

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF SLOVAKIA 1945 – 1948.
MEMBERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, LEADERSHIP, PARTY APPARATUS,
RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

JAN PEŠEK

PEŠEK, Jan. The Communist Party of Slovakia 1945 – 1948. Membership, organization, leadership, party apparatus, relationship to the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. *Historický časopis*, 2012, 60, Supplement, pp. 97-119, Bratislava.

The Communist Party of Slovakia (CPS) formed in May 1939, became a government party in spring 1945. Its membership base grew rapidly, reaching almost 200,000 by the end of 1945. After re-registration of members and party screening at the end of 1945 and beginning of 1946, the party had about 150,000 members in the middle of 1946, but their number was again approaching 200,000 at the time of the February coup of 1948. The organizational structure of the CPS comprised four parts. The first was the local or village organizations, the second was the district organizations in all 80 districts, and the third was the 11 regional organizations. The fourth and highest part was the leadership of the CPS, that is the Central Committee and associated bodies. The CPS had a professional party apparatus. It was not very numerous, with perhaps 200 functionaries from the districts to the centre. This number increased only slightly up to February 1948. After the liberation, the central figures in the leadership of the CPS were Karol Šmidke and Gustáv Husák. This leadership was removed at the national conference of the CPS at Žilina in August 1945. Viliam Široký became chairman of the party, and Štefan Bašťovanský became general secretary. The CPS was formally an independent political party, but it worked in unity with the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, active in the Czech Lands, and was subordinate to its political line.

Communist Party of Slovakia. Membership. Organization. Party apparatus. Leadership of the CPS. 1945 – 1948.

The Communist Party of Slovakia was established in May 1939. Until the stopping of the activity of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in Slovakia (the Slovak Region of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia) in October 1938, the illegal Regional Leadership of the CPC with its seat in Bratislava directed its work. The most important functionaries of the CPC in Slovakia: Viliam Široký, Karol Bacílek, Vladimír Clementis, Karol Šmidke and others, gradually went into exile and the party continued its activities illegally. On the basis of a resolution of the Secretariat of the Executive of the Communist Internationale from 22 February 1939,¹ the organization of the CPC in Slovakia adopted the

1 The Secretariat of the Executive of the Communist Internationale adopted a resolution, which stated: "As a result of the declaration of autonomy of Slovakia and Transcarpathia, the Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the CI considers it useful for the Slovak and Transcarpathian Region of the CPC to be renamed as the Communist Party of Slovakia and the Communist Party of Transcarpathia, although the party as a whole will continue to bear the name Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and there will still be a united leadership for the whole of Czechoslovakia." Národní archiv (National Archives) Prague (here-