

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT WITH REGARD
TO THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESSES THROUGHOUT
CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S HISTORY

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This contribution examines how important the role of Parliament was for the transformation phases in 1918-1920, 1938 and 1945-1948 respectively. It evaluates place and position of the legislative assembly in the process of political decision-making and its relations to the executive power. The author offers the theory that in Czechoslovakia, as indeed in many other nations, the relative importance of Parliament decreased, and it became subordinated to Government and political parties. The proof, with regard to interwar Czechoslovakia, is the so-called "pětka" (Committee of the Five). After World War II, in 1945-1948, this tendency continued to exist. During this later period, there was even a fundamental change in the composition of the National Assembly, with the number of delegates coming from a traditional elite background decreasing, and the number of those having ties to the new institutions (National Committees, trade unions) increasing. The National Assembly ceased to be a place where important political decisions were made, and became a kind of arena in which pointed, sometimes radical political positions were debated and defended, positions for which there was no room in the proceedings of Government, which had to arrive at some form of compromise.