

Petruska Sustrova, Chairman
Council of the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes

Prague, 27 September 2013

USTR 1151 /2013

Dear Mr. Lindblad,

The Council of the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes received your open letter on 19 August 2013 in which you expressed your concerns over the situation which occurred after Mr. Herman was withdrawn from his position as director of the Institute. I can assure you that the way in which the current situation of the Institute is presented in the media is much more conflicting and serious than the actual state of affairs is. Every change may certainly induce certain emotions, and some employees therefore have lively debates with the management of the Institute regarding the focus and role of the institution. The management tries to communicate as openly as possible and to seek a consensus over the future of the Institute. Unfortunately the topic of replacing the Institute's director has become politicised, and some politicians, without having adequate knowledge of the matter, have decided to abuse this for their political goals. We cannot rule out the possibility that topics related to the political abuse of the Institute will reappear during the election campaign that has just been launched.

However, the work at the Institute has been quite normal and the Institute fulfils all its obligations implied by international treaties and agreements. Research has also been carried out according to the rules defined, although not very fortunately, by the previous management, while professionals have reported their considerable objections concerning some of the projects. The Academic Council, as Mr. Herman's advisory body, had announced the need to evaluate research projects in 2012, a plan which was, however, never carried out. The current Academic Council as the advisory body of the current director, under the chairmanship of Adrian Portmann von Arburg, has undertaken this task in good faith.

Ústav pro studium totalitních režimů
Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes

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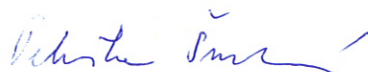
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Regarding the current members of the Academic Council, we hereby inform you that in our appointment we have considered the professional reputation of the nominees as well as their moral integrity. Many of the current Academic Council members are extraordinarily reputed in Czech society. Given the specific historical development in Czechoslovakia, it is extremely difficult, in moral terms, to judge anyone based on his membership in the Czechoslovak Communist Party. This is especially problematic and questionable in ethical terms with the so-called Generation 68, who were an important part of the opposition against the regime after the military intervention of the Warsaw Pact. Membership of the Academic Council is a personal honour for every member, and it is wholly at that member's discretion whether he is able to undertake the demanding tasks required.

The public tender for the director has been now prepared by the Institute Council even though there is no legal obligation to do so. This is a very demanding and responsible course of action, and involves a lot of work to prepare. Even though it is a tender, the law stipulates that only the Institute Council is responsible for the final result of the tender, i.e. the appointment of the new director. The Council members believe that a high quality selection process will guarantee wide respect for the newly appointed director.

As we are quite sure that you have been following the situation from a distance and that you have to rely mostly on how the institution is presented in the media, we would like to take the liberty of inviting you officially to Prague to meet the Council of the Institute and the Institute's management. We believe that a personal meeting will help us to explain all these matters and clarify any uncertainties. We are ready to meet you and will be looking forward to seeing you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



To
Mr. Göran Lindblad
President
Platform of European Memory and Conscience
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