



International Students' Day

Jan Pristach

International Students' Day

1. International Students' Day – Established in memory of the events of November 17, 1939.

2. Key Events Leading Up to November 17, 1939:

- 1. October 28, 1939:** Student-led demonstration in Wenceslas Square, Prague, protesting the Nazi occupation. Student Jan Opletal was fatally wounded, and Václav Sedláček was killed.
- 2. November 15, 1939:** A follow-up protest further clashed with the authorities, escalating tensions.

3. Consequences for Czechoslovak Universities:

1. Closure of all Czech universities for three years.
2. Nine student leaders were arrested and executed.
3. Approximately 1,200 students were deported to Sachsenhausen concentration camp, 39 did not survive. The rest were gradually released by early 1943.

International Students' Day

1. The Velvet Revolution – November 17, 1989:

1. Marked a peaceful transition to democracy in Czechoslovakia between November 17 and December 29.
2. Led to the end of the Communist regime without the loss of any lives, symbolizing a “velvet” (nonviolent) revolution.

2. Background to the Revolution:

1. **1946:** Communist Party gains control in Czechoslovak elections.
2. **1948:** Communist-led coup establishes one-party rule, economic conditions improved, but standards of living lagged behind Western Europe.
3. **January 1989:** Vigorous protests on the 20th anniversary of Jan Palach’s death, with notable arrests, including Václav Havel.

3. November 17, 1989 Demonstration Timeline:

1. **3:40 PM:** Students gather on Albertov Street, Prague.
2. **4:00 PM:** Singing of the student anthem.
3. **6:00 PM:** Official end of the demonstration.
4. **Later Events:** A march continued unofficially, leading to confrontations with security forces by 9:15 PM. Police attacked with batons, injuring 568 people.

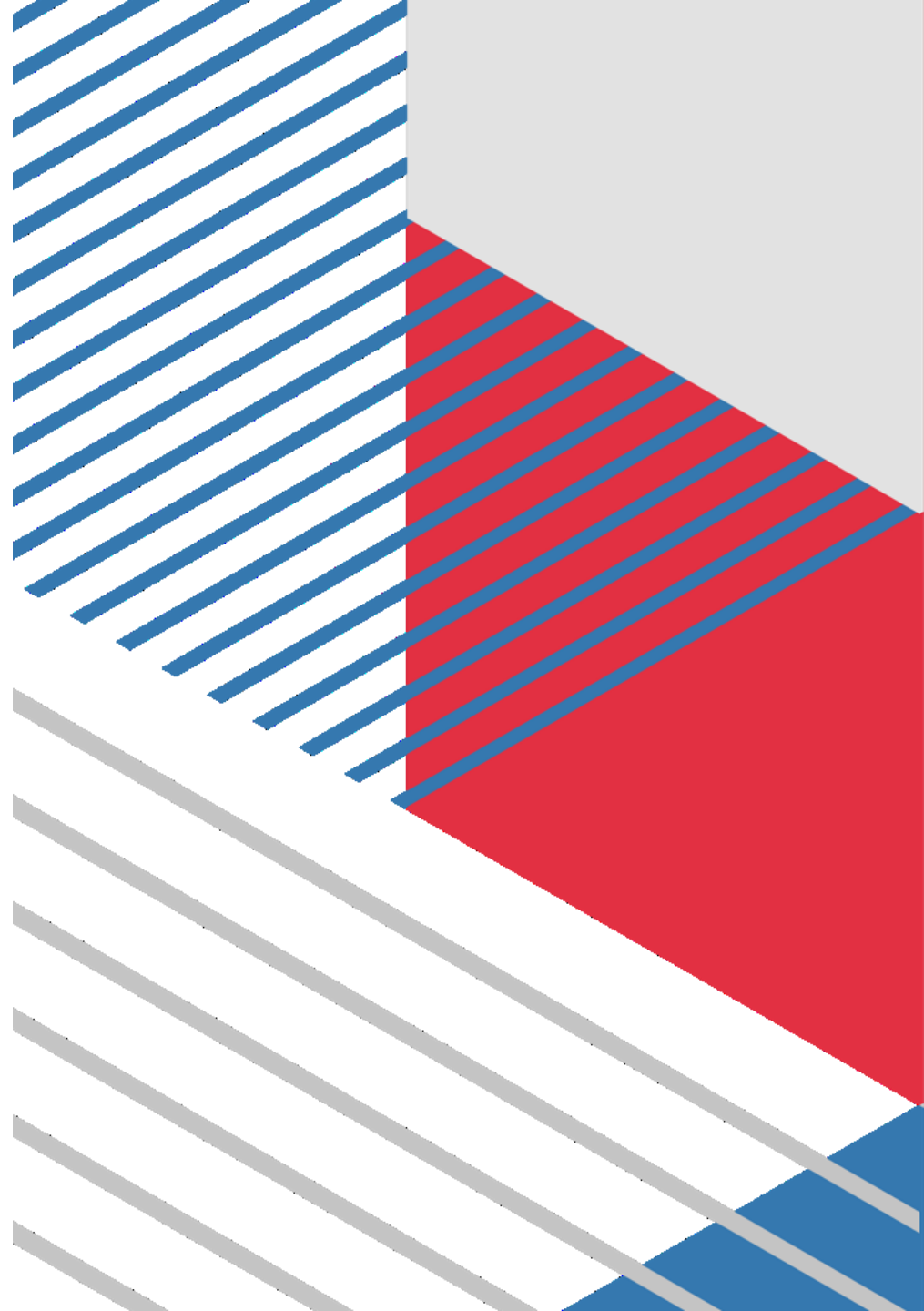
Velvet Revolution

On November 17, 1989, a peaceful student demonstration in Prague was forcefully suppressed by riot police.

This incident ignited a wave of public demonstrations, starting on November 19 and continuing through late December.

By November 20, the number of protesters gathered in Prague had surged from 200,000 on the previous day to an estimated 500,000.

A two-hour general strike, involving citizens from across Czechoslovakia, took place on November 27.





Velvet Revolution

On November 28, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia announced it would step down from power and dismantle the one-party system.

In early December, barbed wire and other barriers were cleared from Czechoslovakia's borders with West Germany and Austria.

On December 10, President Gustáv Husák appointed the country's first predominantly non-Communist government since 1948 and subsequently resigned.

On December 28, Alexander Dubček was chosen as speaker of the federal parliament, and Václav Havel was elected President of Czechoslovakia on December 29, 1989.

Velvet Revolution

In June 1990, Czechoslovakia held its first democratic elections since 1946.

The event is internationally known as the "*Velvet Revolution*„.

In the Czech environment, the term "*Velvet Revolution*" was also commonly used after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993, Slovakia began referring to the revolution as the "*Gentle Revolution*," a term Slovaks had used from the beginning.

Czechia still uses the term "*Velvet Revolution*„.

The name reflects the peaceful nature of the revolution, without the use of weapons or violence.





17 11 1989

The Velvet Revolution

Czechoslovakia 1989-1993



Key People of the transformation



Václav Havel was a Czech playwright, dissident, and political leader.



Alexandr Dubček was a Slovak reformist politician and symbol of the Prague Spring.



Marián Čalfa was a Slovak lawyer, Communist politician, and reformist Prime Minister.



Questions & answers

Thank you for your attention!

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