

"Czech Freedom Tank" and three key personnel . . . (left-to-right) Vaclav Uhlik, the master mind; John Beger and Josef Pisarick, mechanic and soldier.

**Ewing News**

Christine and Diana Baum went to O'Neill on Tuesday, July 13, where they took examinations for driver's licenses. They were accompanied by their mother, Mrs. Henry Baum.

Mrs. Henry Baum and daughters, Christine and Diana, drove to Norfolk Tuesday afternoon, July 13, to meet David Baum, who had been visiting his brother, Henry Baum, jr., at Lincoln for a week.

Marcus Pierson and Miss Bonnie Jo Jefferies were O'Neill visitors on Tuesday, July 13. Miss Jefferies took an examination

for a driver's license.

Several families in Ewing, who raise poultry, recently reported losses in their flocks due to intense heat. Farmers also in the vicinity have had losses in livestock. The cool wind from the northwest on Wednesday, July 14, brought a welcome relief from the high temperatures of the previous 10 days.

Mr. and Mrs. Victor Marquardt of Creighton were Ewing visitors on Wednesday evening, July 14. They formerly lived in Ewing and operated a grocery store here.

Mrs. Irvin Cloyd returned home Monday, July 12, from York where she had spent a week with her daughter, Mrs.

George Garhart, and family.

Ronnie Cloyd, better known as "Butch," is vacationing this week at York as a guest at the home of his brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. George Garhart, and family.

The Ewing and Clearwater congregations enjoyed a fellowship picnic dinner on Sunday, July 11, at the parlors of the Ewing Methodist church following the morning services. There was a "good" attendance from Clearwater.

Valgene F. Krieter, AD3, navy, Mrs. Krieter and their son, Jerry Lee, left Monday, July 12, to return to Kingville, Tex., after visiting with her mother, Mrs. Martha Hill, for a few days. Enroute they stopped at Fremont, where they were guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Merchant. Mrs. Merchant and Mrs. Krieter were classmates, both being graduated from Ewing high school.

The Golden Gleaners 4-H club is busy working on summer projects. On Wednesday afternoon, July 14, the group taking sewing met at the Ewing Methodist church to work on dresses. Those taking cooking met at an earlier date. Mrs. Robert Tams is the leader.

Army Maj. and Mrs. E. D. McDonald will go to Camp McCoy, Wisc., for the summer camp and Mrs. McDonald and children are spending two weeks as guests of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Butler.

Would we be intercepted, accidentally or purposely, by police? Would the barbed wire fence yield without creating serious injury to the armored car? These and a hundred other grim questions paraded through the minds of the tiny contingent of escapees.

Everything was going perfectly "til now. Maybe a bad omen. The engine performed well—too well. The treads and all the movable parts stayed intact. Tank tracks have been hexed by gremlins since the first vehicle of its type was built. Uhlik knew the weaknesses of all types of tanks—especially did he know the shortcomings of his own "homemade" machine. Never mind. Everything was okay now.

It was nearing 5 o'clock in the morning. The armored car, still responding properly to the will of its master, rolled down the road curving close to the barbed wire barrier at the frontier. The border police were on the alert.

Vaclav Uhlik breathed a prayer. So did his wife, their two children, and four other companions.

Uhlik firmly gripped the steering mechanism, applied the power, and the tank wheeled sharply, headlong into the barrier. The complaint of the heavy wire against the hull of the tank must have been audible for several miles.

The Czech deserters, who were inside, kept their weapons trained through rear peep holes. In an instant they would mow down anyone coming from behind to upset the timetable now.

The tank rumbled onto West Germany soil, still in high gear. Too late now for shouts and shots from the guard. Finally, the nondescript car crunched to a stop a few hundred feet inside West Germany.

There were prayers on each set of trembling lips.

Uhlik wiped beads of sweat from his forehead and clambered to the ground. His wife, Marta, fell to the ground and kissed it.

Uhlik handed his tommygun and pistol over to friendly, dumbfounded officials and explained he was on his way to the United States. Glory, headlines and receptions followed, everywhere they went.

Mrs. Cloud, who arrived in New York last September, has rejoined her husband, a meat cutter, in Sioux City. The armored car reached the U.S. the same month and is now on display in the Ford museum.

Uhlik finally went to work in Springfield, Mass., helping build bus bodies. From friendly workers slowly he is learning the language. The kids are learning English, too, from neighborhood children.

Vaclav, jr., and Eva romped and played in Halva's yard when The Frontier reporter called at the house. The Halvas and Uhliks were seated around the dining room table chatting in their native tongue. Mrs. Halva had served an ambitious meal, and we came along during the period of dallying over interminable cups of coffee.

Mr. Uhlik, who was besieged in New York by reporters, newspaper, newsreel and television cameramen, wasn't exactly anxious to go through an interview and speak to "Voice of The Frontier" listeners. But he finally obliged.

It's difficult conducting an interview in which there is a language obstacle and Mr. Uhlik speaks only bits of English.

With the help of the Halvas, however, who served as interpreters, we pieced together the story for Frontier readers. Stories like this one, with international ramifications, seldom present themselves to a weekly newspaper editor in a small Nebraska city. But here was heroic Vaclav Uhlik—a visitor in our own town!

It's an amazing story—one that has been well told by scores of writers far more capable than

we are. But it's a story that can't be retold too often. Because Vaclav Uhlik is only one of millions of people in iron curtain countries who have known freedom and who have fought for the democratic way of life. Yet Uhlik is now free and the millions of others still are captive, restrained from physical contact with the outside world.

Probably there will be no other "Czech freedom tank" as such, because the Soviets no doubt have mended their border defenses to prevent such embarrassment occurring again.

But in our book, Vaclav Uhlik's perseverance, heartaches and indomitable courage in the face of tremendous odds long will stand as a classic in the annals of freedom-seeking people.

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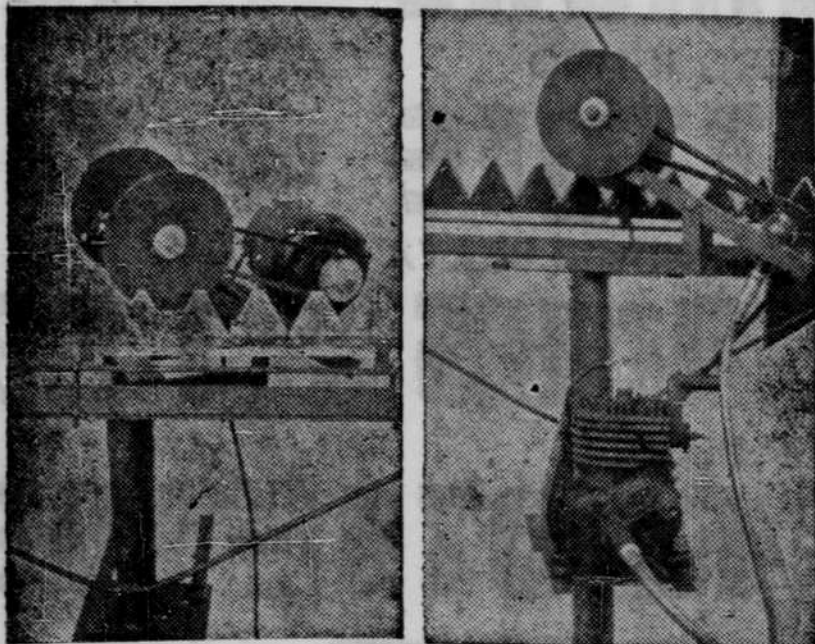
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Primary August 10, 1954

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**'Czech Freedom Tank'  
Builder Visits City**

(Continued from page 1)

chanics is the territory. Even a year later, his hands and nails are those of the village mechanic. Skilled, trained hands.

Theoretically, Uhlik was to stay on in his own shop and work for the state. He didn't like it. To put it bluntly, it was a hell of a way to live.

Now, here he was, just a few miles from the Czech-German border town of Waldmunchen, Bavaria. Uhlik, the skipper, knew the lay of the land. No military expedition ever had been planned more thoroughly.

As the black skies began to turn to grey ash, it appeared the mission was working out perfectly. Only a few more endless miles lay ahead—and the border barrier.

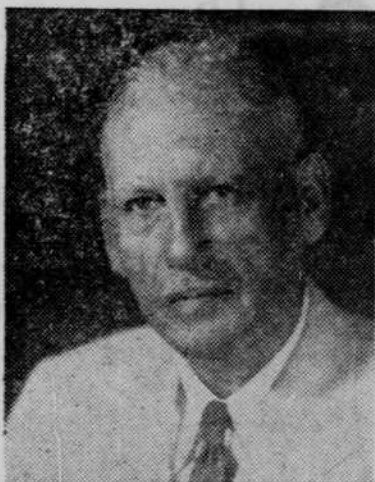
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