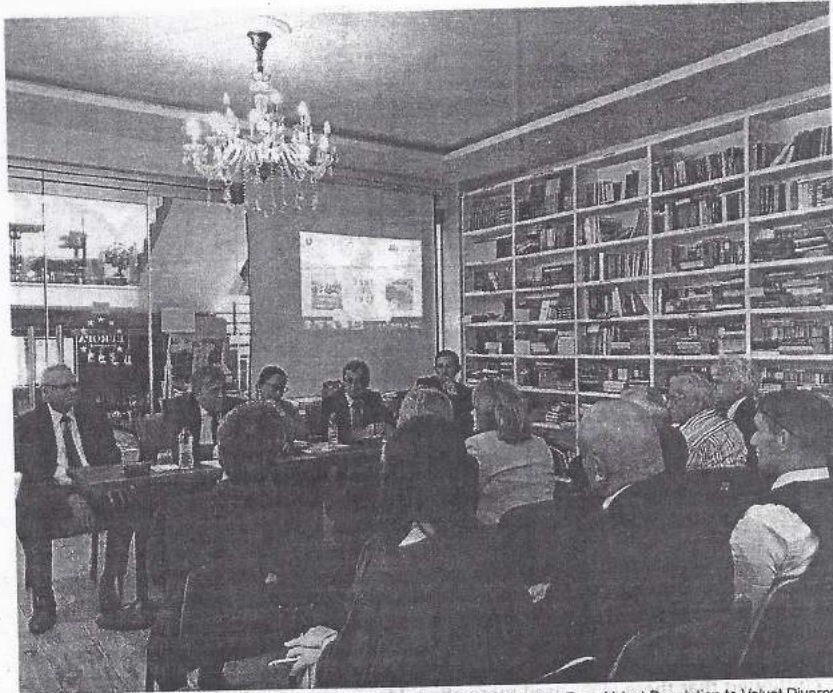


25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DIVISION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

From Velvet Revolution to Velvet Divorce

In 2018 the citizens of the Czech and Slovak Republics will mark a date celebrating the 100 year anniversary of their common independent state - the Czechoslovak Republic. During this past century together, the Czechs and Slovaks have been witness to many great stories that will always hold a special place in their history



During the seminar 'Czechoslovakia: From Velvet Revolution to Velvet Divorce'

TIRANA - On the occasion of 25th anniversary of the division of Czechoslovakia, the Embassies of Czech and Slovak Republics in Tirana in cooperation with the Albanian Institute for International Studies organized a seminar under the headline "Czechoslovakia: From Velvet Revolution to Velvet Divorce" on Wednesday with the main speakers Mr. Slavomír Michalek, Director of the Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences and Mr. Pavel Mucke, Vice-Director of the Institute of Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

The seminar was greeted by the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Tirana, Mr Jaroslav Ludva and the Deputy Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to Tirana, Mr Milan Selecky, who among others noted that the relations between the two countries are excellent, even better than before the 'divorce'.

In their comprehensive

Besides many aspects covering history, politics, economy, demography of their 100 years of being a state, it was noted that a big plus for the calm and peaceful division of Czechoslovakia into two countries was the fact that they did not have any border problems.

The speakers pointed out that both countries are members of the European Union and NATO, and they were proud of those achievements. In the meantime along with Poland and Hungary they are members of the Visegrad Group in whose frame, as they said, they have a fruitful cooperation beneficial for the four countries.

In the political aspect the 'velvet' division was totally different from what happened in the 90s in the former Soviet Union and especially in former Yugoslavia whose dismantling process was characterized by bloody wars with a tragic aftermath on the people and the respective countries.

ple reacted towards Albania's condemnation of the invasion of their country by the Soviet Union led Warsaw Pact troops in on August 20, 1968 to crack down on reformist trends in Prague and its official withdrawal of the Warsaw Treaty. The answer was that such a move was positively appreciated by citizens. And as history has shown although the Soviet Union's action successfully halted the pace of reform in Czechoslovakia at that time, it had unintended consequences for the unity of the communist bloc afterwards.

In the meantime it was unveiled in the seminar that in 2018 the citizens of the Czech and Slovak Republics will mark a date celebrating the 100 year anniversary of their common independent state - the Czechoslovak Republic. During this past century together, the Czechs and Slovaks have been witness to many great stories that will always hold a special place in their history.

It all began in 1918, when

the creation of a common state and is worthy of the title president - liberator.

Another important milestone that is a great source of pride for Czechs and Slovaks is the so-called Prague Spring of 1968 when, seeking liberation and escape from dictatorship, the movement was forcibly ended by the invasion and occupation of the Warsaw Pact troops. And last but not least, it is 1993, when Czechoslovakia was, in a cultured and peaceful way, divided into two new, completely sovereign states within an integrating Europe. It was a peaceful divorce appreciated by the entire civilized world.

The history continues, but the Czechs and Slovaks are still close. In the best sense of the word, they can be proud of their time side by side and boldly commemorate the stormy, joyful and tragic events today. Famous figures that, by their way of thinking, moved Czechoslovakia forward represent an inspiration for the 21st century.