

THE CZECH NATIONAL STATE IN THE YEAR 1919

Alfred Opitz

For the period between the end of the war in the fall of 1918 and the conclusion of the Paris peace treaties, there is only little expressive source material at the disposal of historical research on the building of the successor states after the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Thus it is all the more welcome that a rapid succession of reports originating from the Saxon legation which continued to function in Vienna until the end of 1919 affords more detailed insight into the otherwise confusing picture of the first phase in the building of the successor states. Material from these reports is used to illuminate the internal and international situation of the new Czechoslovak state. The problems of the efforts directed at the internal ordering of the state and of the economic transformation are discussed, as are the national questions which burdened the new state from the

very beginning. The latter resulted from the compulsory incorporation of areas settled by Germans, Slovaks and Hungarians. Also of interest are the attempts — typical for the year 1919 — at sociopolitical reform in the agrarian and industrial sectors, accompanied by Bolshevist influences emanating from Russia and Hungary, as well as the party and government situation, and the establishment of the first foreign policy and foreign economic contacts.