

Translation

GSL - 502

December 12, 1950.

Subject : Dr. Ferdinand DURGAŃSKI,
political activity

Attached herewith is a report about the political activities
of Dr. Ferdinand DURGAŃSKI.

Source: Ladislav ŠEBEK, representative of the group of democratic
 Slovaks at the camp Valka.

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Summary
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Dr. Ferdinand DURCANSKY

I. Political activity until March 14, 1939.

Dr. Ferdinand DURCANSKY was born on December 18, 1906 in Rajec. He became deputy for the "Ludova strana" (People's party) - HSLS - in the Czechoslovak Parliament. The members of the first Slovak autonomous government, appointed by the central government in Prague, headed by Gen. Syrový were: for the HSLS - Dr. Ferdinand Durcansky, CERNAK for the agrarian party and TEPLANSKY and LICHNER. This event took place in Prague on October 7, 1938.

Durcansky together with Tiso, Mach and the rest of the Slovak fascist personalities, approved on February 8, 1938 the agreement about a mutual course of the HSLS and the SDF (Sudetendeutsche Partei). This agreement was signed by Andrej Hlinka with K.H. Frank, Arnost Kundt and Ing. Fr. Karasain, the leader of the Slovak Germans. Into this agreement was also incorporated the united Hungarian party of Esterhazy. Immediately after the Anschluss of Austria Durcansky and Mach negotiated in Vienna with the Sudetendeutsche Heimatbund through Rudolf Vavra; the purpose of these negotiations being the destruction of Czechoslovakia. He also took part in the organizing of a mass rally of the HSLS in Bratislava on June 5, 1938, during which the agreement of alliance was proclaimed between the USSR and Czechoslovakia. He prepared a memorandum for the immediate creation of a Slovak autonomy which was sent to Lord Runciman, with the knowledge that this will harm the international position of Czechoslovakia. In July 1938 they were among the founders of the "Hlinkova garda" into which they incorporated (as a cadre) members of the former anti-state organization "Tura's Rodobrana". In summer 1938 they sent to Prague deputy Stefan Hassik as a permanent representative of the HSLS. Hassik was also active as the liaison man between the HSLS and the leaders of Henlein's party. On September 19, 1938, upon the request of the German minister for Foreign Affairs, Ribbentrop, Durcansky agreed with the proposal to present to the constitutional authorities of Czechoslovakia such radical demands which would bring about a change of the democratic institutions of the Republic (Dr. Benes) and also unfulfillable requests to Prime Minister Dr. Hodza. Together with Tiso, Mach and the others they called a meeting of the executive committee of the HSLS for October 5 and 6, 1938 to Zilina, where a plan was worked out on the basis of which they forced the transfer of government and executive power and later also the legislative power to Slovakia. Immediately after October 6, 1938 they dissolved the communist party, the Social democratic party and forbade the activity of the Slovak National party. The other parties (agrarian, tradesman party etc.) merged with the HSLS. By official decree they allowed the activity of the Hlinkova garda and armed Tuka's Rodobrana. All the properties of the dissolved gymnastic associations were transferred to the Hlinkova garda. He took part in the holding of elections on December 18, 1938 into the Slovak autonomous Parliament according to the pattern of Nazism and bolshevism (one party without opposition). In the press and radio he provoked hatred and antagonism against the Jews. In October 1938 Durcansky and Mach visited Seyss-Inquart in Vienna and the following day Herman Goering in Berlin, where they presented the request that Germany should aid Slovakia to break away from Czechoslovakia. At this occasion they promised that an independent Slovakia would be in close cooperation with Germany in military, political and economic matters. On October 28, 1938 they discussed the same matter in

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Munich together with Tiso and Ribbentrop. Later they conferred also with other German and Croatian fascists. In October 1938 they asked the Government of the Third Reich and that of fascist Italy to decide about ~~the~~ the request of Hungary about ceding some Czechoslovak territory. He took part with Tiso and Dr. Krno (the representative of the Prague government - Ministry of Foreign affairs) in the discussions with the Hungarians at Komarno, with the Hungarian minister of foreign affairs - Kanja. Following this the entire southern part of Slovakia was ceded to Hungary on November 2, 1938.

In February 1939, behind the back of the official Prague Government, Durcansky and Tiso, together with others, commenced direct preparations for the break with Czechoslovakia. They sent to Berlin a delegation of economic and political officials for the purpose of working out with Goering the conditions of economic cooperation between Slovakia and Germany. Together with Mach they persuaded Ludovit Mutnansky to step up the attacks against Czechoslovakia within the framework of the Slovak broadcasts from Vienna and to prove that it is impossible for Czechs and Slovaks to cooperate in one mutual state and stress the importance to create an independent Slovak state. During the first half of March 1939, when the Germans were organizing unrests and disturbances on the territory of the II. Republic, Durcansky by his unwise steps and political demands brought about such an internal political situation between March 9-12, 1939, that it was easy for the German officials to make use of it militarily and politically to take measures against Czechoslovakia. Together with Mach they called to Slovakia groups of trained German terrorists who were supposed to execute attempts on the lives of political officials of the opposition. They took charge and accepted from the Germans explosives at Petrzalka, which were later used. On March 10, 1939 - (immediately after March 7 when the Prague government and Tiso's autonomous government were dissolved) Dr. Durciansky went to Vienna and in broadcasts exhorted the nation to resistance against Czechoslovakia and the Hlinkova garda. He ordered them to accept only his requests and to take over the power. The same day he made arrangements for Hitler to send his plenipotentiary to Bratislava to discuss the break of Slovakia from Czechoslovakia. He also sent ~~him~~ a memorandum in which he protested in the name of the Slovak government against the steps taken by the official government in Prague and asked for assistance of the German government for an independent Slovakia. On March 13, 1939 Durcansky and Tiso had discussions in Berlin with Ribbentrop, Hitler and others about the break of Slovakia from Czechoslovakia.

II. Activities during the existence of the Slovak state.

After the proclamation of the so-called independent Slovak state on March 14, 1939 by the Slovak Parliament, Dr. Ferdinand Durcansky accepted the function of minister of interior. He brought about the abandonment of the democratic system in Slovakia which resulted in the creation of a dictator-like regime in Slovakia, on the pattern of the Nazi regime and the closest cooperation with Nazi-Germany. On March 17, 1939 he signed an agreement with Hungary about cession of a part of southern Slovakia to Hungary. Durcansky and Tiso agreed that the

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Germans should disarm by force all Slovak military garrisons in western Slovakia and that the German army should take charge of the military factories at Dubnica and Povasska Bystrica. They also agreed that the German army should take over and transport to Germany all military material, weapons, gasoline, automobiles etc. in the value of over 2 billions Kcs, which considerably increased the stocks of the German army and decreased the Slovak national property. They also gave their consent for German consultant to be appointed to the Ministry of National Defense in the form of a military mission. In August 1939 they completed discussions and Tiso finally signed an agreement about the so-called defense zone in western Slovakia which rendered Germany outstanding assistance for the future conduct of the war against Poland and the USSR. Between March 18 and 23, 1939 Durcansky met with Herman Goering and signed an agreement with him about economic and political cooperation and inter-state payments between the so-called Protectorate Bohemia - Moravia and Slovakia.

In 1940 he took part at an agreement whereby Slovakia undertook to send workers to Germany (100,000 - 120,000 persons), who were forced to work in the Third Reich in different cities under dangerous conditions. It is necessary to add that the Slovak state accepted the obligation to pay in Slovak currency at home whatever the workers could save in Germany, out of funds of the National bank.

Durcansky as a member of the government of the Slovak state gave his consent together with others to reconstruct state highways, bridges and railroads so that they could serve Germany for military purposes and transport of material and personnel for their attack against Yugoslavia and Greece in 1941. He also participated in the military preparations against the western allies and the USSR. He agreed to send against the USSR a corps in the strength of 2 divisions (fast and technical) and together with others declared war on the USA on December 12, 1941 and also on Great Britain. He was also co-responsible that Slovakia signed the "Munich" Three power pact.

Durcansky ardently camouflaged the true facts and declared, especially during the time of the Slovak uprising in 1944-1945, that the Slovak state is independent, praised Adolf Hitler, the German Reich, uttered slander against the western powers and their government institutions. Already then, when it was clear to every one that the fall of Nazi Germany and consequently that of the so-called Slovak state is imminent, he began to make speeches emphasizing the unacceptance of a renewal of a Czechoslovak state and praised and defended the idea of a Slovak state.

In this period Dr. Durcansky was also guilty, as minister of foreign affairs, that he took part in the crushing of the Slovak uprising, when thousand of persons were liquidated by the HI, POHI and by the Germans, without any court procedure. Together with the chief of the propaganda office - T.J. Caspar he conducted a propaganda in the press and on the radio and through leaflets against the insurgents, branding them as traitors, bandits and criminals. They tried to persuade the insurgent soldiers to desert and also signed an agreement in secrecy whereby Slovakia supplied the German army and this action caused a loss of some

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7 Wilson Esp to the Slovak nation.

In the spring of 1945 Durewicz agreed with other Slovak family leaders that he will continue abroad his efforts about procuring or restoring the Slovak state and the Government of the High Republic to Crown. Durewicz's task was to organize abroad diplomatic and military actions. On April 3, 1945 Dr. Durewicz's files, both French files, Czech files and others left Slovakia and proceeded to America (Kramarsky).

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