

Interview with Dr. Ljubo Sirc, Economist and Former Dissident.

Communism, Slovenia, Dossiers and (Honorary Consul) Dušan S. Lajovic.

Old Inanities are Becoming Annoying

Slovenians May be Waking up From their Moral Apathy Connection of the Totalitarian Past and Crippled Transition Who Knows and Who is (Not) Telling LDS Party (successor of the communist party) and Helpless Opposition

Večer: Mr. Sirc, you were sentenced to death at the infamous Nagode trial (in 1947) and subsequently spent seven and a half years in prison. You left the country and did not return until the late eighties. In the meantime you must have kept the political police quite busy. Have you seen your dossier?

Sirc: My dossier? I am not particularly interested in it because I know exactly what happened to me and who was involved as well.

The most dreadful part of this is that the communists made every effort to break mentally all those that they did not kill. This became clearly apparent in the so-called re-education process in prison and at the “socially useful work” (forced labor in concentration camps). The re-education had three stages: In the first stage it was required that the person confess that he was guilty, next he had to acknowledge that Marxism was the highest science in existence and, finally, it was demanded that the victim inform on his fellow prisoners. It appeared, according to OZNA, that a perfect rule of communism would be established when everybody is informing on and denouncing everybody else. Not only would this enable the political police to know what the subjects thought, it would also ensure that they are all mentally warped.

The communists would not leave me alone even when I was already abroad. On one occasion I had no choice but to complain about OZNA’s interference to the Swiss and the British. All that was so revolting that a person could be truly ashamed of OZNA’s activities. At the same time, the communist contention that “finking” is a way to psychological catharsis is best evidence of bankruptcy of the communist doctrine since it has to be sustained by such psychopathic methods.

About one million of names reportedly contained on the compact disks (published by Dušan Lajovic) confirm what everyone who lived in the forties and fifties knew only too well, namely, that OZNA did not work only on those convicted but that it was also arresting people who were quite innocuous under some pretext, threatened them and released them only after they promised that they would work for the UDB (OZNA). In

sum: depravity without a parallel.

You are asking if they tried to keep me under surveillance while I was living abroad. They have indeed although at one time I let them know that they could stop it as I was quite willing to tell them what I was thinking and doing as all I was doing was in the open and I had nothing to hide.

Večer: The judgment against Nagode and co-defendants was declared void in 1991.

Sirc: In 1991 the Supreme Court vacated the 1947 judgment in part, because the charges did not pertain to criminal acts but to normal political activities, and in part because they were simply made up.

The Affair Continues to the Rop* Government. (*Present Prime Minister)

Večer: When Milan Kučan was still President of the Republic, you inquired twice, where were buried Črtomir Nagode, born exactly 100 years ago, and victims of the trials of Dachau inmates. No answer was ever received. Did you address your inquiry to the right person?

Sirc: As the last Secretary General of the communist party, Kučan should know this. He held all strings of the government and, moreover, it is clear that the party's summit and the political police worked hand in hand. A good example is Mitja Ribičič who, as a high ranking member of OZNA, became president of the Yugoslav communist government and, later, even Tito's designated successor. Ribičič was Kučan's patron and mentor, which is apparent from the fact, reported by Mladina, that he had taken him along to Belgrade, and so on. Not only did this confirm that Kučan was a member of Secret Police UDB, it also made it clear that he had to know about the concealed burial grounds, if not in the course of his official duties, from conversations with his role models Ribičič and Stane Dolanc.

Moreover, burial of victims at undisclosed locations, which the Yugoslav political policemen learned from their Soviet teachers, is part of the systematic terror, intended for intimidation of the population because most people dread not knowing where their relatives are buried. Burial at undisclosed locations was thus part of the terror intended to guarantee that the communists are a power would endure.

At first the Party had to act harshly and murderously until people were so intimidated that continued and repeated intimidation became superfluous. The original terror persisted so that secretaries general, or rather presidents of the League of Communists, were so firmly in control that they could confidently pass on the torch -- or shall I say the femur -- to the next comrade in the relay all the way to the presidency of Milan Kučan. By the time of the latter's presidency, however, at least a few individuals in Eastern Europe began to see the light and realized that communism can bring neither welfare nor a government of the people.

Although Kučan was born only in the fifties, the roots of his power go back to the era of

communist mass murders and staged trials. More than that, the roots of communist rule from the time of crimes against humanity reach beyond Kučan all the way to the Slovenian government of today. If the present government were not aware of its roots and if it wanted to disassociate itself from them, it would not, for instance, publish that eulogy of Franjo Turk-Gorazd in the April 8, 2003 issue of *Delo* (Slovenian government mouthpiece) glorifying that communist. I knew Turk personally and I know well that he was one of the most highly trusted members of the political police UDB at the time when the mass murders were carried out and that he continued his career as an OZNA commissar of prisons where he was doing his best to make life miserable for political prisoners. By glorifying Turk in their eulogy Prime Minister Rop and his government reaffirmed their continued association with totalitarianism and criminal methods of communism.

Ostriches with Head in the Sand

Večer: Would the former president (of Slovenia) be in best position to assess the reliability of evidentiary record, including that of the State Security Service (SDV, Služba Državne Varnosti) as published on the Internet web page by Slovenian Honorary Consul in New Zealand Dušan S. Lajovic?

Sirc: As Secretary General of the communist party, Mr. Kučan is naturally knowledgeable about the handling of these records. Because he is fond of studying the problems of ethics he must recall, albeit perhaps reluctantly, that the foundation of Leninist ethics, to which he owed and perhaps still owes allegiance while cleverly posing as a beautiful person, is that in advancing the goals of communism it is allowed to use deception and murder and, indeed, that deception and murder are not only allowed but ordained.

The best evidence that the published archives are genuine is the frenzy which their publication created among those concerned. In essence, the records only confirm what everyone in Slovenia had to know about communism. No special effort is necessary for that, it is only necessary to listen to those who experienced communism. It is good, however, that publication of those archives will complete the picture by furnishing the details.

Večer: The archives, to the extent that they are not known or destroyed, still have to be found. We are talking over a long distance. How do you view from Glasgow the virtual state of siege in Slovenia caused by the records posted on the Internet? I presume that the nervousness of the politicians did not surprise you. And neither the publication?

Sirc: It is a good thing that the publication stirred the Slovenians from their moral apathy. They act like ostriches sticking their heads in the sand and allow themselves to be ruled by people whose power and authority is derived from crimes in the past which they are not repudiating to this day. They do not observe the valid laws on the books which require a break with the old ideology and practices. I have no idea whether those who

should worry whether the truth will come out are nervous. The main things about OZNA (VOS, OZNA, UDB, SDV -- these are the various names for the political police from the end of World War II to the so-called democratization) are known to everyone, yet no one shows to members of OZNA the contempt which they richly deserve.

Večer: The rush to the no longer blocked web page is not subsiding, the past of the politicians has become interesting and this is obviously what is making them nervous. Bad news for the politicians, say the cynics. People have become accustomed to freedom, to democracy, and they want to know. What is your opinion?

Sirc: The rush to the web page may well be an indication that the voters have finally become interested in the recent history. It is a sad commentary about the Slovenians that they have shown no interest for it prior to that. Worse yet, they knowingly kept electing communist malefactors to political offices despite their unsavory background. Slovenians are so imprudent that they give credence to the communist cliches about revanchism or, believe that the anticommunists are Bolsheviks which is an even greater nonsense. I was first confronted with this inanity a few years ago when I was dealing with Djilas and his son. Then I saw that the Slovenian communists were using this approach against Jože Pučnik and his friends. Finally, the Secretary General of LDS (Liberal Democracy of Slovenia, successor of the communist party) attempted to use this tactics against myself. Slovenians really should reflect upon the methods with which the communists and their offspring are trying to maintain themselves in power. If the rush to the Internet should induce the Slovenians to thinking about the state of their national affairs, we may expect their future to be less encumbered with nonsense.

The Only Truth

Večer: Do you know Mr. Lajovic and his story?

Sirc: Not only do I know Dušan Lajovic, I also know the entire Lajovic family. Vid Lajovic was a co-defendant with me at the Nagode trial, accused of one does not knows what. His father was a well known judge, member of the seven judge court in Zagreb and a leading Slovenian composer. The family started the entrepreneurial tradition in Slovenia which Dušan has been continuing elsewhere in the free world. Reputable and successful businessmen are anathema to Slovenian communists-- to them they are class enemies who must be exterminated so that Marxist incompetents could shine.

Večer: You have no doubt that in publishing the archives of the State Security Service Lajovic acted alone and that the publication is part of his personal memoirs on account of which some people may get elevated blood pressure? For starting up, Lajovic mentions former President of the republic Milan Kučan and his advisor Roter.

Sirc: I understand Dušan Lajovic only too well. He is beginning to be annoyed that Slovenians are still listening to the old rehashed inanities as the only genuine truth. An

opportunity to show from what sources emanates this officially approved truth presented itself and Lajovic seized it. I hope that his memoirs will be published, too, confirming and corroborating everything that Slovenians must know if they want to get anywhere. It is not possible to build the future on counterfeit history and Marxism. In this connection it is essential to know who are Kučan and Roter.

Vecer: The time of publication is certainly not uninteresting. Milan Kučan is no longer President. In evaluating applicants for the positions in NATO it will presumably be considered whether the candidate had anything to do with the various intelligence services. There is a growing number of people who are dissatisfied with the privatization as carried out by the LDS (Liberal Democracy of Slovenia, successor of the communist party). Would you say that this is all coincidence?

Sirc: The impression cannot be avoided that communist notables will seek the well paid positions at NATO. In Poland and Hungary as well as in Slovenia there is all of a sudden great enthusiasm for Western, originally anti-communist, alliances. If we are lucky, all that will happen will be that communists will be getting undeserved high salaries. It could happen, however, that on top of that the communists will also try subverting the organizations they successfully infiltrate.

It is true that we hear that NATO intends to investigate if the candidates for NATO appointments have backgrounds showing that they belonged to political police. Here it is necessary to point out that OZNA was not an intelligence service but a political police which, although to some extent involved in intelligence gathering as a peripheral activity, had as its primary purpose the destruction of the opponents of the communist party -- a fact well known in Slovenia. Such investigations are welcome. It should not be forgotten, however, that there is a great deal of naiveté and widespread ignorance about communism, its strategy and tactics in the West.

The LDS (‘Liberal Democracy of Slovenia, successor of the communist party) brand of privatization is a strange undertaking, particularly because of its political consequences. Concentration of wealth in the hands of clients of the successor parties to the communist party adversely influences the political development.

Vecer: What is that Dušan S. Lajovic has done that he is facing termination of his appointment as honorary consul? Is it that he pointed out the unauthorized and covert totalitarian aspects of the former system and threatened some careers?

Sirc: I am sure that Dušan Lajovic will not be missing much if the Slovenian communists cancel his appointment as honorary consul in New Zealand. Should this happen, the loss will be Slovenia’s because it is in its interest to be represented, even in a honorary capacity, by a successful and reputable person. Of course, the communists do not care about Slovenia’s interests because in their obdurate conceit they maintain that Slovenia’s interests are identical to theirs. The communists do not have the slightest intention ever to admit their errors and crimes or to begin acting as Slovenians among Slovenians instead of playing a role of anointed Marxists among the proletariat. Dušan Lajovic has taken political action. It is time that we recall again the communist crimes in Slovenia and

elsewhere because the transition is in a rut economically as well as politically and it is important to understand what is the cause of this situation. Those who are now being exposed scream that anti-communism is worse than communism but they do not explain why is it worse to condemn crimes than to commit crimes. The new slogan will be that publishing information as to who was working for OZNA and what crimes did OZNA commit is worse than being an agent of OZNA. Reasonable men do not consider publication of information about crimes an infraction of personal privacy.

If the opposition is gullible

Večer: The archive contains both unimportant petty thieves as well as important operators. Those who ordered surveillance by UDB are missing from the list, of course.

Sirc: Although publication of information on crimes and criminals may indeed distress and embarrass some petty thief of many years ago who is of no interest to anyone but this cannot be the reason for glossing over the communist crimes of the previous century. Particularly not because under the Slovenian law persecution of political opponents is a criminal offense subject to prosecution not restricted by statute of limitations.

Večer: Does it appear to you that the archive could be material for manipulations? The left against the right, the right against the left. If it is not followed by comparison and verification of codes in the dossiers, if they exist or rather, with those dossiers that may still exist.

Sirc: Those who know communists know that their tacticians will make every effort to create as great confusion as possible. They are capable of that while the opposition is so ingenuous that it will fall for that. Prominent leaders of the opposition will be set up one against the other by some data that may be pulled out of the archive. Should this happen the opposition will be in the bind. The fault certainly cannot be attributed to Dušan Lajovic. I might expect a division of the minds between the communist heirs. The younger and those who are sufficiently intelligent among them are certainly aware that they must, for their own sake, give up the privileges they inherited from the communist party. The communist party recruited them by coercion and deceit in accordance with the teachings of Lenin. The opposition's recently proposed six points tell clearly what should be done for a new beginning. □