

NATIONALISM TODAY: CARINTHIA'S SLOVENES

Part I: The Legacy of History

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The bombs—mostly destroying Osvobodilna Fronta or Abwehrkämpfer monuments—have been too small and too few and have done too little damage to earn much international attention in this age of ubiquitous terrorism in the name of some ideological principle or violated rights. Moreover, the size of the national minority in question, the quality of their plight, and the potentially wider Austrian and international repercussions of the conflict all pale into insignificance alongside the problems of the Cypriots, of the Northern Irish, of the Basques, of the Palestinian and Overseas Chinese diasporas, of the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union, or of many others. Despite these disclaimers, however, the problem of the Carinthian Slovenes is worth examining for more than its local and bilateral Austro-Yugoslav importance. It is, above all, a particularly tidy and suggestive case study of two intimately related questions that are now and again of worldwide concern and that historically first became acute precisely in this and similarly multinational provinces of the Hapsburg Empire. The first of these is what Central Europeans call “the national question,” involving the nature and significance of nationality and nationalism and the inherent contradiction between the ideology of the nation-state and the existence of multinational ones. The second combines an empirical and a value question: under what circumstances will a national (= ethnic? linguistic? cultural?) minority tend (a) to survive while integrating in other ways and prospering, (b) to survive at the price of social immobility in a ghetto or on a reservation, or (c) to disappear through some form of assimilation? And does it (always? sometimes?) matter if it disappears?

Austria's Carinthia is one of those provinces—like Alsace and prewar Posnania, Bohemia, or West Hungary—where the German world comes gradually to an end and becomes something else. Here the

other world is Slovene, and in the valleys of Carinthia, the two peoples and cultures have been mixed for more than eleven hundred years. Until the “national awakening” of the nineteenth century, nobody seems to have minded. Then came the Slovene renaissance and claims to cultural and social equality for Slovenes *qua* Slovenes, backed by the shadows of Austro-Slavism, South-(Yugo-)Slavism, and pan-Slavism. The German Carinthians, feeling threatened in their thousand-year cultural, political, and economic dominance on the borderland, reacted with a passion that became obsessive and that was to culminate in Nazi attempts during World War II to eradicate the Slovene Carinthians through a combination of forcible assimilation and population transfers. Meanwhile, the logic of the nation-state ideology and the inclusion after 1918 of neighboring and totally Slovenian Carniola in a new kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (later Yugoslavia) also brought Slovenian irredentist claims to Carinthia's ethnically mixed districts. Here, too, the culmination was violent, bringing two short-lived Yugoslav military occupations of the southern half of the province, in 1919-20 and 1945.

Today the dispute focuses on Austrian nonimplementation of specific and international obligations, designed to protect the existence and guarantee the equality of the Carinthian Slovenes, that are part of the State Treaty which ended Four Power occupation and restored Austrian sovereignty in 1955. For two decades the implementation of these provisions has been blocked by an unresolvable disagreement over the superficially curious issue of the relevance and need for some kind of head count (*Minderheitenfeststellung*) to determine how many Slovenes there are and where they live. First proposed by the principal Carinthian German nationalist organization in 1957, such a head count was eventually endorsed by all three of Austria's parliamentary

parties—both government and opposition—as a precondition for the introduction of bilingual topographic signs, Slovenian as a second language in courts and local administration, the definitive regulation of bilingual schools, and other measures stipulated by the State Treaty. On the other side the two officially recognized Slovenian political and cultural organizations in the province, backed by the Yugoslav government, have vehemently and continually refused to accept its need or legitimacy, opposed its execution when it finally came in November 1976, and are now refusing to recognize the results as a basis for settlement.

Each item in the history summarized above plays a role in explaining and giving significance to this dispute and to the positions assumed by all these actors. Relevant items include such apparently esoteric questions as the language spoken by the man who sat on the ancient stone throne on the Carinthian Zollfeld in the early eighth century and the ethnographic and linguistic validity of the concept of a Windisch or Wend people.

Slavs and Germans in the Valley of the Drau

Carinthia itself is worth fighting over. For my taste it is Austria's loveliest province. Its many lakes are the warmest in all the Alps, and there is something about the ratio between the shape of its wide, glacially U-formed valleys and the height and mass of its mountains that is particularly pleasing to this observer's soul. It is also, significantly, one of the most completely enclosed of the Austrian *Länder*. In the northwest corner rises the Grossglockner, at 3,798 meters Austria's highest mountain and pride of the High Tauern, a west-to-east prolongation of the main backbone of the Alps that cuts these southern valleys off from Tyrol, Salzburg, Upper Austria, and north winds. In the south the Karawanken Alps, another west-to-east range, raises a massive, steep-sided barricade between Carinthia and Yugoslav Carniola (gradients on the Loibl Pass road, now avoidable through a tunnel, exceed 22 percent). The Karawanken's westward extension in the Carnic Alps, beyond the narrow Tarvis Gap that is eastern Austria's only all-weather route to Italy, similarly bars the passage to Friuli. Through the middle of this land, giving it hydrographic and geographic unity, flows the river Drau (Drava to the Slavs and to the Italians who command

its source just inside South Tyrol), and in the southeast where the Drau crosses into present-day Yugoslavia, the mountains surrender to the great Pannonian Plain. Only here and to the northeast and east, where the passes into Styria and toward Vienna are lower and more numerous, is Carinthia easily accessible.

This geographic configuration, open to the east over yielding mountains and to the southeast along the Drau, but barely accessible in all other directions, has been important in the history of Carinthia and of the national question. The Slovenes came from the east in the second half of the sixth century, driven before the conquering Avars to an apparently bloodless occupation of valleys either uninhabited or sparsely populated by a mixture of Romanized (Celtic?) peoples and dropouts (Langobards? Goths?) from earlier barbarian migrations. The High Tauern and the Carnic Alps imposed western limits on their penetration,¹ while the eastward thrusting Karawanken split their migration into two streams and thereafter impeded communication between those who settled in the Ljubljana Basin to the south and those who followed the Drau into the Klagenfurt Basin to the north of this mountain barrier. By the time of Charlemagne the German Bajuvarii had come, too—both as settlers filtering across the high passes into northern Carinthia and as a Bavarian king's vassals who were summoned by Slovene appeals for help against the Avars and who stayed to rule. Carinthia became a Bavarian tributary state and with Bavaria passed into the Frankish Empire. As an autonomous German duchy, for a brief time including Styria, Carniola, Istria, Friuli, and the March of Verona, it was part of the Ottonian Empire and then of Ottokar's short-lived realm. Finally in 1335, both Carinthia and Carniola passed to the Hapsburgs, to be joined with Styria after the fifteenth century as the "Inner Austrian" lands of the Styrian branch of the House of Hapsburg.

Whoever may be right about the nationality of the first man to sit on that stone throne on the Zollfeld by the Karnburg north of Klagenfurt, by the end of the eighth century he was a German. But even centuries later, in a curious tradition apparently unique in feudal Europe, each new duke was welcomed there by a Slovene peasant—an honor hereditary in one family—who heard his oath to be a just ruler spoken in the Slovene language before

yielding the throne to him.² In this fashion, and for more than a millennium, German lords and German monasteries ruled a Slav peasantry who were almost alone among the peoples of Central Europe in never having had an independent and at least momentarily powerful state to remember.

In Carniola, lower Styria, and southern Carinthia an ethnic pattern familiar throughout the eastern Hapsburg domains emerged: a countryside of Slav peasants speckled with German market and administrative towns to which a few ambitious Slavs in each generation came...and were Germanized. In northern Carinthia, however, the German peasants also multiplied, spread southward to and across the Drau, mixed with the Slovenes in blissful mutual unawareness of the importance of nationality, and added German cultural to political hegemony in the countryside as well as in the towns. They and their Slovene neighbors both referred to the latter as Wends (*Wenden*, here more commonly *Windisch*), an ancient German name for any and all Slavs, from the Baltic to the Adriatic. Only later did *Windisch* become first a term of ethnic disparagement and then a designation for what German nationalists alleged was a separate Carinthian nationality, distinct from the Slovenes of Carniola and Lower Styria.

Slovene Awakening and German Reaction

The "national question" came to Carinthia in the early nineteenth century, as it did to other parts of the Hapsburg Empire, in the form of a "Slav awakening" encouraged by Slovene priests and an initially small number of intellectuals who rejected the idea that to become urban or to rise in the world required one to cease being a Slovene. The ensuing "Slovene renaissance" was characterized by a linguistic revival, again like analogous movements elsewhere in the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires, and by the spread of Slovene-language primary education in the countryside, here on a scale unequalled by most other such movements. A strategy reflecting a synthesis of nationalist ideology and Enlightenment views of education as the means to liberty and progress, at least in Carniola it had by the end of the century created an unusual entity in the world of that time: an almost totally literate peasant nation.

German nationalists claim that only with this "Slav awakening" did Slovenian become a literary

(written) language for the first time. This is not strictly true, since there had been a Slovene translation of the Bible and a modest flowering of Slovenian books during a "first Slovene renaissance" that coincided with the Reformation's brief triumph in Inner Austria in the sixteenth century. But the Hapsburg Counterreformation put an end to all this, and for over 200 years no books were published in Slovenian. The linguistic revival after 1800 therefore included a significant amount of updating, new vocabulary, and purging of non-Slavic loan words—mostly German or corrupted German and sometimes forms long obsolete in the German language, further evidence of the antiquity of linguistic and cultural mixing. The product, henceforth the Slovenian literary language (*Schriftslowenisch* to the Germans), was then taught in the new Slovenian schools springing up on both sides of the Karawanken and frequently sponsored in ethnically disputed districts by the South Slav Society of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, another characteristic instrument of the nationalities conflict in the monarchy. Virtually unchallenged in Carniola and generally successful in Lower Styria, the activities of the South Slav Society and of other Slovenian cultural nationalists were confronted by a serious rival in Carinthia. This was the German School League and its successor, the German School League of the Southern March (*Deutsche Schulverein Südmärk*), founded in 1880 to defend German schools in beleaguered towns and to subsidize the creation in mixed and Slovene districts of "ultraquist" schools, in which "Windisch" was used in the first grades to ease the transition to German as exclusive language of instruction in higher ones. By 1918 there were 35 such schools, against 3 Slovene language ones, in southern Carinthia.³

The German towns of Carniola and Lower Styria were one by one transformed into Slovene towns under the combined pressure of rural-urban migration from exclusively Slav hinterlands and Slav education. North of the Karawanken, however, where German towns could draw from a German as well as a Slav rural populace as they grew, and where the latter had often learned German in "ultraquist" schools or from German landowners or neighbors, such conversion of urban centers did not take place. Thus, while the Carinthian Slovenes contributed their share of talent to the "national renaissance," that talent tended to migrate south to Ljubljana, which was now the Slovene cultural center, rather

than to predominantly German Klagenfurt. The consequences of all these developments included a relative cultural weakening of Slovenian Carinthia, where literate Slovene peasants could usually read and write only in German and "nationally conscious" urban Slovenes were rare. They also included a growing gulf between the five *Windisch* dialects of Carinthia and those spoken in Carniola, which were gradually altered and unified by the now widespread teaching of *Schriftslowenisch*. Today, as a result, Carinthian *Windisch* and the Slovenian literary language are at times mutually incomprehensible, a fact exploited since 1920 by those who argue that Carinthian "Wends" are in some sense a separate nationality and that only those Carinthian Slavs who speak *Schriftslowenisch* (generally synonymous with those known to themselves and in Yugoslavia as "nationally conscious Slovenes") are really Slovenes.

One other aspect of more remote history deserves mention for its contemporary relevance. The Reformation and Counterreformation, in addition to their relationship to the rise and fall of the "first Slovene renaissance," assumed a particular character in Carinthia that is generally held to be the source of certain peculiarities in the political profile of the province's German-speaking majority four centuries later. Protestantism, briefly triumphant in much of Austria late in the sixteenth century, seems to have struck exceptionally deep roots along the Drau valley before the Emperor's hussars eradicated it with their bayonets. Even today there are proportionately more Protestants in Carinthia than in any other part of overwhelmingly Catholic Austria; most of them live in the higher valleys, a phenomenon explained in local folk history by the observation that seventeenth-century Imperial cavalry could not operate above the thousand-meter level. The memory of the form and brutality of their re-Catholicization lived on among the Catholic majority in the shape of unusually widespread and intense anticlericalism. The political consequences (if indeed there is a causal connection, since the thesis presented here is disputed by some historians and political sociologists) emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Before the rise of modern mass parties in the 1880s, anticlerical German liberalism tended to be the creed of German Austria's urban middle classes and the clericalist Conservative Party tended to dominate in rural areas, but most of Carinthia's country gentry, villagers, and farmers were atypically liberal. Later,

when these premodern parties had been replaced by the three "camps" that still divide Austrians politically—Christian Social (today's People's Party), Socialist, and Greater German Nationalist (whose direct heir is today's Liberal Party)—peasants and gentry elsewhere flocked to the Christian Social standard. In Carinthia, however, these same classes were predominantly German Nationalist, and purportedly as much because the German National Party was anticlerical as because it was nationalist. In this situation, and again for anticlerical as well as national reasons, it was natural that Carinthia should in due course produce a disproportionately large number of Austrian Nazis. But after World War II, when the old German Nationalist camp in its liberal reincarnation shrank to less than 7 percent of the electorate and most ex-Nazis and others of nationalist sentiment sought refuge in the People's Party or among the socialists, it was less "natural"—except in the light of this history—that in Carinthia, alone among Austrian provinces, the Socialist Party got most of them. The consequences of this anomaly for the Slovene question in the 1970s will emerge later.

Civil War and the Plebiscite

The collapse of the Hapsburg Empire in 1918 and the creation of Yugoslavia transformed the national question in Carinthia and Styria from a struggle among ethnic groups for cultural and political dominance within each of these provinces into a territorial question between states. As the Peace Conference assembled in Paris in December 1918, Slovenes from the disbanding Austro-Hungarian army, supported by Serbian regular units, hastened to bolster with a military occupation their claim that at least southern Carinthia, including the province's principal and undoubtedly German towns of Klagenfurt (Celovec) and Villach (Bejak), should be part of their new state. German Carinthians, also returning from the front, defied warnings about the new Austrian Republic's nervous Provincial Government in Vienna and took up arms again. Civil war ensued. An armistice was negotiated through American mediation in mid-January and lasted until the end of April 1919. Then, with the Carinthian question still unresolved as the Treaty of St. Germain entered the final drafting stage (Lower Styria, with only two predominantly German towns left in a solidly Slovene countryside, was to go to Yugoslavia), hostilities began again on a more

serious scale. After some initial successes, the German *Abwehrkämpfer* were driven back, and the Yugoslavs occupied Klagenfurt. The Peace Conference intervened again, imposed a new armistice, and ordered the holding of a plebiscite in the disputed area. The Yugoslavs were forced to withdraw from Klagenfurt, but were left in occupation of most of the rest of their claim pending the vote.

In recognition of the military situation and the ethnic map, the disputed area was divided into two zones. Immediately north and east of the Karawanken, in the districts known to contain most of the Slovenes and under Yugoslav occupation, Zone A included the market centers of Völkermarkt (Velikovec) and Bleiburg (Pliberk), the purely Slovenian Alpine valleys around Zell (Sele), and the predominantly Slovene Rosenthal (Rož). If the plebiscite here should result in a majority for Yugoslavia, a second plebiscite would be held in Zone B to the north, including Klagenfurt and Villach. But if the vote in Zone A were favorable to Austria, no plebiscite would be held in Zone B, which meanwhile remained under Austrian administration.

The plebiscite in Zone A was held on October 10, 1920, under Allied supervision. Despite claims to the contrary still commonly heard in Yugoslavia, there seems no doubt that it was fairly conducted, although both sides had waged a vigorous propaganda campaign and brought to bear such pressures as they could, fair and foul (since the zone had been under Yugoslav occupation since the spring of 1919, undue Austrian pressure could hardly be alleged). The result: 22,025 people, 59 percent of the all-male electorate, turned in the green ballot for Austria. It was clear, as both sides still agree today, that a large number of Slovenes had voted against union with their kinsmen in the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The Yugoslavs reluctantly evacuated the zone, taking many of their most active partisans with them, including 32 teachers and 28 priests. Except for two small districts south and east of the Karawanken that the Peace Conference had already granted to Yugoslavia without a plebiscite, Carinthia remained undivided and Austrian.

There seem to have been several reasons why so many Carinthian Slovenes voted for Austria rather than for Yugoslavia—an outcome that the Yugoslav negotiators in Paris had privately expected, despite

their conviction that the majority of the affected population was Slav, when they opposed the Peace Conference's decision to hold a plebiscite.⁴ One reason was economic and in turn geographic. The Austrians (and also the Yugoslavs, when they originally tried to claim all of the province) had made much of the alleged "indivisibility" of Carinthia on these grounds. It was a good point, and one that the voters were well aware of. A frontier along or near the Drau, which American experts supported at one stage in 1919, would isolate people living south of that line from all population, cultural, and market centers, since Klagenfurt and Villach would become foreign, beyond a customs border, while the Karawanken would still block their access to any alternative Yugoslav centers. The behavior of Serbian troops and administrators occupying Zone A also seems to have played a role, which was eagerly dramatized in German nationalist propaganda, for it could be experienced as an unpleasant foretaste of life in a Serb-dominated and thus quasi-barbarian Balkan kingdom if one voted for Yugoslavia. In addition, and also a favorite theme of German propaganda, there was compulsory military service in Yugoslavia (perhaps to be performed in darkest Macedonia!), but none in republican Austria.

Finally, and just possibly the most important, the "indivisibility" of Carinthia had (and has) another, noneconomic, meaning. Encouraged by old Austrian traditions of provincial political and cultural autonomy but expressed with even greater intensity than elsewhere, perhaps because their land is geographically so self-contained, most Carinthians of any nationality apparently think of themselves as Carinthians first. German, Slovene, Yugoslav, or (especially rarely, even now!) Austrian are at best secondary forms of self-identification. The Viennese is a highly suspect foreigner to the German Carinthian, and the Carniolan as well as the Serb is equally an alien to his Slovene neighbor. The validity of this generalization and the importance I tend to attribute to it, both on the basis of unsystematic personal observations and reading the German and Slovenian Carinthian press over the years, find support in the conclusions of an internationally known Austrian social psychologist, Professor Wilfried Daim. Writing about the plebiscite in a study of attitudinal aspects of today's Carinthian problem, Daim points out that those Slovenes who did vote for Yugoslavia were no more "unpatriotic" or anti-Austrian than the majority of their German

Austrian contemporaries, who at that time wanted union with Germany. As for those who voted for Austria:

Here the feeling of belonging to a territory with a long history, a feeling that is very strong and alive among the population, should also be emphasized. A thousand years ago Carinthia (to be sure much larger than today) was the first Dukedom on the soil of present day Austria, and a rich historical tradition has encouraged the growth here of a patriotism for which the integrity of Carinthia's borders has often been more important than any movement toward national unification. "Loyalty to the homeland" [*Heimattreu*] could be understood in this or that way after 1918, when all frontiers were in flux. But it is certain that, alongside a great variety of other motives, this one above all led many Slovenes to vote for Austria in 1920.⁵

What it all adds up to, in a phrase popular among Yugoslav and Carinthian Slovene politicians and political sociologists, is that in 1920 the Carinthian Slovenes were by and large "not nationally conscious." That is, many and perhaps most of them voted on the basis of other than national or ethnic criteria. To arouse the "dormant national consciousness" of these people has ever since been an objective of governments in Ljubljana and Belgrade, whether royal or communist, and of already "nationally conscious" Slovenes on both sides of the Karawanken. Why they feel this to be so important, why it has been so difficult, and what has happened in consequence explain conflicting Slovene and German nationalist attitudes to this year's disputed ethnic census and are the themes of Parts II and III of this series.

From the First Republic to Hitler and Tito

Before and immediately after the plebiscite triumph of 1920, Austrian federal and Carinthian provincial authorities promised the Slovene minority full protection, in accordance with clauses in the Treaty of St. Germain requiring such measures. Only a month after the plebiscite, however, Provincial Governor Arthur Lemisch, in a statement before the Carinthian Assembly that is quoted with expectable regularity by Slovenian nationalists today, referred to the 41 percent of Zone A's voters who had preferred Yugoslavia in terms that suggested a different policy preference: "We

have only one lifetime to lead these misguided people back to Carinthianism [sic]; the task of re-education must be completed within the span of one generation!" Here were both the thesis and antithesis that have shaped the dialectic of the Slovenian minority's destiny for nearly 50 years.

The first chapter in this story is a tale of ten years of negotiations over legislation to establish "cultural autonomy" for the minority, with each side continually accusing the other of bad faith. On May 27, 1931 the provincial legislature's school commission declared further efforts to be in vain, blaming the intransigence of the Slovene leaders, and the debate ended. Slovene spokesmen still use this decision as evidence of permanent bad faith on the part of Austrian authorities, but the evidence seems to indicate that at least the provincial and federal governments—in contrast to local private nationalist groups with considerable influence—had made a sincere effort.⁶ Slovene cultural societies, periodicals, and a powerful and efficient Slovene cooperative movement continued to exist, relatively unhampered, through the period of the Dolfuss-Schuschnigg dictatorship. The situation was even better, or at least the Slovenes thought it was, in the first years after the Anschluss, Nazi officialdom having promised the minority greater autonomy than they had enjoyed under the Austrian Republic. On the other hand, the failure of the negotiations over "cultural autonomy" left the minority without Slovene schools, "ultraquist" schools did not teach the Slovenian literary language, and the bilingual public signs that had been tokens of official recognition of binationalism in Hapsburg times were painted over leaving German only. Census figures, however otherwise inaccurate and misleading,⁷ are mute witnesses to the fact that pressures on the minority, whether social, official, or self-inflicted, continued. The last Imperial census of 1910 had counted 74,210 Slovenes on the territory of post-1918 Carinthia, as surely an undercounting as the 124,000 claimed in Yugoslav presentations to the Peace Conference was an exaggeration. In the next census, and the first under the Republic, taken in 1923 this figure was down to 39,292, and in that of 1934 there were apparently only 26,796 Slovenes in the province. The nature of the reasons for such a rapid decline in reported numbers under the First Republic becomes ironically even clearer when one notes that the next census, taken in 1939 during the post-Anschluss Nazi-Slovene honeymoon, registered 42,000 as speaking some variant of Slovene.



The German invasion of Yugoslavia in April 1941 brought an abrupt end to the uneasy peace in Nazi-Slovene relations. Northern Carniola was annexed to the Reich and to Carinthia and placed under Gauleiter Friedrich Rainer in Klagenfurt. Almost all Slovene priests on both sides of the Karawanken were promptly arrested; some were later released under pressure from the Bishop's Ordinariat in Klagenfurt, but only in return for an episcopal promise to remove them to German-speaking areas and to replace them with German priests who—it was explicitly stated—were to know no Slovene. Some 272 Slovene families were forcibly removed to northern Germany and their farms were given to German immigrants. These were the first steps in a plan, approved in Berlin, for a “definitive solution” to the minority problem.

In charge of such operations, under Gauleiter Rainer, was SS-Standartenführer Alois Maier-Kaibitsch, for many years before the war the head of the German nationalist Kärntner Heimatdienst (literally “Carinthian Homeland Service”), founded during the 1919 civil war and to be refounded in 1957 to “continue the struggle.” Much more will be said about the contemporary Heimatdienst in Part II of this series: it is worth noting here, however, that when I first visited Carinthia and interviewed then leaders of the Heimatdienst in 1960, almost all were former friends and colleagues of Maier-Kaibitsch, who had died a few years earlier while serving a life sentence for his wartime activities. While they insisted there was “nothing Nazi” about the new Heimatdienst, they remembered Maier-Kaibitsch with affection, defended his and their own records during the war with passion, and were happy to give me introductions to his and Gauleiter Rainer’s widows. Because of the psychological as well as political importance of such continuity in explaining

the attitude of the minority, a lecture delivered by Maier-Kaibitsch on July 10, 1942, outlining the tasks before the Carinthians “now that we are part of the Reich,” is also worth quoting:

The events of the last years in the Balkans have given us the possibility of putting an end to the so-called Slovenian minority in the area north of Karawanken.... Security measures required at that time, among other things, the imprisonment of some Slovene leaders in the former bilingual zone; others were banished from the Gau. We trust therefore that the small number of those who since the 1939 census claimed to be Slovenes will now realize the facts and understand our warnings and invitations.... The use of the Windisch colloquial language must cease once and for all even in private intercourse... this must be achieved by all means. Only German inscriptions can be put in churches, on flags, crosses, on the gravestones in cemeteries. It is everybody’s task to report to the Gaubureau, Section for Nationality Questions, all inscriptions in Windisch... Slovene literature must be confiscated and disappear from use. All party and state institutions have to issue strict instructions that only German may be spoken.⁸

In this same lecture Maier-Kaibitsch expressed concern that the liquidation of the frontier on the Karawanken through the annexation of northern Carniola could make his task more difficult by opening the way for the Slovenes of Carniola to support the minority in Carinthia. This was in fact already happening in a more drastic and dramatic form than he anticipated. The Osvobodilna Fronta za Slovensko Koroški (Liberation Front for Slovenian Carinthia) is still proudly remembered—in appropriate circles—as the first and only militarily significant armed anti-Nazi resistance movement on the soil of the Third Reich itself. Although in some measure autonomous, it was essentially an Austrian branch of the Osvobodilna Fronta (OF), Tito’s Partisans, in Yugoslav Slovenia to the south. Like the parent OF, the Carinthian Partisans were a communist-dominated coalition of all antifascist forces, including a strong contingent from the left wings of the prewar Catholic parties on both sides of the frontier, and in Carinthia the OF also recruited a respectable number of German Austrians who wished to fight Nazism or the Anschluss. Dr. Jože Tischler, the Chairman of the Carinthian OF after the war, who was to be given a place in the Provisional Carinthian Government recognized by

the British occupation authorities in 1945, and who is still an important figure in minority politics, came from the movement's Christian wing.

Much has been made by both sides of the Carinthian OF record. For its veterans and other members of the minority, its staunch anti-Nazism and its sacrifices, successes, and unique armed resistance within the Reich merited special consideration by the victorious Allies and still merit the respect of all "democratic" Austrians. For many German Corinthians this same record is further proof that the new Yugoslavia, even and worse yet a communist Yugoslavia, will use force to take Austrian territory if given a chance. More important still is the record of the last months of the war, when units from Yugoslavia, by then formally part of Marshal Tito's new Yugoslav People's Army, crossed the old frontier to join hands with the Carinthian OF in an apparent repeat of Royal Yugoslavia's 1919 attempt to anticipate the decisions of a peace conference by occupying what they claimed. In the process Nazi atrocities were answered with communist ones, including the abduction and disappearance into Yugoslavia of about 300 Carinthian Germans and Slovenes, largely former leaders of the pro-Austrian campaign of 1919-20 in Zone A. And, although not directly related to the Carinthian question, the fact that the surrender to the Partisans and subsequent "death march" of the retreating army of the Nazi-sponsored and ill-famed Independent State of Croatia began on Carinthian soil, at Bleiburg, has permitted that bloodiest act of revenge in Titoist history to be co-opted into Carinthian memories and into Heimatdienst claims that German Nazi oppression was more than cancelled out by Slav communist terror.

As his forces moved into former Zone A, Tito's government presented to the Allies a demand that Yugoslavia be allowed to participate in the occupation of Austria by taking over Carinthia, which had been assigned to the British Zone, pending a settlement of the frontier question. The British Foreign Office and American State Department replied that the frontier question was indeed open, but that for this very reason they could not accede to the Yugoslav request. Nevertheless it took from April 2 (the date of the Yugoslav note) until May 19, 1945 for the Anglo-American authorities, through a series of increasingly sharply worded diplomatic notes, to obtain a Yugoslav evacuation of Austrian territory.

The Yugoslavs continued to press their claims. In 1949, however, the Foreign Ministers of Austria's

Article 7

Rights of the Slovene and Croat Minorities

1. Austrian nationals of the Slovene and Croat minorities in Carinthia, Burgenland, and Styria shall enjoy the same rights on equal terms as all other Austrian nationals, including the right to their own organizations, meetings, and press in their own language.
2. They are entitled to elementary instruction in the Slovene or Croat language and to a proportional number of their own secondary schools; in this connection school curricula shall be reviewed and a section of the Inspectorate of Education shall be established for Slovene and Croat schools.
3. In the administrative and judicial districts of Carinthia, Burgenland, and Styria, where there are Slovene, Croat, or mixed populations, the Slovene or Croat language shall be accepted as an official language in addition to German. In such districts topographical terminology and inscriptions shall be in the Slovene or Croat language as well as in German.
4. Austrian nationals of the Slovene and Croat minorities in Carinthia, Burgenland, and Styria shall participate in the cultural, administrative, and judicial systems in these territories on equal terms with other Austrian nationals.
5. The activity of organizations whose aim is to deprive the Croat or Slovene population of their minority character or rights shall be prohibited.

four occupying powers (U.S.S.R., United States, Britain, and France), meeting in Paris to draft an Austrian State Treaty and deadlocked on other issues, decided that Austria should retain its 1937 boundaries unaltered. By then, a year after the outbreak of the great Soviet-Yugoslav quarrel, even the Soviet Union had lost interest in supporting Yugoslav pretensions. And in 1955, when the State Treaty including this clause was finally signed, the Yugoslavs acceded to the Treaty and thus legally abandoned their claim.

Since that time Yugoslav government and the Slovene organizations in Carinthia have maintained that they are no longer interested in annexation by Yugoslavia, but only in the protection of the

minority within Austria and increased cultural contacts across the Karawanken. German nationalists maintain that this is only tactically disguised irredentism, and the Carinthian "Titoists," at least, have not always been very convincing in their denials.

The State Treaty also contains two articles—drafted by the Big Four Foreign Ministers at the same 1949 meeting at which they agreed not to alter the prewar Austro-Yugoslav frontier in favor of Yugoslavia—which internationalize the status and treatment of Austria's ethnic minorities. The first of these, Article 6, refers in general terms to the usual list of "human rights and fundamental freedoms," enjoining Austria to "take all measures necessary" to insure their enjoyment by "all persons under Austrian jurisdiction, without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion"; it also prohibits laws that discriminate among Austrian citizens on the basis of such distinctions. The second and more frequently cited, Article 7, refers explicitly to the state's two South Slav minorities and to the three provinces in which they live, committing the republic to a set of specific and positive acts designed to guarantee their existence as a national minority and equality as citizens. Those listed are the Slovenes of Carinthia and Styria, the latter so few in number that they have generally been ignored by all sides, and the Croats of the Burgenland, whose situation is different, not least because they live along the Hungarian rather than the Yugoslav frontier, so that neither they nor the Yugoslav regime can be suspected of harboring irredentist ambitions. Disputes and problems arising from Article 7 and its (non-) application have therefore usually involved only the Carinthian Slovenes. The fate of Article 7, the vicissitudes of the minority since 1955, and the significance of both are the subject of Part II of this series.



NOTES

1. The importance of the geographic factor is doubly clear when one notes what happened at the only two usable "holes" through the arc of high mountains girdling the western end of Carinthia. Just beyond the low pass between the headwaters of the Drau and the Pustertal (Val Pusteria) in present-day South Tyrol, the Slovenes were stopped by a Germanic army in the only recorded battle associated with their arrival. At

the Tarvis Gap (and over the Karst passes to the south from Carniola), in contrast, they filtered through, apparently unopposed, into eastern Friuli. Here, however, they found themselves in a land more densely populated and "civilized" than Carinthia or Carniola; the result was therefore not another peaceful ethnic takeover but rather a combination of gradual assimilation in the plains and surviving colonies in the foothills and mountains (primarily in the so-called "Slavia veneta" in eastern Udine Province, the site of last year's disastrous earthquakes, in the Soca [Isonzo] valley, and around Gorizia).

2. In the interest of accuracy it should be added that there were two (successive) stone thrones: the *Furstenstein*, now in a Klagenfurt museum, and the back-to-back, double-seated *Herzogstuhl*, which still stands in place, exposed to the elements, in the middle of the Zollfeld. For details about the ceremonies and symbolism surrounding both, see Dr. Valentin Inzko, "Furstenstein und Herzogstuhl—Symbole gemeinsamer Landesgeschichte," in *Das gemeinsame Karnten/Skupa na Koroska*, Nr. 6 (Klagenfurt, 1976, a bilingual publication of the German-Slovenian Coordination Committee of the Gurk Diocese dedicated to bringing the two ethnic communities together.

3. Figures from Viktor Miltschinsky (a relatively moderate but sometimes unreliable "grand old man" of Carinthian German nationalism when I met and subsequently corresponded with him in 1960) in *Karnten - ein Jahrhundert Grenzlandschicksal* (Klagenfurt, Eckartschriften, Heft 2, 1950), pp. 16f, and *Karnten wehrt sich!* (do., Heft 9, 1962), pp. 12f. Since the history of the province has generally been written to serve polemical purposes, from one nationalist standpoint or the other, the summary offered here is necessarily a synthesis of many often contradictory sources. The standard work in English on the subject in general is Thomas M. Barker, *The Slovenes of Carinthia—A National Minority Problem* (New York, 1960), now being revised for a second edition.

4. For this point, see Ivo Lederer, *Yugoslavia at the Paris Peace Conference* (New Haven, 1963), pp. 220, 223.

5. Wilfried Daim, *Die Problematik der Versöhnung der Volksgruppen in Karnten* (Klagenfurt, published as *Das gemeinsame Karnten/Skupna Koroska*, Nrs. 4 in German and 5 in Slovenian, 1976), p. 20.

6. Cf. Valentin Einspieler, *Verhandlungen über die der slowenischen Minderheit angebotene Kulturautonomie 1925-1930* (Klagenfurt, 1976). Dr. Einspieler, it should be noted, is both a Carinthian Slovene school administrator and head of the "Verband der Karntner Windischen" (League of Carinthian Wends, of which more in Part II), and therefore a *bete noire* for Slovenian nationalists.

7. As will be seen in Part III along with the reasons why even the figures given here are only one of several versions.

8. Copy in my files, also quoted in my report on my 1960 interviews, "The Slovenes of Carinthia," Institute of Current World Affairs newsletter, DR-28/30, September 1960.