

People's Militia 1948-1969

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Summary

This dissertation deals with the armed forces of Czechoslovak communist party (CCP) called the People's Militia (PM), which became one of the guarantors of regime change in February 1948 and the subsequent development of communism. The text itself tries to capture the origin and evolution of the PM in the period from the factual establishment to the end of 1969. This topic has not been processed in this range before.

These armed forces of the ruling CCP were formed on voluntary basis by proven members. The PM created the important preventive, repressive and also ideological support of the communist apparatus. Since its inception in 1948, over four decades of lack of freedom, conservative militias were the instrument of power of the totalitarian regime. Despite its importance, the PM were never firmly anchored in the Czechoslovak legislation. De facto, the PM were the "army of the party" outside the legal frame.

The militia units developed into relatively well-organized armed forces with a wide scope to carry out tasks in the system of protection and defense of the communist regime ranging from guarding buildings, riots control and in case of war should this "army of the party" fulfill a lot of combat missions at the state territory. For this purpose the members of the PM possessed not only light individual weapons, but also heavy ones, e.g. anti-aircraft guns.

This dissertation focuses on the activities of the People's Militia in Czech territory. It is chronologically organized into six major units and several sub-chapters. In the annexes there are selected transcripts of historical documents. The work mirrors the different spheres of militias' operations. It also describes their formation in February 1948, continuing with the development of organizational standards. Consequently, it deals with different stages of activity, internal organization of the PM, its equipment and accessories, financial management, personnel policy, manpower development etc. The conclusion mentions the disbandment and disarmament of the People's Militia in 1989/1990 and following futile effort for legal sanction of responsible communist leaders, accused of illegal arming of communist militia units.