



PAVOL MAJLING (1911 – 1984)

Pavol Majling, born on 13.6.1911 at Rudlová, became a bank official immediately after completing his studies at commercial academy. From 1930 to 1948, he worked at the Mestská sporiteľňa (City Savings Bank) in Banská Bystrica. In 1944, he joined the partisans and became adjutant to the commander of partisan units in Slovakia.

After 1948 he was entrusted with directing the district savings bank and treasury in Banská Bystrica. After the formation of the State Bank of Czechoslovakia as the only bank with all functions, he was appointed first director of its Regional Institute for Slovakia on 2nd July 1950, with his seat in Bratislava.

Re-education of the staff of capitalist banks to work in the „bank of socialist type“ was regarded as a top-priority task at this time. Extensive training was organized and everything which smelt of „banking anachronism“ was eliminated. Majling himself did not invent the single centralized state bank. The Soviet Gosbank was the model for construction of the State Bank of Czechoslovakia. Majling was only the chief of Slovak banking, which was strictly subordinate to Prague. He only put this principle into practice. Its basic elements were applied with small corrections until 1991, when the State Bank of Czechoslovakia was divided into the central bank and commercial banks from 1st January.

Majling's banking career ended in March 1953, when he became commissioner of finance, and in 1954 chairman of the Slovak Planning Commission, which was the highest national economic position at the time. He was a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia from 1954 to 1962, and of the Presidium of the Slovak National Council in 1960-1961. However, he was finally expelled from the Communist Party in 1974 for political errors. These were connected with his activity as chairman of the Slovak Planning Commission, when he bravely engaged in the industrialization of Slovakia in the spirit of agreements during the 1945 currency reform, in spite of opposition from the central offices and many risks.

His letter of 27th April 1974 to the Presidium of the Communist Party of Slovakia after his exclusion from the Party speaks most tellingly about the difficulties and obstacles he encountered during industrialization. He speaks of the problems he encountered while working out a conception for the development of the magnesite industry, which contributed to building up modern works for the production of magnesite at Lubeník, Jelšava, Teplá Voda, Lovinobaňa and Hačava. We quote the following from his



letter: „A special analysis of the natural and economic conditions in Slovakia followed by discussions with the authorities of the State Planning Commission and the Ministry for the Chemical Industry led to a great wave of investment in development of the chemical industry in Slovakia, involving the expansion and reconstruction of existing capacities and the construction of new chemical works: Dusla at

Šaľa, the cellulose – paper industry at Štúrovo, Plasty at Nitra, Chemlon at Humenné, the works for producing polyester fibre at Senica and substantial expansion of the CHZJD works and Slovnaft at Bratislava. Being aware that especially engineering and metal production represent the modern structure of the economy and maturity of the working class, I emphasized the development of these branches in my work. The engineering - metallurgical complex in Slovakia was developed with extensive investments in construction at VSŽ (East Slovakia Ironworks), Tesla at Nižná na Orave, Piešťany and Stropkov, Transport at Medzilaborce, Drôtovňa at Hlohevec, Tatry at Bánovce and Čadca, a new works for producing transformers at Bratislava-Rača, reconstruction and extension, modernization of engineering and metallurgical capacities in the Brezno - Podbrezová district. I was personally very engaged in intensive construction of water works on the Váh, water-economic improvements in Záhorie and around the Malý Dunaj. I also gave constant attention to the construction of schools of all types. By the end of the second five year plan at the beginning of the sixties about 2000 classrooms were put into use each year.

He had the greatest problems with getting East Slovakia Ironworks (VSŽ), now US Steel of Košice, built. Majling was persecuted for it, although he truthfully stated: „And now VSŽ is the pride of Czechoslovak black metallurgy.“ Pavol Majling also significantly contributed to the reconstruction of Bratislava Castle, for which whole generations of officials and artists, including the artist Janko Alexy, whose bust has been unveiled in Bratislava Castle, had striven. „I also had to put up with the same accusations when I devoted all my energies to the legendary reconstruction of Bratislava Castle. Nobody from the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia and nobody from the former Board of Commissioners showed the slightest desire to support the proposal for its reconstruction, because of a panicky fear of being accused of bourgeois nationalism.“

The reservations of the state authorities towards the establishment of the International Computing Centre of the United Nations at Patronka in Bratislava (today the com-



plex of buildings of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and Statistical Office had a serious impact. When Majling submitted this proposal to the Prague government, the prime minister O. Černík and others vehemently opposed the idea. They argued that a computing centre would be an ideal place for organizing espionage against the state... In connection with these objections, Antonín Novotný signed a decree dismissing Pavol Majling from his functions. It went so far that after 1960 the Slovak Planning Commission was abolished. Majling was transferred to Prague,

where he worked as a minister – chairman of the Central Commission for People's Auditing and Statistics until 1967. Later he worked as ambassador to Bulgaria (1967-1968) and Greece (1969-1970).

The end of the life of P. Majling, implementor of the industrialization of Slovakia after the Second World War, occurred under the shadow of the intrigues of state security police. He died on 15th February 1984 in Bratislava.

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