



November 2007

MD Negotiations Gain Momentum

Senior Czech and U.S. diplomats met again November 5-6 to work on an agreement which would govern U.S. missile defense cooperation in the Czech Republic. The agreement will define the operation of the missile defense system, the goals of the radar installation, the size of the facility, the command and control structure, and access of Czech soldiers and visits to the compound. Addressing the media at the conclusion of the November negotiations, Acting Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John C. Rood said the U.S. remains committed to the completion of the negotiations and establishment of the radar. He and Czech Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Tomas Pojar also announced that a Czech officer would be permanently present at the radar facility in Brdy. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Eric Edelman was also in Prague also November 6 to meet with Czech lawmakers and other officials before traveling on to Afghanistan. Negotiations will continue in mid-December.



Rood, Edelman, Deputy Minister of Defense Bartak and Pojar at press conference

Southern Moravian Towns Warmly Welcome Ambassador and Mrs. Graber

Ambassador and Mrs. Graber met with local leaders, students, NGOs and Rotary Club members in the towns of Znojmo, Moravsky Krumlov and Trebic during a November 6-7 trip to southern Moravia. They were hosted in Znojmo Mayor Petr Nezveda and toured the facilities NGO Protected Workshops, where handicapped people produce high-quality handmade crafts such as candles, baskets, and stuffed toys. Ambassador Graber also addressed the Rotary Club in Znojmo. At the next stop, Moravsky Krumlov Mayor Jaroslav Mokry, accompanied by girls dressed in local costumes, offered the Grabers the traditional Slavic welcome of bread and salt. The Ambassador participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a newly renovated hall to be used for weddings and other important events. The Grabers enjoyed tasting the famous Moravian wines and sweets. A highlight of the trip was

visiting the castle which houses the Alfons Mucha's Slav Epic, 20 enormous canvases of world renown. The last stop on the trip was the town of Trebic, where Mayor Ivo Uher and his staff arranged for the Ambassador to speak with 240 high school students. The Ambassador also visited the TEDOM company, which manufactures energy efficient buses.



Ambassador Graber in TEDOM bus factory in Trebic

Regional Journalists Get Insight into NATO and Missile Defense

On November 12-14, a group of Czech journalists from the Brdy region in Central Bohemia visited NATO headquarters in Brussels; a U.S. Army Garrison Schinnen in the Netherlands; and the NATO Air Base at Geilenkirchen, Germany, which hosts 17 AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) aircraft E-3 Sentry. The objective of the tour, arranged in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy Prague and U.S. NATO, was to give the journalists insight into the NATO structure and show how missile defense works within the broader security framework. The journalists, who write frequently about the planned U.S. radar in Brdy, appreciated briefings on the status of missile defense negotiations, the Polish and Russian positions, and the NATO role. U.S. Ambassador to NATO Victoria Nuland and Czech Ambassador to NATO Stefan Fuelle and other officials based in Brussels spoke at length with the journalists.



Ambassador Nuland with Czech journalists at NATO Headquarters

Conference on Religious Freedom – Tough Questions for Islam and the West

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and the Prague Civic Institute, in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and the American Center, convened a group of Muslim and Western thinkers to discuss the current relationship between Islam and the West and religious freedom in a cooperative atmosphere October 30. Ambassador Graber opened the event, entitled „What Unites Us, What Divides Us,“ together with RFE/RL President Jeffrey Gedmin. Deputy Foreign Minister Alexandr Vondra and Civic Institute Director Roman Joch also spoke. Senior diplomats and experts on Islam from the United States, Iraq, Turkey, Germany, Hungary and the Czech Republic called for intensified dialogue between western and Islamic communities at a conference.

Ambassador Tours Southwestern Brdy

Ambassador Graber toured the southwestern part of the Brdy region on October 31. Mayor Pavel Cizek from Spalene Porici and several councilmen met with him to discuss the planned U.S. radar and other local issues. The mayor then walked the Ambassador around the town and to a beautiful chateau. The group then visited the village of Borovno, where Mayor Josef Loukota pointed out the demarcation line where Soviet and U.S. troops met in May 1945. They continued to Hill 718, the potential radar site lying inside the Brdy military area. The visit concluded in Misov, where Mayor Pavel Hruby spoke with Ambassador Graber and the others over a hearty local meal.



From left, Mayor Cizek, Mayor Loukota, Ambassador Graber and Embassy Political Officer Dodman on Hill 718

Embassy Donates Unique WWII Liberation Footage to Czech National Archive

U.S. Ambassador Graber presented two hours of unique film material from the U.S. National Archives and Record Administration (NARA) to Vladimir Opela, Director of the Czech National Film Archive (NFA) in honor of Veterans Day, November 10. The footage was selected by experts of the Czech Film Archive and shows the U.S. Army liberating Western Bohemia in 1945. Cooperation between

national U.S. and Czech archives began when with former head of the NARA documentary section William Murphy identified previously unknown documentary footage of the liberation and shared it with Czech experts and residents of Western Bohemia on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. A member of the U.S. Marine Corps serving at the Embassy and Czech RAF veteran joined in the event..



Liberation of Western Bohemia by U.S. Army in 1945

Embassy Welcomes Junior Ambassadors from Southern Moravia

Ambassador Graber and other Embassy officials welcomed the third group of Junior Ambassadors to the Embassy on November 15. Under the program, the Embassy asks Czech Rotary clubs to nominate the best and brightest students from their region; the students and their Rotary sponsors are then invited to a day at the Embassy, and the students are designated "Junior Ambassadors." The program is intended to introduce the work of the U.S. Embassy to future young leaders of the Czech Republic.



Program participants posing in the U.S. Embassy

Upcoming Events

- Nov. 26 Panel discussion – “Countering AIDS in the 21st Century: Czech and U.S. Approaches”. American Center, 5 p.m.
- Nov. 29 Text reading – “1968” A Talk with Music and Images by Ed Sanders. American Center, 5 p.m.
- Dec. 2 International Women’s Charity Bazar at Hilton Hotel, Prague
- Dec. 11 Human Rights Awards, Residence, 5 p.m.

Enjoy Thanksgiving Day November 22!