

October 18, 1940

[Shawk Delegation Convention]

FDR Speech File

INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
On the occasion of the visit to the  
Executive Offices of the White House  
of a delegation representing the Slovak  
Convention then being held in Washington  
October 18, 1940, 12.15 P.M.

The following were the members of the delegation:

Dr. Peter P. Hletko  
Stephen J. Skriba  
Joseph Husek  
Magr. Stephen Krasula  
Rev. Casimir Cvercko  
Mrs. Gabriela Vavrek  
Mrs. Helen Kocen  
Joseph C. Prusa  
Adam Podkrivacky  
Judge Michael Tremko  
John Kridlo  
Michael Sineak  
Edward Vaczy  
Rev. Anton Gracik  
Joseph Steller

(The President shook hands with each member of the delegation.)

THE PRESIDENT: Here is an interesting thing: I had this group in the other day, the Lithuanians. Let me tell you the story. They gave me a scroll, a resolution, talking about the loss of independence of the Lithuanians. When they got all through, I pulled a very long face and I said, "It says here, 'the loss of independence of the Lithuanians.' Instead of that it should be

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This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the prepared reading copy text. Parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

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The President made a speech when he was in the White House. He said that he was very interested in the independence of the Latin American countries. He said that he was very interested in the independence of the Latin American countries. He said that he was very interested in the independence of the Latin American countries.

said that Lithuania has temporarily suspended its independence and is going to get it back." That is the real story, because Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and Czechoslovakia are going to get their independence before they get through.

DR. HLETKO: That is the same thought we have.

THE PRESIDENT: We may have and we have had quite a struggle, but we are working toward that objective.

Another thing I pointed out was this Pan-American policy of ours. Under that policy there are twenty-one republics, and among those twenty-one republics there are a number that are infinitely smaller than Czechoslovakia. Now, if it is true that these republics in Central America and South America, although they are small, should retain their nationality, why isn't it equally true that countries in Europe should retain theirs? It is the same principle, absolutely the same principle.

JUDGE TREMCKO: Just as you say, we Americans do not discriminate, regardless of size.

THE PRESIDENT: No, we are opposed to the crushing, by one big nation, of the little nations over here.

DR. HLETKO: We are having a conference at this time of Slovak organizations all over the country, and they are all, 160 of us, in Washington representing those organizations. It is a small delegation, but they represent all parts of the country, and we are, of course, very happy to have this opportunity to come in and extend our greetings and to assure you of our loyalty and cooperation to the fullest extent.

You can always depend on the Slovaks.

JUDGE TREMCO: We want you to know that you have our sincere support  
in every noble thing that you have done and will do for the  
future of this country. And may God bless your health.

THE PRESIDENT: I would much rather have the Monsignor give me his  
blessing.

MONSIGNOR KRASULA: I am happy to do so, Mr. President.

STATEMENTS FILE

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(end)



STEPHEN J. SKRIBAN <sup>✓✓</sup>  
DR PETER P. HLETKO ✓<sub>13</sub>  
JOSEPH HUSEK ✓  
MAGR. STEPHEN KRASULA 7  
REV. CASIMIR CYERČKO ✓  
MRS. GABRIELA VAVREK 5  
MRS. HELEN KOČAN 3  
JOSEPH G. PRUŠA 9  
ADAM PODKRIVACKY 4  
JUDGE MICHAEL TREMKO 2  
JOHN KRIDLÓ 16  
MICHAEL SINČAK 11  
EDWARD VACZY 9  
REV. ANTON GRACIK 11  
Joseph Steller ①