Ing. Philip Katz
Faculty of Social Sciences
Charles University
Smetanovo nábřeží 6
110 01 Prague 1
Czech Republic
philip.katz@fsv.cuni.cz

Philip Katz received his Bachelor's degree in business administration from Temple University (Philadelphia, PA, USA) and his Master's degree in regional studies and international business from Metropolitan University Prague (Czech Republic). He is currently enrolled in the Ph.D programme at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, studying media and communications. His interests lie in marketing communication and the use of humour in marketing and political communications.

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ANTI-AMERICAN POLITICAL CARTOONS AS PROPAGANDA PUBLISHED IN RUDÉ PRÁVO IN 1951

Philip KATZ

ABSTRACT:
Political cartoons have the power to entertain, inform and persuade. Their humour makes sometimes abstract or complicated topics more acceptable to readers. This study uses a methodology based on work by Medhurst and DeSousa and Ray Morris, to examine the rhetoric and symbols used by Communist controlled media in 1951 Czechoslovakia and decodes the visual and contextual elements of anti-American political cartoons published in *Rudé právo* (in English *Red Law*). The analysis shows consistent use of condensation to simplify complex issues with a clear bias towards portraying Czechoslovakia (and countries in the Soviet sphere of influence) as having a better quality of life under the Soviet Union. 'Othering' is accomplished through combination, undermining the credibility and humanity of any actors the state perceives as undesirable, compelling the reader to visualise them as horrible and animalistic. Another prominently displayed feature in the majority of political cartoons of the era is the use of Nazi symbols and caricatures used to associate the U.S. with the Nazi regime facilitating the continued feelings of outrage and hate to be transferred to the U.S. despite the relative feelings of goodwill and friendship developed in previous years. This propaganda proved effective for the Communist party in 1950's Czechoslovakia. Of the 64 cartoons analysed, eight are included as a representative sample detailing the elements and topics depicted.

KEY WORDS:
audience reception, Cold War, political cartoons, propaganda, visual rhetoric

1 Introduction

Political cartoons have been described as a form of *"non-oratorial, graphic persuasion"*.[1] The rhetoric, which appears in illustrated form, is often accompanied by a caption or small amount of text and is mainly used to persuade the reader. As a means of communication, their impact can be overlooked or underestimated. As Walker observes, *"one of the most powerful weapons that a cartoon has is its seemingly innocent humour whose*

1 MEDHURST, M. J., DESOUSA, M. A.: Political Cartoons as Rhetorical Form: A Taxonomy of Graphic Discourse. In *Communication Monographs*, 1981, Vol. 48, No. 3, p. 197-236.

message can be absorbed easily, without much reflection or resistance".[2] While it can be argued that readers being familiar with the local culture and social conditions or being of a certain age is not required to properly decode the cartoons,[3] current research indicates that this familiarity does impact the reader's understanding.[4] Previous papers have considered the unique features of political cartoons,[5] the rhetorical form[6] and sources of inspiration for political cartoons,[7] as well as the reader's ability to decode the intended meaning correctly.[8] Additional research has examined the use of propaganda by the Soviet Union during the Cold War;[9] however, political cartoons of the era were only briefly mentioned.

This study focuses on eight anti-American political cartoons (of 64 collected) published in *Rudé právo* during the Communist era in Czechoslovakia in 1951, which is an area which has not been deeply developed. The cartoons are examined for style as well as to discern the author's and publisher's intent, whether the cartoons were meant as anti-American, to bolster domestic morale or make a caricature of influential events or important people such as the Korean war, labour unions or the President of the United States. To assist the reader, a brief description of the newspaper *Rudé právo* and the political situation in Czechoslovakia have also been provided. This examination will also take into account the authors of the cartoons, whether they were Czechoslovaks working with the Communist government or Soviet artists working for Russian news agencies. The analysis is conducted according to the methodology described in the following section.

2 Methodology

The methodology is developed from Medhurst and DeSousa's taxonomy of graphic discourse[10] and Morris's analysis of visual rhetoric.[11] Medhurst and DeSousa identify four major sources from which cartoonists can draw their inspiration: political commonplaces, literary/cultural allusions, personal character traits and situational themes. Most frequently, the comics involve political commonplaces, meaning topics that are familiar to any cartoonists working within a "modern nation-state".[12] Common themes include the state of the economy,[13] national defence[14] and foreign relations,[15] etc.

Another element to be decoded in each cartoon is the artistic style chosen by the author. Medhurst and DeSousa identify six core stylistic elements from which cartoonists can choose.[16] These include the tone and mood created through the use of line and form, how the author uses relative size within the frame, representation through caricature or exaggeration/amplification of physionomical features, the placement of objects within the frame, *"visual imagery, rhythmic montage within the frame which arises from the interaction of invention"* and relation of text, whether caption or balloon. Additionally, there may appear some perceptions of the personality traits and characteristics of the politicians involved. This is often reflected in the caricatures of world leaders through the use of exaggeration or affectation of facial features or mannerisms.[17]

For political cartoonists, the challenge lies in the utilisation of the graphic rhetoric to some effect. It is incumbent on the artist to understand the audience they are attempting to reach. This means understanding and incorporating *"the beliefs, values, and attitudes of his audience to be an effective persuader"*.[18] Medhurst and DeSousa go on to state that political cartoons as an enthymematic form[19] are *"not only an inventional resource for the caricaturist but also an interpretive resource for the reader"*.[20]

Explained as minor forms of disposition, Medhurst and DeSousa note that the use of commentary allows the artist to offer the reader a 'truth' as perceived by the artist with no background as to the basis or validity of this truth. The assumption is that this commentary is a safe form of disposition because the reader sees an image already popularly accepted. Thus, the reader only needs to recognise the relationship between the way things are and the way things are being presented.[21] This exploitation of a widely held belief or commonly accepted 'truth' was very effective in the Soviet press where the party controlled all of the content and the people were very familiar with the values and beliefs that the party supported and encouraged.[22]

Morris lays out the structuralist approach for political cartoons,[23] building on the concepts of "condensation" and "combination" in Gombrich[24] as well as Goffman's 1979 study which developed the concept of "domestication".[25] "Condensation" compresses *"complex phenomenon into a single image that is purported to capture its essence graphically"*. A complex issue such as immigration or inflation which could be *"condensed into a huge and threatening monster that towers over the President or Prime Minister"*.[26] "Combination" involves the *"blending of elements and ideas from different domains into a new composite that remains clearly identifiable as something that contains each of its constituents"*. A common example is a

2 WALKER, R.: Political Cartoons: Now You See Them! In *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, 2003, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 16.
3 CONNERS, J. L.: Hussein as Enemy: The Persian Gulf War in Political Cartoons. In *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 1998, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 96-114.
4 EL REFAIE, E.: Multiliteracies: How Readers Interpret Political Cartoons. In *Visual Communication*, 2009, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 181-205.
5 See: MORRISON, M. C.: The Role of the Political Cartoonist in Image Making. In *Central States Speech Journal*, 1969, Vol. 20, No. 4, p. 252-260; WALKER, R.: Political Cartoons: Now You See Them! In *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, 2003, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 16-21; CHEN, K. W., PHIDDIAN, R., STEWART, R.: Towards a Discipline of Political Cartoon Studies: Mapping the Field. In MILNER DAVIS, J. (ed.): *Satire and Politics*. London, New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, p. 125-162.
6 MORRIS, R.: Visual Rhetoric in Political Cartoons: A Structuralist Approach. In *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 1993, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 195-210.
7 MEDHURST, M. J., DESOUSA, M. A.: Political Cartoons as Rhetorical Form: A Taxonomy of Graphic Discourse. In *Communication Monographs*, 1981, Vol. 48, No. 3, p. 197-236.
8 See: CARL, L. R. M.: Editorial Cartoons Fail to Reach Many Readers. In *Journalism Quarterly*, 1968, Vol. 45, No. 3, p. 533-535; CONNERS, J. L.: Hussein as Enemy: The Persian Gulf War in Political Cartoons. In *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 1998, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 96-114; EL REFAIE, E.: Multiliteracies: How Readers Interpret Political Cartoons. In *Visual Communication*, 2009, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 181-205.
9 See: MAGNUSDOTTIR, R.: *Enemy Number One: The United States of America in Soviet Ideology and Propaganda, 1945 – 1959.* New York : Oxford University Press, 2019.
10 Remark by author: Though published in 1981, this taxonomy is still widely respected and cited, see: ABRAHAM, L.: Effectiveness of Cartoons as a Uniquely Visual Medium for Orienting Social Issues. In *Journalism & Communication Monographs*, 2009, Vol. 11, No. 2, p. 117-165; MATEUS, S.: Political Cartoons as Communicative Weapons – The Hypothesis of the "Double Standard Thesis" in Three Portuguese Cartoons. In *Estudos Em Comunicação*, 2016, Vol. 23, p. 195-221; CHEN, K. W., PHIDDIAN, R., STEWART, R.: Towards a Discipline of Political Cartoon Studies: Mapping the Field. In MILNER DAVIS, J. (ed.): *Satire and Politics*. London, New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, p. 125-162; ETTY, J.: *Graphic Satire in the Soviet Union Krokodil's Political Cartoons*. Jackson : University Press of Mississippi, 2019.
11 Remark by author: Likewise, MORRIS, R.: Visual Rhetoric in Political Cartoons: A Structuralist Approach. In *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 1993, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 195-210 is still often cited in political cartoon analysis, see: WALKER, R.: Political Cartoons: Now You See Them! In *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, 2003, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 16-21; GREENBERG, J.: Framing and Temporality in Political Cartoons: A Critical Analysis of Visual News Discourse. In *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue Canadienne De Sociologie*, 2008, Vol. 39, No. 2, p. 181-198; EL REFAIE, E.: Multiliteracies: How Readers Interpret Political Cartoons. In *Visual Communication*, 2009, Vol. 8, No. 2, p. 181-205; WANG, J.: Criticising Images: Critical Discourse Analysis of Visual Semiosis in Picture News. In *Critical Arts*, 2014, Vol. 28, No. 2, p. 264-286; MATEUS, S.: Political Cartoons as Communicative Weapons – The Hypothesis of the "Double Standard Thesis" in Three Portuguese Cartoons. In *Estudos Em Comunicação*, 2016, Vol. 23, p. 195-221; CHEN, K. W., PHIDDIAN, R., STEWART, R.: Towards a Discipline of Political Cartoon Studies: Mapping the Field. In MILNER DAVIS, J. (ed.): *Satire and Politics*. London, New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, p. 125-162; SILASKI, N., ĐUROVIC, T.: The Journey Metaphor in Brexit-Related Political Cartoons. In *Discourse, Context & Media*, 2019, Vol. 31, p. 1-10.
12 MEDHURST, M. J., DESOUSA, M. A.: Political Cartoons as Rhetorical Form: A Taxonomy of Graphic Discourse. In *Communication Monographs*, 1981, Vol. 48, No. 3, p. 200.
13 EMMISON, M., MCHOUL, A.: Drawing on the Economy: Cartoon Discourse and the Production of a Category. In *Cultural Studies*, 1987, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 93-111.
14 CONNERS, J. L.: Hussein as Enemy: The Persian Gulf War in Political Cartoons. In *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 1998, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 96-114.
15 GHASEMI, T. Z., DOLATABADI, H.: An Analysis of French and Iranian Political Cartoons on Trump's Withdrawal from the JCPOA. In *Iranian Review of Foreign Affairs*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 31, p. 33-58.
16 MEDHURST, M. J., DESOUSA, M. A.: Political Cartoons as Rhetorical Form: A Taxonomy of Graphic Discourse. In *Communication Monographs*, 1981, Vol. 48, No. 3, p. 212-213.
17 AMES, W.: *Caricature and Cartoon*. Released on 20th July 1998. [online]. [2022-09-20]. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/art/caricature-and-cartoon>.
18 MEDHURST, M. J., DESOUSA, M. A.: Political Cartoons as Rhetorical Form: A Taxonomy of Graphic Discourse. In *Communication Monographs*, 1981, Vol. 48, No. 3, p. 204.
19 Remark by author: Enthymemes are a deductive scheme of a formal argument consisting of a major and minor premise and a conclusion (as in *"every virtue is laudable; kindness is a virtue; therefore, kindness is laudable"*), in which one of the premises is implicit. See: *Enthymeme Noun.* [online]. [2021-11-10]. Available at: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/enthymeme>.
20 MEDHURST, M. J., DESOUSA, M. A.: Political Cartoons as Rhetorical Form: A Taxonomy of Graphic Discourse. In *Communication Monographs*, 1981, Vol. 48, No. 3, p. 205.
21 MEDHURST, M. J., DESOUSA, M. A.: Political Cartoons as Rhetorical Form: A Taxonomy of Graphic Discourse. In *Communication Monographs*, 1981, Vol. 48, No. 3, p. 206-207.
22 Press in the Satellite Countries. In *The World Today*, 1953, Vol. 9. No. 6, p. 256-265.
23 MORRIS, R.: Visual Rhetoric in Political Cartoons: A Structuralist Approach. In *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 1993, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 195-210.
24 GOMBRICH, E. H.: The Cartoonist's Armoury. In *Meditations on a Hobby Horse.* 3rd Edition. New York : Phaedon, 1978, p. 127-142.
25 See: GOFFMAN, E.: *Gender Advertisements.* Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1979.
26 MORRIS, R.: Visual Rhetoric in Political Cartoons: A Structuralist Approach. In *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 1993, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 200.

politician's face grafted onto the body of an animal such as a dog, cat or pig. "Domestication" is when *"abstract ideas and distant, unfamiliar persons or events are converted into something close, familiar, and concrete"*.[27] For Americans unfamiliar with Saddam Hussein, portraying him as a new Hitler enabled readers to assign him the desired emotions and reactions. Opposition is when everything is reduced to a binary; us vs them, good vs bad, David vs Goliath.

Following concepts developed by van Dijk's work in critical discourse analysis theory, this research incorporates a methodology based on visual semiotics[28] and visual discourse.[29] Van Dijk's 1998 essay *Opinions and Ideologies in the Press* describes the relationship between opinions, ideologies and their place in media discourse referring to a *"sociocognitive theory that deals with shared social representations and their acquisition and uses in social contexts"*.[30] These concepts will enable the deconstruction of the cartoon's images and text (when used) and allow for a framing of the meaning of the image. Knight explains how framing *"entails the arrangement of what is included in a way that is structured and differentiated in importance, meaning, and function. This is a relational process that also entails connection – articulation in the dual sense of expression and linkage – as the means by which meaning is produced"*.[31] This study focuses on eight of the 64 cartoons published in 1951. The cartoons were selected as a representative sample to showcase the most common attributes and themes contained in the cartoons published throughout the year.

3 Czechoslovakia and the Cold War in 1951

In 1951, an ideological struggle between the Western powers and the Soviet Union, coined the Cold War, took shape after the defeat of Nazi Germany in May of 1945 and was solidified with the Soviet refusal of the Marshall Plan in 1948.[32] Once the Soviet Union decided to withdraw from negotiations, its Eastern European allies were expected to adopt a similar isolationist strategy enabling the Soviet Union to consolidate its power by building a communist Eastern Europe to rival the emerging West European bloc.[33] In the post-World War II environment, Czechoslovakia, under the direction of Edvard Beneš, had hoped to set up a Republic with liberal, democratic principles. However, the Communist party, headed by Klement Gottwald and allied closely with Soviet leadership, through a combination of political manoeuvring and strong-arm police infiltration tactics pulled off the 1948 Czechoslovak *coup d'état*, known as Victorious February (in Czech Vítězný únor), in which the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (in Czech Komunistická strana Československa, KSČ) took control of the government.[34] This Soviet victory sent shockwaves through the Western powers, instilling in them a sense of urgency which resulted in bolstered support for the Marshall Plan[35] as well as the formation of a West European Alliance.[36] Under the Soviet Molotov Plan, later COMECON, Czechoslovakia, along with other Eastern European countries and members of the Soviet Union, became an economic alliance of Socialist countries.[37] Notably, Benáček points out that compared to other European nations,[38] Czechoslovakia's economy was rather strong since its infrastructure and industrial capacities had not been destroyed like its neighbours. However, under the leadership of the KSČ, nearly all private ownership was eliminated, and the economy was directed by strictly enforced central planning.

It is worth mentioning that a significant portion of Czechoslovak society was not opposed to this alliance and joining of Soviet influence and Communist rule. Nearly 40% of voters in the Czech lands were supporters of the Communist party.[39] *"The true victors in February 1948 were not only the new bureaucratic rulers, but also relatively broad strata of the less qualified population, primarily but not exclusively manual laborers in certain industries. (...) the redistributive, non-market system of the Czechoslovak economy operated in favour of less qualified, less competent and less productive people. These groups provided social and political support for the new rulers, which became the main source both for the functioning of and a certain kind of legitimation of, the communist system."*[40] One factor involved in influencing the minds of the Czechoslovak people was the media; television (which began broadcasting in 1953),[41] radio and newspaper, which were controlled by the state or political parties.[42] One of the leading newspapers of the time was the voice of the Communist party, *Rudé právo.*

Rudé právo

Rudé právo, founded in 1920 during the first Czechoslovak Republic, identified itself as the paper of the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Worker's Party.[43] It became the main voice of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in 1921. *Rudé právo* ceased to be an official publication in 1938 during the German occupation but returned to circulation in 1945 when it became the most prominent newspaper in the country, essentially the Czechoslovak version of the newspaper *Pravda* in the Soviet Union.[44] Among the contributors to *Rudé právo* were many of the era's influential writers, artists and notable personalities such as Zdeněk Nejedlý, E. F. Burian, Bedřich Rohan,[45] Jan Drda[46] and Lev Haas (also Leo Haas) among others.[47] These contributors, who helped create and distribute Soviet propaganda, were referred to as "ideological workers" and their creations were called "ideological work".[48]

Rudé právo was published daily and generally ran four to six pages in length. The front page covered the most important news of the day with entertainment and opinion pieces inside the paper. The contents of the paper covered news associated with politics, agriculture, industrial production and world news.[49] Additional sections appeared on an irregular basis which offered a look into the lives of ordinary people (*Na okraj dne*), information about attractions in cities and regions (*Krátce z domova*), and news from other Soviet countries (*Ze země Sovětů*).[50]

As mentioned, mass media in Czechoslovakia were strictly controlled by the state and political parties. While there were several newspapers to choose from such as *Rudé právo*, *Mladá fronta*, *Lidová Demokracie* and *Práce*, they were all ostensibly used *"to serve 'the people and the Communist Party'"*.[51] Although papers

27 MORRIS, R.: Visual Rhetoric in Political Cartoons: A Structuralist Approach. In *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity*, 1993, Vol. 8, No. 3, p. 201.
28 WANG, J.: Criticising Images: Critical Discourse Analysis of Visual Semiosis in Picture News. In *Critical Arts*, 2014, Vol. 28, No. 2, p. 264-286.
29 GREENBERG, J.: Framing and Temporality in Political Cartoons: A Critical Analysis of Visual News Discourse. In *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue Canadienne De Sociologie*, 2008, Vol. 39, No. 2, p. 181-198.
30 VAN DIJK, T. A.: Opinions and Ideologies in the Press. In BELL, A., GARRETT., P. (eds.): *Approaches to Media Discourse.* Oxford : Blackwell, 1998, p. 21-22.
31 KNIGHT, G.: Prospective News: Press PRE-FRAMING of the 1996 Ontario Public Service Strike. In *Journalism Studies*, 2001, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 74.
32 CROMWELL, W.: The Marshall Plan, Britain and the Cold War. In *Review of International Studies*, 1982, Vol. 8, No. 4, p. 233-249.
33 See: LOTH, W.: *The Division of the World: 1941 – 1955*. London : Routledge, 1988.
34 MYANT, M.: New Research on February 1948 in Czechoslovakia. In *Europe-Asia Studies*, 2008, Vol. 60, No. 10, p. 1697-1715.
35 CROGIN, R. C.: *Natural Enemies: The United States and the Soviet Union in the Cold War, 1917 – 1991*. Lanham : Lexington Books, 2001, p. 135.
36 GRENVILLE, J. A. S.: *History of the World: From the 20th to the 21st Century*. London, New York : Routledge, 2005, p. 371.
37 See: WIENER, R., ARNOLD, J. R.: *Cold War: The Essential Reference Guide*. Santa Barbara : ABC-CLIO Interactive, 2012.
38 BENÁČEK, V.: History of Czech Economic and Political Alignments Viewed as a Transition. In SALVATORE, D., SVETLIČIČ, M., JOŽE, P. D. (eds.): *Small Countries in a Global Economy: New Challenges and Opportunities.* New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, p. 133-154.
39 MACHONIN, P.: The Social Structure of Soviet-Type Societies, Its Collapse and Legacy. In *Czech Sociological Review*, 1993, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 232.
40 MACHONIN, P.: The Social Structure of Soviet-Type Societies, Its Collapse and Legacy. In *Czech Sociological Review*, 1993, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 234-235.
41 KRUPIČKA, M.: *Czech Radio History*. [online]. [2020-08-16]. Available at: <archiv.radio.cz/en/static/history-of-radio-prague/czech-radio-history>.
42 See: GAWDIAK, I.: *Czechoslovakia: A Country Study*. Washington : Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989.
43 See: DOUDĚRA, K.: *Naše Rudé právo*. Prague : Rudé právo, 1980.
44 See: DOUDĚRA, K.: *Naše Rudé právo*. Prague : Rudé právo, 1980.
45 *Rudé právo*, from 10th January 1951, p. 3.
46 *Rudé právo*, from 29th September 1951, p. 3.
47 Remark by author: These author names were corroborated through correspondence with Professor Michal Bauer, PhD. affiliated with the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, Czech Republic.
48 MAGNUSDOTTIR, R.: *Enemy Number One: The United States of America in Soviet Ideology and Propaganda, 1945-1959.* New York : Oxford University Press, 2019, p. 12.
49 The Press in the Satellite Countries. In *The World Today*, 1953, Vol. 9. No. 6, p. 260-261.
50 *Rudé právo*, from 5th July 1951, p. 4.
51 KRUPIČKA, M.: *Czech Radio History*. [online]. [2021-01-20]. Available at: <archiv.radio.cz/en/static/history-of-radio-prague/czech-radio-history>.

which had previously been associated with other political parties were allowed to continue to publish, they were now being used as a means of explaining the Party directives which were being passed along by the Ministry of Information.[52] *Rudé právo* as the main newspaper of the KSČ, was the most widely circulated.

6th January 1951 – Volga–Don Canal

Illustration 1 by Czech painter and cartoonist Lev Haas, depicts the Volga–Don Canal, a crowning achievement of Stalinist Russia.[53] Haas spent time in Nisko and Terezin concentration camps and was a supporter of the Communist regime as a protection against Nazism. He contributed both to *Rudé právo* and *Dikobraz* (in English *Porcupine*) magazine,[54] a weekly satirical magazine which started publication in 1945.[55]

The caption "Kanál a kanál" is a play on words referring both to the Volga–Don Canal as well as the sewer into which the leaders of several Western countries are being 'flushed' by water from the canal. The author used the dispositional form of contrast to allow the reader to see the worth of the shipping canal versus the waste being flushed down the sewer.[56] The Volga–Don Canal was an important symbol, completing Stalin's vision of connecting Moscow (and the Soviet Union) to Western waterways. Additionally, at the top of the canal is a lighthouse with a flag flying above it. The word "mír" (peace) is written on the flag as a symbol of the brotherhood that exists inside the Soviet Union. The canal itself is filled with ships transporting goods to and through the Soviet empire. The connotation of the canal is the wealth and industry of the Soviet Union, in direct contrast to the rebuilding Western countries. Outside of the wall, Western and opposition leaders are being washed down into the sewers. Use of combination is evident as caricatures of the leaders with pained expressions and anger on their faces, and bodies which mimic insects or monsters. This use of opposition facilitates 'othering' that will ensure readers understand that those who are outside the wall are not just foreign but also distasteful.

U.S. President Harry Truman and U.K. Prime Minister Winston Churchill can be identified by the stereotypical features incorporated into their images such as Truman's hairstyle, glasses and straight nose and Churchill's high forehead and big cigar. The caricature at the top of the sewer, wearing a hat and shaking his fist towards the canal appears to be Josip Broz Tito.[57] Although Tito had been an ally of Stalin after World War II, this relationship became strained, and Yugoslavia split from the Soviet Union.[58] Konrad Adenauer, the leader of West Germany, is next to Tito. The prominent placement and larger scale of the canal and prosperous shipping activity above the smaller, Western leaders reinforces the party's rhetoric of their superior industry compared to the 'bugs' of the Western countries.

7th January 1951 – Symbol of American Freedom

Illustration 2 is a typical portrayal of capitalism through the lens of Soviet Marxist-Leninism. The central theme is that capitalism only functions when the workers are being exploited by the owners of the means of production. This is represented by one of the hallmarks of Marxism, the labour theory of value which claims, *"the value of a commodity can be objectively measured by the average number of labour hours required to produce that commodity"*.[59] The central image is a police officer in the process of beating a man dressed in typical factory worker coveralls. The worker has his right arm held over his head in a defensive and protective gesture. The grainy nature of the publication makes it difficult to be certain, but the arm of the worker appears to be dark skinned which allows that the worker may be African American. Additionally, the worker's raised fist is clenched which could be a show of solidarity with other socialist workers.

In the background of the image, we see a second person holding a placard with the words *"We demand . . . Wages."* There are two or three words on the sign which are illegible, but the message is likely intended to demand better or fairer wages. This leads to the conclusion that the policeman is actually being used to break up a protest by workers rather than to protect the peace. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, American unions had lost some of their bargaining power due to changes instigated by the Republican congress. These changes included the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947,[60] which instituted restrictions on unions. Although President Truman had vetoed the act and the unions had protested against it, the strong Republican congress overrode the veto and passed the act into law.[61] The result was that it was no longer legal for unions to force employees to pay dues and join the union. 'Closed shops', when an employer must only hire employees who are part of the union, were also outlawed further weakening the power of the union. Additionally, the new law seriously curtailed the ability of unions to strike and support strikes of their fellow unions.[62]

The policeman symbolises the use of law enforcement to oppress the working class with the implication being that the protesting workers are doing something wrong or illegal in order to justify the wrath of the policeman. This can be compounded further if we accept that the worker is an African American, as the 1950s were a time of great civil unrest in which minorities worked to gain equal rights. Soviet propaganda often showed support for minorities who were being mistreated and exploited in a 'dual America'.[63]

The illustration was created by B. J. Prorokov, most likely reproduced from a contribution made to the Soviet newspaper *Krokodil*. These anti-American cartoons were then reprinted in state-run newspapers of Soviet satellites such as *Rudé právo* in Czechoslovakia. Although *Krokodil* was a satirical publication which was allowed to make some jests aimed at the Communist regime regarding domestic issues that would resonate with local readers, it was expected that the magazine would *"reflect official policy of the Kremlin"* regarding any foreign or international content.[64]

10th January 1951 – Comparison of National Spending on Education

A chart comparing the national spending of Czechoslovakia to that of five other Western or wealthy countries is depicted in Illustration 3. While no author is listed, the content of the picture continues the theme of illustrating the superiority of the Communist government and its concern for the people. The text states *"How much of each country's budget goes to education"*. The most obvious conclusion to be drawn from the chart is that Czechoslovakia dedicates far more money to the people's education than the other countries represented. This is emphasised by the radically decreased size of the students on the chart. The representation of students on the chart instead of a table or bar is a form of domestication making the information seem more dramatic and reminds the reader of the children who are benefitting from the state's generosity.

The children are dressed in school uniforms which could also invoke the image of the "pionýr" (the pioneer). Pioneers were the youth organisation that every child was supposed to join at age eight and which was used to indoctrinate the children, or at least a select group of them, for a larger role and membership in the KSČ.[65] The inference that other countries neglect their children's education is reinforced by the constant

52 The Press in the Satellite Countries. In *The World Today*, 1953, Vol. 9., No. 6, p. 258.
53 RUDER, C. A.: *Reflections on the Soviet Politics of Water in the 1930s*. Released on 11th December 2018. [online]. [2018-12-11]. Available at: <https://www.europenowjournal.org/2018/12/10/reflections-on-the-soviet-politics-of-water-in-the-1930s/>.
54 SVOBODA, R.: *Dikobraz*. [online]. [2021-09-26]. Available at: <http://www.slovnikceskeliteratury.cz/showContent.jsp?docId=89&hl=dikobraz%2B>.
55 *Dikobraz*. [online]. [2020-06-20]. Available at: <https://dikobraz.cz/dikobraz>.
56 MEDHURST, M. J., DESOUSA, M. A.: Political Cartoons as Rhetorical Form: A Taxonomy of Graphic Discourse. In *Communication Monographs*, 1981, Vol. 48, No. 3, p. 206.
57 WEST, R.: *Tito and the Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia*. London : Faber and Faber, 2012, p. 259.
58 *Dikobraz*. [online]. [2020-06-20]. Available at: <https://dikobraz.cz/dikobraz>.
59 PRYCHITKO, D.: *Marxism*. [online]. [2021-09-26]. Available at: <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/Marxism.html.>.
60 GROSS, J. A.: Taft-Hartley. In RAYMAN, P., SIRIANNI, C. (eds.): *Broken Promise: The Subversion of U.S. Labor Relations Policy, 1947 – 1994*. Philadelphia : Temple University Press, 2003, p. 1-14.
61 See: NICHOLSON, P.: *Labor's Story in the United States*. Philadelphia : Temple University Press, 2004.
62 GROSS, J. A.: Taft-Hartley. In RAYMAN, P., SIRIANNI, C. (eds.): *Broken Promise: The Subversion of U.S. Labor Relations Policy, 1947 – 1994*. Philadelphia : Temple University Press, 2003, p. 1-14.
63 MAGNUSDOTTIR, R.: *Enemy Number One: The United States of America in Soviet Ideology and Propaganda, 1945 – 1959*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2019, p. 37.
64 SHABAD, T.: *Behind the Smile on Krokodil*. Released on 7th June 1964. [online]. [2021-09-20]. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/1964/06/07/archives/behind-the-smile-on-krokodil.html>.
65 See: GAWDIAK, I.: *Czechoslovakia: A Country Study*. Washington : Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1989.

reporting of the squalid conditions that students are forced to endure. This includes reports of broken-down buildings often with few or no toilets, too few teachers for the classes, and students who come to school without shoes because they are unable to afford them.[66] The contrast is evident in both the appearance of the student depicted above the label ČSR as well as the percentage of the budget that is used on education. Condensation is used to focus on the specific percentage of budget but does not reference the vastly different sizes of the budgets between Czechoslovakia and the other countries such as the USA which is shown with only 0.8% of its budget going to education. This illustration is meant to refute the notion of the idealistic America in which everyone is treated equally. The implication is that the greedy capitalists are keeping the wealth for themselves instead of using it to improve life for the common American.[67]

12th January 1951 – How They Return

A darker and more critical cartoon, Illustration 4 was reprinted from a Chinese newspaper. The author of the comic, Liu Xun, would be unknown to the readers but the intended message would not seem foreign. It is unlikely that many Czechoslovaks would be able to understand the Chinese characters in the comic; however, the image is telling and there is a caption in Czech stating: *"At the end of last year MacArthur promised US troops in Korea that they would be home for Christmas."* This is a reference to the notorious promise made by General MacArthur in November of 1950.[68] The promise was not kept as the planned offensive failed, costing many thousands of lives.[69] The image of MacArthur includes his trademark sunglasses and hat while dressed as Santa Claus and carrying a sack that would normally hold presents. However, in this image MacArthur is weighed down and sweating under the burden of a sack filled with the caskets of dead U.S. soldiers. The caskets are covered in blood and MacArthur has a pistol and a hand grenade tied to his arm. On his face is a grimace of pain and what could be perceived as defeat. The contrast of the traditionally jolly figure (Santa Claus) with the overburdened and defeated general carrying home his disgrace portrays the vulnerability of the American army. It also brings attention to the downfall of a boastful and prideful general who may have thrown away the lives of thousands of Americans. This use of condensation and a reference to the 'dual America' is similar to what was seen in Illustration 3 and reinforces the theme that the American elite or upper-class do not care for or take care of common Americans or, in this case, the soldiers. This defeat also supports one of the U.S.S.R.'s talking points of how the successful build-up of socialism and the Soviet peace policy are superior to *"the manoeuvres of the Anglo-American warmongers"*.[70]

11th February 1951 – Killers Shake Hands

A popular theme throughout Soviet propaganda is to elevate or emphasise the power of the people to stop or resist American imperialism and capitalism.[71] In Illustration 5 the fist of 'the people' is being used to threaten and cower its enemies, in this case a Nazi war criminal and a soldier of American imperialism who are on their way to world domination. The 'fist of the people' is clenched to show strength and power and the rolled-up sleeve of the shirt shows a powerful forearm. The sleeve itself resembles the rolled-up sleeve of a worker's uniform. The relative size of the fist and arm are much larger than the other figures. This contrast in size reinforces the Soviet message of the people's power.

66 *Rudé právo*, from 10th January 1951, p. 3.
67 See: MAGNUSDOTTIR, R.: *Enemy Number One: The United States of America in Soviet Ideology and Propaganda, 1945 – 1959.* New York : Oxford University Press, 2019.
68 *'Home by Christmas' – October 1950 to January 1951.* Released on 26th May 2010. [online]. [2010-05-26]. Available at: <www.bbc.com/news/10162993>.
69 MINTZ, S., MCNEIL, S.: The Korean War and General MacArthur. In *Digital History*, 2018, p. 72-79. [online]. [2020-09-09]. Available at: <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/teachers/lesson_plans/pdfs/unit10_23.pdf>.
70 The Press in the Satellite Countries. In *The World Today*, 1953, Vol. 9. No. 6, p. 260.
71 MAGNUSDOTTIR, R.: *Enemy Number One: The United States of America in Soviet Ideology and Propaganda, 1945 – 1959.* New York : Oxford University Press, 2019, p. 19.

The American soldier is smaller than the Nazi war criminal, implying that the Nazi is the stronger of the two enemies. The American soldier is seen to be hiding behind the Nazi with his rifle poking out from between the Nazi's arm and side. The use of combination depicts the Nazi not as a man but as a beast with hairy, bare feet and long arms with hairy hands. In the right hand of the Nazi beast is a wooden club (as opposed to the modern rifle of the American soldier). The left hand of the Nazi beast holds a placard reading "*to world domination*" which is broken in half, the reader assumes by the giant fist of the people. The Nazi beast's face is more ape-like than human, but with a moustache similar to Hitler's and what could be a broken leash around his neck. The caption under the comic states "*the people's fist will stop them on their way to world domination*". This declaration serves the purpose of othering the American and Nazi by use of opposition, reinforcing the unity of the people under Soviet rule.

16th February 1951 – Feeding the Horse of War

Illustration 6 brings attention to the relationship between the United States and a German manufacturing power, Krupp, which was integral to the Nazi war machine.[72] The caption along the bottom reads *"horseshoes that help war criminals back into the saddle: Only with that feed will it be a problem this time"*. The mention of war criminals is a reference to the Krupp company being convicted of war crimes for using slave labour in their production plants during World War II.[73]

There are several important elements to the comic. Firstly, we have the placement of the cannon in the centre of the frame. The cannon is larger than the U.S. President and about the same size as the figure of Krupp. Additionally, the illustrator makes use of combination, putting the legs of a horse on the cannon. The legs show recent injuries which have been covered with bandages. This could symbolise the healing of the Krupp reputation and company prosperity. The use of a cannon in place of the body of the horse is a direct relation to the Krupp company's main contribution to World War II, which were arms and steel.[74] The tail of the horse (the fuse of the cannon) is shaped like a Nazi swastika connoting the relationship between Krupp and the Nazi regime. The figure of Krupp is being helped up on top of the cannon by U.S. President Truman implying that the Krupp company is being helped back to the top by U.S. interests. While the figure of Krupp is dressed in a suit, the caricature of President Truman is wearing a worker's apron and boots. The cross-hatching on the pants and thickness of the thighs compared to the slimness of the boots and feet create a feminine display. There is a clear depiction of dominance/subservience between Krupp and President Truman. To further illustrate this point, there is an upturned hat on the ground to the left of the cannon. The hat is styled like an American flag and is positioned to catch the manure from the horse/cannon. On the right side of the panel is an empty food holder labelled *"North American Cannon Fodder"*. To aid reader understanding, the German word *Kanonenfutter* is written phonetically in Czech as *Kanonenfutir*. An additional component of the image is the emotional effect of the Americans being associated with a company that directly worked with and benefited from the Nazi regime to the detriment of American soldiers and European civilians. Many of the families in Czechoslovakia were affected by the Krupp company either through violence committed by the Nazi soldiers, destruction brought about by Krupp weapons or exploitation in Krupp factories as slave labour.[75]

72 See: JAMES, H.: *Krupp: A History of the Legendary German Firm*. Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2012.
73 *Trials of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10. Trials of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals: Military Legal Resources (Federal Research Division: Customized Research and Analytical Services, Library of Congress).* [online]. [2022-06-16]. Available at: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/military-legal-resources/?q=pdf/NT_war-criminals_Vol-IX.pdf>.
74 Compare to: JAMES, H.: *Krupp: A History of the Legendary German Firm*. Princeton : Princeton University Press, 2012.
75 See: BATTY, P.: *The House of Krupp the Steel Dynasty that Armed the Nazis*. New York : Cooper Square Press, 2001.

24th July 1951 – Just Tell Us, Snake, What Everyone Has Given You!

Illustration 7, drawn by Yuriy Lobachev, a Yugoslavian illustrator, depicts Tito through combination and condensation which compels the reader to associate Tito with several concepts analogous to subservience. Tito is drawn kneeling in front of a much larger figure. The kneeling is complimented by the changing of Tito's face to resemble a dog's including the ears and tongue. The dog's tongue is licking the bottom of the sitting figures shoes while simultaneously shining his shoes.

The reader accepts this commentary from the artist and must draw the conclusion that Tito is the lapdog of the larger figure and that he is a bootlicker. Both of these appellations denote a person who is subservient to another and eager to please them. What motivates the begging is clear if you examine Tito's wardrobe. Tito's jacket cuffs, epaulette and necklace pendant are all American dollar signs. More dollar signs can be seen on the socks and shirt cuff of the sitting figure. The dollar signs are used in place of the stars on the American flag indicating that the sitting figure represents the United States. Tito has prostrated himself and is licking and shining the shoes of the United States and begging for help. The help takes the form of U.S. military equipment (tanks, guns, bombs and planes). It is important to note that the hand holding the 'American help' is hairy like an animal's and has very sharp nails similar to claws. This use of combination to dehumanise the opposition of the Soviet community was prevalent in previous cartoons by Lev Haas. The help that Tito is begging for was provided by the United States through the Mutual Defense Aid Program (MDAP) which was negotiated and signed in 1951.[76]

29th September 1951 – The Dam of Peace

Illustration 8 from Lev Haas includes a visual representation of the Soviet Communist ideology. A Wall of the People standing erect with their hands linked are standing together to defend the world, centred on Moscow, from the horrible American imperialist and his Nazi attack dogs. Making up the human chain and identifiable by their typical dress are a Soviet soldier, a businessman, a homemaker (wearing an apron and rolled up sleeves), a villager (wearing the dress and head scarf), and an academic (sweater vest, tie and glasses). We also have one person (possibly two) of Asian descent showing the diversity and inclusiveness of the Soviet Communist regime. Each person is holding their head up high, showing pride in their unity. The globe and the people are relatively much larger than the figure circling them. They are both bigger in size and higher in placement than the stalking figures. This placement and contrast in size reinforce the superiority, both moral and social, of the protectors of peace.

On the other hand, we have the figures circling outside of the protectors. The main character is a caricature of President Truman wearing an American G.I. helmet and holding a lit torch. He is holding the leashes of a pack of dogs with Nazi symbols on their hats and bodies. Again, combination has been used on the second and third dogs which have human faces. In the flame of the President's torch is a dollar sign. This is a common theme in anti-American propaganda which reminds the reader that the United States uses money to manipulate the world around them. This twisted capitalism is also used to hold down the 'good' Americans who are the victims of Wall Street capitalists. The face of President Truman has been inked to be very dark making the President look savage and dirty. The caption below the comic reads "*The insurmountable dam of the Peace Camp stands against the war plans of the new Munich's founder*". The mention of Munich references the 1938 Munich Accord, in which the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and France reached an agreement that would allow Germany to annex Western Czechoslovakia and the Sudetenland.[77] The cartoon infers that with the ratification of the 1951 Treaty of Peace with Japan, Western powers are again attempting to force other countries to accede to their vision of how the world should look. The Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Poland objected to several parts of the treaty that would directly benefit the United States and which were not consulted on with Soviet authorities beforehand.[78]

76 DIMITRIJEVIC, B.: The Mutual Defense Aid Program in Tito's Yugoslavia, 1951–1958, and Its Technical Impact. In *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 1997, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 19-33.

77 MLYNÁRIK, J.: The Nationality Question in Czechoslovakia and the 1938 Munich Agreement. In STONE, N., STROUHAL, E. (eds.): *Czechoslovakia: Crossroads and Crises, 1918 – 88*. London : Palgrave Macmillan, 1989, p. 89-100.

4 Discussion and Conclusion

The illustrations provide their readers with Communist ideals and viewpoints, reinforced through the portrayal of familiar villains and stereotypes. Additionally, the repeated use of Nazi symbols and dehumanising and bestial characteristics connected to American symbols and caricatures forms an association in the readers minds which would lead to significant negative reactions on the part of the reader towards the U.S. Walker warns that the power of humour should not be underestimated and how the simplicity of the message conveyed through cartoons may be more persuasive than many believe.[79] The persistent use of Nazi symbols and caricatures in 1951, despite WWII having ended in September of 1945, was deliberate and effective. Czechoslovaks had mixed feelings towards the United States after several incidents such as the cessation of economic aid to Czechoslovakia in 1946 and an incident involving U.S. intelligence officers who were caught taking Nazi documents from Czech soil without permission.[80] Pairing Nazi and American symbology and caricatures ensured that associations would be made in the minds of readers and worked to undermine the goodwill built up towards the United States in previous years. Another consistent theme in the political cartoons was the elevation of Soviet ideals such as the power of the people and the superiority of their character and economy. Repeatedly, through illustrations of the dam, the education budget, the 'fist of the people' and the Soviet people joined together around the globe, the role and importance of Soviet influence was consistently portrayed as positive in Czechoslovak newspapers.

Future studies could be created by an examination of the way the propaganda in the satellite countries changed from the Stalin era to the Khrushchev era as the anti-American rhetoric was toned down.[81] This study analysed anti-American political cartoons published in *Rudé právo* in 1951 to describe the social and political circumstances surrounding the events in the comic as well as exploring the content, style, intended message and any instances of social or political commentary. Through the use of various dispositional and stylistic techniques such as image placement within the panel, contrast, relative size and captions, the authors of the comics have offered a consistent 'truth' to the reader that Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union in general, is doing well economically (full shipping lanes, funding of education), socially ('peace' flag, civil unrest in the U.S.) and that 'the People' have the power to stop the spread of and domination of imperial powers that would threaten them ('people's fist'). There are recurring themes such as the United States as a power willing to work with unsavoury and unethical agents in order to keep and grow its power as shown by the numerous references to the U.S. paired with Nazis symbols and caricatures. Other distasteful relationships are between the U.S. and enemies of the Soviet Union (Tito's Yugoslavia). The comics are relatable to a sizeable population of *Rudé právo* readers who are themselves part of the working class and sympathetic to the Communist ideals.[82]

The dispositional tools most commonly implemented by the authors were the strategic placement of the images, most often indicating dominance/subservience or moral high ground and relative size of the image to indicate the importance and power of the selected person or caricature. This study illustrates how the use of caricature and other dispositional tools in conjunction with a simple, yet deliberate message can be a powerful medium to inform and persuade readers to a certain point of view.

78 PRICE, J.: Cold War Relic: The 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty and the Politics of Memory. In *Asian Perspective*, 2001, Vol. 25, No. 3, p. 31-60.

79 WALKER, R.: Political Cartoons: Now You See Them! In *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, 2003, Vol. 26, No. 1, p. 16.

80 STEINITZ, M. S.: The U.S. Propaganda Effort in Czechoslovakia, 1945 – 48. In *Diplomatic History*, 1982, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 359-385.

81 See: MAGNUSDOTTIR, R.: *Enemy Number One: The United States of America in Soviet Ideology and Propaganda, 1945 – 1959*. New York : Oxford University Press, 2019.

82 MACHONIN, P.: The Social Structure of Soviet-Type Societies, Its Collapse and Legacy. In *Czech Sociological Review*, 1993, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 231-249.

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Appendix

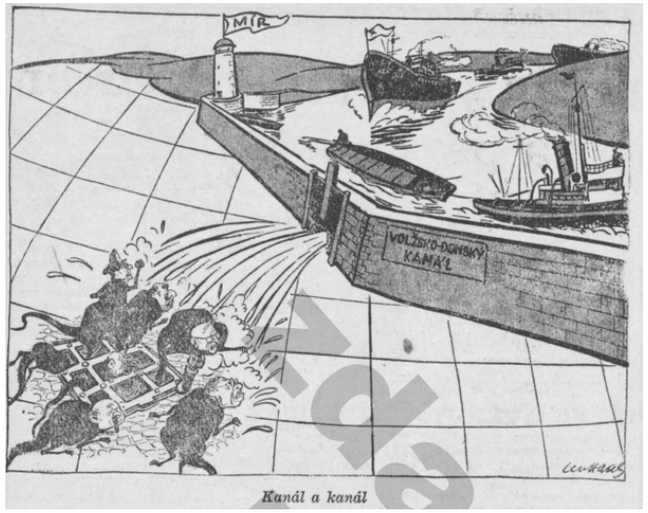

Illustration 1: Haas, L. (1951).

Illustration 2: Kresbo, B. J. (1951).

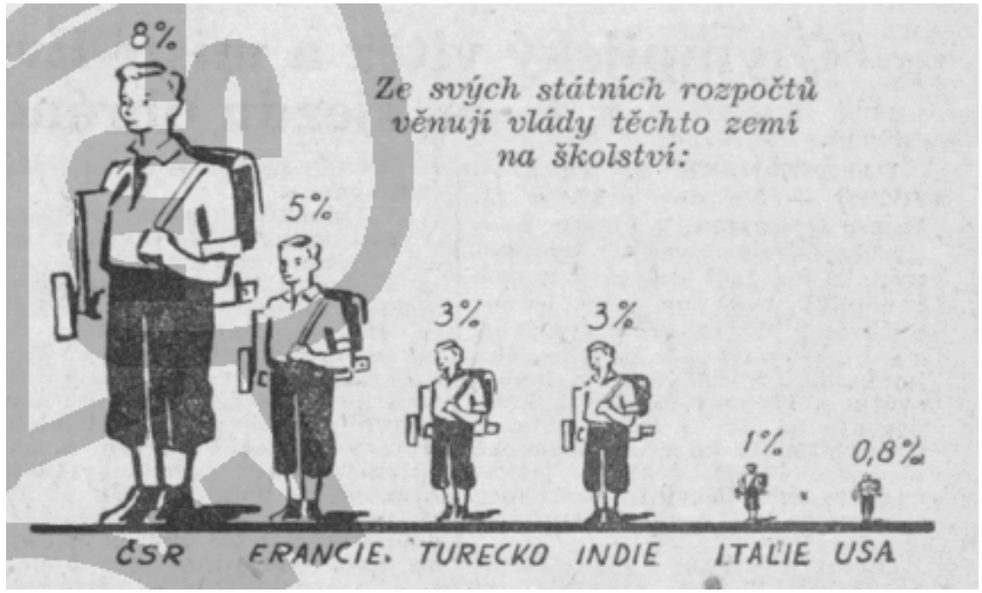

Illustration 3: Anonymous author (1951).

Illustration 4: Xun, L. (1951).

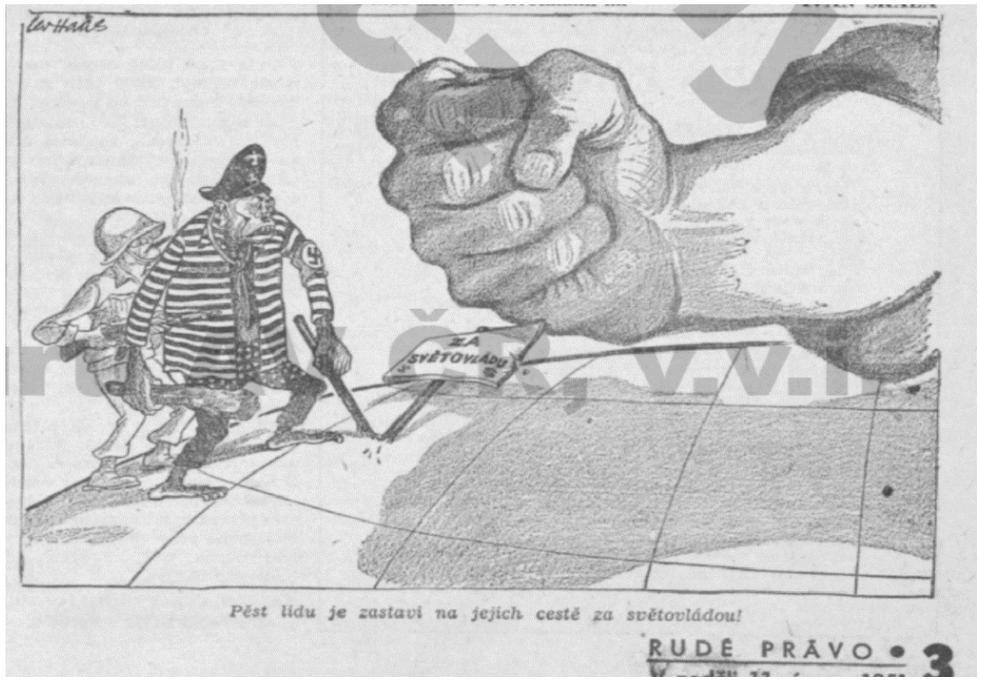

Illustration 5: Haas, L. (1951).

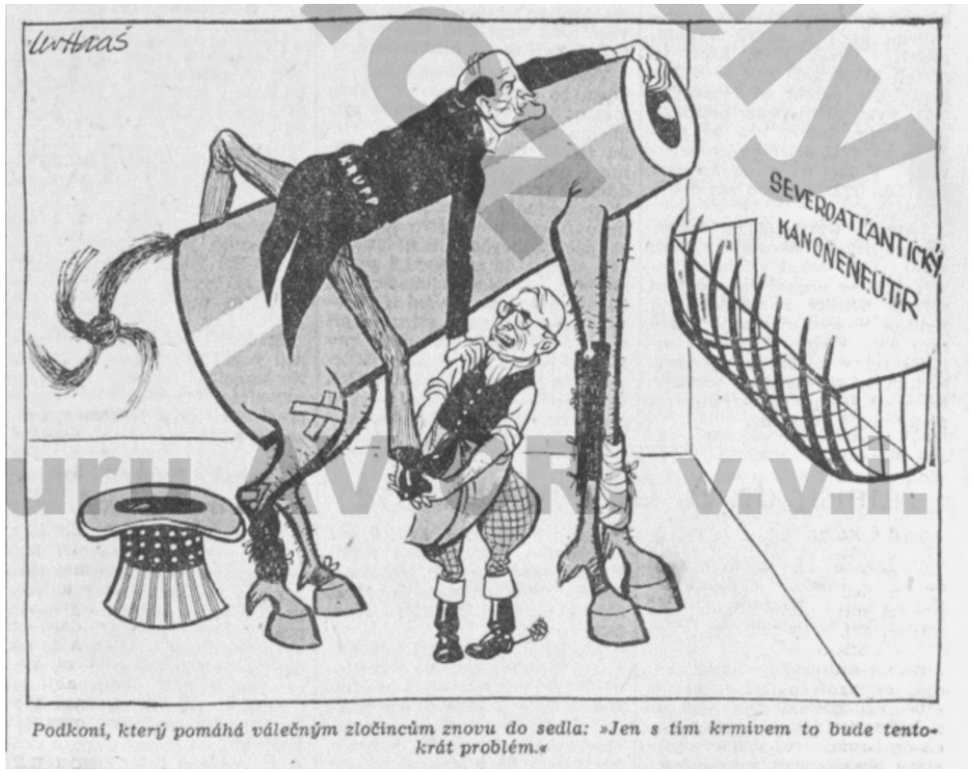

Illustration 6: Haas, L. (1951).

Illustration 7: Lobachev, Y. (1951).

Illustration 8: Haas, L. (1951).