

# ŠVEHLA — BENEŠ — MASARYK

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Contrary to the generally accepted view, the author views Švehla as the leading figure of the First Czechoslovak Republic and as the founder of Czechoslovak democracy.

Beneš presents a picture full of contrasts. Though, on the one hand, he acquired the reputation of a liberal statesman by establishing friendly relations with the neighboring states, on the other, his role as a mediator between Russia, which he wanted to tie closer to Europe, and the Great Powers cast him in the part of the fool to Stalin, whose true designs he did not grasp.

In comparison to Švehla and Beneš, Masaryk played a modest political role. He could be described as an uncrowned head of state. He made little use of his right of intervention, but insisted that fairness and commonsense prevail in political decision-making.