(ZŠ Bobrová 1)

So, are you joining or not?

The Story of Mr Havelka

Youth

Mr Antonín Havelka was born on February 2, 1894 in Věchnov at Bystřice nad Pernštejnem into a working-class family. He received only elementary education, considered, however, sufficient in his time. He was deeply religious and attended church services regularly. He and his wife raised three children; a fourth child had died. He worked as a miner the mine in Železinka ve Věchnově . We were told about his life by Mr Pancner.

Mr Havelka wanted to be a farmer, to plough the land. He decided to buya farm. In the village of Bobrůvka, there lived a certain Mr Havránek who got into debts and his property therefore went into auction. It was his farm that Mr Havelka was able to buy at an affordable price. His family moved to Bobrůvka and applied themselves to work at the farm..

Pressure from the IAC and the Communists

When the Communist party came to power, they intended to persuade all the farmers to enter local Integrated Agricultural Cooperatives (IAC). In Bobrůvka, the IAC was founded in 1951, however, as late as 1953 there weren't many who would join. . Mr Havelka refused to enter because he was fond of all that belonged to him.

“People worked on the field from morning to dawn, an official would come with a pack of Communists, they called the farmers from the fields into an office and , all of a sudden, wanted to persuade them to enter the cooperative? And if they'd refuse, they'd be sentenced to prison?. They threatened that the children would be stripped of the possibility good education. It was unheard of that that a farmer's children would be going to schools. They were to go from pitchfork to shovel.”

At the meetings (of the IAC), he was informed of how much of his own produce he'd be charged to hand over. All the farmers knew that there would be close to nothing left for their private use from what they were assigned to give to the regime. More threats were made about the hardship awaiting their children if they would not comply. Mr Havelka, however, fulfilled the contribution norms despite all the gauchery and remained firm in his decision not to enter the IAC.

How did he become imprisoned?

In 1956, Mr Havelka listened to an illegal western radio broadcast, where he learned that “in Hungary, they're throwing Communists into the Danube.” He thought that the same would happen in Czechoslovakia. When he went to look at his fields he saw members of the IAC ploughing there. He told them to stop working because in a while everyone would be tending their own land again. But the IAC members turned him in and he was sent to jail.

Court proceedings and prison

Mr Havelka dind't even ask for an attorney and did the defense by himself. However, no one else stood up for him at the courtand the people from Bobrůvka even turned against him. The reason could have been envy, fear, or simply the fact that the Havelkas had only recently moved in, “driftwood” as they say. He was sentenced to three years of prison.

In the prison house in Illava, Slovakia,

he was forced to hard labor from morning to evening and, he received food in proportion to how much work he had done. “In prison, folks had to work. If they failed to fulfill the daily norm, they wouldn't get any food. When work was over, there were political lectures. They worked about twelve hours per day, then there were the lectures, and if anybody said something wrong and a guard didn't quite like it, they beat them badly in most cases. If anybody protested they were shut into isolation cells. That meant up to a month in a cell, two by two meters. In the morning, their bed was locked-up and they had to stand the reaminder of the day.”

The Communist made the life of Mr Havelka's family bitter, too.. However, other villagers helped and supported them.

Consequences of imprisonment and further worries

When he came back from prison, Mr Havelka's health was very bad. The communists continued in their effort to force him to join the IAC even after his release. It was less the physical thanthe constant psychological pressure they exerted on him, e.g. waking him up early in the morning and trying to convince him about their “truth”. Notwithstanding it all, Mr Havelka, remained firm and joined neither the IAC nor the Communist party. What he thought was what he said and he also stood for it.

What happened after his death?

Mr Havelka died on June 4, 1979, his widow surrendered to the relentless pressure and entered the IAC, and so the Havelka family ended up like all the other families in the village. We are unaware of any other similar case from the period of collectivisation in Bobrůvka.

A newspaper article mentioning Mr Havelka, July 18, 1957, founded in Třebíč in 1919, no. 48

[…] Antonín Havelka from Bobrůvka from the district ofŽdár nad Sázavou and Bořivoj Daněk from Jiřice u Humpolce are two of them. Their occupation was agriculture and their duty was to contribute with the friuts of their work to others. Both had prosperous and well-equipped farms, Havelka over 30 ha and Daněk over 20 ha. At Havelka's farm, his wife and three sons, aged 15 to 30, could help. They were not inexperienced farmers. Indeed, they fulfilled the norms well enough during the occupation. Havelka even actively participated in the institutions of that society as a local chairman of the National Union. Havelka rented out a part of his land to six petty farmers who had to work on his fields throughout the year in exchange for this. With such people, it is not hard to guess why, after 1945 and especially after 1948, they suddenly stopped being farmers, did not plough over 3 ha of his land, failed to deliver thousands of litres of milk, eggs, meat, corn and potatoes. They made excuses, of course. Havelka claimed that he lacked financial resources, however, when the monetary reform took place he exchanged 200.000 Crowns . He could not deliver, but secret stashes of corn, eggs, milk etc. were found in his house in 1954.

Havelka was always rude towards officials and boasted that nobody could get the better of him. He grew even bolder during the contrarevolutionary conspiracy in Hungary, threatening cooperative workers and clearly suggesting that he was expecting a change of our regime. The senate of the Regional Court in Jihlava sentenced Havelka for sabotage to three years in prison, a five-year loss of honorary civil rights, expulsion from the district for six years and confiscation of property.

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