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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE: 2003 2006

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of Eastern European Affairs
Polish, Baltic and Czechoslovak Affairs

March 2, 1951

To: S/P - Mr. Joyce
From: EE - Mr. Vedeler
Subject: Vojtech Krajcovic

Reference is made to Mr. Kelley's memorandum of February 6, 1951 requesting information on Mr. Vojtech Krajcovic of the National Committee for Liberation of Slovakia and the Department's views on cooperation with him by the NCFK.

Krajcovic, born February 4, 1914, was a minor functionary in Slovakia during World War II, employed in the Bank of Slovakia and in the Institute for Economic Research. It is reported that he was at one time a follower of Durcansky, but later he apparently participated in an effort of certain Slovak officials to seek a separate peace with the Allies in 1944. He was captured by the Gestapo at Sarajevo, Yugoslavia and put in the concentration camp at Mauthausen. After his liberation from there and a brief return to Slovakia, he went to Paris and then immigrated to this country in 1947.

In April 1948, Krajcovic visited this office together with Mr. Lukac in an effort to establish continuous contact with the political desk. At that time he made extravagant statements concerning widespread support for himself among Slovak Americans and other Slovak groups in Western Europe, and concerning the strength of his underground organization in Slovakia.

The Department did not encourage further contact and it was not subsequently maintained. However, Krajcovic, supported by the rightist and strongly separatist Slovak language newspaper in New York City, Slovak v Amerike, made an effort to obtain the backing of the Slovak League of America, a roof organization of Catholic Slovak American organizations, and other large Catholic groups, during the course of 1948. He did not succeed in this endeavor and plans to establish headquarters in Washington in the fall of 1948 apparently fell through.

In February 1949 the most powerful Slovak separatist groups in exile lined up behind two competing leaders, Karol Sidor and Ferdinand Durcansky. Sidor, a former leader of the Slovak Hlinka People's Party and Slovak Minister to the Vatican from 1939 to 1945, then resident in Rome, emerged as head of a reorganized Slovak National Council abroad, superseding a Slovak National Committee in London headed by Peter Pridavok. Ferdinand Durcansky, a former Slovak Minister of Foreign

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Affairs who was strongly pro-Nazi in 1936-1940 and was listed as a war criminal in 1946 by the UNWCC, reorganized his exile organization, the Slovak Action Committee, and renamed it the Slovak Liberation Committee on March 12, 1949. These realignments in the Slovak Separatist camps took place at about the same time as the organization of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia in Washington. On March 16, 1949 Krajcovic announced the formation of the National Committee for the Liberation of Slovakia.

A struggle ensued between the two most powerful separatist organizations, those of Sidor and Durcansky, for the support of Slovak American Catholic groups. Sidor had the inside track from the beginning and obtained the full support of the Slovak League of America at that time. The struggle continued, however, and broke out anew in the spring of 1950 when Sidor obtained a visa to visit the United States. Krajcovic was ignored during most of this period, but he did intervene against the granting of a visa to Sidor, stating to American authorities that Sidor had been pro-Nazi. He also reported that Durcansky was pro-Nazi, and that his own organization was the only Slovak group abroad which was both anti-fascist and anti-communist. It is apparent that he seeks to discredit other factions in order to leave the field free for himself. Apparently, however, he has had very little success thus far in making headway against the two other well-established groups.

His latest project of opening an office in the National Press Building and of registering his organization as a foreign agent with the Department of Justice (on January 25, 1951) is obviously an effort to reinvigorate his organization. However, whether in collusion or in counteraction, Durcansky's Slovak Liberation Committee promptly registered with the Department of Justice also, on January 30, 1951. At the same time, Philip Hrobak, President of the Slovak League of America and an ardent supporter of Sidor, has inquired through Congressional channels concerning Krajcovic's registration with the Department of Justice and alleged registration with the Department of State. Registration with the latter is of course a fictitious claim which he is attempting to exploit in advancing the interests of his organization.

The idea of forming a Slovak separatist group freed from connections with the old Slovak leadership tainted with collaboration with Nazism, and espousing a European Federation, might well have a definite appeal to democratic groups interested in the emergence of a separate Slovak state. Aside from the power of the other Slovak separatist organizations staffed with well-known former leaders of the Hlinka Party, his lack of support appears to be attributable to actions which result in the distrust of those with whom he deals. He is personally very ambitious. He makes extravagant claims, particularly with respect to his leadership of underground groups, which, on examination, have very little substance. The slightest courtesy on the part of American officials is immediately seized upon and distorted to his personal advantage. Even his protestations of opposition to Durcansky are open to question. He derives his principal support in the United States from ardent supporters of Durcansky, such as the Slovak y Amerike group.

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Krajcovic's lack of trustworthiness, his lack of support and his possible collusion with Durcansky are important factors for consideration in this case. In addition, the support by NCFE of any group advocating the break-up of Czechoslovakia is open to question. The position of the Department is that the people of this area should themselves determine under free conditions their own constitutional forms and development. The Slovak Republic of 1939-1945 was formed as a result of Nazi intervention and its leadership was involved in collaboration with the Nazis. A formal connection between NCFE and a strongly separatist Slovak group would therefore, in the opinion of the Department, have an unfortunate effect in alienating truly democratic elements abroad and in Czechoslovakia, and offer the Communists an opening for propaganda attacks along the lines that we seek the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in conspiring with former Nazi collaborators. It is felt that these disadvantages from cooperation with Krajcovic and his organization outweigh the advantages of support such a move would elicit from certain anti-Communist elements in Slovakia adhering to the concept of an independent Slovakia.

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