

## RUDOLF FRAŠŤACKÝ

### 1912 – 1988

Rudolf Frašťacký – chief representative of the Union of Small Farmers' Mutual Savings Banks and one of the significant figures in the Agrarian Movement from the end of the thirties and first half of the forties, was one of the personalities from Slovak economic and political life, who spent the rest of his life in exile, because of the changed political conditions after February 1948.



He was born on 11th February 1912 at Mošovce. After studying at his birthplace, he applied to study at the State Commercial Academy in Bratislava and later in Turčiansky Svätý Martin, where he completed his studies with an orientation towards business and took the final examination in the school year 1931-1932. The beginning of his professional career and his first contacts with the Agrarian Movement in Slovakia are associated with Ján Ursíny, who not only helped Frašťacký to get started, but continued to play an extraordinarily important role in his private life and political career. Ursíny's personal intervention in the Union of Small Farmers' Mutual Savings Banks and finally also Frašťacký's professional education with a commercial orientation opened to the new graduate of the academy the doors to the cooperative financial institutions, known under the name of small farmers' savings banks. He first became acquainted with basic banking work as an official in the Ružomberok savings bank. In November 1933, on the basis of a decision by the leadership of the union, he was transferred to the small farmers' savings bank in Turčiansky Svätý Martin, where he worked until 15th July 1934, when he was called up for active military service. When this ended, he returned to the Union of Small Farmers' Savings Banks in 1936 as an official in the revision department. The Bratislava headquarters of the savings banks gave Frašťacký new possibilities, which were reflected in his rapid professional advance. At a session of the board and supervisory committee on 26th August 1938, when he was 26, he was appointed as presidium secretary, with responsibilities including leadership of the personnel department. In the same year he had a unique opportunity to gain new experiences and knowledge abroad, when he undertook a longer study trip to Denmark and Holland with the support of the union. He devoted his attention mainly to economic and

industrial questions. From September 1938, he held the post of deputy director of Section „B“ - fodder crops in the Centre for Vegetable Agriculture in Bratislava, as well as a position in his original institution. In this function, which he held until 13th September 1931, he dealt with business concerning the malting and brewing industry, its records and the distribution of products. At the beginning of 1939, he

became personal secretary to the chairman of the board of the Union of Small Farmers' Savings Banks Ján Ursíny. At the same time, in the industrial department, he administered matters of purchasing, stocking and auditing of companies of interest to this cooperative association.

He left the services of the union at the end of 1941, but as a functionary in important economic organizations he remained active in the cooperative sphere. Until January 1943, he held the post of director of the Slovak Sugar commercial joint stock company. Later he performed the functions of director and procurator of the Bratislava company Cukrospol and head of the sugar department at the Supreme Supply Office. In parallel with these activities, he also devoted his attention to professional education of cooperative personnel at the Higher Economic Cooperative School in Bratislava.

His position in companies representing Slovak sugar abroad enabled him to make regular business trips abroad, especially to Switzerland. As one of the representatives of the civil wing of the anti-fascist struggle during the Second World War, he used his legal trips abroad to establish courier contacts with foreign resistance elements. Together with Dr. Jaromír Kopecký, a member of the Czechoslovak legation to the League of Nations in Geneva, he built on Swiss soil one of the most intensive and widest links between the leadership of the domestic resistance on one side and the Czechoslovak government in exile in London on the other. After the crushing of the uprising, he left Bratislava on 29th October 1944 in fear of repression, and went to Geneva, where he stayed until 15th April 1945. After returning home, he was appointed head of the fourth department of the Commission for Food and Supplies of the Slovak National Council. He held this function until September 1945, when the Presidium of the Slovak National



Council decided to make him commissioner at the head of this commission. A year later, in August 1946, he became deputy chairman of the Board of Commissioners in Bratislava for the Democratic Party. The change of political climate after February 1948 stimulated his departure to Switzerland and then to Canada, where he returned to finance after a break of years. He became a bank shareholder, president and deputy chairman of the credit committee of the Metropolitan Trust Company bank in Toronto. He also founded the company Frastacky Association Inc. and participated in establishing European Products Ltd. and Allwood Construction. For some time, he also ran the publishers Poľana in Zürich and Liber in Lausanne.

As a leading representative of the post-war Slovak emigrants, he also actively participated in the activi-

ty of various societies and committees. He was chairman of the central body of the political exiles: the Representative Council for a Free Czechoslovakia in New York and a member of the Czechoslovak National Association in Canada. In December 1963, he participated in founding a new exile association: the Permanent Conference of Slovak Democratic Exiles, which had a democratic, Slovak national and Czecho-Slovak state programme. Later he endeavoured to cooperate in the framework of the World Congress of Slovaks. With his wife, he founded the Rudolph and Viera Frastacky Graduate Fellowship, which provided grants for graduate study. He died in Toronto on 19th March 1988.

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