

DISERTAČNÍ PRÁCE

ABSTRACT

ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ NÁMOŘNÍ PLAVBA, 1948–1989

CZECHOSLOVAK OCEAN SHIPPING, 1948–1989

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This work is concentrated on the topic of establishment and development of the Czechoslovak ocean shipping in the period 1948–1989. The theme is presented with using a large number of primary archive sources and relevant secondary literature. In addition, the text offers an insight into the topic through the memoirs of former Czechoslovak seafarers collected with the use of oral history method. The primary aim of this work is to capture the history of the Czechoslovak ocean shipping in a broader context of political, economic, and foreign policy development of Czechoslovakia in the given period. A key moment for founding a merchant fleet represented the year 1948, the communist coup d'état respectively, when the country came into the sphere of the Soviet Union's influence and transformed its economy into a centrally planned one with the absence of market principles. These specific circumstances enabled to develop a transport sector which Czechoslovakia did not have either natural conditions, or practical experience with. Based on a politically motivated decision, the Czechoslovak ocean shipping in the early 1950s was developed in cooperation with the People's Republic of China. By this way the communist China circumvented the embargo imposed by Western countries on its shipping and ships purchases. When this cooperation was terminated (1967), the Czechoslovak merchant fleet further expanded. Until the mid-1970s its development was characterized by a considerable profit; then the Czechoslovak Ocean Shipping company faced problems associated mainly with the oil crises, still worse competitiveness of Czechoslovak foreign trade and erosion of trade relationships with traditional buyers of Czechoslovak weapons and military goods (transport of this cargo was very profitable). At the end of the 1990s, in the changed economic conditions, the Czechoslovak merchant fleet terminated the operation, the ships were sold.

Key words: centrally planned economy, Cold War, Czechoslovakia, foreign trade, ocean shipping, People's Republic of China, seafarer, socialism.