

U R G E N T
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II-1.229CZECHOSLOVAKIAJUSTICE

Show Trial

SLANSKY Trial

COMMUNIST PARTY

Foreign Relations

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Open Letter To Premier ZAPOTOCKY

SOURCE STOCKHOLM: Source was an editor for Reichenberger Vorwärts from 1920. In 1921 when ZAPOTOCKY was arrested, source was a secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. From 1920 to 1926 he was a member of the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. Source was also a member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. In 1922 and 1923 he was a secretary of the Comintern in MOSCOW together with KOLAROV, KUUSINEN and PJATHICKY. In 1923 and 1924 he worked in the Comintern as an expert in the Balkan questions together with DIMITROV. He belonged to the TROTSKY-BUCHARIN group and was against the STALIN group. In March 1926 KUUSINEN arranged a meeting between source and STALIN which lasted for three hours. STALIN tried to get source on his side but without result. After this all positions were taken from him and after three years he was evicted from the Communist Party. He then had a newspaper of his own, "Arbeiter-Politik," in REICHENBERG. It was a Communist paper but against Stalinism. When HITLER entered PRAGUE, source fled to Norway and later on to Sweden. He has not written anything about his experiences since he did not want to actively play the anti-Communist, but after the PRAGUE trial and the anti-semitic tendencies, being himself a Jew, he wanted to tell about the past.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: January 1953.

EVAL. COMMENT I: An open letter of the subsource. As such it is issued without any evaluator's comment.

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"Mr. Antonin ZAPOTOCKY,
Premier,
PRAHA.

STOCKHOLM, January 1953

"Only a few days ago I happened to get hold of all the copies of "Rude Pravo" which dealt with the prosecution material in the PRAGUE witch-hunt trial and with the accounts of the testimony to the so-called "people's court" of the defendants. It appears from this material and the "confessions" of the defendants, that SLANSKY was not the real sinner, but that GEMINDER and FREJKA (Jews also) who had caused the bankruptcy of Czechoslovakia with the aid of Western agents. Both GEMINDER and FREJKA "confessed" that it was I who had led them astray as a "Trotskyist" already in 1923, respectively 1924, and therefore things had to take the course they did take. GEMINDER took even a further step in confessing that SLANSKY in 1926 told him that he in many respects shared my political opinions, especially concerning my admiration for ZINOWIEV. These confessions are about as true as everything STALIN's scapegoats have ever "confessed" to any court.

The mere fact that your (German "Du") former friends and collaborators mentioned me during the trial is not enough to justify an open letter to you, because GEMINDER and FREJKA confessed only what they, the poor devils, were made to confess. I never had anything to do with GEMINDER. And FREJKA who "confessed" that it was due to me that he was given a high post within the Party, only exaggerated on an infinitesimal bit of truth. In 1923 or 1924 I arranged for him to become the provincial editor for REICHENBERG's "Vorwärts." Since then I have had nothing to do with him. And I had left the Party in 1929.

Now that it is established that I had nothing to do with either SLANSKY or GEMINDER and FREJKA, you, as the Party leader (since GOTTWALD really isn't the leader) are responsible, if not mainly responsible, for the fact that several of the former "Karlinske kluci" were arrested, sentenced and hanged. It was the Party leadership which, collaborating with the functionaries of the NKVD, prepared the list of Party functionaries designed to be "Western agents," "saboteurs," "spies," "murderers" and, above all, "Zionists."

Therefore it seems adequate to point to your political past and to your political actions. I did not try to influence SLANSKY, GEMINDER or FREJKA, but i.e. GOTTWALD and several other Party functionaries whom you once called "Karlinske kluci," (the boys of KARLIN) - party headquarters were then in the Karlin district. Then the "Karlinske kluci's" main duty was

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to ward off the excesses (such as raids on the office of "Rude Pravo" and on individual Party functionaries) which you and NOSEK and SMERAL organized. STALIN then called these excesses "banditism" and those behind them he called "bandits." It is ascertained that STALIN changed his opinion of you, NOSKA, etc.

In 1925, the "trio" (ZINOWIEV, KAMENEV and STALIN) decided on a thorough purge of the top level within the Czech Communist Party. The "trio" demanded that you, SMERAL, NOSEK and several others should not only be excluded from the central committee, but also from the Party. A majority of the central committee members, however, refused to comply with this request. And it was thanks to exactly those "Karlínské kluci" whom you sent to the gallows that you in 1925 were not thrown out of the party as a "counter-revolutionary" and "bourgeois agent." In those days there were not yet "spies" and "murderers" in the central committee. "Provocateurs," "spies," "murderers," "Police agents" were not discovered within the leadership of all Communist Parties until STALIN took over.

It would be senseless to add up all your political mistakes, because ever since STALIN took the power in the Soviet Union and within the Komintern, MOSCOW alone decided who is a "spy," "saboteur," etc. and who shall hang or live. And in MOSCOW the background to the various witch-hunt trials is made up. Right now, the international anti-semitic campaign had to be started properly. Otherwise it might not have been SLANSKY, GIMINDER, FREJKA, etc. who were held responsible at a people's court for the economic ruin of Czechoslovakia, but GOTTWALD, ZAPOTOCKY et, consortes.

One of the defendants confessed i.e. that he liked the Marshall Plan. What comely. It was, after all, your single opponent within the Party board, namely GOTTWALD, who almost accepted the Marshall Plan on behalf of the Government. It was none of the defendants, but GOTTWALD, who was ordered to MOSCOW to answer for his sympathies for the Marshall Plan.

The duty of the Party board in the various Communist Parties is to facilitate the work of the NKVD in deciding who should be sent to the gallows. Since MOSCOW this time started an anti-semitic action, it was easy for you to point out some of your former opponents, several of whom are of Jewish extraction. The question this time was not who might have been a "spy" or a friend of the Marshall Plan, but who was a Jew. And thus the poor devils were forced to confess not only that they collaborated with Western agents, but that they worked actively for Zionism. What shame! No party, no human being, and, above all, no active politician can descend lower than to the level of anti-semitism.

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No one knows better than you do that those who were sentenced in the PRAGUE trials were no "spies" or anything the like, that none of them had committed the crime he "confessed." All of them were victims of judicial murder and nothing else!

You are, of course, aware that the trial could not positively influence public opinion in Czechoslovakia. Only very few people believe in the prosecution material or in the confessions of the defendants. From this point of view it was a shot that missed its mark. If the witch-hunt trial had any positive result, it strengthened "Titoism" there. But then the aim of the witch-hunt trial was not either to influence positively public opinion in Czechoslovakia. The trial marked the beginning of an international anti-semitic persecution campaign.

I reiterate here, quoting Rude Pravo", the dialogue between the prosecutor and GEMINDER:

GEMINDER: I went to German schools in OSTRAU. Already in 1910 I left Bohemia and finished secondary school in BERLIN. Even after graduation I mixed with the small towns' petit-bourgeoisie, cosmopolitans and zionists, who spoke German. That is the reason why I do not speak Czech so well.

Pros.: And which language do you speak quite fluently?

GEMINDER: German.

Pros.: Do you really speak German perfectly well?

GEMINDER: It is a long time since I spoke German, but I have a command of the German language.

Pros.: Is your command of the German language about as good as your command of Czech?

GEMINDER: Yes.

Pros.: That means you do not really speak any language perfectly well. A typical cosmopolitan.

On this incredibly low level the entire trial was conducted. And the level of the proceedings of the trial correspond to the true aim of the trial: to propagate anti-semitism.

It is not so long ago that you were forced to "self-criticism" by SLANSKY. In 1945, in an important speech in

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PRAGUE, you admitted that SLANSKY was always right, that he and other "Karlinske kluci" had saved the Party from opportunism and that you had been in the wrong.

MOSCOW's latest "overall line," aiming at the general offensive of international anti-semitism, has changed the entire situation within the board of the Czech Party. MOSCOW wants Jews as scapegoats and you took the opportunity to pick out not only GEMINDER and FREJKA, etc., but also SLANSKY as the foremost tools of Zionism.

Apart from the fact that it gave you satisfaction to deliver your main opponent to the NKVD, you hardly had any choice. And no other path. And you can hardly escape your own destiny. After ZINOWIEW, KAMENEV, etc. it was the turn of those who had borne witness against them: RADEK, BUCHARIN, etc. And then it was the turn of those who had borne witness against RADEK et consortes. And so on and so on. Yesterday it was SLANSKY, GEMINDER and the others. Tomorrow it will be GOTTWALD, ZAPOTOCKY, etc. If not exactly tomorrow, then certainly in a few tomorrows. Everything takes a logical course.

Alois NEURATH."

End.