



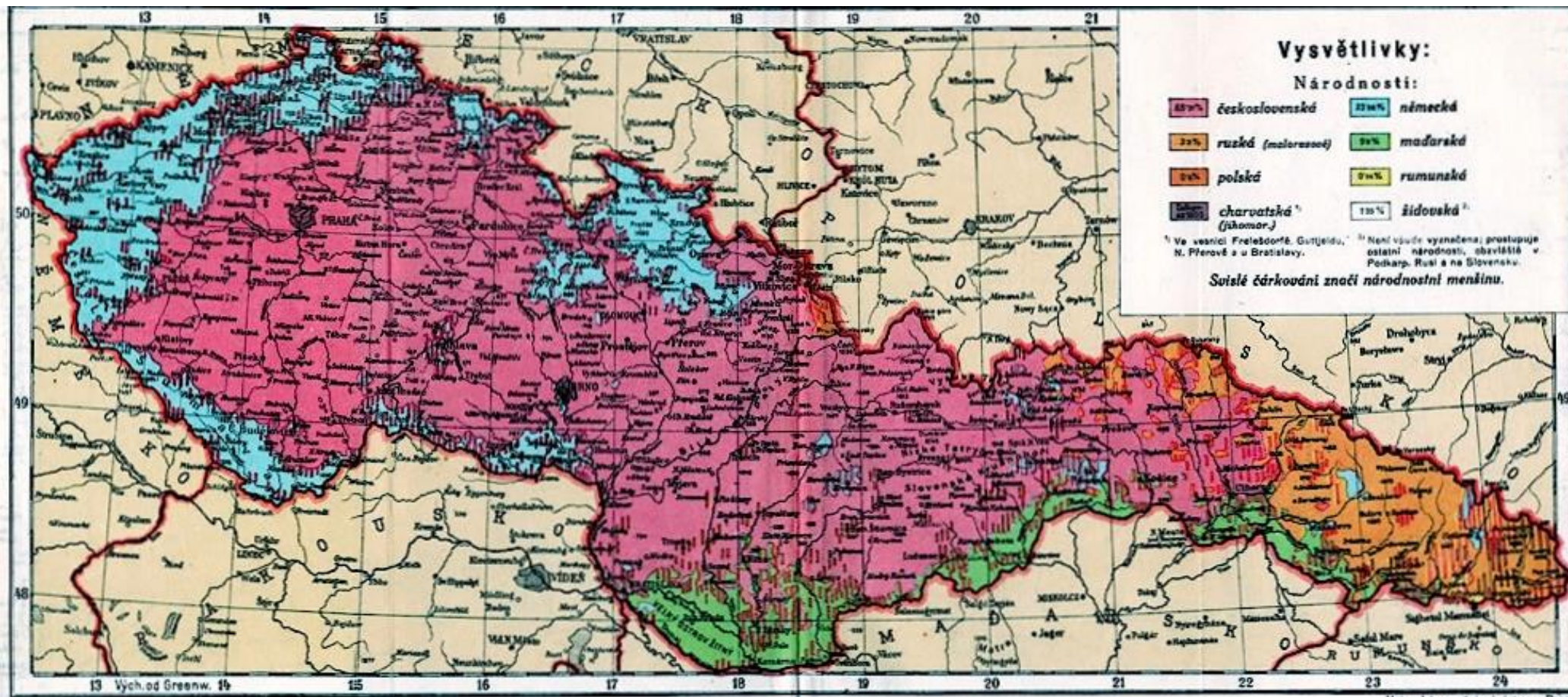
TSJEKKOSLOVAKIA UNDER 2. VERDENSKRIG: SENTRALE BEGIVENHETER OG FORTELLINGER

Tomáš Masař

1ST CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC



- 14th October 1918 - Czechoslovak National Council in France upgraded itself as provisional government → accepted by US, French and British government
- 1st republic was officially declared on 28th October 1918 at Municipal house by National Commission
- construction of „Czechoslovak nation“ and „Czechoslovak language“
 - there were less Slovaks (2 millions) than Germans (3 millions)
 - other nations – 750 000 Magyars, 450 000 Rusyns, 180 000 Jews, 75 000 Poles
- every nationality with over 20% in a district were allowed to have schools and administrative in their language

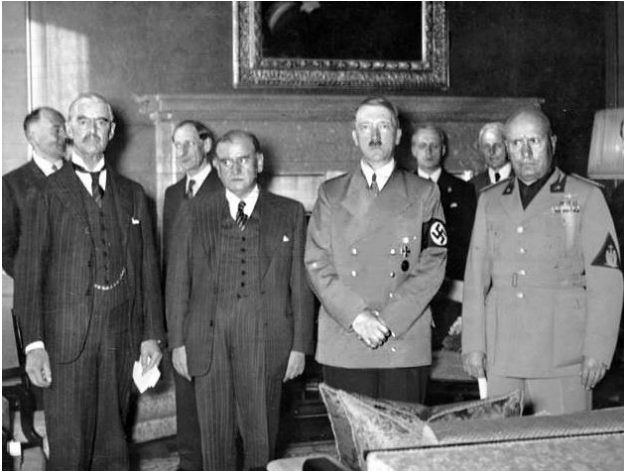


CZECHOSLOVAK DEFENCE

- October 1933 - Konrad Henlein founded a German nationalistic political party (*Sudetendeutsche Partei*) after a model of Hitler's NSDAP
 - 1935 – won the largest part of votes in elections (1 250 000) but not most of the mandates
- summer 1937 – Hitler asks his generals to elaborate plan of attack on Czechoslovakia („Fall Grün“)
- Czechoslovakia starts to build border fortifications (similar as Maginot Line on French border with Germany)
- March 12th 1938 – Austria annexed by Nazi Germany



MUNICH AGREEMENT



- early September 1938 – Hitler negotiates with British prime minister Neville Chamberlain about Sudets (wants to annex them)
- Sept. 29th – meeting of Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and Daladier in Munich → making a deal on Sept. 30th – CS has to leave Sudets, which will be annexed by German Reich
- great part of southern and eastern Slovakia and Ruthenia annexed by Hungary
- Poland annexed Czechoslovak part of Těšín and small parts of northern Slovakia
- CS lost most of the border defensive system, great part of industry and strategically important railway and road crossings





History

MUNICH AGREEMENT

*signed the Munich Agreement,
allowing Nazi Germany*

MUNICH TRAUMA: KEY POINT OF THE CZECH NATIONAL NARRATIVE

- The Czech national narrative emerged and had been artificially created since the mid-19th century on the base of romantic heroism
- the "age-old" struggle with Germanness was a crucial component of the narrative
- The capitulation after the Munich conference totally delegitimized the existing national narrative and thus the *raison d'être* of the state





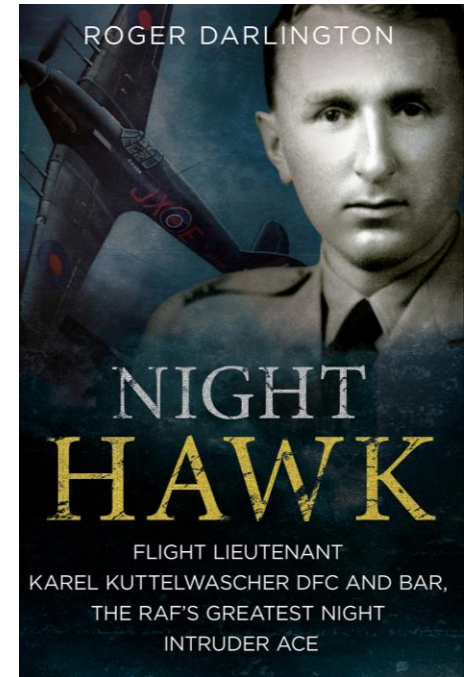
OCCUPATION

- one of the conditions of Munich Agreement was, that Hitler won't occupy the rest of Czechoslovakia
- Slovakia declared autonomy → March 14th 1939 – politicians Andrej Hlinka and Jozef Tiso (nationalistic Slovak People's Party) pronounced independence and became allies of Nazi Germany
- March 15th 1939 – the rest of Czech lands is occupied by Wehrmacht → *Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia*
- several of young Czechs and Slovaks left the country (many of them soldiers)



CZECHOSLOVAKS IN EXILE

- Czechoslovak exile government in London - president Beneš, foreign office Jan Masaryk → struggling for acknowledgement (no legacy of legal continuation)
- Main goal was restoration of independent Czechoslovakia with pre-Munich borders
- CS pilots in RAF → trained pilots, some of them fought already in France
 - 310., 312. and 313. Fighter squadrons
 - 311. Bomber squadron
- Troops from Northern Africa moved to GB → 1st Czechoslovak Armoured Brigade - fighting in eastern France after Normandy (Dunkirk)





RESISTANCE

- after March 1939 – several resistance groups – most of them head hunted until 1941
- Czech and Slovak paratroopers trained in GB by SOE (*Special Operations Executive*) → landing in Protectorate to help resistance groups
- September 1941 – SS Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich named Acting Reich-Protector in Bohemia and → “the Butcher of Prague”
- Exile government in London needs to prove their fighting power and leading position in resistance movement



OPERATION ANTHROPOID

- December 29th 1941 – Jozef Gabčík and Jan Kubiš landed near Prague and got in touch with resistance in Prague
- May 27th - Gabčík and Kubiš attacked Heidrich on his way to Prague → wounded and died on June 4th
- June 10th – small village Lidice is annihilated as revenge (all men executed, women and kids sent to concentration camps)
- June 18th – another paratrooper Karel Čurda betrays his comrades and Waffen SS start an attack of the church → after several hours of fights all 7 Czechoslovak paratroopers were either killed or committed suicide

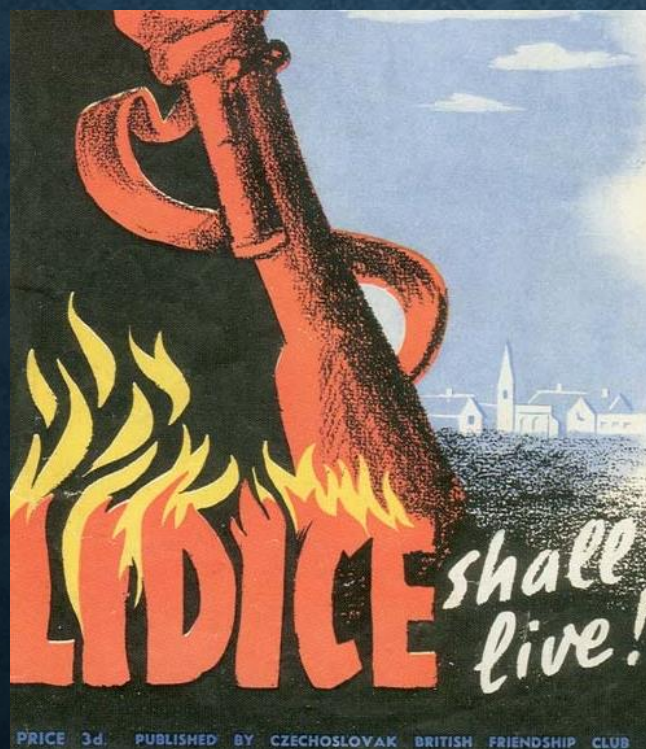




TOTAL FILM

FULL HD
1080p

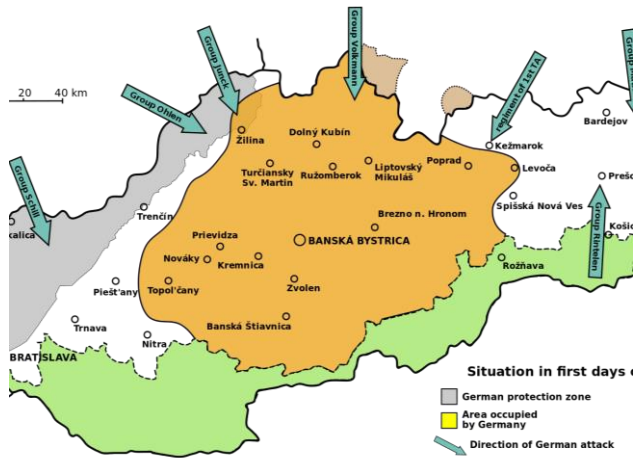
TRAILER CZ



CONSEQUENCES

- 248 people, who helped paratroopers were executed immediately, several others sent to concentration camps
- another village Ležáky annihilated (June 24th)
- assassination of Heydrich was extremely important for exile government → proved that they are worth to be ally → nullification of Munich Agreement (FRA – July 29th, GB – August 5th)
- Frank Knox (Secretary of Navy)
„If future generations ask us what we are fighting for [in World War Two], we shall tell them the story of Lidice.“

CZECHOSLOVAKS ON EASTERN FRONT



- some of the CS soldiers captured by Red Army in Poland in 1939 → POW camps (until summer 1941)
- exile government in London still disappointed because of Munich agreement → USSR new strong ally
 - new political partners → Czechoslovak communists in Moscow
 - Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty (December 1943)
- 1st Czechoslovak Army corps – part of Soviet Red Army (Sokolovo, Kyiv, Dukla)
- August 29th 1944 – *Slovak National Uprising* → resistance fights in central Slovakia (material and personal aid from CS Army Corps) – defeated, rest of them fighting as partisans

END OF WWII

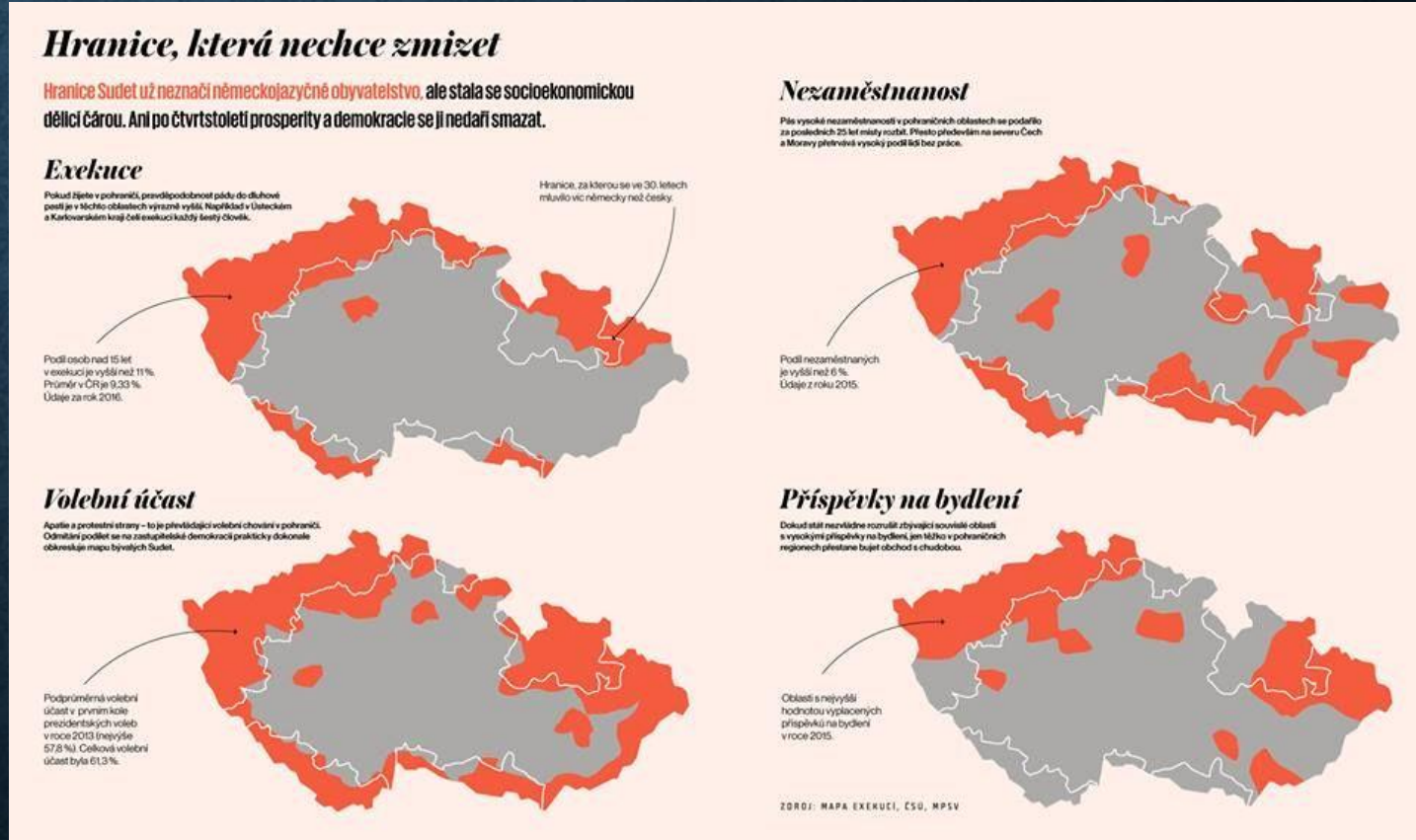
- May 5th 1945 - Prague uprising → fights on barricades against Germans
- 3rd US army (gen. Patton) reached the demarcation line (Karlovy Vary - Plzeň – České Budějovice) on May 6th → Patton wanted to help Prague but held back by Eisenhower
- Czechs lacking heavy guns → receiving help from *Russian Liberation Army* (gen. Vlasov) on May 6th
- German troops wanted to be captured by western allies → May 8th capitulation in Prague under the condition, that they can move west (Waffen SS didn't agree and continued to fight)
- May 9th – Red Army reaching Prague



- Sudet Germans deported from the country („final solution of the German question“) → *Beneš decrees*

AFTER WWII

- shortly after the end of the war „wild expulsion“ → local authorities, several acts of revenge
- after Postupim conference „organised expulsion“ → 1,6 million Germans deported to American zone, 800 000 to Soviet zone
- number of casualties 15 000-30 000
- huge consequences for the republic → losing great number of work power, intelligence, economical and social potential → Sudet areas resettled by newcomers (Volhynia Czechs, Ukrainians, Yugoslavs, Hungarians, Gipsies, etc.)



QUESTIONS AND POSSIBLE GREY ZONES CONCERNING CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN WWII

- Should Czechoslovakia defend in October 1938?
- Was operation Anthropoid worth it, concerning all those mass executions?
- What role played Czech industry for German military production?
- Did Czech people know about the *Holocaust* and what was their stand to the final solution of Jewish question?
- Was it correct to use the principle of collective guilt on all Germans?
- How to deal with the fact, that several Czechs took the revenge on German civilians during the so called „wild expulsion“?
- Was Soviet marshal I. S. Koněv the liberator or conqueror of Prague?
- Were the members of Russian Liberation Army (Vlasov army) traitors or rescuers of Prague?

Mnichovská dohoda

CESTA K DESTRUKCI DEMOKRACIE
V EVROPĚ



LITERATURE

