

## Chapter 7

### 1949-1950

#### 1949

The New Year started with mild weather. It warmed up to such an extent that all the snow melted in a night and a day.

New arrangements for the supply of clothing and textiles were instituted. The previous coupons ceased to be valid after 31 December 1948, and not everybody received new ones. Coupons were given to all employees who worked at least forty hours per week and had been in employment for at least three months, and also to pensioners, students, and agricultural workers with up to fifteen hectares of land, provided that they had delivered their quotas of corn, meat, potatoes, milk, and eggs, and had completely satisfied the sowing plan (that is, had sown the specified amounts of winter wheat and beet). Those with over fifteen hectares, even if they had fulfilled everything, received no coupons, nor did tradesmen, nor tobacconists, priests, nuns, and private businessmen. All were thrown on to the free market. An exception was made for pregnant women, who received separate coupons entitling them to buy for the new arrival.

Starting from January 6, stores were opened in Brno selling free goods, that is without points or coupons.

Item		Price without coupons (crowns)	With coupons
Man's shirt		1200-1600	200
Man's underwear		960	120
Man's socks		68	21
Man's suit		7500	1600
Man's winter coat		9500	1800
Men's woollen cloth	1m	2800	270
Men's winter cloth	"	3800	370
Women's cotton cloth	"	300	50
Women's ordinary cloth	"	960	115
Women's light outdoor cloth	"	3450	280
Artificial silk	"	350	60
Pure silk	"	4597	500
Men's ordinary cloth	"	1420	155
Flannel	"	370	48
Dress material	"	238	25
Washable linen for underwear	"	520	48
Absorbent towel		280	55
Woman's blouse		750	120
Woman's trousers		200	32
Woollen sweater		1600	350
Angora sweater		6000	1200
Woman's cotton stockings		70	19
Woman's silk stockings		500	48
Knitting wool	1kg	3800	540

January 3. The first working day, on which the five-year plan started. There was great celebration, and the loudspeakers played throughout the day to mark the opening of the plan.

January 20. We delivered our wine. The amount to be delivered was not prescribed, but depended on how much had been harvested. Growers were allowed to keep 300 litres for themselves and had to deliver the rest, on which they had to pay an advance tax of 5 crowns per litre. The 300 litres for themselves was exempt from this tax. Our wine was collected by the wine-growers' co-operative "Vinopa" at Velké Pavlovice, which paid us 28 crowns per litre of red wine and 35 crowns per litre of white. We delivered a total of 274 litres.

January 25. There was a change in national insurance payments. We had to pay 187 crowns monthly. There was much grumbling and discontent about this, because the more land a person

cultivated the more he had to pay.

January 26. The new clothing coupons were issued here in Těšany. Only sixty families working on the land received coupons, the rest not having fulfilled their quotas. This was mainly due to a shortfall against the meat quota, because the drought of 1947 had caused many cattle to be put down because of brittle bones and others had not yet reached slaughter weight.

Until January 20, the weather had been warm and wet, but then it got colder and temperatures dropped to 3–5 degrees below zero.

February 1. We ceased to be part of the Klobouky district. In future, our district town would be Židlochovice.

February 11. Twenty people, including our Pavel, were ordered to return their clothing coupons, because they had not completely fulfilled their delivery quotas. Our Franta the carpenter received no coupons, neither for himself nor for his family, because he had not delivered his meat quota.

The breaking up of the manor estate was reversed, and the estate was transferred to the state as a model state farm. A small amount of land would be left to some agricultural workers.

February 26. Contracts were signed whereby workers on the land bound themselves to fulfil all the quotas which were now laid down. Thus smallholders with up to two hectares of arable land had to harvest 22½q of wheat, 23q of barley, and 18q of maize per hectare, medium land-holders 24½q, and larger land-holders 26q. They were allowed to keep 21kg per person per month for themselves, and the rest they had to deliver to the co-operative for public provisioning. We had 1.72 hectares of land, and from that we had to deliver 460kg of wheat, 280kg of barley, 59kg of maize, 3kg of beans, 2.60kg of poultry (from 1 to 1.30kg), 540 eggs, 106kg of pork, 95kg of beef, 750l of milk, and 40q of sugar beet.

In February, off-ration provision shops were opened in the towns, of course with markedly higher prices.

Item		Price without coupons (crowns)	With coupons
Butter	1kg	450	80
Sugar	"	250	15
Rice	"	300	10
Coffee	"	1500	115
Tea	"	2000	
Ham	"	500	
Beef	"	250	
Dried salami	"	1000	
Raisins	10dkg	50	
Almonds	"	50	
Eggs	each	12	
Rum	1 litre	300	
Sweet liqueurs	"	500–600	

The weather in February started with several days of frost, then came a warm spell which lasted until the end of the month and several people were able to sow spring wheat.

March 1. It again started to freeze, without snow. The temperature dropped to 10 degrees below zero.

March 7. This year, there was no memorial evening organized by the cultural council to commemorate the birthday of T. G. Masaryk, as had been the case in other years. Likewise, there was nothing on March 10 to commemorate the first anniversary of the death of his son Jan Masaryk.

In the middle of March, there were changes among the village officials. Vincenc Chaloupka of No. 122 was dismissed, and his place was taken by Barnabáš Sedláček of No. 266.

March 21. Sowing started.

March 24. Constructional engineers Ing. Petrůj and Ing. Kepka came from Brno, and gave their approval to our building.

March 25. The breaking up of the manor estate was finally cancelled. Some fields were to be returned at once, some to be left until after the harvest.

March 26. There was a call-up. Eleven boys were taken.

March 30. A co-operative laundry was established in one of the ground-floor rooms of the manor house. The electric washing machine with its wringer cost 20,200 crowns, to which the agricultural

ministry made a contribution of 20,000 crowns. The members of the laundry co-operative paid the remaining 200 crowns from membership dividends, together with the cost of packing, transport, and preparation of the room.

There had been frosts at the beginning of March, followed by showers of snow and rain. Sowing started on March 20. Towards the end of the month there were fierce windstorms, which in places blew down all the winter wheat. On the whole, March was dry and without moisture.

From April 1, we had ration coupons issued for three months. Previously they had been issued for one month.

Construction started on a water main which would bring water from Skalka [the main village well] to parts of the village whose inhabitants had been suffering severe shortages.

April 16. The Day of the Resurrection. The leaders of our village, being communists, did not come to carry the figure of Christ and the Paschal Lamb in procession, as had been the custom from time immemorial. [Easter Day in 1949 fell on April 17, so it would appear that the "Day of the Resurrection" was Easter Eve, but this is not a usage I have met elsewhere.]

The building of the secondary school was officially stopped. The offices did not want to allow new buildings or even repairs in the five-year plan because of great shortages of building material. Likewise, our Pavel did not have permission to renew the barn at No. 247, which was burnt out in the battle. Building permission was granted to each inhabitant who did not demand an official docket (for cement, bricks, wood, iron, and so on) and had all necessary building material prepared. This meant that if somebody had bought building material on the black market (without a permit), he could build. Officially, a thousand bricks cost 1,500 crowns. On the black market they cost 2,500 crowns, and were hard to find.

The month of April was very favourable for agriculture. It was warm, there was rain, and the corn was doing very well.

May 1, Labour Day, was this year celebrated very ostentatiously. The loudspeakers played music from an early hour. The inhabitants were urged to hang out banners and to take part in the procession. But people took little notice, and few turned up. The procession was filled out by children from the primary and secondary schools, who were ordered to take part with their teachers.

May 5. Inhabitants who had fields on lease were called to Židlochovice, where it was announced that the land would be taken away from those who did not work on it themselves and would be given to those who did work on it.

May 9 and 10. There was a frost which did great damage to the lower vineyards.

On May 15, a meeting was held at Chalupa's tavern, No. 23, to which all those working on the land were invited by a loudspeaker announcement. At the meeting, a speaker from Brno praised the communal cultivation of land as on the Russian model and urged people to join a Standard Agricultural Co-operative, but people were unimpressed and the speaker had to go away disappointed.

In the second half of May there was a loudspeaker announcement that anybody who would undertake to deliver to the co-operative from his sow's litter four sucklings with a weight of at least 15kg each at a price of 80 crowns per kilogramme would receive a ration of maize, at the rate of 300kg for a gilt producing her first litter and 200kg for an older sow, and at a cost of 610 crowns per 100kg.

May had been a good month for agriculture. There was substantial rain in the middle of the month, the corn was promising, and this year there was no need to keep replanting the beet because there were not many pests.

June 2. The first cut of hay was taken, but the crop was very poor. It had been attacked by greenfly, and was as if it had been burnt.

June 12, the day of St Barnabas. Members of the CCP (Czechoslovak Communist Party) came and urged people to subscribe to a "Catholic Undertaking" whereby Catholics agreed that the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia would be obedient in religious matters to the Czechoslovak Government and not to the Pope in Rome. People refused to sign, among them our priest the Rev Antonín Florián, even though the chairman of the regional council in Židlochovice contacted him personally. [I have followed the original text in leaving blank lines around this paragraph and that relating to June 19 below.]

June 14. We received an assessment for room tax at the rate of 50 crowns per living room for the year

1948–1949. We now had two local taxes, the first being a tax of 80 crowns each on dogs.

June 19. A pastoral letter from the Czechoslovak bishops, urging people to remain faithful to the Church, should have been read in all Catholic churches, but on the night between Saturday and Sunday members of the NSC (the police) went from rectory to rectory and collected the letters. However, some priests refused to surrender them, and read them out in church in spite of the prohibition. Our priest in Těšany said that he didn't have the letter, that it hadn't yet been delivered to him. The NSC also went to Moutnice, and when the priest didn't give them the letter they went again in the morning to the church itself, where he said that he would give them the letter as soon as he had read it out from the pulpit. And he did indeed read it from the pulpit. The NSC wanted to arrest him for disobedience, but people from Moutnice, Rosařín, and Nesvačilka were greatly incensed and surrounded the rectory so that he could not be taken, and the NSC had to depart. One week later, on June 26, a second pastoral letter was read in which the bishops urged people to remain faithful to the Church, and immediately after it had been read the NSC came for him. [The text here is somewhat repetitive, perhaps for emphasis, perhaps because it was written with unusual emotion, and I have simplified. The "him" in the final sentence presumably refers again to the priest at Moutnice.]

June 27. After sixteen years, the crow came again to the mill at Žatčany, and brought twin boys who were christened Antonín and Pavel. The godparents were brother Josef and his wife from Dubňany. [Babies in Moravia are apparently delivered by crows and not by storks.]

There was unrest in the villages where the pastoral letter had been read. Priests were interrogated for reading it, and even at night people kept watch on the rectories to prevent their arrest. The priest at Šitbořice was summoned to the regional centre at Hustopeče for interrogation, and people from Šitbořice went with him to the number of five hundred. This was on June 30.

June had been very cold and dry. Barley and wheat were a little late, and when grown after hay or in sandy soils was not developing ears although it had grown tall enough. There would be scarcely any second cutting of hay.

At the start of July, a spell of rainy and wet weather led to an outbreak of mildew, or as the people say "rust", in the vineyards. Many vineyards were eighty per cent scorched. Some parts were less affected, particularly where the owners had sprayed frequently with a solution of copper sulphate.

On July 12, Pavel, one of Tonda's twins at Žatčany, died. He had been very weak since birth.

July 13. The harvest started. It went quietly and quickly. The corn was standing well, and two tractors came from the state depot at Pohořelice and one from the local machinery co-operative, all with binders. Thus few people reaped with scythes. The reaping and binding of one measure cost 16 crowns. During the week after the start of the harvest, all the Těšany threshing machines in the market-place opposite the cemetery were working day and night.

It was announced that those who delivered more than their pork quota in July and August would receive a supplement of 21 crowns per kilogramme to the previous price of 32 crowns per kilogramme, in September only 11 crowns. But they must have completely fulfilled all delivery quotas. Furthermore, those who had fulfilled their egg quotas could deliver the surplus at a price of 90 crowns per kilogramme (the price for the quota was 44.20 crowns per kilogramme).

August 1. The secretary of the village council, Josef Sedláček of No. 128, was dismissed for embezzling communal funds and provision coupons.

In August, salt was freed from control. In future, anyone could buy as much as he chose.

Thursday August 11. A tractor and trailer, heaped high with manure, fell into the track below the vineyards. The tractor driver, Karel Turek of No. 282, broke his arm, and the tractor and trailer, which belonged to the local machinery co-operative, were badly damaged. In my opinion, the blame for this mishap belongs to the "Local National Committee" for having failed to repair the roads.

August 12. It started to rain, and continued without a stop until August 17. The fields were still full of stooks and stacks, and as a result of the prolonged rains the corn was sprouting not only in the stooks but in the stacks.

August 18. There was another change in the distribution of land from the manor estate. Ordinary workers, and agricultural workers with over 25 measures of land, were excluded, and claimants with less land were screened to see if they had a positive attitude towards the government and the state. They were allowed to demand only such land as would bring their holding up to 25 measures, and so only a few people benefitted from the distribution.

In the second half of August, the isolated house “Hastrmánek”, No. 136, was demolished. It had contained a mill with a waterwheel. It belonged to the manor estate, but had been seriously damaged during the battle and had been unoccupied since the autumn of 1945. The state farm sold the building to Jan Baláš for demolition, and from the material he built himself house No. ... [“311” inserted in a later hand].

The weather cleared at the end of the month, people brought the last stooks from the fields, and threshing was in full swing. The corn yielded well, and we threshed 600kg from one measure of wheat and 550kg from one measure of barley.

September 1. The Těšany station of the “National Security Corps” was closed. Těšany now came under the NSC in Měnin.

September 3, the first anniversary of the death of President Dr Ed. Beneš, passed without mention either in the newspapers or on the radio.

September 12. The barn of Jos. Král at No. 52 burned down.

From October 1, coupons for bread, flour, and potatoes were discontinued, and also the grinding of corn was revised, of wheat to 73 per cent and of rye to 75 per cent. Prices were also revised. One kilogramme of bread flour cost 7.50 crowns, of fine-ground wheat flour 7.50 crowns, and of coarse wheat flour 13 crowns. [This might seem the wrong way round, since coarse flour might be expected to cost less than fine, but the text is quite clear. Perhaps the “fine-ground” flour contained more than its share of relatively useless dust. A similar differential will appear in future years, though it will be much smaller.] Now, after ten years, everyone could buy as much as he needed of bread, flour, pastries, and potatoes.

Sunday October 2. This should have been the feast of St Václav, but the chairman of the village council refused to allow the young people to have music on account of their obstinacy in refusing to join the Young People’s Front and go on working parties. This was the first time in living memory that we had had “St Václav’s Day” without music in Těšany.

October 8. A grape gathering was ordered. The crop was poor, and so the quotas were lower. Those who had up to five ares did not have to supply anything at all, and those with more had to deliver 15kg per are. We had to deliver 300kg, for which we received 24 crowns per kilogramme, and for each cent of grapes we received three of sugar, for which however the grower had to pay. As last year, the grower could keep 300 litres of wine for himself, on which no tax was assessed.

October had been very dry. People could not sow, and even where they had the corn was germinating badly.

November 5. It was announced over the loudspeakers that everyone on his own responsibility had to decorate his house and windows with banners and pictures of the Russian leaders, in honour of the Russian revolution of November 7.

On November 11 and 14, there was a massive inspection of those who had not delivered their quotas of corn and potatoes. With the assistance of the “National Security Corps”, inspectors went from house to house looking for and sternly demanding these crops.

Těšany had to deliver 34 waggonloads of hard corn and 14 waggonloads of corn for animal feed. We had 1.82 hectares of arable land, and delivered as follows.

Item	Quota demanded	Amount delivered
Wheat	460kg	460kg
Barley	280kg	280kg
Maize	58kg	58kg
Beans	4kg	4kg
Potatoes	50kg	50kg
Beef	92kg	85kg
Pork	106kg	128kg
Milk	750 litres	834 litres
Eggs	540	614
Pears		48kg at 7 crowns
Apples		158kg at 10 crowns
Grapes		310kg at 24 crowns

Prices of corn and potatoes were unchanged from the previous year, but poultry, fattened geese and ducks, and chickens were down by a half. Geese and ducks were selling at 120–150 crowns per kilogramme, large chickens at 100 crowns each.

Those who had fulfilled all their quotas could deliver pork to the co-operative for the free market at from 60 to 75 crowns per kilogramme depending on weight and quality, compared with a price of 29–33 crowns per kilogramme for pork delivered as part of the quota. Similarly, eggs and milk delivered over and above the quota fetched a good price, eggs 180 crowns per kilogramme as against 44 crowns, milk 10 crowns per litre as against 4.50 crowns.

November had seen plenty of rain, and there was hope that the winter wheat which people had been sowing almost throughout the month would come up before the frost.

Monday December 12. There was a further inspection. 26 men and one woman, mostly factory workers and officials, arrived, split up into groups, and went through the village, going not only into the farm buildings but into the houses. And everywhere they prowled around and examined lofts, storerooms, cowsheds, and in the living quarters even wardrobes and beds, in search of hidden reserves.

December 19 and 20. People were urged several times each day to decorate their houses and windows with banners and pictures of J. V. Stalin, whose birthday was on December 21. Chairman Karel Ardély announced over the loudspeakers the names of those who had still not decorated at least their windows.

Many people were not allowed to slaughter a pig for Christmas because they had not fulfilled their quotas, and there was great discontent on account of this.

The last wedding in the Těšany church took place on December 31, between Oldřich Opletal and Růžena Hořimová from Šinkvice Dvůr. From the New Year, the legitimation of weddings would take place in the office of the “Local National Committee”.

As in other years, the Old Year ended with New Year’s Eve revels, but actors had to be brought in from other villages because the young people, under the influence of the “CCP” [the Czechoslovak Communist Party], did not want to take part.

The weather up to the New Year was mild, and people could complete all ploughing. The year had been good for corn and for root crops, and only hay was lacking. But people were discontented because of the large quotas and the penalties for not fulfilling them.

Likewise, shortages of necessary materials and goods bitterly angered the people, our hard-working people who wanted to build. People would have built and repaired, but did not receive permits either to build or to buy building material such as bricks, cement, iron, wood, and so on. Some inhabitants had built using material gathered on the black market, namely Adolf Mazanec of No. 287, Alois Štěpánek of No. ..., Jan Balaš of No. ..., Stanislav Ledba of No. 307, and Josef Dosoudil [number “307” inserted later, and numbers “...” left blank and never filled in]. They had to pay a fine, Alois Štěpánek 2,800 crowns and Adolf Mazanec 500 crowns.

The new water main from Skalka [the main village well] was not finished for want of the necessary piping, but a fine pump with an electric motor was installed, so that when people had to go for water they no longer had to pump by hand but could start the motor with a flick of a switch and draw water into their bowser or barrel.

## 1950

How did the New Year find our family?

My husband had reached 60 the month before, and I myself was 53 the day before. The five postwar years had been years of hardship and toil, and our ages were beginning to show both on myself and particularly on my man. From time to time, we both suffered a bit from arthritis, but otherwise we were fit and well, and we ourselves looked after our land and vineyard.

Everyone at brother Antonín’s in Žatčany was in good shape. Their 20-year-old daughter Vlasta was employed as an office worker in the central co-operative store “Včela” in Brno at a monthly salary of 2,400 crowns, 19-year-old Květoslav had learned the miller’s trade and was working in the mill at home, and the youngest sprig of the family, seven-month-old Toniček, was a fine and healthy child full of life.

Brother Tobiáš was well, and was working in a factory in Brno for 4,000 crowns a month. His wife Marie was having trouble with her lungs, and although it was not dangerous she had to have treatment. She was also receiving increased rations, butter 1.20kg per month, meat 3½kg, sugar 60dkg,

eggs 30, milk (daily)  $\frac{3}{4}$ l. Their son Alois was doing two years of military service.

Brother Pavel and his 16-year-old daughter Marta, who was working in Zlín, now called Gotvaldov, were well. [Zlín is a town some seventy kilometres east of Brno. Its name reverted to Zlín after 1989.]

The family of brother František at No. 119 were well. Their 18-year-old daughter Libuše had graduated as a nursing administrative sister, and was employed in the regional health centre at Svitavy [a town some sixty kilometres north of Brno] at a monthly salary of 3,000 crowns. 15-year-old son František was learning carpentry.

The family of brother Josef at Dubňany was also blessed with good health, and son Květoslav, 15, was learning the miller's trade at home.

Likewise everyone was well at youngest brother Jaromír's. Twelve-year-old Jožka and nine-year-old Annuška were doing very well at school, and were bringing home excellent reports. Jara himself was employed as a bookkeeper at the local co-operative.

January 1. Two general grocery shops vanished. The Polešovský shop at No. 96 was closed, and the shop of Valent. Slaný at No. 72 was incorporated into the "Včela" co-operative. Its previous owner ceased to be its owner, and became an employee of the co-operative. Now, here in Těšany, there was no grocery shop in private hands, but there were two branches of "Včela" (the second, at No. 149, was the former Suchánek shop). Goods were no longer being supplied to private shopkeepers, and so their owners were being forced either to close down or to put their shops at the disposal of "Včela".

Likewise the butcher's shop of Jan Zejda at No. 289 was now a "Včela", and he was chopping meat as an employee of "Včela". Our younger generation which was now growing up would never know that before the second world war butchers walked on their own through the villages buying animals and calling out in a sing-song voice, "Any meat to sell, any meat to sell, hey," accompanied by the barking of the great dog without which no butcher went out to buy.

From January 1, those with more than two hectares (ten measures) of land would not receive meat coupons, but anyone who had fulfilled all his quotas could kill as many pigs as he wished and sell the resulting products on the free market. However, for each pig killed, whether large or small, he had to supply 5kg of rendered lard for public consumption at 55 crowns per kilogramme.

From January 6, the village council would not grant permission for home pig slaughter as previously. Now a form had to be filled out in duplicate, stating, with confirmation from the agricultural co-operative, that the quotas had been fulfilled. The village council would then forward the request to the district council, where the food committee would either approve the request or refuse it.

January 10. Officials confiscated 35kg of meat and 10kg of lard from workman Josef Ryšánek at No. 13, on the grounds that he had slaughtered a pig despite not having a permit through having failed to fulfil his meat quota.

January 10. Clothing coupons were issued. Every inhabitant received 120. Additionally, footwear was taken off the ration, only working footwear remained on vouchers. Footwear with leather soles required 40 coupons per pair, but all footwear with rubber soles was freely available.

Also announced were reductions in the prices of meat, butter, lard, and textiles on the free market.

People had great problems in respect of pig slaughtering. On January 13, officials came from the region and calculated people's quotas, and allowed those who had not fulfilled their corn quotas to deliver pork instead. Our Pavel and Franta were not allowed to slaughter until they had signed an undertaking to deliver a pig instead of corn.

January 16. Agricultural workers signed contracts in respect of delivery quotas for 1950. These were set higher than in the previous year, and people signed with great reluctance.

January 25. Agricultural machinery was taken in the interests of the national machinery pool, and the previous owners were forced to sell. They took our Pavel's threshing machine, with its press and electric motor, and valued it at 10,000 crowns, then they took the thresher, press, and motor of Jan Hájek at No. 241. They also took the tractor which the local machinery co-operative had bought for 130,000 crowns and offered 65,000 crowns for it, and also a threshing machine and its accessories. The co-operative had not yet paid for the machine, and the bank from which it had borrowed the money cancelled its credit and demanded repayment. Perhaps the members would have to repay the debt themselves.

Then the reaper-binders of Pavel Buček at No. 42 and Adolf Vystavěl at No. 17 were taken. Each was valued at 2,000 crowns.

The weather in the first half of January had been mild and wet. It started to freeze in the second half of the month.

February 2, Candlemas. Holy Mass was celebrated at 7 o'clock in the evening (according to the new church regulations) so that people could take part after coming home from work. This festival had been cancelled, and was now designated as an ordinary working day.

February 4. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the first civil wedding was performed at the local council offices. This was between Martin Mandelík of No. 101 and Pavla Boháčková (divorcee), born Petláková, of No. 214. A wedding hall, whose arrangement and redecoration had cost 60,000 crowns, had been prepared in the council offices in the manor house. The ceremony was performed by council chairman Karel Ardély, and the registrar was Pavel Hanoušek of No. 295, specialist teacher at the local primary school. The newlyweds received a gift of 4,000 crowns from the village as the first pair to have a council wedding.

Similarly, newborn children now had to be reported to the council offices and put down in the register, and only then could they be christened in church. The first child to be so registered was Antonie Zvolská.

February 8. During the digging of a cellar on what used to be Rotnágl's hill, which had been bought in 1949 by the Chaloupka brothers of No. 109, there was a landslip, and workman Eduard Kostrhon from No. 89 suffered a broken leg.

February 23. The bakery of Bohumír Bayer was nationalized.

The frost had continued for several days at the start of February, but then came misty showery weather, almost springlike.

Monday February 27. A "model village week" started. It was opened on the first day by recitations and singing by children, who recited and sang in an empty hall at Rotnágl's tavern because the inhabitants did not come.

On the Tuesday, they had a women's meeting. The attendance was poor, and when the speaker started to praise communal agriculture, and to urge women to set up a Standard Agricultural Co-operative in Těšany, the women present didn't wait for the end of the meeting and walked out.

People were continually urged to decorate their houses and windows in honour of the "model village week", and every day the names were announced of those who had not yet done so. Chairman Karel Ardély announced over the local loudspeaker system that those who did not obey, and did not decorate their houses or windows, were not in agreement with the people's democratic regime, and would be dealt with in the village just as in the district.

On Friday March 4 [a slip here, because March 4 was a Saturday, and although the text bears evidence of a slight alteration it throws no light], there was a public meeting of those who worked on the land in the presence of functionaries from the district. They were tempted by sweet promises to join a Standard Agricultural Co-operative, but people refused to set one up, and the more daring even replied to the speaker. Thus Bohuš Král of No. 92 said, "Yes, when they want the bird they sing to him sweetly, and when they have caught him they don't feed him." [Apparently this is a standard Moravian expression of disbelief, and Jiří, on hearing the translation, immediately quoted the original word for word complete with local accent. It might be idiomatically rendered, "Tell that to the Marines."] Thus people made it clear that they did not want to abandon their freedom and become serfs.

March 7. The inhabitants themselves, without any sort of urging, decorated their windows with pictures and flags in honour of the 100th anniversary of the birth of the first President of the Czechoslovak Republic, T. G. Masaryk.

March 7. There was a call-up of recruits. This year, for the first time, they had to go to Židlochovice, whereas in previous years they had gone to Klobouky. Eight boys were called up.

March 8. Sowing started,

March 17. Jara's son Jožka broke a finger on his right hand during gymnastics at school. He had to go to the hospital, where they put his hand in plaster, and after four days they released him for treatment at home.

March 20. The local loudspeakers announced that by government order pig breeders were not allowed to sell sucking pigs to anyone other than an agricultural co-operative. The co-operatives had in the first place to supply the state fattening stations (some were mass fattening stations for 10,000 pigs), after which those who had a prescribed delivery quota could buy, and finally those who had no more than half a hectare of land and were raising a pig solely for their own requirements.

The weather throughout March was very fine. There was no rain, barley was already sprouting, and people were already sowing sugar beet.

April 5. The apricot trees came into bloom.

April 8. Easter Eve. There were three weddings at the council offices, one from Moutnice, one from Nesvačilka, and the third from Těšany (people from Moutnice, Rozařín, and Nesvačilka now had to go to the council offices in Těšany to get married). The betrothed couples came accompanied only by the witnesses, without wedding guests. They came neatly dressed but not in wedding clothes, and thus people made it clear that they did not regard the civil wedding as valid, because after perhaps three days the couple would have a church wedding, and on that day the guests were invited, with wedding clothes, bouquets, rosemaries, a banquet, and music. And until the church wedding, the bride stayed at home as a single woman, and the groom likewise.

On the evening before April 22, people were exhorted by loudspeaker to decorate their houses and windows with flags and commemorate the fifth anniversary of the liberation by the Red Army. But our people did not want to commemorate it. They remembered the acts of brutality which the soldiers had committed, and their looting in the towns and villages.

April 24, St George's Day. For the first time in living memory, the traditional field walk around the boundaries of the village land, which had always had been made on this day by the mayor and the village council, did not take place.

The April weather was very favourable. It was warm, but there was some rain. The corn was doing very well, and the rye was up to a man's knee. The beet was easy to single, and had not yet been attacked by any pests.

May 1. There was no celebration in Těšany, but people were invited by printed cards to take part in a procession and demonstration in Židlochovice.

May 8. After rains during the first week of May, there were warm days. Beet and corn were doing very well, and the rye was already forming ears.

Until May 11, the village bulls had been housed on the manor estate, but on May 11 the director of state farms arrived and gave instructions that they were to be immediately taken out of the stables, and the village could put them where it chose. For two days they were tied to trees in the courtyard of the estate, while the village prepared a temporary stable for them at Jan Horák's at No. 19. The director of state farms said to the village representatives, "Establish a Standard Agricultural Co-operative and join it, then the bulls can be kept on the manor estate again. We do not support private ownership." The bulls were at No. 19 for around fourteen days, and members of the village council went in turn to feed them and to put them to the cows. Then Josef Drtil at No. 60 leased them and moved them to his stables. For this work he would be paid 50,000 crowns per year, and some fields for the upkeep of cattle were assigned to him. Now people were not paying the keeper of the bulls service by service as before, but instead they were paying the community at the rate of 250 crowns per year for each cow or heifer kept. In the same way, breeders of goats and sows paid the community, at 50 crowns per year for a goat and 200 crowns for a sow.

May 19. Forced labour was ordered to weed the beet on the state farm. The payment for weeding one measure was 200 crowns.

May 24. The hay was cut. The crop this year was very good.

May 26. They took away the threshing machines with accessories which had been requisitioned in January. They did not give the former owners money for them, only a confirmation that they had taken the machines over. They had taken the tractor of the machinery co-operative immediately after its requisitioning in January.

Saturday May 27. The regional "Horácké Theatre" came from Třebíč to play in Těšany, but only eight people came and the performance did not take place. [Třebíč is a town some fifty kilometres west of Brno.]

It had been wet during the first half of May, but the second half was dry.

At the start of June, it was announced that all cherry and other trees growing alongside the roads, which hitherto had belonged to the owners of the land on which they grew, now formed part of the roads, in other words were state property. The former owners were not allowed to pick fruit from them.

Frant Horák of No. 68 and his wife Jůlie had to pay a fine of 20,000 crowns for killing a pig on the black, and in the event of default each would be imprisoned for three months. The meat, lard, and scratchings were confiscated and taken to Židlochovice.

June 15. Hay was surrendered for the village bulls at the rate of 10kg for one cow. The "state farms" broke the contract and didn't want the bulls, but neither did they want to let their new keeper Josef Drtil of No. 60 have the fields which were reserved for their upkeep.

June 16. The previous "Local National Committee" [village council] and its chairman Karel Ardély

stood down, and a new council took office under the chairmanship of Frant Křepela of No. 32 (the reconstruction of the council had taken place on May 29).

Members of the new village council

Chairman	Frant. Křepela	No. 32	workman
Deputy chairman	Ant. Svoboda	No. 81	land-holder
	Jenofefa Skříčková	No. 244	workman's wife
	Frant. Náležinská	No. 222	workman's wife
17-year-old	Frant. Poláčková	No. 253	working woman
18-year-old	Frant. Vahala	No. 198	bricklayer
18-year-old	Josef Buček	No. 135	(resigned for the sake of his studies)
(resigned)	Marie Ardelyová	No. 263	provisions and supplies secretary
member	Alfons Turek	No. 297	land-holder
"	Jaroslav Čermák	No. 281	land-holder
"	Frant Horák	No. 30	butcher
"	Petr Polešovský	No. 217	smallholder
	Frant. Kovačik	No. 131	workman (in place of J. Buček)
	Frant. Sedláček	No. 38	land-holder
	Vincenc Chaloupka	No. 122	smith
	Frant. Mandelik	No. 58	workman
	Rudolf Liška	No. 41	teacher
	Pavel Hanousek	No. 295	teacher
	Miroslav Dostal	No. 237	
	Josef Komínek	No. 283	shop assistant
	Karel Zajic	No. 28	steward
	Josef Sedlák	No. 185	cook
	Ant. Suchánek	No. 149	"Včela" manager
	Ant. Harašta	No. 73	workman
	Vratislav Jílek	No. 132	land-holder
	Jan Kostrhon	No. 259	land-holder

The previous council had had 18 members, and now there were 24. [There is no obvious reason why the "ditto" signs below "member" should stop with Petr Polešovský, and I suspect that the fact has no significance.]

The threshing machines sequestered not only from Těšany but from other villages were standing in the yard of No. 40 (Pavel Turek), and others were in the yard of the manor house. Machines which their previous owners had looked after like the eyes in their head were being left to the tender mercies of sun, wind, and rain.

June 30. People harvested the rape, which they threshed immediately, and because there were no threshing machines they threshed it in the old way using flails.

June had been dry, with just one small shower of rain halfway through the month. There was no second cut of hay, nor were there any early potatoes. Corn was sparse and very late sown, barley had grown few ears. Rye was doing very well.

The harvest started on July 3.

July 6. Tractor drivers from the state motor pool arrived with reaper-binders from Pohořelice. Local people whose reaper-binders had not been sequestered and taken away could not cut their corn with them, because they had not received a ration of twine. Oldřich Vystavěl of No. 17 had obtained some twine on the black and despite the prohibition he went to harvest with his binder, but they came from the council, took away the scythe from his binder and the sheeting to go round the bales, and so prevented him from reaping.

July 13. It was announced on the loudspeakers that with immediate effect it was forbidden to take the corn to barns. It would be communally threshed direct from the field.

July 16. There were five incomplete threshing machines in various places in the village, but so far none of them had done any threshing.

July 17. It was announced for the second time that collecting corn into barns was not allowed, but

people took no notice and collected from dawn to nightfall.

July 18. Some threshing machines finally came into action, but the work proceeded slowly and badly because each of the machines had something missing. Furthermore, the straw binders had been taken off the machines because the ration of twine had been received by the Standard Agricultural Co-operative, and so people had to bind the straw by hand.

The latest chairman, Frant Křepela of No. 32, was good, and in so far as was within his power he liked to help people and comply with their wishes. He was perhaps not so strict with people. The former chairman, Karel Ardély (chairman of the "Czechoslovak Communist Party" in Těšany) took the government of the village into his own hands before the harvest, and several times every day he spoke over the loudspeakers with orders, prohibitions, and threats.

July 19. It was again announced that people should not take corn to their barns, and those who had done so in spite of the prohibition (which was everybody who had a barn) were threatened that the threshing machines would not go to the barns and that people would have to carry the corn to the machines.

July had been very dry right up to the last day of the month, when there was a thunderstorm. The corn from the fields had been almost completely taken into barns despite the prohibition, and eventually the threshing machines went to the barns, because if the quotas were to be fulfilled the corn had to be threshed where it was. Somebody from the council was stationed at each machine, and he weighed out and wrote down exactly how much corn each person threshed. From the machines, the prescribed quota was immediately taken to the agricultural co-operative. People with up to two hectares were more easily able to fulfil their quotas because these were not as high as those imposed on people with more land.

This year the corn yielded poorly. Many people did not thresh enough to fulfil their quotas, and others, after fulfilling their quotas, would have nothing left over for seed corn and for milling.

On the first day of August, there was a thunderstorm with hail. The hail did 80 per cent damage in some vineyards, others were not affected.

Monday August 21. Threshing in the whole village was finally completed. This was four days later than planned. During the preceding week, thirteen threshing machines had arrived in Těšany so that the work could be completed as quickly as possible.

It had been announced by loudspeaker that all quotas had to be fulfilled by 9 o'clock in the morning of August 22, and after August 22 there were daily announcements of the names of those who had still not done so. And those who had fulfilled their quotas were called to the council offices, where they were put under pressure to deliver corn over and above quota.

August 27. Members of the communist party went from door to door forcing people to agree to a voluntary quota of corn, 20-...kg for those with little land [no upper figure in the text] and 50-100kg for those with more.

August 29. The constable took letters to people with orders that they must supply an additional quota, 20-25kg for those with less land and 50-100kg for those with more.

The quota for the village as a whole had to be fulfilled, and so those who had corn had to deliver even on account of those who had not.

The weather during August had been favourable, hot but with rain, but otherwise it had been a month of hard work at the threshing machines and great problems with the quotas.

On September 1, the garden enterprise of Josef Král at No. 302 was nationalized and incorporated into the "State Farms".

Sunday September 3. "Conversations with agricultural workers" were held. Workers came to Těšany from the factories in Brno and spoke in an attempt to persuade people of the benefits that would accrue to them if they joined a "Standard Agricultural Co-operative". After the talk, they invited people to a collective discussion, where they would advise and explain to those who did not understand, but nobody spoke up or asked a question about anything even though the hall was full. And so the speakers did not continue, and with the threat that "Těšany will pay for this" they reminded people of the new school, that if they could put wheels under it they would take it elsewhere.

Our people would have been well able to question and speak, but they had had warnings from other villages, for example Žatčany and Ujezd. Land-holder Josef Binek from Žatčany had merely said to the speaker, "We don't want a co-operative, we want to till the land on our own," and in the night the criminal police had come for him. The same had happened to four land-holders from Újezd.

From Těšany, Rudolf Král from No. 92 and Květoslav Dostal from No. 31 were imprisoned for

political reasons.

September 10. The road was being built to the new secondary school, and people were daily urged to help voluntarily with its construction.

September 21, 22, and 23. A grape collection was announced. The crop this year was very good, but the quota was correspondingly high at 45kg per are. Those who had less than five ares did not have to deliver a quota. The sugar content of black grapes this year was 16 degrees and of white grapes 17–18 degrees, and the price was according to the sugar content, 15 crowns per kilogramme for black grapes and 23 crowns for white.

The two “Včela” shops could not keep up with the demand for flour, because nearly everybody (especially those with more than two hectares of land) was buying it. And they were not only buying to feed their families, but they were buying the darker flour (not animal fodder grade) for their animals (at 7 crowns per kilogramme). They could see no other way, because they had to stock animals in conformity with the plan and they had no corn to crush.

Similarly, baker Bayer was baking bread day and night, because nearly everyone was being forced to buy it.

September 25. Fulfilment of the maize quota was ordered, even though it was unpeeled, that is with heads complete. Our quota was set 67 per cent higher at 100kg (weight of the internal cones). The crop was poor.

September 28. The Holy Sisters had to leave Těšany. They were allowed to take only their clothes and linen. It had been a great boon to Těšany mothers that they had looked after their children from two months old to six years, in the house at No. 36.

The weather during the first half of September was dry and warm, but then came rain, and cold weather continued until the end of the month.

From October 1, all three taverns in Těšany, those of Josef Sýkora at No. 29, Jos. Chalupa at No. 23, and Josef Rotnágl at No. 151, were nationalized. Now they bore the title “Communal Enterprise”.

October 8. There was a celebratory “opening of the new secondary school” in Těšany. The speaker was schools inspector S. Šulc from Brno, who in his speech called people in Těšany “hunchbacks” for not wanting to join a “Standard Agricultural Co-operative”. When people heard their neighbours receiving such abuse in return for their drudgery, they didn’t wait for the end of the speech, and walked out.

October 20. The state farms invited people to go and lift potatoes, and offered 100kg of potatoes per person as a reward for each day’s work. But very few took up the invitation. The work was greatly prolonged by wet weather and lack of manpower, because none of the young people leaving school wanted to stay at home and work on the land. Boys and girls were all going on to further training or to work in the factories.

The potato crop was poor because the potatoes had been attacked by shrivelling. When they were dug up, there were three or four pits one after the other where the potatoes were shrivelled like mushrooms, and then came a healthy pit in which they were fine. On the state farm, where they had planted with new improved seed potatoes, the crop was healthy.

Every day, people were being reminded that the delivery quotas of potatoes and maize had to be met by October 15 [there is an inconsistency here, since we have already had an entry dated October 20]. Both crops were very poor and the quotas were high, so they would be hard to fulfil.

The weather during the first week of October had been cold and wet, but it cleared up during the second week and autumn work got under way. However, it proceeded very slowly. There was more rain during the last week of the month, there were still many fields of potatoes and beet to be lifted, and autumn sowing was not yet finished.

November 9. My brother Josef at Dubňany suffered a serious injury. He was rosining the belt, and his right hand was caught and broken. He was taken to the hospital in Kijov [a town ten kilometres to the north of Dubňany].

November 12. They were still lifting potatoes on the state farm “Těšany”, and working parties of 100–120 people were coming from Brno every day, whatever the weather, to help in the work. These people were office workers, shop assistants, and students (women as well as men). They knew nothing of field work, so their efforts did not amount to much, and they cost the state farm very dear.

The incessant rain greatly delayed the lifting of beet and also its collection from the fields, which was very laborious. Bit by bit, people were moving the beet to the road or to their homes and piling it up, and taking it from there to the sugar factory. The field tracks were in a very poor state, and waggons

were sinking up to their axles in the mud.

In the second half of November, the "Czechoslovak Communist Party" in Těšany screened all its members. Some were expelled from the party as unreliable, others left in disgust, and the number of party members significantly decreased.

November had been very wet. The lifting of beet finished on November 21, but there was still a lot of beet to be taken away from the fields, and the weather allowed only a small amount of ploughing and sowing. The state tractor service refused to plough for people as long as they did not join the Standard Agricultural Co-operative, and took its tractors away to its depot at Pohořelice.

Came December, the time of pig slaughter in country households. Anyone who wanted to slaughter had to submit a request for permission on the relevant form fourteen days in advance. On the form, he had to state his delivery quotas, and how well he had fulfilled them, not only for 1950 but for 1949 as well. The form was then sent to the district centre at Židlochovice, where it was decided whether permission would be granted or not. If it was granted, the applicant then paid 60 crowns at the village council office, and at last he was given a permit to slaughter.

At the start of December, work started on a water main which originally was intended only for the state farms but which now had been allowed to continue to various streets whose inhabitants had previously had to fetch their own water for their animals and all their other needs.

At the new secondary school, meals were instituted for pupils from Borkovany, Šitbořice, Moutnice, and Nesvačilka, so that they could have hot food in the middle of the day.

As in November, the weather was very wet. On the state farm, they could not plough by tractor, and had an announcement made over the loudspeakers that if people came to plough by horse they would receive payment and also fodder for the horse.

December 20. Winegrowers who had not delivered grapes delivered prescribed quantities of wine. They came for it from the state cellars at Pavlovice, and paid growers 26–30 crowns per litre of white wine and 20–23 crowns per litre of red. At the same time, the taverns received an apportionment of wine, which they were ordered to sell at 165 crowns per litre.

In the week before Christmas, there was a sharp increase in the prices of various goods and foodstuffs. Bread, which had hitherto sold at 5 crowns per kilogramme, was now 8 crowns, coarse wheat flour 20 crowns per kilogramme instead of 13 crowns, and semolina for children 21–24 crowns instead of 13 crowns. The spices which occasionally appeared in the shops were also much dearer. A packet of whole black peppercorns used to weigh 28g and cost 2 crowns, and now weighed 8g and sold for 6 crowns. A 27g packet of ground cinnamon used to be 5 crowns and was now 13 crowns, a 25g packet of red paprika had gone up from 3.50 crowns to 12 crowns, a 32g packet of cumin for 2 crowns had become a 25g packet for 4 crowns.

At the same time, a reduction of prices on the free market was announced, but we took no notice because a woman's everyday frock on the free market cost 900–1200 crowns, a Sunday-best frock 1400–1700–2000 crowns, a lady's coat made from coloured rabbit fur 12000–16000 crowns, a man's suit 4000–6000 crowns, a man's winter coat 4000–6000–8000 crowns, a woman's coat 4000–6000 crowns. The prices of all these were still higher if they were made from material of better quality. The prices of clothes and material on coupons were much lower, but they were in short supply.

Individuals could not buy agricultural machinery, but only a "Standard Agricultural Co-operative". In the same way, the larger sizes of kitchen vessels, pots, mixing bowls, baking tins, and water-buckets, were not available to individuals, but only to works canteens and the communal kitchens of the "SAC".

This year, Christmas Eve took place in our village without any celebratory firing of guns. There was no joy among the people, rather a heavy grief weighed down on us all.

This year, for the first time, our church held a Midnight Mass. In previous years, Mass had been celebrated on Christmas morning at 5 o'clock.

1950 had brought to us workers on the land, and to all other people, more trouble and bitterness than blessings and delight. We who worked on the land were oppressed by impossibly high delivery quotas. Factory workers were again being urged to increase their efforts and to compete with one another, and as a result their pay was reduced.

The prices of corn, maize, potatoes, and beet (of which there had been a very good crop) were the same as last year. As appears above, some goods had become more expensive, but there were reductions on the free market [list of prices on next page].

- 1950 -

Item		Previous price (crowns)	New price
Sugar	1kg	160	140
Butter	"	360	320
Lard	"	280	220
Coffee	"	1000	800
Tea	"	2000	1600

Fattened geese and ducks were selling at 100–130 crowns per kilogramme.

The so-called black market was still operating, but with the difference that it was now possible to buy goods more cheaply on the black market than on the free market. Sugar on the black market cost 100 crowns per kilogramme, lard 200 crowns, butter 300 crowns.

Delivery quotas for Těšany for 1950

Item	Amount demanded	Amount delivered
Wheat	1837q	fulfilled
Rye	364q	343q
Barley	1862q	1940q
Oats	132q	78q
Maize	383q in cones or 640q unpeeled	591q
Rape, soya, mustard	188q	50% delivered
Potatoes	2468q	2068q
Hay	12q	10q
Straw	192q	150q
Milk	221,300 litres	169,000 litres
Eggs	178,000	168,000
Pork	45,600kg	40,644kg
Beef	45,258kg	43,748kg
Beet	226 waggonloads	260 waggonloads

December had been wet up to the middle of the month, then snow fell which had disappeared by Christmas, and in the last week before the new year there were snow showers and frost. Many fields on the state farm and elsewhere remained unploughed.