

THE CZECH PEASANT MOVEMENT, ITS LEADER AND HIS PARTY

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The Czech Agrarian party originated around the turn of the century. Its leader, Antonín Švehla, successfully transformed it from an interest-group party into a mass party by championing the interests of all groups of the rural population. Švehla also gained recognition and friends in other party camps. This enabled his rise to head of government and guarantor of a stable government in Czechoslovakia. The Czech Agrarians' election campaign slogan of „equal among equals“ paved the way for participation of German parties and the Slovak People's party in the government from 1926 on.

The Czech Agrarian party's mistrust of Dr. Beneš but also of the Communists was probably the main reason why it was banned after the Second World War.

The literature which has thus far appeared on Anton Štefánek is almost insignificant and of little value for specialists and general readers in East and West. The four essays in this volume of the Bohemia-Yearbook are therefore a welcome interdisciplinary effort toward filling a void in modern Slovak history.