

The outline of the TNP
Ústie nad Oravou



Commemorative plaque for those interned
at the Ústie nad Oravou forced labour camp

"The idea of establishing a TNP in Czechoslovakia arose last year after the [Sokol] riot. At that time, it turned out that the reaction from the last elements of the capitalist class in Czechoslovakia was recovering from the crushing blow of February 1948's events, and that they were trying to regain lost positions or at least damage socialist progress."

Guidelines for the exploitation of the TNP

"Each and every individual counts who is saved for the socialist motherland."

Political vindication of TNP

"I pledge to my honour and conscience that I will be faithful to the Czechoslovak Republic, that I will uphold the People's Democratic Constitution, laws and regulations, and that I will perform my duties as a member of the Commission to the best of my knowledge. I promise that I will never betray the people or the principles of people's democracy, and that in all my deeds I shall only act for the benefit and interests of the people. I hereby so pledge."

KNV commission members' oath



TNP OVERVIEW IN SLOVAKIA IN 1948 – 1953

TNP	Established	Extinction	Capacity
Nováky, Prievidza district	6 December 1948	30 September 1951	1500 persons
Ilava	6 December 1948	25 June 1950	180 persons
Ústie nad Oravou	11 February 1949	30 April 1949	300 persons
Hronec, Brezno district	1 October 1949	20 March 1951	400 – 500 persons
Trenčín	25 June 1950	31 October 1950	300 – 400 persons
Ruskov, Košice district	1 October 1951	15 May 1953	?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

Recommended websites: www.upn.gov.sk; www.enrs.eu



• tasr •

FORCED LABOUR CAMPS IN SLOVAKIA 1948 – 1953

After February 1948, the communist regime enforced persecution aimed at consolidating power and intimidating the non-communist sections population. The adoption of the Law on Forced Labour Camps and the Law for the Protection of the Republic in October 1948, heralded the systematic persecution of alleged and real opponents. From 1948 to 1953, extrajudicial persecution was pursued by means of forced labour camps. Personal freedom could be deprived from three months up to two years just on the basis of an administrative decision that was made by the regional national committee's commission.

to real and perceived opponents. However, the Act's original idea with respect to social class and the political use of TNP were not fulfilled in practice. The position of forced labour camps as part of the prison system also remained unclear. Varying views on the meaning and functioning of TNP between leaders and lower officials of the Communist Party, as well as the low number of enlisted persons, led to the gradual cancellation of labour camps. From 1948 to 1953, **8240** persons were interned at TNP in Slovakia.

MEMORY OF TNP IN SLOVAKIA

Those placed into forced labour camps were not fully rehabilitated even after the communist regime had fallen. Sites of forced labour camps now have memorial plaques, such as the one in Nováky that serves as a reminder of those who suffered. An annual memorial day acts as a remembrance of the state's repressive actions against innocent citizens, which are typical of non-democratic regimes.

1948



Minister of National Defence, Alexej Čepička, who participated in forced labour camps' being established

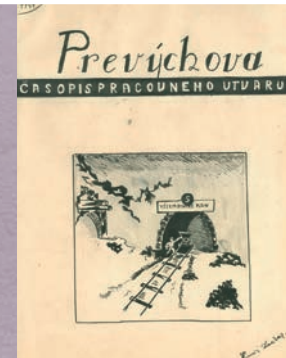
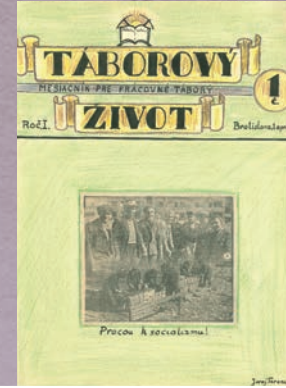
POVERENÍCTVO VNÚTRA, odbor št.b. 114
 Zn.: 84422/06-1/1949. V Bratislave dňa 11. decembra 1949.
 Krajské veliteľstvo št.b. **Veľmi súrne!**
 Bratislava.
 K číslu: /.
 Biskup Jozef a spol., sabotovanie 2-ročného a 5-ročného hospodárskoho plánu, vypracovanie návrhu na zaradenie do TNP.
 Prílohy: 1.
 V prílohe zasielam trestné oznámenie na Josefa Biskupa a spol. a tým, aby na všetky osoby v trestnom oznámení ste ihneď vypracovali návrh na zaradenie do TNP nesúhlasie na rozsudku súdneho pokračovania.
 Táto šíďam nech je u zaraďovacej komisii pri KNV v Bratislave zariadené, aby tieto pri svojom rozhodnutí o zaradení osôb do TNP vyslovila odmietie bytov a to najmä osobám, ktoré bývajú v Bratislave a u ktorých sa sociálne stanovisko je to umožní. Odmiet. byty oznámte oznámte tuzajšiemu odboru, oddeleniu št. byty po dohode s bytovým odd. BK odboru, boli tieto pridelené predovšetkým ženatým príslušníkom št.b.
 Prevedenie výkonu hlásite.

Za poverenika: *[Signature]*
 VI
 Dostlo dňa 14 XII. 1949
 Čís. 31727
 Prílohy: 1.
 Prílohy: 1.
 1266
 V Bratislave dňa 11. 12. 1949
 Vypracované na oddelení vnútra

Interior Commission proposal to send J. Biskup et al. to a forced labour



The map of TNP in Slovakia



Magazines of the TNP conscripts

Preparations for the Act on Forced Labour Camps (in Slovak *Tábory nútejnej práce*, TNP) began in mid-1948, based on the practical experience of labour units established in Slovakia in March 1948. In the draft version of the law, the **Minister of Justice Alexej Čepička** saw an opportunity to isolate unwelcome elements who had, nevertheless, committed no crime. Some members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (ÚV KSČ) such as Oldřich John, President of the National Assembly, recognised the proposal's unconstitutional nature, i.e. **curtailing freedom due to behaviour, rather than criminal activity**. Indeed, the lawmakers did not attempt to conceal their aim: "... to make the measure a tool of intense class struggle in the hands of the working class ...", and forecast over 30,000 internees.

CONSCRIPTS IN TNP

The Act on Forced Labour Camps was approved by the National Assembly after a scant discussion on 25 October 1948. The power to establish and administer TNP was entrusted to the Ministry of the Interior, while camp internments and sentence lengths were determined by a three-member commissions of regional national committees (KNV). The latter could also impose a ban or specify the place of residence in a determined territorial district after a subject's release from a forced labour camp.

The following persons were referred to TNP by regional commissions: those aged 18 to 60, physically and mentally fit, those shirking work (**loafers**), those that endangered the establishment of a people's democracy (**political subversives**) and economic life, especially public supply (**economic subversives**), and persons who assisted or enabled others in these activities (**helpers**). The Act's broad wording allowed KNV commissions to sentence almost anyone aged between 18 to 60 from three months up to two years at TNP, where internees underwent ideological re-education aimed at "*neutralising the capitalist elements in thought and deed, and directly encouraging an active part in the progressive efforts of workers.*" The Board of Appeal considered cases whereby the KNV commission did not accept an interment, or such person lodged an appeal within 15 days of an assessment. For political reasons, all decisions could be reviewed by the 'political commission' at the Secretariat of the Communist Party of Slovakia that comprised Štefan Bašťovanský, Gustáv Husák, and Daniel Okáli.

In August 1950, a new Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code entered into force. Specifically, the Resolutions of the Administrative Criminal Code replaced the Act on Forced Labour Camps and entrusted responsibility for placements into camps with the Criminal Commissions of District National Committees.

SYSTEM OF TNP IN SLOVAKIA

From 1948 to 1953, the commissions of Regional National Committees and subsequently the criminal commissions of District National Committees sent Slovak citizens to six forced labour camps with total capacity of almost three thousand people. They were located in **Nováky, Ilava, Ústí nad Oravou** during the construction of Orava dam, in **Hronec** for the Šverma Podbrezová ironworks, and in **Trenčín** and **Ruskov** where the stone was mined for Czechoslovak Railways. Although these camps had a less strict regime than prisons, they were fenced and guarded by National Security. Leading officials from the Communist Party and State Security criticized the social profile and low number of enlisted persons, as well as camps' under-used capacity and relatively high number of escapees. In early 1951, it was concluded that TNP had failed and would be phased out. The Ministry of National Security was only interested in TNP to provide labour for uranium mines, while the Ministry of Justice rejected FLC as unusable for custodial purposes. FLCs were officially abolished on 31 December 1952 and renamed as the Transitional Correctional Units. The last TNP in Slovakia was closed down on 15 May 1953 in Ruskov. Forced labour camps were established shortly after February 1948 when the communist regime had begun to legitimize its position through new legal norms, and openly stood up