Prologue

2  **first-generation Czech-Jewish American:** For the sake of concision, I use the adjective “Czech” interchangeably as shorthand to reference Czechoslovakia (as in this instance), as well as the Czech Republic, the Czech lands (including Bohemia, Moravia and a portion of Silesia), the residents of those lands, and the language they speak.

3  **one hundred rooms:** Ebel and Vágnerová calculate the room count as follows: “upstairs, the house has 18 rooms which are mostly bedrooms and seven bathrooms; the first and second floor have 28 and 32 various types of rooms, respectively, and the ground floor and basement have 26 and 62 rooms.” See Martin Ebel and Helena Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence: Two Faces of an Entrepreneur’s Villa in Prague*, Prague, Exhibition by the National Technical Museum and US Embassy in Prague, November 28, 2012–March 31, 2013. Other estimates vary, and the exact number is unclear.

4  **Klaus was a climate-change denier:** For more on Klaus, see Gregory Feifer and Brian Whitmore, “The Velvet Surrender,” *New Republic*, September 17, 2010.


The Golden Son of the Golden City

1 thirty-nine-year-old man: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author, New York City, March 14, 2014; Andrea Goldmann Klainer and Peter Goldmann, telephone interview by the author, October 20, 2017. Mrs. Goldmann, the daughter of Otto and Martha Petschek, shared with me her father’s morning routine, which continued throughout the construction of the palace. That interview was informed by a number of previous conversations that I had with Mrs. Goldmann between 2011 and 2014, and the citation to it herein incorporates those prior contacts. After her death in 2014, I interviewed other family members to corroborate various aspects of her account, in particular her children, Andrea Goldmann Klainer and Peter Goldmann, on multiple occasions.

After eleven years: See, e.g., letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 38, Marc Robinson Collection, Petschek Family Archives (denoted henceforth as MRC). Note that letter item numbers refer to the pagination order in the respective collections of the materials presented to me; the letters are not preserved in chronological or other order. Items from the Petschek Family Archive that did not belong to a specific collection are noted simply as PFA.

a remaining slice of wilderness: Eva Penerova, “The House on Zikmund Winter Street,” unpublished manuscript, 3. Penerova refers to the property as “overgrown with weeds and wild bushes.”

accumulated multiple plots over decades: For details of the family property consolidation in Prague-Bubeneč, see Pavel Zahradník, “Dějiny domu” [History of the House]; Pozemkové knihy Bubenče [Bubeneč Land Register], entry 36 and entry 379, Prague Cadastral Office; box 427, Soupis písemností “A” Bankovního domu Petschek a spol [Collection of
documents “A,” Petschek Banking House and Co.], Státní oblastní archiv Praha [State Regional Archive in Prague] (henceforth SOA); and Penerova, “The House,” 3. Unless otherwise specified, all references to documents from the SOA are from the above collection.

14 **He had spent years walking:** Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 174, Eva Petschek Goldmann Collection, PFA (henceforth EPGC).

14 **Hedges ran among them:** Photographs showing portions of the property prior to its development are found in the EPGC.


14 **Still, every morning:** The Petscheks’ Western orientation is discussed in the “History of the Petschek and Gellert Families,” March 1946, PFA, 18–19.

14 **Music was likely running:** Eva Petschek Goldmann emphasized her father’s unusual relationship with music and her belief that he was constantly hearing it in his mind, as if listening to a radio that was always on. He would frequently tap out the beat, hum, or otherwise evidence this trait: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author. Otto’s great-grandson Marc Robinson, who interviewed a large number of those who knew Otto, phrased it as “conducting the invisible orchestra”: details from Marc Robinson, interview by the author, New Haven, CT, November 6, 2017.

14 **It was his first great passion:** Robert B. Goldmann, *Wayward Threads* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1997), 134. For the family’s support of the New German
Theatre, see “History of the Petschek-Gellert Family,” November 13, 1945, box 8, Yarrow Papers, Eisenhower Library; and letter, Mr. Eger to Mr. Petschek, December 12, 1945, box 8, Yarrow Papers, Eisenhower Library. Further details can be found in “The History of the Petschek and Gellert Families,” March 1946, 21–22, PFA, 21–22.

He would build a palace there: For a discussion of Otto’s intentions, see Penerova, “The House,” 3. The decision to build can be dated using Otto’s correspondence with the City of Prague. In 1923, he was still seeking permission merely to expand his existing smaller home on the compound. By spring 1924, he had pivoted to his more ambitious plan showing these features. Each is documented in the building department files. See letter from the Magistrate, June 24, 1924, 493/1, SOA; and Zahradník, “Dějiny domu” [History of the House], 3–4.

more than one hundred rooms: The details of the initial conception of the palace can be found in Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], Archiv Prahy 6 [Archive of Municipal District Prague 6] (henceforth AP6). Otto’s involvement in even the most minute details of the villa’s construction: is noted in Eva Petschek Goldmann, “The Otto Petschek Compound,” unpublished manuscript, undated.

a residence befitting his status: Eva Petschek Goldmann, “The Otto Petschek Compound”; Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author. For the level of Otto’s success, see Karel Kratochvíl, Bankéři (Prague: Nakladatelství politické literatury, 1962), which documents the history of the Petschek banking enterprise. Although a Communist-era volume, Bankéři contains a wealth of facts gathered at a time when they were much fresher. Although it should be studied with caution, it is useful and has been relied upon by scholars. See, e.g., Meir Lamed, “Petschek,” in Encyclopedia Judaica, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, vol. 16, 2nd ed. (Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007), 22.
an embodiment: Otto’s optimism was described in Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author, and corroborated by Klainer and P. Goldmann, telephone interview, October 20, 2017. Robert Gellert, Otto’s nephew, also shared family lore about Otto’s optimistic nature: Robert Gellert, interview by the author, New York City, February 2, 2015.

born in 1882: Otto Petschek’s birth certificate can be found in box 502/2, SOA. Census documents show where the family lived in 1890 and 1910, including all household members’ names—all kept at Archiv hlavního města Prahy [Prague City Archives]. The details of Otto’s childhood are from Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author. Details are corroborated in Viktor Petschek, interview by Marc Robinson, date unknown; and Eric K. Petschek, Reminiscences (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corp., 2010).

Three generations occupied: For the Petschek family census information, see Archiv hlavního města Prahy [Prague City Archives], Všeobecné sčítání lidu 1921, Čechy, Smíchov-Bubeneč, Dejvická 181 [General Census 1921, Bohemia, Smíchov-Bubeneč, Dejvická 181]; additional information is from Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

Otto was taught there by a tutor: For Otto’s educational records, see box 502/2, SOA.

In short pants: Photo of Otto Petschek, MRC. Eva Petschek Goldmann related that Otto was forced to perform as a child (and would later force his own son to do the same): Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

Young Otto’s gifts extended to music: V. Petschek, interview.

as freely as the Moldau: The Vltava River, known as the Moldau in German, is the longest river in the present-day Czech Republic and bisects Prague near the river’s terminus.

high culture: Goldmann, Wayward Threads, 133–134; Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

He begged for piano lessons: V. Petschek, interview.


playing solely from the fresh memory: V. Petschek, interview.

Otto found beauty everywhere: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.


he fully intended: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

university preparatory school: For Otto’s educational records, see box 502/2, SOA.
In 1895, his clear voice: Otto’s bar mitzvah preparations are documented in an annotated Torah-reading volume in the PFA. Eva Petschek Goldmann told me that she believed that the bar mitzvah took place at the Old New Synagogue, and other family members said the same; I have, despite searching, not yet located community records confirming that location and their custodians in Prague believe that they may no longer exist.

He had grown taller: Photos of a teenage Otto Petschek, undated, EPGC.


The Petschek family enthusiastically: Petschek, Reminiscences, 16.

Uncle Julius served him: Ibid., 27.

Leopold Hilsner: Ibid., 17. For the anti-Semitic and anti-German riots at the time, see Hillel Kieval, *Languages of Community: The Jewish Experience in the Czech Lands* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 167–170. The events described here are necessarily compressed and abbreviated.

The fin de siècle waves: The story of the mob has been passed down as family lore and is also set forth in Petschek, *Reminiscences*, 26. The author wrongly identifies the city as Pečky; by that time, the family was in Kolín. See Gottlieb Stein, *Familie Schidlow: die Geschichte einer jüdischen Bürgerfamilie des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* [The Schidlow Family: The Story of a Jewish Bourgeois Family in the 18th and 19th Centuries] (Self-published by the author, 1925), 48–71.

They decided to flee: “United Continental Corporation: History and Background,” undated, PFA, 22. For the economic activities of the Petschek family, see boxes 1 and 25, “Bankovní dům Petschek a spol. 1868–1988” [Banking House Petschek and Co., 1868–1988], Archiv České národní banky [Czech National Bank Archive], Prague (henceforth ČNB); and boxes 415 and 388, SOA. Unless otherwise specified, all references to documents from the ČNB are from this collection.

Otto took a more optimistic view: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview.

The Petscheks were not only Jewish: “History of the Petschek and Gellert Families,” March 1946, PFA, 15. The Petscheks held board positions at numerous Czech banks, and Otto was a major contributor to the New German Theatre.


A new century was coming: Box 502/2, SOA.

he would graduate from gymnasium: Maturitätszeugniss, box 502/2, SOA.

He wanted to train: Ina Petschek, daughter of Otto and Martha Petschek, interview by Marc Robinson, date unknown.

“10 days in Vienna”: Letter, Otto to Isidor and Camilla, December 31, 1900, item 64, MRC.

Julius and Isidor forbade: Marc Robinson, interview by the author; Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

No indication remains: Otto’s letters from the period are, for example, steadily affectionate.

They sent him: For Otto’s matriculation, see Matriky Německé univerzity v Praze, inventární číslo 3 [Register of the German University in Prague, inventory no. 3] and Matrika doktorů německé Karlo-Ferdinandovy univerzity v Praze/Německé univerzity v Praze [Register of the graduates of the German Charles-Ferdinand University in Prague/German University in Prague] (1904–1924), folios 42 and 132, Archiv Univerzity Karlovy [Charles University Archive], Prague. For his other university records, see box 502/2, SOA.

The university was called Charles-Ferdinand University at the time and was divided into a Czech-language branch and a German-language branch; Otto took his courses at the German-speaking branch.

An explosion of red: Otto’s original law school textbooks that include his marginalia can still be found in the library of the palace, or, as it is formally referred to by the State Department, the “Villa Petschek.” Unless otherwise specified, descriptions of Otto’s literary habits, interests, and his vast collection of books derive from the original volumes still held in the Villa Petschek library.


That pessimistic law student: Franz Kafka and Otto overlapped in Charles University’s Faculty of Law for six years, Kafka graduating with his doctorate in 1906 and Otto in 1909. Their families were acquainted, and one of Otto’s best friends was Franz’s cousin Bruno Kafka. The name Kafka frequently appears in Otto’s correspondence in the PFA, and although the references appear to be to Bruno, we cannot rule out possible mentions of Franz. Franz and Otto took at least one class together, during winter semester 1903–1904, with Professor Zuckerkandl; see “Katalogy posluchačů” [Catalogs of the University Students] of Právnická fakulta Německé univerzity v Praze [the Law School of the German Charles-Ferdinand University in Prague], Archiv Univerzity Karlovy [Charles University Archive], Prague.


Isidor and Julius dispatched him: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 60, MRC. Otto wrote to Popper’s daughter, later his wife, that “my father and your father had been friends since they were boys . . . At that time, I had been working then in the office of your father.”

Despite his advanced education: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 57, EPGC; letter, Otto to Dr. Popper, August 8, 1911, item 18, MRC.

When that humbling initiation: For Otto’s early progression within his family’s coal business, see Kratochvíl, Bankéři [Bankers], 214–258.

“I had to go away”: Letter, Otto to Martha, July 17, 1912, item 1, EPGC.

dark three-piece suits: Photos of Otto Petschek, Eva Petschek Goldmann, Sylvia Hoag, and Marc Robinson collections, PFA.

But when he was serving: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 60, MRC.

Otto, five years older: Marriage certificate of Otto and Martha Petschek, box 502/2, SOA.

She had a kindness: Sylvia Hoag, granddaughter of Otto and Martha Petschek, interview by the author, La Mesa, CA, December 22, 2015 (conveying information from her father, Viktor). Further details are from Eric Petschek, nephew of Otto and Martha Petschek, interview by the author, Darien, CT, March 16, 2015; and Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

“Why not marry Martha?”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 60, MRC.

Otto attempted to engage her: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 57, EPGC. In this letter, Otto, reminiscing on how long it took him to court Martha, comments, “It took me that long [from January to October] to figure out how to get closer to such a dear Dumme.”
She was interested in people: For the long duration of Otto’s effort: letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 57, EPGC. The number of Otto Petschek’s hats: letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 3, EPGC; and letter, Otto to Martha, August 7, 1912, item 47, MRC.

But Otto, ever dogged: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., EPGC (this letter was not assigned an item number in the review of the collection).

“a big realist”: Letter, Otto to Martha, August 7, 1912, item 47, MRC.

“In such moments”: Ibid.

“Thank God”: E.g., Letter, Martha to Camilla, June 4, 1928, item 183, EPGC; letter, Martha to Camilla, May 30, 1928, item 184, EPGC. In Otto’s and Martha’s correspondence, the use of Yiddishisms is frequent.

He tried to woo Martha: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

Sometimes she even sent: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 54, EPGC. In this letter, Otto wrote, “I didn’t cancel the order for your dress,” as Martha had requested, but “ordered it instead. Don’t get mad!” He then felt the need to clarify: “Otherwise I didn’t spend anything.”

But she kept: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 149, EPGC.

his forty-sixth hat: Letter, Otto to Martha, August 7, 1912, item 47, MRC; letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 3, EPGC.

By the way”: Letter, Otto to Martha, August 7, 1912, item 47, MRC.

Encouraged by your best present”: Letter, Otto to Martha, August 8, 1912, MRC.

My Mama always says”: Letter, Otto to Martha, July 29, 1912, item 4, EPGC.

Otto remained patient: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 57, EPGC.

Prague’s affluent Jews: For a map of the sprawling Petschek properties, see Helena Krejčová and Mario Vlček, Výkupné za život: Vývozy a vynucené dary uměleckých předmětů při


24 arm in arm: For details of the property, see Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 1–2; the remainder are based on Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.


25 They married in 1913: Per Otto and Martha’s marriage certificate, they were married on May 8, 1913. See box 502/2, SOA. Details of their honeymoon derive from: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

25 They spoke Italian: Ibid.

25 Returning to Prague: Otto’s father-in-law, Julius Popper, had given the newlyweds an apartment in his family building, which also contained his home and law firm, as a wedding present. See Penerova, “The House,” 1.

“It’s FLOWING”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 76, EPGC; letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 13, MRC; Ibid., item 60.

“HRDLS”: The two address each other in their letters as Dumme (dummy) and sign off with “HRDLS,” wishing one another a thousand kisses. See, among many others, letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 161, EPGC.

In February 1914: Viktor’s birth certificate can be found in box 502/2, SOA.

He was the spitting image: Photos of Viktor Petschek as a child, can be found in the MRC.

der Hund: E.g., letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 109, EPGC.


Otto worked long days: Otto’s exceptionally intense World War I–era work is reflected in his correspondence, such as the following, in which he enumerates a long list of steps that he had taken to develop the business in the previous year: letter, Otto to Martha, c. August 1917, item 25, MRC.


Otto rallied: The Petscheks’ loyalties are described in Petschek, Reminiscences, 16, 19; and V. Petschek, interview.

an artillery spotter: Petschek, Reminiscences, 18–19.

But 1915: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 147, EPGC.
Hans’s battery: Letter, Otto to Martha, item 115, EPGC.

Paul was not so lucky: Ibid.; Petschek, Reminiscences, 19.

He wandered the halls: V. Petschek, interview.

Julius had been: For more on Prague during World War I, see Ivan Šedivý, Češi, České země a Velká válka 1914–1918 [The Czechs, the Czech Lands and the Great War] (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2014).

Peace was coming: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 5, EPGC.


Now was the time: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 7, EPGC.

“schlmiel” and “won’t listen”: Ibid.; Ibid., item 102.

“They are sitting”: Ibid., item 19.

“the child is born”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 62, MRC.

“Much to Papa’s and Uncle’s surprise”: Ibid., item 68.

The staff soon ballooned: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 139, EPGC.

“Papa was very surprised”: Ibid., item 7; letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 68, MRC.

He missed Martha: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 5, EPGC.

“No Mama, no Papa here”: Ibid., item 113.

“My dear Burschisch”: Letter, Otto to Viktor, n.d., item 22, MRC.

She was not shy: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 130, EPGC.
“A thousand and more kisses”: Ibid., item 7.


Otto’s brothers: Letter, Paul to Martha, September 3, 1917, item 132, EPGC.

Periodic strikes and riots: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 50, MRC; letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 25, EPGC.

“I finally concluded”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 120, EPGC.

“Rip up the letter”: Letter, Otto to Martha, c. September 1917, item 25, MRC.

An anxious Otto: Many letters were written back and forth between Otto and Martha during her convalescence in the Semmering; E.g. letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 5, MRC; Ibid., item 23; Ibid., item 27; letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 10, EPGC; Ibid., n.d., item 27.

“was so wet and humid”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 16, EPGC.


Blecha started by planning: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 62, EPGC; Ibid., item 23.

The furnace: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 62, EPGC.

“I’m having the garage”: Ibid.

“Now that the wall”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 101, EPGC.

“very imprudent”: Ibid., item 56.
32 **He walked her:** Ibid., item 62.

33 **“Please arrange through Mama”:** Ibid., item 181.

33 **“Hold me or I am going to jump”:** Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 59, MRC.

33 **“Bubeneč has been finished”:** Ibid., item 44; letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 117, EPGC.

33 **“What is the difference”:** Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 147, EPGC.

33 **“high hopes for peace”:** Letter, Otto to Martha, c. October 1918, item 143, EPGC.

33 **the Czech campaign:** Ibid.


34 **The inclusion of Slovakia:** Nor does it appear that Otto later made any significant financial commitments in Slovak territory after it was incorporated into the newly formed state of Czechoslovakia, despite doing so elsewhere across central Europe.


35 **His father’s health faded:** Krejčová and Vlček, *Lives for Ransom*, 362.

35 **mischpoche:** Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 31, MRC.

35 “didn’t realize that young people”: Ibid., item 66.

35 **Otto won places:** Ibid.

35 **were loyal veterans:** Petschek, *Reminiscences*, 19.

35 **To the great amusement:** Ibid., 58.

35 **But the new country:** Krejčová and Vlček, *Lives for Ransom*, 381 (inventorying Kramár materials); Jorg Guido Hulsmann, *Mises: The Last Knight of Liberalism* (Auburn, AL: Ludwig Von Mises Institute, 2007), 289n100; Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview; and “The History of the Petschek and Gellert Family,” March 1946, PFA, 2, 7, 18, which notes that the family loyalty to Bohemia transcended regimes.

36 **When there was a run:** “History of the Petschek and Gellert Families,” March 1946, PFA, 16.

36 **Shield of the Nation:** *Shield of the Nation* 2, no. 22 (December 1, 1921): 3.


“mir viln Beneš”: My mother, whose religious family always said grace after meals, recalled this jest.


He even encouraged: “History of the Petschek and Gellert Families,” March 1946, PFA, 22.

By 1920: Eva, Ina, and Rita Petschek’s birth certificates can be found in box 502/2, SOA.

The King of Coal

39 **She was firmly opposed:** Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; Klainer, telephone interview, October 23, 2017; Hoag, interview.

39 **a twenty-four-page letter:** Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 130, EPGC.

39 **He was not known for apologizing:** Letter, Otto to Isidor, n.d., item 17, MRC. Otto wrote to his father, “Some claim that I’m stubborn, some claim that I never can be convinced, some claim I never admit to be wrong, some claim this, some claim that and so on.” Otto’s apologies to Martha can be found in, e.g. letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 56, MRC.

40 **reconstructing the sprawling, wild gardens:** Penerova, “The House,” 3-4.

40 **strolls through the great gardens:** Examples of Otto’s garden strolls can be found in the following: E.g., letter, Otto to Martha, August 7, 1912, item 47, MRC. Otto’s collection of architecture books spans the centuries, and much of it remains intact in the Villa Petschek. He had several important books on the baroque: Robert Dohme’s authoritative *Barock und Rococo* and one by Friedrich Ohmann, a prominent *fin de siècle* Prague architect and professor at the Academy of Applied Arts, who designed the Music Theater in Prague-Karlín, an insurance company building, a bank, and a coffeehouse.

40 **For assistance, he turned:** Späth’s firm had renowned customers worldwide. For the history of the Späth nursery, see L. Späth, ed., *Späth-Buch, 1720–1920. Geschichte und Erzeugnisse der Späth’schen Baumschule* [Späth Book, 1720–1930: History and Products of the Späth Nursery] (Berlin: Mosse, 1920). See also box 464, SOA.

40 **It was gradually cleared:** Penerova, “The House,” 3–5.

40 **The laborers:** Boxes 291–293 and 464, SOA.
41 **a young Prague-based landscape architect**: Penerova, “The House,” 3; letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 176, EPGC.

41 **But to Viky**: Hoag, interview.

41 **germophobic after Martha’s health scare**: Hoag, interview; Klainer and P. Goldmann, interview, March 25, 2015. Otto and Martha were concerned about Viktor’s health; they did not allow him to shake hands with the nurses in the sanatorium and forced him to wear gloves. Details can be found in the following: letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 45, EPGC.

41 **He was clever**: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 160, EPGC.

41 **It became an instant**: Hoag, interview; Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by Marc Robinson, date unknown.

41 **Otto pushed him**: I. Petschek, interview; Viktor’s school reports can be found in box 414, SOA.

41 **Latin at four**: V. Petschek, interview.

41 **But the harder**: Barbara Kafka and Doris Kafka, granddaughters of Otto and Martha Petschek, interview by the author, Washington, DC, March 20, 2015.

41 **Otto brought him along**: Hoag, interview.

41 **The sociable boy**: I. Petschek, V. Petschek, and E. Petschek Goldmann, interviews by Marc Robinson.

42 **Otto intended to be**: Penerova, “The House,” 2.

42 **For his architect**: Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*; Zdeněk Lukeš, *Splátka dluhu: Praha a její německy hovořící architekti její německy hovořící architekti 1900–1938* [Debt Payment: Prague and Her German-Speaking Architects, 1900–1938] (Prague:
Czech-born, German-speaking: Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*.

massive Renaissance fortress: Ibid.

Otto had novel ideas: Ibid. It is important to note, as Ebel and Vágnerová do, that although “to some degree we can only speculate” about how much Otto shaped the building’s design, “we know about his changes to the completed structure, when finished parts had to be torn down and new ones built, according to his demands.”

He was used to dealing: Spielmann built a house for the Picek brothers on Charles Square in Prague, a villa for Hans Budischowski in Třebíč, and several other residences. He worked for the Petschek family multiple times, designing their new banking house and also villas for Otto’s brothers. See Jana Stará, “Kroměřížský rodák—Architekt Max Spielmann,” [Kroměříž Native—Architect Max Spielmann], Židé a Morava: sborník z konference konané v Muzeu Kroměřížska 5. listopadu 2008 [Jews and Moravia: Proceedings of the Conference Held at the Museum of Kroměříž on November 5, 2008], 2009, 89–103.

Spielmann rolled out: Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6.

Yet Otto approved them: Boxes 493/2 and 512, SOA; box 14, ČNB; Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6; Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 6.

“FLOWING”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 76, EPGC.

The palace’s construction: Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” 6; Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*. For permission to start building, see boxes 493/1 and 493/2, SOA.
Surveyors, engineers, foremen: See photos held in the Museum of Prague, Historical Collections Department.


their amiability was proof: Eva Petschek Goldmann described a number of lectures that Otto would deliver to Viky in this regard; the boy tuned out, but his younger sister “loved to listen” to the dinner-table conversation: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

To Otto, Czechoslovakia: Ibid.

For all his reading: An entire department of the Petschek bank was dedicated to charitable giving. Details are from “The History of the Petschek and Gellert Families,” March 1946, PFA, 19–23.

foothold of roughly 10 percent: For parliamentary breakdowns in the First Czechoslovak Republic, see Kárník, České země v éře první republiky [Czech Lands in the First Republic Era (1918–1938)], 123–126, 370–382.

called herself a Socialist: Petschek, Reminiscences, 293–294. Otto’s ire was recounted to the author by Eva Petschek Goldmann.

He bristled: Prague City Hall, reference no. III-38533/29, October 3, 1929, Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6; boxes 493/1 and 493/2, SOA.

do whiff of Communism: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

While on Fischer’s property: Ibid.; Details regarding Otto’s purchase of the tree and the blooming of the garden are from Penerova, “The House,” 4. Eva Petschek Goldmann also recalled the arrival of some of the trees and the blooming of the bluebells.

The three twins: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.


rode the tram to the Bubeneč: The stop is now called Špejchar.

Otto felt the gaze: Otto’s self-imposed pressure and other details regarding his mindset towards the construction of the villa is from Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

Otto had approved: Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 6; boxes 493/1 and 493/2, SOA.


Otto confronted Spielmann: I first heard the essence of this story from John Ordway, the interim chargé d’affaires at the US embassy in Prague in 2010, and it has also survived among the Petschek descendants; details were corroborated by, e.g., P. Goldmann, interview, October 23, 2017. It was also repeatedly shared with me by today’s Watchers of Prague during my time in that city. It is, I believe, reflected in the dramatic change in the deflection of the palace at this time and corroborated in part by the existence of models of the palace; see Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 15.

The ashen-faced architect: John Ordway, “Villa Petschek—the American Ambassador’s Residence in Prague,” unpublished manuscript, June 8, 2011, updated December
The author questions whether the breaking of the model might be an apocryphal story, and indeed it might; I credit it as authentic for the reasons set forth in the preceding note.

**doubling the curvature:** Box 14, ČNB; Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 8; Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*.


**plans had to be drawn:** Box 14, ČNB; Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 8.

**little visible progress:** Ibid., 7–8.

**the harried Spielmann:** Ibid., 7; Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6.

**the municipal building inspector:** Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*. “It was impossible to see into the site over the high outer wall, and city building officials did not become aware of the unapproved changes until early November of 1925.”

**an immediate order:** Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 7–8.

**performed without an official permit**: Boxes 386, 493/1 and 493/2, SOA.

**immediately apply for approval**: Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 7–8; AP6, Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6.

The matter wended its way: The correspondence is in Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6.

furnished the correct plans: Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 7–8; Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6.

“I refused”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., EPGC (this letter was not assigned an item number in the collection).


thirteen out of every hundred: Dieter Nohlen and Philip Stover, Elections in Europe: A Data Handbook (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 2010), 479, 484; For a history of the political situation in Czechoslovakia in the 1920s, see Kárník, České země v éře první republiky (1918–1938) [Czech Lands in the First Republic Era (1918–1938)].

 “[E]ither I don’t love someone at all, or I do madly!”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 129, EPGC.

the modernizing alterations: Ebel and Vágnerová, Otto Petschek’s Residence. Ebel and Vágnerová argue that “Spielmann was willing to design according to Otto Petschek’s desires only to a certain extent” and quit when Otto’s plans differed too greatly from his vision. However, I contend that the fact that the architect worked on other Petschek projects makes it more likely that Otto fired him and allowed the other work to continue out of guilt or largesse, or that the parting of the ways was mutual.

hideous Beaux-Arts mansion: This mansion would become the Russian embassy and was so badly designed that the occupants found it uninhabitable, eventually moving out and using it only for parties. Its history was described to me in 2011 by the then-Russian ambassador to the Czech Republic, Sergey Kiselev, and his wife, Tatiana.

a conductor at last: The Petschek family believes that Otto played a leading role in the design of the palace even while Spielmann was on the project, and certainly after. Details are from Eva Petschek Goldmann, “The Otto Petschek Compound,” 1; Klainer, interview, November 2, 2017.

the general contracting firm: Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 11.


scour every inch: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

his enormous sample books: Ibid.

“trashy literature exchange”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 5, MRC.

Barock und Rococo Architectur: Otto’s secretary typed up many reference sheets of architectural works that he wished to inspire his new villa; these can still be found in the library of the Villa Petschek. Otto relied on Barock und Rococo Architectur above all other works.

lists of notes and inspirations: These lists can still be found in the Zinc Room of the Villa Petschek. Unless otherwise specified, all descriptions of Otto’s architectural notes and sketches derive from the originals still held in the Villa Petschek.

Otto had slashed hundreds: The missing pages were a great mystery to me until I found the documentation of Otto’s desires in the Villa Petschek. The pages listed there are the ones that
are missing: he ripped them out and sent them to the architect. Ebel and Vágnerová, Otto Petschek’s Residence.

53 Here was the basis: E.g., for the library, Otto cited Chateau de la Loire by Walters Bucher; English Homes, period 4, volume 1; and the aforementioned Barock und Rococo, among others. For the cartouches, he referred the reader to Les anciens chateaux, Chateau de Villarceaux, series 6; Les Trianons; and L’architecture et la décorations aux XVIII et XIX siècles by Louis Dimier. The complete collection can be found in the Zinc Room of the Villa Petschek.

53 jumping-off points: Ebel and Vágnerová, Otto Petschek’s Residence. Ebel and Vágnerová note that the architectural samples marked in Otto’s notes bear little relationship to what was actually produced; I saw this, too, when I compared.

53 The City of Prague: Prague City Hall, reference no. 21244-III/27, October 26, 1927, Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6; Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 11.

53 the half-built palace: See photos held in the Museum of Prague, Historical Collections Department.

53 why he tore out: For more on Otto’s moodiness and willingness to tear down parts of the villa when he disapproved, see Kratochvíl, Bankéři, 244–246. Details about the fortune-teller come from, e.g., Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; and Lucy Barnard Briggs, wife of Ellis O. Briggs, U.S. Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, 1949–1952, interview by Patricia Squire, October 16, 1989, The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Program Foreign Service Spouse Series, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

53 the mad builders of Prague: For more on Emperor Rudolf, see Jaroslav Pánek, “The Czech Estates in the Habsburg Monarchy,” in Pánek and Tůma, A History of the Czech Lands,

53 **He lashed out angrily:** Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

54 **“you don’t treat me like an adult”:** Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 130, EPGC. Although this letter is undated and may be from an earlier period, it indicates that this was a recurring theme in their disputes, and its tone is consistent with later ones.

54 **movable components:** Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 15.

54 **fear Otto’s temper:** E.g., V. Petschek, I. Petschek, and E. Petschek Goldmann, interviews by Marc Robinson.

54 **a musical guessing game:** Eva Petschek Goldmann, unpublished manuscript, July 1985, 4.

54 **a particular target:** E.g., I. Petschek, interview; Ina referred to her older brother as a “crown prince,” and he was held to an impossible standard by his overbearing father. Further details are from Goldmann and Klainer, interview, March 25, 2015.

54 **“The Hund again has an omission”:** Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 109, EPGC.

54 **“only taking responsibility”:** Letter, Otto to Martha, January 1927, item 66, MRC.

54 **a series of tutors:** Details regarding Viky’s education and relationship with Otto are from V. Petschek, interview.

55 **Viky standing on a chair:** Ibid. Unless otherwise specified, all details regarding Otto’s efforts to control Viky are from this interview.
“Römer! Mitbürger! Freunde!”: Ibid.

“Rogue, blackguard”: These exchanges are jotted in the margins of Viky’s copy of a biography in English of Queen Victoria (Lytton Strachey, *Queen Victoria* [London, UK: Chatto & Windus, 1922]); he evidently recorded them as part of his English practice. This copy is still held in the library of the Villa Petschek.

bevilled the three grown men: I. Petschek and V. Petschek, interview; Petschek, *Reminiscences*, 28; letter, Otto to Martha, January 1927, item 66, MRC.


He ripped out planned rooms: Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*; Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 11; Prague City Hall, reference no. 21244-III/27, Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6; box 512, SOA.

two entrances: Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*.

the Bauhaus modernists: Otto’s library, which can still be found in the Villa Petschek, contains numerous items highlighting twentieth-century developments in architecture, including the Bauhaus. In particular, he seems to have studied Frank Lloyd Wright; his library includes a rare oversized German volume that was the first extended scholarly treatment of Wright’s work, and which compiled about a hundred of the actual full-sized working blueprints for Wright.
projects. This was intended for architects to study and implement Wright’s modern innovations, including opening up interiors to light and outdoor space. The pages are well worn.

56 **an Olympic-sized swimming pool:** Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*; box 14, ČNB; boxes 386 and 493/1, SOA.

56 **The pool grew in length:** Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*.

56 **run 160 feet:** Box 493/1, SOA.


56 **A protracted negotiation:** Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 11–12.

56 **Otto had torn it down:** For the claim of three times, see “Otto Petschek—pražský Rothschild,” *Moravská orlice*, January 12, 1941. For six times, see A. Jacobson, “The Czechoslovakian Rothschilds Prepare to Migrate to America,” *Forward*, August 22, 1938.


57 **put his stamp:** Eva Petschek Goldmann, “The Otto Petschek Compound,” 1.

57 **He and his agents:** Ibid.; Penerova, “The House,” 2; Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

57 **His host offered to sell:** Penerova, “The House,” 14; Ebel and Vágnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*. The story is borne out by the unusual dimensions of the room: the ceiling is lower than any other of the formal rooms’, and the floor higher. The only other similar customization is the niche above the formal staircase, expressly molded to exactly fit and display
the extraordinary tapestry, down to installing special blinds in the window on the staircase to protect it from fading.


57 **Martha, always nervous:** Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

57 **Otto, alarmed:** E.g., letter, Martha to Camilla, May 30, 1928, item 184, EPGC.

57 **her eyesight flickered:** Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 76, EPGC.

58 **he was back at the palace:** E.g., letter, Martha to Camilla, June 9, 1928, item 187, EPGC. Martha wrote, from her sickbed in Semmering, that “Otto is in Prague at the moment and leaves for Paris from there”—perhaps to pick up more decorations for the house.

59 **the risk of his extravagance:** Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 10, EPGC.

59 **she was too soft on him:** Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author. Eva felt this strongly, and others felt that she could be a pushover as well. The correspondence, however, makes it clear that she resisted, often mightily, before yielding.

59 **she had never cared very much about the possessions:** E.g., letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 54, EPGC.
“I told you so”: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

ask them for the money: Petschek, Reminiscences, 56; Gellert, interview, February 10, 2015.

the genial Paul: Eric Petschek, interview; Petschek, Reminiscences, 53-54.


Uncle Julius was there: Gellert, interview, February 10, 2015.

“schlmiel”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 7, EPGC.

a working-class woman: I. Petschek, interview; Petschek, Reminiscences, 19. Eric Petschek remembers his father, Paul’s, desires being thwarted by Isidor and Camilla, but Ina later claimed that it was Otto; perhaps the three united against the second-born son.

and treated Walter: Otto went so far as to tell the much-younger Viktor to, as Otto’s successor, get used to giving Walter orders, though Walter was fifteen years his senior: V. Petschek, interview.

under Czech law: Gellert, interview, December 18, 2015.

The family business had split: Petschek, Reminiscences, 31; I. Petschek, interview; V. Petschek, interview.

the other Petscheks: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; and Gellert, interview, December 18, 2015.

equal shares: Gellert, interview, December 18, 2015; Petschek, Reminiscences, 56.

3 Palace Neverending

61 **Otto walked up the steps:** Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

61 ** piled high with books:** Ibid.

61 **If he simply stopped:** Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 12; Prague City Hall, reference no. III-1835/29, January 18, 1929, Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6; boxes 493/1 and 493/2, SOA.

61 **a massive dining table:** Boxes 6 and 7, ČNB.

62 **allow diners to recline:** Boxes 138 and 139, ČNB.

62 **Exact copies of other:** Penerova, “The House,” 5.

62 **precisely duplicated:** This china collection can still be found in the Villa Petschek.

62 **a crew of masons:** Penerova, “The House,” 7.

63 **the deep walls of the pool:** Ordway, “Villa Petschek,” 21. The initial approval to build the pool had been issued in 1927. See box 386, SOA.

63 **By October 1929:** Details of the villa’s progress by 1929 are from Ebel and Váagnerová, *Otto Petschek’s Residence*; Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 12–16; and Prague City Hall, reference no. III-1835/29, January 1929, Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6.

63 **already oxidizing green:** Pictures of the Villa Petschek from the time period, Museum of Prague, Historical Collections Department.

63 **oxen eyes:** Penerova, “The House,” 2. Drawings in Otto’s hand still remain in the Villa Petschek.


Otto struggled with his mines: See Kratochvíl, *Bankéři* [Bankers], 259–296.

The Czechoslovak Communist Party was led: Karel Kaplan, *Kronika komunistického Československa: Klement Gottwald a Rudolf Slánský* [Chronical of Communist Czechoslovakia: Klement Gottwald and Rudolf Slánský] (Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2009).

the labor actions targeting Otto: The Communist Party formed the “Red Unions,” which then organized the strikes, most notably the big strike in 1932 in Most. During the action, two workers were shot, which led to further unrest. During the Communist era in Czechoslovakia, this event gained mythic proportions. See Lubomír Vebr, *Mostecká stávka 1932* [Most Strike 1932] (Prague: Státní nakladatelství politické literatury, 1955); and Marie Čutková, ed., *Mostecké drama: Svědectví novinářů, spisovatelů a pokrokové veřejnosti o velké mostecké stávce roku 1932* [Drama of Most: Testimonies of the Journalists, Writers and Progressive Public about the Great Strike of Most in 1932] (Prague: Mladá fronta, 1972).
“You say that we are under command of Moscow”: Klement Gottwald, Klement Gottwald v roce 1929: Některé projevy a články [Klement Gottwald in 1929: Selected Speeches and Articles] (Prague: Svoboda, 1950), 118–135.

Some irritated creditors: For the documentation of the complaints and lawsuits of Jan Koška and Copex Expeditieberief, see boxes 272 and 348, SOA.

The world outside his walls: Kubů and Pátek, Mýtus a realita hospodářské vyspělosti Československa mezi světovými válkami. [The Myth and Reality of the Czechoslovak Economic Level between the World Wars]. Czechoslovak protectionism in foreign trade similarly did not help boost the Czech economy.


Maryčka Magdonova: “Maryčka Magdonova” was written by Petr Bezruč. The story of the Petschek daughters comes from I. Petschek, interview.


He was a leading sponsor: Otto was also on the board of trustees at the Czech Museum for Industrial Art. See “History of the Petschek-Gellert Family,” November 13, 1945, box 8, Yarrow Papers, Eisenhower Library.

too German: For more, see Čapková, *Czechs, Germans, Jews?*, 90–91.

the harder he worked: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

studies of Fascism: Among these were seminal works expressing the Nazi ideology, such as Guenther’s *Rassenkunde des juedischen Volkes* [Race Anthropology of the Jewish People], as well as volumes attacking it, such as Hegemann’s *Entlarvte Geschichte*, a polemic against Fascism and Nazi attempts to rewrite history by claiming historical figures as antecedents of their movement. It would become a focus of the book burning of 1933 in Berlin. Among Otto’s many books on economics and finance were *American Banking Methods* and *English Banking Methods* by Leonard le Marchant Minty, *The Financial Crisis of France* and *The Economic War* by George Peel, and Taussig’s *Principles of Economics*, volumes 1 and 2.

a man of sixty-five: V. Petschek, interview; Viktor’s description of his father, and evidence that Martha aged with him, is also confirmed in photos, EPGC and MRC.

“Now you will get mad”: Letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 166, EPGC.

“Don’t scold me!”: Ibid., item 54.


thousand-stream shower: Ibid.

detailed written instructions: The instructions can still be found in the Villa Petschek.
moving into the palace: Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 17–18; Prague City Hall, reference no. 49881/30, December 29, 1930, Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6; boxes 329/1, SOA; Penerova, “The House,” 8.


Otto proudly led them: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

Martha had made her peace: E.g., letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 176, EPGC.

crossed the lush green oval: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; Eva was kind enough to recall her moving-in experience, still traumatic eighty years later. Her children remarked to me after she died how precise her recollection of her childhood had been. Other of these details are drawn from V. Petschek, I. Petschek, and Eva Petschek Goldmann, interviews by Marc Robinson.

hosted elegant dinners: All details, unless otherwise specified, regarding Otto and Martha’s dinner parties are from Penerova, “The House,” 9, 12, 13–14, 20.


would grow accustomed: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

butlers served them: Eva Petschek Goldmann, unpublished manuscript, July 1985, 3.


“would have killed me”: V. Petschek, interview.

a small, simple chamber: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.
tapping out the beat: Ibid.


“It’s relaxing”: Stein, interview.

vacation to the Netherlands: E.g., letter, Otto to Martha, c. 1931, item 194, EPGC; Ibid., item 193; and Ibid., item 170.

He escorted them to the beach: Letter, Otto to Martha, c. 1931, item 193, EPGC; Ibid., item 172; Ibid., item 170.

He told them tales: Letter, Otto to Martha, c. 1931, item 174, EPGC.

he had to cut it short: Ibid., item 178; Ibid., item 173.

sudden swerves of temper: Otto’s intimidating presence was confirmed by nearly every family member whom I spoke to.


$100 million today: This figure is from Penerova, “The House,” 8; this conversion was done using an historical conversion chart, together with the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ CPI inflation calculator: Juergen Schneider, Oskar Schwarzer, and Markus Denzel, Währungen der Welt II. Europäische und nordamerikanische Devisenkurse (1914–1951) [Currency of the World II: European and North American Exchange Rates (1914–1951)] (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1997), 346–347.
a moment of resurgent nationalism: Otto’s style was not indebted to a particular national tradition; rather, it was an expression of his own eclectic tastes, drawing on a mix of different historical influences. Such constructions established members of the Jewish community as economic and cultural forces in their own right: Zdeněk Lukeš, interview by the author; As Frederic Bedoire points out, it was a commonly expressed desire of Jewish entrepreneurs to construct a freestanding villa that “catered to the need for freedom and independence, a desire to be visible and identified in the city, but also a place where one could withdraw into almost complete seclusion.” Frederic Bedoire, The Jewish Contribution to Modern Architecture, 1830–1930 (Stockholm: KTAV Publishing House, 2004), 229.

boarding school in England: Hoag, interview.

overnight with friends: Details regarding Martha’s maternal anxiety can be found in, e.g., letter, Otto to Martha, n.d., item 159, EPGC. Otto offhandedly mentions that Viky “was very silent and depressed,” before hastening to add, “But you shouldn’t imagine too much depression.”

cut him deeply: This irritation is reflected in the correspondence with Martha about Viky’s course of action; e.g., letter, Otto to Martha, c. 1930, item 154, EPGC.

Otto would accompany him: Ibid.

never to set foot: V. Petschek, interview. According to Marc Robinson’s interview notes, Viktor wanted to be British—perhaps another way of distancing himself from his father.

his daily stresses: This section and those that follow are based upon Otto’s medical records, which, remarkably, still exist in the PFA.

his groans were heard: Professor Dr. Herrnheiser, “Results of the X-ray examination of Otto Petschek,” September 8, 1931, PFA.
They found nothing life threatening: The doctors found colitis and an irregularly shaped heart valve, but nothing more urgent. Ibid., November 26, 1931, PFA.

same violent, thrusting pain: Ibid.

again moved to the hospital: For Otto’s additional health records, see box 414, SOA.


a one-room hospital: Ibid., 11.

sensation returned: Professor Dr. Herrnheiser, “Results of the X-ray examination of Otto Petschek,” November 26, 1931, PFA.

Otto came to occupy: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; box 414, SOA.

Otto dismissed such talks: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.


first recorded private use: “Vila jako Zámek,” [Villa as the Chateau], Residence magazín, Bydlení jako v pohádce [Living Like a Fairytale], n.d., 84–88.

Zander Room: A switchboard in the villa still contains the notation.


Social unrest was spreading: Ibid., 191–193.

“The Czech government”: Čutková, Mostecké drama [Drama of Most], 43.


promptly banned the party: Zeman and Klimek, The Life of Edvard Beneš, 118.


Beneš encouraged Petschek support: Ibid., 22.

Otto was asked to represent Czechoslovakia: “Report concerning the choice of the Czechoslovak member of the Administration Board of the High Commissariat for Refugees by the League of Nations,” November 10, 1933, box 926, 3. Společnost národů [The League of Nations], II. politická sekce [Political Section], Archiv Ministerstva zahraničních věcí [Archive
of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs], Prague (henceforth MFA); Kateřina Čapková and Michal Frankl, Nejisté útočiště: Československo a uprchlíci před nacismem 1933-1938 [Uncertain Sanctuary: Czechoslovakia and the Refugees from Nazism 1933-1938], (Prague: Paseka, 2008), 84.


75 **Jews and liberals were taking flight**: Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century* (New York: Knopf, 1999), 43, 56–57.


76 **The floodwaters of Nazism**: Eva Petschek Goldmann recalled that Fraulein Fürst departed earlier in the 1930s; Penerova seems to place it later in the decade. I believe this to be one of the occasions on which Penerova is inaccurate, but due to the uncertainty I have placed this event in a freestanding section and not assigned it a precise date.

76 **one of the first basement rooms**: Penerova, “The House,” 11.

76 **Fürst had never been a warm person**: Penerova puts it diplomatically: Fürst “can’t be remembered as a beloved member of staff.” See Penerova, “The House,” 20; Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; and P. Goldmann, interview, November 2, 2017.


77 **Martha explained**: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; Penerova, “The House,” 11, 20.

77 **When Otto could go to his bank**: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.
He remained fundamentally optimistic: Penerova, “The House,” 20. Penerova surmised that “maybe [Otto] believed that . . . great capital will be always connected with a certain exceptional position of safety.”

He seems to have believed: Indeed, the business did not feel threatened or begin taking serious measures to deal with the German regime’s anti-Semitism until October 1936. See “United Continental Corporation: History and Background,” PFA, 40.


Some began taking steps: R. Goldmann, interview.

Otto did not think: There is no indication that Otto took any such measures. Penerova, “The House,” 20.

Instead, Otto’s daily routine: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author. Eva and the rest of the children had occasion to observe the routine, though they were under strict orders not to disturb it.

Otto did not permit vehicles: Penerova, “The House,” 22A.


Otto fired off: A packet of Otto’s dictations, likely left behind by accident, survives in the Villa Petschek.

In the afternoon: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by Marc Robinson.

Otto even created a Golfzimmer: The name of the room is still on an old switchboard in the basement.

he felt much better: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; box 414, SOA.
“He already looks like an Englishman”: Letter, Otto to Martha, c. 1930, item 161, EPGC.

apprentice in a bank: V. Petschek, interview; Hoag, interview.


They had inherited: Photos of Eva, Ina, and Rita wearing a variety of costumes can be found in the EPGC.


treyf (nonkosher food) cooking: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; P. Goldmann and Klainer, interview, March 25, 2015.


Pokorný and his wife helped: Ibid., 15.

Mrs. Pokorný operated the switchboard: Ibid.

Asperin von Sternberg: Rita Petschek, daughter of Otto and Martha Petschek, interview by Marc Robinson, date unknown.

the bank’s health: “United Continental Corporation: History and Background,” undated, PFA, 35. There were severe strains in the early 1930s, but they were resolved.

an uptick: Kubů and Pátek, Mýtus a realita hospodářské vyspělosti Československa mezi světovými válkami [The Myth and Reality of the Czechoslovak Economic Level between the World Wars], 408–412.

That spring, Martha and her sister: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by Marc Robinson.

Martha was a bit anxious: Ibid; Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.
He had barred Eva: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by Marc Robinson.

He consulted remotely: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

He decided to make: Ibid; Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by Marc Robinson; box 414, SOA.

Otto was rushed off: Otto’s death notice can be found in box 502/2, SOA.


At the hospital: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author.

The steadfast Pokorný: Penerova discussed Pokorný’s presence; see Penerova, “The House,” 18. However, the information is otherwise slightly off.

His heart stopped beating: Otto’s death notice can be found in box 502/2, SOA; contemporaneous articles discussing his death can be found in box 314/1, SOA.

“No stairs to the basement”: Prague City Hall, reference no. 379264/34, August 11, 1934, Odbor výstavby - Dům č. 181 [House no. 181, Department of Construction], AP6; Zahradník, “Dějiny domu,” [History of the House], 19.
4 The Final Child

“The Petscheks are gone!”: Quotations and the other details in this chapter are based on my conversations with my mother over many years. Other sources are noted where relevant. I am grateful to Denisa Vinanska of Sobrance for her many exchanges with me regarding the history of the town. To corroborate my mother’s recollections of Sobrance, I relied upon Lýdia Gačková et al., Dejiny Sobraniec [History of Sobrance], ed. Peter Kónya and Martin Molnár (Prešov: Vydavatelsťvo Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove pre mestský úrad v Sobranciach, 2013).


5 An Artist of War

The black diplomatic Mercedes pulled away: For the time and destination of the vehicle, see cable from the German Minister in Czechoslovakia (Eisenlohr) and the Military Attache of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia (Toussaint) to the German Foreign Ministry and the war Ministry, Prague, May 21, 1938, 9:30 p.m., Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918–1945. From the Archives of the German Foreign Ministry (DGFP), series D, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1949), no. 182: 309–311; and Andor Hencke, Augenzeugen einer Tragödie. Diplomatenjahre in Prag, 1936–1939 [Eyewitness of a Tragedy: Diplomatic Years in Prague, 1936–1939] (Munich: Fides Verlagsgesellschaft, 1977), 90–92. Germany maintained a legation (Gesandtschaft) in Prague. Although they were nearly identical in function to embassies, legations were established in smaller countries such as Czechoslovakia. This distinction was abolished after World War II. For the make of Toussaint’s official car, see memo by Eisenlohr, February 9, 1937, Gesandtschaft Prag [Legation in Prague] (RAV Prag 6), Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts [Political Archive of the Foreign Office], Berlin (henceforth PAdAA).

forty-seven years old and square jawed: Toussaint was born on May 2, 1891, in Egglkofen, Bavaria. See his personnel file, Personalbogen, Rudolf Toussaint Offizierspersonalakten [Officers’ Personnel Files] (henceforth OP) 61643, Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv [Bavarian State Archives], Munich (henceforth BayHStA). This description is based on photos of Toussaint from the late 1930s, shared by Alexander Toussaint, his grandson: Toussaint Family Archive (TFA). Additional details about Toussaint’s appearance are drawn from a lengthy interview with Alexander, conducted by the author in Prague on August 7–8,
2016. That conversation incorporated information from numerous other talks with him in 2015 and 2016; all are collectively cited here as “Alexander Toussaint, interviews.”

101 The chauffeur conveyed: Alexandr Štorch, Plán velké Prahy [Map of Greater Prague], [map], 1:19,000, (Prague: A. Štorch Syn, 1939).

101 many owned by the famous Petschek clan: Krejčová and Vlček, Lives for Ransom, 366.

101 Limousines were waiting: For the timing and activity of the Petscheks’ departure, I drew upon Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by the author; and Gellert, interview by the author, February 10, 2015; and B. Kafka and D. Kafka, interview by the author, Washington, DC, October 16, 2015.

101 the man in the backseat: Alexander Toussaint, interviews. The scenario is based upon the timing of Toussaint's travel and the Petscheks departure in May 1938.

102 He had trained as an artist: Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

102 the regime that he served: Alexander Toussaint, interviews. At his trial, Toussaint also claimed, “As an old German family, [we] were totally against membership [in the NSDAP].” See Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.


102 To try to defuse it: Hencke, Augenzeuge [Eyewitness], 90.
Toussaint hated: Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

He had survived: Toussaint was a decorated veteran. Details on his career in the military are drawn from his personnel file: Personalbogen, Rudolf Toussaint OP 61643, BayHStA. The death toll of the First World War changed Europe’s demographic composition. As an officer, Toussaint saw this carnage firsthand, and many of his men perished in the conflict. For a military history of the First World War, including the battles reflected in Toussaint’s military records, see John Keegan, *The First World War* (London, UK: Vintage, 2000).

Toussaint knew that the Czechs: Letter, Toussaint to supervisor in Berlin, March 26, 1938, RH 2/2934, 35–36, Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv [Federal Archives—Military Archives], Freiburg im Breisgau (henceforth BA MA).


Toussaint was born: Rudolf Toussaint personnel file, Personalbogen 6/371, BA MA; and Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

But his transfer application: The army’s Topographical Office reports that his sample drawings “lack the eye for and understanding of the sharpness and cleanness necessary for cartographic drawings.” See “Topographisches Büro to Bayerisches Ministerium für Militärische Angelegenheiten,” May 17, 1919, OP 61643 (49), BayHStA.

In 1936, Toussaint was serving: Memo from the Foreign Office, October 13, 1936, RAV Prag 6, PAdAA; memo of the General Staff, October 10, 1936, Rudolf Toussaint personnel file, Personalbogen 6/371, BA MA.

But he seems to have assumed: His military record shows that his evaluating officers characterized him as extremely competent and dependable. See Rudolf Toussaint’s personnel file, Personalbogen 6/371, BA MA.

There was another advantage: Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

For years, he had warily watched: Ibid; and Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

Like other who had come up through the ranks: At his trial, Toussaint stated, “I was never a member of NSDAP, I always refused as well as my wife and son and anyone from my family. We, as an old German family were totally against being members. My wife was also not a member of NSV [National Socialist Women’s Association]. I was also twice reminded by the provincial commander about it and he recommended to me that I become a member.” See
Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48. k. č. 881, SOA.

Toussaint criticized Hitler’s itching for war in Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 148.

104 **Her brother had:** Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

104 **He announced to his startled parents:** Ibid.

104 **the German legation notified their hosts:** The German Foreign Office expressed its intention to send Toussaint to the Prague posting in November in a memo to the German legation in Prague on October 8, 1936; see RAV Prag 6, PAdAA.

104 **Toussaint was met with:** Internal memo, German Legation, Prague, November 9, 1936, RAV Prag 6, PAdAA.

104 **When the government organized:** Letter, Toussaint to supervisor (name illegible), November 25, 1937, RH 2/2934 (28) BA MA.

105 **In February 1937:** An article first appeared in *Večerní České slovo* on February 5, 1937. The legation’s reaction is recorded in memo by Eisenlohr, February 9, 1937, RAV Prag 6, PAdAA.

105 **The following October:** The newspaper *Baseler Nationale Zeitung* published a similar article on October 5, 1937. The legation’s reaction to this article can be found in memo by Eisenlohr, October 12, 1937, RAV Prag 6, PAdAA.

105 **The police interviewed:** Ibid.

105 **he had fallen in love:** Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

105 **He worked out a compromise:** Memo, German embassy in Prague to German Foreign Ministry, April 22, 1938, RAV Prag 6, PAdAA.

105 **“situation was too complex”:** Cable, Toussaint to supervisor, November 5, 1937, RH 2/2934 (20), BA MA.
Privately, Berlin instructed Toussaint: In February 1938, the German minister in Prague, Eisenlohr, met with Beneš and assured him that Germany had only peaceful intentions. Beneš replied that he was willing to negotiate but only on his terms. If Hitler did not like them, Beneš “did not care.” See Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 122.

On February 20: Ibid.


“knew nothing of such preparations”: Ibid.

his assertion was proven correct: Ibid.

This was what he had been working for: Toussaint thought that an undisturbed continuance of developments in Czechoslovakia would strengthen the German hand. See letter, Toussaint to supervisor, March 18, 1938, RH 2/2934 (33–34) BA MA.


“One people, one empire, one leader!”: The majority of Sudeten Germans reacted with enthusiasm to the annexation of Austria. Among SdP members, the conviction soon spread that the annexation of the Sudetenland by the German empire was to be expected. Members greeted
each other with the salute and “Heil Hitler” and demonstrated their ethnic affiliation by wearing white stockings. See Brandes, *Die Sudetendeutschen* [The Sudeten Germans], 312–315.

107 **On May 19:** To piece together Toussaint’s experiences during the May Crisis, I drew upon Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 143-157; Jodl diary entry, August 24, 1938, Defense Document Books, Alfred Jodl, JO 14, Records of the Office of the US Chief Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality, Record Group (henceforth RG) 238, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (henceforth NARA); and Affidavit of Infantry General Rudolf Toussaint, April 3, 1946, Defense Document Books, Alfred Jodl, JO 62, Records of the Office of the US Chief Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality, RG 238, NARA.

107 **Backed by intelligence reports:** Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 152. The intelligence reports would soon turn out to be erroneous.

107 **On the twentieth:** Ibid., 144; Zdeněk Beneš and Václav Kural, eds., *Facing History: The Evolution of Czech-German Relations in the Czech Provinces, 1848–1948* (Prague: Gallery for the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, 2002), 145.

107 **Overnight, placards were pasted:** Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 87.

107 **he called his contact:** Cable, Eisenlohr and Toussaint to the German Foreign Ministry and the War Ministry, May 21, 1938, *DGFP*, series D, vol. 2, no. 182: 309–310; Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 90.

107 **But when Toussaint headed to the legation:** Ibid.


107 **“provisionally concerned”**: Ibid.
troops appeared to be mobilizing: Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 144–145.

At six p.m.: Hencke, *Augenzeuge [Eyewitness]*, 91.

The name meant “tailor”: For more on General Krejčí, see Jiří Fidler, *At the Head of the Army: The Chief of the Armed Forces 1919–1939* (Prague: Naše vojsko, 2005), 51–57, 132; and Pavel Šrámek and Martin Ráboň, eds., *Army General Ludvík Krejčí in Documents and Photographs* (Brno: Society of Friends of the Czechoslovak Fortifications, 2000), 95.


“irrefutable proof”: Ibid.


By the end of the day on Sunday: Göring had telephoned Hitler and relayed his assurances repeatedly, as did Baron von Neurath. Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 126.

Red Defense: The Red Defense and other destabilizing forces in the First Republic are named in the following: cable, Eisenlohr to Foreign Office and Ministry of War, no. 161, May 23, 1938, Büro des Staatssekretär [Office of the State Secretary] R 29765, PAdAA.


“brown-eyed”: Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

As tensions rose: As the British military attaché in Prague wrote to London in late 1938, “Colonel Toussaint has frequently been in personal touch with the Führer.” See cable, Mr. Newton (Prague) to Viscount Halifax (London), November 1, 1938, DBFP, series 3, vol. 3, no. 286: 253–255.


The ceremony would be held: For the context of the funeral that was held in Cheb, including the demographics and political leanings of the town, see Brandes, Die Sudetendeutschen [The Sudeten Germans], 157–158; Heribert Sturm, Eger: Geschichte einer Reichsstadt [Eger: History of an Imperial City] (Augsburg: Kraft, 1951), vol. 1: 228.

The slightest miscalculation: A photograph of the funeral procession, with Toussaint just out of frame, appeared on the front page of the May 27, 1938, edition of The Baltimore Sun, beneath the headline, FUNERAL THAT BROUGHT EUROPE TO THE VERGE OF WAR.

Toussaint and his colleagues protested: Hencke, Augenzeuge [Eyewitness], 101.


Toussaint maintained a military salute: Photo: Berliner Verlag/Archive (ČTK Fotobanka: Third Reich-Sudetenland Crisis 1938).


111 “The situation here”: Letter, Toussaint to superior in Berlin, June 1, 1938, RH 2/2934 (45) BA MA.

112 “Negotiations between the government”: Letter, Toussaint to superior in Berlin, August 17, 1938, RH 2/2934 (47–52), BA MA.

112 **Henlein and Frank had instructions**: Letter, Toussaint to general, August 17, 1938, RH 2/2934 (47–52), BA MA. See also Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 185.


112 **there would be conflict**: In mid-August, 1938, Rudolf Toussaint met with his British military attaché counterpart, H. C. T. Stronge, for a remarkably frank, and prescient, conversation. Toussaint told Stronge that he “had always hoped for a possible peaceful solution
of the Sudeten question.” But at the moment, however, “it was hard to see a ray of light.”

Stronge asked Toussaint whether a full Czech cession of Sudetenland autonomy to Germany would satisfy the Nazis. Toussaint replied that he “could not candidly say yes.” Stronge then asked Toussaint if all-out war was the only solution that he foresaw. Toussaint exclaimed, “No, at all events not a European war.” Yet he told Stronge that a local war was inevitable if a settlement was not achieved. Toward the end of the meeting, Toussaint told Stronge that “Germans in common with other peoples desired only to live in peace but they seemed destined to have to fight for the mere ‘Lebensraum’ which was necessary to enable them to feed their people and to live in decency.”

Unnerved, Stronge reminded Toussaint that “He knew as well as I did that once war was let loose no one could foretell as to who might ultimately be fighting who.” Toussaint agreed and changed the subject. See cable, Mr. Newton, British Legation in Prague, to Halifax, August 23, 1938, DBFP, series 3, vol. 2, no. 675, 143-146.

112 “as to how these states”: Letter, Toussaint to superior, August 17, 1938, RH 2/2932 (47–51), BA MA.

112 envoys from each of the three countries secretly suggested: Lukes, Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler, 173–189; Letter, Toussaint to supervisor, August 17, 1938, RH 2/2934 (47–51), BA MA.

112 In a desperate bid: Shirer, Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, 383.

113 Henlein contrived: Lukes, Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler, 188.

113 Jodl confided that Hitler: Just prior to his conference with Toussaint, Jodl wrote a top-secret memo to Hitler outlining the military’s strategy for Case Green. Jodl explained to Hitler that he and his colleagues intended to use an “incident” in Czechoslovakia as pretext for military
intervention. However, in the event of an invasion, Germans living in Czechoslovakia, like Toussaint, would be placed at risk from German bombing. The German Foreign Office had questioned whether Germans, government workers and otherwise, should be recalled to safer territory before the planned provocation. Jodl argued that this would shatter the illusion. He wrote, “The question raised by the Foreign Office as to whether all Germans should be called back in time from prospective enemy territories must in no way lead to the conspicuous departure from Czechoslovakia of any German subjects before the incident. Even a warning of the diplomatic representatives in Prague is impossible before the first air attack, although the consequences could be very grave in the event of their becoming victims of such an attack.” The Führer approved Jodl’s plan; Germans in Czechoslovakia would not be notified of an impending attack. In the shadow of war, Toussaint and his colleagues at the Embassy would remain in the dark.


113  **Jodl wanted a candid assessment:** Diary of General Jodl, translation of doc. no. 1700-PS, September 7, 1938, microfilm T84, roll 268, frame 180 (51) NARA.

113  **“judge[d] the Czech situation”:** All quotations from Toussaint’s September 7, 1938, conference with Jodl in Berlin are from Ibid.

113  **Once back at the legation:** Andor Hencke was the first counselor to the German legation in Prague at the time. His memoir, though it must be treated carefully, is indispensable for describing the atmosphere in the German embassy in Prague from 1937 through 1939. See Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness].
“Hitler has established”: Ibid., 148. Further details of Hencke’s and Toussaint’s actions are also drawn from Hencke’s account.


“completely broken”: Friedrich-Carl Hanesse, statement under oath, November 28, 1949, Toussaint War Crimes Trial, Abt. IV OP 61643, BayHStA.

Now Germany faced: Most top generals believed that Germany was ill equipped for an early strike against the Czechs and advised Hitler to that effect. See, e.g., Hoffmann, History of the German Resistance, 1933–45, 49–98.

The Führer’s rantings: Hencke, Augenzeuge [Eyewitness], 147; Lukes, Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler, 211–213.

The next day, Toussaint informed: Cable, Toussaint and Hencke to Wehrmacht High Command (OKW) Attachegruppe, no. 356, September 13, 1938, Büro des Staatssekretär [Office of the State Secretary] R 29.767, PAdAA.


In response, the Czechs dissolved: Brandes, Die Sudetendeutschen [The Sudeten Germans], 281.

The legation was flooded: Details on activities in the German embassy in Prague after Hitler’s speech on September 12, 1938, can be found in Hencke, Augenzeuge [Eyewitness], 153.
“Spreading of the news”: Cable, Toussaint and Hencke to the OKW, September 17, 1938, DGFP, series 2, vol. 2, no. 515: 824.

he was more determined than ever: Toussaint reportedly told a friend, “And now more than ever I will do everything I can for an agreement between Germany and Czechoslovakia.” See Friedrich-Carl Hanesse, statement under oath, November 28, 1949, OP 61643, BayHStA.

Their reaction to Hitler’s: Lukes, Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler, 211–212.

On September 14: Ibid., 215.

the first meeting between Chamberlain and Hitler: This account of the meeting at Berchtesgaden is based on Ibid., 216–218.

Nor did they receive: Hencke, Augenzeuge [Eyewitness], 151–167.

Toussaint and his colleagues: Ibid., 154.


Jodl hurriedly explained: There were several phone calls between the OKW in Berlin and Toussaint in Prague during this September time frame. The following account of the call between Jodl and Toussaint reflects an effort to reconcile the following sources: Jodl diary entry, September 22, 1938, Defense Document Books, Alfred Jodl, doc. JO 13, Records of the Office of the US Chief Counsel for the Prosecution of Axis Criminality, RG 238, NARA; Toussaint’s affidavit, which corroborates it; and Hencke’s account of a phone call taking place some time in mid-September between Keitel and Toussaint. Keitel’s memoir also reports directing Jodl to call Toussaint in late September during the Godesberg negotiations. Keitel, Erinnerungen.
Memories], 192. See also Hencke, Augenzeuge [Eyewitness], 154–155 (describing call but apparently misattributing it to Keitel instead of Jodl).

117 **The Sudetenland would no longer:** Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 234; Ullrich, *Hitler*, 737.

117 **Jodl was clearly disappointed:** Hencke noted that Toussaint perceived disappointment from Berlin. See Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 155.

117 **Toussaint sought out Hencke to debrief:** Ibid., 154–155.

117 **His and Hencke’s warning:** Cable, Toussaint and Hencke to OKW Attachegruppe, no. 427, September 23, 1938, Büro des Staatssekretär [Office of the State Secretary] R 29.768, PAdAA; Ullrich, *Hitler*, 738–739.


118 **Hitler assured**: Further details of the terms appear in Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 238–239; and Ullrich, *Hitler*, 739.

118 **Chamberlain, burned**: Ibid.

118 **“If peace breaks”**: Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 169.

118 **“[a]ll attachés said the incidents”**: Cable, Toussaint and Hencke to OKW Attachegruppe, no. 443, September 24, 1938, Büro des Staatssekretär [Office of the State Secretary] R 29.768, PAdAA.

118 **He learned through his Wehrmacht network**: Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 171, 181.

119 **The diplomat, though known**: Ibid., 183.

“itinerant professor”: Ibid. On Hitler’s disdain for Wilson, see also Shirer, *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 898.

By now it was unofficially known: Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 179–184.

Hencke’s barber, whom he visited on September 27, 1938, kept his shop in the Alcron Hotel.


On this calculus: Toussaint did, in fairness, note in the cable that the Czech numbers may be exaggerated. Cable, Toussaint and Hencke to OKW, September 27, 1938, no. 481, Büro des Staatssekretär [Office of the State Secretary] R 29.768, PAdAA.

The ranks of the career Wehrmacht: Jodl diary entry, September 7, 1938, microfilm T84, roll 268, frame 13-198, frame 180, NARA.

In Berlin: The details of the Fuehrer’s disappointment are drawn from Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 245; and Ullrich, *Ascent*, 745.

Most troubling: Lukes, *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler*, 245.

“There is no way”: Ibid.

The next morning broke: Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 184.

After lunch, the two friends: Ibid.

At five p.m.: Ibid., 185.

In the middle of the night: Ibid., 186–197.

A six a.m. appointment: The appointment was set for six a.m., but due to the time required to draft the demands, it had to be postponed by thirty minutes. Ibid., 186.
But the details of the Munich Agreement: Interrogation of Rudolf Toussaint on November 3, 1947, at Pankrác RG 1329/S/1/187, Vojenský historický archiv [Military History Archive], henceforth VHA.


Before him alone: Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 309.

If Toussaint experienced: At least, there is no indication of any in Hencke, who describes the encounter. Ibid.

he would be moving east: Rudolf Toussaint personnel file, Personalbogen 6/301107, BA MA.

As Toussaint wound down: It took several months before the German bureaucracy in Prague was fully installed and the actual structure of the Protectorate was in place. See Brandes, *Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat. Besatzungspolitik, Kollaboration und Widerstand im Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren bis Heydrichs Tod (1939--1942)* [The Czechs under the German Protectorate. Occupation Policies, Collaboration and Resistance in the Protectorate of
Bohemia and Moravia until Heydrich’s Death], part 1, (Munich and Vienna: Oldenbourg, 1969) 34-36.


124 **And Otto’s palace:** Ibid.; Penerova, “The House,” 22A.

124 **the highest value:** Krejčová and Vlček, *Lives for Ransom*, 368–370.

124 **The Wehrmacht general would even inherit:** Penerova, “The House,” 22A.

124 **One night before the Germans:** Penerova, “The House,” 23; Marc Robinson, interview by the author, New York City, October 19, 2017.
6  The Most Dangerous Man in the Reich


127  **although he had been pushed out:** Details on Laumann's career can be found in Terry C. Treadwell and Alan C. Wood, *German Fighter Aces of World War One* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), 120.

127  **Laumann started secretly:** Toussaint eventually became aware that it was Laumann who was reporting on him. Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

127  **“reactionary”:** Confidential report, December 2, 1939, Dienststelle Ribbentrop [Ribbentrop Section] R 27179, PAdAA.


127  **“I cannot agree”:** Confidential report, December 2, 1939, Dienststelle Ribbentrop [Ribbentrop Section] R 27179, PAdAA.

127  **He rushed off:** The statement was reported, and three Germans employed by the embassy and the press office acted as witnesses. Ibid.; Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

128  **Dissenter disappearances:** In March 1938, Wilhelm Freiherr von Ketteler, attaché at the embassy in Vienna, disappeared under mysterious circumstances, and his body was later found.


128 **So he claimed:** Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

128 **Von Tippelskirch passed his findings:** Diary entry from November 29, 1939, *War Journal of Franz Halder*, 58.

129 **“Don’t say so much”:** Alexander Toussaint, interviews.


129 **Von Tippelskirch:** Keitel, *Erinnerungen* [Memories], 235.


130 **“I struggle internally against”:** Letter, Toussaint to supervising general, May 15, 1940, RH 2/2922, BA MA.

130 **“brown-eyed general”:** Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

130 **With this new rank came a new assignment:** Rudolf Toussaint personnel file, Personalbogen 6/301107, BA MA.

130 **and a new home:** Toussaint’s predecessor, Friderici, had occupied the palace with his family before Toussaint’s arrival in the fall of 1941. See Edmund Glaise von Horstenau, *Ein General im Zwielicht: Die Erinnerungen Edmund Glaise von Horstenau* [A General in Twilight:

131 **She and Toussaint bundled up**: Photo, Rudolf and Lilly Toussaint with terrier, c. October 1941, TFA.

131 **“great zeal and energy”**: Rolf Toussaint personnel file, Personalbogen 6/71086 BA MA.

131 **Toussaint was alarmed**: Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

132 **They dueled at chess**: Ibid.


132 **“out came the minks”**: Ibid., 23. Some misspellings are corrected in text.


134 **he protected their home**: Penerova, “The House,” 23.


134 **Toussaint’s promotion**: Rudolf Toussaint’s personnel file, Personalbogen 6/301107, BA MA.

134 **That October**: This section describing the meeting at Hitler’s headquarters is based on a detailed report. See Werner Koeppens, “Tuesday, October 7, 1941,” Bundesarchiv [Federal Archives], Berlin, R 6/34a, in Martin Vogt, ed., *Herbst 1941 Im “Führerhauptquartier“: Berichte Werner Koeppens an Seinen Minister Alfred Rosenberg* [Autumn 1941 in the “Führer’s Headquarters”: Reports by Werner Koeppens to His Minister Alfred Rosenberg] (Koblenz: Bundesarchiv, 2002), 63–66. The atmosphere in early October 1941 was reportedly buoyant: Kershaw, *Hitler: A Biography*, 648–650.
Hitler welcomed: Koeppens, “Tuesday, October 7, 1941,” 63–66.


Hitler was a dedicated vegetarian: Hitler was a dedicated vegetarian and often served his guests the same fare. In Hitler’s “Table Talks” (transcriptions of conversations with his guests that were later published by Henry Picker, a permanent fixture at the Führer’s headquarters), it is said that everyone ate the same vegetarian food from the same pot, unless it was a meat day, in which case guests could opt for a meat dish instead of Hitler’s own vegetarian one. Henry Picker, Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier [Hitler’s Table Talks at the Fuehrer’s Headquarters] (Munich: Hocke Books, 2014). In interviews, Hitler’s food taster, Margot Wölk, confirmed that he maintained a strict vegetarian diet, though she never mentioned what others might have been served. Roya Nikkah, “Hitler’s Food Taster Speaks of the Fuehrer’s Vegetarian Diet,” Telegraph (Feb 9 2014).

“The ransom/hostage system”: Koeppens, “Tuesday, October 7, 1941,” 66.

“All Jews in the Protectorate must be removed”: Ibid., 64–65.

“After the war”: Ibid., 63–66.

his new boss: Heydrich arrived in Prague to assume his new role on September 27, 1941. For information about Heydrich’s youth and early career, see Robert Gerwarth, Hitler’s Hangman: The Life of Heydrich (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 14-83.


Like many others: Perhaps among the reasons for Heydrich’s distrust of Toussaint was Toussaint’s relationship with Admiral Canaris, a longtime threat to Heydrich. Whatever the exact reason, Heydrich ordered the Gestapo to conduct an investigation on Toussaint. See note 429 in


137 **Any Czechs who were forced:** Letter from Horst Böhme, October 15, 1941, in Kárný, *Protectorátní politika Reinharda Heydricha* [Protectorate Policy of Reinhard Heydrich], 137.

137 **On October 15, 1941:** Ibid.

137 **In November:** Toussaint sent along a report of the meeting on November 13, 1941, to the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, November 25, 1941, 1799 ÚŘP-ST, Národní archiv České republiky, http://www.badalne.eu/fond/959/reprodukce/?zaznamId=339715&reproId=372871. Unless otherwise specified, all details from this meeting come from this report.

137 **Yet it also flatly stated:** Ibid.

138 **Heydrich, and Berlin, expected Toussaint:** Toussaint allowed his signature to appear on other unsavory documents as well, including an article entitled, “The Wehrmacht in the Protectorate During the War Years of 1939/40; The Threat to European Peace posed by the Czechoslovak Republic.” Although Toussaint may not have drafted the full text of this propaganda piece himself, it contains statements related to the duty of the German Wehrmacht to “make it possible to correct the grotesque impressions of German soldiers that were cultivated here through the lies of Jewish emigrant literature under the protection of the Benes regime.” See General Major Toussaint, “Die Wehrmacht im Protektorat in den Kriegsjahren 1939/40. Die

138 **The more muted daylight:** Penerova notes Toussaint’s hobby, suggesting that he likely painted in the palace. See Penerova, “The House,” 24.

138 **His old Prague colleague:** Major Friedrich Mörick was shot down in the Battle of Britain in 1940. See Hencke, *Augenzeuge* [Eyewitness], 41; and Chris Goss, *Luftwaffe Fighters and Bombers & The Battle of Britain* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2000), 306.


138 **“The main reason for”:** Ibid.

139 **Multiple reports:** Gerwarth, *Hitler’s Hangman*, 2, 276. Multiple reports of parachutists were passed up the chain of command in the Protectorate; many can be found in Národní archiv České republiky [National Archives of the Czech Republic] inv. č. 674 sg 109-4/442, badatelna.


139 **To his attentive:** Ibid., 1.

139 **Later that spring:** Gerwarth, *Hitler’s Hangman*, 270–271.

140 **“Reinhard’s Crime”:** Ibid., 270.

140 **Toussaint kept:** Photo evidence shows a cheerless Toussaint at the concert seated with his wife, Lilly, and Reinhard and Lina Heydrich. "Atentát [Assassination]: Episode 39/44,”
Heydrich - konečné řešení [Heydrich – Final Solution], directed by V. Křístek (2012; Prague: Česká televize; 2012).

140  **traveling to see Hitler:** Gerwarth, *Hitler’s Hangman*, 277.

140  **The next morning:** The account of the events on May 27, 1941 is principally drawn from Gerwarth, *Hitler’s Hangman*, and other sources as noted.


140  **The Slovak Gabčík:** Gerwarth, *Hitler’s Hangman*, 6; Callum A. MacDonald, *The Killing of SS Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich* (New York: Free Press, 1989), 169-171. The fact that Gabčík acted first has long been the consensus view. Some have recently argued that Kubiš was the first to engage; here I follow the account presented by Gerwarth.


142  **other generals even called him “Lackeitel”:** Geoffrey P. Megargee, *Inside Hitler's High Command* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2000), 42.
“the active intervention”: Sworn statement of Fromm’s chief of staff, Carl Erik Koehler, February 15, 1949, Toussaint War Crimes Trial documents, TFA. All details about the conversation between Toussaint and Fromm come from Koehler’s statement.

spent most of the day: Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

Toussaint was awakened: There are two accounts presented by Toussaint in his postwar trial. According to one statement, he was called at six a.m. the next day, though at another point in his defense he said that it was the night of June 9. I conclude that the call occurred on the morning of the tenth, as that is corroborated by several other witness statements. See Toussaint defense and Toussaint witness, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

“Sir . . . some very wild rumors”: Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.


Toussaint moved through the day: E.g., Brickenstein statement under oath, February 16, 1949, OP 61643, BayHStA.

and made Toussaint sick, too: E.g., Fricke statement under oath, Toussaint Affidavit, December 31, 1949, OP 61643, BayHStA.

Political Biography of a Sudeten-German National Socialist] (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2010), 275-278.

145 “If you only knew”: Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

145 “You should judge”: Ibid.

145 The SS had commandeered troops: In his war crimes trial, Toussaint insisted that although the officers’ school in Slaný might have been a supplemental garrison, armed forces did not take part in the massacre, unless some individuals decided to take part without reporting it to him. Ibid.
7  Is Prague Burning?

147  **Rudolf and Rolf Toussaint were:** Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

148  **To the east:** Keegan, *The Second World War*, 518–519.

148  **An audacious sequence:** Frank discussed his plan and consultations with Dönitz in his trial testimony, June 10, 1945, Nuremberg, Germany: International Military Tribunal, vol. 104, 31.04 June 20, 1945, 14 in Donovan Nuremberg Trials Collection, Cornell University Law Library; for additional detail, see Küpper, *Karl Hermann Frank*, 390–392.

148  **Frank had gone to Germany:** Frank consulted with the Dönitz regime on May 3. In an attempt to resolve inner political tensions, they concluded that negotiations were necessary, including declaring Prague an open city. Brandes reports that Frank was in Königgrätz (Hradec Králové) on the night of May 4 with Schörner and returned to Prague the next morning. See Brandes, *Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat* [Czechs under the German Protectorate], 2: 121–122. At 12:45 a.m. on May 5, 1945, Toussaint reported to OKW that the workforce was refusing to carry out further production of armaments and wanted to start producing goods for civil use. See Joachim Schultz-Naumann, *The Last Thirty Days: The War Diary of the German Armed Forces High Command from April to May 1945*, trans. D. G. Smith (New York: Madison Books, 1991), 62.

149  **Early on Saturday:** Zdeněk Roučka, “Saturday, May 5, 1945,” in *Skončeno a podepsáno: drama pražského povstání* [Accomplished and Signed: The Drama of the Prague Uprising] (Plzeň: ZR&T, 2003), np.

149  **The Prague Uprising:** Unless otherwise specified, details concerning the Prague Uprising are from Pavel Machotka and Josef Tomeš, eds., *Pražské povstání 1945: Svědectví*
Toussaint’s instinct: Toussaint and Frank attempted on May 5 and 6 to negotiate with the leaders of the uprising, offering the insurgents the deal that Dönitz had authorized. The Czechs rejected the terms. The negotiations came to nothing, as the fighting raged late into the night and continued unabated into the next morning. Tens, then hundreds, of bodies lay slumped on both sides of the barricades. See Brandes, *Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat* [Czechs under the German Protectorate], 2: 140–141.

“to prevent the destruction”: Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, SOA Prague, LS 804/48, box 881.


As high-ranking as Toussaint was: Brandes, *Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat* [Czechs Under the German Protectorate], 2: 120.

Bloody Ferdinand: Alexander Toussaint, interviews.


“On the order of SS Feldmarschall Schörner”: Cable, Toussaint to subsidiary sector Beneschau L95, May 5, 1945, British National Archive ULTRA Decryption File, box HW
1/3758, CX/MSS/T541/24. Toussaint then reiterated Schörner’s order the following day (May 6) in another cable to subsidiary sector Beneschau. Both of these ULTRA Decryptions were only available in translation. There is some ambiguity in the language owing to the two versions and the absence of Schörner’s original orders.

151 **He dragged his feet:** Observers reported that in many areas of Prague, Wehrmacht units showed little resistance to Czech rebels. Brandes, *Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat* [Czechs under the German Protectorate], 2: 125.

151 **The dispute between the two men:** “Minutes of meetings between representatives of the Czech National Council and their military representatives on the one side and General Toussaint, two officers and headmaster Rudl representing the German side,” Tuesday, May 8, 1945, box 3, Česká národní rada 1945–1949 [Czech National Council 1945–1949], VHA.

151 **Schörner dispatched five divisions:** Wehrkreis Prague (Military Area Prague), B-135, microfiche 0129G, 0128, RG 338, NARA. Biographical information on Schörner derives from Peter Steinkamp, “Generalfeldmarschall Ferdinand Schörner,” in *Hitlers militärische Elite* [Hitler’s Military Elite], ed. Gerd R. Ueberschär (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2011), 507-515.


151 **He dispatched one of his:** On May 5, Frank and Toussaint signed a power-of-attorney statement authorizing Ziervogel to deal with American forces. Vollmacht, *[Power of Attorney]*,

Toussaint’s aide: This section is based on a newspaper interview with Rolf Toussaint, “Gebt meinem Vater die Freiheit wieder,” Deutsche Soldaten Zeitung (DSZ), March 1960; and letter, Rolf Toussaint to Stanislav Auský, October 23, 1977, box 2, Stanislav A. Auský Collection, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, CA.


“Rolf, you must understand”: Ibid.


“Das ganze Nest”: Cable from SS Group Leader and Lieutenant General of Waffen SS May 5, 1945, in Wolfgang Schumann and Olaf Groehler, eds., Deutschland im Zweiten Weltkrieg [Germany in the Second World War], vol. 6, Die Zerschlagung des Hitlerfaschismus und die Befreiung des deutschen Volkes (Juni 1944 bis zum 8. Mai 1945) [The Smashing of Hitler’s Fascism and the Freeing of the German People (June 1944 to May 8, 1945)] (Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1985), 765. Pückler also reported that he had proposed further bombing attacks to Toussaint in keeping with Schörner’s orders on May 7: cable, Pückler to Heeresgruppe Mitte, May 7, 1945, in Václav Král and Karel Fremund, eds. Lessons from History: Documents
One of his men brought peculiar news: The details of the meeting between Toussaint, Meyer-Detring, and Pratt were reconstructed by piecing together information from multiple sources, including “After Action Report, April 28 to May 9, 1945,” box 13260, entry 427, 616-CAV-0.3, 23rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squad, 16th Armored Division, World War II Operations Reports, 1941–1948, RG 407, NARA; subsequent accounts in the American press, and secondary sources, principally Roučka, Skončeno a podepsáno [Accomplished and Signed] [np], who confirms the meeting took place at Toussaint’s residence; Jindřich Pecka, Na demarkační čáře: Americká armáda v Čechách v roce 1945 [On the Demarcation Line: The American Army in Czech Lands in 1945] (Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, 1995), 77–80; Pacner, Osudové okamžiky Československa [Crucial Moments of Czechoslovakia], 246-250; and Bryan J. Dickerson, The Liberators of Pilsen: The U.S. 16th Armored Division in World War II Czechoslovakia (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2018). Dickerson’s account of the meeting relies exclusively upon the after-action report, which incorrectly identified Toussaint’s rank and other details. Roučka and Pecka corroborate the Americans meeting Toussaint in his residence.

Walking next to him: Milwaukee Journal, September 14, 1945, 57.

He greeted his guests: “After Action Report,” NARA.

Toussaint offered: Ibid.

Surely Pokorný served: Penerova notes that he also acted as headwaiter, “The House,” 23.

The surrender would: Brandes, Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat [Czechs Under the German Protectorate], 2: 140.
The German requested: Pacner, Osudové okamžiky Československa [Crucial Moments of Czechoslovakia], 246.

Then there was the risk: Several of those who testified on behalf of Toussaint at his war-crimes trial credited him with saving Prague. As one witness stated under oath, “What could have happened if there was another man in his position who would not have acted so kind and benevolent in the matter of Prague, one wonders. Prague would have probably been destroyed. There could have been a lot of suffering, but Prague had been spared it thanks to this man.” See testimony of Rupert von Miller under oath, October 28, 1949, Toussaint War Crimes Trial, ABT.IV, FA IV-1635-15 OP 61643, BayHStA. See also testimony of Oldwig von Natzmer under oath, August 8, 1949, Toussaint War Crimes Trial, ABT.IV, FA IV-1635-15 OP 61643, BayHStA.


At ten the next morning: Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

They had blindfolds: Machotka, “Vznik České národní rady a její předrevoluční činnost” [The Origin of the Czech National Council and its Pre-Revolutionary Activities], 19.

Toussaint, his eyes still covered: Ibid., 21–22.

“stood with his adjutant general”: Ibid. The sequencing and description of the negotiations on May 8 is primarily from “Minutes of meetings between representatives of the Czech National Council and their military representatives on the one side and General Toussaint, two officers and Headmaster Rudl representing the German side,” Tuesday, May 8, 1945, box 3, Česká národní rada 1945–1949 [Czech National Council 1945–1949], VHA. (Hereafter cited as

158 “Do you have enough authority”: “Minutes of meetings,” VHA. According to one witness, all generally agreed that a cease-fire was necessary and desirable. Toussaint agreed to give the order, but found that many of his military units were out of communication. His order was not heard. Seeing no other option, Toussaint sent von Briesen out to deliver the cease-fire order in person. See Machotka, “Česká národní rada za revoluce” [Czech National Council for Revolution] 45-49.


160 All eyes turned to: Letter, Stanislav Auský to Rolf Toussaint, October 10, 1977, box 2, Stanislav A. Auský collection, Hoover Institution Archives.

160 “[Your] son was found”: “Minutes of meetings,” VHA.

160 At his signal: Machotka, “Vznik České národní rady a její předrevoluční činnost” [The Origin of the Czech National Council and its Pre-Revolutionary Activities], 22.

And for good measure: Alexander Toussaint, interviews.


Von Briesen’s hand: Toussaint explained that his negotiation with Pückler was a success due to two factors: a threatening display of his gun and assistance from von Briesen. Toussaint defense, War Crimes Trial, October 25, 1948, Prague, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

But Pückler was not ready: Arthur von Briesen, statement under oath, February 17, 1949, TFA.


“Ten hours are left”: “Minutes of meetings,” VHA.

Kutlvašr agreed: Kutlvašr and Pražák remember that Toussaint was quietly speaking to his son; then he stood by the window and cried. See Stanislav Kokoška, “Prag im Mai 1945: Die Geschichte eines Aufstandes” [Prague in May 1945: The History of an Uprising] (Doctoral dissertation, Univerzita Karlova, 2009), 212.

“A general without”: Toland, The Last 100 Days, 581.
8 “If You’re Going Through Hell, Keep Going”


163 The Nazi ammunition train: The account of the refugee train from Lübberstedt that was struck by British bombers on May 2, 1945, was a story that I heard from my mother. It is substantiated by Rüdiger Kahrs, “The Evacuation of the Satellite Camp Lübberstedt in Bremen to Ostholstein 1945,” Informationen zur Schleswig-Holsteinischen Zeitgeschichte, no. 36 (1999): 93–96; and further detailed in Barbara Hillman, Volrad Kluge, and Erdwig Kramer, Lw. 2/XI, Muna Lübberstedt: Zwangsarbeit für den Krieg [Lv. 2/XI – Muna Lübberstedt: Forced Labor for the War] (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1996), 130–135. The events are also corroborated by a number of the contemporaneous statements collected by the National Committee for Attending Deportees (DEGOB), https://www.degob.org. See, in particular, statements (known as “protocols”) numbers 1236, 1453, 1574, 1801, and 1827.


Lübeck had once been: Hillman, Kluge, and Kramer, Lw. 2/XI, Muna Lübberstedt: Zwangsarbeit für den Krieg [Lv. 2/XI – Muna Lübberstedt: Forced Labor for the War], 130.
“He Who Is Master of Bohemia Is Master of Europe”


177 **Otto Petschek’s palace was in danger:** For the danger presented to the house, see Penerova, “The House,” 24–25, which describes the Soviet predations upon the palace. For Laurence’s determination to save it, see, e.g., letter, Laurence Steinhardt, U.S. Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, to Francis Williamson, assistant chief of the Central European Affairs Division, Department of State, July 28, 1945, box 82, Laurence A. Steinhardt Papers (henceforth Steinhardt Papers), Library of Congress, Washington, DC (LOC).


177 The palace hadn’t looked: The exact date of Laurence’s first glimpse of the Villa Petschek and his conversation with Pokorný on its premises is unclear. However, we know that it occurred between July 17 and July 20, 1945. The details in this introductory section, including the contents of Laurence and Pokorný’s discussion, are found in “Steinhardt Meeting with Beneš and Clementis,” July 20, 1945, box 65, collection General Secretariat-A (GS-A), 1945–1954 USA, MFA; letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; letter, Steinhardt to Frederick Larson, Chief, Foreign Buildings Operations, Department of State, September 11, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; letter, Steinhardt to Bohumil Boček, Chief of Staff, Czechoslovak Ministry of National Defense, September 29, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; and letter, Steinhardt to Ballance, September 7, 1948, box 58, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. That the house was under the control of the Czech military by July 1945 after a brief occupation by Soviet soldiers is established in Krejčová and Vlček, *Lives for Ransom*, 370.

A Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs memo from more than a year later inaccurately reported that Laurence was prompted to acquire the Villa Petschek after he attended a dinner reception held there in General Patton’s honor. See “Bubenec Villa Lease,” November 5, 1946, box 191, GS-A, 1945–1954 USA, MFA. But General Patton did not visit Prague until July 26, 1945. Laurence asked Beneš about the possibility of inhabiting the palace, demonstrating that he had already seen it, six days earlier. Furthermore, Patton did not spend the night in the city; he left
for Plzeň at five p.m. See “Itinerary for General Patton’s Visit 27–28 July 1945,” box 47, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

177 He was immediately taken: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Laurence described the palace, in perhaps extreme terms, as the “only desirable house” in Prague.

178 On either side were interior courtyards: Photos of the palace from 1945 through 1948, Steinhardt Family Archive (SFA).

178 He and his wife were still occupying: Details on Pokorný’s devotion to the palace even after Otto died derive from Laurence’s recommendation that he be kept on after he left. See letter, Steinhardt to Ballance, September 7, 1948, box 58, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; for his appearance and personality: photos of Pokorný from J. Hájek and M. Hájek; further details from J. Hájek and M. Hájek, interview.


178 “some Russian officers”: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Perhaps, though, the Soviets did not gain all the silver; some may have been hidden by Pokorný: Eva Petschek Goldmann, interview by Marc Robinson.

178 As the ambassador looked at: Laurence’s dismay at the poor condition of the house and idea to acquire it for the United States government are based on the following: letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; and on my conversations with the Steinhardt family, who were kind enough to meet with me as a group. They described his feelings for the palace and visceral reactions to Soviet predations: Steinhardt family, interview by the author, Washington, DC, November 16, 2017.
He had done the same as a wartime ambassador: Laurence was recognized by at least one authority for his work to aid refugees as a wartime ambassador. See “Visas For Life: The Righteous and Honorable Diplomats Project,” Institute for the Study of Rescue and Altruism in the Holocaust, http://www.holocaustrescue.com/visas-for-life.html. Others have taken a more critical perspective on his efforts in that period. See, e.g., I. Izzet Bahar, “Turkey and the Rescue of Jews During the Nazi Era: A Reappraisal of Two Cases; German-Jewish Scientists in Turkey & Turkish Jews in Occupied France,” (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2012); and Barry Rubin, “Ambassador Laurence A. Steinhardt: The Perils of a Jewish Diplomat, 1940–1945,” Jewish History 70, no. 3 (1981). Laurence’s family has evidence that he was active in aiding refugees, often endangering himself, pointing out that the work was necessarily secret and that he is no longer with us to tell the full story or respond to critics: Steinhardt family, interviews by the author, Washington, DC, November 13, 2015, and Washington, DC, November, 6, 2015 (discussing his dismay when children whom he helped escape from the Soviet Union perished when their ship sank, as well as efforts in Turkey). See also Mordecai Paldiel, Diplomat Heroes of the Holocaust (Jersey City: KTAV, 2007), 215. Because this work tells the story of Laurence’s ambassadorship to Prague from 1945 to 1948, an extended treatment of these wartime matters is beyond its scope. I gained information about Laurence’s rescue of downed Allied pilots from my Steinhardt family interview, November 16, 2017. For Laurence’s Russian icon collection, see “Divine Collection of Russian Icons from former Ambassador to USSR: Sells for $1.3 Million at Bonhams New York,” Bonhams New York, April 11, 2014, https://www.bonhams.com/press_release/16348/.

His current apartments downtown: Letter, Steinhardt to Larkin, July 26, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.
Known as the Schönborn: On the US embassy’s chancery in Prague, which has not changed locations since Laurence served as ambassador, see U.S. Department of State, “The U.S. Embassy in the Czech Republic: Schoenborn Palace,” https://cz.usembassy.gov/embassy/prague/schoenborn-palace/.

But the interior of the building: Laurence wrote vivid descriptions of the state of the Schönborn in many of his letters back to Washington. See, e.g., letter, Steinhardt to James Riddleberger, Chief, Central European Division, Department of State, September 1, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. The building’s origins derive from U.S. Department of State, “The Secretary of State’s Register of Culturally Significant Property,” May 2010, 30-31.


“camping out in this covered stadium”: Letter, Steinhardt to Paul Alling, Consul General, U.S. Legation in Morocco, September 19, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

He was often the first: Letter, Steinhardt to Rudolph Schoenfeld, Foreign Service Officer, Department of State, September 19, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Laurence and his deputy, John Bruins, understaffed and underfunded, threw themselves into their work. As Laurence reported, they often put in seventy-hour workweeks, frequently laboring until 1:30 a.m. See letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

In the north: Cable, Robert P. Patterson, Secretary of War, to Department of State, October 15, 1945, 860F.01/10-1545, box 6576, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

The other expanse: Scholarly works conclude that the exact number of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia after World War II is unclear. See, e.g., Lukes, On the Edge of the Cold War,
For various reports on the figure, see cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, August 25, 1945; *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers (FRUS),* 1945, Europe, Volume IV, eds. William Slany, John G. Reid, N.O. Sappington, and Douglas W. Houston (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1968), 485; 860F.01/8-2545, box 6576, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA; and cable, A. D. Reid, Chief, Liaison Section, Operations Division, Department of War, to Department of State, September 25, 1945, 860F.01/9-2545, box 6576, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.


181 **As Stalin (and Patton):** Ibid., 54.

181 “had hoped”: Letter, Steinhardt to Schoenfeld, May 21, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

it was, apparently, too much to ask: Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 42.

Laurence fretted: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, August 18, 1945, 860F.60/8-2045, box 6584, Central Decimal Files, 1945-1949, RG 59, NARA.


Franklin Roosevelt had dispatched: Details regarding Laurence’s diplomatic relationship with Stalin and activities in Moscow can be found in Dennis J. Dunn, *Caught Between Roosevelt and Stalin: America’s Ambassadors to Moscow* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 97–144; and David Mayers, *FDR’s Ambassadors and the Diplomacy of Crisis: From the Rise of Hitler to the End of World War II* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 208-220. Laurence’s prior experiences with Stalin contributed to his advocacy for Patton beating the Soviets to Prague. See Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 76; and letter, Steinhardt to Schoenfeld, May 21, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.


Laurence warned Roosevelt: Dunn, *Caught Between Roosevelt and Stalin*, 114.


For his part, Stalin detested: Ibid., 119–120; Sherlock, unpublished memoir, SFA, 64–65. Laurence accurately reported to the State Department that the only way that Stalin would ally with the West would be if Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. See Dunn, *Caught Between Roosevelt and Stalin*, 122. I learned the story of the German diplomat’s dog from Sherlock, unpublished memoir, SFA, 65. For more on Laurence’s conclusion that Germany would invade the Soviet Union, see cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, June 19, 1941, *FRUS*, 1941,

182 **Laurence told people:** Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 76; Dunn, *Caught Between Roosevelt and Stalin*, 142-143; and Mayers, *FDR’s Ambassadors and the Diplomacy of Crisis*, 219-220.

182 *“where we have a fighting chance”:* Letter, Steinhardt to Riddleberger, September 1, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.


182 **He went straight to the top:** Details on Laurence’s meeting with Czech president Edvard Beneš derive from Steinhardt talk with Clementis and Beneš, July 20, 1945, box 65, GS-A, 1945–1954 USA, MFA; and letter, Beneš to Fierlinger, August 9, 1945, box 987/35, Archiv Kanceláře prezidenta republiky [Archive of the Office of the President of the Republic] (henceforth AKPR), Prague.


183 **the largest in the world:** Details regarding the architecture of Prague Castle and the surrounding square can be found in Gabriela Dubská et. al., *The Story of Prague Castle*, trans.

183 he had played his hand shrewdly: For a brief and useful overview of Beneš’s activities during the war, see Gerwarth, Hitler’s Hangman, 2–6. His appearance is from multiple photos of Beneš’ with Laurence from 1945–1948, SFA.

184 The Soviets had two other large Petschek houses: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

184 Beneš knew the property: I. Petschek, interview.

184 “a matter of political wisdom”: Letter, Beneš to Fierlinger, August 9, 1945, box 987/35, AKPR; also quoted in Lukes, On the Edge of the Cold War, 88.

184 “I would not wish to occupy”: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

185 Williamson agreed to put things in motion: Letter, Williamson to Steinhardt, August 29, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

185 The Soviets had even taken: Cable, Alfred Klieforth, chargé in Czechoslovakia, to Department of State, June 21, 1945, FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 459–460. Klieforth soon thereafter developed ulcers: letter, Steinhardt to Riddleberger, September 25, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

185 Soviet soldiers had stolen a car: Sherlock, unpublished memoir, SFA, 105.

185 the reign of terror: Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia committed up to twenty thousand rapes of Czech women, assaulted locals with great frequency, and lived off the land. Looting and theft were ubiquitous. See, e.g., Smetana, “Concessions or Conviction?” , 66.
So Laurence seized on a strategy: For a scholarly overview of the withdrawal of the US Army from Czechoslovakia and Laurence’s role in it, see Mareš, “History in the Service of a Story,” 159–166; Laurence, before he arrived in Prague, had been an early proponent of a cautious troop withdrawal from Czechoslovakia. See letter, Steinhardt to Schoenfeld, May 21, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Once he took up his post, his State colleague, Francis Williamson, was involved in the development of a proposed strategy that involved recommending that the Czechs suggest a simultaneous withdrawal of Soviet and US troops to the Soviets. See letter, Williamson to Steinhardt, July 27, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Although we here discuss Laurence’s role as the point person in Prague for US policy, I know from my own experience that the ideas that an ambassador advances are often the result of a collaborative process with other US officials in D.C. and the embassy. See Williamson to Steinhardt, July 27, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC (discussing Williamson’s role). Laurence’s friendship with General Harmon (he gave the general a key to the villa) is established in Sherlock, unpublished memoir, SFA, 108.

Laurence concluded that it was crucial: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, August 25, 1945, FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 485; Smetana, “Concessions or Conviction?,” 6.

Laurence suspected that this had been ginned: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, August 18, 1945, 860F.60/8-2045, box 6584, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

To confirm his hunch: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, August 25, 1945, FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 485. Laurence also met with Masaryk regarding troop
withdrawal on August 1, 1945: cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, August 2, 1945, 860F.01/8-245, box 6576, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.


186 “Truth prevails, but it’s a chore”: In, e.g., Matěj Barták, *Velká kniha citátů* [Great Book of Quotations] (Prague: Plot, 2010), 226. Jan’s partner wrote a memoir in which she reported that the two planned to marry. See Marcia Davenport, *Too Strong for Fantasy* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1967), 420. That the Steinhardts referred to Jan Masaryk as Johnny is confirmed noted in Sherlock, unpublished memoir, SFA, 122.


187 In August 1945, it finally made its way: Letter, Williamson to Steinhardt, August 29, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Details on the Petschek family’s emigration from Czechoslovakia derive from: letter, Viktor Petschek to Edgar J. Goodrich, attorney,
Guggenheimer, Untermeyer, & Goodrich, October 25, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; Hoag, interview; B. Kafka and D. Kafka, interview, March 20, 2015; B. Kafka and D. Kafka, interview, October 18, 2015; and Goldmann, *Wayward Threads*, 133. I learned of Viky’s business trials and tribulations from Hoag, interview.

187 **His mother and his uncles**: Krejčová and Vlček, *Lives for Ransom*, 363–381; The Petschek Family Archives contain extensive documentation on the Petscheks’ financial transactions in 1938 and 1939. Hermann Göring, at the time ranked field marshal, signed the final report mandating that the Petschek group return coal property to German ownership. See translation, doc. no. NI-3306, Office of Chief of Counsel for War Crimes, Wohltat to Koerner, Neumann, Brinkmann, Bylers, Wilhelm, and Flick, December 19, 1938, PFA.

187 **“What the Soviets have done”**: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Williamson confirms that he passed along Laurence’s concerns to Viky through an intermediary in: letter, Williamson to Steinhardt, August 29, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

188 **Viky’s relationship with his father**: Hoag, interview.

188 **“On behalf of Mr. Viktor Petschek”**: Letter, Hollitscher to Williamson, August 28, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

188 **“The answer is 100% no”**: Quotations from and details regarding Williamson’s interactions with the State Department bureaucrats can be found in: letter, Williamson to Steinhardt, August 29, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

189 **The commander of the US troops**: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, August 31, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 486–487.
But he was displaying the same neglect: For an authoritative account of General Eisenhower’s decision to refrain from liberating Prague from German occupation, see Pogue, “The Decision To Halt at the Elbe,” 479-92. Most scholars agree that liberating Prague was an important strategic victory for the Soviets, which they subsequently exploited through aggressive propaganda campaigns to sway public opinion. See, e.g., Lukes, On the Edge of the Cold War, 32–54.

“The sudden withdrawal”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, August 31, 1945, FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 486–487.

Both Laurence and Acheson: For example, Acheson’s enthusiastic support played a key role in the appointment of Harry Schulman, a Jewish lawyer, as dean of Yale Law in 1954. See E.g., David G. Dalin, Jewish Justices of the Supreme Court: From Brandeis to Kagan (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2017), 55. For more on Acheson’s background, see Robert L. Beisner, Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Acheson asked Laurence: Cable, Dean Acheson, Undersecretary of State, to Steinhardt, September 11, 1945, FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 489–490.

On September 14: Unless otherwise specified, all details and quotations from Laurence’s meeting with Beneš on September 14, 1945 can be found in: cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, September 14, 1945, FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 490–492.


At the end of September: Cable, Reid to Department of State, September 25, 1945, box 6576, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.
Laurence decided to take matters: Laurence came to the conclusion that the most expedient means of acquiring the Petschek villa would be to pursue renting it from the Czech government in a personal capacity. Laurence also requested a rental allowance for the villa from the Department of State to defray his expenses. See, e.g., letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, September 25, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

Laurence negotiated a lease: Letter, Steinhardt to Larkin, September 11, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Further details of Laurence’s lease with the Czech government derive from “Lease for Petschek Villa, September 22, 1945,” box 1, Territorial Departments–USA, MFA; and letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, September 25, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

Laurence had to enlist: Letter, Steinhardt to Peter Zenkl, Lord Mayor of Prague, September 13, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

There were almost twenty leaks: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, September 25, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

He wrote to the Netherlands and New York: Letter, Steinhardt to Stanley Hornbeck, United States Ambassador to the Netherlands, September 29, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; receipt, Peter Henderson & Co to L. A. Steinhardt, October 31, 1945, box 48, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

Laurence put plumbers to work: Letter, Dulcie Ann Steinhardt to Mrs. Henry Hoffmann, October 29, 1945, SFA.

In October, after weeks: Laurence moved into the Petschek villa on October 4, 1945. See letter, Steinhardt to Schoenfeld, October 4, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

Laurence ran the US flag: Correspondence, Steinhardt family, to the author, October 11, 2016.

On October 11: My account of General Eisenhower’s visit to Prague is based on
“Program for Visit of General Eisenhower to Praha on October 11, 1945,” box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; cable, Patterson to Department of State, October 15, 1945, 860F.00/10-1545, box 6576, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA; cable, Eisenhower to George Marshall, Chief of Staff, United States Army, October 17, 1945, FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 498-499; and photos of Laurence with Dwight Eisenhower in Prague, October 11, 1945, SFA.


“so he will know”: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, September 25, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. The lease, passed through intermediaries, was ultimately transmitted to Viky’s lawyer, Harry Hollitscher, on October 22, 1945. See letter, Goodrich to Hollitscher, October 22, 1945, PFA.

he was livid: Letter, Petschek to Goodrich, October 25, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

Laurence’s initiative: Cable, Patterson to Department of State, October 15, 1945, 860F.00/10-1545, box 6576, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA; cable, Robert D. Murphy, United States Political Advisor for Germany, to Department of State, October 17, 1945, FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 497-498.

The capital never seemed to fear: See, e.g., letter, Steinhardt to Riddleberger, September 1, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.
During deliberations: See cable, Murphy to Department of State, October 11, 1945, box 6576, 860F.01/10-1145, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA; and cable, Murphy to Department of State, October 12, 1945, box 6576, 860F.01/10-1245, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.


an absolute final deadline was set: Cable, James Byrnes, Secretary of State, to Steinhardt, November 2, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 506-507.

At the end of October: Cable, Patterson to Byrnes, October 26, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 502 n91.

“As you know”: Cable, Byrnes to Steinhardt, November 2, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 506-507. In the original cable, the shorthand *ZECHO* is used to denote *Czechoslovak* or *Czechoslovakia.*
10  Lush Life

196  **The day was cold:** Prague online weather archive, November 8, 1945, http://www.in-pocasi.cz/archiv/archiv.php?historie=08-11-1945&stanice_kraj=0&klima_kraj=0.

196  **Laurence was planning:** All details and quotations regarding Laurence’s meeting with Beneš are from: cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, November 8, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 507-508.

196  **decoded blue papers:** The memos that Laurence received from the State Department at the Czech embassy during his ambassadorship, currently held in RG 59, NARA, were printed on blue paper.

197  **“I have received your message”:** Cable, Byrnes to Steinhardt, November 9, 1945, *FRUS*, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 508.

197  **Laurence was too delighted:** Laurence took no measures to protect other Czechoslovak citizens—those who, in vast numbers, were targeted by the Czechoslovaks because of their German nationality. The Czech government believed (with some justification) that its German population had encouraged Hitler’s predations of 1938 and 1939 and supported, or at least failed to object to, the establishment of the Protectorate, and so shared some of the blame for the country’s suffering. From 1945-1948, therefore, the Czechoslovak government launched a series of forcible evacuations and expulsions of Czechoslovak Germans, who found themselves with their property confiscated, forced to undergo loyalty tests, stripped of citizenship, and, finally, rounded up and sent to camps before being deported to Allied-occupied Germany. See Norman Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).
Already laboring under Patton’s failure to liberate Prague, a concerned Laurence felt that he could not afford to stand in the way of this juggernaut, and that expulsion was a critical means of helping the Czech people heal from the trauma of the war (letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, October 20, 1945, box 82, Laurence A. Steinhardt Papers, LOC). He believed that Westerners, including many of his friends in the State Department, who criticized the Czechoslovak Sudeten policy as a violation of human rights were both ill-informed and giving cover to former Nazis and their sympathizers. After receiving assurances from Beneš that those transferred would receive “good treatment”, he wrote Williamson that “these same Germans” now being deported were “torturing and murdering these same Czechs” doing the deporting just a few short years ago. (Cable, Steinhardt to State, August 2, 1945, FRUS, 1945, Europe, Volume IV, 481-482; cable, Steinhardt to Williamson, October 20, 1945, box 82, Laurence A. Steinhardt Papers, LOC.) He further dismissed reports in American newspapers of “mass deportations” as “typical newspaper exaggeration,” brought on by ignorant journalists who knew nothing of the atrocities wrought by the Sudeten Germans during the war (letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, October 20, 1945, box 82, Laurence A. Steinhardt Papers, LOC). Annoyed at a flood of requests from Americans requesting information on their Sudeten friends and relatives, complained, “there is not the slightest doubt but that many of these Sudeten Germans who have relatives and friends in the United States maltreated their Czech compatriots during the nearly seven years of occupation” (letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, May 1, 1946, box 95, Laurence A. Steinhardt Papers, LOC). Laurence remained firm in his conviction that the expulsions were of the utmost importance to the people of Czechoslovakia throughout his tenure in Prague.

“I was, of course, very much astonished”: Letter, Williamson to Steinhardt, November 21, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Viky wrote his response in late October (letter, Viktor
Petschek to Goodrich, October 25, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC), but the message was not forwarded to Laurence through Williamson at the State Department until late November.

198 Laurence was infuriated: Laurence wrote to Williamson, “I quite agree with you that Petschek’s letter is rather petulant and indicates an amazing ignorance of developments in Czechoslovakia.” See letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, December 17, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

198 So he didn’t write back: Laurence would not write back to Williamson at the State Department, or to a lawyer of the firm representing Viky, until December 17, 1945. See letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, December 17, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; and letter, Steinhardt to Goodrich, December 17, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Williamson’s letter to Laurence, which contained Viky’s response, was sent from Washington, D.C., on November 21, 1945, via airmail. See letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, November 21, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Although it is not clear exactly when Laurence would have received the letter, other messages sent from D.C. via airmail in 1945 reached the ambassador in Prague as soon as one day after they were mailed. See, e.g., letter, Williamson to Steinhardt, July 27, 1945, box 46, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; and Laurence’s response one day later: letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Hence the conclusion that Laurence failed to respond to Viky’s message for nearly one month.

198 In the frenzy: For details on Laurence’s hectic pace during November and December 1945, see, e.g., letter, Steinhardt to George Allen, Chief, Near Eastern Division, Department of State, December 18, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

Sternberg’s background (pages 56–61, in particular), as well as Cecilia and Laurence’s relationship. Unless otherwise specified, all information about the Sternbergs, and quotations attributed to them, their associates, and to Laurence while in their presence, can be found in *The Journey*.

199 **She and the count invited him:** Letter, Sternberg to Steinhardt, September 10, 1945, box 94, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; letter, Steinhardt to Sternberg, September 11, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; invitation to hunt, September 21, 1945, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; and Sternberg, *The Journey*, 31.

The quotations and details regarding Laurence’s participation in the hunt and lunch with the Sternbergs in autumn 1945, unless otherwise specified, can be found in Sternberg, *The Journey*, 31–39. Other details on attire were gleaned from photos of Laurence and other guests at the hunt in the SFA, and Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 96.


203 **The waves of soldiers:** I relied upon Lukes’s description of the event in *On the Edge of the Cold War* (pages 110–111), as well as on photos in the SFA.

203 **He couldn’t ignore the specter:** See, e.g., cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, August 25, 1945, 860F.00/8-2545, box 6569, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.


He had installed them snugly: Letter, Dulcie Ann Steinhardt to Mrs. Henry Hoffman, October 29, 1945, SFA.

The three breakfasted together: Photos of Laurence with Dulcie and Dulcie Ann in the Petschek villa dining room from October 1945 through September 1948, SFA.

She wore fur at all times: Steinhardt family, interview, December 22, 2015; photos of Dulcie Steinhardt, SFA.


She was lovely: A description of Dulcie Ann can be found in Sternberg, The Journey, 28; photos of Dulcie Ann from 1945–1948, SFA.

With the diplomatic mission still understaffed: Sherlock, unpublished memoir, SFA, 108. Unless otherwise specified, further information about Dulcie Ann’s diplomatic adventures comes from her memoir.

longer and more painful lists of Jewish Americans’: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

She was attending a diplomatic dinner: The story of Dulcie Ann’s confrontation with Valerian Zorin comes from Sherlock, unpublished memoir, SFA, 107–108.
After serving as a liaison: On Valerian Zorin’s role in Prague after the war, see Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 192-193.

“He was still in the prime of life”: Sternberg, *The Journey*, 27.


She became an important source: Letter, Steinhardt to Norris B. Chipman, First Secretary, American Embassy Paris, July 9, 1948, box 90, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.


could not have cared less”: Ibid., 28.

heart-to-heart woman’s talk”: Ibid.

Do tell me”: Ibid.


If Laurence and Cecilia’s affair: Laurence and Cecilia’s affair was indeed recorded by Czech secret-police agents, who learned of the relationship between the two at least as early at 1946. See Laurence Steinhardt file, inventory no. 302-223-4, Archiv bezpečnostních složek [Security Service Archive] (henceforth ABS), Prague.


two of the most feared lawyers: Laurence made it his business to be on good terms with the Dulles brothers, including because they were powers in the New York legal and foreign-
relations communities where his roots lay. For an excellent biography of the Dulles brothers, see
Stephen Kinzer, *The Brothers: John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles, and Their Secret World War*


209  **The Dulleses’ emissary to Laurence:** Bernard Yarrow’s biographical information can be found in Yarrow Papers, finding aid, Eisenhower Library, https://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/Research/finding_aids/pdf/Yarrow_Bernard_Papers.pdf; and Scott Benarde, *Stars of David: Rock ’n’ roll’s Jewish Stories* (Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2003), 57-58 (also discussing his son, Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul and Mary). For his appearance, see photo in Richard Smith, *The OSS: The Secret History of America’s First Central Intelligence Agency* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972), 159.


209  **The visitor explained:** The substance of Laurence and Yarrow’s meetings and conversations in December 1945 can be found in Yarrow’s and Steinhardt’s respective letters to John Foster Dulles. See letter, Yarrow to Foster Dulles, December 26, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; and letter, Steinhardt to Foster Dulles, December 26, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.
“the country is still living”: Letter, Yarrow to Foster Dulles, December 26, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

“Your property was taken over”: This quotation appears in a letter that Edgar Goodrich, who served as an intermediary between Viky and Laurence, wrote to Viky, explaining Laurence’s stance on the villa. See letter, Goodrich to Petschek, January 21, 1946, box 49, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

Laurence himself wrote to Goodrich, outlining his own position, on December 17, 1945 (letter, Steinhardt to Goodrich, December 17, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC). The text of Goodrich’s letter to Viky is a near-verbatim paraphrase of this note.


“I was informed”: Letter, Yarrow to Foster Dulles, December 26, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

“The Ambassador suggested”: Ibid.

the ambassador felt confident: See, e.g., letter, Steinhardt to George Van Slyke, Editorial Department, The Sun, December 17, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

“the Communists will be lucky”: Letter, Steinhardt to Foster Dulles, December 26, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.
11 Small Salvations

212 The quarter-mile: See, e.g., letter, Steinhardt to John Browning, Personal Assistant, September 29, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; receipt, Peter Henderson & Co., florists, to Steinhardt, October 31, 1945, box 48, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

213 especially tall flagpole: Author correspondence with Steinhardt family, October 11, 2016.

213 But the political leanings: Lukes, On the Edge of the Cold War, 132-134.

213 “Unquestionably there is”: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, May 1, 1946, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

213 Gottwald’s goal: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, May 27, 1946, FRUS, 1946, Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union, Volume VI, eds. Roger P. Churchill and William Slany (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), 199-200. For Laurence’s belief that an outright Communist majority was extremely unlikely, see letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, April 26, 1946, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

214 “the influence of western”: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, May 1, 1946, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; for Laurence’s election prediction to Department of State, see cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, May 15, 1946, 860F.00/5-1546, box 6570, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

214 “initiate further action”: Letter, Yarrow to Steinhardt, May 23, 1946, box 50, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.
On election day: Lukes, On the Edge of the Cold War, 134; George F. Bogardus, interview by Charles Stuart Kennedy, April 10, 1996, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project (ADST), LOC (henceforth Bogardus, interview).

The bureau oversaw: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, February 25, 1946, 860F.00/2-2546, box 6570, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

Its warden: All biographical information on Václav Nosek can be found in Jitka Klementová, Václav Nosek (Prague: Práce, 1987), 50–66.

Now he was on hand: Bogardus, interview.

Finally, Nosek: Photo, Steinhardt with Nosek, in Hlas osvobozených 22, May 31, 1946.

The Communists would have: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, May 29, 1946, 860F.00/5-2946, box 6570, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA; Jiři Kocian, “Czechoslovakia Between Two Totalitarian Systems,” in Pánek and Tůma, A History of the Czech Lands, 484.

“They would come at him”: Bogardus, interview.

“would be controlled”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, May 15, 1946, 860F.00/5-1546, box 6570, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

The actual count: Cable, John H. Bruins, counselor, US Embassy in Prague, to Department of State, June 4, 1946, 860F.00/6-446, box 6570, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

“In spite”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, May 27, 1946, FRUS, 1946, Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union, Volume VI, 199-200.

“I find no disposition”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, June 3, 1946, 860F.00/6-346, box 6570, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.
“of common sense”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, July 3, 1946, FRUS, 1946, Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union, Volume VI, 204-205.

Gottwald and his colleagues agreed: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, July 3, 1946, 860F.00/7-346, box 6584, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

“I have every reason”: Letter, Steinhardt to Foster Dulles, July 23, 1946, box 7, Yarrow Papers, Eisenhower Library.

“drive a hard bargain”: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 29, 1946, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

He reoriented US policy: See, e.g., ibid.

No sooner did Foreign Minister Masaryk: Letter, Steinhardt to Foster Dulles, July 23, 1946, box 7, Yarrow Papers, Eisenhower Library.

“smug self-satisfaction”: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, August 29, 1946, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

The roof began to spring more leaks: On the leaky roof and the backed-up sewage pipes, see letter, Steinhardt to Janecka [sic], April 14, 1947, box 83, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. (The addressee appears to be a typo, and should read “Janeček.”) For the panes of glass falling out of the greenhouse windows, see letter, Steinhardt to Boček, September 26, 1946, box 89, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

Laurence’s point of contact: Petschek Lease Agreement between Laurence Steinhardt and the Czech Ministry of Defense, September 22, 1945, box 1, Territorial Departments—Standard, MFA.
But his minister: “Minutes of a meeting held on November 5, 1946, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about a lease of a building in Bubeneč to Ambassador Steinhardt,” box 191, GS-A, 1945-1954 USA, MFA.

“[T]he important consideration”: Letter, Steinhardt to Boček, September 26, 1946, box 89, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

“the palace originally served”: Letter, Ministry of National Defense to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 7, 1946, box 1, Territorial Departments—Standard, MFA.

He sent off a September note: “Minutes of a meeting help on November 5, 1946,” box 191, GS-A, 1945–1954 USA, MFA.

He was notified: Letter, City of Prague Department for the Administration of National Property to Steinhardt, January 8, 1947, box 53, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

A city official: The substance of the conversation between Dr. Janeček and Laurence, and the ultimate terms of their agreement, are described in ibid.; and letter, City of Prague, Department for National Administration of Property to Steinhardt, November 29, 1946, box 50, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

“could not be replaced”: Letter, Steinhardt to Boček, September 26, 1946, box 89, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

But Janeček, too, eventually: Letter, Steinhardt to Janecka [sic], April 14, 1947, box 53, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

“It has been my practice”: Letter, Steinhardt to National Property Administration, May 7, 1947, box 49, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. This memo is dated May 7, 1946, but that is incorrect, as is clear from the letter’s context, which shows that it was actually written on May 7, 1947.
Laurence finally went ahead: Letter, City of Prague Department for the Administration of National Property to Steinhardt, January 8, 1947, box 53, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

A neighbor insisted: For details on Laurence’s dispute with his neighbor, see, e.g., letter, Jan Borkovec to Steinhardt, November 30, 1945, box 89, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; for his difficulties regarding the legal status of his furniture, see the materials held in box 49, Majetek cizí v ČSR—USA [Foreign Property in ČSR—USA], Legal Department, MFA; and for the National Museum’s claim to the palace’s artwork, see Krejčová and Vlček, Lives for Ransom, 379.

“beautiful and extremely comfortable”: Letter, Steinhardt to Therese Rosenblatt, his sister, November 14, 1945, box 82, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.


“interfering with [his] proper duties”: Letter, Steinhardt to National Property Administration, May 7, 1947, box 49, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. (Incorrectly dated; see prior note.)

But he never seems to have considered: There is no indication in the thousands of pages of Laurence’s personal letters, family memoirs, and other documents, that he ever considered abandoning his quest to live in, and ultimately purchase, the Petschek villa.

“this little mother has claws”: Stach, Kafka: The Early Years, 23.

Nor can Laurence have relished: Laurence praised Pokorný’s loyalty to the house and strongly recommends that he be kept on by his successor in the following: letter, Steinhardt to Ballance, September 7, 1948, box 58, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

he found a solution: Letter, Steinhardt to Larkin, November 4, 1946, box 92, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. For a scholarly explanation of the debts owed to the United States by the Czech


220 Niederle was personally sympathetic: Letter, Steinhardt to Foster Dulles, October 21, 1947, box 84, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

220 In early 1947, Niederle: For Laurence’s aversion to the Czech efforts to exclude the Petscheks from compensation, and his pushback against those efforts, see “Memorandum Dictated by Mr. Yarrow,” March 3, 1947, box 8, Yarrow Papers, Eisenhower Library; and Faure, “Les paradoxes de la diplomatie américaine en Tchécoslovaquie,” [The Paradoxes of American Diplomacy in Czechoslovakia,” 302-303. For Niederle’s deal with the Swiss government, see Miroslav Niederle, “Foreign Claims on Czechs: Compensation Plans,” Financial Times, March 14, 1947.

220 “great obstacles”: Yarrow’s letter is transmitted to Foster Dulles in: letter, Riddleberger to Foster Dulles, May 21, 1947, PFA.

220 On May 31, 1947: Letter, P. S. Cooney, Assistant Chief, Division of Communications and Records, Department of State, to Foster Dulles, May 31, 1947, PFA.
Having acquired the palace: Letter, Steinhardt to Riddleberger, June 12, 1947, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.


He feared that infusions: See, e.g., letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, July 29, 1946, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, August 29, 1946, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; letter, Riddleberger to Steinhardt, October 3, 1946, box 50, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; letter, Steinhardt to Riddleberger, June 12, 1947, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; and letter, Steinhardt to George Bogardus, Foreign Service Officer, US Embassy Prague, July 3, 1947, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

He wondered if the Soviets: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, July 3, 1947, 840.50 RECOVERY/7-347, box 5719, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.


Stalin had commanded: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, July 4, 1947, 840.50 RECOVERY/7-447, box 5719, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.


The Czech cabinet was already meeting: Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 173.

“He is now in a position”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, July 10, 1947, 840.50 RECOVERY/7-1047, box 5720, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.


“All Slavic states”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, July 11, 1947, 840.5 RECOVERY/7-1147, box 5720, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.


 “[T]he political situation here”: Letter, Steinhardt to Foster Dulles, October 21, 1947, box 84, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

“The election campaign”: Ibid.


Laurence once again predicted: In autumn 1947, at a dinner in the palace, Laurence told a visiting group of senators and congressmen that the Communists would not receive more than 30 percent of the vote “in the absence of intimidation.” See “Visit by Smith-Mundt Group to Czechoslovakia,” September 24, 1947, box 1, vol. 2, Visit of the Smith-Mundt Group to Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria, Smith-Mundt Group Collection, National Security Archive, Washington, DC (NSA).

as Laurence was returning: United States Lines Company receipt for Steinhardt, February 4, 1948 (for a ticket on February 11, 1948), box 59, Steinhardt Papers, LOC. Laurence had traveled back to the United States to undergo an operation to remove kidney stones. Bedridden in the hospital, he anxiously waited through his doctor-mandated recovery period, writing to his family and friends that he was eager to return to post. Many of these letters are held in box 84 of Laurence’s personal papers at the LOC.

When he was forty-eight hours: Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 191.

lies and slander: Letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, April 26, 1946, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 176–178, 190.

Then Interior Minister Nosek: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, February 20, 1948, 860F.00/2-2048, box 6572, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

At the cabinet meeting: For a firsthand account of the February 1948 Communist coup d’état, including the cabinet meeting of February 17, see Hubert Ripka, *Czechoslovakia Enslaved: The Story of the Communist Coup D’Etat* (London, UK: Gollancz, 1950).

For a scholarly treatment, see Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 190–198. Unless otherwise specified, details of the coup derive from these pages.

Laurence rushed back: Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 192. There is some scholarly disagreement about when Laurence actually landed in Prague, but a close look at his writings from the time pinpoints his arrival to February 19.
See cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, February 20, 1948, box 6572, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA, in which Steinhardt mentions that Valerian Zorin arrived “yesterday” (February 19); and letter, Steinhardt to Harold Vedeler, Central European Division, Department of State, April 1, 1948, box 94, Steinhardt Papers, LOC, where he clarifies that both he and Zorin had returned “on the same day.”

224 His embassy staff had alarming news: Bogardus, interview; letter, Steinhardt to Vedeler, April 1, 1948, box 94, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

225 The ostensible reason: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, February 20, 1948, 860F.00/2-2048, box 6572, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1948, RG 59, NARA.


225 “reactionary agents”: Lukes, On the Edge of the Cold War, 192.

225 “the situation is messed up”: in Ullmann, The United States in Prague, 147.

225 “Should the [socialists]”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, February 21, 1948, 860F.00/2-2148, box 6572, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

225 Laurence reported developments: State Department records held in RG 59, NARA, show that between February 20 and February 25, 1948, Steinhardt sent more than fifteen cables to Washington, D.C.

226 “action committees”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, February 23, 1948, 860F.00/2-2348, box 6572, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

226 “There were far fewer”: Birge, They Broke the Mold, 319.

226 “the embassy receptionist”: Ibid.

226 “positively grim”: Ibid.
They would be the first: See, e.g., the other escape missions recounted in Birge, *They Broke the Mold*; and Louise Armstrong, interview by Charles Stuart Kennedy, January 13, 2000, *ADST*, LOC.


“seemed to have aged”: Ibid., 40. All quotations and details from Laurence’s meeting with the Sternbergs after the coup can be found in Sternberg, *The Journey*, 40–41.

On February 24, Laurence’s hopes: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, February 24, 1948, 860F.00/2-2448, box 6572, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.

On the twenty-fifth, Laurence learned: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, February 25, 1948, 860F.00/2-2548, box 6572, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.


“There was no evidence that Beneš”: Ibid.

Laurence cabled all this information: Ibid.


A request to declassify: On Embassy Prague’s earlier appeal to declassify the Soviet requests that the US Army not liberate Prague, and partial permission, see letter, Bruins to Steinhardt, January 23, 1948, box 56, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; letter, Steinhardt to Williamson, January 28, 1948, box 84, Steinhardt Papers, LOC; Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 44.

Marshall, when asked by journalists: Ibid., 198.


Laurence again worked around the clock: Letter, Steinhardt to Vedeler, March 23, 1948, box 94, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.
Masaryk came to the palace: Sherlock, unpublished memoir, SFA, 122. All details regarding Laurence and Masaryk’s last lunch together come from Dulcie Ann’s memoir.

“delightful, witty”: Ibid.


The Watchers of Prague believed: Boháč, “Kauza Masaryk v průběhu let,” [The Case of Masaryk Over the Years], 70–71.

“the bitter criticism”: Cable, Steinhardt to Department of State, March 10, 1948, FRUS, 1948, Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union, Volume IV, 743–744.

“to run down”: Letter, Steinhardt to Vedeler, April 7, 1948, 860F.00/4-748, box 6573, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA. In the days that followed Masaryk’s death, Laurence found that he was unable to rid himself of gnawing suspicions that perhaps something more sinister had taken his friend. He wrote one month later, “While I was at first disposed to accept the suicide story, I am less convinced than I was at the time of his death . . . I cannot escape the feeling that the repeated rumors of murder might have some basis.”


Beneš joined Masaryk in death: Lukes, On the Edge of the Cold War, 199.
“[T]he past three weeks”: Letter, Steinhardt to William Rosenblatt, his brother-in-law, March 19, 1948, box 93, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

“What has taken place”: Letter, Steinhardt to William Diamond, American Mission for Aid to Greece, April 20, 1948, box 90, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

One concerned General Toussaint: Letter, Steinhardt to Colonel Joseph A. “Mike” Michela, June 17, 1948, box 58, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

“return to the United States”: Letter, American Embassy Prague to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 1, 1948, box 193, GS-A, 1945–1954 USA, MFA.

The German was found guilty: Judgment on behalf of the Republic, acknowledged after completion of the main trial on 25 and 26 October 1948, LS 804/48, box 881, SOA.

One by one: Pacner, Osudové okamžiky Československa [Crucial Moments of Czechoslovakia], 257.

“What are you doing here?”: Alexander Toussaint, interviews.

Laurence decided: Letter, Steinhardt to Bruins, March 31, 1948, box 58, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.


Laurence was even closer: For background on Heidrich, see “Special to the New York Times: Arnost Heidrich, Ex-Czech Aide, 78,” New York Times, February 13, 1968; for the Americans’ productive relationship with him, see Birge, They Broke the Mold, 351.

“was more successful”: Cable, Steinhardt to Vedeler, April 7, 1948, 860F.00/4-748, box 6573, Central Decimal Files, 1945–1949, RG 59, NARA.
233  **The United States still held:** Letter, Foster Dulles to Steinhardt, June 15, 1948, box 8, Yarrow Papers, Eisenhower Library; Michálek, “Compensation for Nationalized American Property in Czechoslovakia,” 170.

233  **In May, the Czechoslovak government:** Letter, Steinhardt to Department of State, May 26, 1948, PFA. For the diplomatic correspondence between Laurence and the Czechs over June and July with respect to the villa, see box 39, GS-A, 1945-1954 USA, MFA.


234  **The price was not cheap:** Letter, Emil A. Kekich, Chargé d’Affaires ad interim, American Embassy Prague, to Steinhardt, July 28, 1948, box 56, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

234  **“wooden money”:** Sherlock, unpublished memoir, SFA, 107.


235  **“I like to be able”:** Ibid.

235  **Viky was shocked:** Hoag, interview.

235  **“the Czech State promises”:** Letter, Hollitscher to Yarrow, July 2, 1948, PFA.

235  **“unless the Department considered”:** This quotation and all details from the meeting that determined the fate of the Petschek villa derive from Department of State Memorandum of Conversation, Participants Steinhardt, Yarrow, Vedeler, Williamson, Donaldson, Oliver, and Taylor, July 21, 1948, PFA.

236 “Adolf has an intense sense”: Letter, Steinhardt to Ballance, September 7, 1948, box 58, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

236 Operation Flying Fiancée: All quotations and details on Laurence’s last adventure in Prague can be found in Birge, *They Broke the Mold*, 341–350. The incident is also described in Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 212–214. I am grateful to Professor Lukes for discussing the incident with me (on October 26, 2016 in Boston), as well as for pointing me to Walter Birge’s memoir. On the incredulity of Laurence’s threat to bomb the airport, Birge later wrote, “To a reader nowadays, this bravado and seemingly incredible threat by Ambassador Steinhardt seems utterly fantastic. I was there and I can vouch that those were Mr. Steinhardt’s words.” Birge, *They Broke the Mold*, 345.
“Never, Never, Never Give In”

“Never, Never, Never Give In”: This quotation is an abbreviated version of a line from a speech that Winston Churchill delivered in October 1941. The original can be found in Winston S. Churchill, *The Unrelenting Struggle: War Speeches by the Right Hon. Winston S. Churchill* (London: Cassell, 1942), 274–276.

Fewer Jewish men than women: For an account of the shifting demographics of Jews in the Czech lands after World War II, including the discrepancy between men and women, see Láníček, Jan. “After the Whirlwind: Jewish Absence in Postwar Czechoslovakia.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 2 (2017): 278–296.


There were signs: Moshe Schiff, nephew of Frieda Grünfeld, later Frieda Eisen, telephone interview by the author, September 14, 2017.


It was thronged: See, e.g., photo of the long line outside the United States Information Service in “Life Visits U.S. Embassy in Prague,” *Life*, November 15, 1948.

her heart beat faster: Visiting the US embassy after the Communist coup would have been a terrifying experience. As Laurence wrote, the Czech public was warned “that mere social contact with members of the Embassy staff will be the basis for charges of espionage and that
association with Westerners is ‘anti-State.’” See letter, Steinhardt to Jake, March 31, 1948, box 95, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.

247 **The embassy was being watched:** For an overview of Communist intelligence efforts directed toward the US embassy, its staff, and their associates, see Lukes, *On the Edge of the Cold War*, 203–231.

247 **an immigrant visa:** For an immigrant visa similar to the one that Frieda would have had to fill out, see US Department of State, *Admission of Aliens into the United States: Supplement A of the Consular Regulations Notes to Section 361, Revised to January 1, 1936* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1935), 146.

247 **The list of documents:** For the list of requirements to immigrate to the United States at the time, including the oversubscribed Czech immigration quota, see Eliot B. Coulter, “Visa Work of the Department of State and the Foreign Service,” *Department of State Bulletin*, October 1949, 6-14.

247 **“But what about the special quota?”:** The Displaced Persons Act, passed on June 25, 1948, authorized visas to be issued to 205,000 displaced persons, including two thousand of those who originated in Czechoslovakia. However, Czech immigrants had to have already fled the country in order to qualify for the quota at the time of its enactment. See Coulter, “Visa Work,” 10. Laurence himself was displeased with this provision, calling it “idiotic.” See letter, Steinhardt to Parry, September 13, 1948, box 58, Steinhardt Papers, LOC.


In July: Peter Meyer et al., The Jews in the Soviet Satellites (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1953), 146.

They had company: Ibid., 150

Despite the Israeli ambassador’s bold prediction: Láníček, “Postwar Czech-Jewish Leadership,” 91–95.


Even more frightening: Moshe Schiff, interview.

Twenty thousand Jews would be allowed: Kaplan et al., Československo a Izrael v letech 1947–1953 [Czechoslovakia and Israel in the Years 1947–1953], 22–39.

“used”: Moshe Schiff, interview.

The travel papers: Berta and her family traveled under the name of her husband, Schiff. The family traveled from Bratislava to Bari aboard the Gallia, from April 10, 1949, to April 13, 1949. See RG 48 017 425 214 07, microfilm, collection 425 Židovské organizace [Jewish organizations], USHMM, Washington, DC.
The visa program was approaching: Láníček, “Postwar Czech-Jewish Leadership,” 91–96; Meyer et al., *The Jews in the Soviet Satellites*, 150.


They would embark for Romania: RG 48 017 425 09, microfilm, collection 425, Židovské organizace [Jewish organizations], USHMM.

There were openly anti-Semitic slurs: Meyer et al., *The Jews in the Soviet Satellites*, 98–112, 122–190.

259 **The Palace:** Shirley’s published memoir about her experiences in Prague in August 1968, “Prague Diary,” *McCall’s*, 1969, was the most important source for this chapter. In some instances, I have altered the tense of quotations from “Prague Diary” from present to past to improve the flow of the text. The time, the vehicle, and other details from Shirley’s trip to the palace on August 20, 1968, are in her forthcoming autobiography, chapter 1. It was generously made available to me by her family. Because the manuscript has not yet been fully paginated, it is cited throughout by chapter, rather than by specific page. Julian M. Niemczyk, Air Attaché in Prague from 1967 through 1969, also discussed Shirley’s meal at the ambassador’s residence in an interview by Charles Stuart Kennedy, December 16, 1991, *ADST*, LOC.

259 **behind a local driver:** For the description of Shirley’s driver, see Black, “Prague Diary,” 94. That the same man chauffeured her on August 20 is established by Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 2.


259 **She began acting in films:** “Cinema: Peewee’s Progress,” *Time*, April 27, 1936.
her hair: Photos of Shirley Temple Black as she looked in 1968 exist in many newspapers, as well as in Black, “Prague Diary.” On Shirley’s trademark fifty-six curls, see Christy Khoshaba, “Shirley Temple Black: 10 Things to Know about Curly Top,” Los Angeles Times, February 12, 2014.


but there was nothing: Family of Shirley Temple Black, interview by the author, Woodside, CA, August 7–14, 2017.

She was intrigued: “Přijetí u ministra dr. Vlěka,” Lidová demokracie, August 21, 1968.


It was too much: Black family, interview by the author, Woodside, CA, August 7–14, 2017.


They were no more aware: Although intelligence gathered by US agencies during July 1968 plainly showed that Warsaw Pact nations had made the necessary preparations for a military invasion of Czechoslovakia, analysts wavered over whether such an invasion was imminent—in part because the Soviet leadership itself had not yet made up its mind. When a Soviet Special Forces battalion landed at, and took hold of, the Prague airport at midnight Central European Time, President Johnson and his top aides – including Jacob Beam, the US Ambassador to Prague – were caught by surprise. See Beam, *Multiple Exposure*, 189, 192; Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library and Museum and the Central Intelligence Agency's Historical Collections Division, *Strategic Warning and the Role of Intelligence: Lessons Learned from the 1968 Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2011); and Cynthia M. Grabo, “Soviet Deception in the Czechoslovak Crisis: A Study in Perspective,” *Studies in Intelligence* (CIA), Spring 1970: 19-34.


A series of Czech films: This artistic movement that swept through Czechoslovakia is known as the Czechoslovak New Wave. For more, see David Cook, *A History of Narrative Film*, 4th ed. (New York: Norton, 2004), 624–636.


“Socialism with a Human Face”: Commonly referred to as “socialism with a human face,” Dubček’s proposed government action plan, which was formally adopted by the Czech Communist party in April 1968, can be found in Navrátil, *The Prague Spring 1968*, 92–95.
“The apex of hope”: Niemczyk, interview.


The man perhaps most responsible: Details on the life on Adolf Pokorný after his service to Laurence ended in 1948, and his death, were derived from J. Hájek and M. Hájek, interview.

Viky came from the States: Hoag, interview.

like the roses: I learned details of the flowers from Penerova, “The House,” 4-5.

“charmed out of [her] boots”: For this quotation, as well as details on the timing of Shirley’s return to her hotel room after her meeting and its results, see Black, “Prague Diary,” 75. Further details from Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 1. That the meeting occurred on the campus of Charles University is from Anne Edwards, *Shirley Temple: American Princess* (New York: William Morrow, 1988), 264.

“Your meeting with Mr. Dubcek”: Whitney, “Prague Journal.”

“bleak stone wall”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 75.

packed with geologists: Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 1.

She did not complain: Ibid.

“as those things do”: Whitney, “Prague Journal.”

Droste chocolate pastilles: Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 1.
“seemed very good indeed”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 75; see this also for Shirley’s bedtime routine on August 20, 1968.

“it was an appointment”: Ibid.

A few years before: Black family, interview by the author, Woodside, CA, June 28–July 1, 2016.

“airport”: Whitney, “Prague Journal.”

“Whatever it was”: For this and all other quotations and further details regarding what Shirley heard and thought throughout the very early hours of August 21, 1968, see Black, “Prague Diary,” 75.


Shirley ducked: Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 2.


Shirley exited room 21 and headed upstairs: Whitney, “Prague Journal.”

“Great green tanks, grimy and oily”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 75.

“Personnel carriers rolled”: Ibid.

“disbelief and confusion”: Ibid.

A new horror: For further descriptions of the response of the Czechoslovaks, see Skoug, interview; and cable, Jacob Beam, U.S. Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, to Department of State,
August 21, 1968, Prague 03044, box 1, entry 5193, lot file 70D19, Czechoslovak Crisis Files, 1968, Office of the Executive Secretariat, RG 59, NARA.

267  “Then a small knot”: Ibid.

267  “A block away”: Ibid.

267  all that she needed to: Shirley said of that moment, and of her footwear, “It’s the first time I have been so close to gunfire. I think these yellow boots are unlucky.” See “Shirley Temple Black Unlucky in Yellow Boots,” Washington Daily News.

267  “While tanks continued”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 91.


267  The broadcasters explained: Black, “Prague Diary,” 91.

267  Dubček was in party headquarters: Czechoslovakia Crisis Chronology, box 1, entry 5193, lot file 70D19, Czechoslovak Crisis Files, 1968, Office of the Executive Secretariat, RG 59, NARA. For firsthand accounts of Dubček’s kidnapping, see Dubček, Hope Dies Last, 180–

268 **The American embassy warned**: Cable, Beam to Department of State, August 21, 1968, Prague 03053, box 1, entry 5193, lot file 70D19, Czechoslovak Crisis Files, 1968, Office of the Executive Secretariat, RG 59, NARA.

268 **“Chambermaids, busboys, and guests”**: Black, “Prague Diary,” 91.


268 **just a five-minute walk**: For a map of Prague as it was in 1968, see Farnsworth, “People of Prague Scream Defiance at the Tanks.”


268 **Some youths had barricaded**: Rehak, “Undated Occupation.”

269 **“Russian tanks by the scores”**: Black, “Prague Diary,” 75.

269 **“one overriding impression”**: Ibid., 91.

269 **Two tanks attempted**: Rehak, “Undated Occupation.”

269 **a single Czech**: Black, “Prague Diary,” 75.

269 **Five tanks caught fire**: Levy, *So Many Heroes*, 233.

269 **“Soviet troops were trying”**: “Fighting Reported,” *Prague ČTK International Service in English* (Prague), Daily Report (FBIS-FRB-68-164), August 21, 1968, FBIS.

“Nine ambulances wailed”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 75; “1215 Situation Report,”
Prague ČTK International Service in English (Prague), Daily Report (FBIS-FRB-68-164),
August 21, 1968, FBIS.

“People fled before the shooting”: “Fighting Reported,” Prague ČTK International
Service in English (Prague), Daily Report (FBIS-FRB-68-164), August 21, 1968, FBIS.

Miraculously, the radio: Levy, So Many Heroes, 251.

“Twenty badly wounded persons”: “Care for Wounded,” Prague ČTK International
Service in English (Prague), Daily Report (FBIS-FRB-68-164), August 21, 1968, FBIS. A little
more than an hour after the battle outside the radio building ceased, Ambassador Jacob Beam
dispatched embassy officers to quietly survey the scene. Beam reported back to Washington that
they saw “devastation reminiscent of World War Two.” See cable, Beam to Department of State,
August 21, 1968, Prague 03064, box 1, entry 5193, lot file 70D19, Czechoslovak Crisis Files,
1968, RG 59, NARA.

“What’s going on?”: All quotations and details, unless otherwise specified, regarding
Shirley’s interaction with the “long-haired young girl” in the Alcron can be found in Black,
“Prague Diary,” 91.

Soon a crowd: Ruth Dorf, wife of geologist trapped with Shirley in the Alcron,
"Impressions of Czechoslovakia Accumulated After a Week of Travel," unpublished manuscript,
BFA, 3; "To Serve a Healthy World," BFA.

The German writer: "To Serve a Healthy World," BFA.

“Sparkle, Shirley, sparkle”: Black, Child Star, 20; Rosalind Shaffer, “The Private Life

“A large cardboard sign”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 91.
“as he presented”: Ibid.

“A heavyset man”: Ibid.

“One boy”: Ibid.

“the talk got around”: Ibid.


Not that he would be unduly worried: For Charlie’s measured reaction to hearing that his wife was trapped in the invasion, see “Shirley Temple Caught in Prague by Invasion,” *New York Times*, August 21, 1968. For Charlie’s background, see Shirley’s own description of him in Black, *Child Star*, 449–455.

the rest of her family: On Shirley’s close relationship with her parents, see Ibid., 479–487.


She passed along Charlie’s contact: Dorf, "Impressions of Czechoslovakia," BFA, 3-4.

They came to inquire: Black, “Prague Diary,” 93.

“Things are deteriorating”: Ibid.

“No”: Ibid.


“They are strangers”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 93.

“German, really?”: Ibid.

The dwindling food supply: Ibid.
A message came through: Ibid., 94; Dorf, “Impressions of Czechoslovakia,” BFA, 5; This communication between the US embassy and American citizens in Prague regarding a proposed bus evacuation is confirmed in the following: cable, Beam to Department of State, August 22, 1968, Prague 03077, box 1, entry 5193, lot file 70D19, Czechoslovak Crisis Files, 1968, Office of the Executive Secretariat, RG 59, NARA.

citizens were reminded: Cable, Beam to Department of State, August 21, 1968, Prague 03053, box 1, entry 5193, lot file 70D19, Czechoslovak Crisis Files, 1968, Office of the Executive Secretariat, RG 59, NARA.

The radio was still broadcasting: Although the building of Radio Prague was ultimately occupied by Russian troops, the radio employees—refusing to be defeated—found a “secret location” from which to broadcast. See Levy, So Many Heroes, 251.

“A short time ago”: Czechoslovak Crisis Chronology, August 21, 1968, box 1, entry 5193, lot file 70D19, Czechoslovak Crisis Files, 1968, RG 59, NARA.

“A woman nearby”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 93.

shaken a clenched hand in anger: Bassett, “Taking shelter in a riot.”

“Look”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 93.

Instead of eating: Ibid., 94.

She chose the sensible: Photo of Shirley climbing into her escape car on August 23, 1968, BFA; David Brinkley and Garrick Utley, “Invasion/Americans/Border,” NBC Evening News, NBC, August 23, 1968, Vanderbilt Television News Archive.

“For a long time”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 94.

“I must go”: Unless otherwise specified, all quotations and details regarding Shirley’s escape from the Alcron to the US embassy can be found in Black, “Prague Diary,” 94.
“The shooting has different sounds”: Jackson, “Sounds, Sights.”

Someone was constantly singing: Ibid.


They would head west: Cable, Beam to Department of State, August 22, 1968, Prague 03077, box 1, entry 5193, lot file 70D19, Czechoslovak Crisis Files, 1968, Office of the Executive Secretariat, RG 59, NARA.

“snaked past many”: All quotations and details, unless otherwise specified, on Shirley’s convoy from the US embassy through her safe arrival in West Germany can be found in Black, “Prague Diary,” 94–95.


Americans, Canadians, Brits: Niemczyk, interview.
279  scenic highway: Skoug, *Czechoslovakia's Lost Fight for Freedom*, 149.

281  she emerged: “Americans Flee—Shirley in the Lead,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 23, 1968. Shirley’s name, and the names of many other American citizens who escaped Prague that August in the convoy, were dutifully recorded by the American embassy. She appears as “26. Shirley Temple Black.” See cable, Beam to Department of State, August 23, 1968, Prague 03116, box 1, entry 5193, lot file 70D19, Czechoslovak Crisis Files, 1968, Office of the Executive Secretariat, RG 59, NARA.

281  “still clutching the eight red carnations”: Black, “Prague Diary,” 95.

282  “What did you see?”: Brinkley and Utley, “Invasion/Americans/Border.”
14 A Revolutionary Production


283 Her befuddled family: After leaving Prague in 1968, Shirley was a changed woman. Reflecting on her stay in Prague nearly fifteen years later, she remarked, “The effect that it’s had on my life has been quite profound.” See, e.g., John Askins, “Tempo: Shirley Temple Meets Her Past,” Chicago Tribune, June 12, 1984. I derived further detail on the influence that her 1968 visit to Prague had on her life from my conversations with her descendants.


283 She was a Republican: Unless otherwise specified, all of Shirley’s biographical information can be found in Patsy G. Hammontree, Shirley Temple Black: A Bio-Bibliography (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 143–188.


284 “fresh breeze”: “Shirley Captures the UN,” Washington Post, November 28, 1969. One fellow American delegate remembered that Shirley was always one of the first in the office in the
morning. “She really worked. She was good.” See Dan W. Figgins, interview by Jeff
Broadwater, November 20, 1993, ADST, LOC.

284  “Now I understand”: Theodore S. Wilkinson, interview by Charles Stuart Kennedy,
January 11, 1999, ADST, LOC.

284  The no-compromise school: See, e.g., Kinzer, The Brothers, 320–323.

284  She did not think America was perfect: On Shirley’s thoughts on the United States and
its role in the world, see, e.g., Viola Osgood, “Shirley Black Sees Moral Decline in US,” Boston

285  She had been a candidate: Black family, interview by the author, Woodside, CA, May
8–11, 2017.

285  By the time Bush: Eileen Keerdoja with Joe Contreras and Pamela Abramson, “Shirley
Offers Diplomatic Advice,” Newsweek, December 7, 1981. The newly tapped envoys whom
Shirley trained gave her rave reviews. See, e.g., Rockwell A. Schnabel, interview by Charles
Stuart Kennedy, October 17, 1990, ADST, LOC.

285  considered a hardship posting: Russell, interview by Kennedy.

285  “prime, prime property”: Niemczyk, interview.

286  “I said yes”: Dennis Murphy, “Shirley Temple Black Named Ambassador,” NBC News,
September 15, 1989; Other details on Shirley’s phone conversation with President Bush in which
she accepted the ambassadorship come from McKenzie, “A Conversation with Shirley Temple

286  Twenty-one years: The Czech secret-police surveillance on Shirley began the moment
that her plane touched down in Prague. The police documented Shirley’s arrival in Prague and at
the Petschek villa on the evening of August 11, 1989. Their source relayed that Shirley
recognized the villa staff from her sojourn in 1968 and even remembered the butler by name. See record no. 10/89, Shirley Temple Black file (1006042 MV), ABS. For the weather, see Czech Hydrometeorological Institute, Daily measurement from Prague –Klementinum, August 11, 1989, http://portal.chmi.cz/historicka-data/pocasi/praha-klementinum#.

286 “came as a stranger”: Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 1.


286 Miroslav Štěpán: Štěpán’s own reflections on the Velvet Revolution and background on his life can be found in his memoir: Miroslav Štěpán, Můj život v sametu. Zrada přichází z Kremlu [My Life in Velvet: Betrayal Comes from the Kremlin] (Prague: Malý princ, 2013).


286 Shirley confronted a thorny problem: As US Embassy Prague cables from autumn 1989 demonstrate, one of Shirley’s primary foreign-policy objectives in Czechoslovakia was to improve relations with the Czech Communist government while utilizing a series of carrots and sticks to improve the government’s human-rights practices: cable, Shirley Temple Black, U.S. Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, to Department of State, August 23, 1989, Prague 05736, doc. no. C06406518, MDR. See also, e.g., cable, Black to Department of State, October 19, 1989, Prague 07303, in Vilém Prečan, ed., Prague–Washington–Prague: Reports from the United States Embassy in Czechoslovakia, November–December 1989 (Prague: Václav Havel Library,
I was able to supplement this collection with nearly sixty cables that were declassified and provided to me by the State Department in response to a Mandatory Declassification Review request that I filed (US Department of State case no. MP-2017-00697, henceforth referred to as MDR).


“If Prague were Rome or Paris”: Whitney, “Prague Journal.”


“force in accord”: Cable, Black to Department of State, August 2, 1989, Prague 05232, doc. no. C06406504, MDR.


She was careful: Stein, “Czechs’ Favorite Diplomat,” San Francisco Chronicle; Bond, interview, June 28, 2017. See also Hull, interview by Whitman, for an account of the difficulty in hiring trusted staff.

Her tall husband: To describe Shirley’s husband, Charlie Black, I drew upon: Black, Child Star, 449–455; Black family, interview, by the author, Woodside, CA, May 8–11, 2017; and photos of him from 1989 in the BFA.


Lest they miss her: Bond, interview, June 28, 2017.
A group of protestors resisted passively: Cable, Black to Department of State, August 22, 1989, Prague 05726, doc. no. C0606522, MDR.

“political activism [was] growing”: Cable, Black to Department of State, August 30, 1989, Prague 05959, doc. no. C06406529, MDR.


Charter 77, the foremost dissident movement: See, e.g., Bolton, Worlds of Dissent.


They wondered: Alexandr Vondra, “Discussion on the Velvet Revolution,” panel with Clifford Bond and Michele Bond, the American Center in Prague, August 2015.

“It was an opportunity”: Ibid.

Dienstbier and the others implored Shirley: Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 9.

“a lot of emotion”: Seal, “Shirleyka,” 93.

the Czechs wanted change: ); Robert J. Guttman, "Interview: Shirley Temple Black", Europe no. 309 (September 1991): 32.
Shirley sensed that change: Shirley told reporters after the Velvet Revolution that she had known that change would come to Czechoslovakia but was surprised by the speed with which it swept the nation. See, e.g., “Czeching It Out,” Los Angeles Daily News, May 16, 1990. Shirley also told a Czech reporter, “The first few weeks I traveled around across Czechoslovakia, walked around Prague, I felt that something would happen, but I didn’t think it would be so fast. . . . I’m glad I was wrong.” See “Sloboda je najväčší dar,” [Freedom Is the Greatest Gift], Národná obroda, July 10, 1992. Cables sent in mid-to-late August 1989 suggest that Shirley and her staff believed that the likelihood of change was increasing as the next generation of Czechs came of age and became more willing to challenge the regime. At the end of August 1989, Shirley wrote to D.C. that a more active youth “does not bode well for the regime. As one dissident reportedly said, his generation is at least willing to have a dialogue with the government, but the next generation may not be.” See cable, Black to Department of State, August 30, 1989, Prague 05959, doc. no. C06406529, MDR. However, as Shirley and her staff later acknowledged, they did not expect that change to happen in the near term. A cable sent by the Embassy assessing the consequences that the political upheaval in neighboring East Germany would have for Czechoslovakia, sent just one week before the November 17, 1989 protest that would spark the revolution, read, “we caution against expecting any real political reform resulting, since widespread popular pressure for it remains muted.” See cable, Black to Department of State, November 9, 1989, Prague 07892, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 45.

“No one knew”: Guttman, “Interview: Shirley Temple Black.”

Shirley was unsure: Unless otherwise specified, all details regarding the mechanics of Shirley’s credentialing process from Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Ceremonial of the
inaugural audience given to Ambassador of a foreign state by the president of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic,” BFA.


292  **They took a seat**: Photo, Nástupní audience velvyslankyně Shirley Temple Black [Inaugural audience of Ambassador Shirley Temple Black], AKPR. Although Shirley was embarrassed by her habit, she did smoke. See Hull, interview by Whitman.

292  “I wanted to have you come here”: Larsen, “Three Extraordinary Years for Temple Black.”

292  “Shirley Temple opens the door”: Kenny, “Czech Leaders Rigid.”

292  **Whatever works**: Larsen, “Three Extraordinary Years for Temple Black.”

292  “I don’t like”: All quoted dialogue between Shirley and Biak can be found in “Přála bych vám to nejlepší,” [I Wish You the Best], *Prostor*, June 27, 1992. Italics are my own. For more detail on their scuffle, see McKenzie, “A Conversation with Shirley Temple Black,” 6.

293  **She welcomed them**: Stein, “Czechs’ Favorite Diplomat”; Cadden, "Return to Prague," 65.

293  “the age-old”: Kenny, “Czech Leaders Rigid.”


“she and her entire family”: Hull, interview by Whitman; I learned more about this moving incident in my personal telephone interview with Thomas Hull, August 30, 2017.


“Why do you Americans”: Michele Bond, ibid.


“We maintain”: Michele Bond, “Discussion on the Velvet Revolution,” panel.


a familiar destination: Žantovský, Havel, 250.


He sat quietly: Havel was known for “only putting on a suit and tie under extreme duress.” See Timothy Garton Ash, We the People: The Revolution of ’89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague (Cambridge, UK: Granta Books in Association with Penguin Books, 1990), 117.

he had been doing unflinching battle: For the authoritative biography of Havel and descriptions of the many years he spent resisting the Communist regime, see Žantovský, Havel.

those rebellious radio voices: Ibid., 116.


“Vašku, you may”: Gerová, Vyhrábačky [Gleanings], 147.

quietly answered questions: Havel described the subject of the questions in Gerová, Vyhrabáčky [Gleanings], 147–148. His writings, which I also quote, reveal more of his thinking on these matters.

“[It] was almost”: Václav Havel, To the Castle and Back (New York: Vintage, 2008), 52.

“more had changed”: Ibid.

“a long discussion”: Black, “Those Czech Dissidents Were Not Ignored.”

“that he worked”: Gerová, Vyhrabáčky [Gleanings], 148.

Havel did his best: For corroboration of Havel’s thinking on what Czech leaders might have done to secure international support before the Soviet invasion in August 1968, see Václav Havel, Disturbing the Peace: A Conversation with Karel Hvížďala, trans. Paul Wilson (New York: Knopf, 1990), 104.


“charismatic”: Ryan, “As Ambassador to Prague.”

“will always remain”: “Sloboda je najváčší dar.” [Freedom is the Greatest Gift].

change continued to accelerate: For a detailed, scholarly account of the revolutions in Europe in 1989, see Kenney, A Carnival of Revolution. For an assessment of the peaceful dissolution of East Germany, see Charles S. Maier, “Civil Resistance and Civil Society: Lessons from the Collapse of the German Democratic Republic in 1989,” in Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash, eds., Civil Resistance and Power Politics: The Experience of Non-violent Action
For Poland’s and Hungary’s expressions of regret for their roles in ’68, and Czechoslovakia’s refusal to do so at the time, see, e.g., Craig R. Whitney, “Prague to Make Changes, but Not Dramatic Ones” New York Times, August 31, 1989.


**298 Dissidents murmured to Shirley**: Bond, interview, June 28, 2017; cable, Black to Department of State, October 25, 1989, Prague 07451, doc. no. C06406561, MDR.


**298 in a meeting with Štěpán**: Unless otherwise specified, all quotations and details on Shirley’s first meeting with Štěpán on October 18, 1989, can be found in the following: cable, Black to Department of State, October 19, 1989, Prague 07303, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 13–17.

**298 Štěpán was obese**: Photos of Štěpán are readily available online, and Cliff Bond’s descriptions in my interviews with him on June 28 and August 1, 2017, were especially helpful.

**298 Then he tried to end the meeting**: Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 9.


299 “I’d like to go for a walk”: Epstein, “From Hollywood.”

299 her Reebok sneakers: Anderson and Van Atta, “Shirley Temple Black.”

300 “Wenceslas Square was filling”: Lucas, “Prague Rally Thwarted.”

300 “raised a banner”: Ibid.

300 “TRUTH PREVAILS”: Wise, “Over 10,000 Attacked.”

300 “little short guy”: Epstein, “From Hollywood.”

300 Shirley guessed: Cable, Black to Department of State, October 29, 1989, Prague 07534, doc. no. C06406565, MDR.

300 “rising, then sinking”: Kukral, *Prague 1989*, 41.

301 the national anthem: Ibid., 43.


301 “Masaryk!” “Freedom!” and “Havel!”: Ibid., 42.


301 “forcing the crowd”: Wise, “Over 10,000 Attacked.”


301 “Now we run”: Epstein, “From Hollywood.”

302 “got across another street”: Ibid.

302 “Every time we crossed”: Ryan, “As Ambassador to Prague.”
“took cover behind a nearby billboard”: All quotations and details in this paragraph can be found in Bassett, “Taking shelter in a riot.” Seal, in “Shirleyka,” 48, confirms that Shirley signed the autographs for the students as she fled.

Perry Shankle: Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 9; and Fernando Rondon, Department of State Inspector Corps, telephone interview by the author, February 22, 2018. See also Wilkinson, interview; and Wilkinson, “Shirley Temple Black.”

“What are you doing here?”: Epstein, “From Hollywood.” Shirley, in this 1995 San Francisco Chronicle interview, attributed this dialogue to a conversation between herself and a “journalist from London.” However, this is most likely a misrecollection. Shirley recounts in her forthcoming autobiography, chapter 9, that the man whom she encountered outside the Hotel Jalta was Perry Shankle, an American Foreign Service Association inspector, not a British journalist. Shankle then offered Shirley shelter in the hotel’s lobby. Shankle’s presence is also confirmed by Rondon, interview; Rondon was in the hotel room with Shirley and Shankle on that day. For more on Shankle and Shirley’s interaction, see also Wilkinson, interview; and Wilkinson, “Shirley Temple Black.” From his writing about that day (Bassett, “Taking shelter in a riot”), I was able to determine that the British journalist that Shirley spoke to that day was Richard Bassett of the Times of London. In my interview with him, Bassett reported that he was quite sure that he first met Shirley inside the hotel. Bassett’s recollections corroborate Shirley’s account of the events as described in her forthcoming autobiography, rather than in her newspaper interview. Accordingly, I have attributed this dialogue in text to Perry Shankle.

No sooner did they enter the lobby: Bassett, interview.

“Musing on the helmeted”: Bassett, “Taking shelter in a riot.”

“no stranger to violence”: Ibid.
She made her way: Cable, Black to Department of State, October 31, 1989, Prague 07590, doc. no. C06406570, MDR.

“Shirley Temple spent”: Wilkinson, interview. Because Wilkinson reports that this language is what Shankle used with his wife, I have changed the tense of this quotation for flow. See also Wilkinson, “Shirley Temple Black.”

A large window with a ledge: Photos of Shirley and Charlie on ledge, October 28, 1989, BFA; cable, Black to Department of State, October 31, 1989, Prague 07590, doc. no. C06306570, MDR; Ryan, “As Ambassador to Prague”; Epstein, "From Hollywood."

“but a few hundred”: McRae, Resistance and Revolution, 95.

“Ach, synku, synku”: Kukral, Prague 1989, 42, 43.

“During the singing”: Kukral, Prague 1989, 43.

“People jeered and whistled”: Ibid.

“created a box”: McRae, Resistance and Revolution, 95–96.

“These few hundred”: Ibid., 96.

“Young men in casual dress”: Tagliabue, “Police in Prague.”


“chanting ‘No violence!’”: Wise, “Over 10,000 Attacked.”


“might get knocked down”: Anderson and Van Atta, “Shirley Temple Black.”

What should have been: Anderson and Van Atta, “Shirley Temple Black”; Epstein, "From Hollywood."

left dark streaks: Ryan, “As Ambassador to Prague.”

“250 people were detained”: Tagliabue, “Police in Prague.”


On Monday: Country team meetings were on held on Mondays throughout the fall of 1989: Kaska, interview.

So you disobeyed: Epstein, “From Hollywood.”


even though they were: Epstein, “From Hollywood.”

There was only one star: Hull, interview by Whitman.
15 Truth Prevails

Shirley and Charlie: As Shirley and Charlie were both early risers and ate breakfast together quietly nearly every morning throughout their marriage, and both were in Prague on November 17, 1989 (Black family, interview, August 7–14, 2017), I conclude that this is how their morning began; That the two passed notes derives from: Stein, “Czechs’ Favorite Diplomat.”

Her contacts had alerted: Cable, Black to Department of State, November 16, 1989, Prague 08031, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 68–69.

Hitler’s men had executed: Kenney, A Carnival of Revolution, 281.

Shirley would have loved: Neither Shirley nor her foreign service officers at the Prague embassy believed that the student demonstration on November 17 would be the spark that would set the revolution ablaze: author interviews with Kiene, telephone, June 29, 2017; Kaska; Bond, June 28 and August 1, 2017; Cameron Munter, Desk Officer, Czechoslovakia, Department of State in 1989, telephone, August 2, 2017; Hull; and Russell.

STUHA (Ribbon): Kenney, A Carnival of Revolution, 283.

They hadn’t even bothered: John Macgregor, British chargé d’affaires in Czechoslovakia in November 1989, telephone interview by the author, August 31, 2017.

The playwright was at his country house: Žantovský, Havel, 296.

“who could have predicted”: Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 9.

Shirley herself had stood: Cadden, “Return to Prague,” 62.

There would be three: Kiene, “The Velvet Revolution and Me,” 8–9; Kiene, interview; Bond, interview, June 28, 2017, and August 1, 2017; Kaska, interview; Russell, interview by the
author. All details, unless otherwise specified, regarding the circumstances surrounding Shirley’s dispatch of Kiene, Bond, and Kaska and their experiences during the protest, are drawn from Kiene’s manuscript and these interviews.

310 But more mundane duties called: McRae, interview; McRae, Resistance and Revolution, 103.

310 In the early afternoon: My writing on the experiences of the three embassy men during the evening of November 17, 1989, is primarily based on my interviews with them (Bond, June 28, 2017, and August 1, 2017; Kaska; and Kiene) and on Kiene’s unpublished manuscript, as well as on the following cables sent by Shirley to the State Department: Prague 08082, November 18, 1989; Prague 08087; Prague 08097; and Prague 08109, all from November 20, 1989, and all of which can be found in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 87–97, 101–102. My description of the details also benefits from the writing of others who participated in the protest and who documented their experiences, and from the work of those who have studied that pivotal day. The most useful to me were Kukral, Prague 1989, 47–59; McRae, Resistance and Revolution, 99–106; Kenney, A Carnival of Revolution, 280–289; John Keane, Václav Havel: A Political Tragedy in Six Acts (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 338–342; Pacner, Osudové okamžiky Československa [Crucial Moments of Czechoslovakia], 552–554; the official investigation into the events: Federal Assembly of Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, “Závěrečná zpráva vyšetřovací komise Federálního shromáždění pro objasnění událostí 17. listopadu 1989.” [Final Report of the Investigation Committee of the Federal Assembly for the Clarification of the Events of November 17, 1989], accessible at http://www.psp.cz/eknih/1990fs/tisky/t1236_01.htm; reporting by Reuters, particularly by Michael Wise; Paula Butturini’s reporting in the Chicago Tribune, as well as her memoir,
Keeping the Feast: One Couple’s Story of Love, Food, and Healing in Italy (New York: Riverhead, 2010), 57–59; Edward Lucas’s reporting in The Independent; Tomki Němec’s photo album of November 17, 1989, Velvet Revolution, available online at https://tomkinemec.photoshelter.com/gallery/17-November-1989/G0000z2P2W9C1No0/ (hereafter denoted as photo, Němec); and the memories of the students themselves, many of which were recorded in Milan Otáhal and Miroslav Vaněk, Sto studentských revolucí [One Hundred Students’ Revolutions] (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 1999).

310 **The Americans arrived:** Kiene, “The Velvet Revolution and Me,” 8.


310 **The leader of the 1939 protests:** Demetz, Prague in Danger, 79–90.

311 **ZRUŠTE MONOPOL KSČ:** Kukral, Prague 1989, 49.

311 **TRUTH PREVAILS:** Winters, ed., T. G. Masaryk (1840–1937): Volume 1, Thinker and Politician, 48. For the banner, see photo, Němec.

311 **Josef Šárka ascended:** Pacner, Osudové okamžiky Československa [Crucial Moments of Czechoslovakia], 552–554.

311 **“Students, do not be afraid”:** “Připomeňte si události 17. listopadu 1989 minutu po minutě,” [Recall the Events of November 17, 1989, Minute by Minute], iDNES, November 17,

311 what the government could do better: Ibid.

311 “We will not merely commemorate”: Michael Wise, “Tens of Thousands Demand Reform in Prague,” Reuters, November 17, 1989.


312 “Havel!”: McRae, Resistance and Revolution, 102.

312 “Svobodné volby!”: Kukral, Prague 1989, 50.

313 “To Wenceslas Square!”: Ibid., 51; Cliff Bond saw protestors whom he understood to be dissidents initiate the cries to travel to Wenceslas Square, whipping the crowd up, seeking to lead the students off the authorized path: Bond, interview, June 28, 2017.

313 “LET WHOMEVER IS AFRAID STAY AT HOME”: Kukral, Prague 1989, 49.

313 In the palace: McRae, interview.

313 But he was an outstanding officer: Cliff’s colleagues to whom I spoke gave him rave reviews. E.g., Munter, interview.
“The crowd of students”: Bond, interview, August 1, 2017. Cliff has vivid memories of the content and timing of his phone calls back to Ambassador Black on the night of November 17, 1989.

The too had attended: McRae, Resistance and Revolution, 94.

When they reached its base: For a map depicting the route of the marchers on November 17, 1989, see Kukral, Prague 1989, 54.


“We are unarmed”: Ibid.


“Forty years of Communism is enough”: Cable, Black to Department of State, November 18, 1989, Prague 08082, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 88.

Their passengers extended their arms: Photo, Němec.

Prague was a giant chessboard: Some claim that the Czech government lured the students onto Národní třída on November 17, 1989, although no definitive proof of this has surfaced. As one leading historian wrote, “There are many conspiracy theories concerning November 17. It is possible the crowd was steered toward National Avenue. But if one considers the growing experience of student opposition leaders, the unpredictable nature of earlier demonstrations (such as August 21, in both 1988 and 1989), and the fact that the crowd moved slowly enough in any case for the police to react, then the conspiracy theory proves to be not so much impossible as irrelevant. Moreover, even if the events of November 17 were controlled, those on subsequent days certainly were not.” Kenney, A Carnival of Revolution, 282. Whether drawing the students into the narrow street was intentional or not, the government would make its next moves in that corridor.
“The students marched north”: Bond, interview, August 1, 2017.

“something really big is happening”: McRae, interview.

One slightly overzealous young man: See photo, Němec. Videos of this moment that show the policeman recoiling are readily available on YouTube.

“We DON’T WANT VIOLENCE”: Photo, Němec.

“DEMOCRACY FOR ALL”: Ibid.

“Police are blocking”: Bond, interview, August 1, 2017.

“State Ops”: Munter, interview.

“Pee before you go”: Kaska, interview.


The three embassy men: Kaska, interview.


“When you are faced”: Žantovský, Havel, 284.

“laws will be”: Cable, Black to Department of State, October 19, 1989, Prague 07303, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 16.

He repeatedly called: Although Štěpán’s actions during the protest are not entirely clear, the official investigative committee concluded that he took some initiative for the students to be stopped. See Federal Assembly of Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, “Závěrečná zpráva vyšetřovací komise.” [Final Report of the Investigation Committee]. Štěpán had initially agreed to the demonstration only on the condition that it wouldn’t go to the city center, and he later
acknowledged that he had not wanted to allow the students to reach it. See Miroslav Štěpán, *Můj život v sametu* [My Life in Velvet], 148–194.


319 “We Shall Overcome”: Keane, *Václav Havel*, 341.


320 “Suddenly the crowd realized”: Keane, *Václav Havel*, 341.

320 “decided discretion was”: Kiene, “The Velvet Revolution and Me,” 8.

320 “We need to get out”: Kaska, interview.

320 “We invited her”: Kiene, “The Velvet Revolution and Me,” 9.

321 *Just after nine p.m.*: Bond, interview, August 1, 2017.


322 “I have to run”: Bond, interview, August 1, 2017.

322 *He left the ambassador*: Kiene, “The Velvet Revolution and Me,” 9; Bond, interview, August 1, 2017; Kiene, interview.
They would grab some: Kiene, “The Velvet Revolution and Me,” 9; Bond, interview, August 1, 2017.

But she could not rule out: Taken together with the interviews that I conducted, the currently available cables suggest that Shirley and embassy staff believed that a violent crackdown was possible. They perceived that the regime issued a “none-too-veiled-warning of suppression if things remain out of hand.” See cable, Black to Department of State, November 21, 1989, Prague 08144, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 106. The embassy also gained intelligence that suggested that the threat was not an empty one. According to a local informant, a group of “hardliners” within the government, including Štěpán, was advocating for “stiffer actions, including a curfew and possible state of emergency taken against the demonstrations.” See cable, Black to Department of State, November 22, 1989, Prague 08171, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 122. Another source, one day later, confirmed to the Americans that the Czech leadership seemed prepared to “rely on the security forces to defend socialism.” See cable, Black to Department of State, November 23, 1989, Prague 08204, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 138.

In response, the embassy took precautionary measures to mitigate the risk of harm to US citizens, including issuing a warning for all travelers to avoid public spaces—in particular, Wenceslas Square. The embassy determined that, while unlikely, “the potential for violent confrontations, such as occurred on November 17, cannot be ruled out.” See cable, Black to Department of State, November 21, 1989, Prague 08137, November 21, 1989, doc. no. C06406585, MDR.

The interviews that I conducted with senior embassy officers stationed in Prague at the time confirmed that the staff harbored concerns that the regime might resort to military violence and
that its threats of suppression were perceived to be credible, even if the likelihood of follow-through was uncertain: Bond, June 28 and August 1, 2017; Russell; and Kaska.

323 **She and her colleagues:** Cable, Black to Department of State, November 18, 1989, Prague 08082, in Prečan, *Prague–Washington–Prague*, 91. The full text of the protest is contained in the following: Cable, Black to Department of State, November 20, 1989, Prague 08087, in Prečan, *Prague–Washington–Prague*, 92–94.

323 **They urged Main State:** Cable, Black to Department of State, November 18, 1989, Prague 08082 in Prečan, *Prague–Washington–Prague*, 91.


323 **Her staff spread out over Prague:** See, e.g., cable, Black to Department of State, November 21, 1989, Prague 08155, in Prečan, *Prague–Washington–Prague*, 117–118.

323 **She made sure:** There are currently eight declassified cables from the US Embassy in Prague to the State Department between November 17 and November 20, 1989. See Prečan, *Prague–Washington–Prague*, 87–106; and cable, Black to Department of State, November 20, 1989, Prague 08117, doc. no. C06406583, MDR.


323 **several thousand demonstrators:** Cable, Black to Department of State, November 20, 1989, Prague 08097, in Prečan, *Prague–Washington–Prague*, 96.

324 **“I walked with the crowd”:** Kiene, “The Velvet Revolution and Me,” 9.


Every district had a sports stadium: McRae, interview.

Robert Kiene was startled: Kiene, “The Velvet Revolution and Me,” 9–10; Kiene, interview.

The regime had also summoned: “Telex from General Secretary Miloš Jakeš to First Secretary of the Slovak Communist Party and secretaries of regional and district CPCz committees, on the situation in the country and tasks facing the Party,” November 19, 1989, in Vilém Prečan and Derek Paton, eds., *The Democratic Revolution in Czechoslovakia: Its Precondition, Course, and Immediate Repercussions 1987–89: A Chronology of Events and a*
She and the embassy: There are at least seven currently declassified cables from the US embassy in Prague to the Department of State on Monday, November 20, 1989, signed by Ambassador Black. Six can be found in Prečan, *Prague–Washington–Prague*, 92–105. The seventh was provided to me by the State Department as part of my declassification request. See cable, Black to Department of State, November 20, 1989, Prague 08117, doc. no. C06406583, MDR.

She hoped that the StB was listening: Indeed, an StB agent dutifully jotted Shirley’s intended activity in a thick dossier. See record from November 24, 1989, Shirley Temple Black file (1006042 MV), ABS.

Shirley was there: Ibid.


“It’s finally here”: Paul Wilson, member of Czechoslovak dissident band The Plastic People of the Universe, correspondence with author, November 2017.


Riot police with water cannons: Cable, Black to Department of State, November 20, 1989, Prague 08117, doc. no. C06406583, MDR.


The space was illuminated: Kukral, *Prague 1989*, 66.


Havel had rushed back to Prague: Details on Havel’s return to Prague and his immediate actions upon arrival can be found in Žantovský, *Havel*, 297–299. For the make of his car, see ibid., 129.


drown us here:” Ibid., 301.


“As if out of nowhere”: Žantovský, *Havel*, 302.


“The sound system”: Ibid.

Some feared that police: Keane, Václav Havel, 354. For the size of the crowd, see Michael Wise, “Communist Party Warns of Crackdown after 200,000 Protest,” Reuters, November 21, 1989.


Havel was not a great speaker: See, e.g., Zdena Tomin, “The Uncrowned King of Prague—Vaclav Havel,” Times (of London), November 23, 1989.

Havel knew that: Žantovský, Havel, 302.


Marta Kubišová: Kukral, Prague 1989, 73.

gave the orders”: Cable, Black to Department of State, November 22, 1989, Prague 08171, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 124.

“entry is controlled”: Cable, Black to Department of State, November 24, 1989, Prague 08208, November 24, 1989, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 146.

“he had invited”: Ibid.


Kiene again feared: Kiene, “The Velvet Revolution and Me,” 9–10; Kiene, interview.

Shirley urged her team: Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 9.

“trained to deal with”: McRae, Resistance and Revolution, 136.
Štěpán and his clique: Shirley was told that the group of Czech hard-liners, including Štěpán, Jakeš, Hoffmann, Urbánek, and Indra, purportedly went so far as to plan an escape if a violent suppression of protests failed. They ordered that a plane wait for them on standby, which would take them to Switzerland. See Black, forthcoming autobiography, chapter 9.

In the Wintergarden: “Thanksgiving Service 23 November, 1989, 10:00, Ambassador’s Residence,” BFA.

“In 1620 a small band of Pilgrims”: Shirley Temple Black handwrote her 1989 Thanksgiving service prayer, which she did not title, on a loose piece of paper, which can be found in the BFA.


Shirley noted in a cable: Cable, Black to Department of State, November 24, 1989, Prague 08208, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 144.

Together with workers”: Otáhal and Sládek, Deset pražských dnů [Ten Days in Prague], 298–299.


“dribbled out to”: Cable, Black to Department of State, November 25, 1989, Prague 08237, in Prečan, Prague–Washington–Prague, 149.

The Communist leadership: Greenhouse, “Prague Party Leaders Resign.”

Shortly before four p.m.: Ash, We the People, 94–95.

“He looks as if”: Ibid., 94.

They drew more incredulous: Ibid., 94–95.

“Dubček!”: Kukral, Prague 1989, 84.

The cheers were so powerful: One student later wrote that “Wenceslas Square literally shook to the loudest roar of any crowd that I’ve ever heard as the legendary Alexander Dubček stepped onto the balcony.” Kukral, Prague 1989, 84.

“You know I love you”: McRae, Resistance and Revolution, 143.


He endorsed the Civic Forum: Kukral, Prague 1989, 84.

“Already, once”: McRae, Resistance and Revolution, 144.

“Dubček to the castle”: Ibid.

He spoke for eleven minutes: Greenhouse, “Prague Party Leaders Resign.”

“Dubček-Havel”: Ash, We the People, 95.
“All members of the Presidium”: Videos of the press conference, with Jiří Černý’s announcement, can be found on YouTube.

Štěpán and the rest: Štěpán would not exit easily. When the details of the resignations came in on Friday, November 24, it turned out that he was one of the few holdovers who had retained his Presidium seat. The public outcry that followed resulted in his complete ouster. See cable, Black to Department of State, November 25, 1989, Prague 08237, in Prečan, Prague-Washington-Prague, 148–154.


“a free Czechoslovakia”: Ash, We the People, 96.

clinking his glass with Dubček’s: Bassett, “Czechs Cheer.”

In the square, the people of Prague: Kukral, Prague 1989, 85.


She turned it upside down: Stein, “Czechs’ Favorite Diplomat.”

“so I can say”: Ibid.

“In Poland it took”: Ash, We the People, 78.

“The Past Is Never Dead. It’s Not Even Past.”


**Czech accession to NATO:** Jane Perlez, “Expanding Alliance: The Overview; Poland, Hungary and the Czechs Join NATO,” *New York Times*, March 13, 1999.

**The Velvet Divorce:** For a useful overview of the period between the Velvet Revolution to the drift toward Klaus and nationalism at the turn of the century in the Czech Republic, see Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*, 292–331.


**Before going to bed:** Since Černík had first showed me the swastika, I had discovered several others on my own; they turned out to be all over the house. I would sometimes discuss
this in speeches, though, at Černík’s request, I generally left him out of the story. I have now obtained his permission to discuss his role.

340 **Czech and European liberals:** For background on Václav Klaus’s US education, including his various controversies, see, e.g., Gregory Feifer and Brian Whitmore, “The Velvet Surrender,” *New Republic*, September 17, 2010; and Dan Bilefsky, “A Fiery Czech Is Poised to Be the Face of Europe,” *New York Times*, November 24, 2008.


341 **The Czech Republic had some of the lowest rates of anti-Semitism:** See, e.g., Jewish Community in Prague, “The Annual Report on Anti-Semitism Symptoms in the Czech Republic in 2011,” 2011.

A later study conducted by the Anti-Defamation League, albeit in 2014, found that only 11 percent of the population of the Czech Republic held anti-Semitic views. See Anti-Defamation League, “ADL Poll of Over 100 Countries Finds More Than One-Quarter of Those Surveyed


342 “old poison in new bottles”: For the text of Jiří Schneider’s speech, see Ibid., 22.

342 “In countries with small Jewish communities”: Ibid.


347 I had thought that history arced: The famous aphorism is that “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.” See “Theodore Parker and The ‘Moral Universe,’” interview by Melissa Block, All Things Considered, NPR, September 2, 2010. Many others have expressed the idea, including Lorraine Hansberry, in her play A Raisin in the Sun (New York: Random House, 1959).


349 “a media fiction”: Parlamentní listy, May 2, 2015.


a Nazi yearbook: This item can be found in the Zinc Room of the Villa Petschek.

a movie theater: For Laurence’s interest in using American films to combat Soviet propaganda, see, e.g., letter, Steinhart to Harold L. Smith, Executive, Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America Inc., August 28, 1945, box 82, Steinhart Papers, LOC.

the restorations all over the house: Photos of Shirley Temple with roofers, among other construction workers, 1989–1990, BFA.

We were quick to say yes: US Embassy in the Czech Republic, “U.S. Embassy Supported Prague Pride Festival,” August 17, 2015, https://cz.usembassy.gov/u-s-embassy-supported-prague-pride-festival-August-17/.


And Klaus had also publicly defended: “Controversial Batora to be Czech education minister’s adviser,” ČTK, April 4, 2011.


“No one prevents”: “Klaus Says Ambassadors’ Letter.”


“old lame duck”: “TOP 09 Ministers Leave Czech Cabinet Meeting, Want Bátora Sacked,” ČTK, August 17, 2011.


He was soon demoted: “Review of Controversies Linked to Czech Outgoing Clerk Batora,” ČTK, October 14, 2011.

