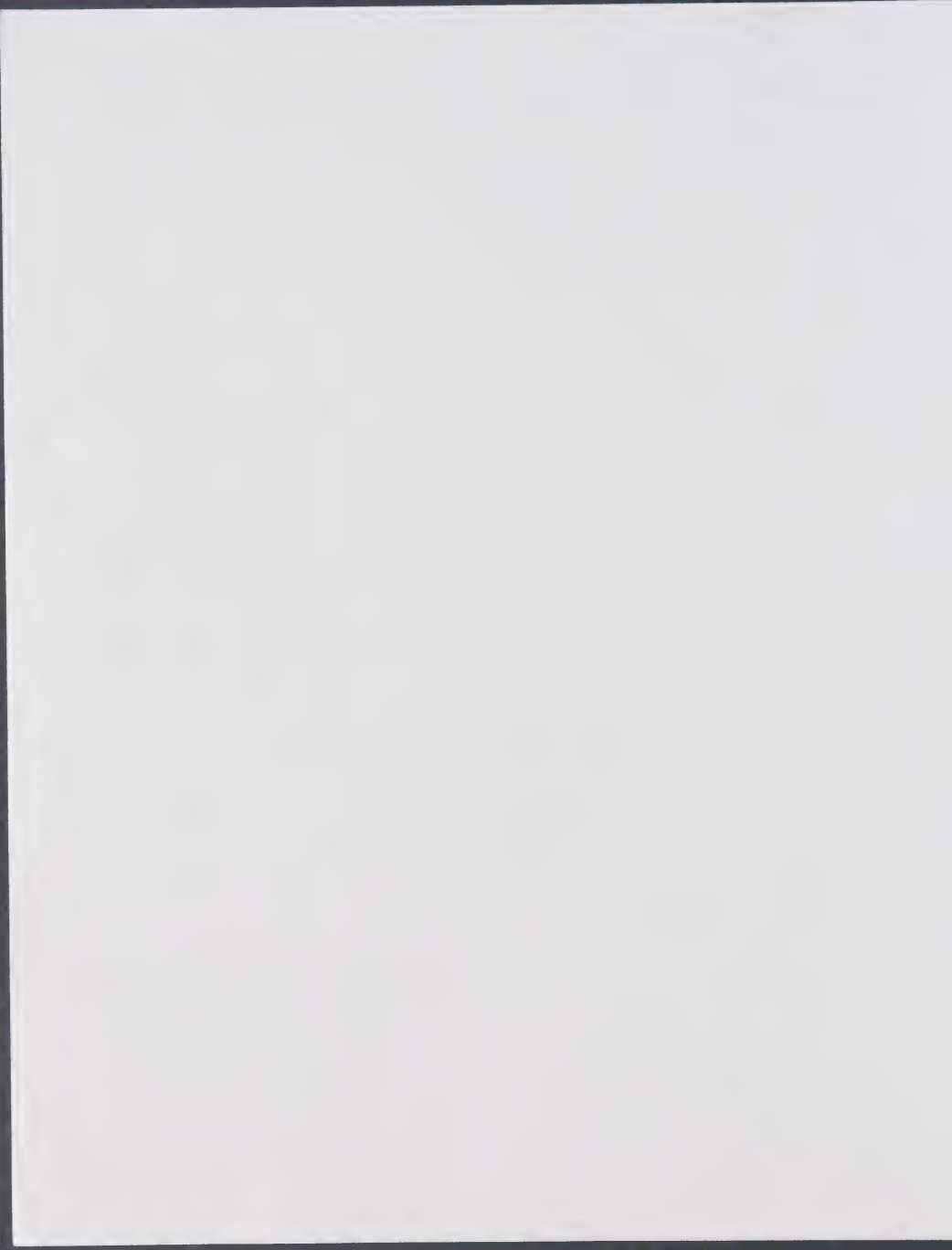


A familiar sight this summer: Two corners of the Florence metro station during a recent protest.

## Latest conspiracy Cabbies behavior system bomb

By Lenka Studnicková

Police are stepping up efforts to identify callers making repeated bomb threats in the Prague metro system and elsewhere. Since the beginning of July, there





# Romannies awakened to the Canadian dream

By Michele Legge and John Chipman

OSTRAVA, northern Moravia—It's late afternoon in this gritty steel town in the Czech Republic's eastern reaches. Marie sits with a group of women on a stool in front of the crumbling public-housing block where they live. Children play in the dirt around their feet. The women assert that there is no running water, no gas, no electricity and that they have no work. They are Romannies (Gypsies), and this is Ostrava.

Romanny community leaders estimate that there are 30,000 Romannies here, and that 60 per cent of them now dream of starting a new life in Canada. News spread like wildfire after a documentary broadcast earlier this month on TV Nova, the most-watched Czech television station, painted Canada as a utopia for Romannies. What do they hope to find there?

"Freedom," Marie declared. "We don't think we'll get rich, but we want to live without being afraid of going outside, without being afraid of what will happen to our children."

One of Marie's male Romanny neighbours added: "I really believe that if we get there, get jobs and say clear of trouble, we will not face the same problems we do here."

Sentiments such as these have been common since the Aug. 6 broadcast of *Narvástí detí* (With Your Own Eyes) depicted an easy life for Romanny emigrants in



Canada beckons as a land of hope to the Romannies of Ostrava. Marie, feeding her 9-month old son in front of her apartment building, anticipates a better life for her children. (JULIE DENESKOVÁ/PRAGUE POST)

Canada. Since then, the Canadian Embassy and airlines in Prague have been inundated with calls from Romannies eager to make the move.

However, at least 17 Romannies seeking asylum had returned to Prague by Aug. 16 after being turned back by immigration officials in Canada, the daily *Lidové noviny* reported.

An Air Canada spokesperson said the airline had received hundreds of calls inquiring about

flights to Canada — 90 per cent of them from Romannies.

Lucie Cernáková, a spokeswoman with the Canadian Embassy in Prague, estimated that it received 200 phone calls a day after the broadcast. The inquiries continued, reaching more than 400 on Aug. 12, a day after the mayor of Ostrava-

Maránské Hory announced that the town council would pay two-thirds of the airfare — in exchange for the Romannies' flats.

"We have two groups of people — Gypsies and whites — that live together, but can't and don't want to. So why can't one group take the first step toward finding a solution?" Lana Janáková, the mayor, told the daily *Mladá fronta Dnes*. "I don't think it's racist. We just want to help the Gypsies."

Despite initial interest, Deputy Mayor Jiří Jizevský said that not a

See ROMANNIES on Page A3

# Slow response puts Euro-flood aid at

By Siegfried Morkowicz

Indecision by Czech leaders could cost the country billions in much-needed flood relief at a time when the government is straining the strapped state budget to help rebuild areas devastated by the worst flooding in modern history.

The Council of Europe's Social Development Fund has offered upwards of DM 100 million, or almost 1.9 billion Kč (\$55.9 million), but the funds are languishing in Strasbourg while Czech ministers decide whether to become a member of the fund, a precondition for aid. The offer was made July 25 in a letter to Miloš Zeman, the chairman of the Czech Chamber of Deputies and leader of the opposition Social Democratic Party, from Leon Fischer, the president of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly.

It offers to "help with the rebuilding of the stricken regions of the Czech Republic" and "potential action to the Fund's" and "drives attention, particularly with regard to the financing of urgent projects such as ... low-cost housing, health pro-

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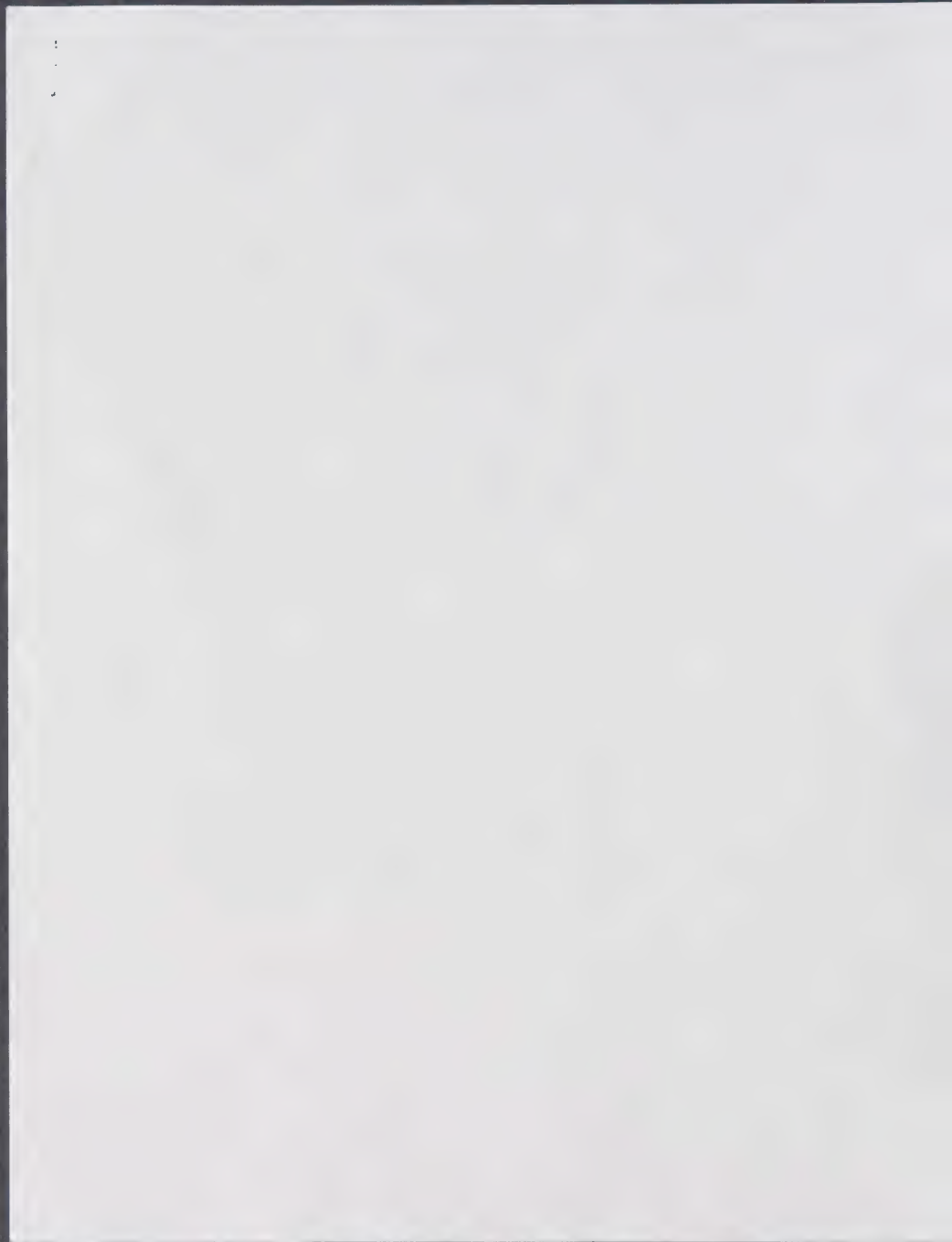
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# Anti-foreigner draws critic's

By Arie Farnam

In the aftermath of two recent shootings allegedly involving foreigners, the Czech press has been inundated with anti-foreigner opinion columns and radio-cast

dece permits and submit in criminal records. Observations would determine excessive time







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## INSIDE

## LATE NEWS

**Albright visits Terezin**

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visited the former Nazi detention camp at Terezin Aug. 31 during a private trip to the Czech Republic, according to a source at the camp. Albright, who was born in Czechoslovakia, arrived in the Czech Republic over the weekend, according to another source. U.S. officials, most of whom were off for the American-holiday Labor Day weekend, were not available to confirm or comment on the visit. Albright learned earlier this year that some of her relatives were among Czech Jews killed during the Holocaust. She went to Prague's Jewish Quarter during her brief visit July 14, but did not go to Terezin then.

Albright is staying at U.S. Ambassador Jenonne Walker's residence in Prague.

## BUSINESS

**To be, or IPB?**

Will too many auditors spoil the sell-off of Investiční a poštovní banka? **PAGE A5**



HN-Wood Index

Aug. 22-29

US\$ cash middle rate,

Sept. 1 (FP)

Plus a rerun of part of our list of Prague's largest language schools and Prague Stock Exchange listings. **PAGES A5-7**

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## HUMAN RESOURCES

Stress management: the West's newest export. **Pages A11-12**

## WEATHER

Proverbs for this month say "Warm September days are good for fruit and grapes," and "September will not be able to bake what August didn't catch to cook."

Mean monthly temperatures for September are forecast to be a bit higher and precipitation lower than seasonal values.

A ridge of high pressure will be interrupted by a slight cold front on Friday, Sept. 5. **Pages A11-12**

# Did state ever stop sterilizing Romany women?

By Ross Larson

Recent revelations that Scandinavian countries and Canada allegedly pursued policies of ethnic purification have brought new attention to reports that the Czechoslovak state systematically sterilized its "socially weaker" population during the communist regime and possibly after.

Investigations by the dissident group Charter 77 in the mid-1980s and early 1990s, and by the international human rights organization Helsinki Watch in 1996, found that the Czechoslovak state had offered cash payments, barter and even apartments to entice women — many of them Romany (Gypsy) — to be sterilized "in the interests of a healthy nation."

According to witness accounts cited by the organizations, other Romany women were sterilized — without their knowledge or permission — when they came to the hospital to give birth or have a gynecological operation performed.

About 5,000 sterilizations were carried out annually in Czechoslovakia. That number fell to about 2,000 after 1989.

The Helsinki Watch report cites several cases, including one in which a Romany woman in the eastern Slovak town of Krompachy went into the hospital there for an abortion. She was told that the operation would make her temporarily infertile, and she was told to sign a paper before the operation proceeded. When it was over, other women at the hospital told her she had been sterilized.

The woman told Helsinki Watch that when she complained, the doctor slapped her across the face and said, "How many Gypsies do you want to bring to this republic? Hitler was a prick, because he didn't kill all of you. Do you want to overwhelm the entire republic?"

Helsinki Watch also interviewed a doctor in Most, northern Bohemia, who said "socially weak" mothers could easily be sterilized under the pretext of another medical procedure.

"When you see how these Gypsies multiply and you see that it is a population of an inferior quality, and when you look at the huge sums that had to be paid for the care of these children, it's understandable," the doctor told the organization.

The report goes on to say that "it is not disputed that in the 1970s, state agents — social workers and medical professionals — took exceptional measures to prevent the Roma from breeding. Material inducements were a popular method. Sometimes Romany women would be offered cash in return for being sterilized. Sometimes a sort of barter was employed; for example, the state might furnish a Romany a flat as its side of the bargain."

According to several sources, complaints were filed with the legal authorities both before and after the revolution and no action has been taken.

Dr. David Marx, assistant to Deputy

See EUGENICS on Page A3



According to police officials, 75 beggars line the street summer months, creating an image problem.

# City aims to clean up streets of beggars

By Michele Leggo

The young blind couple stands, with their backs against a wall, jingling a plastic cup half-filled with coins as the mobs of tourists jostle through the streets of Prague. For this couple, and for many of the city's panhandlers, begging pays the bills — and pays them well.

Prague's beggars can earn as much as 30,000 Kč (\$880) a



Human-rights activist Václav Trojan, a member of the Helsinki Citizens' Assembly in the Czech Republic, said it is clear from the Charter 77 reports — one in the mid-1980s and one in 1990 — that the policy existed. However, he said he hadn't seen any evidence that the policy has been carried out officially or unofficially since the November 1989 revolution.

"What could and should be done is to find some compensation," Trojan said. "But so far, no one has really tried to look into this."

The Helsinki Watch report was inconclusive as to whether any official or semi-official policy still exists. However, it said an environment persists in both republics in which Romanies are considered ethnically inferior, and this could encourage doctors to act on their own.

## Eugenics

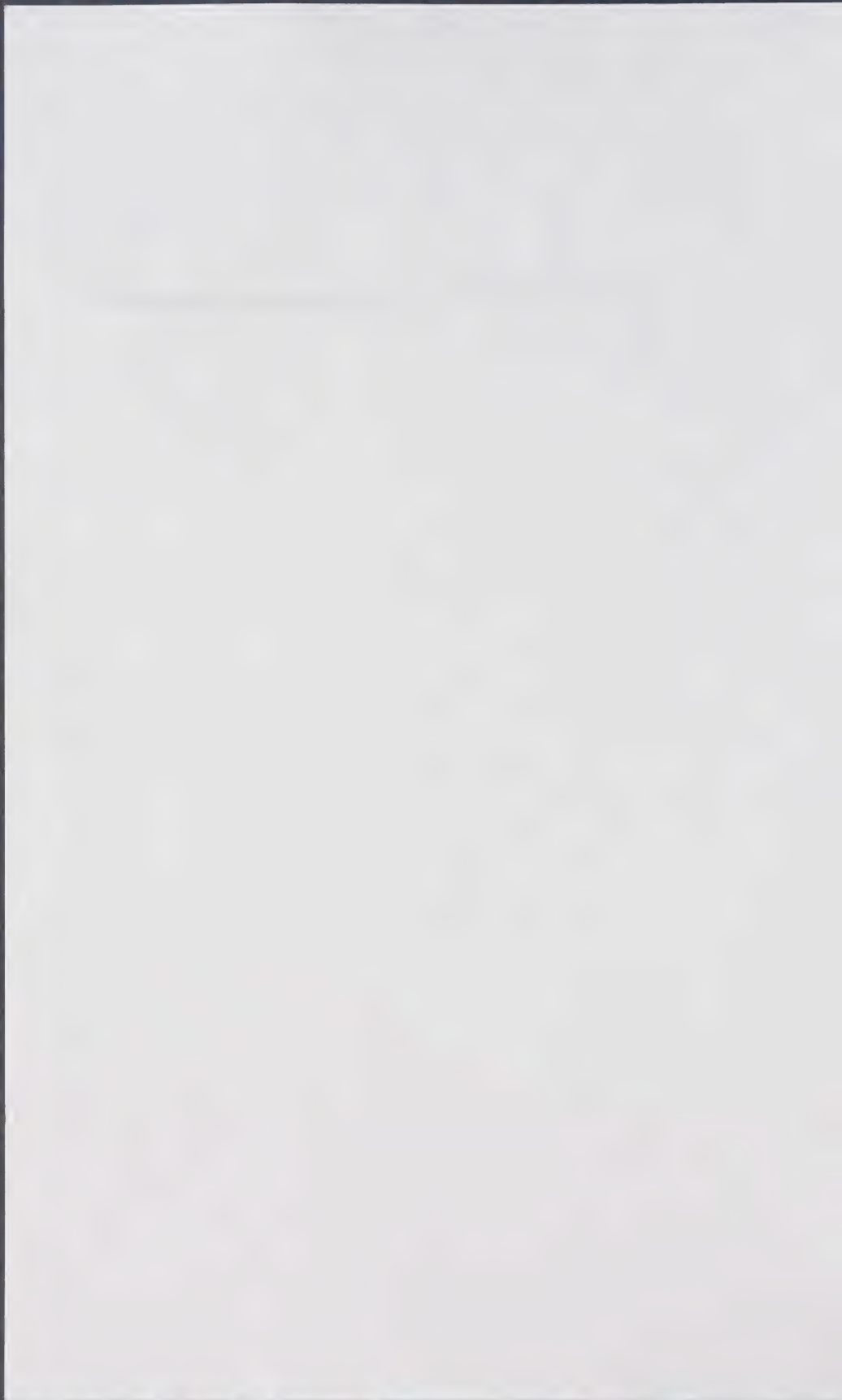
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Health Minister Miroslav Čerba, said that to his knowledge, the Health Ministry has never acknowledged that the former government conducted such an initiative. He is a member of a special committee that has been formed to investigate the issue. He said that so far he knows only what he has learned through the media.

Health Ministry spokeswoman Markéta Soukupová said the issue is "on the edge of our interest" because of other problems in health care that are more pressing.

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# Czech officials accused of faking police records to hinder asylum

By Michele Leggo

George Kubes, the Czech-Canadian lawyer representing several dozen Czech Romanians applying for asylum in Canada, claims that Czech immigration authorities are trying to hinder his clients' chances of gaining refugee status there.

The lawyer's remarks followed the complaint of one Czech Roman (Gypsy), Josef Banom, who applied for refugee status in Canada in May. Banom accused Czech authorities of falsifying documents to show he has a criminal record, thus stripping his chances of being granted asylum in Canada.

"The Czech Republic has created these criminal offenses purely to discredit my client," Kubes was reported saying Aug. 25 by Czech news agency CTK.

Banom said Canadian immigration officials told him that they had received information indicating that he had a criminal record in the Czech Republic. The Roman told CTK that he had never been in trouble with the police, other than a minor scuffle in 1990 that ended up on his police record even though he was not charged. Banom added that his remarks were supported by Czech court documents, which his father retrieved after the allegations were made earlier this month.

Kubes blamed officials from the Czech Embassy for the phony criminal record. He added that he was outraged that the embassy had allegedly suggested that he was personally responsible for the wave of Czech Romanies currently vying for a new life in Canada.

Nora Jurkovičová, a spokeswoman with the Czech Embassy in Canada, said the embassy categorically rejects Kubes' statements, CTK reported.



Canadian skinheads shouted fascist slogans in Scarborough, a Toronto suburb, where some Czech Romanies are staying in a motel.

"There has been absolutely no communication between the Czech Embassy in Ottawa and the Canadian authorities regarding Josef Banom's criminal record," Jurkovičová said.

Huguette Shoulice, a spokeswoman for Canadian Citizenship and Immigration in Ottawa, said she could not speak about individual claims for refugee status in Canada.

Shoulice did say, however, that asylum can be denied only when claimants have had jail sentences of 10 or more years, have been convicted of a crime in Canada or are fleeing a court case in their home countries.

Statistics from Canadian Immigration show that 38 Czechs were deported in the first half of 1997. Reasons range from simple denials of claims to overstaying visas. In 1996, 36 Czechs were deported from Canada. Ninety Czechs arrived in Canada between Aug. 22 and 26 of this year, Shoulice said most of these new arrivals were Romanies, but she declined to comment on how many would likely be granted asylum. In 1996, 189 Czechs filed for refugee status in Canada. Up until Aug. 12 this year, 419 Czechs had already applied.

## Canadians protest Romanies

By Michele Leggo

About two dozen Canadian skinheads, several concealing their faces beneath scarves, protested outside suburban Toronto's Ildo Motel, where several Czech Romanies (Gypsies) requesting asylum in Canada are being housed.

Bearing Canadian, Nazi and Iron Cross flags, as well as placards with statements such as "Canada Is Not a Trash Can" and "Out, Gypsies, Out!" — the demonstrators marched on the sidewalk outside the motel, while horrified Romanies and other passers-by looked on.

"It was horrible, these kids with a Nazi flag," Stella Kryzanoski, a resident of the area, told a reporter from *The Toronto Star*. "There were Gypsies at a bus stop, confused and frightened, I walked across the road with them. [But] it wasn't anything really, just a symbolic walk."

One 17-year-old Czech Romanian, who wanted to be identified only as Julia, said, "In the Czech Republic, there are skinheads who say bad things about Gypsies. We came to Canada to get away from that."

Her family and other Romanies are staying in the motel awaiting the outcome of asylum claims. "There are reportedly about 500 Czech Romanies in Canada requesting refugee status, citing racial discrimination at home."

Julia Lovell, a member of the International Union of Romanies, told Czech news agency CTK that regardless of this protest, Canada is a country where people of different colors can live together in peace. She added that outbreaks of racial intolerance are extremely rare in Canada.

Walter Johnovich, one of the protest organizers, said that the demonstration "were not an organized gang." "We're just skinheads from all over the place uniting to fight the Gypsies," he told the *Star*.

Lovell said that in light of recent revelations about the plight of Czech Romanies, many Canadians believe their government should re-evaluate its economic ties with the Czech Republic and impose sanctions. Lovell suggested that sanctions be imposed for as long as Czech Romanies continue to live under what she described as a system of apartheid that deprives them of equal opportunities.

## Czech citizenship law under fire

By Siegfried Morkowitz

When the Czech Republic was born out of the breakup of Czechoslovakia, Emil Cina decided to apply for Czech citizenship. After all, he was born in Prague and had lived here all of his 38 years. But he was told that, according to the then-new Czech citizenship law, he was not eligible for citizenship because he did not have a clean criminal record for the preceding five years.

The law that frustrated Cina and thousands of other Romanies (Gypsies) in their quest for Czech citizenship will apparently remain on the books despite continued criticism by international human rights groups and, most recently, U.S. lawmakers, that it violates fundamental principles of human rights.

On Aug. 28, Deputy Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda told two members of the Council of Europe (CE) Parliament that the government was not planning to change its citizenship law. Svoboda's statement echoed comments made by Prime Minister Václav Klaus Aug. 25 in

response to a letter sent by U.S. Senator Alfonse D'Amato and Representative Christopher Smith, the chairman and vice-chairman, respectively, of the U.S. Congress' Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Klaus said statements in the letter condemning the Czech citizenship law were "simplistic and inaccurate."

The law has been controversial since its inception in 1993, largely because of its stipulations. One is the manner in which Czech and Slovak citizenship was decided after the 1993 breakup of the federation.

According to Marta Miklušáková, a consultant with the Prague-based Citizenship Project of the Helsinki Committee, the law simply took over a 1969 citizenship law that stipulated that internal citizenship would be determined by the place of birth of the applicant, or of his or her parents, before 1954.

"Most of the Romanies born immediately after the Second World War were born in Slovakia, because almost all the Czech Romanies had been exterminated in the war,"

Miklušáková said. After the war, however, waves of Romanies moved to the Czech Republic to settle areas vacated by Sudeten Germans or to augment the labor force.

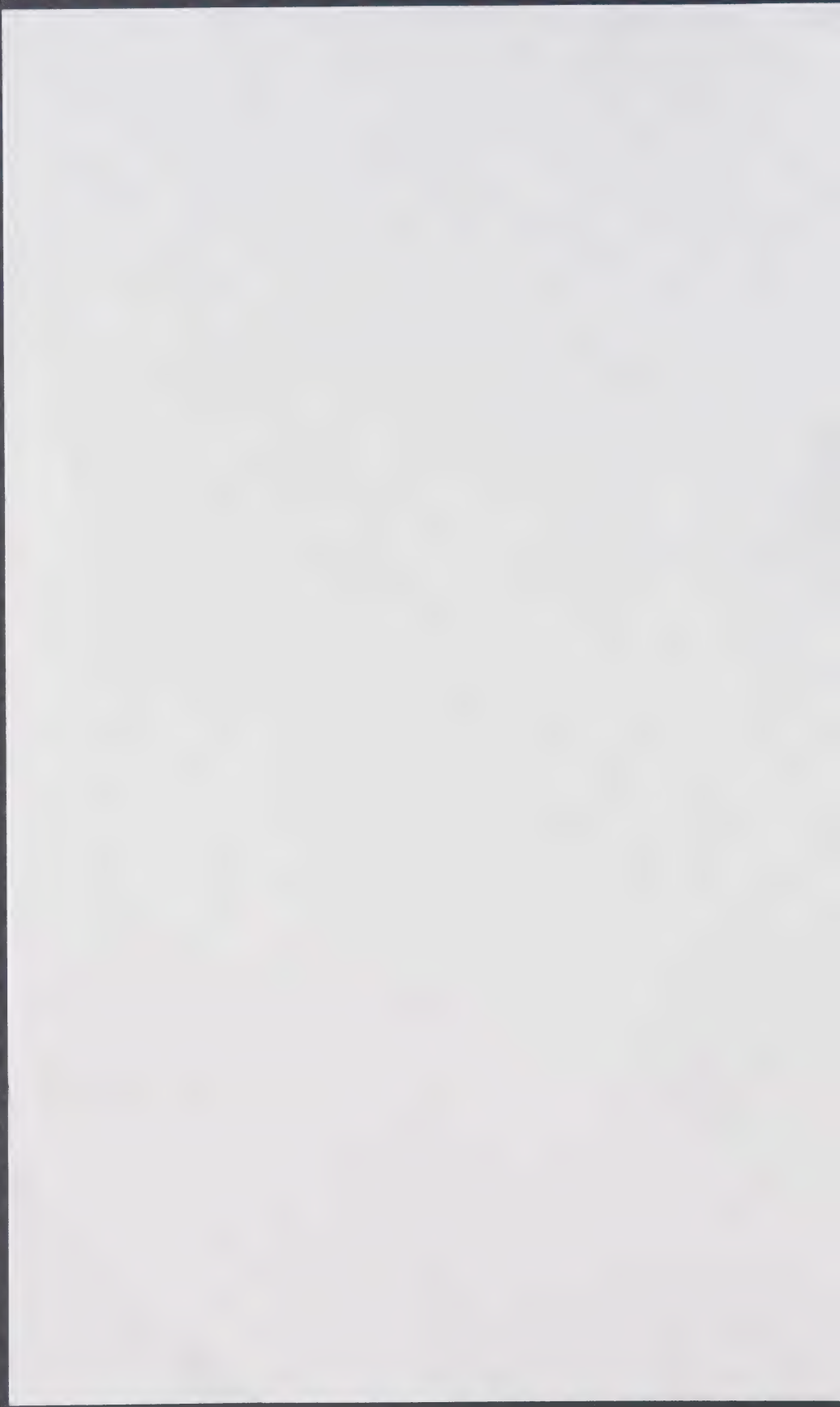
As a result, many Romanies living in the Czech Republic today and considered Slovak citizens by the state cannot speak Slovak and have never set foot in Slovakia.

Radwail Noutček, the head of the liaison office in Prague of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, said this citizenship criterion was faulty. "We suggest the criteria of a genuine link with an area," he said. "If you have more links with the Czech Republic, you should have the possibility, with no conditions, to become a Czech citizen."

The second aspect of the law that has drawn fire is the condition that frustrated Cina, who had been convicted of petty theft, among other crimes. The CSCE letter specifically criticized the requirement for a clean criminal record, calling it, "in effect, an ex post facto criminal penalty in violation of international human rights law."



*The British International  
School of Prague*





# THE PRAGUE POST

Aug. 27 - Sep. 2 1997

"The world we live in and the world around us"

## Fleeing Romanies find no welcome wagon in Canada

By Michele Legge

After the first wave of Czech Romanies emigrating to Canada washed up on its shore, a trickle returned home — disillusioned, but not without hope.

In the week following Aug. 14, more than 30 Romanies (Gypsies) who flew to Toronto hoping to apply for refugee status boarded a return flight home before being admitted into Canada, immigration officials said. More than 100 people from the Czech Republic applied for refugee status in the same week, the officials said.

Romanies who returned speak of intimidation by Canadian immigration officials, and of shattered dreams.

"We counted on a different situation," said Milan Štuka, 24. Štuka borrowed 60,000 Kč (\$1,765) from friends and relatives to buy air tickets to Canada for himself, his wife, who is eight months pregnant, and their small son. But the family hepped on a return flight home after encountering problems at the border.

"I am really unhappy about what happened," Štuka said. "But we're not giving up. We'll try another country once we have amassed more money. My kids have no chance of happiness [in the Czech Republic]."

Štuka was one of thousands of Czech Romanies inspired by the documentary *Na vlastní oči* (With Your Own Eyes), broadcast on the popular Czech station TV Nova Aug. 6. The documentary painted a rosy picture of life for Romany émigrés in Canada, free from the racial discrimination they live with in the Czech Republic.

*Na vlastní oči* has since been criticized for providing a biased and superficial glance at Canadian life and that country's immigration process.

The program prompted a mass exodus of Czech Romanies. Canada received 189 claims for refugee status from Czechs in 1996. So far this year, 544 Czech asylum-seekers have filed claims in Canada, according to Canadian immigration officials.

Štuka said that the TV Nova documentary filled him with expectations that were blown away by immigration officials. "I didn't want financial support," he said. "But, based on what I saw on TV, I did expect to be provided with accommodation. And the officials told me that there was no free accommodation."

Štuka also said the asylum procedure was much more convoluted than he had been led to believe by the TV program. He said he was surprised when officials told him he'd have to give up his passport for three months while his application for refugee status was processed. Štuka said he could not comprehend how, without a passport, he could secure accommodation in Canada.

He also said he didn't realize that it would take at least three months until his family's application for asylum would be processed. In that time, he said, "our plane tickets would expire, and we wouldn't have any money to buy another one."

In an interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Toronto lawyer George Kubex, who is representing Czech Romanies in applying for political asylum in Canada, accused Canadian immigration officials of deterring potential Czech immigrants from entering the country.

F René Mercier, senior spokesman at the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in Canada, said officials were investigating these allegations. "If this conduct did occur, we certainly wouldn't condone it," Mercier said. He suggested that problems could have arisen as a result of



Milan Štuka and his pregnant wife, Renata Dunová, left their home in Pilsen (Pilsen) hoping for a better life in Canada, but were soon disillusioned. JULIE DENESHA/The Prague Post

## Romanies don't trust Czech justice

By Emma McClune

When Simon, a 22-year-old Romany (Gypsy) laborer, was attacked by a group of four skinheads while walking home late one night last year, the last place he thought of going was to a police station. "Why?" he asked. "I'd only be making more trouble for myself. Probably, the police would want to beat me, too."

of the police — to report the incident, said Michal Hrádk, a human-rights activist and office manager at the Citizens' Solidarity and Tolerance Movement (HOST).

"Romanies generally have a bad experience with the police, or they do not believe their complaint will be dealt with properly."

It makes quantifying racially motivated incidents an extremely tricky procedure, Hrádk said. Although Romany rights organizations vigorously assert that all Romanies experience verbal or

Such is life for the thousands of Romanies like Simon who have experienced racially motivated harassment and physical abuse. Most victims are either too scared of retaliation — or too distrustful

See JUSTICE on Page A3

## Stran Cheap no b

By Michele Legge

Alena Boubinová first suspected trouble when a delegate from a Czech travel agency called to tell her family from their hotel in Pilsen to nearby Bodrum airport to return flight to Prague.

After a few frantic calls, the family of four learned they were stranded, along with about 1,500 Czech vacationers who had booked bargain-priced holidays to Turkey and Greece through Prague. On Aug. 15, Prague became the domino to fall in a row of 10 travel companies that have collapsed this summer.

"I don't know which travel agency to book my holiday with next," Boubinová said of her experience. "I don't know which travel companies are credible anymore."

Nonetheless, the Boubin family fared better than most. They eventually hopped a free flight provided by the Turkish-owned DETUR agency and arrived in Prague Aug. 16. During the four days that the family spent in limbo — not knowing when they would return to Pilsen — they received free room and board. "We took the rooms of those who should have arrived after us," Boubinová said.

Others weren't so lucky. Elizabeth Čechová on a Prag tour vacation in Alanya, a tiny resort in southern

## Expats gain vo

In a reversal of past policy, Czech citizens living abroad are allowed to vote in national elections without having to return to the country.

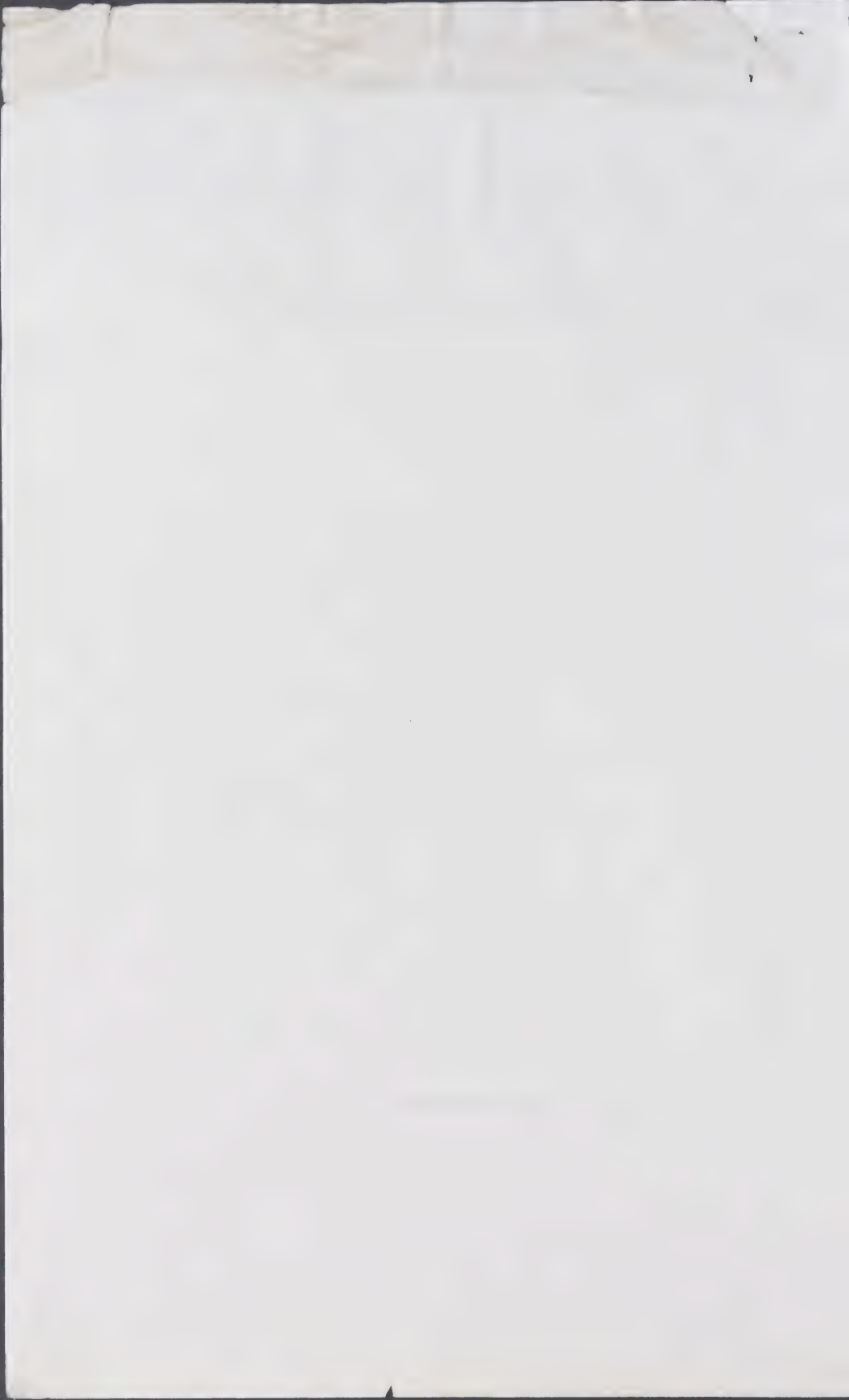
Currently, even diplomats and consular officials abroad cannot vote in Czech elections unless they physically return home. The policy has been sharply criticized by expatriate groups and international organizations and the United States Congress.

More than 200,000 Czechs abroad, the equivalent of 2 percent of the Czech Republic's population,

Interior Minister Jan Ruml said details of how citizens would vote from abroad have not been worked out yet. The Foreign and Interior Ministries will work together on a formal proposal for amending the country's election law that will be submitted to the Cabinet and then Parliament.

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See ROMANIES on Page A3





# Romanies feel excluded from Czech educational system

By Aida Farnam

David Goni, a Romany ninth-grader in Prague's 5220v neighborhood school with other Czech youngsters. But the bilingual Romany (Gypsy) quickly transferred to a special school for mentally disabled children — despite good grades — to escape the rampant racial discrimination.

"The teachers usually ... and the kids laugh at me," Goni recalled. "I wish I could go back to regular school. Then I could go to high school and there are so many opportunities there. I might go into medicine or work with computers but that is far out of reach now."

He and his friends agree that they will leave the school for unemployment or coming from a special school, or a dead-end job as cooks or manual laborers.

Several thousand Romany children will enter the first grade at Czech elementary schools this fall, but most will be Goni's 8-year-old cousin, Sandra, has made it to the second grade and hopes she can keep going. A report from the Citizens Solidarity and Tolerance Movement (HOST) estimates that as many as 80 percent of Romany children attend special schools for mentally disabled students, fees that are supposed to measure intellectual, verbal and graphic abilities.

"Unless you are going to tell me that three out of four Romany children are mentally disabled, then Romany children are being segregated into special schools," says the report. Members from the Budapest-based Regional Roma Participation Program. Observers compare this separate system, which some Czech teachers bluntly label "the Gypsy school," to the separate but equal "poor school" that the Supreme Court struck it down in 1954.

"Romany children do have somewhat lower intelligence," maintained Jiri Pital, the director of the special education department of the Ministry of Education. They live totally outside the moral structure of society and they don't know the regular things that every white child knows. They are socially handicapped."



JULIE DEBEŠKOVÁ/Prague Post

**As many as 80 percent of Romany children are forced into special schools because of racially biased aptitude tests, according to a report by the Citizens Solidarity and Tolerance Movement (HOST).**

The Education Ministry states that the tests that determine whether children exhibit learning symptoms. Human-rights groups allege that the tests are culturally biased and are routinely administered to Romany children.

Although the Czech constitution guarantees education to all citizens there are no Romany-language classes or subject matter dealing with Romany history and culture in Czech elementary schools. The psychometric tests are not administered in Romany. HOST officials contend that the bilingual special school primary education. "Of

It's a sign of intolerance, not mental or intellectual impairment."

Marie Rauchová, a specialist at the Ministry of Education, claims, "There has been no call from the Romany side for education in their own language. This showed intolerance by education officials, despite the continuous flow of proposals to teach Romany language and culture and the cries from Romany activists and educators that their language is dying."

Today, Romany children do not finish the special school primary education. "Of course they drop out," Nienberg says. "Romaniacs are not idiots. They realize that they are in a segregated school system. The situation on the state offers them no chance to finish their education."

At the same time, the state offers them no chance to finish their education. "Of course they drop out," Nienberg says. "Romaniacs are not idiots. They realize that they are in a segregated school system. The situation on the state offers them no chance to finish their education."

## Romanies

Cont. from Page A1

language discrepancies between Romanies and officials, although a translator was provided. "There were probably also large discrepancies between the test results and reality," Mester said. "Maybe they were shocked when they discovered they had not said all their belongings, and Canada was not as rosy as they thought."

The Canadian daily *The Globe and Mail* reported Aug. 21 that shelters for asylum seekers with Czech Romanies join a list of the head of

## Justice

Cont. from Page A1

physical racial hatred at some point in their lives, the reported incidents are stunningly low. HOST estimates that there were fewer than 300 cases of racially motivated violence reported to police last year, according to official reports. Unofficial estimates put the country's Romany population at more than 300,000. Dominika Petrova, executive director of the European Roma Rights Center, agrees that most racist attacks against Romanies go unreported. "Police are usually not particularly motivated in an offense police are generally unresponsive and the courts are extremely reluctant to prosecute," Petrova said. Court attempts to steer clear of racial-motivation charges at all costs, she said, preferring to prosecute violent offenders for

Racist cases bear this out. Earlier this year, two men who threatened to throw a Romany child from a moving train were accused of

Toronto's hotel services divisions said the hotels may have to start turning people away. Hager told the daily that there were about 300 Romany families currently accommodated in Toronto hotels.

Miroslav Holub, chairman of the Romany Democratic Union in Ottawa, said some reports from those who had already returned. But, "whether they really want to go, still will," he added.

Holub plans to go visit relatives in Canada in mid-September. Upon his return, he will report on any findings on conditions there.

racially motivated violence. But a district court judge in Prague, Karelou ruled it was not really motivated. Czech police are even using the code for racially motivated crimes against the Romany community, Petrova said. This tends to happen in cases in which a Romany, resisting arrest, attacks a policeman either in self-defense or in a fit of rage. "We've seen a lot of such cases and we're very worried about it," she said. Last April, five Romanies from Louisa, north Bohemia, received jail sentences for a racially motivated attack on a group of policemen. The Romanies struck "white pigs" and Czech pigs during the attack, she said. A policeman with a bottle, was sentenced to 30 months in jail.

At the same time, in the high-profile case surrounding Tibor Damiel's death in September 1995, the two skinheads who killed him were given only 15 months in prison and 22-month sentences. Unlike the Louisa case, the court ruled that the crime was not racial, by motivated.

## Voting

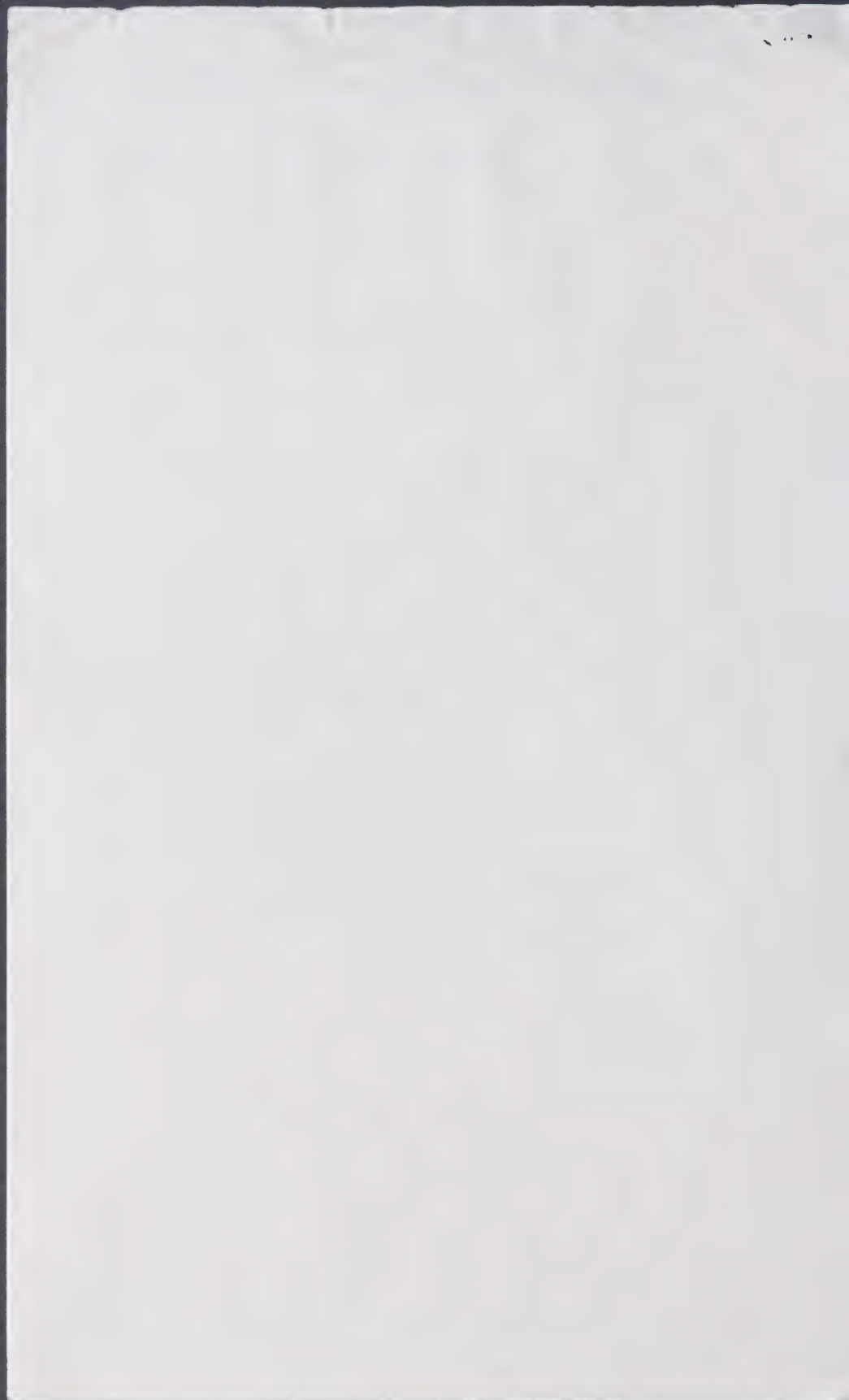
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return to the Czech Republic at their own expense. The law says only if their expenses are paid for by the state. "We are not available to explain why they are seeking to change the policy now, instead of prior to the last elections," says explicitly Czech government, has explicitly stated that it is not available to explain why they are seeking to change the policy now, instead of prior to the last elections.

Black, editor of the expensive newspaper *Americká TV*, a delegation of Czechs living in the United States lobbied Deputy Prime

Minister Jiri Stalicky during his visit to a United Nations conference in June. They said that Czech citizens living abroad cannot understand why they are not allowed to cast absentee ballots, which is allowed in many countries, including the United States.

Black, editor of the expensive newspaper *Americká TV*, a delegation of Czechs living in the United States lobbied Deputy Prime



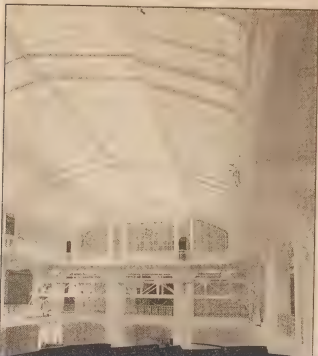
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## Roma fordern Erfüllung alter Bundesversprechen

Wien - Auch zweieinhalb Jahre nach dem Bombenattentat von Oberwart seien die seinerzeitigen Zusagen an die Volksgruppe der Roma und Sinti erst „teilweise eingelöst“, kritisierte am Donnerstag der Vorsitzende des Volksgruppenbeirates der Roma, Rudolf Sarközi. Die Siedlung in Oberwart sei lediglich zur Hälfte renoviert. Bis jetzt habe nur das Land, nicht aber der Bund die Versprechungen erfüllt. Für das Archiv in Wien

könne er nicht einmal mehr die Miete bezahlen, sagte Sarközi in einer Pressekonferenz der Grünen. Er appellierte an die Öffentlichkeit, den mutmaßlichen Bombenbauer Franz Fuchs nicht zum „Genie“ zu stilisieren, schließlich werde Fuchs des vierfachen Mordes verdächtigt. Die Grünen forderten neuerlich, die Wahrung der „sprachlich-kulturellen Vielfalt“ Österreichs als Staatsziel in der Verfassung zu verankern. (kob)

STANDARD  
16  
Oct 25<sup>th</sup> 1997



Momentan ist das general-sanierte Museum noch ziemlich leer, aber das wird sich ändern. Der LD-Tiegel präsentiert sich schon jetzt als Zeuge einstiger technischer



Dr. Robert Tauber  
Panikengasse 17  
A-1160 Vienna

Oct. 28th 1997

Dear Alfred,

Thank you for your letter with the copies of  
Hans Anthofer's letter and your answer.

On October 26th Ernestine and Hans Anthofer came to see me  
and Hans told me that he understands your intention now  
fully and the organization will use the money only for  
the Roma and Sinti.

Last week I was in the Kongresspark with Dr. Löw-Beer.

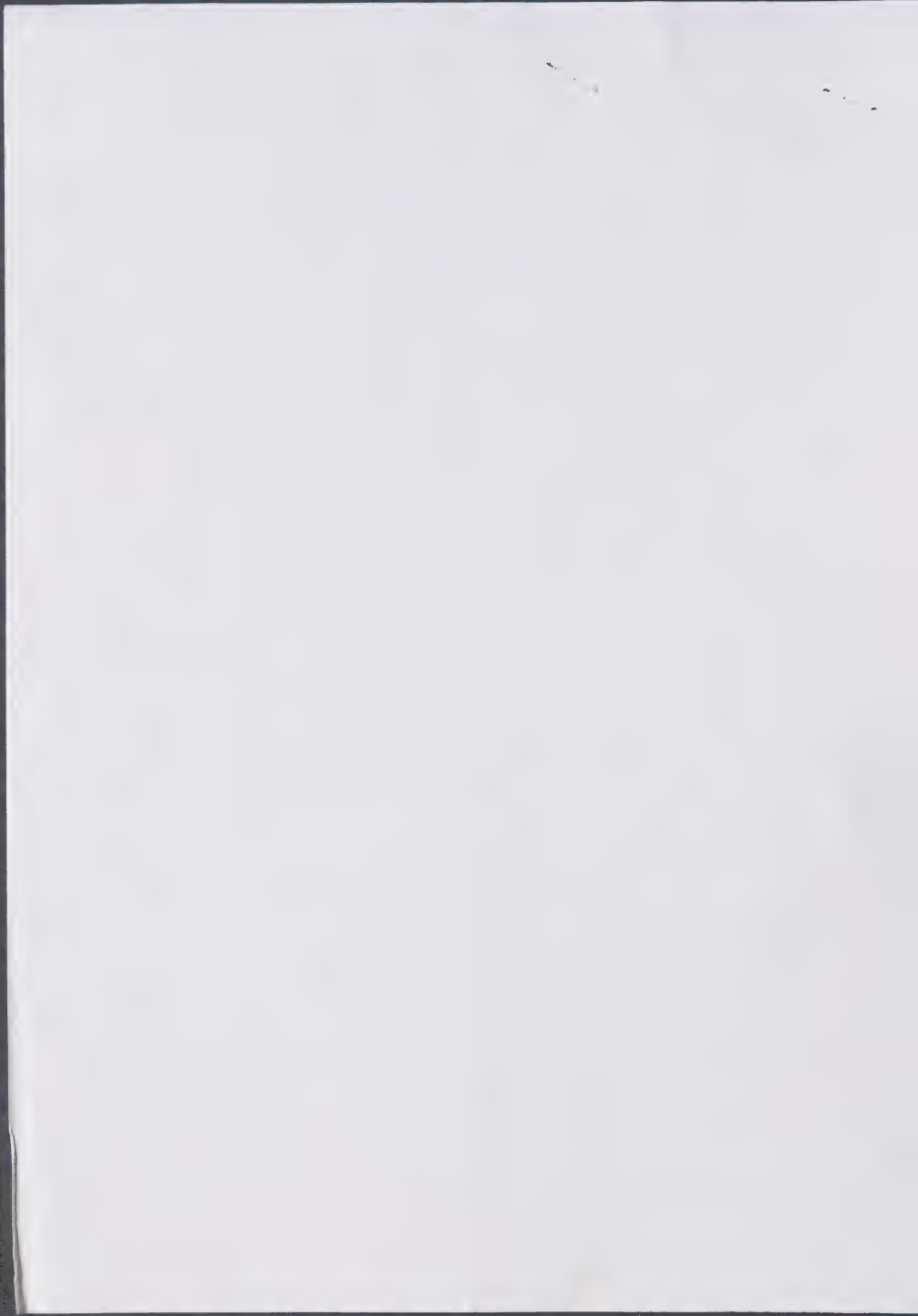
I too am looking forward to seeing you next June.

I remain  
Yours sincerely,

*Robert Tauber*

PS

Please, give my best regards to Mrs. Bader.



## Hard Times for Europe's Gypsies

Last week, the Catholic Church beatified a Gypsy for the first time. Ceferino Jiménez Malla was a Spanish Gypsy, executed during the Spanish Civil War for protecting a local priest and refusing to surrender his rosary. The beatification, which is the first step toward canonization, was a rare public acknowledgment of the contributions of a reviled and persecuted minority in Europe.

A statement by a contestant in the 1993 Miss Czech Republic pageant was unfortunately more typical of attitudes in Eastern Europe, where most Gypsies live. Asked the predictable question about her dreams for the future, the contestant said she wanted to cleanse her city of dark-skinned people. The crowd applauded and Czechs around the country praised her candor.

Life for Eastern Europe's Gypsies was never good. The Nazis killed half a million of them. Germany never paid recompense, and has only now built a memorial to this genocide, a Gypsy cultural center in Heidelberg. Communist Governments alternated between deporting Gypsies and trying to protect them with special programs, such as channeling their children into music schools, which often did more harm than good.

Ironically, the end of Communist controls on speech and behavior has made Gypsy conditions worse. Reports of skinheads killing Gypsies or burning their villages are common. Otherwise peaceful village residents have assembled to raid

Gypsy neighborhoods. Few of these crimes are investigated, and police abuse of Gypsies is frequent. Police violence is also a problem for Gypsies in Western Europe.

Few people want to hire Gypsies or lease apartments to them. As a result, many live in shacks and have no jobs. Often they turn to begging or petty theft, which fuels prejudice.

In times of economic uncertainty, people in Eastern Europe are looking for scapegoats, and often find them in the Gypsies, who pride themselves on keeping separate from the rest of the world and frequently do not keep their children in school. Eastern Europeans are also once again defining themselves through ethnic nationality and restricting the rights of minorities. When the Czech Republic split with Slovakia, it ruled that only people who had a clean criminal record for five years could get Czech citizenship, a law that directly targeted Gypsies. Twenty thousand who had been living in the Czech Republic were left without citizenship.

Gypsies are increasingly defending themselves. They run for political office and publish newspapers. Lawyers representing them have won a few cases in the courts. But even countries that have reasonably good laws find that prejudice poisons their enforcement. States must take special care to insure that Gypsies receive the same protections and access to justice as all their other citizens.



**HATE CALLS:** Gypsy refugees who landed in Vancouver before Christmas have been the target of hate calls by people saying the newcomers should be sent to gas chambers.

## Czech gypsies receive rough welcome

By Robert Sarti  
Southern Newspapers

VANCOUVER — It's no big news when a group of refugees land in Vancouver and receive a flood of help from Canadians to get settled in.

That's what happened for 10 families from the Czech Republic who arrived here just before Christmas.

But social service agencies and volunteers who were helping the newcomers were unprepared for the series of anonymous hate calls, some saying literally that the refugees, half of whom are children, should be sent to concentration camps, and even to the gas chambers.

Most disturbingly, all the hate calls were in the Czech language — a case of importing Old World hatreds to Canada.

The newly arrived refugees were members of a minority group that has long been targeted by racists in Europe — the gypsies, those dark-skinned, traditionally nomadic people who have made their living for centuries by travelling from town to town buying and selling goods and repairing household items.

Like other "outsiders," including the Jews, the gypsies have often been scapegoated for the social problems in their host countries.

### Wave of racist terror

More than 300,000 gypsies were killed by the Nazis before and during the Second World War. Now a wave of racist terror led by neo-Nazi skinheads in the new eastern European democracies is raising alarm among not only gypsies, but among Jews, gays and all dark-skinned immigrants.

Here in Vancouver, at least 200 people of gypsy descent have been leading settled lives for years. They have close family ties, strong Catholic backgrounds and arranged marriages, and a lot of them make their livings in sales and repairs, especially of cars.

When they go out to socialize, it's to quiet cafés. They have an aversion to publicity born of their experiences in less tolerant parts of the world.

"We haven't been advertising who we are," says Julia Lovell, a dark-haired 30-year-old, who has lived in Vancouver most of her adult life.

"People ask me if I'm Spanish or Italian. I'd say, yeah, whatever."

Lovell grew up as a nomad. Born in

*"They were told, this bus is not for gypsies. They had to walk to school."*

— JAN DUNA  
Gypsy refugee

Scotland, she travelled around Europe and the United States in a motor home with her family, selling rugs and telling fortunes, getting only as far as grade five in school.

If you visit her at home, she will show you a pile of old fading photographs of her grandparents, her father as a young man, and herself in horse-drawn caravans and motor homes.

For the last 10 years she and her father have lived in an unremarkable east end Vancouver house, operating a small textile design business.

"My father got too old to travel," she says.

During the summer, up to 50 itinerant gypsy families, most of them United States-based, pass through the Lower Mainland in motor homes, staying at campsites in the Fraser Valley, buying and selling goods in neighboring municipalities. In the winter, most of them head south to warmer weather.

It's these itinerant gypsy groups that sometimes attract the attention of local police. Arrests have been made for shoplifting and other offenses.

Lovell, like some other younger gypsies here, think the time is ripe to come out of the closet.

"In Europe, they think gypsies just steal, that we're a plague, but Canadians romanticize gypsies, we're good dancers, colorful, we tell fortunes at the PNE, the women are dark-haired and beautiful."

An estimated three million gypsies live worldwide, calling themselves Romany and speaking their own language as well as the languages of the countries they live in.

Lovell and some friends are starting a "gypsy union" to press for civil rights for gypsies in other countries.

And every Thursday and Sunday evenings, they gather at the Kino Café in Vancouver to enjoy gypsy flamenco music and talk gypsy news in a very public way.

The Czech newcomers say they chose Canada because they see it as a country where people from many different backgrounds live together peacefully. They didn't even know there were any gypsies here.

They fled a country that has proportionally more skinheads than any other in Europe, about 4,000, according to the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish civil rights group. Three gypsies have been murdered there since 1990.

Each of the newly arrived families has its own story of harassment.

Jan Duna's children were kicked off the school bus by the driver and beaten up by other children.

"They were told, this bus is not for gypsies," said Duna. "They had to walk to school."

Construction worker Emel Danihela, 45, shows his scar where he was bitten on the stomach by a skinhead's dog.

### Attacked by thugs

He and his family were attacked by six thugs in the park who threatened them with knives. He says the police just confiscated the knives, but didn't make any arrests.

"We had a nice apartment and nice furniture, but what good is it if you can't go out if it's not safe? There were signs sprayed on the walls — gypsies die."

The Czech Republic was reborn in 1989 in a peaceful revolution out of part of the former Communist Czechoslovakia.

The 43 newcomers are from the industrial city of Pardubice, where their families settled after the war, finding jobs in telephone repair, restaurants and on assembly-lines.

They have applied in Canada for refugee status — a process that can take up to a year. In the meantime, they were placed in shelters and are on welfare until they can find work.

To be accepted as a refugee in Canada, an applicant has to show he or she has reasonable grounds for fear of persecution on the basis of race, political affiliation or religious belief.

Canada accepted thousands of refugees from the former Czechoslovakia after the Soviet invasion of 1968, but the federal government's attitude about this new wave of refugees has yet to be tested.

The Vancouver Sun



eye at the car rental desk, not the woman at the front desk. ... This car rental lady read the note, stated that she did not think it was for her, and would pass it on to Gerlind (that was her name)....

By the end of the summer ☀️ dated and ultimately she left for New York City. Early in 1964 Gerlind began work at the Warwick Hotel. ...

(Feeling jilted) that fall I went to Garmisch to perform ski patrol duties for the army. Upon returning to my barracks, around Thanksgiving Day, my brother Richard (also serving in Germany) called. He told me that he was going home to New Hampshire for Christmas. He thought it would be fun if I surprised everyone and just arrived there for Christmas. ...

Collecting my baggage (at Logan International in Boston), I observed Jon (another brother) waiting in the crowd. To my total astonishment he was with Gerlind! For the first time in a year we fell into each other's arms.

How had she gotten to my parents' home in New Hampshire? Simple. At the Warwick (in New York), she served a client from Manchester (New Hampshire). ... She commented that she knew someone from there. The gentleman, a prominent attorney, asked who it might be?

She said, "Conrad Hermsdorf"

He said, "That's my golf buddy Walter's son!"

(The lawyer) related the story of meeting Gerlind to my father at the 19th hole of the Manchester Country Club soon after. Thus my family extended an invitation asking if Gerlind might like to spend Christmas in New Hampshire. ... On Christmas Day I proposed. She accepted. ...

Gerlind, our three children and I lived a comfortable life in rural New Hampshire for 22 years. On our 22nd wedding anniversary she succumbed to the ravages of breast cancer. ...

Recently an acquaintance of my youngest daughter asked if I had ever remarried. She told the woman that I hadn't. Whereupon this lady commented that she was not surprised, as Gerlind was the epitome of a perfect wife. ...

By now you understand exactly how valuable an asset I stole from the Inter-Continental in Frankfurt

**ners, who after all butter  
sion of its 50th anniversary,  
d former guests to send in  
of the purloined items.**

University of Ottawa that are generally bounded by  
Avenue, Henderson Street, Laurier Avenue and Stewart Street.

The land to which the proposed Official Plan Amendment applies is the subject of an application under the Act for a zoning amendment (File No.: OZP1994/006). The zoning amendment application, which will also be considered by Planning and Economic Development Committee on January 7, 1997, requires that a parking requirement of 1,000 spaces be established for the campus.

A copy of the proposed Official Plan Amendment is available for inspection during regular business hours at the reception area of the Department of Planning, Economic Development and Housing, 111 Sussex Drive, 2nd floor, Rideau Pavilion.

Written submissions in respect to the proposed Official Plan Amendment can be submitted to the Executive Assistant of the Planning and Economic Development Committee at 111 Sussex Drive, 1st floor, Bytown Pavilion, Ottawa. Written submissions received prior to January 2, 1997, will be considered by the Planning and Economic Development Committee in considering the proposed amendment.

If a person or public body that requests a referral of a proposed decision in respect of the proposed Official Plan Amendment to the Ontario Municipal Board does not make oral submissions at the public meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Committee or does not make written submissions before the proposed Official Plan Amendment is adopted by City Council, then:

- (i) The Council of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, as the approval authority, may refuse the request to refer all or part of the proposed decision to the Ontario Municipal Board, and
- (ii) The Ontario Municipal Board may dismiss all or part of the referral of the proposed decision

If you wish to be notified of the adoption of the proposed Official Plan Amendment, you must make a written request to the Clerk of the Corporation of the City of Ottawa, 111 Sussex Drive, 1st floor, Bytown Pavilion, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 5A1.

☎ For information, call John Smit, 244-5300 ext. 1-3666.

C-7041

## NOTICE OF RESUMPTION OF PUBLIC HEARINGS



### Given pursuant to Section 34., of the Planning Act CITY OF OTTAWA'S PROPOSED NEW ZONING BY-LAW

**TAKE NOTICE THAT** the Planning and Economic Development Committee will resume Public Hearings into the proposed new zoning by-law for the City of Ottawa, and will receive the written and oral views and comments of citizens, residents, property owners, community groups and any other interested party on the following dates:

**AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE THAT,** pursuant to Section 34., of the Planning Act, the Ontario Municipal Board may summarily dismiss an appeal of the by-law if the party appealing has not made oral or written submissions to the Committee on the proposed by-law, unless there is a reasonable explanation provided to the Board for failing to do so.

Delegations will be heard in accordance with a pre-booked schedule. Appointments can be made by calling our Committee and Council Services at 244-5300-1-3445.

LOCATION	Whitton Hall, City Hall, 111 Sussex Dr.
TIME	1:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.*
Session Date	Purpose
Session 4 - January 21, 1997	Public Delegations - City-wide
Session 5 - February 4, 1997	Committee consideration of input and determination of findings

\*NOTE: Evening sessions will be cancelled if there are no delegations pre-booked.

To find out where to pick up your copy of the proposed new zoning by-law or for further information, call the Zoning Studies Section, Planning Branch, 244-5300-1-3121.



C-7058



## Hard Times for Europe's Gypsies

Last week, the Catholic Church beatified a Gypsy for the first time. Celerino Jimenez Malla was a Spanish Gypsy, executed during the Spanish Civil War for protecting a local priest and refusing to surrender his rosary. The beatification, which is the first step toward canonization, was a rare public acknowledgment of the contributions of a reviled and persecuted minority in Europe.

A statement by a contestant in the 1993 Miss Czech Republic pageant was unfortunately more typical of attitudes in Eastern Europe, where most Gypsies live. Asked the predictable question about her dreams for the future, the contestant said she wanted to cleanse her city of dark-skinned people. The crowd applauded and Czechs around the country praised her candor.

Life for Eastern Europe's Gypsies was never good. The Nazis killed half a million of them. Germany never paid recompense, and has only now built a memorial to this genocide, a Gypsy cultural center in Heidelberg. Communist Governments alternated between deporting Gypsies and trying to protect them with special programs, such as channeling their children into music schools, which often did more harm than good.

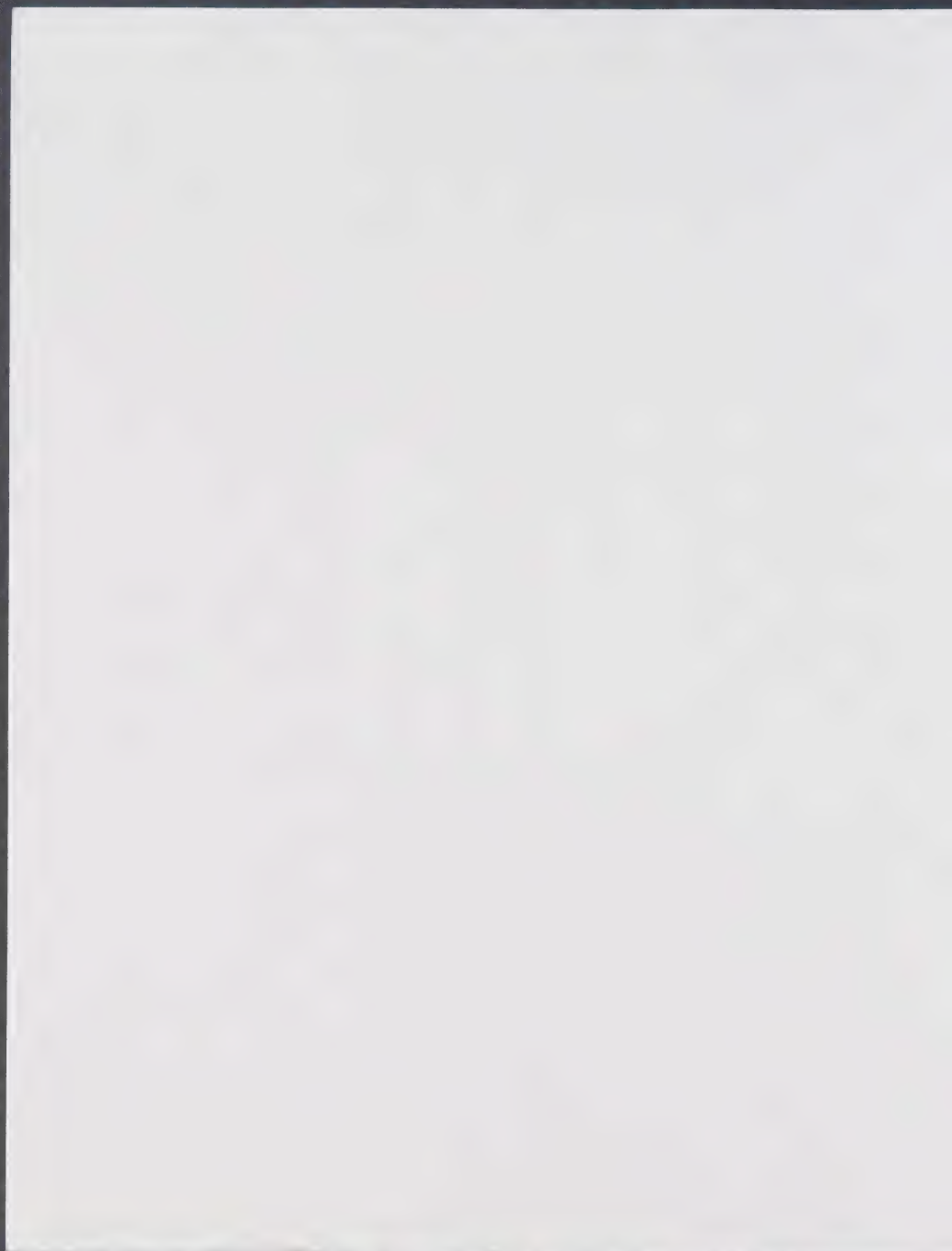
Ironically, the end of Communist controls on speech and behavior has made Gypsy conditions worse. Reports of skinheads killing Gypsies or burning their villages are common. Otherwise peaceful village residents have assembled to raid

Gypsy neighborhoods. Few of these crimes are investigated, and police abuse of Gypsies is frequent. Police violence is also a problem for Gypsies in Western Europe.

Few people want to hire Gypsies or lease apartments to them. As a result, many live in shacks and have no jobs. Often they turn to begging or petty theft, which fuels prejudice.

In times of economic uncertainty, people in Eastern Europe are looking for scapegoats, and often find them in the Gypsies, who pride themselves on keeping separate from the rest of the world and frequently do not keep their children in school. Eastern Europeans are also once again defining themselves through ethnic nationality and restricting the rights of minorities. When the Czech Republic split with Slovakia, it ruled that only people who had a clean criminal record for five years could get Czech citizenship, a law that directly targeted Gypsies. Twenty thousand who had been living in the Czech Republic were left without citizenship.

Gypsies are increasingly defending themselves. They run for political office and publish newspapers. Lawyers representing them have won a few cases in the courts. But even countries that have reasonably good laws find that prejudice poisons their enforcement. States must take special care to insure that Gypsies receive the same protections and access to justice as all their other citizens.



### Current needs within the Roma community

Suggestions made in consultation with Dr. Donald Kenrick, Secretary of the Romany Guild, and Mr. Martin Emerson, Minority Rights Group

#### 1. Czech Republic

Support for the Rajko Djuric Foundation in Prague (details enclosed)

#### 2. Britain: Combatting homelessness

Support to create small national research/advice centre on purchasing private sites. This would enable richer gypsies to support poor gypsies by buying sites on which they can place caravans. The Romany Guild and the Gypsy Sites Management Welfare Committee would support this venture, together with the Gypsy Council.

#### 3. Britain and Europe:

Support to create materials on Roma history and culture for Romany parents and children and for teachers of Roma.

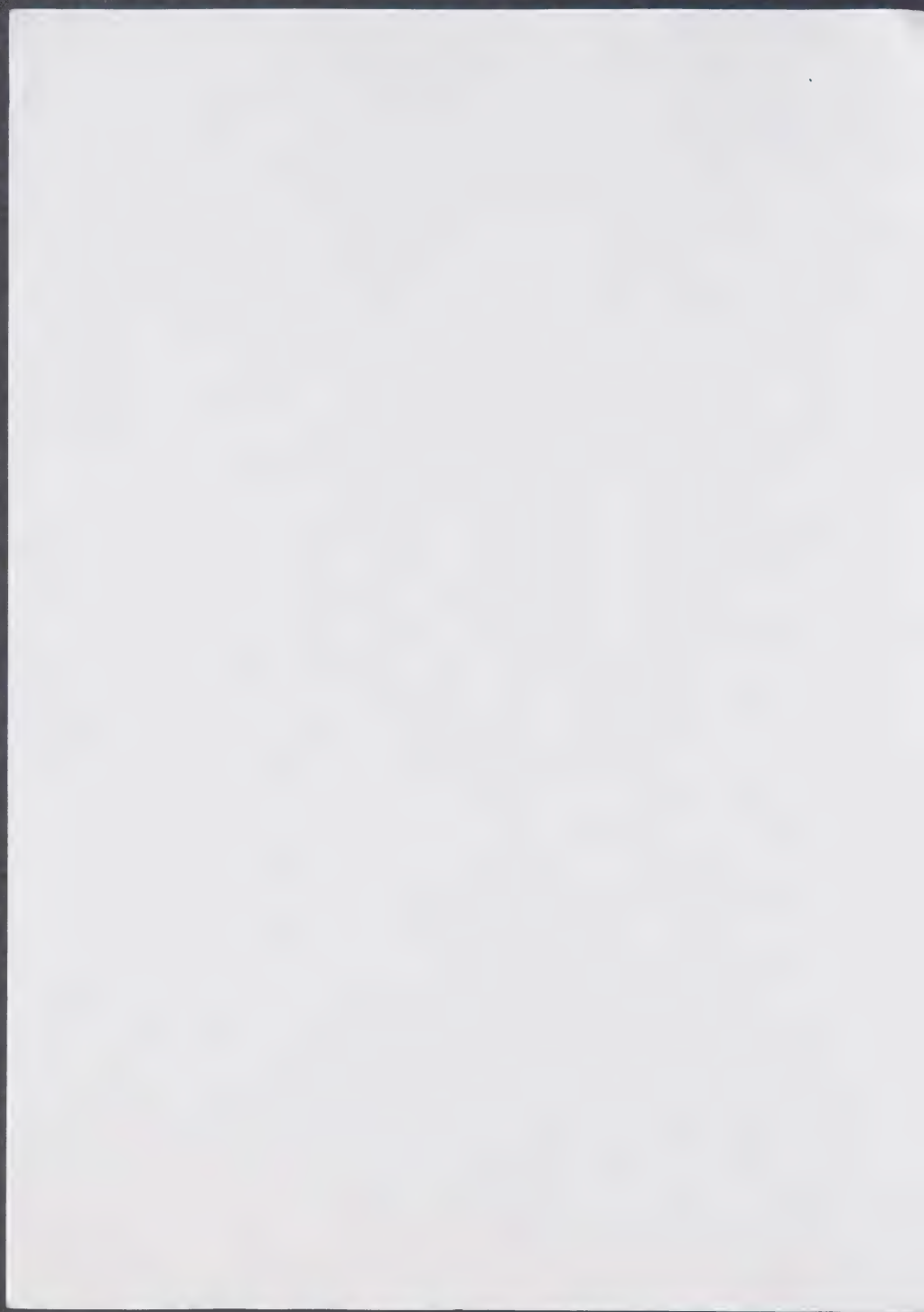
One of the greatest problems for Roma today is that almost no Gypsy children in Europe have education beyond the age of eleven. In Britain 40% of all eleven year old Gypsy children have already this term been permanently expelled, in large measure due to the lack of understanding of Roma culture among teachers (and the present lack of vocational/crafts courses).

Few materials exist at present, though there are excellent children's readers in German Romani with teachers' instructions in three languages, which could be translated.

Materials could be produced in conjunction with the following bodies: ACERT (Advisory Committee of the Education of Romanies and other Travellers, chaired by Lady Plowden), the Romany Guild, the Gypsy Council for Education, the National Association of Teachers of Travelling Children (the latter organization, though, is opposed to materials for ethnic Gypsies), and Mr. Arthur Ivats, Her Majesty's Special Inspector for Gypsies.

#### 4. Britain and Europe: combatting illiteracy

Illiteracy is still extremely widespread among Roma. Paradoxically, the most powerful force towards literacy among Roma today is the wish to read the Bible (as in Europe four hundred years ago). Roma have never been 'people of the Book' because their religion has been animism. Now, for the first time ever, large numbers of Roma are learning to read the Bible - and therefore learning to read and write. The provision of cheaply produced illustrated Bible stories or other literacy materials (perhaps in conjunction with the Bible Society) in simple Romani could be valuable.



#### 5. Britain and Europe: educating for leadership

Another urgent need is for the education of Gypsy leadership equipped to develop united Roma organizations and to represent their people both nationally and internationally. The present few Gypsy leaders are concerned that a new generation of young leadership should be developed as soon as possible. They need to be trained in areas such as literacy, public speaking, leadership and management skills, Roma history and culture, the structure of international human rights organizations etc.

An exciting venture would be to adapt existing Jewish young leadership programmes in Europe and Israel to the specific needs of Roma, and to bring one or two key Roma from each European country to participate in them. Alternatively, 'madrichim' experienced in educating for leadership could train groups of young Roma within their own communities, especially in countries, such as Romania, with very large Roma populations.

The Histadrut training college in Tel Aviv and the Mount Carmel Women's Leadership Training College might be particularly useful, since they have outstanding programmes for training potential leaders from the Third World in decision-making and problem-solving within their own cultural and economic contexts.

Organizations which might help in such a venture could include ORT, B'nei B'rith, the Minority Rights Group and the Standing Conference of Roma NGOs.

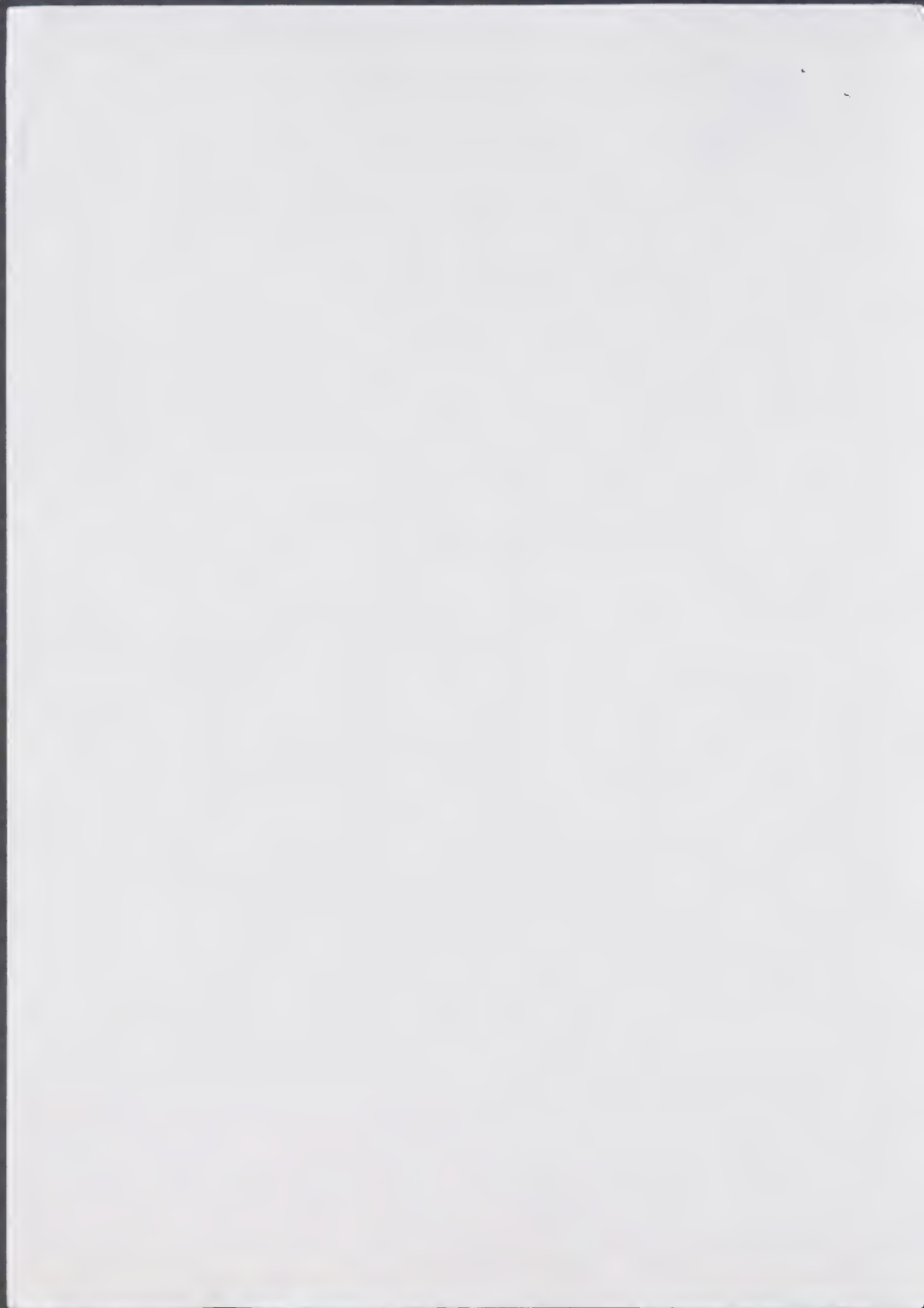
#### 6. Britain and Europe: spreading a new perception of Roma

S4C/BBC might well be persuaded to make a 15-30 minute animated film on Roma history and culture. (S4C/BBC have made the Animated Shakespeare series, Animated Opera series, and the current, highly successful series of animated Bible/Tenach stories, *Testament*, watched by 2.2 million people weekly. S4C/BBC use the best Russian animators and superb British script writers and actors.)

Such a film could be invaluable. It could be dubbed into all European languages (*Testament* is now selling in 30 countries) and could be used to educate both Romanies themselves and, especially, non-Romany mass audiences about the past history, cultural achievements and sufferings of the Roma people. This could greatly increase respect for and understanding of Roma in the present.

It ~~is~~, perhaps, be possible to interest the Soros Foundation in some kind of joint venture in this field.

might





The White House,  
Pages Lane,  
Muswell Hill,  
London N10 1PU.

January 2nd.

Dear Dr. Bader,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to have lunch with you at the Royal Academy recently. I greatly enjoyed meeting you and was touched by your generous thought of extending your philanthropy towards Gypsies in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. Your autobiography is fascinating to read, particularly as it demonstrates from early on the warm humane interest in others which so clearly inspires your later cornucopia of benefaction.

Dr. Donald Kenrick, the leading expert in Britain on Gypsies in Europe and Vice-President of the Gypsy Council for Education, Culture, Welfare and Civil Rights, will phone you between 1 and 3pm. tomorrow. He is a rather shy Jewish academic of great integrity and has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the contemporary Gypsy world. Having worked with him for over a year while writing my report, I have learnt considerable respect for his judgment.

He recommends an excellent organisation in Bulgaria:

Human Rights Project,  
23 Solunska St. (6th. Floor),  
Sofia 1000

Phone: 359 2 806 145  
359 2 808 092

Fax: 359 2 808 092

e-mail: [hrproject@sf.cit.bg](mailto:hrproject@sf.cit.bg)

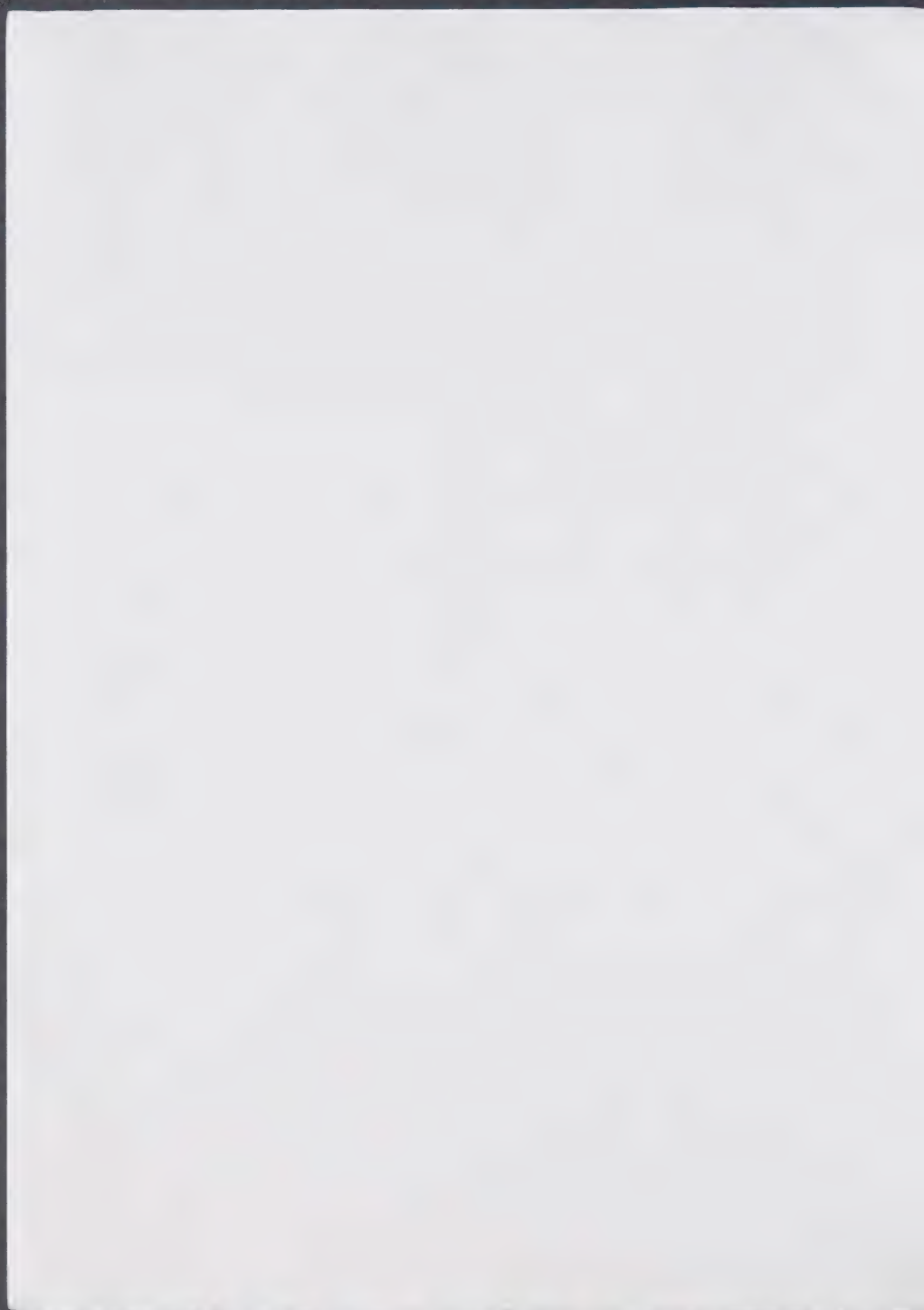
I am sure that, when you speak with him by telephone, he will be able to give you ample information concerning this and other Gypsy organisations.

Dr. Kenrick's own telephone number is: 0171 727 2916

Ralph Emanuel tells me that you are the leading authority on biblical iconography in Dutch art. If we ever meet again I should love to ask you about this, for as university lecturer in mediaeval, Renaissance and Reformation German literature for thirteen years (until I resigned to devote myself to Jewish-Christian relations), biblical symbolism and iconography were an important part of my life. (By the way, have you seen Heinz Schreckenbergs' newly published *The Jews in Christian Art?*).

Yours with gratitude and best wishes

Margaret Breasley





Dr. Alfred Bader  
924 East Juneau, Suite 622  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202  
Phone: 414/277-0730  
Fax: 414/277-0709

*A Chemist Helping Chemists*

August 6, 1997

Dr. Renate Meissner  
Nationalfonds der Republik Österreich  
Parlament - 1017 Wien  
AUSTRIA

Dear Dr. Meissner:

I so enjoyed meeting you on June the 19th when I gave you my Fragebogen to receive the AS 70,000.

As I explained to you, I would like to use that AS 70,000 to help the treatment of the Gypsies in the Burgenland. I understand that this is best done through the organization SOS-Mitmensch and I enclose a bank deposit slip for you to use.

What a pity that you are not related to the well-known Viennese chemist Professor Paul Traugott Meissner, but perhaps on checking you will find that you are related. In any case I enclose a copy of a manuscript which describes his views about Jews.

I am sending a copy of this letter to SOS-Mitmensch and hope that they will send me a receipt when they receive the AS 70,000.

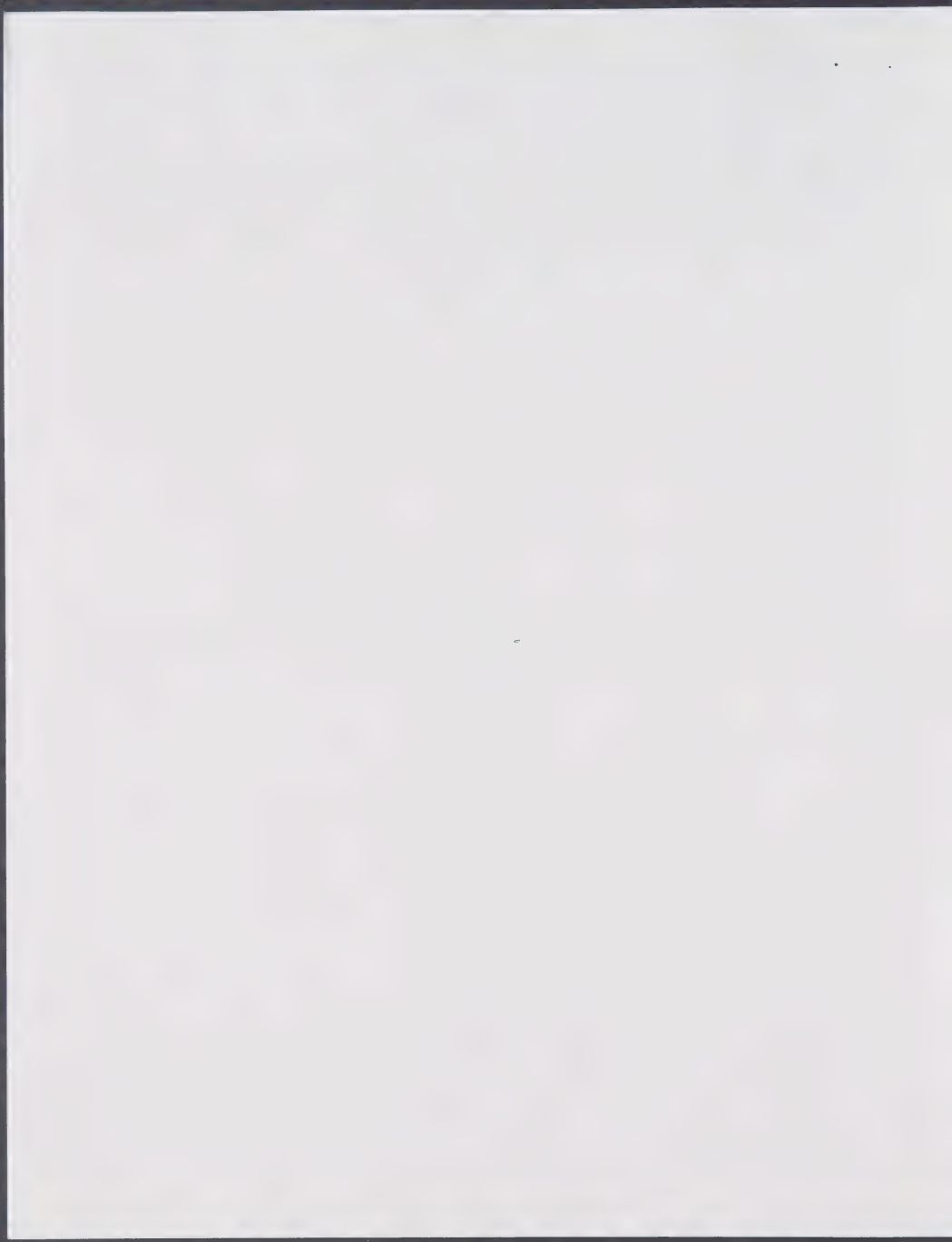
With many thanks for your help, and with best personal regards, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

AB/nik

Enclosures

c: SOS-Mitmensch



V. zuma 19 VI 97

Seite -2-

Teil 2:

**9. Beschreibung der derzeitigen Lebensverhältnisse** - (Seite 5) - falls Ihr Gesundheitszustand besonders schlecht oder Ihre soziale Situation besonders schwierig ist, wäre es günstig, diesen Punkt auszufüllen.

**10. Beschreibung der Verfolgung** (Seite 6)

**11. Höhe der Bezüge** (Seite 7) - diese Angaben werden, wie alle anderen, selbstverständlich streng vertraulich behandelt.

**12. Sonstiges** - (Seite 7) - auszufüllen, in dem Falle, daß Sie uns noch etwas mitteilen wollen, das in den bisherigen Punkten keine Berücksichtigung gefunden hat.

Abschließend nun nochmals eine **Zusammenfassung der Voraussetzungen, die ein Antragsteller erfüllen muß:**

1. Der Fonds erbringt Leistungen an Personen, die aus folgenden Gründen Opfer des nationalsozialistischen Regimes wurden:

a) Personen, die aus politischen Gründen, aus Gründen der Abstammung, Religion, Nationalität, sexuellen Orientierung, aufgrund einer körperlichen oder geistigen Behinderung oder aufgrund des Vorwurfes der sogenannten Asozialität verfolgt wurden - oder

b) Personen, die auf andere Weise Opfer typisch nationalsozialistischen Unrechts geworden sind; oder

c) Personen, die das Land verlassen haben, um einer solchen Verfolgung durch das nationalsozialistische Regime zu entgehen.

2. Diese Personen müssen folgende weitere Voraussetzungen erfüllen:

a) Am 13. März 1938 die österreichische Bundesbürgerschaft und einen Wohnsitz in Österreich besessen haben; oder

b) bis zum 13. März 1938 durch etwa zehn Jahre hindurch ununterbrochen ihren Wohnsitz in Österreich gehabt haben bzw. in diesem Zeitraum als Kinder von solchen Personen in Österreich geboren worden sein; oder

c) vor dem 13. März 1938 die österreichische Bundesbürgerschaft oder ihren zumindest etwa zehnjährigen Wohnsitz verloren haben, weil sie wegen des unmittelbar bevorstehenden Einmarsches der deutschen Wehrmacht das Land verlassen haben; oder

d) vor dem 9. Mai 1945 als Kinder von solchen Personen im Konzentrationslager, oder unter vergleichbaren Umständen geboren worden sind; als vergleichbare Umstände gelten jedenfalls Geburt in einem Ghetto, Internierungslager oder unter ähnlichen Beschränkungen.

Wir möchten darauf hinweisen, daß auf **Leistungen** aus dem Nationalfonds der Republik Österreich für Opfer des Nationalsozialismus **kein Rechtsanspruch** besteht. Die Abwicklung ist einfach, daher ist **eine anwaltlich Vertretung nicht erforderlich**. Da es sich außerdem um eine persönliche Zuerkennung der Republik Österreich handelt, bitten wir um Bekanngabe der **Nummer eines Kontos, über das Sie allein verfügen**.

**Bitte retournieren Sie den ausgefüllten Fragebogen an die angegebene Adresse:**

**Nationalfonds der Republik Österreich  
Parlament - 1017 Wien**

Sollten Sie uns **persönlich** aufsuchen wollen, bitten wir Sie, dies von **Montag bis Donnerstag von 9.00 bis 12.00 Uhr** zu tun.



## ERLÄUTERUNGEN

### zum FRAGEBOGEN des

#### NATIONALFONDS DER REPUBLIK ÖSTERREICH FÜR OPFER DES NATIONALSOZIALISMUS

Der vor Ihnen liegende Fragebogen ist zugleich offizielle Antragstellung. Bitte lesen Sie diese Erläuterungsmuster zum Ausfüllen durch und machen Sie Ihre Angaben so genau wie möglich, da Rückfragen, wie Sie sicher verstehen werden, die Bearbeitung verzögern.

Bitte schließen Sie beglaubigte Kopien aller Dokumente bei, die Ihre Angaben belegen. Beglaubigungen werden von Notaren, Gerichten und Botschaften ausgestellt. Inhaber von Opferausweisen und Amtsbescheinigungen sowie sozial Bedürftige können sich zum Zwecke der Beglaubigung auch an das Bundessozialamt, 1010 Wien, Babenberggasse 5 wenden.

Teil 1 des Fragebogens – Seiten 1 bis 4 – ist bitte vollständig auszufüllen.

Teil 2 des Fragebogens – Seiten 5 bis 7 – ist bitte (für den Betroffenen) zu und in welchen Punkten Sie uns Mitteilungen machen möchten.

Unverzichtbar sind auch Ihre Unterschrift auf Seite 5 sowie die Lebensbescheinigung, die von Botschaften, Konsulaten, Penalenvericherungsanstalten, dem behandelnden Arzt, dem Vertrauensanwalt, Notaren und der Polizei erteilt werden. Sollten Sie die Möglichkeit haben, uns selbst zuzurufen, benötigen wir keine Besätigung derartige Institutionen, bitten Sie aber, deren aktuellen Kontaktadressen mitzubringen.

#### Zu den einzelnen Punkten:

1. Ihre persönlichen Daten (Seite 1) – Bitte vollständig ausfüllen, vergessen Sie nicht, Ihre Kontonummer anzugeben und wechseln Sie dies, nach Möglichkeit nicht, eine Sex von uns hören.

2. Wohnort bei Beginn der Verfolgung (Seite 2) – dieser Punkt entspricht dem § 23 des Gesetzes und dem dem Nachweis des Wohnortes in Österreich zum Stichtag. Sollten Sie keine Dokumente besitzen, wie Ihren damaligen Wohnort belegen, kann auch die eidgenössische Erklärung eines Zeugen zur Glaubhaftmachung verwendet werden.

3. Grund der Verfolgung (Seite 2) – dieser Punkt entspricht dem § 24 des Gesetzes und dient der Festimmung des wahren der abgeleiteten Grundes, weshalb Sie während des nationalsozialistischen Regimes verfolgt wurden.

4. Aufenthalt während der Verfolgung – (Seite 3) – sollten Sie keine Bescheinigung, erklären Sie bitte so genau wie möglich die Umstände und fügen die wichtigsten Zeugen an.

5. Opferausweis/Amtsbescheinigung (Seite 3) – Auch wenn Sie schon diesen beiden Ausweise besitzen, ist Ihr Antrag gültig.

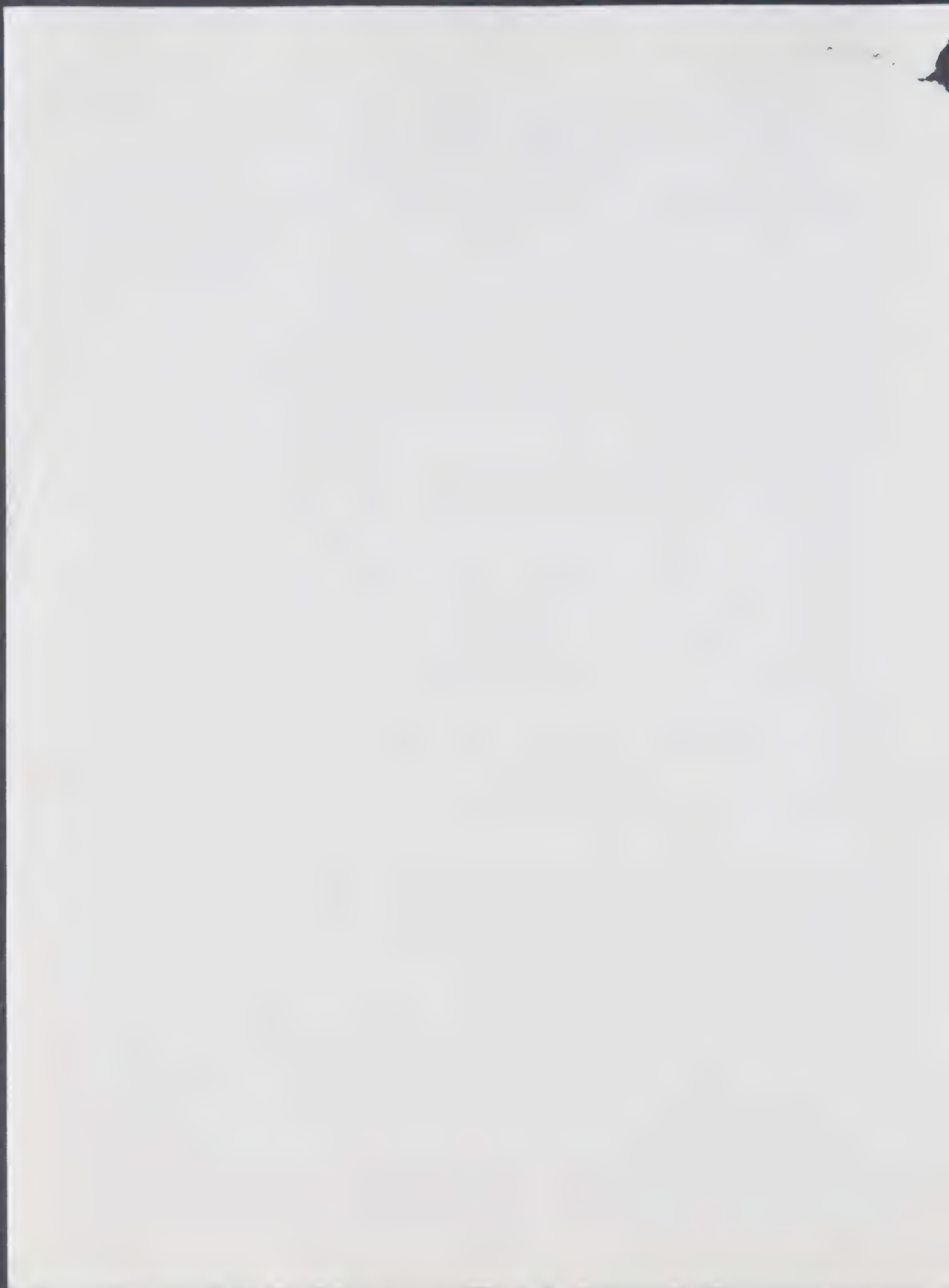
6. bis 8. – (Seite 4) – Diese Punkte haben keinen Einfluss auf den Ausstellungsantrag.

# THE FOUNDATION FOR A CIVIL SOCIETY

SUPPORT FOR A CIVIL SOCIETY

[The following text is extremely faint and largely illegible. It appears to be a letter or report containing several paragraphs of text, possibly including a list of items or a detailed description of a project. The text is too blurry to transcribe accurately.]

ations we would seek them out and provide them with guidelines agreed upon in advance. An alternative, and in our view more effective, approach would be to create a pool of funds to which organizations may apply









# The Roma/Gypsies of Europe: a persecuted people

'The treatment of Roma/Gypsies has become a litmus test for a humane society. Their widespread suffering is now one of Europe's most pressing—but most neglected—human rights issues.'

Margaret Brearley

The **Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR)**, an independent think-tank, informs and influences policy, opinion and decision-making on issues affecting Jewish life worldwide by conducting and commissioning research, developing and disseminating policy proposals, and promoting public debate.

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## Summary

Second to the Jews, the Roma are Europe's oldest non-Christian minority. In many European countries which now have a minimal Jewish presence, Roma have taken over the role of principal scapegoat. Their treatment has become a litmus test for a humane society. Today they suffer serious and increasing persecution. Since the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, their plight has significantly worsened in that region. Roma face new forms of discrimination and legal harassment in several West European countries, including Britain. The widespread suffering of Roma is now one of Europe's most pressing—but most neglected—human rights issues.

This Policy Paper outlines the tragic history of persecution of the Roma in Europe from their arrival in the fourteenth century to barbaric measures against them in the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries—including forced labour or expulsion, enslavement, forcible and permanent removal of children, hunts to the death, the imposition of the death penalty on the sole grounds that the individual was a Gypsy—and their genocidal suffering during the Second World War. Numerous parallels are drawn between the history of anti-gypsyism and the history of antisemitism.

Above all, the paper focuses on the contemporary situation of Roma in various European countries. Persecution of Roma today takes many forms.

Grassroots prejudice, deriving from centuries of official outlawry, runs deep and often results in public hostility and discrimination, lynchings, house-burnings and murder. Roma are a prime target for skinhead and ultra-nationalist violence, and are sometimes victims of police brutality. They are virtually always on the bottom rung of society: the severity of their health, educational and housing problems approximates that in the developing world and is more acute than in any other sector of the population. In some Central and East European countries most Roma are destitute.

Since 1989 many impoverished or persecuted Roma in Central and Eastern Europe have been able to extend their nomadism (their traditional survival mechanism) across borders and seek asylum in the West. This in turn has triggered hostility, violence, repressive government legislation and forced repatriation.

Although it concentrates on the urgent humanitarian needs of today's Roma, this paper also records the new measures being introduced at national and European levels, both by newly formed Roma organizations and by governmental and voluntary bodies. Concern at the unique and growing problems faced by Roma has resulted in important initiatives within the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The paper also makes a number of recommendations for further policy initiatives on behalf of Roma.

## Preface

In devoting this Policy Paper to the persecution of Roma in Europe, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) is continuing the tradition of commitment to general human rights issues followed by its predecessor, the Institute of Jewish Affairs.

Moreover, Jewish scholars have for many years been involved in Romany issues, both at an academic level and in political activism on behalf of Roma. It is hoped that this Policy Paper will contribute at both levels by outlining the tragic history of the oppression of Gypsies in Europe, highlighting the factual details of their current situation and proposing policy recommendations.

The preparation of this paper has been long and complicated, partly because there are no Roma archives in Britain. Many of the materials used were drawn from the private libraries and document collections of two academic specialists and political activists working on behalf of Gypsies, the linguist Dr Donald Kenrick and the sociologist Dr Thomas Acton, to both of whom I am deeply indebted.

I am especially grateful to Dr Paul Iganski, social researcher and a member of the JPR Research Board, for writing the policy recommendations and to Dr Donald Kenrick for providing material enabling me to update the current developments section.

While there may well be ethnic and cultural overlap between Roma and other travellers (e.g. Irish travellers and the Swiss Jenisch), who also experience hostility and persecution, this paper focuses solely on Roma. For reasons of space, it cannot be comprehensive. There is no discussion of Romany communities outside Europe. Regrettably,

certain countries with sizeable Gypsy populations have had to be omitted, primarily due to lack of space or of sufficient readily available material, but also because there is normally less active harassment in those countries.<sup>1</sup>

Readers familiar with JPR's *Antisemitism World Report* and its standardized format for coverage of individual countries should not expect similar standardization in this paper. With some exceptions, such as Spain, the length of an entry reflects the relative numbers of Roma resident within that country and the acuteness of their situation. Data relating to Roma are often sparse and contradictory. Information is easier to obtain for Central and Eastern Europe than for Western Europe, with the major exceptions of Albania and the former Soviet republics. It is known that harassment of Roma is currently an increasing problem in some of the Baltic states, Belarus, Moldova and the Ukraine, but no details appear in this paper due to lack of verifiable sources.

Within Europe as a whole, the history and present situation of Gypsies within a given country is often highly distinctive. Each country is therefore treated as a discrete entity and, where appropriate, a brief history of Gypsies in that country is included. Nevertheless, key common factors in the treatment of Roma do emerge. Both historical and contemporary factors have been summarized.

The paper cannot claim to be an adequate reflection of the complex economic and social burdens experienced by Roma today. But it will, I hope, transmit something of their past and present suffering and alert its readers to the urgency of their plight and to the importance of protecting both the Gypsies and their unique identity.

<sup>1</sup> All statistics of Roma populations (unless derived from government census figures, which are invariably unreliable) are taken from the Minority Rights Group report by Jean-Pierre Liégeois and Nicolae Gheorghe, *Roma/Gypsies: A European Minority* (London 1995), 7 (hereafter MRG). Countries/areas omitted include: Turkey (300,000-500,000), Greece (160,000-200,000), Scandinavia (24,000-32,000), Portugal (40,000-50,000), Belgium (10,000-15,000), the Netherlands (35,000-40,000), Switzerland (30,000-35,000) and Ukraine (50,000-60,000).



## Introduction

*A land without Gypsies is a land without freedom.<sup>2</sup>*

*Living scattered all over Europe, not having a country to call their own, Gypsies are a true European minority, but one that does not fit in the definitions of national or linguistic minorities. Council of Europe recommendation, January 1994*

The Roma are the most vilified and harassed minority in Europe today. Exact population figures are not available: in censuses many Roma conceal their identity due to the internalized racism and shame borne of persecution and/or as a survival mechanism. Numbering between 7 and 8.5 million, including over 5.2 million in Central and Eastern Europe, Roma are more despised than any other ethnic group. In opinion surveys of attitudes towards various nationalities/ethnic groups sponsored by the American Jewish Committee in a number of European countries between 1991 and 1996, respondents almost consistently voiced the greatest degree of hostility towards Gypsy communities.<sup>3</sup> Referring to Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, Tom Gross wrote in 1994: 'No other group in this region . . . is currently exposed to such widespread racial hatred and prejudice—and there are signs that the situation is worsening.'<sup>4</sup> Dominant cultures tend to mistrust nomadism and autonomous, non-conformist communities. Throughout 600 years as non-Europeans in Europe, Gypsies have been consistently persecuted solely for being Gypsy. French sociologist Jean-Pierre Liégeois stated: 'The Gypsies, moving about in their nomadic groups, were seen as physically threatening and ideologically disruptive. Their very existence constituted dissidence.'<sup>5</sup> Myths contributing to the cycle of Gypsy persecution and deprivation have abounded. Some still have wide currency—e.g. that Gypsies are thieves, abduct children and are parasites on the host community.

Long-extant negative stereotypes of Gypsies have gained new force in the European media, for most people their only encounter with Gypsies.

## Post-1989

The persecution of Roma has intensified during the past seven years. As the break-up of Russia's communist empire removed inhibitors of ultra-nationalist and racist sentiments and far-right movements have grown, anti-gypsism has flourished. While no government has proposed expelling all Gypsies, some right-wing parties have made such a proposal—with popular support. Several governments, including those of Germany, France and Britain, do not want Gypsy refugees. The worsening economic and social climate in both Western and Central and Eastern Europe has reduced many Gypsies to destitution. The reaction of European Union countries to the mass migration of refugees, including many Roma, has led to increased hostility towards indigenous Gypsies, a tightening of legal controls on them and forced repatriation of most Roma refugees. Their one traditional means of fleeing persecution—escape across national borders—is now virtually closed.

Largely unprotected by local authorities and the police, European Roma communities have endured much since the major political upheavals of 1989—forced evictions from homes; expulsions from villages and towns (often with the support of local mayors); physical assault and murder by skinheads, policemen and neighbours; exclusion from public places; widespread legal discrimination; unduly harsh prison sentences and extortionate fines for petty offences; and endemic racial abuse. With reason, a Polish Rom leader, Stanislaw Stankiewicz, remarked at a Council of Europe conference on Roma in 1991: 'Today we are witnessing the new changes which are sweeping through Europe. What we see causes us great fears . . . We Roma must ask: is there room for us?'<sup>6</sup>

## Contemporary problems

Roma have become the pariahs of Europe, sharing a collective fate of rejection. Nicolae Gheorghe, sometime vice-president of the International Roma Union, has said: 'To be a Gypsy is not just an ethnic identity, but is also a stigma.'<sup>7</sup> The 1995 Minority Rights Group report on Roma/Gypsies stressed that they 'are uniquely subject to measures of control, and expulsion, among others, which affect the group as a whole, rather than a given individual under suspicion for a precise reason.'<sup>8</sup>

2 A prayer in *Divesa*, a Gypsy newsletter in Albania.  
3 See Renae Cohen and Jennifer Golub, *Attitudes Toward Jews in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia: A Comparative Survey* (1991); Lev Gudkov and Alex Levinson, *Attitudes Toward Jews in the Soviet Union* (1992); Fritz Karmasin, *Austrian Attitudes Toward Jews, Israel, and the Holocaust* (1992); Zora Bütörövi and Martin Bütörövi, *Attitudes Toward Jews in Independent Slovakia* (1995); Jennifer Golub, *British Attitudes Toward Jews and Other Minorities* (1993); Jennifer Golub, *Current German Attitudes Toward Jews and Other Minorities* (1994); Renae Cohen and Jennifer Golub, *Current Austrian Attitudes Toward Jews and the Holocaust* (1995); Renae Cohen and Jennifer Golub, *Knowledge and Remembrance of the Holocaust in Poland* (1995); *Current Russian Attitudes Toward Jews and the Holocaust: A Public-Opinion Survey* (1996).  
4 Tom Gross, *Jewish Chronicle*, 25 February 1994.  
5 Jean-Pierre Liégeois, *Gypsies: An Illustrated History*, trans. Tony Berrett (London 1985), 104.

6 'The Gypsy people and Europe: continuation of the tradition in a changing Europe', Council of Europe (CE) Conference Report, July 1991, 30.  
7 *The Times*, 30 September 1992.  
8 MRG, 13.



Most Roma are poor; each year their poverty increases and their plight deteriorates. Their life expectancy is up to a third lower than that of non-Gypsies. Roma throughout Europe have high birth and death rates, high infant mortality, early marriage and large families; many suffer from malnutrition and diseases now rare in the general population. They thus experience many of the hardships associated with populations in developing countries.<sup>9</sup> Their situation is one of 'powerlessness in the face of oppression and violence'.<sup>10</sup>

### Ways forward

Yet there are signs of hope.<sup>11</sup> A new generation of Rom intellectuals and activists has created an infrastructure of Gypsy organizations which work together with EU and governmental bodies to ameliorate conditions for Roma. Gypsies are now recognized as an ethnic minority or nationality in Britain, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary and Slovakia; museums of Gypsy life have been established in the Czech Republic and Poland; Macedonia and Slovakia now have broadcasts for Roma on radio and television. Some governments (notably that of Hungary) help to fund Gypsy clubs and societies.

Projects to increase awareness among police and teachers of the special needs of Gypsy communities are being undertaken in several countries.

This paper will explore the historical background to the contemporary situation of Roma, their present persecution and current projects and proposals to alleviate their suffering.

### Terminology<sup>12</sup>

*Gypsy* A term used to denote ethnic groups formed by the dispersal of commercial, nomadic and other groups from within India from the tenth century onwards, and their mixing with European and other groups throughout their diasporic history. The term is not intrinsically derogatory and is now used widely by Romany leaders and writers.

*Roma/Rom* A broad term used to signify (a) ethnic groups (e.g. Kalderash, Lovari) who speak the 'Vlach', 'Xoraxane' or 'Rom' varieties of the Romani dialect; (b) any person identified to others as 'Tsigane' in Central and Eastern Europe and Turkey, plus those outside the region of East European extraction; (c) Romany people in general.

*Sinti* Long-established Gypsies in Germany.

### Abbreviations

CDMG	European Committee on Migration (of the Council of Europe)
CE	Council of Europe
CERA	European Centre for Research and Action on Racism and Antisemitism
CSC	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
IRR	Institute of Race Relations, London
MRG	Minority Rights Group
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (of OSCE)
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

9 'The situation of Gypsies (Roma and Sinti) in Europe', European Committee on Migration (CDMG), CE, May 1995, 4.

10 Diane Tong, *Gypsies: A Multi-disciplinary Annotated Bibliography* (New York 1995), 171.

11 See especially section 6 of this paper

12 Taken from MRG, 6. Except in certain specific contexts, the terms 'Gypsy', 'Romany' and 'Roma/Rom' are used more or less interchangeably in this paper.

## 1 Historical outline

*It is certain that the Gypsies have at all times been godless, wicked people who are harried with complete justification.*<sup>13</sup>

### Origins

The Roma are, like the Jews, one of the oldest surviving minority groups in Europe. It is assumed, on linguistic and ethnic grounds, that they descend from several tribes or castes which left northern India between 500–1000 CE, perhaps following Muslim invasions. The Roma comprise many diverse tribal groupings, distinct but linguistically and ethnically related. Although culturally heterogeneous, they are linked as one people by the Romani language, which has more than 100 dialects but a common core vocabulary, two-thirds deriving from Sanskrit or Hindi. Other uniting factors include: a strong core culture and value system, cleanliness/pollution taboos, autonomous systems of justice, traditions of purposeful nomadism and a shared history of persecution and group solidarity.

Roma who were long settled in Central and Western Europe were often given derogatory names by non-Gypsies (*gaje, gadze*), reflecting their presumed origins ('Gypsies' from 'Little Egypt', claimed by some Roma as their country of origin and perhaps referring to Rom settlements in the eastern Mediterranean) and presumed heresy ('Heiden' in German; 'Cigane', 'Tsigane' and 'Zigeuner' out of confusion with the heretical Byzantine sect from Asia Minor of 'Atsinganos', 'untouchables'). But long-established Roma groups developed other names for themselves—Cale ('blacks') in Spain and southern France, Romanichals in England, Sinti in Germany and Manouches in France. Later nineteenth-century arrivals from the Balkans, following the abolition of Roma slavery in 1855–6, included tribes named from traditional skills (Kalderash, or copper-smiths; Lovari, or horse-dealers; Ursari, or bear-leaders).

### Roma in medieval Europe

After their departure from India, Roma migrated slowly westwards in family or tribal groups through Iran and Armenia, reaching Constantinople in the eleventh century. By the late fourteenth century they were widely established in the Balkans and beyond. By 1427 they were travelling throughout Western Europe in groups of 100–300 or more and had reached Saragossa,

Augsburg, Leipzig, Zurich, Hamburg, Brussels and Rostock.

In pre-Reformation Europe, paganism had been extinguished. Marginal groups—including heretics, early proto-Protestants and Jews—were at best tolerated, at worst harshly persecuted and killed or, in the case of Jews in numerous states, banished. Europe meant Christendom—Roman Catholic in the West, Orthodox in the East. Although essentially animist, Roma were not immediately persecuted. Claiming to be penitent pilgrims under papal or imperial protection, they initially inspired a warm reception by ecclesiastical and secular authorities and local populations, despite their exotic dress and outlandish appearance. Official gifts of alms, food and clothing were the norm. But although Roma leaders—frequently non-Gypsy and called 'dukes' or 'counts' in contemporary chronicles—produced often authentic documents of safe conduct from emperors, nobility or the Pope, hospitality soon gave way to hostility.

### Beginnings of repression

As constantly shifting groups of 'pilgrims' returned, benevolence waned. Some local populations were alienated by incidents of petty theft; the Church opposed fortune-telling and healing; racism triggered by a dark skin, oriental dress and presumed Islamic provenance increasingly provoked contempt. More importantly, as increasingly centralized nation-states grappled, during the sixteenth century, with the massive social upheavals caused by early agrarian capitalism (including unemployment, destitution and increased vagrancy due to field enclosures and abandoned villages), harsh legislative measures were introduced to curb begging and all itinerants.

Linked to these harsh measures, and perhaps to new theological intolerance and fear of popular uprisings (such as the German Peasants' Revolt in 1523) inspired partly by the incipient Reformation, were 'the sustained genocidal persecution and enslavement [of Roma] which appeared in the third and fourth decades of the sixteenth century'.<sup>14</sup> In this more repressive climate Gypsies proved a ready-made scapegoat. Banishment, refusals of safe conduct passes and repressive legislation designed to outlaw nomadic Gypsies replaced charity virtually everywhere by the end of the sixteenth century.

13 *Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschaften und Künste* (Leipzig 1735), quoted in Angus Fraser, *The Gypsies* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA 1992), 190. For the historical section I am indebted to Fraser and to David M. Crowe, *A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* (London 1995); cf. also Ian Hancock, *The Parihah Syndrome: An Account of Gypsy Slavery and Persecution* (Ann Arbor, MI 1987).

14 Nicolae Gheorghie and Thomas Acton, 'Dealing with multiculturalism: minority, ethnic, national and human rights', *OSCE ODIHR Bulletin*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1995, 31.

### Roma in Eastern Europe

The fate of Roma in Eastern Europe varied widely (cf. sections on individual countries); they became predominantly sedentary, as opposed to West European Gypsies, who remained predominantly nomadic. In the north they experienced expulsion, forced assimilation and extermination in turn. Under the Ottoman Empire (Albania, Bulgaria and other parts of the Balkans), Roma generally fared better than in Christendom, although taxation could be harsh. Roma occupied separate quarters of towns and villages. They were free to remain nomadic and not specifically subject to repressive laws. In Wallachia and Moldavia, however, they were perpetual slaves from the fourteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, and bear the scars of slavery even today.<sup>15</sup> Without rights and as the property of secular princes or monasteries, they were in the absolute power of their masters, who could dispose of them at will, and torture and kill them without penalty. Mihail Kogalniceanu, a campaigner for the emancipation of Roma slaves, wrote in 1837: 'The Europeans are organizing philanthropic societies for the abolition of slavery in America, yet in the bosom of their own continent of Europe, there are 400,000 Gypsies who are slaves, and 200,000 more equally victim to barbarousness.'<sup>16</sup>

### Roma in Western Europe

In Western Europe the fate of Roma varied in detail from country to country and from decade to decade, but most states sought at some stage to annihilate the Gypsy presence within their borders, particularly if it was nomadic. In various countries at various times, organized Gypsy hunts became a fashionable sport. To be a Rom was a crime; if apprehended, the penalty could be torture, flogging, branding and banishment. The penalty for a second offence was death by hanging for men and drowning for women. To deter Romanies from entering a particular territory, public warning signs showing the flogging and branding of a Romany were often displayed near borders.

Male Roma were often sent to the royal galleys, serving as chained oarsmen for many years. Women and children could be forcibly banished. In Hungary, Germany, Spain and elsewhere, children as young as two or four could be forcibly removed from their mothers and given to non-Romanies to rear. (The fact that Gypsy children often sought to escape and their parents attempted to rescue them may have led to the myth that Gypsies steal non-

Gypsy children. In fact, non-Gypsies stole Gypsy children for forced assimilation.)

### France

The most difficult period for Roma in France was the late seventeenth century. Laws enacted in 1666 decreed that all Roma males were to be sent to the galleys for life. Louis XIV strengthened these laws in 1682: boys too young for the galleys were to be placed in hospices, women and girls branded and banished. Nobility and magistrates were forbidden to shelter Romanies on pain of losing both office and domains. Such laws were enforced as rigorously as small police forces permitted. Romany bands were hunted down, many were sent to the galleys and clan groups were dispersed. Small family units became sedentary or sought shelter in isolated mountain or border regions.

### Germany

In some German states, all adult Romanies faced torture, flogging, branding and banishment, while males could be sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labour. If banished Romanies reappeared, they were liable to hanging without trial. The Netherlands pursued an equally repressive policy: harsh measures, bordering in the eighteenth century on genocide, included organized large-scale Gypsy hunts, hard labour and the gallows.

### England

In England, specific legislation adopted against Gypsies was designed to expel all who chose not to become sedentary, on pain of forfeiture of life and property. Wandering Romanies were hanged for nomadism until the 1650s in England and 1714 in Scotland. Lesser penalties for being apprehended as Gypsies remained, including whipping, hard labour or perpetual banishment. Children between the ages of five and fourteen could be taken into unpaid bonded service until the age of eighteen for girls and twenty-four for boys (such legislation also applied to non-Gypsy beggars). Laws attacking vagabondage continued to name 'Gypsies' specifically as late as the Vagrant Act of 1824.

### Roma and the Church

Although, from early on, Roma had often sought to baptize their children and have Church marriages and funerals, the Church was largely hostile towards them until nineteenth-century Protestant revival movements encouraged active proselytizing among them. In Central and Eastern Europe, slaves belonging to churches and monasteries were treated even more cruelly than those of the nobility. In 1568 Pope Pius V sought to expel all Gypsies from the domain of the Roman Catholic Church, prompting Spain, Portugal and France to begin shipping Roma as slaves to colonies in Africa and the Americas.

15 Marcel Courtiade, 'Quelques repères psych(olog)iques dans l'histoire des Romis de l'Est', in Claire Auzias, *Les Familles Roms d'Europe de l'Est* (Paris 1995), 15-23.

16 Quoted in Hancock, 33

### Forced assimilation in the eighteenth century

By the eighteenth century, the forcible sedentarization and assimilation of Roma had replaced the aims of total exclusion and death. The ultimate aim was the annihilation of Romany identity and language (and even, in Hungary and Spain, their very name) rather than of the Roma themselves. The measures designed to achieve this could be brutal, and Roma sought to evade them wherever possible. Forced settlement with prohibition on travel was common; children remained vulnerable to forcible seizure by the state until recently (between 1926 and 1973 Switzerland's Pro Juventute organization took hundreds of Jenisch children to be reared by non-Gypsy families); in some countries Romanies were forbidden to marry one another. In Spain all male Roma were rounded up in June 1749 and sent to penal establishments and mercury mines; many died of exhaustion and disease, and some were not released for sixteen years.

### Strategies for Roma survival

It is remarkable that the Roma have survived, given the harshness with which they have been treated throughout Europe. They subsisted on the geographical margins (border lands, remote or mountainous regions) and the economic margins of society, working among rural peasants or the urban poor as skilled craftsmen, itinerant smiths, musicians, peddlers, casual labourers and seasonal farm workers. From the sixteenth century onwards, army commanders valued Rom smiths as makers and menders of weapons. Gypsies were illiterate and without books. But they possessed a rich heritage—valuable crafts and technical skills acquired in India or Byzantium (including weaving, smelting, making shot and basket-making); facility in music, dance and entertainment; a profound knowledge of the natural world and its free products to sell or transform for their own use.

Roma learned to adapt quickly and with versatility to changed laws or circumstances, rapidly acquiring new crafts and means of earning an independent livelihood. Their widely esteemed love of children, close kinship bonds and social solidarity forged strong ties of loyalty and identity within their particular Roma grouping. Moreover, they could frequently count on support among the nobility and gentry, as well as among some elements of the local peasantry and urban working class, among whom they lived often harmoniously in 'cultural osmosis',<sup>17</sup> providing valued peripatetic services to settled populations. Indeed, it is known that numbers of *gadze* joined the Gypsies permanently.

Survival mechanisms included: developing a financially independent 'culture of invisibility'; patterns of migrating and emigrating in search of work; flexible habits of seasonal nomadism; and temporary or longer-term settlement according to opportunities for employment.

### Roma in European culture

From the late eighteenth century onwards there was some amelioration in attitudes towards Roma. Scholars, particularly philologists, began to appreciate the antiquity and rich provenance of Romani language and customs. The Romantic interest in the *Volk* awakened interest in Gypsies as a distinct 'people'. Romany instrumental music, song and dance became popular from Spain to Hungary; leading Rom musicians entertained aristocrats in Hungary and Russia, a few even marrying into the aristocracy. Numerous non-Gypsy composers, including Liszt, Bizet, Brahms, Rachmaninov and Bartok, were inspired by Gypsy music. Artists frequently painted romanticized portraits of Gypsies.

Whereas earlier literature, particularly drama and clerical writing, had treated Roma with contempt, casting them in an entirely negative light, Goethe was one of the first to characterize a Romany chief as a 'noble savage'. While the semi-autobiographical novels of George Borrow, including *Lavengro* (1851) and *Romany Rye* (1857), drew on prolonged though ambiguous first-hand experience of Romanies as 'real' people, many nineteenth-century writers like Sir Walter Scott romanticized Gypsies or, conversely, portrayed them as lawless outcasts. In nineteenth-century France and elsewhere Roma were still banished or imprisoned simply for being Gypsies; in Germany children were forcibly removed to orphanages until the end of the century. Negative stereotypes abounded. (And still do: Gypsiologist Diane Tong recently wrote: 'Gypsies are often devalued as people at the same time that their arts are valued and imitated world-wide'.<sup>18</sup>) Yet during the nineteenth century some churches and humanitarian bodies began to grow aware of the increasing poverty of many Roma communities.

### Nineteenth-century developments

While deep-seated prejudice remained widespread, some persecution from official sources lessened. Emancipation of Romany serfs and slaves in Wallachia and Moldavia was completed in 1864 and coincided with large migrations of diverse Romany tribes from the Balkans and Hungary. Exotic in appearance, speaking strongly Romanian-influenced dialects, the Kalderash and other occupation-based tribes emigrated to the Americas

17 Jean-Pierre Liégeois, *Gypsies and Travellers: Socio-cultural Data, Socio-political Data* (Strasbourg: CE 1987), 17.

18 Tong, 33.



and settled widely throughout Europe, providing a marked contrast to the long-settled 'Gypsies' and today forming important subgroups of the Romany people.

Yet in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the influx of Rom into Europe triggered new outbreaks of anti-Gypsy legislation and prejudice, particularly within the German state, Switzerland and France, and led to widespread attempts to control Gypsy nomadism prior to the First World War.

## 2 The forgotten holocaust

### Anti-Gypsy racism prior to the Jewish Holocaust

The social Darwinism deriving from theories of Aryan racial superiority propagated by Richard Wagner, Count Gobineau (*L'Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, 1853-5) and Houston Stewart Chamberlain led to increased contempt for Roma. In 1876 Cesare Lombroso, in *L'uomo delinquente*, typified Roma as atavistic and criminal.<sup>19</sup> Decrees to deport or exclude foreign Roma and pressurize nomadic Roma to settle were passed in Germany at Bismarck's instigation. In 1899 research on Roma began in a Munich institute, later named the Central Office for Fighting the Gypsy Nuisance. The institute was created by the Bavarian police and was closed only in 1970.<sup>20</sup>

In 1906 the Prussian government issued a directive, 'Zur Bekämpfung des Zigeunerunwesens' ('Combating the Gypsy nuisance'), listing bilateral agreements with nine neighbouring states on forcible expulsion of Roma from Prussia. A 1926 law aimed at 'Gypsies and the work-shy', described by Joachim Hohmann as 'a legally encoded requirement to destroy specific Gypsy culture',<sup>21</sup> forbade nomadism for families with school-age children, outlawed travelling in groups and curbed Gypsy ownership of animals. Further measures forbade the carrying of weapons and made fingerprinting and close police supervision of all Gypsies compulsory.

### Nazism and Roma

The Nazi Party encouraged research into Roma genealogy. Dr Robert Ritter, who in 1936 founded what became the Racial Hygiene and Population Biology Research Unit of the Department of Health in Berlin, had by 1942 created files on 30,000 Sinti, Roma and part-Sinti in German territories. Nazi researchers regarded Roma,

although 'Aryan' in origin, as asocial, with 'a criminal element in their whole make-up',<sup>22</sup> and redefined them as 'non-Aryan'. Inter-marriage with pure- or part-Roma was seen as a threat to the German nation; so too were their high birth-rate and alleged welfare costs. Ritter regarded Roma as primitive and mentally backward.<sup>23</sup> He recommended sterilization of all part-Sinti; his colleague, the racial scientist Eva Justin, recommended it for all Roma.

### Persecution during the 1930s

From 1934 onwards some German Gypsies were forced into policed settlements. In 1936 400 were sent to Dachau. In June 1936 a decree naming nomadic Gypsies 'a plague' required the compulsory expulsion of foreign Gypsies and intense controls over those with German citizenship. Late in 1938 the first racial law against Roma and Sinti, 'Fight against the Gypsy Menace', was enacted and in March 1939 passes were issued. These were grey for non-Gypsies, brown for pure Roma, brown with blue stripes for part-Roma (those with two or more Rom or Sinti great-grandparents—a stricter classification than for part-Jews). The 1938 law aimed explicitly at the 'racial separation' of Roma and Sinti from Germans, the prevention of miscegenation and tight control of all pure- and part-Roma and Sinti.

### Measures in the early 1940s

In 1940, 3,000 German and Austrian Roma and Sinti were deported to Polish camps or ghettos; the remaining 27,000 continued to be forced into holding camps. Following the German occupation of Austria in 1938, Austrian Roma were sent to work camps, concentration camps (e.g. Ravensbrück, Mauthausen and Buchenwald) or to a special Roma camp in Lackenbach. Roma in territories annexed or conquered by Germany were subject to similar treatment. Some fascist governments allied to Germany (particularly Croatia, Slovakia and Romania) initiated persecution of Roma without apparent pressure from Germany.<sup>24</sup>

### Roma in concentration camps and death camps

The decision to annihilate all Roma was probably taken in mid-1942, after the Wannsee conference. But already by January 1942 several thousand

22 Quoted in Donald Kenrick and Gratton Puxon, *The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies* (London and Brighton 1972), 63 n33. A new edition of this book was published as *Gypsies under the Swastika* (Hatfield, Hertfordshire 1995).

23 Fraser, 260.

24 Donald Kenrick, 'The Nazis and the Gypsies: a fresh look', *Jewish Quarterly*, no. 156, winter 1994/5, 46.

19 Fraser, 249.

20 Hancock, 61.

21 Joachim Hohmann, *Geschichte der Zigeuner-Verfolgung in Deutschland* (Frankfurt and New York 1988), 81



Roma had been gassed in closed vans at Chelmno.<sup>25</sup> Because records are incomplete and the statistics disputed, estimates of the total number of Sinti, Roma and part-Sinti murdered in the Holocaust vary from 200,000-500,000. Auschwitz-Birkenau contained a special Roma camp, where families were kept together, probably in order to forestall revolt. At least 19,000 were murdered or died there.<sup>26</sup> Many Roma not allocated to the special camp also died in Auschwitz. Thousands of Romanies were killed in Belsen and Buchenwald and in extermination camps, including Belžec, Sobibór, Majdanek and Treblinka. Many were subjected to inhumane experimentation at Dachau (salt injections), Natzweiler (typhus injections), Sachsenhausen (mustard gas) and elsewhere. In Auschwitz Dr Mengele selected many Romanies, including children, for experimentation. Many Roma men, women and teenagers underwent forced sterilization.

While over half of all German, Czech, Austrian, Latvian and Polish Roma died, some communities suffered even heavier losses. Virtually all Roma in Belgium, Holland, Estonia and Lithuania were annihilated, as were those in Croatia, where the Catholic-supported fascist Ustaša perpetrated mass atrocities against the Roma. Rom communities in the USSR, Romania, Serbia and Hungary each lost thousands, massacred by the Nazis. Donald Kenrick and other scholars point to documentation showing that the ultimate aim of the Nazis was the "complete extermination" of the Roma people.<sup>27</sup>

### Long-term consequences on Roma of the Second World War

These bald statements mask the prolonged anguish of Gypsy suffering—starvation, separation from loved ones, brutal treatment and inhumane degradation before an agonizing death. Those who survived the concentration camps were often physically maimed, always destitute, and usually bereft of all family. Even those who escaped the worst horrors of persecution endured years of terror followed by the large-scale forced migrations after the war. Pre-war patterns of relative integration had been shattered. Roma remained outcasts, often stateless and without papers, their suffering unacknowledged and without compensation from the German state. Many of today's problems faced by Europe's Roma are a direct long-term consequence of the war-time destruction of life, community and way of life. Moreover, it should be remembered that 'the Nazis'

well-publicized persecution of Gypsies followed centuries of historical precedent by virtually all peoples of Europe'.<sup>28</sup>

While there are recorded war-time incidents of 'righteous non-Gypsies' helping persecuted Roma,<sup>29</sup> no European government spoke out on behalf of the Roma, either before or during the war. The Catholic Church ignored their plight completely, although many Roma were Catholic. While a few Rom survivors began collecting their memories after the war, there was little documentation of the collective Gypsy fate until the mid-1960s when Jewish scholars committed themselves to gathering it. Only in September 1994, in Vienna, did the first international conference on the Nazi genocide of Roma take place.<sup>30</sup>

### 3 Parallels with and contrasts to the Jewish experience

#### Historical parallels with antisemitism

Roma have much in common with Jews in their experience of persecution within Christian Europe. (There are, incidentally, Jewish Gypsies in Belarus and Sofia.) For both Roma and Jews, their suffering and annihilation in the twentieth century are the culmination of centuries of oppression, partly motivated by religious intolerance and racism. Some Rom leaders have noted the parallel. Nicolae Gheorghe recently commented: 'Gypsies are now the scapegoats as the Jews were before.'<sup>31</sup> Kurt Holl of Cologne stated in 1993: 'The East European Roma have today the same role as the Ostjuden early in this century.'<sup>32</sup>

There are many historical parallels. Hostility towards Roma and Jews has similar roots—fear of the unknown, of religious difference; envy (of the Romanies' apparent freedom); hatred of 'the outsider'; mistrust of possible 'spies'; simple chauvinism and racism. Roma, like Jews, were attacked in sermons, books, drama and popular art, and thus demonized in the popular mind. (Stereotypes of the Gypsy woman or the Jewess as a dangerous seductress and of the male Gypsy or Jew as a dark sinister threat featured widely in

25 Martin Gilbert, *The Holocaust: The Jewish Tragedy* (Glasgow 1987), 254-67.

26 See Kenrick and Puxon for a full account of Rom suffering during the Holocaust, esp. 140ff. on Auschwitz.

27 Donald Kenrick, 'Letter to the editor', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, 1989, 251-4.

28 William A. Duna, *Gypsies. A Persecuted Race* (Minneapolis 1984), quoted in Tong, 174.

29 Kenrick, 'The Nazis and the Gypsies', 47; see also Kenrick and Puxon.

30 Mirella Karpati, 'L'altro Olocausto', in *Lacio Drom* (Rome), vol. 32, no. 6, November-December 1994, 17-20.

31 *The Times*, 30 September 1992.

32 *Regards*, June-August 1993; cf. Gilad Margalit, 'Antigypsyism in the political culture of the Federal Republic of Germany: a parallel with antisemitism?', *Analysis of Current Trends in Antisemitism* no. 9 (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, 1996).

literature.) The spread of the Black Death in the fourteenth century was attributed by at least one nineteenth-century writer to both Gypsies and Jews.<sup>33</sup> Roma had their own 'blood libel', the myth that Gypsies abduct non-Gypsy children. Like Jews, Roma were subject to harsh fines and taxation and barred from numerous trades and legitimate economic practices. Historically, Jews migrated for similarly complex motives as Roma today—to escape persecution and improve their economic situation. Both Jews and Roma coped with suffering by distancing themselves inwardly from the oppressor, through jokes, songs and stories expressing ridicule. With significant exceptions, neither Jews nor Roma resorted to a people to armed struggle in defence of their cause.

#### Contemporary parallels with antisemitism

Like Jews of old, migrating or nomadic Roma are now herded into marginal ghettos and regarded as pariahs. In Western Europe exotic newcomers from Eastern Europe are often resented by long-established Gypsies, just as late nineteenth-century immigrant 'Ostjuden' were often resented by assimilated German and Austrian Jews. (Moreover, non-Jews who publicly opposed Jewish immigration into Britain also opposed that of Lovari Gypsies in the early twentieth century at the time of the first Aliens Act.<sup>34</sup>)

Like Jews, Roma function as a litmus test of democratic society. Both Jews and Roma were without significant support from the churches before and during the Holocaust. Both are vulnerable in post-communist countries to the resurgence of pre-war stereotypes and myths, dormant under communism. Like Jews, Roma are victims of neo-fascism and ultra-nationalism. Both Jews and Roma have been targeted by skinheads and verbally attacked by ultra-nationalists.

In some countries the 'Gypsy problem' is perceived as the dominant question, much like the pre-war 'Jewish problem'. Proposed 'solutions' to the 'Gypsy problem' echo earlier fascist 'solutions'. They include: segregation in public places; proposals to lower the birth rate; forced evictions from homes; forced expulsion from some countries; police curfews; discriminatory legislation.

#### Contrasts to the Jewish experience

There are, however, major differences between the victimization of Jews and that of Roma. The most evident of these is the existence of Israel. Prominent

Romany leaders have stressed the vulnerability of Romanics in this regard. Rajko Djurić of Yugoslavia has said: '[Unlike Jews] we have no country and no powerful lobbies and politicians see no political capital in defending us.'<sup>35</sup> The German Rom leader, Romani Rose, lamented at the fiftieth anniversary commemoration of *Kristallnacht*: 'For Sinti and Rom there is no State of Israel... All Gypsies are in diaspora; but there is no... national home, nor even any wide recognition of the nationhood of Romanics.'<sup>36</sup> There is no parallel today to Zionism. Pan-Gypsy visions of shared peoplehood or 'Romanistan' pale before the urgent, practical needs of European Roma.

Other differences are internal—for example, Rom attitudes to education. Many Roma mistrust state education, following centuries of exclusion from school, rejection within school, state persecution and necessary reliance on their own resourcefulness. Roma educate their children thoroughly, on gender-based lines, within the family. From early on, fathers teach sons and mothers daughters, passing on skills, crafts and experience, encouraging the ability to take initiatives and decisions at an early age. Children aged eleven and twelve become part of the economic unit, contributing to the family's income. Meeting immediate needs through informally acquired skills and a flexible combination of trades has to take precedence over long-term investment in formal education. Freedom from dependence on wage labour is highly prized, facilitating mobility and a communal lifestyle. Children who do attend school face rejection by teachers and other pupils and often receive little encouragement from parents deeply suspicious—with good historical reason—of non-Gypsy society: 'The legacy of centuries of vilification and persecution... informs the living memory of Gypsies everywhere. The passionately held view of most Gypsies today is still that gadje are dangerous, not to be trusted, and, except for business dealings, to be avoided.'<sup>37</sup>

Traditional antisemitic rhetoric has shifted on to the Gypsy, who is widely—and wrongly—perceived as a parasite, a criminal, a threat to stable society. Few positive images of the Romany now remain to counteract negative ones; in most of Europe, nineteenth-century romantic images of the Gypsy as a fancy-free rover or passionate performer of music or dance have long since evaporated, except in the theatre. The many strengths in Romany life—intense family love, loyalty and hospitality; courage in adversity; friendship and generosity; the constant warm presence of other Roma, including

33 Theodor Tetzner, *Geschichte der Zigeuner, ihre Herkunft, Natur und Art* (Weimar and Ilmenau 1835), quoted in Hlohmann, 50.

34 Colin Holmes, 'The German Gypsy question in Britain, 1904-6', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1978, 248-67 (quoted in Tong, 177).

35 *International Herald Tribune*, 31 July 1990.

36 *Regards*, June-August 1993.

37 Isabel Fonseca, 'Among the Gypsies', *New Yorker*, 25 September 1995, 95.

in sickness and old age (a Rom is rarely alone); stringent cleanliness; collective *joie de vivre*—are simply unknown to the outsider. Despite the persistence of antisemitism, therefore, Roma are today considerably more unpopular in Europe than Jews.

Until recently, Roma have been relatively disorganized. The many new Rom organizations were, and are, quite disunited, with little international co-ordination. Roma are without internationally known spokespeople, though national leaders are increasingly emerging on to the international scene. Whereas Jewish communities contain a disproportionate number of professionals and intellectuals, most Romanies remain illiterate. The few who become professionals often abandon their Romany identity. Moreover, there may be some correlation between the mass immigration of Roma into some regions and a rise in petty theft and burglary (directly related to high unemployment, reduced opportunities for self-employment, high birth rates and extreme poverty among Roma).

Some of the main champions of Roma are prominent Jews. Former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt for the first time publicly acknowledged the Romany holocaust in 1982 only after a Romany conference in Göttingen in the previous year, at which Jewish personalities, including Simon Wiesenthal, Heinz Galinski, Miriam Novitch and Donald Kenrick, had highlighted the war-time persecution of Roma.<sup>38</sup> The Slovakian Council of Christians and Jews has strongly supported local Roma.<sup>39</sup> In 1986 the Cologne branch of the Council of Jewish-Christian Understanding supported 100 destitute Romanies, including seventy children, forcibly evicted from Holland. Ignatz Bubis, leader of Germany's Jewish community, has spoken out strongly on behalf of Roma, as have Serge Klarsfeld and the organization *Fils et filles de déportés de France*. In the United States the new Romani-Jewish Alliance publishes regular newsletters. High-level Jewish-Roma contacts are increasing and bode well for the future.

#### 4 Roma experience since the Second World War

##### Under communism

People at all points of the political spectrum have wanted to change the Gypsies.<sup>40</sup> This has been true of fascist, free-market capitalist, social democratic

and communist governments. The Roma had at one time been free to enjoy a certain cosmopolitanism due to their peripatetic life-style (often in a radius of hundreds of miles) and disregard for national boundaries. This brought them under some suspicion in the new monolithic communist nation-states whose early sympathy and cultural and economic assistance to Roma as 'victims of capitalism' soon evaporated. Post-war communist governments compelled Roma to abandon nomadism. Use of the Romani language was discouraged. Forced assimilation caused a virtually complete sedentarization as well as the widespread loss of identity and traditional cultural values. Viable life-styles, developed over many decades and based on self-sufficiency and prized skills, were destroyed. Projects funded in some countries to improve educational standards and provide better housing, and compulsory employment in state factories and farms in Eastern Europe, which provided a safety net against destitution, could not compensate for the loss. A few Roma became leading communists, though they did not function as representatives of their people.

##### Former communist regimes post-1989

Lacking both education and land, Romanies were at a considerable disadvantage once communist structures began to disintegrate. While some who possessed entrepreneurial skills could grasp new opportunities for free trading, the majority found that their situation worsened in the infant market economy. Most Roma housing remains wretched, often isolated and without water, electricity or sanitation. Unemployment among Roma has risen dramatically (to 60 per cent for adult Roma in urban Bulgarian ghettos),<sup>41</sup> while those in employment often earn wages below subsistence level. The lifting of oppressive restrictions encouraged non-Gypsies, themselves prey to economic distress, to express open animosity towards Roma. Nicolae Gheorghe has stated: 'Before the revolution, only the police were violent to Romanies. Now the whole population can be.'<sup>42</sup>

Unemployment has encouraged some young Roma to engage in petty crime, which in turn has increased anti-Gypsy sentiment. Unprecedented open nationalism, moreover, has focused latent racism sharply on Roma, kindling an irrational, centuries-old hatred, while Roma feel unprotected in the face of persistent skinhead intimidation and violence.

In the area of criminality, Romanies paradoxically act as scapegoats for populations facing political

38 *Regards*, June-August 1993, 38; Donald Kenrick, 'The Roman Gypsies of Europe', 1.

39 *Tablet*, 9 October 1993.

40 Tong, 251.

41 A. Reyniers, OECD, 1993, quoted in 'The situation of Gypsies (Roma and Sinti) in Europe', CDMG, Cl, May 1995, 7.

42 *The Times*, 30 September 1992.

uncertainty, a sharp decline in their national economies and unprecedented financial insecurity. Since 1989 large-scale crime and fraud have increased massively. Former members of the *nomenclatura* and security forces, indigenous mafia gangs and international crime syndicates appear to be involved. Existing juridical systems are largely powerless to investigate and prosecute. Yet the alleged disproportionate increase in petty crime attributable to Roma is often tackled by mob violence with impunity and by draconian measures by police and local authorities. (Police commonly attribute assaults against Roma to local feuds rather than to their root cause—racism.) Anger against Roma can thus serve to deflect widespread popular anger and frustration at less visible—and far more powerful—non-Gypsy criminals.<sup>43</sup>

#### Post-war Western Europe

In Western Europe nomadism, although permitted by law and remaining considerably more widespread than in Central and Eastern Europe, grew progressively more difficult following the Second World War as central governments increased control over marginal groups. Legislation was enacted in several countries to settle nomadic Gypsies permanently on authorized sites, particularly during the 1960s (at a time, paradoxically, when many non-Gypsies were buying caravans and becoming seasonally peripatetic, holidaying at municipal and private sites specifically closed to Gypsies). 'Steps taken without consulting the Gypsy populations often proved unsuitable, and failed to solve the problems of cohabitation with the majority population.'<sup>44</sup>

Gypsies wishing to remain nomadic or semi-nomadic, or unable to find space on official sites, face harassment and often violent eviction from temporary and unauthorized sites. (The burgomaster of Ghent became involved in a campaign to evict twenty Gypsy families from the city.<sup>45</sup>) Many still endure unsanitary living conditions, often on 'discarded land' close to motorways or industrial areas or under power-generating pylons.<sup>46</sup> Roma have little access to health care, and only 30 per cent of Romany children in the EU attend school regularly. Drug abuse is a new but pressing problem among young Roma in Spain and elsewhere.<sup>47</sup>

Economic changes following the Second World War affected the traditional livelihoods of Gypsies. In rural economies they had enjoyed financial independence and a modest living in a variety of peripatetic occupations (including fairground and circus work, basket weaving, tinkering, peddling and horse trading). Rapid industrialization, agricultural mechanization, rural decline and the increasing difficulty of remaining nomadic resulted in the loss of long-standing seasonal occupations. Mounting bureaucracy rendered some traditional areas of economic activity impossible for illiterate Roma. Many were therefore forced to seek unskilled or semi-skilled work in towns and cities. Technological advances in industry and recessions during the 1980s reduced the availability of such work, forcing some sedentary Gypsies for the first time into unemployment and social welfare benefits. (Nomadic Gypsies are commonly unable to draw welfare benefits, due to their peripatetic life-style.) This has underpinned widespread anti-Gypsy slurs in the media which perpetuate public negative stereotypes. Anti-Gypsy racism, far from being restricted to a lunatic fringe or the far right, is almost universal.

#### Ecological and community values within Romany life

Gypsy culture and history are little known among the general public. This has led to a remarkable paradox. Romany values and life-styles, when associated with ethnic groups outside Europe, were idealized during the 1970s and 1980s—'small is beautiful'; community life; 'sustainable living in ecological balance with nature'; the use of herbal healing; the recycling of waste materials; owning minimal material possessions; 'learning from the ancient wisdom' of indigenous and illiterate peoples; non-individualistic and interdependent group living in extended, multi-generational families; profound knowledge of animals and the natural world.

Yet the one ethnic people within Europe who had actually lived such values and life-styles for centuries, with dignity despite intense suffering, was ignored. Roma remained despised outcasts, regarded contemptuously as deviants or paupers, increasingly forced from rural areas into urban shanty-towns, from self-sufficiency into dependency, from traditional crafts and occupations into the most arduous menial jobs and unemployment. Throughout Europe, the social fabric of Gypsy life has been damaged, as large family groups, cohesive and mutually supportive, have been broken apart by dispersal into small housing units, often far from possible sources of work.

43 See Toni Sonneman, secretary of the Romani-Jewish Alliance: 'The media portray the Romanies as generic "suspects" in the rising tide of crime and black marketeering', quoted by Donald Kenrick in Report for Association of Gypsy Organizations (privately circulated), June 1995.

44 'The situation of Gypsies (Roma and Sinti) in Europe', 5.

45 IRR *European Race Audit*, November 1995.

46 *Europe*, October 1989.

47 *Gitanos y Drogas* (Madrid: Secretariado General Gitano 1978).



### *Roma nomadism and migration*

Today, as Western Europe's internal borders dissolve, some long-settled Roma are reviving purposeful nomadism, often in large family groups. As many as one in ten of Europe's Romanies may cross national borders each year. (One Rom leader, Rudko Kawczynsky, has recently argued: 'Romanies are, after all, the only true Europeans'.)<sup>48</sup> While there is some migration northwards among Spain's 400,000 Roma, migration within mainland Europe is generally westwards. Jean-Pierre Liégeois has estimated that, although they rarely use caravans, some 30 per cent of Europe's Roma are internally nomadic within their own countries, while 30 per cent are semi-nomadic (travelling for only part of the year) and 40 per cent more or less permanently settled.<sup>49</sup>

Renewed nomadism, both within and between states, stems partly from fear of persecution and growing anti-Gypsy hostility and violence, particularly from neo-Nazis, skinheads and police. Other causes include the need to search for work and to escape endemic poverty and ill-health and fear of increasing nationalism. But the migrations themselves have led to intensified hostility to Roma, forced repatriation and the new media myth of a possible 'Gypsy invasion'. The reality is that proportionately fewer Roma than non-Gypsies migrated from Central and Eastern Europe between 1946 and the late 1980s; since 1960 about 250,000 Roma have emigrated to Western Europe.<sup>50</sup>

### **Religious revivalism among Roma**

Partly as a survival tactic, most Roma have traditionally subscribed to the locally dominant religion, whether Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox or Muslim. Within this outer framework, animist beliefs and practices have subsisted hand-in-hand with informal elements of Christian or Muslim piety and observance. But, since 1952, unprecedented religious enthusiasm has swept through Rom communities. The Light and Life evangelical Gypsy pentecostal movement claims 8,000 members in Britain and 150,000 in France,<sup>51</sup> where there are 500 Rom preachers, 60 places of worship and a Rom Bible school. Thirty per cent of all Spanish Gypsies have become 'alleluyas', members of a similarly charismatic pentecostal form of Christianity, dubbed by Spanish Romanies the Church of Philadelphia.<sup>52</sup>

This new, strongly Bible-based Romany pentecostalism fosters Gypsy culture and political solidarity. 'It is a new type of movement which

unites across traditional divisions . . . sustains resistance to pressure from the environment . . . through its Gypsy dynamism . . . [and] is a source of originality and a mainspring of change.'<sup>53</sup> Thomas Acton wrote that the Gypsy evangelical church 'does not teach its converts to be ashamed of being Romani . . . [It is] instrumental in turning the different Gypsy ethnic groups from an atavistic tribalism towards a general Romani nationalism.'<sup>54</sup>

The new Roma churches also bring more intangible benefits, paralleling the Methodist revival in terms of fervent spirituality and puritanism (e.g. their opposition to drugs and fortune-telling).<sup>55</sup> The Roma religious revival is already having a major impact on encouraging literacy and the acquisition of education, and developing leadership. Perhaps, too, at long last, the mainstream churches may become active on behalf of Roma (Pope John Paul II symbolically used Romani in his Christmas message in 1994).

### **Urgent needs of the Roma people today**

Rom intellectuals have recently emerged as activists and articulate spokespeople, both nationally and internationally. Roma organizations have been developed in both Western and Eastern Europe. Some governments and several international agencies have recently undertaken programmes to address the dire social and educational problems faced by Europe's Gypsies (cf. Roma, European institutions and NGOs, pp. 36-9). Some state finance for Romani newspapers, language teaching and theatre is now available in Slovakia and elsewhere.

Yet, despite being archetypal 'free marketers', Roma remain a powerless minority, the most vulnerable and poorest of Europe's peoples within the new market economy. Because Roma are largely unprotected by international law, most countries still have no national laws to protect them. They are in urgent need of measures, drawn up in consultation with Roma representatives, to protect them from violence and to improve their living conditions, health, education and housing in ways which will enable them to retain as much of their independence, rich social organization and distinctive culture as possible. But any measures that are taken must be sensitive to the historically rooted suspicion among Gypsies of non-Gypsy intervention and to the need to establish mutual understanding between local Gypsies and non-Gypsies.

48 *Die Zeit*, 7 September 1990.

49 Liégeois, *Gypsies and Travellers*, 24.

50 CDMG (Strasbourg 1995), 19.

51 *Guardian*, 3 May 1995.

52 *Independent on Sunday Magazine*, 11 February 1995.

53 Liégeois, *Gypsies and Travellers*, 62-3.

54 Thomas Acton, 'The Gypsy evangelical church', *Ecumenical Review*, vol. 31, no. 1, July 1979, 289-95 (quoted Tong, 256).

55 Olivier Lucarneau, 'Une loi à soulever les Tziganes', *Le Monde*, 22 August 1990.



A leading expert who has travelled widely in Europe summed up the situation thus:

The Gypsies are on a powder keg which may explode at any time. But the situation is not as clear-cut as it was in the 1930s for the Jews. On the surface all seems well. The Queen of Spain attended the first European Romany Congress in Barcelona. The Slovak government has upgraded the Romanies to a national minority. A Gypsy folk group is invited to perform at the National Folk Festival in the main stadium in Budapest. No one is asking the Gypsies to wear the sign or banning them from buses.

Yet not so far below the surface there is prejudice and hate, fanned by government ministers, right-wing leaders and local politicians. A high percentage of the population in every country place Gypsies as their most disliked group, the ones they would like to expel (if another country would take them). Within living memory not just the Germans but Croats, Slovaks, Hungarians and Romanians killed Romanies in wired camps and the forests. It is not surprising that in many towns and villages Gypsies live in fear of attack from their neighbours as they are made the scapegoat for the economic crises.<sup>56</sup>

## 5 The position of Roma in various European countries

### Albania

Total population: 3.2 million  
Roma population: 90,000-100,000 (MRG (see footnote 1))

Although under communism Roma lived virtually segregated from other Albanians and faced major economic problems, many had employment and there was no special discrimination against them. Albanian leader Enver Hoxha spoke of Roma positively.<sup>57</sup>

Since 1989 their situation has worsened relative to the rest of the population. Land where they had traditionally lived for decades on the outskirts of towns and villages has been reclaimed under privatization. Many live in hovels made of corrugated iron or in tents. The majority are unemployed, even in the capital Tirana. Those who do have work are commonly employed in heavy labour, such as street cleaning, or on municipal rubbish dumps, at below subsistence wages.<sup>58</sup>

Poverty among Roma can be extreme, exacerbated by the large average number of dependants (many families have eight or more children). The government has done little to ease Roma suffering. In Gjirokastra primitive homes were built for 300

Roma, without access to telephone or medical facilities; yet these were preferable to hovels or tents, and the Roma were apparently content.

Hostility towards Roma has intensified since 1989. Peasants, especially those who have again become landowners, regard them with contempt. Many Roma are now charged exorbitant rent for land given to them long ago and become indigent as a result. There has been sporadic anti-Gypsy violence. In 1991 many Roma families in Berati were flooded out twice, losing their shacks and all their possessions. The entire community is unemployed. The government provided a small amount of aid—but non-Roma residents demanded that it be withdrawn. Some Roma were robbed and injured, a few threatened with death.<sup>59</sup> Elsewhere, two young Roma were shot by police in separate incidents in 1993 and 1994.<sup>60</sup>

### Austria

Total population: 7.9 million  
Roma population: 20,000-25,000 (MRG)

#### *The contemporary scene*

Some Austrian Roma, including Kalderash and Beash, immigrated from 1965 onwards; long-established groups, including Hungarian Roma, have been sedentary since Empress Maria-Theresa's 1762 edict; and Sinti and Lovari remained semi-nomadic until the 1960s.<sup>61</sup> Long-established Roma and Sinti have been regarded as Austrian citizens since 1945, while citizenship can be acquired by newer arrivals only by marriage to an Austrian. Only 5,000 of Austria's Roma population have been included in the new category of 'official minority' since 1983. Many Romanian Roma have passed through Austria en route to Germany and the United States. In addition, over 30,000 Roma refugees from Serbia, Bosnia and Macedonia have migrant worker status; those without work can stay for three-month periods on tourist visas. Roma refugees are still arriving in Austria.

#### *Legal recognition*

Austria recognized Roma and Sinti as an ethnic minority group only in 1994, following increased political activity by three Roma organizations formed in 1991. Since December 1993 Roma and Sinti have been entitled to set up their own councils.

#### *Socio-economic problems*

The standard of living for Roma is low, life expectancy shorter than average, and birth rate high (3-7 children per family). Only 10 per cent

56 Donald Kenrick, private communication, 13 November 1995.

57 *O Drom*, September 1994.

58 *Auzias*, 47-8.

59 *Auzias*, 49; *O Drom*, September 1994.

60 *O Drom*, September 1994.

61 *Etudes Tsiganes*, vol. 1, 1993, 69.

complete compulsory education, while girls normally leave school at the age of eleven or twelve.<sup>62</sup> The majority are very poor, demoralized and isolated because of the wide gap in standard of living between Roma and most Austrians, and because anti-Gypsy sentiment is particularly strong in Austria. A scheme to pay students a small stipend to teach Gypsy children in small groups has been in operation in several centres, but its funding is insecure.<sup>63</sup>

#### *Recent violence*

Although media portrayals of Roma are largely favourable, anti-Gypsy prejudice is growing and can be violent. On 3-4 February 1995 a mock gravestone urging Gypsies to return to India was placed at the entrance to an underpass leading to a Roma encampment at Oberwart, Burgenland. (Oberwart, home to Austrian Roma who survived the Nazi period, is near Lackenbach, the former concentration camp for Roma en route to Auschwitz.) When four Roma attempted to remove it, a huge explosion occurred; all were killed. (Police were later criticized for initially claiming that the men had blown themselves up or killed one another in a blood feud.) The so-called Bavarian Liberation Army claimed responsibility for the murders. Later vigils at the site of the deaths and elsewhere were disrupted by skinhead violence; again police were criticized for having failed to protect the vigils.<sup>64</sup>

#### **Bulgaria**

Total population: 8.9 million  
Roma population: 576,927  
(official statistics 1989)  
700,000-800,000 (MGR)<sup>65</sup>

#### *History*

Roma have had a stable and significant presence in Bulgaria since the fourteenth century. Divided by the Turks into mainly nomadic Muslims and mainly settled Christians, they were 'relegated . . . to the lowest rung of the Ottoman social ladder'.<sup>66</sup> They were subject to special taxes but had some autonomy. While Muslims may have regarded Muslim Roma as schismatics, Orthodox Christian Bulgarians held strong prejudices against Roma. In the 1860s some bishops declared alms-giving to them to be a 'great sin'.<sup>67</sup> Laws were passed after

Bulgaria's reunification in 1886 to combat Roma nomadism and to prevent Rom immigration.<sup>68</sup> Discrimination against Bulgaria's Roma (134,844 in the 1926 census) existed under the monarchy (1878-1946) and Roma were traditionally assigned 'lowest-status occupations', such as road-sweeping.<sup>69</sup> Literacy increased to 8 per cent due to the provision of two or three primary schools. Roma publications and societies, founded in the 1920s, flourished until the rise of fascism in 1934.

Despite fascist press attacks on them, Roma remained relatively unscathed by the Second World War, due partly to support from King Boris and to Bulgaria's long-standing multi-ethnicity. (Germany's war-time ambassador in Sofia commented on Bulgaria's refusal to deport Jews: 'The Bulgarians have lived for too long with peoples like Armenians, Greeks and Gypsies to appreciate the Jewish problem'.<sup>70</sup>)

#### *Under communism*

Following a brief post-war renaissance of Roma culture and organization after the Soviet occupation of Bulgaria, the increasingly Stalinist government adopted a policy in the 1950s of expelling Muslim Roma to Turkey and assimilating all other Roma, suppressing their distinctive ethnic and cultural identity. The Gypsy Theatre Roma was closed in 1953. Between 1953 and 1959 the government forced nomadic Roma to settle permanently. New segregated Gypsy ghettos were created for these Roma. Measures were taken in the early 1960s to assimilate the far larger number of sedentary Roma. All Roma with Turkish or Muslim names were required to take Bulgarian names. Gypsy music was banned from radio and television and its public performance discouraged by fines. Attempts were made to disperse compact Roma communities by placing families in Bulgarian quarters. Roma were forbidden to speak Romani in public and to create distinctively Roma organizations. Roma serving in the military were commonly assigned to labour brigades and allocated the most menial tasks.

The assimilation campaign under President Todor Zhivkov achieved some positive results. Living conditions and housing improved for many Roma, and educational opportunities rose, though still remaining substantially lower than for Bulgarians. But 'the practical implication of these policies was the destruction of Roma self-identity through continued forced integration and Bulgarization'.

62 *Ibid.*, 70.

63 *Romano Centro*, vol. 8, March 1995.

64 *JRR European Race Audit Bulletin*, 13 April 1995.

65 The interior ministry estimated the Roma population in 1989 as 576,927, over 6 per cent of the total population of just under 9 million; the Democratic Union of Roma (ROMA) puts the figure at 800,000-1,000,000.

66 Crowe, 2.

67 *Ibid.*, 8.

68 *Ibid.*, 11.

69 *Ibid.*, 16.

70 Quoted in Kenrick and Puxon, 130-1.

71 Crowe, 25.

#### *Post-1989: Rom organizations*

Since 1989 several Rom political organizations have been created, notably ROMA, the Democratic Union of Roma, founded in 1990. Roma remain politically weak, however, having been denied the right to create a political party prior to the 1990 election. Factors hindering Roma from becoming a strong political force include the division between Muslim and Christian Roma, the fifty or more Romani dialects and various clan and tribal allegiances. A national lobby, the United Roma Federation (URF), was created in October 1992. In December 1993 the URF, ROMA and Rom intellectuals complained to the government about the activities of Father Gelemenov and his Vazrazhdane organization and media coverage given to their pro-Nazi views. Gelemenov has publicly advocated that Bulgaria should 'subordinate' its Gypsy and Turkish minorities.<sup>72</sup>

#### *Discrimination*

According to Helsinki Watch, 'Gypsies in Bulgaria continue to be discriminated against by the government, and are denied some of the most basic human rights'.<sup>73</sup> Vassil Chaprazov, chairman of the URF, has said: 'We are at the bottom of Bulgarian society . . . the most disadvantaged people are Gypsies'.<sup>74</sup> Main areas of discrimination include housing, education and employment.

#### *Housing*

Most Roma live in squalid areas of larger towns and cities such as Sliven, which may house up to 50,000 Roma.<sup>75</sup> Many roads in Gypsy quarters are unpaved, with infrequent refuse collection. Dwellings often have no access to running water or adequate sanitation. The birth rate is substantially higher than that of the Bulgarian population. Most Roma quarters are severely overcrowded, with three or four families sharing one house and five or six sleeping in each room. Current land privatization schemes seem likely to exacerbate these problems.

#### *Education and socio-economic problems*

Many Roma children are educated in segregated technical schools which produce goods commissioned by local industry. Educational opportunities and attainments are low, and few Roma children complete secondary school, although the reasons for this include the fact that Bulgarian is their second language, early marriage and the failure of illiterate Roma parents to support adequate schooling.

Poverty among Roma is growing. Gypsies queue at soup kitchens in Sofia, and there are many Gypsy beggars. Unemployment is high, though lower than in some East European states. Some traditional crafts have disappeared because of the assimilation campaign, while access to many jobs is limited by low educational levels and work-place prejudice (fuelled by the state media which stereotype Roma as criminals and black marketeers). No political party defends the interests of Roma, and they are prohibited from forming their own parties. In 1993, however, the Confederation of Roma in Bulgaria was established, to 'assist the legislative and executive powers in solving Gypsy problems'.<sup>76</sup> There is now at least one declared Rom in parliament.

#### *Anti-gypsyism*

Public hostility to Roma has been increasing since 1989. Racist articles now appear in the press. Some are aimed at Gypsies; 'Sofia News', for example, claimed that all Gypsies are thieves and, sometimes, murderers. A 1992 survey showed that 89.5 per cent of Bulgarians, 71.8 per cent of Turks and 74 per cent of Bulgarian Muslims did not want their children to attend a class with Roma children; 81.7 per cent of Bulgarians, 54.2 per cent of Turks and 57.2 per cent of Muslims said they would not vote for a Rom.<sup>77</sup> Bulgarian sociologists have suggested that antipathy to Roma in Bulgaria is comparable to hostility among Americans to blacks in the 1960s. Surveys have shown that Roma are far more disliked than other minorities. They are widely, and unfairly, blamed for Bulgaria's marked increase in crime. Legal moves to criminalize the black market, in which Roma are prominent, are partly responsible for the fact 80 per cent of Bulgaria's prison population are Roma.<sup>78</sup>

#### *Violence*

Recently anti-Gypsy violence has erupted, possibly orchestrated by the far right. In 1993 there were many attacks on Gypsies, including one in Cherganova led by the mayor. In Pleven local skinheads announced that they would 'cleanse the town of communists, Jews, Gypsies and the rich'. Skinheads held a rally in Sofia; banners read 'Turn the Gypsies into soap'.<sup>79</sup> In December 1993 an attack on Roma in Malorad left seven wounded and one dead. In February 1994 villagers in Dolno Belotintsi demanded the expulsion of all Roma after a Rom deserter murdered a villager. Seventeen of

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 28-9.

<sup>73</sup> Helsinki Watch Report, *Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Gypsies of Bulgaria* (Helsinki 1991), 17.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>75</sup> Jaap Tanja, *O Drom*, April 1990.

<sup>76</sup> Bulgarian radio, 8 May 1993.

<sup>77</sup> BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (SWB), 11 May 1993.

<sup>78</sup> *Crowe*, 27.

<sup>79</sup> *Political Extremism and the Threat to Democracy in Europe: A Survey and Assessment of Parties, Movements and Groups* (London: Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1994 for CERA)

the twenty families were expelled. One Rom died and fifteen were injured in an arson attack on a market district of Sofia in April 1995.<sup>82</sup>

Police have been implicated in anti-Gypsy violence, and Roma held in custody are often ill treated.<sup>81</sup> Four died in police custody, including one in Pleven after alleged torture, and another in Sliven in March 1995.<sup>82</sup> Ill-treatment and torture of Roma at police hands have allegedly occurred in Dubova, Stara Zagora, Glushnik and Pazardzhik.<sup>83</sup>

Roma in Rakitova (Plovdiv) were attacked in January 1995 by non-Roma residents and police. Four Roma were badly wounded by gunfire, and fifteen were severely beaten by police. In an open letter the Roma of Plovdiv complained: 'We are treated worse than dogs, deprived of human rights.'<sup>84</sup> An arson attack on a Roma house near Sofia on April 1995 left one dead and fifteen injured. Shortly afterwards, the interior ministry officially condemned attacks on Roma by skinheads, as well as xenophobia and antisemitism.<sup>85</sup>

Romani was taught in Bulgarian schools from 1991. However, according to the press, Education Minister Dr Ilcho Dimitrov announced in April 1995 that teaching of Romani would henceforth be discouraged, being 'an obstacle to the acquisition of the Bulgarian language'.<sup>86</sup> After protests by Roma organizations, he retracted this statement.

### Czech Republic

Total population: 10.4 million  
Roma population: 145,738  
(local authority statistics 1989)  
250,000-300,000 (MRG)

Romany population statistics in the Czecho-Slovak region are confused. Estimates vary from 400,000 to 800,000 in total. At least 150,000-300,000 Roma are in the Czech Republic, forming the second largest minority.<sup>87</sup> Czechoslovak Romanies speak one of three Romani dialects; most also speak Slovak or Hungarian. Before 1991 Roma had been allowed to register on censuses only as Czechs, Slovaks or Hungarians.<sup>88</sup> In the 1991 census Roma could for the first time declare themselves as Romany. Only

114,116 chose to do so.<sup>89</sup> However, even local authority statistics suggest a considerably higher figure.

### History

Anti-Gypsy legislation began in 1541 and intensified under Leopold I (1657-1705), who expelled all Roma from Habsburg lands on pain of death. Emperor Charles VI (1711-40) ordered the execution of all Romanies. In 1740 any Roma entering Bohemia were to be executed. Empress Maria Theresa (1740-80) sought compulsory assimilation: Romani was forbidden; so were nomadic travel, horse-trading, Romany dress and the institution of the *vajda*, the Rom leader. Children aged from seven to twelve were placed with non-Gypsy farmers. Emperor Joseph II (1780-90) ordered the settlement of Romanies in rural ghettos. Some nomadism returned after his death. Repressive legislation and close control by the authorities persisted into the twentieth century.<sup>90</sup>

Of 13,000 Roma in Bohemia and Moravia, 90 per cent were killed during the Nazi period. In Slovak territories Romanies fared better; of approximately 80,000, 1,000 perished.<sup>91</sup> Most survived in harsh conditions. Nomadic Roma were forcibly settled, and settled Romanies forcibly evicted from homes near frequented roads. Following the war, the Czechoslovak government relocated large numbers of Slovak Roma to northern Czech territories to work as unskilled labourers in heavy industry, following the mass expulsion of ethnic Germans.<sup>92</sup>

### Under communism

Once communists had seized power in February 1948 they 'did not recognize the Roma as a nationality and pursued a policy meant to destroy Romany identity through social integration'.<sup>93</sup> Roma were to be compulsorily assimilated. Nomadism was forbidden in 1958, punishable by six to thirty-six months' imprisonment. Travel for Roma was severely restricted. Romani language and traditions were suppressed. Rom organizations established during the 'Prague Spring' of 1968 were closed in 1973. From the mid-1970s many Rom women were paid to be, or tricked into being, sterilized.<sup>94</sup> Unemployment was high, although relatively generous welfare benefits brought some

80 IRR *European Race Audit*, November 1995.

81 *Ibid.*, 9 July 1994.

82 *Ibid.*, June 1995.

83 *Ibid.*, December 1994.

84 *Ibid.*, 13 April 1995.

85 BTA News Agency Sofia, 20 April 1995.

86 *Ibid.*

87 Tom Gross, UNHCR Prague Liaison Office, Monthly Update 1, October 1994.

88 Josef Kalvoda, 'National minorities under Communism: the case of Czechoslovakia', *Ukrainian Quarterly*, vol. 45, no. 4, winter 1989, 426.

89 Rachel Tritt, *Struggling for Ethnic Identity: Czechoslovakia's Endangered Gypsies* (New York and London: Helsinki Watch Report, 1992), x.

90 Tritt, 5-6.

91 Kenrick and Puxon, 183.

92 Sebkova/Zhnyayova, 'Les Roms de Tchécoslovaquie', in Auzias, 53.

93 Tritt, 11.

94 R. Pellar, 'La fécondité n'est plus en vente', in Auzias, 66-70; Tritt, 19-35.



security.<sup>95</sup> Many children were forcibly placed in government children's homes.

#### *Post-1989*

Following the 'velvet revolution' of November 1989, anti-Gypsy discrimination in laws and policies ceased at a national level. Rom culture and language revived; Romani newspapers and a theatre were established; cultural centres and six Rom political organizations were created. Roma can now openly declare their Rom identity. Rom parties and organizations such as the Romany Democratic Congress were founded and have openly criticized government policies towards Roma. They suffered electoral defeat in the 1992 elections due to political apathy and lack of a united front; no Rom representatives were elected to the Czech or Slovak parliaments.

The Bill of Fundamental Rights and Liberties (January 1991) outlawed discrimination and granted all nationalities the right to use ethnic languages in official business and education. Yet discrimination remains widespread at local level. Roma do not have equal access to housing, education or public and private services.<sup>96</sup>

#### *Crime and unemployment*

A major source of public hostility stems from the soaring crime rate, for which Roma are partly responsible. Although only 2 per cent of the population, they account for 11 per cent of all crime and over 50 per cent of burglary and pick-pocketing.<sup>97</sup> Gypsy crime has increased because of massive unemployment. Unskilled and untrained, Roma were predominantly manual labourers under the communist regime. Economic reforms forced many enterprises to lay off workers. Roma became unemployed in disproportionate numbers, especially in Slovakia. From 1990 many Slovak Roma migrated in search of work to Bohemia and Moravia, Czech industrial regions, staying either in overcrowded apartments with relatives or empty state-owned flats.<sup>98</sup> Unemployment among Roma now reaches 40-50 per cent.<sup>99</sup>

#### *Demography*

Rom birth-rates are very high—5.8 children per woman in 1971-80, dropping to 4 per woman in 1986-90. Four-fifths of Roma are under 34, compared to 55 per cent of Czechoslovaks. Life expectancy is low, comparable to that of Czechs in

the 1930s.<sup>100</sup> It has been estimated that by 2000-2005 Roma could number nearly 8 per cent of the population of the Czech and Slovak republics.<sup>101</sup>

#### *Violence*

The sudden influx of Slovak Roma has triggered serious anti-Gypsy violence by skinheads since early 1990, particularly in northern Bohemia. The killings of four young Roma in separate incidents (three involving skinhead aggression) in August and September 1993 led to the formation of HOST, the Citizens' Solidarity and Tolerance Movement.

In 1994 racist attacks tripled from the previous year, and nearly all acts of racial violence recorded were against Roma. Attacks by skinheads on Roma occurred in Prague, Prerov, Ostrava, Brno (one Rom was stabbed to death) and Jablonec nad Nisou (a young girl and her mother were burnt by a Molotov cocktail). Skinheads held a rally at Jablonec nad Nisou to oppose 'Gypsy terror', and at Karlovy Vary shouted 'Gypsies to the gas chambers'. Between 1990-94 skinheads murdered at least sixteen Roma; the best organized skinhead group of streetfighters, the Naziskins, demand the expulsion of all Roma and Jews from Czech soil.<sup>102</sup> One Rom died in police custody. In 1995 at least nine acts of racial violence against Roma occurred, including several stabbings and one murder; skinheads were involved in some of the attacks.<sup>103</sup>

#### *Housing*

In Most (Bohemia) some 600 non-rent-paying Rom families are being moved to a new low-grade settlement of small concrete houses, with only 3 square metres allocated per person, and multiple families sharing a bath and toilet. (They had been forcibly moved to Most in the 1980s to provide labour for local industry. Unused to modern facilities, some had damaged their houses.) Other authorities are considering copying the Most project. In Karviná near Ostrava 200 Rom families have been homeless for several months, having lost their Czech citizenship in June 1994 and thus their right to state benefits. Many live by rummaging in dustbins for food and clothing.

#### *Education*

At least 30 per cent of Roma are illiterate. Only 15 per cent complete primary school. Twenty per cent of Rom children are transferred to special schools for the mentally handicapped.<sup>104</sup> Recently new

95 P. Ofner, *O Drom*, April 1990, 34-5.

96 Tritt, 9-10.

97 Jiri Pehe, 'Law on Romanies causes uproar in Czech Republic', *RFE/RL Research Report*, February 1993, 19.

98 *Ibid.*

99 Jan Obrmann, 'Minorities not a major issue yet', *RFE/RI Research Report*, December 1991, 11.

100 E. Kalibova, 'La situation démographique de la population tzigane en Tchécoslovaquie', in *Auzias*, 57-65.

101 Obrmann, 10.

102 *Political Extremism and the Threat to Democracy in Europe*, 19.

103 *IRR European Race Audit*, November 1995.

104 *O Drom*, 1990.



projects have been developed to train teachers of Roma children and to create preparatory classes in nursery, primary and special schools.<sup>105</sup>

#### *Politics*

The extremist Association for the Republic-Czechoslovak Republican Party, which won nearly 7 per cent of votes in the 1992 elections, campaigns against Roma and attracts skinheads to its ranks. It has 40,000 members in northern Bohemia alone. Miroslav Sládek, its founder and leader, called on all Czech mayors, in February 1993, to expel all Roma from their territories, offering a new car to the most successful. The party claims that Czech Roma operate a mafia. Party spokesman Jan Vik has stated: 'We will simply liquidate the [Gypsy] mafia. It is necessary to strike very forcefully.'<sup>106</sup>

Roma are politically isolated, with few notable Czech supporters. Most who work on their behalf are not themselves Czech. President Havel has condemned racism in general, but has not recently specifically named Roma as victims; nor has the Catholic Church spoken on their behalf.<sup>107</sup>

#### *Discrimination*

Whereas there is widespread sympathy for non-Romany ethnic minorities (Kazakhs, Volhynian Czechs etc.), 65 per cent of Czechs are hostile to Roma.<sup>108</sup> Magdalena Babicha, a beauty contest finalist in April 1993, caused a public outcry when she expressed a widely shared wish to cleanse Czechoslovakia of Gypsies.

Roma are commonly forbidden access to pubs, restaurants and other public places. In northern regions signs saying 'Gypsies forbidden' are widespread.<sup>109</sup> In the June 1992 elections a far-right anti-Gypsy campaigner won 15 per cent of the votes. In October 1992 'death squadrons' threatened 'reprisals' against Roma unless the authorities acted against them.<sup>110</sup> Subsidies to Rom organizations were suspended by the ministry of culture in August 1993. There are unconfirmed rumours that in Prague a play called 'Romanies and Juliet', showing Roma as pimps and prostitutes, had a brief run in October 1994.

#### *Legal discrimination*

In October 1992 the northern Bohemian town of Jirkov passed a decree intended to curb the growing crime rate. It ordered heavy fines for actions endangering the morals, health and security of

others, immediate eviction without judicial approval and other penalties. This law was criticized as discriminating particularly against Roma.

The Law on Extraordinary Measures was proposed on 30 December 1992 by the prosecutor-general as a means of curbing 'undisciplined groups of migrants', identified as predominantly Roma. The law was intended to prevent proliferation of local ordinances such as the Jirkov decree. But Rom leaders argue that skinheads who break the law are prosecuted less vigorously than Roma, while the Republican Party has called for the chief prosecutor to be sacked on the grounds that she thinks only 'of the protection and privilege of Gypsies'.<sup>111</sup>

#### *Citizenship laws*

Between 80 and 90 per cent of Roma on Czech soil in early 1994 had Slovak nationality, due to their forced mass migration from Slovakia into Czech regions after the Second World War and under communism, and to the voluntary migration for economic reasons of thousands, mostly from impoverished rural areas to Czech areas, in 1992 and early 1993.<sup>112</sup>

In 1994 the Czech government introduced a new citizenship law which was heavily criticized by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), US senators and the international media. It met with little internal opposition, however, apart from that of the Citizens' Solidarity and Tolerance Movement (HOST) and Rom leaders, who condemned it as discriminatory against Roma. In November 1994, HOST held a candle-lit commemoration of *Kristallnacht* in Prague; invited Rom speakers condemned the citizenship law.

To obtain Czech nationality by 1 July 1994, Roma and other ethnic minorities had to prove that they had spent the last two years on Czech soil, that they could speak Czech and that they had no criminal record for the previous five years. They also had to renounce their Slovak status. Moreover, whereas Czechs could gain citizenship without problems, even native-born Roma faced barriers, including the need to produce expensive legal documents. These conditions have proved insurmountable for many Roma. Many cannot prove residence because they have stayed with relatives. Some have a criminal record simply because of the harsh penalties imposed on Roma.

Those who fail to acquire Czech nationality will receive no permanent residence permit, and therefore no entitlement to medical care or social

105 CDMG, 10.

106 *Political Extremism and the Threat to Democracy in Europe*, 19.

107 Gross, UNHCR Monthly Update 1.

108 *Guardian*, 7 April 1993.

109 *Independent*, 13 January 1993.

110 *Le Monde*, 22 January 1993.

111 *IRR European Race Audit*, November 1995.

112 *O Drom*, September 1994.

security, housing or education. They will be regarded as illegal aliens, subject to forcible deportation to Slovakia. (The Czech government already intends to deport Rom children in Czech orphanages to Slovakia.) But many of those deported would already have renounced their Slovak citizenship in their bid to become Czech citizens, or would in any case not be entitled to Slovak citizenship, resulting, according to British lawyer Tom Gross, in Roma becoming stateless.<sup>113</sup>

Moreover, a November 1994 report by the Tolerance Foundation based on interviews with ninety-nine individual Slovaks and Roma living in the Czech Republic showed that nearly 50 per cent of Roma without Czech citizenship were born in the Czech Republic and were life-long residents. Ninety-three were *de facto* stateless, having neither Czech citizenship nor Slovak identification papers or citizenship. All ninety-nine were without permanent residence permits.<sup>114</sup> In Karviná 186 people, nearly all Roma, were stripped of their legally acquired Czech citizenship because they were accused of bribing a Czech official; their welfare benefits were withdrawn.<sup>115</sup>

#### *Hopeful signs*

Individual projects launched in 1994-5 included local council summer camps for children (Pardubice, Kouřim); adapted school curricula for primary children (Ostrava); a summer seminar for teachers on Romany education (Dobřichovice); and a theatre exchange programme with a group in Boston, Massachusetts, comparing Black and Romany experience. Across the country MENT, an educational organization, is running seminars on Romani language and culture for teachers of Romany children. Pardubice has opened a nursery to teach pre-school Romany children Czech and has established a fund to support the best Romany secondary school pupils. With Ústí nad Labem, Pardubice has formed an institute for the study of Romany culture. Prague University now runs a Romani course, and a Romany museum has opened in Brno.

In May 1995 the first memorial to Czech Roma interned in Nazi transit camps was unveiled at Lety. The ceremony was attended by President Havel, who admitted for the first time Czech complicity in the extermination of thousands of Roma in Auschwitz and other camps.<sup>116</sup> In September 1995 an international Rom festival was held in Strážnice, with 300 performers and an audience of over 1,000.

#### *Outlook*

Future economic difficulties are likely to increase attacks on Romanies. In 1995 train fares rose steeply, state-controlled property rents rose by between 17 and 32 per cent, and other predicted problems include rising unemployment and widespread corruption. If public discontent increases, Romanies are a ready scapegoat, particularly if, due to withdrawal of benefits, more Roma turn to petty crime.

#### **France**

Total population: 57.9 million  
Roma population: 280,000-340,000 (MRG)

Due to France's traditions of cultural unity, monolingualism and centralized politics, Manouches and other Gypsies ('Tsiganes') are not treated as an ethnic minority. As in Britain, identity is determined by nomadic life-style, not cultural or ethnic bonds. Although nomadism is a legally recognized right, successive French governments have favoured sedentarization as the best way to reduce marginalization of Gypsies. Thus the main law affecting nomads, the act of 3 January 1969, was rigorous, requiring all itinerant and non-sedentary people to carry a *camet*, a circulation pass-book, at all times. This had to be regularly stamped by municipalities, and can still be a source of bureaucratic discrimination against Gypsies. As in other countries, nomadic Gypsies are virtually unable to vote.

Gypsies engage in a far wider spectrum of professions, trades and activities than in most European states. The vast majority, including sedentary Tsiganes, are self-employed. Press coverage is largely negative, reflecting public disquiet at periodic 'invasions' by nomadic Tsiganes.<sup>117</sup>

A government policy of decentralization, adopted in 1982-3, has devolved on to local authorities wide powers of decision-making. This can have negative consequences for Gypsies.<sup>118</sup> Local municipalities with over 5,000 inhabitants, for example, are obliged by the Besson Act of 1990 to provide short-term and long-term sites for nomadic Gypsies. But, due to local opposition, it is increasingly difficult for French Roma to find sites on which to stay. All sites are stringently regulated, thus limiting social and economic activity (few allow scrap iron or gatherings around a fire).

In March 1993 a National Consultative Committee on Travellers was set up, comprising ten elected

113 Gross, October 1994

114 Ina Zoon, *A Need for Change: The Czech Citizenship Law* (Prague 1995)

115 Gross, UNHCR Monthly Update 1

116 *Prague Post*, 13 May 1995

117 *Etudes Tsiganes*, vol. 1, 1993, 150-2.

118 Jacqueline Charlemagne, 'Les Tsiganes en France: face aux normes sédentaires', in Patrick Williams (ed.), *Tsiganes identités, évolution* (Paris 1989), 187-95.

officials, ten representatives of Gypsy organizations and ten ministerial representatives.<sup>117</sup>

Six refugee Roma were deported in January 1995 from Carrières-sur-Seine, where Gypsies live without electricity or water.<sup>120</sup> In June and July 1995 seventy-three Romanians, chiefly Roma, were repatriated to Bucharest on chartered aircraft with Romanian police aboard. The French office for the protection of refugees and stateless persons has recently placed Romania on the list of 'safe' countries; very few refugees from Romania will therefore be granted asylum, and existing Romanian refugees in France will lose their status.<sup>121</sup>

In May 1995 the Socialist mayor and nearly all the councillors of Saint-Priest (where Jean-Marie Le Pen's Front National had polled 27 per cent of the vote) resigned over the government's decision to accommodate hundreds of Gypsies from Romania and South Craiova.<sup>122</sup>

Municipalities in south-west France have been accused by Gypsy associations of discrimination for refusing them access to private camp sites, electricity, education and medical care, amounting to a policy of 'systematic expulsion'.<sup>123</sup>

## Germany

Total population: 81.5 million

Roma population: 110,000-130,000 (MRG)

### History

From the fifteenth century onwards German cities and states sought to expel Gypsies, using harsh legislation, banishment, torture and hanging. Gypsy hunts and shipment to Pennsylvania. While the first research on Gypsies, including pioneering scholarship on the Romani language, was undertaken by Germans, it often reflected deep-seated prejudice. Heinrich Grellmann, who wrote the first ethnographic treatise on Gypsies in 1783, described his 'evident repugnance, like a biologist dissecting some nauseating, crawling thing in the interests of science'.<sup>124</sup> Many German scholars expressed similar 'revulsion' (*Widerwille*) towards Gypsies.

### Post-Holocaust 'revisionism'

The *porajmos*, the Roma holocaust, has remained widely unknown and ignored outside Germany. Within Germany, it was never officially admitted prior to a statement by Chancellor Helmut Schmidt

in 1982. Until recently, Gypsy victims of Nazism were neither commemorated on official remembrance days nor mentioned by politicians.<sup>125</sup>

Moreover, the *porajmos*, in which between 200,000 and 500,000 Roma died, has been subject to 'revisionism', as has, to an even greater extent, the Jewish Holocaust. Some authors have claimed either that concrete data are not available or that most deaths of Sinti and Roma in concentration camps were caused by typhus due partly to the Gypsies' lack of hygiene. Numerous criminologists argued in the 1950s that Nazi measures against Gypsies were taken not on racial grounds but on the grounds of the Romanies' supposedly asocial, criminal tendencies.<sup>126</sup> Nazi racist vocabulary (*Zigeunermischung*) and stereotypes of Gypsies as primitive, corrupting and criminal were used repeatedly to justify Nazi actions against them. Until 1982 Hermann Arnold, a leading expert on Roma, used Dr Ritter's materials from the Berlin Institute to publish books justifying Ritter's pro-Nazi work and perpetuating anti-Gypsy attitudes;<sup>127</sup> as late as 1961 he published (in the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*) an article entitled 'The Gypsy gene'.

Similar anti-Gypsy prejudice is reflected in the matter of German reparations, particularly in Munich. Whereas Jewish victims of Nazism commonly won reparations, Romanies—with no state or lobby behind them—did not. German Sinti survivors (descendants of Roma who first entered Germany in the early fifteenth century), initially refused reinstatement of their German citizenship, eventually regained it. But the vast majority, like all Roma of other nationalities, received no reparations. Not until December 1963 did the supreme court reverse its view that Nazi deportations of Gypsies had occurred not for racial reasons but out of military and criminological considerations. Even then, forcibly sterilized Sinti and Roma receive no compensation unless they are demonstrably at least 25 per cent incapacitated for work.<sup>128</sup>

### Official prejudice

Many of the Gypsies who remained in post-war Germany live in bleak, isolated settlements for the homeless and so-called *Asozialen* on the outskirts of cities. Most of their children are in schools for the mentally handicapped. As surviving Sinti, they are marginalized. Since the 1970s, and particularly since the mid-1980s, tens of thousands of Roma from Poland, the former Yugoslavia and Romania,

119 CDMG, 23.

120 *IRR European Race Audit*, 13 April 1995.

121 *Ibid.*, November 1995.

122 *Observer*, 11 June 1995.

123 *Romnews*, no. 33, 11 April 1995.

124 Quoted in Hancock, 58.

125 *O Drom*, April 1990.

126 Hohmann, 187ff.

127 *Ibid.*, 198-203.

128 *Ibid.*, 195-7.

fleeing racist persecution and often destitution, have entered Germany. (Between 50-60 per cent of the 103,787 Romanian asylum-seekers who entered Germany in 1992 were thought to be Romanies.)<sup>129</sup> Unlike the Sinti, they were highly conspicuous, wearing different clothing and speaking Romani or other languages. The latent German dislike of Gypsies, never fully confronted after the war, re-emerged even among liberals. In 1990 Herr Schmidt, a member of the Bremen state parliament, said in parliament with reference to the Gypsy holocaust: 'It's a pity that not more of them were murdered.' In the same month Herr Heck, the chief of Bremen city council and a member of the Green Party, compared the Nazi holocaust of Roma with the disappearance of the dinosaur: 'The Romany culture is not worth protecting.'<sup>130</sup> In 1992 the Nordrhein-Westfalen minister of social affairs accused Roma from Romania and Yugoslavia of 'poisoning our social climate'.<sup>131</sup>

#### *Pressure on Roma asylum-seekers*

Local authorities exerted pressure on Roma to leave by refusing to meet their elementary needs, placing children in homes, imposing strict police controls and making arrests. Following pressure from non-Roma human rights groups (including the Lutheran Church), less harsh policies were adopted in some major cities, where programmes to integrate the immigrants were developed. But among the half-million asylum-seekers in Germany the Roma have been singled out as prime targets of government stringency and public hostility. For example, some Roma seeking asylum were forced to live rough outside the Rostock asylum centre without sanitation. In August 1992 local protests quickly grew into organized violence and riots, in which neo-fascist skinheads played a major part.

#### *Repatriation*

A new policy of forcible return replaced that of integration. In December 1990 the government of Nordrhein-Westfalen withdrew a regulation allowing stateless Roma to settle there, instead offering Macedonia over DM 20 million to resettle Yugoslav Roma near Skopje.<sup>132</sup> On 5 March Germany was the only one of forty-three participants to vote against Resolution 62 of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, entitled 'Protection of Roma', the German delegation arguing that Roma did not constitute a minority in Germany, that they should not be the subject of positive discrimination and that

Germany wished to retain its right to expel Romany refugees.<sup>133</sup> In September 1992 a formal agreement between Germany and Romania, becoming effective in November 1992, stated that all Romanians ineligible for asylum (mostly Roma) would be liable to forcible deportation to Romania. Since then Germany may have repatriated at least 40,000-50,000 Roma. Over DM 30 million were paid to the Romanian government.<sup>134</sup> Some monitoring has occurred of the fate of those forcibly returned. Thousands of Roma immigrants remain in Germany, and many still arrive. Even those without identity papers are likely to be repatriated.

By early 1993 no Roma had ever been granted refugee status in Germany. The Federal Office for Recognition of Foreign Refugees stated in January 1993 concerning Roma refugees from Romania: 'As a result of the alien character of the Roma, their stubborn retention of alien traditions, an intensive rejection of Roma as well as deep prejudices have emerged [in Romania]. This is normal. It is also understandable that such feelings are now expressed in a violent manner.' Since persecution of Roma in Romania is not officially regarded as political, no Roma would be eligible for political asylum.<sup>135</sup>

Germany concluded a re-admission agreement with Poland in May 1993 which will affect many Roma. Moreover, a new refugee law came into effect in 1994, rendering it virtually impossible for any Rom to acquire a residence permit. Roma from Yugoslav territories, rendered stateless following the break-up of Yugoslavia, continued to be forcibly repatriated from Schleswig-Holstein and Baden-Württemberg.<sup>136</sup>

#### *Harassment*

Police actions against Roma have sometimes been harsh. In April 1990 1,200 officials and police raided an impoverished Romany settlement and claimed to have found money and goods worth DM 500,000. Rom leaders and supporters claimed that all belonged rightfully to the Roma.<sup>137</sup>

Few attempts have been made to ameliorate the lives of Roma in Germany. The Hamburg city council established a project in 1993 with the Roma and Sinti Union to help Romany child beggars. The project's caravan was destroyed by arson in March 1994. Following the arrest of a Rom woman in Hamburg, press rumours began circulating in July 1994 that a ring of Gypsy child thieves was operating in Germany.<sup>138</sup>

129 Revniers (quoted in CDMG, 19).

130 Roma National Congress, 'Roma in Germany', January 1993, 4.

131 Mark Braham, *The Untouchables: A Survey of the Roma People of Central and Eastern Europe* (Geneva: Office of the UNHCR 1993), 124.

132 Braham, 106.

133 Roma National Congress, 'Roma in Germany', 4.

134 *Regards*, June-August 1993.

135 Roma National Congress, 'Roma in Germany', 4.

136 *IRR European Race Audit*, 12 March 1995.

137 *Die Zeit*, 7 September 1990.

138 *IRR European Race Audit*, July 1994.



### *Anti-Roma racism*

Roma in Germany are the object of intense racial hostility. On 28 August 1992 they were described in the *Badische Zeitung* as 'a pure disease', and in the *Hamburger Morgenpost* as a 'serious plague'. In 1994 Joachim Siegerist, who has dual Latvian/German citizenship and leads the second strongest political party in Latvia, the People's Movement for Latvia, was convicted in Hamburg of incitement to racial hatred after distributing over 17,000 circulars in which he claimed that 'Gypsies produce children like rabbits' and were 'a seedy criminal pack who should be driven out of the country'.<sup>139</sup> A poll of 1,342 German university students in late 1994, conducted by the University of Wuppertal, showed that 60.4 per cent of East German and 37.7 per cent of West German students admitted disliking Gypsies, much higher than prejudice towards any other group.<sup>140</sup> In an arson attack on a prefabricated building housing refugees, mostly Roma, a Rom brother and sister were killed in Herford, Nordrhein-Westfalen in early 1995. Both Herford municipal council and the ministry of the interior denied that the victims were Roma.<sup>141</sup>

Gypsies are subject to harassment from police and civic authorities. In December 1994 Frankfurt police strip-searched a Roma woman who had reported the theft of DM 700 from her purse.<sup>142</sup> In January 1995 the president of the Roma National Congress, Rudko Kawczynski, was fined for organizing at the former Neuengamme concentration camp a commemoration of Roma victims of the Holocaust. The peaceful event was held to contravene the 'law on green recreation areas' which prohibits protests in state parks.<sup>143</sup> Pro-Rom campaigners who protested against the deportation of forty-five Roma families from Erkelezn (Nordrhein-Westfalen) to Macedonia in May 1995 were threatened with prosecution on the grounds that their banner, 'Gassed yesterday—deported today', was an 'insult to the state'.<sup>144</sup> Following a dawn raid by 150 police in April 1995, thirty-nine Roma women, some as young as twelve, were taken into custody in Cologne and compelled to submit to fingerprinting and blood tests (and some to gynaecological searches) after an anonymous tip-off to police that one might be the mother of an abandoned baby.<sup>145</sup>

Thus, fifty years after the Romany holocaust, Roma and Sinti living within Germany remain subject to intense public hostility, official harassment and

murder. But there is a growing Gypsy civil rights movement, in which Roma and Sinti activists and performing artists are prominent. Today the federal government funds a staff of five people in the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma and (since 1981) a staff of eight people in the Cultural and Documentary Centre for German Sinti and Roma, both in Heidelberg. Financial support is, however, granted on the basis of a categorization of Roma as a 'socially marginalized group' and not as a 'national minority', which Romani Rose, chairman of the Central Council, describes as a 'stigmatizing practice'.<sup>146</sup>

### **Hungary**

Total population: 10.3 million  
Roma population: 400,000  
(1990 census)<sup>147</sup>  
550,000-600,000 (MRG)

About 10 per cent of Roma in Hungary derive from Romania and speak archaic Romanian; 20 per cent are Romani-speaking and became sedentary under communism; about 70 per cent speak mainly Hungarian, their ancestors having arrived in the fifteenth century.

### *History*

Established in Hungary by the late Middle Ages, nomadic Roma became prized metal smiths, gun smiths, soldiers and 'castle musicians', playing even before royalty. Following the Ottoman success at Mohács in 1526, their situation deteriorated. Immigrant Roma fleeing devastation due to the Thirty Years' War (1618-48) triggered anti-Gypsy legislation, which intensified after the recapture of Turkish territories in Hungary and anti-Habsburg riots in the late seventeenth century. Roma were outlawed from Habsburg lands; illegal re-entry led to flogging and finally execution. A 1710 ordinance decreed hard labour for anyone harbouring them.<sup>148</sup> All Roma found in Hungary were to be registered, and resistance was punishable by death.

Empress Maria Theresa (who reigned from 1740-80) attempted to exile or forcibly settle nomadic Roma throughout the empire (see section on the Czech Republic). Taxes, compulsory feudal service and military service for all male Roma were imposed. Providing Roma with food was punishable by law. Roma were forbidden to own horses and wagons and, from 1774 onwards, to

139 *Searchlight*, November 1995.

140 *IRR European Race Audit*, 13 April 1995.

141 *Ibid.*, March 1995.

142 *Ibid.*, 13 April 1995.

143 *Romnews*, no. 30, 7 February 1995.

144 *IRR European Race Audit*, September 1995.

145 *Romnews*, nos. 34/35, 16-23 April 1995.

146 Romani Rose, 'Sinto and Roma as national minorities in the countries of Europe', *OSCE ODHR Bulletin*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1995, 45.

147 Martin Kovats, 'The Political Development of the Hungarian Roma', MA Dissertation, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London, 1994, 8-9.

148 Crowe, 73.



marry other Roma. Rom children over five were to be taken permanently into non-Gypsy families to ensure a Catholic upbringing. A policy of Magyarization and compulsory integration of Roma was strongly pursued, though with mixed success. Roma evaded it whenever possible, officials and nobles complied half-heartedly, and Hungarian scholars protested. Joseph II intensified the oppressive anti-Gypsy legislation. Smithing and trading at fairs were forbidden; Rom children over four were to be forcibly removed from their families; forced settlement continued. In the nineteenth century there was little open persecution of Roma (although until 1906 anyone suspecting a Gypsy of a petty crime could nail him to a tree until police arrived). Rom music, championed by Franz Liszt, regained prominence, and scholars explored Romani dialects and culture.<sup>149</sup>

#### *Under communism*

Roma have historically been rejected by Hungarian society and remain so today, despite attempts under the communists to combat growing anti-Gypsy prejudice and raise educational standards and housing conditions (though Roma did not benefit from post-war land reform). Many local communities were destroyed in slum clearance programmes from 1964, and many men had to travel long distances for work, staying in hostels. In the late 1970s the government established councils of Gypsy affairs and an inter-ministerial co-ordinating committee, and in 1986 ratified the formation of a (politically active) Gypsy cultural association, supporting forty dance troupes and over 200 cultural groups.

#### *Post-1989*

From the late 1980s, when the government abandoned the policy of full employment, unemployment among Roma rose sharply. Formerly over 83 per cent were employed, mainly in traditional crafts, agriculture and unskilled jobs. Now a minimum of 30 per cent are unemployed, rising in some regions to 50, 80 or even 100 per cent.<sup>150</sup> Most employed Roma earn below-average wages in unskilled menial or heavy work and are the first workers to be sacked. Unemployment pay is for one year only; many Roma, particularly those who have worked in agriculture on a daily paid basis, are ineligible to claim it. An estimated 80 per cent of Roma live below the poverty line.

#### *Education*

Although their condition is better than that of Roma in Romania, Hungarian Roma live on the

margins of society, dwelling in hovels, urban slums and rural shanty-towns. Their educational level is low: 50-80 per cent of Rom children do not complete elementary school, due partly to cultural factors (Romani as a first language, early marriages, lack of parental encouragement), and partly to poverty and the overriding need to contribute to the family's livelihood (under 2 per cent of Roma adolescents attend a secondary school).<sup>151</sup> Despite attempts to improve Romany education in the 1970s and 1980s, by 1985 36 per cent of children in schools for the mentally handicapped were Rom; 15.2 per cent of all Rom schoolchildren were in such schools; 42.9 per cent of Rom fathers and 50.9 per cent of mothers had received no schooling whatsoever.<sup>152</sup> Yet Hungary has virtually no educational programmes specifically designed to assist Rom schoolchildren.

#### *Ill health and crime*

Rates of infant mortality and physical disability are high. Average life expectancy is low; estimates vary from 32 to 55/60 years.<sup>153</sup> Poor living conditions (up to twelve in a room), smoking from an early age, excessive drinking and the prevalence of major diseases, including tuberculosis and cardiac and rheumatic illnesses, are contributory factors. Due to unemployment, homelessness, extreme poverty and a large number of dependants, many Roma live in permanent fear of destitution and famine. Petty crime has markedly increased among them. (Budapest police estimate that Roma commit 80 per cent of burglaries and 95 per cent of pocket-picking.) Over 50 per cent of the prison population are Roma. The Council of Minorities chairman in Ózd, a town with nearly 90 per cent Rom unemployment, stated: 'People are stealing because they are hungry.'<sup>154</sup> Roma convicted of crimes often suffer harsher penalties than non-Gypsies.

#### *Gypsy organizations*

In 1989 new Rom political organizations were created, including Phralipe (Brotherhood), the Democratic Alliance of Hungarian Gypsies and the Hungarian Gypsy Party. Hungary's two largest political parties began to incorporate some Rom concerns into their own programmes. By 1993 nearly 1,000 national or local Rom organizations existed, parliament having set aside 80 million forints in 1991 for distribution to Gypsy bodies. But, according to Martin Kovats, there was no increase in the political strength of Roma between 1990 and 1994.<sup>155</sup> In 1995 a fifty-three-member

149 Cf. Gyorgy Meszaros, "‘Tsiganologie’ et politique en Hongrie", in Williams (ed.), 111-127.

150 Braham, 35; Crowe, 103.

151 Braham, 36.

152 Crowe, 95.

153 Braham, 42.

154 Crowe, 103.

155 Kovats, 19.

national Romani Council was elected, the first of its kind in Eastern Europe, and was given \$500,000 by the government to fund Roma development projects and to lobby government institutions on behalf of Roma.<sup>156</sup>

#### *Legal protection*

In 1979 Hungary granted the Roma people ethnic group status, but did not recognize them as a full minority with the attendant financial and legal benefits. However, constitutional changes introduced in mid-1990 resulted in the Law on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities in July 1993. This explicitly gave Roma legal protection against discrimination, the right to use Romani in the courts and elsewhere, potential provision for funding education and media in Romani, and limited self-government where concentrations of Roma were high. But the new law disappointed some Rom leaders, who had been hoping for the granting of national minority status with stronger rights. According to Zsolt Csalog of the Raoul Wallenberg Society, the new law 'would not go far enough to protect Gypsies, who often find police unwilling to investigate crimes against them'.<sup>157</sup>

#### *Anti-Gypsy prejudice*

Such legal protection is vitally important. Prejudice against Roma, always latent in Hungary, increased during the 1980s. Anti-Gypsy graffiti and newspaper articles appeared. A hard rock band sang the lyrics: 'We want to remove all bad things. All evil should disappear. A shotgun is the only weapon to achieve this. I want to kill every Gypsy, little or big'.<sup>158</sup> Among the causes of this intensified hostility were ignorance of Gypsy life apart from one television programme highlighting Rom crime; fear of high Roma birth rates (it was estimated that the Roma population was doubling every twenty to thirty years);<sup>159</sup> and resentment against government measures to assist Roma at a time of high inflation.

#### *Violence*

The early 1990s saw a huge influx of tourists and foreigners. Skinheads, with whom (according to a welfare ministry report of 1994) 40,000 young Hungarians fully and 190,000 partly identified, gained prominence.<sup>160</sup> Numerous skinhead attacks against Roma occurred. Forty-three skinheads were prosecuted following the ravaging of the Roma settlement Eger in September 1990.<sup>161</sup> In Miskolc and other settlements numerous Roma were injured in attacks by skinhead mobs during the autumn of

1990. In September 1992 Roma homes were burned or destroyed and their inhabitants injured in Kétegyháza. In Tura two Roma were killed by a farmer while picking pears, and in November 1992 another Rom was killed.<sup>162</sup> Despite a government clamp-down against the far right in 1993, persistent skinhead violence and fire-bombings against Roma continued, including a serious petrol bomb attack in Gyöngyös (November 1994).<sup>163</sup> According to Zsolt Csalog, such violence 'heightens the Roma's feeling of exclusion from society'.<sup>164</sup>

#### *Official prejudice*

Some commentators argue that 'though skinheads have been important in creating a climate of fear, intimidation and exclusion for the Roma, it is the violence and discrimination meted out by the state authorities which is of greater political significance'.<sup>165</sup> In August 1992 István Csurka, vice-president of the Hungarian Democratic Forum, blamed some of Hungary's problems on 'genetic causes', interpreted by some as 'an allusion to Gypsies'. In September 1992 Aladar Horvath, chairman of the Roma parliament and deputy in the Hungarian parliament, argued that the government 'completely disregards the interests of the Roma minority'. In August 1993, after the recognition of Roma as a full minority, Interior Minister Peter Boross was accused by Rom organizations of encouraging skinhead and police actions against Roma.<sup>166</sup>

#### *New developments*

Yet there have been positive developments, including the creation of the dynamic Roma parliament and other umbrella bodies. In December 1994 elections took place for Romany representative councils with consultative status in Hungary's 519 municipal and district councils. The councils, each with between three and five members, will be consulted on general issues and have a veto on measures of specific concern to Roma.<sup>167</sup> (Due to the poverty of Roma, all Rom organizations are dependent on government funding, which may penalize groups critical of government policies.)

With full legal status, increasingly articulate representatives, greater access to public funding and more awareness of the dire financial and educational plight of the Hungarian Roma, their situation should gradually ameliorate. Moreover, there are signs that skinhead activity lessened in

156 IRR *European Race Audit*, June 1995.

157 Crowe, 105-6.

158 *O Drom*, April 1990.

159 Crowe, 98.

160 Welfare ministry statistics cited in Kovats, 10.

161 *Political Extremism and the Threat to Democracy in Europe*, 52.

162 Braham, 39-40; Crowe, 104.

163 IRR *European Race Audit*, March 1995.

164 Kovats, 11.

165 Crowe/Kolsti, 11.

166 BBC SWB, *Eastern Europe Report*, August 1993.

167 IRR *European Race Audit*, March 1995.

1994-5. But the economic situation for ordinary Hungarians has worsened substantially since 1994, with high inflation and large wage cuts, increasing the danger of Roma being used as scapegoats by a discontented population. The large income differentials between Roma and other Hungarians need to be tackled, as do public hostility and police harassment. In 1995 there were major attacks on Romanies. On 7 April in Kalocsa fifty non-Gypsies beat up a group of Roma, causing serious injury. Racist attacks on Roma occurred in April and May in Gyöngyös, Veszprém and Kecskemét. In May in Kalocsa, skinheads bearing the slogan 'For a white world, kill all the Gypsies' attacked twenty-two Roma, seriously wounding seven, including children.<sup>168</sup>

#### Italy

Total population: 57.9 million  
Roma population: 90,000-110,000 (MRG)

Italy's Rom population comprises some 50,000 descendants of the first wave of immigrants in the fifteenth century, together with some 15,000 Sinti who migrated from France and Austria in the nineteenth century. Later immigrant Roma include 3,000-5,000 Kalderash and other tribal groups and some 30,000 recently arrived Roma from the Balkans. Most Italian Roma, even if sedentary, maintain a pattern of winter settlement and summer nomadism.<sup>169</sup>

Italian Roma commonly experience marginalization and discrimination, particularly in the justice system. For the general public they provide ready scapegoats.

While the ministry of the interior has repeatedly forbidden the prohibition of stopping rights as unconstitutional, local authorities—frequently hostile towards Roma—have instead prohibited the caravans themselves.<sup>170</sup>

Anti-Roma attacks in Rome in 1992 were linked to the Movimento Politico neo-Nazi skinhead organization.<sup>171</sup>

#### Nationalism and anti-Gypsy prejudice

Professor Gianfranco Miglio, chief ideologue and key figure of the right-wing Lega Nord until June 1994, condemned racist violence in Germany in a 1994 interview with *Stern* magazine, but stated that he readily understood frustration at 'the onslaught of these waves of immigration flowing from the East, especially the Gypsies'.<sup>172</sup>

Increased nationalism acts as a catalyst for expressions of hostility to incoming Roma among officials and the Italian public. In August 1994 Forza Italia MP Umberto Cecchi attacked 'nomads' in the Florence daily *La Nazione*. Describing travellers' camps outside Florence as 'a gathering of thieves and prostitutes, muggers and rapists', he called for Roma to be prevented from entering or travelling through Florence. A local campaign against travellers' camps attracted 22,000 signatures and support from the mayor, Morales. Local authorities promised to expel 1,000 Roma from camps at Olmatello and Poderaccio and all 'nomads' without refugee status by September 1994.<sup>173</sup> Police at Valcannuta closed down a Romany camp in August 1995, expelling fifty Roma.<sup>174</sup>

In Rome residents of Via Purgatorio blocked a street to a small convoy of Roma. The Alleanza Nazionale staged a festival opposite the site of a proposed camp for Roma,<sup>175</sup> having earlier issued a pamphlet urging that Roma be assigned to campsites on the outskirts of cities so that 'everybody may live in dignity and free of harassment'.<sup>176</sup>

#### Violence

Violence against Gypsies seems to be escalating. In Padua an eleven-year-old Rom boy, Tarzan Sulic, was killed when trying to escape from a police barracks in 1994. After a *carabiniere* was given a one-and-a-half years' suspended sentence for the manslaughter, fifty lawyers and the mayor of Padua protested against the light sentence, but no appeal was granted.<sup>177</sup> Gangs attacked a Romany camp outside Turin several times in early 1994.<sup>178</sup> When in early 1995 four Bosnian refugee babies, almost certainly Roma, burned to death on an illegal site in Milan, the Lega Nord mayor, Marco Formentini, said: 'If only we had cleared them [Roma] out of here, it would never have happened.' In the spring of 1995 a Rom boy was shot and killed in the Milan railway station.

Rom children have been given letter bombs disguised as toys. In January 1995 a five-year-old boy in Pisa was wounded by a bomb hidden in a book of fairy tales. The White Brotherhood sent a letter to the mayor of Cascina (a province of Pisa) claiming responsibility for the attack and threatening to assassinate him for being 'a friend of Gypsies'. In March 1995 two Romany children from Yugoslavia who were begging on the Pisa-

168 *Ibid.*, September 1995.

169 *Etudes Tsiganes*, vol. 1, 1993, 44.

170 MRG, 13.

171 *Political Extremism and Threat to Democracy in Europe*, 58.

172 *Ibid.*

173 *IRR European Race Audit*, March 1995.

174 *Ibid.*, November 1995.

175 *Ibid.*

176 *IRR European Race Audit*, December 1994.

177 *Ibid.*, June 1995.

178 *Il Manifesto*, 7 May 1994.

Florence motorway were permanently disabled by a bomb concealed inside a doll.<sup>179</sup>

### Poland

Total population: 38.5 million  
Roma population:  
approximately 30,000<sup>180</sup>  
50,000-60,000 (MRG)

#### History

Poland's Roma, like those of other countries, are heterogeneous. The oldest, established since the sixteenth century, are the originally nomadic lowland Polska Roma and the highland Bergitka Gypsies, the latter being the poorest 'Gypsy proletariat',<sup>181</sup> hut-dwelling and subsisting by breaking stones, begging, blacksmithing and working at the Nowa Huta steelworks. Vlach clans arrived later—Kalderash tin-smiths in the mid-nineteenth century and Lovari smiths and musicians from Russia after the Second World War.<sup>182</sup>

#### Before 1989

Under the communist regime, private trading by Roma was banned in 1952; nomadism was outlawed and forced settlement decreed in 1964. Roma could be prosecuted and fined or imprisoned for minor offences such as lighting bonfires, not registering a change of address, itinerancy or the failure of their children to attend school. As a result, 10 per cent of Roma men today have a criminal record. When co-operatives were broken up, Roma remained landless. They were sometimes refused ration cards and were not served in shops. Although hostility to Roma was suppressed under communism, it sometimes emerged, as during the pogroms in 1981 in Oswieçim (Auschwitz), Konin and Katy. Two hundred Roma were forced to flee Oswieçim for Sweden and from Konin to Germany. They were granted asylum because of Poland's undemocratic nature.

#### Post-1989

Since 1989 Romany cultural life has flourished. Music groups are encouraged and subsidized, a Romani newspaper was founded in 1990, and books on Roma have been published. In 1991 the Association of Romanies in Poland was created; it organized a commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Gypsies massacred in Auschwitz, attended by 3,000. The government formed an Office for National Minority Affairs in 1992. A 'gadjo' (non-Gypsy), Adam Bartosz, has become a prominent pro-Rom spokesman.

179 IRR *European Race Audit*, June 1995.

180 Braham, 89.

181 Jerzy Ficofski, 'The Gypsies in Poland: history and customs', in *Poland: History and Customs* (Yugoslavia [n.d.]).

182 Jetske Mijs, *O Drom*, April 1990.

#### Public prejudice

Yet life for Polish Roma is deeply insecure. In April 1991 the Demoskop Research Agency published the results of a public opinion survey of racial prejudice in Poland. It demonstrated widespread prejudice against Roma: 72 per cent of Poles preferred not to have a Rom for a neighbour; 48 per cent would have refused Roma a seat in the Sejm (parliament); 43 per cent believed that Rom behaviour provoked hostility.

#### Emigration and repatriation

In 1991 a serious pogrom in Mława, and lesser ones elsewhere, caused many Roma to flee to Sweden. This time they were refused asylum and repatriated to Poland. Flight became almost impossible after the large-scale immigration of Romanian and Bulgarian Roma into Poland in 1991. The ultimate destination of these immigrants was Germany. Germany, however, repatriated tens of thousands of Roma, and in October 1992 demanded that Poland impose visa requirements on all Romanians, and tightened Polish-German border controls. Polish Roma are now seeking asylum in Britain; some have already been repatriated.

#### Violence

Open racism against Roma has surfaced since 1991. In 1993 the neo-fascist Polski Front Narodowy (National Front of Poland) circulated pamphlets urging that all '90,000' Polish Roma should be banished.<sup>183</sup> Fly posters have borne slogans such as 'Death to Gypsies' 'Hang the Gypsies' and, in Oswieçim (Auschwitz), 'Gas the Gypsies'. In 1992 and 1993 there were attacks on Roma in numerous Polish towns. At least two Roma were killed in 1995, and the editor of the Polish Rom magazine *Rom p-o Drom* warned of a 'new wave of violence against the Romany population of Poland'.<sup>184</sup>

### Romania

Total population: 23.3 million  
Roma population: 430,000  
(official statistics)  
1.8-2.5 million (MRG)

#### A history of enslavement

Romanian Roma form the largest Rom community in Europe. Their history has been the most tragic. Their presence in Wallachia and Moldavia was recorded in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, possibly following their capture during Tatar raids or through their debts to landlords.<sup>185</sup> They experienced five centuries of slavery and utter destitution. Apart from a few free musicians and

183 Braham, 92.

184 IRR *European Race Audit*, June 1995.

185 Crowe, 108.



the heroic *Netotsi* (runaway slaves who fled to precarious near-starvation in the mountains) all Roma were chattel slaves, regarded by their owners, primarily feudal lords and Orthodox churches and monasteries, as a permanent work force of indispensable artisans.<sup>186</sup> Recaptured runaway slaves were tortured. Even Roma without a master automatically became slaves of the crown, owing an annual tribute.

Roma slaves were engaged primarily as artisans in specialized trades, above all in smithing. Conditions were brutal. Whereas Roma could be tortured for a trifling offence, no non-Gypsy is known to have been executed for killing a Rom. Women could be possessed sexually by owners and their guests. The slaves owned by the monasteries and boyars were absolutely at the disposal of their masters and possessed no personal rights. They and their children were chattels who could be sold, exchanged or given away; a Rumanian man or woman who married such a Gypsy became a slave too<sup>187</sup>—as did their children in perpetuity. Entire families were broken up through sale; mothers were permanently separated from their children, resulting in deep psychological trauma and widespread loss of the (forbidden) Romani mother-tongue.

Conditions for Roma slaves were as inhumane as for African slaves. Kogalniceanu, a politician who campaigned for the emancipation of Roma, wrote:

In my youth I used to see in the streets of Jassy human beings with chains on their hands and feet, some of them even with iron rings about their heads and necks. Cruel floggings, starvation and exposure to smoke, being cast naked into the snow or frozen river; this was the treatment meted out to Gypsies . . . Neither humanity nor religion, nor the law had any mercy for these hapless human beings.<sup>188</sup>

#### *Emancipation*

Moves towards emancipation, begun in the 1830s with princely emancipation, led to the final abolition of slavery in Moldo-Wallachia in 1864, prompting a gradual and massive exodus from Romania of Roma fearful of a future re-imposition of slavery. Those who stayed 'remained deeply impoverished social outcasts',<sup>189</sup> prey to exploitation by the traditional landlords, often landless and lower in the social hierarchy even than the wretched peasants, who revolted in 1907. Following the First World War, strong Roma organizations were established and Roma newspapers published. Roma leaders pressed the government for educational and other reforms to

ameliorate conditions. This process was halted by the Second World War, during which several thousand of Romania's Roma perished.

#### *Consequences of servitude*

The consequences of prolonged slavery are still apparent today. Marcel Courtiade, writer and linguist, argues that servitude has produced among Roma psychological traits including: resignation, fatalism and aggression; deep shame at being Rom; profound lack of confidence in the future; and a lack of a feeling of responsibility towards third parties.<sup>190</sup> Lying became a necessary survival mechanism in the face of brutal owners, one aspect of a process of what Yugoslav Rom leader Rajko Djurić calls 'animalization by slavery'.<sup>191</sup> Among the non-Gypsy population, racist hatred and contempt for today's Roma are the result of centuries of disdain towards Roma slaves and outlaws and the degrading conditions in which they were forced to live.

#### *Under communism*

During the People's Republic from December 1947 onwards and under the Ceauşescu regime (1965–89), all national minorities (guaranteed complete equality in 1945) were treated with hostility. The Roma—the second-largest minority after Hungarians—were no exception. As Romanian nationalism intensified, Roma language and culture, including Gypsy music, were suppressed. Romani was banned in churches and the printing and circulation of Romani bibles forbidden. In order to absorb Roma into the majority population, some nomads were forcibly settled, private Rom farmers were collectivized and traditional handicrafts were abandoned. Under Ceauşescu some attempts were made to improve Roma education and increase employment, though with little success. Many communities were destroyed as Roma were forced into urban tenements or collective farms. Roma remained on the margins of society, some operating in the black market, engaging in street-cleaning or begging. Few had regular jobs. Roma were frequently a target of police violence, while gold ornaments worn by some made them easy prey of the *Securitate*.

#### *After Ceauşescu*

Following Ceauşescu's downfall, many Roma hoped for a change of fortune for their people. Some major developments did occur. Article 6 of the Romanian constitution (8 December 1991) 'recognizes and guarantees persons belonging to national minorities the right to conserve, develop and express their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity'. The constitution guarantees the

186 Fraser, 58; Courtiade, 14.

187 Fraser, 59.

188 M. Kogalniceanu, *Esquisse sur l'histoire . . . des Cigains* (Berlin 1837), quoted in Kenrick and Puxon, 54.

189 Crowe, 121.

190 Courtiade, 16.

191 Quoted in Auzias, 17.



right of national minorities to representation in parliament.

The Democratic Union of Romanian Roma was founded in 1990, and Romania's first Roma newspaper since before the Second World War, *Şatra liberă* (Free Camp), and other Roma publications, were produced. Numerous Roma political organizations have been created, many reflecting tribal or occupational interests. Rom cultural life has begun to flourish, with a Roma-language theatre established in Timisoara.

#### *Anti-Gypsism and violence*

The new freedom of speech has rekindled longstanding contempt for Roma. As David Crowe has written, 'the Gypsies became the national scapegoat for Romania's immense problems.'<sup>192</sup> The nationalistic Partidul Romănia Mare (Greater Romania Party), for example, publishes a weekly paper, *România mare* (circulation 600,000), in which Roma are attacked. Radu Sorescu, leader of the xenophobic Partidul Dreapta Națională (Party of the National Right) said on the radio: '[A]ntisemitism is old hat—these days we must fight against Gypsies and immigrants.' The party advocates sterilization of Roma women and compulsory transfer of Roma to reservations.<sup>193</sup>

Such hatred has unleashed a wave of violent anti-Gypsy incidents among the civilian population, in which a number of Roma have been murdered. In early 1991 two dozen Roma families were evicted forcibly by 1,000 villagers in Bolintin Vale.<sup>194</sup> Between January 1990 and September 1995 thirty similarly brutal mob attacks against Roma occurred across Romania, often involving the lynching and permanent expulsion of Roma and the torching of Roma homes,<sup>195</sup> as at Hădăreni in September 1993, when three Roma died. Few perpetrators are prosecuted and victims receive no compensation. Amnesty International issued in May 1991 a nine-page 'catalogue of injustice' suffered by Roma since 1991, arguing that 'a nationwide pattern of inadequate police protection . . . encouraged further acts of racist violence against Gypsies'.<sup>196</sup>

There is evidence of tacit local government support for anti-Roma violence, related to rising nationalism and consequent intolerance of non-ethnic Romanians. In June 1990 10,000 miners, called into Bucharest to end anti-government demonstrations, attacked the city's Rom quarter,

ransacking homes and assaulting many Roma. Romanian state television described protesters as Roma 'dregs of society'; the head of television claimed that the television studios had been destroyed by Roma.<sup>197</sup> The press and broadcast media still commonly portray Roma as criminals.

Roma leaders are dismayed at increasingly open expressions of hatred. Nicolae Gheorghie, spokesman for the Ethnic Federation of Roma, said: 'Before the revolution the violence against the Gypsies was the monopoly of the police. Now it is more democratic, the people on the street can do it too . . . To be a Gypsy is not just an ethnic identity but also a stigma.'<sup>198</sup>

#### *Socio-economic conditions*

The economic condition of Roma in Romania remains very poor. Until 1989, 50 per cent were employed in agriculture. When land was redistributed to farmers, most Roma lost their jobs. A survey in 1992 found that 80 per cent of adult Roma were unskilled and that over 50 per cent of those interviewed were unemployed.<sup>199</sup> Overcrowding is endemic—over 3 per room, compared to the 1.5 per room among non-Roma; in over 10 per cent of families between five and twenty persons share one small room.

#### *Education*

Educational levels remain low. Twenty-seven per cent of Roma have never been to school; only 4.5 per cent have attended secondary school. Most children leave school aged nine; only 51.3 per cent of children under ten attend school regularly. Between 40 per cent and 80 per cent of children in orphanages are Roma. Among the adults, 79.4 per cent have no professional training and only 16.1 per cent have modern professions. Only 22.1 per cent of Roma adults are in regular employment, and 45 per cent have no employment at all.<sup>200</sup>

#### *Emigration of Roma*

Since 1990 tens of thousands of Romanians have fled to Germany via Poland, seeking to make use of Germany's liberal asylum laws. Over half the would-be immigrants were Roma. In September 1992 the Bonn-Bucharest Accord was signed, enabling Germany to repatriate 50,000 Romanians, mostly Roma. The Romanian government was given DM 30 million to help with repatriation. Since then Germany has pursued a policy of repatriation and adopted legislation to deter political refugees from entering Germany. There is evidence that returning Roma are resented by the Romanian population.

192 Crowe, 146. Essential reading on Roma in Romania is the Helsinki Watch Report, *Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Persecution of Gypsies in Romania* (Helsinki 1991).

193 *Political Extremism and Threat to Democracy in Europe*, 84-5.

194 *The Times*, 30 August 1992.

195 'Lynch law: violence against Roma in Romania', *Helsinki Watch*, vol. 6, no. 17, November 1994.

196 *IRR European Race Audit*, September 1995.

197 Crowe, 146.

198 *Guardian*, 30 August 1992; *The Times*, 30 August 1992.

199 Survey by E. and C. Zamfir, 1992, cited in CDMG, 7.

200 *SWB, Eastern Europe*, 12 April 1993.

#### *Anti-Gypsy legislation*

New racist legislation has been introduced. In May 1995 Romanian Roma were reclassified as 'Tsigani', officially in order to avoid confusion with ethnic Romanians. For Roma to call themselves 'Roma' is now forbidden. Roma leaders lodged a strong protest during a government-sponsored conference on tolerance in Bucharest in May 1995.

#### *Hopeful signs*

Rom organizations are involved, with increasing success, in local conflict resolution and mediation between villagers and Roma. There are signs that the authorities are tackling anti-Rom violence with greater urgency. When a mob of 1,000 villagers looted and burned nine Gypsy homes in Racsas, police reacted forcefully and brought charges against forty villagers. Şatra Mare province gave money to rebuild the Romany homes, 'a signal that anti-Gypsy violence now carries a penalty'.<sup>201</sup>

#### *Conclusion*

The overall situation of Roma, former slaves and outcasts, remains extremely bleak. As human rights advocate Smaranda Enache stated in the autumn of 1993: 'Gypsies are generally persecuted by the police, humiliated by local authorities and made to live on the margin'.<sup>202</sup> Roma are hated in Romania with a greater venom than elsewhere in Europe, as Isabel Fonseca's recent book testifies.<sup>203</sup>

#### **Russia**

Total population: 147 million  
Roma population: 262,015  
(1989 census)  
220,000-400,000 (MRG)

#### *History*

Roma entered Ukraine and Lithuania during the fifteenth century and by the eighteenth century had migrated as far as Siberia. Tsarist policies were aimed at strict control and limiting nomadism. Roma were forbidden entry to St Petersburg from 1759 to 1917 and subject to special taxes and passport regulations from the late eighteenth century. Measures taken in the 1830s for their compulsory settlement were never fully implemented.

Many Roma remained nomadic; virtually all were poor, but a few attained remarkable prominence. Count Orlov's late eighteenth-century Gypsy choir performed at aristocratic soirées, the first of many Rom choirs and orchestras patronized by the nobility. Some Gypsy musicians attained fame and

fortune. The romantic image of the free Bohemian inspired Russian composers (e.g. Rachmaninov) and many writers (including Pushkin, Lermontov, Tyutchev, Gregoriev, Blok and Leo Tolstoy, whose brother married a Gypsy). Literary preoccupation was underpinned by serious scholarship on the Roma and their rich ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity.

#### *Under communism*

Under the Bolsheviks, Roma, like other minorities, enjoyed a cultural renaissance. In 1925 the All-Russian Union of Gypsies was founded and Roma were given nationality status. Literacy in Romani was promoted by a Romani magazine, adult primers and literary texts. In the 1930s several Romani schools and clubs were opened. Romany teachers were trained at the Moscow Institute of Education and Roma entered medical school in Smolensk. In 1931 the Theatre 'Romen' opened in Moscow; created by Roma and assisted by members of the Jewish theatre, it was partly intended to 'fight against anti-Gypsism'.<sup>204</sup>

Yet primers and texts contained propaganda designed to encourage Rom assimilation. Decrees issued in 1926 and 1928 urged Roma to abandon nomadism and settle on state land. Under Stalin, from the mid-1930s onwards, all cultural initiatives disappeared; from 1937 until 1989 there were no Romani publications. Romani schools, clubs, theatres and troupes were closed, with the exception of Theatre 'Romen'. Many Roma were killed or exiled to Siberia, Rom collective farms were disbanded and Roma were forcibly settled with non-Roma.

During the Second World War the USSR proved a relatively safe haven for indigenous Roma and refugees from further west. Roma were compulsorily registered in the post-Stalin era. Nomadism was banned in the 1956 decree 'On Reconciling Vagrant Gypsies to Labour'. While most Roma remained illiterate, a small Gypsy intelligentsia gained prominence in the performing arts and some professions. Crowe identified a new Gypsy renaissance under Gorbachev from the mid-1980s; it was evident in new scholarship on Roma, television programmes and films featuring Romany life, and increasing affirmation by Roma of their Rom identity.<sup>205</sup> Yet Roma remained politically isolated and culturally impoverished.

#### *The contemporary situation*

Since 1989 the situation for many Roma has worsened, despite the publication of the first Russian-Romani dictionary in 1990, the creation of

201 | Isabelth Sullivan, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 21 May 1995.

202 Quoted in Crowe, 149.

203 Isabel Fonseca, *Bury Me Standing: The Gypsies and Their Journey* (New York 1995).

204 Crowe, 179.

205 *Ibid.*, 192ff.

some Rom organizations and the granting of permission to Rom delegates to attend the Fourth World Romany Congress in Warsaw in 1990. The Gypsy Cultural Section of the Soviet Cultural Union, created in 1989, has remained without funding, premises and publications.<sup>206</sup> Little is done to eradicate Rom illiteracy.<sup>207</sup>

Anti-Gypsy racism has intensified and is now expressed openly. Roma, many of whom operate in the black market, are a convenient scapegoat for the rise in crime and deterioration in living standards since 1989.<sup>208</sup> In July 1991 hundreds of local youths attacked, and demanded the expulsion of, the Rom community in Alapaevsk. In August 1992 two Gypsy women were murdered near Volgodonsk; Cossacks demanded the banishment of all local Romanies. In August 1993 an anti-Romany article in *Troed* reported the expulsion of Roma from a district in the Novgorod region.<sup>209</sup>

There is 'growing prejudice in Russia towards "chorniye" (Blacks) or "churki" (wood chunks) from the Caucasus'.<sup>210</sup> Gypsies have been arrested in Moscow and elsewhere in anti-crime campaigns following the violent events in Moscow in October 1993. In December 1993 Vladimir Zhirinovskiy described Romania as an 'artificial state' populated by 'Italian Gypsies'.<sup>211</sup> In the same month the Falcons, the youth section of Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party, demanded at a news conference in Perm the expulsion of 'all Gypsies, Transcaucasians and Vietnamese' from the region.<sup>211</sup>

### Slovakia

Total population: 5.3 million  
Roma population: 253,943 (local authority estimates 1989, i.e. 4.5 per cent of population)<sup>212</sup>  
480,000-520,000 (MRG)

In nearly half of Slovakia Roma account for 10 per cent of the population, and in some parts for 12.5 per cent. Some villages in eastern Slovakia are almost entirely Rom, partly as a result of expulsions from towns during the Second World War.

### History

See section on Czech Republic for earlier history of Roma in Slovakia.

### Under communism

Nomadism was unconditionally prohibited in 1956 and in the bill entitled 'Permanent Settlement of

Nomadic Persons' of October 1958. Many Romany communities were forcibly relocated to new settlements, often in border areas or near mines, where Gypsies became workers. Councils were often unable to provide housing and employment, although required to do so by law. In the late 1980s many settlements were destroyed, their occupants being placed in flats, but many remain in very poor housing. Voluntary sterilization of Romany women for payment was a common practice, as in the Czech lands. An official report of the Slovak government committee on the 'Gypsy problem' showed that in 1986 one-third of all Rom under-fives were in government children's homes. The report urged that all 'Gypsy children with criminal tendencies' should be placed in such homes from an early age. Fifty-seven per cent of all children in Slovak homes and borstals were Roma.<sup>213</sup>

### Post-1989

There have been some positive developments. Roma were recognized as an ethnic minority in 1991. A state-financed Romani theatre and a secondary technical school for Roma, specializing in music, art and crafts, have been established in Košice. The government financed a conference to explore ways of including Gypsy history in the school curriculum. It is proposed that the Romani language should be used as a supporting language in kindergartens and elementary schools, conditional upon regular school attendance by Roma children. The Department of Romany Culture in Nitra provides training for teachers of Roma children.

Despite these substantial developments and full governmental commitment to equal rights for Roma as a recognized national minority, significant problems remain, particularly those of prejudice. On a visit in September 1993 to Spišská Nová Ves, a town with a large Rom community, Prime Minister Vladimir Mečiar expressed concern at the large number of defective children born to very young and near-menopausal Rom mothers. He demanded a reduction in family welfare payments to lower 'the reproduction of socially unadaptable and mentally retarded people' and described Roma as 'antisocial, mentally backward, unassimilable and socially unacceptable'.<sup>214</sup>

Mečiar's remarks were stimulated by the pyramidal age structure among Roma, with 43 per cent of the population being of pre-reproductive age compared to 26 per cent of the general population.<sup>215</sup> But they provoked an outcry among human rights

206 *O Drom*, September 1994.

207 Leksa Manus, in *Auzias*, 44.

208 Nadezhda Demeter, in *Auzias*, 43.

209 *O Drom*, September 1994.

210 Crowe, 194.

211 *Ibid.*

212 Pehe, 18.

213 *O Drom*, April 1990.

214 Liz Fakete and Frances Webber, *Inside Racist Europe* (London: IRR 1994).

215 Anna Jurova, 'Local history and minorities', paper presented to CE seminar at Spišská Nová Ves, September 1994.

organizations in Central Europe; Simon Wiesenthal pointed out that such language reflected the thought-patterns of Nazism.<sup>216</sup> Official denials of racism by Mečiar included criticism of Rom lifestyles and behaviour<sup>217</sup> and reflected popular resentment against some Roma who were receiving child benefit for numerous children at a time when living standards were falling for many employed Slovaks.<sup>218</sup>

Open anti-Gypsy violence has occurred since 1990, the authorities taking few steps to curb it. Some villages followed the example of Spišské Podhradí, whose mayor imposed a night curfew on Roma and other 'suspicious people' in July 1993.<sup>219</sup> Several young Roma were badly hurt and a seventeen-year-old Rom was burned alive in July 1995.

In education Roma children are commonly segregated from 'white' children. In March 1993 the ministry of culture suspended subsidies to the major Roma organizations.

Early in 1995 the Slovak ambassador to the Netherlands, Stefan Paulny, protested against a day of action in connection with racist attacks on Roma by stating that Roma in Slovakia 'prefer to avoid working, are engaged in criminality... are molesting their surroundings and disregarding the rule of law'. In a letter to a Dutch anti-racist organization, he wrote: '[N]othing can be done to improve the fate of the Roma'.<sup>220</sup>

The British Know-How Fund and the MRG, together with the Slovak police authority, held seminars in June 1994 in four towns with Roma leaders to discuss the main problem areas (including education, unemployment, housing, delinquency and coexistence) and possible solutions.

### Spain

Total population: 39.2 million  
Roma population: 650,000-800,000 (MRG)

The Spanish Gypsy (Gitano) population is large, amounting to about 2 per cent of the population. At least 300,000 live in Andalusia (4.3 per cent of the total population). It is highly differentiated (with an increasing number of Gypsy professionals) and prominent in cultural life, particularly in flamenco and *canto jondo*.

Successive post-war governments have adopted policies of assimilation, recently resisted by Gitanos with increasing political activism. (The Gypsy Federation of Aragon, for example, is petitioning to have Gypsy marriage rites legally recognized.)

Relatively few Spanish Gypsies are still nomadic. Infant mortality is high at 61.1 per thousand, compared to 14.1 per thousand among non-Gypsies. Life expectancy is significantly lower (only 4 per cent reach the age of 60) and the birth-rate much higher than among the non-Gypsy population. A total of 49.2 per cent of Gitanos are aged under 15, compared with 22.8 per cent of the non-Gypsy population.<sup>221</sup>

Many Gitanos live in sprawling slum barrios in large cities (67 per cent of Andalusian Gypsies live in cities of over 100,000 inhabitants<sup>222</sup>), eeking out a living in manual work and petty trading, commonly socially marginalized and poor. Some male Gitanos spend periods as 'guest worker' migrants to Germany and Switzerland and then return.

### Public hostility

Despite evidence of some working-class solidarity with Gitanos, public hostility is widespread, including among the middle classes. This takes many forms, including racist remarks. In January 1995 the president of Torregrossa football club argued that some Gypsies were 'worse than a gang of vandals'.<sup>223</sup> In 1994 many complaints were made against the police relating to unjustified expulsions of Gypsies.<sup>224</sup> The 1994 report on *Political Extremism and the Threat to Democracy in Europe* stated that Roma were often subject to physical harassment; violent attacks against Roma camps were usually locally inspired and did not involve national political organizations.<sup>225</sup> Sporadic violence occurs. In 1993 a lynch mob of 1,000 attacked a Gypsy home in Valencia following the death of a youth whose motorcycle had collided with a caravan.<sup>226</sup>

Evictions are not uncommon, people increasingly refuse to let flats to Gypsy families, and housing problems are acute. Civic authorities contribute to housing problems. In May 1994 the Madrid city council forced fifty-six families to leave a shanty town, which was then destroyed. The Roma were transferred to housing near a municipal rubbish tip, where trucks carrying rubbish arrived at a rate of three a minute. Many of the children had diarrhoea. Madrid's mayor ordered a wall to be constructed so that the Roma could not be seen.<sup>227</sup> Eighty more families soon joined them.<sup>228</sup>

216 *Wiener Zeitung*, 7 September 1993.

217 *Independent*, 9 September 1993; *Tablet*, 9 October 1993.

218 *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 14 August 1993.

219 *Daily Telegraph*, 4 August 1993.

220 *IRR European Race Audit*, March 1995.

221 *Estades Tsiganes*, vol. 1, 1993, 40.

222 *El Correo de Andalucía*, 15 June 1995.

223 *La Manana* (Lerida), 31 January 1995.

224 *IRR European Race Audit*, June 1995.

225 *Political Extremism and the Threat to Democracy in Europe*, 99.

226 *IRR European Race Audit*, December 1993.

227 *Ibid.*, December 1994.

228 MRG, 14.



### *Gypsy organizations*

While the claim that 250 Spanish Gypsy associations have a total of 900,000 members between them sounds inflated,<sup>229</sup> it nevertheless reflects the reality of increasing Gypsy organization and self-confidence. The opening of the first Gypsy congress of the EU in Seville in May 1994 was attended by Queen Sofia, who later opened the Biennale of Flamenco Art there in September. Gypsy political leaders are gaining more prominence, negotiating with local authorities in conflict situations with some success. Gypsy associations are taking useful initiatives; in 1995 the Federation of Andalusian Gypsy Associations organized for the first time summer schools for Gypsy children aged four to fourteen.

### *Pro-Roma projects*

Absenteeism from school, drug-taking and associated delinquency are serious problems among the marginalized young, particularly in urban slums where traditional Gypsy culture and values have been lost. They are being tackled by joint projects between Gypsy organizations and local or national authorities (the government devotes part of each annual budget to Gypsy development programmes). Absenteeism among Cordoba Gypsy children, for example, has dropped from 56 to 28 per cent as a result of such co-ordinated projects.<sup>232</sup> Numerous seminars and education programmes are run for and by teachers of Gypsy children.

### **United Kingdom**

Total population: 58.4 million  
Roma population: 90,000-120,000 (MRG)

'The present-day Gypsy population of the United Kingdom can be divided into five main groups, each with its own cultural heritage': some 50,000 Romanies or 'Romanichals' in England and South Wales, descendants of 'Egyptians' who arrived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; Roma from Eastern Europe, including Kalderash, who arrived earlier this century; perhaps 8,000 Irish travellers; some 300 Kale in North Wales; and some 2,000 Scottish travellers.<sup>231</sup>

### *Legal restrictions on travelling and settlement*

The 1960 Caravan Sites Act 'made it difficult for Gypsies to buy small plots of land and winter on them'.<sup>232</sup> Proof of earlier occupation by a caravan or

planning permission had to be shown; both were hard to obtain, and even successful sites could be compulsorily purchased and their occupants evicted. Hundreds of families were turned off their own land or off private unauthorized sites.

Life became increasingly hard for Gypsies and travellers following the 1968 Caravan Act. Under this legislation it was mandatory for county councils and London boroughs to provide sites for Gypsy caravans in 'designated areas' and it became a criminal offence to park anywhere in those 'areas' other than on vacant pitches on those sites. (Such 'areas' included entire counties such as West Sussex and Dorset.) The net effect was to compel many Gypsies to abandon travelling and settle on local authority permanent sites. Sites provided are often inadequate and unhealthy, usually in undesirable locations, and always so stringently regulated that they cause a radical loss of freedom and deterioration in life-style (families and friends can no longer stay together, work cannot be done on site, pets are forbidden). Moreover, not nearly enough sites were created, due largely to public opposition and council resistance. Only half of Gypsy caravans were legal at any one time,<sup>233</sup> resulting in many, often violent evictions from unauthorized sites.

### *Contemporary problems*

Today about 20,000-30,000 live in houses. At least 40 per cent of nomadic Gypsies (nearly 4,000 families) still have no legal resting place, cannot receive post and their children can have little schooling. Many have health problems. Most traditional stopping places and empty pieces of land are now permanently barred and inaccessible. Simultaneously, many former ways of earning a living have been lost, forcing some settled Gypsies to draw social security for the first time. In 1990 Donald Kenrick wrote: 'Gypsies are again at a crisis point, where their survival as an ethnic group is being challenged on all sides . . . Although harassed as a minority, they have not, in practice, had the protection which the law should afford to minorities'.<sup>234</sup>

### *The new legislation and its consequences*

The enactment of the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act has further intensified pressure on Gypsies. The 1968 act has been repealed and local authorities are no longer required by law to provide camp sites suitable for Gypsies, some of

229 *El Dia de Toledo*, 28 May 1994.

230 *Cordoba*, 25 April 1995.

231 Donald Kenrick and Sian Bakewell, *On the Verge: The Gypsies of England*, 2nd ed. (London: Runnymede Trust 1995), 9-10. For this section I am deeply indebted to Kenrick's and Bakewell's book; I have also made use of Judith Okely, *The Traveller Gypsies* (Cambridge 1983) and Jeremy Sandford, *Gypsies* (London 1975).

232 Kenrick and Bakewell, 35.

233 Bill Forrester, *The Travellers' Handbook: A Guide to the Law. Affecting Gypsies* (London 1985), viii; cf. also Mavis Hyman, *Sites for Travellers: A Study in Five London Boroughs* (London: London Race and Housing Research Unit 1989), 14-21; Mary Daly, *Anywhere But Here: Travellers in Camden* (London: London Race and Housing Research Unit 1990), 8.

234 Kenrick and Bakewell, 7.



whom have since been evicted from existing sites. 'The powers previously available [under the 1968 act] in designated areas have been strengthened and will apply to the whole of England and (Wales).'<sup>235</sup> 'Considerable numbers of children who currently live on unofficial sites will face eviction.'<sup>236</sup>

Since 1988 Romanies have been protected by race relations laws, but Gypsies are not recognized as a specific ethnic minority group, despite a growing Gypsy civil rights movement. Legal definitions of 'gipsy' relate to life-style, not ethnic identity. In 1967 the high court defined a 'gipsy' as 'a person leading a nomadic life, with no fixed employment and no fixed abode', in 1968 as any owner of an illegally parked caravan. (Gypsies who have settled are thus no longer legally defined as 'gipsy'.)

In 1994 Lord Justice Millett ruled that to qualify as a 'gipsy' one must travel in a group (thus again depriving settled Gypsies of their historical identity)—yet the new act has made it harder for Gypsies to travel in a group. For changes in the law regarding mass trespass have affected Gypsies adversely. Formerly, twelve vehicles constituted a mass trespass. Now, six or more constitute mass trespass. Legally, a vehicle is anything, with or without wheels, capable of carrying a load, or anything attached to a vehicle. So an extended Gypsy family with two lorries, two caravans, one trailer and a wheel-less van-cum-toilet is technically committing 'mass trespass'. Gypsies accused of mass trespass must either leave immediately or face three months in prison. Numerous families have already been evicted.

The deteriorating situation of British Gypsies results partly from the proliferation of 'New Age' travellers; the more draconian measures in the Criminal Justice Act are aimed primarily at them, yet make life much harder for traditional Romanies. Peter Mercer, president of the Gypsy Council for Education, Culture, Welfare and Civil Rights, said: 'The Act amounts to genocide. It is an attempt to destroy our culture and everything that Gypsies do. They are seeking to exterminate us.'<sup>237</sup>

Despite the circulation of numerous vicious anti-Gypsy pamphlets in recent years, the refusal of entry to Gypsies at some public houses, dance halls and shops, and discrimination by employers, no prosecution has ever been brought on behalf of Gypsies by the Attorney General under the Public Order Act, and very few by the Commission for Racial Equality.

#### *Harassment*

British nomadic Gypsies today suffer poverty and many injustices, including harassment by the police and bailiffs. Their public image is overwhelmingly negative and contributes to their sense of powerlessness. Many British Gypsies feel intense loss; one warden of a permanent site said recently: 'They've taken our language, our culture from us . . . I miss the travelling, the freedom, the fresh air. The young Gypsies don't know nothing about it, they've lost it all.'

Some municipal councils exert pressure on Gypsies. Licenses at fairs at which Gypsies traditionally gather (e.g. Yarm and Horsmonden) have been withdrawn. The Epsom Derby has been moved to coincide with Appleby fair; there have been legal moves to prevent Gypsies from staying at traditional Appleby sites and at Stow-on-the-Wold. These are serious developments, since both nomadic and settled Romanies need regular meetings at fairs where Gypsies can meet, exchange news and maintain cultural life and social contacts.

#### *Education*

Since the 1970s Britain has, like Italy, pioneered projects for Gypsy education, and now has some 200 specialized teachers for Gypsy and other travelling children, though the number of teachers is diminishing due to economic cuts. Only a third of Gypsy children attend school regularly; those who do commonly encounter marked hostility.

#### *Asylum-seekers*

Several hundred Polish Roma refugees have sought asylum in Britain in recent years (139 are currently in the London Borough of Camden). A total of 350 Gypsies fled to Britain from persecution in Turkish Cyprus. Most are likely to be repatriated, together with several hundred Bosnian and Serbian Roma.

#### **Former Yugoslavia**

Total population:  
Bosnia-Herzegovina: 4 million  
Croatia: 4.6 million  
Serbia-Montenegro: 10.6 million  
Roma population:  
Bosnia-Herzegovina: 40,000-50,000 (MRG)  
Croatia: 30,000-40,000 (MRG)  
Serbia-Montenegro: 400,000-450,000 (MRG)

*Cursed is the land from which the Gypsies flee.*  
Old Serb proverb<sup>238</sup>

#### *Pre-1989*

In 1981 Yugoslavia recognized Roma as a distinct national group (although only Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro fully recognized Roma as a

235 Ibid., 42.

236 Derek Hawcs and Barbara Perez, *The Gypsy and the State* (Bristol 1995), 139.

237 *The Times*, 24 January 1995.

238 *O Drom*, April 1990.

nationality rather than as an ethnic minority). In the 1981 census, the number of those identifying themselves as Roma doubled. Census numbers were still deceptively low; ethnic identification is voluntary and, because of widespread anti-Rom prejudice, many Roma conceal their identity. Roma were scattered throughout the republics, the largest concentrations, according to the census, being in Serbia (57,140) and Kosovo (34,126).<sup>239</sup> This increase may reflect the attempts of Tito's government during the 1970s to help ethnic minorities.

Concrete fruits of this policy included the publication in 1980 of the first Romani grammar in Romani script and orthography, and in 1981 an anthology of Romani poetry. Several radio stations broadcast daily programmes in Romani, and eighty Gypsy associations were established.<sup>240</sup> Today Rom musicians are still widely respected and play at local festivities. There are Romani associations in main Croatian towns and elsewhere.

Yet even before the recent ethnic warfare, Roma were the 'poorest of the poor',<sup>241</sup> which partly explains emigrations of Roma to Western Europe from the mid-1960s onwards. In the 1980s infant mortality rates could still reach 50 per cent, most Gypsy children did not complete primary school and in Serbia less than one in sixty attended secondary school. There were few Rom intellectuals or professionals. An unemployment rate of 90 per cent was not uncommon; most employed Roma had jobs with extremely low wages. Many lived in shanty dwellings in urban slum areas. By 1983 ten primary schools used Romani in infant classes, but few other initiatives were undertaken to help Romanies.

#### *Post-1989*

Antipathy to Roma, already intensifying during the 1980s, increased under post-communist nationalism. In 1990 several Roma were murdered in suspicious circumstances in Serbia, and a leading Yugoslav Romany activist, Rajko Djurić, was forced into exile.<sup>242</sup> During the ethnic warfare many of the rights granted to Roma (use of Romani in public life, Rom organizations etc.) have disappeared, especially in the war zone. Many Roma—particularly those in border areas—have been victims of ethnic cleansing; some have been forcibly evicted from settlements in Bosnia, some others have been murdered in concentration camps, many others have become refugees. Eleven Catholic Roma were massacred in the Bosnian village of

Torjanici on 11 November 1991, probably by Serb irregulars. In Banja Luka Roma were forced to cross mine fields to test for mines, and elsewhere compelled to dig front-line trenches.<sup>243</sup> Roma were forced by Serbs into front lines during the battle of Vukovar, and violence against Roma has occurred in Mostar (August 1991), Kazarisi and Torjanici (November 1991), Belgrade's Zemun district (April 1994), Zrenjanin (July 1994) and Gilane (September 1994).<sup>244</sup>

Macedonia (estimated Roma population: 200,000) has undertaken new initiatives to help Roma. President Gligorov has stressed their full citizenship, Romani-language teaching is planned for grades 1-8, and Skopje University opened a department of Romany studies.<sup>245</sup> Yet in February 1995 a Romany house was burnt down in Titov Veles. Twenty per cent of Macedonian Romanies have no passport, and have to pay \$600 (a small fortune) to acquire one.

In Macedonia and Kosovo an unusual development has recently occurred. Over 10,000 people, believed to be Roma, have registered their identity as 'Egyptians' and belong to the Egyptian Association, formed in 1990. Most had identified themselves as Albanians in 1981, being mostly Muslim and Albanian-speaking. Now that Kosovo is under Serbian rule and Albanian autonomy abolished, Albanian identity can be a liability, while Rom identity can confer social stigma. The declaration of 'Egyptian' identity may be a survival mechanism.<sup>246</sup>

It seems that Roma in Serbia are currently treated well, highlighting perhaps their ill-treatment elsewhere in many parts of former Yugoslavia. A 'Gypsy Day' meeting was held in St Mary's Church in Belgrade on 8 April 1995, attended by the bishop, in order to commemorate Roma victims during the Second World War. But apart from such gestures, the outlook for Roma in Yugoslavia remains grim. Many ex-Yugoslav Roma have sought refuge in Western Europe, particularly in the Netherlands and Germany. But The Netherlands appears to be pursuing a policy of encouraging Roma with Yugoslav passports to cross into Germany where, increasingly, they are forcibly repatriated back to Yugoslavia.

243 *The Times*, 6 April 1994.

244 MRG, 18.

245 Crowe, 232-3.

246 Ger Duijzings, 'The Egyptian in Kosovo and Macedonia', revised and updated version of article in *Amsterdam Sociologisch Tijdschrift*, vol. 18, 1992, 24-48.

239 Crowe, 228.

240 *Ibid.*, 226-7.

241 *Ibid.*, 232.

242 *Ibid.*, 229-31.

## 6 Roma, European institutions and NGOs

### Gypsy organizations and cultural development

With the emergence of a new Gypsy political élite, Roma have created many bodies to represent their interests in recent years. In 1967 the Comité International Rom was founded; in 1971 it held the first World Gypsy Congress in London. Its central theme was the Rom proverb 'sa e Rroma phrala' (All Roma are brothers). By 1987 its successor organization, the International Romani Union, had offices in twenty-seven countries and had held three international congresses. (It was given full UN consultative status in March 1993 and now, as an NGO, negotiates actively with national governments and with the EU, CE and OSCE.) In April 1990 the Fourth World Gypsy Congress was held in Warsaw, including for the first time representatives from Eastern Europe, while in September 1991 an international colloquium of Gypsy studies met in Rome. EUROROM (the European Romani Parliament), created by the Hungarian Roma Parliament together with other Roma in Central, Eastern and Western Europe, was established in November 1990 and met in August 1992 in Budapest.<sup>247</sup>

Romani-language journals and newspapers are now published. Moves are afoot to create a standardized Romani orthography. Pan-Gypsy awareness among European Roma is growing. (British Gypsies have been sending aid lorries to help Bulgarian Roma.) Ian Hancock, a leading Rom academic and activist, expressed this revitalized sense of Rom international solidarity: 'We were one people when we came to Europe, and . . . we must be one people again.'<sup>248</sup> Yet although the Roma, numbering at least 1.2 million within the EU, form one of its largest minorities, 'the Rom people are not organized in such a way as to assert their rights and defend their fundamental freedoms within the society in which they live'.<sup>249</sup>

### Roma and European bodies in the 1980s

Without the protection of a nation-state, Roma are dependent on international organizations to express their concerns. Until the early 1980s European bodies were primarily concerned with their legal status and problems of migration. The Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (SCLRAE), for example, recommended in 1981 that stateless Gypsies and other nomads be enabled to acquire identity papers and travel between member states.

But Roma remained on the fringes of the EU political agenda until the emergence of new initiatives in Roma education during the 1980s, including: correspondence courses; intercultural programmes; seminars on the training of teachers of Gypsy children; a CE handbook on *Gypsies and Travellers* (1985) and a survey by the Commission of European Communities of Gypsy schooling in Europe (1986), both by Professor Jean-Pierre Liégeois.<sup>250</sup> As a result of these and later measures, many pilot projects, publications and inter-school exchanges were developed.

### Post-1989 developments

Moves to assist Roma intensified from 1989, due partly to pressure from the German government, fear of mass Rom immigration (made potentially more possible by the 1985 Schengen Agreement guaranteeing removal of border controls and free movement of peoples between signatory states), the likely future expansion of the EU and increasingly effective lobbying by Roma organizations. In May 1989 the EU, in an important resolution stressing the integral nature of Roma culture and language to the European heritage, called for European schools to include provision for Gypsies and the multi-cultural teaching of Romany history, culture and language. In July 1989 sixty-five European Community (EC) educators attended a seminar on improving assistance to Roma communities. The OSCE (formerly the CSCE) recognized for the first time 'the particular problems of Roma/Gypsies' at its Copenhagen summit in June 1990, while its follow-up Minority Rights Conference in Geneva in June 1991 discussed the problems of Roma among those of other non-territorial minorities.

Following the Gulf War, which focused concern on the plight of the Kurds, and the development of the concept of a 'new world order' in the spring of 1991, UN and European bodies devoted more attention to the protection of minorities. The UN granted the Roma permanent consultative status in 1979, urged member states to ensure protection and equality for all Roma in August 1991, adopted Resolution 1992/65, 'On the protection of Roma (Gypsies)', in March 1992, and recognized Roma as an official minority in September 1995.

### 1992-93: Roma on the European agenda

In May 1992 European Roma and OSCE held an international seminar parallel with the Helsinki CSCE, discussing the political situation of Roma in Eastern Europe, their legal situation in Western Europe, Roma refugees and Romani language

247 Brahm, 51.

248 Quoted in Tang, 267.

249 Official Journal of the European Communities, 9 May 1994.

250 *La scolarisation des enfants tsiganes et voyageurs* (1986) (English translation, *School Provision for Gypsy and Traveller Children* . . . Commission of the European Communities, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Documents Series (1986)).

rights. In June the CE finally signed a Charter of Regional or Minority Languages, adopted in 1988, recognizing Romani as a minority language. Gypsy issues were discussed at other specialist seminars and conferences, including a European Colloquium on Gypsies held in Czechoslovakia in October 1992, and organized by the SCLRAE.

In February 1993, against a background of mounting skinhead anti-Gypsy violence, the EU Parliamentary Assembly adopted Resolution 1203 'On the situation of Roma in Europe', which stressed the vulnerability of Roma and the urgent need for member states to implement previous proposals: '[A]s one of the very few non-territorial minorities in Europe, Gypsies need special protection.' In April 1993 the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities was mandated to report on the situation of Roma in member states.

#### 1994: New Romany organizations in Europe

Simultaneously, Gypsy organizations were being strengthened. In May 1994 the first Romani Congress of the EU was held in Seville, led by a Gypsy MEP. The Standing Committee on Co-operation and Co-ordination of the Romani Organizations in Europe was formed under the auspices of the CE, holding its first meeting in August 1994 in Oswieçim, following a commemoration in Auschwitz of the Gypsy holocaust. Its aims included providing an institutional base for permanent action within the CE and CSCE, creating a Roma-run office and establishing a Romani rights charter to define the legal position of Roma within Europe.

The Standing Committee recommended appointing a mediator on Gypsy matters to work within Eastern Europe and the CSCE, modelled on Nicolae Gheorghie's role in Romania, where non-Gypsies have sometimes rebuilt Gypsy houses following persuasive mediation. Gheorghie himself attempted to persuade the International Romany Union and other Rom bodies to create one unified organization to receive international funding, on the pattern of the World Council of Churches.

#### 1994-95: Europe's growing concern over persecution of Gypsies

Until recently Romany affairs were discussed only at fringe meetings of EU and CE institutions. That changed in 1994. In July of that year 130 visitors from sixteen countries attended a hearing organized by the SCLRAE entitled 'Towards a tolerant Europe: the contribution of the Gypsies'. Alexander Tchernoff, chairman of the SCLRAE, pointed out that most Roma in Europe were now worse off than in 1991. Discussions of the problems of Gypsies and other nomads in Strasbourg,

Amsterdam, Budapest, Bologna, Marseilles, Dublin, Pardubice (Czech Republic) and Ploiesti (Romania) highlighted problems of housing, freedom of travel, employment and education. The SCLRAE will urge greater consultation with Roma and publish case studies of successful local initiatives; in 1995 it created networks of municipalities most involved with Roma.<sup>251</sup>

Josephine Farrington, vice-chairman of the SCLRAE, emphasized Roma persecution: 'There is no group in Europe which is so systematically attacked and humiliated as the Gypsies.' Fears were expressed for their ultimate safety. Peter Leuprecht, then CE General-Secretary, stated: 'Just as in the 1920s and 1930s, there is a trend among intellectuals and scientists today towards the irrational and the instinctive . . . The victims pre-war were the Jews . . . We must take care that something similar doesn't happen to the Gypsies now.'

In September 1994, the CSCE and CE jointly held a major Human Dimension Seminar on Roma in Warsaw. It strongly recommended appointing a mediator to prevent violence against Roma, arguing that anti-Gypsy violence ultimately threatens relations between states (because of its potential for triggering mass migration). The conference proposed that the mediator should be funded by the EU and should work closely with the CE on information, the EU on matters of education within its own states, and with the CSCE on security. No mediator has yet been appointed, due to lack of funds, but an office has been established in Warsaw to collect information on both positive and negative developments.

In November 1994 the Committee of Ministers adopted the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and opened it for signature, though without naming Roma (or any other ethnic group) as a national minority. As the Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia have during the 1990s recognized Gypsies as a national or ethnic minority, the Framework Convention should further support their legal status.

#### 1995: New European initiatives to protect Roma

The Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the OSCE was involved, together with other European bodies, in setting up the Contact Point for Roma Issues in March 1995, designed to circulate information about Roma, encourage Roma organizational capacity and address discrimination and violence against Roma. In April 1995, at a meeting of foreign ministers of the ten-member Central European Initiative in

251 Hawes, 147.



Cracow, representatives of the governments of Poland, Italy, Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary agreed to form a joint working party on the situation of Roma in their countries.<sup>252</sup>

In May 1995 the CE's European Committee on Migration adopted the text of a report on 'The situation of Gypsies (Roma and Sinti) in Europe', taking into account proposals from the September 1994 Warsaw seminar and other CE initiatives on Roma.

#### International aid projects for Roma

Some international foundations, including the Carnegie Foundation, have created specific programmes to aid Roma. George Soros has established the Soros Roma Foundation; recent projects include backing a campaign to use Romani as a literary language in Lithuania and developing literacy materials in Burgenland in Austria. The Heredia organization aims to teach Spanish Gypsies to adapt to modern technologies. The British Know-How Fund has created a Community Policing Initiative within the Bulgarian police force using specialists within the Metropolitan Police; projects such as this are valuable in training local 'first contact' police officers who foster close relations with Gypsy communities. Some projects run by PHARE have been criticized by Hungarian Roma leaders because participants must provide 40 per cent of the funding.<sup>253</sup>

#### Increased public awareness of Romany issues

Europe's Gypsies are no longer alone, at least in theory. In addition to increasing support from the EU and from international aid foundations, other bodies are concerned with their plight. In 1992 the Regional Bureau for Europe of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) commissioned a short-term survey by Mark Braham on the condition of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, and its recommendations were published in March 1993.<sup>254</sup> Helsinki Watch has published several monographs devoted to the suffering of Gypsies in Eastern Europe. Increasingly, television programmes in Britain, Germany and elsewhere have begun to highlight Romany issues, and press coverage of their plight has dramatically increased since skinhead attacks on Roma in Germany in the early 1990s.

#### Current developments

Practical action, particularly at the local level, is crucial. Numerous initiatives under way in several

countries include: the development in police forces of rapid reaction teams to prevent or minimize local anti-Gypsy violence; EU-funded Combat Poverty programmes; the training of police, social workers and teachers in cross-cultural awareness specifically related to Roma; the creation of local mediation offices;<sup>255</sup> the involvement of UNICEF and UNESCO in educational projects.

Among pan-European developments in 1996, an international Workshop on Violence against Roma was held by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (January); the Council of Europe's Specialist Group on Gypsies/Roma met for the first time in Strasbourg (March); the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights published the CPRSI newsletter in Romany for the first time (June); a Round Table on Romany and Sinti issues was held at the European Parliament in Brussels on the initiative of the Green Group of MEPs (July).

On a national level, initiatives undertaken in 1996 include the following: the Croatian Ministry of Education and Sport sponsored a conference on education in Krizevcima at which invitees included representatives from the Ghandi High School for Romanies in Pecs (Hungary); the Hungarian Ministry of Culture allotted 2 million forints to the museum of Romany culture in Pecs; in Bulgaria, for the first time, courts indicted police officers for assaults on Gypsies; in Austria, the sedentary Romany population of the Burgenland found that their recognition as an ethnic group led to an improvement in their situation; the European Union has financed the programme Euroma and in Sofia a course for young Romanies on radio journalism was organized; following a decision by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, a fact-finding group visited Bosnia and recommended, *inter alia*, that the Romanies in that country be recognized as a national minority in both parts of Bosnia (Republica Srpska and the Federation); the Slovak Ministry of Culture sponsored a Gypsy film festival in Klenovec.

The picture is, of course, by no means all positive. During 1996 there have been reports of physical attacks on, and harassment of, Roma in Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. In March the UK's Office for Standards in Education reported that 10,000 children of secondary age were not even registered with a school and that a disproportionate number were apparently being 'excluded' from school for disciplinary reasons. In England and Wales the situation for Gypsies still

<sup>252</sup> Electronic mail message from Ian Hancock.

<sup>253</sup> Braham, 45.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>255</sup> Cf. Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe Hearing of 11 July 1994: Towards a Tolerant Europe: the contribution of Gypsies.



living in caravans worsened following an adverse decision by the European Court of Human Rights in the test case of a Mrs Buckley. Other than in exceptional circumstances, Gypsies are barred from living in large areas of the country, classified as, for example, Green Belt and Special Landscape Areas. This has been confirmed by the court decision. A May 1996 survey on education in the Czech Republic confirmed that less than 25 per cent of Romanies complete basic compulsory education. In September a report published in Bulgaria by the Human Rights Project revealed a similar picture.

At least in theory, all relevant international bodies are now in favour of supporting the Roma. It is essential for Roma themselves to be involved in the planning and implementation of all programmes to assist their people. Only 'Gypsy autonomy and participation in the control of their own destiny'<sup>256</sup> can ensure that the Roma receive justice and the amelioration of their situation with dignity and without forfeiting their identity or culture.

The new international awareness of the Gypsies' plight and new national and local initiatives to ease that plight offer some hope. So, too, does the essential character of the Roma people themselves, as Jean-Pierre Liégeois has stressed: 'Gypsy communities are still strong. . . . Their dynamism, their flexibility, their adaptability and their originality, the importance they attach to social life and their desire to maintain it . . .'<sup>257</sup>

With their unique history and identity, Roma have much to contribute to the new Europe, as the German novelist Gunter Grass recently pointed out in an essay on right-wing German nationalism and anti-Gypsy violence:

Let half a million and more Sinti and Romanies live among us. We need them. They could help us by irritating our rigid orders a little. Something of their way of life could rub off on us. They could teach us how meaningless frontiers are: careless of boundaries, Romanies and Sinti are at home all over Europe.<sup>258</sup>

## 7 The persecution of Roma/Gypsies in contemporary Europe: policy recommendations

The problem of racist violence, racial discrimination and disadvantage experienced by minority ethnic groups across Europe has been subject to considerable attention in recent years, by policy-makers and academics. But the

contemporary experience of historically persecuted groups such as Roma, and other Gypsy communities, has been relatively neglected. The neglect is significant in the light of the extensive evidence of anti-Gypsy violence and hostility presented in this paper, and the evidence of discrimination and severe disadvantage experienced by Gypsy communities. It is timely, therefore, to propose recommendations for policy intervention to combat the problems faced by Gypsy communities and to serve as the basis for discussion by the institutions of the European Union, Member States, and governments in other European countries, in consultation with representatives of Gypsy communities. Furthermore, as it has in the case of Jewish victims of the Nazi regime, the German government should enter into negotiations with Roma/Gypsy communities with a view to reaching agreement on reparations/compensation for the genocidal measures inflicted on Roma/Gypsy communities by the Nazi regime. Finally, as the European Union's Social Affairs Commissioner, Padraig Flynn, has recently argued, 'I do not believe that we can credibly claim to support the concept of a Citizen's Europe which, for example, sets welfare standards for farm animals but remains utterly silent on the subject of racism.'<sup>259</sup>

### Violence and hostility

As the paper shows, numerous extreme incidents of anti-Gypsy violence have occurred in many European countries in recent years. Understanding the processes behind racist violence and harassment is arguably essential to the formulation and targeting of appropriate policy measures. The European Parliament has recently produced wide-ranging policy proposals for action by the European Union institutions and member states, based on the diagnosis that racist violence is symptomatic of racism and prejudice in general. It is notable, though, that few of these measures will be implemented, due to opposition in some Member States. But they provide a comprehensive guide for policy implementation, and inform some of the policy recommendations in this paper.

The prevalence of anti-Gypsy prejudice, as demonstrated by this paper, necessitates a role for education authorities to intervene in the processes behind racist violence and harassment.

### Education authorities

The European Parliament's Consultative Commission on Racism and Xenophobia recently advocated a number of educational measures aimed at the hearts and minds of Europe's young people, with the aim of fostering 'basic ideas of humanity

256 Tong, 255.

257 Liégeois, *Gypsies and Travellers*, 161.

258 Gunter Grass, 'Losses', trans. Michael Hofmann, *Granta* 42, winter 1992, quoted in Tong, 263.

259 Press release 19 June 1995, 'Commissioner Flynn calls for European legislation to combat racial discrimination'.

and democracy, stressing equal rights and obligations for all.<sup>260</sup> Some of the more tangible proposals provide a basis for policy measures relevant to prejudice and hostility towards Gypsies:

- Education authorities in all countries should ensure that attention to anti-Gypsy prejudice and hostility is incorporated into a broader framework of multicultural and anti-racist education, and implemented by educational institutions, such as schools, colleges, and universities. More specifically:
- Multi-cultural teaching should incorporate understanding of Gypsy culture and history.
- Anti-racist teaching should address processes of anti-Gypsy prejudice and hostility.
- The role of teachers is critical in countering prejudice among young people. Appropriate training should be provided—within existing training arrangements, or through additional in-service training—to provide teachers with the appropriate skills for focusing on the experience of Gypsy communities, within the broader framework of multicultural and anti-racist education. Appropriate materials should be developed and collected to provide teachers with the resources for this work.
- Education authorities should ensure that teaching institutions establish measures to prevent and manage anti-Gypsy violence and harassment, as part of broader policies dealing with racist harassment in and around schools.
- The recommendations for teaching curricula and teacher training should be established in consultation with specialists and representatives of Gypsy communities.

As the paper shows, violence and hostility towards Gypsies is not confined to the EU Member States, and in some countries the problem is more acute. Anti-Gypsy violence appears to have been escalating since the late 1980s in former communist states and other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Under communism, open displays of anti-Gypsy hostility were suppressed to some extent, but extreme cases of violence still occurred. With the collapse of communist regimes, a climate has emerged for previously suppressed Roma ethnic identity and culture to begin to flourish again, and the political organization of Gypsy groups is growing. But the less authoritarian climate with fewer restrictions on freedom of expression has also provided fertile ground for historic enmity against Gypsies to re-emerge with a new virulence. The

policy recommendations are therefore relevant to governments of all European countries. But the European Union has an additional role to play:

- The European Union should ensure that countries seeking membership are required to establish the above policy measures as a condition of their entry to the Union.

The proposed measures for Education Authorities provide a long-term strategy against anti-Gypsy prejudice and hostility. More immediate measures should be incorporated into criminal justice provisions of all European countries.

### Criminal justice

Immediate action should be taken to respond effectively to anti-Gypsy violence and harassment. The status of Gypsies as an ethnic group should be explicitly acknowledged by criminal justice provisions, affording protection to Gypsy communities. The measures should provide:

- inclusion in the criminal law of a clear prohibition of incitement to racial hatred;
- penalty enhancement in cases of racially motivated crime;
- prohibition of demonstrations, publications—including news media—and other public forms of expression, which incite racial hatred;
- the establishment of a specific offence of 'racially motivated crime'.

In addition:

- consideration should be given to legal prohibition of the activities of neo-fascist and racist groups;
- training of the judiciary should address processes of hostility against Gypsies, in the broader framework of anti-racist training.

Some of these measures have already been established by EU Member States. Steps should be taken to harmonize criminal justice provisions for racist violence across the European Union, explicitly acknowledging Gypsies as an ethnic group to be protected by the provisions. The recommendations are relevant to all European countries but membership of the European Union should be conditional upon their implementation.

### Policing

The paper shows that in a number of European countries policing practices have been inadequately sensitive to violence and hostility towards Gypsy communities. There is also evidence that in some countries the police themselves have been implicated in racist attacks. Whilst police forces in some countries have begun to respond

260 European Parliament (1995), Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs, *Consultative Commission on Racism and Xenophobia—Final Report*, DOC EN/CM/274/274586.

constructively, it is to be expected that all countries should implement measures to effectively deal with violence against Gypsy communities as part of their policing of racist violence and harassment in general. Specifically:

- Data on the number and distribution of racist attacks are essential to the effective targeting of policy initiatives in particular localities. Police forces should monitor and collect data on the ethnic group of victims of racist attacks, acknowledging Gypsies as one of the ethnic group categories to be included in the monitoring statistics.
- It is difficult accurately to compare the incidence of racist violence and harassment across countries, due to variation in monitoring procedures—where they exist. Steps should be taken by the European Union to standardize monitoring procedures across Member States.
- Police forces should liaise with Gypsy representatives, and other relevant agencies at the local level, to intervene effectively in localities where violence against Gypsies occurs.
- Attitudes of police officers are integral to sensitive policing of racist violence and harassment. Training of police officers should therefore incorporate understanding of Gypsy culture, and understanding of the processes behind violence against Gypsy communities, as part of a broader framework of multicultural and anti-racist training.

#### *Asylum*

- Gypsies who have fled persecution and violence in some countries should have their status as refugees fully granted in the countries to which they have fled.

#### **Discrimination**

In common with other minority ethnic groups across Europe, the paper shows that Gypsies are discriminated against when they seek employment, housing, access to educational facilities, and the use of other public services. But discrimination against Gypsies is often more blatant compared with that against other minority ethnic groups, reflecting the strength of prejudice and hostility towards Gypsy communities. The discrimination experienced by Gypsies, especially in employment, housing, and education, contributes significantly to the severe disadvantage and deprivation that many Gypsy communities suffer. Legislative measures should be taken, therefore, to ensure that Gypsies are protected against discrimination.

#### *Legislation*

In addition to providing a means of redress to those who suffer discrimination, and also perhaps serving

as a deterrent to discrimination, the legislation will serve an important symbolic function by unequivocally declaring that discrimination against Gypsies is unlawful. Specifically:

- All European countries should ensure that they explicitly outlaw discrimination against Gypsies within the broader framework of 'race' discrimination legislation—according to the definitions and guiding principles of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. In each country, Gypsies should be explicitly acknowledged as an ethnic group to be protected by legislative provision.
- The European Union should take steps to harmonize such provisions across all Member States.
- Legal assistance should be provided in all countries to support complaints of discrimination.
- In countries where agencies have been established to monitor and review 'race' discrimination legislation, discrimination against Gypsies should be given priority on their research agendas, and investigative activities.

#### *Responsibilities of public authorities*

- Public housing authorities in all European countries should ensure that Gypsies are not discriminated against in housing allocation, and in terms of the quality of housing offered.
- The particular housing needs of Gypsy communities should be acknowledged by all local authorities, by the provision of authorised caravan sites with a high standard of services.

#### **Disadvantage**

The paper shows that Gypsy communities throughout Europe suffer extreme disadvantage and deprivation. They are one of the most marginalized minority ethnic groups in terms of access to employment and economic opportunities. Participation in economic activity is essential for a person's well-being and quality of life in general. Because of their economic marginalization, many Gypsies, as the paper shows, experience extreme poverty, suffer from poor health and low life expectancy, and live in degrading housing conditions. Such marginalization has an impact upon the educational participation of children from Gypsy communities, with consequent high levels of non-attendance and illiteracy.

All European countries should acknowledge the severe disadvantage experienced by Gypsies, and take immediate remedial measures in consultation with specialists and representatives of Gypsy communities.

#### *Education*

- Provisions should be made for pre-school and support classes for Gypsy children.
- Outreach educational measures should be provided in consultation with representatives of Gypsy communities.
- Educational provision should be established with due recognition to the informal education provided within Gypsy communities.

#### *Health*

- Health authorities and services should acknowledge the particular health care needs of Gypsy communities and take outreach measures in consultation with community representatives.

#### *Employment*

- To counter the economic disadvantage, all European countries should establish affirmative action training schemes utilising the skills and resources of Gypsy communities to assist their integration into the labour market and economic activity in general.

#### *Cultural activity*

A community's cultural activity provides a mechanism for asserting community aspirations and demands, and for facilitating community relations. Support should therefore be provided for the cultural activity of Gypsy communities. Specifically:

- Where appropriate, the Romani language should be introduced as an optional school subject for children of Gypsy communities, in consultation with parents.
- Programmes of vocational training in practical crafts and skills should be provided for Gypsy children of secondary school age, in keeping with the cultural and occupational activities of Gypsy communities.
- Provisions should be made for Gypsy cultural centres and exhibitions, to provide support for

Gypsy cultural activity, and foster cross-cultural understanding.

#### *Representation*

Many of the policy recommendations in this paper propose consultation with informed representatives of Gypsy communities. To enable effective consultation, further measures should be established:

- The proposals by the OSCE/IRV/ODIHR for a Romani Rights Information Centre should be implemented.
- Mediators from Gypsy communities should be established at national and local levels, and support provided for Gypsy organisations and consultative bodies.
- Specialist advisers should be appointed to provide expert advice to the European Union Council of Ministers, and other institutions.
- International co-operation in exchange of expert knowledge and examples of innovative and successful practice in education, training and community relations for Gypsy communities, should be encouraged.

#### **Persecution and genocide: reparations/compensation**

The Federal Republic of Germany has accepted its obligation to make some amends for the Holocaust perpetrated by the Nazi regime, and has paid reparations/compensation to the Jewish people as well as to individual Jewish victims.

In a similar spirit, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany should enter into negotiations with representatives of Roma/Gypsy communities with a view to reaching agreement on reparations/compensation for the genocidal measures inflicted by the Nazi regime and its allies on the communities concerned during the Second World War. We propose that part of any proceeds be used for the establishment of a development fund in order to finance the implementation of the recommendations set out on pages 39-42.



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# antisemitism

## world report 1996

Institute for Jewish Policy Research  
and American Jewish Committee

Since its first publication in 1992, this pioneering report has become established as the most authoritative survey of antisemitism worldwide.

Completely revised, the fifth edition

- examines developments in 61 countries in the year 1995
- draws comparisons with previous years as well as across regions
- identifies regional and global trends

### Contents

- introduction summarizes main features in the Report, focusing on individual countries and noteworthy trends
- country entries arranged alphabetically by region, organized in the following categories:

demographic data

general background

racism and xenophobia

parties, organizations,

movements

mainstream politics

manifestations

cultural life

business and commerce

education

social antisemitism

sport

publications and media

religion

Holocaust denial

effects of anti-Zionism

opinion polls

legal matters

countering antisemitism

assessment

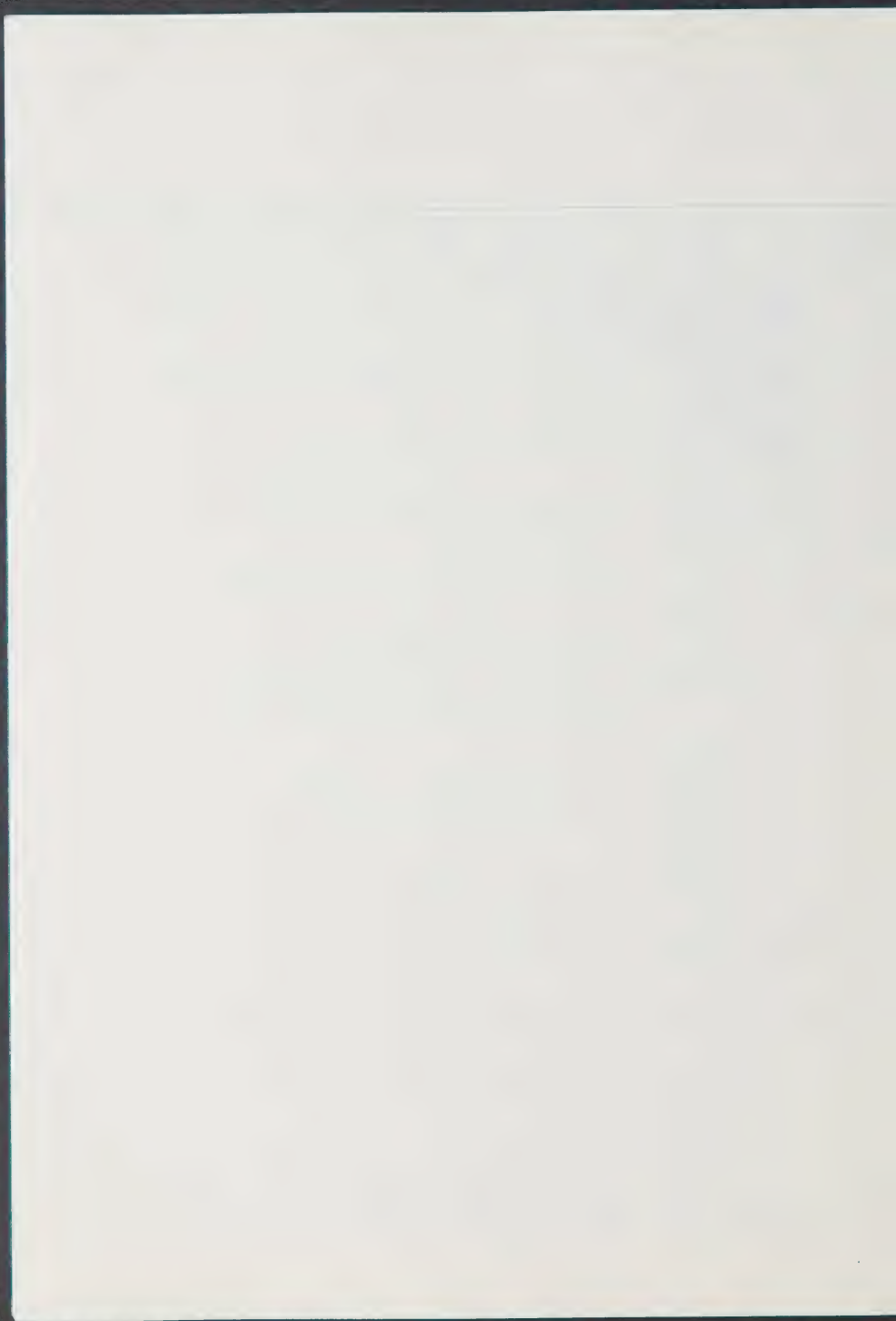
### New features

- list of abbreviations and acronyms, based on language of the country
- over 60 maps showing main regions, cities and towns mentioned in text
- comprehensive index

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The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial data. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses and income. The text suggests that a systematic approach to record-keeping is essential for identifying trends and making informed decisions.

In the second section, the author addresses the challenges of managing cash flow. It is noted that many businesses struggle with timing their payments and receipts. The text provides practical advice on how to forecast cash requirements and manage working capital effectively. It stresses the need for regular monitoring and adjustment of the cash flow plan.

The third part of the document focuses on the role of technology in modern accounting. It highlights how software solutions can streamline processes, reduce errors, and provide real-time insights into financial performance. The author encourages businesses to invest in reliable accounting systems that can scale with their operations.

Finally, the document concludes with a discussion on the importance of professional advice. It suggests that consulting with accountants and financial advisors can help businesses navigate complex tax regulations and optimize their financial strategies. The text reinforces the idea that a proactive approach to financial management is key to long-term success.

The following table provides a summary of the key financial metrics discussed in the document. It is intended to serve as a reference point for businesses looking to track their performance over time.

Metric	Definition	Importance
Revenue	Total amount of money received from sales	Indicates overall business performance and growth potential
Expenses	Total amount of money spent on operations	Helps identify areas of inefficiency and cost-saving opportunities
Profit	Revenue minus expenses	Measures the net gain or loss of the business
Cash Flow	Change in the amount of cash and cash equivalents	Crucial for ensuring the business has enough liquidity to meet its obligations
Accounts Payable	Amount owed to suppliers	Managing this metric helps maintain good relationships with vendors and avoid late payment penalties
Accounts Receivable	Amount owed by customers	Efficient collection of receivables is vital for maintaining a healthy cash flow

The document also includes a section on budgeting and forecasting. It explains how creating a detailed budget can help businesses set realistic goals and allocate resources effectively. The text provides tips on how to use historical data to make accurate forecasts and adjust plans as needed.

In addition, there is a section on financial reporting. It discusses the various types of reports that businesses should generate, such as the balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement. The text explains how these reports provide a comprehensive view of the company's financial health and are essential for communicating with stakeholders.

The final part of the document offers some concluding thoughts on the future of accounting. It predicts that as technology continues to advance, the role of accountants will evolve from traditional record-keepers to strategic advisors. The text encourages businesses to embrace change and stay ahead of the curve by adopting new tools and practices.

# jpr / policy paper

Institute for Jewish Policy Research

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Taňa Hlavata

Dr. Rajko Djuric Foundation  
Čelakovského sady 12  
Praha 2, Czech Republic

The Dr. Rajko Djuric Foundation, established in 1991, is a Romani organization run by and for Roma. Our goals are to promote civil and minority rights, education of Romani children, and the preservation of Romani culture. Our chairperson is doctor of law Emil Ščuka. Project coordinators are Marta Tulejová and Jud Nirenberg. Tulejová has worked with the foundation for several years as well as working for the Czech anti-discrimination organization HOST, where she runs a project in which Roma around the country are gathering evidence against restaurants that refuse to serve nonwhites. Jud Nirenberg is originally from the USA and has worked for two years at the foundation. He has also worked with refugees in London for the nonprofit organization Stepping Stones and worked at the UNHCR in the Czech Republic. Other staff include Pavel Demeter, who has many years experience as a social worker and formerly worked for the Romani party, RO1.

*The request.* We are asking for a total of \$7,170 in order to do several projects, which are described below.

*Tutors for Czech and math.* There is a Romani children's club in Prague which works with children 6-15 years old. The club is run by six volunteers Romani adults. We would like to supply an afterschool tutor to the club so that children can get help in Czech grammar or mathematics after school. We seek money to pay the tutor and supply some paper and pencils. It would cost \$30 weekly and we would like to offer the tutor for one school year, which is nine months.

\$270

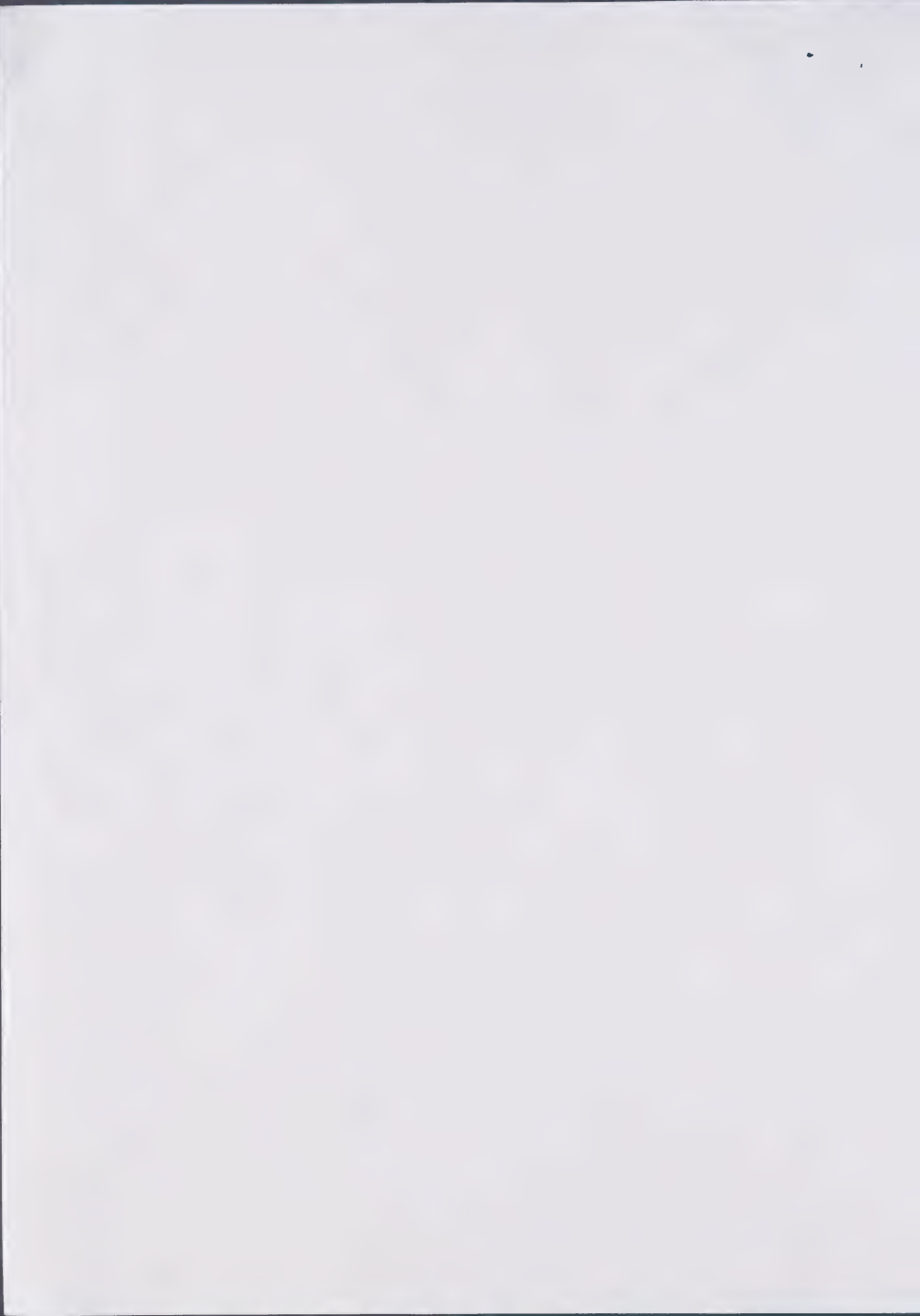
*Scholarship.* We offer a scholarship to support the studies of Romani youth at university, law school or vocational schools. All students are in difficult financial situations and are in good academic standing. We traditionally give a student, depending on the case, about \$100 monthly. We are seeking funds to support 6 students for one year.

\$5,400

MARTA  
TULEJOVÁ

main  
contact

TEL: 2491 4690.



*Children's day.* The town of Chanov is a large Romani ghetto on the edge of the town of Most. The primary school there is almost 100% Romani and struggles with an insufficient budget. Our foundation tries to offer support to the school as often as possible. We wish to make a children's day in which we will provide food and entertainment for 300 children. Given the dropout rate in this town, we like to have events like this to encourage the children who are still in school. The budget to make a party for the children is small.

\$300

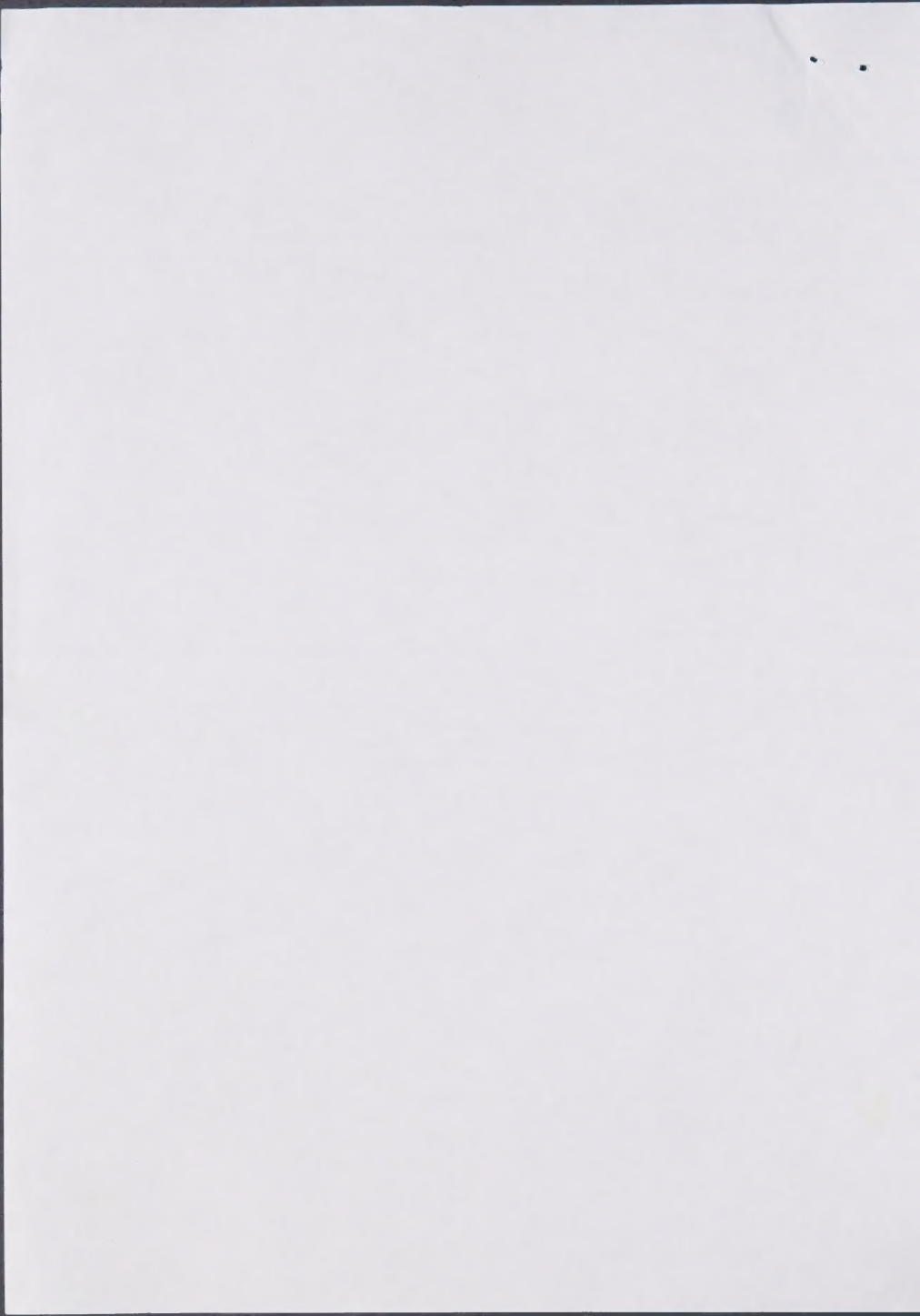
*Field trip from Chanov to Prague.* Because this ghetto is in such isolation from white Czech society, children grow up with no knowledge of what life is like on the other side, what it can be like for those who work hard to move out. We want to organize a school trip for about 50 children to go to Prague for the day and visit museums and cultural sites. The budget for such a project takes into account the rental of a bus and driver, the museum tickets and food, costs of labour to hire someone to plan such a project, etc.

\$700

*Entrepreneur support project.* We will pair one young person who aims to start his own business with one older and more experienced business person who can give advice and experience. When the advisor and young entrepreneur agree upon how and when to spend it, we will support the young person with a small grant to cover some of the starting expenses. This is an affordable way to help a young person build a new career and create several jobs in communities with stunning unemployment.

\$500

TOTAL REQUESTED BUDGET = \$7,170





Nadace Dr. Rajka Djurice  
Celakovskeho sady 12  
120 00 Praha 2  
Czech Republic

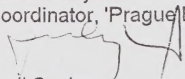
Dear Mr. and Mrs. Bader,

We would like to express our deepest and warmest heartfelt thanks for your generosity towards our Foundation. Three thousand dollars is by no means a small sum of money, and we are extremely grateful to you for being able to find that much for us, especially considering the incredibly generous amount you have already granted. We are so happy to be able to continue the 'Prague Bader Class' into the New Year and be able to provide the high standards which have been the mark of this course throughout.

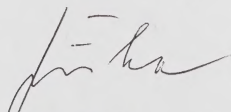
We realize that we, as novices, have indeed made some glaring errors along the way, most seriously in the area of organization and administration, where we entirely overlooked large sources of necessary expenditure, and are therefore even more grateful to you for not allowing our inadequacies to fatally wound that which is ultimately of prime importance - the students involved. We are pleased to let you know that despite a certain amount of resistance and prejudice on the part of some Prague districts, we managed to find places for all the students for their December internships in various local governments, where they each spent a week studying the workings and ways these offices operate. Obviously, in the uncertain fiscal and political atmosphere of contemporary Czech politics, of which you are no doubt aware, very few of these institutions could promise to employ our interns once they finish the course in July, but they were generally well-received and themselves felt they had gained from the experience. A full description of the internships and the interns' reaction will reach you shortly, once we have the opportunity to gather it together, but we just wanted to let you know right away, at least in outline, how things are going, and assure you that both we and the students are fully aware that this would not be possible without your generous and so highly-appreciated help.

We would like to wish you all the best in the New Year, as well as to once again express our utmost gratitude to the two of you, without whom so much would have remained beyond our reach. I can only say that such generosity and willingness to care is all too infrequently encountered in life, and I wish there were more people in the world with hearts as big as yours. We remain gratefully,

Marta Tulejova  
Coordinator, 'Prague Bader Class'



Emil Scuka  
Foundation Director



NADACE Dr. Rajka Djuriče  
SOCIÁLNE-PRÁVNÍ AKADEMIE  
Čelakovského sady 12



