

“Of course, contemporary Communism does not deny the existence of an objective or unchanging body of laws. However, when in power, it acts in an entirely different manner towards human society and the individual, and uses methods to establish its power different from those its theories would suggest.”

(Milovan Djilas)

## **Communist Revolution**

**By: John A. Arnež**

Immediately after the Axis Powers' attack against Yugoslavia, the Slovenian National Council – composed of representatives of all political parties under the leadership of the Governor (*ban*) of Yugoslav Slovenia, Marko Natlačen – had been formed in Ljubljana. The parties represented in the Council were: SLS (Slovenian People's Party), JNS (Yugoslav National Party), SDS (Independent Democratic Party), NRS (National Radical Party), SSJ (Socialist Party of Yugoslavia) and SKS (Independent Peasant Party). Communist application for representation was turned down. One member of this Council only later joined the Communist bloc. It was Darko Černež, who represented in 1941 in the National Council the Independent Democratic Party – predominantly a Serbian Party – and who served after World War II in Yugoslav Foreign Service. The first meeting of the National Council was held on April 6; the last on April 17, 1941.

### **Preparation of Military and Political Uprisings**

On April 27, 1941, the Communist leader – together with representatives of various groups with leftist leanings – held a meeting in Ljubljana. Boris Kidrič, Aleš Belber and Boris Zihelr represented the Communist Party; Jože Rus the left wing of the nationalist organization *Sokol*; Tone Fajfar the *Christian Socialists*, and Josip Vidmar, Ferdo Kozak and Franc Štrum were representatives of the so-called “progressive men of arts and letters”. The meeting is considered by present Communist historians the establishment of a mass organization under Communist leadership called Liberation Front (*Osvobodilna fronta*). Its original name was: Anti-imperialist Front (*Protiimperialistična fronta*); later, to OF (Liberation Front). The former name of the organization was primarily intended to express anti-British feelings, since Great Britain – for the sake of her own interests – was considered by Communists as the instigator of war against Germany – then a Soviet ally.

The meeting was apparently led by the Communists and “...the leading role of the Communist Party was recognized without any further discussion.” A representative of the Communist Party promptly presented a thesis prepared by the Party's Central Committee. The original founders of the Anti-imperialist Central Committee. The original founders of the Anti-imperialist Front (late the Liberation Front) accepted it without reservation. It stated the following:

1. Old Yugoslavia disintegrated because of treason against the nation committed by the governing classes of exploiters. “This treason was manifestly caused by the class struggle and originated from a fear of the people and from a class refusal to cooperate with the Soviet Union as a socialist state.”

2. The bourgeoisie proved to be incapable in directing the national identity of the Slovenian people. The struggle for national freedom and the future of the nation fell into the hands of the working people of Slovenia.
3. "... the Slovenia people and other enslaved peoples of Yugoslavia cannot expect certain help from the so-called Western Democracies, despite that the latter are temporarily at war with Hitler. Liberation is possible through the nation's own struggle, in closest cooperation with the Soviet Union."

Organized cooperation of all Leftist forces did not mean a compromise but an acceptance of a direct Communist Party line. "Liberation Front did not follow, and could not have followed the way of strict coalition," but had accepted a method of radical liquidation of all remnants of formal coalition by forging all groups into one homogenous movement under Communist leadership.

The Party had well-established strategy, and had waited for instructions from the Comintern. In the beginning of June 1941, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovenia held a Party conference in Ljubljana. Edvard Kardelj explained the international situation, "and clearly indicated a perspective of the Fascist drive against the Soviet Union. On the basis of this analysis, concrete tasks were allotted: collection and preparation of arms, organization of fighting groups, and the establishment of necessary positions in the country for foreseen partisan fighting ..."

Radio Moscow began broadcasts in the Slovenian language on June 15, 1941. From the original fifteen minutes daily, broadcasts in Slovenian were increased to ninety minutes. Ivan Regent and his wife were announcers.

In April 1941, Communists favoured the Germans over the Italians. "Up to 22 June, 1941, the Communists, under the influence of German Soviet pact, were widely believed to be co-operating with the occupying powers but after the attack on Russia they immediately went over to a policy precipitate activity." Communists also participated in public manifestations in Belgrade during coup d'état of March 27, 1941. Their activity, however, was directed against the government and its supposed alliance with Great Britain. "Several Communist leaders were arrested when police seized the pamphlets which assailed the government on the grounds that it is striving to 'go to war to aid imperialist England'."

The Communists waited for a signal. "On June 22, 1941. Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union. The main enemy of the Liberation Front became involved in a battle with the first-and-foremost socialist state in the world. The Communist Party believed that a sign had been given as a decisive factor for a general uprising. Whereupon, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia called the Yugoslav people to the fight for freedom, against Fascism, and of course, to the fight with an armed fist. On June 22, 1941, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia received a cablegram from the Comintern with regard to the necessity of beginning guerilla warfare against Germany."

The development that followed was of a twofold nature: military and political. In this brief outline, we are more interested in the political background, than in the military activity which occurred and which had been completely publicized but exaggerated by Communists and their admirers abroad.

The Communists persuaded their allies of the necessity for the abolition of any separate political activity, in order to avoid all possible future friction that might jeopardize the entire liberation movement if members of the non-Communist groups attempted to retain their own objectives and opinions. To eliminate all possible signs of distrust, fear, or suspicions, in

February 1943 representatives of the no-Communists in the Liberation Front signed with the Communists a special *Declaration of the Dolomites*. They declared that the Liberation Front was not a coalition but a uniform political movement under the exclusive leadership of the Communist Party. The *Sokol* and the Progressives, and all the group of *Christian Socialists* promised not to form any political group of their own, because of the goals “are in all fundamental questions identical with the aims of the Communist Party of Slovenia.”

At its third session on September 16, 1941, the Supreme Plenum of the Liberation Front decided to transform itself into the Slovenian Committee of National Liberation (*Slovenski narodnoosvobodilni odbor*). At the session held on November 1, 1941, seven fundamental points of Liberation Front were accepted. Among these were: the indivisibility of Yugoslavia, and a resolution that after the liberation the Liberation Front was going to exercise all power on Slovenian national territory. The following year on June 27, 1942, a first type of Partisan government was established in the form of the National Council Liberation (*Narodni osvobodilni svet*) having eight departments.

### **Efforts for International Recognition**

On November 26 and 27, 1942, the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia (*Antifašističko veče narodnog oslobođenja Jugoslavije*) held its first meeting in Bihač, Bosnia. It was some sort of Communist-organized Parliament. But, delegates from Slovenian were unable to attend, because they had inherently considered travel to Bihač too dangerous. The next February in 1943, AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia) and the Command of NOV (*Narodna oslobodilačka vojska* – National Army Liberation) with the Command of POJ (*Partizanski odredi Jugoslavije* – Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia) made a declaration about the objectives of their struggle, and issued an appeal to the Allied Governments for a recognition of the AVNOJ and the Partisan army as the only true representatives of allied peoples of Yugoslavia.

Early in May 1943, the first British liaison officer was parachuted into the territory of Yugoslavia; he landed in Croatia. A decision to send a liaison officer to that territory occupied by the Partisans was carried out upon the advice and insistence of the Cpt. F. W. Deakin. The officer sent was Major William Jones of the “Black Watch” of Canada. according to his own story, he attended the first session of the Anti-Fascist Committee for Territorial Liberation of Croatia held on June 13 and 14. It was presumably considered to be the new Croatian Parliament somewhere on Partisan-occupied territory. Partisan leaders came from various parts of Yugoslavia; those from Slovenian were headed by Edvard Kardelj. “It was decided that Captain Hunter, M.C., should remain in Croatian Headquarters with Sergeant Jephson as his wireless operator, and the other two proceed at once to Slovenia – Sergeant Simitch as wireless operator and interpreter.” Major Jones informed all the Allied Headquarters in the Middle East about the Partisan activities and pressed for military, medical and political assistance to the Partisans. The British sent for a short time to Bela Krajina also Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Moore as a demolition expert.

To understand or, better, to guess what kind of information the British Liaison officer gave to the Allies, and what his personal opinion was about the Communist Partisans, one finds it quite interesting to note in his book how he describes, understands and sees these Partisans. He describes the leaders this: “They were men and women of the loftiest character and ideas; truthful, fearless, humble, God-fearing...their deep-rooted love for freedom and

democracy...” He is most undoubtedly characterizing a certain type of Partisan, namely, an average man-under arms – assisting the Communist-dominated Partisan army: “Though he made little show of it, the spirit that permeated the life of the Partisan was essentially and fundamentally religious zeal. His home training from childhood had been to fear God, and his knowledge of the principles of Jesus Christ was profound... They believed in the brotherhood of man.”

Members of the British Military Mission were entirely favourable toward Communist Partisans and considered them “faithful nationalists” fighting for their national freedom and independence. These members of the British Military Mission had not mastered the language of the country; they were informed about events and the programs of the liberation movement by the well-seasoned, experienced Communists who deliberately concealed all real intentions and acts which might have been looked upon with disapproval by the Western Powers. At the time, these Communists did not wish to lose the sympathies of the West. For that reason, the British Military Mission members received an untrue, unrealistic, and distorted picture of the real role of the Partisan detachments and their final goal.

The Communists were pleased with success they had in convincing British officers; they were certain that reports were extremely favourable to them. “The pictures which they had seen and transmitted to the Western Allied World were evidently disastrous for national traitors of all kinds, whereas for the National Liberation Movement they were more than favourable – otherwise, it would have been impossible.”

A New Zealander who had escaped from the Germans and then joined the Slovenian Partisans recounted his impressions when he returned home via Italy: “He heard scarcely any party discussion among them (i.e. Partisans) and saw no evidence that any particular political creed played a predominant part in what he found was a national movement for freedom among the population that had become an army.” The same impression was created on Daniel de Luce, an Associated Press correspondent who was one of the first American correspondents to visit Yugoslavia after the beginning of Axis occupation. On one occasion, he had visited a Partisan brigade somewhere in Croatia on October 3, 1943: “In this newly-liberated section of Yugoslavia, I’ve found not one scrap of evidence of Partisan terror. He had spent only twenty-four hours in Yugoslavia and was amazed to notice the deeply religious feelings of Partisan leaders.

We can see how official opinion about Yugoslav problems had taken shape in Great Britain; firstly, on the basis of these pro-Partisan and biased liaison officers, who undoubtedly were full of good-will, but were inclined toward a certain naivety and unintentional gullibility. Secondly, those “leftists” working in the Foreign Office, who did everything to formulate favourable opinion toward Communist-led guerillas. One of these men was Stephen Clissold. In August 1943, the British had published a handbook dealing with the problems of Yugoslavia – “classified” publication at the time – which discovered the nature of accepted and adjusted information

The leftist influence in Britain attempted to minimize any fears of Communism in Yugoslavia, since the admission of a Communist danger might be harmful to the willingness of British authorities to grant full support to the Tito regime. “The apparent strength of Communism in Yugoslavia is largely an illusion ... the genuine, doctrinaire Communists of Yugoslavia did not seem the less patriotic because they wished to act for Russia’s sake as much as for Jugoslavia’s...” The movement of Tito’s Liberation Front is a patriotic coalition of members of all parties for the sake of fighting against the invaders for their home. “It is

true to say, therefore, that while few of the rank-and-file Partisans are Communists..." the mass of armed soldiers belongs to varying beliefs and groups.

In another section of the same handbook, however, we perceive that the British were aware of the dominant Communist tendencies within the Partisan movement. "By January, 1942, the Communist leaders, by exploiting the popular reluctance to accept a policy of inaction, had constituted a resistance movement under the name of the Osvobodilna fronta (O.F.) or Freedom Front. Originally under purely Communist direction, it aimed at driving out both the Germans and Italians and reconstitution Yugoslavia as a Communist ally of the U.S.S.R. the O.F. carried out its guerilla operations regardless of reprisals on the local village population, who thus began to lose much of their original sympathy for anyone willing to fight at one."

Editors of the British Handbook of Yugoslavia apparently had confidence only in the reports which emanated from the Communists. They manifestly showed distrust toward any information which came from any other source. As devoted-leftists, they despised the Catholic group which had consistently opposed Communism and had disregarded Communist threats. "As in the rest of Yugoslavia, the course of resistance in Slovenia is difficult to trace; confusion here is increased by the fact that almost all the early reports came out through clerical and Vatican channels and were thus inclined to overplay the virtues of the waiting policy adopted by the clerical leaders in Slovenia from the first days of the annexation. The people as a whole was eager for action from the first."

Moreover, the British were only interested in the momentary usefulness of the Communist forces. The political implications resulting from such an attitude were evident from the very first moment. The British insisted that the political future of Yugoslavia was an internal affair, and that they wished to be neutral in that respect. Nevertheless, at the same instance, they armed just one political party – Communists. It is scarcely conceivable that any other party could have had any chance against the powerfully-armed political party of the Communists. If not directly, then otherwise, British assistance to the Communists can be interpreted as an indirect intervention in Yugoslav internal politics.

Early in August of 1943 (since July 25, Badoglio had headed the Italian Government), an Italian divisional commander with two of his staff, a Communist commissar, a British liaison officer, and an interpreter-Partisan held a meeting somewhere in Italian-occupied Slovenia. The Italian commander had been asked to place his command directly under Partisan protection. He refused, and stated that he would die first for his beloved Italy. At that time, the Italians had about three divisions in Slovenia.

On September 9, 1943, the Partisan General Jaka Avšič, the Secretary of the Executive Council Boris Kidrič, a Communist commissar, the artisan Albin as interpreter, and the British liaison officer held another meeting with the Italian divisional commander at his headquarters, probably at Novo Mesto. At the time, the Partisans deliberately prolonged discussions with the Italian commander in order to gain time, during which the Partisans were to disarm the Italian troops. Major Jones estimated that about 50% of the Italian troops in Slovenia had been disarmed by the partisans, but most of the motorized detachments succeeded in escaping.

After Italy's capitulation, a few thousand Slovenians either joined the Partisans voluntarily or were forcibly drafted into the Partisan army. Moreover, the Partisans were eager to conclude profitable "business relations" with the Germans, as they had previously with the Italians. one such example of the "relations" is the armistice agreement reached by

Partisans and Germans in the Trieste and Gorizia areas. Order no. 1,461/44 of the German Command, dated July 5, 1944, established that on July 5, 1944 at noon all fighting against “the bandits” would cease. That arrangement was made at moment when considerable Partisan forces were encircled by the Germans.

According to German reports, *Klagenfurt Abwehr station* discussed – in the beginning of 1943 – with Tito an eventual truce agreement. Tito demanded for himself control over all Yugoslavia “under supreme German sovereignty...” The Germans refused to yield.

During October 1-3, 1943 in Kočevje – in the southern part of Slovenia – the first session of the Communist-led Slovenian Parliament (Convocation of the Representatives of the Slovenian People) with its 572 delegates was held. Visitors from Tito’s Headquarters were headed by Ivan Ribar, Vlado Zečevič and Vladimir Dedijer; a delegation from Croatia had at its head Vladimir Bakarič and Pavel Gergorič.

In February (19-20) 1944, Črnomelj was the place of the first meeting the SNOS (Slovenian National Council of Liberation). The meeting was attended by an AVNOJ delegation under the leadership of Ivan Ribar and Moša Pijade. Also present at the meeting were heads of Allied military missions assigned to the headquarters of the Slovenian Partisans, namely Major William Jones head of the British Mission, Captain George S. Wuchinich – of Ridgeway, Pa. – head of the American Mission in Slovenia, and Colonel Ribachenko head of the Soviet military mission in Slovenia.

No particular significance can be attached to that meeting. The purpose of the session was limited to reports of two leading Slovenian Communists: Edvard Kardelj and Boris Kidrič, who explained the decisions of the AVNOJ’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Session. All the decrees issued by SNOS closely followed the decisions of AVNOJ. Since then, the working of the entire administrative and political apparatus of Slovenian territory adheres rigidly to the policy of the federal government.

## **Communist Terror**

The Communists, well aware of being an insignificant minority, used various methods to win and assure for themselves absolute power within the country. They knew that the decision on this matter, i.e. the leadership of underground movement, would have to be forced as soon as possible, for a waste of time was about to work dangerously against their projects.

In the first place the Communists used, especially at the beginning of their Liberation Front, personal contact with so-called middle-of-the-way men (*sredinci*) who were somehow undecided on the question of the collaboration with the Communists. They wished to be neutral in regard to the problem of the anti-Communism and Communism.

The Communists asked the so-called “progressive Catholics” to help them to bring other Catholics into the Liberation Front. Well-known leftist Catholics like Tone Fajfar, Edvard Kocbek, Srečko Žumer and Aleš Stanovnik had meetings with other Catholics who were, at various times in the past associated with them, but had not yet decided whether or not to accept the Communist invitation. The leaders of this latter group were Andrej Gosar, Jakob Šolar, Ivan Kamušič and Jokob Mohorič. Two meetings were held, on August 21 and on August 22, 1941. Andrej Gosar was not opposed in principle to cooperation. He demanded only that collaboration should be between his group and the Liberation Front as two equal partners. However, many of these undecided Catholics preferred to remain neutral and stay

away from the struggle which was growing between the Communists, their allies and the anti-Communists.

Besides the Catholic neutralists there were also neutralists among the nationalistic liberals. One group joined the liberation Front in 1941, but abandoned it very soon. That group, *Stara Pravda*, was under the leadership of Črtomir Nagode, who was executed by the Communists after World War II. *Mlada JNS*, a section of the Yugoslav National Party, had many contacts with the representatives of the Liberation Front, but had finally decided to stay away from any Communist-sponsored organization. Members of the SDS (Independent Democratic Party) had a divided opinion over collaboration with the Communists. The majority of the leaders refused to have any dealings with the Communists; the minority joined the Liberation Front. One of these dissidents was Darko Černež.

The Communists were pleased when the Nazis and Fascists resolved to shoot hostages whenever an act of aggression was committed against the forces of occupation. As a matter of fact, the Communists considered anybody who wished to be neutral in the Communist – anti-Communist dispute or who actively opposed Communist, as unpatriotic and treacherous. The Communists rejoiced to see many of the non-Communists murdered by the forces of occupation. Moreover, the reprisals which followed any Partisan attack or violence forced many of the undecided to take refuge in the mountains to escape possible arrest by the invaders.

Another tactic used by the Communists in order to eliminate the opposition or at least to paralyze it by fear of annihilation, was terror. They declared anybody who opposed them was a traitor. They created special “murdering squads” to kill all potential leaders on the non-Communist side. According to the Communist report, they killed 49 well-known anti-Communists in the city of Ljubljana from the inception of the murders in 1941 until October 13, 1942. The Fascists were pleased to see the elimination of the Nationalists by Communists since they disliked them as much as the Communists did.

“In Ljubljana, itself the Slovene Communist secret police assassinated Clericals and collaborators.” In reality, the Communists decided to eliminate all anti-Communist leaders regardless of their personal ideological belief. In executing this program, they assassinated Marko Natlačén (October 12, 1942), former governor of Slovenia and underground head of the Slovenian People’s Party in occupied Slovenia, Franc Emer, leader of a young liberal nationalist group in the underground, Social-Democrats as Vrankar (December 11, 1941), university students as J. Kikelj and F. Župec, or labour leaders as Fortunat Majdič, etc.

The peasants were living even a more fearful life in the areas of no-man’s-land. At times the incursions into the countryside were made by the Fascists or Nazis, at other times by the Communist Partisans; each of these invaders left behind burned houses and hundreds of innocent villagers killed. Those who survived lived in a shadow of death since anybody might next be on the list of victims. The Communists declared that anybody who was not pro-Communist was pro-Fascist and therefore a traitor to his country and a saboteur in the national fight for freedom. They spread terror all over the country and among all classes and ages. They wanted to make the anti-Communists “fear greater fear of us than of the enemy.” Even H. Seton-Watson, who largely sympathized with leftist movements, recognized that the Communists abused their power in Slovenia. Killings mounted to the thousands throughout the country. The murders of the Slovenian patriots – committed by the Communists during the war – increased greatly when the capitulation of the Italian Army in September 1943 gave the Communists access to large sectors of Slovenian territory. According to Edvard

Kardelj “in four days ... (in September 1943) ...seven thousand of the white-and-blue-guard traitors were actually erased from the Slovenian soil...”

The Communists also used indirect ways to get rid of undesirable elements. A typical case is that of Aleš Stanovnik. He was denounced deliberately by the Communists to the Germans who executed him. Stanovnik was of leftist inclination, but remained religious and a practicing Catholic. Since he cooperated with the Communists in the Liberation Front, but refused to change his ideology to Communism he became undesirable and was eliminated by the help of the Nazis. a well-known case was also that of the sudden death of Janko Premrl-Vojko, which occurred under suspicious circumstances. He was a commanding officer of a Partisan detachment, a sincere nationalist and a religious man.

The following poem is significant for the understanding of the Communist-Partisan “patriotic” activities. It appeared in the collection of poems under the title “*Previharimo viharje*”, issued by the High Command of the Slovenian Partisan detachments in 1942. Their author is Matej Bor (real name: Vladimir Pavšič).

Stretch the gallows over the whole world!  
Your God is robbery, arson, murder!  
Rave Blood cries out (for vengeance)!  
Revolt raised its head high!  
Hurrah! “Red” pioneers!  
(Place) the bombs (and) dynamite  
under the foundations, arches!  
Tomorrow – “red” engineers,  
(you shall pass) through the (victory) arches (on to)  
    build a new world!  
Partisan,  
destroy! Demolish! Hurrah!

### **Nationalist Front**

“The Joint burned or requisitions by the O.F. and reprisals by the Axis soon became intolerable. In the Provincia di Lubiana this made it possible for the Zavesa (sic!) to obtain Italian approval, in the summer of 1942, for the formation of its own militia, the Vaška Straža, Village Guard. This was composed of local peasants, owing allegiance to the Zavesa (sic!) but armed and controlled by the Italians...” Principal reason was self-defence against the Communist aggressors and murderers of armless villagers.

In one small village, Št. Jošt, high in the mountains area, the villagers dug out guns left by the retreating Yugoslav army in 1941 and decided to set up a defense against the Communist invaders. On July 25, 1942, that village was the first one to defend itself without any foreign intervention or help. Other villages were encouraged by that example and asked the Italians to give them permission to keep arms in order to protect themselves against the Communist attacks. The first anti-Communist detachments (Voluntary Anti-Communist militia) were organized by the end of August 1942. Evidently, these units attached to the villages had few arms and scant supplies of ammunition. The Communists concentrated larger forces and with concentrated attacks against these Village Guards succeeded in some cases in eliminating the small defense units.



After the Italian surrender, the Germans gave more freedom and more arms to the Slovenian defense units. At that time, armed groups were organized into so called Home Guard (*Domobranci*). Beside the local guards they also had mobile battalions which were chasing with considerable success the Communist guerilla groups. Toward the end of World War II, the Communist Partisans were strengthened by motorized units equipped by the British Army with modern weapons transferred from Italy to Yugoslavia. Against these forces supported by tanks and the Air Force the resistance was impossible.

During the time of underground world in occupied Slovenia the anti-Communists had various organizations. Their work had been concentrated to Ljubljana. The supporters and members of these groups agreed on the necessity to wait for the opportunity of an open revolt against the Italians and Germans and to prevent all unnecessary losses. They realized that in case of a general uprising the Germans could and would eliminate the Slovenians as a nation. A million and a half Slovenians would certainly not present a real problem for the Axis forces. We should just remember the extremely savage treatment of the Slovenians by the Germans and Italians and their plans for a definite elimination of that nation. They could be executed with a greater speed if the political leadership followed the Communists in their irresponsible antinational terroristic activities. The refusal of nationally conscious leaders to embark in activities against the Slovenian national interests was interpreted to the Allied Headquarters by the Communists as a proof of an open collaboration with the Axis powers. And the Allies accepted the interpretation at its face value.

Particularly the British High Command and the Foreign Office were unfavourable to all those who refused to execute the Communist orders or any act which might have increased the Axis terror in Slovenia. The British reported that in the spring of 1943, General Mihajlovič “made a proposal through his representative in Slovenia, Colonel Novak, that the Zavesa (sic!) should approve the undertaking of sabotage by his small local units. Even this was rejected by the Zavesa, which is now as subservient to the wishes of the Vatican as the O.F. was to those of Kremlin in 1941.” The conclusions manifest a very deep lack of understanding of the hardships, of honesty of true national political leaders and of the knowledge of the Slovenian political and ideological differentiation.

In April 1942, an agreement was reached between the three principal political groups, namely the Slovenian People’s Party, Yugoslav National Party and the Socialist Party of Yugoslavia (SLS, JNS and SSJ). The National Council founded at the moment of the attack on Yugoslavia was changed into the Slovenian Alliance (*Slovenska zaveza*) which worked underground up to the end of the war. The JNS represented in that Council all factions of liberals who were united under the name of Working Community of Progressives (*Napredna delovna skupnost*) SLS or the Slovenians People’s Party represented groups of Catholics which formed in 1944 the Slovenians People’s Bloc (*Slovenski ljudski blok*). The bulletin of the national coalition had the same title (*Slovenska zaveza*) and its first number was published on May 7, 1942.

On October 29, 1944, on the day of the Slovenian National holiday commemorating the end of the Austro-Hungarian rule, about 300 prominent public leaders signed the “National Declaration”. In that document, they agreed on common basic national political goals to be fulfilled when the war came to an end. All territories inhabited by Slovenians were to be united in a Slovenian National State, which might become a member of a Federative Yugoslavia under the rule of the Karadordevič royal family. That declaration also agreed

upon the establishment of a National committee for Slovenia as the highest National authority until a regular government could be formed.

Contrary to other statements the Foreign Office's *Handbook on Yugoslavia* recognizes that the Communists did not accept any sort of cooperation with other parties unless the [/they] later submitted to Communist leadership and disappeared into the Liberation Front. "The Zavesa's attempts to obtain Communist co-operation failed and Partisan attacks were, in fact, not confined solely to the occupying authorities, but included action against Zavesa adherents, whom the Communists now regarded as Quislings."

The National committee for Slovenia called into its session on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1945 an underground Slovenian Parliament, composed of the representatives of all democratic groups. Under the presidency of Fran Krmžar, the Slovenian Parliament proclaimed a united Slovenia part of a Federal Yugoslavia. The proclamation expressed the belief that Communist dictatorship would be prevented and that general forbearance would bring about a government of National coalition. But, alas, shortly after that first session, the National Committee and thousands of civilian people as well the Slovenian armed forces left their homes in order to escape the invading Communist troops. They found a refuge in Carinthia, which was under the occupation of the British armed forces. After two weeks, the British transported the members of the Slovenian armed forces together with hundreds of civilians, about 12, 000 people all-together, to the Yugoslav border and handed them over to the Communists despite repeated assurances given by the British officers that all transports were directed towards Italy. By means of this British cooperation, the Communists were given the opportunity to murder the nucleus of their opponents.

Recently, this tragedy was also reported by the *Congressional Record*, which published in an Appendix upon demand of the Hon. Walt Horan of Washington as extension of his remarks an article from the *Inland Register*, the official Catholic publication of the diocese of Spokane. It was written by Bishop Bernard J. Topel of the diocese of Spokane. "Tito's supreme massacre came in 1945 ... The war was over, and many thousand refugees ran away from Tito's Communism to the safety of the British Zone in Austria. Early that summer of 1945 some 11, 000 refugees were forced by the British Army to return to Yugoslavia. Ten thousand of them, that is more than could be seated in the Spokane Coliseum, were killed."