



LEADERS TO FOLLOW

Volume 16, #3

March 2007

International Leadership Institute: Providing Leadership Development Services and Programs in the US and Europe since 1985

Havel Stresses Role of Human Values and Spiritual Development

By Jarda Tusek

When Vaclav Havel, past President of the Czech Republic, spoke to more than 1200 students, faculty administrators and alumni of Columbia University in New York City last November 15 in an hour-long discussion with former US President Bill Clinton, Havel credited the Clinton administration of the 1990's with aiding the democratization of Czech society, both materially and psychologically. The reference here was to the process of recovery from forty years of communist rule, which was brought to its knees in 1989 by ordinary Czech citizens, and the significant aid provided to the Czechs by Clinton's administration. The occasion was an address sponsored by the Kraft Family Fund for Interfaith and Intercultural Awareness, part of a series of presentations on topics of importance regarding human faith and friendship.

One of the more interesting aspects of Havel's comment is that he mentioned only two types of aid, the material and the psychological, leaving vast areas of human concern, such as the moral, the spiritual and the eternal, unexplored. Perhaps as a prod to further discussion, Havel was then asked if he believed that democracy is the political system best suited to human nature. He retorted,

I believe that spirit is prior to matter, and I believe that certain human values like solidarity and civil rights are the most important things and that everything else in a society should be subordinate to these values.

Thus Havel's statement stopped short of characterizing the importance of democracy in absolute terms, while it affirmed the critical role that moral and spiritual development will play in the next decades in the European Union and the Czech Republic.

Clearly, continued Havel, future US foreign policy should endeavor to develop "more partners and fewer adversaries" not only in Europe but throughout the whole world, and that the relationships established through such a forward-thinking foreign policy will go far in addressing, in relevant ways, the larger issues confronting the world. These issues must necessarily go beyond simple economic and political freedoms; as countries develop their

go to page 2

Photo of Karel Prihoda and Lida Cervenkova, courtesy L. Cervenkova



TRAVEL-AND-LEARN: MARCH '07

A spring ritual at ILI is welcoming a group of Czechs to travel around the sunshine state of Florida, sampling the vast treasure trove of cultural, historical, spiritual and recreational opportunities of the state. This year, ILI extended the traditional tour across the border into Georgia, whose hospitality and historic charm are legendary.

go to page 2



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Havel Stresses Human Values and Spiritual Development *from p. 1*

ability to provide their citizens with basic economic and political stability, the competing moral and spiritual values of the people living in those countries become ever more an area of potential conflict. Yet this conflict can produce a vitality of moral and spiritual development that can lead to higher levels of personal happiness and fulfillment.

We at ILI fully agree with President Havel, as our core business mission has been, since 1991, to help the US develop mutually-beneficial business partnerships not only with the Czech Republic, but with all the former soviet-bloc countries in East and Central Europe. These relationships, to be productive and long-lasting, are grounded in an

agreement concerning key moral and spiritual values. Such agreement produces mutual understanding and trust, key components of any successful foreign policy over the long haul.

In alignment with Havel's challenge, we continue to refine our mission in the Czech Republic, to better reflect the thriving economic and political developments there. No longer is it an imperative to "help" the Czechs materially and psychologically; our mission now is to aid them in their moral and spiritual development, to prepare them for their emerging leadership roles in the European Union and the world.

The International Leadership Institute

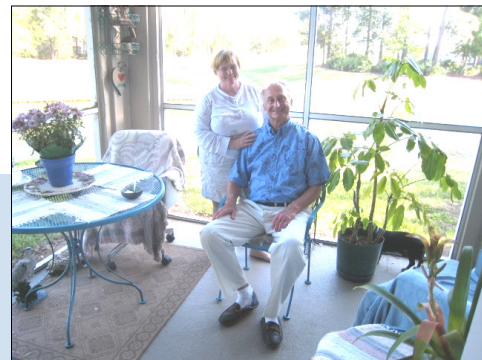
- **WAS FOUNDED IN 1985 IN PRINCETON, NJ**
- **REMAINS DEDICATED TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**
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TRAVEL-AND-LEARN: MARCH '07

from page 1

For March 2007, during one of the warmest and most beautiful spring seasons we can remember, the Travel-and-Learn participants bathed in the sunshine on the Atlantic coast (in Florida and Georgia) and on the Gulf of Mexico coast (in Sarasota/Bradenton). Beginning in Jacksonville, the group traveled, under the leadership of ILI president Jarda Tusek, first to Orlando and the Space Coast. Visits to EPCOT at DisneyWorld, the John F. Kennedy Space Center (home of the Space Shuttle), and a stay at a comfortable Disney villa provided participants time to shake off the Central European winter and relax into a pleasant mindset.

In Sarasota/Bradenton the group visited long-time ILI friend and associate Lubomir Komarov and his family (Cherie and their three sons). Lou's pastor came by to discuss his church's interest in the spiritual development of Czechs, adding to the on-going program discussion of how religion gives energy and joy to many Americans in their daily lives. Sunsets over the Gulf of Mexico at Lido Beach, morning walks on the beach, a visit to Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, and delicious food at Armand Circle were some high-



Photo, of Sara and Jarda Tusek, courtesy Karel Prihoda

lights of leisure time. Back in Jacksonville, the group enjoyed more time on the water at Windsor Parke, and a trip to the skyscrapers of downtown Jacksonville, along with a lively Sunday church service at Christ the Redeemer in Ponte Vedra Beach. They then traveled north to St. Mary's, Georgia, to spend a few days at Crooked River State Park. Here, in a rustic cabin nestled among the pines and palmettos, participants could see how Americans spend their free time, hiking, fishing and boating in the serene natural setting. A visit to Jekyll Island, with its ancient live oaks and Spanish moss, was a highlight of the time in Georgia. From looking for alligators at Guana River State Park in Ponte Vedra to marveling at the technology at Kennedy Space Center to tracing the Spanish and English heritage of St. Augustine, the oldest US city, the two-week program offered a wide variety of settings and situations for anyone interested in learning about the USA. We look forward to March '08, and a new group of Travel-and-Learn participants!