

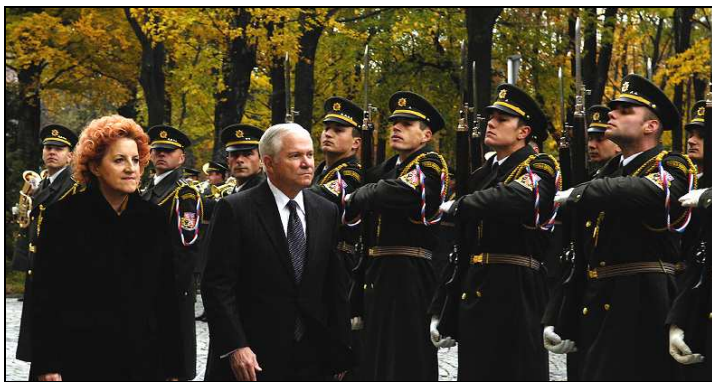


Newsletter Celebrates 1st Birthday!

October 2007

Secretary of Defense Gates in Prague

U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates visited Prague on October 23 to discuss missile defense and foreign military missions with President Václav Klaus, Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek, Defense Minister Vlasta Parkanová and opposition leader Jiří Paroubek. With regard to European missile defense, Gates said: “Our goal is an integrated system that would protect all of the members of the Alliance against threats such as from Iranian ballistic missiles. And I am pleased to say that in the recent past both NATO foreign and defense ministers have been supportive of this approach.”



Gates and Parkanova review Czech soldiers in Prague

To clarify media reporting, the United States did not offer to host Russians at sites in Poland or the Czech Republic. The idea raised in Moscow was for a reciprocal exchange of observers at missile defense sites in the U.S. and Russia. Gates stated clearly that, “If we were to explore measures of transparency with the Russians, such as having a presence here in the Czech Republic or in Poland at these sites, we would carry these proposals first to the Czech government, and then nothing would be done without the consent of the Czech government.” Secretary Gates arrived a week prior to further U.S.-Czech missile defense negotiations.

Ambassador Travels to Northern Moravia and Jičín

Ambassador Richard Graber, during his October 2 visit to the Prostějov base in central Moravia, decorated five Special Forces troops from the Prostějov Unit. The Ambassador stressed that the professionalism of the soldiers equals that of the best U.S. forces. The unit is ready to be deployed again to Afghanistan. In addition to meeting with the soldiers, the Ambassador and his wife, Alexandria Graber, made tandem jumps from 4000 meters above the Czech military base. The Ambassador was at a loss to describe the beauty of the experience. He also traveled to the Český ráj region or “Czech Paradise” in eastern Bohemia. Ambassador Graber is now an honorary citizen of

the town of Jičín, called “The City of Fairytales.” There he spoke with high school students about opportunities to study in the United States, toured the historic town square built by Albrecht of Valdstejn as well as a Czech-American dental company operating in Jičín.



Ambassador greets Czech soldiers after his jump in Prostějov

The Via Bona Awards for Philanthropy

Ambassador Graber hosted the Via Bona awards for corporate and individual philanthropy at the Residence. The Via Foundation, a leading Czech NGO, has awarded the Via Bona Awards for the past 10 years thanks to support from the Citigroup Foundation. Two Czech firms – Isolit Bravo and Orbit - received awards for their support of local charitable projects and Vodafone Czech Republic and Countess Mathilda Nostitz received awards for support of the Czech Blind Union.



Senator Petr Pithart at the ceremony

Monument of U.S. WW II Pilot in Brno

Brno, the Czech Republic’s second largest city, unveiled this month a monument to U.S. pilot William Kiggins, who was the only U.S. soldier to die in Brno during World War II. Officer Kiggins’s plane was shot down in the Brno region in 1944. The memorial is in the shape of a wing of Kiggins’s fighter P-51 Mustang, called “Miss Betty,” part of which was recently recovered.



Czech Experts Visit Kwajalein; Declare Radar Safe

Czech military and civilian health experts traveled to the Kwajalein Island at the beginning of October to assess possible health impacts of the X-band radar which the United States proposes to move to the Czech Republic if agreements are reached on the construction of a missile defense shield in Europe. Chief Public Health Officer Michael Vít, the leader of the expert team said the results comply with Czech norms. “The electromagnetic radiation near the radar is lower than when you have a cell phone to your ear,” Vít said. Their formal report will be available on the new Czech government information website <http://www.protiraketam.cz/>.

The EU and its Eastern Neighbors: Conference at American Center

On Friday September 21, the American Center hosted a seminar about the European Union’s policies towards its Eastern neighbors. The program included a panel about current relations with Russia, with views from both Europe and the U.S. The Center invited Nikolas Gvosdev, editor of *The National Interest*, a quarterly journal of international affairs and diplomacy founded by Irving Kristol. Gvosdev spoke about the American perspective. Among the other distinguished panelists were Prof. Christian Lequesne from the London School of Economics, Viktor Makarov from the Baltic Forum and Alexei Kuznetsov from Center for European Studies in Moscow. The event was co-organized by the Czech think-tank Europeum, Prague Security Studies Institute, and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.



Nikolas Gvosdev speaking in the American Center

U.S. Companies Share Renewable Technologies Know How

A trade mission of six U.S. companies came to Prague on September 17 to share with Czech counterparts the latest developments in renewable energy know how and to find new business partners. About 12 Czech firms and representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Czech Energy Agency attended the meeting in the American Center. Couple of days later, Plymouth Tube Company representatives signed a contract with a Czech firm doing business in energy that could eventually become Plymouth’s distributor.



Czech Television reported on October’s Renewable Technologies Fair on the National Mall in Washington D.C.

Professor Forman Talks about Hip-hop Culture and Youth Creativity

Professor Murray Forman, who studies the role of popular music in society and analyzes media industries and the creation of cultural content, with an emphasis on youth, race, and ethnicity, visited the Czech Republic in late October to speak on contemporary hip-hop culture in the United States, its many manifestations and creative power that accompanies this important cultural and social phenomenon of contemporary - not only American - society.

U.S. Voter Registration

U.S. citizens living abroad and wishing to register to vote in the presidential primaries should consult the following website: The Federal Voting Assistance Program at <http://www.fvap.gov/>. General information on the candidates, issues, campaigns and state primary dates is available at <http://usinfo.state.gov/politics/elections/>.

Other Upcoming Events

- Nov.7 Concert – Bred Mehdau Trio – Strings of Autumn, Rudolfinum, Prague
- Nov. 8 Seminar on Corporation Social Responsibility, VIA Foundation. American Center, Prague, 8 p.m.
- Nov. 14 Workshop – How to prepare a successful application form, AC, 4 p.m.