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No. 1323

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YUGOSLAVIA

THE SLOVENIAN POLITICAL EMIGRE MOVEMENT

Maribor VECER in Slovenian 23 Apr-18 Jun 76

[Article by Janez Cucek: "Shadows of the Past"]

[23 Apr 76, p 2]

[Text] All was silent in the little room.

The eyes staring at me were languid, drooping, listless.

The hair of the man lying in bed was almost completely white, falling in disarray on his temples and forehead covering the parchment white skin.

He did not speak much. Perhaps he was too tired and ill to speak, too full of distrust or both.

He turned his eyes away and looked at the ceiling, persistently and fixedly as if he wanted to withdraw from his world which for him was only these four walls and a collection of medicine bottles on the chair near the table.

It was a small world: 2 meters wide and 3.5 meters long and even over that little space the man could only wander with his eyes while his body was confined to the narrow bed.

There was nothing he could do bound to his bed and this was in a way expressed by his hands stretched supine and motionless as in acknowledgment of surrender.

The silence in the room lasted a minute, two, and it seemed that it could last like this forever.

The eyes turned from the ceiling and looked at me again, still indescribably wan, imparting no message.

Those eyes had nothing to say and neither did the mouth that remained closed and silent. It seemed as if the mouth was also part of the past that can no longer return and it seemed, too, as if it were aware of this.

Then the silence was broken by a woman's voice behind my back: "You really should leave, he is very ill."

The man on the bed who heard this as well as I did not move an inch. He stared at me as he did before, silently confirming what was said.

Slowly I nodded and said: "So long." I turned and with his eyes bent on my back stepped out of the little room. The woman followed me through the living room and the short hallway to the apartment door, opened it and let me out. I stepped out on the second floor landing and descended down the staircase.

The visit was over.

When the door closed after me there remained behind it in his small world an emaciated, ill, grey haired man in whom few could recognize the Slovenian political exile in Argentina who was once so active in hostile emigre activity. The man and the world of which he was a part were alike. Ill, dried out, empty, without a future and clinging only to the past.

The eyes that were a short while ago so obstinately mute were those of Rudolf Jurcec, a man who headed a handful of diehard clerical extremist emigres in Argentina rallied around a fortnightly paper with high sounding name SIJ SLOVENSKE SVOBODE [The Glow of Slovenian Liberty].

"How did they ever let you out of the country?" he asked slowly at the beginning of the interview looking me over from head to toe for the umpteenth time.

"What do you mean?" I asked puzzled by the question.

"They are afraid for everyone who goes out," he said convincingly.

"But people can travel abroad whenever they wish," I replied. "The only exceptions are criminals and persons who forgot to pay their taxes."

He looked at me trying to decide if I was joking.

"You do not have to tell me that, I know it all," he said. "Terror reigns in your country. Everything is controlled by the police and no one can go anywhere without knowledge and approval of the police."

"Of course, I would not know much about that," I said, "but I know quite a few people who regularly go shopping in Trieste or skiing in Austria if there is not enough snow at home."

"These are only a few individuals. I know very well that most of the people are not allowed to go anywhere without permission."

"They must have a passport, of course..." I wanted to say but he interrupted me with a wave of his hand.

"Forget it, there is no use to talk about it. You will never change the communists. They are reds and will remain reds till the day they die. I know them only too well--there are even a few of them right here in this country."

"Among the economic emigres?"

"Among them, too."

"I met a few of them but they seemed alright to me."

"You do not know them well enough! They are all birds of a feather. We refuse to have anything to do with them. They keep to themselves and so do we. Our time has not yet come but it will not be much longer now. You will see when we return to Ljubljana."

[24 Apr 76, p 2]

[Text] He spoke the last few words very softly and then his gaze remained fixed upon the ceiling as if he were seeking there the faded image of Ljubljana he knew in his memories.

(Before I went to see Jurcec I was warned by my new acquaintances in Buenos Aires--both those from the economic as well as from the political emigre circles--that I was going to see a man who is consumed by hatred of everything contrary to his own political views. They were not mistaken.)

"You will come to Ljubljana?" I asked.

"You can be sure of that," he said in a weak voice, broken by illness.

"We shall come and drive out that rabble."

There was such hostility in his voice in pronouncing the word "rabble" as I could never attribute to a bedridden man, a man whose days on this world are in all likelihood about to end.

"When," I asked for want of other questions.

"You will find out all right," he said after a short pause. "And the people will greet us with song."

Fantastic Daydreaming

This was almost more than I was prepared to take but at that instant I was a reporter doing an interview, not just an ordinary citizen listening to someone prophesying the doom of his country--someone tied to a bed with a stand full of medicine beside it.

Later, after several conversations with certain people, I became used to such statements and they no longer seemed impossible or unusual. They became part of the unreal atmosphere in which I moved about. It is difficult to render an exact and fair description of all this. It seems that it is best to say that one must first penetrate some kind of an invisible wall, overcome an inconceivable time barrier, step from one world into another and then tread about in this other world with uncertain steps.

It was quite unusual and truly uncanny to watch people approaching their seventies and listen to their talking, predictions and daydreaming.

But it can be done, slowly one can get used to it. I no longer lifted my eyebrows on hearing that my country which I left only a few days ago will go to hell, not even when I heard this from people who had never seen the country they spoke about, who did not know what it is like, what kind of people live there, nor what these people think.

I could get used to all this and endure the few hours spent in conversation with political emigres. Some of the emigres knew who I was, but some did not, and to the latter I had to pretend that I was an innocent tourist spending my hard earned money on world traveling as a hobby.

It could be done, at least for a few hours. Later, as I am sipping coffee in one of the many cafes on the incredibly busy Florida, a lively boulevard in the heart of this throbbing city, these conversations catch up with me and I cannot believe that I actually heard all these things hastily jotted down on a writing pad to make notes for a story on the political emigre movement. I simply think that I am dreaming or that those who have told me all these things must have been dreaming.

And since I know that I am not dreaming, because I sit in the middle of Buenos Aires drinking coffee, my head begins to sway all by itself--just like that, literally like that. Is this possible, really and truly possible?

Is it possible that some people, people like Jurcec on his death bed, truly do not know how we live in Yugoslavia? In this country where people daily curse and bitch because of price increases (as do Englishmen in England, Italians in Italy, and who knows who and where else) and loudly complain because of the monumental stupidities perpetrated by all of us--where people have neither the slightest idea who Rudolf Jurcec is nor would they ever dream in their wildest flights of fancy of greeting him and his likes on their return, which will never come because it is simply not possible.

Nevertheless, Jurcec talks this way and so do others. They are daydreaming, or to put it differently, they are following their boundless imagination.

I should like to ask Jurcec and others around him what they would think if they saw in the center of Ljubljana, a few hours after the uncovering of the Monument of Revolution on the city square of the same name, some 20 or 30 teenagers in blue jeans dancing the kolo and singing the partisan songs while their parents, or at least people who could be their parents, smilingly look on from the sidewalks, some of them a little surprised, because of the teenage boys' long hair and looks identical to that of teenagers in Chicago or, perhaps, in Stockholm.

[26 Apr 76, p 9]

[Text] What would Jurcec say? That I am lying, that it could not be true? And what could I tell him? That it is the truth because I saw it myself and it seemed to me the best part of the celebration which received front page treatment the following day.

Rudolf Jurcec simply knows nothing, absolutely nothing about the generation now being reared in Yugoslavia in an atmosphere of pop music, long hair, blue jeans but also of green-yellow-brown parachutist uniforms of young people's volunteer detachments of the General People's Resistance in which no one is forced to serve because there are more than enough volunteers. And then I must listened with a straight face to what Jurcec is saying, when I would like to smile at his fairy tales about greetings awaiting him in Yugoslavia on his return.

Back to Jurcec

"The Germans betrayed us, the Italians betrayed us, the British and the Americans betrayed us. We believed them all, we thought that we would be able to form our Yugoslavia but it all went down the drain. There is nothing left." There was so much defeat and despair in these words that I almost felt sympathy--but there was not a trace of admission that it was they who have betrayed themselves in the first place and those thousands who believed them, Jurcec and others in the leadership of various treasonable organizations during the war.

I have heard such admission neither from Jurcec nor from anyone else. Something like this does not exist in their scheme of things, all there is is a conviction that they are great and tragic victims of some inexorable fate rather than their own misconceptions, errors, and crimes.

"We fought and we shall fight again. God will not let the communists reap the reward. Never!"

The voice was very faint now, barely understandable. The head sank on the crumpled pillow. My interlocutor fixed his gaze upon the ceiling and I slowly realized that the interview was over, that the old man on the bed had nothing more to say--or could say nothing more.

The room became quiet. And then the woman behind my back said: "You really should leave, he is very ill."

And I nodded silently and said: "So Long."

I never saw him again. A month later he died.

The conversation I had with him in his second floor apartment at 2247 Cuba in the cosmopolitan Buenos Aires was only one of many I had to go through in my search for truth about the Slovenian political emigration.

What is hidden behind these words? Whom does the Slovenian political emigration include? What are its goals and objectives? How and where does it operate and who is supporting it? How did it come into being?

This is a long string of questions having no short and fast answers nor can the answers pertain only to today and the day before, for the history of the political emigration began long ago, a long, long way back.

End of Illusions

Slovenia, May 1945.

Only a few more days remain to the end of World War II. It was clear to the Germans that they and their collaborators--from white guards to home guards, members of various legions, chetniks, ustashe and all others--have lost the war.

A few thousand Slovenians who supported the Germans throughout the war had only one possibility left: to flee with their one-time protectors while there was still time. And the time was running out.

In the chaos that was increasing every hour fear was increasing, too. On May 3, 1945 the "Slovenian Parliament," was convened in Ljubljana by the "National Committee for Slovenia" formed on 29 October 1944 and proclaimed the "National State of Slovenia" and established the "Slovenian National Army." A few hours later the "deputies" and members of the "Slovenian government," were already packing their bags and backpacks in preparation for flight.

The entire administrative apparatus which for 4 long years rendered faithful service to the Italians and Germans was disintegrating. The last radio transmitter in Ljubljana with which contact was maintained with the Slovenian members of the exiled Royal Government in London ceased to transmit in the night of 5 May 1945.

[28 Apr 76, p 2]

[Text] Nothing remained, there was neither will nor strength for anything else but a panic-stricken flight across the mountains.

In the years that followed the defeat the political emigres tried to come up with excuses for their senseless flight and retreat. Not only that, they sought also to justify all their shady activities during the occupation, the murky period of their collaboration with the Italians and Germans.

They were attempting to do at least two things: to justify their collaboration with the occupying powers during the war and to deprecate the development of the Socialist Yugoslavia after the war.

This is what they are still carrying on, which one can readily see by picking up any paper or book published by the political emigres or by listening to the speeches at any of their meetings.

There is hardly any point in quoting these writings or speeches, although we shall do so in this article to illustrate a few points, since they are all alike regardless of when they were written, last year or 25 years ago.

The fate met by the thousands who in May 1945 fled across the mountain passes varied according to many different reasons.

Some had to flee because they had sunk too deep in the morass of collaboration with the occupying powers and were aware that they would have to pay for it in accordance with the laws of this world--but some had fled simply because they were talked into it and frightened.

And some just barely mustered their will and power of reasoning and remained at home.

There were instances when people trudging along with a retreating column turned around on reaching the Ljubelj pass and went back home. A woman walked from Grosuplje to Ljubljana listening all the way to dismal predictions on the part of two home guard troopers as to what the partisans would do to her if she did not flee. In Ljubljana she accidentally met a former school mate whom she knew well and whom she knew to be active in the Liberation Front.

"Are they really going to kill me if I do not get away?" The school mate who knew the frightened woman from Lower Carniola quite well and knew that she had done nothing to make her flee persuaded her to escape--but from the retreating home guard column, not across the border.

It will never be possible to find out how many people in May 1945 were running away from their past and how many were only fleeing out of fear that was induced in them.

However, those who knew why they were running away, who knew that flight was their way to escape retribution, fled with the obstinate persistence of desperados whose world had been destroyed.

They were also fleeing so that they might resume as soon as possible, from the safe haven of foreign countries, their struggle against those before whom they had to retreat along the dusty hairpin roads leading to Ljubelj. And this is what they in fact did as soon as they could find new patrons, thus changing their camp for the third time in a few years.

Many years later, in the embrace of emigration, some memoirs of these confused days in May 1945 were recorded.

The Memoirs

Following are a few passages:

"On 5 May 1945 I left Devica Marija v Polju and went to Jezica, thence through Crnuce and Menges to Predoselj and from there, on 7 May, through Cerklje to Kranj. Here was the first session of the National Committee for Slovenia where I acted as the recorder. Presiding was Dr Joze Basaj with Dr Franc Bejlec, Joze Mavric, General Krener, Captain Anton Mehle, and others in attendance. We discussed the draft of a general proclamation in connection with the 3 May resolution (on proclaiming the 'National State of Slovenia'--Note by Editor) and budgetary matters.

Only a handful of notables gathered here, the rest had already fled to safety or were in the process of doing so. The strange "government" and the strange "parliament" fell apart in a way that was not strange at all.

"Because the instructions for retreat came quite unexpectedly the time available for getting ready was very short, one hour at best. People collected the most essential clothing, shoes, and food for a few days. No one was informed of the actual situation or the cause of the home guards' retreat, that is why some people did not leave."

"On 8 May 1945. In the morning we stopped at Sv Jurij near Kranj. We had the impression that proper communications, precise instruction, and organization were lacking. During the day we rested in a forest. Toward the evening we continued on our way. We could walk only very slowly. The greatest impediment to our progress were numerous automobile columns. That night the Germans had supposedly capitulated."

[29 Apr 76, p 11]

[Text] "It was then that we heard that the Partisans were in Borovlje and that their underground activists were gathering around Trzic. There were also a few accidents with hand grenades thrown away by the home guard. A few people were injured, including two Germans."

"The Germans made obstacles to our retreat. Across a road which they needed for themselves they placed a Tiger tank thus blocking all traffic."

"On the 9th and 10th of May we were still waiting before the tunnel. People were crowding, the German troops were blocking the passage through the tunnel. We lost all hope that we might get through the tunnel to Austria and so we started up the road above the tunnel. An immense mass of people and vehicles was moving up the moonlit road. That night was terrible indeed. We were sweating blood, although not as Christ did."

"The long column of vehicles moved slowly, braking all the way toward Borovlje and Celovec. Before sunrise we cooked our last potatoes. Still in the dusk we moved on together with the home guard troops. We were making better progress on foot and managed to reach Borovlje before noon. That is where we saw the first British troops."

"We traveled partly by cars, partly on foot, some with knapsacks on their backs."

"From Rovte we went to St Jost nad Vrhniko, through Suhi Dol and Lucne to Gorenja Vas thence to Skofja Loka, Kranj, Trzic, and across the Ljubelj pass into the Celovec basin."

"People on the road took comfort in the hope that the whole affair could not take long. The retreat impeded the numerous vehicles on the road, everybody wanted to get to Ljubelj as soon as possible. The Germans held people back with their columns. After waiting for two days at Ljubelj another group which was not allowed to go through the tunnel proceeded on the road to Austria as late as 11 May 1945."

"Some are advocating annexation of Slovenia to Austria because it would be to their own advantage since they could then return home. However, there are not many of these. Others are placing their trust in God and the Allied diplomacy and bravely endure the hardships of exile. May the Almighty grant our prayers and purge the partisans and communists from our homeland...."

Such are randomly selected fragments of stories told by those who 30 years ago retreated in a panic flight.

Thus began the as yet unfinished story of the Slovenian political emigration.

Combatting the Obscurantism

In May 1975 in Poljana near Prevalje at the 30th anniversary celebration of the concluding military operations and final victory Mitja Ribicic said, among other things, the following:

"Who fought for man and his future? Who fought for his own liberty rather than wait for others to liberate him? Who remained true to his own people after his victory in the struggle for establishing his own rights and his own road to socialism. On the other hand who had after the demise of

Hitlerite power offered his services to new masters--the forces of imperialism and hegemony? Those who deny this struggle are denying the very existence of the Slovenian people."

"The Yugoslav borders are among those most open in the world, they are certainly the most open borders between countries with different social orders. We are advocating such openness also at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. We champion the overcoming of the divisiveness of blocs, free circulation of men of good will, exchange of commodities and merchandise, technological and scientific cooperation, interaction of various cultures through which people are ennobled, for free contact of national minorities with their mother countries, for free flow of ideas that serve peace, progress, coexistence among nations and the freedom of the people. On the other hand we shall declare our opposition to the abuse of our openness for political interference, instigation of hatred or even dispatch of terrorist groups and spies. We shall make it clear to everybody that in our country the Nazi and fascist propaganda spreading of nationalistic or religious bigotry, racism and insults directed against friendly countries are prohibited and in fact prevented."

In conclusion he said: "This means that people, and especially young people, are aware of the accomplishments achieved by the armed revolution and throughout the 25 years of development of socialist self-management.

"This is a contribution to the efforts of progressive forces for reestablishment of a line setting apart the forces of darkness and evil. Europe can gain nothing from a reconcilliation between the progressive forces and the reaction."

[30 Apr 76, p 11]

[Text] Another speaker at the celebration was Kosta Nadj, one time commander of the Third Army who, among other things, recalled that 30 years ago in the last few days of war the Yugoslav army captured approximately 300,000 German and Quisling troops including the entire command of the German army group Southeast headed by Colonel-General Loehr.

"This was the collapse of the last remnants of Hitlerite military forces who wanted to rule the world and force upon all nations the reign of tyranny."

He continued: "The Slovenian detachment, brigades, and divisions operating behind enemy lines were the advance guard of our armies making the frontal attack in liberating our territory. The contribution of the Slovenian people in the overall national liberation effort was considerable. In this units of the 4th zone of operations had an especially important role. In the struggle against the occupying power and the domestic traitors the activity of the Liberation Front was of special significance."

Recognition

Yugoslavia was and is still receiving recognition on the part of the Allies for its contribution to the war effort of the anti-Hitlerite coalition said General Kosta Nadj. "We are proud of it."

Some are trying to deprecate this struggle and to those General Nadj said: "Underestimation of the struggle for our liberation does not contribute toward international understanding, it represents an underestimation of our revolution's achievements on the basis of which we are today building our self-managing socialist society. We shall never permit this."

[4 May 76, p 8]

[Text] "The Nazis and their collaborators perpetrated a macabre phenomenon of the 20th century, mass persecution and extermination of civilian population for the sole reason that they were of different political opinion, were not Germans, and did not belong to the Aryan group."

"The Nazis, assisted by their collaborators who acted against their own people, were forcibly displacing the Yugoslav peoples so that they could facilitate germanization of individual places. This method was vigorously practiced in Slovenia, where Hitler wanted to create a totally German region. The freedom-loving patriotism of the Slovenian people represented an obstacle to the Greater German expansionist policy as it did to other conquerors in the past. Accordingly the Germans wanted to extirpate the Slovenian people on this territory which was strategically very attractive to them."

"When we look back to the days of victory we note with indignation that fascism is again arising from the ashes, because its political roots were unfortunately not eradicated in spite of the military victory."

"We are convinced that the progressive humanity will never again permit groups of such terrorists and perpetrators of violence to grow in strength to a level where they would be able to destroy all that men have built throughout centuries."

"Today when fascism is again forming international alliances and when public gatherings of adherents of fascism are being held in Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, and Italy, one hears the thesis purporting that the struggle against fascism is an unpleasant matter of the past which should be forgotten. Propaganda efforts along these lines will not deceive us nor will they lull us into complacency."

"In recent times World War II has been represented in some Western countries as a simple conflict of two groups of countries that came about by an unfortunate series of circumstances or because of mutual misunderstandings."

This is no way to educate the new generations about the bitter experiences of the past and the criminal indictment of Nazism. This is deception of one's own population which can result in an exactly opposite effect than was intended."

Not only last year, on the 30th anniversary of victory, but in all previous years, we made clear how we view those who worked against their own people. We had, however, less opportunity to say what this political emigration is like today and what it was doing during all those years after the defeat of their one-time masters.

On these pages we shall try to present part of the story about people who in 1941, the year of destiny, or even before, when confronted with a choice between darkness and light, between good and evil, elected the latter.

Conversations and Impressions

Thirty years later I met some of them in Argentina and elsewhere, but primarily in Argentina.

Some knew that I was a journalist, some did not--and their statements were at least in a small way dependent on that.

At the conclusion of a conversation I was almost invariably asked not to divulge the names because "there could be difficulties." What kind of difficulties?

"You know how it is," my interlocutors would say, "the word gets around very fast over here and we are still living quite close together. What I think is one thing, but what I can say is another."

We talked over coffee in many of the Buenos Aires coffeehouses, in pleasant living rooms, gardens or even in business offices--as, for example, in the Slovenian House.

These were interesting conversations, albeit not always pleasant.

The reporter who was gathering the impressions and material for this story felt that there was a distinct dividing line separating two groups of people among the inimical emigres: the leadership and the rest.

People from the leadership with whom I spoke or about whom I heard from persons who know them well were as a rule hostile and aggressively against all that Yugoslavia represents today.

In contrast with the, and in a sharp contrast indeed, all others seemed to be extremely disinterested in any kind of political activity.

This is the dividing line which emerged as the most prominent characteristics of the enemy emigres at the moment. While the leadership is becoming increasingly more aggressive the majority of others among the enemy emigres simply pay no attention to the "politics" of this kind.

There may be, of course, other possible characterizations of the present state of affairs in the Slovenian emigrations, but this reporter sees the above characterization as the essential and dominant one.

Total Alienation

The Yugoslav political emigre movement is not the only group of nationals acting outside of their native country but it is among all emigre movements from the socialist countries--Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and others--the most aggressive and probably also the best organized.

This is so even though emigre groups of some other countries possess ethnically and politically considerably stronger traditions and are politically considerably more united.

[5 May 76, p 8]

[Text] The Yugoslav political emigre movement--and this holds also for the Slovenian emigres--is rather highly differentiated along the political, social, nationalistic, and cultural lines, but there are nevertheless some processes and characteristics that are common to all these segments.

First of these is their total alienation from Yugoslav reality. The political emigres live in their own world which has nothing in common with ours. It is this very fact that can explain some of their impossible beliefs and ideas, which here among us seem utterly incredible, but which persist in the minds of political emigres thousands of kilometers away.

The activity of enemy emigres is, of course, also conditioned by the relations of certain states with Yugoslavia and by their strategic objectives. If Yugoslavia happened to be less interesting, if it were located in a less important geographical region and did not possess such strategic importance, then the political emigres certainly could not operate in the way they do now.

The activity of enemy political emigration is likewise directly related to the political atmosphere that prevails among the superpowers on the global scale. During the time of the "cold war" the political emigre movement had entirely different opportunities than it has in the present era of detente although, of course, this time too retains some potentially interesting possibilities for cooperation with those entities that may have interests or at least entertain hopes of one kind or another concerning Yugoslavia.

And, to be sure, the lesser or greater activity of the emigre movement as a rule depends also on the events on the Yugoslav scene. A flurry of developing activity within Yugoslavia stimulates the activity of political emigration, and conversely lack of domestic excitement slows down the emigre activities.

To this can be added that the many and varied external pressures upon Yugoslavia, regardless of where they originate, act in approximately the same manner--they are always accompanied by increased intensity of the political emigre activity.

Accordingly, there are three factors in all that to a large extent condition the tides of inimical emigre activity against Yugoslavia, namely, the global balance of forces in the world, internal situations in Yugoslavia, and pressures exerted individually or by groups upon our country.

However, regardless of these periodically changing internal or external processes, the global strategic goals of the enemy political emigration remains constant despite any internal or external differences, namely: the destruction of the self-managing and nonaligned socialist Yugoslavia.

In this regard all the political emigre groups are in perfect agreement and it is precisely because of this that none of these groups may be viewed differently or supposed to be apparently more "liberal" and less dangerous than those appearing to be more "conservative."

This is certainly not a consequence of a greater or lesser degree of "softness" or even "humanitarianism," but solely and only a result of realistic assessment of conditions available to individual political emigre leaderships.

Before we attempt to present information about the structure and positions of the political emigre movement it is in order to point out one characteristic, namely, the mutual interrelationship of emigre groups operating in different countries and even on different continents which one may observe in passing, another indication of the uniformity of their global objectives. Thus, for instance, very close contact exists between the political emigres in Melbourne, Buenos Aires, or Cleveland and this network includes all larger centers of the Slovenian political emigre movement throughout the world. This, of course, is no accident or a consequence of personal friendship between the individual leaders although this, too, exists. Rather it is an indication of not only a fairly well directed "political" emigre movement but also of cooperation of their protectors.

In recent years the leaderships of the Slovenian, and, of course, Yugoslav, political emigration began to extend their activity to an area where they were previously not active, that is, among our workers who are temporarily employed abroad.

Particularly active in this area is the enemy emigre clergy, which is naturally trying to disguise its operation under the cloak of religious activity. They are trying to establish contacts particularly in the cultural and scientific circles, but not so much in the economic and other.

Geographically larger groups of enemy emigres are located particularly in Argentina (Buenos Aires, Mendoza), the United States of America (Cleveland, New York, Milwaukee), Canada (Toronto), Australia (Sydney, Melbourne), Great Britain (London), the German Federal Republic and in some other foreign countries.

[6 May 76, p 9]

[Text] Emigres in the United States of America, Great Britain and Australia are in the most favorable position materially.

Who are the political emigres and what positions do they espouse?

If we discount the already mentioned common goals, methods, and mode of operation a closer scrutiny of the enemy emigration reveals an exceedingly varied picture composed of many tiny elements.

In this sense the wartime tradition when all of them collaborated with the occupying powers, although they all differed in the details of their political views, is being carried on.

Differences

All their differences with which the emigres left Yugoslavia in 1945 have been preserved and some of them have even been accentuated.

By their political origin the Slovenian political emigres are extremely reactionary clericals with only a few more "liberally" oriented personalities. They come from the ranks of politicians, clergymen, members of one time armed forces which collaborated with the occupying powers, police and security services of the occupation and the Slovenian bourgeoisie, which had been collaborating with the Germans during World War II.

Following the defeat of Nazi Germany they were at first on the run for their lives, but they also immediately began their inimical activities abroad. Although this was a period of assimilation and search for a basis of material sustenance, new home, and a job they nevertheless never missed the slightest opportunity for activity against the new Yugoslavia.

Among those who, in the last few days before the German collapse, succeeded in fleeing abroad were many collaborators of the occupying powers who were literally fugitives from justice. Those were people who were with all their heart and soul on the side of the Germans and Italians, quite a few of whom were carrying revolvers or knives. They were criminals who would be brought to the bar for their crimes in any country if they operated on its territory.

With flight across the border they saved their own lives but they could not nor will they ever be able to purge themselves of the stains of their criminal past.

And yet, there were not only criminals who fled over the hairpin curved road to Ljubelj. The refugee columns contained also those who had done nothing, or at least nothing that could bring them before a court.

People were also fleeing who simply believed the threats and propaganda, who believed that the partisans would kill them all. It was only later that they came to recognize their error and some of them did in fact return.

But the butchers and the criminals knew very well why they were running away: they knew this was the only way out of their murky past. The only thing that they did not know or at least were not ready to believe was that they were running away from a murky past to an exactly identical future.

For across the border from the country which they were leaving in panic flight in May 1945 there was no milk and honey waiting for them; all that they found was the despair of alienation.

It is true that they soon found new protectors, but this was all, for there was no way back for them although they believed in it and nourished the hope of returning some day for years to come.

However, the hope of return dwindled until it eventually faded away, except for those who had lost all faculty of reasoning.

At first they tried to carry on where they had left off in May of 1945.

It took only a few years, until the end of the 1940's or 1950's for them to return to "politics." In some places this process went faster and in some slower.

In Argentina, for example, where the Slovenian political emigres took refuge in 1947 fleeing from Italy where at that time appearances indicated that the communists might win the elections, they began a more intense activity in 1950--at first carefully and circumspectly and later increasingly more aggressively.

In this the enemy emigres were rather astutely making use of the situation in individual countries, including the cold war which started at that time. Thus they found in Argentina, which has traditionally been favorably disposed toward any anticommunist activity, a very fertile ground where there was no problem with promoting their views.

Here and in some other countries they succeeded in working their way into the various branches of the government, particularly in the agencies where they could make use of their official position, that is, the police, security and intelligence services, and the rest.

In some countries, in Argentina and the United States of America, for instance, their early penetration to sensitive and important positions allowed them to remain at these posts to this day. They also became staff members in various "institutes" for strategic and other research, which are in some instances only a cover for a purely intelligence analysis activity.

The transition from the open collaboration with the powers that once fought against the Allied coalition to cooperation with their former adversaries apparently did not bother them at all.

[7 May 76, 12]

[Text] Nor did it bother their new employers, who never hesitated a moment to retain the services of the former Nazi and fascist collaborators.

In the semi-covert world of espionage and low blows all that matters are results and effectiveness. The means and methods--not to speak of principles and convictions--are of secondary importance.

Disagreements

The specific goals of the Slovenian political emigration cannot be readily discerned, for the simple reason that various parties and groups are not united in this respect.

Consider: The "Declaration and Appeal of the Slovenian National Committee," published on 19 December 1974 in the paper SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA [Free Slovenia], an organ of the extended arm of the "Slovenian Government in Exile," namely, the organization "Zedinjena Slovenija" [United Slovenia], was dealt with rather harshly on the pages of SMER V SLOVENSKO DRZAVO [Toward Slovenian Statehood] the paper of the orthodox clerical group "Slovensko Drzavno Gibanje" [Slovenian Statehood Movement].

The above is only one instance proving the differences in positions espoused by the Slovenian political emigre movement, which is otherwise bound by the common goal--the destruction of self-managing, socialist, and non-aligned Yugoslavia.

What are the differences?

The "Declaration and Appeal of the Slovenian National Committee," which I read in Argentina states, for instance, the following:

"...We Slovenians are determined to defend the principle that the Slovenian people, like other nationalities in Yugoslavia, has every right to its own state, but we resolutely reject any forced partition of Yugoslavia. Such partition would cause irreparable damage to all nationalities in Yugoslavia

not only to the Slovenian people. The only solution is in the return to the sovereignty of nationalities which, organized in democratic nation states--one of which should be Slovenia--should in accordance with the principle of self-determination be included in a free federation...."

"...We seek fulfillment of the principles of sovereignty whereby the Slovenian people together with the other nationalities in Yugoslavia will, free from the communist or other dictatorship, enjoy to the fullest extent all their rights and decide freely the course of their destiny in the political, economic, and cultural domain."

After pointing out the "impending threat that Yugoslavia may come under Soviet domination," they state the following: "However, if the Slovenians and other nationalities in Yugoslavia should be deprived of the opportunity to freely shape their own destiny and existence of their own federation and if some external intervention or other events should bring about the partitioning of Yugoslavia we, Slovenians, will in that moment of destiny rally all our forces to ensure that the present republic of Slovenia becomes an internationally recognized democratic state."

In its 15 March 1975 issue SMER V SLOVENSKO DRZAVO propounding the views of its publishers, namely, the Slovensko Drzavno Gibanje presented a whole series of sharp reservations to the above declaration.

Reservations

"Although the Slovenian Christian Democratic Party or the Slovenian National Committee say that the Slovenian people have a right to their own state, it has to this date never presented a formal demand for a sovereign Slovenian state either to the Slovenian people or before the international forums.

"We are used to declarations and appeals of the Slovenian National Committee. They are all marked by more or less high sounding words serving as a disguise for pragmatic modesty and unclear, nebulous formulation of objectives.

"This may perhaps be a consequence of the actual incompatibility of the programs of various parties constituting the Slovenian National Committee."

[8 May 76, p 12]

[Text] "Programs adopted by partners so ideologically diverse must simply be designed so that one can 'have his cake and eat it too.' It is precisely because of this that the Declaration and Appeal of the Slovenian National Committee is truly a masterpiece of obfuscation and lacks all substance of a program."

The continuation of this critical essay polemicizes with the "Declaration and Appeal of the Slovenian National Committee" at great length and eventually reaches the following conclusion:

"Slovenians at home as well as abroad (here the latter reference is actually to the emigres) wherever we may be have in these last 30 years undoubtedly experienced some changes in viewing our national problems and in searching for optimal solutions for the future. It is time that they recognize these changes and adjust their mode of operation accordingly. There is no sense in persisting to advocate programs that to the majority of the people represent perhaps only a historical relic, a phase in the evolution to something more elevated, more perfect and more Slovenian. We are not interested in the people who created these programs, we are interested in new programs based on experiences of the most recent past. However, this is neither satisfactory nor is it acceptable to the Slovenian people.

"It would be interesting to know what the Slovenians themselves think of their future. Do they still insist on the Yugoslav state as their community, do they think that the Slovenian people would be better protected in a state of their own or do they perhaps envision their future within a confederation of South Slav states? The latter two possibilities inevitably require a sovereign Slovenia, that is, a state of their own for Slovenians.

"About the political life of other countries' emigre groups we know that some of them have replaced their leadership in their entirety with new people scattered over all continents of the world. With the modern methods of rapid communication it should not be difficult to poll Slovenians living abroad on their political views. The results would clear up the rather stale atmosphere of political activity of Slovenian emigrants and could preclude any future need for equivocation in various declarations and appeals.

Polemics

Similar disputes and polemics are not lacking among the Slovenian political emigres. However, it is characteristic of them that they are being carried on only by narrow circles of the leaderships, while the vast majority of the emigres takes no part in these debates. I could gather as much from the numerous conversations with Slovenian political emigres.

Of course, a complete disregard for reality is also characteristic. The leadership of individual emigre political groups debate and engage in the polemics as if they were the true representatives of all Slovenians, as if they were speaking for all of them.

No one among them, for example, would pause for a moment and ask what the Slovenians in their homeland think about those debates, that is the people who long ago decided for and who daily reaffirm their way of life in a self-managing socialist Slovenia which is an integral part of the self-managing socialist Yugoslavia.

The emigre politicians, however, are not concerned with this. In their debates they toss arguments around like ping-pong balls in an atmosphere of total alienation from the Slovenian and Yugoslav reality.

[10 May 76, p 9]

[Text] All this idle talk about sovereignty, confederation, a separate state, and the like with which the pages of the emigre papers are filled have not the slightest weight because they can at best be of concern to only a few thousand emigres living in foreign countries, but never to a nationality of 2 million people of a self-managing socialist republic.

However, this does not disturb the Slovenian political emigre leaders. On the contrary, debating their hollow sounding ideas on their splendidly isolated islands totally ignoring reality they are trying to create an impression in the world at large that there is in fact something behind it all, although they must realize that there is simply nothing there.

Idle Talk

The talk about "polling" the Slovenians so that they could declare their political predilection is quite characteristic: the proposed poll would include a few thousand Slovenian political emigres scattered from Buenos Aires to Toronto and from London to Melbourne and make a "decision" for the 2 million Slovenians who are in fact deciding about everything, that is, the Slovenians in the homeland.

And whatever a few Slovenian emigres might decide in a poll conceived in this way would, of course, be of no significance at all, but the emigre leadership, which is fully aware of this, is nevertheless playing around with such ideas.

These sterile endeavors bring into question the seriousness of their protagonists and in some instances even evoke disregard and antipathy of politically inactive Slovenian emigres.

After 30 years of sterile debates in this vein and "predictions" that never came true, an inexorable process began to unfold among the Slovenian emigres.

While the leaders are becoming increasingly more engrossed in instigation of hate toward Yugoslavia and immersed in arguments on the "appropriate" directives and instructions for future activity, the emigre "masses" are turning away from the unpromising and sterile politicking and directing their efforts to much more tangible things such as establishing themselves in their communities and gradual rapprochement with their native land.

Proof of this are the increasingly more numerous visits of Slovenian political emigres to Slovenia (discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this story) which is, of course, causing indignation and objections in leading emigre circles.

It seems that the increasingly more radical positions of the Slovenian emigre leaders are widening the gap between them and the "ordinary" emigres, accelerating the process of mutual estrangement.

Organization

Who are the Slovenian political emigres, how are they organized and where and how are they operating?

The answer to this question cannot be given in one sentence because there are several emigre groups that are active abroad.

The central organization of the Slovenian political emigres abroad is the "Slovenian National Committee," established on 29 October 1944 on the initiative of the Yugoslav emigre government in London as some kind of Slovenian government within the homeland which was supposed to pave the way for the arrival of the Allied armies in Slovenia.

The "Slovenian National Committee" included representatives of all the major political parties of the time. Later, on 3 May 1945, the Committee "proclaimed" Free Slovenia as a constituent state of a Federal Yugoslavia, at the same time the home guards were declared to be the "Slovenian National Army."

The "Slovenian National Committee," presently under the leadership of president Dr Milos Stare, considers itself a coalition "government in exile" and the representative of the Slovenian people. Its headquarters are in Buenos Aires.

Today only two former bourgeois political parties are represented in the Committee: the clerical "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" and the liberal "Slovenian Democratic Party."

And what does this "government in exile" do?

It does the only thing it can: pouring out endless verbiage and propaganda and forming alliances with other emigre splinter groups in the United States, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere.

It also sends various "protests" and "petitions" to the governments on whose territory the emigres are operating and tries to interpose itself in this way in the relations between those countries and Yugoslavia.

Its most important characteristic is at the same time its greatest, albeit quite understandable, weakness: it has practically no contact with its supposed constituency, not to speak of being a representative or at least something of interest to the emigres. The average political emigre has only a vague and unclear idea of its activities. This has been particularly true in the last few years when the politicking of emigre leaders has become something unrealistic and totally unimportant.

[11 May 76, p 12]

[Text] Documents

It is interesting but of little importance to read the "documents" published by enemy emigres in recent years that refer to the formation of the "Slovenian National Committee." I read them in Buenos Aires.

Thus Miha Marijan Vir writes in his book published in Buenos Aires in 1972 the following:

"The German occupation authorities calmly acknowledged the proclamation of Free Slovenia thereby giving up its authority of the occupying power on the Slovenian territory."

This is, of course, fairly accurate except that on 3 May 1945 the "German occupation authorities" were already down and out, with Berlin having already fallen the previous day, so that the only thing of interest to the Germans at that time was how to save their own skins by withdrawing across the Karawanken Alps. That was their only interest and nothing else. The Germans could not have cared less, even if someone had proclaimed the Fourth Reich in Ljubljana.

More devious is the assertion in the same book on the same page that on 3 May 1945, five days before the end of the war, the Slovenian home guard and chetniks were the only Slovenian armed forces that held Slovenia and its capital and that Slovenia was for all practical purposes liberated by the home guard and chetniks.

The person who wrote this most certainly never talked to any of the tens of thousands of Slovenian partisans who in those days in May fought the last battle for liberty precisely against the home guard and chetniks and others from these and German ranks.

The same book also contains an interesting explanation of why the home guard, then supposedly the "only Slovenian armed force" who, by declaration of the Slovenian National Committee became the regular "Slovenian National Army," did not attack the retreating Germans.

The explanation is as follows:

"Because this would be senseless: why should we waste our own forces at a time when it was necessary to marshall all our strength against another enemy, the communists?"

"The Germans helped the home guard to impede the communist advance and thus incidentally defended Slovenia against a communist takeover."

"The immediate objective of the home guard and chetniks at the end of the war was holding Slovenia until the arrival of the allied Anglo-American forces."

Then they would, of course, seize power and dispatch all "communists" to their happy hunting grounds.

However, the Allied armies never came and according to the same source the subsequent events unfolded as follows:

A Slip

"When the Slovenian National Committee realized that the British forces were not coming to Slovenia, it decided to withdraw along with the home guard army to the British in Austria. The war was over and defending Ljubljana from the partisans would mean destruction of the city and unnecessary bloodshed."

Here the author apparently made a slip: for if "on 3 May 1945 the chetniks and the home guard were the only Slovenian armed forces that held Slovenia and its capital" and if those armed forces "had for all practical purposes already liberated Slovenia," against whom was it then necessary to "defend Ljubljana," an undertaking which they so humanely gave up to prevent its destruction?

And why were they retreating from Slovenia if they were then "the only Slovenian armed forces?"

But questions of this kind are not important, they only serve as pasttime games because the events in May 1945, and not only then, as well as the role of various entities are by now hopefully perfectly clear and require neither further explanations nor rebuttal of palpable untruths.

The latter is not our purpose here, we are simply trying to describe the world atmosphere in which the "Slovenian National Committee" operates.

This, then is the "Slovenian National Committee," which consists of clericals and liberals.

Background

First a few words about this.

The Slovenian Christian Democratic party, according to what I was told by my acquaintances in Buenos Aires, is the largest Slovenian political emigre organization. It has evolved from the pre-war Slovenian People's Party [Slovenska Ljudska Stranka] and retained all of its characteristics.

Its headquarters are in Buenos Aires, but part of its leadership also operates in Cleveland in the United States of America.

They publish a paper called SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA.

[12 May 76, p 12]

[Text] The editorial board includes, according to a notice on the back page, the editor-in-chief Dr Milos Stare (who is also the president of the "Slovenian National Committee" and head of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party," director Tone Mizerit, Pavel Fajdiga, Tine Debeljak, and Slavimir Batagelj.

The paper SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA is not an outright organ of the party but rather only of the party's extended arm called "Zedinjena Slovenija" [United Slovenia].

The following explanation is in order here:

The "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" operates behind the scene and only rarely appears in the open under its true name, instead it uses other emigre organizations as fronts. One of these is "Zedinjena Slovenija" which we shall discuss more extensively below.

The Reaction

The Slovenian political emigre organization having the largest number of members is also the most reactionary clerical by its alignment. The political doctrine of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" is extremely conservative and advocates positions which the Catholic church used to propound prior to the ecumenical council, that is, it is even further to the right than the Roman Catholic Church at this moment.

Its goal is the destruction of the socialist self-managing, nonaligned Yugoslavia and the establishment of a Yugoslav state based on the principles of the bourgeois parliamentary "democracy." It advocates a greater secular presence of the Roman Catholic Church. Its conception of state would allow only rightist parties under the ecclesiastic tutelage, while all the rest would be prohibited. Their concepts can hardly be matched with any government structure presently existing in the world--only Spain under the fascist dictatorship of Francisco Franco might perhaps suit their views.

What is its influence and how far does it reach?

Because of increasing polarization between the leadership and rank and file members the latter show less and less interest in the activity of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" hence its influence is waning. This I was told by emigres in Argentina whom I interviewed and who, characteristically, requested that I not divulge their names.

Ties with some other political parties and movements of the Slovenian emigres operating in other countries are still being maintained although these, too, are on the wane.

In the last few years they have appeared also among the Yugoslav workers temporarily employed abroad in Western European countries where they are represented by clergymen.

They are, of course, also working indirectly, as we have already mentioned, through some other emigre organizations, the most important of which is "Zedinjena Slovenija" with its paper SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA, which is, as a matter of fact, a "politically" exclusive organ of the "Slovenian National Committee" and the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party."

Three Decades

"Zedinjena Slovenija" is one of the oldest emigre organizations. It was founded in 1946 in Rome when the remnants of the home guard, war-time politicians, members of security-intelligence services of occupation authorities, individual industrialists, compromised clergy, and other collaborators took refuge in Italy.

It was founded to unite all "Slovenian refugees," but it soon had to leave the hospitable Italian soil for fear that there, too, the left could come to power.

In Argentina it became a clerical emigre mass organization trying to inject itself among the emigrants, gain their trust, and grow in strength in their ranks. One of its basic tasks at the very beginnings was to "assist" emigres in refugee camps in Austria and Italy to emigrate to Argentina.

In this it astutely used the clergy which facilitated their approach to the refugees.

"Zedinjena Slovenija" soon began to found Slovenian schools, homes, and other institutions which brought to its fold the emigres who were gathering there along, of course, with their contributions, with which it financed the anti-Yugoslav activities of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" and some other emigre groups. From its inception it, of course, also acted with all its resources against socialist Yugoslavia, which it attacked at every opportunity.

In Buenos Aires it published SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA which has a circulation of approximately 2,000. For comparison some Slovenian provincial papers in Dolenjska [Lower Carniola], Gorenjska [Carniola], Primorska [Littoral], and elsewhere have circulations between 15,000 and 25,000 or more. The paper is extremely reactionary and replete with anti-Yugoslav outpourings. This weekly cooperates with some other similar political emigre publications.

Contents

The content and style of SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA can best be seen by reading a few passages from its pages. Thus I could read the following:

"At the 30th anniversary of communist enslavement the men who now hold power in Ljubljana again demonstrated that they did not fight for liberty in World War II but rather for world communist domination."

[13 May 76, p 9]

[Text] "On 10 May 1975 they staged on Kongresni Trg [Congress Square now Trg Revolucije=Revolution Square] the 'Central Slovenian Celebration' (according to a column News from Ljubljana, 5 June 1975).

"On the consecration anniversary of the Saint Mary of Succor church we recall the 30th anniversary of our departure from home. We thank Saint Mary for our rescue from the holocaust engulfing our homeland and for her protection and comfort in our sufferings and fears in refugee camps.... We pray for our common cares, for our priesthood in view of the threat that our community may remain without Slovenian priests.... Let us work together toward preservation of our religious and national heritage.... Our families and our press will find the strongest support in well organized organizations.... (Report on the benediction festivities at Saint Mary of Succor, June 1975).

"These days Slovenians all over the world, from Buenos Aires to Toronto, will commemorate our heroic home guard, chetniks, legionnaires, and rural militia whose martyrdom 30 years ago was their last and greatest victory in a gigantic struggle between good and evil, a victory over the immoral and profoundly depraved Marxist system. Thirty years later their sacrifice remains to us who live in freedom a beacon and a most powerful source of strength while the lackeys of Marxist ideology currently in power in Slovenia are forever haunted by the nightmare of their crime.

"Thirty years later from Buenos Aires to Toronto free Slovenian words from the lips of sons and grandsons of our martyred heroes sing praise to their great sacrifice on the altar of the Slovenian homeland. As long as the Slovenian word and Slovenian song resounds on Earth this sacrifice of Slovenian heroes and defenders of liberty will never be forgotten.

"Let us work steadfastly and fervently to speed the arrival of the day when the Slovenian people will cut out of its national body the festering sore of the criminal communist ideology. May the shining example of our victorious home guard, chetniks, legionnaires, and rural militiamen, brave fighters for the true liberty of the Slovenian people be our guiding star. Free and united we shall continue their struggle. Glory to their memory.... (Article on the 'Majestic commemoration at the 30th anniversary of the Slovenian tragedy,' 5 June 1975)."

Respects

"As we pay our respects to the sacrifice of our heroes we believe in the greatness of the cause for which they died. We are convinced that their death was their as well as our greatest victory," (ibid.).

All this was written in one single issue of a single emigre newspaper but even if one were to read 10 of them one would glean nothing more.

It seems truly incredible that someone could write things like that since they read as if the author lived on another planet and not here on Earth. If the home guard, chetniks, legionnaires, and rural militia had all been soldiers of a good cause whose strength could not hold back the evil force, then who were those who donned uniforms supplied by the Germans and who were shooting with weapons and ammunition provided by the Germans and other occupation authorities? Who fought side by side with the Germans in their attacks against the same enemy?

These are questions that remain unanswered in those papers because no one even thinks of posing them.

A Change in Tactics

The "Slovenska Kulturna Akcija" [Slovenian Cultural Society] has its headquarters in Buenos Aires. It was founded in 1953 on the initiative of Tine Debeljak, one of the leaders of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party." Debeljak has remained to this date president of the "Slovenska Kulturna Akcija," an organization exhibiting all the characteristics of a clerical educational and cultural institution.

In the last few years it changed somewhat its former openly hostile aggressiveness toward Yugoslavia and began to use more covert means.

"In contrast with earlier practice it is now acting as a center for clandestine indoctrination of Slovenian emigrants and workers temporarily employed abroad, especially in the field of culture. It represents itself as a 'nonpolitical' emigre cultural institution, disinterested in politics," I was told by S. L. whom I met in Buenos Aires (and who requested that his name be withheld).

With this disguise it became the most successful of all emigre political organizations in penetrating not only among our temporary workers abroad but also in foreign countries.

It was the operation of the "Slovenska Kulturna Akcija" that provided some people such as the clerical writer Alojz Rebula from Trieste with a basis for self-admiring statement that Slovenians now have two cultural centers of which one is in Ljubljana and the other in Buenos Aires.

[14 May 76, p 3]

[Text] In reality this is a hopeless conceit for which there is no excuse. All that the emigres in Buenos Aires were able to achieve in the last 30 years in the fields of literature, painting, or sculpture did not surpass the average work of amateurs according to objective connoisseurs.

"Slovenska Kulturna Akcija" publishes a monthly review GLAS SLOVENSK KULTURNE AKCIJE [The Voice of Slovenian Cultural Society] of which a few issues are also sold abroad. The publication is not limited solely to culture--nor is any other no matter how "cultural" institution of the political emigres limited in this way--but rather diligently seeks political topics. The latter consist mainly of various "proclamations" and "documents" in which the "Slovenian National Committee" and the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" expostulate their positions... all well within the narrow bounds and with a suitable admixture of clerical views.

Another of their publications is the review MEDDOBJE [Entresiglo; Time Between Two Eras] which is published quarterly and has considerably smaller circulation in which there is seemingly somewhat less of politics, albeit its presence is always there. The review's content is ossified and of very modest literary value.

In addition they publish various other books which, however, could never attract even a modicum of interest in the circles of objective literary critics.

Visit in Ramon Falcon Street

I interviewed Tine Debeljak, president of the "Slovenska Kulturna Akcija," member of the leadership of "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" and the board of editors of SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA in a small third floor room in the Slovenian House at 4158 Ramon Falcon in Buenos Aires. Here are the headquarters of "Slovenska Kulturna Akcija."

Tine Debeljak was at one time editor of DOM IN SVET [The Home and the World], a paper published in Ljubljana during World War II. He and the chairman of the editorial board Monsignor Dr Alojz Odar hailed the decree on annexation of the Slovenian territory to Italy with the following words:

"With this act we became an integral part of the great Italian Empire which brings new avenues of cultural activities to our cultural life. As a cultural review we hail this wise decision... and we are grateful for the understanding and farsightedness of the great Italian leaders." (DOM IN SVET, 1941, No 4-6, p 169).

Another item on Tine Debeljak who was also at one time editor of the cultural page of the daily SLOVENEK:

"It can safely be said that there was no armed force in World War II more deserving to be called the "army of national liberation and defense" than the Slovenian rural militia and the chetniks."

[15 May 76, p 12]

[Text] "Why did the Slovenian anticommunist fighters accept weapons from the Germans to be used against the partisan army? To save the already heavily wounded Slovenian people from new bloodshed.... They offered to accept the responsibility for maintaining law and order on the Slovenian territory.... Woe to the Slovenian population if this territory were 'controlled' by the German troops themselves! The Slovenian anticommunist fighters were the salvation of the Ljubljana province. By offering to take up by themselves the struggle against the communists on domestic soil they removed any basis for the German army to consider the entire Ljubljana province as enemy territory favoring the communists....

"Weapons were accepted from the Germans under the condition that their use would be limited strictly to the domestic territory and the internal enemy.

"The Germans did not call up the home guard to fight the partisans, the home guard themselves offered to go into combat. The Germans merely acceded to the continuation of their fighting against the partisan army and provided the means for doing this.

"Only their immense love of their own people bleeding from a thousand wounds commanded to the home guard the sacrifice of accepting before all the world the appearance of being German collaborators, while they in fact were saviours of their people....

"The communist exaltation of the Slovenian partisan army and its importance for liberating Slovenia and contributing to the defeat of the Axis powers (Germany and Italy) in which they indulged during and after World War II is nothing more than a mendacious exaggeration.

"When Italy capitulated in September 1943 the partisans disarmed the Italian divisions because they were instructed to do so by the unprincipled and shortsighted Western allies....

"The partisan struggle against the Germans was of no significance to the Allied war effort when viewed on the European--let alone global--scale.

"The occupation powers endeavored throughout the war to keep the partisan forces alive and safe from destruction by the Slovenian anticommunist forces.

"The reason for German assent to arm the Slovenian anticommunist fighters was that it would be irrational and against their interests if they turned

down the offer of the anticommunist fighters and refused to support them in their struggle. The agreement of the Slovenian anticommunist leaders with the German command on establishment of the Slovenian home guard was a compromise between two enemies who realized that it would be senseless to fight each other in view of their engagement with a much more dangerous enemy, against whom each had to summon all forces at his command.

"In 1943 when the partisan army was rapidly dwindling under the onslaught of the rural militia, it was saved from destruction by the enormous Italian occupation forces when three Italian divisions, on instructions from Western powers and out of fear from retaliation by the Slovenian people, surrendered with all their modern equipment to the partisans, who used this equipment for combat against 6,500 rural militia groups and chetniks scattered in various locations.... In the Spring of 1945 the partisans were again saved by direct military intervention of the Red Army and the Anglo-American 8th Army. If it were not for this the partisans would never have won. They had prospects of victory neither in Slovenia nor in Serbia, only in Bosnia and Herzegovina did they find a receptive ground.."

[17 May 76, p 10]

[Text] "The partisans were victorious only because the British cynically and ignobly betrayed their faithful ally of their darkest hour, General Mihajlovic.

"The fatal historical mistake and the international crime of supporting insurrection against lawfully constituted, friendly allied government was the declaration of the British government whereby it recognized at the outset Tito's partisans as legitimate fighters against the occupying powers, when they were, according to all laws of the civilized world, common rebels and deserters from the regular Yugoslav army.

"In the battle of Belgrade, that was actually conquered by the Soviet and Bulgarian armies, in addition to Yugoslav partisans, two Italian divisions and the Hungarian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Albanian and Greek partisans also participated."

All this can be read in the book "Pravi Obraz Osvobodilne Fronte" [The True Face of the Liberation Front] by Miha Marijan Vir, edited and published by the principal of the "Rozman Institute" in Adrogué near Buenos Aires, Filip Zakelj, who also wrote the introduction.

A Collection of Lies

Such incredibly complete collections of lies and falsifications, which hardly deserve mentioning, can be found also in other books and publications circulating among the Slovenian political emigres.

As a matter of fact it is not strange that such things are published, but it is strange that anyone would be willing to believe something which, in addition is also clearly inconsistent and contradictory, as can be already seen from the few excerpts quoted above.

However, this is the reality of the Slovenian political emigration and its "view of the world."

In this world there is, of course, no place for history as it actually was, no place for facts that cannot be falsified.

[18 May 76, p 12]

[Text] And so one will never find mentioned in those books the subservience to the Germans, for instance, and certainly not that other summit of treason, the oath with which they bound themselves to the Nazis.

The home guard swore allegiance and obedience to Hitler on 20 April 1944 publicly and without reservations at the central stadium in Ljubljana as well as in some other places in Slovenia.

The Liberation Front issued the following proclamation at that time:

Home guard!

On 20 April, on Hitler's day, you swore in Ljubljana, Kocevje, Grosuplje, Vrhnika, Ribnica, and all other home guard positions the following oath of allegiance to Hitler:

"I swear by God Almighty that I shall be true, brave, and obedient to my superiors, that I shall in joint combat with the German armed force under the command of the leader of great Germany, SS troops, and the police against the bandits and communism as well as its allies, always conscientiously perform my duties to the Slovenian homeland as part of free Europe. In this struggle I am ready to sacrifice my life. So help me God."

Do you realize what you have done by this? Do you realize that you have sworn before all the world and Almighty God total obedience to Hitler, you have sworn to the army and police--the Gestapo, the most murderous enemies of mankind. You have sworn that you will fight against your own people, your own brothers who have already been bleeding for three years so that our homeland may eventually be free. You have sworn that you will fight against England, the Soviet Union, and America, wherever Hitler considers it necessary. And this fighting against your own people for the benefit of Hitlerite Germany you call fighting for the Slovenian homeland and you are willing to lay down your lives in this fight. By the oath you have publicly bound yourself to an army which today faces defeat on all fronts.

The disintegrating Germany and your white guard leaders who have sold themselves for money to the German Gestapo wanted to chain you to Hitlerite ranks so that they could save their anti-people interests at the cost of your blood. Because they realize that the oath is something sacred to you they have administered the oath to you at the Stadium in Ljubljana following a mass and eucharist at which the bishop of Ljubljana Dr Rozman officiated.

Can you now still believe that you will be able to join the Western allies in a decisive moment? Your traitorous leaders headed by General Rupnik have shown you by this oath that all their assurances along these lines were a big lie. You can see by yourselves that these words were only camouflage for the infernal plans of the Gestapo and its white-blue hirelings whose intention was to induce as many Slovenians as possible to help Hitler, their protector. On the day of the oath the leader of the SS police in Ljubljana, Roesener, who has hundreds of Slovenian hostages on his conscience, told you loudly and clearly:

"We have equipped, armed and trained you with the help of the great German Reich."

Can you now deny that you did not receive everything you have from the Germans for the sole purpose of fighting against your own people whom Hitler decided to destroy. You are then in fact Kraut-guard not home guard.

By now it should also be clear to you that all statements and threats of the leading British and American politicians, including Prime Minister Churchill himself, directed at Hitler and his abettors are fully applicable to you, too. By taking your oath you have shown to all the world that you are aware of your criminal collaboration with Hitler.

Do you see now what a predicament you have been led into by your Gestapo-paid white-blue guard leaders?

Home guard!

You have sworn to the most atrocious murderer of peoples, you have sworn allegiance and obedience to the criminals who destroyed the churches and clergy in Stajerska and Gorenjska whose hands are dripping with the blood of innocent victims, men, women, and children. You have sworn of your own free will and in absence of duress, for there were many avenues open to you if you wanted to return to your people who are fighting for their existence and liberty. You have publicly allied yourself with Hitler!

Yet--does the oath to a criminal bind you?

Families and relatives of newly sworn home guard!

Are you aware what and to whom your fathers and sons have sworn Are you aware that they have burned the bridges behind them and that they are about to bring misery to all of you. Do not be surprised after all this at increasingly stricter measures taken against them as well as against yourself by the people's authorities. Do not be surprised when you are justly condemned by the Slovenian people, the new Yugoslavia and the allied forces of Britain, the Soviet Union, and America. As helpers of the powers of occupation you are criminals of war and all allied powers will, in accordance with the Moscow declaration, pursue you wherever in the world you may be so that you may be brought to trial.

Misled and forcibly conscripted home guard!

[19 May 76, p 11]

[Text] You, who have not yet made the final step on the path of treason and who have not yet tainted your hands with your brother's blood, will you really fight against your own people and the Yugoslav National Liberation Army? By participating in combat against the National Liberation Army you will seal your fate and none of you will escape the deserved punishment.

Woe unto the executioners of their own people!

Death to the occupation powers and their abettors!

The Slovenian People's Liberation Front

We have already mentioned that various emigre organizations work together although they are operating in different countries or even on different continents. One of the examples illustrating this observation is "Zveza Drustev Slovenskih Protikomunisticnih Borcev" [Alliance of Slovenian Anticommunist Fighters' Societies--ZDSPB].

This is an organization of former white guard members who, although aging, are still unbendingly hostile toward Yugoslavia.

The headquarters of this organization in the United States of America is in Cleveland, but its local chapters are scattered throughout the United States and Argentina. The leader of ZDSPB is Karel Mauser who is also a member of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party."

The Promise And...

Karel Mauser was one of those curates and seminarians who were on 19 September 1943 captured in the Turjak castle by the Preseren partisan brigade.

At that time, on 23 September 1943 in Kocevje he had jointly with other curates and seminarians voluntarily signed a statement that they "realized

the treasonable character of their conduct and that they by their example led astray on the path of treason uninformed rural population and Catholic youth." The others who signed the statement were curates Franc Malovrh-Breznik of Ljubljana; Ivan Lavrih, Tone Polda, and Janez Bukovec of Dobrepolje; Jakob Mavec of Ig; Franc Malovrh of Skocjan pri Turjaku; and seminarians Franc Jancar, Franc Stare, Franc Jakop, Zvonimir Gorsek, Andrej Pogacar, Janez Mausar, Leopold Potocnik, Janez Medved, Alojz Zagar, Ivan Pekolj, Rudolf Ropas, Jozef Vesenjsek, Franc Videc, Ludvik Jeza, Franc Zagorsek, Karel Pecovnik, Ivan Volk, Franc Lepidicek, and Avgust Jamborovic.

They further admitted that claims maintaining that the white and the blue guard in Slovenia was protecting religion and Slovenian homes were false because the leadership of the white and the blue guard is consorting with German national socialism.

Their statement concluded with the following promise:

"Therefore we solemnly agree that":

"We shall never again either by our conduct or by words attempt to bring harm to the cause of the Slovenian people and its only true people's government in Slovenia, the Liberation Front."

"We shall never again abuse our priestly functions, the pulpit, and the confessional for political and anti-people ends and that we shall in discharging the duties of our calling limit ourselves strictly to conscientious performance of our ecclesiastic duties."

"We shall in the future by our conduct prove worthy of the magnanimity shown to us in the present proceedings by the Slovenian people's government of the Liberation Front."

"So help us God!" (Statement of white guard priests and seminarians, leaflet published in September 1943.)

A similar statement was also drawn and signed by Dean Pavlin Bitnar of Crnomelj, curate Ivan Sitar of Ribnica, curate Ludvik Tomazin of Bloke, curate Boris Femc of Cerknica and other captured white guard priests.

The above named on various occasions emphasized that they were sincere in voluntarily signing the quoted statement.

Because of their solemn priestly promises most of these priests, with the exception of those who were brought to trial, were consigned by the people's government to the Cistercian monastery in Sticna where they were to remain until the end of the war. However, they soon broke all their promises.

A New Betrayal

"When at the end of October 1943 the Germans rolled into Sticna they decided to change over once again into the old white guard organizers and informers. With the Germans they departed to Ljubljana where they tried to apologize and revoke their former contrite statement by various contradictory declarations. Some maintained that they were forced to sign while others invented other excuses." (See: F. Saje, Belogardizem, p 787)

The solemn promises were forgotten and the "reformed" priests subsequently continued with their treasonable activity and open collaboration with the occupation authorities.

Those of them who at the end of the war fled abroad continued their inimical activities there.

The central goal of this organization is preservation of the white guard activity.

[20 May 76, p 9]

[Text] The members of Zveza [League--ZDSPB] consider themselves as "fighters" and remain oriented along pronouncedly clerical lines.

The ZDSPB publishes a monthly review VESTNIK in Buenos Aires. In it they print the memoirs of former white guard members who not infrequently describe "communist atrocities." They also publish polemics with a kindred home guard review TABOR [The Stronghold]. I read both of them with considerable boredom since they are rather mediocre products regardless of how one chooses to view them.

Quite seldom they also reprint some article from SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA and from time to time the proclamations and appeals of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" leadership and the "Slovenian National Committee."

It was VESTNIK that several times expressed indignation on its pages about increasingly more frequent visits of the Slovenian emigres to the homeland, fulminating fire and brimstone at those who allowed themselves to be "taken in."

Somewhat different is the clerical trade unionist organization "Druzbeno Pravda" [Social Justice] which publishes in Argentina some kind of internal bulletin every 4 months. It was founded by the Slovenian political emigres soon after their arrival in Argentina.

In addition there are several other emigre organizations that are active.

"Slovensko Katolisko Akademsko Drustvo" [Society of Slovenian Catholic Academics] in Argentina, "Akademsko Drustvo Sava" [Academic Society Sava]

in the United States of America (New York); "Slovenian Scouts," supposed to develop anti-Yugoslav ideas under the guise of camping; "Slovensko Planinsko Drustvo" [Slovenian Mountaineer Society]; "Zveza Slovenskih Mater in Zena" [League of Slovenian Mothers and Wives] in Argentina and some others of even lesser political importance.

All these organizations are under the direct influence of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" and all of them are interweaved with at least two types of activities: the basic one such as camping, mountaineering, and the like and the other, common to all, namely, the staging of more or less successful anti-Yugoslav demonstrations.

Disagreements

The Slovenian political emigre movement brought with it to Argentina not only their common hatred toward the new Yugoslavia but also differences and discord in its own ranks. These differences concern, of course, only the operational tactics and the political concepts within the framework of extremely reactionary clerical disposition toward Yugoslavia that is common to all of them. "You should know this from the start," I was told by one of my new acquaintances in Buenos Aires.

Within a few years after their arrival abroad, after becoming economically established in their new environments, the differences between Slovenian political emigres began to formally assert themselves. There were divisions in the ranks of various political and "fighter" groups and new organizations and "parties" were set up.

Throughout all this, of course, their basic position and goal, which is anti-Yugoslav activity directed at the eventual destruction of the self-managing nonaligned socialist Yugoslavia, remained intact at all times--any differences pertained solely to individual views.

An example of such a split in the ranks of the Slovenian political emigre movement are the adherents of the former academic club "Straza" [Watch].

First some background for better understanding.

The academic club "Straza" was the clero-fascist shock troop detachment at the University in Ljubljana. Its leader was Dr Lambert Ehrlich, professor of theology and secretary-general of the "Society for Propagation of Faith Throughout Yugoslavia." He was a supporter of Dr Ignaz Seipl who, with his Christian Socialist Party, established totalitarian Catholicism in Austria in 1934. Ehrlich wanted something similar for Slovenia.

In the process he became embroiled in controversy with the leadership Katoliska Akcija [The Catholic Action]. He demanded that his "Straza" become an organization of Katoliska Akcija at the university while

professor Ernest Tomec with his "Youth of Christ the King" would concentrate on intermediate schools. However, the national committee of Katoliska Akcija decided otherwise and recognized "Straza" only as an auxiliary organization, designating Professor Ernest Tomec as the leader.

Because of this an open disagreement ensued as a consequence of which members of "Straza" angry at the leadership of Katoliska Akcija allied themselves with the clerical Gospodarska Zveza [Economic Alliance] and founded the "Slovenska Dijaska Zveza" [Slovenian Student Alliance] which embracing all clerical students and preparing them for later membership in the academic club "Straza" at the university.

Emulation of Fascists

Members of "Straza" hated all that was even slightly progressive and democratically oriented, but they admired fascism in Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain, Portugal, and elsewhere. Ehrlich went even so far as to send one of his most fervent lieutenants Dr Ciril Zebot (of whom we shall say something more later in this serialized article) to Milan for the purpose of studying the fascist social order and bringing its experiences to Slovenia.

The fanaticism of Ehrlich's men was manifested not only in words but also with deeds, since they not infrequently attempted to assert their principles with their fists or by informing on the more progressive students to the police.

Members of "Straza" were not numerous but they were exceptionally disciplined, devoted, and obedient Slovenian intellectuals who subordinated everything to their goal: absolute leadership over the Slovenian clerofascism which was to establish in an autonomous Slovenia a totalitarian regime with a corporate state economic system. This regime would maintain close cooperation with other Catholic Central European nations.

Upon occupation of Yugoslavia Dr Ehrlich remained in the country--he wanted to escape to England but missed his plane so that he had to remain at home where he was most obsequiously peddling his services to the Italians.

[21 May 76, p 12]

[Text] The Italians formulated the following opinion about "Straza."
"These are ultraclerical bigoted religious fanatics who are willing to sell their highest national interests for any, no matter how small, seeming advantage of the church. Dr Ehrlich and they desire that Slovenia might become a protectorate of Italy and the Vatican." (Document No 3576 in the archives of the Italian division "Isonzo," published by Dr Makso Snuderl in his publication "Fasisticko Domobransko Nasilje" [Fascist Violence by the Home Guard], p 26, 1944.)

Members of "Straza" openly collaborated with the occupation authorities in words, informing, or by use of armed force. Their activities were covert at first, but in time the Security Intelligence Service tied all the leads into one and completely exposed the treasonable activities of "Straza" and its leader.

In accordance with the decree on protection of the Slovenian people a people's tribunal sentenced the leader of "Straza" to death. The judgment was executed on 26 May 1942 in front of Ljudska Kuhinja [People's Kitchen] on Streliska street in Ljubljana.

Members of "Straza" continued to support the occupation authorities until Italy capitulated, whereupon they carried on their activities with the help of the Germans until their new master, too, collapsed.

After the liberation of Yugoslavia there was nothing else left for them but flight across the border.

In 1944 they parted ways with the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party" and the "Slovenian National Committee," however, their activities did not cease.

They formed two new organizations and, moreover, deviously worked their way into the academic and government circles of their host countries: the United States of America, Argentina, and some others.

New Organizations

The two new organizations, "Gibanje za Samostojno Slovensko Drzavo" [Independent Slovenian Statehood Movement] in the United States of America and Canada, have somewhat modified their political doctrine. This was a consequence of the gradual ebbing away of the "cold war" and the changes in relationships between the two superpowers, as well as their policies toward Yugoslavia. Moreover, the resolutions and conclusions of the ecumenical council in the Vatican also influenced a change in "Straza" members' views.

From their vocabulary vanished certain words and slogans to be replaced by new ones: advocacy of a "national rapprochement," gradual and nonviolent counterrevolution, pluralism, polycentrism. In this way they supposedly "democratized" their activities in accordance with the requirements of their host country's government.

Simultaneously with making the above change in their political doctrine--which now began to omit the demands for secession of Slovenia from the Yugoslav community of nations and an independent Slovenian state--they dissolved "Gibanje za Samostojno Slovensko Drzavo" which was active in the United States and transferred its membership to the "Nacionalna

Federacija Slovencev v Kanadi" [National Federation of Slovenians in Canada] with headquarters in Toronto. This organization has now become the organization of former "Straza" members in North America; its publication is SLOVENSKA DRZAVA [The Slovenian State].

Eloquent Examples

Following are a few examples illustrating the writings of this rather irregularly appearing Toronto monthly paper which I happened to come across in Argentina.

"The Voice of America in Slovenian is Silent" is an article attacking the United States government for its decision to terminate the Slovenian broadcasts because of budgetary difficulties.

"Accident or Assassination": an article intimating that the tragic death of Stane Rozman, commander of the Slovenian partisan army at the testing of new weapons was not an accident but an "assassination." The article insinuates that this incident was a consequence of disagreements between Stane Rozman and other Slovenian leaders. What was the source of this information? It came from a very "reliable" source: a Slovenian intellectual who is now living abroad....

"The Freedom of the Press in Slovenia" belabors at great length the bilious and quite unnecessary reaction of Ljubljana DRUZINA, 26 January 1975, p 3 [Cf. JPRS 64157, 24 Feb 76, Translations on Eastern Europe-Political, Sociological and Military Affairs No 1306, pp 64-66] to an article in DNEVNIK of 11 January 1975, p 6, reporting on a League of Communists conference meeting in the Ljubljana-Bezigrad opstina.

All of the above articles appeared in SLOVENSKA DRZAVA No 4-5, April 1975, along with the following "editorial" by Dr Ciril Zebot.

"The recent social and political development in Yugoslavia is pursuing the direction of increased pressure for asserting the original sovereignty of the republics. This pressure is especially strong in Slovenia because of its pronounced cultural peculiarities and blatant economic deprivation and exploitation. This development prompts the Slovenians, too, to support the assertion of the new Slovenian Statehood and democracy."

Dr Ciril Zebot, whom we have already introduced on the pages of this series in narrating the history of "Straza" has assumed the role of an "ideologist" of sorts to his organization which is very much under his influence. He, as a rule, fills almost every issue of SLOVENSKA DRZAVA with anti-Yugoslav articles all by himself.

Reversals

Dr Ciril Zebot is also capable of quite unexpected reversals of his views.

When liberalism began to spread in Slovenia and elsewhere the anti-Yugoslav excesses of Dr Ciril Zebot and his coworkers were almost a rarity. Instead, SLOVENSKA DRZAVA began to publish articles indicating a possibility of cooperation and even expressing support, while of course, at the same time stressing counterrevolutionary tendencies. This was--in comparison with Dr Zebot's previous position--a conspicuous reversal. However, the matters did not remain at that point.

Following the 21st session of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the LCY and the Socialist Federal Republic Yugoslavia Dr Ciril Zebot changed his tune.

[22 May 76, p 12]

[Text] Dr Ciril Zebot lost his "trump cards" and "grounds" for "extending a helping hand" and "giving advice" for the future of the Slovenian people.

The former open and undisguised anti-Yugoslav positions and attacks returned to the pages of SLOVENSKA DRZAVA. On the pages of SLOVENSKA DRZAVA and KLIC TRIGLAVA [The Call of Triglav Mountain] which is published in London and will be discussed at somewhat greater length later began to appear articles on the "Stalinist coup in Karadjordjevo" which supposedly interrupted further "evolution of Yugoslav constitutionality into a pluralist and federalist society," and the like.

With this, however, Dr Ciril Zebot was only hurting himself and his opportunities to continue his insidious influence on the thinking and actions of a smaller part of Slovenian emigres who had with considerable interest listened to predictions of possible cooperation with the protagonists of liberal tendencies in Yugoslavia. These liberals could perhaps open the back door for their return.

Now there was no more "carrot" that could be offered and so Dr Ciril Zebot redirected his writing to dissertations on what would happen to Yugoslavia if its president Josip Broz Tito were no longer at its helm.

The Message of Dr Ciril Zebot

Thus he tried toward the end of 1974 to explain his new positions in some sort of a message entitled "What Could the Slovenians at Home and Abroad Say for the New Year 1975."

In this writing he predicts two possibilities: either a violent totalitarianism with physical vendetta carried on between the individual Yugoslav nationalities or a quiet disintegration of the Yugoslav state. In each case he exhorts Slovenians to be prepared for "defending their interests and their liberty" and form their own army, "shed any prejudice about the feasibility of establishing their own state," and continue the "development of constitutionality prior to 1971" at which the political emigres would be "ready to assist."

In this connection he demanded the removal of the present political leadership and the return of some of the former leaders.

Dr Ciril Zebot tried to communicate all these views to the American authorities to whom he supplied some entirely false and contradictory information such as, for instance, the reasons and consequences of the termination of Slovenian transmissions of the Voice of America.

In all this he refers to his own observations and "analyses" and to his conversations with "reputable acquaintances from Slovenia," which he conducted during his recent travels abroad. The latter is particularly interesting because such travels from the United States of America to Europe and prolonged stay on the old continent can cost a great deal and probably more than Dr Ciril Zebot can afford from his own pocket. There are, however, various pockets contributing to this, of course.

It is also noteworthy that the Canadian authorities maintain an extremely "correct" attitude toward SLOVENSKA DRZAVA and its writing which they explain by the fact that each of the numerous cultural and ethnic groups in Canada has a right to enjoy full freedom in its activities.

[24 May 76, p 10]

[Text] For the same reason, and, of course, in deference to the freedom of the press, the Canadian as well as the U.S. authorities take no steps whenever Dr Ciril Zebot or someone else succeeds in publishing one of his anti-Yugoslav essays in papers like THE NEW YORK TIMES or THE WASHINGTON POST, for example.

"Consultants"

There is something else here which is not unimportant in the context of the Slovenian emigre activity in general and the members of "Straza" in particular: Some of them are employed as "experts" and "consultants" for "Yugoslav questions" with the authorities and governmental institutes concerned with the research of the American-Yugoslav relations. Moreover, some members of "Straza" are directly cooperating with some of the American intelligence services as information-analysts.

After returning from their visits to Europe and other foreign countries they prepare "studies" and "analyses" of the processes and events in Yugoslavia.

We shall discuss in greater detail the so-called Slovenian Research Centers and their research workers elsewhere in this article.

It has already been mentioned that the former "Straza" organization operates in Argentina under the name "Slovensko Drzavno Gibanje" [Slovenian Statehood

Movement] which maintains close ties with the current "Nacionalna Federacija Slovencev v Kanadi" [National League of Slovenians in Canada] which evolved from the earlier "Gibanje za Samostojno Slovensko Drzavo" [Independent Slovenian State Movement] founded in the United States of America.

"Slovensko Drzavno Gibanje" which is the Argentine version of the North American "Straza" organizations experienced no such reversals in its positions as did Dr Ciril Zebot in the North.

[25 May 76, p 11]

[Text] This means that it persisted in anti-Yugoslav activity based on clero-fascist traditions of "Straza" members who were not attuned to possible changes in day to day practice. Accordingly, the Argentine members of "Straza" preferred no offers of "rapprochement" to those circles in Yugoslavia who declared their adherence to liberal views but persisted in their rigid anticommunism and anti-Yugoslav activity.

"Slovensko Drzavno Gibanje" publishes a local monthly paper in Buenos Aires with contents similar to those of SLOVENSKA DRZAVA with the only difference that the contents of the former is perhaps less covertly hostile. This paper, small even in its physical appearance is edited by the emigre Tine Duh.

Hidden Malice

A few passages from this publication which I came across in a Buenos Aires library.

The 15 May 1975 issue contains an article on "The Difficult Situation of Political Prisoners in Yugoslavia." However, in the text one can read that "it is reported that the political prisons in Slovenia are empty...." It is impossible from the contents to find out the reason for the title.

Another good illustration of the contents of SMER V SLOVENSKO DRZAVO is the article "Marx and Engels were Racists" also published in the 15 May 1975 issue where it is observed that Marx and Engels were "enthusiastic advocates of war, imperialism, colonialism, and racism."

And as if this were not enough SMER V SLOVENSKO DRZAVO descends to an even lower level, the lowest possible, by printing in the same issue the following vulgar fabrications, which certainly could never appear in a paper that has at least a little respect for its own and the readers' good taste:

"The Slav people were for Marx and Engels mangy Balkan churls, while the Bulgarians were referred to as a nation of swine and the filthiest people in the world."

At the end of this incredible essay one can read:

"The criminal propensity of Marx and Engels for destruction of entire nationalities was faithfully emulated by the Slovenian communists. All of us still vividly recall the ringing declaration of the Slovenian communist leaders to the effect that it did not matter if not more than one single Slovenian survived the revolution so long as he were a communist."

The writing carries on in this vein from page to page with almost morbid bitterness and fanatic callousness. It is quite unbelievable to read something like this in the second half of the 20th century.

If nothing else it proves at least one thing, namely, that time for them stopped with irrevocable finality 30 years ago and that this world in the second half of the 20th century is not their own, for they are living in another.

[26 May 76, p 12]

[Text] Among the organizations which parted ways with the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party," because it became too "soft" and "indecisive" in its views concerning Yugoslavia, is also the group gathered around the paper SIJ SLOVENSKE SVOBODE published fortnightly in Buenos Aires. Its size is approximately the same as that of the SMER V SLOVENSKO DRZAVO; its editor was the war criminal Rudolf Jurcec of whom we wrote at the beginning of this series of articles and who was also the spiritual leader of this somewhat strange group of Slovenian political emigres.

These are truly extremist clericals who fly into a fit of rage at the mere sight of the red color which, after all, is not surprising when one finds out from what background they came.

Jurcec's group of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party renegades" is some kind of a successor to the traditions of the pre-war and wartime members of "Straza," young men gathered around Professor Ernst Tomec at the University in Ljubljana, of whom we have written elsewhere in this series of articles.

Extremists

In brief, they are advocating an extremely clerical totalitarian government, something like the government of Portugal used to be before the armed forces overcame the old fascist dictatorship. Their wartime ideals were the Hitlerite Germany and fascist Italy, except that there was still "too much" freedom in both of them and not enough of ecclesiastic influence, particularly not in the former.

They envision an independent Slovenia but firmly in the hands of the clergy and with no democratic liberties allowing the activities of no other

democratic political parties whatever. They are extremely anti-Yugoslav and are not trying to conceal their views in the least. This can be readily seen on every page of their paper and in every issue of one of their periodic publications such as, for example, ZRENJA IN UVIDI [Views and Insights].

For better understanding of the views and contents of this extremist clerofascist movement we shall try to illustrate the writing of the SIJ SLOVENSKE SVOBODE by a few randomly selected passages from the 1 June 1975 issue which I found on an emigre's bookshelf during a pause in our discussion at his home.

"After Belgrade's attack on Slovenia in 1969 the Slovenian public, too, is no longer the same as it used to be before the war in 1939 and for a long time after the war. It can no longer be fooled by the official releases prepared in Ljubljana. The Slovenian public realized what the covert intentions of Belgrade were. For a long time the impression of kindness and hospitality of the Serbian people deceived the Slovenians, so that they did not recognize the small and large Great Serbian plots and conspiracies. But the common Serbian people, too, are today suffering under the rule of the governing clique in Belgrade, their plight being compounded by a total lack of access to information that would make them realize their predicament; they are at the mercy of the daily propaganda barrage about the greatness of Yugoslavia and so on which conceals their true situation."

Or consider the following, written in the same ossified language which is in itself alien to modern Slovenia

"Today Yugoslavia is a reminder of classic capitalism. After the period of post war centralism, which had the traits of pure colonialism, Belgrade amassed the capital from other republics, primarily Slovenia and Croatia, in the central banks whereupon, in accordance with the "process of self-management," this capital became "self-managing," that is, independent. Today, when the parliament could have a say in its disposition for which there was a somewhat greater chance after Rankovic was removed, this possibility is gone and the capital extracted from the republics is in the hands of Belgrade to be used at its sole discretion. An extremely clever way of "lawful" plunder. That is how much legality means in today's Yugoslavia."

Cheap Insinuations

In addition, the above issue contains cheap insinuations concerning the health of the president of the republic (published in June and already denied at that time in the best possible way), a long dissertation of the incident involving Kocbek and his interview, long since forgotten in Yugoslavia, and other passages written at best on the level of a gossip column.

I talked with the editor of SIJ SLOVENSKE SVOBODE, septuagenarian former editor of the defunct newspaper SLOVENEK, in his apartment at 2247 Cuba [Street] in Buenos Aires.

As early as 1942 he, together with his collaborators at the time, applied to the Italian authorities for permission to carry a firearm. He took over the editorial duties of the clerical paper SLOVENEK from Reverend Dr Ivan Ahcin, the notorious author of anticommunist pamphlets who had left for Rome to represent there the Slovenian clero-fascism.

Ruda Jurcec was born in Ormoz and studied in Paris. At first he was somewhat rebellious, but later he became an obedient servant of the clerical leadership.

Ruda Jurcec with whom I talked last September, 30 years later, was but a shadow of his former self. Emaciated and exhausted after a long illness which chained him to a sickbed he showed little interest in a conversation with me.

It was only later that I found out that SIJ SLOVENSKE SVOBODE is written and edited largely by him alone, from the headline to the back page. When I remembered his face and eyes powerlessly staring at me in that little room of his apartment, I thought that it would be a long time before he would sit at his desk again.

"Everything is lies and deceit," he said when I casually asked him what he thought of Yugoslavia. That was all he could say about it but he said these five short words with such fervor that they stood out distinct from everything he said from his bed that day.

"Say, how are the things over there," he said at the beginning and when I would say only that people live well, travel wherever they wish, and can observe and compare by first hand experience life on both sides of the border, he merely strained to lift his hand and make a deprecating gesture.

It was as a lugubrious sign of protest against my words and a request to cease disturbing the world of his illusions.

Ruda Jurcec refuses to see or hear anything that he himself does not believe and thus he wound up at the end of his life tied to a bed in a small room of a Buenos Aires suburb, 10,000 kilometers away from his native land.

The Consequences of Discord

"An offspring of the discord between the former members of the white guard allied with the wartime clerical political groups the "Slovenian National Committee," and the Slovenian representatives in the Royal Yugoslav Government in Exile in London, for instance Dr Miha Krek and his coworkers, on one hand and the representatives of the Slovenian home guard and chetniks

on the other, has since 1965 been also the organization "Zveza Drustev Slovenskih Protikomunisticnih Borcev" [Alliance of Slovenian Anticommunist Fighters' Societies--ZDSPB] with headquarters in Buenos Aires, where it publishes its journal TABOR [The Stronghold]" explained B. L., who requested that I not divulge his name when we discussed the structure of the Slovenian political emigre movement as well as other acquaintances whom I met in far away Argentina.

This is not the already discussed organization of the same name based in the United States of America in Cleveland and headed by Karel Mauser, activist of the "Slovenian Democratic Party" which publishes the review VESTNIK, on the contrary: the two organizations vigorously oppose each other and indulge in mutual recriminations.

[27 May 76, p 9]

[Text] This is already evident from the occasional bigoted and visceral polemics appearing in TABOR and VESTNIK.

Since the latter was already discussed in greater detail elsewhere we now add the following information concerning the former. TABOR is a monthly review with a pronounced anti-Yugoslav and particularly anticommunist and antisocialist orientation which publishes various memoirs. It is neither of literary nor of political value.

The Buenos Aires ZDSPB represents itself as being a "nonpartisan" organization of former home guard members, but a strange and motley collection of the Slovenian enemy emigres congregates around it.

Among them are clericals who favor the views of Jurcec's group, former members of "Straza," members of the "Slovenian Democratic Party," and non-clerical "Slovenska Pravda" [Slovenian Rights], former supporters of Ljotic, chetniks, and others.

They are stronger in number than the Cleveland ZDSPB and also considerably more aggressive and hostile toward Yugoslavia.

Publications

This is apparent especially by their publishing activity for which Reverend Filip Zakelj, a notorious collaborator during the War of National Liberation, principal of "Rozman's Home" in Androque near Buenos Aires is responsible. The author of this series of articles did not have the opportunity of meeting Zakelj because he was out of town when the author called on him.

The objectives pursued by Filip Zakelj and ZDSPB [Buenos Aires] can be readily discerned by perusing the titles of some of the books published

by this organization in Buenos Aires: "Bela Knjiga Slovenskega Protikomunističnega Upora" [The White Book of Slovenian Anticommunist Rebellion], "Matica Mrtvih" [The Matrix of the Dead], "Odprti Grobovi" [Open Graves], "Slovenija v Plamenih" [Slovenia Aflame], or the most characteristic of all--"Rdeca Zver, Pijana Krvi" [The Red Beast Drunk With Blood].

They seek to popularize the home guard and persuade the Slovenian and Yugoslav public that injustice was inflicted upon those "anticommunist fighters," and wish to bring about their apotheosis as "heroes" and "fighters for freedom." On the pages of their books the partisans are referred to as common "criminal bandits," who were responsible for the "fratricidal war."

The undisguised purpose of Filip Zakelj's and his coworkers' books and activities is, of course, smearing and deprecating the importance of the national liberation struggle and achievements of the socialist revolution and exhortation of anticommunist forces to organize and "overthrow" the self-managing socialist government of Yugoslavia and replace it with a home guard controlled regime.

In this survey of the activities and organizations of Slovenian political emigres we have so far discussed only the clericals. In addition to those, however, there are also "liberals" operating outside of our national boundaries, who do not belong to the ranks of the clerically oriented emigres.

The most important non-clerical parties are the "Slovenian Democratic Party," which we briefly discussed in connection with the structure of the "Slovenian National Committee," and "Slovenska Pravda."

Both are remnants of the former liberal party and supporters of Ljotić. Of all the emigre parties, groups, and organizations they have the least influence on emigre circles which is, after all, a consequence of their small membership. The two parties operate in various places, for the reader's information we note that their members actively operate on four continents of the world, namely, South America, North America, Europe and Australia!

Political Program

Their "Political Program" as I could discern from articles appearing in emigre reviews and papers is roughly as follows: a pluralist, parliamentary, and federal structure of the Yugoslav community of nationalities, a "quiet counterrevolution," and "national reconciliation."

Another characteristic of the "Slovenian Democratic Party" is its relatively close ties with some institutions of the countries in which it operates, which holds particularly for the intelligence information gathering centers.

Members of the "Slovenian Democratic Party" and "Slovenska Pravda" Dr Ljubo Sirc, Dusan Plenicar, and others publish a monthly review in London called KLIC TRIGLAVA, with a negligibly small circulation.

Dr Ljubo Sirc was a supporter of Dr Crtomir Nagode who, under the guise of a "middle of the road" would-be politician, engaged in subversive activities against the Liberation Front and worked against the unity of the Slovenian struggle of national liberation during World War II.

"Because of venomous opposition to the liberation movement any scruples against collaboration with the occupying powers soon faded away because we considered it to be mere camouflage." (Interrogation of Ljubo Sirc at the proceedings against Dr Nagode and co-defendants in the High Court, 1947, p 146.)

Dusan Plenicar collaborated, among other things, in the organizing committee for the setting up of the so-called "first Fridays" devotions which were under the cloak of religious exercises carried out as propaganda activities against the growth of the liberation movement and the partisans. The organizational affairs of the committee were conducted by the office of "Katoliska Akcija".

Collaborator of Franc Glavac

Among other things, Dusan Plenicar also collaborated with Franc Glavac, who was during the war an open admirer and collaborator of the occupation powers and who took up arms against the national liberation movement. Glavac organized the so-called armed "Glavac units." He is now an emigre priest in Argentinian.

It is appropriate to elaborate somewhat on Franc Glavac to elucidate the background and environment out of which the Slovenian political emigre movement in Argentinian came forth.

Reared in Beltinci in Prekmurje Franc Glavac, who already as a young man embraced clericalism, became in wartime one of the most fervent adherents of the Italians and, later, of the Germans.

As a seminarian in Ljubljana he became a contributor to various student papers. First he was co-editor of MI SMO MLADI BORCI [We Are Young Fighters], the paper of the student's "Katoliska Akcija." Shortly before the war he was editor of REVIJA KATOLISKE AKCIJE [The Catholic Action Review] and DOMOLJUB [Patriot], and later editor of the "ideological and internal affairs" column of SLOVENEK, or to put it more directly, a column that constantly tried to "prove" that the national liberation struggle was leading to the "destruction" of the Slovenian people.

With ecclesiastic colleagues who shared his views and clero-fascist students of "Katoliska Akcija" he founded "Slovensko Narodno Gibanje." A close collaborator of this group was also professional engineer Franc Emer, also known as Fanoush.

Both were in league with Governor Dr Natlacen who provided them not only with moral but also with monetary support. This was reported by SLOVENSKI POROCEVALEC [Slovenian Reporter] on 5 December 1941.

In this both Emer and Glavac not only collaborated with the Italians but were also making preparation for collaboration with the Germans. Glavac maintained, according to the confession of Alojzij Krek at interrogation during the proceedings against Bitenc, that the "only salvation for the Slovenian people lies in absolute legality and loyalty to the Germans."

In addition Glavac's disposition toward the Italians and, subsequently, the Germans is most clearly apparent from the leaflet which he composed together with Mirko Javornik, editor of SLOVENSKI DOM [The Slovenian Home], early in November 1941. That leaflet met with an interesting fate: Immediately after it was printed it was seized by the members of Vernostna Obvescevalna Sluzba [VOS--Security Intelligence Service] and destroyed according to the report in SLOVENSKI POROCEVALEC [The Slovenian Reporter], No 25, 13 November 1941.

[28 May 76, p 12]

[Text] "The traitors again attempted to issue a leaflet against the Liberation Front of the Slovenian People.... On Monday, 10 November [1941] couriers sworn to secrecy were to distribute a larger consignment of leaflets to trusted agents throughout the 'Ljubljana Province.' The vigilant eye of the Liberation Front's intelligence service discovered the printing plant, main storage, and the couriers. On Sunday evening the security organs of the Liberation Front skillfully searched the couriers' residences and the storage. The leaflets were seized and destroyed...."

The leaflet, of which 8,000 were printed, was never distributed to the public as its authors planned. Following is the text of the leaflet from a specimen preserved in the Ljubljana National and University Library.

"To All Slovenians!

"Under the disguise of nationalism the so-called Liberation Front is appearing throughout Slovenia. With its papers DELO and SLOVENSKI POROCEVALEC and with leaflets it is trying to win the support of public opinion, with threats it is extorting money and food, with senseless acts of sabotage it is driving hundreds and hundreds of Slovenians to death and misery.

"What is the Liberation Front?

"The Liberation Front is an organization founded by communists when the German-Russian war began...." (Here the authors simply falsified the truth, for the Liberation Front was already founded on 27 April 1941.)

"With its high sounding slogans they also enticed into the Liberation Front many idealistic and patriotic people. The armed members of the Liberation Front are calling themselves partisans....

"Why did the communists establish the Liberation Front?

"1. The communists want to gather in the Liberation Front all Slovenian men capable of carrying arms and place them under the leadership of the Communist Party....

"2. The communists are carrying out, with the aid of the Liberation Front, acts of sabotage in order to create confusion in the land, thereby preparing the ground for communism.

"3. The communists want to use the Liberation Front's armed force for setting up a Bolshevik dictatorship when their time comes.

"SLOVENSKI POROCEVALEC maintains that any opposition to the work of the Liberation Front is treason.... It is clear that those who oppose the communist led Liberation Front is not a traitor because of this.... We shall not cease to warn the Slovenian public about the pernicious nature of this work which can bring to the Slovenian people only death and destruction.

"One asks why all these sacrifices? Will the war end a single day sooner because of them? Will the occupation army really be expelled from Slovenian soil in this way?

"Do you not realize that all these acts of sabotage are bringing only harm to the people, only destruction of the people's property and unnecessary killing?

"Therefore no one who truly loves his people can approve what the communists are doing today under the guise of the Liberation Front. Whoever is truly concerned for the fate of his people must reject and condemn the actions of the partisans who can never bring happiness or a brighter future to the Slovenian people but only misery and destruction.

"Men of good will who have eyes must see the light."

However, Glavac went further than this verbal propaganda and began to organize terrorist acts against those Catholics who refused to turn their backs to the Liberation Front.

Thus the Security Intelligence Service discovered, as was reported in SLOVENSKI POROCEVALEC on 9 December 1941, that Emer and Glavac were planning to assassinate Dr Ales Stanovnik, a member of the Supreme Plenum of the Liberation Front. Incidentally, it was in that issue that the characterization "white guard" was for the first time used in public; the term rapidly entered into widespread use by the people and was later even adopted by the Italians, Germans, and all their collaborators.

However, the student who had at first agreed to murder Dr Stanovnik for a reward of 50 lire changed his mind and was as a consequence attacked and critically wounded by Glavac's men, from whom he barely managed to escape. This, too, was reported by SLOVENSKI POROCEVALEC in its issue No 29 of 9 December 1941.

After the Security Intelligence Service liquidated professional engineer Emer, after he was sentenced to death by a special tribunal because of his collaboration with the Italians against the national liberation movement, curate Franc Glavac wanted to take over the leadership of Slovensko Narodno Gibanje [Slovenian National Movement]. To this, however, some career military officers--the so-called Slovenian chetniks--objected and later formed the blue guard, although they also cooperated with the white guard units.

They did not sever their ties forever, on the contrary, they continued to cooperate for a long time, although they did not formally belong under the control of Glavac's organization.

Curate Glavac and the remainder of those who shared his views continued their ruthless struggle against the national liberation movement. According to a report in SLOVENEK of 3 December 1942 "his men" were the first to become engaged in armed combat in Dolenjsko at St Jost near Novo Mesto and thus "raised the flag of the anticommunist struggle."

Early in May 1942 Curate Franc Glavac and other curates and rectors who shared his views sent their fanatic adherents to the white guard Stajerska battalion formed under the direction of Major Karel Novak, a representative of [General] Mihajlovic, by clero-fascist groups for the purpose of fighting the partisan army. Within the armed white guard units, men from the clero-fascist group headed by Glavac were the most radical and ruthless in fighting against the rebellious Slovenian people. In their fanaticism they did not spare even some of the more moderate white guard leaders, fighters, and collaborators. This ruthlessness on the part of Glavac was soon noted by the Italian command:

"The Most Reverend Franc Glavac, now editor of SLOVENEK is a representative of an extremist Catholic movement which seeks to ruthlessly eliminate all non-Catholic elements from public life and the MVAC [Voluntary Anticommunist Militia]...."

In view of this the command of the XI Army Group suggested to Dr Rozman, the bishop of Ljubljana, that curate Glavac be removed from the Province of Ljubljana, but to no avail. The evil spirit of Glavac continued to sit in the editorial offices of SLOVENEK and freely moved about the diocesan palace gathering around himself the most venomous and bloodthirsty white guard warriors, selected mainly from the ranks of "Katoliska Akcija" from where Glavac himself, too, had come. (F. Saje, BELOGARDIZEM, p 132.)

Glavac continued his collaboration with the occupation authorities. Among other things he wrote and edited the propaganda book: "Under the Sign of the Liberation Front, Evidence of Communist Atrocities in the Province of Ljubljana." The book was published in March 1943 by the editorial board of SLOVENEK.

This book was replete with lies and falsifications fabricated by Glavac and his coworkers.

Consider the following example:

Included among other material was a letter, previously published in SLOVENEK of 26 February 1943, supposedly found near Zibrsce, directed from the command of the 1st battalion "Ljubo Serker" to the command of the "Dolomite Company."

Following is the text of this letter which the Italian intelligence service established to be a forgery but nevertheless passed on for propaganda purposes to serve as "evidence" of the partisans' extreme cruelty.

"Headquarters of the 'Ljubo Serker' 1st battalion, KRO.

"No 416--In the field--3 February 1943--Top Secret!"

"To the Command of the Dolomite Company in the field.

"According to oral orders of the Commandant of the Third Group all new conscripts must be examined by a commission and are to be examined. The commission is to consist of three to five 100 percent reliable communists who are to ask the conscripts what communism is....

"All persons who know nothing about the history of communism and show no interest for it are to be liquidated...."

[29 May 76, p 11]

[Text] "Signed: Political Commissar Fric Novak."

In his book "Belogardizm" p 705, F. Saje commented on the above as follows:

"How unskillfully the white guards wrote this 'document' is apparent from the following facts: the 'Ljubo Serker' battalion had already ceased to exist in 1942 because it was reformed into the 'Ljubo Serker' shock brigade. The Krim Company, too, by October 1942 had already been reorganized into the Notranjska Company. A battalion does not give orders to a company, it is the other way around. The Third Group had already been dissolved in October 1942. Writing on the level of a complete illiterate was attributed to Fric Novak, a university student. Moreover, Fric Novak, the alleged author of this writing was at that time no longer in the Province of Ljubljana, because he had been killed in action in Gorenjska 6 months earlier."

Nevertheless, Franc Glavac included this letter in his book as the principal "evidence of intended massacre of all noncommunists," as one can read on p 158.

There are quite a few other things that we could bring out about the activities of Franc Glavac. However, we shall add only the appeal of 27 August 1943 sent to white guard members who were at that time about to fly apart because of premonitions of the imminent collapse of their Italian protectors.

In the appeal they say, among other things, the following:

"Do not allow yourself to be confused with the irrelevant German threat. The majestic processions and pilgrimages in Gorenjska have eloquently demonstrated that the German people respect our faith and this is our best guarantee that even after the Germans move in our faith will remain intact and with it will remain the name of our people...."

"Everything for our faith and country--The Legion of Slovenian Men and Fighters for Freedom."

A specimen of the above leaflet is preserved in the National and University Library in Ljubljana.

It was all to no avail, however, for in a few weeks the Italians capitulated followed by the Germans less than 2 years later.

The bigoted Franc Glavac and his coworkers lost their former masters and protectors. All that they could do was to flee abroad.

However, let us return from the wartime to a later period.

In the enemy activity of the group to which Dr Ljubo Sirc and Dusan Plenicar belong it is possible to discern something more than a curious detail, namely, a correlation of the intensity of their activities with the current interests and policy objectives of their host country pertaining to Yugoslavia.

Equally clear is the correlation of this group's activity with the social development within Yugoslavia. I established this by comparing the published articles. In the time of the most intense growth of liberalism this part of the "Slovenian Democratic Party" and "Slovenska Pravda" strengthened its ties to Dr Ciril Zebot and those who shared his views in the United States because both sides saw a fertile ground and a common starting point for their activities in the growing liberal influences within Yugoslavia. After the smashing of liberalism in Yugoslavia and the concomitant waning of Dr Zebot's interests, or rather their redirection, the cooperation between the two groups, one in the United States, the other in Great Britain, also dwindled to insignificance and was never again reestablished.

KLIC TRIGLAVA published in London, carries various summaries of articles in other papers with fairly pronounced and only seldom disguised anti-Yugoslav content interspersed with a profusion of original "production."

Blaming the System

Thus, for instance, issue No 430 of 30 June 1975 dealt at unbelievably great length with the proceedings against the two railway employees who were responsible for the train wreck near Zagreb in 1974 when the express train Athens-Zagreb-Dortmund was derailed and 153 passengers were killed. The article intimates that the blame does not rest with the two railway employees, but rather and essentially with the system that makes such errors possible. To quote the article verbatim: "As a retribution for 153 dead the Yugoslav system demanded prolonged incarceration of the two railway workers who will ruminate for many years about the fateful ride. The punishment, reminiscent of pagan sacrifices to placate the wrath of their gods, will accomplish nothing beyond bringing a feeling of smug satisfaction among the responsible officials who will feel that they have taken drastic corrective steps. Actually, it may well be that they will precisely because of this smugness overlook the fact that the real blame lies much higher than upon the two minor exploited railway employees."

Then there are lengthy articles dealing with the by now already somewhat forgotten Kocbek "affair" written in such manner as to present everything as dismally as possible. This summer and fall the subject of Kocbek in general was an extremely popular and attractive theme of all emigre papers and publications. It is characteristic that they from time to time seize upon a theme which they then belabor ad infinitum. Thus it was for a while with the liberalism, then with Kocbek and who knows what will come up next.

KLIC TRIGLAVA is also trying to work itself in among our workers who are temporarily employed abroad, in which it uses the assistance of the clergy and other devices.

This applies also to the activity of the only seemingly more moderate group, the "Slovenian Democratic Party" and "Slovenska Pravda" who, for example, make profitable use of some of their older ties with their hospitable protectors abroad dating back to the time of the "cold war" and form alliances with liberally oriented remnants of the Croatian and Serbian emigre movements.

[31 May 76, p 9]

[Text] It is characteristic of them to try (not infrequently with the support of the authorities and political parties in both host countries to arrest the process of depoliticization among the emigres. In other words, they are endeavoring to rekindle the interest in politics among

the emigres to which they have recently been paying less and less attention. "They have tried this with me, too," I was told by one of the political emigres who had several years ago lost all interest in 'politics.'"

The Slovenian political emigres also participate in some international emigre leagues and with the emigre organizations of other Yugoslav nationalities.

All these groups are in one way or another, directly or indirectly, connected with the authorities and political parties of the countries in which they are operating.

Occasionally these groups exploit certain existing problems in various and diverse areas and attempt to take part in "searching for solutions."

An example is the activity of the "Slovenian National Council" and the clerical emigres in connection with the unresolved problems of Carinthian Slovenians in neighboring Austria.

Thus immediately after the nationalist retaliatory campaign against the Slovenian minority reached its climax, Dr Milos Stare on behalf of the "Slovenian National Committee" as a "lawful Slovenian government in exile" sent a "vigorous protest" to Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky.

Demands

The protest said that the Slovenian "emigrants" demanded resolution of the Carinthian Slovenian problem in accordance with Article 7 of the Austrian peace treaty. The protest, of course, included a comment which was in fact the real reason for making the protest, namely, assertion that "steps taken so far by the Yugoslav government were deliberately ineffective," hence the emigres supported only independent political actions of the Catholic Slovenian minority in Austria.

A similar protest concerning Carinthian Slovenians was also sent by the "Slovenian National Committee" to Dr Kurt Waldheim, Secretary-General of the United Nations, except that this version was signed by Dr Ludvik Pus, secretary of the "Slovenian National Committee," and vice-president of the "Slovenian Christian Democratic Party."

Such and similar protests and petitions were sent by the "Slovenian National Committee" on various "appropriate" occasions in the past to other recipients, for instance, to the government of the United States. I saw some of them published in the emigre literature.

Purposes and Goals

Since the end of the war to this date the basic purpose and objective of the Slovenian, and, of course, other Yugoslav political emigres' activity

has been the destruction of the new nonaligned Yugoslavia and its self-managing socialism and incidentally and at the same time to vindicate themselves from the taint of their collaboration with the Axis.

Attempts at rehabilitation are as old as the emigre movement itself, dating back to the time when the fleeing emigres found refuge beyond our national boundaries.

These attempts take on various forms: from the simple glossing over of facts to blatant falsification of history. A good example of the former is the so-called "Declaration and Appeal of the Slovenian National Committee" of December 1974 which states, among other things, the following:

"After the occupation of Yugoslavia in 1941 the Slovenian people were partitioned in World War II between three occupation forces: the Germans, Italians, and Hungarians. They were condemned to die by the German Nazis and Italian fascists."

This is, of course, accurate, but before and after this paragraph the illustrious "Declaration" contains not a single word on how, during the war, the current Slovenian political emigres collaborated with the very same German Nazis and Italian fascists "who had condemned the Slovenian people to die."

Instead the "Declaration" contains the following:

"In the revolution it (the Communist Party of Slovenia and Yugoslavia-- Note by author) carried out acts of terrorism and physical annihilation of the Slovenians and did not refrain from using the occupation authorities in destroying the democratic and patriotic Slovenians."

And in the following paragraph:

"The Slovenian people immediately placed themselves on the side of the Western democracies, because it was only from them that liberation and freedom could be expected."

A Difficult Struggle

And further down in the same "Declaration."

"The struggle against Nazism was difficult and the Slovenian dead in this era amounted to tens of thousands.

"Although World War II ended as we Slovenians expected and desired, that is, with a defeat of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy we did not attain our goal. We were deceived.

[1 Jun 76, p 12]

[Text] "The Slovenian National Committee, after having proclaimed a Slovenian national state as a part of a democratic federal Yugoslavia, withdrew in exile." (Although the Slovenian National Committee was formed on 29 October 1944 it made the above proclamation only shortly before the end of World War II, on 3 May 1945. Note by author.)

There is hardly a need to comment on this because this part of the Declaration reveals with sufficient candor the incredible skill for concealing facts, omitting historical truths and forging the record.

The struggle against Nazism and fascism was indeed difficult but the white guard, home guard, chetniks and others were among the constellation of the Axis collaborators.

This struggle was carried on solely by the Liberation Front which united the greatest part of progressive and freedom-loving Slovenians labelled as Communists by the "Slovenian National Committee." Fighting them was indeed hard for the white guard, home guard, and others, there is no doubt about it.

And that they were deceived at the end of World War II is also unquestionably true but they were deceived by themselves because they were allied with those very same Nazis and fascists who lost the war. And then they, of course, had to flee in exile.

Yet, if the "Declaration and Appeal of the Slovenian National Committee" (as published in SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA of 19 December 1974) appears relatively modest in its aggressiveness, there is more of that in its other pronouncements.

In these the Slovenian political emigres are not only attempting to vindicate but are outrightly denying their wartime collaboration with the occupying powers. •

In the already mentioned book by one "Miha Marjan Vir" "Pravi Obraz Osvobodilne Fronte" [The True Face of the Liberation Front] which was edited and published by Filip Zakelj one finds, on p 307, the following example:

"Appearances"

"Only the infinite love of their people, bleeding from a thousand wounds, prompted them to the sacrifice of taking upon themselves the 'appearance' (emphasis added by the author) of collaboration."

Accordingly, they really were not collaborators although they might have seemed to be.

There is a profusion of such misrepresentations in all books and publications of this kind representing one of the achievements of Filip Zakelj, principal of "Rozman's Home" in Androque near Buenos Aires, who has in the last few years instigated very nearly all the attempts directed at exonerating the Slovenian political emigres from the taint of wartime collaboration with the occupation authorities.

All these attempts have yet another, secondary, importance: they are intended to somehow "balance" the ever increasing esteem enjoyed by Yugoslavia in international affairs.

This objective is also pursued by the booklet "Edvard Kocbek--Pricevalec Nasega Casa" [Edvard Kocbek--A Witness of our Time] published in April of this year by Boris Pahor and Alojz Rebula, two writers in Trieste. The latter, incidentally, is the advocate of the thesis on "two cultural metropolies," one of which is Ljubljana and the other supposedly Buenos Aires.

The above booklet included an interview with Edvard Kocbek which was essentially part of the plan to vindicate the wartime home guard collaboration with the occupation authorities and at the same time demand that the Slovenian society "confess" to "crimes" committed in wartime. This confession is, according to the visionary ideas of the Slovenian emigre movement, a prerequisite for any "future dialogue and cooperation."

The establishment of such "dialogue" is also the goal of the annual meetings of some "Slovenian intellectuals" in Draga near Trieste, at which discussions are held on how to "bring about a rapprochement" between the representatives of the Slovenian political emigre movement abroad and the "representatives of the regime" at home.

Pressures

The pressures of the enemy emigres are not applied only indirectly through their print and declarations but also by attempts at action on Slovenian soil.

To this latter category belong anonymous letters with inimical or insulting contents sent from abroad to various Slovenian institutions or individuals. Sometimes such letters contain photocopies of various articles published in emigre papers, copies of various "appeals" of emigre leaders, or merely insults and invective.

There is not a great deal of this, but even a few incidents are evidence that the Slovenian political emigre movement does not intend its activities to stop at our national boundaries. Such letters become more numerous when the emigres feel particularly concerned or provoked, as was the case when NEDELJSKI DNEVNIK [The Sunday Journal] published a series of articles with documented testimony on the wartime crimes of "Crna Roka" [The Black Hand]....

An especially attractive target for the Slovenian political emigre movement, or rather its radical leadership, are the young people. Accordingly, special efforts are made to influence the youth.

Evidence of this are similar anonymous mailings with insulting or inimical content to some Slovenian schools.

The religious emigre review NASA LUC [Our Light] published in Celovec has recently also joined the circles of those who desire to influence the younger generation of Yugoslavs both at home and abroad.

[2 Jun 76, p 12]

[Text] NASA LUC is, of course, only a small link in the chain of the relatively well organized and managed anti-Yugoslav activity which systematically and consistently endeavors to poison, not only the relationships between their host countries and Yugoslavia, but also to create an atmosphere of uncertainty and nervousness within Yugoslavia itself.

These efforts bear rather meager fruit, however, it would be naive to dismiss them altogether, for while it is true that truth cannot be suppressed in this world there are still some who are ready to accept it in a distorted form.

Participation of the Clergy

It is extremely difficult to tell exactly to what extent the clergy participates in the ranks of the Slovenian emigre movement throughout the world in general and in Argentina in particular but there can be no doubt that it is extensive and important.

In the first place the clergy is a very cohesive group which is active with greater or lesser effectiveness almost everywhere where our economic emigrants or political emigres live.

They are present in all centers and leaderships of the Slovenian political emigre movement abroad, maintaining close ties and connections reaching beyond the centers of the political emigre movement and their leaderships.

There are not many of them--200 at most--but their effectiveness is greater than one could expect from the rather small number quoted above. The reason may be sought in their university education, intense bigotry, and unified leadership. All of them have the same goal whether they operate in Buenos Aires, Cleveland, or Munich.

"With rare and unimportant exceptions, of those who were already stationed outside of Yugoslavia before the war, the great majority are refugees from Yugoslavia who arrived subsequent to the collapse of Nazism. Some of them

left their native land because of their political conviction. Most of them, however, fled because this was the only way in which they could avoid punishment for open collaboration with the occupation powers," I learned in conversation with a fairly reputable political emigre who is not active in the political arena.

As early as May 1941, for instance, all Italian and Slovenian newspapers published the following statement addressed to Mussolini by the Bishop of Ljubljana, Dr Gregorij Rozman:

"Duce: With great joy we learned that the Slovenian territory, occupied by the Italian army, has been incorporated into the Kingdom of Italy. Please accept in the name of all clergy on this territory our deepest thanks for the magnanimity and thoughtfulness in granting this form of government to the Slovenian population. Accept, Duce, the expressions of our unconditional devotion and cooperation. At the same time I pray that God may bless your work, the Italian and Slovenian people which will under the aegis of the Roman empire be able to live and thrive." (Published in SLOVENEK, 6 May 1941.)

This overt collaboration of the greater part of Slovenian clergy--and not only clergy--gave rise, if not immediately at least after a time, to scandalizing and public attacks in Great Britain.

A Warning From London

Thus, in March 1943, Dr Alojz Kuhar, former editor of SLOVENEK wrote to Bishop Dr Rozman as follows:

"...In Jerusalem the British served him (i.e., the former Governor Natlacen who likewise collaborated with the occupation authorities--Note by author) to us on a platter and we thought that we would all be slapped into a concentration camp because of him. We knew well that his heart was in the right place. But what naivete and tactical blundering! How much better would the man have done if he quietly withdrew from public life and preserved his and our aura of loyalty to the king and the allies. The Slovenian people would suffer no less because of it and someone else could always be found for that running around with the wops in Rome...."

"The British spoke about him as of the plague...." (Londonski Kuhar Pise [The London Cook /=Kuhar/ Writes] Documents II. Published by the Agitprop Commission of the IOOF [Executive Committee of the Liberation Front] 1943.)

And furthermore:

"Is continued publication and writing in the style of Italian propaganda at all necessary or even good political tactics.... The things published in our papers often place us in an unfavorable light here in England...." (ibid.)

When his wartime masters were through, the faithful service of his clergy also come to an end. Accordingly, his only route to safety was flight across the border.

"Immediately after their flight this most highly compromised part of the Slovenian clergy began participating in anti-Yugoslav activity wherever an opportunity presented itself--some became involved sooner, others a little later. Today they represent the hard core of the anti-Yugoslav activity, and rear the second and third generations of Slovenian emigre priests, many of whom cannot resist the tremendous pressure to follow the steps of their elders." Thus the situation was described to me by the already mentioned "nonpolitical" emigre.

[3 Jun 76, p 9]

[Text] The clergy operates among the political emigres through religious institutions, emigre organizations, as well as cultural societies. Thus they are not only performing the duties of rector, principals of religious centers, missions, and the like but are also involved in the political, social, and educational institutions. They are especially active in publishing papers and other publications.

Ever Present

And this is not all.

The clergy makes use of every opportunity to exert its influence among the emigres--political or economic alike--and among the Slovenian workers temporarily employed abroad.

They help in job placement, offer financial assistance, organize supplementary instruction in the Slovenian language, child care, social and sport events, various adult education course, even dances and the like. This I could readily establish in Buenos Aires from the articles and announcements appearing in emigre publications.

They are sufficiently skilled not to disclose publicly their true objectives and goals, this is reserved for confidential conversations on a person-to-person basis.

Although they operate in various countries they maintain close contacts and a common leadership.

The top man directing the activities of all Slovenian priests is one time home guard chaplain Ignac Kunstelj who manages and directs approximately 60 clergymen operating mainly among the Yugoslavs temporarily employed abroad. Most of them are in Europe.

On the territories of individual countries national directors are responsible for leading the work in their areas. Among them are Janez Zdesar, Ciril Lavric, Nace Cretnik, Vinko Zakelj, Fidelis Kraner, Anton Orehar, Franc Bergant and others.

The Slovenian emigre clergy are exploiting any and all means for spreading their influence among the religious, particularly through the printed word in their own as well as in foreign publications.

They also publish a series of their own papers and publications ostensibly of purely religious character in which, however, they are hardly concealing open attacks on Yugoslavia. They are particularly fond of reprinting under the guise of "objective" journalism anti-Yugoslav articles published elsewhere.

NASA LUC

Thus, for example, in June 1975 the monthly journal NASA LUC published by Druzba sv. Mohorja [St Mohor's Society] in Austria ran a reprint of a West German paper reporting the efforts of a "Holland group of Amnesty-International to assist a Yugoslav prisoner who was sentenced to prison because of enemy activity."

There is no lack of other similar examples.

"The second generation of Slovenian emigre priests has because of their untainted past even broader opportunities of action and they are making full use of them. They move in circles which spurn the older generation because of its overt collaboration with the Nazis--(as, for example, Slovenians who came to Argentina before World War II as a rule refuse to submit to the religious tutelage of priests whom they know to have been subservient to the Germans or Italians in wartime), and try to accomplish the same objective with the same methods as their older mentors," I was told in an after dinner conversation with the M. O. family.

The second generation of Slovenian emigre priests was educated abroad. In Argentina, for example, two separate intermediate level boarding schools were established for preparation of young emigrants for the ecclesiastic career.

One of these is the "Rozmanov Zavod" [Rozman Institute] at 214 Rivadavia Street in Androque, about 10 kilometers away from the center of Buenos Aires.

This is a relatively pleasant edifice bounded on one side by the street and a rather large garden on the other. On that September day when I stepped across its threshold the rain was pouring down and the coldness of a grey winter day (although winter was, of course, only momentarily there in Argentina) was giving a somewhat lugubrious outlook to the otherwise none too pleasant environment.

A Visit in "Rozmanov Dom" [Rozman's Home]

I did not have the slightest idea as to what reception I might expect when I greeted a woman in the courtyard, the first person I came across.

"Dr Filip Zakelj? No, he is out of town. I can take you to Reverend Becan, if you wish."

I nodded.

A few moments later I was sitting in a tiny room, one of a half dozen identical cells stacked together in the low building at the other end of the garden facing the main structure which served as a dormitory for students, who at that time were not in. They were attending school in another building a little further down the road.

The room seemed cold and somewhat in need of tidying up, looking like bachelors' quarters everywhere.

"Do come in," my interlocutor said courteously after the introductory formalities. I talked with Marjan Becan, a man some 30 years old who is the prefect at the boarding school, its manager, and general aide to the principal.

"It was here that I was educated and now I am helping to educate the young who decided to become priests. It is pleasant work."

He told me he had visited Yugoslavia a short time ago.

[4 Jun 76, p 12]

[Text] "How did you like it?"

"It is beautiful. Nothing in the world can surpass its natural beauty. Truly wonderful."

"Were you well received?"

"Yes. I traveled around a great deal."

Thus we somehow wrapped up this part of the conversation and changed the subject to the Argentine situation but before we started discussing this topic he said that people in Yugoslavia "live quite well" and "have plenty of everything" except that there "is no real freedom" although he could not elaborate or explain the last observation.

And the situation in Argentina?

"The economic situation is not the best and neither is the political. There is no real stability, everything is shaky. But things will work out, one way or another."

A few dozen future priests live in the "Rozman Institute." The institute offers room and board and facilities for study. There is not much in the way of recreation--some sport, debating, books, journals, papers--emigre papers, to be sure.

My host inquires as to how I came to look them up--I simply got their address in Buenos Aires, took the train, and came.

When it was time for me to leave the nasty rain was still coming down as strongly as when I came. Marjan Becan hospitably took me to the station in a jeep.

Not Only Education

My host would not say directly, in fact he would not even hint at the fact that religion is only one of the reasons for the existence of the "Rozman Institute" boarding school in Androgué, for here, too, as in all other educational institutions founded by the political emigre movement the inmates are inculcated, in addition to the traditional subjects, with some other "learning" as well. Instruction without appropriate admixture of ideological indoctrination is inconceivable. This indoctrination in essence consists of the following tenets: the situation in Yugoslavia is not good, a system based on self-management and nonalignment with the communist present can come to no good. Accordingly it must be replaced with something else.

Priests who begin to practice their calling are thus quite well prepared not only for spiritual but also for secular affairs. The latter are present everywhere and extend from the past to the future.

Another good example are the so-called "Slovenian Houses" in which both emigre politicians and priests meet on an entirely equal footing--and, of course, the average emigres who rank on no hierarchical scale are welcome, too.

The most important of the institutions where the Slovenian political emigres aggregate is the "Slovenian House" at 4158 Ramon Falcon in Buenos Aires.

When I knocked at its gate no one opened. I looked over the fairly pleasant front but there was no one at any of the windows. I hesitated for a few moments and then tried the doorknob. The door gave way and after pausing to think I stepped across the threshold.

I was in some sort of a wide hallway leading to a courtyard. In the middle of the courtyard was a large palm tree around which there was some small,

meticulously planted landscaping. Opposite the gate through which I came was another building that could not be seen from the street. Only later I learned that the building at the other end was the headquarters of the organization "Združena Slovenija" [United Slovenia] founded by the political emigres as early as 1946 in Rome to unite all Slovenian refugees and which was later, in 1949, moved to Argentina. In the new host country it was reorganized and eventually further developed. Under its wings are several Slovenian schools of the enemy emigres and some other institutions in all of which the emigre clergy is also most "cordially" cooperating.

"Zedinjena Slovenija" which is supposed to be a mass clerical organization of political emigres (although it could of course never be a mass organization for even if every Slovenian emigre belonged to it the total number of members would not exceed a few thousand) publishes in Buenos Aires its own weekly paper, SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA [Free Slovenia], which is spreading the most hostile articles one can imagine against Yugoslavia. The articles in that paper are frequently so indescribably vile and shameless that they leave a reader speechless. We will discuss this at greater length elsewhere in this series.

Memories

On that September afternoon, however, everything was quiet on the courtyard of the Slovenian House at 1458 Ramon Falcon. No one was there. I did not know where to turn.

I decided to try the nearest door to the right, through which I could see the staircase leading to the second floor of the building standing at the side of the street.

I entered and slowly climbed to the second floor. There was no one in the rather long corridor. I tried a few doors. Some were locked, and some were not. I entered a schoolroom with benches, desks, and a blackboard on the wall.

Slowly I toured the entire building but there was no one there.

I went out and stepped through the gate into the courtyard.

To the right was an attractive low building in which I soon recognized an architecturally well proportioned modern church building of rather unusual form.

Then the door opened and out came an older man with a broom in his hand. Silently he gave me a wry glance and reentered the church.

I followed him. The church was small but very modernly decorated--an inscription on the wall glorified the home guard and white guard members who fell in the war.

Again I returned to the courtyard and slowly walked toward the inner building. I was not at all sure that someone would not eventually ask me what I was doing there and tell me to get lost or do something else with me.

A short distance in front of the entrance, inside the courtyard there is a large memorial plaque with the inscription: "In memory of Slovenian fighters for justice...remembrance...gratitude...honor...."

It was here that a few months ago, according to the front page report in SVOBODNA SLOVENIJA of 5 June 1975, Marjan Loboda, president of "Združena Slovenija" and the representative of the Slovenian priests in Argentina Anton Orehar spoke at a "majestic commemoration."

The former said, among other things, the following:

"In the struggle for the truth against the organized lie the home guard, chetniks, legionnaires, rural militia, and thousands of other Slovenian Christians gave their lives. They shall be our example, not those useful dupes who were, in company with the reds, preparing the worst misfortune of the Slovenian people...."

The second speaker said:

"The late bishop Dr Gregorij Rozman was teaching the people well and led them along the right path, accordingly, my countrymen I entreat you to preserve his idea.... We must not endeavor only to acquire as much material goods in as short a time as possible, but should try learning to make sacrifices to contribute for the common good. We must take part in our organizations and papers by contributing our time and money.... I entreat you to fight the godless communism, revive our faith with prayer and preserve the truth in your publications...."

Without Change

In addition the two speakers said on that day and in that courtyard many other things that were even more incredibly vile and obscene but the above quotes already suffice for the simple realization that the ties and cooperation between the politicians and the clergy remained at the same level as it used to be 30 years ago. Nothing has changed, only their great protectors with swastikas on their flags disappeared.

And not all of these protectors have left the scene.

[5 Jun 76, p 11]

[Text] Some are still very much present and, the way the things are, will continue to stay around for a while, for if it were not for them their former proteges, too, would have to pack their bags and leave.

And yet they do not leave. The reason is, in part, their "amazing" ability to adapt and choose their allies.

The Slovenian emigre clergy has also in this respect performed an unusual volte face: from the one time collaboration with the Nazis they managed to make the transition to collaborate with those who once fought against the Nazis.

Although the supreme leadership and the summit of the Slovenian Catholic Church placed itself immediately after the occupation at the side and in the service of the German and Italian conquerors, there were nevertheless some priests who recognized where their loyalty belonged.

Supplementary Instruction

Already in 1950 the Slovenian political emigre movement in Argentina began to organize a system of supplementary instruction for the second generation of fugitives from Yugoslavia.

In this way they wanted to preserve the Slovenian language and culture and prevent the second generation of Slovenian political emigres from coming under undue influence of the Argentine moderates--the primary purpose, however, was to ensure their ideological and political influence over the youngest. This did not happen, nor is it still happening only in Argentina but everywhere where a larger group of Slovenian political emigres settled down: in the United States, Canada, Australia.

Peculiar to the Slovenian political emigres was and is their social structure: the percentage of intelligentsia is unusually high, the same holds for priests and people with intermediate level education. In comparison with the older, economic emigration the political one was definitely much better off with respect to professional capabilities of its cadres and they have made full use of their advantage.

They have made use of it, of course, for their own purposes. While the usefulness of various emigre schools and courses for retention of the Slovenian language cannot be denied, despite the fact that their cultural endeavors are ideologically colored and of a very low level the predominant characteristics of the supplementary instruction is an extremely intensive ideological and political indoctrination.

[One paragraph in source garbled and undecipherable.]

Religion is present everywhere, since religious instruction is as a rule the most important subject in these supplementary schools, while the clergy constitutes the majority of the teachers and faculty.

"The leaderships of the political organizations and institutions are increasingly exerting more intense pressure on the pupils and their parents

to attend emigre schools and their efforts are successful. I know this from personal experience: they would not give up until I enrolled my son and daughter," I was told by one of the emigres.

Thus, for instance, in 1974 there were 16 emigre schools for supplementary instruction in Argentina with an attendance of 893 students.

Elementary Schools

In Argentina there are several "Slovenian schools" which operate under the supervision of the emigre clergy. Let us list a few of them:

The Bishop Anton Martin Slomsek Elementary School, France Balantic Elementary School, Bishop Gregorij Rozman Elementary School, Bishop Friderik Baraga Elementary School and others in Buenos Aires.

In addition to these they have several intermediate level courses in Buenos Aires (The "Slovenian House" and "Slovenian Village"), Mendoza, and Bariloche.

In Argentina there are, moreover, two institutions that are exclusively controlled by the clergy. These are Rozmanov Dom in Androque near Buenos Aires and the Baraga Mission.

Rozmanov Dom is headed by Dr Filip Zakelj, the most extremist Slovenian priest in Argentina, who is also the leader of the relatively active publishing group as is reported elsewhere in this series.

The following incident is a good enough illustration of how Dr Zakelj exploits his charges for purely secular ends. At the first showing of the Yugoslav motion picture "Sutjeska" in Buenos Aires, which, incidentally, attracted extraordinary attention of the critics and the public and which was exceptionally well received, Dr Filip Zakelj sent a group of his institute's students on the street in front of the theater with instructions to distribute leaflets with inimical and anti-Yugoslav content.... I was told this by our emigrants in the society "Triglav."

The elementary schools, courses, and other educational activities are carried on in various communal halls of the Slovenian emigres in Argentina. Most of them are in Buenos Aires, but some are also in Cordoba, Bariloche, Miramar, Mendoza, and Carapache.

These halls, in most cases called "Slovenian House" or "Slovenian Home," are places where the Slovenian political emigres congregate as well as.. educational and religious centers. The "Slovenian House" in Buenos Aires even contains a church. Although the archdiocese in La Plata is the formal holder of the title to the building it is apparently not concerned at all over the fact that the building is shared by a political organization of Slovenian emigres, namely, "Zedinjena Slovenija" [United Slovenia] in this case.

Some of these Slovenian political emigre centers also include some other institutions such as the savings and loan association and a convalescent home in Buenos Aires.

[7 Jun 76, p 9]

[Text] It is, of course, superfluous to note that all these institutions are completely under the control of the leadership which exploits them for its own purposes.

Relations between the Political and Economic Emigrants

At the end of the 1940's, when the Slovenian political emigres began to migrate to Argentina in greater numbers, an extraordinarily strong colony of the older Slovenian economic emigration already existed there. Accordingly, it is of interest to inquire as to what the relations between the two groups have been like.

Some background information may be useful for better understanding.

The first large group of Slovenians came to Argentina as early as 1878 in response to the invitation of the Argentine government. They came as subjects of the then existing Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

This immigration occurred because in the 1870's the government in Buenos Aires decided to accelerate the settlement of the enormous plains--pampas--from which the sparse Indian tribes who lived there were withdrawing to the South. At that time European immigrants were coming mostly to North America, to the United States of America, while the interest in Latin America was considerably smaller. Therefore the Argentine government requested various European governments to encourage migration of their citizens to Argentina.

In April 1878 this announcement was also published by some Slovenian papers and after considerable discussion, with some favoring and some opposing the proposal, about 100 Slovenian families decided on a voyage across the Atlantic Ocean. Later they were followed by other individuals and according to rough estimates approximately 1,000 Slovenians altogether had come to Argentina by the turn of the century. This was the first wave of Slovenian economic emigrants to Argentina.

The second wave came between 1922 and 1929, at the time of the great economic depression and political crisis. Approximately 25,000 came, mainly from Benecija [the Julian March], the Slovenian Littoral, Istra and also from Prekmurje and Bela Krajina.

The greatest part by far came from regions that came under the Italian control after the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was established. These latter were actually not emigrating solely because of economic reasons but also

because they wanted to leave Italy due to increasingly more intense fascist persecution and reign of terror. They settled mainly in Buenos Aires and, in smaller numbers, in Santa Fe, Cordoba, Chaco, Entre Rios, Rio Negro and Nenqueno.

These emigrants were largely farmers and unskilled laborers with strongly developed class-consciousness and of pronouncedly anti-fascist orientation.

Rich Social Activity

Although hardly any of these emigrants were educated and they had very little capital (only a few of them managed to set up artisan's shops, stores, or smaller industrial plants of their own) they nevertheless succeeded in organizing a strong social activity.

In the 1930's they already had seven societies, their own press, papers and other publications, excellent vocal choruses, and a Slovenian elementary school.

With a few exceptions they were strongly oriented to the political left and when the war of national liberation began in Yugoslavia they were incredibly united in its support.

All the Slovenian societies became members of the Slovenska Zveza [Slovenian League] in which the communist party had a dominating influence. To it belonged many Slovenian economic emigrants. Under the leadership of the Slovenian section of the Argentine communist party they formed the organization Svobodna Jugoslavija [Free Yugoslavia] which made an exceptional contribution to the national liberation war effort as well as to the post war reconstruction of the homeland. Svobodna Jugoslavija had approximately 15,000 exceptionally active members.

During World War II alone over 2 million dollars were collected by them to aid the National Liberation Army and even more after the war. When the rebuilding began in the homeland, 600 young Slovenian men and women came from Argentina within a single month to work on the youth projects such as the Brcko-Banovici and Samac-Sarajevo railroads, among others. Argentine emigrants continued sending aid even much later, for example after the earthquake in Skopje.

The contribution of the economic emigrants from Argentina both during the war of national liberation as well as after the war is surprising and shows exceptional patriotism, for it was no small matter to collect over 2 million dollars of aid for the partisans. This aid came from poorly paid Slovenian workers and poor farmers, who in some instances literally gave up their meals so that they could give a few dollars to their homeland.

At that time an important political activity also developed. With the exception of a negligibly small circle gathered around the Reverend Janez Hladnik, Slovenians living in Argentina made use of every opportunity to make manifest their allegiance to the new Yugoslavia.

[8 Jun 76, p 12]

[Text] Such was the situation and atmosphere when toward the end of the 1940's a new group of Slovenian emigrants began to arrive. In contrast with the previous two waves this one was pronouncedly political.

Flight From Italy

They came from Italy, which gave them a hospitable refuge from the end of World War II until 1948. Then they became afraid in the, for them, uncertain atmosphere that the communists might win the elections in Italy and began to leave in a panic flight.

What were the Slovenian political emigres doing in Italy and in some other countries (most of them went to Italy after their withdrawal from Yugoslavia) between 1945 and 1948, after which time they began a massive exodus to Argentina and some other overseas countries?

Roughly speaking they, not altogether unexpectedly, changed their masters in a surprising volte face and offered their services to those against whom they had been fighting a short time ago. To put it more directly: after having been in the service of Germany until its collapse they, after the collapse took place, offered their services to those who had fought the Germans in the war.

The organizing of the extremist Slovenian political emigres began within a few weeks after their arrival to their temporary refugee camps in Italy.

A Buenos Aires acquaintance told me something like this: "First they packed us into large camps surrounded by barbed wire where we lived as some kind of prisoners of war but soon I noticed that the allies nevertheless treated some among us differently."

The "different treatment," of course, was accorded to those who were ready to work against the "red communism," or even more than that.

Thus some of the refugees very soon became involved in various intelligence and propaganda organizations in Italy. The most hotheaded among them even volunteered for action in Yugoslavia.

This was the time of various "crusaders" who were attempting to subvert the foundations of the new state with murders or other acts of violence on Slovenian soil.

Things were like this until 1948 when they became afraid that the Italian communists might win the elections and fled to Argentina and some other countries.

To Argentina came some 6,000 to 7,000 of them, but some stayed only a short time whereupon they moved on--to the United States, Australia, and some West European countries. Some 3,000 to 4,000 remained in Argentina.

Among them were members of Nazi quisling units, various legions, rural militia, home guard, white guard, voluntary anticommunist militia and clergy, as well as the reactionary politicians of the extreme right with a sprinkling of liberals, officials of the former Yugoslav administrative and other offices of the occupying powers, some entrepreneurs, and others.

The first of them began arriving as early as 1947 but the majority came between 1948 and 1950. Some arrived with Yugoslav passports, others with papers issued by the International Red Cross supplied by their protectors in Italy and elsewhere. The political asylum in Argentina was arranged for them by the Reverend Janez Hladnik--the same who had been active against the national liberation movement in wartime.

The relations between the two groups of Slovenian emigrants in Argentina, the economic and the political, were from the very first moment not only extremely cool but also outrightly hostile. Between them stretched an unbridgeable gap.

On one side were unusually patriotic and class-conscious members of the Slovenian economic emigration and on the other overt collaborators with the occupation powers who had nothing in common with their socialist and communist compatriots except their language and the old country.

To this date the relations between the two groups remain unchanged, although some other important event intervened.

The Cominform Schism

What happened was the violent split in 1948 when Yugoslavia broke all relations with Stalin because of his openly hegemonistic tendencies.

The 1948 Cominform affair had unusually strong repercussions in Argentina and resulted in dramatic consequences which were felt for many years.

Among the Slovenian economic emigrants were many communists. They were members of the Argentine communist party which was under the unusually strong influence of the Soviet Union and its communist party.

Moscow's expulsion of the Yugoslav communist party was supported by the Argentine communist party and its Slovenian members were faced with a tremendous dilemma of which side to take and whom to believe.

For them the decision was considerably more difficult than for the Yugoslavs at home, because Slovenians in Argentina did not have all the background information and did not know all the details of the dispute.

It was because of this that part of them under the leadership of the Argentine communist party declared themselves for the Cominform and this division remained for a long time.

However, this had no effect on their relations with the political emigres because the communists who succumbed to the influence of the Argentine communist party did not change their position with respect to the white guard members and others from the camp of fascist collaborators.

And how is it today?

"Our halls are open to all Slovenians--and not only them: we are pleased to be visited also by Serbs, Croats, and others regardless of their political convictions. The only thing we ask is that they do not abuse our hospitality for political purposes," I was told by president of "Triglav," a Buenos Aires society that joins the still divided Slovenian economic emigres.

Members of Triglav see a possibility for attracting to their ranks particularly the politically untainted second generation which has different views than they, but for which an eventual change of position is not entirely ruled out. It should be understood that many among those who fall under the designation "political emigres" are not at all inimically disposed toward Yugoslavia. More than that: among them are people who have almost no political affiliation and who are following with friendly interest the development of the socialist self-managing Yugoslavia. If they had perhaps once actively collaborated with the enemy emigres they have not done so for many years, partly because they simply came to the conviction that the things which their leaders claim and propound are not true. They now wish to have normal relations with their homeland and many among them are coming to visit their old country.

Open Door

"You see, to those our door is always open," I was told by Rudolf Steker, president of "Triglav," in a conversation in the society's office at 5158 Ramon List Street in Buenos Aires.

"And we certainly have nothing against their sons associating with ours, and I can tell you that in some instances bonds of friendship as well as kinship are formed among them."

By ideology, of course, the two sides are thousands of kilometers apart and this gap is reduced only in cases when the political emigres change their positions while the economic emigre hold steadfastly to their own.

Although there is no direct connection with the central theme of this story it nevertheless seems appropriate to transmit at this occasion at least some telegraphically compressed information on the activity of our economic emigrants in Argentina. If nothing else, it will complement the description of the environment in which the political emigres operate--for the headquarters of some societies of the opposite sides are physically only a few hundred meters apart.

[9 Jun 76, p 12]

[Text] The most important currently active organization in Buenos Aires is "Triglav" with the headquarters in Ramon List. Its work is supplemented by the branch in Bernal at the other end of the vast Argentine capital.

"Triglav" was formed after many years of negotiations by fusion of three societies "Ljudski Oder" [The People's Theater] "Nas Dom" [Our Home] and "Zarja" [Dawn]. These organizations were for many years carrying out their activities separately and all efforts at uniting them were in vain until the second generation of the Slovenian economic emigrants grew up and politely but firmly told their elders that the differences which kept them apart were not recognized by the young.

For example: the Catholic organization "Nas Dom," which was during the war of national liberation equally patriotic and its members equally enthusiastic in collecting funds for the partisans, and "Ljudski Oder," dominated by the communists, had never in their history thought of cooperating although their headquarters were only 300 meters apart.

Now this is only history.

"Triglav" unites all of them. How this works in practice can best be seen when they hold a joint picnic on the society's premises. These affairs are attended by between 600 to 800 Slovenians who together finish off a good 500 kilograms of barbecued meat and drown all this in three 50 liter barrels of wine.

"Ljudski Oder," which prior to fusion with "Triglav" merged with the society "Bratstvo," was founded as early as 1925 by the emigrants from the Slovenian Littoral and Prekmurje. During the civil war in Spain they sent aid and volunteers to the Spanish republican army. In 1949 it was banned by Peron's government because some of its active members were communists. It was revived in 1958 after being purged of Cominform supporters, who a few years later again joined the society, thus prolonging its internal vibrations for a few years. After the war it had 1,000 members, now there are a few over 400.

"Nas Dom" was founded in 1935. Before the merger it had about 200 members.

Ambitious Plans

"Zarja" was the youngest organization of the three, having been founded only in 1957, and was intended to be strictly nonpolitical. In it gathered the more well-to-do emigrants who had no contact even with the Yugoslav diplomatic representatives. The society had 120 members.

The above three societies are now carrying out, under the common roof of "Triglav," the most ambitious project in the history of the Slovenian emigration: building an exceptionally attractively designed center of rather huge proportions in which there will be space for all members and activities, including some heretofore unknown.

In the building, the foundation of which has already been laid, there will be, in addition to the auditorium, accessory rooms, dining facilities (decorated in the national styles, including the Serbian and Croatian) libraries, and the organization's offices, also a bowling alley and an indoor swimming pool.

The effect of this center on the organization's future activity can hardly be imagined. It will not only be a cultural, social, and educational center for the Slovenians but (I firmly believe) the meeting ground and bridge between the Slovenians and Argentines.

"You know, as a matter of fact, we have so far always been and still are working in facilities which are everything but suitable and not in the least impressive. Quite a few of us were embarrassed to invite our Argentine friends or acquaintances to our organization's quarters. In the new center it will be different. Besides an opportunity to substantially improve the functioning of our organization, it will also be a proof of what we Yugoslavs can do if we set our mind to it. This will be our showcase," said the president of "Triglav" with unconcealed pride which was readily shared by his listener.

They are building the center all by themselves gradually selling off smaller older centers. All this is being done at a time of incredible inflation with such success as if they were the most successful capitalists. Thus, for instance, they were able, by selling the smallest of their old centers, to buy a huge lot (of approximately 4,000 square meters) and build the foundation for a structure that will, in the first phase cover no less than 2,100 square meters.

In this way they will continue until the entire building is finished which is expected to be by the end of 1976. And they started only last February!

There will be tennis courts, a gymnasium, and in brief, everything that young Argentines want. The young, unlike their elders, are no longer satisfied only with gathering, singing, and looking at the shows.

"Is all this done by your own efforts alone?" I asked the organization's industrious secretary Boris Kosuta.

Valuable Healp

"We are on our own--but I must tell you that any help from the homeland would be most welcome. We are not looking for money, this we can collect here. What we would like are things one cannot get here: books, records, sheet music, papers, journals, national costumes, some paintings, and ethnic musical instruments."

"Has the Yugoslav embassy helped you in any way?"

"Unfortunately not. The only help--and we really appreciate it--was quite unofficial and if it were not for the extraordinary vice-consul Mitja Strukelj even that would not be forthcoming. He began to teach the Slovenian language to our members. You have no idea how much this means to us."

I could convince myself of this one evening when I saw an incredible crowd of 30 people packed in a small office--the youngest was a girl of 7, the oldest a man in his fifties--avidly listening to the enthusiastically delivered instruction of the young vice-consul. Unfortunately, however, Mitja Strukelj is a lawyer, not a teacher or professor and moreover he is teaching his willing students from manuals that are not too well suited for such purposes. Nevertheless this cannot dampen the enthusiasm of the students or their teacher who is doing this voluntarily on his own free time, of which he does not have a great deal to begin with.

On an evening at the "Triglav" center when we talked about what could be done to help the organization there came to light many good ideas.

For example: if the Hrastnik--or any other--glassware factory could send 50 ash trays... if a few Slovenian painters could each donate one painting... if the publishing houses could donate from their inventories a few dozen books... if the enterprises producing records could spare a few dozens of records of ethnic music... if some furniture factory could kindly provide free of charge a table with four chairs in the native style... or if the enterprise "Dom" could send some national souvenirs... and if the General Line of Piran could bring all this on one of its ships that regularly frequent the port of Buenos Aires... this would represent a priceless treasure to several thousands of Slovenians living in Argentina.

This reporter promised to transmit the above ideas to the public--but I could see some scepticism in the eyes, for many people have visited down under before and made promises which did not materialize.

I am true to my promise and if any of the potential contributors should be in doubt as to where the gifts may be sent I was told at "Triglav"

that they should be sent to Slovenska Izseljenska Matica [The Slovenian Emigrant's Foundation] in Ljubljana. Hopefully, they said, it will not be too much of an imposition if we burden them with this.

[10 Jun 76, p 9]

[Text] In the meantime DNEVNIK and NEDELJSKI published several articles about our emigrants in Argentina and the editorial offices have already begun to receive presents.

Thus Cankarjeva Založba [Cankar Publishing House]--which was the first to respond--Partizanska Knjiga [The Partisan's Book], publishing house "Borec" [Fighter], Mladinska Knjiga [Book of the Young], Državna Založba Slovenije [State Publishing House of Slovenia], Moderna Galerija [The Modern Gallery], and Dekorativna [The Decorators] sent to the editorial offices of DNEVNIK bulky packages of books, records, paintings, and other things while several institutions promised to make their contributions later.

The society of Slovenian artists and sculptors, has, on our request, promised to carry out a campaign among its members and deliver the donated paintings to Slovenska Izseljenska Matica which will forward them to the emigrants.

Similar promises were made by some other working organizations. We are convinced that this year Slovenian emigrants will receive the first shipment of gifts, which will be most useful in equipping their new center.

Slovenska Izseljenska Matica, too, has promised its full support to this campaign.

"We shall do all we can," said Drago Seliger, president of Slovenska Izseljenska Matica, "to help our people in Argentina, not only because we are aware of their contribution to the liberation and post-war rebuilding of Yugoslavia, but also because we feel that this is our duty." We are pleased that we can relay these encouragements and we are convinced that it will not remain only with promises. Others, too, not only enterprises and individuals may join this campaign and we hope they will.

Strengths and Weaknesses

All this can have a deeper significance.

"We know," I was told in "Triglav," "that you have to deal sometimes with attacks on Yugoslavia and we know, too, that such attacks come from the ranks of the political emigre movement. Now think about it in this way: the stronger we are, the weaker they are and those few ash trays, paintings, records or books mean a great deal to us, namely, the ability to offer our members more than we have been able so far. It also enhances the possibility that someone from the other side will come to us. Considering all this we ask: is it not well worth to help build us up?"

This was said somewhat roughly, in the emigrants' way, directly and without beating around the bush but it was not being said to the wind.

That evening, on leaving "Triglav" I heard something which I remembered for a long time afterwards.

A four member delegation of Slovenska Izzeljska Matica on a visit came to inspect the center and its facilities. One of them suddenly noticed on a table a textbook of the Slovenian language with a portrait of King Alexander with the former national anthem "Boze Pravde" [God Protect Us].

"Why on earth are you using this book for instruction?" he asked astonished.

Came the answer: "Because you have not sent us something else."

Indicently, the visit of that four member Slovenska Izzeljska Matica delegation, which remained in South America for over two months, cost, transportation and all, approximately 8,000 dollars. The emigrants whom the comrades from their native land visited appreciated the visit very much but they observed that the mission could be carried out equally well by one or at most two persons while the 2,000 or 4,000 dollars savings converted in Argentine pesos would go a long way indeed in equipping their future center. Of course, they were too polite to tell this to their visitors. Fortunately journalists are not always expected to be so polite.

The activity of pre-war emigrants in Argentina is not restricted to Buenos Aires, however.

In Lanus the "Slovenian Social, Cultural, and Sports Society" was recently reorganized and revived by the young, who took charge after a relatively long period of inactivity under the leadership of members of the older generation. The original name of this pre-war organization was "Prekmursko Drustvo" [The Prekmurje Society].

Two other organizations exist in Argentina: "Edinost" [Unity], an organization of Slovenian workers in Cordoba founded 35 years ago with membership constituted mainly of older and none-too-active members and the dynamic and ambitious former "Triglav" in Rosario now called "Jugoslavanski Center" [The Yugoslav Center] with some 70 members.

Characteristics

Characteristics of all Slovenian societies is that they are becoming increasingly more open, not only for the other Yugoslav nationalities but for all Argentines. In this they are moving in step with the recently initiated development of improved Yugoslav-Argentine relations and in this way, albeit slowly, contribute toward the isolation of the other group of Slovenian emigrants in Argentina.

The leadership of the Slovenian political emigres naturally cannot ignore the increasingly more intensive activities of the older emigrants, which are apparently a thorn in their side.

"Of course," ran one of the explanations of the political emigres, "they have it made with all that aid and money channeled through the Yugoslav embassy to 'Triglav' by the communists in the old country."

When I told about this in "Triglav" they retorted with a touch of bitterness in their smiles: "We wish it were true."

Nursing a glass of the red Argentine wine he said slowly: "You see, there are three things that come into play here. Each of them means a lot to me and sometimes it is difficult to draw the boundaries. This is not easy for me nor is it for hundreds of others who think as I do."

We were sitting in a small but comfortably decorated living room of a two-story house. Through the large wide open door I could see a pleasantly landscaped garden with a swimming pool. In Argentina early September marks the end of Winter and the beginning of Spring. Through the open door came the cool fragrance of a Sunday evening.

We had spent the afternoon in the garden where the hostess roasted on a handy iron grill first a dozen sausages, then three chickens, and finally a huge cut of meat called simply "asado" in Argentina.

The dinner started before all that, with an enviable charcoal broiled blood sausage and salad served in two enormous dishes.

I had been invited to a Sunday dinner but the affair turned out to be a sumptuous feast instead, one of those people give on Argentine pampas and which last for hours.

This one, too, was long and exceptionally strenuous, but also very agreeable since my hosts were unusually kind, sincere, and direct.

Later, when a touch of evening chill breathed through the garden we moved indoors.

The couple who invited me knew that I was a journalist and why I came to Argentina. Nevertheless, they spoke freely although they did make a small request when I left: "Please do not divulge our names since it could be embarrassing...."

The Second Generation Recounts

They have already been living in Argentina for a long time. Their son and daughters, born under the Southern Cross, have never seen the native country of their parents.

[11 Jun 76, p 12]

[Text] It was he, a second generation Slovenian Argentine--or should I say Argentine Slovenian, that I asked what the expression "political emigre movement" means to him, what was his opinion about all these things. His father came to Argentina at the end of the 1940's as a political emigre who, although not burdened too heavily with his conduct in the past, nevertheless did not have an entirely clear conscience. The son, a pleasant, albeit somewhat reserved man of 30, was familiar with his father's past.

Slowly he took a sip from his glass and put it back on the table.

"Now look here," he said, "the three things I mentioned to you are: I was born here in Argentina but I feel that Slovenia is my homeland and between me and Slovenia stands my father. I do not know if you fully understand what I mean. On one hand this is loyalty to the country in which I live and which adopted me. It is here that I make my living and got married. My friends are Argentines and so are my business partners. However, my father is Slovenian, born in Slovenia, and so is my mother. Although I have never been in Slovenia I nevertheless feel for it and if I had to choose between Argentina and Slovenia the latter could very well tip the scale."

"But your father stands in between?"

Again, he took a sip from his glass and turned his eyes toward a framed diploma on the wall attesting that his father successfully defended his doctoral dissertation in jurisprudence somewhere in Yugoslavia some time before the war.

"If we look at it rationally," he said, "my father's past is his own personal affair. I was born when that part of his past was already over. I took no part in it and I am not a part of it. Accordingly, I am..." he groped for words... "not tainted with it. Yes, not tainted. And yet this holds only for that part of my father's past which burdens him, not for the time thereafter. It does not pertain to today or tomorrow. Today or tomorrow I am burdened by my father's past if only circumstantially, indirectly. So far as I am concerned I would be quite willing to join my sister in Slovenia. There is nothing there that would turn me away. On the contrary, I have heard a great deal about Yugoslavia, more good things than bad and believe me when I say that I like what is going on there. But my father stands in between. I cannot, for instance, leave him here and go away. I am too attached to him. Because of him I am an Argentine, because of him I live here. In a sense we both came here together and it is only together that we can return. And, you see, he remains here."

His father could return to Yugoslavia without difficulty. To state it more clearly: because he had done nothing for which he could be made to answer before a tribunal now, 30 years later, he can return to Slovenia without any obstacle.

"I would return," he told me, "but it is not all that simple. In a year or two I can retire but under Yugoslav regulations I do not meet all the requirements. In Slovenia my pension would be too small, it would be difficult to live on it. This is why I am not going back. If this could be corrected I would return."

"If my father returned I would go with him. However, because he is not going or at least has not yet made up his mind, I am not going either. This is what stands between me and Yugoslavia."

A Personal Problem

His sister is employed in a bank.

"My sister and I have been discussing this a great deal. She would also like to go but she feels as I do. We are attached to our parents and until they make the decision we cannot decide on our own," and this holds for the other sister, too.

This is a purely personal problem of a young person who cannot break out of a triangle, the emotions involved are stronger than anything else.

"This has no connection with politics, it is a purely personal matter, concerning only myself and my sisters, nobody else," he said.

"What about the activities of the political emigre leadership in Argentina?"

"It is hopeless, no one believes in that anymore, perhaps even they themselves do not believe everything they say."

"Does this not have at least some influence on the young?"

"No way! You know, I have quite a few acquaintances, friends even, among the sons and daughters of political emigres and I can tell you that they do not give a damn about what the leadership is doing. First, because they have other problems and goals and, second, because they clearly see that their elders are not right. If their reasons and arguments had any validity they would not have to live in exile--they would be in Yugoslavia now. Do you understand?"

We lit up cigarettes.

"Do you know what children of political emigres say to their parents?" he asked me. "This: 'How can you teach us anything or expound things to us when we can see the results of your policy.' This is what they say and I can tell you that this argument simply cannot be refuted. The young are concerned with other things--but first of all they want to live well and not be bothered with a sterile policy that has no prospect ever to achieve its goals. The old may say whatever they want, even if they ever had a chance it was irretrievably lost. Period. There is nothing to add."

"But their parents, at least those who are active in the emigre political leadership, still expect that they will some day come to Ljubljana riding on a white horse and be greeted as liberators, do they not?"

He laughed.

"Come on. You can count those who really think so on the fingers of your hand. The overwhelming majority knows that this is entirely out of the question."

"Nevertheless this is what they say and write."

Shattered Illusions

"Of course. What else can they do? Should they simply say: 'It is all over, it was all a mistake, all our promises of 30 years are no longer valid.' They cannot do this. Moreover, you should not forget that this is literally how they make their living. The money they receive for the printing of their papers and other things is their support or at least part of it. Some of them would have nothing to live on if they gave it up. That is the situation with the leadership. The majority, however, is no longer paying attention to these things. What do you think: who would be willing to believe for 30 years something that each year keeps receding further away, out of reach? How many people like that can you find?"

"At the beginning, however, they were convinced."

"Of course, they were. They were 1,000 percent sure. I remember myself hearing predictions that Yugoslavia would come to an end within a year, then the prediction was modified and they said that we would be at home and in power within 5 years at the latest. And when 5 years rolled by they extended the term still further and so from year to year, 10, 15, 25, 30 years. And now, after 30 years, there is suddenly an end to the fairy tale. The Slovenians who live here are, after all, not the dumbest of all people. They have seen the light. Thirty years is long enough, don't you agree?"

Now it was my turn to smile for it was truly unusual for a son of a political emigre to speak so convincingly about the futility of his father's and his friend's activities.

"Wait a moment," I said smiling, "you do not have to convince me." We both laughed.

"It is true, however," he said. "You can hear what I told you from any of my peers. I know because we have discussed these matters over and over."

After a short pause he added: "Blood is a strong bond and one cannot simply tell one's father that he had wasted his life--and if one does it is enough to say so once without repeating it every day."

[12 Jun 76, p 11]

[Text] "Therefore you should not think that the young are going out of their way to persuade the older generation that it messed things up. Perhaps they are arguing about this here and there, but in most instances they are not. Everybody has his own ideas and does not meddle in other people's affairs. The young have their own lives to live and for an average son or daughter of a political emigre the question as to where he will get the money for a new car is infinitely more important than thinking on whether socialism or self-management in Yugoslavia is a failure.

The hostess came in carrying a platter. "Will you have a bite?" she said cheerfully.

I looked at her wondering if she was serious after all those sausages, chickens and roast beef. "Where am I goint to put it?" I asked without the slightest dissimulation.

"You can at least taste it," she said, "this is the empanada."

And so we interrupted our conversation for a moment to help ourselves to empanada, a wonderful pie which, however, does not contain apples or plums but pieces of incredibly tasty seasoned meat, something like large meat-filled crescent rolls.

Money and Awareness

"The younger generations of Slovenian political emigres are interested in comfort. Housing, food, automobiles, recreation, money. That and not the kind of politics in which their parents were and still are engaged. There is another thing which you must not forget: people in the leadership of the political emigre movement are getting rather old. They are largely in their sixties or seventies and this, too, is significant since you must consider that they live practically in an entirely different world, a dream world that often does not have the slightest relevance to this other world their children live, not to speak of the world in which you live."

"What is it that they do know about the world in which I live?"

"I think that you should distinguish between two things here. I am not sure if I can properly explain this to you. One thing is the material progress, the other is people's awareness. They are quite well informed about the former. I think they are very well informed on what new factories, roads, and I do not know what else you have built or may be

still building. One can readily see this, it would be impossible to miss. However, what is going on inside the people's thinking is more difficult to find out. And of this, it seems they know very little. Whether this is so because of their lack of contact with the people in Yugoslavia or because they simply refuse to find out or accept what they do not like I do not know. However, I would say that they cannot deny at least the outward signs of progress, namely, the new housing, automobiles, and the like no matter how they might wish to."

He took a bit of empanada and paused for a moment.

"This, you know, applies to those who take the interest to follow more closely the developments in the home country. In my opinion, however, the majority of political emigres does not very diligently pursue this aspect. I would not say that they do not from time to time read an article on Yugoslavia, but this is about all they do. What I mean is an impartially written article not those one can read in the emigre papers."

"How about the second generation of the political emigres?"

"Oh, they are even less informed than their fathers. The young hardly know anything, which is a pity because there are many good things they could learn. But after all, you share part of the blame for this, too."

I shifted on my chair, but my host simply shrugged.

The Attack and Defense

"Believe it or not, you are to blame. Consider only the propaganda turned out by the people in the leadership of the political emigre movement. They publish papers replete with attacks on Yugoslavia, print brochures, and present hostile lectures. They are doing all they can to smear the regime at home as much as possible. And you? You remain silent, you do not even defend yourselves, let alone mount a counterattack. I do not mean this literally, after all, your best defense is what you have to show at home and this is alright. But how many people from the ranks of the political emigres ever get to visit the old country? A few hundred in the last few years. That is all. I cannot understand why you do not counteract the emigre activity in Buenos Aires and elsewhere. Do you feel it would be a waste of money? Young people from the ranks of political emigres would be delighted to read some of your papers, books, journals, see a motion picture or hear some records--but where can they get all this? Do you realize that in the entire Buenos Aires with its 9 million inhabitants and a few hundred bookstores, libraries, and cultural clubs one cannot find a single decent book on Yugoslavia? You cannot believe this? Well, I am sorry, but I know this well from personal experience when I was looking for a book myself to give it as a present to somebody. It was all in vain. The only thing I could buy if I wanted to--in Slovenian or Serbo-Croatian,

that is--was the book by Milovan Djilas and still another one written by Dr Ante Pavelic. There is not a single book about you. Actually I am surprised that the young from the ranks of political emigres have any information of the right kind about Yugoslavia at all."

This sounded like a complaint and regardless of its source I felt that it was coming from the right direction. However, my interlocutor was not yet through.

"And now I ask you this: if the young political emigres, or to be more precise, sons and daughters of the political emigres, are even, in view of such lack of information and absence of sources, so tolerant toward you as they appear to be, what would happen if you acted differently?"

[14 Jun 76, p 9]

[Text] "If you made it possible for them to become a little more familiar with this country of yours, to find out for themselves what is going on there? You cannot even imagine what an important influence this would be on their attitude toward their old country. Perhaps it is ridiculous that you're being told this by myself because I am, after all, one of them. I mean ridiculous because it sounds as if I were digging my own grave, but that is the way it is. The second generation of political emigres views the situation differently than their fathers. Many are much more tolerant toward all that is going on at home and some follow your development with friendly interest, like myself. After all, this is nothing strange because we are all of the same blood and the young among the political emigres to a great extent consider themselves to be Slovenians, like I do. And if they consider themselves to be Slovenians they are not indifferent to what is going on over there. At first they probably believed the stories told by their parents but now when they have turned 30 or 40 years of age they no longer believe them. If the things their parents told them were true, their attitude toward Slovenia and Yugoslavia would be hostile. They can see, however, that it is otherwise, but since they do not know the full story why should you not make the information available to them? I am ready to walk across the coals if quite a few of them would not even come home for good."

Visitors From San Just

"Passengers are requested to fasten seat belts and extinguish their cigarettes. Thank you."

The long cabin of a Boeing 707 was filled with the clapping of safety belt buckles as the passengers fastened them. This is always a slightly dramatic event because half of the passengers at least always feels slightly uneasy at landing.

This time the cabin of the Beoing 707 gradually descending on the glide path of the Rome Leonardo da Vinci airport was filled with excitement of another kind. People looking at the approaching ground through the windows would have a hard time explaining their feelings, but each of them was about to embark on an unusual adventure.

These were not the usual passengers, business men or tourists of which several thousands land each day at the airport of the Italian capital.

In the airplane were 145 members of the emigre "Slovenski Dom" in San Just, who after almost 30 years crossed the Atlantic again and returned to the old continent.

The Slovenian Home in San Just ostensibly chartered the airplane for a visit to Rome in a holy year but the great majority of the 145 political emigres boarding the aircraft at the Buenos Aires International Airport on the day of departure knew full well that this was only a pretense.

Their true final destination was not Rome.

When comfortable airconditioned busses transported the passengers from the airport to the city most of them did not remain in Rome for a single day but took the first train to the North.

Twenty-four hours later they were in Ljubljana--for the first time since the end of World War II.

They remained in Slovenia for a few weeks visiting friends, relatives, or acquaintances.

When the time set aside for "visiting Rome in a holy year" was up they gathered again at the Rome airport, boarded the plane and flew back to Argentina.... During the long flight across the Atlantic no one said a word about the marvels of the eternal city. The subject of all conversations was Slovenia.

They were comparing their impressions, telling what they saw, and describing their experiences.

Everybody had a different story to tell but there was something at least that all these stories had in common: not one of all these emigres had been harmed or molested in the slightest. No one was arrested, beaten up, or terrorized, even though some were convincingly predicting such things before the plane's departure from Buenos Aires.

"Whoever goes to the communists is taking his life in his hands. Just wait and see how Tito's police will lock you up. You will be sorry for your thoughtlessness." Such were the dismal predictions of the political emigre leaders directed at those who were going to their homeland or who were thinking of visiting it.

A Cordial Welcome

What happened was exactly the opposite.

The reception at the Ljubljana railway station was so cordial that many a visitor's eye filled with tears. They were met by friends and relatives, some in national costumes, with a song. There were no militiamen with submachine guns, no paddy wagons, no terror. Nothing but joy at the reunion with those whom they have not seen for a long time.

Then followed trips all over Slovenia and the incredulous wondering of the visitors who had for years heard stories about the miserable life and repression at home, but found something quite opposite on their return.

For some it was a real shock. Their former conceptions were shattered. First went the claims of the political emigre leaders who had for years drummed into their heads that any reports of advancement in the homeland were only lies and deceit and that in reality everything was going to the dogs.

[15 Jun 76, p 12]

[Text] Then followed their own old ideas which they brought with them after they left Slovenia 20, 25, or 30 years ago. Everybody carried with him a picture of the old country as he had last seen it--from the old Figovec Inn in the center of Ljubljana to the dusty road in his native place somewhere in Dolenjska or elsewhere.

And now they saw something quite different, something that could be compared with nothing else. Everything looked better, richer and although some people with whom they spoke on their visit made many caustic comments on the account of high prices, some poorly thought out regulation, or inefficient operation, it all amounted to nothing in comparison with the good things they had seen.

The visitors from San Just did not compare only the Slovenia of 1974 with the Slovenia of 1944 or 1945 but also with Argentina in both periods and it was the latter comparison that was particularly incredible.

"You are living better than we," was one of the most frequent observations made in the numerous conversations in the old country.

The true sensation, however, occurred only when the people from San Just returned to their Argentine homes and began telling their neighbors and acquaintances what they had seen. I hardly had a conversation in Argentina without someone mentioning it to me.

In the relatively closely grouped Slovenian settlements in the gigantic Buenos Aires even items of lesser importance travel very fast, let alone

the news of the visitors returning from Slovenia. Their impressions traveled by word of mouth. In some instances lectures with slides and motion pictures were given by the tourists.

May It Come Today

Then came the day when the bottom was kicked out of the barrel. My new Buenos Aires acquaintance told me about it at a glass of wine.

"When people at a meeting in San Just compared notes on what they saw in Slovenia on their visit a woman literally said the following in the hushed quiet of the room:

"If that is communism then I wish it would come to Argentina this very day without waiting for tomorrow."

"A few voices protested against such heresy but the majority was silent: the facts simply could not be denied. These facts directly and in a most convincing manner refuted the carefully nourished legend of many years about the horrors of the dictatorship at home. This is exactly how it was, so that you may know."

The return of the group from San Just caused a panic among the people in the leadership of the political emigre movement. There were, of course, other visits to Slovenia by others, before and after, but none involved so many people. Something had to be done, because the things told by the visitors in many instances destroyed the effects of many years' political propaganda against the socialist Yugoslavia. Accordingly, they intensified their earlier campaign against visits to the old country.

In the emigre papers several articles appeared pointing out that "no one should forget the crimes committed by the communists in the last war," and that the "seeming opulence and democracy in Yugoslavia must not dazzle and deceive those who visit the old country.

First priority was given to an intensive campaign against visits to Yugoslavia. It was conducted under the slogan that the visitors "indirectly recognized the communist government" and that it was "unbecoming for anti-communists to humiliate themselves," by visiting Yugoslavia.

Cliches of this kind, however, swayed but few. Whoever could muster his confidence and get hold of enough money, particularly the latter because a trip from Argentina to Yugoslavia is relatively expensive, went, the contrary propaganda notwithstanding.

The intensity of this propaganda mounted. It did not only manifest itself by the printed word but also in other ways.

Thus, for example, Edi Skulj, editor of the emigre tabloid VESTNIK was, in reprisal for his joining the San Just charter flight to Europe, removed from his position in an extremely humiliating manner.

Attacks

Somewhat later the same VESTNIK, which is published monthly in Buenos Aires as the voice of "Zveza Drustev Slovenskih Protikomunisticnih Borcev" [Alliance of Slovenian Anticommunist Fighter's Societies--ZDSPB], (an organization of former members of the white guard with a total of approximately 1,000 members in various local chapters throughout the United States, according to my Buenos Aires sources, and with headquarters in Cleveland) printed the following article under the title: "Some Questions to Our Compatriots Who Will Spend Their Vacations in the People's Republic Slovenia."

"The Communist Government in the home country is a dictatorship opposed to your democratic convictions. Why are you giving it recognition and support with your visit?

"You are giving it public recognition by asking its representatives for an entry visa.

"You are giving it moral support by not condemning the errors of communism and its governmental order being silent so that they may allow you to enjoy your vacations."

[16 Jun 76, p 12]

[Text] "You are giving it material support with your savings earned in freedom. If you did not support the communist party during the revolution why are you supporting it now?

"If there has indeed elapsed so much time after the mass murder of our national army and the bloody persecution of our democratically thinking countrymen that this tragedy should--in your opinion--be forgotten, why are these crimes still of current interest in our homeland which is evidenced by the government's attempt to cover them up or rationalize them away with lies?

"And you--surviving witness of communist crimes--have you forsaken the duty to bear witness to the truth?

"It is our duty to forgive our enemies but it is equally our duty to condemn error and crime.

"Will your visit be a protest or a condonation of the acts of executioners and dissemblers whom you will be politely meeting on the street?

"Do you wish to visit your relatives? What will you bring them? Our papers and journals, perhaps, or the poems of Balantic and Hribovsek, "Crna Masa" [The Requiem], "Pred Vratih Pekla" [Before the Gates of Hell], or "Odprti Grobovi" [The Yawning Graves]--or are you perhaps afraid? Why are you afraid if there is freedom in the People's Republic Slovenia?

"Will you, too, allow yourself to be interrogated by the representatives of that communist party which murdered people without giving them a hearing?

"They have no right to claim you! You are free! Why do you want to bend your back at all costs?

"No enemy exacted so many victims from the Slovenian people as the communist dictatorship against whom you fought. The events after your departure from the homeland have shown that you were right.

"Are you tired of fighting, of loyalty, and truth?

"Did you perhaps make a mistake when you decided to take up arms against communism? Did the communist party change in the meantime or did you? Has communism ceased to be atheistic, materialistic, repressive, undemocratic, and anti-people?

"Does all this no longer seem important to you?

"Materialism which is being imposed as the official doctrine of the state in the People's Republic Slovenia is destroying your people.

"Will your visit contribute to the revival of the national and religious ideals or will you carefully seek only your pleasure?"

Pathetic Questions

"Will you, too, fascinated by the tourist trade or scenic sights forget to visit the pits and other hidden mass graves of fallen fighters whom the authorities in the homeland still refuse to accord proper burial because they are, for them, officially still 'traitors.'

"They gave their lives for your security--will you disown them?

"The duty to resist communism rests primarily on the shoulders of our freedom loving countrymen at home. They deserve our respect! They are doing their duty but it is a question of whether you who have chosen the path of exile are still true to your own. Are you sure that you will help them with your visit?

"When you meet at home your countrymen broken or tempered by prisons and persecution how will you justify your silence, you, who having not yet been brainwashed, should bear witness to the world of their suffering and sacrifice?

"Will you, too, return persuaded that the government at home is the only one possible and forget that a just government cannot be founded on crime, as freedom cannot be based on lies.

"When you return, will you still be brave and free or will you allow them to plant the seeds of fear in your heart. Will you become more reticent and circumspect in case your travels should again lead you to the lands under the communist dictatorship.

"Have you ever asked what is your, what is our common mission in life? Do you really intend to exchange the corss of a political exile for the back-pack of an economic emigrant?

"Are we perhaps doing you an injustice? Are you truly an exception who is going to the People's Republic Slovenia with a mission? Perhaps. Only God and your conscience know the truth."

Despite the pathetic question at the end of his writing the author evidently could not conceal his despair over the fact that people nevertheless travel to their homeland and, worse yet, return with a different opinion of it than when they left. This is inadvertently revealed in the question "Will you, too, return persuaded that the government at home is the only one possible..." and in many other places in this article which although it may probably seem rather crass or even obscene to our readers is actually not out of the ordinary among the articles published in the emigre political papers. They used to startle me, too, at first but eventually I got used to them.

The above questions of VESTNIK are similar to others posed by similar tabloids and most likely to questions posed by the leaders of political emigre organizations when they were thinking about how they could stop the flow of visits to the homeland.

These visits, I am convinced, are the best evidence of the dwindling membership in the political emigre circles and also evidence of the widening gap between the members and the leadership, which is trying in vain to return their "subjects" to the old political mainstream or at least prevent the recently increasingly more overt expressions of friendship and positive attitudes toward the homeland.

Futile Endeavors

However, the efforts on the part of the leadership to change the attitude of the average political emigre toward his homeland are becoming increasingly more futile--and this assertion can be supported by numbers.

In the consular section of the Yugoslav embassy in Buenos Aires I was provided without hesitation with the following data. Between 1 January and 15 June of this year 159 emigres applied for entry visas in Buenos Aires alone. All applications were approved because no one is refused an entry visa. I was told that the consulate expected a few additional groups of visa applicants in the next few months. According to this a total of 400 Slovenian political emigres will visit Slovenia this year from Argentina alone. This may seem a rather modest number, but it should be borne in mind that according to rough estimates there are only some 5,000 of them in Argentina including the children. Accordingly, almost every tenth Slovenian political emigre from Argentina came for a visit this year.

And this is practically only the beginning for the first larger groups of Slovenian political emigres began to arrive to Slovenia only after 1970. Now more of them are coming every year, the year before the last, for instance, a little less than 300 came, last year there were between 300 and 400, and this year a few more than that.

A rather funny thing--but with a touch of bitterness--is the fact that many political emigres who come to our embassy are turned away empty handed because our diplomatic representation simply does not have enough magazines, papers, or pamphlets for distribution to the interested persons.

"I am sorry," said our vice-consul Mitja Strukelj, "but I really have almost nothing at hand. The embassy simply has no money for these things."

And so they leave, particularly the young ones, the embassy at 1705 Avenida M. T. de Alvear somewhat disappointed, but in any case without what they should get.

[17 Jun 76, p 9]

[Text] The only good thing about this, and a rather scant satisfaction, is that it may possibly be a quiet denial of the emigre leaders' claims to the effect that the "Yugoslav authorities use every opportunity to spread their lies." If this were true our embassy would be distributing a mass of papers, journals and records but, unfortunately, because of the parsimonious budget of the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs it does not.

This is rather inefficient because people who come to the embassy are coming voluntarily, no one is specifically asked to come. If they could get what they want this would be the cheapest and most direct propaganda one can think of. And, incidentally, embassies of nearly all countries throughout the world are doing this. Our embassy should be particularly interested in this, at least in the areas where there are active centers of enemy political emigration. Argentina, for example, is one of such countries. Some may take umbrage at these words, but to a journalist who makes his living by writing and can appreciate the power of the written word carrying on like this seems everything but rational--whether there is money available or not.

There may be other things that seem inefficient and this is precisely why one should speak out about them openly.

When I spoke with people in Buenos Aires who had visited Slovenia not a single one of them came back disappointed. Even a priest with whom I spoke in "Rozmanov Dom" the center of emigre clergy in Androgué a few dozen kilometers outside of Buenos Aires could not say a bad word about what he had seen in Slovenia.

Anger and Rage

The impressions gleaned in Slovenia are so favorable that some can no longer decide to go back to Argentina. I heard about the case of a former Yugoslav army officer's wife who initially came to Slovenia for only a few weeks and then took a job to stay there for a year! I was told this by her husband himself.

More frequent visits to Yugoslavia are also a consequence of the 1962 amnesty which washed away many taints and relieved many consciences. The primary reason for these visits, however, is the progress and achievements of Yugoslavia.

Everyone with whom I spoke agreed on that.

"Why should we not come back when you have everything so perfectly arranged that one can only envy you." I heard this statement time and again.

More than that. Some had engaged in long discussions with their hosts while on their visit to Slovenia when they expressed criticism about this or that weakness. In one instance it almost came to an argument when the "Argentines" began to defend something that was being caustically commented upon. I spoke with one of those "Argentines" and he became so excited during the conversation that I had to calm him down.

I honestly do not wish to engage in cheap propaganda or tell tall tales for grownups but these are things I heard from people who had not the slightest interest in flattery or in saying something else than what they thought.

The simple truth is that the political emigres who visited our country returned to Argentina very pleasantly surprised and that this fact caused anger and rage in the leadership circles.

[Portions of text apparently omitted]

By the end of the year people in the editorial offices of some Ljubljana papers and journals (JUTRO, SLOVENSKI DOM, and DOMOLJUB to name a few) found that they would have to think about their personal security because

of their collaboration with the occupation authorities. They feared retribution. Evidence of this is a letter sent by the questor [chief of police] of Ljubljana, Ravelli, to the command of the Italian XI army corps:

"Persons named below: Dr Tine Debeljak, Ludvik Klakocer, Rudo Jurcec, Janko Hafner, Viktor Cencic, Slavko Skoberne, Vinko Oblak, Rudolf Makovec, Franc Kremzar, Franc Zupan, Josko Kroselj, Jozef Kosicek, Joze Kesler, Mirko Javornik, all from the editorial offices of papers SLOVEN C, SLOVENSKI DOM, and DOMOLJUB, of good moral and political conduct have applied for permission to carry firearms for their own personal security. Your opinion is requested in this matter." Document of Questura Reale [Royal Police] No 20579, Ljubljana 29 October 1942.

Incidentally, the Italian military authorities accepted the recommendation of the intelligence officer Tornari and the commander of the 14th Carabinieri battalion Major Ettore to the effect that "it would be a mistake and a weakness to arm professional politicians..." and denied the request.

After more than 30 years this still relatively vivacious professor of Slavic languages from Skofja Loka clearly and openly stated his name and surname at introduction but he did not say what his profession was because no one even asked him about it.

Conversation With Dr Debeljak

We talked in one of the two rooms of Slovenska Kulturna Akcija [The Slovenian Cultural Society] at 4158 Ramon Falcon.

[18 Jun 76, p 12]

[Text] "Thus far we have already published 95 books," he said proudly as he wrapped some books in brown wrapping paper in which he was assisted by his wife who had joined him in Argentina a few years after he came.

This reporter who was probably acting somewhat naively and quite uninformed asked a candid question:

"Why are you doing this here? Why do you not come to Ljubljana and do your publishing there?"

Without hesitation he replied:

"Because I have no money for such a long trip to begin with and, moreover, because political reasons preclude my return."

"What reasons?"

"There is no freedom in your country. We shall return when there is freedom."

He did not say what freedom is lacking, to whom it is denied, or what kind of freedom should be there and for whom. I did not probe further either.

"Yugoslavia must publicly declare that it regrets all the errors and wrongs it has committed. Only when the authorities over there show a public sign of contrition will we consider the possibility of return, not before." I listened to this with a poker face waiting to hear more.

"They clamored so much about the Cominform although it all amounted to nothing!"

"What?"

"Just as I said. It was not you who broke with the Cominform--you were kicked out. Stalin did. They begged him on their knees to take them back but he held his own. That is what happened."

Astonished I nodded.

"Yes," said Dr Tine Debeljak, "do not be surprised. They would not tell this to you, the young, but we, the older generation know well how it was. No one can fool us."

Then the conversation touched upon the Croatian and Serbian emigres.

Without the Croats

"We are not working with them," he said. "The Croats want to secede and we are against it. We have no common ground with the Serbs, either. There is only one thing on which we all agree, namely, that the current Yugoslav regime must go."

"What would happen then?"

"Then? We would have a new government with several political parties. At least two in any case. Thus we could remain within a democratic federal Yugoslavia as an independent Slovenia. Perhaps not entirely independent but very much so."

In what respect would Slovenia be independent?"

"We would have our own army. The foreign policy, however, could be common to all Yugoslav states, as could the money."

I nodded and carefully inquired:

"What would the people say to this?"

"What people?"

"The inhabitants," I said like a schoolboy. "The Yugoslavs, Slovenians and others. Would they not bring up the wartime memories?"

"Wartime memories?" he said. "Where do they fit in here?"

"What I mean is who was on which side, who was fighting whom, and things like that."

"Oh, that," he said. "Well, the matter is very simple. We would be considered as liberators."

"You?" I asked startled more than one would expect from a naive interlocutor.

"Naturally," asserted Dr Tine Debeljak. "It was we who fought for liberty and justice spilling our Slovenian blood for a just cause."

"And the partisans?"

I was almost floored by his answer and for a long time thereafter I kept wondering whether he was pulling my leg thinking I was indeed a sucker from Ljubljana on a pleasure trip to Argentina or did he really believe what he was saying.

A Fantastic Assertion

He said verbatim:

"The partisans actually never fought against the Germans, instead they cooperated with them. They only fought against us."

At this I was left speechless. I mean this not only as a figure of speech but as a description of my actual state.

"Were you not aware of this?" he asked.

I shook my head.

"Of course," he said. "The Partisans never fought for freedom or against the Germans or Italians but only against the white guard, home guard, legionnaires, and rural militia. Both the Italians as well as Germans were openly shipping arms and equipment to the reds in the mountains. This is why we could not be too successful in resisting them."

And as if this were not enough he added at the conclusion of our conversation the following:

"The partisan leadership sought alliance with the Germans to prevent the landing of the Allies on the Adriatic coast because they both knew we were waiting only for that and they were afraid of us."

Despite all this our parting was fairly correct but as I was walking down the staircase toward the exit of the "Slovenian House" I kept shaking my head in disbelief.

Had I known then what I learned later the talk and assertions of Dr Tine Debeljak would probably seem less strange and incredible.

It was only later when I was visiting some other emigrants in Buenos Aires that I had the opportunity of reading some other books which were even more far out.

"The Truths"

For example:

"The communist party was the only Slovenian party that actually collaborated with the occupation powers against its own people...."

"The Italian occupation was the only salvation for the Slovenian people in its most fateful hour...."

"Italy gave to the Province of Ljubljana a magnanimous statute such as no other occupied European country enjoyed...."

"The Soviet Union was one of the principal parties responsible for the outbreak of World War II...."

"The partisans received weapons and other equipment from the Italian army both before and during the great offensive...."

"The Italian military command was much more afraid of the growth of the Slovenian anti-communist army than of the partisan army...."

"The Italians were always careful to preserve the partisan army in sufficient strength to tie down the forces of the rural militia and chetniks thereby preventing the latter from taking to the woods and beginning a true war of national liberation.

"The communists are ashamed to admit that the Italians were shielding them and providing them with all necessary supplies...."

"In the Fall of 1943 the partisans were, despite the substantial support from the Italians, at the brink of collapse...."

"General Cerutti, commander of the division 'Isonzo' in Novo Mesto was assiduously supplying the partisans with weapons and ammunition even before Italy capitulated...."

"The occupation authorities were guarding leaders of the Liberation Front and the National Liberation Army as the apple of their eye."

"The Italians assisted the partisans in destroying the chetniks."

"At the attack on Turjak there were more Italians on the partisan side than partisans themselves...."

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