

flag-waving students, awash with the golden glow of the floodlights, it provided a most dramatic and stirring backdrop to the tumultuous events below. Each night our hearts were stirred by the ringing of the keys ceremony and the cries in one voice from the thousands for Svobodu, Svobodu, Svobodu (Freedom, Freedom, Freedom). And then, just when you thought you could not bear another drop of emotion, they sang, their voices echoed by the encircling buildings, the magnificent and stirring national anthem, all hands raised in the V for Victory sign.

Saturday morning, day seven, the sweep of events rose to yet another grand climax as the old Cardinal Tomasek, who has done so much over the years to advance the cause of freedom, celebrated a mass, scheduled many months earlier, but so appropriately taking place on this Saturday of this week of weeks. The mass celebrated the recent canonization of Czechoslovakia's own St. Agnes, and was performed in elaborate splendour with all the zeal and passion the long spurned Catholics could muster. As Mr. Skvorecky said, it was enough to make a heathen pray. Saturday afternoon and Sunday, the largest of the demonstrations were held on the Letna field, a venue in earlier times reserved for the May Day parade, and now swept by icy winds. The flags snapped and crackled briskly, as did the wicked Swejkian wit of the crowd.

Later in December, with the universe unfolding as it should, Prince/President Havel was crowned/proclaimed in the great Gothic Vladislav Hall where the ancient kings of Bohemia were once crowned, and again voices were raised in song in a Te Deum sung in St. Vitus cathedral. The music was by Dvorak and the Cardinal officiated proudly.

New Year's Eve was the final glorious celebration of the festival of change, and everyone went to Wenceslas Square and the Old Town square and drank champagne, embraced, sang songs and danced in a spontaneous outpouring of happiness. Our last memories of the evening were of seeing a young gentleman arranging empty champagne bottles neatly beneath one of the Baroque statues on the Charles Bridge. A little further along, still on the bridge, which is strictly reserved for pedestrians, at 2:30 a.m., January 1st, 1990, were to be seen two police cars covered, from stem to stern with illuminated candles, and beside their cars, two sheepish policemen being embraced and kissed by all the girls. Meanwhile, past this bizarre and spectacular scene, a young man playing his guitar and listening to his own imaginary drummer, danced along his way singing Freedom, Freedom, Yeah Yeah Freedom.

