

NEWS OF TRAVEL
Enjoy The Slovakia Of Czechoslovakia



Question—can you name the six countries comprising Eastern Europe? If you get to three and stop, you're not alone. This scenic cluster of countries—Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Eastern Germany and Romania—is somewhat of an enigma to most Americans.

Sandwiched between Western Europe and the USSR, and sharing the Danube River (which isn't blue), Eastern Europe offers travelers the best of both worlds ... at prices much lower than Western Europe.

If you only have time to go to one of these, then plan to visit Czechoslovakia, a country a little larger than New York state with a population of fifteen million. Most of the forty thousand Americans who go to Czechoslovakia each year stay in Prague, the thousand-year-old capital, making trips into the Bohemian countryside. Czechoslovakia is for the culturally-hungry, offering a rich blend of architecture, 2,500 castles, 40,000 monuments, and music, music everywhere.

But ... there's more. The visitor who wants to sense the ancient mystery of this country, and completely escape the modern world,

should head south to Slovakia, the southeastern part of Czechoslovakia.

Starting a trip at Bratislava, the capital located on the Danube, the visitor heads slowly (no rushing allowed) East, driving through little towns which trace history back thousands of years, where people live in a different age, still weaving cloth for clothing, and making their own furniture. Such a journey back into time is certain to encounter some of the many folk festivals held during the summer and fall, and ends up in the High Tatras where turn-of-the-century resorts make the ideal stopping place for a few days of swimming, boating, hiking, or skiing.

In short Czechoslovakia—in the heart of Europe—is a fairyland kind of country set up to accommodate millions of visitors in first class hotels, and with organized motorcoach tours throughout Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia. The big surprise in store for the first time visitor are the moderate prices for hotels, food, and gifts.

For more information, call or write Cedok, Czechoslovak Travel Bureau, 10 East 40th Street, New York, New York 10016.

This feature is a news compilation from more than 100 black-owned and oriented newspapers in this nation. It deals with what blacks, who are all-too-often little recognized, are doing to promote full participation in American life by black Americans. It is thus a salute from all of our readers for unsung heroes ... and is designed to be a challenge for all of us to keep on doing our very best.

The Kalamazoo, Michigan Focus News, in a front page piece, suggests the outgoing spirit which has traditionally characterized the black press and our need to support our local black press to the fullest possible extent.

The article is captioned: "No More Free Copies: Focus Depends Upon Community Support!" The revealing—and challenging—article reads:

Sometimes we take good things for granted. Therefore, it seems pertinent to remind our readers of the status of Focus in the community it serves.

We are not publishing an ordinary paper, as you know by reading it, and will see in the following described circumstances; therefore, we do need extraordinary assistance and support. Thus, this appeal.

We are dependent upon the people—for the following reasons:

(1) Unlike so many dailies and other publications, Focus is not owned by a conglomerate. Even though we are privately and locally owned and controlled—which we believe is better—at the same time, we do not have BIG money behind us, which makes it a daily struggle to pay bills, and adding to the prohibitiveness at this time of expanding to include more staff and a larger paper.

(2) We do not have the luxury of being able to continue to distribute the paper free (as we have done in the past for a large percentage of the paper's distribution). The paper must be purchased by individuals to offset the distribution costs—either by subscription, at stands, or by

newsboys and girls. (The only free ones will be on a promotional basis.)

(3) Because we are independently owned, we do not subsist on grants, the government, or any other benefits we would receive (even with lower postage rates) if we were (legally) non-profit, church-related, or government controlled. We would have it no other way, for the sake of freedom of the press.

We hope this reminder will impress upon you the importance of your support—through subscriptions, advertising, contributions of news items, or in any other way to promote the growth—and continuance—of Focus.

The Grand Rapids Times provides us with a story which should prod us to move with courage and determination for a broader share—no more than is our due—in the highest economic benefit levels in the nation. The Times relates:

Michigan Bell spent more than \$2 million in 1977 on purchases from minority businesses, the company announced this week.

David K. Wenger, Michigan Bell vice president, said the sum represents a 200 percent increase over 1976 in the buying of goods and services from minority owned firms.

In addition to Michigan Bell's purchases, Wenger said Western Electric, the manufacturing and supply arm of the Bell system, spent another \$485,000 at Michigan minority businesses last year.

According to Wenger, one of the main causes for last year's sharp upturn in Michigan Bell's minority purchases is the continued fine-tuning of the company's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) program.

Michigan Bell was one of the first companies in the nation to initiate a program to assist minority businesses in bidding for contracts," Wenger explained, "and as leaders in the field, we've had to learn as we go."

Wenger said Michigan Bell's MBE program includes compiling a directory of every minority-owned busi-

ness in the state, and giving that directory to every Michigan Bell employee who makes purchases for the company from outside suppliers.

"We've found that our minority business directory makes our buyers aware of minority firms, and that awareness is being translated into familiarity—and ultimately, purchases—with increasing frequency," he explained.

"Our objective is to eliminate the need for the MBE program by creating an environment that will make purchasing from minority businesses a routine occurrence," Wenger added.

According to Larry Leatherwood, director of the Division of Minority Business Enterprise, Office of Economic Expansion, in Lansing, there are a number of obstacles which make it difficult to increase the number of purchases made by large corporations like Michigan Bell from smaller, newer firms owned by minority individuals.

"Quite often, a small company is very capable of providing the goods or services a large corporation needs, but it needs assistance in learning the procedures of placing bids," Leatherwood explained.

"In fact, a small new business may think a large corporation like Michigan Bell is too large a customer to handle," he added, "but with efforts like Michigan Bell's Minority Business Enterprise program, such obstacles may be removed."

Leatherwood said there is a natural reluctance on the part of individual purchasers in large corporations to try a new firm. "A purchaser's first commitment is to obtain quality goods and services for his or her corporation," he said.

"Once purchasers find a supplier they feel comfortable with, they're not easily persuaded to try a new one," Leatherwood added.

"Agencies such as the Division of Minority Business Enterprise in the Office of Economic Expansion, are familiarizing purchasing agents at large businesses

with the capabilities of minority firms, and as a result more minority firms are receiving contracts than ever before," Leatherwood said.

He said the chances of Michigan Bell increasing its use of minority suppliers are "good to excellent."

"The hard part is breaking the ice, making the first contact," Leatherwood explained, "and since Michigan Bell has now progressed far beyond that point, I'm fairly certain they will continue to make steady gains."

The Tulsa, Oklahoma Eagle tells of funds being allocated specifically for American Indian (or Original American) job training. Yet monies designed to meet acute or gravely pressing black needs are siphoned off repeatedly under the guise of "no discrimination." Just how our problem may be resolved may be anyone's conjecture. But the Indians did it, as the following report from the Eagle suggests:

Additional job training funds totalling \$2,340,902 have been allocated to 10 Indian employment programs in New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas by the U.S. Labor Department ... The funds are part of President Carter's Native-American Economic Stimulus Appropriation of last May for \$21 million nationally. A first round of projects was funded last November.

Training will be conducted in 10 occupational groups with this second round of funding under Title III of the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA).

Our readers may wish to address congratulatory messages and messages of encouragement to the papers which report happenings of interest or concern to us. Such messages may be sent to the editors or other persons directly by simply addressing them, using the name of the paper, c/o Black Resources, Inc., 410 Central Park West, New York, N.Y. 10025

Your Personal MONEY Management

Want to live "The Good Life" after you retire? There are ways to manage it.



The key is planning well enough in advance, say per-

sonal money management experts at The Consumer Credit Institute, a counseling service of over 800 consumer finance companies nationwide. Since a man of 65 today is expected to live an additional 13 years, and a woman, 18, you should decide first where you want to live and what you want to do after you retire.

Do you want to stay right where you are so you can be around friends and family? Move to the country to get away from it all? Settle in a retirement community or leave the country to take advantage of possible lower prices?

Answering these questions will take you a long way toward establishing your retirement money management plan. Then you can estimate your "after-retirement" living expenses and the income you'll need.

Braniff International "Visit USA"

Braniff International will put "Visit USA" fares into effect Feb. 10, offering international visitors discounts of up to 40 per cent for flights on Braniff routes to the United States mainland. "Visit USA" fares will be available for both individuals and groups of 10.

Individual "Visit USA" fares provide a discount is available for groups. Proof of foreign residence, such as a passport, visa or driver's license, must be displayed to qualify for the discount fare.

Reservations for the first segment of travel must be made 30 days in advance for the individual "Visit USA" discount and then may be made at any time for other flights. Tickets must be purchased prior to arrival or within 15 days after arrival in the United States. There are no limitations on the number of stopovers permitted.

Group 10 "Visit USA" fares require reserva-

tions and tickets to be purchased seven days in advance, with no limit on the number of stopovers and no restrictions on the length of stay.

Braniff has added 17 cities and 50 non-stop route segments to its domestic system as a result of recent airline deregulation and plans to inaugurate non-stop service from both Boston and Dallas-Fort Worth to Paris, Frankfurt, Amsterdam and Brussels on June 1 in addition to its current daily 747 service between Dallas-Fort Worth and London and Concorde service between D-FW and London and Paris.

Braniff also is a major carrier between the United States and South America and between the U.S. and Mexico.

Braniff is authorized to fly to 79 airports on the U.S. Mainland and in Hawaii, Mexico, South America and Europe, plus interchange service to Alaska and Canada.