

## summary

The study deals with the development of relationship of the totalitarian Communist regime to one of a large groups of its victims – female prisoners of 1950s and 1960s in Czechoslovakia. The work has been based on sources of immediate statements and the published memoirs containing some characteristics of general relationships relating to issues of the totalitarian prison systems in Czechoslovakia. Comparing the policy of the Communist Party and its Security Forces to women, allegedly suspected and subsequently condemned for the so-called treasonous punitive act, present the most repressive demonstrations of the Totalitarian Regime to its own population.

Like in other European countries of the Eastern bloc, the communist regime observed the prison system as an integral part of its repressive tools. It should be noted that it never acknowledged the term „political prisoner”. There were duly no great differences in treating male and female-political prisoners behind bars, or behind barbed wires. Bad living conditions, hard labour, persistent humiliation, creating feelings of inferiority, and often excessive punishments for any slight or utterly fancied offences against the prison rules were usual and normal. Moreover, theirs lives were made complicated by contiguity and skirmish with other groups of prisoners – those who were convicted for criminal offences and the so-called retribution.

In the first period of the Communist regime between 1948 and 1953, the Communists created into their legal system such acts which, as a matter of form, outwardly, commemorates the model of the so called First Republic (viz Act No. 50/1923 Coll. on the Protection of the Republic and Act No. 51/1923 Coll. on the State Court). For example, Act No. 231/1948 Coll., was to resolve treasonous acts whose sentencing guidelines referring from 10 years imprisonment to death sentence. However, with its own Draconian contents this law was not at all comparable to its forerunner. The Communist Party thus obtained a weapon in hand which invoked a avalanche of terrors throughout Czechoslovakia. Tens of thousands of Czechoslovak citizens found themselves behind the bars, in many cases the State Security Force exerted physical and psychological violence on them. They were likewise treated even after their conviction. It was not possible to appeal for one's own rights.

In years 1954–1956, over the incessant proclaims of observance of socialist legitimacy, conditions in Czechoslovak prisons did not undergo any radical changes. Following the deaths of Stalin and Gottwald, there, however, appeared a certain relaxation in international relations as it was reflected on life of prisoners as well. We are the witness that the political prisoners started appealing for ameliorating the living conditions in prisons and demands for one's own inalienable human rights. Moreover, as an attempt to demonstrate that the totalitarian regime failed to break them, the female political prisoners of NPT labour camp No. 1 in Pardubice even sent in letters to the UN General Secretary, into which they referred to the hard and difficult situation of political prisoners in Czechoslovakia. The subsequent revenge of the regime was cruel.

Still, in years 1956–1960, women alike men in other prisons strive to defy the hard living and working conditions. They start educating themselves mutually and in one's tragic moment of life try to be mutual supports to each other. In 1960 came a large amnesty for political prisoners. But for those to whom the amnesty did not apply, further stay behind the bars become practically unbearable. Remaining female political prisoners were promiscuous

with women condemned for, for example, prostitution, theft, vagrancy and the like. The life style of these women, their intellectual outlook and poor education which was sometimes close to illiteracy, coarse language and practicing lesbianism which was on rise to a giant dimension, appeared to the female political prisoners unreal though they spent in prisons years and even tenth year of their life. In addition, in some prisons the relation between them and the prison staffs (SNZ) even aggravated. It remains a memento that some of the female political prisoners of the 1950s were released practically on the eve of the so-called „Prague Spring”. And some of them even did not live to see their release at all