

ANTUN NOVAK

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NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Antun Novak is a former official of the Yugoslav Embassy in Prague, who asked the Czechoslovak government on March 31, 1951 to grant him the right of asylum because he does not agree with the policy of the present government of Yugoslavia and the methods of Tito's Embassy in Prague.

Antun Novak's booklet, I Served Tito, records a chain of events which overtook Novak or his friends among the ranks of the partisans. These events form a picture of the political development of Yugoslavia during the last ten years. The events which befell ordinary people, as described by Novak, only go to prove the justness of the political analysis contained in the resolution of the Information Bureau. These events show how far back the treason of Tito and his clique dates. The intentional slaughter of the proletarian brigades and the seemingly miraculous survival of the officers' corps in these units, proves that even during the war the Titoites were purposefully and criminally destroying the flower of the Yugoslav working class.

We present this booklet to our public with the wish that it be used as an instrument against American imperialism and also therefore in the fight to maintain world peace.

P R E F A C E

I have never written even an article, let alone a book. It never occurred to me that in the struggle for the liberation of Yugoslavia, in the struggle against fascism, I should have to fight with the pen. I do not know how to, I have not the necessary schooling. In my whole life I attended school altogether five years, and only the elementary school, at that. Circumstances, which I shall describe, forced me to write this booklet, in order to reach the widest masses of the public. Therefore, I beg my readers to judge it rather for its content than for its form.

I deal most often with the affairs in my native village of Vratišinec in Croatia, because there I can point to concrete cases, known very well to me, which illustrate the perversity of Tito's policy, and paint a picture of a village, a picture which is typical of present-day Yugoslavia. In Vratišinec, just as everywhere else in Yugoslavia, one can see the removal of old partisan fighters, and their replacement by the village rich, pseudo-experts in industry, and by former collaborators with the Hungarian and German fascists. In Vratišinec one can also see how Tito's government has constructed for itself a different foundation from that on which it rested during the fight against the occupants. From my description of the conditions in our region and the fate of the partisan fighters who remained faithful to their ideals, for which during the war they went into the hills and woods to fight, one can get a clear

picture of the Tito regime, from whom it gets its support and who is against it.

During my stay in Czechoslovakia I realised that there are only two camps in the world, the camp of peace, at whose head stand the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies and the camp of the new aggressive war, led by the Anglo-American imperialists. I do not want to remain an onlooker in the fight for peace.

The ideals for which I fought in the partisan units, together with my comrades during the Nazi occupation, have been betrayed by Tito's clique. Today, instead of a regime strengthening peace and building Socialism, there is a terrorist, fascist regime; and instead of friendship and love towards the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, a policy of hatred towards these countries and pact-making with Truman, Churchill and Attlee.

So also in the fight against the fascist Tito, whom the American imperialists have entrusted with the role of Chiang Kai-shek or Syngman Rhee in the Balkans, the struggle for the maintenance of peace is our main task. The more Tito's servitude to the imperialist war-plotters is revealed, the more his political basis in Yugoslavia is narrowed, and the more difficult it becomes for him to retain his power.

J. V. Stalin in his interview with the correspondent of *Pravda* showed clearly that it is possible to safeguard peace and that the safeguarding of peace is not only in the interests of the working people of all nations but primarily it is in their hands. By our fight for the liberation of Yugoslavia from Tito's fascist dictatorship we are contributing to the maintaining of world peace.

WHAT I FOUGHT FOR

I received a political schooling from my childhood. I had the best political teacher anyone can have. I was schooled by the poverty-stricken life of a peasant family of the Medjumurie region in Croatia. My parents tilled their two hectares of land and one can imagine what a living such a small piece of land could provide and how much remained for the realization of their life's dream: to secure a better life for my brother and me.

It is only natural that my brother and I had to work from childhood and help our parents in obtaining the barest necessities. It was not easy at that time, in the thirties, when at the age of twelve I left school. I never succeeded in finding any other work besides helping the wealthier farmers. All the year I used to hope that at least for a few days in the summer I should get work on the building at the mine-head at Mursko Središće. There was no hope of my getting work in the mine. And so, besides helping my parents till their two hectares, the only work which remained to me was that of kuluk. For father, as for all the male inhabitants of Croatia, work on the state roadways for six to ten days a year was obligatory. This compulsory work was known as kuluk. Rich farmers could evade this duty by paying cash. Of course in our family we could not entertain such an idea. So I went in father's place to work on the roads. Four days of my work were counted as one day of father's work.

While I was at school the teacher was always telling me I ought to study, that I ought not to leave school at twelve years, and so I thought that I should succeed in learning at least some kind of a trade. Then I should have an easier life than my father. I should have liked to have learned to be a turner or a locksmith or something like that, because I had always fancied working at a machine. But with such a small, undeveloped industry few boys were taken on as apprentices. If you did not know someone among the foremen or if your

father did not offer the expected amount of gifts, you were not accepted into apprenticeship. So my attempt to become an apprentice in the maintenance of the coal-mines at Mursko Središće came to nothing.

So it is not surprising, that from childhood I hated the system in which the poor had not even the right to work. How many times was I consumed with helpless anger. How many times I racked my brains as to why it all was like this. How many times I saw that father would rather have abandoned his two hectares in our district and sought work elsewhere.

Such was the situation till the end of March, 1941, when my father, who was now over forty, was called up for military service on the Yugoslav-Austrian frontier. About eight days later, on Sunday, 6th April in the morning, the Germans invaded Yugoslavia and from the next day our family lived in German occupied territory. After some time the Germans gave place to Hungarians and our country was annexed by Hungary.

To the anxiety about a livelihood was added the anxiety for life itself. The Germans began to give us practical lessons in fascism. They started arresting people in our Vratišinec on the second day after their arrival. Not even the traitor to his own people was missing. German soldiers came to our house looking for arms; the Mayor of Vratišinec, Djuro Premoš and the priest, Henryk Kroder brought them. They did not find any arms but that did not stop them from arresting my brother, Mijo. At the same time they arrested Vinko Vrančić and Josip Matoša. They tied my brother up in a bundle and took him off in a sidecar.

So with the arrival of the Germans there began for us a terror worse than that of King Alexander. Uncertainty reigned. People showed themselves in a new light. Ordinary, unknown people left their homes and began a hard, relentless fight against the occupants in the hills and woods. At the same time below in the village the rich farmers, who before the war used to turn down our social demands with patriotic phrases,

betrayed the people for the second time and made pacts with the Hitlerites. While in the village the Mayor, Premoš, and the priest, Kroder, were pointing out to the Germans citizens of progressive opinions, thereby laying them open to persecution, the first partisan units had begun to be formed in the hills. It was logical, that the partisan units consisted mostly of poor people, who had struggled hard for a living, as I had and as had Vinko Vrančić and Josip Matoša, who, as I have said, were arrested by the Germans immediately after their arrival, but who managed to escape from the camp and to help then in the fight to drive out the invaders. Vrančić later performed the important but dangerous function of messenger between the partisan units in the hills and the civilian population in the village.

The fascist occupants raged. Captured partisans were publicly executed. People who were suspected of co-operating with and helping the partisans and those who were suspected of sympathising with them were arrested, maltreated and sent to concentration camps.

My aunt, Maria Šimonić, was arrested because she had cooked for the partisans. She was sent to the concentration camp at Dachau, from whence she returned a year after the war, crippled for life. Her seventy year old father was arrested because he left her milk for wounded partisans. In the presence of his daughter he was beaten so badly that his whole face dripped with blood. He did not receive medical attention and infection got into the wound, which finally resulted in his death.

My father was arrested because someone denounced him for sympathising with the partisans. I was left alone with mother. This was too much for her and for me, a seventeen year old lad. I could not control myself and while talking with people in the village I loudly protested against my father's arrest. Someone denounced me. I was interrogated by the Chetniks and cruelly beaten. After my release not even my mother's tears could hold me back. Rather than remain in

uncertainty somewhere in a German camp, where sooner or later I should be beaten to death or at the least maimed, I would rather perish with arms in my hands but before perishing I would fight for my life and for a better life for our people.

So I became a partisan. Luckily it did not take me long to get into contact with a partisan unit. Four others left Vratíšinec with me. Three of us were sent to the brigades of Matej Gubec and the brothers Radić. Gust Vugrinec and I were sent to a Zagreb youth battalion which was afterwards incorporated in the elite unit of the Third Croat Brigade of "National Defence".

Military training in the partisan unit was simple. Gradually when we were not on the march, one of the older partisans taught me how to handle various arms. I soon mastered the German automatic, Schmeisser, and various kinds of rifles, light machine guns and grenades and that was sufficient for my military training. We were almost continually on the march. We never remained in one place for more than two days.

The political commissar made use of every halt, of every spare minute, to raise our political standard. We used to read the partisan newspapers, mainly *Borba* and *Napried* and the mimeographed *News*, containing chiefly reports about allied military successes. This schooling, even though it was not regular, had a great influence on each of us and made of us a really unified, elite, fighting unit. Examples of the heroism of the Red Army in this war and the history of the partisan fight of the Soviet people at the time of the Revolution awoke in us the desire to go their way, to fight the enemy as hard and successfully as the Red Army men and the Soviet partisans. We used to return singing from the fight. We used to sing our own Croat songs and songs of the Soviet partisans. We learned them from one another. We created new songs for ourselves, songs which corresponded to our present situation, by writing new Croat texts to the melodies of Soviet songs.

The political schooling made my class interests clear to me and explained to me my past life. As a young boy I had hated the life in which our whole family was dependent on two hectares of soil and in which all doors to a different, better way of life, to schooling and education, were closed to me. All at once I began to understand everything consciously, from the class point of view and I began to understand, too, the laws of social development, to think and act according to them. A hatred began to grow in me, an informed, conscious hatred towards the German occupants, towards the Ustasha bandits, towards our own Croat bourgeoisie and their paid agents.

This schooling was not only a school of hatred but a school of love, too. Just as I had learned consciously to hate, so I learned consciously to love. I learned to love our people, our country, our fight, our way of life. I loved to dwell on thoughts about my future life, the life of a Socialist man. I looked forward to the building of a Socialist Yugoslavia. This made me even less willing to wait patiently for the victorious end to our fight.

I began then to love the Red Army, to love it for its victorious battles through which it was liberating its Socialist motherland and through which, at the same time, it was helping us to liberate our Yugoslavia. I loved it because I knew that without its hard but victorious fight against the Hitlerite occupants, our successful fight in Yugoslavia would not have been possible. Our fierce desire to fight the Germans grew with the consciousness, that with each Hitlerite we killed and with each German weapon we seized or destroyed, we were drawing nearer not only to the liberation of our Yugoslavia, but also to the liberation of the Socialist country, the Soviet Union and of the other countries, occupied by Hitler's troops. Our love for the Soviet Union and our joy at each success of the Soviet armies knew no bounds. Each report of a victorious battle of the Red Army spurred us on anew to fight against the occupying forces in our country.

How great was our joy when we first caught sight of Soviet-

made tanks! Some of our partisan units in Serbia and our partisan units near to the Rumanian frontier were better off in this respect than we were in Croatia. They received Soviet arms sooner than we because they had direct contact with the Red Army whose units had fought their way into Rumania. These partisan units of ours were mechanised and armed with modern Soviet weapons, while we in Croatia had only light Soviet automatics and were otherwise dependent only on arms which we captured in our fight against the Germans. When our eastern partisan units, mopping up after the retreating Germans, reached us in Croatia and we saw for the first time tanks produced in the Soviet Union, Soviet heavy mortars and Soviet guns, it was a memorable day for us, it was the beginning of the realisation of great dreams. The arms which the Soviet Union delivered to us at a time when she had not enough for her own fight against the Hitler occupants, were for us the most eloquent expression of the aid by which the Soviet people were helping us in our fight to liberate our country. Soviet automatics and Soviet guns were the fraternal help of the Soviet Union to the Yugoslav people, fighting for their liberation.

Our growing political consciousness expressed itself also in our increased physical achievements. Suddenly we were able to bear exertion of which we had not even dreamt before. We achieved performances of which only a conscious fighter for Socialism is capable. When in November, 1944, we were given the task of fighting our way through from the Kalnik mountains to the north of Zagreb to the Moslavačka mountains to the east of Zagreb, we had to cross several flooded rivers and streams in the Croat plain. As we had to avoid the villages and could not march along the roads, we had to force our way through a difficult, flooded, muddy terrain. During three days of continual rain we crossed rivers and streams sixteen times at places where there were no bridges. We forded streams sixteen times in three days, breast-deep in water and with arms at the ready. There were about three hundred of

us. No one hesitated once. Physically this life was more arduous than the work on our two hectares of soil before the war. But otherwise how much easier was this life! The thought that we were driving the Hitlerite occupying forces out of our country, the thought that at the same time we were gaining political power for the hitherto oppressed class, the thought that we should use this power to set ourselves on the path to Socialism, with the USSR for our example, and that the Soviet Union's experiences would make our path easier for us—these thoughts changed physically weary partisans into fresh, conscious, proud fighters.

The civilian population in its overwhelming majority was on our side, on the side of the fighting partisan units. They used to give us reports about the movements and intentions of the enemy, they looked after our wounded comrades, and practically fed all our units. We had no military kitchen or food store. We ate only what we received from the civilian population, who gave gladly and who often gave us their last. Poor people in the villages, from whom the Germans and the Ustasha units had confiscated everything they could lay hands on, used to send us bread and in places where we felt more safe we used to go for meals right into the houses of the civilian population. Our contact in the village drew up a scheme by which each family had one to three partisans for meals according to the circumstances of the family. I remember how in the village of Daskatice near Čazma in the region of Moslavačka, the inhabitants decided, that at Christmas our unit would be their guests. They divided us up among the families and each one of us received the same as each member of the family. Next morning we had to leave for the hills again. Elsewhere, where it would have meant unnecessary risk of life to go into the village, the village youth used to bring food to us to the woods. In this way the civilian population expressed its love toward us partisans, in this way it showed its agreement with our fight to drive out the Hitlerites and their capitalist allies from the ranks of our own nationals.

The civilian population of many villages consisted only of old folk, women and children. The young men had left for the hills. Even in the villages which we had only temporarily liberated from the Germans, we helped the villagers with their domestic work or their work in the fields. We arranged public meetings, at which we explained to the population what we were fighting for. The political commissar usually spoke about the present situation. He showed how we were drawing near to the realisation of our aims and explained how the civilian population could contribute to the victorious end of the war. These meetings of ours, which we usually concluded with a survey of the history of the partisan battles and with Soviet and partisan songs, were very popular. People liked us also because we never stole anything from them, because we took only what they themselves voluntarily gave us and because it was known about us that the least offence met with a most severe punishment, the use of which was seldom necessary, for our political standard had resulted also in a high moral standard. Every partisan tried by his exemplary behaviour to show the civilian population the falseness of the German and Ustasha gangs' propaganda which tried to persuade the world that the partisans were bandits.

The civilian population looked after us in every way. From providing us with food, knitting socks, sweaters and gloves for us for the winter, to giving us important information about the Germans, Ustasha units and traitors, all this was the civilian population's contribution to our anti-fascist, liberating struggle.

We were enthusiastic with the perspective for our future. We were convinced that nothing could deter us from our path, the path which led to the driving of the occupants from our country and to the building of a Socialist order in Yugoslavia. We thought foolishly that as each of us was obliged continuously to pass verification tests there could be no more traitors among us.

I had to pass such a test immediately on joining the partisan

unit. My past was examined very carefully as to whether at any time I had had any contact with the enemy. My first verification test was based on the report about me given by the partisans' representative in our region. These regional representatives, whom we called terrainers, had the task of giving reports to the partisan units about the movement and intentions of the enemy and the mood of the civilian population, about traitors and those who collaborated with the occupants and about the past of individuals seeking admission to the partisan units. They also suggested to the partisans plans of campaign and how to carry them out.

On the basis of this report my past and present work and my attitude to the party line were verified. And from that time, like all the partisans, I had to pass again and again such verification tests. Our political reliability and our devotion to the fight were best verified in our carrying out of the concrete fighting tasks entrusted to us. The verification tests were carried out by the Communist Party together with the Union of Communist Youth. All of us, including non-party men, had to go through these verification tests. The criterion for these verification tests became more and more severe all the time. The tasks set at the verification tests became bigger and more difficult. The aim of these constant verification tests was the unceasing endeavour to purify our ranks, to increase our fighting ability, to bring our voluntary discipline to a higher level and to raise our political consciousness so that we should all become the best fighters against the Hitlerite and Ustasha gangs, the most useful fighters for a Socialist Yugoslavia.

When today I recall our constant and severe verification tests, I am amazed to see how in spite of all that vigilance, we were blind where we should have been most vigilant. We constantly put each other through these verification tests, we the simple, ordinary people, the rank and file partisans in the ordinary and elite partisan units. We were very severe on each other. By constantly raising the criterion we believed that we should prevent traitors from infiltrating among us.

Our vigilance towards those above us, towards the high command, and the leading personalities at the head of our fight, was lulled by a blind faith that the higher the functionary the more perfect the partisan fighter, the more devoted the fighter for Socialism, the more loyal the ally of the Soviet Union. Today it seems incredible that we put only each other through these verification tests and that it did not occur to us to carry them further to the high command, although even at that time we had good reason to submit even the high command to verification tests.

What about the case of the sacrificing of Matej Gubec's brigade in the Spring of 1945, when after the offensive out of a brigade of seven hundred partisans, a mere sixty or seventy remained? Was not that a serious reason to submit to a verification test the high command which had made the decision on using the brigade? Or let us take the example of the tragic fate of the proletarian brigades. For instance the Thirteenth Proletarian Brigade which consisted of the best Zagreb workers, was several times so badly massacred that it had to be reformed with new rank and file members, but the officers miraculously survived each disaster of the brigade. Why did we not look more closely then? Perhaps we should have discovered what was in fact concealed in Marko Milić, who was an officer in that brigade and who today combines the functions of Yugoslav Chargé d'Affaires in Prague and paid agent of American imperialism. Perhaps we should have saved the lives of our best and most valuable proletarian fighters and by the timely unmasking of traitors in the high command, we should have saved our sorely tried country the necessity of struggling anew today for her liberation. The knot of traitors in the highest places, unrecognised by us at that time, began only after the war to unravel itself slowly and gradually. But nothing can excuse the fact that we, the rank and file members of the partisan units were not vigilant enough. Many of our best and politically most mature partisans, as they seemed to me during the war, would certainly today be tireless partic-

ipants in the building of peace and a Socialist order in Yugoslavia, were it not for treason in high quarters as a result of which the best sons of Yugoslavia are today languishing in Tito's jails, are expelled from the party or have to save themselves by fleeing abroad. I shall mention only a few examples of the large number of those, who instead of becoming builders of Socialism, have become the victims of the traitorous clique of Tito, Ranković, Kardelj, Pijade, Djilas, Bebler and company.

I remember my first political teacher. His name was Blažon and I met him on my way to the partisan unit. He was commander of an elite group of diversionists, who used to blow up trains, bridges, warehouses and power-stations in the rear of the enemy and organise sudden attacks on German troops. Another task of Blažon's group was the winning of new cadres for the rank and file of the partisan units. For years the words of Blažon, which he addressed to our group of unarmed partisans, when the well armed enemy blocked our path, accompanied me. Blažon maintained our fighting morale by reminding us that our convictions, our class consciousness, the fact that all the people were with us, were our best weapons—more powerful weapons than the developed technique of the enemy and that with these weapons of ours in the end we must defeat the enemy. To me Blažon became an example of a heroic, courageous partisan, an admirable, conscious, political fighter, a convinced adherent of scientific Socialism and a devoted political worker, whose aim was a Socialist Yugoslavia and whose pattern the Soviet Union. Blažon has remained an example to me today, an example in whose footprints and whose fight I want to continue. When the resolution of the Information Bureau of the Communist Parties unmasked before the world agents of imperialism in leading positions in Yugoslavia, loyal fighters for Yugoslavia's adherence to the camp of peace began to be expelled from the Communist Party, gradually removed from the army, from the state administration and from important positions in industry, persecuted, arrested and tortured. So it came to

Blažon's turn, too. He was removed from the army, expelled from the party and after his arrest all traces of him disappeared.

In particular the oldest partisan fighters began to be removed, the founders of the partisan units and those who took part in the struggle already in 1941. Vinko Vrančić who, the day after the entry of the Germans into Vratišinec, was arrested on the denunciation of the priest, Kroder, and the Mayor, Premoš and who succeeded in escaping from a German prison camp, this Vrančić who, from the very beginning stood on the side of the people against the German occupants, early in 1949, when he occupied the position of Party secretary in Vratišinec, was expelled from the Party. What a different fate befell the denunciator, Premoš! In the time immediately after the war he was clever enough to evade the People's Court and punishment for his activity during the occupation. He was actually later on sentenced as an "enemy of Socialism and an enemy of the Soviet Union", because he propagated in our region the "American way of life", because he wanted us to establish co-operative farms not on the pattern of the Soviet Union but on the pattern of Australia. Premoš did not suffer for long because of his premature public stand for a policy which the leadership of Tito's Yugoslavia is today carrying out. Shortly after the resolution of the Information Bureau Premoš was released from jail and today he holds in our region a position which would have been better filled by his former victims, like Vrančić.

After the publication of the resolution of the Information Bureau many who had collaborated with the Hitlerites during the war were, like Premoš, released from prison. People who had been sentenced as war criminals, people who had helped the Hitlerite occupants in the fight against the Yugoslav people, against the Yugoslav partisans, were released from prison, and were replaced by brave partisans who were found "guilty" of loyalty to the Soviet Union and to proletarian in-

ternationalism, of loyalty to the ideals for which they had already once fought with arms in their hands.

Tito's government began by degrees to remove partisan and workers' cadres from industry and from the state apparatus, local government, the officers' corps in the army and elsewhere. With the excuse that it was necessary to replace them by experts, former partisan and workers' cadres were returned to their original occupations or were sent to work in the mines and in their places the "experts" were reinstated, who had been thrown out before on account of their political unreliability for the interests of the working people, and because they were often directly harmful and dangerous. All this was done gradually, unobtrusively so that it should not provoke too much resistance. Under the false title of "democratisation", "Socialism" is being built in our country like that being created in Great Britain by the Labourites. The restoration of capitalism is being step by step realised in Yugoslavia against the will of her working people, against the will of the partisan fighters and patriots, silenced or imprisoned or at the least expelled from the party.

A relation of the denouncer, Premoš, Djuro Premoš became the manager of an oil plant in Donja Lendava in Slovenia. It did not matter that this same Premoš had been a leading figure in the oil business in this very place before the war and that he was already then a faithful servant of the German and French firms owning these oil fields. He refused to employ our people. During the war he continued in his job in the oil plant, this time in the service of the Nazis. After the war, to evade punishment and to deflect attention from himself, he worked for some time in a lower position. At that time also he showed his true face as a worker in the pay of Western capitalism. The machines, turbines and other equipment for oil-drilling which we were then receiving from the Soviet Union so that we could replace the equipment looted by the Germans, he described as of a quality inferior to the German products and as not

suitable for the efficient drilling of oil. At first he did so only in hints and in private conversations, later on more loudly and openly and after the resolution of the Information Bureau quite publicly. He did so intentionally and with the aim of undermining faith in the capability of Socialist production in the Soviet Union. This old, sworn and experienced enemy of the working class was not tried and punished after the war for his former harmful activity and today he has even been re-instated to a leading position by the Tito government.

Day after day they are taking on more Premošes into leading positions. The return to capitalism is progressing at an ever increasing pace. For example many Macedonian businessmen and tradesmen, especially confectioners, who left Yugoslavia for Czechoslovakia at the time when trade in Czechoslovakia was only in private capitalist hands and in Yugoslavia was already nationalised, today are returning joyfully to Yugoslavia, because in Czechoslovakia the last remnants of private capitalist trading are in irrevocable retreat, whereas today in Tito's Yugoslavia shops are being returned to private capitalist ownership. The transfer of Yugoslavia from the camp of peace, led by the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, to the camp of aggressive war, to the camp led by the American exploiters, is being done gradually but still more and more rapidly and openly. Important obstacles in this development, the most politically conscious workers and partisans, have been removed. Many of them were sent to certain death in hazardous actions, ordered by the traitorous command before the war was over. Those who survived were step by step, one after another, unobtrusively, under various pretexts, removed from their positions and replaced by "experts" of the type of Djuro Premoš. The more of them were removed, the quicker became the tempo of the transfer of Yugoslavia to the camp of the American imperialists, and of the renewal of capitalist economy in Yugoslavia. Many of the tried fighters from the time of the war were purposely not admitted to positions where they could influence

the political and economic development of the building of Socialism in Yugoslavia.

In the partisan unit I made friends with two comrades from our parts who before the war worked on the oil fields at Selnice and Peklenice. They often used to talk to me about their work, which they had enjoyed and which interested me, too, though I, myself, had not been able to get such work on account of the pre-war conditions I have already described. We often used to plan in our conversations how after the war we should purge the oil plants of the treacherous paid agents of our own and foreign bourgeoisie and how the profit from the work on the oil fields would not go into the pockets of German and French capitalists, but to the benefit of the working people of Yugoslavia. In our plans we thought of everything and we did not underestimate even the necessity for expert training. We believed that the Soviet Union would help us by training the necessary number of cadres. In my dreams I saw myself somewhere in Baku studying Soviet working methods and later with the help of our comrades adopting these methods in our region. None of this came true. These two comrades are working again on the oil fields in our region, but they are working as ordinary workers, though one of them before was actually foreman in charge of the drilling. Today they are disgusted because the management of the concern has again been entrusted to the pre-war "experts", and they have not been able to undergo further technical training, so they have lost interest and with bitterness recall their dreams of the time of the partisan fights.

When after demobilisation I wanted to apply for a job at the oil plant, I had at the order of the district political secretary of the Party, Mijo Križnik, to forego this dream and take over a function in the district committee of the Union of Communist Youth. If only I had at least held this function for some time, a function of which every Communist would have been proud and would have enjoyed, a function which would have given me pleasure and compensated me for the dis-

appointment at not being able to take up the work for which I had prepared myself and looked forward to in conversations with the comrades in the partisan unit! But the decision which Mijo Križnik passed on to me, practically meant that I went to work on the Youth Railway, whence a few months later I was sent for training to the school of the UDB.

I entered the service of the UDB gladly because I regarded it as an honour to be able to protect the achievements of the working class and our alliance with the Soviet Union. I did not suspect then to what purposes the UDB would be misused by Ranković and Co. I did not suspect that I was going to serve the secret police organisation, in practice superior even to the party and ruling today throughout Yugoslavia and even in the Yugoslav diplomatic missions abroad. After concluding the course of the UDB I was graduated as one of the best pupils with the rank of Second Lieutenant. The resolution of the Information Bureau reached me in the school and very much impressed me. Although in the school in order to discover those who were in agreement with the content of the Resolution, they made use of spying and provocation and many of the pupils in our school thus landed in jail, luck was on my side, for as it turned out, none of the snoopers sent for that purpose to our school, were in my immediate neighbourhood.

The report of the Information Bureau came as a great surprise to the wide masses of the working people of Yugoslavia. It was a surprise even for many rank and file members of the Party. Up till then we had been convinced, that the leading Jugoslavs in the international field were co-operating most sincerely and most closely with the Soviet Union, that the Soviet Union was in every way an example to them and that there could be no better and closer relationship than the relationship between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. How was it that we had entertained such false conceptions? As in the partisan units when we had neglected to notice the activity of the high command, because we had been lulled by the con-

viction that the leadership consisted only of the best, the most loyal and the most politically conscious fighters for Socialism, so after the war, too, we let ourselves be lulled by words, empty phrases expressing friendship with the Soviet Union. We did not inspect closely enough what this friendship looked like in practice, we let ourselves be misled by fine words about the victorious march of the building of Socialism in Yugoslavia and at the same time we did not even notice, how every day the policy carried out by the leadership of the Party was getting further away from scientific Socialism and instead of drawing on Soviet experiences and following the example of the Soviet Union, it was carrying out a treacherous policy of deviation from the road to Socialism, a policy of restoration of capitalism. At the same time many of us did not even notice how the Tito government in order to maintain power, leaned less and less on the workers and small working peasants and more and more created its basis from the village rich, the "expert" in industry and the pre-war officer in the army. The Party and its organisations ceased to play the leading, directing role in the State. The dictatorship of the Tito-Ranković clique began, which governs through the secret, police organisation of the UDB. The leadership of the Party and the UDB is combined in the person of Alexander Ranković, who is organisational secretary of the Party and at the same time Commander-in-Chief of the UDB and Minister of the Interior. So it came about that the UDB, with Ranković at its head, subordinated the Party in pursuit of its anti-socialist aims.

Some of the reproaches, contained in the resolution of the Information Bureau, for instance about the illegality of the Party, were clear to us immediately. There could be no doubt about it that our Party was using organisational forms from the time of illegality. Only members of the Party were allowed to know about Party meetings, including those of its basic organisations; meetings took place in rooms with drawn blinds, membership candidates could be present only at meet-

ings with theoretical schooling on the agenda, the Party secretariats with the sole exception of the central secretariat in Belgrade did not bear the name of the Party, so that non-Party people should not know where they were, members of the Party did not wear badges and actually the majority of the members were not even issued with Party cards. Non-Party people were not even allowed to know who was a member of the Party, and members of the Party never presented themselves as members of the Party but only as members of the National Front. Other reproaches contained in the resolution of the Information Bureau became clear to us only later because Tito and his gang succeeded for some time in confusing us by claiming that there was only a temporary misunderstanding, that Yugoslavia could never draw close to British-American imperialism and so on. At that time it did not even occur to us, that Tito's clique in fact was much worse than was indicated in the resolution of the Information Bureau, that it was the main striking fist of American imperialism against the Soviet Union and the countries of the People's Democracies, against the camp of peace.

We could not discuss freely the resolution of the Information Bureau. We were not even sure of its actual content. We did not know whether that which was put forward by Tito's press as the content was in fact the whole content. Nevertheless, the resolution of the Information Bureau shook the blind faith of the membership in the leadership of the Party. That was true first of all of the old partisan fighters. It could not be seen immediately outwardly, because experience soon taught us, that we were faced with a long and difficult struggle in which it was not advisable to split and risk our own forces unnecessarily.

Healthy elements among the workers, former partisans and in the villages, at the least sign of resistance to the policy of the Tito clique, at the least sign of sympathy with the Soviet Union and the countries of the People's Democracies, were removed, persecuted, arrested. Many of our honest fighters for

Socialism became victims of the methods of provocation of the UDB.

At that time I was at the radio-telegraphic school of the UDB. Officers of the UDB from Belgrade were sent among us, posing as students of radio-telegraphy. It did not take long before some of the real students of radio-telegraphy disappeared from the school. The first was Paško Kozić. He was guilty of not observing the line of Tito's clique while discussing the resolution of the Information Bureau. Soon after that at night three other students were arrested, for whom a UDB car was sent from Belgrade, although our school was more than 60 miles away. The arrested were the leaders of an organised anti-Tito cell in the Party, a cell which had succeeded in penetrating even into the UDB school but there it was tricked by a provocation and was discovered. Two of these three lads, Veljko Krivokapić and Božo Vujović, were officers of the Montenegro partisan units in which they fought from 1942. No one ever found out anything about their subsequent fate.

A colonel of the UDB, who led the Party organisation for the whole of the UDB, and who passed on the resolution of the Information Bureau to the lower organs of the UDB without commenting on it in the line of the Tito propagandists and press, escaped arrest two months later only by fleeing in time to Hungary.

The biggest mass arrest for agreement with the criticism contained in the resolution of the Information Bureau took place among the "colonists" in Vojvodina. The old Montenegrin and Bosnian partisans, who had taken part in the fight right from the beginning, after the war received as a reward the fertile land in Vojvodina, abandoned by the fleeing Germans and that is why they were known as "colonists". Most of the arrested were functionaries in the Party or the Union of Communist Youth or of the Trade Union organisations.

Slavko Nota, a member of the Russian national minority in Vrbas in Vojvodina, a member of the district committee of

the Party, president of the town Trade Union organisation and a partisan, whose long scar across the whole of his face, testified to his participation in heroic battles, did not report two members of the Russian minority although he knew that they agreed with the criticism of the Information Bureau. Nola was deprived of his functions, expelled from the Party and the Trade Union organisation and arrested.

Stjepan Vidović, a member of the partisan unit in Kalnik from 1943 and later its leader, with whom I worked for some time after the war in the district committee of the Communist Youth in Čakovac and who was afterwards also president of the Union of the Fighters for Freedom, in spring, 1949, was to have been arrested for his anti-Tito opinions. While being arrested he attempted to escape and succeeded. He reached Hungary and only thus he escaped imprisonment and torture in Tito's jail.

An example of how Tito is replacing the old, tried partisan fighters by the pre-war servants of capitalism, is the case of Vido Radiković. Before the war Radiković was a substitute for the then Deputy and Minister, Dr. Hynko Krizman, who was Minister at the time of King Alexander and stood for Parliament on the list of the Maček Croat Agrarian Party. He stood on this list of candidates as Krizman's substitute. And what happened to these two gentlemen? Radiković, who during the war had nothing in common with us partisans and happily collaborated with the Hungarian occupants, is today a member of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia; although he is a rich farmer he is chairman of the agricultural co-operative in Mihovlany near Čakovac and he is—a member of the National Assembly of Yugoslavia! Even Dr. Krizman is not doing so badly. He is again a Minister, this time he is Minister of Social Welfare in the Croat government.

How was I to convince my father that he ought to join the local agricultural co-operative, when he pointed out to me such a man as Radiković. The fact that the chairman of the village agricultural co-operative is the rich farmer, Radiković, and

who in addition to that has a bad political past, means that the small peasants refuse to join the agricultural co-operative. How could they! Join the co-operative led by their class enemy? Or should they join the co-operative led by a former member of the Hungarian fascist organisation, "Nilaši", as is the case of Fraňo Čisar, chairman of the agricultural co-operative in my native Vratišinec? This Nilašite, Čisar, was even accepted into the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and today is chairman of its local organisation in Vratišinec. That is, out of twelve hundred inhabitants of Vratišinec, at the time of the resolution of the Information Bureau, only eight of them were members of the Party. How can honest, small peasants or miners from the nearby coal-mines apply for membership to the Party when it is led by a member of a fascist Hungarian organisation? Of these eight members after the resolution of the Information Bureau, two were expelled from the Party and two more refused to have anything to do with the Party.

When I was last at home in Vratišinec, ten families were then members of the local agricultural co-operative. Small peasants could not see a future for themselves in Tito's pseudo co-operatives. They would only have to drudge there for the village rich and would be systematically exploited by them. In Vratišinec the agricultural co-operative was joined by the village rich, Stjepan Novak, who during the war only to evade service in the Hungarian army, left for the hills and joined the partisan unit. During the first encounter with the enemy, Novak fled from the unit and until the end of the war lived with friends in Varaždin. I would add only that Novak did not evade service in the Hungarian army because he did not want to fight against the Soviet Union—this rich farmer was not capable of such a motive—but simply because he did not want to serve in the army at all and by joining the partisan unit he facilitated his crossing from the Hungarian occupied part of Yugoslavia into Croatia. The presence of this Novak in the co-operative, a deserter from the partisan brigade and the richest farmer in Vratišinec, has had the result that the

others, the small peasants, of whom there are about two hundred families, quite understandably do not wish to join the co-operative run by this national traitor and class enemy. In such a situation it's no wonder that Yugoslav agriculture today supplies the towns with less agricultural products than ever before. The policy of supporting the village rich means also, that the wide masses of the agricultural people are not fully engaged in agricultural production and the general lack of industrial consumer goods in the towns has resulted in the peasants' losing interest in cultivating a larger amount of products than they require for themselves. For their surplus products they cannot buy in the towns what they need anyway. Tito's government by its anti-working class policy and by its policy of support for the village rich, has created a situation, where the workers in the towns have not enough food and the prices of food-stuffs are continually rising and on the other hand, in the villages there is an unusual lack of industrial, consumer goods.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MY STAY IN PRAGUE

I finished my course in the radio-telegraphic school of the UDB, to which I had been sent, in the autumn of 1949. While I was waiting for a further assignment, I spent, like the other members of the school, some time on the construction of the Zagreb—Belgrade autostrad. Out of two hundred members of the school, six, among them myself, were chosen for service abroad in diplomatic missions, the others were sent as radio-telegraphists of the UDB to various posts throughout Yugoslavia.

One day I was called to Lieutenant-Colonel Pavel Bojčević, who was head of the radio service of the UDB, and was informed by him, that I was to be transferred to the Yugoslav

Embassy in Prague, which news meant for me a test of nerves and simulation. I could not show that I was looking forward to this transfer, for at that time, in December, 1949, relations between People's Democratic Czechoslovakia and official circles in Yugoslavia were very strained. There was a danger that if I showed only a little of the pleasure I was feeling, my journey to Prague would not materialise.

Bojčević commented on my transfer to Prague in these words, "The Party has given you the task of representing and defending Yugoslavia. Do not forget that you are going into an enemy country. You should not mix with people there. Do not have anything to do with women in Prague, most of them are spies. As a rule in the countries of the People's Democracies, women are used to spy out secrets from our people."

Bojčević was not the only one, who gave me such advice for my stay in Prague. Before I left, Bojčević ordered me to report at the Ministry of Interior to Lieutenant of the UDB, Fraňo Mičević. He was to put me in touch with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and arrange all other technical details necessary for my departure for Prague. First of all he took me to a high-ranking officer of the UDB, whom I did not know, who like Bojčević stressed, that I was going to work in a foreign enemy country, that I should avoid contact with the Czechoslovak people and he especially developed in detail the theory of the danger for Yugoslavs in Prague entailed in meeting Czech girls, and he concluded his advice by saying that I should go to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and report in the Personnel Department to Miss Anna Sekulić who was the UDB representative there. He instructed me to refuse to produce any personal documents at the reception office, not to say where I really came from and to introduce myself at the reception office as a clerk from the Ministry of Labour. I obeyed and so it nearly happened that I did not get to Miss Sekulić at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The clerk at the reception office quite understandably refused to admit me into the building, when I could not show him any personal documents.

I was afraid he would telephone to enquire at the Ministry of Labour where of course no one knew me and the whole story would have become very unpleasant. Luckily for me I succeeded in persuading him at least to 'phone Miss Sekulić. She joked cynically about how easy it was to deceive employees of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. She welcomed me with a grin, with the remark that she knew from which Ministry of Labour I had come. She gave me visa questionnaires to fill in: I needed them not only for Czechoslovakia, but also a transit visa through Austria, and she instructed me to write a false address and not the true one. She was afraid, that is, that if I gave my real address the Czechoslovak or Austrian authorities might discover that I was from the UDB.

Before my departure to Prague I had to deposit in the office of the UDB all my personal documents, membership cards of an officer of the UDB, of the Union of Fighters for Freedom, of the National Front and all the photographs which I had. I even had to hand over photographs of my parents, friends and acquaintances. For reasons which were not explained to me and which I could not even guess, I was not permitted to travel to Prague with any photograph of anyone. Originally I was to have presented myself in Prague at the Yugoslav Embassy, to Frank Bóžo, who was the chief representative of the UDB on that diplomatic mission. But at the time when I travelled to Prague Frank was on leave in Belgrade and the instruction was changed to the effect that I should report to the Military Attaché, Lieutenant-Colonel Slavko Djurić. It seemed somewhat strange to me, as I had expected to present myself to the Chargé d'Affairs of the Embassy, who was then Dr. Ivo Murko.

Djurić, whose main occupation in Czechoslovakia was espionage, welcomed me in a similar manner as Bojčević in Belgrade. He instructed me to have no contact with any one in Prague, to avoid Czech company and referring to my membership in the UDB he said to me, "If you cannot avoid contact with Czechs, always remember these two rules: offer Czechs

Yugoslav cigarettes, because for a few cigarettes you can get anything you want out of them and secondly always and everywhere propagate Tito's policy and praise conditions in Yugoslavia, whether they are really as good as that or not."

The employees of the Embassy really had to observe these rules on the "truth about Yugoslavia". I quote at least one example: when in the autumn of 1950 the Czechoslovak authorities expelled a group of Yugoslav citizens from Czechoslovakia for dishonest practices, including black-marketeering, the Chargé d'Affaires, Marko Milić defended them and handed a number of notes of protest to the Czechoslovak Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Milić and all the other employees of the Embassy knew very well that the accusations were correct. Milić did not even attempt to conceal this in his talks with us. But to the world we had to declare that these people were persecuted by the Czechoslovak authorities only because they did not wish to betray Tito.

UDB RULE IN THE EMBASSY

My first impression on arriving at the Embassy in Prague was of confusion and anarchy. It was not at all clear who exactly ruled in the Embassy. Murko was officially Chargé d'Affaires and, therefore, outwardly represented the Embassy. The Military Attaché Djurić behaved in fact as though he and not Murko were in charge of the Embassy. It sometimes happened that he changed Murko's orders. Božo Frank, at that time the chief representative of the UDB on the Embassy, did not care whether he was regarded as the real boss, but in fact, without people noticing it very much, it was he who ruled in the Embassy and through the Belgrade central office of the UDB had employees removed, arranged their transfer to the Ministry or their recall to Belgrade under the pretext of an official journey or leave, from which they never returned

to Prague. Frank made use of these possibilities several times and used them even against the Military Attaché, Djurić. It did not surprise me when Djurić was invited to come to Belgrade and did not return to Prague again. Božo Frank had previously said to me about Djurić, "I shall have to turn the heat on Djurić, but first I shall take another look at his work here. I think that it will be better for him if he goes on leave to Belgrade and remains there." Apparently Djurić's espionage work was not sufficient for the chief representative of the UDB at the Embassy.

Then came a reorganisation at the Embassy. Murko was transferred to Belgrade and in his place Marko Milić took over as Chargé d'Affaires. He took over the cipher of the UDB from Božo Frank. But not for long. He then handed it over to another employee who had arrived from Belgrade, Branišlav Atanasković, who apart from his official function as First Secretary to the Embassy, took over also the function of chief representative of the UDB, which was held formerly by Božo Frank and then temporarily by Milić. Officially the employees were not informed as to who was the chief representative of the UDB. It was, however, clear to me and I could easily observe every change. In my capacity as radiotelegraphist I saw who possessed the cipher of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, who had the cipher of the General Staff and also who had the cipher of the UDB. In time I discovered even how to recognise these various ciphers. The question as to who ruled in the Embassy I could also answer after a time. It was the UDB who ruled there. Irrespective of who was the Chargé d'Affaires, who represented the Embassy outwardly, disregarding the fact that at the Embassy there was a "Party" organisation, which though it held its meetings irregularly, at least formally discussed Embassy affairs, the real power was always exercised by the chief representative of the UDB at the Embassy. Only he knew who were members of the UDB among the employees of the Embassy. I was one of them, but like the others, with the exception of the chief representative

of the UDB, I had no idea as to who else of the employees also belonged to the UDB. Thus it happened that during one of my official visits to Belgrade, I met one of the former drivers of the Yugoslav Embassy in Prague, Marian Kuchtić, in the rooms of the Belgrade central office of the UDB. With a grin Kuchtić asked me, noticing my surprise at seeing him in the building of the UDB, "What, didn't you know that I, too, was a member of the UDB?". Today Kuchtić is working at the Yugoslav Embassy in Vienna.

I found out about Milić's membership of the UDB only by chance, or rather by the carelessness of his wife. In conversation she admitted that she had been for recreation in a convalescent home near Maribor to which she as the wife of an officer was entitled. That was enough for me, as I knew that that convalescent home was the property of the UDB, which used it for recreation only for officers of the UDB and members of their families.

The fact that a number of members of the UDB were at the Embassy who did not know about each other and the majority of whom did not know even who was the chief representative of the UDB, created among the employees considerable nervousness and uncertainty. This state of affairs meant in practice that each of them knew that each was controlling the other, that each was making reports about the other, that no one could defend himself, appeal, complain or bring his case to an organ with any jurisdiction. To criticise affairs at a meeting of the Party organisation was practically useless and could even have unpleasant consequence for the critic. Once when at a meeting of the Party organisation I criticised Milić's decision that I should live at the Embassy in a badly neglected room, Atanasković got up and declared that we were not permitted to criticise our superior, even at Party meetings. With that Atanasković showed not only that there is no democracy in the Party but he also confirmed the criticism contained in the resolution of the Information Bureau, that the UDB and not the Party rules in Yugoslavia.

After the meeting Atanasković called for me and again rebuked me for my remarks at the Party meeting. He said to me, "How could you, an officer of the UDB, criticise your superior, the more so if he is a member of the UDB, and at a meeting of the Party organisation? You are not permitted to criticise at all at meetings otherwise the others would find out that you yourself are a member of the UDB."

Milić, although he was an officer of the UDB, although he was officially in charge of the Embassy, did not enjoy the full confidence of the chief representative of the UDB, Atanasković. He used to conceal his files and notes from Milić and if he did not succeed in getting his decisions passed in an unobtrusive way, he did not hesitate to cancel Milić's instructions and arrange matters in his own way. I remember how, at the time when an employee of the Embassy, Biluš, was shut up in one room of the Embassy and was not allowed for more than a month to leave the building and then was transported to Belgrade, he asked if a barber could come to him and cut his hair. Milić gave permission and arranged for him to come after working hours. This, however, did not come about, for when Atanasković got to know of it, he cancelled Milić's instructions and prohibited anyone from entering the building to see Biluš.

Reports, meant for the UDB, were sent by Atanasković through the representative of the UDB in the personnel department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Dragoj Djurić. This Djurić, in the course of his journeys of inspection of the Yugoslav diplomatic missions in the countries of the People's Democracies, came also to Prague, where he arranged for the immediate release of the Czech employees of the Embassy. At that time, in February, 1951, there were altogether only two of them: a driver, who had been employed since 1945 and a sixty-year-old charwoman. According to Milić and Atanasković there was a danger of these two spying at the Embassy. Atanasković and Milić saw in every working Czech, to whom any one of the employees of the Embassy spoke, a dangerous spy.

PRISON REGULATIONS INTRODUCED AT THE EMBASSY

The fear that after all the employees of the Embassy might have some contact with the Czech citizens and create for themselves a different picture of the building of Socialism in People's Democratic Czechoslovakia, from the one presented to them by Tito, Ranković and company in Belgrade and Milić and Atanasković in Prague, was the reason for the introduction of a number of measures, by means of which our contact with the Czech working people was to be made more difficult, if not completely impossible.

First of all Milić altered our working hours. We began to work from eight until one and in the afternoon from four till eight. At noon, between one and three, I had to remain at the Embassy and wait for the radio-telegraphic connection with Belgrade. Not even the other employees could make use of the noon break. Every honest Czech was at work during our off time, from one to four, and Milić evidently supposed, that at that time, therefore, there was less danger of our meeting with anyone. Not much time remained in the evening after eight o'clock. But even that seemed risky to Milić and so he cancelled this time-table and ordered us to work from eight till one in the morning and in the afternoon from four till a time which he regarded as sufficient. Thus we were prevented from going to Soviet or Czech films. The last performance starts at eight o'clock in the evening and at that time we still had to work.

Atanasković and Milić soon discovered, that even this measure was not sufficient and that many of us could still find ways of meeting Czech working people. We were ordered to inform Atanasković or Milić beforehand when, to whom and for what purpose we wanted to go out. We had at the same time to describe by which way we were going and how long we should stay there. When we got permission to go out, we had to describe in detail to Milić or Atanasković on our

return with whom we had spoken, who said what, where the conversation took place and so on, so that Atanasković and Milić could form a picture of everything and if necessary decide whether our outings could be utilised for reports to Belgrade.

To make their control over us still more easy, they ordered us all to live at the Embassy.

But it turned out that even all these measures were not sufficient and it was necessary to supplement them. Every day we had to hand over to Milić a written survey of what we had done the previous day. In this survey each of us had to fill in the exact time of everything he had done from the moment he got up in the morning till the time he went to bed in the evening.

Milić and Atanasković tried gradually to block all the chinks and channels through which we could contact the outer world and therefore step by step they introduced prison regulations at the Embassy. In this effort they did not respect the privacy of our correspondence. For some time my letters had not been brought to me by the porter, as was the usual custom, but directly from Milić. I noticed that the letters were delayed more than before and from the content of some of them, I realised that a number of letters had not been handed on to me at all.

Once it even happened that on Sunday evening Milić handed me a post-card, which a girl-friend of mine had sent me from the Krkonoše mountains. This post-card had taken four days to come from the Krkonoše mountains to Prague, although normally the post is delivered in a day. I was a bit surprised to get this post-card on Sunday evening when every child knows that there is no post in Prague on Sundays. Milić had kept back the post-card because he had had its Czech text translated into Serbo-Croat before handing it over to me.

The Embassy building at one time really resembled a prison. A clerk at the Embassy, Zvonko Biluš, was held in the Embassy building with his family for a whole month until by

threats he was compelled to leave for Yugoslavia. Biluš had worked for several years in the Consular department of the Embassy and had lived in Czechoslovakia even before the war. His wife was Czech and that was probably the reason why Milić and Atanasković feared that he would not return to Yugoslavia if he were recalled from Prague. Milić and Atanasković, therefore, thought up a trick. One afternoon Milić came to Biluš' office and told him that he had received a reliable report that a Czechoslovak policeman was concealed in the neighbourhood of Biluš' flat and was waiting to arrest him as soon as he returned home. Before the surprised Biluš could recover from this news, Milić curtly informed him that he was not to leave the Embassy building. The next day Milić and Atanasković moved the other members of Biluš' family to the Embassy where they lived until his departure, not once being allowed out of the building. The Bilušes lived in the Embassy for over a month. During this time their daughter was not even allowed to go to school. Biluš, who was the only employee of the Embassy to live outside the Embassy, because he had lived in Prague for more than twenty years, found out one day from Milić, that his furniture and other possessions had been collected from his flat and sent to Belgrade. In about a month when Biluš had been thoroughly scared by all the stories about the alleged intrigues of the Security organs against him, which Milić and Atanasković daily described to him as "news just received", he agreed to his being transported with his family by plane to Belgrade. I do not know what in fact Biluš is doing today in Belgrade. I do know that before leaving he promised the employees of the Embassy to write to them from Belgrade. But no one has received from him a single line.

As in the case of Biluš, Milić was afraid that Libuše Atoničić and Jovo Vukobratović would not return to Belgrade if they were transferred there. The distrust towards Miss Atoničić was founded on the fact that she was a close friend of Maria Franke, a clerk in the Prague office of the Yugoslav

press agency, Tanjug, who had published an anti-Tito statement and had appealed to the Czechoslovak authorities for asylum. Milić knew that Miss Antoničić in conversations with the employees of the Embassy had criticised the treacherous Tito regime in Yugoslavia. For fear that Miss Antoničić should take example from her friend, Miss Franke, and decide also to remain in Czechoslovakia, immediately on informing her that she was transferred to Belgrade, Milić took her by car to the airport and sent her off to Belgrade. To make sure he decided himself to fly to Belgrade with her and at the last minute he took with him the Embassy's cipher clerk, Jovo Vukobratović, too.

Apparently Milić was afraid that Vukobratović could also be pondering whether he should return to Belgrade or not, as he wanted to get married in Prague to a Czech girl. Therefore, he informed Vukobratović at three in the morning, that he had to leave for Belgrade and at seven in the morning Milić took Jovo Vukobratović and Libuše Antoničić to Ruzyně airport and flew with them to Belgrade. I found out from Zvonko Biluš, who some months before his forced removal to Belgrade was on an official visit of some day's duration in Yugoslavia, just at the time when Milić brought Vukobratović and Miss Antoničić to Belgrade, that Miss Antoničić was arrested immediately on her arrival at the Zemun airport in Belgrade. Jovo Vukobratović's marriage to his Prague fiancée was forbidden by the Titoite authorities. Vukobratović and Miss Antoničić left behind them in the Embassy in Prague some Marxist books, mostly translations from Russian into Serbo-Croatian. Milić had these books put away in the store-room but he did not permit their removal to Belgrade.

The more Milić and Atanasković attempted with their arrangements about office hours, our having to ask for their consent before leaving the building even after office hours, and having to hand in written summaries of where and what we had done the previous day and with all their prison regulations to control us day and night, in the intimidating cases

of Biluš, Vukobratović and Miss Antoničić, so that we should not meet any of the working people of Czechoslovakia, the more cautious we had to be and the more we had continually to seek new ways of getting out of the building without arousing the suspicion of Milić or Atanasković. Now it is not only a matter of Atanasković's distrust towards Milić, of which I have already spoken, but of the distrust of Milić and Atanasković towards all the other employees because they do not know who is trying to get out of the building to go on some pleasure trip and who to go the way chosen by me.

BLACK MARKET DEALINGS OF THE YUGOSLAV DIPLOMATS IN PRAGUE

In the previous chapter I mentioned how Milić defended a group of black marketeers, expelled by the Czechoslovak authorities, and how even when he knew that these people had really carried out black market dealings, he tried to present them to the public as victims persecuted by the Czechoslovak authorities for their agreement with Tito's policy. Milić and Atanasković had good reason not to admit the black market dealings of these people. It could happen that one day they, too, would be called black marketeers. And not unjustly.

It must be a very strange prosperity in Tito's Yugoslavia, praised at every opportunity by Atanasković, and a very strange poverty in Czechoslovakia, of which Milić used to write in his reports, when they both used to buy everything they could lay hands on in Prague and send in large quantities to Belgrade.

In February, 1951 all the employees of the Embassy were to receive their pay in dollars so that they could buy Czecho-

slovak goods for export in Darex. Dragojc Djurić, the representative of the UDB in the personnel department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Belgrade, arrived in Prague and came to the decision with Milić that they would pay the employees only half of their salary in dollars. Milić then recommended us to keep at least half of that half and not to use it in Darex, we should see that in the future it would pay us. Atanasković put it even more plainly. Why should we buy Czechoslovak goods for export in Darex for dollars? We should wait and the opportunity would turn up when we should be able to change these dollars on the black market and then we should receive ten to twelves times as much. Both, Milić and Atanasković had experience in earning without working, on the black market. When I wondered at Atanasković's sending to Belgrade a number of wireless sets, it was explained to me that such wireless sets in Prague cost only 7,200 crowns and in Belgrade anyone would gladly pay for them 40 or 50 thousand dinars. They did not do business in this way only with wireless sets. Milić for instance sent twenty five fountain pens and fifty cigarette lighters by the diplomatic bag. Another time he sent to Belgrade a number of bicycles, dismantled, so that it should be less obvious. Milić and Atanasković sent large quantities of tooth paste, soap, tooth brushes, pencils and erasers, pork dripping, sugar and coffee. During two months Milić's wife sent over twenty pairs of shoes to Belgrade. It seems a lot can be made on ping-pong balls. In Yugoslavia they are not to be had. In a Prague shop one can get them for 8 crowns a piece and in Belgrade on the black market they sell for a minimum of 100 dinars. How many has the enterprising firm of Milić-Atanasković sent to Belgrade and how much have they made on them? Hiding behind their diplomatic privileges and taking advantage of their official position in Czechoslovakia, they are carrying out black market dealings for which any other citizen would be punished.

In March, 1951 Milić requested me to take to Belgrade some

silver which he said the Yugoslav bookshop had left behind in Prague. It turned out to be various pieces of silver, brooches, cigarette cases, paper knives, various ornaments, rings and so on—altogether about 500 pieces. Immediately afterwards, however, Milić withdrew his request saying that he did not want to happen to me what had happened to the former vice-Consul in Bratislava, Kević.

As it is known, the Czechoslovak authorities found that Kević had 50 kilograms of pure silver and a considerable amount of gold with him. At the State Court in Prague not only was espionage proved against Kević but also black marketeering and he was sentenced to 20 years deprivation of freedom. At the time of Kević's trial Milić had asserted to us that the reports about silver being found on Kević were made up by the Czechoslovak authorities and here all at once was this same Milić, afraid that if I took the silver articles with me to Belgrade, which he had made out to be official property, I should end up in the same way as Kević.

Besides his income from his black market dealings and his salary, which he receives from Belgrade, Milić has still other sources of income. To these I shall return later.

WHAT THE YUGOSLAV WORKER IS NOT ALLOWED TO KNOW

Employees sent by Belgrade to the Yugoslav diplomatic mission in Prague, were instructed before their departure abroad how to behave, with whom they should and with whom they should not mix, and what to do in various situations. At the same time emphasis was laid on the membership of Czechoslovakia in the Information Bureau and various slanders against the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies were repeated. In particular slanders against Czechoslovakia continually increased in magnitude so that in the end they

reached such senseless heights that they became ridiculous and reacted against their original authors.

I recall how I had to laugh when in November, 1950 Milan Tvrđković was transferred from Belgrade to Prague and the day after his arrival I saw him buying over six pounds of pigs' blood sausage. In answer to my astonishment at his buying so much of this sausage at one go, he replied, "Well, it's so cheap and the shopkeeper is willing to sell me as much as I want. But this can't last long and the pigs' blood sausage will be sold out. And what shall I eat then?" I tried to calm him by assuring him that he need not worry about meals, that in every Prague restaurant he could get as much as he liked and that everywhere the food would be of good quality, too. Tvrđković, apparently still under the influence of what he had been told in Belgrade about Czechoslovakia, asked me in surprise, "You say you go to restaurants in Prague for your meals? Suppose they find out you are a Yugoslav, surely they will poison you."

I could no longer laugh: they had gone as far as this, these officers of the UDB in Belgrade, whose job it was to inform employees, selected for service abroad, of conditions in the countries to which they were being sent.

It is only a proof of the terrible weakness of Tito's regime, when it tries its utmost to prevent its representatives in People's Democratic Czechoslovakia from eating in restaurants and ensure their living in complete isolation from the activities of a country building Socialism.

In an attempt to divert the attention of their people from the empty shops in Yugoslavia, the Tito government paints them a picture of a scarcity of goods and a consequent lack of interest in work and income on the part of the people of the People's Democracies. But in Belgrade they do not repeat the same lie all the time. With the growing misery, the increased scarcity and rising prices of consumer goods, the Tito propagandists magnify their lies about conditions in the countries of the People's Democracies. In the end it comes to this, that

they cannot allow their people to see with their own eyes conditions in the People's Democracies. It is not to be wondered at, that when someone for whatsoever reason comes to People's Democratic Czechoslovakia from Belgrade, that amazement at the full shops, which in Czechoslovakia are already nationalised and the large number of working people buying in them, changes to wonder at the immensity of the lies presented by the Yugoslav press and the Yugoslav radio to their own people.

I wish you could have seen the wife of an employee at the Yugoslav Embassy in Prague, who when she first saw Prague in March, 1951 was so surprised at the goods displayed in the shop windows, that with wondering and sighing at the full shops it took her an hour to walk down half of Václavské náměstí on one side, during which she exclaimed at a number of things which did not exist at all in Belgrade.

I know that she was not exaggerating. I twice sent my parents a little sugar and I know what it meant to them. During the whole of 1949 and 1950 they did not receive a single lump. There simply is not any sugar and a number of other things, too. They issue points on which, however, people cannot obtain goods. It is understandable that in such a situation the employees of the Embassy were prevented by all possible means from having contact with the Czech working people. To get to know the real conditions in People's Democratic Czechoslovakia, to give the Yugoslav people a picture of the position of the Czech and Slovak worker with his rising standard of living and his enthusiasm for work in the building of Socialism, would mean to destroy the basis of the lie by which Tito's government in today's Yugoslavia is maintained.

For the same reason the Yugoslav worker and small peasant is not allowed to know how the Yugoslav diplomats abroad behave, in whose service they work and whose policy they carry out. What would the Zagreb steel-worker, the Dalmatian fisherman or the peasant from Mostar say if he

knew, that Marko Milić who is supposed to represent them to the Czech and Slovak worker, does not take the smallest step without consulting beforehand at least a Secretary of the American Embassy. What would the fallen members of the Thirteenth Proletarian Brigade say if they heard Marko Milić, who survived them, say to me in front of other employees of the Embassy, "You mustn't feel insulted if American Diplomats offer you crowns. They offer me money, too. I can get from the First Secretary of the American Embassy as many dollars as I want." I should not like to hear what our people at home would say if they saw Milić fraternising with the Chargé d'Affaires of the diplomatic mission of monarchofascist Greece—the former partisan, Milić, embracing the murderer of Greek partisans.

And Milić is no exception. He is only the devoted instrument of the Tito regime, the unthinking servant of the First Secretary of the American Embassy. Paid by the Americans directly and through the Tito government, he is not ashamed to serve imperialist interests against the interests of his own people.

WHY I LEFT TITO'S SERVICE

The resolution of the Information Bureau first shook my conviction that by my work I was furthering the building of Socialism in my country. For some time, along with many other people at that time in Yugoslavia, I still hoped that our government would after all return to the policy of the time of our fight for national liberation, the time when we partisans could not imagine post-war Yugoslavia otherwise than on the road to Socialism, otherwise than as a country following the Soviet Union as its only example. We hoped for this also because the frequent speeches of Tito and his clique about building Socialism in Yugoslavia had dimmed our impression of the internal development of Yugoslavia and still more our impres-

sion of the policy Tito's Yugoslavia was following in the international field. Only in Prague had I the opportunity of comparing that which the Tito clique was trying to persuade our people it was doing with that which it was in reality carrying out.

I followed the sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations and I was disturbed when I realised how, while the Soviet Union, supported by the countries of the People's Democracies, continually came out with suggestions for the peaceful solution of international conflicts, the representatives of Tito's Yugoslavia were helping to frustrate the realisation of these peaceful suggestions, by supporting and serving British-American imperialism. This was most clearly apparent during the discussion on American intervention against the Korean people.

At the Embassy I expressed my indignation at Kardelj's claiming that North Korea was the aggressor who at the command of the Soviet Union had invaded South Korea. I was shaken by Kardelj's claim that the purging of South Korea of the Syngman Rheeites would not mean the liberation of the Korean people but "their subjection to Soviet influence". I regarded Kardelj's opinion that the Chinese People's Republic was not carrying out an independent policy but was "blindly following the policy of the Soviet Union", as an insult to every fighter for Socialism. Then came the journeys of Djilas and Moshe Pijade to London and Paris. Djilas travelled to London to meet the arch-enemy of Communism, Winston Churchill, and Clement Attlee, who prevented the Second World Peace Congress from being held in the town of the English steelworkers, Sheffield; the "ideologist", Moshe Pijade led a delegation of Yugoslav Deputies to Paris and London to study the tactics used by the Right Wing Social Democrats in their attempts to destroy the unity of the working class.

It was not possible to keep silent and not give vent to my indignation in talks with the employees of the Embassy. For this Milić branded me as a man on the wrong path. He did not

regard America but the Soviet Union, as the interventionist in Korea. He rejoiced at every success, however small, of the American interventionists in Korea, he exulted at reports of American bombardments wiping out Korean towns, he repeatedly expressed his admiration for MacArthur, for his "purposeful, unwavering attitude", for the "well thought-out tactics" which he employed against Korea and China. And most of all he admired the Americans for having the atomic bomb on which he relied as the most powerful weapon against the camp of peace.

All this was reflected in the activities at the Yugoslav Embassy in Prague. At the time of the session of the International Union of Students in Prague, Milić tried in some way to get into contact with the reactionary British delegation. Returning from a discussion at the American Embassy, Milić requested me to arrange in some way for him to contact the British students at the Congress. I refused. I excused myself by saying, that I had no experience in such matters and that in any case I should not be able to come to an understanding with the British students. Milić then tried to establish contact by other means.

At the time of the session of the World Peace Council in Prague before the Warsaw Congress in the autumn of 1950, Milić consulted in the Prague Alcron hotel with the American, John Rogge. The meeting between Milić and John Rogge was arranged by the American Embassy in Prague. I went to the Alcron with Milić but I was not present at his conversation with Rogge. I noticed only that when, some time after midnight, Milić left Rogge's room, he looked immensely satisfied. A few days later when I read about Rogge's stand at the Peace Congress, about his attempt to destroy the world peace movement, I recalled Milić's satisfaction after his consultation with Rogge and even more clearly than before I realised that unwillingly I was serving those who were plotting an aggressive war, even though with all my soul I desired peace and my whole previous life proved that I had wanted to help build

Socialism so that I would never again have to go into the woods with an automatic.

I did my work at the Embassy with distaste and aversion. I began to hate Milić and Atanasković, to hate them for what they were doing and for the regime which they represented. I avoided Party meetings so that I should not have to listen to their lectures full of slanders against the Soviet Union and the countries of the People's Democracies. I made some excuse when Milić invited me with the other employees to lunch and I pondered only as to what conclusions I was to draw from my disgust at the policy of the betrayers of Socialism, at the policy of serving the British-American imperialists, at the policy of the cliques of agents who by deception had got possession of the government in Yugoslavia, and at the policy of Tito's representatives in Prague.

At this time a minor incident occurred which had a deep effect on me. I went to a restaurant for supper and sat down at a small table at the only unoccupied place. Opposite me sat a Czech worker, who noticing that I mixed Czech with Serbo-Croat, asked me whether I were a Yugoslav emigrant or a Titoite. I replied that I was an employee of the Yugoslav Embassy in Prague. "A Titoite, then", said the Czech worker and launched a whole cannonade of arguments against the Tito regime. Even if I had wanted to carry out the instructions given me once by Lieutenant-Colonel Djurić, I could not have resisted the arguments of this Czech worker. I knew that he was right. But at that time I had not yet enough courage to admit it openly. I do not know how he interpreted my silence. But on leaving he repeated three times, "You are still a young lad and therefore you must think over in whose service you are. Think it out in your own head, don't let others do your thinking for you."

Yes. I began to think over not only in whose service I was and how it had happened that the Yugoslav people who had fought so heroically in the war against the German occupants, had been deprived of their freedom by a group of agents in

the pay of the Western imperialists and deprived of it without even noticing it: I began to think over, too, what conclusions arose from this knowledge. It was clear to me that I could no longer serve the Tito government. It was only a matter of what I should do to be of most use to the forces of peace and Socialism. For some time I believed that the most sensible thing would be for me to return home to Yugoslavia and there help to open people's eyes, to help the anti-Tito fighters: I would become once more a fighter for Socialist Yugoslavia. Luckily for me distrust towards me at the Embassy began to be every day more apparent. I noticed that Atanasković was now controlling me more than the other employees. As a result of his carelessness I found out that he was having me followed somehow. One day he called me to him and ordered me to repeat to him everywhere I had been and with whom I had spoken on the preceding day. I replied as I had written it in our compulsory report, in which I had not mentioned a meeting with a girl whom I had been meeting for friendly chats. It turned out that Atanasković knew of these meetings with this girl. And he knew not only about the meeting of the day before but about all the previous ones and where my girl-friend was employed, where she lived and God knows what else. While Atanasković was reproving me for having concealed from him and from the Embassy my meetings with this girl and while he was trying to get me to say whether it would be possible to make use of her for the espionage aims of the Embassy, I was feverishly turning over in my mind how Atanasković came to know of my meetings with her. I came to the only possible conclusion: someone in Atanasković's service was following me.

A short time after, Milić surprised me by informing that I was immediately to take the holiday which I had not taken last year and he emphasised that I was to spend it in Yugoslavia. In my mind I asked myself the question: what had happened all at once? Only a week ago I had received a letter from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, informing me that they

could not grant me leave as there was no one to take my place at work and that therefore I should receive over-time pay for my holiday from the Embassy. Why then had I to go immediately on leave to Belgrade? It was not mentioned that now there was someone who could take over my work.

I saw that not much time remained to me. Milić did not press me to leave at once for Yugoslavia. I wanted to gain a few more days' time in which to take counsel about my further steps. I began to buy various presents to take with me from Prague and hoped thus to divert a little Milić's attention. I wanted to consult someone about what I should do now. But whom? Apart from the employees at the Embassy I did not know anyone sufficiently to be able to confide my thoughts in him. In the end I could not even consult with those employees of the Embassy whom I otherwise trusted and of whom I knew that they were not unthinking slaves of the Tito regime, because in these days Atanasković's informers were moving among us all the time and mainly around me. I had to consult with myself alone and it had to be quickly.

Milić facilitated my decision. A radiotelegraphic cipher came from Belgrade, which I felt concerned me. From the minute when I handed it over to the cipher clerk, Dobrosavljević, it did not escape me that both Dobrosavljević and Milić were watching me all the time. They did not speak a single friendly word to me, only Milić abruptly informed me that I must without fail fly to Belgrade on leave on Tuesday. That day two of our diplomatic couriers returned to Belgrade from Prague. Milić sent a message by one of them to Atanasković, who was then on official business in Belgrade, where he had certainly given a report on my unreliability, that he should meet the 'plane from Prague on Tuesday as he was sending him some "champagne" by that 'plane. I understood that by this "champagne" he meant me, for Milić wanted me to fly on Tuesday and who has ever heard of sending champagne from Prague to Belgrade. I remembered Libuše Antoničić for whom when she arrived in Belgrade the Marica—nickname for the

van in which the UDB carries off people under arrest—was already waiting at the airport. So Milić helped me to decide not to return to Belgrade.

So it remained for me only to find a way how to get out of the Embassy. Under the prison measures which Milić and Atanasković had enforced, even that was a problem.

MY PLAN TO ESCAPE SUCCEEDS

I left the Embassy building on the night of 30/31st March, 1951. Beforehand I tried to think of every detail of my procedure. In my mind I prepared several ways of getting unobserved out of the building. I planned that if one way were not successful, I should try another way the next day. Altogether according to my estimate I had three days in which to get out of the Embassy, if I did not want to meet Marica on the Zemun airfield. Luck was with me and the first attempt succeeded straightaway on the night of 30/31st March.

Because the Belgrade and Zagreb radios tried to persuade the world that I had been abducted by force by the Czechoslovak Security organs, who, they said, even had to drag me through the window and over the roof of the neighbouring building, I shall describe in detail every step which I took on that night.

Milić left the Embassy building after nine o'clock that evening. I convinced myself that no one had remained in the building except for the employees who lived there and I went to have supper with the door-keeper, Jeremić. Then I went to see the cipher-clerk, Dobrosavljević, who lived on the floor below me. I purposely remained with him until nearly midnight so as not to arouse his suspicion. On leaving his flat, as though absent-mindedly, I turned the key in his door from the outside, so that he could not come after me. Then I went

into my own flat and in case I was still being followed by someone I pretended to go to bed. About one o'clock I got up and in darkness I carried my two cases into the dark-room where Atanasković used to develop his films. The room was darkened and therefore there was no danger of someone outside noticing the light, so I switched on the light. Piece by piece I carried my things there and packed them into the cases. Then I went downstairs, pistol in hand. I was resolved to shoot if anyone tried to prevent my leaving the building. On the way I stopped. The whole house lay in deep silence. In the door-keeper's room I looked into the cupboard where the keys from the offices hung. All of them were there and that meant that no one was in the offices. I tried the lock at the main entrance of the Embassy to see if Milić had not had the lock changed since the time when I obtained a key to the building for myself. Then I convinced myself once more that the door leading to Dobrosavljević's was closed and I went upstairs to my flat. I dressed myself and carried downstairs first of all my two cases. Then I returned upstairs for my radio and my brief-case. I locked the door leading from the office to my flat and left the key in the lock so that no one would be able to enter the flat from the office. I went downstairs to the vestibule, I slipped the inner iron bolt, I opened the inner lock, which could be opened only from inside the building and then with a Yale key I opened the main door. In the vestibule I then dismantled my pistol and stuffed the barrel and piston into my pocket to prove later to the Czechoslovak public that the Tito government armed the officials on its Embassy in People's Democratic Czechoslovakia. The remaining parts of the pistol I left in the porter's room. I stopped for the last time. The porter and the other inmates of the Embassy slept. Everywhere there was deep silence.

As I stepped out into the street, two o'clock struck. At that moment I became a free man. I straightened my back and with every step which took me farther from the Embassy, the feeling returned to me of a proud, open fighter for Socialism, as

I had been in the hills and the woods, when I had been a member of the partisan Third Croat "National Defence" Brigade.

Half an hour later a taxi brought me and my luggage to the Centrum Hotel. First thing in the morning I went to request the Czechoslovak authorities to grant me political asylum.

TITO'S PROPAGANDISTS CONVICT THEMSELVES BY THEIR OWN LIES

I thought that with my leaving the Embassy and requesting political asylum in Czechoslovakia, which I did on the morning of March 31, 1951, I had severed all the connections which until that time I had had with the Tito regime. It never occurred to me to make a sensation for Czechoslovakia or even eventually for the world out of my quitting the service of the Tito-fascist government. My parting with the Tito regime and its Prague representatives was merely the logical conclusion of my political reflections and the development of the situation as I have described it. It was a matter of course for me that in the future I should remain to the public an unknown, anti-fascist fighter for the liberation of Yugoslavia from the Tito regime and from American exploitation, that I should remain for Czechoslovakia and the world an unknown fighter for peace and Socialism.

I never imagined that my first public encounter with the Tito regime would take place over the ether waves and that Djilas' manufacture of lies would force me in my fight for the truth, which I had discovered, to take up the pen. Until now I had handled other instruments rather than the pen. However, in the fight against the betrayers of Socialism, the betrayers of my country, who have sold the Yugoslav working people to the American imperialists, in this fight I am willing to use any weapons, even the pen.

By chance I was invited on Thursday, 12th April, to lunch with a family of anti-Tito Yugoslavs in Prague. During the conversation someone switched on the radio and to our great surprise we heard Belgrade broadcasting a detective story in which I played the leading role, the role of the innocent victim carried off by the wicked brigands. It had taken the Belgrade radio thirteen days to think up the story of my alleged kidnapping, a story which apparently was intended to explain to the Yugoslav people my departure from the Embassy. For thirteen days Djilas' propagandists at the Belgrade radio had had to think over how to explain to their listeners my quitting Tito's service.

In its radio thriller Belgrade tried to convince the world that I had not left the Embassy voluntarily, but that I had been forcibly abducted by the Czechoslovak Security organs, who had entered my flat at night by the window and abducted me against my will through the window and then over the roof of the neighbouring building.

I have already described in detail every step of my departure from the Embassy building. It must have occurred to the listeners of the Belgrade radio: how many people it must have required to drag me, an experienced partisan fighter, armed with a pistol, against my will through the window, so that no one in the building would be awakened by the noise and no one notice anything suspicious. At the same time the Belgrade radio purposely ignored these facts: that my having left the building by the main door was proved by the fact that the inner iron bolt which I had had to slip before I left, must have remained open after my departure, because it could be bolted only from the inside; I had left part of my dismantled pistol in the porter's room; I had carried from my room two cases full of my things and my brief-case. The Belgrade radio regards its listeners as such idiots that they will believe that the Czechoslovak Security organs dragged me by force against my will through the window and over the roof of the neighbouring house without making any noise, and at

the same time they carried off various pieces of luggage and a radio, then they finally returned again through the window into the Embassy building, where they went down to the ground floor and opened the main door to make it look as though I had left voluntarily and of course beforehand they had persuaded me to give up at least a portion of my pistol, with which I had defended myself against them and which they then deposited in the porter's room of the Embassy. I think that is a little too much, even for the listeners of the Belgrade radio, although by now they are accustomed to almost anything.

As though in support of their claim that I had been forcibly abducted, the Belgrade radio added that in the Embassy safe, to which I possessed the key, all the papers were found carefully folded and in order and also 90 thousand crowns. Of what a low moral standard the Belgrade radio convicted itself when it expressed surprise at my voluntarily leaving official documents and the Embassy funds untouched. The Tito gang naturally cannot imagine the morale of an anti-fascist fighter for peace and Socialism. I never touched another's property even when I was in the direst need when I was a partisan in the woods. By leaving Tito's service I did not become less moral, rather on the contrary. We shall carry on the fight against Tito's fascism relentlessly to the victorious end but we shall keep our hands clean and our consciences clear so that we, in contrast to the present governors of Yugoslavia, may be able at any time to look the Yugoslav working people in the eyes.

Even if the story about my alleged kidnapping by the Czechoslovak Security organs, to make up which Tito's propagandists needed a whole thirteen days, was, as became apparent at the first moment, so romantically conceived, that even the least discerning person must have had to laugh pittingly at it, I thought things over and came to the conclusion that it would be necessary for me to reply to it, or else I ran the risk that some of our heroic underground fighters against

the Tito regime in Yugoslavia, would not be armed with arguments with which to expose the clumsy lies of the Belgrade radio. Djilas' propagandists of the Belgrade radio needed thirteen days in which to make up this story about me. They never explained to their listeners why they had needed such a long time before they could announce that they had perceived signs of a struggle in my rooms, proof, they said, that I had defended myself during my abduction. Why did they require such a long time before they "noticed" that on the walls were marks made by the "steel tips of my shoes", a proof that I had been dragged against my will through the window. They took a long time to make it up and they made it up badly. I do not wear steel tips on my shoes. And their story does not concur with a whole number of other facts which I have described here and which I stated earlier at my press conference in Prague. I think that the fact that I did not issue a statement to the public immediately after leaving the Embassy and requesting the Czechoslovak authorities for asylum, put the propagandists of the Belgrade radio in a quandary. They did not know how to explain that I did not want to make a world sensation out of my decision to turn against Tito's fascist regime. People who could not understand my not touching the 90 thousand crowns, which did not belong to me, naturally could not understand that personal modesty was also part of the make-up of an anti-fascist fighter and that I had not seen any particular reason for making a statement to the public. They themselves forced me to it with their lying story broadcast by the Belgrade radio just thirteen days after my quitting Tito's service.

On the afternoon of that same day I asked the Czechoslovak radio to allow me to reply on their waves to the morning's broadcast from Belgrade and reveal their mendacity. I am grateful to the Czechoslovak Radio and to the Czechoslovak Press Agency for granting my requests so quickly. On Thursday, 12th April at 1.30 p.m. the Belgrade radio first broadcast their fictitious account of my abduction. The same day in the

evening the Czechoslovak Press Agency sent out to all its subscribers a statement which I had written in the afternoon, in which I briefly related the story of my life and the political reasons which had decided me to quit Tito's service, leave Tito's political party and request the Czechoslovak authorities to grant me the right of asylum. The next day all the Czechoslovak newspapers printed my statement. It was quoted by the Prague radio and by the radio stations of other countries.

Tito's propagandists, however, did not give up and continued with their fabricated account of my abduction. The lies they had used up till now did not suffice them, they tried to magnify them further. On 14th April the Belgrade radio claimed that the statement published by the Czechoslovak press was forged, written by some one else and that the radio talk was not spoken by me but by some one posing as me. For several days they repeated their lies as though in the hope that by constant repetition they would become true and on 17th April they added the report that I had been arrested and was languishing in a Soviet dungeon. I wish you could see how all the people, with whom I was mixing at that time in Prague, laughed, especially when the Belgrade radio elaborated its previous story with the claim that in the prison I was being drugged before appearing as the accused or a witness in some impending trial.

Then the foreign newspapers came into my hands. I did not wonder at the Belgrade Borba and Politika's reprinting the stupid fabrications of the Belgrade and Zagreb radios. I was not even very much surprised when I noticed that the bourgeois Western press had in the main repeated to its readers the fabrications of Tito's radio about my alleged abduction. It forced me, however, to think of a way of revealing to the people of Yugoslavia and the world the magnitude of the lies which were as laughable as they were infuriating.

So a press conference was arranged in Prague, to which the press department of the Ministry of Information invited not only Czechoslovak journalists, but also foreign correspondents

of the Western press, bourgeois as well as Socialist. The conference took place on 18th April. At this conference I explained in detail the present political situation in Yugoslavia, and the conditions at the Yugoslav diplomatic mission in Prague and proved the mendacity of the Tito radio by describing in detail my exit from the Embassy. I showed to the journalists present part of the pistol whose other parts I had left in the porter's room of the Embassy and the keys of the safe, the door of the Embassy and the door of my room, these being the keys which Tito's propagandists claimed that the Czechoslovak Security organs had stolen when they tried to rifle the safe. At the conclusion of the conference I appealed especially to the representatives present of the Western capitalist press to reveal the truth in their reports and articles, that they had seen me alive and well here, that they had seen a free man who had stated to them the reasons why he had publicly broken with the Tito regime.

I thought that even if not from political understanding then at least from respect for the truth, that after my explanation the Western press would correct the reports which it had taken over from Tito's propaganda. I had no other aim than that the honest and peace-loving people in the capitalist countries of the West should know that the reports about my abduction, which they had read in the Western capitalist press and which were only taken from the Belgrade radio and Tito's newspapers, were not true and had been denied in every detail at a public press conference.

I appealed in particular to the representatives of the largest capitalist press agencies in the world, to Mr. William Oatis, representing the American press agency, Associated Press, to Mr. Russel Jones, representing the United Press of America, to Mr. Robert S. Bigio, representing the world agency Reuters, and to Mr. Gaston G. Fournier of the press agency, Agence France-Presse, to emphasise in their reports, besides what I had told them at the conference, the absurdity of the claim that I was in prison and in a Soviet one at that, or that the

“Czechoslovak organs were drugging me before some trial”. I begged them at least to write that they had seen me here well and at liberty.

For several days I waited impatiently, curious as to what arguments Tito's radio and the Western press would use to explain to their listeners and readers my reply to the lies which until now they had tried to circulate throughout the world about me. I had no illusions about the decency of Tito's press and radio. And I was not mistaken. On the morning of April 18 at the time when the press conference was being held, Belgrade was still broadcasting the contents of a slanderous article printed in *Politika*, in which among other things the lies about my abduction, about the falsification of my statement, about my being drugged and other clumsy fabrications were again repeated. Again they convicted themselves of a low moral standard when they said, “If Novak left to ask for asylum, why did he leave 90 thousand crowns in the safe and not take them with him?”

That was the last time the Tito radio dealt with my “case”. After the news about my stand at a public press conference in Prague they could not continue repeating their fabricated story, but they had not the courage and honesty to admit to their listeners the truth and therefore they preferred to conceal the fact that the press conference had taken place at all, that I had spoken there and unmasked Tito's treacherous policy, described the Titoist methods at the Embassy and showed the mendacity of Tito's propaganda.

I soon found out that the entire bourgeois radio and press in the Western capitalist countries had again copied the Belgrade propagandists. If the press in the Western imperialist countries at first repeated to its readers Belgrade's invention about my abduction by the Czechoslovak Security organs, so now this bourgeois press in the countries of the Western imperialists copied the Tito propagandists in remaining silent, in suppressing the news about the public press conference in Prague at which it itself was widely represented.

By this silence the Western bourgeois press tried to prevent the progressive and peace-loving people in the capitalist states from learning the truth about the Tito-fascist dictatorship, from finding out that the story about my alleged abduction by the Czechoslovak Security organs was made up in Belgrade and reprinted by the bourgeois press in the West, because it suited it in its slanderous campaign against People's Democratic Czechoslovakia. They wanted to prevent them from finding out that I had left of my own accord, that I had left out of the conviction that it would be immoral to remain longer in the service of the American *gauleiter*, Tito and thus to help him in his policy against the interests of the Yugoslav working people and for the benefit of the American exploiters, preparing a new, aggressive, world war.

There remained to me still one more way of telling the progressive and peace-loving people in the capitalist states what the bourgeois press and radio in their countries had tried to conceal from them: to turn to them directly in my own words with this book. Therefore, I beg every reader in the interest of spreading the truth about the conspiracy against peace and progress of the Tito clique in Yugoslavia, to try to circulate this book as much as possible.

CONCLUSION

I have described to you my life as I have lived it up to today. It consists of a chain of struggles: the struggle against the endless exploitation of the poor peasant in the Medjumurie region, the struggle against the German and Hungarian occupants of our country, the struggle against the Ustasha bandits and traitors from the ranks of our people, the struggle against our own bourgeoisie and their paid agents, and finally the struggle against Tito's fascism and his morally repulsive representatives in the Embassy in Prague.

I know that I am still young and that I still have my life before me but that also a great, difficult, relentless struggle lies ahead of me at the end of which comes the complete unmasking of a most repulsive treason, the unmasking of the American *gauleiter*, Josip Broz Tito, who with the help of other agents of Western imperialism, Kardelj, Ranković, Djilas, Pijade, Bebler and the secret and today all-powerful police organisation UDB and by cunning, seized power over the Yugoslav people, transferred our country from the camp of peace to the camp preparing an aggressive war and opened the door to the ruthless exploitation of our working people and the natural wealth of our country by the American imperialists.

In one thing, however, the Titoist criminals will never succeed. They can slander the Soviet Union and the countries of the People's Democracies, they can make up more and more lies about the policy of the Soviet Union and conditions in the People's Democracies but they have not succeeded yet by these means in suppressing the love and gratitude of our nation to the Soviet Union and the sympathy and admiration of our working people for the countries of the People's Democracies, building true Socialism.

The speeches of Tito, Kardelj, Djilas, Pijade and the others cannot erase from the minds of our people the knowledge that but for the Soviet Union and her brave armies Hitler's Germany and fascist Italy would not have been defeated. But for the courageous and victorious fight of the Soviet Union there would be no Yugoslavia and every progressive person must shudder with horror at the thought of what the world would look like today if the Soviet Union had not destroyed the most powerful instrument world reaction ever possessed—Hitler's Germany.

Our people have not forgotten, too, the fact that but for the great material help of the Soviet Union, there would not have been the great successes which our heroic partisan units achieved against the occupants of our country. We have not

forgotten that the Red Army itself liberated a considerable part of Yugoslavia including our white-walled Belgrade. It is impossible to persuade our working people, who have not forgotten the Soviet grain and other food-stuffs which we received at the time of our greatest need, at the end of the war and after the war, and our workers who are working with machines, received from the Soviet Union and People's Democratic Czechoslovakia, that the Soviet Union and the countries of the People's Democracies are the enemies of our working people and on the other hand their friends are the British-American imperialists, led by Churchill, Truman and MacArthur.

Not even Tito's attempts to keep himself in power with the help of American arms, now being imported into Yugoslavia, can meet with success. The masses of the Yugoslav people, who today under the fascist terror of the American plenipotentiary, Tito, cannot freely tell the world that they wish to remain in the camp of peace, in the camp led by the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies, will never use these arms against the Soviet Union and against the countries building Socialism. If our people should ever be forced to fight again with arms in their hands, there is no doubt that they will know who is their real enemy and against whom they should use these arms. The example of the victory of the Chinese people over the fascist dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek, armed also with American weapons, has not passed unnoticed by the nations fighting for their liberation from subjugation to fascist dictators in the pay of American imperialism.

I should like this booklet to become a weapon in the hands of all fighters for peace and Socialism. I should like it to help them to uncover the traitors in their own ranks, masking themselves with progressive-sounding phrases, as Tito and his clique have for so long succeeded in doing. I should like this booklet to be a warning to all honest people against Titoist agents covering themselves by diplomatic passports, especially in the countries of the People's Democracies. Trained UDB-ites

know how to discover and make use of every weak link in the anti-fascist, anti-Tito camp. When Atanasković ascertained that in a speech by Marie Švermová there was not one mention of the Soviet Union or of Yugoslavia, this agent of imperialism trained at the UDB school remarked, "In her speech Švermová did not praise the Soviet Union nor did she attack Tito. We should take notice of the fact that Švermová is different from the other leaders of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia."

I repeat once more that the danger of Tito's agents must never be underestimated, the danger of the fascist ideology camouflaged by Tito and aimed at the destruction of the unity of the world peace camp and the international solidarity of the working class.

By the consistent unmasking of Titoism we are helping to unmask, too, the assistants of the plotters of a new, aggressive war and helping to maintain world peace.

APPENDIX

Prague, 12th April. ČTK.

An official of the Yugoslav Embassy in Prague, Antun Novak, born 17. 1. 1925 in Vratišinec in the district of Čakovec in Yugoslavia, has requested the Czechoslovak government to grant him asylum because he does not agree with the policy of the present government of Yugoslavia and Tito's Embassy in Prague. At this occasion he made the following statement to the Czechoslovak authorities:

I come from a poor peasant family. Although father worked very hard, many a time he could not provide his family even with the bare necessities, so even as a child I felt the burden of the capitalist system. At the time when our country was menaced by the German and Hungarian fascists, I took up arms in her defence. I fought together with the Soviet Army so that once and for all we should bring to account the enemies and exploiters of the working people. After our victorious struggle to liberate our nation, I devoted all my strength to the regeneration of my country. For this I was several times decorated.

In January, 1948 I joined the UDB and regarded it as an honour to be able to protect the achievements of the working class and our alliance with the Soviet Union from intrigues. While I was on this course the resolution of the Information Bureau reached me, which had a deep effect on me. I did not believe that Tito and his associates could have played such a shameful game and have so terribly deceived the honest and sorely tried working people. After the conclusion of the eighteen months' course of the UDB in January, 1950 I was appointed to the Yugoslav Embassy in Prague. When I was told that I was going to an enemy state, to the heart of the Information Bureau and all contact with Czechoslovak citizens was forbidden me, I began to realise that the policy of the Yugoslav government was not in the interests of the working

people, but against their interests, in favour of world reaction and the Anglo-American war-mongers. It was using to this end a number of individuals of fascist leanings and methods, whose main argument was lies and demagoguery.

After my arrival at the Embassy, Lieutenant-Colonel of the General Staff, Military Attaché, Slavko Djurić, whose chief occupation in Czechoslovakia was espionage, called me to him. Referring to my membership of the UDB he directed me to propagate everywhere the policy of Tito and to laud conditions in Yugoslavia, regardless of whether it was true or not. The Chargé d'Affaires of the Yugoslav Embassy, Marko Milić, and Secretary Atanasković, used the same tactics. Tito ordered compulsory listening in to the slanderous Western and Belgrade radio broadcasts which were afterwards used in propaganda against Czechoslovakia. Employees of the Embassy were openly terrorised. A clerk, Zvonko Biluš, and his family were detained by force for a whole month in the Embassy building, where he was forced by threats to leave for Yugoslavia. An employee, Libuše Antoničić, was recalled to Yugoslavia and arrested there and is still imprisoned only because she criticised some abuses at the Yugoslav Embassy. Marko Milić makes use of the meetings of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia at the Embassy to incite the employees against People's Democratic Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union.

Here in Prague I have had the opportunity of convincing myself with my own eyes of the mendacity of Tito's propaganda against Czechoslovakia. I have seen the rising standard of living of the working people, while in Yugoslavia the working people suffer hunger. I have seen how the Czechoslovak people with the unselfish help of the Soviet Union are going forward to a better and happier life and on the other hand how Yugoslavia is being continually enslaved and sold to American capitalism.

The dictatorial methods, the suppression of all criticism, the terrorising of employees, the slandering and abusing of the internal conditions in Czechoslovakia and on the other hand

the elevating of the war policy of the Anglo-American imperialists, confirmed my suspicions about the treachery of the governing clique in Yugoslavia towards the working people. Many times I came into conflict with some of the employees, chiefly with Milić and Atanasković, particularly when they approved of the war of intervention in Korea, the remilitarisation of Germany and so on. It produced no less effect on me when the Yugoslav governing clique took up its stand against the Warsaw Peace Congress. At the beginning I tried at our Party meetings to point out the contradictions between what Tito announced and the actual facts. I pointed out that the Americans were the aggressors in Korea, that they wanted to enslave the Korean people, for which I was rebuked for being on the wrong path. In the end I realised that representatives of Tito's fascism, like Marko Milić and Atanasković, both high-ranking officers in the UDB, are just the same as the American aggressors in Korea. How is it possible to convince a person, like the Chargé d'Affaires, Marko Milić, who regards the atom bomb as the greatest victory against the camp of peace and takes his orders from the American Embassy as an obedient agent of the bourgeoisie? How is it possible to convince a servant of the bourgeoisie, who for a salary of some hundred thousand likes to fraternise with the newly-armed German fascists, the murderers of the best sons of the working class? One must hate such a sworn enemy of peace, progress and Socialism and unmask his corrupt, lying face.

I realised that there was no place for me among these fascist traitors if I were not to turn renegade to the class from which I had sprung. I accepted as my own the words of comrade Stalin, that peace would be saved if the people took the matter of peace into their own hands. I do not want to have anything to do with war-mongers or their agents and I want uncompromisingly to side with the camp of peace and Socialism.

I want to tell the truth to all the comrades who fought with me in the partisan fight. Tito and his clique are serving the war policy of international capital in the pay of the Anglo-

American imperialists. We must finish with this criminal gang which is leading our nations into military adventures.

For these reasons I have issued this statement about the true nature of Tito's regime in Yugoslavia and of his ambassador in Prague. I am withdrawing my membership from Tito's party and I am leaving the service of the Embassy.

At the same time I am requesting the Czechoslovak government for the right of asylum so that I can join in the building of Socialism in People's Democratic Czechoslovakia and so become one of the fighters for world peace and Socialism.

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ANTUN NOVAK

I served Tito

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