

## Zborov 2. 7. 2017

Ladies and Gentlemen, participants in the hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Zborov.

Today, a hundred years have passed since the events we are commemorating today took place.

Five generations have grown up since then and today there is no single person alive who has survived and could talk about these events.

Therefore: There is time for questions.

What is left of the ideas and values of these brave deceased whose bones are entwined here in a pile and covered with soil?

Was all they went through worth doing?

.... and the answer?

No one is giving us the answer! The dead cannot speak, they stare at us now living with their 'empty eyes'. Accusingly? Questioningly? Or maybe strictly calling us to account?

It is hard to say what the deceased would say if they could ... or if they would like to, because we may not be worthy of their answers to their questions.

As if they would say, not us, but you alive should give the answer to our actions!!! Here on the battlefield we are asking!! Silently ... but more vigorously!

„Was it all worth doing??? Were our deaths worth it?“

Our young bodies have been decomposing here on for a hundred years, far from our homes, far from our homeland, our nearest – a dry branch of a family tree without a wife or children to remember us.

.... and if you will turn up here ... to put flowers on a grave?

Why?

Why have you made this long journey here, to a monument composed of a hundred years old dead bodies?

What is left from the ideas of Zborov for which we sacrificed our lives? ... and not only us, our brothers now lie down in France, Italy, Serbia, Romania, Poland and all the way to faraway parts of the cold Russian Siberia, often without any grave, cross, or memory.

Where is the Czechoslovakia, which we fought and sacrificed our young lives for?

What has happened to our dream? What have you yourself done for to keep the memory alive?

Here, on the earth of Zborov soaked with blood, in front of the deceased, dear ladies and gentlemen, there is no place for excuses, apologies or lies.

What is there to answer?

I have come here with respect .... in humbleness ..... and perhaps with a plea for a blessing, if at all I am worthy to do it.

### **With respect**

Because you went off to the attack to fight for our Czechoslovakia, which at that moment was on your minds, in your hearts and heads.

You knew that the understanding of our state that we belong to, and our homeland which we believe in, has often been different, that the state is a sort of a house – building, but the homeland is home and the house becomes home only through our emotional bond with it, and nothing more!!!

You knew our homeland that we carry in our hearts cannot be taken away from us – by no government, no officer, no politician – by no one. It depends on our courage, bravery and moral virtues whether we are ready to do something about it.

Bravery and courage – it is not about romantic or naive, trivial or useless risk of losing lives. It is about overcoming one's fear and phobia, which prevent us from winning our objective, morally so important, that we cannot give it up or run away from it.

The aim was to fight for a free Czechoslovakia – with no compromise. None of them wanted to die young, fatally wounded in a brutal way on a battlefield, or as they say in literature ' they died a heroic death'. They did overcome their fear, they voluntarily joined the army and they attacked with poor armaments. They jumped out of the trenches to fulfill their duty risking to lose their life.

They knew that real patriotism is the principal moral virtue of every individual and it is lived at each day, minute or with each action.

You knew that patriotism is a personal awareness of responsibility, duty and loyalty of everyone to their homeland ..... which means to take over the values from the ancestors with responsibility. It is then each individual's duty to develop them and hand them fairly over to the next generation.

They knew that the real patriotism is the way of life, often prickly, difficult and painful, but the only solid and straight course.

### **With humbleness**

With humbleness, because they sacrificed their own lives for the sake of our homeland – Czechoslovakia, and did not even have a chance to live a single day in it.

With humbleness, because we somehow have forgotten that it is vital to work actively for the country and for the benefit of the country, and to struggle every day to overcome unjust regimes, lies, bad laws as well as incompetence of administration or laziness or corruption of officials and politicians. It made the dividing up and 'larceny' of Czechoslovakia hopes possible.

With humbleness, because we have forgotten the basics and values of our state – our homeland – our Czechoslovakia. ... and as Tomas Garrigue Masaryk said, the states could be kept by the same ideals which had been at their origins. The Czech and Slovak Republics did not come into being by the will of the majority, they came into being by politicians who wanted to divide follow their own political channels. They came into being by treason and the denial of the ideas that the ancients had been fighting for.

With humbleness, because we have forgotten all the moral values, we did not mind and as it seems still don't mind stealing one of the state symbols of Czechoslovak republic – the state flag, and present it as the Czech one.

... and what's more? At schools , ladies and gentlemen, children are taught immoral lies, that this is the Czech flag!!! It has never been!

### **With a Plea for Blessing**

I am not asking for a blessing for myself,

I am asking for blessing for our country – Czechoslovakia, for us to find strength not only to unite our countries, but also and first of all, to find again the values you had fought for and sacrificed your lives for. So that we wouldn't just remember with a glass of beer, or a bunch of flowers to put somewhere ... but again the Sokol movement promise should become reality for all generations: „Dead or alive, or not born yet, in brotherhood we carry our fate, let strong bodies being led by strong minds and ideas of liberty. Let the truth join fellow to fellow.“

I am asking for blessing for teachers and parents, so they could find again the moral values, strength and courage to teach these true values to our children. The values Czechoslovakia was built upon. So that they feel that the homeland doesn't change with an ID card of the state which was imposed upon us.

I am asking for a blessing for Ukraine and Russia, so that together they could find some peaceful solution to their problems and be able to recover Slavic mutuality, assistance and brotherhood.

Brothers, legionaries and Sokol members,  
Not you, not you who are dead, even a hundred years after your brutal death at Zborov you are more alive than we are or will ever be.  
With my undying respect and humbleness I bow down before you as Eagles among Hens.

Thank you for your attention.

Written by: Josef Ryšánek, Czechoslovak patriot, member of the Czechoslovak committee, Sokol – Komensky district Zlín, member of the Active Reserve of Armed Forces of the Czech Republic (since its foundation in 2004)