

Ideological Imperative of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in Activity of Universities in Slovakia (1948–1953)¹

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Abstract The paper on the base of archive materials, published documents and scientific literature analyzes situation that occurred at Slovak universities after Communist coup in February 1948, with a focus on ideological pressure of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in this segment of society. The paper documents means that Communist Party of Czechoslovakia used to transform educational process and other activities in such a way that universities became subservient to communist ideology – the Marx-

ism-Leninism. The paper is devoting attention to setting-up the Marxism-Leninism as the self-standing topic into academic program of universities.

Keywords universities, Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Marxism-Leninism

The aim of the paper is to describe situation at Slovak universities after coup that the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC) enacted in February 1948 with focus on ideological pressure in sphere of university education. The paper points out by which means CPC imposed ideology of the Marxism-Leninism into educational process and influenced other activities of universities.

To the issues of university education in Slovakia during period of culminating Stalinism is in Slovak historiography devoted only

1 Paper is a part of project solving VEGA MŠVVaŠ and SAS No. 2/0057/20 *Elementary and Middle Schools in Slovakia in Context of Policy of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia during Years 1948–1953*. This article was translated by Milan Olejník ©.

minor attention. Not long ago a work by Soňa Gabzdilová titled *Ako sme študovali v totalite. Vysokoškolské vzdelávanie na Slovensku pod ideologickým diktátom Komunistickej strany Československa (1948–1953)* [*How We Were Studying during Totality. University Education in Slovakia under Ideological Dictate of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (1948–1953)*] was published (Gabzdilová, 2018). In the sphere of universities a research realized by Slovak historians was focused on issue of persecutions of students and pedagogues after communist coup. Course of purges on universities during years 1948–1953 is documented in paper written by Marta Glossová *Demokratizačná čiara. Študentské čistky na slovenských vysokých školách na prelome rokov 1948 a 1949* [*The Line of Democracy. Purges of Students at Slovak Universities at the Turn of Years 1948 and 1949*], published in *Soudobé dejiny*, and study written by Ivan Chalupecký *Príspevok k perzekúcii študentov a ich vylučovaniu zo škôl na Slovensku v rokoch 1945–1956* [*Contribution to Purges of Students and Their Expulsions from Schools in Slovakia during Years 1945–1956*] published in yearbook of Zips Historical Association *Z minulosti Spiša*. Several historians are researching status of university pedagogues in purges of all teachers at all degrees of schools – Jan Pešek, Jozef Žatkuliak (Pešek, 1998, pp. 186–193; Žatkuliak, 2001, pp. 655–680). Milan Olejník devotes his work to issues of ideological pressure applied upon particular areas of schools and universities (Olejník, 2018). At the Faculty of Pedagogy, University of Trnava, a collective researchers led by Blanka Kudláčová is probing education process in Slovakia (1918–1989) focusing on its pedagogical site. Results of other works are presented in several collective monographs and proceedings (Kudláčová, 2019; Kudláčová, 2016). Knowledge about status of university institutions are offering works published before year 1989, which, though affected by ideological concept, in factual sphere are offering many relevant information (Grešík, 1980). Czech historians are devoting their works to issues of education process after February 1948, namely to situation at universities, incomparably greater attention in numerous monographs, studies and articles. Development of Slovak universities had its own specific problems. Ideological content of highest degree of education was conceived and approved by highest institutions of CPC and was

identical for all universities in the Czechoslovak Republic. In this context, works of Czech historians are bringing relevant knowledge about universities also in Slovakia.

Education is an object of regulation of every state, however in democratic states there is a space for variability of educational content. This is different from authoritative and dictatorial regimes, which demand strictly defined form and content of educational process, including total subordination of pedagogues to ideological form of state at all levels of schools. Political parties of authoritative and dictatorial regimes, which have a monopoly of power, are sole authorities in determination of school policy.

This approach in a sphere of education in Slovakia was realized namely after the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, usurped in Czechoslovak Republic (CSR) absolute power over all parts of society, including educational institutions. After February 1948 the Communist regime in CPC paid a great attention to indoctrination of youth with ideology of communist parties, the Marxism-Leninism, which unlike religious world outlook and so called bourgeois pseudo sciences, was allegedly the only world outlook based upon “scientific” knowledge of society. According to the Marxism-Leninism, the main task of communist parties was removal of capitalist system and building new socialist society. This process was characterized by fight with so-called class enemies, into which were included capitalists, land lords, bankers, rich peasants, but also of middle class and small entrepreneurs among others. However, ideas of the Marxism-Leninism were at that time in Slovak society little known.

Leadership of CPC judged universities as ideologically unreliable, resistant to ideology of the Marxism-Leninism and perceived them as “hotbeds of hostile ideas”. According to leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the Resort of Schools it was necessary ideological transformation realized radically. In period when CPC usurped power in Czechoslovakia, universities worked essentially in same conditions as were active during the First CSR. They were thus perceived as corporative institutions, which managed academic senates led by rectors, in frame of faculties they were led by assembly of professors

and deans. State interfered into activities of these bodies only in minimal measure. It were academics senates and assemblies of professors that guaranteed traditional autonomy of universities and this was for CPC unacceptable. University students had traditionally free choice of lectures and throughout control of their study was considerably limited and inconsistent.

Though after February 1948 no regulations, which would fundamentally change work of universities were issued, universities were affected by coup and became precursors of definitive subjugation of universities by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. The monopoly of power CPC enabled already during 1948/1949 to implement, even without issuing appropriate legal norms, reforms limiting academic freedoms.

The most striking display of new ruling power in the sphere of universities were activities of action committees, which were emerging immediately after February 1948 in the whole society. In spring 1948 they gained a great power and they could extract from public life basically any person. Action committees organized purges namely in political and social organizations, but their activities affected also economic, cultural and sport areas. They were composed mostly of members of CPC, who took initiative in creation of all state organs. The only political organization, which had a full control over action committees was CPC. In Slovakia, according to decision the Presidency of Central Committee (CC) of Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS)², namely Secretariat

2 The Communist Party on Slovakia established in January 1921 and in May of this year united with the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. In May 1939 Slovak Communists became organizationally independent and assumed name the Communist Party of Slovakia. With CPC, CPS had common political line and common foreign leadership in Moscow, led by Klement Gottwald. After renewal of the Czechoslovak Republic in spring 1945, political line of CPS was increasingly influenced CPC. In line with gradual centralization of management of society after February, organizational unification CPC with CPC was initiated. The Communist Party of Slovakia became only territorial organization of CPC.

of CC CPS.³ Action committees, which were not created by any legal procedure, became significant “revolutionary” institutions usurping power in the Republic.

A common denominator of establishment of action committees at universities was an initiative of left oriented students. Their communist representatives assumed active role in after-February purges at universities (Devátá & Olšáková, 2010, pp. 34–35). Therefore, members of action committees were composed, besides pedagogues, also from left-ist students, who made decisions about further activities of professors and senior lectures at universities. Action committees were gradually established at all Slovak universities, faculties and at several university dormitories in Bratislava. Leading institution of action committees was the Central Action Committee of the Slovak National Front of Slovak Universities established on March 3, 1948. Action committees initiated a system of verifications in frame of which they probed attitudes of teachers and students toward regime and their political reliability (Straka, 1978, pp. 106–125; Černák, 2014, p. 252). These verifications targeted primarily persons who were suspected to be hostile to new regime. In frame of verification were removed from universities namely professors and senior lecturers, who belonged to elite of contemporary scientific community in Slovakia. Because of negative attitude of a large number of university pedagogues toward communist regime, universities became primary target of verifications (Jareš, 2012, pp. 20–53; Chalupecký, 2015, pp. 161–169). Though academic senates and professors assemblies, composed of professors and senior lectures, were still active, they were “cleansed of undesirable elements”. These institutions were enlarged by newly appointed members of action committees from ranks of students and school employees, who were mostly members of the Communist Party. The Ministry of Schools, Sciences and Arts (MSSA) legalized this process via acts issued on 13 March and on May 3, 1948, which ordered that numbers of students and school

3 *Meeting March 1, 1948*. F. Central Committee (CC) of Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS), presidency, C. 789. Slovak National Archive (SNA), Bratislava.

employees would be no larger than half of total number of members of scientific community.

Verifications of students and pedagogues realized after February 1948 by action committees continued during years 1949–1950 as a part of fight for rebuilding of society in line with ideology of the Communist Party. In frame of “cleansing”, euphemistically named “democratization”, hundreds of students and tens of professors and senior lectures and assistants had to leave Slovak universities (Gabzdilová, 2018, pp. 56–85; Glossová, 2019, pp. 189–226). These people were marked as enemies of the Republic, reactionary elements, minions of capitalists, or persons who were under influence of religious ideology.

Since school year 1949/1950 applicants of universities had to absolve entrance interviews. Primary condition for admission was a “class” origin. A significant role fulfilled educational institutions named *the State Courses for Preparation Workers for Universities*, in which for a period of one year young workers and peasants without absolved high school should have been prepared for a study at universities (Urbášek & Pulec, 2012, pp. 111–123; Gabzdilová, 2018, pp. 86–110). By implementation of this measure, CPC was pursuing to change the “class” structure of students of universities and this way to increase representation of workers and peasants at universities and by this way to broaden ideological influence among students. Communists did not trusted contemporary intelligentsia and their aim was raise a new “socialistic” intelligentsia, coming out of working and peasant families (Maňák, 2004, pp. 110–155).

However, after several verifications, which were realized during years 1948–1950, after implementation of admission interview and after entry of absolvents of state courses, leadership of the Communist Party and the Resort of Schools were not satisfied with situation, which existed at universities in sphere of ideology. During the gremial session of the Commission of Schools, Sciences and Arts (CSSA) it was concluded that “ideological issues, actual issues of internal and foreign political and economic life are not founding breeding ground at universities.

Universities are still torn off from life and are limp behind speedy tempo of our socialist build-up”.⁴

On all levels of school system, including universities, leading position of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was established. Members of CPC were nominated into all leading positions of university institutions, starting with rectors, deans, vice-deans and secretaries or chairmen of departments. A significant role had organizations of Communist Party, created at individual faculties. Organizations of the Communist Party, established at faculties in Bratislava, managed the University Committee of CPS. The University Committee CPS were set-up also in the second university center in Slovakia at Košice (Grešík, 1980, pp. 134–137). Primary function of organizations of the Communist Party was to oversee implementation of decisions of the Central Party Organizations, control fulfilment of ideological program of the Party and an elimination of any signs of independent thinking among pedagogues (Olejník, 2018, pp. 50–51). Organizations were fulfilling an important role in implementation of the Marxist-Leninist ideology at universities.

An important obligation in process of realization of fundamental changes in organizational reconstruction of universities had pedagogues (Connelly, 2008, pp. 234–240). Their task was to raise students as persons devoted to new socialistic regime and identified with ideology of the Marxism-Leninism. Ideological rebirth of universities was, according opinions of leaders of the Resort of Schools and CPS, to a large extent determined by “Bolshevik ideology and communist resolution” of professors, senior lectures and teaching assistants.⁵ However, as Viliam Široký mentioned at the IX Congress of the Communist Party of Slovakia in May 1950, upbringing of young generation was frequently entrusted to deliberate enemies of socialism and of the Czechoslovak Republic (Protokol IX. sjazdu Komunistickej strany Slovenska, p. 71). Similarly critically judged university pedagogues the Commissioner

4 F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 178, Inv. No. 462. SNA, Bratislava.

5 F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 179, Inv. No. 467. SNA, Bratislava.

of CSSA Ernest Sýkora, according to whom namely pedagogues were the most unreliable segment of university environment.⁶

Similarly, at session of Secretariat CC of CPS on June 14, 1951, E. Sýkora declared that many university pedagogues are still oriented toward “decadent bourgeois science”. In valuation of E. Sýkora, they were not “fired-up for socialism. They viewed scientific world outlook still as a political case, they detaching world outlook from scientific and pedagogical work, thinking that must be limited to lectures of social sciences. Even if they are studying the Marx-Leninism, they do not know how to apply it in their work”.⁷ According to E. Sýkora, many university teachers allegedly stagnated being burdened by obsolete knowledge. They held-on to “capitalistic science” which they had been studying in the past. Therefore, it was necessary to led them to study of Soviet literature and to demand from them that they included in their lectures works of Soviet authors. University teachers were criticized namely for their alleged failure and in many cases reluctance to acquire the Marxist-Leninist ideology and identify with it. Consequently, it was necessary “to take care about ideological accretion of teachers, mainly absolvents of bourgeois science, who many are possessing an honest endeavor to deepen their knowledge the Marx-Leninism”.⁸

The University Department of Commission of Schools, Sciences and Arts (CSSA) organized during summer 1951 at time of summer vacations, political and professional classes of university teachers at Mlyňany and at Betliar. Three weeks lasting courses, organized in two segments, were attended by 130 university pedagogues, including professors and senior lectures.⁹ According to CSSA, courses were carried

6 F. Central Committee (CC) of Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS), Secretariat, C. 12, Arch. Unit 29. SNA, Bratislava.

7 F. Central Committee (CC) of Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS), Secretariat, C. 20, Arch. Unit 22. SNA, Bratislava.

8 *Summer School of University Teachers*. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 179, Inv. No. 467. SNA, Bratislava.

9 *The Report about Political-professional Schooling of University Teachers at Mlyňany and Betliar*. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 180, Inv. No. 479. SNA, Bratislava.

on in atmosphere high working discipline.¹⁰ Evenings, which were devoted to discussion, shown that university teachers till then did not devoted enough time and attention to the Marxism-Leninism and many of them were for the first time introduced to its ideas. During courses were given several lectures, which should have been sources of knowledge for university teachers, for example Socialistic public health, About idealism in chemistry, Chemistry and socialistic production, Class nature of science and art, About Pavlov and its lore, Foundations of economy of capitalism, Foundations of economy of socialism and many other lectures.

The CSSA¹¹ valued courses positively and highlighted their contribution to formation of new ideological attitudes and positive relation to socialistic society in ranks of university pedagogues. Participants of session, organized by CSSA in October 1951, acknowledged that “it was a grave mistake when in last school year was not realized a similar course, which, as confirmed by this year experience, is helping

10 Schedule of work was as follow: time from 8.00 until 12.00 was reserved for individual study recommended literature , during afternoon (13.00–20.00) study of scientific works covering scientific specification of participants, evening hours were reserved for discussion.

11 In CSR after World War II. existed asymmetrical model of political arrangement. On the whole level was active central government and central parliament. In Slovakia the Board of Commissioners – an executive institution and Slovak National Council, which had legislative power. However, in Czech part of the Republic such institutions did not existed. During one year (June 1945 – June 1946) the National Front, central government in Prague and the Slovak National Council concluded three Prague Agreements. They divided competences in legislative and executive sphere among Slovak national institutions. A radical interference into competences of Slovak institutions brought namely third Prague Agreement. Chairmanship of the Slovak National Council, similarly as before, named the Board of Commissioners, but its composition must be approved by the central government. Commissioners administered oath to prime minister. The third Prague Agreement established an individual responsibility of commissioners to ministers, which was binding for commissioner in relation to minister of schools. Minister of school of Prague government was authorized to perform its authority via members of its office with knowledge of commissioner. Commissioner of schools was subordinated to minister of schools.

overcome lofty academic attitude and individualism exhibit by university teachers and explain to them political and economic tasks of our socialistic build-up and get them for its fulfilment”.¹²

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia principally refuted political neutrality of educational institutions. Especially negative approach expressed CPC after its IX Congress in May 1949 and on Slovakia also CPS after its IX Congress year later. The Minister of Schools, Sciences and Arts, Zdeněk Nejedlý, in his speech at IX Congress of CPC in May univocally defined the Marxism-Leninism as the ideological base of education in Czechoslovak Republic, as allegedly only scientific discipline (*Protokol IX. řádného sjezdu Komunistické strany Československa*, p. 127). Commissioner E. Sýkora in article *Our Schools after IX Congress of CPS*, published in periodical *Jednotná škola (United School)*, expressed opinion that schools never stayed outside of politics, always had class character and served ruling class. “It is true, natural and fully understandable, that if bourgeois society wanted with help of schools to achieve its dirty exploiting goals, which were in conflict with aims of working people, it must somehow obscure its aims [...]. Equally self-evident matter is that after acquiring power by workers, aims which serve working people will be not kept secret [...] but they will be always openly accentuated. Our political goal is build-up of socialism. Hence, schools must serve to this goal and raise young builders of socialism” (Sýkora, 1950/1951, p. 13).

Similarly, in a concrete form expressed this demand after IX Congress of CPS to universities Igor Hrušovský,¹³ when he said that political nature of “university is manifesting itself in principle that all educational and scientific work is penetrated via method of the dialectic materialism. All work at universities must come out from basis of the Marxism-Leninism and at the same time be developing in fight against pseudo-scientific and idealistic theories. Only by fulfilling this condition our professional and scientific cadres will be able to be close

12 F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 180, Inv. No. 476. SNA, Bratislava.

13 Igor Hrušovský during period of school years 1950/1951 – 1952/1953 was rector of the Slovak College of Technology.

to builders of socialism, to our working class” (Hrušovský, 1950/1951, p. 118).

The base of education and activities of universities were clearly defined. Education, but also scientific work at universities had to be in harmony with elementary thesis of the Marxism-Leninism. According to opinions of leaderships of CPC and CPS, pedagogues and students were obligated not only to learn, but primarily to identify with ideas of communist ideology. Different opinions were not accepted, refused was any free discussion, which was natural in academic environment before February 1948. At universities was in the year 1948 studying the generation born in the early 1930s. They could only remember period of the First Czechoslovak Republic. They have more accurate memories on the First Slovak Republic and years after the World War II. A majority of them was religious, mostly Catholics, who were raised in religious families and schools. Therefore, to “reeducate” these young people who were older than eighteen years, to change their ideological outlook was not simple. However, not all university students were religious, a minority of students inclined to leftist ideas, including communist ideology.

Whilst during existence of the First Slovak Republic educational institutions of all levels were upbringing pupils and students according Christian outlook, which was prevalent faith among majority of Slovak population, after February coup ruling the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was by all means, including violent measures, trying to impose the Marxist-Leninist ideology as the only correct and true world outlook. Other ideologies were classified as bourgeois, reactionary and hostile to socialist society (Zavacká, 2017, pp. 103–109). According to leadership of CPC and the Resort of Schools, it was necessary that young generation “would enter life armed by the most progressive outlook, by the Marx-Leninism, world outlook of working class [...] the Marx-Leninism must become in hands of our new intelligentsia a mighty weapon against reactionary ideology of dying-out

bourgeoisie – against bourgeois nationalism, cosmopolitanism and religious obscurantism”¹⁴

A significant tool of change was to be teaching of the Marxism-Leninism at universities. Educational process started gradually and in Slovakia started during summer semester of academic year 1948/1949 via implementation of topic named social sciences, which were included in study program of universities. Lectures were read at all faculties in Slovakia to the extent of two hours weekly. Initial theme was *Development of Socialism from Utopia to Science and People's democracy on Road to Socialism*.¹⁵ Thereafter space was given to study of dialectic and historic materialism. During second, third and fourth year was at universities during winter semester lectured *the History of the Communist Party of Soviet Union* and during summer semester *the Political Economy*.¹⁶

Because insufficient number of qualified pedagogues, lectures were realized for all students of one year of given faculty jointly. In year 1949 the Secretariat of CC CPS nominated first lecturers. They were Jaroslav Čelko (professor of the Faculty of Pedagogy, Slovak University Bratislava, Leopold Hanzel (director of the Central Political School of CPS), Andrej Siracký (professor of the Slovak University), Štefan Rehák (rector of the College of Economic Sciences), Štefan Jaššo (member of CC CPS) and Ľudovít Bakoš at that time acclaimed authority in pedagogic.¹⁷

14 *Učiteľské noviny*, 1952. Year II, No. 39, September 25, p. 1.

15 Lecturers of the first part of course were: Leopold Hanzel, Miloš Gosiorovský, Milan Lajčiak, Anton Smutný, Jozef Čihák, Lívia Ivaničová, František Pazúr, Ignác Rendek, Igor Hrušovský, Andrej Siracký, Topoľský, Rehák, Jaroslav Čelko-Nikluščin, the second: Július Šefránek, Eugen Palášthy, Ladislav Kurták, Pavol Király, Blanka Svoreňová, Samuel Takáč, Daniel Okáli, Oskár Jeleň, Jozef Valentíni, Jozef Fraňo, Viliam Šalgovič. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 1, Inv. No. 4. SNA, Bratislava.

16 *Proposal for Nomination of Professors at Universities*. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 17. SNA, Bratislava.

17 *Proposal for Nomination of Professors at Universities*. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 17. SNA, Bratislava. Next year were added Ján Gero, Vladimír Mikuláš, Jozef Djubek, Jozef Beniska, Mária Janzová, Štefan Chochol, Jaroslav Klaučo, Gertrúda Gyárfášová, Václav Vačok, Róber Hrbek, Ján Kocka, Vladimír Cirbes, Kalo Slivka, Andrej Červený.

Lack of pedagogues qualified to teach topics of social sphere was solved in several ways. Some pedagogues began to teach after completion state lectures for preparation of workers for attending universities. The most “progressive” absolvents became assistant teachers of social sciences immediately. Others participated on six months lasted courses organized by the Central Political School of CPS. Another group of students begun to study dialectic and historic materialism at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Slovak University in Bratislava. A selection of students “dedicated to the Party” was selected from various faculties, who after undergoing “systematic preparation” at the Central Political School of CPS, entered university pedagogic process as assistants. However, a majority of lectures was realized by external readers, who could not devote to preparation to lectures sufficient attention which had a negative impact to quality of teaching. People responsible for social sciences teaching, were obliged to participate on various courses, frequently organized in their personal free time and during summer vacations. Lectures of social sciences content should become “significant tool of ideological transformation” of universities, but as is quoted in the Report about Universities “they in their majority were perfunctory, eclectic, vulgarized the Marx-Leninism and were suffering from lifeless formalism”.¹⁸ Organizational structure of social sciences teaching was not covered by educational institutions, but provided by organizations of Communist Party. This division contributed to diminished interest on part of functionaries of faculties who were responsible for realization of lectures. A negative factor was also perception of topic of social sciences in academic environment. University pedagogues and students perceived social sciences only as secondary topic. Teaching of social sciences is possible to perceive rather as schooling of agitation about fundament of ideology, than study of the Marxism-Leninism corresponding to level of university education (Devátá, 2020, pp. 178–179).

18 F. Central Committee (CC) of Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS), Secretariat, C. 22, Arch. Unit 20. SNA, Bratislava.

Ideological upbringing of students was initiated by the Political Secretariat of CC CPC on November 2 and November 8, 1951 (Devátá, 2020, pp. 192–194). At all universities in Czechoslovak Republic ideology of the Marxism-Leninism according to Soviet example, were to be implemented into a study program. The teaching time of this topic was decided to be four hours weekly. Determined were also changes in teaching content of (the most significant was increase of teaching hours devoted to history of the Communist Party of Soviet Union) and decision about systemization of departments of the Marxism-Leninism. The Ministry of Schools, Sciences and Arts (MSSA), after cited decision adopted by CC CPC, issued organizational directives for establishment of departments of the Marxism-Leninism fundamentals. Teaching of the Marxism-Leninism should have been realized at three types of departments: 1. departments of fundamentals of the Marxism-Leninism; 2. departments of dialectic and historic materialism and 3. departments of political economy. According to MSSA establishment of departments was necessary, because “one of the most important tasks of universities is constantly improving quality of teaching of the Marx-Leninist ideology”.¹⁹ MSSA was setting-up following structure of departments, which should realize teaching of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. It was decided that at the Slovak University in Bratislava and at schools of fine and performing arts going to be operational three departments – 1. department of fundamentals of the Marxism-Leninism, 2. department of dialectic and historic materialism and 3. department of political economy. At the Slovak College of Technology and at the College of Economic Sciences, Departments of fundamentals of the Marxism-Leninism and Department of political economy. At colleges in Košice departments of the fundamentals Marxism-Leninism and political economy.²⁰ Above mentioned departments were attached to rectorates (deans) of universities and were secured teaching at corresponding departments.

19 F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 397. SNA, Bratislava.

20 In Košice there were following colleges: the College of Agriculture and Forestry, the Veterinary Faculty and the Branch of the Faculty of Medicine of the Slovak University and the Branch of the Faculty of Pedagogy of the Slovak University.

All internal pedagogues teaching at above mentioned departments were subordinated to rectorates, or dean offices of schools where departments were established. Activities of departments were organized and managed by directors, who were nominated (recalled) by minister of education, in Slovakia commissioner. In frame of the department, in case of need, could rector, in agreement with dean, establish cabinets of the Marxism-Leninism.

The task of departments was primarily to provide teaching of the Marxism-Leninism on the base of curriculum issued by MSSA containing lectures, workshops and consultations and conclude course via examination. The task of departments was also to develop “ideological life” at universities and last but not least, to assist university pedagogues in study of the Marxism-Leninism.²¹ Examinations of the Marxism-Leninism were specific. The goal of examinations was not only verify level of knowledge of students, but to evaluate the whole profile of students, their political development and activities in social and political organizations. Students could have been excellently prepared for examination, “but if they ignore required activities, if they are passive in social and mass organizations, if they are slovenly, they cannot obtain best marks. We are endeavoring to utilize results of examinations educationally and either positive or negative valuation justify in front of collective”.²²

In Slovakia first departments of the Marxism-Leninism were established in the winter semester of academic year 1951/1952. However, on the end of 1951, all departments were without directors and workshops were prepared by students attending second, third and fourth year of colleges. According PSSA they manned almost 95% of teaching

21 *A Report about State of Study of the Marxism-Leninism at Universities*. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 397. SNA, Bratislava.

22 *A Statement about State of Study of the Marxism-Leninism at Slovak College of Technology and Partial Evaluation of Other Examinations*. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 397. SNA, Bratislava.

positions.²³ In such state, curious situations occurred. For example at the Slovak Technical College in Bratislava, where workshops were lead exclusively by students and politically conscious members of CPC, “drawback was that these students were leading workshops in their own class”.²⁴

Gradually, also departments of dialectic and historic materialism and of political economy were established. The Ministry of Schools, Sciences and Arts instructed rectors and deans to set-up and equip departments of dialectic and historic materialism until March 1, 1952 and department of political economy latest until June 30, 1952. The Commission of Schools, Sciences and Arts as a follow-up of measures adopted by MSSA, dispatched to all rectorates and deans offices a letter in which emphasized that “teaching of the Marx-Leninism at colleges must become the most important part of study of all students. Therefore, it is necessary that our rectors and deans functioning at universities and colleges increase care about teaching of the Marx-Leninism at schools”.²⁵

At the outset of 1952 the Commission of Schools, Sciences and Arts and CC CPS initiated survey activities realized by departments of fundamentals of the Marxism-Leninism (departments of historical and dialectic materialism and political economy were not working yet). In report submitted by Ludovít Bakoš during session of the Presidium of the Central Committee of CPS in May 1952, informed that pronounced drawback of teaching of the Marxism-Leninism is “disaffectedness” from praxis of socialistic build-up. The most relevant issues were allegedly lectured without giving reason for their explanation, in a dry manner and uninterestingly. According to L. Bakoš, lectures were

23 *A Report about State of Study of the Marxism-Leninism at Universities*. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 397. SNA, Bratislava.

24 *A Report in Regard to Activities at Department the Marxism-Leninism during the Winter Semester of Acad. Year 1951/1952*. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 397. SNA, Bratislava.

25 *In Regard to Improvement of Teaching of the Marxism-Leninism at Colleges – Recommendation of Two Publications*. F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 397. SNA, Bratislava.

lacking needed professional level and vulgarized ideology of the Communist Party. Similar situation existed allegedly in workshops, which initially should have been led by assistants, but their number was very low. As was already mentioned, this task was assigned to students, frequently in their own year of study. Only the Department of the Marxism-Leninism associated with the Slovak Technical College in Bratislava, after accession Ivan Rohaľ-Iľkiv to function of director, was evaluated positively. However, I. Rohaľ-Iľkiv stated, that the Department will be able to fulfil all its tasks depends on immediate (February 1952) increase of 25 qualified staff members.²⁶

During academic year 1951/1952 were active at departments of the Marxism-Leninism 47 pedagogues, of them 20 (42.55 %) were external employees.²⁷ The number of pedagogues teaching at departments of the Marxism-Leninism was gradually increasing and on at the outset of academic year 1952/1953 a number 58 pedagogues was reached, including 10 external teachers.²⁸ During following years personal situation at departments of fundamentals of the Marxism-Leninism, historic and dialectic materialism and political economy at Slovak colleges was improving.

Ideological transformation of Slovak universities after February was realized by CPC gradually. Initially were active action committees, established at faculties of Slovak universities, which organized verifications of pedagogues and students. Verifications continued also during years 1949–1950 and, paradoxically, were designed as democratization process. An important tool were admission interviews of students applying for university study and participation at *State Courses for Preparation Works on Universities*. A radical step, according to Soviet

26 *A Report about State of Study of the Marxism-Leninism on Slovak College of Technology and Partial Evaluation of other Examinations.*, F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 397. SNA, Bratislava.

27 F. Central Committee (CC) of Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS), Presidency, C. 817, Arch. Unit 15. SNA, Bratislava.

28 *A Report about Beginning of Study of Academic Year 1952/1953 at Colleges.* F. Committee of Schools (CS), C. 397, Inv. No. 1589–1590. SNA, Bratislava.

example, was implementation of ideology of CPC – the Marxism-Leninism, as the independent topic into study program of all universities in Slovakia, which was mandatory for all students, Process was initiated during summer semester of academic year 1948/1949 via implementing courses of topic designed as social sciences. A change was broad by the Political Secretariat CC CPC in November 1951, which established at universities study of essential Marxist-Leninist disciplines. Since then teaching of the Marxist-Leninist ideology was realized by departments of Marxism-Leninism (departments of fundamentals of the Marxism-Leninism, of dialectic and historic materialism and political economy), which in Slovak conditions were beset by many difficulties (especially by dearth of qualified pedagogues, absence of teaching materials, text books etc.). The Marxist-Leninist ideology was implemented into teaching of all departments, regardless of their professional orientation.

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