

Security Information

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22 August 52

SUBJECT: [redacted]

Transmittal of Report on Durcansky

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TO: Chief/EE
Washington, D.C.

INFO: Chief of Mission
Frankfurt, Germany

ATTN: [redacted]

ATTN: [redacted]

1. Enclosed herewith is a report on Durcansky written by [redacted] as requested by [redacted] while in the field recently.

[redacted]

Distribution:

- 3 - Wash w/l encls.
- 3 - Fran w/o encls.

Enclosure: HEREWITH

1. a/s

WEP/CDE/hmb

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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2003 2006

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SUBJECT: Dr. Ferdinand DURCANSKY; His Political Activities; Political Trials of Slovak Democratic Party Officials (Ursiny, Kempny, Bugar) and Their Affiliation with the Durcansky Movement.

Who is Dr. Ferdinand Durcansky, what have been his political aims and activities? Durcansky was graduated from the Law School of Komenskaho University in Bratislava and from the University of Political Science in Paris. His political activities were affiliated right from the beginning with the Hlinkova Slovenska Ludova Strana (Hlinka Party). Although young, he was able shortly after joining the Party to get an important position and much influence. He was known as a person whose driving force was not hindered by anything. He became publicly known especially as a fighter for Slovak autonomy and for standing on the side of the activists. "To reach the goal at any price and at any sacrifice" was Durcansky's motto. In October 1938 he became the member of the first Slovak Government as a Minister of Justice, later as a Minister of Communications. In the spring of 1939 he supported the movement for independence of Slovakia with the help of German Nazi leaders. His close friend and political collaborator (fma) MUTNANSKY was sent to Vienna, where through the help of Nazi radio (Radio Vienna) he broadcasted Slovak-language lectures supporting the independence movement. Durcansky was the man who in the critical time of March, 1939, left Slovakia for Vienna and looked for help to anyone who could support his personal aims. He established contact with top Nazi leaders (e.g. Baldur von Schirach) and prepared the way of his own political benefits at the expense of the Slovak nation's fate. He made the first step for the visit of Slovak politicians at the Fuhrer's headquarters and joined Dr. Jozef Tiso in his flight to Hitler's Headquarters. There, on 13 March 1939, they decided about the future of Slovakia and the next day proclaimed

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in Bratislava the Slovak Republic under the support and auspices of Germany and Hitler himself. Durcansky became in the first Slovak Government the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was a political radicalist and was behind the move of the purge of Karol Sidor, Minister of Interior. After Sidor's purge Durcansky took over Sidor's Government position too.

In 1941 a rumor spread in Slovakia that Durcansky accumulated around himself some individuals known as radical-politicians. The names of these politicians are as follows: Dr. Falath, Karol Murgas, K. Mutnansky, Dr. Obtulevic, Dr. Krajcovic, etc. The reputation of the mentioned persons was listed as unreliable. These people were against correct policy of Tiso and his Government, and pledged themselves for closer collaboration with the Nazis on the one side, but on the other side were making plans for the unlimited ruling of Slovakia themselves. Dr. Tiso as Slovak President met Hitler in the so-called "Salzburg meeting", succeeded in purging Durcansky from all high-level political positions, and in this way he (Dr. Tiso) was able to continue in his policy "to salvage for the Slovak nation whatever could be salvaged". Durcansky and his followers were not arrested or otherwise punished. They just had to give up their public activities.

The period 1941-1944 can be listed in regard to Durcansky as a non-political in the sense that he did not perform any public political activities.

After the Slovak uprising with the near battle lines in the East, and allied victories on the Western front, the Slovak Government realized together with Dr. Tiso that its existence was nearing the end. Durcansky,

** Other sources inform us that Durcansky was fired at the insistence of the Germans, who suspected him of dealing with the British - i.e. buying English wool for Slovak textile industry. This view more favorable to Durcansky.*

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on the other side hand viewed this possibility as his last chance to become a leader and take over the Government of the Slovak Republic. He started a new radical movement against the Allies based on anti-Communist propaganda. But it was too late for him to do anything. His last public appearance was at a radical-youth congress in Piestany. Durcansky left together with other members of the Government, high rank officials, Party functionaries, etc. for Austria or Germany.

Mr. Durcansky's name appeared on the official State Department list of War criminals as a proscribed Fascist.

The exile activities of Durcansky can be shortly divided into three parts:

1. First period: Common exile problems brought all Slovak political refugees together in one camp, based on the thesis of "continuation of the Slovak Republic". But this thesis could not last long, because of the legal establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic by peace treaties and United Nations acceptance.

2. Second period: Political efforts to form a common organization for establishment of freedom and independence of Slovakia. Durcansky proved himself once again as a radical, and after some arguments with Sidor and his followers Durcansky organized an independent separatist organization SAV* - Slovensky akcny vybor (Slovak Action Committee). Here are some leading names of his followers: Dr. Polakovic, Dr. Krajcovic, Dr. Meciar, Dr. Bartek, etc. The split was a result of two different political conceptions and characters. On the one side, Sidor with honest patriotism and love for Slovak nation; on the other side, Durcansky, political gambler, materialist and totalitarian who is using the Slovak

* Now SOV, Slovak Freedom Committee

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nation as an instrument of his desires.

3. Third period: Durcansky left Europe (came back last fall) for Argentina (the only country where he, as a Fascist, could find support) and pushed his activities through SAV (branch offices in Austria and Germany), using all means without concern to accomplish the goal of his personal benefit.

The case of Jan URSINY, Deputy Chairman of the Slovak Democratic Party and Deputy Prime Minister in the Czecho-Slovak Government from 1945 till October 1947.

In the middle of October 1947 the Communist Party represented by its Government members brought up charges against Ursiny on the basis of affiliation and illegal connections with the movement and organization of the "Second World War criminal, Dr. Durcansky". The charges were brought up on one of the Government meetings and were not given publicly at that time. The democratic members of the Government first considered the charges as a Communist Party move to compromise the democratic leaders, and in this manner to get rid of the fighters against Communist activities. The argument between the Communist leaders and the democratic parties' representatives went through 3-4 weeks with the final result of a compromise: Ursiny to resign from his government post and submit his defense story to the government. The Communist promised that, in the mean time, they would not make public the whole affair, and any further action would depend on a new government issue after Ursiny's defense story. But the Communists did not keep their word. In the beginning of November, 1947, the police (the police force was under the Communist Minister NOSEK)

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arrested all members of Ursiny's cabinet. The names of arrestees are as follows: Chief of the Cabinet Dr. Kubricky, Private Secretary Dr. Ondrus, Chief of the Legal Section Dr. Kalous, Press Secretary Jan Obuch, Secretary Lili Simakova, etc. All were released from prison in two days except Jan Obuch and Dr. Kubricky. Charges were brought up especially against Jan Obuch who was accused of being a cut-out between Ursiny and Durcansky's movement SAV. Ursiny was forced to resign sooner than agreed in the government meeting.

The Press Secretary Obuch was accused of maintaining contact with SAV movement in Austria and Germany through Durcansky's agents. Of all the agents of Durcansky, only a certain (fnu) Komandera was mentioned by name. (The name Komandera was known to the public in connection with the case Bugar and Kempny - see below). The police claimed that some compromising material was found in the safe and desk of Obuch's office: two letters addressed to Obuch from Germany brought inside of Czechoslovakia by couriers, propaganda material and newspaper issues published by SAV, proved connections with members of the Slovak separatist movement in Italy (probably Udine, where was located the Radio-broadcast station of SAV), etc.

During the police interrogation, Obuch claimed that he informed Ursiny on all issues, that he maintained the connections with Ursiny's blessing, that he shipped some secret Government material to SAV on Ursiny's advice, etc. Komandera also claimed during the police investigation that Ursiny knew all about it. On the other hand Ursiny denied all charges and claimed he never spoke with Obuch about the matters under inquiry and

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did not maintain any connections either directly or indirectly with Durcansky or SAV movement.

Ursiny was arrested shortly after the Communists took over in February 1948. He was brought before a political trial in March 1948, was found guilty on all charges and sentenced to seven years in prison.

From my own experience, I know for sure that the private secretary of Ursiny, two days before the Police search, broke into the desk and safe of Obuch to find out if there was any compromising material as claimed by the Communist charges. He did it on orders of Ursiny and of the Secretary General of the Slovak Democratic Party. The Private Secretary took a bunch of material from Obuch's desk but did not get a chance to go through the safe. The mentioned Secretary is now in exile working for Voice of America in New York. There is no question that Ursiny knew about the activities of Obuch and that he discussed the matter with him. The question is only how far Ursiny agreed with these activities.

Persecution and political trial of Dr. Kempny and Dr. Bugar because of affiliation and contacts with Durcansky's movement.

According to the agreement between the Slovak Democratic Party and the highest representatives of the Catholic Church before the last free elections in Czechoslovakia in spring 1946, Kempny and Bugar became members of House of Representatives for the Slovak Democratic Party and Secretaries General for the same Party. They both were

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Catholics with good relations with the Catholic hierarchy.

The Communist Party tried from the beginning of 1947 to compromise by any means the democratic leaders, especially the individuals who were fighting Communism without fear. As a part of the mentioned Communist move was an attack against Kempny and Bugar. The attack was a public one on the base of anti-Government activity, affiliation with the Slovak Separatist movement in exile, spying for the mentioned movement, etc.

After this public attack Kempny and Bugar were put before the House investigation and immunity Committee. Before the immunity Committee the Communist members supported by the Social Democrats brought charges against both of them (Kempny and Bugar): They accused them of moral and financial supporting of the Slovak Separatist movement in exile, of connections with agents working with Durcansky and the SAV organization, of spying for the mentioned organization, etc. As witness the Communist brought a certain (fnu) Komandera who according to the Communist was an agent (courier type) of Durcansky and was caught by the Czechoslovak police after being shadowed for weeks. Kempny and Bugar denied all charges. The House Committee with the votes of Communist and Social Democratic members against the votes of democratic members by a majority of two released Bugar and Kempny for a regular police investigation and trial procedure.

The public opinion was that the charges were contrived to incriminate the subjects, and that Komandera was an agent-provocateur of the police.

The trial took place only after the Communist coup d'tat. Kempny

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and Bugar were sentenced to long prison terms, although they both pleaded not guilty on all charges, Komandera, the police witness, testified that Kempny and Bugar were carrying on the contact with him giving him financial support and reports for SAV. (Kempny admitted only that Komandera tried once to approach him, but that he himself did not commit and collaboration with the witness).

In May 1948 I met in Germany and spoke with a Slovak political refugee (an engineer - I do not recall his name) who came to Germany in 1945 and was a prominent member of Durcansky's movement. The mentioned person who was living in an Ukrainian DP camp at Regensburg told me that Komandera was his roommate in 1945-1946. He knew also that Komandera's mission in Slovakia was to make contact with prominent representatives of the Catholic Church. The engineer testified also that Komandera accomplished in 1946 a few mission to Slovakia very successfully, and that he did not return from one of them because he was caught in Slovakia by the Czechoslovak police.

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