

# HOME OF THE FREE



Czechs who escaped into West Germany in rebuilt armored car wave from atop vehicle on arrival in New York. In light trench coat is Vaclav Krejcirik. Others, from left: Joseph Pisarik, Vaclav Uhlik and wife with children and Walter Hora.

America is a bright new world for the Vaclav Uhliks and their three companions who crashed through the Iron Curtain from Czechoslovakia in Uhlik's rebuilt armored car. They're living in a big, eight-room house in Springfield, Mass., and enjoying every minute of it. The city "adopted" them last December.

Within two days after their arrival, the Czechs were equipped with virtually everything found in an average American home, all donated by the people of Springfield. When they're not devoting their time to the house and to studying English, they're out making radio and TV appearances aiding the Crusade for Freedom and Radio Free Europe whose broadcasts inspired their escape.

In the beginning, the Uhliks and their companions, Joseph Pisarik, Walter Hora, and Vaclav Krejcirik, all unmarried men, who live upstairs, were quite baffled and confused by all the shiny new things in the house. Especially Mrs. Uhlik. She had never seen a gas stove and electric washer before. In Czechoslovakia she slaved over an ancient wood-burning stove and that's where she heated the big tub of water for the washing.

However, the Uhlik children Vaclav Jr., 6, and Eva, 4, have no problems whatever. While they haven't the first notion of English nor their young neighbors the slightest smidgen of Czech, everybody understands each other perfectly in the one world of childhood.



Mrs. Marta Uhlik, at neighborhood supermarket, buys more food than she ever had at one time.



A neighbor, Mrs. Leslie Johnson, arrives with bedclothing; is greeted by Emil Ransdorf, interpreter for the Uhliks. Her daughter, Ruth Ann, 4, is greeted by Eva Uhlik.



Automatic washer baffles new tenants. From left, Vaclav Uhlik, bending, Joseph Pisarik, Walter Hora and Mrs. Uhlik. They finally got it going.



Neighborhood boys help Mrs. Uhlik unpack some of the donated articles. Little Eva is puzzled by the egg beater.



The Uhliks enjoy one of their greatest luxuries—bananas. None of party ever tasted a banana, they said, until they arrived in America.



Quick friendship sprung up between Eva Uhlik and her neighbor, Ruth Ann Johnson. Ruth is giving Eva one of her dolls.



Uhliks tell of America's wonders on tape recording for broadcasting over Radio Free Europe. Emil Ransdorf, interpreter and RFE attache, holds mike for Eva.

This Week's PICTURE SHOW—AP Newsfeatures