

--ANOTHER AMERICAN "SPY"??--

MINNESOTA'S LIVELY SEN. HUBERT HUMPHREY BUMPED UP AGAINST THE IRON CURTAIN THE OTHER DAY IN TRYING TO SAVE THE LIFE OF A CZECH DEMOCRAT. HIS EXPERIENCE GIVES AN INSIGHT INTO THE DOUBLE-DEALING OF IRON CURTAIN DIPLOMATS.

THE MAN MARKED FOR DEATH WAS KAROL FOLTA, WHOSE ONLY CRIME WAS HEAD-ING THE SLOVAK DEMOCRATIC PARTY. SINCE THE COMMUNIST REGIME TAKES AN UNFRIENDLY VIEW TOWARD ALL BUT THE COMMUNIST PARTY, FOLTA WAS BRANDED AS "A SPY FOR THE UNITED STATES" AND SENTENCED TO DEATH FOLLOWING A SECRET TRIAL.

THE TRAGIC NEWS REACHED THE CONDEMNED MAN'S THREE BROTHERS, WHO LEFT CZECHOSLOVAKIA LONG AGO AND NOW LIVE IN MINNEAPOLIS. URGENTLY, THEY APPEALED TO SENATOR HUMPHREY TO SEE WHETHER ANYTHING COULD BE DONE.

BECAUSE THERE WAS NO TIME TO LOSE, HUMPHREY BYPASSED THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND MADE A PERSONAL APPEAL TO THE CZECH AMBASSADOR, DR. VLADIMIR OUTRATA.

"THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE REPUBLIC OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA ARE AT PEACE," PLEADED THE SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA. "IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT ONE COULD RECEIVE A DEATH SENTENCE FOR THE ALLEGED CONVEYANCE OF INFORMATION FOR THE UNITED STATES OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY WITH WHOM CZECHO-SLOVAKIA IS AT PEACE."

BUT AMBASSADOR OUTRATA WROTE BACK SADLY: "THE PENALTY WAS CARRIED OUT BEFORE YOUR LETTER ARRIVED. . . .

"I APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT THE UNITED STATES ARE IN A FORTUNATE POSITION WHERE IT IS NOT NECESSARY FOR THEM TO PENALIZE THE CRIMES OF TREASON, ESPIONAGE, ETC. BY DEATH IN TIME OF PEACE. UNFORTUNATELY THE POSITION OF SMALL AND DANGEROUSLY EXPOSED CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS NATURALLY DIFFERENT, AND THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT MUST, ALTHOUGH RELUCTANTLY, RESORT TO THIS EXTREME MEASURE OF JUSTICE. THE CASE OF KAROL FOLTA IS JUST ONE OF SUCH CASES. . . .

"ANYWAY," ADDED THE CZECH AMBASSADOR, "I DO NOT SEE ANY REASON FOR SUSPICION THAT KAROL FOLTA DID NOT GET A FAIR TRIAL."

BUT THE AMAZING FOLLOW-UP IS THAT THE FOLTA BROTHERS RECEIVED A MATTER-OF-FACT LETTER FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA, SAYING THEIR BROTHER WAS STILL AWAITING EXECUTION. THIS WAS THREE WEEKS AFTER AMBASSADOR OUTRATA ANNOUNCED THAT THE "PENALTY" HAD ALREADY BEEN CARRIED OUT.

SENATOR HUMPHREY ALSO RECEIVED A DIRECT LETTER FROM THE CZECH UNDERGROUND, INFORMING HIM THAT KAROL FOLTA IS STILL ALIVE IN THE LEOPOLDV PRISON. THE SENATOR HAS NOW WRITTEN ANOTHER LETTER TO OUTRATA, PLEADING AGAIN FOR FOLTA'S LIFE. BUT SO FAR THE AMBASSADOR HAS GIVEN NO EXPLANATION.

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