

## A visit to the US Ambassador's residence in Prague

On Tuesday, March 31, we (students of 1st, 2nd and 3rd year Gymnasium Nad Alejí) with our exchange students from Chicago (Walter Payton College Prep) visited the residence of the US Ambassador Andrew H. Schapiro which is known as Villa Otto Petschek after the first owner.

First, Mr. Schapiro told us a few words about his origin. He was born in Chicago. His mother was a Czech survivor of the Holocaust who became a psychiatrist. Later, she co-compiled a book, *Letters From Prague: 1939-1941*, dealing with the experience of her grandmother and uncle during the Nazi occupation of Prague.

Then Mr. Schapiro talked concretely about the history of the Villa. Petscheks were German-speaking Jewish family and most of their wealth came from banking or ownership of coal mines. Villa is a residence of the US Ambassadors since 1945.

Finally, his wife Tamar Newberger showed us the entire ground floor of the residence – we saw the central rotunda, conservatory, library, ladies room, men's room and the musical salon.

