

“For New Creative Deeds in the Name of Socialism and Peace.” In: Vilém Prečan, ed. *Charta 77 1977-1989. Od morální k demokratické revoluce* [Charter 77 1977-1989. From a Moral to a Democratic Revolution]. Scheinfeld-Schwarzenberg: Čs. Středisko nezávislé literatury and Bratislava: ARCHA, 1990. 35-38.

Our land, in its thousand guises so sweet and so dear to each of us, was given to us as a cradle and as a home. Its appearance and its history were shaped by the dreams, aspirations, revolutionary struggles, and the everyday labors of the many generations of those who work with their hands, as well as those who work with their minds. All of the best forces hidden in the people and its abilities, in its social strivings and in the whole of its national culture, have always been directed towards one goal: to make this land a happy home for the individual, home for an ever richer and more joyful life. The fiery outburst of the Great October Socialist Revolution [in Russia in 1917, BA] revealed the possibility of fulfilling this goal. The Great October Revolution began a magnificent era of the dramatic overturning of the social order, when from revolutionary effort, labor and battle a new social order emerged in the Soviet Union, one which liberated the working person and penetratingly influences the history of the entire world. The Great October Revolution – as we are commemorating this very year – has for six decades been illuminating the way to progress, the way to a happy future for the working people and the revolutionary forces of the entire world.

What was a dream for many generations became for us, after the liberation of our homeland by the Soviet Army, a real possibility, one that was gradually accomplished through the realization of the program of building socialism. And just like those who work with their hands understood, so did those who work with their minds, that a new epoch of human history, of material and spiritual history, had dawned. They grasped the need for collective human activity for the further progress of life, and of the history of their own land and the entire world.

Herein lies the source of our certainties, of our proud self-confidence, of an optimism that has not been made blind by our successes, unshaken by any difficulties or even by temporary failures. Here lies the source of our deliberate, concentrated and joyful activity; for it is with satisfaction that we measure our dreams and programs by their achieved results; for we see how, after a mere three decades, the face of our land and the lives of our people have changed; we see how daily, seemingly even routine everyday labor yields exquisite fruits, how the appearance of the world and the balance of power in it have been changed; for we feel that magnificent, unstoppable energy, with which the history of our land and world history surges forward as a result of common effort. And from this stems the undeniable fact that from the 'twenties until today the overwhelming majority of the geniuses of our culture's progressed and continue to progress in their strivings faithfully alongside the working class and the Communist Party, under the banner of the Great October Revolution.

The whole world is in motion. Our socialist world is strengthening and enriching the material and spiritual values destined for the welfare of man. The world of imperialism is torn by its internal contradictions and by crises, and its dogs of war are seeking to escape these by attempting to cast a shadow on our radiant achievements and on relations between countries and nations. We, however, will not permit an atomic firestorm, a catastrophe a thousand times more terrible than all past wars, to burn up the works of art that we have created over decades of concentrated labor in our socialist lands, and continue to create now. Our socialist world – at the head of which stands the Soviet Union, because of its breathtaking example of the construction of a communist society, its creative employment of all scientific, scholarly and technical discoveries, and its tireless initiatives for peace – has enough strength to defend the results of its labor.

We are happy that, with every one of our efforts, we become more integrated as members of a wider, international family. We are happy that, in these efforts, we march side by side with the artists of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, with whom we share the common goal of the development of socialist life. We find good friends among the artists and progressive people of diverse continents, to whom we are tied by the ideas of true humanism, one able to ensure work, freedom and security in life, and to satisfy the material and spiritual needs not of a chosen handful, but of millions of people.

That is why – in accord with the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference – we stretch out our hand across the borders of countries and continents, fully aware that true art and true culture should help individual nations and all of humanity move forward; they should create understanding among people of diverse countries; they should win people over to the humanistic perspective on peace and mutual cooperation in the interest of happy human life. That is why we hold in contempt those who, in the unbridled pride of their narcissistic haughtiness, for selfish interests, or even for filthy lucre in various places all over the world – even in our land a small group of such backsliders and traitors can be found – divorce and isolate themselves from their own people and its life and real interests and, with inexorable logic, become instruments of the antihumanistic forces of imperialism and, in its service, the heralds of disruption and discord among nations. Historical development convinces us that the spirit of peace and cooperation in the world is growing stronger, that it is precisely true culture that is one of the most effective means for achieving understanding between people, and that every artistic work that is committed to life and man's bright future is a dove bearing the message of tranquility on all continents.

We also want to think hard about these questions at our congresses. There, we will evaluate our work over the past years from the perspective of the meaningful, beautiful and

obligating calling that art has in a socialist society. We will also turn our gaze to the years ahead, because we want to keep pace with the other workers of our land, with its exciting dynamism. We want to fruitfully take advantage of the complete creative freedom that our society extends to us for its flourishing work of socialist construction. We want our new works in their broad palette of themes and artistic expressions to satisfy, as best as possible, the growing and widely differentiated cultural needs and interests of our contemporaries.

We are convinced that, so understood, the calling of the artist in our socialist society – of which we are proud and to which we want to devote the best of our strength and the programmatic goals that the congresses of the artistic unions set out for their continuing labors – will be an inspirational force not only for the members of the unions, but for all our artists, for all of the creative forces in our culture. We are convinced that the words of the congress programs will be transformed into artistic acts, into new novels and poems, into new symphonies, into new songs and chamber-music compositions, into new paintings and sculptures, into new works of drama and film, into new artistic performances.

We are convinced that the coming years will be filled with new creative acts closely bound to the interests of our workers, to the humanistic goals of our socialist society and to the politics of its leading force, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

The Executive Committee of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union
The Executive Committee of the Czechoslovak Union of Visual Artists
The Executive Committee of the Czechoslovak Composers' Union
The Executive Committee of the Czechoslovak Union of Dramatic Artists
The Central Committee of the Federal Union of Architects of the CSSR

Rudé právo, 29 January 1977