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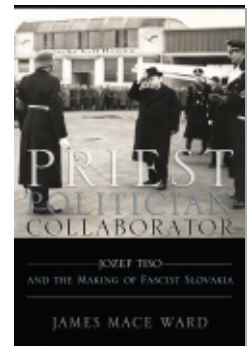
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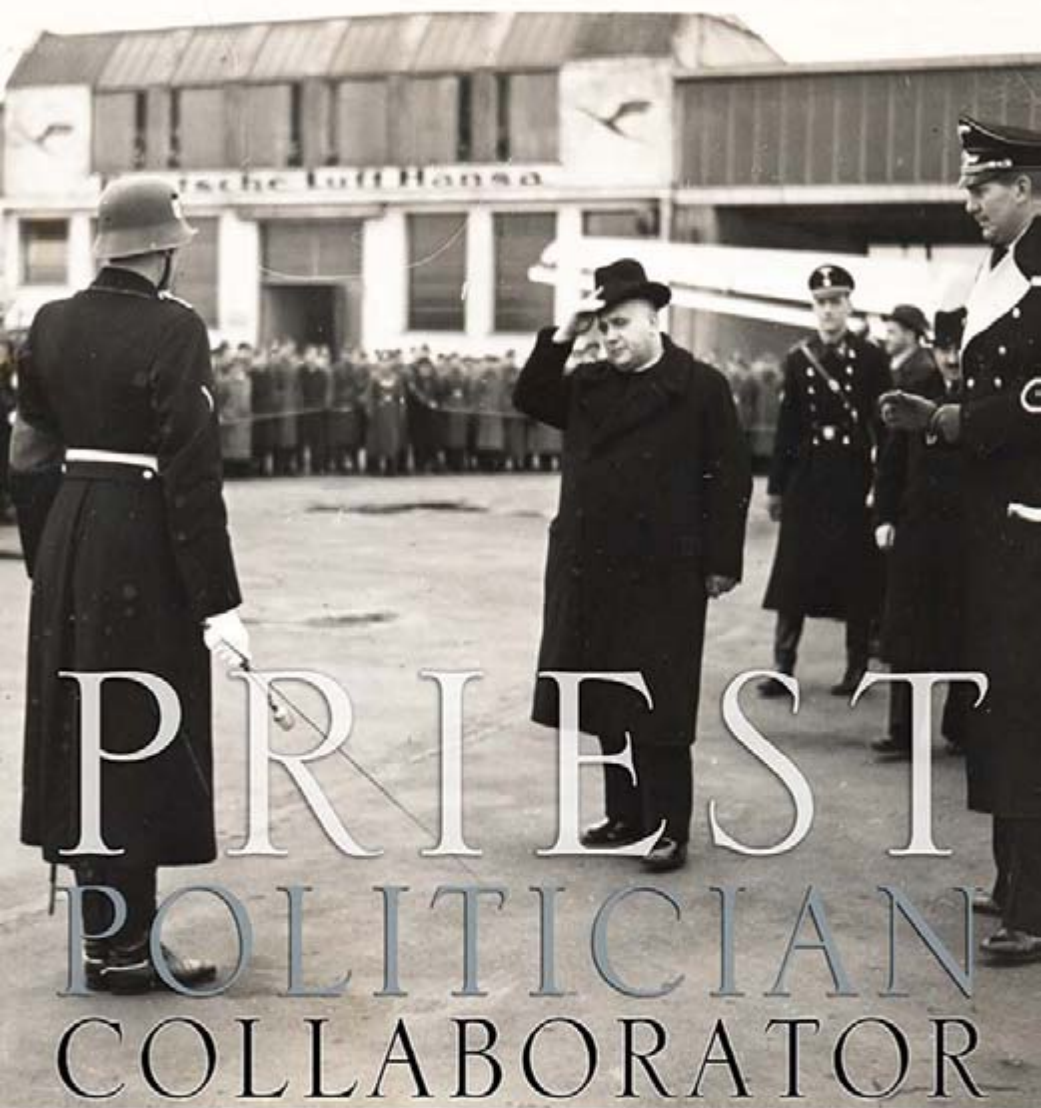
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PRIEST
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JOZEF TISO

AND THE MAKING OF FASCIST SLOVAKIA

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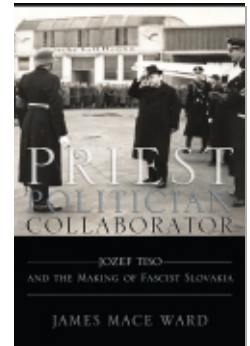
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JAMES MACE WARD

CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS
Ithaca and London

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First published 2013 by Cornell University Press

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, politician, collaborator : Jozef Tiso and the making of fascist Slovakia / James Mace Ward.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-8014-4988-8 (cloth : alk. paper)

1. Tiso, Jozef, 1887–1947. 2. Presidents—Slovakia—Biography. 3. Slovakia—History—1918–1945. I. Title.

DB2821.T57W37 2013

943.73'033092—dc23

[B] 2012038563

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Cloth printing 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

For Martina

There is no such thing as the State
And no one exists alone. . . .
We must love one another or die.

W. H. Auden, "September 1, 1939"



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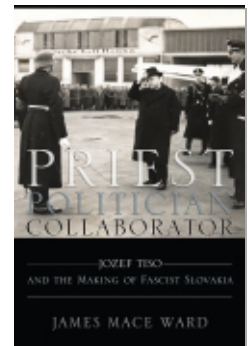
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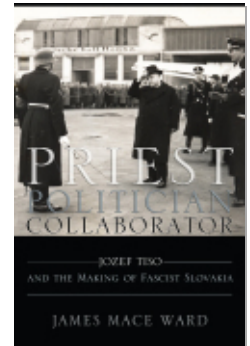
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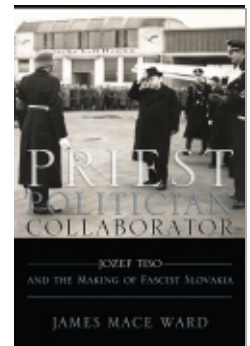
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Preface

I first heard of Jozef Tiso in fall 1992 as a volunteer English teacher in Czechoslovakia. With the New Year, as the country split into the Czech and Slovak Republics, I hit on the idea of this biography. For the next half-decade, however, I continued to teach English in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Thailand, not seriously taking up the project until 1998. Wanting to do the best job that I could, I soon after began training as a historian.

In the 1990s, Tiso was the object of an aggressive attempt to rehabilitate him and a symbol of everything seemingly wrong about post-Communist Slovakia: nationalism, authoritarianism, xenophobia, bigotry, neofascism. These were the years of the greatest social debate about Tiso, discussions that were typified by their confusion and stridency. What you thought about him said a lot about the direction in which you wanted the country to go and how you imagined yourself as a person. What you knew about him depended on which side you read of an extraordinarily polarized literature.

This book began invested in this Slovak debate and in sorting out the contradictory claims about Tiso. Since then, I have disengaged from these questions. I am still, of course, deeply committed to providing as accurate an account of this life as I can. Arguing against myths, errors, and misinterpretations, however, pulled me away from the task of understanding Tiso. I also wanted to speak to a broader audience than my initial approach would allow. Although my dissertation has not benefitted from the process of revision that this manuscript has, readers engaged in the Slovak debate and in questions about sources may wish to consult this earlier work.

One does not finish a project like this without a surfeit of debts to those who kindly gave of their time, expertise, and support. Here, in the interest of liberating

readers from what would be a shockingly long accounting, I will give only brief acknowledgments. I enjoyed the support of several generous grants: an Austria and Central Europe Fellowship from Stanford University's Forum on Contemporary Europe; a Mellon Foundation Dissertation Fellowship; a Charles H. Revson Foundation Fellowship for residence at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; a Fulbright-Hayes Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship and an International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) Individual Advanced Research Opportunities Grant.¹ I also benefited much by belonging to faculties at Stanford University, Queen's University of Belfast, and DePauw University. My debt to mentors, colleagues, clergy, friends, and family for sustaining me is even heavier. I hope that all of you understand how sincerely grateful I am and how much I admire you. Here, however, I will limit myself to naming a few individuals who made exceptional contributions to this project: Norman M. Naimark, James J. Sheehan, and Amir Weiner (all of Stanford University); James R. Felak (University of Washington); István Deák (Columbia University); Emily Greble (City College of New York); Ivan Kamenec (Slovenská akadémia vied); Peter Magura (Slovenský národný archív); and John Ackerman (Cornell University Press). Finally, I thank above all my wife, Martina Podsklanová. No one besides me has invested more in this book or done more work on it.

Every preface of a work about central Europe must include a note on nomenclature. The region abounds with contested sites. At the beginning of the twentieth century, cities went by many names. Privileging one, such as Bratislava, over another, such as Pozsony, is to favor Slovak over Hungarian nationalism. Using both names (or more—Pressburg, Prešporok, Wilsonovo mesto) is to clog one's prose or to confuse the reader. No author has yet found an elegant solution to this dilemma. My own inelegant solution is to use the official name of the city or territory for the period about which I am writing. I hope that the contested nature of these sites is made clear by the fact that place names (as well as that of my protagonist) change with the geopolitical environment. I have opted in general to translate titles and names of organizations, providing the original in footnotes. The exceptions to this rule were cases in which I felt that readers could easily hang on to meaning and would benefit from remembering a lost multilingual world.

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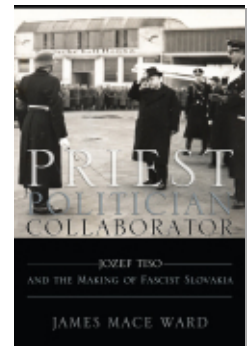
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Introduction

The pride of Bytča, Slovakia, is its castle. A splendid example of the Italian Renaissance in the Kingdom of Hungary, it was commissioned in the sixteenth century by Francis Thurzo, a former Catholic bishop who converted to Lutheranism. Francis's family used the fortification as a seat from which to oversee their extensive holdings in the Felvidék, or Upper Hungary, as the territory of Slovakia was then known. Today, the castle is a national cultural monument and houses one of Slovakia's state archives. To reach the main reading room, one passes through an imposing main gate and up worn stairs onto the second floor of an arcaded courtyard. The walls are adorned with murals depicting military heroes, the images' moral messages reinforced by Latin inscriptions. Most likely, none of the schoolchildren touring the castle on the day that I was there in fall 2004 could read Latin, but I suspect that the castle nonetheless served an important moral function for some of them. In Slovak historiography, Francis Thurzo is claimed as František Thurzo or Turzo, a Hungarian magnate of Slovak origin and even a proto-Slovak nationalist. He is, for his Slovak admirers, a symbol of the resilience of their culture in the face of Hungarian attempts to assimilate it. Hungarian historiography claims Francis instead as Thurzó Ferenc, a Magyar—a category that historically made no distinction between Hungarian and Slav, but that today tends to mean only Hungarian.

Across the street from the Bytča castle stands an eyesore: a tumbledown synagogue. It was built in the 1880s by Baron Popper, the German-speaking Jewish founder of the local brewery. On the day of my visit, parked cars and a newspaper kiosk crowded the front doors of the locked temple. The building was in striking disrepair, especially when compared with its much older neighbor. Large sections of plaster had crumbled from the synagogue's façade. Many windows were

broken. A sapling had taken root on the roof. Stumbling through the overgrown grounds, I found a swastika and the words “*Juden raus*” scratched on the back wall in small letters. Despite this history of neglect and even desecration, the town’s leaders claim the synagogue as part of its heritage. The temple ranks fourth on the city’s Internet directory of cultural monuments, after churches but before the market square.¹

The Jewish community that worshiped here thrived and died in a political landscape subject to profound change. In 1890, when the country was the Kingdom of Hungary and the town was called Nagybittse, there were 535 Jews among its 2,885 inhabitants. In 1921, the country was democratic Czechoslovakia, the town Veľká Bytča, and there were 486 Jews. In 1940, in the fascist Slovak Republic, the district of Veľká Bytča had 413 Jews. In 1950, in a reconstituted, Communist Czechoslovakia, Bytča district had 24 Jews. In 2001, in a new, democratic Slovak Republic, the district had 2 Jews.²

Across town from the Bytča synagogue stood another landmark of the Jewish community’s life: the old cemetery. Historical photographs capture glimpses of a modest, even charming graveyard. It was closed in 1979, the remains removed, and apartment buildings erected on the cleared ground. These prefabricated housing estates testified to the Communist commitment to social justice—a vision of affordable, comfortable, and functional mass housing. By Western standards, the apartments were cramped, drab, and cheap. Nicknamed “rabbit hutches,” they were already symbols of failure in the 1970s. After the fall of Czechoslovak communism in 1989, a descendant of the Bytča Jews funded the erection of a memorial in the middle of the housing estate. Made from polished slabs of granite, in the shape of an isosceles triangle, the memorial carries inscriptions in Slovak, English, and Hebrew. Part of the English text reads: “May this monument also be a marker for the souls of the martyrs from the Jewish community of Bytča who were sent to the death camps in the years 1942–44 and who perished in sanctification of God’s name and did not merit a proper Jewish burial.”

Today the majority of people who pass by this monument are Catholics, who make up over 90 percent of the district’s population.³ Their main house of worship is the Church of All Saints. Although also built in the sixteenth century, the church fails to convey the castle’s weighty sense of history. Yet it has the advantage of location. The castle stands on the edge of Bytča, while the church tower pinpoints the town’s center: an intersection of a river, the market square, and the city hall. When the ringing of the bells peals forth from the oversized tower on Sunday mornings, it is easy to believe that the entire town is Catholic and Slovak, and has always been so. For devout Catholics in Slovakia, such moments reaffirm the endurance of religious and nationalist values despite long decades of persecution, harassment, and disfavor. It is an ascendant, self-congratulatory vision of faith, one nourished in particular by the visits to Slovakia of a charismatic Slavic Pope, John Paul II.

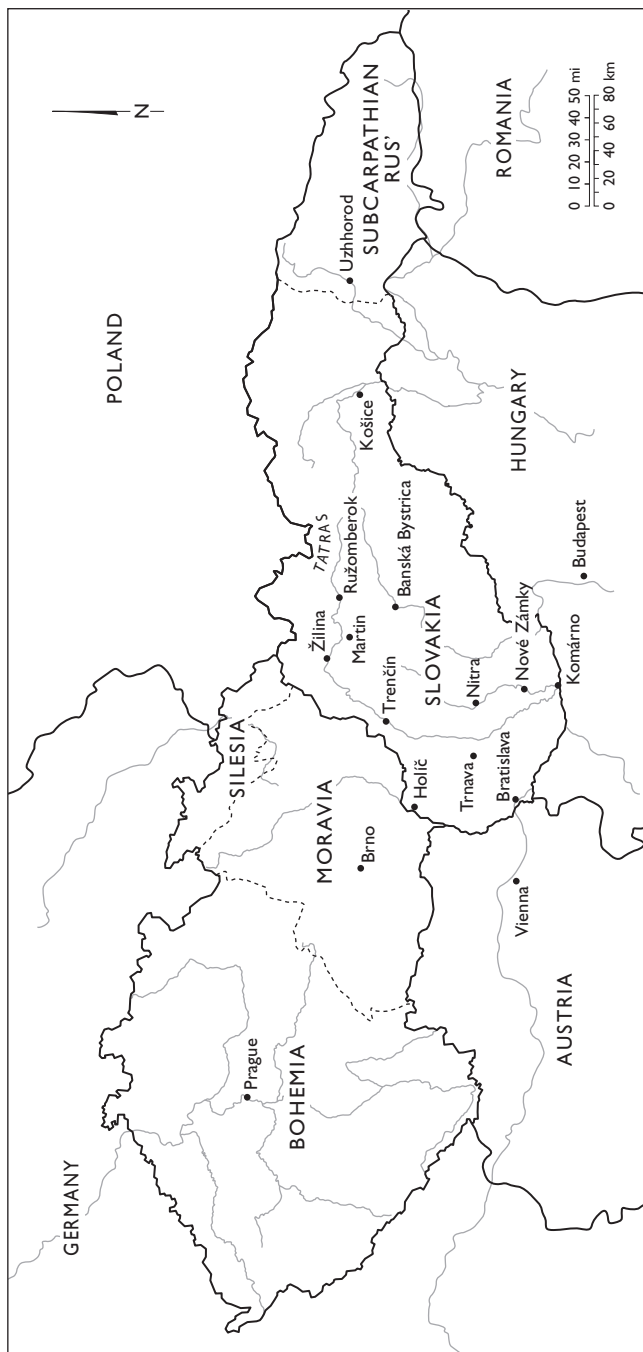
Around the corner from the city hall is the house in which the subject of this biography, Jozef Tiso, was born. It is a squat structure, characteristic of single-family houses in the area, with a red tile roof, mauve walls, and white trim. A metal double door that is wide enough for a car to pass through leads into a courtyard that divides the house in two. In the 1990s, Slovak nationalists converted the dwelling into a museum commemorating the life of Tiso, a Roman Catholic priest and theologian, and the president of the 1939–45 Slovak Republic. The memorial has yet to thrive. The town's webpage studiously avoids mentioning it or Tiso, even though he is Bytča's best-known son.⁴ On the outside wall of the house, a plaque hangs with a bas-relief portrait of Tiso, his portly face in unflattering profile. When I came, the house was locked, and visits were by appointment only. A large, dried-up wreath of flowers hung under the plaque, a single candle burning nearby. The inscription, dedicated on Tiso's birthday in 1991, also carries his presidential motto: "True to ourselves, we march forward in harmony."

In retrospect, most of Tiso's life was a tale of Slovak and Catholic success. A brilliant student, he trained at the most elite seminary that Hungary had to offer and rose so rapidly through the hierarchy that, as a thirty-year-old, he seemed destined to become bishop. After the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, Tiso embarked on a no less brilliant political career. He helped to found the Slovak People's Party, the largest interwar Slovak party. As a lieutenant of his fellow priest-politician, Andrej Hlinka, he labored tirelessly for two decades to raise Czechoslovak living standards, to defend Catholic interests, and to gain autonomy for Slovakia. Although continuously occupied with political tasks, he always found time to tend to the spiritual needs of his parishioners. As the 1927–29 Czechoslovak minister of health and physical education, for example, he habitually split his week between his political offices in Prague and his religious ones in the distant Slovak town of Bánovce nad Bebravou. Politically, he represented a moderate stream within his party. He was a parliamentary leader who stressed that political struggles must be carried out legally and nonviolently, and who generally preferred to see his party in government coalitions. For many Catholics, he was a model priest; for many Czechs, the best hope that his party would integrate into the Czechoslovak political system. Succeeding Hlinka as party chairman in 1938, Tiso quickly achieved his greatest victory, the establishment of an autonomous Slovakia. After the creation of an independent state in 1939, the Slovak parliament unanimously elected him as president, a post he held for five years.

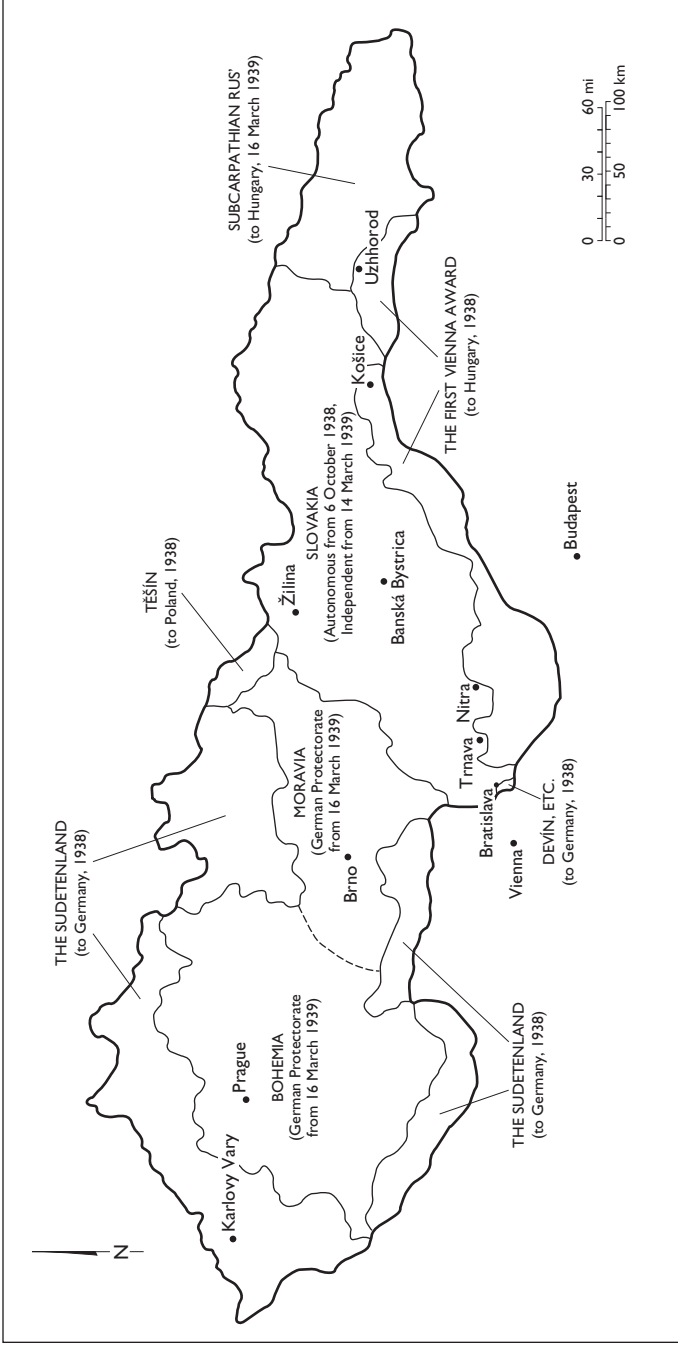
This success story, however, was not without blotches, most of which were connected to Tiso's lifelong pattern of collaboration. As a student and young cleric, Tiso worked so easily with Hungarians that many people assumed him to be a Magyar. During the 1918 revolution, he defected from the Hungarians to the Czechs, but never delivered on the promise that some Czechs saw in him. Instead, he dismantled democracy in Slovakia, even expelling thousands of Czechs from



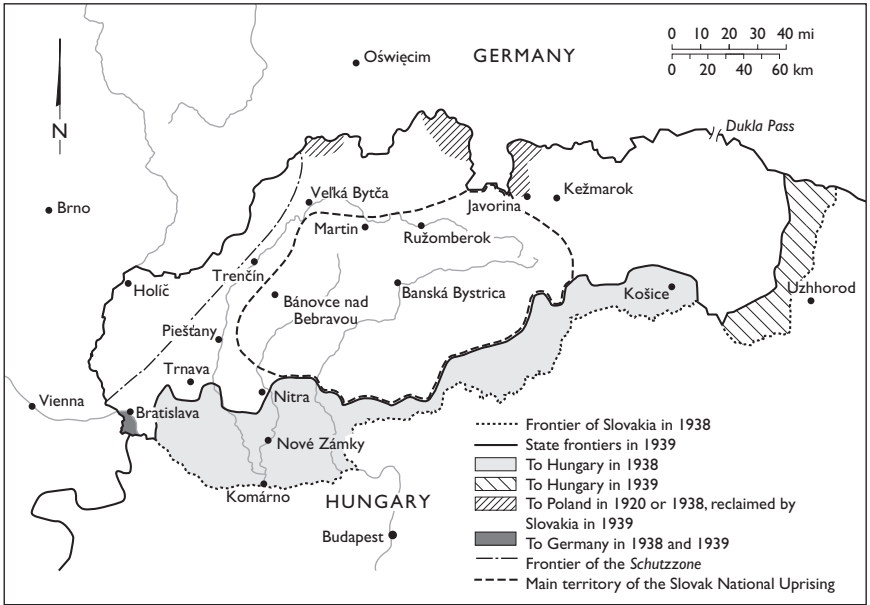
Map 1: Central and eastern Europe in 1910. Adapted from Ivan T. Berend, *History Derailed: Central and Eastern Europe in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), xviii.



Map 2: The First Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–38



Map 3: The Second Czecho-Slovak Republic, 1938–39. Adapted from Richard Crampton and Ben Crampton, *Atlas of Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 1997), 66.



Map 4: The Slovak Republic, 1939–45. Adapted from Elena Mannová, ed., *A Concise History of Slovakia* (Bratislava: Historický ústav SAV, 2000), 272; and Dušan Kováč, *Dejiny Slovenska* (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 1998), 211.

his province. His crowning achievements, Slovak autonomy and independence, were inseparable from the partition and destruction of Czechoslovakia by Adolf Hitler. Tiso's career thus culminated in partnership with *der Führer*, an icon of twentieth-century evil.

The central, irradicable stain on Tiso's story was his involvement in the Holocaust and other violations of human rights. In 1942, for example, in the western Slovak town of Holíč, Tiso briefly commented on his state's Jewish policy:

People ask if what we do is Christian. Is it human? Isn't it robbery? But I ask: is it Christian if the Slovak nation wants to rid itself of its eternal enemy—the Jew? Is it Christian? Love of self is a command from God, and this love of self commands me to remove . . . everything that damages me or that threatens my life. I don't think I need to convince anyone that the Jewish element threatened the lives of Slovaks. . . .

We determined . . . that the Jews, who made up only 5 percent of the population, had 38 percent of the national income! . . . It would have looked even worse if we hadn't pulled ourselves together in time, if we hadn't purged them from us. And we did so according to divine command: Slovak, cast off your parasite.⁵

At the time of this statement, the Slovak Republic had already handed over around 55,000 Jews to its ally, Nazi Germany. Tiso's regime would deliver 2,800 more Jews to Germany before ceasing deportations in fall 1942. No further transports occurred until the outbreak of the 1944 Slovak National Uprising, a civil and military revolt against Tiso's regime and its Nazi patron. Tiso helped the Germans to suppress this insurgency, an action that would become for many Slovaks his main betrayal of the nation. During the subsequent occupation of Slovakia, the Germans, with Slovak assistance, deported some 12,000 more Jews. Perhaps another 2,000 were murdered directly on Slovak territory. By 1945, more than three-quarters of Slovak Jewry had perished. Although they sustained far lower proportionate losses, non-Jews in Slovakia also suffered, especially during the suppression of the uprising.

Tiso's Holíč statement has become his moral epigraph; for his supporters, however, there was another side to his leadership. They saw the creation of the state as a breakthrough for Slovak consciousness and self-confidence. For them, Tiso defended the natural right of their nation to self-determination, delivered justice to Slovaks long denied by interwar Czechoslovakia, and provided Slovakia with prudent leadership through the dangerous war years. The Slovak nation (the argument continues) prospered despite inhospitable times, and Slovak culture flowered. Even if Tiso's minority policies failed to live up to his intentions, harshness was dictated by the realities of Hitler's Europe, and Tiso's policies nonetheless proved to be more humane than those of other wartime leaders. Tiso also achieved a change of fortune for Catholics, restoring lost privileges and properties to the

church, reestablishing God as the source of sovereignty in the Slovak polity, and creating an environment in which Catholicism could thrive. Although other Catholic priests have headed governments in modern Europe, the only one besides the pope to have headed a state was Tiso—an extraordinary accomplishment within the church's struggle against the heritage of the Enlightenment and its control of public life. For these understandings of Tiso, what matters are different facts about the wartime experience: how the Slovak state never carried out a single death sentence; how Tiso, a supposed dictator, traveled freely throughout Slovakia without a heavy guard; or how he used his office to protect individual Jews.⁶

After the Second World War, Tiso was tried by a Communist-dominated National Court for collaboration, treason, and crimes against humanity (which were legally classified as treason). He was convicted on all charges on 15 April 1947 and hanged three days later. While outside Slovakia the tribunal's verdict has sufficed as an evaluation of Tiso's actions and motives, inside the country the judgment has failed to become the verdict of history. Most Slovaks accept Tiso's responsibility for collaboration and genocide, but they tend to reject the court's view of him as a traitor to Czechoslovakia, an opportunist who stabbed his Czech partners in the back. These Slovaks also reject the later Communist reduction of him as a "clerical fascist," or a Nazi in a clerical collar. A minority of Slovaks go even further, denying Tiso's responsibility for collaboration and genocide, interpreting him instead as a defender of Slovak interests and a victim of circumstances. At their most extreme, his apologists think of him as a national hero, a martyr to bolshevism, and even a potential Catholic saint.

In this book, I follow Tiso's life through the changing contexts that defined it. Chapter 1 focuses on his training in the Roman Catholic Church and his experiences in Hungary. Chapters 2 and 3 look at his entrance into politics mainly through his activities in the city of Nitra. Chapters 4 and 5 follow him onto the national stage of Czechoslovak politics. In chapters 6 and 7, during which Tiso rose to head a Slovak state, the international context moves to the fore. The last chapter, 8, chronicles his transformation from life into memory as polar moral symbols: war criminal versus saint. A major theme that emerges from these changing contexts is the internationalization of local politics. Tiso was driven by parochial concerns, yet in 1939 he found himself in the center of a European crisis. Another major theme stems from how these contexts for Tiso fell into dual time regimes: the revolutionary and the normal. During the revolutionary periods (1918–19, 1938–47), Tiso functioned under different rules than during periods of normalcy. This difference was stark in his practices toward Jews.

This book is the first in-depth account of this significant life from other than a Slovak nationalist and Catholic perspective; yet I take Tiso's devotion to nationalism and Catholicism seriously. Unlike his past biographers, I employ a rigorously

chronological approach rather than a thematic one, a technique that reveals surprises such as Tiso's tenacious resistance to the temptations of antisemitic politics in the twilight hours of the 1918–38 First Czechoslovak Republic. At the same time, I contextualize his involvement in the Holocaust within lifelong patterns of political behavior, what I call his habits of deniability. Within scholarship on Tiso, I make the strongest argument not only for his support for the despoiling and expulsion of Slovak Jews, but also for his probable involvement in initiating the 1942 deportations. As well, I provide a clearer analysis than previously available for Tiso's perplexing behavior during the short-lived 1938–39 Second Czecho-Slovak Republic. Although Tiso waged chronic power struggles with radicals from his own party, he also used these rivals to avoid responsibility for political decisions that threatened his legitimacy as a priest, such as his support for the war against the Soviet Union. Scholars will encounter in this work many new sources on Tiso, especially in regard to his presidency and his early career in Nitra. Documentation for this study includes Tiso's presidential papers and postwar trial record, Czechoslovak police reports, German and Hungarian diplomatic correspondence, Catholic Church records, and central European press. These materials were culled from over twenty national and regional archives in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria, and the United States.

In addition to these empirical contributions to scholarship on Tiso, I advance several arguments, sometimes of a theoretical nature, that other scholars should find of value. Within nationalism studies, my portrait of Tiso's transition from a Magyar with a primarily Catholic identity into a Slovak nationalist suggests the usefulness of a sharper focus on religion in examining such processes. Similarly for studies on political Catholicism, I stress the importance of relating theology to political behavior. Students of Czechoslovak history will discover here Tiso's 1938–39 *Gleichschaltung* of autonomous Slovakia as a reflection not only of fascist imitation but also of the state-building culture of the early Czechoslovak Republic. In line with the work of Holly Case, I help to develop a regional approach to Holocaust studies, arguing that the genocide in Slovakia must be understood within the context of Hungarian and Slovak competition.⁷ For Tiso, especially during the instability of fall 1938, the Jewish Question fused in profound ways with considerations about state security. In terms of literature on fascism, I take issue in my conclusion with the concepts of "clerical fascist" and "conservative-authoritarian," proposing instead a novel category that highlights the conflicted attitude toward revolution that typified politicians such as Tiso. For scholars interested in the problems of postcommunism, my work explains the dynamics of attempts to rehabilitate him, why they have generally failed, and why individuals often favor a simplified moral calculus for understanding the involvement of this priest and patriot in the Holocaust. This biography's overall contribution is to make comprehensible how experiences of Catholicism, nationalism, and state building can

combine with the international system to produce genocide, and why the memory of this tragedy in Slovakia remains so contested.

Finally, this work contributes to rethinking the relationship of Catholics to modernity. The French Revolution and its heirs denaturalized Catholics from modernity as enemies of progress and the nation. Catholics in turn often embraced this charge in counterdiscourse. Many scholars continue to fall victim to this construction, writing, for example, of the church confronting or coming to terms with the modern world. Such a framework implicitly excludes Catholics from modernity, which then becomes equated with progressive values. This tendency is compounded in the case of eastern Europe by claims of the region's backwardness.⁸ Modernity, however, seems to me to be better understood as competition and dialogue between different visions (including Catholic) of how to pursue a prime imperative of progress. Between 1789 and 1945, Catholics and progressive elites in Europe tenaciously fought over two issues: the secularization of the public sphere and the creation of centralized states. Catholics lost the first contest but won the second, as postwar Christian Democrats yielded on religious politics while anchoring decentralization in European Union structures.⁹ Rather than Catholics coming to terms with the modern world, one could just as easily speak of progressives coming to terms with Catholic modernity. In this work, I have striven to understand Tiso as an essentially modern actor. His life demonstrates how Catholics fit within such core modern narratives as democratization, nationalism, fascism, and genocide. His Christian-national state, even as a failure, represents a unique, Catholic vision of modernity. Thus, even though I use the historical term "progressives" in this text, readers should keep in mind that progress was hardly a secular domain.

This, then, is the story of Jozef Tiso's life and of his lives—that is to say, of his histories, whether told by professionals in universities or parents in kitchens. It is a tale that stretches chronologically from his birth to Slovakia's early years in the EU, thematically from the impact of Catholicism on his politics to the impact of his legacy on Slovak identity, and visually from the geography of memory in Bytča to the sight of his grave in Bratislava, blanketed in candles on All Souls' Night 2004. The contexts for this narrative are central European experiences of construction, destruction, and reconstruction: of communities, identities, politics, and moralities. This story courses in channels of remembering and forgetting, alongside which stand the signposts of religion, nationalism, and human rights. This is the story of a life, but also of how to understand a life.



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Priest, Politician, Collaborator

Ward, James Mace

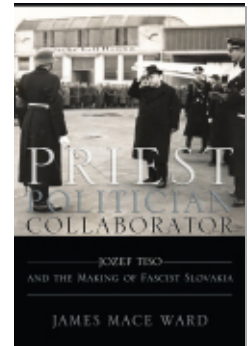
Published by Cornell University Press

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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“For God and Our Homeland,” 1887–1918

Beseech your faithful apostle, St. Stephen,
to look favorably upon his Hungary
and preserve holy and inviolate the benefits of a holy religion.

—Leo XIII, *Constanti Hungarorum*, 1893

For the first half of his life, Jozef Tiso lived in the Kingdom of Hungary and the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church. The state was consolidated around 1000 by István, a Magyar warrior. Before 1918, it held extensive lands later belonging to Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Austria. After 1526, the kingdom was half of a Habsburg empire that, by 1914, stretched from Bohemia to Transylvania and from Galicia to Bosnia. The empire of Tiso’s church, meanwhile, claimed millions of adherents worldwide, remaining the dominant European religion despite the vicissitudes of schism, reformation, and secularization.

The histories of Tiso’s state and church intertwined. István affiliated his realm with the Latin Church, thus earning himself canonization (in our epigraph, as St. Stephen). During the Reformation, however, Protestantism flourished in Hungary, Calvinism forging enduring ties to the Magyar nobility. During the Counter-Reformation, Catholicism wrought equally durable links to the Habsburgs, who leaned on the church for primacy in Hungary. Both developments were shaped by a sixteenth-century Ottoman invasion that conquered much of Hungary for two centuries. As a result, Upper Hungary (roughly today’s Slovakia) became heavily Catholic, while Ottoman rule shielded Transylvanian Calvinism from re-Catholicization. By 1900, Catholicism was Hungary’s largest, most privileged faith. Yet half of the country’s population was Protestant, Eastern Orthodox, or Jewish.¹

Habsburg rule in Hungary was contentious. By 1848, the issue had become a modern nationalist conflict, inspiring a Hungarian revolution. Although Franz Joseph, the young Habsburg emperor, defeated it with Russian help, he could not crush Magyar resistance. So he compromised. In 1867, he transformed his empire into a dual state: Austria-Hungary. The emperor remained the king of Hungary,

and defense, finances, and foreign policy stayed fused. Otherwise, Hungary became autonomous.

The liberals who took over dualist Hungary aspired to make her a modern nation-state. They wanted to industrialize her, to educate her peoples, and to assert Magyar culture on the world stage. But Hungary was mainly agrarian, rural, uneducated, and multicultural. Less than half of her inhabitants called themselves Magyars. Ethnographers identified over a dozen other nationalities, including Slovaks. Troubled by this reality, Hungarian governments linked national unity with modernity, both of which they hoped would subvert Habsburg domination and internal backwardness. Education in particular became characterized by Magyarization—manufacturing Magyars through carrot-and-stick tactics.

In the nineteenth century, Catholics wrestled with different issues of modernity. Enlightened thinkers and Socialist revolutionaries were resolutely anticlerical. German and Italian nationalists clashed with the Catholic Church over loyalty and territory. Ever more influential liberals equated secularism with progress. From 1789 on, European states confiscated church properties, revoked her privileges, and occasionally even murdered her priests. Liberal governments strove to subordinate the church, to equalize her with other faiths, and to privatize religion. In Germany, the *Kulturkampf* attacked Catholics as ultramontanes, or papal infantry. More generally, culture wars were moments in which governments restricted the church's rights, and Catholics responded by laying claim to the public sphere. The rhetoric of these conflicts was polarized and violent. Liberals reviled Jesuit conspiracies against reason; Catholics scourged Jewish plots against God. Yet, in practice, church and state generally sought compromise, even if Catholics tended to lose in such deals. More promisingly for the faith, the church enjoyed a surge in membership and religious practice, and a strengthening of papal authority over national hierarchies. A "New Catholicism" emerged, characterized by a vibrant press, burgeoning associational life, social activism, and mass politics—all inherently modern developments. While Catholics from pope to layman were fond of denouncing modernity, they embraced its benefits and accepted progress as good. Where Catholics disagreed with liberals was on what constituted progress and whether it or God should reign in the public sphere.²

In Hungary, this conflict over sovereignty fused with liberal worries over national unity. Hoping to promote Magyar identity through greater religious equality, the liberals established a hierarchy of faiths in which Catholicism was a "received" religion alongside Protestantism and Orthodoxy; Judaism and Islam, meanwhile, were "recognized." Another measure sought to deal evenhandedly with mixed marriages by assigning confession to offspring according to gender: boys followed their father's faith, girls followed their mother's. These laws were compromises for the liberals, who preferred to separate church and state. For

Catholics, the legislation demoted their church while threatening to abandon their youth to false faiths. The stage was thus set for Hungary's culture war.³

These dual contexts of church and state frame this chapter, which follows Tiso's life until 1918. How did he experience dualist Hungary? What did Catholicism mean to him? How did he coordinate the demands placed on him and the opportunities offered to him by both institutions? I argue that Catholicism was bedrock for the young Tiso. It provided him an identity and a worldview, enthusing him in lifelong missions. The nationalist discourses of dualist Hungary, in comparison, tended to wash over him with little effect.

A Pupil Deserving of the Finest Hopes

In the parlance of the 1880s, Hungary was "backward." The country lagged behind Western Europe in industrialization, urbanization, and democratization. Around the turn of the century, Hungary's per capita national revenue was a third of England's. Over half of the buildings in Budapest had only one story, compared to one in twenty in Berlin. France's franchise was at least three times wider than Hungary's.⁴ Although generally opposed to democratic reforms, Hungarian elites after 1867 otherwise emulated the West. By 1910, Hungary had significantly narrowed or closed the gap in industry, infrastructure, education, and urbanization. But the economy was still dominated by a troubled agricultural sector, and light industry had failed to take off. Among Hungary's sizable underclass, poverty was widespread.

The Felvidék (or Upper Hungary) county of Trencsén was a middling performer by these standards. In 1890, it was mainly rural, only five thousand people living in its namesake city. Politically, the county was a cluster of "rotten boroughs," districts in which corruption and the limited franchise favored government candidates. Magyarization had not done well here. The vast majority of the county's inhabitants reported that they spoke only Slovak. Largely Roman Catholic, they were peasants, small farmers, or lower-middle-class townsmen. Most of them were also illiterate, while those who were not tended to assimilate to Magyar culture.⁵ Hungarian and German speakers (especially Jews) often fared better socioeconomically. Although only 5 percent of Hungary's population, Jews made up "[12.5] per cent of the country's industrialists, 54 per cent of the merchants, and 43 per cent of the employees of credit institutions."⁶ Most Felvidék Jews were Orthodox, while cities also had strong Neolog (Hungarian Reformed) communities. The Neolog Jews assimilated well, the Orthodox less so, especially in the east, where Yiddish rather than German predominated.⁷

Jozef Gašpar Tiso was born in the center of Trencsén County, in Nagybittse, on 13 October 1887. His father, also Jozef, was a butcher from an affluent farming

family. His mother, Terézia, descended from less prosperous potters. Both parents spoke Slovak but reportedly not Hungarian. Jozef the younger was the second of seven children who survived infancy. Of his two brothers, the oldest, Pavol, took over his father's trade and house, while the younger, Ján, entered the priesthood. Tiso's four sisters similarly succeeded by the standards of their milieu, each marrying well.⁸

The Tisos were Catholic, which for the younger Jozef initially meant a system of rituals, a vocabulary of faith, and an identity. Days after his birth, he received the religion's first sacrament, baptism. During his youth, he received three others (the Holy Eucharist, penance, and confirmation) and witnessed at least one of the remaining sacraments (matrimony, Holy Orders, and extreme unction). He would have regularly celebrated Mass and partaken in other Catholic rituals and associations, from Corpus Christi processions to Catholic circles. As noted before, his age was one of Catholic enthusiasm across Europe, especially among women. New passions for visions (often Marian), pilgrimages (as to Lourdes), and cults (such as the Sacred Heart of Jesus) swept the faithful. Tiso's household centered on Catholicism, his parents raising their children "strictly and according to Christianity."⁹ His grandfather had the honor of maintaining their church, in which Tiso served as an altar boy.

When Tiso was three years old, the culture wars reached Hungary. In 1890, the government decided to fine Catholic priests for baptizing children from mixed marriages who legally belonged to other confessions. Picking up this gauntlet, a Felvidék priest made himself a living martyr by defying the ban. The resulting conflict drew in the press, the government, and the emperor. Pope Leo XIII encouraged Hungarian priests to defy their state. Liberals introduced legislation to make civil marriage obligatory, birth and marriage records state business, and Judaism an "accepted" religion. The measures removed the last obstacles to Jewish assimilation. From a Catholic viewpoint, the laws debased sacraments and denied that the Catholic Church was a repository of truth. In response, Catholics mobilized in an unprecedented manner, engaging in press polemics, using church networks to build resistance, and demonstrating en masse. Practices such as *Katholikentage*, for example, were introduced, the largest Felvidék one taking place near Nagybittse.¹⁰ Catholic opposition, however, did not prevent the passage of the laws in 1894–95, an event that ended the culture war but not Catholic activism in Hungary.

Catholicism quickly became Tiso's future. His parents bet early that he would succeed as a priest (an attractive profession in the Felvidék), and so secured him an education: first at a local Catholic grammar school, where he received his only formal training in Slovak, then at a Catholic middle school in nearby Zsolna, where he replaced his brother Pavol as the family student. Although not much larger than Nagybittse, Zsolna was booming thanks to new railways and government investment. Magyarization also was paying dividends here. Whereas only

9 percent of the city's non-Magyars spoke Hungarian in 1880, by 1910, almost 37 percent did. In Zsolna, Tiso boarded with two families, once in a child exchange. The Zsolna school taught languages, the classics, Hungarian civics, and Catholicism to mainly local students from diverse faiths. Tiso did well, excelling in his languages (Hungarian, German, and Latin) and lagging only in physical education. He was surpassed in his class by only one student, a Jew. The Zsolna Jews accounted for nearly 20 percent of the city's population. As elsewhere in Hungary, they excelled in education, making up nearly half of Tiso's class.¹¹

After graduating, Tiso moved south to a high school and preparatory seminary in relatively distant Nyitra. As Nitra, the city was the seat of a medieval Slavic prince, Pribina, who established a church here in 828. Soon after, Pribina's realm became half of the Great Moravian Empire. Slovak nationalists and Felvidék Christians—especially Slavic Catholics—accordingly imagined the city as the cradle of their culture. Although the dualist Hungarian government tolerated Nyitra's Catholic past, it targeted its Slavic heritage, making the city a base for a key Magyarizing instrument: the Magyar Educational Society for Upper Hungary, or FEMKE, according to its Hungarian acronym. FEMKE, which promoted Magyar culture through literacy projects, had much success in Nyitra. The number of Slovaks on censuses dropped over 6 percent between 1900 and 1910, as the society's programs were popular with non-Magyars. A Nyitra kindergarten, for example, drew its applicants mainly from German, Slovak, and Jewish families, many of whom received tuition waivers.¹² Nyitra's skyline, meanwhile, was dominated by a castle from which the Bishop of Nyitra, Imre Bende, commanded his diocese. The preparatory seminary where Tiso lived lay just below the castle.

As a seminarian, Tiso studied mainly at Nyitra's Catholic high school, run by Piarists. He was one of their few students on a merit scholarship. Even so, his grades slipped during his first years there. Perhaps he had trouble adjusting to this new world. He was just a teenager, after all, separated from family and confronted with a clerical lifestyle. Tiso's final exam marks, however, were excellent during his first two years and perfect during his last two. He was third in class his second year, again behind peers from a large local Jewish community. His fourth year, he tied for top student. He excelled outside the classroom as well in the Dugonics Circle, a self-education society that under the motto "For God and Our Homeland" cultivated morality and patriotism through Magyar oratory.¹³

Under the guidance of Nyitra's Little Seminary, Catholicism became a vocation for Tiso. Founded in 1888, the seminary followed three centuries of "recruit[ing] very young men for God's Holy Army."¹⁴ According to its charter, the institution sought "to educate youth from a tender age in pioussness and in Church discipline, and to grant to our diocese men of model lives, exemplary morals, and refined intelligence who can successfully face the attacks of evil and spread the Kingdom of God on earth."¹⁵ Dressed in blue cassocks, these young

hopes for a better Catholic world stood out on the city streets. The boys were set apart further from society by the seminary walls, within which "they should be protected from dangers [and] separated from everything worldly."¹⁶ In practice, the Little Seminary was a cross between a dormitory and a monastery. Since Tiso and his "brothers" attended high school with lay and non-Catholic students and spent summers at home, they were hardly sealed off from the world. Otherwise, however, the seminarians tended to withdraw within their cloister.¹⁷ Tiso arose before dawn according to a schedule that filled nearly every hour with tasks. Their purpose was to train the will, to instill in him priestly discipline, to keep his thoughts on faith, and to lock out polluting influences. Daily "exercises of piety," such as meditation or communion, worked to make him an "athlete of the Lord." The coach was the seminary's spiritual director. Tiso was obliged to reveal the state of his soul to this spiritual father and to accept his discipline on building a priestly character.¹⁸

A model for such training was the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits. Ignatius's book is one of three religious texts analyzed in this chapter that offer insight into how Tiso understood Catholicism, the others being the *Imitation of Christ* and the *Summa theologica*. Tiso testified in 1947 that the *Exercises* formed the basis of his clerical training. In brief, they were a month-long course in which participants examined their consciences, made an "election," or decision to redirect their life, and then sought mystical union with Christ. The means to this end were prayer, meditation, instruction in church ways, and self-reflection. Influentially for Tiso, Ignatius stressed military ardor and Catholic discipline. At the core of the *Exercises* stood "two standards": Lucifer "in a great chair of fire and smoke," assisted by demons with their "nets and chains," and Christ the Lord, commander of an army of "Apostles, Disciples, etc." In this vision of life, the faithful battled daily with predators who preyed on weakness in order to destroy union with Christ. Christian weapons of choice in this struggle included "poverty against riches . . . , contempt against worldly honor . . . , [and] humility against pride." Appended rules prescribed Catholic unity and discipline. The "mind" should be "prompt to find reasons in . . . defense [of all Church precepts] and in no manner against them." Catholics should praise symbols of their faith from "the ornaments and building of churches" to psalms. A bold Catholic front was essential, for "like a woman, [the enemy is] weak against vigor and strong of will. . . . It is the way of the woman when she is quarrelling . . . to lose heart, taking flight when the man shows . . . courage: [yet] if the man, losing heart, begins to fly, the wrath, revenge, and ferocity of the woman is very great, and so without bounds." Ultimately, the *Exercises* prescribed blind obedience to Catholic authority: "To be right in everything, we ought always to hold that the white which I see, is black, if the Hierarchical Church so decides it." The *Exercises'* vision of a ubiquitous, diffuse enemy held wide appeal for fin de siècle Catholics like Tiso, even

if such paranoia was hardly exclusively Catholic. Tiso also took Ignatius's rules of discipline seriously, later referring to himself as a soldier of God.¹⁹

Befitting such a warrior, Tiso spent Christmas at the hearth not of his family but of his new brotherhood: the seminary. Eugen Filkorn, who graduated a few years before Tiso, recalled a homesick yet "joyous" celebration with a "bountifully spread . . . table," gifts (mainly books), and parlor games. Later,

a bell sounded. Prepare for midnight! The wide black cape (the *larga*), the white blouse (the *superpellicium*), the black beret. . . . We marched up the dark sidewalks toward the illuminated cathedral and *salutari nostro* (our Savior).

We sat on the pews before the gates of the sanctuary. I gazed into the huge, marble altar, its towering pillars, the artistic statues, the golden tabernacle, and I felt how small I am.

. . . We joined a . . . majestic Gregorian psalm. . . . We sang with the priests, even with the theologians. . . . *Christus natus est nobis, venite adoremus*—Christ is born to us, come, let us adore him!²⁰

This society was replete with ritual, fraternity, scholarship, and faith; less charitably, one can think of the institution as a four-year indoctrination course or boot camp for "God's Holy Army." Between the impressionable ages of fourteen and eighteen years, Tiso was shaped and directed mainly by the Nyitra seminary. The psychological impact of this training must have been formidable. Certainly, he took to this life, receiving a glowing seminary evaluation. He was "very zealous" in the chapel, showing "exemplary" conduct. He was "tireless," "orderly," possessed of "splendid" talents. In short, he was "a pupil deserving of the finest hopes."²¹

The Little Seminary also educated Tiso in political Catholicism. The seminarians served as cheerleaders for the country's first Catholic party, Néppárt, or the Catholic People's Party, which aimed to replace the 1894–95 laws on church-state relations with Catholic autonomy. Despite significant support for the party in the Felvidék, the Hungarian political system sent few Catholic Populists to parliament. One Néppárt star who failed to get elected was Ottokár Prohászka, a bishop from 1905 and a Nyitra native. Prohászka was known both for his efforts to claim modernity for Catholicism and for his vision of a "Jewish worldview" at war with the "triumphant worldview" of Catholicism. Another Nyitran with Néppárt roots, the Jesuit Fr. Béla Bangha, pioneered a Catholic press fixated on a similar dichotomy. In the seminary, Tiso also would have kept abreast of Christian socialism, a Catholic associational movement. Gaining a fundament in Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum novarum*, Christian Socials condemned capitalism for its individualism and rapacity, and socialism for its atheism and violence. Christian Socials sought to solve the workers' question instead through Catholic labor unions and self-help societies, often pursuing these goals with demagoguery and antisemitism. In

general, political Catholicism was part of a Hungarian new Right that felt threatened by free-market capitalism and was disenchanted with liberal oligarchic rule. An analogous new Left, characterized by the tiny but influential Social Democrats, had similar complaints.²²

As should be obvious, a facet of Catholic politics was political antisemitism—mass politics legitimated by opposition to a purported Semitic race. After economic crisis in the 1870s, Hungary seemed to be ripe for this trend. An 1882 petition denounced an influx of pogrom-fleeing Russian Jews as usurers, alcohol distillers, and get-rich-quick men. The next year, a blood libel inspired widespread rioting and the creation of a National Antisemitic Party. Its program called for “breaking Jewish power and offsetting Jewish influence on politics, society, and the economy.”²³ A campaign catechism in Slovak argued that antisemitism obeyed Christ’s dictum to “love your neighbor,” for to let someone do you ill was to love your neighbor more than yourself—not what Jesus supposedly meant. Even if such arguments were, as John Connelly has shown, “well within the strictures of [the] time’s moral theology,” political antisemitism won few Hungarian voters.²⁴ The liberal establishment suppressed its rioters, ridiculed its parliamentarians, and linked it to backwardness. Religious leaders, including Catholics, denounced anti-Jewish violence. The liberal-Jewish alliance persisted even as liberal rule crumbled after 1905, by which time a disproportionate number of Jews had become prominent Socialists. Néppárt, in contrast, picked up the antisemites’ mantle, doing well in the same territories as the 1880s party.

Nyitra had special ties to Hungarian political antisemitism. The county had an unusually large Jewish population, much of it German-speaking Orthodox. The city’s strongest paper, the Jewish *Nyitra Journal*, was rock-solid liberal and then later rock-solid Social Democratic. Most businesses in town were Jewish. In the 1880s, antisemitism made many inroads here. The 1883 blood libel, for example, inspired a wave of antisemitic incidents in the county. In elections the next year, three of the country’s forty-two antisemitic candidates and two of the seventeen winners were Catholic priests from Nyitra County, including Ignác Zimándy, coauthor of the above-mentioned campaign catechism. Zimándy claimed to seek a nonviolent, legal “liberation . . . from Jewish influence and usury.” In parliament, he tied Jews to freemasons and revolution, denouncing Hungary’s liberal premier as an “agent of the Rothschilds.”²⁵ Although Zimándy’s parliamentary colleagues may have deplored them, his ideas resonated among Nyitra’s Slavs and lower clergy. Filkorn, for one, connected the “reception” of Judaism with insults to Catholicism, as when a rabbi, “let . . . into [a] Catholic High School to teach religion . . . , covered the cross with a handkerchief . . . , took it off the wall, and contemptuously tossed it under the dais.”²⁶

A final political wave that lapped at Tiso’s shores in the Little Seminary was Slovak nationalism, a trend that dated only to the eighteenth century. Mainly

intelligentsia and Protestants, Slovak nationalists found common ground in the belief that Slovaks were not Magyars who simply spoke a different language, a central tenet of Hungarian state ideology. The leading Slovak nationalists during Tiso's youth were an "old school," which sought Russian support and advocated passive resistance, and a "young school" centered on the journal *Hlas (The Voice)*, which favored instead Czech and Slovak cooperation and grassroots activism. Slovak nationalism disturbed Magyar elites and the Hungarian Catholic hierarchy, the latter of which saw itself as a Habsburg pillar. The government shut down Slavic schools and cultural associations, threatened to fire teachers who lacked Hungarian language proficiency, and jailed non-Magyar nationalist activists. (In 1903, Tiso could observe up close the notorious "Nitra political trial," the prosecution of Slovak politicians on trumped-up charges.)²⁷ The church also repressed "pan-Slavs" (i.e., Slovak nationalists), incessantly shifting around the priests while expelling the seminarians. Although some Nitra seminarians dared to interact with clerical Slovak agitators, most students who were attracted to Slovak nationalism or to promoting the Slovak language kept their own counsel.²⁸

Although sources on this issue are scarce, Tiso does not seem to have invested much in these conflicts. The best available evidence on his early national identity is a 1939 newspaper article by his lifelong friend Jozef Randík and the post-1945 testimony of both men. These sources betray an effort to overturn claims that Tiso was a Magyarone, or a Magyarized Slovak. Evidence from Tiso's 1946–47 trial (important sources throughout this narrative) was compiled in a poisoned, retributive atmosphere that gave ample motive for exaggeration or invention. These reservations aside, Randík's article and both men's testimony portrayed the young Tiso as a largely Magyarized Slovak who had then shaken off this training. Tiso frankly admitted that he had lacked Slovak national consciousness as a student in Zsolna, while Randík claimed that they had tended to speak Hungarian among themselves. This experience was hardly average for Slovak speakers in Trencsén county (only 3 percent of whom reportedly knew Hungarian in 1900), suggesting that volunteerism more than coercion was at work here. Yet Tiso and Randík also insisted that the young Tiso had a sense of Slovakness, expressed in such behaviors as singing the Slovak anthem, "Hail to Slovaks!," on hikes, or writing his name in Slovak orthography. Tiso's attachment to this ethnicity was supposedly strong enough to make the Zsolna teachers, all Magyarizers, characterize him as a "little pan-Slav." In Nitra, his national consciousness then reportedly bloomed under the influence of Jozef Kopták, an older seminarian, who introduced him to Slovak nationalist literature. Tiso, Randík, and Kopták followed the exploits of Slovak nationalist priests, including Tiso's future mentor, Andrej Hlinka.²⁹

Tiso, however, was always too prudent to let Slovak national sentiment endanger his career. According to Randík, when instructed in Zsolna to use the Hungarian form of his name (Tiszó József), Tiso "only smiled at this, as he does

now when someone attacks him. The smile served his purpose. He held on to what was his."³⁰ Perhaps so, but he also switched spellings. While henceforth he signed his Christian name in Hungarian, German, Slovak, and Latin versions, depending on the society to which he was presenting himself, he almost always signed his family name in its Hungarian form: Tiszó. Tiso's prudence is also evident in a 1906 run-in with school authorities over pan-Slavism. Kopták had given Tiso letters from František Jehlička, a political priest who was recruiting for the Slovak cause. Tiso's superiors learned of the letters during raids in several seminaries. The Pázmáneum, an elite Hungarian seminary in Vienna, for example, expelled three clerics for speaking Slovak, "propagat[ing] Slovak national ideas," and maintaining "unpatriotic" links with Jehlička.³¹ Tiso allegedly destroyed the letters in his possession that most compromised Kopták (and, by extension, himself), but turned the others over to the authorities. The seminary expelled the older student. Consoling him, Tiso expressed "his regrets."³² These probably stemmed in part from his role in the expulsion and from having escaped punishment himself.

Indeed, Tiso finished his Nyitra studies bathed in glory. Bishop Bende sent him to train at the Pázmáneum. As the Nyitra diocese normally kept only one student in Vienna, this honor was one of the highest that a local Catholic boy could achieve.

Tiszó József in Fin de Siècle Vienna

If the Felvidék of the 1880s was behind the times, fin de siècle Vienna was a hothouse for the modern. Here, Otto Wagner reoriented architecture from a backward-looking fixation on decoration to a forward-looking functionalism. Arnold Schönberg overthrew melody in favor of esoteric musical regimes. Sigmund Freud dredged around in the unconscious to explain why man had created God. Gustav Klimt taunted bourgeois morals with a bold eroticism, choosing, for example, the bare pelvis of a sultry siren as the focal point for a public mural.³³

Near the city's university lay an opposition camp to such modernism: the Pázmáneum. Founded in 1623 by the Jesuit Péter Pázmány, the leading counter-reformer in Hungary, the institute served as the premier "perpetual seed-plot" for Hungarian priests.³⁴ While the seminarians took courses at the university, they otherwise lived and trained within this newly built cloister. Here, the architecture was neo-Roman. What music as coursed within its walls was harmonious and sacral. The solution to psychological crisis lay in prayer, devotion, and pastoral instruction. The altar painting in the chapel focused on the burning heart of Jesus.

The Pázmáneum imposed a demanding schedule on Tiso. He typically rose at 5:00. Soon after, he was meditating, perhaps praying the rosary. At 6:00, he partook in a Mass before passing to the breakfast room in strict silence, the cloister being "a

place of holy retirement.” By 7:45, he had studied, dressed for school, and met his classmates outside, whereupon they departed for the university *en corps*. On Sundays, instead of lectures, he heard a sermon and attended to holy exercises, such as confession. Weekdays, he finished class by 12:30 and was back in the seminary, reading the New Testament and visiting chapel. At 1:00, he lunched, followed by a break. Between 2:00 and 4:00, he took a corporate walk (during which he could talk quietly with peers) or else he studied in silence. Between 5:00 and 7:00, he always studied. Afterward, he read the Old Testament and visited chapel, followed by dinner and recreation. In the evening, the spiritual director laid out the morning’s meditation points in Latin. Before retiring, Tiso then meditated again. According to the institute’s statutes, he would have prayed for benefactors from Habsburg rulers to his teachers. To get eight hours of sleep, he needed to nod off in his cell by 9:00.³⁵

Instructing Tiso in this rigorous, pious life were many guides, but probably none so important to him as the *Imitation of Christ*. According to Tiso’s March 1946 affidavit (the “March Affidavit”), he discovered the book in Vienna, and it so affected him that he read it aloud every day.³⁶ Attributed to Thomas à Kempis, a Dutch monk, the *Imitation* is a fifteenth-century classic of *devotio moderna*, a Catholic movement that stressed spirituality over materialism. Thomas urged readers to renounce the vanities and fleshly corruptions of the world in favor of the “most blessed mansion of the City which is above!” “Gird up thy loins like a man against the assaults of the devil; bridle thine appetite, and thou wilt soon be able to bridle every inclination of the flesh. Be thou never without something to do; be reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or doing something that is useful to the community.”³⁷ According to Thomas, one should take up the “inner life” of meditation, prayer, devotion, and ritual. One should embrace adversity as Christ embraced the cross, greeting death as release from this “exile . . . upon the earth.” One should prefer “simple and undoubting faith” to “vain and worldly knowledge,” becoming a “fool for Christ.” Passion on this earth, meanwhile, lay in union with Christ through the Eucharist, or Holy Communion:

Oh happy mind and blessed soul, to which is granted devoutly to receive Thee its Lord God, and in so receiving Thee to be filled with all spiritual joy! Oh how great a Lord doth it entertain, how beloved a Guest doth it bring in, how delightful a Companion doth it receive, how faithful a Friend doth it welcome, how beautiful and exalted a Spouse, above every other Beloved, doth it embrace. . . . O my most sweet Beloved, let heaven and earth and all the glory of them, be silent in Thy presence; seeing whatsoever praise and beauty they have it is of Thy gracious bounty; and they shall never reach unto the loveliness of Thy Name, *Whose Wisdom is infinite*.³⁸

Tiso no doubt felt this rapture. He later fervently advocated priestly asceticism, an expression of the inner life. A copy of the *Imitation* was among his few possessions turned over to relatives following his execution, suggesting that he drew lifelong counsel from Thomas.³⁹

Although Tiso's spiritual training tended to happen within the Pázmáneum, his intellectual training took place outside in a troubled imperial capital. In fin de siècle Vienna, the categories of nationality and class increasingly mattered, and mass politics had taken off. In 1905, for example, the city's Social Democratic Party mobilized two hundred thousand demonstrators behind universal male suffrage. Franz Joseph granted it in Austria, while his threat of similarly "unleashing" the nationalities in Hungary forced recalcitrant Budapest parliamentarians to back down in the dual state's worst constitutional crisis, sparked by Magyar nationalist demands regarding the common army. Nationalist tensions were on the rise throughout the empire. In 1907, Magyarization in Hungarian schools reached a high point with the controversial Apponyi Law, which put Slav and Romanian teachers on the defensive. In 1908, the Bohemian Diet closed after Czech and German deputies, deadlocked over language rights, began lobbing inkwells at each other.⁴⁰ That same year, Serbian nationalists swore revenge on the Habsburgs for annexing Bosnia, which the Kingdom of Serbia coveted.

At the University of Vienna, Tiso tackled an intimidating curriculum defined by categorical certainties. In addition to an intensive study of scripture, he carried a heavy course load of church history and law, philosophy, and pedagogy. His titular theological courses included dogmatic ("the systematic presentation of the faith, establishing the Church as the depository of revealed truth"), moral ("the science of human acts considered in the light of man's supernatural destiny"), and pastoral (the study of the "cure of souls"). In other courses, Tiso pondered "questions cosmological and psychological," explored pantheism, differentiated between "natural religion and revealed Christianity," and developed an eye for church architecture. He added Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic to his languages. He trained in exegesis ("the investigation and expounding of the true sense of the sacred scriptures"), hermeneutics ("the principles which govern the right interpretation of the sacred scriptures"), apologetics ("the science of the defense and explanation of the Christian religion"), and homiletics ("the art and science of preaching"). He also learned pragmatics such as how to administer the sacraments or take a student through a catechism. He prepared for his final pastoral duties—"the care of the poor and the sick, and of children"—in part by engaging the "social question," a debate on how to alleviate widespread poverty.⁴¹

Tiso's Viennese professors tended to be liberal Catholics who followed Leo XIII's accommodative approach to challenges facing the church. While Leo may have advised Hungarian Catholics in 1893 to resist their liberal state, he preferred collaborating with moderate liberals against the greater threat of socialism.⁴²

Leonine encyclicals such as *Immortale Dei* (1885) abandoned the church's commitment to monarchy, freeing Catholics to support democracy and, eventually, to participate in mass politics. Leo's *Rerum novarum* committed the church to social justice. Franz Martin Schindler, the head of the university's theology faculty and Tiso's moral theology teacher, helped to midwife the encyclical. Schindler and Ignaz Seipel (another student of the former) led a seminar on it that Tiso apparently audited. Both professors emphasized social theory, a trend among Austrian clerics aimed at convincing the faithful that they were not Habsburg minions but rather modern, activist leaders. A desire to revitalize or protect the Christian mission also led clerics like Schindler and Seipel into politics. Schindler was a pioneer in Austrian clericalism, rising to the top of the Vienna-based Christian Social Party, while Seipel served twice as Austrian chancellor in the 1920s. Schindler saw the modern state as the means to Catholic corporatism. Seipel pursued Catholic goals through political realism, believing that the ideal was "the norm which should penetrate the real, but with which the real could not be expected to be identical."⁴³ As a political priest, Tiso also favored realism and championed Catholic corporatism and Christian socialism, suggesting that many of these professors' teachings found their mark.⁴⁴

A third formative Christian Social influence on Tiso was Karl Lueger, Vienna's controversial mayor. Lueger helped to develop a novel style of mass mobilization, memorably dubbed by one historian as "politics in a new key."⁴⁵ For Lueger, politics was not just a profession but also a way of life, an all-absorbing calling that he practiced through the dramatic and shocking. A draft for an 1891 speech concisely captured his style: "The Christian Social Program does not aim to *incite*, but rather to *reconcile*; it is not a *fight of all* against *all*, but rather a *harmonious formation of different interest* groups against the *stratification* of *human society* by *professions and occupations*." Lueger then transformed this olive branch into a whip, lashing out at "the liberal press, sometimes also called Jewish liberal, or Jewish Press . . . , the most impudent press on this earth . . . , the ally and accomplice of all robberies and thefts that have been committed against . . . Christian[s]."⁴⁶ Exploiting the energy and organizational contacts of the lower clergy, Lueger built a mighty party machine. His antisemitism, although sometimes openly racist, tended to claim Catholic legitimacy through confessional, social, and economic justifications. Lueger also had a reputation as a capable administrator more interested in developing infrastructure than acting on radical rhetoric.⁴⁷ Although Tiso later paid but faint tribute to Lueger, the political styles of the two men were too similar to be unrelated.⁴⁸

Tiso also encountered in Vienna strong currents of ultramontanist and Catholic integralism, the latter of which imagined the church locked in mortal combat with modernity. Ernst Commer, Tiso's professor of dogmatic theology, was a devotee of Pius X, a pope best known for his attacks on Catholic liberal clergy and their

"modernist errors." Again, the problem was not modernity per se but a progressive vision of modernity that, for example, made faith irrelevant to science. In 1910, Pius compelled priests to take an "anti-modernist oath." While most of Tiso's professors opposed it, Commer not only defended it but even joined an "ecclesial spy ring" used to purge the liberals.⁴⁹ More notoriously, he served as the pope's Doberman pinscher in a conflict over the late Herman Schell, a liberal cleric who had portrayed Catholicism as an "ally of progress."⁵⁰ Sharing a conservative fear that such trends could prompt schism, Commer published a polemic that misstated the dead man's theology while dragging his name through the mud. A judicious critic deplored the book as "a nasty, vile, shoddy effort."⁵¹ Yet Pius commended Commer. Although not necessarily impressed by this episode, Tiso greatly admired Commer, later naming him and Seipel as pivotal influences.⁵²

Under Commer's tutelage, Tiso explored what became his moral handbook: the *Summa theologica* by Thomas Aquinas. At its heart, it was a simple tale of man's fall from grace and of his return to God through Christ. According to Aquinas, man moves toward or away from God mainly through free decisions, but also under divine and satanic influences. God teaches and supports man through law and grace, while Satan leads man astray through temptation. One's capacity to return to God depends on developing right "habits" or inclinations. Good habits—the virtues theological (faith, hope, charity) and cardinal (prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance)—orient man toward God. Bad habits—the vices capital (vainglory, envy, anger, sloth, covetousness, gluttony, and lust)—turn man away from God.⁵³

Aquinas analyzed these simple themes in comprehensive depth. For example, how should Tiso understand the commandment to "love thy neighbor as thyself"?

The mode of love is indicated in the words *as thyself*. This does not mean that a man must love his neighbor equally as himself, but in like manner as himself, and this in three ways. First, as regards the end, namely, that he should love his neighbor for God's sake, even as he loves himself for God's sake, so that his love for his neighbor is a *holy* love. Secondly, as regards the rule of love, namely, that a man should not give way to his neighbor in evil, but only in good things, even as he ought to gratify his will in good things alone, so that his love for his neighbor may be a *righteous* love. Thirdly, as regards the reason for loving, namely, that a man should love his neighbor, not for his own profit, or pleasure, but in the sense of wishing his neighbor well, even as he wishes himself well, so that his love for his neighbor may be a *true* love. . . .⁵⁴

Aquinas ran sin through a similar analytical centrifuge to separate out the nuances of culpability. If unbelief was the greatest sin, should not heretics, heathens, and Jews be compelled to faith? It depended on situation and motive. Heretics should

be so because they had recognized Christ as the Messiah. If they remained recalcitrant, they should be executed: “*Cut off the decayed flesh, expel the mangy sheep from the fold, lest the whole house, the whole paste, the whole body, the whole flock, burn, perish, rot, die.*”⁵⁵ Heathens, in contrast, who had never known Christ, could not be guilty of unbelief, as sin was by definition a voluntary act. They just should be prevented from “hinder[ing] the faith.”⁵⁶ Jews were an ambiguous case. By willfully denying the patent truth of the Resurrection, all were mortal sinners. Yet, never having fully received Christ, they were innocent of heresy. Aquinas argued that the rites of this obstinate faith should be tolerated as a lesser evil. Otherwise, Creation would lose the good that “our very enemies bear witness to our faith,” in that Judaism presaged Christianity.⁵⁷ As should be obvious, the *Summa’s* complexity and confident tone gave it the feel of a legal codex. By all accounts, Tiso relished plumbing its dense arguments.

In addition to being his moral handbook, the *Summa* also became Tiso’s “guide in politics.”⁵⁸ As mediated by the influential Swiss Jesuit Viktor Cathrein—a favorite author for Tiso—Aquinas’s political philosophy was hierarchical, conservative, and authoritarian. Cathrein envisioned an ordered universe in which everything had its place. In his theory of rights, for example, divine law manifested itself in the lower value of natural law, which then trumped manmade positive law. As with all Neo-Thomists, natural law dominated Cathrein’s thinking. For him, man’s social nature led to forming communities such as the state, which then secured public welfare. Because the commonweal included public morality, the state should prevent disruptions of orderly social life. Public officers should be virtuous and preferably led by one man. The state should help individuals to gain their fortunes by supplying means that society could not. Public administration should secure civil rights, based on the natural law to give “to each his own,” either according to equality or merit. Citizens were obliged to shoulder communal burdens, distributed by the same principles of justice, and to obey positive laws promulgated by legitimate authorities, so long as neither violated natural law. Even should they, citizens could not oppose authorities with violence.⁵⁹ Although Tiso did not rigorously adhere to all of these principles, they clearly constituted the basis of his political philosophy.

Considering how intensively Tiso labored at training his soul and mastering his studies in Vienna, his rare moments of respite must have been precious. He had a little free time every day, for example, to lounge in the institute’s reading, music, or smoking rooms. Here, he could converse quietly in Hungarian or Latin, or read “Catholic-spirited . . . newspapers.” Walks provided another daily diversion. Although companions and dress (top hats) were assigned, the seminarians could choose from a set of destinations. Occasionally, they even hiked to “an establishment of good repute” for a beer. “Dawn,” a humor society, afforded entertainment within the cloister. The club presented lectures and theater, and also sponsored

the year's most raucous celebration, May Day, during which the entire house took to the garden for sack races, chess competitions, and skittles (using rubber balls and pillows to muffle the noise). The festivities began with irreverent "cannon shots"—water-filled top hats dropped from the cloister's second floor. Among the prizewinners, Tiso grabbed top honors four years running.⁶⁰

Tiso likewise excelled as a cleric. His report cards gushed over his "eagerly pious" character, "exemplary" conduct, "bounteous" talent, and "tireless" industry.⁶¹ By his fourth year, he was the Pázmáneum's assistant prefect, the highest student authority. Thanks to a dispensation, he was ordained as a priest in 1910 despite being under age. Compared to these achievements, Tiso's dissertation was disappointing. He wrote on the origins of the Marian cult, producing a lengthy Latin text that testified to his diligence and ambition but lacked brilliance. He shined again, however, in his final exams, receiving his doctorate in 1911.⁶²

Indeed, Tiso's Pázmáneum record bore only one real black spot: a 1909 allegation that he was a pan-Slav, that threat to Catholic universalism and Habsburg unity. The charge said more about Magyar hierarchical paranoia than Tiso's national consciousness. Warned that the student hailed from a town "infected" with Slovak nationalism, the Pázmáneum's rector had kept an eye on him. What he observed was a student with a sense of Slovakness but who also fit well within Magyardom. When registering for classes, Tiso listed his mother tongue as "Slavic" or "Slovak," yet always signed his name Tiszó. He also preached in both Hungarian and Slovak, even handing out mementos with Slovak text and his name as "Jozef Tiso" after his first Mass as a priest. But church authorities would have expected such linguistic competence from someone likely to minister to Slovaks. There is no evidence that Tiso openly mixed with pan-Slavs. One such example from Nagybittse, Rudolf Kubiš, swore in 1946 that Tiso instead was fully Magyarized: "as a student, [he] didn't socialize with us nationally conscious students. . . . We, of course, only spoke Slovak among ourselves. It's just as obvious that Tiso [among his peers] spoke only Hungarian."⁶³

The pan-Slav charge stemmed from Tiso's friendship with Randík, now a Nyitra seminarian. Because Tiso's school year began a month after Randík's, it was Tiso's habit to finish his summer break visiting Nyitra. In 1909, however, Randík informed Tiso of "worsening national relations" in that seminary. Randík had been passed over as assistant prefect, a slight that he connected with his Slovak consciousness. Tiso abruptly cancelled his travel plans, sending in his stead a postcard written in Hungarian: "Since bad reports circulate in the Felvidék about the topsy-turvy state in your seminary, I didn't want to add to your burdens and [so] didn't come. I'm busy as can be these days: I'm assistant prefect! God be with you. József."⁶⁴

This innocuous note caused Tiszó József grief, as the administration of the Nyitra Seminary intercepted it. The rector, Antal Bartossik, complained to the

Pázmáneum that Tiso “incessantly belittles [our] seminary, perhaps . . . because I do not allow the seeds of Slovak nationalist tendencies to take root [here]. . . . From what I’ve heard, [he] has a lot of fingers in [this] pie.” Bartossik asked his Pázmáneum counterpart, Antal Drexler, to call Tiso on the carpet: “If he should [prove] to be full of Slovak national ideas, please make it clear to him how dangerous they are and forbid him most strongly from writing such [things].” But Bartossik wanted no harsher action lest he need report the affair to the bishop-coadjutor of Nyitra, Count Vilmos Batthyány. Drexler dutifully investigated the case, making Tiso submit written answers to questions such as: What exactly did he mean by “topsy-turvy state”? Tiso avoided framing his answers in national terms, claiming only that he “had heard . . . that the [Nyitra] seminarians [were] split into factions” and denying that he had “ever incited or disparaged anyone.”⁶⁵ Satisfied, Drexler reported to Bartossik that no one in the Pázmáneum “had even the slightest complaint” against this “model pupil. . . . [Tiszó]—as well as his [family]—distances himself from the national movements, [which] he understands are dangerous.”⁶⁶

Drexler judged the Tisos’ relationship to Slovak nationalism accurately. The family, for example, backed their Magyarone priest, József Teszelszky, in conflicts with Slovak nationalists. Tiso’s father served alongside the priest on the city council, while the family campaigned for him in elections. (Ironically, Teszelszky won a parliamentary seat in 1906 by defeating a candidate from Tiso’s later Slovak People’s Party, which had just split off from Néppárt.) The Tisos also followed Teszelszky into battle with local Hlasists (progressive “young school” nationalists) over leadership of a Catholic circle.⁶⁷ Although at seminary during most of these conflicts, when at home Tiso kept his distance from the Hlasists. As Kubiš later explained: “Young Jozef Tiso was an exemplary student and a model cleric in all religious aspects. Therefore, I think that our group . . . repulsed him by our freer behavior. . . . [It was also important] that we were public ‘pan-Slavs’ and he was on the other side. Yet he did not work against us politically.”⁶⁸

The term “pan-Slav” here implied not only political but also religious values. The Hlasists’ Czechoslovak orientation threatened to revive Felvidék interest in Hussitism, the Bohemian proto-Protestant tradition from the fifteenth century. Pan-Slavism as an alliance with eastern Slavs (such as Russians) evoked the esoteric Christian doctrines of Count Leo Tolstoy, an inspiration for the Hlasists. Most Felvidék Slavic nationalists were Protestants, while others, such as the leading Slovak Hlasist, the anticlerical Vavro Šrobár, were apostate Catholics. Finally, many Felvidék Catholics considered the Hlasists’ guiding light, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, a popular sociology professor in Prague, to be “the embodiment of atheism.”⁶⁹ For the cleric Tiso, these religious objections were supreme. As a journal of his later argued: “Slovak affairs were directly compromised by progressivism [before 1918].

A Catholic priest could not align himself with people who were open opponents of everything religious without dishonoring his class."⁷⁰

The Young Priest in Peace and War

Between 1910 and 1914, Tiso was an assistant priest in three Felvidék towns: Ocsad, nestled in the northern mountains, then Rajecz and Bán, both of which lay to the southwest. The last was the most affluent and middle class. Rajecz was industrializing, while Ocsad was impoverished. Each town was mainly Slovak-speaking and Roman Catholic. Bán also had a sizable German-speaking, Jewish minority that dominated local commerce. Ocsad, in contrast, had only a score of German-speaking Jews. In 1941, Tiso claimed that, when he had arrived there, he had found only three educated men, the "most important" of which had been a Jew—"although he wasn't an educated man at all, but just wore such a coat."⁷¹ The Jew baiting aside, the anecdote captures much of the reality of Felvidék social structures. In 1910, only around 4 percent of economically active citizens here were intelligentsia, while 70 percent of independent businessmen and bankers were identified as Jewish. Slovak speakers thus often got their alcohol, retail goods, and loans from (in their eyes) German, Hungarian, or Galician Jews. In places like Ocsad, this pattern contributed to rife antisemitism.⁷²

As a new priest, Tiso became a social activist. Even though he spent most of his ten months in Ocsad studying for his doctoral exams, he helped his superior organize a farmers' union. The association, for example, sold goods such as footwear at prices that undercut the local "Jew."⁷³ In Rajecz and Bán, respectively, Tiso assumed control of a youth circle and a men's Christian Social union, also founding a Catholic circle in Bán. The Rajecz circle sponsored lectures, balls, and theater. Tiso also taught its members Slovak commercial correspondence.⁷⁴ Another activist front for him in Rajecz was alcoholism, on which he held lectures that he illustrated to good effect with a magic lantern. In 1913, he contributed a series of anti-alcohol articles to Néppárt's Slovak-language newspaper, in which he rehashed well-justified arguments about the malign impact of drink on minds, bodies, families, and societies. Displeased with the "dry" tone of other reformers, he adopted a fervent, pulpit style. Alcohol was "more dangerous than the sulfurous fire that laid waste to Sodom and Gomorrah," a poison conceived by "the hellish wrath of the devil." Drink's greatest crime was that it destroyed religious sentiment, "our single strength, [without] which . . . we vanish among the other nations as a water drop is lost in the wide, stretching sea." In addition to human frailty, Tiso blamed this plague on governing parties and Jewish tavern owners. The parties manipulated voters with drink, while the Jew got rich quick plying the poison, transforming himself from poor immigrant into village master.⁷⁵

From a nationalist viewpoint, Tiso's most intriguing activism was his involvement in a Slovak bank. Like many Felvidék cities, Rajecz lacked enough credit institutions, so Tiso and a few associates organized one in 1912. Because control of credit translated into influence, the Hungarian government preferred to corral such institutions within a National Central Credit Union.⁷⁶ Tiso and his partners steered free of these ties, opening their institution instead as a branch of a Zsolna bank with good Slovak nationalist credentials. Three of the key individuals associated with the branch had the "distinction" of being on the Hungarian Ministry of Interior's "Black Book," a list of 526 Slovak nationalists under surveillance. Two of the branch founders were also Lutherans, suggesting that Slovak nationalism was in fact the common link between Tiso and his colleagues.⁷⁷ The Rajecz venture advertised in prominent Slovak journals, some of which even printed Tiso's name in its Slovak form.⁷⁸

Despite the national content of such activism, however, Tiso was not yet a pan-Slav. Although Slovak concerns were part of his ministry, his activities still fit comfortably within Magyar Christian socialism. In 1913, for example, a regional paper that was harshly critical of pan-Slavs and their credit institutions warmly praised his circle's performance of Hungarian and Slovak one-act plays:

In terms of the Hungarian national concept, it is worth . . . stressing . . . that the Youth circle . . . undertook the Hungarian presentation on its own. Although battling with the language, [the students] bravely rose to their difficult task. . . . Spar- ing neither time nor effort, [Tiszó] devotes . . . weeks to improving, teaching, and cultivating the youth and the people. . . . This is really the only medicine for their lamentable backwardness. . . . Thus, one day, moral weakness, alcoholism, etc., will lose ground [in favor of] material and moral strength. And an independent citizenry [will arise] as children of the Magyar homeland, loyal to their faith and country.⁷⁹

The "Hungarian national concept" presented the Magyar nation fundamentally as a political construct, yet one to be strengthened by the spread of the Hungarian language. Tiso clearly did not have the nationalist reputation later attributed to him. Instead, he associated with Néppárt, which had grown hostile to pan-Slavs. Even his involvement in the bank branch is not conclusive proof of his Slovak nationalism, as the boards of such institutions sometimes included Magyarone shills.⁸⁰ According to testimony from Tiso's purge trial, however, his involvement in the bank caught the attention of his Magyar superior Batthyány, now bishop, whom he had to placate. In mid-1913, although most likely not as punishment, Tiso was transferred to Bán.⁸¹ There, he did not repeat his ostensible mistake. Bán was home to a prominent circle of open Slovaks, mainly Lutherans. Tiso not only cold-shouldered these pan-Slavs but also feuded with them over their bank.⁸²

The outbreak of the First World War dramatically interrupted Tiso's social activism. Already in the reserves, the priest mobilized with the 71st, Trencsén's *kaiserliches und königliches* infantry regiment. Its rank and file mainly spoke Slovak, its officer corps, German. Captain Tiso, its chaplain, enjoyed the privilege of a servant and a horse. Inept in the saddle, however, he usually traveled by wagon or foot. The regiment quickly joined armies of the Central Powers on the Galician front, a few hundred miles from Kraków.⁸³

Tiso's regiment went into battle in late August 1914, driving into Russian territory at a ghastly cost. The 71st lost over two hundred men and more than half of its officers within days. In a weekly column published in 1915–16 in the form of a war diary, Tiso described these frontline experiences as overwhelming: "One man displays . . . shot-off hands and tearfully complains, 'What will my two small children do?'. . . . A bullet hit [another man] around the nose. I can hardly put a piece of sugar into the poor fellow's shattered mouth, foaming with blood. . . . The freshly brought [wounded men] . . . make horrible rattles and uneasy moans. From time to time, the savage howling of the desperately battling cannons interrupts this terrible dissonance. It is as though the earth moved, and every fire burning inside it began to storm."⁸⁴ Chaplains worked close to the firing line, so Tiso feared for his life as well. His task was to give "comforting and compassionate words" to the wounded. He heard the confessions of terrified men. He anointed torn-apart soldiers. He blessed mass graves. It is no surprise that he later described the "sacrifice" of frontline chaplains as "shattered nerves."⁸⁵

In addition to witnessing the violence of battle, Tiso viewed up close the toll of war on civilians. A late-August entry in his "war diary" described a particularly brutal incident. Snipers firing from a settlement had shot down a corporal in Tiso's advancing column. "They paid a bitter price for [this] audacity!," Tiso noted, for the regiment then reportedly surrounded and set fire to the village. The entry continues: "As soon as a fleeing form appears, our soldiers' salvos cut the clouds of smoke rolling on the ground. Either he burns there at the scene of his audacious deed, or else the bullets of our waiting soldiers kill him while he flees, [leaving him to] burn to ashes among the crumbling beams!" Tiso tempered this apparent zeal for violence by bemoaning the "thoughtless" justice of the military that "does not care how many innocents suffer." Yet he accepted these methods, as "the extraordinary circumstances do not permit a more precise investigation." When women from the village "carrying small, scared-to-death children" protested that the snipers were Russian agents provocateurs, Tiso fundamentally agreed with them. But his response was passive: "We pity these poor ones, but we cannot do anything else." The massacre lasted a quarter hour, after which the column crossed through the smoking rubble of the village. "We avert our eyes in disgust, but wherever we turn, it is the same picture—houses standing in flames, here and there the scorched corpse of a shot-down man, not far from him the sooty, burnt remains of

a piglet that couldn't get away or a penned-up hen! We make haste to get out of there and into clean air. . . . Crying, the trembling people come out of the village and kneel before us, imploring us for mercy and compassion. We look on them with impotent sympathy."⁸⁶ To judge from the war diary, this sympathetic but passive response was characteristic for Tiso. He consistently prioritized military over civilian needs. The army, for example, had "an absolute and entitled need" to requisition, even though this subjected civilians to crippling shortages and loss of property. Local people, "trusting in the protection of the priest and his love of truth," often sought his aid against such depredations. Tiso typically pitied them, especially if they were Catholic. But he also avoided them by "going incognito" in a military uniform, complaining that they failed to comprehend "that in war, there is no legal relief."⁸⁷

Fortunately for Tiso, his active service was short. In October, he was diagnosed with nephritis and ordered to the rear. He left burrowed in a wagon-bed of straw—a "sweat cure" that turned into treatment at a Felvidék spa. He then served temporarily at a local garrison before convincing his superiors to return him to sick leave in February 1915. This decision apparently held until August, when the army reactivated him and dispatched him to Slovenia, a posting that he was rescued from within a month by two appointments in Nyitra.⁸⁸ First, Bishop Batthyány chose him to replace the recently inducted Filkorn (the Little Seminary memoirist) as a teacher of religion at the Piarist high school. Second, Batthyány named Tiso as the spiritual director of the Grand Seminary, a senior diocesan position. Tiso was meanwhile discharged from the army. Even though this process hinged on Batthyány "reclaiming" his priest, the initiative probably lay with Tiso, as he had "fought something terrible against military service."⁸⁹

Tiso no doubt facilitated his exit from the army and his entry into Batthyány's inner circle through the publication of his war diary in *The Nyitra County Review*. He later claimed to have prepared the diary at the request of the paper's owner, Lajos Franciscy, a local Néppárt leader and the rector of the Grand Seminary. But Tiso may have taken the initiative here as well. He later admitted writing the articles to please "Magyar circles."⁹⁰ This group would have included Batthyány, who had a reputation as a Magyar chauvinist. Certainly, the bishop would not have named Tiso as spiritual director if he had considered him to be a pan-Slav.⁹¹

In the war diary, Tiso appears as a nationally reliable, fervently Catholic, and personable idealist. He defended the justness of Hungary's cause, praising the valor of her troops, especially "our fallen heroes." Despotism in Russia, in contrast, fielded Cossacks who "literally cut [captives] into pieces." Upon learning that Pius X had died, Tiso teared-up and his "heart gave a leap."⁹² As though heeding Ignatius of Loyola, he often admired the churches that he passed, while the piety of local Catholics warmed his soul, particularly when they stood in awe of priestly authority. Despite his support for the war, Tiso condemned its destructiveness and

longed for it to disappear. He admitted Hungarian heavy losses and questioned official propaganda, thus lending authenticity to his reporting. Most engagingly, he made himself the butt of jokes, spinning charming tales of his incompetence on horseback. Such self-deprecation was a rare glimpse of the joviality that Tiso's associates often attributed to him. By the end of the diary, self-righteousness had replaced good humor, as when—returning from the front—he sneered at rear-echelon "parasites."⁹³ He was, of course, arguably joining their ranks. It would not be the last time that he accused others of charges to which he himself was vulnerable.

The war diary, along with his other articles in the *Review*, is the best pre-1918 evidence of how Tiso viewed himself and his world nationally. Even though he often referred to "our Slovaks" in the diary, when he addressed his own nationality, he chose the adjective *magyarországi* (from Hungary) rather than *magyar* or *tót* (Slovak). Such ambiguity helped him to navigate between the groups. Elsewhere, Tiso followed the official line that Hungary was a kingdom not of nations (*nemzetek*) but of peoples (*népek*). He typically celebrated their unity, as when he took refuge with them under a bridge: "We get along beautifully with one another! Here, the Magyar is not a rascal, the Slovak a piece of trash, the Romanian a wretch, the German a rogue. . . . As brothers we stand beside each other and we help one another! Why can't it be like this in peacetime?"⁹⁴ Tiso also had good things to say about the foreigners that he met at the front. He outright admired the Germans: "Almost from every word one feels the famous German self-esteem, yet their . . . manner is not off-putting but rather makes a man feel a certain sympathy. Behold the mute surrendering of men and minds before German superiority!" Despite their initial distrust of him, he also liked the Poles, seeing them as essentially pious people with "a bottomless respect for the priest."⁹⁵ He pitied their lot under Tsarist rule, which suppressed their schools and pushed Orthodoxy on them. The only people (except for the enemy) whom he apparently disliked were Galician Jews. He linked them with filth, disorder, and fraud. At other times, however, he simply noted them as victims of pillaging or pogroms, or as refugees.⁹⁶

Particularly in later articles for the *Review*, Tiso's patriotism took on a protofascist tinge. Despite being disillusioned by its costs, Tiso saw war as morally purifying and an "educational instrument" of "divine Providence." Through uncertainty and terror, war made man reach out to God, filling churches and raising hopes for a "moral renaissance." War also awakened idealism in "frivolous man," encouraging sacrifice and the choice of "a more substantial, wiser life."⁹⁷ Tiso especially valued the classless unity that he saw as a product of war: "[Its] fiery hammer wrought together the entire nation into one camp, one heart, one spirit." In war, "there are no personal claims. . . . The individual shrinks to a small point, without volume." Wanting to maintain this mass mobilization in peacetime, Tiso suggested that only the "iron grip" of a German-style social militarism could ensure

“the true striving toward one, uniform aim by every part of society. . . . Let us not take away the great, unforeseeably influential results of war . . . , so that society returns to the dangerous notion that it makes its way on as many different roads and in as many different directions as it has eyes.” On the one hand, Tiso imagined this “harmonious working together of strengths” as “a voluntary subordination of souls.” On the other, he tasked intellectuals, “especially those in direct contact with the lower classes,” with grassroots organizing: “The intelligentsia must realize that its position . . . is not for acquiring diplomas, rewards, or sinecures . . . , but that it is a responsibility. [It] will be fulfilled only by those capable of uniting the vast masses into one camp.”⁹⁸

In the *Review* articles, Tiso also advocated democratization, a development in his thinking that overlapped Slovak nationalist agendas. Near the end of the war diary, he related the wide-ranging objections of a Polish priest to Russification, complaints that echoed Slovak issues with Magyarization.⁹⁹ Three months later, Tiso explicitly criticized Hungarian society and politics. He proposed solving war-time labor shortages by reversing the heavy emigration from his land, another traditional Slovak nationalist agenda. But would “those of our blood” living “in the free atmosphere of America” want to come home? “Only if . . . they do not find here corruption, gendarme politics, freedom of movement [controlled by a violent] border police, the string-pulling of usurers, the weaker at the mercy of the state authority and of [those who] crave profits. [Instead, they must find here] a real home, which ensures rights, freedom, and honest bread for the individual and the family. / Let us find in our home more democracy in every respect.” In his next column, Tiso urged Catholics to challenge the Protestant lead in publishing Slovak devotional literature. Otherwise, “we hand our people . . . over to predatory wolves.”¹⁰⁰

In his purge trial, Tiso held up this last column as proof that his work for the *Review* had not been an embarrassing example of Magyarism but rather a Slovak nationalist double game. This subterfuge was supposedly inspired by Tiso’s service in Slovenia, where he had been impressed by how “nicely the Catholic priests [there] developed cultural and social work among the people.” Tiso claimed to have met Anton Korošec, a Jesuit priest and later leader of the Slovenian People’s Party. “After conversations with Dr. Korošec,” Tiso deposed,

it came to me that in Slovakia we should utilize the Catholic clergy more for work among the people. First, I wanted priests in individual districts to come together in meetings more often so that we could begin such work. Second, I wanted to encourage them to write for the people, so that we would not be dependent on . . . Lutheran authors. [This] was the case, for example, in theater, where I often was pushed into choosing pieces that . . . displeased me as a priest. In terms of the first

idea, Bishop [Batthyány] forbade me, as there was a war on. So that my second idea would not meet a similar fate, I wrote [the above-mentioned article. In it,] I had to assume a pose that would be to him somewhat appealing [that is, using confessional rather than national justifications]. . . . If I had written [it otherwise . . .], then [Batthyány] would have knocked me down, the same as [he did with my idea for] organizing priests.¹⁰¹

It is significant that, even while defending himself as a Slovak nationalist, Tiso used mainly confessional arguments. His claim to subversion is at best heavily exaggerated. He began his *Review* articles eight months before his brief service in Slovenia. As will be seen, his efforts to organize priests also postdated his appeal for Slovak devotional literature.

The double-game canard aside, Tiso indeed began to align himself with Slovak nationalism during the last half of the war. The venues in which he published betrayed a drift away from Magyar allies. His patriotic articles for the *Review* basically stopped after his test balloon for more Slovak devotional literature.¹⁰² He subsequently published only theological articles in two journals: the Hungarian *Priests' Bulletin*, based in the Banat (now western Romania), and the Slovak *Spiritual Shepherd*, Hungary's new (and only) Slovak-language magazine for priests. The *Bulletin* tended to feature Tiso's work as lead articles, attesting to his stature. He published in the Slovak journal, in contrast, under a pseudonym: Spiritualis. In private, Tiso reportedly was bolder about his Slovak sympathies, especially as the war drew to a close. For example, he visited his future bishop Karol Kmeťko, a conscious Slovak, and proposed schemes to promote Slovak language use, especially among priests. The initiative led Kmeťko to conclude that Tiso was in fact "a quiet Slovak."¹⁰³ Randík meanwhile supposedly told Tiso of efforts to create a Czechoslovak Republic, which Tiso was enthusiastic about. In August 1918, while at a Budapest spiritual retreat with the Jesuit Béla Bangha, Tiso looked askance at the collapsing Hungarian economy. He agreed with Randík that "we will order things otherwise in the new republic."¹⁰⁴

Tiso's Hungarian articles in *The Priests' Bulletin* provide a final glimpse of his prewar political thinking. They suggest a man preparing for revolution. In fall 1917, for example, after a rise in agitation by Hungary's Social Democrats, Tiso warned of the coming "ideological battles," which priests, "sticking together in one large and classless camp," should meet with "a common worked-out, uniform course of action." Soon after, in a particularly striking passage, he informed his "altar brothers" that "we live in the age of democracy. . . . The spirit of the new times falls to the land of the people. With the introduction of the broad masses to every aspect of public life, there will come renewal, rebirth. [Democracy] grants to the son[s] of the people freedom, right, success. It brings to public life honesty,

truth, and honor. It would be superfluous to stress excessively that . . . we should take the same position. . . . Democracy is not compelled to batter on the gates of the Church."¹⁰⁵

These politically charged comments, however, were just asides in a campaign by Tiso to strengthen self-confidence and faith among priests. According to the *Bulletin* articles, this project was inspired by his brief Slovenian posting, which Tiso had reconciled to by getting "caught up in the powerful, self-conscious life" of priests. That is to say, he had found a circle of peers with whom he could discuss his problems while relaxing over music or cards. For Tiso, an unexpected benefit of these breaks from solitude and routine was an invigorated spirituality. He felt that such collegiality could have aided him in earlier battles with "abandonment in the spiritual sense: that I preached to another, but no one to me. That I encouraged, inspired others—if need be, chiding them—but no one [did so to] me. What a great danger it was that loneliness should weaken [my] persistence, crush [my] perseverance!"¹⁰⁶ Tiso proposed that Hungary's priests hold regular clerical councils, a scheme that he promoted in the *Bulletin* into 1918. As noted before, Tiso later linked this project to Slovak nationalism, but a desire to strengthen clerical consciousness was the more likely motive. Tiso urged Hungary's priests to embrace one another in introspective circles and retreats, in which they would relieve one another's worries, inspect one another's souls, and inspire one another in the ascetic life. The priest must abandon sensual love, developing a "tough heart" that, although filled with a greater love, burns only for God and his calling.¹⁰⁷ Especially in the Slovak *Spiritual Shepherd*, Tiso urgently called for greater clerical asceticism, seeing it as an antidote to the spiritual emptiness of modernity.¹⁰⁸

As the war entered its last year, Tiso took a quiet yet profound step. He became an officer of a political party: Néppárt, the Catholic Populists. A Nyitra branch, heavily dominated by priests, activated in late 1917, with Tiso as a secretary.¹⁰⁹ Around the same time, a local Christian Social Society, which organized Catholic workers under clerical leadership, was revived. The society unanimously "elected" Filkorn and Tiso as president and secretary, respectively. In fact, the rank and file, in a show of unity common for the Felvidék, affirmed choices that had already been cleared with Batthyány. The society's purpose, suggested Filkorn, was "to correctly channel the social forces that the war had pent up in souls."¹¹⁰ Neither the society nor the Nyitra Néppárt, however, subsequently did much for the rest of the war.

The last one heard of Tiszó József before the collapse of Austria-Hungary, he was climbing yet higher on the ladder of hierarchical success. In September 1918, Batthyány named him professor of religion in Nyitra, having also made him the diocesan librarian just months earlier.¹¹¹ Even if Tiso had moved away from Magyar allies in private, no one could be faulted for having failed to notice.

Rules and Missions

During the first half of his life, Jozef Tiso encountered several sets of rules on behavior. One set defined the good Catholic as pious, zealous, and disciplined. Another, political Catholic set confronted secularizing liberal states with a mixture of unyielding resistance and prudent collaboration. A third, Christian Social set encouraged the modern Catholic to compete with Socialists on the social question. Finally, a national set advised Felvidék Slovak speakers to assimilate to Magyar culture and to hide Slovak nationalist sentiment.

Tiso learned these rules well, becoming a model of behavior. As a student, he achieved as much as was possible within his milieu. As a Catholic, he took the enthusiasm of religion to heart, seeking purification in devotion, service, and spirituality. As a priest, he was entrusted at a young age with training his brothers of the cloth. As a Hungarian, he worked so well with Magyars that many considered him to be one.

Opposing this last interpretation of Tiso as a model Hungarian is a nationalist narrative, according to which he was a forcibly denationalized Slovak who quickly recovered his identity. His alliance with Magyars was thus a double game in service of Slovak causes. This interpretation cites evidence that appears to confirm Slovak nationalist behavior on Tiso's part. Most of this evidence, however, consists of memories articulated during Tiso's purge trial. Even when not invented, these testimonies had their own way of re-creating the past.

Although speaking three languages was just a good idea in nineteenth-century Hungary, by 1918 language increasingly marked national identity. A polyglot, Tiso tended "to speak as others began," switching languages facilely.¹¹² He could always pass as Slovak or Magyar. Especially through the lens of post-1945 testimony, how he spoke was conflated with how he felt about building the Slovak nation. In fact, his language choices more likely reflected how he felt about his career and the company that he kept. Around Slovak speakers, he apparently projected an image of a sincere and even fervent Slovak. Around Hungarian speakers, he made it clear that he was no pan-Slav. Rather than an enthusiastic Magyar, Tiso was more likely a patriotic Hungarian. Rather than a secret pan-Slav, he was someone who was attracted to Slovak social causes yet unwilling to jeopardize his career over them. Virtually all of Tiso's actions before 1917 can be understood as defending Catholicism and the Hungarian state. It is also clear that he was drawn to agendas of progress for the country and for the weaker social classes. In the western Felvidék, these social groups tended to speak Slovak.

Tiso was a child of two families. The first, his biological one, spoke a dialect of what is today known as Slovak. The second, his church, raised him from the age of fifteen to be a good Magyar. The glue that held these two milieus together was Catholicism and loyalty to the Hungarian state. Before 1917, when the national

claims of these two families came into conflict, Tiso always chose the church and state. After 1917, those binds loosened, and Tiso realized that his future might be in a non-Hungarian state.

The political thinker that emerged at the war's end already displayed many of the traits of the later professional politician. In the first half of his life, Tiso developed two missions: to defend the Catholic Church and to pursue social justice. By war's end, he had begun to explore how to pursue these ends through politics rather than just his ministry. He now aspired to unify and mobilize the masses. He celebrated the collective over the individual, endorsing authoritarianism. He also foresaw and welcomed the coming democratic wave. Most telling is his response to the unraveling of dualist Hungary: he promoted a spiritually invigorated priesthood as the vanguard for the coming struggles. The catalysts that moved him in these directions were his training in Vienna, the trauma of war, and the rise of nationalist identities.

Yet Catholicism ultimately defined the young Tiso. The multiple meanings of his religion, from ritual to worldview, overlaid his personality like so many leaves of gleaming foil, be it gold or plastic. He was a good Catholic. He was a Catholic priest. He was a soldier of God. He was an exile on earth. For the Neo-Thomist Tiso, the end of reason and morality and the object of man's temporal journey was God. Nations, in contrast, were merely expressions of Providence, objects of a lower order that fit within Catholicism but could never rival it. Before 1918, Tiso strove far less to build the Slovak nation than he did to cultivate good Catholics and to save souls. There was nothing unique or surprising in these priorities. National indifference was commonplace in Habsburg ethnic borderlands at the *fin de siècle*.¹¹³ It was only through the lens of his later, nationalized life that Tiso's indifference demanded explanation.

Finally, although Tiso was profoundly ambitious and seized opportunities as they arose, careerism is of limited use for understanding the first half of his life. He was an activist, possessed of exceptional energies and talents. His need to always be in the middle of things can be read as self-aggrandizement, a desire to dominate. But he also could have been heeding Ignatius of Loyola or even Thomas à Kempis: "Be thou never without something to do."



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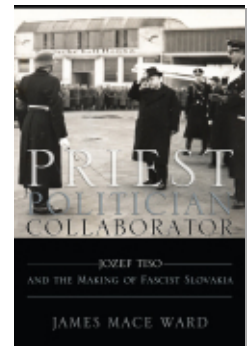
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Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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Turning National and Political, 1918–19

The darkest side of socialism is murder and terror.

—Ottokár Prohászka, *Kultúra és Terror* (1918)

On 1 December 1918, in the middle of a revolution that changed Nyitra, Hungary, into Nitra, Czechoslovakia, Jozef Tiso stood up at a Christian Social assembly and sang “Hail to Slovaks!” Years later, he bragged that it had “caused a sensation”: people were amazed to discover “that there were Slovaks in Nitra.”¹ Many bystanders no doubt were indeed shocked to find Tiszó József among them. As a colleague later put it: “Frankly speaking, [we] Magyars didn’t take kindly . . . to Tiso immediately after the revolution changing . . . into a Czechoslovak.”²

Thus, as his city and state transformed, so did Tiso. He suddenly became a politician: the most dynamic Christian Social in town. The tempo was breathtaking. Within little more than a week, not only did he proclaim himself to be Slovak, but he also negotiated the occupation of his city by Czechoslovak troops and accepted a high position in its provisional administration. For the next half-year, he led efforts to Slovakize Nitra and to consolidate it within the new republic. At the same time, he labored to organize the Slovak People’s Party, which he had helped to refound and to which he henceforth remained dedicated.

Yet national politics, although essential to this state revolution, was secondary to Tiso’s personal revolution. His dual missions of defending the Catholic Church and enacting social justice instead drove his entry into politics. The collapse of dualist Hungary brought Social Democrats to power, leading Tiso to fear “terror.” At times, this term meant what it does today: the use of violence to demoralize and manipulate civilians. But, for Tiso and his contemporaries, the term “terror” also could be devoid of physical violence, implying merely unscrupulous coercion. Many Social Democrats wanted a complete separation of church and state, thus hoping to overcome what they saw as debilitating backwardness.³ The Christian

Socials feared that their church and priests might be consigned to irrelevance, their poor seduced into unbelief, and their children indoctrinated to hate faith. Driven also by careerism, Tiso strove to outflank the Social Democrats and to “capture the masses.” By so doing, he pursued his own revolution: the creation of a Christian, socially just community.

In addition to the weapons of Christian socialism and Slovak nationalism, Tiso fought his revolution with antisemitism. Before 1918, he rarely had discussed the Jewish Question. Now, as he turned national and political, it was at the heart of his criticism of local Social Democrats and of his vision of a just society. He was even more antisemitic in spring 1919, when a short-lived Soviet Hungary invaded Slovakia, threatening his life. Tiso’s antisemitism was common for the revolutionary Felvidék, and it proved to be an episode. Yet it was also a harbinger of policies to come.

The 1918 Revolution in Nyitra

In fall 1918, dualist Hungary collapsed under the weight of military defeat, international claims on its territory, and revolution. In October, the Austro-Hungarian southwestern front broke. Demoralized soldiers streamed home to the Felvidék, sometimes laying aside their arms, sometimes using them to loot, sometimes joining paramilitary bands. Hungarian ruling elites meanwhile confronted an Allied plan to carve up their country. After the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution removed Russia from the war, the remaining Allied powers backed émigré Slavic nationalists, including T. G. Masaryk, in their bids to form new states. On 28 October, the National Committee in Prague declared Czechoslovakia to be a fact. Two days later, unaware of the Prague declaration, the Slovak National Council in the Felvidék town of Martin committed its nation to Masaryk’s republic. Within two more days, revolution broke out in Hungary. Crowds seized the streets of Budapest as royal troops abandoned King Karl and other rebellious soldiers assassinated a former prime minister. Karl, soon to abdicate, entrusted the reins of government to a reform-minded liberal, Mihály Károlyi. The new prime minister hoped to harness the newly unleashed forces of mass politics by making Hungary an independent democracy. To foil Bolshevik revolution, he favored land reform. To preserve the country’s territorial integrity, he reached out to the country’s non-Magyars, accepting the demands of American President Woodrow Wilson that they be given “self-determination,” but interpreting this as autonomy and equal rights.⁴

What did these changes portend for Tiszó József? Multicultural Hungary, to which he had been ostentatiously loyal as late as 1916, was perhaps already a thing of the past. Yet it was not clear to what country Nyitra would fall or what rights he would enjoy if he stayed in place. Czechoslovak troops were pushing their way

across the Felvidék, turning the claimed map of the republic into reality. Revolution meanwhile threatened to bring radical leftists to power. Although moderate Social Democrats dominated Károlyi's government, Bolsheviks lurked in the background. Many clerics feared both the new Hungarian government, which smelled of secularism, and the Czechoslovak state, which threatened to divide Hungarian Catholicism with a state border.⁵ Church careers were on the line. Should Czechoslovakia win the Felvidék, most of the region's bishops could face retribution as Magyarizers. Nationally conscious Slovak priests presumably would be rewarded with promotion. For Tiso, much was at risk. As Batthyány's protégé, he had dim prospects within a Slovakized hierarchy. Should Czechoslovakia take most of the Felvidék but not Nyitra, he would be cut off from his family. Should the revolution radicalize, he could fall victim to anticlerical violence. At the same time, a Czechoslovakia promised Tiso, as a Slovak, greater political and cultural freedom, and a privileged position in the new ethnic hierarchy.

Right after Károlyi took power, his government challenged Nyitra to organize a local national council, a task that fell to Ferenc Gyürky, the town clerk. Gyürky engaged local Social Democrats, led by Győző Magyar, a lawyer, who helped him to compose a candidate list favorable to his party but not the Christian Socials. On 2 November, the city council unanimously accepted the slate of candidates, and the national council embarked on a mildly revolutionary program pushed through by Magyar and his colleagues. The council presidium was dominated by Social Democrats, many of whom, like Magyar, were Jews or of Jewish background.⁶ To help to maintain order in Nyitra, civil guards were formed. Looters—sometimes murderous—roamed the countryside, targeting Hungarian officials and Jewish entrepreneurs, and threatening to descend on Nyitra.⁷

Hungarian and Czechoslovak authorities now competed for the loyalty of Nyitra's Slovak speakers. The county's Christian Social governor (*főispán*) announced that "in the future, we must recognize the Slovaks as equals. We must respect their language and customs. We must defend them from usury and exploitation."⁸ Trying to make good on such talk, Győző Magyar invited two self-identified Slovaks to join his council. Both men declined, preferring to heed instructions from Czechoslovak authorities. The Slovak National Council, for example, had demanded the allegiance of Slovaks still living under Hungarian control. The Slovak nationalist priest Andrej Hlinka similarly implored his Felvidék "altar brothers" to behave at least passively toward the "undeniable reality" of Czechoslovakia.⁹ Hlinka also formed a clerical council to Slovakize the Felvidék church and its hierarchy. In Nyitra, Czechoslovak appeals resonated poorly, as few Slovak speakers there were nationally conscious.¹⁰

Tiso participated in the 1918 revolution as the secretary of the Nyitra Christian Social Society. As its acting head (the chairman, Filkorn, was away at war), he had already carried out financial preparations for the "ideological battles" expected at

war's end. He was the society's political motor throughout the revolution. With Filkorn's return in mid-November, the society launched a campaign for influence in the city. Among other things, the Christian Socials tried to get Filkorn and Tiso named to the Nyitra National Council.¹¹ Talks between the society and the council, however, quickly broke down. The society meanwhile began publishing a newspaper: *Nyitra/Nitra*, Hungarian and Slovak editions on either side of a single broadsheet. By the second issue, they had separated into two-page weeklies that sometimes shared content. Tiso edited both newspapers. In his 1946 March Affidavit, he claimed of *Nitra* in particular that "I did this paper alone. No one helped me. I didn't sign the articles, because everyone knew that I wrote the unsigned ones."¹²

The first issue of *Nyitra/Nitra* urged readers to embrace Christian unity and the democratic order. This last plea most readily referred to the republic that Károlyi had just proclaimed. Both papers also endorsed Wilsonian principles of national self-determination and emphasized law and order, the Christian Socials' rationale for supporting the local national council. Separately, *Nyitra* advocated land reform, while *Nitra* was keen on mass democracy: "It is only necessary for us [Christians] to hold together, to mutually support one another, to step forth everywhere and always as one for all and all for one—and then not even infernal gates can hold us back! Who would dare stand in the way when the mountains move? We are the mountains, and as a sea we flood everything. . . . Hand in hand, [let us] begin this future and [let] true democracy rule!"¹³

Tiso was a strongly Populist editor. His papers sported slogans such as "Don't Be a Traitor to Your Kin and Blood!" and "Each to Their Own!" (the Neo-Thomist principle of justice that also served as a mantra for ethnic nationalism). Although claiming to welcome cooperation with everyone, *Nitra* pointedly defined its "enemies" as anyone "who by word or deed threatens our holy treasures," namely, "religion, mother tongue . . . , public order, and certainty of life and property." Antisemitism could be read between the paper's lines. *Nyitra*, for example, celebrated the maltreatment of a local "Viennese merchant" named Ascher, who had overseen rationing in the city. In early November, a mob reportedly almost lynched him. Other threats convinced him to flee the city. While the town's main newspapers deplored such rough handling, *Nyitra* accused Ascher of favoritism and corruption: "His nose was grand. . . . He caught wind of the people's dissatisfaction, and he saved his skin just in time. . . . He was afraid that the people would strike him down in anger. I wonder who could be the protector of this man that he could have played the tyrant in Nyitra for so long."¹⁴

Even though the first issue of *Nyitra/Nitra* did not dwell on it, Tiso's Christian Socials were also riled by the local Social Democratic renaissance. Disbanded during the war, the leftists re-formed with the creation of the city's national council. The party also organized a civil guard, the members of whom swore oaths under a red flag while listening to a speech by one of their leaders, László Matyuga.

For Tiso, Matyuga exemplified everything that was wrong with social democracy. Most notably, at a rally held the same day that *Nyitra/Nitra* premiered, Matyuga used exterminationist rhetoric to call for class revolution: “Down with the ruling class. . . . Not just counts, barons, prelates, and capitalists [should decide] what happens, but also the working people. . . . We should swear that whoever works against today’s order should perish, should be destroyed without mercy. / If need be, we will defend [the new order] with weapons. . . . In the end, I also proclaim the Communist manifesto: Proletarians of the World Unite!”¹⁵

The next week, Tiso’s Christian Socials declared war on the Social Democrats. On 24 November, *Nyitra* reported that the society had “not wanted to initiate . . . civil strife,” but “the honorable other side” had “thrown down the gauntlet” by proclaiming: “Down with priests!” That was to say, “Down with Christians! Down with religion!” It was time for “a settling of accounts.” “An ocean of despair filled us Christians during . . . the war! If there must be a battle . . . , let it be a fight to the knife!”¹⁶ Demands and charges flowed forth. After Tiso stirred up the society with a speech, the “entire assembly” challenged the Social Democrats to disown Matyuga’s rhetoric. Such meetings were part of a recruitment drive that swelled the society’s ranks with several hundred new members. Tiso’s papers also leveled their sights on the national council, accusing it of mismanaging funds, of failing to provision the city properly, and of slighting Bishop Batthyány. As *Nitra* complained, the council “does not suit our tastes, for it is not a democratic but rather a Jewish council that fails to represent all sectors of society.”¹⁷

Tiso’s papers thus turned shrilly antisemitic. “Brothers! Christians! Why beat around the bush? We are the slaves of Jews. They order, we keep quiet!”¹⁸ Tiso tailored such sentiment to fit his national audiences. As some of *Nyitra*’s inhabitants fled the city, for example, *Nitra* bid the “Jews” a sarcastic bon voyage. The paper urged Christians to become self-sufficient, although “not from hatred of Jews.” In Slovakia, “no Jew shall have a pub . . . [or] tobacco shop.” *Nitra* also proposed expropriation and expulsion as punishment for usury. *Nyitra*’s version of this article, in contrast, attacked Jews only for their “loud patriotism [that has no] value” and their lack of ties to the soil.¹⁹ Tiso’s different approaches most likely reflected the lesser appeal of antisemitism to the city’s Magyars, who shared with local Jews a desire to keep *Nyitra* in Hungary. Overall, however, his complaints were typical for the Hungarian new Right, which increasingly saw Jews as “a threat both to social order and the nation’s security.”²⁰

Another weapon that Tiso increasingly wielded against the Social Democrats was Slovak nationalism, but on the behalf of what state? Although *Nitra* was the city’s first Slovak paper in forty-five years, explicit Slovak nationalism was absent from the first issue. The next issue (24 November), in contrast, urged Slovaks to “rejoice, as our . . . freedom has dawned! . . . We no longer need be ashamed that we were born Slovaks. We are no longer second-class citizens just because

our mother[s] sang Slovak songs at our cradle.” The paper went on to characterize Catholicism as the foundation of Slovak identity, the antipode of which was godlessness or radicalism. The following week, the paper portrayed the Slovak nation as an ingénue pursued by two suitors; the girl gave her hand to “where her heart has long pulled [her].” Ostensibly less vaguely, *Nitra* added that “we Slovaks as an independent nation want to take part in the common work of cultured nations. . . . As an independent nation, we want to express every aspect of national life, whether in internal matters or in connection with other nations! ‘Full independence, independence in every regard’ is now our motto!” Tiso published this remarkable passage while Nyitra was still in Hungary. Czechoslovak occupation of the city, however, was increasingly likely. The paper’s nationalist tone also fit a Hungarian strategy to encourage Slovak separatism, the calculation being that a Slovakia unattached to a Czech state would be easier to reclaim. In print, Tiso thus straddled the fence, explicitly rejecting neither a Hungarian nor a Czechoslovak future for Slovaks.²¹

Tiso’s campaign against the Nyitra National Council soon produced results. On 25 November, the council’s presidium resigned. In a letter to Budapest, the presidium complained of a lack of support and direction from the new Hungarian government, as well as obstruction from local officers, especially the Christian Social county governor. The letter carped that such authorities ignored the presidium “because [it] does not consist of elements agreeable to them.” The presidium also defensively noted twice that the council had been “founded from every sector of society.”²² The letter thus seemed to echo and answer criticism just published in *Nitra*, as quoted above. Such scant evidence of Tiso’s influence spoke to the fact that the priest was still a minor player in Nyitra and only one of many critics of the council. Both the Néppárt *Nyitra County Review* and the Jewish *Nyitra County*, for example, called at this time for the dissolution of the council, arguing that it had outlived its usefulness. As ordered by Budapest, the council sought instead to revive its legitimacy by reconfiguring itself.²³ On 1 December, *Nyitra* reported that the council’s chairman had asked the Christian Social Society to nominate candidates for a new council. The society responded testily, warning that they would support a council only “in which the entire Christian citizenry and population is represented appropriately.”²⁴ Tiso the Slovak politician was born that evening, as he sang “Hail to Slovaks!” at a society assembly.

An election for the new council took place the next day in a tense atmosphere. Surrendering their dominance on the council, leading Social Democrats negotiated a single slate of candidates that afternoon with their Christian Social counterparts. Tiso most probably led the latter, as his signature apparently approved their candidate list. The city council planned to sanction the new national council at three o’clock. A Christian Social assembly was planned in the society’s hall an hour before. But then things took a twist. “Most of the fellows” at the society decided

that they “wanted to be present” at the election.²⁵ Taking to the streets, they began a bellicose procession, drawing Social Democrats out in force as well. Nyitra’s fire chief, fearing a battle, stationed a hose before the city hall so he could turn it on rioters. Inside, the nominating committee grew nervous if not terrified. The Christian Socials on the committee denied any foreknowledge of the march. But just the day before, *Nitra* had in effect instructed its readers “to show [themselves] everywhere: in the society, in the shop, at the city hall, at elections!”²⁶ Someone, probably Tiso, was manipulating events, and to good effect. The Social Democrat Magyar, among others, fled the building rather than provoke the crowd.²⁷

An agitated public soon packed the hall. Although the election had a “stormy course,” it remained peaceful thanks to interventions from “several sides,” including probably Tiso. By late afternoon, the assembly had confirmed the Christian Social triumph by accepting the slate of candidates. Among these were Tiso, who had just won his first political victory. He had achieved it through populism, antisemitism, propaganda, political organizing, and physical intimidation. Immediately after the election, the city council levied a high tax on local capitalists to finance the civil guards, a measure recognized as illegal but deemed necessary because of “the extraordinary circumstances.” The Christian Social Society’s chairman, Filkorn, then drew warm praise when he called on Christians and Jews to stand united in fulfilling their “sacred duty to guard and defend the Fatherland.”²⁸

Press coverage of these events reveals Tiso’s aggression in comparison to his opponents. *Nitra* not only trumpeted the righteousness of the Christian Socials but even celebrated their intimidation tactics. According to the paper, the city’s Christians had “gathered together their forces,” “showed themselves en masse on the street,” and made their enemies shut up. “We broke up that rabble that had settled into the city hall, and we put [in their place] our own men: Christians and Slovaks.” Nyitra’s Social Democrats and Jews, in contrast, wanted to cool passions. The *Nyitra Journal*, which acted as a Social Democratic press organ, characterized its party as relinquishing power in the interests of civil peace. In this same spirit, the party disowned Matyuga’s speech, while the *Journal* favored purging party radicals. For Nyitra’s Jews, the election exacerbated fears of a pogrom. The community sent a delegation to Bishop Batthyány asking him to intervene, a request that he apparently received with solicitude. According to the *Journal*, which also represented the community, “Inflam[ing] denominational discord” was both dangerous and unpatriotic, as things “could erupt [right now], when ethnic hatred tears our homeland into pieces.”²⁹

Although the election of the second national council was a Christian Social victory, it was not a Slovak coup, as it was sometimes later characterized. The addition of Tiso and three other self-identified Christian Social Slovaks hardly dented the Magyar character of the 120-member council. Rather, they fulfilled a Hungarian desire to strengthen the council’s legitimacy by broadening its ethnic base.

Among the Christian Socials on the council whom Tiso apparently approved was also Kálmán Szmida, an outspoken Magyar patriot. As late as 1946, Tiso referred to Szmida's arrest by Czechoslovak authorities (see below) as an act against "our people."³⁰ Tiso's issue with the first national council was not that it was Magyar but that it was Social Democratic and Jewish.

In the week after the election, fear, uncertainty, and violence gripped Nyitra. Villagers looted arms depots after Hungarian troops pulled out, the civil guards holding anarchy at bay. On 7 December, the city council reportedly resolved to defend the town from Czechoslovak invasion, the Christian Social Szmida urging resistance "to the last drop of blood."³¹ Cooler heads supposedly prevailed the next day, however, as the city council opted to negotiate the occupation of the town with the advancing Czechoslovak troops, delegating the task to Tiso and others. Batthyány meanwhile prepared to resign. According to post-1945 testimony, he sharply rejected a proposal to make Tiso, the newly revealed Slovak, his replacement.³²

As Czechoslovak occupation loomed, Tiso ratcheted up the Slovak nationalism in *Nitra*. He published the lyrics of the song "Nitra, Dear Nitra," which celebrated the city as the seat of the Great Moravian Empire. An updated stanza (not by him) read: "Celebrated Wilson / Gives to you freedom. / Do you hear, Mother Nitra? / 'The Daughter of the Slavs' arises!" In another apparent endorsement of Czechoslovakia, *Nitra* argued that

Since long ago, you could always tell a [Hungarian] patriot by the way he Magyarized his name. Anyone brave enough to carry his father's name, even if it only had a Slovak accent, was considered a traitor and a pan-Slav. The Jews understood this, so they Magyarized their names. . . . Lately, Jewish students supposedly have been talking among themselves . . . that Schwartz will . . . [soon be called] Čierný, [and that] Lustig [will be] Veselý! But we Slovaks are not so stupid that we will let our names to be abused in such a fraud. We will not allow any [non-Slovaks] to Slovakize their names! Let everyone keep the names that they have now, until we see who is who!³³

Embarrassingly for Tiso, his credit as editor appeared directly under this article, his last name in its Magyarized form.

Tiso meanwhile played a pivotal role in transferring Nyitra to Czechoslovak control. As part of a deputation, he made contact with the nearby troops and arranged the city's occupation. His inclusion in the mission was, according to *Nyitra*, "so that the Church would be represented."³⁴ The next day, 10 December, the army marched in. Brushing aside the town clerk Gyürky's pro forma protests, the commander declared that he would deal only with a Slovak national council. One was hastily organized, with Tiso as its secretary.³⁵

Between Nyitra and Nitra

Over the winter, Tiso struggled to coordinate Slovak nationalism with his Catholic and Christian Social agendas. Before the revolution, he had navigated between Magyar and Slovak Christian Socials through the medium of Catholicism. Now, it grew less fluid. Tiso had chosen a national side, the Slovaks, even becoming a Czechoslovak officer. Many of his Magyar colleagues, in contrast, were hostile to the new republic, while his Czechoslovak allies often equated Catholicism with Magyarism. To an extent, Tiso tried to glue together his splintering Christian community with another “ism”: antisemitism. But neither it nor Catholicism could mend these national fractures, forcing Tiso to choose sides more decisively.

Tiso began his Czechoslovak life fending off charges of collaboration. Although *The Nyitra Journal* characterized the members of the city’s new Slovak National Council as “generally esteemed without regard to nationality,” people on the street apparently said otherwise. *Nyitra* reported a “false and malicious rumor” that “the Catholic clergy . . . invited into town” the occupying army. In rebuttal, the paper pointed out that Tiso had been the only clerical negotiator and that he had acted on instructions from the city council. Accordingly, occupation was not the fruit of clerical treason but rather of an Allied diktat. By negotiating the takeover, Tiso even had shielded the city from violence. *Nyitra* called on its readers to support the new council, to maintain order, and to forego resistance: “Even if the national sorrow grips our hearts, even if our eyes are sometimes teary, we reconcile ourselves to Providential design.”³⁶ *Nyitra’s* Magyar readers, however, had fewer reasons than before to rally with Tiso around the Christian Social flag. For one thing, the occupying authorities briefly took Magyar hostages to ensure order and break resistance. Among the unfortunates was Szmda, the Christian Social ultrapatriot. The council (presumably including Tiso) intervened on the hostages’ behalf.³⁷

As a chief administrator now for the city, Tiso wrestled with daunting problems in an unstable political environment. Housing and food shortages, in particular, racked the city. Lacking qualified Slovaks, the Nitra council had to rely on often-hostile Magyar civil servants. No one was sure if Nitra was being annexed or just occupied by Czechoslovakia. The new provincial Slovak government—led by the progressive Vavro Šrobár—did not establish provisional offices in Slovakia until mid-December. The county’s new Slovak governor (*župan*), Fr. Ludevít Okánik, dared not visit Nitra until early 1919. Even then, he kept a low profile and stayed only a few hours.³⁸ In 1920, he reported on taking control of his county: “Because the citizenry . . . was in a revolutionary mood, I . . . promised everything that was demanded. There would be no more requisitioning; there would be no draft; the Allies would send us flour; we would all eat . . . cake. . . . There were few police, and the returned soldiers had arms and munitions. . . . The citizens of Nitra behaved . . . ‘passively’ [i.e., they did not actively support the state]. Because

of aggressive Magyarization, they were full of hatred for all things Slovak.”³⁹ Tiso and his fellow councilmen no doubt shared Okánik’s sense of personal insecurity. In late 1918, someone reportedly shot twice at one of them, a commissar of the Prague government.⁴⁰

As they worked to stabilize the local situation, Tiso and his colleagues found it useful to punish Jews. The local Czechoslovak commander reportedly wanted Jews who had fled before his army locked out of Nitra, blaming them for financing Hungarian military resistance. The council “at first almost unanimously” endorsed the proposal, but then “moderate” voices—taking a cue from the earlier extraordinary tax on the city’s (mainly Jewish) merchants—suggested that fines would be more appropriate. Tiso’s *Nitra* described the policy in action: “The application of Ludwig Práger to return was tossed out [by the council], while [that of] Dr. Emil Stein was heard, [but] only under the condition that he pay 20 thousand crowns.” According to a leading councilman, the targeted Jews had spread anti-Czech rumors and were “all rich people, war profiteers, who have no trouble paying a few thousand crowns.” The punishment supposedly dispersed public indignation that otherwise might have sparked violence. More to the point, the fines filled the city’s empty coffers, netting over 250,000 crowns.⁴¹

In the meantime, Andrej Hlinka seized the initiative in Slovak Catholic politics. On 19 December 1918, he held a congress in Žilina (the former Zsolna) to reestablish his Slovak People’s Party, or *Ludáks*, as they were known. Hlinka thus responded to revolutionary anti-Catholicism, such as the toppling of the Marian Column in Prague’s Old Town Square the month before, a mob action expressing widespread Czechoslovak anger at the church for having supported Habsburg and Hungarian rule. Hlinka also worried that the Czechoslovak government, which had nationalized church schools and land, now pursued rigorous secularization. Like Tiso, Hlinka believed that it was time to mobilize for the “ideological struggles.” “I would not be able to die peacefully,” he confided in a private letter, “if the Socialists or the Bolsheviks captured our masses.”⁴² Hlinka liked neither the Slovak head of government, Šrobár, nor the composition of the appointed Slovak government and parliamentary caucus, both of which were dominated by Protestants and progressives. But when Šrobár offered to name the priest as the Slovak minister of Catholic Church affairs, Hlinka turned the appointment down, apparently finding it beneath him. Hlinka’s complaints thus mirrored preconditions for a culture war: constitutional changes that brought mass politics, challenges to the church and Catholic authority, and contests over the nation.⁴³

In one of the most consequential steps of his life, Tiso attended the Žilina congress, joined the *Ludáks*, and formed a relationship with Hlinka. According to the March Affidavit, on being introduced to each other, Hlinka noted Tiso’s work on *The Spiritual Shepherd*. There were few other Slovak connections between them to accent, for the men made a striking nationalist contrast. Hlinka had long defied

the Magyar establishment over Slovak nationalism. As a consequence, in 1906, his bishop suspended him as a priest, while the state jailed him for two years. In 1907, gendarmes shot dead fifteen of his protesting followers, a massacre that became central to the Slovak nationalist narrative. During summer and fall 1918, Hlinka was a leading Slovak revolutionary. Tiso, in contrast, had yet to declare himself a Slovak, remaining a trusted deputy of his Magyarizing bishop. On 2 December, Tiso accepted his first political office from a Hungarian government, exchanging it the next week for a more powerful Czechoslovak office. A week later, he traveled over 150 kilometers to Žilina, where he presumably shook Hlinka's hand. At the time, it appeared that Hlinka might succeed Bishop Batthyány.⁴⁴ Tiso's sudden commitment to the Ľudáks thus neatly aligned with his hierarchical ambitions.

Although Tiso's poor record as a Slovak nationalist posed no obstacle to joining the Ľudáks, it was a hurdle for rising through their ranks. At the Žilina congress, the key issue was defending the Catholic Church. Hlinka and other "old" Slovaks, or those who had been active nationalists before 1918, consequently welcomed "new" Slovak clerics like Tiso. As a Žilina paper grouched, an "overwhelming number of priests, well-known Magyarones and until recently opponents of the Slovak language," attended the congress.⁴⁵ Many of these "Magyarones" allegedly coveted seats on the party's executive council, aspirations that the "old" Ľudáks stymied. According to an internal 1926 party memorandum, an agreement was struck at Žilina to exclude from the leadership "new" Slovaks, including apparently Tiso. He, however, nonetheless quickly gained Hlinka's trust and was on the executive council by late 1920.⁴⁶

Upon his return to Nitra, Tiso threw himself behind the Czechoslovak policy of "Slovakization," which aimed to "de-Magyarize" Slovakia's schools, bureaucracy, and public space. For Tiszó József, Slovakization also meant a new public persona. A mid-December article in *Nitra* already referred to him as Jozef Tiso; a few weeks later, he permanently dropped the half-Magyarized form that he had used as editor. Tiso Slovakized himself further through the Ľudáks. He founded a Nitra branch, tirelessly promoted the party's press organ *Slovák*, launched a campaign to conquer the surrounding villages, and attended party councils in Žilina. In Nitra, he taught Slovak courses, using the Christian Social Society as a base. The society now made Slovak its official language, while Tiso was promoted to cochairman.⁴⁷ Among Nitra's priests, many of whom opposed the new state, he was probably Czechoslovakia's strongest supporter. According to the March Affidavit, the Slovak government entrusted him with obtaining loyalty oaths from his peers. Certainly the state recognized his value as a collaborator. In winter 1918–19, county governor Okánik appointed him to city and county councils, both of which took over duties from the now defunct Nitra Slovak National Council.⁴⁸

On the pages of *Nitra*, Tiso toiled to build Slovak consciousness. Likely hinting at personal regrets, he scolded his readers for having strayed from the Slovak

path: "There is hardly anyone among us who should not beat his breast and say *mea culpa*. Common people and intellectuals alike . . . , we forgot that we are part of a single Slovak nation. We forgot that all of us should contribute to the more perfect development of our family." Tiso proposed to bring about this "more perfect development" through language training, a flowering of Slovak literature, and a deepening of faith. He instructed his readers to sing Slovak songs, educated them on the role of the *Matica slovenská* (the premier Slovak cultural association), and assured them that "we have a missionary role . . . to graft our Christian convictions and morals onto the branches of the new state." Similarly, after teaching its readers a Slovak version of the Czech national hymn, "Where is My Home," *Nitra* sermonized, "In this song, love of God and love of nation embrace each other." As Tiso presented it in *Nitra*, Slovak national consciousness inevitably entailed the adoration of God. Thus, Slovaks had to be Christian and could never be "radical"—code for left-wing or Jewish.⁴⁹

Although his tone mellowed under Czechoslovak occupation, Tiso continued to wage a propaganda war against his enemies. A letter in *Nitra*, albeit not by him, distilled his criticisms of the Social Democrats: the party was revolutionary, godless, and led by "genuine, unadulterated hook-nosed Jews." Hardly a week passed without Tiso firing a broadside at these "false prophets" and "ravaging wolves." Far rarer were shots at Hungarians, as when *Nyitra* belatedly published an attack (not by Tiso) on the defunct Magyarizing society, FEMKE. It is interesting that Tiso's editorial addendum condemned it mainly as a nest of Freemasons. When such freethinkers allied with Social Democrats, as *Nitra* charged that they had in the Czechoslovak parliament, the result compelled Christians to self-defense: "They want to throw religious instruction out of the schools. They want . . . civil marriage. . . . The Christian and Slovak people sincerely . . . dedicate themselves to the general interests of the . . . nation. But when they begin to insult us, to proceed against our consciences, then our patience ends, and [we become] pugnacious!"⁵⁰ In a common paranoia for the time, Tiso described his enemies as in grand coalition. He warned the Christian Social Society, for example, that "a new attack threatens from the side of social democracy and capitalism. This new attack is bolshevism, which, the same as capitalism, works through money."⁵¹ The breadth of this conflation suggests in part the impact of the speaker's theological training. Tiso had just restated Ignatius of Loyola's vision of a universe cleft between divine and satanic armies.

Throughout winter 1918–19, Tiso labored to out-organize the Social Democrats and to build a "mass" that could "put into practice Christian Social aims."⁵² Pursuing a Leonine strategy of allying with moderate liberals against Socialists, he wooed local Magyar parties. He stumped the nearby villages, hawking *Slovák* and spreading the nationalist gospel. Above all, he worked to build Christian Social associations. In February, for example, his society scored a triumph when

its tailors' union acquired a trove of goods. Tiso hoped that such victories, in addition to boosting the economy, would save workers from the moral morass of social democracy. But this hope dimmed when his rivals offered a dole of 15 crowns a day, a policy that *Nitra* derided as "purchas[ing] slaves for Judaism."⁵³ As an antidote, Tiso proposed public works such as channelizing the Nitra River. But the city council vetoed the scheme as unfeasible.⁵⁴

Tiso's "enemies," not surprisingly, did not suffer his abuse in silence. Their general reaction can best be judged through the Jewish/Social Democratic *Nyitra Journal*. In late 1918, the *Journal* called for a truce in the city's newspaper war lest a pogrom break out. Before laying down arms, however, the paper complained about partisan discord, "this cancer of our public interests and . . . life," which had inspired "high stationed sirs . . . on high pedestals [to] scream about Jewish brats." Such behavior struck the *Journal* as vulgar, unworthy of "the lips of an illustrious priest." The paper also directly reproached Tiso and Filkorn for antisemitism, which the paper saw as unpatriotic, dividing the community in the face of "the common danger." In addition, the *Journal* published an open letter to Filkorn and Tiso from Vilmos Clair, FEMKE's secretary general. *Nyitra* had singled him out as a Freemason. Clair replied: "As a humble member of the community, I have fulfilled my entire life in the practice of Christ's love of man. But you . . . priests . . . always preach and practice hatred."⁵⁵ Even though Clair was hardly one to talk, being a violent pioneer in political antisemitism, this public questioning of the sincerity of Tiso's Christianity was a new and probably disturbing experience for the priest.⁵⁶

Tiso suffered other setbacks as well. The Šrobár government instructed the Nitra Slovak National Council to refund the illegal fines levied against Jews who had temporarily fled the city, complaining that the practice had "compromise[d] Slovakia before foreign opinion."⁵⁷ *Nitra* reacted with a bitterly sardonic "welcome home" to "Nitra's millionaires," fingering several of them as war profiteers. The Social Democrats meanwhile made strides at "capturing the masses." The party's dole was apparently popular, while its counteragitation in the villages stung Tiso into indignant responses.⁵⁸ He also faced challenges from local Christian Socials. His role in the occupation of the city and his efforts to Slovakize the society discredited him in the eyes of its Magyar rank and file. An opposition faction led by Jenő Lelley began to push him out of power, as Tiso's leadership had proven disastrous. "The Christian Social workers' party has nearly ceased to exist," the *Journal* reported in February. "We read just the other day the lamentations [in the two-language paper] of the wonderful party leader, whose flock has abandoned him."⁵⁹ While Tiso might thank "our brother Czechs [for] . . . our national freedom," local Magyars had mainly resentments to air. Their leaders in the bureaucracy had been purged. Magyars still on the state payroll faced a painful dilemma: they could keep their jobs by swearing loyalty to Czechoslovakia, but doing so risked charges of

treason should the upcoming peace conference return Nitra to Hungary. Magyars were also upset over the Slovakization of schools, which affected both the education of their children and the livelihoods of conational teachers.⁶⁰

In February, the Hungarian and German Social Democrats (a rump party resulting from a split with Czechoslovak Social Democrats) led strikes throughout southern Slovakia. In Nitra, these became a demonstration of Magyar resistance to the new state. The entire courthouse staff refused to swear loyalty oaths, declaring that they wanted to continue as Hungarian officials. Czechoslovak authorities responded by deporting strikers and by provisionally closing the court. These actions were part of a trend that, by 1920, had purged the Slovak administration of at least 6,500 Magyars, some of whom left voluntarily.⁶¹ Czechoslovak authorities also tightened security, for example, ordering all foreigners without residence rights (such as Jewish refugees) to emigrate or face deportation. At the height of the strike, a crowd marched through Nitra displaying Hungarian colors. Although Czechoslovak soldiers insulted and briefly interned protesters, Nitra was spared the violence that afflicted the new Slovak capital, Bratislava, where street battles left several people dead.⁶²

The strikes inflamed Tiso's antisemitism. In this regard, *Nitra* had no local rivals: "For a time [the Jews] feared us. They were as quiet and dumbstruck as newborn lambs. But now, they have recovered their nerve. Here, in Nitra, a Jewess saucily told one of our Christian craftsmen, 'You must die like a dog!' . . . Another Jew spat in the face of one of our society's members: 'We are again the masters! We have you in our grasp, so you Christians must dance as we like!'" *Nitra* habitually portrayed Jews as war profiteers, hoarders, revolutionaries, and usurers. They could not be trusted as citizens, as only Christians knew how to give to the state its due. Jews, in contrast, sought global domination: "With every war and every revolution, Judaism has always won the most and sacrificed the least. . . . They saved their lives and blood so that from the spilled blood of others they could live. As creditors to the states . . . , they provisioned the armies . . . , and they amassed . . . billions for themselves. Now, in force not exhausted, in numbers not diminished, and in every state on the march, [they strive] to take over governments around the world." What should be done about this? At its most extreme, *Nitra* proposed expulsion:

We always imagined freedom thus, that there would not be in the villages any Jewish tavern owners or shopkeepers, those tenants of the sinful last government and herders to the devil. We imagined freedom thus, that no Slovak would be forced to turn to a Jew when he needed a doctor or lawyer; that he would not have to deal with a Jew when he came to an office; that he would not have to read Jewish newspapers when he wanted to educate himself; that he would not be compelled to go to a Jewish inn, coffee shop, or theater when he wanted entertained. We always

imagined free Slovakia thus, that no Jew would organize our workers and that no Jew would get rich from our fields or, even more so, from Church property. . . .

. . . Give the order . . . to fully liberate . . . the overly exploited Slovak people from this Jewish oppression. Make order in all of Slovakia so that not only will they disappear, but also the present poverty and shortages, which can be defrayed by their property, unjustly gained during the war through usury. . . . Liberate us from this Jewish hegemony. . . . When we will be able to govern ourselves alone, to do what we want and to want what is necessary and beneficial for us, then we will have full, golden freedom! But we don't have this yet, because the Jews are still on our backs. Away with them!⁶³

Tiso's declining authority within the Nitra Christian Social Society, his growing antisemitism, and Magyar opposition to Czechoslovakia converged in March 1919 to rupture his relations with the society. The breaking point was probably the society's decision to dispatch two missions to Budapest in an unsuccessful search for funding. While it is not clear if Tiso personally approved the missions, he knew about them and was also aware that such actions bordered on treason in Czechoslovak eyes. A week after the second mission, for example, Governor Okánik banned unauthorized relations with the Hungarian government. By this time, Tiso was already extricating himself from the society. In February, for example, he dropped the society from *Nitra's* masthead. According to the March Affidavit, his campaign in the villages coincided with his loss of all influence with the Christian Socials. Certainly, when Tiso reported back to the board on the branch organizations that he had founded during the campaign, his colleagues appeared set on gracefully dumping him. They politely thanked him for "his enthusiastic and self-sacrificing work" while assigning urgent tasks in the villages to other members.⁶⁴ When the society sent a delegation to Governor Okánik to discuss provisioning on 1 March, it was led by Lelley, soon to be Tiso's successor.⁶⁵

The official break came as political theater. On 9 March, the Christian Socials convened both a board meeting and an extraordinary session of the general assembly, during which Tiso resigned as cochairman. To the board, his counterpart Filkorn reported "systematic intrigues against the society" by the Social Democrats. "At present, they single out . . . Dr. Tiso, accusing him of ethnic incitement." To protect the society, Tiso offered to fall on his sword. After a secret vote, the board "unanimously rejected the baseless accusations against Dr. Tiso" and declined the resignation. Filkorn then convened the general assembly, informing it that Tiso had "resigned three weeks ago, but considering [his] great value and that the campaign launched against [him] is in fact only a pretense [for] . . . breaking up the society, [I] did not [accept] the resignation." This time, Tiso "for practical reasons" insisted on quitting. The society could only "accept with regrets [his] resignation, express grateful thanks to him for his very esteemed work, and

request that he continue his blessed work in the interests of the society.”⁶⁶ The purpose of such ostentatious drama was to place blame for the divorce on the Social Democrats while portraying the Christian Socials as harmonious, self-sacrificing, and beyond reproach.

What was the campaign that the Social Democrats had launched against Tiso? A few days earlier, on Ash Wednesday, they had demonstrated under Okánik’s balcony over economic issues. According to Tiso’s paper, they also “demonstrated against *Nitra*. Why? Because it defends the people? . . . Or because it dares to be Christian and to write about Jews? Well, this is some freedom of speech, when they threaten to shoot anyone who dares to disseminate his thoughts.” The next week, Tiso seemed to change his story. This issue of *Nitra* came out on the memorial day of the 1848 Hungarian Revolution, celebrations of which had just been banned. The paper now offered Slovak nationalism rather than antisemitism as the core conflict: “Despised is . . . the man who . . . is not so wicked and immoral as to hide that a Slovak mother gave birth to him. . . . They threaten to shoot whomever . . . declares himself a Slovak and demands the right to speak Slovak. . . . Inspired, we accept on the altar of the Slovak nation these sacrifices . . . , so that the nation can prosper and live out its life in peace.”⁶⁷ No other account of the protest agrees with Tiso’s versions. Considering the society’s strategy to blame everything on the Social Democrats, did the Christian Socials simply make the campaign up? There is no record of the claim being disputed, which surely would have happened if the incident was fabricated. A more plausible explanation is that some sort of protest against Tiso indeed occurred, but that the Christian Socials exaggerated its significance.

In any case, one can best judge the meaning of the episode by the society’s actions after Tiso resigned. On that day, *Nyitra*, under new editorship, reached out to both Social Democrats and Jews. In addition to stressing the overlap between social democracy and Christian socialism, *Nyitra*—without a hint of antisemitism—called to do “away with party strife, the vile, ignoble rivalries. We shouldn’t increase the following of the parties with terror, eloquent phrases, and honeyed words. . . . [Rather, we should] appreciate each other [and] respect religious beliefs and other convictions of sentiment: on one road, although under different flags, but . . . for one and the same goal.”⁶⁸ Nationalism had trumped Christian socialism. Concerned about their declining influence in the city, feeling the ties of community, and preferring Hungary to Czechoslovakia, the Christian Social Magyars had decided to make common cause not only with the city’s Social Democrats but also (briefly) with the city’s Jews. Tiso, on the other hand, was out.

A fortnight later, Tiso also parted ways with his Magyar bishop. Batthyány had stayed at his post despite a late 1918 attempt to resign, which the Károlyi government had scuttled for reasons of state. In the meantime, Slovak nationalists among the lower clergy had pushed for control of Catholic Church affairs in Slovakia.

In January, for example, a clerical council led by Hlinka debated, but rejected, proposals to abolish priestly celibacy and the Latin Mass, and to allow the election of bishops. (Tiso attended the session and sided with the conservatives.) Reasserting his authority, Batthyány threatened to punish council participants. This conflict then intersected with a breakdown in the Czechoslovak-Vatican negotiations over the Magyar bishops. In response, the Czechoslovaks charged Batthyány with “working against the interests of the republic” and rudely shipped him across the border.⁶⁹ By this time, Tiso’s relations with the bishop were probably sour. Tiso claimed in 1946 that his village campaign had led Batthyány to demand “what these speeches of mine in the countryside meant. I told him that I did now as my heart preaches, and if he didn’t like it, he could have my job as spiritual director. He said to me, ‘I won’t make any martyrs.’”⁷⁰ Another retrospective account, reportedly by the officer in charge of deporting Batthyány, portrayed Tiso instead as loyal to the bishop to the bitter end. Fond of anticlerical old saws, this memoirist caricatured Tiso as a “priest of quite bulky proportions” with a “foxy face” who left an “impression of a cunning Jesuit.”⁷¹ Although both sources are probably tendentious, together they encapsulate Tiso’s conflict. Batthyány’s hierarchical claims on Tiso’s loyalty and obedience had clashed with those of new patrons: Czechoslovakia and the *Ludáks*. No matter how Tiso dealt with this conflict at the time, the bishop’s expulsion resolved the dilemma. Batthyány was gone. Tiso remained, one of the few pro-Czechoslovak priests in Nitra.

The Béla Kun Threat

In spring 1919, one of Tiso’s worst fears came true: Hungary turned Bolshevik. The prospect of this revolution spreading to Czechoslovakia became intensely personal for Tiso. As a Magyar traitor, a cleric, and antileftist, he was a prime target for retribution. Feeling vulnerable, he redoubled his efforts to consolidate Czechoslovakia while reaching back out to Magyar Christian Socials. He also escalated his campaign against Jews as agents of revolution and as exploitative capitalists, prompting critics to question his Christianity again.

Hungary’s Bolshevik revolution sprang not from class conflict but from national frustrations over partition. In March, an Allied representative pushed the demarcation line deeper into Hungarian territory. Mistakenly believing that this line would be a state border, the Károlyi government resigned in favor of Social Democrats, who then brought Communists into power. Hungary became a Soviet republic. Although mainly Social Democrats headed and composed the government, it was dominated by the single Communist full commissar, the Russian-trained Béla Kun. Over half of the commissars, including Kun, descended from Jews. (The disproportion reflected the exceptional attraction of leftism for Jews in

Hungary. But even here, as elsewhere, the vast majority of Jews wanted nothing to do with radicalism.) Kun's government launched an ambitious nationalization of agriculture, industry, finance, and education. Law and order passed into the often brutal hands of popular tribunals and red guards. Most significantly for Tiso, the Kun government began to "liquidate" religion's public role, seizing church property and banning religious symbols. Local cadres even murdered a handful of Catholic priests.⁷²

Soviet Hungary appalled Tiso. Weak liberals had handed over power to Social Democrats, who had then served as cover for Bolsheviks. The resulting "Jewish" government now threatened to export terror to Czechoslovakia. From Tiso's viewpoint, revolution encircled him: Russia was already Bolshevik, Berlin put down a Communist uprising in January, Bavaria sprouted a Republic of Soviets in April, and Vienna faced an attempt to create another in June. *Nitra* gave a bleak forecast: "[So let] Russian Bolsheviks come . . . [to] burn and break, rob, kill, and exterminate in our country, as [they have] already ruined everything at home. . . . Let come famine, which in Russia has toppled so many thousands into the grave. Let these human beasts decimate us with robbing and plundering. Let everything here fall apart: education, industry, agriculture. Let even human life be extinguished, so that not even a memory remains of the people who lived here." Although overstated, Tiso's description of Soviet atrocities was fundamentally correct. Expropriation, deprivation, cultural destruction, and extermination plagued Bolshevik rule in both Russia and Hungary. *Nitra* also argued that desperation, anger, and spite had led Magyars to revolution as a way "to protect . . . the integrity" of their land and "to suffocate Slovak freedom."⁷³ Tiso thus recognized that, should revolution spread, he would be doubly threatened as a class enemy and as a nationalist renegade.

To make matters worse, Tiso's best defense against the Kun threat—his alliance with the Czechoslovaks—was under strain. During winter 1919, the *Ľudáks* clashed with the Slovak government over church and school policy. Slovakization in practice seemed to mean secularization. The *Ľudáks* were also angry that the centralists did not defer more to Hlinka. In February, he declared that Catholic Slovaks faced a culture war, asking of the Slovak (disproportionately Protestant) parliamentary caucus, "Is it possible to collaborate with these sirs?"⁷⁴ As though in answer, the *Ľudáks* began espousing a program of Slovak autonomy. The head of the Slovak government, Šrobár, and his allies meanwhile banned *Ľudák* (as well as other) rallies and accused the party of Magyarism.⁷⁵ These skirmish lines extended to Nitra, where Governor Okánik headed a circle of clerics who promoted Czechoslovak identity, the separation of church and state, and progressive reforms within Catholicism. In April, he launched *Catholic News* as a counterweight to *Slovák*, which the government began to censor. Bratislava also backed Okánik rather than Hlinka as the next bishop of Nitra.⁷⁶

As the city's leading Ľudák, Tiso sided with his party without joining the fray. Czech antireligious acts deeply troubled him, prompting *Nitra* to ask: "Is it a noble thing to save someone from drowning just to steal and rob everything that is holy and dear to him?"⁷⁷ Otherwise, Tiso tended to withhold criticism of Czechs or Czechoslovaks (individuals who professed the state's official nationality). Even though he and Okánik increasingly stood on opposite sides of a political fence, both men could still work together closely. Tiso's break with the Christian Social Society was a goodwill gesture to the centralists, mirrored by Ľudák efforts to distance the party from controversial Christian Social Magyars and Magyarones. The common Bolshevik threat also smoothed things over between the Slovak Populists and the Czechoslovakists. According to the British journalist-scholar R. W. Seton-Watson, as attack by Soviet Hungary loomed, "the Slovaks made the impression of a helpless animal fascinated by the approach of the boa-constrictor, and Prague was literally the sole hope."⁷⁸

Despite his resignation from the irredentist Christian Social Society, Tiso also leaned on Magyar colleagues as allies against bolshevism. *Nitra*, for example, appealed to "non-Slovaks" to erase "divisions between us, because [the Bolshevik threat] is not about nationality or speech but about human life . . . , our common treasure." In another gesture of solidarity, the paper pitied local Magyars whom the state had fired for failing to swear loyalty oaths. These "poor people" were not traitors but rather the victims of social democracy and the Hungarian government, who had "confused" them and left them to starve. At the same time, Tiso made it clear that he would brook no suggestion that Slovakia should return to Hungary. In the biblical metaphors favored by *Nitra*, Hungarian irredentists began to appear as "loyalists of the Pharaoh," demonic creatures that flexed their claws while spewing fire and brimstone. But even if more sharp-tongued about irredentism, Tiso continued to work with the Magyar Christian Socials. In May, *Nitra* even promoted the society again as a venue for raising Slovak consciousness.⁷⁹

The focus of Tiso's nationalism, meanwhile, began to shift from honoring God to building the nation. *Nitra* became increasingly occupied with "construction work," or a program of progress for Slovaks. Tiso wanted to see their education, science, art, and economics thrive. Education was essential for Slovak identity. Science and art proved national maturity. Economics was the cornerstone of national freedom.⁸⁰ As *Nitra* argued in May,

What would it benefit us Slovaks if we built our national life spiritually or artistically but we left all the material ways and means in enemy hands? Sooner or later we would become subjugated to them. . . .

[How] was it in the past? Was not the conscious Slovak everywhere removed? Could he start up any kind of enterprise? . . . If he dared to show his beliefs at an election, didn't the bank give him notice? Didn't the Jew oppress him in the shop,

in the tavern, and everywhere else where only [Jews] could? And this ordering of economic life [hasn't changed]. The means of material life are still in the hands of our enemies.

To solve this perceived problem, *Nitra* proposed creating a network of associations, an approach typical for both Christian socialism and Slovak nationalism. Here, Tiso's Christian Social and Slovak national agendas merged:

[We] Slovaks [must] understand that it is absolutely necessary to found societies and associations. . . . Let there be no village on our free land [without] a grocery cooperative . . . , so that we will not be forced to go to a foreigner, to a Jew. Let there be no town [without] a credit association, so that we will not [have to use] Jewish banks [for] a loan. In the grocery cooperatives, we will get better articles for cheaper prices, because [we will not have to deal with] unscrupulous Jews, who always falsify everything and sell for too much. In credit associations, we will receive loans at reasonable rates, because there will be no merciless bankers but [instead] our people, brother Slovaks. . . . And [our] net profit . . . will not disappear into the pockets of one man. Instead, it will be applied toward common needs. . . . Instead of the Jew thriving in the village, our villages will thrive, and they will be able to take better care of their schools, their poor. This is true socialism. Our Slovak people did not learn this from social democracy. It does not found societies, because these would sap the lifeblood of the Jews, and of course the Social Democrats do not want that. But let us Slovaks associated on the basis of Christian socialism found societies, because only thus can we liberate ourselves from this Jewish power, which is hostile to us.⁸¹

The ultimate object of Tiso's "construction work" appeared more and more to be the nation. Rather than also a means for loving God, national songs such as "Where Is My Home" now only validated Slovaks as a "singing nation," the equal of others. Tiso's new nationalist fervor even bridged ideological and confessional divides. Thus, when Milan Rastislav Štefánik, a pioneer aviator and Masaryk's Slovak partner in founding Czechoslovakia, died in an airplane crash, *Nitra* mourned this "great son" despite his Protestant and progressive ties.⁸²

The constant in this shift, as should be evident, was antisemitism. *Nitra's* complaints against Jews were legion. After the rise of Soviet Hungary, for example, the paper never tired of counting the Hungarian commissars who were Jewish, presenting this as rock-solid proof that "Jews make bolshevism." Neither did Tiso's attacks on Jews as capitalists abate. As *Nitra* warned Slovaks, "Don't believe a Jew, even if he reveals his soul to you, for even this he does only for money." To combat this "plague," *Nitra* continued to propose or endorse a variety of measures, from segregation in schools to emigration to Palestine.⁸³

As Tiso escalated his campaign against Jews, Social Democrats in Nitra rose to their defense. The second issue of the party's new Hungarian paper, *Brotherhood*, criticized the "Asiatic" practice of fining individuals (i.e., Jews) who had briefly fled the city in 1918. The same issue, which came out a week after Tiso declared himself a martyr for the Slovak nation, compared the apostles ("These are the martyrs of Christianity!") with "today's priests": "Such a difference! Rather than striving to teach their faithful charity, they spread hatred."⁸⁴ *Brotherhood's* next issue (which has been lost) decried the killing of a local Jew, reminding its readers that "murder cannot be reconciled with Christianity or Christian teachings." The paper reportedly also referred to the murdered man as "the most recent victim of hatred of Jews."⁸⁵ The phrasing is intriguing. The area's previous victims of "hatred of Jews" had been killed roughly around the time that the Social Democrats launched their mysterious "campaign" against Tiso. Had the priest been accused of inciting murder? Tiso's agitation against Jews could have played a role only in the latter crime, and even then a link is doubtful.⁸⁶ Yet how could criticism of antisemitism in Nitra at this time *not* have been aimed at the city's most anti-semitic journalist, especially considering that he was the archenemy of the party making the accusation?

Tiso apparently responded to *Brotherhood's* allegations in a lead article published five weeks later: "What Should We Do with These Jews?"

You might ask . . . how our actions against Jews are reconcilable with the [divine] command of love. One hears this question even from Jews themselves. In newspapers, in their speeches, they often reproach us Christians that when we speak up against Jews, we . . . do not honor Christ's command, because we spread hatred and not love. . . .

Yet we tenaciously adhere . . . to love even when we speak up against Jews, because we do so but from love of self. [This principle] is not only correct, not only necessary, but is also a measure of love of your neighbor. Christ's command reads thus: love your neighbor (even Jews) just as much as you love yourself. . . . And because we love ourselves, we defend ourselves against the attacks of Jews, who want to exploit us. . . . No one imagines that Jesus Christ, when he commanded us to love our neighbor, wanted us to stand quietly as lambs . . . before wolves. . . .

Thus, vain is the charge that it is unchristian to attack Jews, to agitate against Jews, to come together against Jews. Because would it be Christian to let them rob, to let them use, to let them oppress? It would not be Christian but simply stupidity and cowardice!⁸⁷

While self-righteous, this article has a more tempered and sincere tone than other responses to criticism that Tiso published in *Nitra*, suggesting that *Brotherhood's* charges had touched him personally. "What Should We Do with These Jews?" is

not just about blaming everything on the enemy but instead appears to be a sincere defense of the moral consistency of Christian antisemitism. The article claimed, for instance, that by removing privileges from Jews—such as their disproportionate success at receiving licenses for pubs and newsstands—that Christians would remove reasons to hate Jews, and thus protect them. The timing of the article also suggests the charges' impact on Tiso. "What Should We Do with These Jews?" appeared well after the other Catholic papers in town had indignantly rejected the insinuation of Christian involvement in murder. *Nitra*, in the meantime, had been uncharacteristically silent on the issue. It is as though Tiso had been forced to wrestle with his response.

By the time Tiso published "What Should We Do with These Jews?" he already knew that *Brotherhood* would not respond. Mobilizing against Soviet Hungary, Czechoslovakia had begun to "consolidate." Šrobár declared martial law in his province, ordering the internment of Communists and other political unreliaables and the censorship of their press. Twenty-five individuals were interned in Nitra, all of them listed as either Hungarians or Jews.⁸⁸ On 28 April, Okánik banned the Nitra Social Democrats as a fifth column, shutting down *Brotherhood* at the same time. Czechoslovak authorities also worked to deepen the Czechoslovak character of Nitra, such as through a two-day cultural celebration.⁸⁹

Tiso cheered on this consolidation, wishing it had been more timely and severe. When railway workers in a nearby city were interned, *Nitra* noted that "now they will have a peaceful time to think." When Vienna expelled Hungarian and Bolshevik agitators, *Nitra* cried, "We salute you, Vienna, that you are following [our lead]!" When Okánik banned the Social Democrats, *Nitra* remarked that "it should have happened a long time ago." When the county court prepared to reopen with Czech and Slovak judges, *Nitra* commented that "the only sour note in the entire affair is that among [them] is one Jew." Tiso also supported redoubled efforts to Slovakize Nitra, for example, supervising a school and its crash Slovak language courses. At the time, he was worried about the security not only of his state but also his person. According to *Nitra*, the Social Democrats had "applied an unprecedented terror to anyone who dared to utter a word against them and their Budapest swindlers. They even pointed out the trees on which they planned to hang some of us." As in the earlier references to "shooting," the implication was that Tiso had received death threats.⁹⁰

Tiso soon had more reason to fear for his safety, as Hungary invaded Slovakia. In April 1919, Romanian and Czechoslovak armies advanced to a new demarcation line that further diminished Hungarian territory, prompting a counteroffensive. The Hungarian Red Army, enthused more by nationalism than Marxism, drove deep into the former Felvidék. By June, the Hungarians menaced Tiso's panicked city. *Nitra* reported the emergence of a death list, while someone apparently warned Tiso "to clear out." He fled north. Although the invading army never

took Nitra, Tiso's flight was nonetheless prudent. Hungarian soldiers captured a former colleague of his from the Nitra Slovak National Council. Tried as a collaborator by a revolutionary court, he was executed.⁹¹

It quickly became apparent, however, that no such nightmare would overtake Tiso. The Allies, threatening intervention, intimidated the Hungarians into withdrawing. In August, the Romanians took Budapest. Control of Hungary passed from the Communist Kun, who fled into ill-fated exile in the Soviet Union, to the conservative Admiral Miklós Horthy. Tiso was a refugee for only a week. In the first issue of *Nitra* after his return, he felt compelled to defend his flight, yet without ever explaining exactly why he had left. He preferred instead to lambaste local Jews who had similarly fled Czechoslovak occupation the year before, also calling for the arrest of the Magyars who had told him to clear out. Such transparent tactics for deflecting criticism were by now trademarks for him. In the same issue, *Nitra* portrayed the Jews as ghouls that “had threatened . . . [to] make soap out of Slovaks.”⁹² Tiso thus recycled a British yarn about the German abuse of frontline corpses, a myth that in a later mutation attached to the Holocaust.

Two weeks later, Tiso shut down *Nitra*. He probably had many reasons for doing so, ranging from overwork to disenchantment with his political career. On its final front page, *Nitra* declared its mission of securing the city for Slovakia accomplished. This article, no doubt written by Tiso, gave the impression of a man burdened by censure: “[*Nitra*] came out to much laughter, hatred, persecution. It had to struggle with the moral pressure of those standing near to it and with an almost general social boycott. It was threatened with death, and its good name and honor were besmirched.” True to its character, *Nitra* literally ended with an antisemitic swipe. A news brief reported a “grotesque” spectacle: Budapest Jews lining up for baptism as protection against a reactionary “white” terror. (It would claim twice as many victims as its “red” predecessor.) The queued-up Jews struck *Nitra* as “rats fleeing a sinking ship.”⁹³

A Watershed

When revolution came to Nyitra, Tiso led the battle against the city's Social Democrats and Jews. This struggle at first was not about Slovaks. But it quickly became so, as Tiso brought the full force of his personality behind Czechoslovakia. In the turbulent months that followed, he dutifully shared the republic's burdens and woes—even if often without the dignity and compassion that is commonly attributed to his calling.

The arrival of revolution meant both threats and opportunities for Tiso. The threats were mostly to his faith and career. Because the Catholic Church was associated with Habsburg oppression and progressives led the revolution, secularization

advanced in Czechoslovakia. Instability provided fertile soil for “godless” doctrines such as bolshevism. The Slovakization of the Felvidék hierarchy gave “old” Slovaks advantages over nationally ambiguous clerics like Tiso. The opportunities of the revolution for him, in turn, were mostly political. He could spread democracy and mass politics, both of which he had predicted before 1918 and now embraced. He could help to establish what he perceived as a more just social order. He could push to anchor re-Catholicization in a polity not yet institutionally hardened.

Tiso confronted these threats and seized these opportunities above all through Christian socialism. He sought to unify Christians and to mobilize them against social democracy. He vigorously engaged the social question, promising workers and peasants better lives under Christian governance. Nothing agitated him more than the possibility that materialism could supplant idealism (i.e. spirituality), driving God from the public sphere. Tiso’s choice to enter politics as a Christian Social was predictable. He had trained under and observed outstanding examples of such politicians in Vienna, an experience reflected in his adroit use of populism and antisemitism. In contrast, he had virtually no connection with Slovak nationalism, nor could such politics build a powerful machine in Magyarized Nitra. His lingering ties to Hungarian Christian Socials demonstrate the primacy for him of political Catholicism over Slovak nationalism. To put a twist on a later quote of his, he often felt politically closer to a Hungarian Catholic than to a Slovak progressive.

Yet, although not preeminent in his politics in 1918–19, Slovak nationalism was vital to Tiso. His metamorphosis into a Slovak politician was an opportunistic, carefully calibrated response to revolution. He did not enlist publicly in the Slovak cause until the Hungarian Catholic hierarchy could no longer advance his career.⁹⁴ His nationalism subsequently grew more vocal in direct relation to the likelihood that Nyitra would fall to Czechoslovakia. Before the occupation of the city, Tiso never openly challenged the Hungarian state. Indeed, his Slovak agitation could even be understood as serving Magyar aims. After the occupation, he quickly offered his services to a leading Slovak nationalist, but one who was also expected to be his next bishop: Hlinka. Even if opportunistic, however, Tiso’s defection to the Czechoslovaks nonetheless took courage, and his commitment to the new state was sincere. The power of his convictions showed in his tireless efforts to tighten Czechoslovakia’s hold on Nitra. Especially during the Kun invasion, his new loyalties even made him a target for physical violence. Overall, Tiso’s nationalism fit his dual missions. Slovak speakers were mainly Catholic. By mobilizing them as *Ludáks*, he shielded them from Protestant or progressive depredations. Slovak speakers also tended to be lower class and thus worthy objects for a program of social justice. As the revolution unfolded, Tiso’s nationalism increasingly became his preferred mode of politics. But it would take years before the nation eclipsed God as the object of his politics or before his dual missions fused fully with Slovak nationalism.

The other politics that Tiso pursued in 1918–19 was antisemitism. As noted before, his strident campaign against Jews was an episode. He had paid little attention to them before 1918, a habit that he would reembrace for most of the interwar period. The Jewish Question would only return to the fore after 1938, when revolutionary time also returned for him. It is not hard to find sources for Tiso's first campaign against the Jews: in addition to fin de siècle Vienna, Nyitra county's affinity with Hungarian political Catholicism and antisemitism comes to mind. Nor is it hard to grasp the utility of this politics for Tiso. With it, he could deflect or preempt criticism of himself as a Magyarone. Antisemitism strengthened his claim to Slovak identity, constructed so often as it was in opposition to Jews. This politics even shored up Christian Social bonds that were under stress from national shocks. More difficult to identify are the non-opportunistic motives for Tiso's antisemitism. I offer here three. First, Tiso considered the Jewish Question to be embedded in the social question. Second, he associated Jews with liberalism, socialism, and radicalism. Finally, during revolutionary time, he felt the need to purge Jews from the body politic. I also suggest that the episodic nature of Tiso's hostility to Jews in 1918–19 can be traced in part to his position as the town's most antisemitic journalist. He made an easy target for progressives, who questioned his Christianity and denounced his profession for spreading hatred rather than Christian love. As I will argue further in the next chapter, Tiso took such criticisms seriously and acted to deny his enemies grounds for raising them. Within this chapter, one sees the beginning of this tendency in *Nitra's* "What Should We Do with These Jews?"

Tiso's transformation in 1918–19 was startling, profound, and enduring. There is not a more radical break in his life or one that more cleanly cleaves it. Within the matrix of revolution, Tiso was reborn as a nationalist, recast as a politician, and redirected onto a Czechoslovak path. One set of drivers for this change was the forces unleashed by the collapse of empires and the rise of national states. Another driver was the contingency of Nyitra falling to Czechoslovakia. But the most important driver was a single agent: a zealous Hungarian soldier of God who decisively reinvented himself as a guardian of the Slovak nation. Tiszó József made Jozef Tiso.



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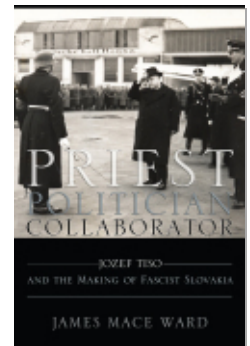
Published by Cornell University Press

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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“For God and Nation,” 1919–25

He that is not with me is against me;
and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

—Matthew, 12:30

“Today there is a struggle in all of Europe: either democracy, progress, and socialism, or else reaction, bolshevism, and clericalism.”¹ Thus Ivan Dérer, the leading Slovak Social Democrat, characterized the choices facing Czechoslovak citizens in 1924. Just months earlier, Jozef Tiso had evoked the same sense of polarization by paraphrasing Christ: “Who is not with us is against us.”² Czechoslovak politics, it seems, was a barren field in which cooperation could never sprout.

Dérer and Tiso were hardly alone in imagining their polity as hopelessly divided. As the state consolidated, the need for Czechoslovak unity grew less urgent. The gravest danger for many people was no longer an external nightmare such as Soviet Hungary but rather the internal specter that the republic might harden in a form hostile to their interests. Especially for the Ľudáks, 1919–24 was a time of sharp conflict with a left-leaning central government.

In this struggle, Tiso’s dual missions were at stake. Rather than becoming a state in which Catholics could roll back liberalism, Czechoslovakia enabled progressives to drive secularization forward. Tiso’s old political vehicle, Christian socialism, failed to capitalize on the revolutionary promise of social justice, letting Social Democrats reap an electoral harvest. Tiso’s new political vehicle, Slovak nationalism, was cleft between Catholic, Protestant, and progressive wings. Even if Tiso could mobilize the “entire Slovak nation,” his side would still be dominated by Czechs, who were more numerous, better educated, more prosperous, and more experienced in democracy. Building alliances with Catholics in the historic lands of the Bohemian crown (mainly Bohemia and Moravia) could offset the imbalance, but Slovak nationalism ran poorly on such appeals for Catholic solidarity.

Given this unfavorable context, Tiso had two basic strategies available for shaping Czechoslovakia. Either he could collaborate more intensively with the government and try to inspire change from within, or he could opt for resistance and try to force it from without. This dilemma was familiar to Catholics, trapped as they often were in subordinate relationships to liberal states. As Leo XIII advised the Hungarian faithful in 1893: "In all matters, certainly, be prudent and moderate; the Church itself in defense of the truth intends to follow a responsible mode of action. Nothing, however, is so contradictory to the laws of true prudence than to allow religion to be harassed with impunity and to endanger the moral welfare of the people."³

Between 1919 and 1924, Tiso tended to see "true prudence" in resistance. It was another transformation for him: from a pillar of cooperation to a thorn of opposition, especially over the role of Catholicism (lesser so, of Slovak nationalism) in schools and youth movements. Tiso fought this battle mainly as a local notable: Nitra's foremost *Ludák* and, from 1921, Bishop Kmeťko's secretary, a position that resurrected his hierarchical career. Unfortunately for Tiso, these renewed prospects collided with his political career, leading Kmeťko to fire him in 1923. Blocked from rising higher within the church, Tiso turned to national politics, recasting himself as a party man and moderate Slovak nationalist. Ironically, by this time his opponents understood him only as a radical opponent of the republic itself.

The Move into Opposition

Tiso's turn to resistance sprang in part from his deeper involvement in the Nitra school system. As noted before, in June 1919 he was in charge of local crash courses in Slovak language. Among his staff were two women who were part of a wave of imported Czech teachers. Because Slovakia was regarded as a hardship post, these teachers often drew higher pay than their indigenous colleagues. Slovakia was also a land of opportunity for some Czechs. They could compete for administrative jobs better than self-declared Slovaks, who tended to be undereducated. Czech immigration quickly raised tensions in Slovakia. Even Czechoslovak centralists criticized the newcomers for such things as disrespecting Slovak religious traditions. Tiso was certainly displeased with the female teachers that he had drawn, complaining of their behavior that he "was ashamed to present them to the children."⁴

This local conflict merged with Tiso's fear that God would be driven from the nation's schools. In July 1919, he and other notable Nitra Catholics appealed to Masaryk to halt such secularization as the state's provisional takeover of the local Piarist high school, Tiso's alma mater. Tiso and his colleagues complained

that Slovakization weeded out teachers from religious orders and introduced a “Czechoslovak” language regime.⁵ The alarmed petitioners largely felt powerless to contest this development. They were, after all, disenfranchised. The Kun invasion had derailed communal elections in Slovakia. Parliamentary representatives were still appointed, with the representation of Catholics still disproportionately low.

In July as well, Social Democrats won control of the Czechoslovak government, giving the Ľudáks and Tiso a reason to agitate for Slovak and Catholic autonomy. At roughly the same time, the Ľudáks gained a copy of the May 1918 Pittsburgh Agreement, a document that would define them. Concluded between Czech and Slovak émigrés in America, the pact promised Slovakia an independent administration, judiciary, and diet while privileging the Slovak language. The agreement also provided a legal claim to autonomy, as Masaryk himself conceived of and signed the document. He did so, however, as a “witness,” a distinction that arguably released him from honoring it. For Masaryk, the compact was merely a wartime play for Allied support.⁶ He and other centralists had no interest in granting autonomy to Slovakia, as to do so would legitimate similar claims from Sudeten Germans, who substantially outnumbered the Slovaks and who generally preferred union with Germany.

The Ľudák initiative for autonomy was badly timed. The Béla Kun invasion was barely over while Czechoslovakia’s borders were not yet confirmed by treaties. The Hungarian government meanwhile claimed that Slovaks wanted no truck with Czechs. Czechoslovak centralists consequently viewed Ľudák agitation as a threat to the state and even as a ploy for reattaching Slovakia to Hungary. Šrobár clamped down on the party, repression that Tiso experienced firsthand. In August 1919, for example, soldiers dispersed a reportedly unruly Ľudák rally. Tiso and other witnesses swore that Czech soldiers had beaten participants and even threatened to kill Hlinka. That same month, an Allied military spokesman declared that the easternmost province of the country, Subcarpathian Rus’ would be autonomous—a move that inspired Hlinka to demand equal status for Slovakia. The government just ignored the proposal.⁷

Fed up, Hlinka took his case to the Paris Peace Conference. He fancied that he would be received there as the tribune of his nation, revealing through a memorandum the true nature of the administration of Slovakia. But in Paris he met mainly closed doors, achieving nothing more than to call his loyalty into question. He had traveled on a false passport supplied by the Polish government, which contested Czechoslovakia’s claim to the coal-rich duchy of Těšín. His tendentious memorandum also mirrored Hungarian propaganda, a similarity made more ominous by the defection to Budapest of his main advisor on the trip, the “old” Ľudák František Jehlička. Hlinka was not a Hungarian agent. But he had certainly made himself look like one. Two days after his return to Slovakia, Czechoslovak authorities jailed him on suspicion of treason.

In Nitra, Tiso and his clerical allies found themselves under fire. Šrobár put pulpits under surveillance as nests of "anti-Czech agitation," while his administration shut down Ľudák papers. The Ministry of Education transferred clerics such as Filkorn out of town.⁸ The Little Seminary, lacking funds, temporarily closed its doors. The Grand Seminary was scheduled to be replaced by a central institution in Bratislava. *Catholic News* stressed that professors there would need to be "tested Slovak nationalists." The paper did not mean Tiso, as it also grouched that the Nitra seminarians (who were under his supervision) spoke only Hungarian among themselves.⁹ In short, the future of Tiso's clerical jobs and political party were up in the air.

With Hlinka in jail, Tiso and his associates struggled to stay on the offensive. Fr. Jozef Buday, an "old" Ľudák from Nitra, took command of the party, while other local priests (probably including Tiso) resolved on a village-to-village "battle for the autonomy of Slovakia."¹⁰ In September, Tiso and Buday led a foundational congress of a short-lived Union of Catholic Theologians. According to Buday's keynote address, "We want . . . to defend our material, class, even spiritual interests. Today it is written in the liberal press that the greatest enemy of the Slovak people is the Jew and the Catholic priest. . . . The Church's rights are trampled on. It is necessary for us to unify as a single man and defend the rights of our homeland, altar, and Church."¹¹ Tiso, as the union's secretary, proposed a resolution protesting government interference in church affairs and the dissemination of the cult of Jan Hus, the proto-Protestant Czech hero who burned at the stake as a heretic. The resolution, which the union passed, also suggested that priests who were county governors should resign over the sacking of religious teachers—a demand that Buday and Tiso then delivered to their governor, Fr. Okánik. Unimpressed, Okánik replied that the takeover of the Nitra high school was "in the interests of the nation."¹² Tiso also kept on the offensive by founding a Nitra chapter of Orol (Eagle), physical fitness clubs sponsored by the Catholic Church and the Ľudáks. A counterpart to Sokol (Falcon), a vanguard of Czech nationalism, Orol emerged after Sokol split with the church in the 1890s over the veneration of Hus. The Nitra Orols held weekly exercise sessions and sponsored entertainments à la Tiso's earlier Catholic youth circles. Although the Nitra chapter's minutes offer little proof of his eloquence, they recorded Tiso delivering a "beautiful speech" at the branch's inaugural session:

He described . . . how we have waited for the moment when we could begin our proper Slovak life. He referred to the past struggle of the Nitra Slovaks against Magyars, Magyarones, and Bolsheviks. He protested against those [presumably progressive Czechs or Czechoslovaks] who came only to take advantage of what the Nitra Slovaks had accomplished. [The newcomers] abuse their power. They want to intern leading Slovaks only because they are Christians and Slovaks.

... Our Orol organization . . . is inspired by idealism [i.e., not materialism]. It wants to work for this land, which has been conquered with so much effort. As an idealist, the Slovak cannot concede that education means to read and write without God.¹³

A half-year earlier, Tiso would not have described Nitra Slovaks as pitted against Magyarones and Magyars but rather against Jews and Magyar lords. The change was a reaction to the Kun invasion and charges that Ludáks such as himself were Magyarones.

Tiso's activities with Orol sparked an acrimonious dispute with Fr. Jozef Rozím, the new director of the Nitra high school. In fall 1919, Tiso mobilized students behind Orol. Posters appeared all over the school: "CATHOLIC STUDENTS! / DEFEND YOUR FAITH! . . . WHOEVER IS A SLOVAK IS ALSO AN OROL!" According to Rozím, some posters also read "Czechs Out," offending teachers whom the director had labored to transplant to Nitra. Determined to unmask the culprit behind the signs, Rozím hid under a lectern until he caught one of Tiso's protégés red-handed, eventually coercing out of him Tiso's role. Tiso supposedly vowed in response that "he would teach" Rozím.¹⁴ The feud that ensued was political, personal, and mutually aggressive. Okánik, not surprisingly, sided with Rozím. The governor was a sponsor of the Sokols and—like Rozím—a leading representative of the pro-Šrobár Agrarian Party, the Ludáks' main Czechoslovak competition in Nitra.¹⁵

In late 1919, a Moravian Catholic paper published articles attacking Rozím and Okánik, which both men attributed to Tiso. The first article appeared under the pseudonym Roháč (Pinching Bug). To judge also from similarly signed articles in *Slovák*, Tiso and Roháč shared profiles: both were well versed in the conflict with Rozím, apparently from Nitra, and had connections to Veľká Bytča.¹⁶ Roháč's attack against Rozím focused on "unreliables" who called themselves "true, patriotic Slovaks while honoring others with the name of Magyarone or Octoberist" (a "new" Slovak). The director was apparently "the slime that rises to the top during revolutionary, tumultuous times." Malicious and dictatorial, he banned students from Orol and "threatened Hlinka's followers with internment." A fortnight later, it was Okánik's turn to be pilloried on the Moravian paper's front page. Replying to Roháč, a "Zobod" attacked the governor as a coward, a lazy priest who ridiculed celibacy, and an economic collaborator with Jews.¹⁷ Yet Zobod's style and profile evoked neither Roháč nor Tiso, making them both unlikely authors.

Czechoslovak authorities now seemed to go after Tiso. *Catholic News* implied that he had written the articles: "This particular priest-professor up until now faithfully served his Hungarian master—the bishop—as a loyal little dog. He never wrote anything against him, but now he spews filth and poison against . . . Dr. Okánik. . . . And this man [Tiso] educates our future . . . priests!"¹⁸ Around

the same time, the army cancelled Austro-Hungarian exemptions from military service and called up Tiso, giving him two weeks to report for duty in Bratislava. Until then, he was to be under surveillance and his "activities confined." A few days later, Šrobár asked for a report on Tiso, which Rozím got the pleasure of writing. The director portrayed Tiso as a uniquely divisive force in Nitra. In addition to setting students to battling each other, Tiso supposedly insulted Czech teachers, "unjustly denounce[d] them as anti-Christian at the Ministry of Education," and behaved as though each teacher was accountable only to him. He "assembl[ed] around himself all the unreliable elements, that is, all of the Magyarones and rebels who still perform Hungarian theater and so on." Deleting only Rozím's claim that Tiso was "the real Beelzebub of Nitra," Okánik's office passed the report on to Šrobár, who forwarded it to the Czechoslovak prime minister.¹⁹

Whether this storm was a coordinated assault or a set of coincidences, Tiso rode it out. The Ministry of Defense rescinded its order to draft him, while the prime minister's office merely filed Rozím's report.²⁰ If Czechoslovak authorities were indeed pressuring Tiso, they may have relented because of his high standing among Slovak clergy. The day before Šrobár asked for his report, the first seven appointees to the Bratislava theological faculty recommended to Masaryk that Tiso join them.²¹ Moreover, Tiso had already given the central authorities less reason to distrust him—supporting, for example, a Nitra City Council condemnation of anti-Czech agitation. At the time, relations between the Ľudáks and the central government were on the mend. The party declared its commitment not only to a common Czech-Slovak state but even to a unified "Czechoslovak people." Šrobár, in turn, let up on the party.²²

In winter 1919–20, Tiso and the Ľudáks turned their attention to Czechoslovakia's first parliamentary election. Their program emphasized defense of the Catholic Church over Slovak nationalism. In addition to wooing Catholics, the Ľudáks especially courted farmers, offering incentives ranging from protection against cartels to developmental schemes such as electrification. The party also appealed to craftsmen, workers, and women, promising this last group equal rights and pay, expanded educational opportunities, and protection against divorce (which the Ľudáks tied to female impoverishment). In terms of opponents, the program attacked Social Democrats (treated generically) and Jews, "the greatest parasites and the enemy of our nation" before 1918. The Ľudáks even called for the expropriation of Jewish shops, taverns, and inns. As another remedy for national ills, the Populists proposed to build an independent administration staffed by Slovaks. (Despite the autonomist, nationalist, and antisemitic tenor of this program, the party ratified the February 1920 Czechoslovak constitution. It confirmed the centralized structure of the government, institutionalized "Czechoslovak" as a nationality and language, and guaranteed minorities substantial language and civil rights.)²³ As the 1920 campaign played out, Tiso's party felt no need to go after the

Social Democrats, who were expected to place third. The Ľudáks instead pitted themselves against the frontrunner Agrarians, with whom they also competed for the same voters: farmers and Slovak nationalists. To improve their chances, Tiso's party cut two deals. In exchange for a similar advantage elsewhere, the Ľudáks agreed not to compete in a district favored by Hungarian Christian Socialists.²⁴ Tiso's party also formed a bloc with a Czech Catholic people's party. Known as the Lidáks (the Czech equivalent of Ľudák), these Populists were led by Fr. Jan Šrámek. As a consequence of the bloc, both the Lidáks and the Ľudáks appeared on the ballot as the Czechoslovak People's Party.

By this time, Hlinka had regained control over the party despite his confinement. He and Buday, for example, cut the deal with Šrámek in Hlinka's "cell," a Prague sanitarium to which the Ľudák chairman was transferred in March 1920. The central government had rethought the treason charge. Hlinka, after all, was pursuing autonomy, not separatism. The only laws that he had clearly violated were passport regulations. Once the constitution was settled, the authorities released him but restricted him to Prague during the elections. He could run the party through Buday and stand for office, but nothing more.²⁵

Tiso gave his all to the Ľudák campaign, speaking at rallies, serving in important party positions, and putting his organizational skills to the test. Buday later characterized these efforts as "superhuman," a debt that won Tiso the third slot on the Ľudák candidate list for his district.²⁶ Police agents and journalists, however, paid scant attention to him, leaving little record of the content of his politicking. What reportage as survives shows him focused on familiar Christian Social and Slovak national themes, such as protecting the youth, which he described as a vital organ in the national body.²⁷

Better documented in the 1920 election is criticism of Tiso and his struggle with the "dirty tricks" embedded in Slovak politics. It was common, for example, to send hecklers to opposition rallies, a practice that sometimes led to deadly riots. Tiso himself reportedly once faced "a well-aimed stone."²⁸ More often, his critics preferred to hurl the Magyarone charge. The day before the election, for example, *Catholic News* described him as

raised in the Magyarone spirit. . . . As a priest, he wrote for Hungarian newspapers but never for Slovak ones. If he had been a reliable, public Slovak, then Magyar Bishop Batthyány never would have named him as spiritual director. . . . In Nitra, not even one Magyar knew that Tiso was Slovak. . . . As the spiritual director, he kept quiet when the seminary threw out Slovak clerics. . . . Why . . . did he not care about abandoned Slovaks in Nitra? Why did he not found for them some sort of society? Why did he not hold lectures in Slovak? . . .

Hungarian is still spoken with his colleagues in the seminary, even though they all know Slovak. . . . Yet from the revolution on, he boasts that he is such a great Slovak, the likes of which has never been seen before.²⁹

This attack is noteworthy not only for its spleen but also its relative veracity. One can argue about the meaning of the term "Magyarone," but there is no denying that Tiso was schooled as a Magyar, succeeded marvelously as such, and kept a low Slovak profile before 1918. It is even plausible that, in 1920, he still spoke Hungarian with his seminary colleagues, few of whom had mastered Slovak. Compared to the above attack, Ľudák spin on Tiso as an "old" Slovak rang hollow.³⁰

Neither Tiso nor the Ľudáks fared well in the election, which Social Democrats won by surprise landslides throughout Czechoslovakia. Tiso's party, with 17 percent of the vote in Slovakia, placed third behind the Agrarians. Although the Ľudáks gained a few new parliamentary deputies, their total of twelve (including Hlinka) fell far short of the expectations of a party that claimed to speak exclusively for the Slovak nation. In Tiso's district, Trnava, the Ľudáks won only two seats in the first round of counting. For the second round, the party compiled its leftover votes throughout Slovakia to elect three more deputies. To judge from returns, Tiso should have been one of them.³¹ Yet his seat went instead to the top candidate from the Nové Zámky district, Fr. Ferdiš Juriga, a ranking "old" Slovak who wanted party "Magyarones" like Tiso locked out of power.³² There was a certain symbolic justice to this decision, as the poor showing in Juriga's district was partly Tiso's responsibility. Because Czechoslovakia gerrymandered to keep minority votes out of "Slovak" areas, the "Hungarian" Nové Zámky district claimed multicultural Nitra. The Ľudáks polled an abysmal 368 votes there.³³ As the city's chief Ľudák, Tiso had been trounced.

After the elections, the Ľudáks switched to emphasizing Slovak nationalism over Catholicism. Hlinka, in effect amnestied, triumphantly returned home, vowing to turn "red Slovakia . . . white."³⁴ What this slogan meant in practice became apparent in the 1920 campaign for local elections, during which the Ľudáks ruthlessly played the antisemitic Jewish card.³⁵ Party meetings, resolutions, and demands grew more demagogic and anti-Czech. After an October rally in northern Slovakia erupted into a battle with Czechoslovak soldiers, leaving two Ľudáks dead, the party called for Czech troops to quit Slovakia. Even though Ľudáks were mainly at fault, they predictably blamed the tragedy on Czech aggression.³⁶ This claim was by now a Ľudák trope: Czech and Slovak relations as a series of painful encounters in which peaceful, polite, and reasonable Slovaks ran afoul of arrogant, uncultured, and even homicidal Czechs.

Despite being excluded from parliament, Tiso soldiered on for the Ľudáks. He worked to maintain the party's organizational momentum, attributing the party's poor showing in the general election to the votes of Czech soldiers. In *Slovák*, he hammered away at alleged national injustices and corruption in the railway system. In an Orol annual, he used the party slogan "For God and Nation" for the first time. The article trumpeted the Slovaks' special mission of spirituality within a Herderian garden of nations, urging Slovak youth to embrace idealism and activism.³⁷ In late 1920, Tiso became vice chairman of the Ľudák club of clerics, a

shadow presidium.³⁸ On the party's executive council, meanwhile, he functioned as an important negotiator and an expert on both the press and the association movement. He argued that the latter, which he hoped would help Slovaks to develop an entrepreneurial spirit, needed to be defended against "the undermining work of Jews."³⁹ But generally he abandoned political antisemitism. By 1921, he could even explain at length the difference between social democracy and Christian socialism without once mentioning Jews.⁴⁰

Why did Tiso drop political antisemitism? One possibility is that he recognized that Jews in Slovakia supported the republic. They, for example, overwhelmingly eschewed Hungarian identities on the 1919 and 1921 censuses, helping Czechoslovakia solidify its ethnic claim to land by statistically shrinking the Hungarian share of its population.⁴¹ In Nitra, the newly formed Jewish Party also offered Tiso a significant non-Socialist ally, no doubt weakening his tendency to associate Jews with revolution. A 1925 lead article from *The Spiritual Shepherd*, most likely written by Tiso, offers another explanation. Titled "*Suaviter in modo . . .*" (half of a phrase meaning "gentle in manner, resolute in execution"), the article stressed moderation and tactics in the priesthood's struggle with "the forces of darkness": "Our battle is not a battle of destruction, but rather a constructive battle. We don't want to destroy, we only want to remove obstacles. Therefore, we do not excessively persecute the enemy, and we especially do not do so uselessly. We give him instead a rest from time to time, so that he can think about the wisdom of fighting on and perhaps even admit that further resistance is unacceptable."⁴² In a similar vein, the article advised the clergy to build bridges so that enemies need not "jump" far once they realize their error. Priests who failed to be "gentle in manner" provided "hard examples" of the damage wrought to the priesthood by too aggressive an approach. Although the article did not address the Jewish Question, its emphasis on moderate tactics suggests that Tiso drew lessons from his 1918–19 experience as the most antisemitic journalist in Nitra. By 1921, he evidently had concluded that a reputation as a Jew baiter served neither his political nor pastoral purposes.

Prelate or Politician?

Between 1921 and 1923, Tiso's sacerdotal and political careers collided, and the political won. In 1921, Bishop Kmeťko hired Tiso as his secretary, a step up in the hierarchy. But within a year the two men had parted ways. Preferring Czechoslovak parties, the bishop quit the Ľudáks and built a nonpartisan reputation. Tiso, in contrast, grew more confrontational over educational policy and Slovak nationalism. In 1923, his outspokenness earned him a month in jail for the equivalent of hate speech, prompting Kmeťko to fire him as secretary. Soon after, however, Tiso won a breakthrough election that vindicated him as a politician.

In early 1921, Tiso had climbed higher on the hierarchical ladder again by organizing the consecration of three Slovak bishops in Nitra. Prague and Rome had taken two years to agree on the new prelates. In addition to being cause for Slovak Catholics to rejoice, the pact was occasion for Ľudáks to celebrate: all of the bishops were from the party, Kmeťko even holding a parliamentary seat. The Ľudák press had speculated that Tiso might also receive a miter, but he instead drew the task of managing the mammoth ceremonies. He strove to make the celebration "all-Slovak" (i.e., Ľudák), spotlighting Hlinka and Juriga as speakers, locking Sokols out, and allegedly failing to invite Czech and Protestant dignitaries in a timely manner.⁴³ Although the Ľudák press lauded the festivities, Czech papers tended to denounce them as a disgrace. Several journals attacked Tiso personally, the first time that he was the target of national criticism. A Prague daily, for example, characterized him as "an anti-Republican and sickly biased enemy of Czechs." The paper also implausibly charged that he had threatened to send massed followers against government troops to block a performance of the Slovak National Theater, which featured Czech actors.⁴⁴

For his part, Bishop Kmeťko was won over by Tiso's industry, élan, and loyalty. Feeling shunned by Nitra's priests, Kmeťko was "very surprised" that Tiso "gave himself completely to the service of Slovak things. . . . When I saw that he committed himself to me, to a Slovak bishop, I paid him back and hired him as my secretary."⁴⁵ Tiso functioned as Kmeťko's chief of staff, wielding considerable power within the diocese. In practical terms, he was training to be a bishop himself, as secretaries often received their own miters with time. To compensate for the additional workload, he cut back on teaching and party tasks.⁴⁶

Soon after becoming Kmeťko's secretary, Tiso's rejuvenated prospects in the hierarchy hit a snag. In June 1921, Orol rallied in Bánovce nad Bebravou (Bán) in response to a triumphant Sokol exhibition in Nitra featuring Czech guests. As the key speaker in Bánovce, Tiso denounced the Sokols as "red devils," a reference to their uniforms and progressive values, which he felt lured youth away from God. Although Tiso may have aimed his barbs at the Sokols, witnesses understood his quarry as Czechs. "Czechs take our faith," they quoted him, also attributing to him criticism of Czech officials in Slovakia and the use of Czech in Slovak schools.⁴⁷ Tiso's speech reportedly stirred up his audience to the point of violence, prompting the authorities to charge him with incitement.

Ironically, Tiso's controversial agitation for Orol marked a shift in his public persona away from the party. The priest was, of course, still deeply involved with the Ľudáks. He belonged to the editorial board of *Slovák*, for example, and in 1921 helped to found a Ľudák weekly in Nitra, *Populist Politics* (*Ľudová politika*). But he was most active outside the strict confines of the party. In fall 1921, he joined the board of the St. Vojtech Society, a Catholic publisher, around the same time translating a Czech religious textbook for another Catholic press. While Hlinka

headed both organizations, they were understood as serving first religious rather than political missions. Both organizations were also backed by Kmeřko.⁴⁸ In early 1922, Tiso became the editor of *The Spiritual Shepherd*, through which he immediately urged priests “to dedicate all of [their] free time to the education of youth.”⁴⁹ A few weeks later, he stole a march on Nitra’s Czechoslovak progressives by helping to open an attractive local social club: a Catholic circle that also welcomed Hungarian Christian Socials.⁵⁰ Finally, most of Tiso’s appearances and publications in 1921–22 were for Catholic organizations that were legally independent of the Ľudáks, such as Orol. Such distinctions no doubt mattered to Kmeřko. In 1947, the bishop characterized Sokol versus Orol as antireligious versus pro-Church. He considered Orol to be a Czechoslovak Catholic organization rather than a Ľudák youth circle.⁵¹

During this shift toward a more Catholic public persona, Tiso won and then curiously lost a clerical honor. In late 1921, the Vatican named him monsignor. The tribute reflected both Tiso’s accomplishments and Kmeřko’s sponsorship of him. Two months later, the death of Benedict XV invalidated the title. Canon law of that time required Tiso to reapply for it through Kmeřko, a process that should have been pro forma. Yet neither Tiso nor Kmeřko undertook it. This double failure probably stemmed from tensions between the two men. First, Tiso’s legal predicament was an embarrassment for Kmeřko. Although Tiso won an acquittal in early 1922 on the charge of incitement, a higher court overturned the decision.⁵² Second, Kmeřko had cooled on the Ľudáks. Soon after Benedict made Tiso a monsignor, the party split with their Czech counterparts, the Lidáks, over school policy. The government had reneged on a deal to return to the Catholic Church three high schools, including Nitra’s. The Ľudáks wanted their Czech allies to join them in militant opposition, but the Lidáks were more interested in building bridges to the government, which now included party chairman řrámek. Kmeřko apparently sided with the Czechs. Also under pressure from the Vatican to be apolitical, he resigned as a Ľudák parliamentary deputy in early 1922. He, however, continued to back the party as a defender of Catholicism and Slovak nationalism.⁵³ He also never denied Tiso permission to stand as a party candidate.

Kmeřko’s disenchantment with the Ľudáks stemmed in part from the rise of party radicals, led by Vojtech (Béla) Tuka. A “new” Slovak who had lost his position as a law professor in Bratislava, Tuka’s loyalty to Czechoslovakia was constantly in doubt, in part because he spoke Slovak with a Hungarian accent. Like Tiso, Tuka was a devout Catholic with a Christian Social and Jesuit background who dreamed of uniting Catholics and expanding the influence of the church. He became the editor of *Slovák* in 1922 on Hlinka’s recommendation. The endorsement confirmed again Hlinka’s atrocious judgment of character, for Tuka was in fact a Hungarian agent.⁵⁴ An admirer of Italian fascism, he strengthened the ideology’s influence within the party while sharpening the Ľudák drive for autonomy.

Weak as the party was (claiming 4 percent of the Czechoslovak electorate), the Ludáks had no hope of reaching this goal legally. Their first proposal for autonomy, from 1922, died in parliamentary committee.⁵⁵

In the meantime, Tiso considered quitting politics (as he had also done in 1919). His legal troubles, the loss of his title as monsignor, and Kmeťko's disputes with the Ludáks all cast a shadow on his career in the hierarchy. When Kmeťko left the party, Tiso supposedly asked if he should leave politics as well, but the bishop said no. Soon after, Filkorn—who now managed the financially troubled *Slovák* but had yet to hire Tuka as editor—offered Tiso the position. Tiso turned him down cold: "Do you think there's much future in that for me, as a priest? *Slovák's* here today, but what about tomorrow?"⁵⁶

Tiso would have served his hierarchical ambitions best by steering clear of controversy, but he instead chose to provoke his opponents. In mid-1922, he returned to Bánovce as the star of another Orol rally. He reportedly wanted to speak on schools, but the authorities objected. Annoyed, he began his revised speech by reflecting on his recent conviction. The year before, he claimed, he had spoken against only Sokols, yet he had been denounced by traitors as if he had spoken against Czechs. Today, in contrast, he would indeed speak about Czechs. After a dramatic pause, he then proclaimed "with scornful derision" that "all Czechs in Slovakia are respectable."⁵⁷ The line predictably drew denials from the stirred-up crowd. In response, a local Czech teacher jumped onto the stage and had a heated, mildly physical confrontation with Tiso. In what may have been a coincidence, Tiso had pointed toward him when complaining of "traitors." Spectators soon hauled the Czech off the stage and beat him, giving him a concussion. The state again indicted Tiso for incitement. Yet victory was momentarily his. He had gotten the authorities to censure him for, of all things, calling Czechs "respectable."

Such defiance was unusual for Tiso when compared with his record on the Nitra City Council. By winter 1919–20, the council had evolved from an instrument of Czechoslovak revolution into a semiconstitutional body that not only included Hungarians and Jews but also allowed Hungarian as a language of discussion. Tiso apparently accepted these changes with few qualms, quickly winning the trust of his colleagues, who unanimously elected him chairman of a powerful committee on finances.⁵⁸ Tiso's success on the council reflected his flexibility. Despite his reputation as a fanatic nationalist, he could value civic over national agendas. In 1920, for example, he opposed downgrading the administrative status of Nitra, even though the change facilitated Slovak control over the city's Hungarians. He also could join forces with his enemies the Social Democrats, as when he opposed a "National House" in Nitra, probably because it would encourage Czechoslovak consciousness. Except for an unexplained streak of absences from council (but not finance committee) sessions in 1921, Tiso was a dedicated, reliable, and cooperative participant in local government.⁵⁹

By mid-1922, however, the frustration that Tiso and other Catholics felt over secularization had reached a boiling point. A pastoral letter by the republic's bishops warned that "unbelievers and enemies of the Church" had driven God out of so many schools that the faith now faced a "life and death struggle."⁶⁰ Earlier, the state had assumed administration of twenty-one Catholic high schools, which the government distrusted as infected with a Magyar spirit. The takeover ostensibly provided Slovak leadership to the schools while the bishops' chairs were still vacant. Even though the state had been more permissive with Lutheran schools, Catholic Slovak nationalists such as Tiso accepted the situation in order to consolidate the republic. But now that Slovak bishops were in place, they and the Ľudáks wanted the balance redressed. Rather than return schools to the church, however, the government pressed on with nationalization. The conflict was especially intense in Nitra, as local Magyars (many of whom liked confessional schools) were constitutionally guaranteed instruction in Hungarian. Such concessions agitated many Slovak and Czechoslovak nationalists. Was it not rolling back the clock? The local Agrarian press also equated returning the high school to the church with handing it over to the Ľudáks, thus creating a "nest" of anti-Czechoslovak agitators.⁶¹

The month after his defiant speech in Bánovce, the school issue led Tiso to adopt confrontational tactics in the Nitra City Council. In July 1922, the council voted on the nationalization of a local Catholic boys' school. The question had divided residents, inflaming tempers and prompting charges of dirty tricks. On the occasion of the vote, both the Ľudáks and the local Communist Party—formed the year before—packed the council chamber with followers (in the Ľudák case, mothers). In an even more unusual step, Okánik's successor as governor (the poet Janko Jesenský, the leader of the Bán Slovak nationalists during Tiso's ministry there) chose this session to add a councilmember: "A. Klaus," a progressive school director. The governor clearly wanted to ensure that the school measure passed. Despite shining in debate, Tiso failed to block Klaus's entry onto the council. According to *Nyitra County*, Tiso also debunked the alleged financial benefits of the nationalization, "shaking out the sawdust from inside the glistening cover." His passion was inspirational compared to the high-handed, anticlerical, and anti-Hungarian Klaus, who "spattered around vitriol." Yet Tiso did not sway the majority. As defeat loomed, he turned to obstructionism, accusing a local Czech administrator of using the nationalization to avert being disciplined by the Ministry of Education.⁶² The claim sparked a furor but did not keep the measure from passing. Tiso then stalked out of the hall, the rest of the opposition in tow.

Although he kept working on the finance committee, Tiso did not return to city council sessions until late 1922, when he again employed obstructionism, this time over a national issue: the selection of a new mayor. At the time, Nitra had yet to hold local elections. Parties and the government appointed councilmen, the relative proportion between parties determined by national election results.

The council's majority bloc picked mayors, the minority bloc, vice mayors. In preparation for this, the Ľudáks formed a "civic" (meaning non-Socialist) bloc with the Hungarian Christian Socials and the Jewish Party, upper-middle-class Zionists. Opposing them was a majority bloc of Agrarians, Social Democrats, and Communists. According to their later joint declaration, Tiso and the minority had learned beforehand of the majority's candidate: an "entirely unobjectionable individual" except that he was Czech. Tiso and the civic bloc took the choice as a "slap in the face."⁶³ The majority could not find a single Slovak from Nitra capable of running the city? Angry, Tiso and his allies went into the election session primed for action. Shortly after it began, Tiso announced the opposition's wish that the mayor be a Slovak from Nitra. The majority instead stuck to the Czech. Tiso again led the civic bloc out of the hall in protest, dumping all responsibility for government onto the majority and starting another virtual boycott of the council.

With Nitra's first communal elections coming in August 1923, one might expect Tiso to take this confrontational politics to the next level. But rather than beating the Ľudák drum, he avoided a higher party profile while letting his nationalism mellow. A lecture for Orol, published in 1923, showed Tiso still basing "love of nation" on "love your neighbor." Yet now he was careful to insist that

love of nation is not hatred toward another nation. . . . Rather, it is enthusiastic work for lifting up one's own nation; it is fulfilling our responsibilities in the national interest; it is a conscientious and honorable life, so that we do not bring shame . . . on our nation. . . . The nation lives from the sacrifices of individuals [not vice versa]. . . . Only religion can awaken [this] love without contempt for and hatred of other nations, because this love is . . . founded on God's command.⁶⁴

Typically, this article did not appear in a formal Ľudák venue. Indeed, Tiso's major publication for spring 1923 was in a pedagogical journal: an anonymous series in which he strove to refute Enlightenment arguments that morality derived from man rather than God.⁶⁵ Tiso's only known article in a formal party venue during this time was a May column for *Slovák*, his first in over two years. Although initially antisemitic, the column surprisingly then looked to Orthodox Judaism as a model for Slovak nationalism. Reminiscing about his youth, Tiso wrote of how he and his friends would visit the synagogue on Friday—"more out of curiosity than anything else"—to watch their "peaceful fellow citizens" worship. He was moved by the Jewish ritual of touching the covered Torah and then one's lips. He was also impressed by a corollary ritual, in which Jews similarly paid obeisance to a miniature Torah nailed to their front doors. For Tiso, it was as if Jews thus literally transferred the strength of their faith and identity to their souls. He proposed that Slovaks do likewise by treating the Pittsburgh Agreement as their Torah, calling on the Ľudáks to distribute a reproduction of the document "to every Slovak

home. Let [the agreement] hang in a beautiful frame in every Slovak's dwelling, so that he can have it before his eyes in good times and bad. . . . Every Slovak will be strengthened by this law in the struggle for the distinct Slovak character. In front of this agreement, Slovaks will teach their children love of nation. From this agreement, Slovaks will draw a sense of common belonging."⁶⁶

By reshaping his politics as less Ľudák and more moderate, Tiso hoped to balance the demands of his career as a priest with his political needs. The lower party profile was no doubt a concession to Kmeťko, who wanted his office (which Tiso ran) to be nonpartisan. Tiso accordingly avoided trumpeting the Ľudák cause, campaigning instead through "quiet agitation," as a later observer characterized it.⁶⁷ By professing more tolerance toward Jews, Tiso also helped to strengthen his alliance with the Jewish Party, important non-Socialist votes on the city council. Finally, his more tolerant nationalism also countered complaints that he sowed hatred.

Such criticism of Tiso was harsh at the time, for he was due to go to jail. In early 1923, the Czechoslovak Supreme Court upheld his conviction on the 1921 incitement charge. The court took a dim moral view of Tiso: "[He] is a highly educated person and has a respectable position as the bishop's secretary. Considering his age, he also must have extensive life experience. As a priest, he has a professional responsibility to promulgate peace and brotherly relations among people. Neither education nor position nor age nor responsibility, however, restrained the defendant from systematically inciting . . . the Slovak branch of the Czechoslovak nation to hatred against the Czech branch."⁶⁸ The Agrarians' *National Sentinel* had a field day. "Tiszó," the paper argued, exploited Slovak nationalism for his own earthly concerns, "caring more about politics than about the religious education of [his] faithful." He was not fit to be the bishop's secretary or to train priests. He was instead "the main obstacle to consolidating Czech and Slovak elements" in Nitra.⁶⁹

A few months later, Tiso faced a worse charge: that he had driven a colleague to suicide. In July 1923, Josef Zdrálek, a popular Czech infantry chaplain, shot himself in Nitra. The progressive press blamed the Ľudáks, naming Tiso (who "hates everything Czech") as an *éminence grise*.⁷⁰ Through intrigues, the party supposedly had convinced the army to replace Zdrálek with a party agitator, thus pushing the Czech into despair. The main evidence for these charges was the cozy relationship between Kmeťko, Tiso, and Zdrálek's commanding officer, who lived in the bishop's castle. Zdrálek's replacement, "an obstinate Ľudák," was also said to have lunched with Hlinka on arriving in Nitra.⁷¹ Buday, in the Ľudák response, failed to exonerate or even mention Tiso. Zdrálek allegedly had been a "nonentity" for the Ľudáks and suicidal for months. The lunch between Hlinka and the replacement happened by chance. The Ľudáks, moreover, had no pull with the army.⁷² Judging from all accounts, it seems that the unfortunate Zdrálek had problems besides Ľudák antipathy. He was reportedly a progressive cleric at

odds with both his religious superiors and military commanders.⁷³ The case for Ľudák intrigue was weak and served as campaign fodder. Yet the Ľudák defense also was unconvincing, employing familiar stratagems: a proclamation of absolute innocence, a denial of relations with the victim, and the explaining away of harder evidence as coincidence.

Days after Buday's response to the Zdrálek scandal, Tiso went to jail, his legal alternatives exhausted. Brno's progressive daily *Lidové noviny* (*The People's News*) reported his incarceration with satisfaction. The Hungarian Christian Socials, in contrast, decried it as "entirely political" while praising his "unimpeachable" character.⁷⁴ *Slovák* began a vigil for him as a martyr, running a repeating notice that "Dr. Jozef Tiso, professor of theology, [monsignor, and] bishop's secretary sits in Trenčín in jail."⁷⁵ But jail for Tiso was not so different from seminary. He had no trouble celebrating Mass or working on projects such as translating a favorite ascetic text. Thanks to permissive visiting hours, he presumably also directed the Ľudák campaign in Nitra. As he and *Slovák* admitted, he was treated "very humanely."⁷⁶

Strained relations with his bishop probably caused Tiso more pain than did incarceration. When Tiso went to jail, *Nyitra County* reported that he was to be transferred away.⁷⁷ But Kmeťko held off formally firing him. The delay suggests that Tiso might have kept his job if yet another scandal had not enveloped him. In July, Kmeťko and the Ľudák radical Tuka attended a Paris Eucharistic congress. The Slovak bishops had endorsed Tuka as a representative of a Marian association.⁷⁸ He used the trip to shop for international patrons with a Ľudák memorandum.⁷⁹ The document (not so subtly titled "The Voice of the Slovak Nation, Condemned to Death, to the Civilized World") supported Hungarian claims that Slovaks were an oppressed minority. The party had adopted the memorandum, which was penned in part by Tuka, and the party leadership had approved his mission to Paris. Tiso was not only a member of the presidium but also had earlier proposed "inform[ing] foreign countries about our autonomist cause."⁸⁰ In short, he must have known what Tuka was up to. The Paris incident prompted accusations that Kmeťko was in league with Tuka, charges that the bishop indignantly denied. In response, *Lidové noviny* suggested that he "turn against the Ľudák priests who so indecently and maliciously abused [your] benevolence and added a political agent to [your] trip."⁸¹ Two weeks later, Czechoslovak president Masaryk visited Nitra, chatting briefly with Kmeťko about the Paris trip. The bishop apparently fired the prisoner soon after.⁸² In 1947, Kmeťko explained his motives: Tiso had "begun to do politics by methods that were incompatible with my political and Church convictions." At the same time, Kmeťko downplayed discord between the pair, characterizing the decision as semimutual. Tiso certainly accepted his firing quietly. But his personal relations with the bishop foundered. In Kmeťko's estimation, Tiso believed that "in political matters, the bishop does not order me."⁸³

The week after being fired, Tiso was out of jail and on the campaign trail. The Nitra seminary petitioned Masaryk for his early release, claiming (probably falsely) that Tiso was needed in the classroom. Tiso instead went on leave. His first stop was Bratislava, where a *Slovák* reporter “accidentally” bumped into him. “How is it that you go about . . . without guards?” Tiso played dumb: “As far as he knew, neither his legal representative, nor his bishop, nor the party made a plea.” Perhaps the high point of Tiso’s subsequent campaign tour was a massive rally in Veľká Bytča, where he was introduced as wearing “the order of the thorny crown.”⁸⁴

The fall elections were a vindication for Tiso. The Ľudáks unexpectedly won over a fifth of the vote in Nitra, finishing just behind the Hungarian Christian Socials. The district and county results tasted even sweeter, as the Ľudáks dominated the field.⁸⁵ Tiso’s successes in Nitra were doubly impressive considering that the local Ľudák paper, *Populist Politics*, had closed in June. The jail time, in contrast, probably helped more than hurt Tiso. In general, the elections voiced voter anger over the economy. Competition with Czech firms and a disproportionate tax burden had devastated Slovak industry, a crisis that had spread to agriculture.⁸⁶ As *Nyitra County* reported, everyone understood the local triumph to be Tiso’s:

The real point of the Nitra elections was without a doubt the surprising victory of the Hlinka party. . . . Nearly underground, the party expanded with feverish, subdued, quiet agitation, growing larger before our amazed eyes almost in a matter of minutes. It is an open secret that the work of a single individual—Dr. Jozef Tiso, the bishop’s secretary—fertilized the seed of this organizing. The fanatical, passionate soul of Dr. Tiso inspired his followers. . . . Whoever follows [history] remembers that it was he who, in fall 1918, celebrated the revolution with such rising enthusiasm. Noting now the new aims of Dr. Tiso, this observer reflects on how the very first publisher of a Slovak paper in Nitra [recently] sat in prison because of antistate incitement. . . . Now he will lead an embittered, passionate opposition. Individual men make not only national but also civic history. Will the chisel of Dr. Tiso shape Nitra’s next period?⁸⁷

Leaving Nitra

Theoretically, Tiso could have salvaged his sacerdotal career. His prospects within the church, although crippled, were hardly dead; he was demoted to professor of theology, a still respectable post. But rather than try to return to grace by leaving politics, he instead dove into the party, becoming the “main collaborator” (a cross between coeditor and featured columnist) for the weekly version of *Slovák*.⁸⁸ Over the next year, he remade himself as a career Ľudák politician. Controversy meanwhile dogged him, ultimately driving him from Nitra.

Right after the 1923 elections, Tiso signaled his commitment to a political life through *The Spiritual Shepherd*. A series on "The Priest and Politics," most probably by him, urged Catholic priests to defend their church politically against secular enemies. The series served as an apology for Tiso's political activism, implicitly criticizing Kmeřko's less partisan approach. One installment, for example, linked an old archbishop in Chile to the "Freemason" proposition that "the priesthood [should] behave neutrally toward politics, because their mission is of love and peace. (In a recent judgment, which condemned one of our priests to jail, it is strange that this same justification was given. . . .)" A youthful bishop then ostensibly corrected the archbishop's error by calling for "the fervent participation of Catholics and priests in politics."⁸⁹ The passage, which clearly alluded to Tiso, symbolically cast him both as Kmeřko's victim and as his wiser and more moral subordinate.

Freed from the binds that he had felt as Kmeřko's secretary, Tiso gave his partisan agenda full rein. Through regular front-page articles in *Slovák*, he again sought to capture the masses, to unify them into a disciplined camp, and to mobilize them behind a program. As a journalist, Tiso especially labored to build party morale and to guard against partisan raids on membership. In one column, he argued that the party had to be big enough to overcome Czech divide-and-rule tactics. In another, he linked the size of the party with the chances of winning a Great Power patron, the "only [way] we will gain autonomy." More generally, he conflated the party with the nation, presenting their fates as fused: "Whatever is Slovak is also Ľudák. Let us persevere!"⁹⁰

Compared to his organizational concerns, Tiso paid less attention to the party's program. Autonomy, of course, was the supreme Ľudák demand. He wrote of it often, yet more as a motivational object than as policy. It was simply something that the nation must have.⁹¹ Tiso's other programmatic concerns mixed Christian "white" socialism (improved conditions for workers and defense of Christian values) with Czechoslovak agendas (land reform and jobs for Slovaks).⁹² He characterized the Ľudák as "a party of truth, harmony, the general good, and social justice."⁹³ He also followed an antimilitaristic line, proposing, for example, that conscripts trade field exercises for vocational schooling.⁹⁴

Tiso portrayed his party as squeaky clean, a sharp contrast to the governing parties with their corruption scandals. For him, the Ľudák should be a selfless servant of the nation: "With proudly raised heads, let us bear our sacrifices on the altar of the freedom of the Slovak nation, and cherish the sacred fire of love of nation in our souls, as it gives us strength to bear these sacrifices with pleasure. We should preserve this sacred fire for ourselves and our offspring, to whom we should hand over as a sacred inheritance this vital credo: 'Love your nation. Work for your nation. Raise up your nation and make it noble. This is our sacred duty!'"⁹⁵ (Characteristically, this affirmation of his own sacrificing spirit followed an attack on

him as a Magyarone.) Beyond such dramatics, Tiso pushed the *Ludáks* to prove their managerial skills in city governments and thus to demonstrate their worthiness for autonomy. As a prime example, Tiso pointed to Nitra, where the *Ludák*-led council had slashed its own salaries.⁹⁶

The Slovak nation for whom Tiso labored had changed from the one he saw in 1918–19. The Slovak was still Christian, hard working, conscientious, and well wishing, but he had also become a pacifist: “He doesn’t want other people’s property and would rather renounce his own for the sake of peace. For this reason, the Slovak is the darling of the nations and has no enemy.”⁹⁷ He was also poor. “We don’t have capitalists,” Tiso claimed. They were instead “Czechoslovaks, who are not organized in the People’s Party.”⁹⁸ Tiso tempered his pride over the supposed ancient pedigree of the Slovaks with an admission that they suffered, so to speak, from arrested development. They had not spoken their first “infantile” words until the 1918 Martin Declaration, which committed the nation to Czechoslovakia. Tiso accordingly criticized the declaration as “phonetically and grammatically” imperfect. It was the *Ludáks*’ mission to rear the nation, whereupon it could demand its natural right to autonomy, a mark of nationhood.⁹⁹

Tiso packaged these concerns in his Catholic worldview, lacing his arguments with fundamentalist rhetoric. The “enemy” was always pounding at the gates, be they of Christianity, the nation, or the party. The “sodomite” Socialists, “Hussites,” and other progressives typically worked in variations of “diabolical calculation.”¹⁰⁰ In a favorite motif, Tiso warned against “false prophets” who wanted to subvert Slovaks and to tear “this Catholic nation” away from its “natural leader,” the priest. He meanwhile attributed 1,700,000 executions to Russia’s “Bolshevik hell”—persuasive reasons for Slovakia to stay “on the Right.”¹⁰¹ Tiso saw the “truth of Christ” as essential for all aspects of human life, including state and national development. Accordingly, it was the Slovak’s duty to bring about a “Catholic and Christian” state.¹⁰²

Given Tiso’s religious certainties, it is striking how tolerant he had become. The admonition “Love your nation, but not to the detriment of others” had replaced the edict “Don’t be a traitor to your blood and kin.” “The enemy always remain[ed] the enemy,” of course, and instruments such as boycotts still filled his political toolbox. But now Tiso applied them to opponents of autonomy rather than to Jews. Indeed, other than for occasional swipes at “the Jew Marx” or brief portrayals of Jews as deicides, he had purged antisemitism from his rhetoric.¹⁰³

In the meantime, legal problems continued to plague Tiso. Despite being twice acquitted on his 1922 indictment, the Czechoslovak Supreme Court convicted him of incitement in June 1924. According to the judgment, his “All Czechs in Slovakia are respectable” line had clearly been ironic, keeping with the anti-Czech tone of the speech. Treating his clerical status as an aggravating circumstance, the court

gave him two weeks' jail time. This term was on top of a month that he had left to serve on his 1923 sentence.¹⁰⁴ Two other run-ins with the authorities in 1924 failed to produce indictments. First, police units tried to disperse a Ludák meeting that they argued had not been registered. Tiso defied them, claiming that the meeting was not a party rally but rather a confidential party conference, which did not require registration. Second, a different police unit wanted Tiso indicted for religious incitement for urging Catholics to belong only to Catholic organizations.¹⁰⁵ The episodes illustrate both Tiso's willingness to contest state authority and the degree of police harassment with which he often had to contend.

Tiso was by now a polarizing figure. Two reports from his court cases capture the debate. In late 1923, the County and District Offices in Nitra issued opinions on granting Tiso clemency for his remaining jail time. According to the District Office, "Under the old government, [Tiso] was a quiet Slovak. / [His] earlier life is immaculate. During the revolution, he was a member of the Nitra Slovak National Council, and he worked very effectively . . . in the interest of Slovakia and Czechoslovakia, respectively. He published the first Slovak journal, *Nitra*, in which he spread the idea of the Czechoslovak state and of Czechoslovak reciprocity. He awakened and taught the Slovak people throughout the environs. During this time, he was really a tireless Slovak national worker." Attributing Tiso's involvement with the Ludáks to personality conflicts with local teachers, the District Office recommended clemency on the basis of his revolutionary record. The County Office's report told a different story: "Before the revolution, Tiso was Magyarized both in his thinking and sentiment. After the revolution, he became a Ludák Slovak—that is to say, he [behaved] toward the Czechoslovak Republic . . . not only as a foreigner but also as a resolute and aggressive enemy. His whole life is a manifest protest against all things Czech, state, government, official. . . . He is a priest, Ludák, and a sower of discord. This has made him popular with enemy elements, of which there are a lot in denationalized Nitra and its surroundings."¹⁰⁶

These contradictory understandings of Tiso were matched in the press. Nitra's Social Democrats saw him as "the great friend of darkness and backwardness."¹⁰⁷ Nitra's Agrarians warned that Tiso would "burn in hell for his deeds."¹⁰⁸ The governing parties occasionally accused him of corruption or implied that he had a dissolute private life. In fall 1924, for example, the Social Democrats charged that he had gotten public apartments for his friends, including a woman who "must have given [this] distinguished and holy [man] much pleasure."¹⁰⁹ More commonly, he was simply "Tiszó," a Magyarone and a religious hypocrite. A 1924 Agrarian preelection attack accusing him of treason and corruption can only be described as character assassination. Tiso sued and had the satisfaction of seeing the article retracted.¹¹⁰ Normally, he had to content himself with rebuttals from the Ludák press. The Hungarian Christian Socials and even Jews, however, also praised his integrity and sympathized with his troubles. For example, when Tiso

was physically assaulted in 1923—in a bizarre, minor altercation in which he was apparently blameless—*The Nitra Journal* condemned the attack.¹¹¹

In his 1947 testimony, Kmeřko suggested that Nitra ultimately rejected Tiso: “He was a very [politically] committed man. As a consequence of this, he lost the trust of the citizens of Nitra.”¹¹² Certainly, he lost Kmeřko’s trust. Yet a police report from fall 1923 claimed that Tiso still “enjoy[ed] a good reputation,” a sentiment echoed by the District Office.¹¹³ The County Office, in contrast, thought Tiso was a traitor, while the local progovernment press wanted him gone. In August 1924, Czechoslovak courts confirmed that they intended to jail Tiso for two weeks. The *National Sentinel* commented: “We are curious whether this professor . . . will continue to instruct young priests. We know that the bishop presents himself as a representative of Czechoslovak unity, [yet] his theology professor must be condemned for incitement twice. We think that the bishop . . . will pass his own judgment on [Tiso] and remove him from a position for which he . . . is in no way suited.”¹¹⁴

The Sentinel got its wish. In September 1924, Bánovce needed a priest. The parish was generously endowed, and Tiso had ties to it. He easily won the post.¹¹⁵ In November, he received a well-attended send-off. In the words of a local official, “the spirit of the Ľudák movement [thus] goes away from Nitra.”¹¹⁶

As Tiso prepared to leave for Bánovce, *The Spiritual Shepherd* published an anonymous lead article entitled *Vir desideriorum*, “a man of holy desires.”

Vir desideriorum is a kind of modern priest. A priest who has concepts and plans; a priest who is not satisfied with himself or his work. . . . He does not lay down the sword merely to enjoy his already harvested fruits. *Vir desideriorum* is a priest of constant action. . . . He is a priest enthused by idealism . . . , a strong motor for tireless work. . . . *Vir desideriorum* [is never] a quiet man, an apathetic man, or a depressed man. He embraces only the victorious worldview, which flows from internal harmony and is expressed in incessant, manifold blessed work. And therefore *Vir desideriorum* is our model.¹¹⁷

Tiso probably wrote this passage, which perfectly sums up his self-image and ambition. Although he might have been leaving Nitra as an exile, he was not going into the wilderness. He had plans.

Radical/Moderate

Between 1919 and 1925, Jozef Tiso made a series of trades. Displeased with how the republic intended to educate its young, he switched from collaborating with his Czechoslovak partners to resisting them. Failing to strike a sustainable balance

between his sacerdotal and political roles, he turned to climbing party rather than church hierarchies. Rethinking the wisdom of pursuing his missions too radically, he made moderation his political trademark. These changes, of course, were not cut and dried, as Tiso was always given to pragmatic compromise. He might stalk out of city council meetings, for example, but he kept busy on its finance committee. Yet, in general, these changes marked the crystallization of his Slovak political personality.

Tiso's shift to resistance grew out of the conflict between Christian socialism, the Ludák version of Slovak nationalism, and Czechoslovak state building. Christian Social agendas inspired Tiso to maintain ties with Hungarians, but his support for Ludák autonomy worked against strengthening ties with Czechs. Czechoslovak centralists equated autonomy with Magyar subversion. Czechoslovak progressives equated the Catholic Church with Magyar oppression. Partly as a result, building the republic meant secularization, Tiso's greatest fear. Since he had always constructed Slovak identity around Catholicism, it is not surprising that he rejected a Czechoslovak identity that celebrated the progressive Masaryk, the anticlerical Sokol, and the heretic Hus. In response, his Czechoslovak opponents took his Magyar and autonomist connections as proof of his national unreliability. In such an environment, Tiso had little to gain through collaboration or to lose through resistance.

Tiso's personality exacerbated these conflicts. "An outspoken young priest" who was "fanatical about his opinions," he clashed easily with other strong personalities.¹¹⁸ When he felt insecure or wronged, his religious fervor and self-righteousness could burst into aggression. In pursuit of his Christian Social and Slovak nationalist aims, he sought to kindle religious and national sentiment in his audience, bringing crowds to a boil. When they slipped over into violence, his main concern was to avoid personal and partisan responsibility, blaming instead his enemies or coincidence. In line with Ignatius of Loyola's dictums on Catholic defense, Tiso was loath to admit mistakes, preferring to retreat silently or under cover. His critics habitually accused him of intrigues, opportunism, and hatred. To be sure, between 1918 and 1925, he was a sly tactician and careerist who contributed more than his share of animosity toward Jews, Social Democrats, and progressive Czechs. Yet he operated within a political culture in which dirty tricks were standard, and at a time when failing to master the new national vocabulary could leave one impoverished—as it did many Magyar state workers. Despite the dictates of Slovak nationalism, he was also tolerant toward Magyars and, after 1921, even Jews.

Nitra was pivotal for Tiso's journey into conflict with the Czechoslovaks. The Magyars had seen the city as an outpost on a linguistic border, making a cultural stand there. Adopting an analogous approach, the Czechoslovaks resolved on taking Nitra "back": nationalizing schools, importing cultural organizations, and promoting Czechoslovakism among the clergy. All three tactics favored

progressivism. Catholic teachers with Slovak identity were rare in Nitra, while Orol remained a pale competitor to Sokol, the “Czech army.” Prominent Czechoslovak clerics such as Okánik and Rozím promoted Catholic Church reforms that repelled the orthodox Tiso. In challenging both the secularization of schools and the clerical reform movement, Tiso’s best allies were Hungarian Christian Socials. But working with Magyars opened him up for attack as a Magyarone, a sensitive issue for him. Czechoslovaks were just as sensitive to his attacks on Sokols and Czechoslovak progressivism, seeing him as Hungarian irredentist and anti-Czech.

Although Slovak nationalism moved forward in Tiso’s thinking between 1919 and 1925, Catholic politics still drove him.¹¹⁹ His overriding concerns before 1923 were maintaining religious instruction for youths, saving souls from materialist doctrines like social democracy, and restoring prestige to the church and its clergy. His corporatist understanding of politics inspired him to seek the largest Catholic party possible to push through his program. The *Ludáks* best fulfilled this need. The party’s poor showing in the 1920 election, however, demonstrated the weakness of Catholic politics within Czechoslovakia. The solution for the *Ludáks* (and ultimately for Tiso) lay in playing more to nationalism through autonomy politics. Tiso, of course, increasingly cared about issues of Slovak identity and did desire autonomy. But in 1918–24, Slovak nationalism for him tended more often to be a vehicle for achieving religious ends rather than an end in itself.

Tiso’s use of Slovak nationalism to advance his sacerdotal career, in contrast, backfired. In 1921, it was above all Slovak nationalism that won Tiso the post of Kmeťko’s secretary. With his clerical career restored, Tiso muted his party politics, reshaping his public persona more as Slovak Catholic than *Ludák*. Given different circumstances, he could have remained Kmeťko’s secretary and even succeeded him as bishop. Three contingencies stymied this result: a Czechoslovak political culture that read Tiso’s antisecularism as subversion, Kmeťko’s abandonment of the *Ludáks*, and Tiso’s failure to do likewise. While Tiso considered leaving politics in winter 1921–22, by summer 1923 he led the *Ludáks* to victory in Nitra. He had forged bonds to the party that he could not or would not break. To compensate, he apparently concealed aspects of his political activism from Kmeťko in the same way as he claimed to have hidden his alleged pan-Slavism from Batthyány. This subterfuge would explain both Kmeťko’s anger at being linked to Tuka’s Paris mission and the underground nature of Tiso’s party work in Nitra.

Instead of rising higher in the hierarchy, Tiso became the consummate *Ludák* insider. His skills as an organizer, journalist, and speaker served him well in the party. He had charisma, intelligence, conviction, and endless energy. He knew how to mobilize the masses, whether through demagoguery or reasoned argument.¹²⁰ He was less successful at forcing political change, even though he used a similarly wide range of tactics, from cooperation to obstructionism. By present-day

standards of democracy, he and the party had many legitimate complaints about the Czechoslovak regime. For the first few years of the republic, he lived under dictatorship or close to it. Šrobár's administration often censored the Ľudák press, interned its members, and labeled the party as antistate. The government's pursuit of secularization meanwhile infuriated Tiso. These complaints merged with his developing self-conception as a Slovak, with his political and personal need to prove that he was not a Magyarone, and with his antipathy to a progressive Czechoslovak identity. Through the party, he could satisfy his Catholic activism, exercise his Slovak nationalism, and oppose the developments that troubled him so much. Grand irony was at work here, the problem of balancing "For God and Nation." Tiso entered national politics to defend the church; by 1924 he was left to the nation, cut off to an extent by the church.

Along the way to this unexpected destination, Tiso became a moderate, a shift that is most evident in his treatment of Jews. How is one to understand his switch from Jew baiting to a seeming indifference to antisemitism? Opportunism, of course, is again one answer. In 1918–19, Tiso opposed local Social Democrats and Bolshevik Hungary, both of which were closely associated with Jews. In 1922–24, in contrast, Jewish nationalists in Nitra constituted non-Socialist swing votes. In 1918–19, as well, Tiso had been radicalized by revolution, occupation, and invasion. By 1924, Czechoslovakia had stabilized. The time of great uncertainty and radical change had passed. Tiso felt secure in both his identity and position.

But opportunism and a change of political climate cannot fully explain Tiso's abandonment of antisemitic politics. Although his party energetically played the "Jewish card" in the summer of 1920, Tiso did not follow suit. Nor did he bait Jews much thereafter, even though it was a staple among his Czechoslovak opponents.¹²¹ He had learned something from his 1918–19 experience. At that time, he was implicitly if not directly accused of inspiring murder. In 1923, he endured a similar round of accusations in the Zdrálek scandal before being jailed for inciting hatred against Czechs. Such episodes gave his opponents ammunition with which to attack his person, his profession, and his party. As the *National Sentinel* argued in 1923: "The principal command of Christ is 'to love your neighbor as yourself.' [The Ľudáks] reject this, and they teach people hatred and rancor. They drive them to battles, bloodletting, even to murder."¹²² Tiso did not like such talk about Catholic priests. For him, "the greatest treasure" of the clergy was its "immaculate" reputation.¹²³ Although his immediate response to such attacks was often to return the insult, to accuse others of the same deed, or to adopt sanctimonious outrage, his long-term response was to give opponents less grounds for such claims. In short, he listened to their complaints. Whereas in 1919 he had justified his campaign against Jews as self-defense derived from love of nation, by 1924 he stressed that love of nation could not be to the detriment of others. While there is

no compelling reason to assume that his inner convictions profoundly changed, it is clear that by 1924 he styled himself as a moderate.

His opponents meanwhile had grown to understand him only as a radical. There was a moral logic at work here that defied reality. From 1918 on, Tiso firmly supported Czechoslovakia. Until 1922, there is no evidence that he had turned against the Czechs as a whole. He worked well with Moravian Catholics, saved his harshest criticism for Slovaks such as Okánik and Rozím, and overall sought to improve (rather than to reject) the union of Czechs and Slovaks. Yet, by 1922, Czechoslovaks (usually progressives) generally regarded him as a Magyarone traitor. They refused to recognize that he was committed to a common state-building project or even that he had been one of their best collaborators. Many times, this refusal was a deliberate attempt to make political hay. Tiso, after all, belonged to a party that was in many eyes antistate. The *Ľudáks* allied themselves with irredentists such as the Magyar Christian Socialists and even harbored Hungarian agents such as Tuka. Tiso's party also had a bad habit of courting international patrons who were hostile to the republic. But, at other times, the Czechoslovaks' failure to perceive Tiso accurately was discursive. They were building a state for Czechoslovaks, and progress for them usually included secularization. Tiso was instead building a state for Czechs *and* Slovaks, and progress for him could never be secularization. For many Czechoslovaks, this meant that Tiso neither understood progress nor its appropriate object. He was consequently "Tiszó," a reactionary relic. But if one understood progress as excluding secularization and defined its object as the Slovak nation, Tiso was an admirable Slovak patriot. His Hungarian past and his decisive turn to Czechoslovakia provided ample evidence for both sides of this interpretive divide.

Overall, Tiso's move into resistance strengthened the priest politically but failed to effect the most important changes that he had sought. True, the Czech mayor of Nitra stepped down shortly after the 1923 election. But the state did not return the Nitra school to the Catholic Church. Nor did the *Sokols* decamp from the city; instead, the club thrived.¹²⁴ For Tiso, resistance had turned out to be more useful for building moral credit among Slovak nationalists than for redressing the balance between church and state. The personal cost of this strategy also had been high: his brilliant clerical career was stunted, while the scandal-free reputation that he had enjoyed before 1918 was but a wistful memory. As compensation, he wore a *Ľudák* "thorny crown."



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Ward, James Mace

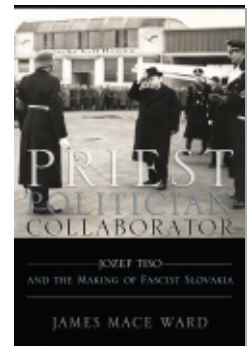
Published by Cornell University Press

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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The Failure of “Activism,” 1925–33

Either with the Vatican and consequently out of the government
or with us and against the pretensions of the Vatican.

The Vatican = petty, obsolete, already unviable.

—Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, April 1927

Between 1927 and 1929, when the Czechoslovak minister of public health and physical education spent the night in Prague, he slept in a monk’s cell. The minister, Tiso, had declined the benefit of a state flat, preferring to board in a monastery. As more evidence of his distaste for metropolitan life, he traveled weekly to his Slovak parish, over 300 kilometers away. He lived modestly in the Bánovce parsonage with his assistant priests and a younger sister, all of whom he supported.¹ His devotion to the town was legendary. One assistant priest remembered him as a self-sacrificing taskmaster, always the first to hear early morning confessions. Despite pressing duties over the next decades as an MP, minister, and president, Tiso rarely missed celebrating Sunday Mass here. He was also a fixture of city government, continuing to oversee municipal finances even while minister. His patronage over the years helped to land the town a wealth of public works.²

This contrast between the Prague minister and the Bánovce priest and town father marks a central conflict for Tiso. His concerns were mainly parochial, yet he felt compelled to pursue them from the Czechoslovak capital. Although his core agenda—Christian socialism as adapted to Slovak nationalism—had wider, even universal vistas, Tiso was most exercised by its local practice. He had a deep-seated need to lead, build, and contribute within his community. But this need was frustrated by competing, Czechoslovak visions on *who* should lead and *what* should be built. Since Tiso saw this vision as emanating from Prague, it made sense to overcome it there.

Working efficiently in Prague, however, required new tactics. By 1925, Tiso had grasped what the slogan “with us or against us” meant for the *Ľudáks*. So long as they clung to principled opposition, they would not share state power.

To go “behind the ramparts of the enemy,” as Tiso later characterized joining the government, the Ľudáks needed a new relationship with the often progressive centralists who ran the country.³

Between 1925 and 1933, Tiso tried to craft this new relationship. In the 1925 elections, he skillfully exploited Catholic and Slovak resentments, helping to reap a breakthrough victory for the Ľudáks. In 1926, he overcame factionalism within his party to lead it into government with non-Socialist centralists, winning himself a cabinet post. After this coalition collapsed in 1929—in connection with the treason trial of the Ľudák radical, Vojtech Tuka—Tiso moved to take over the party, which he hoped to reshape in his moderate image.

Tiso thus sought an “activist,” or pro-state, label for the Ľudáks. In Czechoslovak usage, “activists” were minority parties that the regime trusted. “Passive” or “negativist” parties, in contrast, were antistate. Even though Slovaks (as Czechoslovaks) were by definition a “state-forming,” or constituent, nation rather than a minority nationality, the term “activism” was commonly used to describe Tiso’s project to rehabilitate the Ľudáks.

The new relationship with centralists that Tiso sought, however, proved to be dysfunctional. While he could lead the Ľudáks into government, he could not deliver enough results to sate their nationalist hunger. Nor could he overcome the chronic distrust between his party and its new allies. Although he helped to purge the Ľudáks of Tuka for a time, Tiso could not break their addiction to a politics of martyred opposition. His final move to remake the party withered because of the barrenness of activism for achieving Slovak autonomy. By 1933, rather than remolding Ľudák radicals in his own image, they had begun to remold him in theirs.

Entering the Government

Tiso moved to Bánovce in late 1924, becoming its dean, or senior parish priest. He threw himself into the new post, ardently tending souls and church property. During his first years in Bánovce, he again concentrated on stirring religious sentiment in his faithful, invigorating their participation in Mass, for example, by introducing congregational singing. At the same time, he shifted much of his pastoral attention from women to men, whom he felt were more effective agents of re-Catholicization.⁴ Such issues, although less important now to this narrative, were incessant and dear to the priest.

This shift of focus from women to men betrayed an engagement with European Catholicism, as the trigger for the change had been a massive, male procession that Tiso witnessed during a Eucharistic congress in Amsterdam.⁵ He partook in several such congresses and no doubt used them to explore wider Catholic strategies

for dealing with interwar political challenges. My sources, however, reveal little about the impact of such politics on him. In general, he belonged to the diverse "democrats" in European political Catholicism, but would share with many of them an ambivalence toward parliamentarianism, an attraction to corporatism and authoritarianism, and an investment in the social question. Postwar Christian democracy, in contrast, would be built by the left wing of this stream: Catholics with a more enduring commitment to parliaments, less hostility to capitalism, and a willingness to accept the secularization of the public sphere.⁶

As a Slovak Catholic politician in 1925, Tiso's main concern was an upcoming parliamentary election, which offered a chance to sink the ruling, centralist coalition. It consisted of five parties, divided between Socialist and "civic." The former were the Czechoslovak Social Democrats and the Czechoslovak Socialists. The latter were the Agrarians, the Lidáks (the clerical Czechoslovak Populists), and the conservative National Democrats.⁷ Despite the challenges of irredentism, invasion, reconstruction, and integration, the coalition and its predecessors had greatly stabilized the republic. She now fit snugly in the European order, Czechoslovak economic indicators pointed upward, and Czech and Slovak culture flourished. These achievements, in part, were the fruit of a unique governing structure, the Pětka (the Five), a backroom council in which each coalition party held a seat. The Pětka let these ideologically diverse partners compromise without losing face before their often uncompromising constituencies. Most crucial decisions in the republic were made in the Pětka and enforced in parliament through strict party discipline. Another force for stability was the country's founder and president, T. G. Masaryk. An idealist, but of a very different strain than Tiso, Masaryk was committed to a multiparty, progressive, and generally tolerant vision of democracy. He also had an authoritarian side, however, keeping a firm hand on the republic through his cult as the enlightened president-liberator, through his personal wealth and influence, and through his network of political and press allies. Masaryk periodically established caretaker governments or claimed key ministries for his own men. Collectively, this power center was known as the Castle (his office and residence in Prague). Not surprisingly, the Castle and the Pětka often fought with each other.⁸

The success of stabilizing the republic had let the Pětka grow fractious, making the coalition vulnerable in the election.⁹ Minority and religious issues mapped avenues for attack. Although Czechoslovakia treated minorities comparatively well, the republic's Germans and Hungarians had yet to share in power. Slovak nationalists like the Ľudáks complained of Czech domination and economic disadvantage. Relations between most of the coalition and sections of the Catholic Church were abysmal. In late 1924, the Slovak bishops issued a pastoral letter denying sacraments to Catholics who belonged to "anti-Christian" organizations, such as leftist parties. This preelection maneuver on behalf of the Ľudáks revived

an acrimonious row over separating church and state.¹⁰ Another stink rose from a 1925 law on public holidays that replaced Catholic with “Czechoslovak” ones, such as a memorial day for the Czech martyr/heretic, Jan Hus. When, in July, the republic celebrated him amidst anti-Catholic demonstrations, the Prague nuncio quit the country. Czechoslovakia recalled her Vatican ambassador. But the Czech clericals—Fr. Jan Šrámek’s Lidáks—stayed in the government.¹¹

Tiso and the Ludáks skillfully exploited these tensions, turning the holiday law, for example, into a *cause célèbre*. True to the party’s dual focus on religion and nationality, Hlinka swore that Slovaks would observe neither Hus’s day nor 28 October, the Czechoslovak day of independence. Instead, the nation would commemorate Cyril and Methodius, Byzantine missionaries to the Slavs, and 30 October, the anniversary of the 1918 (Slovak) Martin Declaration. Following Hlinka’s lead, Tiso promised that Slovaks would honor Hus “with methods appropriate to [his] tradition. . . . Since [the Czechs] celebrate [him] with bonfires, let’s do the same. But what shall we burn? Let’s burn . . . everything connected to Hus . . . and his cult. And at each of these celebrations, let the Slovak nation swear. . . : ‘We will never be Czechs, and we will never give up the Catholic Church!’”¹²

That July, the Ludáks organized Cyril and Methodius celebrations throughout Slovakia. The one that Tiso led in Bánovce recalled his anti-Sokol rallies from a few years earlier, mixing religious zeal, nationalist anger, and contempt for the government. Local authorities had approved him to speak on “Cyril and Methodius and Slavdom.” Tiso instead attacked the Hus holiday. The Ludák’s interactions with the crowd resembled liturgy. “Who prevents us from celebrating Cyril and Methodius?” he asked. Someone shouted “Hus!” “Yes, Hus!” he answered. The crowd began to cry “Down with Hus!” “Who takes your faith and bread?” Tiso asked, then answered, “the Hussite idea, which leads to disbelief.” Later, Tiso pulled out a Czech article and asked if anyone could read it, since he supposedly could not. Lacking volunteers, he then read “in an undignified manner” a section describing the fifteenth-century war that broke out after Hus’s death, during which Hussites committed “cruelties on unarmed inhabitants, especially the old, women, and children.” Tiso also engaged in a tug-of-war with the rally’s government supervisor. When told to follow the program, for example, the priest impetuously replied: “I’m not going to stick Saints Cyril and Methodius, and Slavdom in every sentence!” When warned to drop the topic of taxes, he turned sarcastic: “The idea of a Slavic nation founded on the Cyril and Methodius tradition makes paying taxes easier.” Through such techniques, Tiso fired up the crowd without losing control over it. The rally ended with a torchlight procession through the town during which the marchers shouted insults at their opponents.¹³

In the campaign, the Ludáks prospered despite problems such as poor finances. The party program stressed economic grievances, such as a tax code that still used

Austro-Hungarian law to the detriment of the Slovak lands. The Ľudáks were also upset over land reform, which the Agrarians dominated and exploited.¹⁴ Complicating the Ľudák campaign were internal disputes and competition from the Lidáks, who set up their own branch in Slovakia, nicknamed the Mičurovci (after their leader, Martin Mičura). To better distinguish themselves and to capitalize on Hlinka's appeal, the Ľudáks renamed themselves the Hlinka's Slovak People's Party.¹⁵ A more serious problem was a lack of money, which led them to accept shady, perhaps foreign backing. According to a 1926 letter to Hlinka by leading Ľudáks, a "non-Slovak group" offered the party "significant material support" in exchange for working to soften the land reform and sending Tiso to parliament. Tiso ended up not needing help, however, so the group sponsored other Ľudáks. The incident resembles the "Coburg affair," charges that the Ľudáks had been funded by Bulgarian royalty, who had extensive holdings in Slovakia.¹⁶ While it is not clear if Tiso was a client in any such deal, he did push to overhaul land reform, generally on behalf of the Catholic Church. He argued that seizing church lands frustrated her charitable works and impoverished Catholics. He consequently wanted such land to go only to his coreligionists.¹⁷

Tiso was an outstanding if mercurial Ľudák campaigner. He quickly built up Bánovce's chapter into the most active force in town.¹⁸ Despite intense competition, he became his district's top Ľudák candidate, a position that assured him a seat in parliament. During one stump speech, he accented the party slogan "For God and Nation," privileging the religious half: "The nation cannot exist without faith and God." Tiso summed up the autonomy program as "The Slovak must come first everywhere [in Slovakia]."¹⁹ Otherwise, he hammered away at taxes, corruption, and land reform, ending with an appeal for Lutherans to join the party. Police reports from other appearances capture him in a less tolerant light, ranting about the prevalence of Protestants in the Slovak administration or denouncing state fees as a "Jewish trick."²⁰ As in 1920, the opposition harassed Tiso when he spoke. He displayed superb self-control during one such confrontation, even when "insulted in a crude fashion" by a drunk mayor.²¹ At another rally, however, he recklessly tried to shout down hecklers as "Judases," nearly provoking a riot.²²

In this campaign, Tiso especially resented competition from the Mičurovci, the Lidák Slovak branch. He likened them to a shape-shifting "witch" called "Czechoslovakism," which came "to Slovakia first as progressivism, then as communism, and now in the sheep's clothing of Catholicism."²³ Tiso's anger was not about the few votes that the Mičurovci stole, but rather about Catholic betrayal. He complained that the Slovak Lidáks had "poisoned the faith [of the nation] in its priests," giving cause especially to Communists "to call all priests traitors and Judases."²⁴ Tiso's objections to the Czechoslovak appeal of the Mičurovci had similar roots in pastoral and caste concerns. A lead article in his *Spiritual Shepherd*

argued that “antinational” causes spelled disaster for the Catholic Church. When the Felvidék hierarchy allied with Magyars before 1918, it alienated Slovaks and strengthened Catholicism’s enemies. Priests repaired the damage only through embracing Slovak nationalism. The *Shepherd* accordingly extolled the model priest “to be a living conscience of his nation and a fervent advocate for its desires, so long as they do not violate divine and Church law.”²⁵

When Slovaks voted in fall 1925, they returned a Ľudák landslide. The party captured a third of the ballots—twice the Agrarians’ share and more than for all governing parties. (Over a quarter of the Ľudák votes came from Tiso’s district, one of seven.) The party now held half of the Slovak seats in parliament. Beyond Catholics, the Ľudáks won over peasants, urban middle classes, workers, and young intelligentsia. Overall, the election signaled a shift right that especially strengthened Catholic parties. For progressives such as the journalist Ferdinand Peroutka, the election thus heralded “the collapse of the . . . anticlerical struggle.”²⁶

As an MP, Tiso now entered the highest party echelons, altering his relations with Ľudák colleagues. Impressed by the standout new deputy, Hlinka adopted him as a protégé. Such favoritism stoked the envy of senior lieutenants, such as Hlinka’s former second-in-command, Jozef Buday, and the ranking “old” Ľudáks, Ferdiš Juriga and Fr. Florián Tománek. For most freshman Ľudák lawmakers, in contrast, Tiso became a leader rather than a rival. The main exception was Tuka, the party’s lightning rod for controversy. In 1923, for example, he founded a Slovak Blackshirts, the Rodobrana (Home Guard). It reportedly gained some five thousand members before being banned that same year. In 1925, Tuka resurrected it, moving the party closer to the extreme right.²⁷ Tiso initially worked well with Tuka, but the relationship soon soured. Tuka suggested in 1926 that Hlinka belonged in an insane asylum. The “disrespectful” proposal, whether serious or not, cost the radical Tiso’s trust.²⁸

Elated by their 1925 landslide, the Ľudáks prepared to enter government—only to discover themselves still locked out. Even though they had won Slovakia, they merely placed seventh in the republic. Not needing the Ľudáks, the winning Agrarians turned instead to a version of the previous governing coalition. Hlinka and his colleagues consoled themselves by compiling conditions for joining it. Significantly, they backed down from their key demand: autonomy. They reportedly now were willing to build it “in stages”—a “gradualist” approach that was later identified with Tiso.²⁹ In a mark of Hlinka’s confidence in him, Tiso delivered the formal Ľudák response to the new government, lambasting it for “completely ignoring . . . the voice of the Slovak nation.” As he argued against a sugar tax, a heckler needled him on subsidies for the Catholic Church. “You give her little,” Tiso shot back, “and we have a right to it. . . . The Catholics of this republic will not let themselves be destroyed.”³⁰

The Ludáks never entered this short-lived coalition despite a favorable climate for doing so.³¹ Tired of Social Democratic opposition to higher agricultural tariffs, the Agrarians wanted a new coalition partner. The Ludáks, meanwhile, were under pressure to join the cabinet from the hierarchy, which hoped that more Catholics in the government would make it easier to deal with the state. A place in the ministerial council also offered the party other benefits, such as subsidies. Most of the Ludák leaders were ready to sign on without a guarantee of autonomy, but they needed something to show in its place. As Tiso put it, Slovaks “would not be able to swallow it if we translated [the nation’s] rights more or less into personal benefits.”³² The governing parties never made a good enough offer, while other issues complicated consensus. The Czech clericals were dead set against Slovak autonomy, Šrámek (their chairman) and Hlinka also clashing personally. Hlinka, moreover, was the least enthusiastic Ludák for gradualism. The Vatican reportedly had to order him into line. Around the same time, however, Hlinka fell afoul of the republic’s strict defense of Masaryk’s authority, drawing a short prison sentence for mocking the president’s alleged preference for Jews over Catholics. Leaving the court, the priest remarked: “Today, they convict me. And I’m supposed to negotiate with them about joining the government?”³³ The Ludáks instead stood by and watched the alliance between the Agrarians and Social Democrats collapse. In its place, Masaryk installed a caretaker government.

Over the next months, Tiso led renewed Ludák efforts to form a coalition. Unlike Hlinka, Tiso was eager to leave the opposition. According to him, the Ludáks had a mandate from the nation to “direct its fate.”³⁴ He liked the idea of more Catholics and no Socialists in the government. A ministerial career was also well suited to his ambition. Tiso’s Agrarian negotiating partner, Milan Hodža, similarly was acting on different ideas than his political boss—in this case, the prime minister of the previous coalition, Antonín Švehla, abroad at the time for a cure. Hodža, a Slovak Lutheran, hoped to exploit his chief’s absence to shift the Agrarians to the right. Both Tiso and Hodža were helped in their negotiations by the Catholic hierarchy, which maneuvered Hlinka off on an American tour. Departing in mid-1926, he left the party in the hands of the “energetic, young, capable, and qualified” Tiso.³⁵ Hlinka’s stand-in headed a five-member directorate, in which “new” Slovaks, including Tuka, dominated.

Tiso and Hodža’s talks were part of a power struggle between the civic (non-Socialist) parties and the Castle. Hodža, in contrast to Masaryk, preferred a coalition without the Socialists. The Agrarians coveted the portfolio of Masaryk’s favorite, Foreign Minister Edvard Beneš, and even schemed to make Švehla president. Masaryk and Beneš, meanwhile, wrestled for control of the Czechoslovak Socialists with their former ally Jiří Stříbrný, who had veered toward the right. The Castle also tussled with domestic fascists, one of whom, General Radola

Gajda, allegedly was plotting to seize power. Czechoslovak democracy struck many of the country's leaders as tottering toward collapse. Masaryk, Beneš, and Stříbrný all considered coups. The sense of crisis did not abate until the fall, when Švehla returned and put Hodža in his place. Beneš took over the Socialists, who were renamed the National Socialists (no relation to the Nazis). Masaryk neutralized Gajda, sending him on forced leave after failing to bribe him.³⁶

Tiso welcomed the shift to the right but not the accompanying instability. At the height of the storm, he advised his followers in typical fashion to seek shelter in national unity: "People talk about fascism. Reports come out [all the time] about Socialist or Communist putsches. [Parties] discuss forming this or that bloc. Let it be! Whatever happens, so long as the Slovak nation is unified, it will find its place in the [resulting political] constellation."³⁷ At the time, Tuka's subversion was making headway in the party. The radical had revived the Rodobrana in support of secret plans for revolution. He also was negotiating with both fascists and Communists, hoping to carve Slovak autonomy out of their similar plans. The Ľudák directorate, including Tiso, discussed relations with fascists just before Hlinka's departure. According to the police, the directorate voted for closer ties, also approving the Rodobrana as the platform for incorporating the ideology into the party.³⁸ Although Tiso evidently supported these decisions, he probably was ambivalent about them. According to a press report, when Hlinka courted Czechoslovak fascists in connection with the meeting, Tiso disapproved. At the same time, he strongly endorsed Hlinka's condemnation of Hungarian irredentism, a gesture that courted centralists instead.³⁹ Tiso also behaved coolly toward the Rodobrana. Although he appeared alongside the guard, he rarely played to it. In the *Spiritual Shepherd*, he even warned that "exaggerated nationalism" hindered re-Catholicization.⁴⁰

The most compelling evidence that Tiso sought stability, however, was the parliamentary alliance that he forged with Hodža. Within weeks of Hlinka's departure, the clericals and the Agrarians helped each other to pass laws on tariffs and *congrua*, or state salaries for clergy.⁴¹ The deal was a compromise for Tiso. He complained that the *congrua* law was insufficient, but he liked how it frustrated plans to separate church and state, and aided Czech priests impoverished by land reform. The new law also presaged legislation that equalized teachers in confessional schools with secular counterparts. Best of all, the alliance outflanked the leftists, who rioted in parliament in response. As Tiso reportedly wrote Hlinka: "Against the Socialist-Communist terror, we loyally maintained a front with the other civic parties. . . . We broke the terror. . . . This was about . . . who should rule in the republic: a Socialist blackmailing clique or law and order."⁴²

Tiso next set out to transform the alliance into Ľudák cabinet seats, but ran into resistance from his own party. The "old" Ľudáks Juriga and Tománek attacked him in the press as a Magyarone, a man "unknown to the Slovak nation before the revolution." Although infuriated, Tiso wisely held his tongue. Juriga and

Tománek retreated, downing their "bitter pill" for the sake of the party.⁴³ Tuka, as editor of *Slovák*, threw Tiso other curveballs. The paper took a hard line against joining the cabinet, quoting Hlinka that no Ľudák would accept a minister's chair unless "it was lined with autonomy." *Trenčan*, the party paper closest to Tiso, countered: "Entering the government is the only way that autonomy will fall like a ripe fruit into the hands of Slovaks. . . . [This is] but the first step of carrying through [our] entire program."⁴⁴

Within weeks, Tiso's gradualist approach had prevailed. In fall 1926, the Agrarians formed a government with conservative, clerical, and (for the first time in Czechoslovak history) German parties. The Ľudáks deferred their decision to join until Hlinka returned from America. Tiso and the directorate (minus Juriga) met him at the home border and briefed him on the train to Prague. Once there, the Ľudák caucus voted in support of the government, with only four members—including Tuka and Juriga—dissenting. Tiso immediately proclaimed his victory in *Slovák*. He had no trouble explaining the benefits to his church of a non-Socialist, semi-Catholic government. The benefits to the nation and party, however, had yet to be negotiated. Tiso nonetheless insisted that Ľudáks share in governing. Should they find no success "behind the ramparts of the enemy," at least "no one could say that [they] did not try."⁴⁵

It took two more months to close the coalition deal. Hlinka was unhappy with both the agreement and Tiso's leadership. In the press, Tiso described the party as caught between "Scylla and Charybdis." If the Ľudáks let the "Civic Coalition" fall, they would bear the blame for reempowering Socialists. If the Populists bought too little with their entry, voters would desert them.⁴⁶ The Ľudák caucus, sounding like Tiso, sought to reassure the nation: "We know that our gains so far are trifles, not very beneficial for us. But like the tiny mustard seed of the Gospels, [these gains] can grow into a mighty tree: autonomy for Slovakia."⁴⁷ *How* was a good question. The Ľudáks failed to seize Šrobár's old Ministry for the Administration of Slovakia, while Tiso's reported hope for at least four Ľudák ministries proved to be inflated. The party instead settled for two minor portfolios and an administrative reorganization of Slovakia. (Formerly just counties XV to XX, the territory became for the first time an administrative unit named Slovakia.) In addition, the Ľudáks could nominate the provincial president, a new post.⁴⁸

In the meantime, Tiso's rivals tried to sink his chances for a ministry. Even before Hlinka's return, the Ľudáks were supposedly slated for the health ministry and a smaller one that dealt with integrating the republic's Hungarian and Austrian administrative legacies. Press reports pegged Tiso and Marek Gažík for the posts.⁴⁹ A month later, however, Gažík, Buday, Juriga, and other "old" Slovaks protested to Hlinka that they had been passed over. They charged that a Magyarone wing, which included Tuka and Tiso, wanted to push them out of the

party. Although the “old” *Ludáks* insisted that they did not want to sack the “Magyarones,” the protest’s demand that only “tested Slovaks” hold power implied it.⁵⁰ Whether in response or not, the party’s final six ministerial candidates included four of the discontented “old” Slovaks. In the end, Hlinka and Prime Minister Švehla picked the early favorites, Tiso and Gažík.⁵¹

Tiso had led the *Ludáks* out of the opposition and into the government, gaining himself a cabinet post. He may have thought that this road led to Slovak autonomy. But his immediate destinations belonged instead to his church: the defeat of the separation of church and state, increased influence for Catholics, and the outflanking of the godless Socialists. Still a provincial priest at heart, Tiso had become a national politician. He was thirty-nine years old.

Behind the Ramparts of the Enemy

In power, Tiso struggled to prove that activism was worth the party’s investment. He needed to find common ground with the “enemy” and to deliver the promised “ripe fruit”: tangible, significant steps toward autonomy. What kept him from doing so was not only hostility from both centralists and *Ludáks*, but also his own penchant for missteps and scandal. Through careful maneuvering, however, he did neutralize his main party rival, Tuka.

In early 1927, Tiso became minister of public health and physical education. In addition to such duties as managing state hospitals and regulating medical and food industries, he oversaw the republic’s lucrative spas and promoted sports through organizations like Sokol and Orol. Tiso’s ministry was modest (claiming less than 1.5 percent of proposed government spending in 1928) and insecure (its abolishment having been recently debated).⁵² As a political appointee, he needed no health-care expertise; his section chief provided that. Tiso, however, set his department’s agenda. He also hired and fired (in agreement with the government) and dealt with the requests for interventions that poured into his office. Such activities were important means of building party loyalty.

Upon naming Tiso and Gažík as ministers, Masaryk sat them down for a talk. The president was unhappy with the choices and so grilled them on their plans. According to a witness, “it was obvious that neither man was ready to take over his department. Dr. Tiso, in particular, [could] not respond to [our] questions.” The view from the Castle was that the *Ludák* ministers were Magyarone “dead-weight.”⁵³ One might assume that Tiso went into this meeting with an equally dim view of the anticlerical and arguably double-crossing Masaryk. Two years earlier, Tiso even had refused to participate in celebrations for the president’s birthday. Yet, despite this mutual antipathy, Tiso reportedly left the audience enthused.

Masaryk supposedly encouraged him to implement the Pittsburgh Agreement through the government, a gesture Tiso took as a sign of goodwill.⁵⁴

In his new post, Tiso was still a minor player on the Czechoslovak political stage. The fifteen-member cabinet to which he belonged was split in three between agrarians, clericals, and technocrats. Slovaks held only three seats. Tiso, the youngest minister, was dominated by more experienced colleagues. Beneš, for example, had served as foreign minister since 1918, while Minister of Finance Karel Engliš was a noted economist. Both men were technocrats, answering more to Masaryk than the coalition. While the Castle often intrigued against the Ľudáks, the Pětka was less trouble for Tiso. During the Civic Coalition, it became the "Osmička" (the Eight), with Buday in the Ľudák seat. For structural reasons, the Osmička lacked the influence of the Pětka, leading Buday to complain to Hlinka that Tiso and Gažík did not listen to him. "A lot of people don't listen to me either," Hlinka replied, "but what can I do?"⁵⁵

In general, Tiso was an ordinary member of an ordinary government. The Civic Coalition's time was marked mainly by tensions with the Castle and Švehla's ill health. Major achievements included a tax and welfare reform, the Slovak administrative reorganization, and the concluding of a *modus vivendi* with the Vatican. This last agreement significantly lowered church-state tensions, but fell short of the Catholic ideal of a concordat.⁵⁶ During cabinet meetings, Tiso appropriately stuck to his portfolio. But Slovak issues, such as the abolition of a district office, also drew him into discussions. It is interesting that he was absent from the main debates on both the *modus vivendi* and the welfare reform.⁵⁷ The former took place during a party crisis, the latter on a Saturday, when he was probably in Bánovce. His failure to attend these meetings epitomized the declining importance of Christian socialism in his public mission.

The leitmotif of Tiso's government ministry tended to be service to the nation rather than the Catholic Church. In his first interview as minister, Tiso demanded a Slovak parliament and administration, and industrial investment for Slovakia. In the weeks ahead, he boasted of hiring a Slovak lawyer for his department, promising that in Slovakia his ministry would do business in Slovak; he inspected foundations for a new spa restaurant in Sliač, an 8-million-crown investment for Slovakia; and he revealed plans for more investment—a major mental health facility and two Pasteur institutes. Tiso also wanted to hire and fire some doctors, evidently planning to replace Czechs with Slovaks.⁵⁸ His initiatives on behalf of his church, in contrast, were rarer.⁵⁹ Yet Catholicism continued to inform Tiso's greater attention to the nation. For example, he also espoused tolerance toward Germans and Hungarians, an approach that he justified through faith: "We are Catholics, and thus our highest law is 'justice for everyone.' To unjustly deprive people . . . of their property is not Catholic."⁶⁰

Even in conflicts that inflamed religious passions, such as abortion, Tiso behaved in office more like a secular leader than a political priest. In spring 1927, Betty Karpíšková, a Social Democrat on the parliament's health committee, challenged him to respond to Socialist proposals to liberalize the republic's penal code, which prescribed up to five years of hard labor for women who underwent abortion. Picking up this gauntlet, Tiso used his appearance before the committee to set the terms of debate. As he explained it, he wished to avoid criticism that he was mixing religion with politics. He consequently eschewed appeals to scripture or divine law, favoring instead argumentation better identified with his opponents: material determinism. First, he equated population with national strength, portraying abortion as a strategic liability. Second, he argued that high birth rates improved social values. Because large families were forced to share resources, family members learned sacrifice and solidarity. Small families, in contrast, had a surplus of material comfort and so cultivated selfishness and hedonism.⁶¹

Tiso's decision to engage his foes on their intellectual terms was characteristic of his confidence. It was also characteristic that he failed to pull it off. By the end of his appearance before the committee, he had slipped into sophistry, self-righteousness, and pedantry. He ran into trouble when he tried to use statistics to refute the claim (favored by Karpíšková) that poverty drove women to abortion. If so, he asked, then why did the poor have more babies than the rich? Karpíšková and another Social Democrat, Václav Johanis, sharply protested:

Karpíšková: The reason is backwardness.

Tiso: You praise the poor to the heavens, and yet you see them as less moral and cultured than yourself. In the poor, I don't see a lack of culture and character, sentiment and consciousness. I measure poverty according to economics and wealth.

Johanis: Why do you think that the middle class has fewer children than the wealthy?

Tiso: Middle-class people don't want to spend their income on children but on their own personal pleasures, while the poor have already been taught self-denial, and they know how to deny themselves in this matter.

Johanis: In practice, our colleague Karpíšková is right.

Tiso: I am dealing with this question as a theoretical and practical educator. I have no personal interest, and you acknowledge that such a man judges these questions [better]. I represent a standpoint that is founded on the theories of those who have carried out the logical preparatory work.

Johanis: [Your] statistics miss the point about the poor. Practical experience teaches us the opposite with these poor women.

Tiso: You said that economic difficulties compel people to abort their unborn children, and I have demonstrated that there is no economic basis for this. Therefore, there must be something else to it.⁶²

Although failing to dazzle his opponents, Tiso did cast himself as an effective defender of Catholic and Ľudák values. *Slovák*, for one, tied the bill's demise to his opposition.⁶³

Tiso was by now a party star. The Ľudák press portrayed him in constant motion in Slovakia: traveling home by night express, inspecting health facilities, or intervening in land reform. As the surprise showstopper, he threatened to upstage Hlinka at Ľudák rallies. *Slovák* especially praised Tiso's devotion to his parish: "When not in Prague, he is in Bánovce—baptizing, burying, hearing confession, saying Mass, and preaching. He attends to the adornment of his church, [employing an] academic muralist. . . . [Tiso] also plans to construct a park around his church and is building two grade schools." "Entire deputations" made pilgrimages to the town, beseeching his help.⁶⁴ Good deeds from the past came back to honor him. Actors at the Slovak National Theater, for example, told reporters of how Tiso, the year before, had miraculously and humbly solved an array of technical problems during a performance in Bánovce. This lionizing of the minister reached its apogee on May Day 1927, when the town's Communists rallied. Confronting them, Tiso gained the podium. According to *Slovák*, by the time he finished, they were praising Jesus.⁶⁵

Ironically, the man overseeing much of this propaganda—Tuka, the editor of *Slovák*—was set on driving the Ľudáks (and Tiso) out of the government. Tuka and his Hungarian contact, the Ľudák defector František Jehlička, mobilized party dissidents to attack the Ľudák leadership for selling out autonomy. In late 1927, the dissidents founded the journal *Autonomia*, the purpose of which (according to Tuka) was to facilitate the creation of a new party by "definitively discrediting" the Ľudáks.⁶⁶ *Autonomia* mercilessly attacked the progovernment wing, even proposing the abolition of both Ľudák ministries as sinecures.⁶⁷

Driven by such internal ferment, the Ľudáks often postured as the opposition despite being part of the establishment. In 1927, for example, Masaryk was reelected president. The Ľudáks refused to support him, embarrassing the coalition and arguably abetting Hungarian claims that the republic was illegitimate. Hlinka justified the decision in *Slovák* with a long list of "injustices" allegedly committed against his church and nation.⁶⁸ "The Slovaks are still young and inexperienced lads," Masaryk condescendingly complained. "They don't know how to demonstrate against the Hungarians through my election. And what did I do to the Slovaks?!"⁶⁹ The Ľudáks again disappointed by these standards during the "Rothermere action," an international campaign on behalf of Hungarian revision.

Even though the Ľudák leadership consistently rejected such irredentism, the party snubbed an all-Czechoslovak rally protesting the action.⁷⁰

In mid-1927 Tiso set a ministerial agenda worthy of his wunderkind reputation, unveiling twenty-nine major legislative and organizational goals, ten of which he wanted done within a year.⁷¹ He projected heavy investment in health-care institutions (including spas) and public health campaigns against diseases such as tuberculosis. Although much of the proposed investment was for Slovakia, overall the program was centralist rather than autonomist. It stressed legislative and administrative uniformity, regulation of the population, and increased ministerial powers. Throughout the program, Tiso again favored the dictates of progress, democracy, and science over religious agendas. Indeed, his Catholicism was barely discernable in the document.

The program's ambitiousness reflected more than just Tiso's personality. He was under heavy pressure to deliver results for the nation. The Ľudáks had bet that the administrative reorganization would lead to autonomy. Instead, the restructuring created weak regional organs dominated by Prague. The government, for example, appointed a third of the provincial legislators. Overall, local autonomies were actually emasculated, leaving the party with only symbolic gains: it had put a province called "Slovakia" on the map. Tiso knew that this record would not satisfy Ľudák voters.⁷² The party's only hope lay in milking the ministries. Since Gažík's portfolio was miniscule, everything depended on Tiso. But, with a small ministry himself, he could only do so much.

Perhaps as a result, Tiso tended to hunt for trophies. Just before unveiling his program, for example, he gained the coalition's provisional agreement to invest 4 million crowns in a badly needed mental health institute for Slovakia. One can imagine his frustration when the technocrat minister of finance later slashed the outlay to 100,000 crowns.⁷³ Tiso fared worse on his next outing, which in fact pursued a white elephant: a tuberculosis "reservation." The project would coerce investment by forcing Czech sanitariums to relocate to Slovakia's Tatra Mountains. To enact the plan, Tiso's ministry drafted legislation for new powers to tax, police, and expropriate. His coalition partners dismissed the bill as half-baked, inept, and unconstitutional. The scheme offered no advantage for treating the disease yet threatened the Tatra's tourist economy.⁷⁴ Criticism of Tiso meanwhile spread to charges of mismanaging spas, purging Czech personnel, and buying favorable press. Despite the clamor, he clung to the project.⁷⁵

A bigger obstacle to Tiso's activist program than the centralists or his own blunders was Tuka. On New Year's Day 1928, the radical published an article in *Slovák* that shook the party's tenuous hold on power. Tuka argued that the 1918 Martin Declaration included a secret clause: if Slovakia lacked autonomy within a decade, then a *vacuum juris*, or absence of law, resulted. Czechoslovakia, in short, would soon be null and void.⁷⁶ The article immediately inspired a campaign to

charge Tuka (and by extension the Ľudáks) with treason. Two "old" Slovaks led the way: Milan Ivanka, a Lutheran from the coalition's National Democrats, and Ivan Dérer, the leading Slovak Social Democrat.⁷⁷

Tiso countered Tuka's challenge by steering between competing party factions. Some "old" Ľudáks, reportedly led by Gažík, wanted to expel Tuka. Hlinka, however, fused the party's fate with the radical's.⁷⁸ Besides believing Tuka to be innocent and admiring his Catholic mission, Hlinka sensed a propaganda cure for the party's falling support: Tuka would be the next martyr for autonomy.⁷⁹ Tiso aligned with the "old" Ľudáks on dumping Tuka but wanted to avoid revealing party disunity. While he complained in the press that the treason talk was a "sully of Tuka's honorable reputation," he also dismissed the radical's *vacuum juris* argument as "entirely irrelevant."⁸⁰ Privately, he ordered the star witness against Tuka, a disgruntled Ľudák mayor, "to do [his] duty." The witness later claimed that, if not for this instruction, he "likely would have remained silent about several things."⁸¹ Tiso no doubt wished that party discipline left him more leeway for undermining Tuka. According to a police report, the two men were "great enemies." Tuka supposedly tried to sack Tiso as minister "because [he] now . . . dedicates himself very little to Catholicism."⁸²

The Tuka affair opened up space for Tiso as the "good" Ľudák. Rumors that he was purging the party's "unreliable elements" were ecstatic front-page news for the Agrarians.⁸³ Another progovernment paper extolled his insistence on Slovaks building their own economy: "We are not used to hearing such fair words from Ľudák mouths."⁸⁴ More and more, people listened to Tiso to divine his party's next move. They also grew more comfortable with him representing the state, as he did well during a tour of Yugoslavia's spas.⁸⁵

Yet Tiso remained intensely controversial. In fall 1928, a parliamentary committee tore into him, complaining that his ministry was lethargic and ineffective. (Tiso took the censure gamely, admitting failures and asking for help with solutions).⁸⁶ As part of the republic's decennial celebrations, he clumsily sparked a scandal by awarding a disproportionate number of physical-fitness medals to Catholics. One newspaper wondered if he wanted to categorize all learning (as he allegedly had sports) into "Catholic-clerical" and the less valuable "civic" (or non-Catholic in this usage).⁸⁷ The next month, the pro-Castle *Lidové noviny* pilloried him as incompetent. Of the twenty-nine major goals that he had trumpeted sixteen months earlier, he had accomplished only the three easiest: "For 'do-nothingness' . . . , the Ministry of Health compares only to the Ministry of Schools, but not even there will you find such a miserable balance sheet. . . . Informed sources insist that [the problem lies] not merely with political issues, which occupy the Ľudák minister so much that he cannot care about his department. Rather, the sticking point is . . . his chief of staff, in whose desk drawer disappears every proposal and initiative from real experts."⁸⁸

This hail of criticism, of course, was not just about Tiso. It was election time. Tiso symbolized Ľudák participation in government, which both enemies and supporters of the party wanted to end. According to the police, Tiso expected the Ľudáks to be thrashed at the polls, in part because they had let their quarrels go public. “The rural masses hear from [us] only insults against other religions, other nationalities,” he also complained. “There is a simple lack of tolerance for everyone and everything that is not Slovak and Catholic.”⁸⁹ The bigger problem was the party’s record in government, which failed to meet Slovak nationalist demands. Sensing this vulnerability, Tiso—just before the election—talked his cabinet colleagues out of 11 million crowns for a Slovak hospital. It was a big-budget example of the constructive side to his ministry that the scandals tended to overshadow. As an election gesture, it was too little, too late. When Slovaks voted for a provincial legislature in late 1928, they punished the Ľudáks. Compared to the last parliamentary election, the party’s share dropped by nearly a third.⁹⁰

Right after the elections, Tiso and the party faced another crisis over Tuka. Polemics on the *vacuum juris* article had changed into formal treason charges. The elections had confirmed the Ľudáks as the “weakest link” in the Civic Coalition, prompting the Castle and the Socialists to pounce. The Ľudáks supported the parliamentary motion to prosecute Tuka, a gesture of unanimity that veiled a deepening split. Tuka’s allies—chief among them his confessor Hlinka—championed the radical as a martyr and wanted to exploit his expected vindication. In opposition, Tiso and a trio of “old” Ľudáks (Juriga, Tománek, and Gažík) pushed to abandon him.⁹¹ Hlinka’s view prevailed, leading to repercussions for all of Tuka’s opponents except Tiso. Hlinka kicked Juriga and Tománek out of the party, while Gažík lost his ministry. Unlike Tiso, these three had broken with Tuka in public.⁹² Despite a 1929 cabinet reshuffle, the Ľudáks stayed in the Civic Coalition, which increased its own attacks against the Castle.⁹³

Late that summer, Tuka and two lieutenants went on trial in Bratislava for treason. Although Tuka was guilty, the government’s case rested on questionable witnesses like the disgruntled Ľudák mayor. He testified that Tuka had kept a Viennese spy office and had planned insurrection, charges that stuck despite inconsistencies in the evidence. On the witness stand, Hlinka denounced the proceedings as political, declaring that the “old” Ľudáks were ready “to walk through fire” for Tuka.⁹⁴ Tiso and Ľudovít Labaj, Gažík’s successor, watched from the gallery—the most notable gesture of solidarity that Tiso granted Tuka. At least partially convinced by the government’s case, Tiso seems to have anticipated a guilty verdict. According to the Castle, he apparently “wanted Tuka to be convicted.” Hlinka supposedly only defended Tuka because he feared that the radical might tell tales.⁹⁵ According to the police, Tiso urged the party to jettison Tuka before his conviction “damaged” the party.⁹⁶

But Tuka's fate soon was enmeshed with the party's chances at the polls. In September 1929, Švehla's successor as prime minister, František Udržal, provoked early elections by reshuffling his cabinet to the benefit of Agrarians. Instead of using Tuka to bring down the Civic Coalition, Masaryk had found allies within the government who were sympathetic to a change. The timing meant that Tuka's conviction would hit voters with full force, be it good or ill. Angry over these intrigues and drawn to the politics of martyrdom, Hlinka and the party proclaimed their "unanimous confidence" in Tuka by standing him for parliament. Days later, he received a fifteen-year sentence. Masaryk rebuffed pleas by Hlinka to pardon him. In a mutually indignant correspondence, the president instead characterized Hlinka as congenitally bilious: "I often wonder if you don't have a heart but rather a second liver."⁹⁷

The Tuka verdict ended Tiso's cabinet career. Participating in government and backing a candidate who had just been condemned of treason by the same government were mutually exclusive. According to the police, Tiso and Labaj preferred quitting over being forced out. Although Hlinka reportedly rejected the idea—fulminating that "it wasn't possible to terrorize either him or his party"—he nonetheless "recalled" both men the same day.⁹⁸ The party expected to fare better running in opposition than on its government record. In spite of differences in the past, *Lidové noviny* seemed to rue Tiso's fall, praising his "moderation" and efforts to "check Magyarone influence in the party."⁹⁹

Tiso went into the October elections with little to show for three years of activism. He had gotten few laws through parliament, secured few investments for Slovakia, and created few titled positions intended for Slovaks.¹⁰⁰ Outside his ministry, the party had landed a lasting grip on jobs in the provincial government, and he also had helped to protect some enterprises in Slovakia, such as a mint.¹⁰¹ But the administrative reorganization of the province paradoxically had strengthened centralism, while Tiso's ministry had been tarnished by scandal and questions of competence. Like all interwar Slovak ministers, Tiso failed to dent the preponderance of Czechs in the central government.¹⁰² In the end, he achieved less for the nation than for Catholicism, having strongly reasserted obligations toward the church and clergy.

Campaigning, Tiso compensated for the weaknesses in his record with demagoguery. During an appearance in Bratislava, for example, he portrayed autonomy as the real defendant in the Tuka trial. According to Tiso, the proceedings had proven beyond doubt that the party's program had no Budapest connection. The conspiracy lay instead in "the medieval inquisition that controls [Czechoslovakia], this secret camarilla, whose purpose is to extirpate [us]." Beneš, it seems, ordered Tuka's conviction to cover up the secret clause, which Tiso now claimed actually existed. More responsibly, Tiso called on Slovak parties to pass a

provincial budget. He also reached out to minorities, albeit insisting on privilege for Slovaks:

[We must] offer our hands to every citizen, no matter what nationality . . . , who wants to build a true democracy and autonomy here. In Slovakia, the Slovak is the master of the house and must remain so. We grant rights to the Hungarians and Germans, but we will not lease our homeland to anyone. They reproach us that we protect Jewish-Hungarian industry. We admit it. But . . . these [industries] give our people bread and sustenance, and we will continue to [protect] those [people] who benefit the Slovak nation.¹⁰³

Tiso finished the rally hoisted on the shoulders of followers. It must have been tough work, as he now was reaching the girth for which he would be known.¹⁰⁴

When the election results came in, the Ľudáks had little reason to celebrate. Compared to the 1928 returns, the party won back supporters. But compared to the 1925 contest, the Ľudák share of the overall vote in Slovakia slipped 6 percent. Tiso's district was again a stronghold for the party in 1929. In Tuka's district, in contrast, the party failed to elect any candidate.¹⁰⁵ Although voters may have welcomed the party's return to opposition, they were wary of Tuka. Hlinka, hoping to shield the radical from jail, nonetheless wanted to award him a seat during the second round of counting. Tiso and others persuaded the chairman to let Tuka instead recede into the obscurity of prison. Even though Tiso probably did not wish incarceration for his rival, he had won the battle to rid the party of him. "We came out of the elections purged . . . ," he wrote in *Trenčan*, "May God help us to translate these lessons into future success."¹⁰⁶

Tiso's party in fact was demoralized, disorganized, and broke. The election had challenged the Ľudáks' image as the wave of the future, a movement that went "from victory to victory."¹⁰⁷ Chaos and factionalism clogged the workings of the party machine. Its finances were so weak that *Slovák* almost shut down.¹⁰⁸ As a more serious handicap, the Ľudáks were isolated politically. The Agrarians built another coalition with Socialists and the Lidáks, Prime Minister Udržal claiming that Hlinka now did "not mean a thing."¹⁰⁹

Tiso soon suffered another blow when he lost control of *The Spiritual Shepherd*, which had declined under his editorship. The Slovak bishops withdrew support in 1925, while the journal's publisher, the St. Vojtech Society, threatened in 1928 to shut it down if at least half of the Slovak priests did not subscribe.¹¹⁰ Critics complained that the *Shepherd* was expensive, unscholarly, impractical, and politicized.¹¹¹ Some priests even returned issues in protest.¹¹² In early 1930, the society made good on its threat. After much press discussion—often critical of Tiso—the journal was relaunched under new leadership.¹¹³ The *Shepherd* had been

Tiso's last link with his life as a spiritual director. Henceforth, he would have few opportunities to shape Slovak priests theologically.

Behind Tiso's humiliation at *The Spiritual Shepherd* lay a shift in the Vatican's attitude toward political priests. The papacy has often been ambivalent about political Catholicism, which it has trouble controlling and which threatens to damage the church by embroiling her in domestic conflicts. The pontiffs that Tiso came of age under, such as Benedict XV, sometimes turned to Catholic parties to compensate for the loss of sovereignty sustained during the 1870 unification of Italy. In contrast, Pius XI, who was elected in 1922, forsook these parties in a drive to settle with the Italian state. He achieved his goal in 1929 with the Lateran Accords, through which Italy recognized the Vatican's sovereignty and Pius bolstered Mussolini's legitimacy. The pope henceforth concentrated on defending the interests of the church through concordats, also asking priests to confine themselves to the "apolitical" Catholic Action, the lay movement aimed at re-Catholicizing social life. In 1928, reports circulated in Czechoslovakia that Pius intended to ban all of the republic's priests from holding elective office.¹¹⁴ Thus, some of the complaints about the politicization of the *Shepherd* were support for Pius's position. The *Shepherd* responded to this conflict as Tiso had during his humiliation with Kmeřko: the journal published a defense of priests in politics, arguing that Pius's message had been misunderstood.¹¹⁵

Overall, Tiso's foray "behind the ramparts of the enemy" was disappointing. He had reached out to the centralists, adapted his methods to them, and served their interests. This initiative had opened him up to charges of selling out his movement, as his gradualism cost the party votes without moving it toward autonomy. Despite speaking the language of the "enemy," he failed to establish a dialogue between his outsider party and the Czechoslovak centers of power. His sincere desire to stay in government was no match for internal party rivalry or opposition from the centralists. One can sympathize with the centralists' distrust of the Ludáks. Not only did the party defend the treasonous Tuka, it even ran a campaign based on his court conviction. Yet one can also sympathize with Tiso's frustration. After all, compared to Tuka, Hlinka, or even Masaryk, Tiso arguably did the least of anyone to defeat reconciliation.

Activism versus Radicalism

For the next three years, within the context of economic depression and the reestablishment of Socialist-civic rule, Tiso tried to return to power. He incessantly looked for allies, honing his skills at speaking like the "enemy." He reformed the party's ideology, mining Catholicism for fresh ore to alloy with nationalism. Most

important, he moved to succeed Hlinka and to shift the party toward the center. None of these initiatives brought him nearer to his goals. Rather than taking over the party or returning to power, an ever more frustrated Tiso confronted a new generation of radical rivals who—unlike him—offered tactics that had impact.

Tiso began the 1930s trying to break the *Ludáks*' political isolation by forming alliances. His initiatives on Slovak nationalist and Catholic blocs quickly fizzled. There was little interest in the former, while the latter could not surmount the discord between the *Ludáks* and *Lidáks* over autonomy and the *Mičurovci*. Tiso's proposal for a territorially Slovak bloc, in contrast, stirred enthusiasm among the Hungarians, yet there was a rub here as well. Since the Hungarian parties were generally irredentist, the proposal evoked Tuka's ghost.¹¹⁶ Tiso tried to convince the centralists to accept the alliance by equating it with their cooperation with German activists. "This is not Hungarianism," he insisted, "but the opposite. It is the approach of the Prague political school."¹¹⁷ For Tiso, this "test balloon" turned out to be made of lead.¹¹⁸ As one newspaper put it, "Only a political child could believe that our Hungarians are 'state-forming,'" or committed to the republic.¹¹⁹ Hlinka also was dead set against the deal, reportedly being willing to "join hands with the devil" to get autonomy "but not with the Hungarians."¹²⁰ In the end, Tiso succeeded in allying only with Czech right radicals. These deputies provided the *Ludáks* three extra votes in parliament, which let the party propose laws and file interpellations, or inquiries into government conduct. The alliance lacked common ground and quickly fell apart when the government attacked the radicals in 1931.¹²¹ By this time, Tiso had exhausted all possibilities for a bloc that could break his party's isolation. He would periodically revisit these options, but the problems attached with each never changed.

The republic's economy, crippled by the 1929 market crash, also inspired Tiso to reach out to Slovak parties even without a chance of a bloc. The depression hit harder in Slovakia, already weakened by competition with Bohemia and Moravia, than in most other European areas: production fell around 40 percent, leaving every third worker jobless.¹²² Always attuned to "bread" issues, Tiso reacted quickly to the Wall Street crash by founding an "all party" economic council for his region.¹²³ This approach fit nicely with the "regionalism" of the Agrarian *Hodža*, who wanted parties to cooperate on the province's economic policy. In 1931, the *Ludáks* joined *Hodža* in forming an institute with this mandate. While these ventures yielded few results, it was striking to see Tiso work publicly with not only Agrarians but even Social Democrats.¹²⁴ The time in government clearly had accustomed him to the multiparty system.

In confronting the depression, Tiso spoke a thoroughly modern idiom, stressing the role of the state. He wanted progress: railway connections, hydroelectric dams, regulated rivers, soil reclamation. He scolded Prague for neglecting such

development in Slovakia, which remained plagued by “backwardness” and emigration. In a 1931 parliamentary speech, he decried confiscations that denied the indebted means of production, as when tax authorities in Bánovce stooped to grab a pig sty. Tiso justified his other economic policies through the old nationalist project of building a specifically Slovak intelligentsia, finance network, and industry. He opposed hiring freezes by the state (the main employer of Slovak university graduates), denounced Czech banks “for swallowing” Slovak rivals, and proposed a 10 percent price advantage for industry in Slovakia.¹²⁵

Never had Tiso sounded more assured as a statesman or better versed in democracy. He handled himself adroitly in parliament, deploying statistics with a skill that he had lacked as minister of health. Rather than explode at hecklers, he dispatched them with humorous asides. A new, self-critical frankness graced his pleas for Slovak cooperation:

Every Slovak party came out of the revolution with the same standpoint . . . to lift up Slovakia, to benefit [her]. The only difference . . . was that some forgot about Slovakia and looked first to the state. . . . Our party emerged . . . with a more emotional . . . love of Slovakia and of the Slovak nation. . . . We knew well, however, that to defend Slovakia without considering the entire state is not possible, yet—and I admit this—emotions dominated our tactics. Many times, it impelled us to push to the forefront solely Slovak interests.¹²⁶

At times, Tiso even seemed to espouse a liberal understanding of democracy. In one speech, he decried the “dictatorship of a selfish majority”: “A healthy system . . . is careful to maintain an opposition. And it supports this opposition by respecting it, by noticing its legislative proposals, and by encouraging it to criticize. But what can we say about our majority, which . . . does not even begrudge the opposition a place in the presidium of the parliament. . . ? [Our bills] either never get out of committee or else do not go [far beyond it]. . . . An infirm government pushes the opposition into infirmity as well.”¹²⁷ Although Tiso was serious about economic progress and forging links with the centralists, however, he was not sincerely liberalizing. He was concerned about the opposition mainly because his party was in it. His voice rings truer in a 1931 party council, during which he blamed the isolation of the Ľudáks on the “enemy,” who wanted “to condemn them to inactivity” and thus sow “internal confusion” and “dissolution.”¹²⁸

Tiso’s reasons for defending the opposition aside, his complaints about government domination were well founded. Whether through the Pětka or the cabinet, Czechoslovak governing coalitions enforced their will on the legislature. An MP who defied party orders risked his seat. As a result, the interwar house never rejected a government-sponsored bill nor passed a vote of no confidence

in a cabinet. The standard Pětka parties tended to make up the governing coalitions, which often ignored the opposition, leaving it frustrated and effectively disenfranchised. In 1930, for example, the Ludáks submitted another proposal for autonomy, seeking this time merely guarantees already granted (but not enacted) in Subcarpathian Rus'. The bill shared its predecessor's fate, dying in committee.¹²⁹ The same treatment was dished out to the party over mundane legislation. One Ludák deputy, for example, reportedly saw his 250 suggestions for a budget law ignored like "the buzzing of a fly on a window."¹³⁰

Stymied by this state of affairs, Tiso sharpened his ideological spears. After the death of the second autonomy proposal, he authored the party's official ideology. Rather than just arguing for the Pittsburgh Agreement as a historical right, Tiso explained autonomy as the latest stage in the development of an organic Slovak nation, an evolution that it was imperative for the nation to pursue. In short, Tiso articulated autonomy primarily as a natural right.¹³¹ He had made such claims before, but never had he developed them so systematically or embedded them in such a major programmatic statement. He thus raised the moral stakes. In addition, Tiso began to characterize Slovak loyalty to the republic as conditional. In an article, he stressed both the Slovak preference for the common state and the Catholic "duty of loyalty to the state. Yet [let us] not forget that Catholic morality also explains how long this obligation lasts and under what conditions it expires. . . . The national interest is the highest value in politics; the state should serve the nation. . . . We shall not hesitate to declare that the nation *comes before* the state should we see the Slovak nation threatened."¹³² Tiso's placing of the nation over the state drew on three influences. The first was Neo-Thomism, which saw the church as superior to the state, since Catholic loyalty depended on a tolerable environment for religion. The second was the Enlightenment, natural-law roots of Czech and Slovak nationalism, which justified its rebellion against Austria-Hungary by the dual state's oppression of non-Magyar nationalities. The third was the Ludák habit of questioning the republic's legitimacy. By making the nation a moral arbiter of the state, Tiso enthroned the nation on a plane that he had formerly reserved for his church.

With his rise to party ideologist, Tiso seemed set to take over from Hlinka. In the wake of the Tuka trial, the deputy chairman had no serious party rivals. Hlinka, meanwhile, seemed to bow to age and illness, even missing a 1931 executive council session. Tiso used the venue to stamp the party in his own image, arguing for his "realistic" politics of gradualism and compromise, albeit in service of the "categorical imperative" of "securing for the Slovak nation all attributes of sovereignty."¹³³ Most significant, Tiso renounced the Ludák habit of seeking foreign patrons. That fall, meeting with priests in eastern Slovakia, he talked as though he would be chairman at any minute. Some party members were unimpressed. As one "influential" layman groused to a police informant,

"Tiso is very mistaken if he thinks that he will have as much power and influence as Hlinka."¹³⁴

Tiso's attention to priests in eastern Slovakia mirrored a renewed engagement on his part with Catholic issues. As usual, the Ľudák had many reasons for the change in tactics, from consolidating his power base to defeating alleged leftist plans for a culture war. A landmark Catholic initiative also had appeared: Pius XI's *Quadragesimo anno*. Celebrating forty years of Christian socialism, Pius's 1931 encyclical proposed to end the world economic crisis by reasserting spiritual over material values and by transcending class conflict through worker-employer corporations. This Catholic corporatism, in contrast to its fascist cousins, would be based on voluntary association and "subsidiarity," the principle of reserving to the state only those functions that lower organs of the body politic, such as charities, could not do effectively. In parliament, Tiso enthusiastically promoted the encyclical, intensifying his criticism of party politics and of capitalism. He also declared a Catholic bloc imminent. In fact, although Tiso perhaps made progress with the Vatican over the issue, no such deal happened.¹³⁵

Inspired by *Quadragesimo anno*, Tiso began to interpret the world economic collapse as the harbinger of a new Catholic order. In a 1932 lecture, he described secularism as a system that "posits material power as the highest principle. . . . As if to protest against the spiritual hegemony of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages, liberalism, capitalism, and socialism joined forces . . . to exclude God and to deny the influence of moral principles in directing the world. And the world, intoxicated with rapid success, built a tower of culture. But, just when they thought that they had reached the apogee, confusion sat in, economic crisis, Babylon." Recovery demanded the restoration of idealism over materialism. Catholicism should again "direct the world." Tiso imagined this Catholic dominion as both rigid and flexible. "To be Catholic means to stand firmly on the eternal laws and principles that the Creator himself gave to the world." Yet, once this dogma was accepted, Catholicism was remarkably synthetic:

For us, there are a hundred possibilities and not just one. . . . The line that we follow is one in which spirit and matter, thought and form, soul and body, supernatural and natural meet in higher unity. The conjunction "and" characterizes us: God and nation, state and homeland, nation and humanity, Slovakia and the republic, power and right, justice and love, time and eternity. . . .

We feel every breeze, we swim in every stream, but we are not carried away by any fashion, because our essence is eternal.

Catholic strategy, finally, was patient. "We know how to . . . wait . . . , to let things ripen," Tiso explained. "[We do this] even if . . . others will harvest after us, for we do not sow for ourselves."¹³⁶

Tiso reconfigured his “realistic” politics along similar eternal and temporal axes. Rather than a politics of compromise and gradualism, “realism” now meant “directing and managing the material world according to Slovak and Christian ideas.”¹³⁷ In effect, Tiso fused the temporal goal of autonomy to the eternal project of expanding the Kingdom of Christ. At the same time, he identified autonomy as an “eternal,” dogmatic principle for the Ludáks: “Just as the prayer ‘Our Father’ does not change, neither does [our] program change until the Slovak can say ‘. . . I have rights in Slovakia too.’ Autonomy for us is not just an election slogan, but rather a national creed, a national ‘Our Father,’ a national need, and its gaining is a national duty.”¹³⁸ Like Tiso’s vision of Catholicism, Ludák politics was also synthetic, aspiring “to employ and satisfy the minds of people of different intellects and interests.” Unlike Catholicism, it was mired in the world. Tiso argued that the depression had increased people’s real-life worries, forcing the Ludáks to operate in a “labyrinth of materialism.” The party could no longer rely on autonomy as a rhetorical banner under which to build the nation. Instead, “the party should look for and find means to deepen and to always present the idea of autonomy in temporal terms.”¹³⁹ Tiso’s most concrete explanation of autonomy at this time, however, offered nothing new:

We want the administration, schools, and courts to go into the hands of Slovaks without exception and unconditionally. We want [to see] Slovaks making good in every branch of public life. Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party strives to improve agriculture, to expand industry, and to develop Slovak financial institutions. We are for maintaining and developing our national culture, speech, traditions, customs, and so on. In short, we want to realize the slogan “Slovakia to Slovaks” in full measure, acknowledging the rights of other citizens.

Otherwise, we are for a common Czecho-Slovak army, finances, and diplomatic service.¹⁴⁰

Although autonomy could be read here as the eternal Catholic principle of justice, of “each to their own,” it was also a carbon copy of *Ausgleich* Hungary, both as a constitutional order and as a modernizing program dominated by one ethnicity.

Despite all his talk about finding new strategies, Tiso was stuck. He and the party were locked in ineffectual opposition, achieving virtually nothing between 1929 and 1932. They faced unenviable choices. To join a government coalition or even to form a powerful parliamentary bloc, they needed to change their program. But doing so would resign their dominant position in Slovak politics. Tiso, the Ludák strategic wellspring, seemed to have run dry when confronted with this dilemma, spouting only rhetoric.

The party, frustrated, turned to extraparliamentary means. In mid-1932, the Ludáks exploited voting bylaws to oust Czechoslovakists from the Matica

slovenská, the cultural association that controlled the standardization of the Slovak language. With backing from the Social Democrat Dérer, Matica's board had wanted to move the language closer to Czech. The next month, Ludáks cooperated with Communists to turn a "Congress of the Young Slovak Generation" into an intolerant demonstration against centralism. These propaganda victories proved a Ludák ability to contest Czechoslovakism, but they also reinforced the party's radical reputation.¹⁴¹ Tiso seems to have authored neither initiative. The Matica coup was led by "old" Slovaks. Even if Tiso helped to plan it, his reputation as a Magyarone likely dissuaded him from participating. In contrast, he was the only "older" (not to be confused with "old") Ludák at the youth congress. He and other elders, however, quickly withdrew after the young targeted them. A proposal debated on the first day of the congress sought to deny them the right to speak, while the young Ludák speakers implicitly criticized Tiso, calling for fresh national leadership.¹⁴²

Tiso's grasp on the levers of party power had slipped. Rather than fading away, Hlinka was back in command. He led the Matica takeover, and his cranky personality dominated presidium meetings and congresses during 1932. At one, he told the party to abandon hopes of a Catholic bloc (usually Tiso's preference) and to look for Slovak allies instead. According to Hungarian intelligence, Hlinka also blocked Tiso's designs to join forces with ethnic Hungarians and Germans. Other sources claimed that Tiso had intrigued against his boss.¹⁴³ Without doubt, the two men were often at odds. As Július Stano, a party functionary, testified in 1946: "[Tiso] and Hlinka did not understand each other well, because Hlinka was more committed to opposition [politics]. For this reason, no one had a hard time turning Hlinka against Tiso from time to time. . . . Tiso was a rational theoretician and a committed activist, while Hlinka was more temperamental and impulsive."¹⁴⁴ Tiso also battled with Hlinka over the party press, which the chairman kept as personal property. The protracted conflict supposedly broke Hlinka's trust in Tiso.¹⁴⁵ In public, however, both men still tended to sing the same song. When a chance to enter the government arose in 1932, for example, Hlinka spurned it: "Why should we take the blame for everything that the Socialists and Agrarians have spoiled?"¹⁴⁶ Tiso agreed: "[Let the Agrarians] eat what they've been cooking for the past three years!"¹⁴⁷

From below, Tiso had to contend with ambitious "young Ludáks," as a generational conflict now surpassed the "old"/"new" Ludák quarrel. By the 1930s, the party had a reputation as the easiest place for young Slovaks to build political careers. In 1928, Hlinka made the twenty-seven-year-old Martin Sokol general secretary, setting him to overhauling party structures. In 1932, all the editors at *Slovák* were in their early thirties, including their chief, Karol Sidor. Hailing from Ružomberok, Sidor was a favorite of Hlinka, who kept him as editor over Tiso and Buday's objections.¹⁴⁸ Another favorite, Alexander (Šaňo) Mach, had stood

trial with Tuka but was acquitted. Tiso, of course, also had his “young Ľudáks.” He had taught the Ďurčanský brothers, Ferdinand and Ján, in Nitra and was a family friend. Anton Vašek, whose report at the youth congress drew heavily on Tiso’s ideology, was a protégé.¹⁴⁹ Yet even these younger men were radicals, impatient with Tiso’s gradualism. Although Tiso talked about making room for youth, he preferred to leave the older generation and priests in control. The lay youth, in contrast, hankered for a changing of the guard. Hlinka was in the middle, turning the press and party structures over to the youth, but keeping the presidium and caucus in the hands of elders.¹⁵⁰

In the Ľudáks’ next initiative, Tiso reclaimed a starring role: he negotiated a bloc with the Slovak National Party. The combination was neither powerful nor difficult to create. Martin Rázus, the party’s only MP, supported autonomy and had helped during the *Matica slovenská* takeover. The most challenging aspect of forming the alliance (and valuable in terms of propagating Slovak nationalism) was the confessional divide that it bridged. The Nationalist membership was mainly Protestant, Rázus even being an ordained minister. Tiso accordingly adapted Ľudák ideology and rhetoric to his new partners. In August 1932, he invited Rázus to Bánovce, where they celebrated Protestant and Catholic ties during the nineteenth-century national awakening, Tiso’s latest Slovak golden age. In place of Great Moravia’s Prince Svätopluk, the priest now honored Ľudovít Štúr, the codifier of modern Slovak, the father of Slovak romanticism, and the son of a Lutheran pastor.¹⁵¹ Two months later, the Ľudáks and the Nationalists formalized their alliance at a congress. Tiso summed up the union: “In national politics, I am closer to a Slovak Lutheran than to a Czech Catholic.”¹⁵² The quote, one of Tiso’s best known, marked a profound transformation. In the 1920s, Tiso had viewed Lutherans as conspiring with progressives to suppress Catholicism. By 1933, in contrast, he complained that Czechs had offered the Ľudáks a Catholic bloc in order to disrupt Slovak unity.¹⁵³ In other words, the conspiracy now lay between Czechs and Catholics against Slovak nationalists.

A few months later, Adolf Hitler became Germany’s chancellor. Tiso seemingly paid little heed to the event, one of the century’s most momentous. Speaking in parliament just days later, he condemned fascism in general but saved his harshest words for the Left. Otherwise, when Tiso denounced dictatorship, he tended to mean centralists locking Ľudáks out of power. He even accused the government of emphasizing external threats in order to distract from the Slovak Question.¹⁵⁴ But Tiso’s relative silence on Hitler did not necessarily mean that he had few concerns about him. His lack of comment also reflected his role as the Ľudáks’ domestic strategist; Hitler belonged to the foreign policy portfolio.¹⁵⁵ To judge from Hungarian intelligence, however, Tiso was more sensitive to the European balance of power than he let on. In late 1932, he reportedly confided to an informant that “in the not-too-distant future, there will be big changes in central Europe, and

some states that exist will disappear. It's necessary to prepare for this today."¹⁵⁶ As Hitler gained dictatorial powers and liquidated his political enemies, including the mighty German Catholic party, Zentrum, Tiso's concerns about him no doubt grew. Hitler's campaign to revise the Versailles Peace Treaty also gave a dangerous boost to Hungarian irredentism. To combat these trends, both Tiso and the party repeatedly declared their loyalty to the republic and their resolve never to cede territory to her southern neighbor. Yet they invariably linked such professions with demands to settle the Slovak Question.¹⁵⁷

In contrast to his muted concern over Hitler, Tiso clanged the tocsin in 1933 over his domestic nemesis on the left, the Social Democrat Dérer. As minister of education, Dérer proposed a reform that threatened some four hundred small Catholic schools.¹⁵⁸ The Ludáks again cried culture war. In parliament, Tiso accused Dérer of subverting the church through a different kind of gradualist tactics. During this latest battle over schools, Tiso reclaimed his role as a zealous soldier of God. He excoriated the government for sabotaging the *modus vivendi*. He beat the drum for *Quadragesimo anno*. And he tore into plans for "an abortion law, removing crosses, euthanasia. . . . Is this not a secularization of our public life, a destruction of Christian principles, which are the only way to bring healthy, calm development to society? A culture war is being waged here. . . . (*Shouts.*) Forgive me, I consider this tribune a pulpit, and I do here my duty . . . even though I find [only] deaf ears, which don't want to understand."¹⁵⁹ Tiso's outrage over these issues was no doubt sincere. But, yet again, partisan tactics lay behind his behavior. The alliance with the Lutherans had made Ludáks vulnerable to charges that they had betrayed Catholicism. The Dérer reforms had roused opposition from all Catholic parties in Slovakia.¹⁶⁰ The Ludáks needed to match their indignation.

Another impulse for Tiso's fervor was pressure from his party to radicalize. In late 1932, Hlinka adopted a disturbing new slogan, promising to fight for autonomy "even at the price of the republic."¹⁶¹ Soon after, the Ďurčanskýs founded the bimonthly *Nástup* (*Line Up!*), which became a magnet for party radicals. Among the Ludák press, the journal was the least critical of German fascism, at times even admiring it. While Hlinka was often unhappy with the Nástupists over such issues, he shared their affection for being in the opposition.¹⁶² In the same period, the Ludáks used fears about irredentism more consistently against the centralists. For example, when Peroutka's *Přítomnost* (*The Present*) insensitively suggested that a peaceful change in the Slovak-Hungarian border might benefit the republic, the Ludáks lashed out against "Czech revision."¹⁶³ In a similar spirit, they shunned another anti-irredentism rally in Bratislava.

Tiso both swam with these radical currents and against them. His February 1933 parliamentary attack against the Dérer reforms surprised *Lidové noviny* with its sharp tone. In May, he railed in parliament against "Czech revision" and "colonial" politics such as censorship while defending the party's boycott of the

Bratislava rally. *Nástup* even praised his plan to “compel the Czechs to solve the Slovak Question” in the interest of international stability.¹⁶⁴ At the same time, Tiso defended his reputation as a moderate. He eschewed Hlinka’s “at the price of the republic” slogan, attributing its origin to Social Democrats. According to the police, he remarked privately that “if necessary, the party will return to the government, because maintaining the state is the most important thing.”¹⁶⁵ Most significantly, he (and Hlinka) came down hard on the radicals at an April party congress. Tiso argued that the radicals were playing with fire by undermining state authority. The nation’s interests, in contrast, could only be served by activism: a constructive, unifying politics, whether in the government or not. Combined with his strong endorsement of Czechoslovakia, his speech left the impression of a responsible leader struggling to curb party excesses.¹⁶⁶

Tiso meanwhile endured a scandal over Bánovce’s finances, which he had tended for years. A lengthy audit report spoke of “frivolous, irresponsible, illegal, and excessively damaging” fiscal management.¹⁶⁷ Since Tiso habitually threw the same accusation at centralists, they were only too happy to charge him with squandering up to a million crowns of public money.¹⁶⁸ Making the scandal more painful, it followed on another, when Tiso—irate over disrespect for his authority—wrenched a drumstick away from the town’s drummer (or town crier) and carried it off. The drummer had refused to proclaim an announcement by him that provocatively contradicted a state request to celebrate the founder of Sokol. The police filed a charge in the earlier incident, but the parliament (as usual) upheld Tiso’s immunity. Tiso countered the later scandal by pushing through a city council resolution praising his service to the town.¹⁶⁹ Tiso’s problems with Bánovce’s money most likely stemmed from his habit of spreading himself too thinly. Considering his duties as priest, party leader, and MP, it is a wonder that he found time to tend the city’s coffers at all, let alone haphazardly.

In mid-1933, Tiso succumbed to pressure and temporarily embraced radical tactics. The occasion was the 1,100 anniversary of Prince Pribina’s founding of a Christian church in Nitra. For most of the previous year, the state, the Nitra hierarchy, and the Ľudáks had haggled over planning for the event. The central authorities envisioned massive celebrations to demonstrate Czechoslovak unity. Bishop Kmeňko, the head of the preparation committee and now a supporter of the Mičurovci, hoped instead to stress Catholicism. The Ľudáks, the odd men out, wanted to spotlight Slovak nationalism. As planning proceeded, the Hlinka party drew no significant role in the celebrations. Tiso negotiated to have Hlinka speak in a capacity other than head of a party, but this proposal and others fell through. Hlinka’s injured pride swelled. “I am not just Andrej Hlinka,” Tiso quoted him. “[In Nitra], I am also the nation.”¹⁷⁰ The party prepared to disrupt the ceremonies “to show who is master in Nitra.”¹⁷¹ Buday apparently took charge, supported by Sidor and other lay youth. In the weeks before the demonstration, Tiso fruitlessly

pleaded with the authorities to let Hlinka speak. As Ľudák intentions grew clearer, the authorities also turned to him for help. Hodža and Provincial President Jozef Országh quietly visited him in Bánovce just before the celebrations, supposedly beseeching him to stop the demonstrations.¹⁷² But, by this time, Tiso had another part to play in his old home.

On 13 August 1933, Tiso arrived in Nitra at the head of around 500 Bánovce inhabitants dressed in national costumes. The contingent joined around 5,500 other Ľudáks and an estimated 34,000 other celebrants, many of whom would parade as corporations before a grandstand. Tiso took command of the Ľudák contingent, which performed as a well-oiled machine that day. Rather than march behind Sokol as scheduled, Tiso and his Bánovce shock troops forced their way into the procession early. A parade marshal tried to stop them. Tiso's temper flared. "What kind of order is this?" the priest sneered in reference to riders in the parade. "Oxen and asses in front, and Slovaks take up the rear? We won't wait any longer. This is our Church-Slovak celebration. These . . . Czechs have no business here."¹⁷³ Once near the grandstand, Tiso and other Ľudák leaders stage-managed a disruption that silenced the speakers, including Prime Minister Jan Malypetr. Facing disaster, officials let Hlinka be carried to the tribune. Only after finishing his speech did he let other participants take the floor. In short, the Ľudáks humiliated the centralists in front of an international audience. At a victory rally afterward, Tiso gloated: "The Ľudák party is today the entire Slovak nation. . . . All the trash that would like to soil our nation will be removed."¹⁷⁴

In response to the Nitra demonstrations, the government clamped down on the Ľudáks with a severity it had not used since 1920, infuriating Tiso. He and around a hundred others were indicted, while Ľudák papers were closed and rallies banned. The parliament even passed an ominous law on dissolving antistate parties. When Tiso protested such treatment to provincial president Országh, the priest was "significantly indignant." "Go ahead and sign all those [measures] against us," he told the Agrarian. "History will judge you for it later."¹⁷⁵ The next month, Tiso fiercely defended the Nitra demonstrations in parliament, characterizing his party as driven to its actions by centralist intransigence. The Nitra action had been "a spontaneous expression of the Slovak people."¹⁷⁶ Throughout the speech, Dérer—who now wanted to ban the Ľudáks—and other deputies relentlessly harassed Tiso, efficiently challenging many of his claims. Malypetr, for one, released economic data that portrayed Czechoslovakia paying out proportionately more to Slovakia than to the Czech lands. The coalition later distributed the statistics in Slovakia through posters, at the same time exploring measures to lower Slovak discontent, especially among the youth.¹⁷⁷

Hand in hand with his rivals, Tiso had pushed autonomy back to the forefront of Czechoslovak politics, refuting Udržal's cut that Hlinka "did not mean a thing." But by doing so, Tiso proved his policy of engagement and compromise wanting.

For the time being, he looked and sounded just like the radicals: angry, defiant, and unyielding.

Misfits

While Tiso's "activism" did not die in 1933, it had failed. His vision, his party, and Czechoslovak politics were fundamentally incompatible.

The Ľudáks did not fit the republic's political system. They aimed for hegemony in Slovakia, but they were neither strong enough to force it immediately nor persuasive enough to win it gradually. They were instead a permanent minority party, marginalized in government and isolated in opposition. This isolation was not just the "enemy's" work but also—ironically—an expression of Ľudák loyalty. Contrary to the subversion of Tuka and other Ľudák radicals, the party's mainstream was indeed "state-forming." It was consequently reluctant to work with parties that sought Czechoslovakia's death. As a result, the Ľudáks found only insignificant opposition allies, such as the Lutheran Nationalists.¹⁷⁸

Activism, in turn, did not fit the Ľudáks. Although Tiso could get them into cabinets, he could not make them behave like a Czechoslovak governing party. Gradualism returned poor dividends on autonomy while costing the party dearly at the ballot box. In opposition, Tiso could not even get Prague's attention. The Ľudák youth, in contrast, could. Their recipe of noisy obstructionism mixed with an appeal to world opinion worked brilliantly in Nitra, upstaging the government and forcing the centralists to deal with the Ľudáks. That Tiso took a leading role in the demonstrations confirms the sterility of his tactics for the party. Activism also betrayed the Ľudák promise to youth. Rather than offering rapid advancement, as had Hlinka, Tiso's program advised party juniors to wait patiently for concessions from the centralists. But the radicals were not that much younger than Tiso and wanted the same success that he enjoyed. Not surprisingly, they became his rivals, exploiting Hlinka's distrust.

One would expect that Tiso's activism at least suited Czechoslovak democracy. Tiso did, after all, what the centralists claimed to want. He reached out to them, established dialogue, and worked for compromise. Certainly, he tended to the republic. The 1926 tariff-*congrua* coalition helped to snap the parliament out of paralysis. The Civic Coalition produced the country's only non-Socialist interwar cabinet (caretaker governments excluded), an impressive democratic achievement. While Tiso's record as a government minister might have been weak, most of his projects, like the Pasteur institutes, were welcome additions to Czechoslovak progress. The republic also could thank him for helping to lay the Tuka affair to rest.

Yet, Tiso's activism nonetheless clashed with Czechoslovak centralism as well. Neither the Castle nor the Pětka parties as a whole really wanted the Ľudáks in

government. Masaryk, for one, saw them not as partners but rather as bilious, "inexperienced lads" and Magyarone "deadweight." As the Lidáks' perennial presence in the Pětka confirms, the issue was not clericalism but rather collaboration and shared agendas. The Lidáks could work with the Socialists, and both the Castle and the Pětka system preferred Socialist-civic combinations. The Ludáks did not, tending instead to battle with the Social Democrats. Although the Lidáks and the Socialist parties clashed over belief, they shared the project of a centralist state. Tiso, in contrast, shared with the centralists only the project of a common state. Thus, his mission to Prague was subversive by definition. He might serve the centralists in practice, but his goal as an autonomist was to break their power.

Tiso was not invested enough in Czechoslovak democracy for his activism to benefit the republic in the long run. As he explained in his 1932 lecture to Catholic students, "We feel every breeze, we swim in every stream, but we are not carried away by any fashion, because our essence is eternal." Czechoslovak democracy, like dualist Hungary, was just a temporal stream in which Tiso the priest pursued his eternal goal, the re-Catholicization of public life, while Tiso the politician pursued a new "eternal" goal, Slovak autonomy. When he no longer could make headway in this stream, he searched for passages to other channels. As early as 1931, he moved away from parliamentary democracy by endorsing the Catholic corporatism of *Quadragesimo anno*. Even earlier, his frustration over political isolation led him to define autonomy as a dogma while placing the nation over the state. This combination let the party incessantly demand a privileged position in Slovakia while shirking onerous state duties. The pattern eventually helped to unhinge the republic.

Was there a liberal democratic potential in Tiso? If the Ludáks could have shared power consistently as did the standard Pětka parties, he might have continued to reconcile himself to the centralists. One must also wonder how events would have played out without Tuka's subversion or Hlinka's longevity, or if the authority that had to be respected in the republic had been Fr. Šrámek rather than the anticlerical Masaryk, the signer of the Pittsburgh Agreement. It is highly significant that, coming out of the government experience, Tiso showed more willingness than ever for nonpartisan cooperation. Yet although he could compromise, build bridges, and bend with the times, there were limits to how much he could change. It is hard to imagine him, for example, quitting the Ludáks. What other party could fulfill his dream of gathering all his supporters into one camp? In addition, although Tiso might talk to his enemies, he was entirely uninterested in their values. He knew that his were right. No one should confuse Tiso's habit of co-opting his opponents' rhetoric and methods with his accepting the legitimacy of alternate ideas. Tiso instead bemoaned of "deaf ears, which don't want to understand." As a Catholic, he was infinitely patient, able to reconcile all dualities, willing to embrace all possibilities, yet possessed of an eternal essence. As a politician,

he translated this essence into two concepts: authority and unity. In 1918–19, Tiso overwhelmingly interpreted these concepts in illiberal terms. In 1933, the habit resurfaced. Hlinka had to speak first in Nitra to show “who [was] master.” The Ludáks now were “the entire nation,” which would cleanse itself of “trash.” This continuity is the best indicator of Tiso’s democratic potential.

Instead of subversively converting his opponents, Tiso ultimately underwent a subversive conversion himself: his focus shifted from his church to his nation. The model youth who had shied away from Slovak nationalism because of its Protestant connections now valued Slovak Lutherans over Czech Catholics. The parliamentarian who established the 1926 tariff-*congrua* coalition mainly in the interests of Catholics spent his time as minister trying to land Slovaks jobs. The alarmed young priest who had embraced nationalism to lead people to God was replaced by the middle-aged politician who mined Catholicism on behalf of Slovak autonomy. Even though Tiso might be patient, his essence was not as eternal as he thought.



Figure 1: Jozef Tiso, circa 1918. Courtesy Slovenská národná knižnica, Archív literatúry a umenia (SNK-ALU), ST 26/3.



Figure 2: Andrej Hlinka in his moment of triumph at the 1933 Pribina Celebrations. Courtesy Slovenská národná knižnica, Archív literatúry a umenia (SNK-ALU), PN 21/203.



Figure 3: Karol Sidor, Tiso's bête noire of the 1930s, voting in fall 1938. Courtesy Slovenský národný archív (SNA).



Figure 4: Tiso at the 1938 Jubilee Rally for the Pittsburgh Agreement. Courtesy Slovenský národný archív (SNA).



Figure 5: The same image as figure 4 in its doctored, postwar form (Imrich Stanek, *Zrada a pád: Hlinkovští separatisté a tak zvaný slovenský stát* [Prague: Státní nakladatelství politické literatury, 1958], 241).



Figure 6: Tiso's reception in Berlin on 13 March 1939. Courtesy Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (ÖNB/Wien), S 287/45.



Figure 7: Returning from Hitler's Field Headquarters in fall 1941 after the first discussions on deporting the Slovak Jews. Left to right: Vojtech Tuka, Tiso, Šaňo Mach, Ferdinand Čatloš. Courtesy Slovenský národný archív (SNA).



Figure 8: The parish priest of Slovakia. Courtesy Slovenský národný archív (SNA).



Figure 9: Tiso's cult of personality. Courtesy Slovenský národný archív (SNA).



Figure 10: Tiso and Tuka during an undated government retreat in the Tatras. Courtesy Slovenský národný archív (SNA).



Figure 11: Tiso and Hitler. Courtesy Slovenský národný archív (SNA).



Figure 12: Tiso decorating German soldiers after the suppression of the 1944 Slovak National Uprising. Courtesy Slovenský národný archív (SNA).



Figure 13: The war criminal—Tiso returned in shackles to postwar Czechoslovakia, 1945. Štefan Tiso walks behind. Courtesy Tlačová agentúra Slovenskej republiky (TASR).



Figure 14: The martyr—a card carried in his memory.



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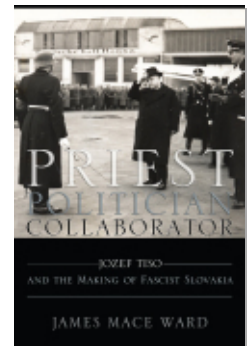
Published by Cornell University Press

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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The Lure of the World, 1933–38

[Herr Beneš] demands of the Slovaks to defend policies which are completely irrelevant to Slovakia's situation. The Slovak people wish to live in peace, they have no wish to become involved in adventures.

—Adolf Hitler, Berlin *Sportpalast*, 26 September 1938

Adolf Hitler loathed Czechs, and probably had since school age. Yet, before 1938, he seems to have rarely thought about Slovaks. In this regard, he was like most Europeans. When he suddenly championed the Slovaks against the Czechs in a 1938 speech at the Berlin *Sportpalast*, it was a rare moment when Tiso's nation stepped out of the Czech shadow.¹

Hitler's interest in Slovaks had little to do with sympathy for them. The dictator was on the verge of dismantling Versailles Europe. The guarantors of continental security—Britain, France, and the League of Nations—had failed to contain fascism, letting Germany defy peace treaty obligations and Italy conquer Abyssinia. Liberal democracy had solved few problems in central and eastern Europe. By 1938, the states in this region had turned to authoritarianism, Czechoslovakia being the sole exception. Worse, world war was in the air. In 1936, Spain collapsed into a civil war that served as a proxy fight between fascism and communism. The next year, Hitler unveiled to his generals plans for territorial expansion, envisioning a new European order founded on racial empire and German domination. He moved first against Austria and Czechoslovakia, annexing the former in spring 1938 and preparing to invade the latter that summer. The Ludák contest with centralists served the *Führer* as a propaganda weapon against the “Czech” state.² Days after the *Sportpalast* speech, Hitler received permission from Britain, France, and Italy to annex the Sudetenland, the borderland in Bohemia and Moravia that was home to most of Czechoslovakia's Germans. This compromise, the Munich Agreement, averted war by acknowledging Hitler as master of central Europe.

This tale of aggression was the crucial happenstance of Jozef Tiso's life. Had Versailles Europe stabilized and Czechoslovak democracy endured, he probably would have merited only a footnote in the republic's history. He most likely would have remained tamed by the country's political system and locked out of power. Under no circumstances can one imagine him breaking centralist resistance to autonomy—as he did in 1938—without the international crisis that engulfed his country. Tied to such contingencies, his involvement in aggressive war and genocide could have remained only disturbing inclinations in an otherwise harmless personality.

But Tiso's life followed a more fateful course, in which he and the Ľudáks achieved their goals in part through international crisis. In 1934, Tiso resumed trying to make his party "activist," or a partner with Prague. His party rivals also continued as before, vexing him and undermining activism with a competitive alternative. In 1936, Tiso ran out of ideas as the radicals stepped forward. In the interim, international events pierced Tiso's parochial shell. A Nazi coup attempt in Austria killed the country's chancellor, a model statesman for political Catholicism. The Spanish Civil War unleashed unprecedented anti-clerical violence, reviving Tiso's fears of revolution. Czechoslovakia's irredentist neighbors—Germany, Hungary, and Poland—plotted ever more energetically against the republic.

In late 1937, the partisan, domestic, and international converged in Tiso's life. Hlinka's health failed, bringing the succession struggle to a head. The Ľudáks prepared to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Pittsburgh Agreement, an occasion that symbolically called for them to force autonomy. Hitler readied for war, threatening Czechoslovak statehood. These events pushed and inspired Tiso to adopt radical tactics in a final drive for autonomy and command of the party. In this end game, he was relentless, resolute, and effective.

Futile Maneuvers

In a memoir, Edvard Beneš recalled that during his presidency, Tiso "came to [my office] quite often. . . . At all times, he emphasized that he wanted to reach an agreement, that he is from the moderate side of the party . . . , and, namely, that he accepts my standpoint concerning the entry of the party into the government. He only stressed that [this] should be made possible by some kind of initial concession."³ Through this personal relationship with Beneš, Tiso tried to compensate for the Ľudáks' failure to find powerful party allies. Like most maneuvers that he tried in 1934–36, this one proved largely futile. His renewed "moderation," meanwhile, took on radical edges.

Tiso arguably began this turn to Beneš during a 1934 attempt to form a Catholic bloc. Beneš, then foreign minister, had proposed it as a basis for a new

government. He hoped in this way to consolidate domestic politics in the face of international challenges, such as a recent nonaggression pact between Nazi Germany and Poland. Tiso, in turn, wanted to reclaim his activist profile now that tensions over the Nitra demonstrations had waned. He became the main Ľudák negotiator for the bloc. Although public and hierarchical enthusiasm for a Catholic front was strong, the barriers to cooperation between the Czech and Slovak clericals remained formidable. The Lidáks, for example, still adamantly opposed autonomy. Tiso and the Ľudáks also did not like the timing of the talks: the party assumed that it would be in a stronger position after elections and also wanted to see the economy in better shape lest the Ľudáks share responsibility for the depression. Thus, even though Tiso reportedly enjoyed full power to forge a pact, his real mandate most likely was to avoid blame for its failure.⁴ He was by now adept at such politics. Over a mere two weeks, for example, he gave an anonymous interview portraying the Ľudáks as eager for the bloc, yet raised the stakes when the Lidáks seemed ready to compromise. Meanwhile, he assured his nervous partners from another bloc, the Lutheran Nationalists, that the chances of a Catholic front were null because the Vatican opposed it.⁵ By such tactics, Tiso stretched out the talks as a way to build moral and political capital. Throughout 1934, he was eager to work with Beneš and the Castle as the “good” Ľudák, often declaring the bloc all but fact. But police reports showed him consistently rejecting Czech conditions for a deal, even advising Hlinka to make demands that were “almost impossible to fulfill.”⁶

Despite such duplicity, Tiso remained sincerely interested in reaching out to the centralists—efforts exemplified by an April 1934 lecture that he gave to an elite Prague club. Before this mainly Czechoslovakist audience, he argued that the Hlinka Party was the “organized political will” of a distinct Slovak nation. Because sovereignty resided in the nation, not the state, autonomy was a sensible way to coordinate the binational project of Czechoslovakia. In effect, it would reeducate the state to regard Slovak national development as a prize bloom rather than as a pernicious weed. Autonomy also would strengthen the Slovaks’ commitment to the republic, making it easier to mount a common defense against international foes.⁷ Here, Tiso turned a sturdy liberal tenet on its head, arguing that the key to unity lay not in equality and cultural homogeneity but instead in privilege and particularism. These arguments swayed few listeners. While appreciative of his manners, most commentators found him short of fresh ideas and concrete proposals. His logic often sounded fallacious. (Why did only the Ľudáks speak for the Slovak nation?) His attempts to skirt sticky issues fell flat. (Had he nothing to say about the economic viability of an autonomous Slovakia?) The experience of Austria-Hungary, periodically paralyzed by competing nationalist agendas, made the centralists leery of dual states. As Peroutka, the founder of *Přítomnost*, wrote, “It’s better to be one strong nation than two weak ones.”⁸ Even centralists who saw autonomy as a necessary compromise wanted upfront demonstrations

of Ludák goodwill, such as joining the government. Despite these shortcomings, Tiso's lecture marked a high point in civil debate between him and his opponents, a striking reversal from the menacing incivility of the previous summer.

Tiso's return to moderation also expressed his concern over an increasingly perilous international environment. In 1934, Germany fomented an unsuccessful Nazi revolt in Austria that resulted in the assassination of Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuß, the heir to the Viennese Christian Socials. Dollfuß had reacted to domestic instability the year before by establishing a dictatorship, later putting down a leftist revolt. For Tiso, Dollfuß's murder was a blow against political Catholicism, as the Austrian regime was proudly Catholic, its constitution even based in part on *Quadragesimo anno*. Both Tiso and Hlinka demonstrated their dismay over the murder by a pilgrimage to Dollfuß's grave in late 1934. Around the same time, Tiso complained at a party rally that

The onslaught is always loosed against the strong first so that the weak falls from his side. That is why they [attack] Rome first. But they will find that Rome will break their backs. Just as the Fredericks and the Bismarcks had to retreat [before the Church], so must Hitler. The Great Powers today kneel before her; small men must do the same.

. . . [Even though] Catholicism defends the state against subversion, it's not interested in Hitler's totality. [The Church] cannot allow for the state . . . to intervene in all matters. Hitlerism and Mussolini's fascism must recognize that God is a greater power than man and that the Church is greater than the state.⁹

In other venues, Tiso condemned "*Gleichschaltung*" ("coordination") processes—through which one-party systems were built—and the notion that war could bring "economic, social, and biological rebirth."¹⁰ He also repeatedly denounced extreme, chauvinist nationalism, which he often equated with fascism. "A healthy love of nation," he argued, "has as a correlative the love of other nations, of neighbors."¹¹

Tiso's worries about fascism, however, did not translate into a new regard for Czechoslovak democracy. If anything, his faith in the republic's political system weakened. Liberalism and socialism remained for him bankrupt systems at the root of the world's travails. According to a police report, he wanted to replace them with a "new democracy," characterized by a hierarchy of cultural, social, and economic freedom. The plan—a jargon-bound and confusing scheme—aimed for social harmony, activism, and solidarity: "Capital must yield, so that man can justly and fraternally govern over it, and not it tyrannically over man. . . . Socialism must yield to a strong, social synthesis, built on the strict personal responsibility of individuals who have become self-aware of their specific social function."¹² The critique mirrored Tiso's dim view of the republic's parties, which he described as

self-obsessed obstacles to “mutual understanding among Slovaks.”¹³ As an alternative, he continued to dream of gathering all his flock into one camp, even intimating that his party might someday desert electoral democracy: “National unity is such a moral force that . . . a technical majority must kneel before it.”¹⁴ Finally, Tiso equated suppressing the Left with defending against external threats from the Right. German and Austrian Socialists, for example, had found safe haven in Czechoslovakia. Tiso implicitly characterized these refugees as a “foreign element, often hostile to the state,” urging the government to rein them in: “It is not just to our detriment to provoke our neighbors [by sheltering] people who took up arms against . . . their own state. In today’s international situation, it is frankly dangerous.”¹⁵

Tiso’s renewed moderation showed other signs of radicalization. In fall 1934, Tiso addressed a rally in Trnava, in western Slovakia. The speech showed the priest raising the stakes on autonomy again, transforming it from a natural right into a divine duty. According to him, God gave life not just to persons but also to nations. Slovaks therefore had a duty to preserve and cultivate their own national life as sacred. Autonomy presumably was the best way to do so, as other programs sapped Slovak consciousness and stunted national growth. In a similar exploitation of Catholicism, Tiso stressed the Neo-Thomist principle of justice, *suum cuique* (“give to each what belongs to him”):

We don’t want anything else than what belongs to us: the autonomy of Slovakia. (Cries [from the audience]: That’s what we want! We want Slovak officials!) . . . Give to each, what belongs to him! . . . Yes, officials, professors, teachers, drummers. . . . Whatever is in Slovakia, whatever fulfills a function for the Slovak nation, this clearly belongs to Slovaks. . . .

[Once] we manage our Slovak land ourselves, then these jobs and other [things] will come of their own accord. . . . It’s not enough to just get two or three pears. . . . We want the whole garden. . . . No one [else] has the right to say how this garden should be fenced off or what kind of trees should be planted here. . . . Not offices and bread first, but the right of the Slovak nation as stated in the Pittsburgh Agreement. . . . There will be plenty of time later [for us] to decide [exactly] who gets what.¹⁶

Although he did not abandon it yet in practice, Tiso thus rhetorically repudiated gradualism. He now claimed to hold a position of party radicals: that autonomy should precede other gains.

In contrast, Tiso stood firm on another aspect of his past moderation, tolerance toward minorities. In Trnava, he even implied that Jews could be Slovaks—a first for him: “[We need] the unity of the nation, without regard to whether I am a peasant or a worker, a craftsman or an officer; whether I am a man who toils

and sweats, or one who lives from capital; whether a Catholic, Jew, or Lutheran; whether a Hungarian or a German who lives on this land and who had to fight during the world war. . . . [We] should stand behind one slogan, one banner, because Slovakia belongs to Slovakia, and this Slovak nation claims it.”¹⁷ Tiso’s wording, as usual, was ambiguous. (Did Jews belong to Slovakia or to the Slovak nation?) Yet, his willingness to blur such lines captured the distance that he had traveled since his Jew-baiting days in Nitra. His record toward Jews as government minister bears noting. For example, Bratislava’s hospitals were overcrowded in 1927. Tiso approved building a Jewish one despite entrenched local opposition to it. Even though he preferred to hire Slovaks, he also seemed to have had no problem adding to the disproportionate number of Jewish doctors and pharmacists in his department’s employ.¹⁸ Tiso’s approach, of course, was utilitarian, and he likely remained privately exercised by the Jewish Question. But he displayed no more than mild antisemitism in public. This habit was all the more remarkable since, in 1934, political antisemitism was resurgent in Slovakia. The latest census had sparked fresh polemics on the Jews’ alleged preference for German and Hungarian identities. *Slovák* and *Nástup* took hard antisemitic positions, *Nástup* blaming Jews for everything from the French Revolution to a global moral collapse.¹⁹ Tiso, in contrast, called again on them and Slovakia’s other minorities to “fight with us for autonomy.”²⁰

These divergent paths mapped in part a deepening rivalry between Tiso and the Ľudák radical youth. Karol Sidor, the editor of *Slovák*, challenged the priest’s claim to succession. Sidor was personally close to his townsman Hlinka and had a pre-1918 record as a teenage nationalist, making the editor both “old” Slovak and “young” Ľudák. In fall 1934, *Lidové noviny* reported that he wielded more influence in the party than Tiso; a “quiet” power struggle was underway.²¹ Other rivals among the younger generation, the *Nástupists*, were a lesser threat for Tiso but a bigger pain in the neck. That summer, for example, he withdrew support for their draft autonomy proposal, which called for Slovak diplomatic representation and a nearly independent Slovak army. Betting that Tiso’s earlier backing of such a radical vision would undercut his pro-Czechoslovak reputation, the *Nástupists* leaked the draft to cabinet members in Prague. The intrigue backfired, but not without delaying the development of a new autonomy proposal by several years.²² The *Nástupists* also tried to unseat Tiso. In early 1935, their journal celebrated the end of a six-month government ban by accusing party elders of clinging to power while lacking the idealism needed to win autonomy. The target here was Tiso, not Hlinka, whom the young considered a patron and ally. Tiso fought back at an executive council session, during which he appealed for unity while blaming the discord on “crazy seat seekers” and (predictably) “the enemy.”²³ Although *Nástup* retreated, Tiso was weakened. When the party picked candidates for upcoming parliamentary elections, roughly half of the choice slots went to young Ľudáks

such as Sidor, at the expense of older, moderate laymen. But Tiso remained second in command, whereas the *Nástupists* went unrewarded for their audacity.²⁴

In the meantime, Tiso's shaky position in the party and his frustration over political isolation led him for the first time in years to dally with Budapest. For electoral allies, Tiso claimed to "welcome any cooperation that [would] weaken the centralist regime" and let the *Ľudáks* "master Slovakia."²⁵ He and Sidor accordingly began negotiations in early 1935 with the irredentist Hungarian Christian Socialists, the third-strongest party in Slovakia. These talks were tracked closely and even guided by the foreign ministries of Hungary and Poland. The Polish consul in Bratislava, for example, coached Sidor (a Polonophile) on how to break Hlinka's resistance to the bloc. Sidor also led unsuccessful talks on founding a Budapest-subsidized newspaper favorable to Hungary, thus offering to facilitate her irredentist goals. Hungarian documentation on the talks compromises Tiso as well. He reportedly approved the newspaper. "Behind the backs" of his *Ľudák* colleagues, he also asked his Hungarian counterpart to rework the party's draft proposal for autonomy.²⁶ Tiso no doubt understood that he was indirectly dealing with the Hungarian government. But it is important to note that such actions were neither treasonous nor exceptional in interwar Czechoslovakia. The Slovak Agrarian Milan Hodža, for example, had similar contacts in the 1920s. In all likelihood, neither Tiso nor other party elders really wanted the alliance. When agreement appeared imminent, he—with the party's blessing—ran to Prague to "make inquiries" about the coming election.²⁷ More plainly said, he probably used the specter of the bloc to try to squeeze concessions from Beneš (the republic's preeminent politician now that Masaryk was ailing) and Hodža (also increasingly powerful). They, for example, preferred to subsidize the *Ľudáks* secretly rather than have them in foreign pay. In April, the Hungarian consulate in Bratislava reported that Prague had scared Tiso off of the bloc. Hodža, meanwhile, had steered Hlinka in the same direction. The *Ľudáks* dropped the Hungarians, forming instead an inconsequential "Slavic" bloc with the Slovak Lutherans and Polish and Rusyn parties.²⁸

The 1935 campaign was an uninspired and unpleasant experience for Tiso. The slogan that he chose for the party ("unity in the nation, equality in the state, and justice everywhere") sounded tired.²⁹ The programmatic details that he delivered were well worn. At an executive-council session, for example, he issued some familiar economic commandments: "To create and accumulate Slovak capital through credit unions is a tested way to elevate the nation. / To create and defend Slovak industry is our duty. / To protect the middle class, our craftsmen, from greedy capital, to save them from . . . proletarianization, is an order. / It is necessary to stabilize farm production and to lower interest rates and taxes."³⁰ These proposals were, of course, old Christian socialist or Slovak nationalist cures. The few new economic ideas that Tiso advanced, such as giving farmers up to fifty years to repay

loans, tended to pander to radical nationalism. In one speech, he even tied Ľudák entry into the government to the apparent expulsion from his province of “Czech owners of remainder estates and agitators. . . . We’ll give this land and all positions in Slovakia . . . to Slovaks.”³¹ For Tiso, a painful side of the 1935 campaign was the return of the Magyarone charge—a tactic coordinated to an extent between the Mičurovci, the Social Democrats, and the Castle. In the best-known such attack, a Mičurovci claimed that Tiso had punished a Slovak student in 1919 for refusing to learn the “Our Father” in Hungarian. Tiso sued for slander. As so often in the past, the trial went in his favor, but the appeal did not. Although the former student testified that Tiso had punished him for not learning the prayer rather than for not learning it in Hungarian, an appellate court excused the defendant’s “understandable mistake.”³² The Ľudáks’ opponents trumpeted the acquittal as proof of Tiso’s guilt. Social Democratic campaign material, for example, depicted the priest standing on a supine student labeled “the Slovak language”—a double insult, considering that in 1919 Tiso had led Slovakization in Nitra.³³

In the election, Tiso the strategist failed again to deliver a breakthrough. The returns hardly altered relative strengths between the Slovak parties. In the historic lands, in contrast, a seismic shift occurred; the *Sudetendeutsche Partei* won over a million votes, making it the republic’s largest party.³⁴ Led by Konrad Henlein, a gymnastics teacher, the *Partei* was a German autonomy movement that was increasingly linked to Nazi foreign policy. The Henleinist 1935 campaign, for example, drew heavily on funding from Germany. Tiso saw the *Partei* as not only a model but also an obstacle, for the more pressing Sudeten Question distracted the centralists from solving the Slovak one.³⁵ In a pathetic attempt to compete, Tiso claimed in parliament that Slovak autonomists also had reaped nearly a million votes. He achieved this statistical feat only by counting oppositional Hungarian and Communist votes—over the shouted objections of Communists. The “Slavic” bloc, meanwhile, fell apart. Feeling that the Lutheran Nationalists had not pulled their weight in the election, Tiso’s party cheated them out of a parliamentary seat. They quit the bloc, as did the Rusyns over similar complaints.³⁶

In yet another disappointment, Tiso failed to land cabinet posts. This result was surprising, as the political winds blew favorably for the Ľudáks. The party could secure the government a majority, completing a Czechoslovak front against Henlein and, by extension, Hitler. The initial price for this service was instant autonomy. Tiso reportedly pushed the party to reconsider, promising before the Agrarian prime minister, Jan Malypetr, to “rout” the Ľudák youth.³⁷ Soon after, Tiso delivered Malypetr thirty-two demands, ranging from expanded authority in provincial bodies to broader Czechoslovak investment in Slovakia. Although extensive, the demands were not so different from Agrarian schemes for resolving the Slovak Question. The Ľudák list neither mentioned autonomy nor asked for constitutional changes. But the Social Democrats, among others, distrusted

the Ľudák change of heart. Malypetr rejected the list, offering instead two ministries.³⁸ If ever there had been a missed opportunity for integrating the Ľudáks into the system, here it was. After six years in opposition, Tiso had earned the same deal as he had had in 1927. To take it would be to commit political suicide for having sold out autonomy not once, but twice. As *Přítomnost* explained: “Tiso’s position is somewhat special. Among the Ľudáks, only he and [Mikuláš] Pružinský are capable of being ministers. For internal party reasons, [Tiso] will be compelled to appear somewhat more unyielding than [he really is. Otherwise,] he could be accused of desiring a ministerial chair.”³⁹ When Tiso briefed the party on the fruitless negotiations, he reportedly proposed “the most radical opposition. We should fiercely fight the government until they change their attitude.” Concurring, the presidium charged him with forming a “strong front of Slovak opposition,” starting with Rázus’s Nationalists.⁴⁰ The intransigent-sounding tactics thus fell far short of *Nástupist* proposals to link up with Hungarians and Henleinists.⁴¹ Instead, the Ľudáks kept to their course, Tiso quietly continuing talks with the government parties.

Contingencies soon made a coalition deal more likely. First, the possibilities of working with the Agrarians improved: Slovak nationalism had made inroads with the Agrarian youth, while Milan Hodža had become the Czechoslovak prime minister. The first Slovak to hold the post, Hodža shared Tiso’s conviction that Prague neglected the Slovak economy. It was also Hodža’s ambition “to solve the Slovak Question” by taking the Ľudáks into government.⁴² Second, the octogenarian Masaryk resigned, giving the Ľudáks new leverage since their votes would count for much in electing the next president. Initially, the party seemed to reject Masaryk’s preference as a successor, Beneš, in favor of his rightist competition, the botanist Bohumil Němec. Sidor reportedly concluded a provisional deal with right-wing Agrarians to support Němec. (Hodža’s smaller Agrarian wing stood behind Beneš, support that had been a condition for making the Slovak prime minister.) It would also appear that both Sidor and Tiso closed a pro-Němec deal with the Henleinists.⁴³ But, in the end, the Ľudáks threw their lot in with Beneš, thus positioning themselves better for joining the cabinet.

The about-face was surprising. Beneš was not only an archetypal Czechoslovak centralist but also a Socialist who, as foreign minister, had recently forged an alliance with the Soviet Union, the exemplar of atheism. But Beneš’s other credentials proved more decisive, especially for Tiso. Not least, the Vatican backed Beneš, who had greatly accommodated the church earlier that year during a Czechoslovak Catholic congress. Through the hierarchy, the Vatican turned its “biggest guns” on Hlinka, who leaned toward Němec.⁴⁴ Beneš also strengthened his case by standing as a nonpartisan rather than Socialist candidate. Neither did it hurt to dig up some old quotes from Němec, such as “For a scientist, God really doesn’t exist.” Such revelations “shook the [Ľudák leadership’s] trust in the candidate.”⁴⁵ Tiso took it

on himself to bargain with both candidates for autonomy and amnesty for Tuka, whom Sidor's *Slovák* had begun to champion again. Beneš fared better in this test.⁴⁶

Won over, Tiso drew the party behind Beneš. He helped to bring the candidate and Hlinka together for a crucial meeting, during which Beneš assured Hlinka that he would keep the status quo between church and state. ("No culture war," as the future president's notes from the meeting read.) Beneš voiced his support for "decentralization," which he argued should first be enacted in Subcarpathian Rus', "as much as is possible without hindering the unity of the state." He also encouraged the Ľudáks to join the government, as this would solve "their financial difficulties." Beneš felt that he closed the deal when he explained that the Slovaks had an opportunity to choose the president. Backing Němec, they would have to share the role of kingmaker with Henleinists. "It seemed to me," the notes read, "that [Hlinka] understood this well."⁴⁷ But in the Ľudák caucus that followed, Hlinka still seemed ambivalent, and Tiso had to carry the day for the candidate. Tiso claimed to have argued that "in Beneš, we have a better guarantee that the question of the Pittsburgh Agreement will be solved. Němec, in contrast, is a completely unknown quantity to us." An evident record of the meeting shows Tiso especially concerned that Němec as president would strengthen the Agrarians, who were "known for their aggression."⁴⁸ Whatever his arguments, Tiso prevailed. The final vote for Beneš fell fifteen to four. According to Martin Sokol, the decision "was perhaps the first time in our party's history in which the deputies and senators took a stand against Hlinka over a serious political issue. Obviously, this did not . . . deepen [his] trust in Tiso." After Němec withdrew from the race, Beneš quickly dispatched thanks to Tiso and Hlinka, assuring the latter that he would never "forget that the Slovaks decided the presidential election."⁴⁹

Tiso's decision to align with Beneš and Hodža, however, did not break the Hlinka party's isolation. In early 1936, Tiso and Sokol began negotiating a Ľudák entry into government, reportedly asking for a ministry for Slovakia. When Hodža balked because this could lead to "other" (German or Hungarian) ministries, the Ľudáks supposedly settled for the promise of an analogous institution "at an appropriate time and occasion."⁵⁰ But this auspicious launch soon ran aground. Sidor's *Slovák* published nonnegotiable "cardinal" demands, which included the new ministry and a legal acknowledgement of the Slovak nation and language. *Prítomnosť* argued that *Slovák* thus stalemated the talks, pushing both sides back into entrenched positions.⁵¹ Certainly Sidor was intractably opposed at this time to entering the government, but Hlinka also leaned this way. Tiso, in contrast, seems to have sincerely worked for agreement until he felt outflanked by Sidor.⁵² Tiso's maneuvering room, however, had been limited not only by party dictates but also by his ambition to succeed Hlinka. For Tiso to enter the government and also to best his party rivals, he needed to cut a more attractive deal than he had received in 1927. In 1936, he was again unable to do so.

Despite such impotence on the national stage, Tiso remained a shaker and mover at the local level. In 1934, for example, he established in Bánovce a Roman Catholic institute for training male teachers. It took him a year longer than expected to open the school, thanks to opposition from the Ministry of Education, which justifiably fretted that the school would become a Ľudák stronghold. Forty students, mainly sons of farmers and tradesmen, comprised the first cohort. Tiso was both the institute's director and instructor of religion. The school replaced to a degree his lost career as spiritual director of the Nitra seminary. Instead of priests, he now trained teachers as a frontline defense against the forces of the enemy. According to his reported 1934 commencement address, "During the time of growing political pressure and the assault of Czech progressivism—which is in conflict with our Christian and national tradition—I resolved that I would not allow the nation to be infected and ruined by anti-Christian principles and the idea of Czechoslovak national unity. Instead, I would educate Slovak teachers myself."⁵³

Switching to Revolutionary Time

In 1936–37, Tiso lost control of Ľudák strategy. His turn to a personal politics with Beneš and Hodža, like seemingly every other tack that he had taken since 1927, had sailed the Ľudáks nowhere. Now the radical youth moved to seize the helm—taking to the streets, pushing antisemitism, and searching for international patrons. Tiso faltered in response. The dead end of activism had shaken his commitment to Czechoslovak democracy. European instability, especially the Spanish Civil War, frightened him, encouraging him to turn against the Left. Although he repeatedly tried to steer the youth in less troublesome directions, he offered them no new vision. Instead, he papered over this poverty with rhetoric, meanwhile yielding on the demand to internationalize the Slovak Question.

The 1936 Ľudák failure to enter government further soured Tiso on Czechoslovak democracy. In an April lecture to Moravian Catholic students, he spoke of a "crisis of mutual trust, even of the will to understand each other." As was his habit before such audiences, he argued that Slovak and Czech reconciliation could be achieved only through Catholicism, which "sanctified" every nationalism and balanced love of nation with love of neighbor. His main message, however, was another critique of Czechoslovak democracy. According to him, the system should equalize rights and duties while directing all citizens toward common goals. Czechoslovak democracy, however, made the mistake of leveling:

General equality is nonsense. We are all born with differences. Our system of democracy prevents us from cultivating individuality. Instead, it only creates the

preconditions for a mob. A mob does not know how to build; it can only destroy. . . . If our democracy wants to fulfill its historic role, it must . . . introduce a cult of individuality. If it wants to be true democracy, it must have quality! Also in a democracy, only those who know how to work have the right to criticize.

Another fatal mistake is the thesis that the majority is always right. This mistake has often been made when drawing up a constitution. Ethical truth remains true even when [shouted down] by a mob. . . . Truth has other roots than relative majorities or electoral results.⁵⁴

Some readers again may see a liberal intent here: a defense of individuality and truth against the mob. But it is the hardening of the illiberal themes in the speech that are most revealing: Tiso's desire to harness all citizens to a common goal, his discounting of critical voices within the collective, and his implication that electoral majorities lack legitimacy.

Tiso's flagging commitment to Czechoslovak democracy had roots also in the sickly international system. In March 1936, Hitler remilitarized his western border, the Rhineland. The year before, Mussolini invaded Abyssinia in the first major European aggression in over a decade. Britain, France, and the League of Nations did little in response. Czechoslovak citizens had no reason to believe that the European security system would perform better against Hungarian, German, or Polish aggression. Europe's Left arguably was on the rise as well. In 1935, the Comintern instructed Communists to join "popular front" governments with their former sworn enemies, the Social Democrats. In early 1936, such a coalition won elections in Spain. The scenario soon repeated in France, with a Jewish Socialist becoming prime minister.

The Spanish election destabilized a society already polarized along ideological, class, and religious lines. In July, nationalists revolted against the Republican government, plunging the country into civil war. These combatants were sponsored by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, and the Communist Soviet Union, respectively. To the horror of priests such as Tiso, the war featured an "anticlerical fury." Republicans murdered nearly seven thousand clerics, the worst anticlerical violence in the modern history of the Catholic Church. Tiso's personal experience with such bloodletting, Béla Kun's "Red Terror," paled in comparison, having claimed the lives of only a few priests. Accompanying the Spanish slaughter was symbolic violence—churches burned, clerical graves sacked, relics profaned. In a much publicized image, Republican militiamen aimed their rifles at a statue of the sacred heart of Jesus, "the symbol of nineteenth-century pious Jesuitism, of the union of church and state and throne and altar, of clerical power, of Catholic triumphalism, the symbol, in fact, of an entire cultural ethic."⁵⁵ Although Communists aided the fury, they neither drove it nor did most of killing. The violence mainly stemmed instead from the particular role of anticlericalism in Spanish

political culture. This distinction, however, was lost on most European Catholics, who saw the conflict as a Manichaean struggle between Catholicism and nationalism on one side and satanic bolshevism on the other. The European Left, in turn, tended to see the war in reversed black-and-white terms as a fight to the death between democracy and fascism.

The Spanish disaster unfolded before Tiso's eyes roughly at the same time as his party ran into new competition from Communists. In the 1935 elections, the Slovak leftists (with 13 percent of the vote) picked up another seat in parliament, also making inroads through strikes and demonstrations in former Ľudák strongholds. As the Ľudáks moved closer to the government, they reportedly lost supporters to the Communists. In May, *Přítomnost* reported that the Hlinka party was trying to "paralyze" the influence of its now "greatest adversary" in the countryside through a new daily, "but the results are thin. . . . The Ľudáks try to keep pace with Communist methods—it seems without success."⁵⁶

This partisan struggle turned into a press war that overlapped with antisemitic riots. In March 1936, a Czechoslovak Communist journal, the editor of which was Jewish, reported that a leading Spanish Communist had prophesied that his Catholic counterpart, José María Gil Robles, would "die with his boots on"—that is, be hanged. The journal then drew parallels with Hlinka's clerical slippers. The Ľudáks denounced the implied death threat, while Sidor launched a campaign in *Slovák* against "Bolshevik Jews."⁵⁷ Soon after, a few hundred Bratislava students, mainly Ľudáks, shut down a screening of the film *Golem* by throwing stink bombs and firecrackers. Claiming that the "Jewish" movie was pornographic and insulting to Christians, the students wanted it banned as in neighboring Hungary, Germany, and Austria. Over the next days, young Agrarians joined the Ľudáks in demonstrations that targeted Jewish property, professors, students, and passersby. Communists staged counterdemonstrations, leading to clashes between the opposing forces and the police.⁵⁸ Many observers attributed the riots (or at least their defense by *Slovák*) to the Sidor wing. According to a police report, Sidor turned to antisemitism and street tactics as a maneuver against Tiso, whom the party's clerical wing "had advanced to protect."⁵⁹ The left-wing press denounced the students as "fascists" or "clero-fascists." *Lidové noviny* noted that the demonstrations followed "the Nazi model."⁶⁰ But *Politika*, an independent journal run by some of Slovakia's brightest young intellectuals, shared the Ľudáks' antisemitism, charging that Jews clung to German and Hungarian identities.⁶¹

Tiso endorsed the party's move toward antibolshevism but again kept his distance from antisemitism. Soon after the riots, he denounced in parliament the Soviet-Czechoslovak alliance: "Communism has not given up its plans for world revolution. One need only look to Spain to see systematic subversion." The Soviets, after all, had sent there "the bloody Hungarian executioner" Kun. Slovak

Communists had compared Gil Robles's boots to "the slippers of prelates." Tiso was incensed: "[Don't pretend] that you're not terrorists of the crudest kind, that you're not hungry for human blood—the blood of the noblest people, because they made it possible for you to live in a free state with a roof over your head . . . and to earn your daily bread. . . . Catholics will never prepare a revolt, but—have no doubt—we'll find a way to prevent one."⁶² Significantly, Tiso denounced bolshevism rather than Judeo-bolshevism. The closest he came to endorsing the latter criticism was to sign interpellations against the censoring of Sidor's antisemitic articles. Like the party presidium that he dominated, he did not join *Slovák* or *Nástup* in defending the riots.⁶³ But neither did he condemn them.

Tiso's assault on the Soviet-Czechoslovak alliance came during parliamentary debate on a defense bill, during which the priest showed himself as still enthused about the Czechoslovak state but not its culture. Indeed, Tiso handed the government a blank check for securing the republic: "In the case of extreme need. . . , we need no law. *Salus rei publicae suprema lex* [The safety of the state is the highest law]. . . . Whatever the leading state actors consider appropriate during [such] times, let it be done." In an unusual aside, he then railed against "defeatism, destructiveness, the moral decadence, which thrives in our nation. . . . Murder, theft, the decline of the population—these are horrible indictments of the system that under the grand name of Enlightenment goes so far that it threatens the very roots of defense and the existence of the state."⁶⁴ Ironically (or perhaps tellingly), this linkage between national security and Enlightenment "decadence" was typical for antirepublicans across Europe.

In the speech, Tiso also criticized the Czechoslovak party system, these complaints relating more to local conflicts than to a right-radical worldview and a destabilizing international environment. He claimed that the state was securest when it stood above "narrow [mainly party] interests."⁶⁵ To prove his point, he detailed a quarrel of his with the Agrarians. In 1934, they had asked the Bánovce City Council for aid in building a granary, a proposal that Tiso sharply rejected: "So long as I'm [here, they] won't receive a penny."⁶⁶ Although the Agrarians' co-op network had benefitted Slovakia considerably, the party also exploited it for patronage and as a financial empire, even cornering agricultural markets. Tiso argued that the granary would drain profits from local farmers. When the Agrarians countered that he preferred to use the services of Jews, Tiso put the lie to the charge by organizing his own co-op.⁶⁷ Ján Ursíny, Hodža's protégé and relative, locked it out of the Agrarian network, forcing Tiso to turn to a Czech one. Ursíny later claimed that there had been a glut of co-ops, making "political" projects like Tiso's unviable.⁶⁸ Tiso's alternate explanation—that this was an example of how Czechoslovak structures were "politicized"—rings truer, even if it also explains his own behavior. Within the context of the speech, Tiso's point was that the defense law similarly could serve party interests first.

Throughout summer 1936, it was unclear if the young radicals or Tiso and the moderates set Ľudák strategy. Shortly before his speech on the defense bill, the presidium declared that the party would pursue its goals “more radically than before.” Weeks later, Ľudák MPs walked out of a vote for defense loans (which passed anyway).⁶⁹ In August, Tiso seemed to favor the Nástupists’ Germanophilia over Beneš’s foreign policy: “Today, we can see from Abyssinia that one can’t rely on [the League of Nations], while internally divided France is not the guarantor she once was. / Ignoring the central European states—even the often provocative behavior of some actors toward such aggressive Great Powers as Italy—has immensely damaged our state.”⁷⁰ Yet Tiso and his team also kept negotiating to join the government. According to *Prítomnosť*, party leaders held September talks in secret mainly to outflank the Nástupists.⁷¹

Around the same time, Tiso made a determined but unsuccessful effort to guide the party’s youth down less radical paths. Over three days in Bánovce, he dedicated a commission stemming in large part from his patronage: a statue of Ľudovít Štúr, the Slovak “national awakener.” The unveiling was part of summer-long Štúr celebrations that Tiso helped to kick off in Prague, activities that for him offered positive instruction for youth.⁷² In Bánovce, however, he lacked the charisma needed to turn this audience around, delivering only stodgy sermons on the nationalist “faith.” Holding up Štúr as a model, Tiso told his juniors to embrace “responsible work,” to keep “a strict moral life” and to spend their “physical and spiritual powers only for the benefit of the nation.” Like Štúr, they should be ready to lay “life, personal happiness, and career . . . on the altar of the nation.” Tiso presented the fundamentals of Slovak nationalism—the uniqueness of the nation and its language—now as “dogma.” If the youth dared to ignore it, the nation would be lost. Salvation lay in “the greatest ideal of life—for the future of the nation!” In comparison to his earlier speeches, there was little Catholic content here. Tiso used religious form instead to convey an ideology of progress for the nation. As Tiso quoted Štúr: “A return journey is not possible. We must always go forward!”⁷³ The dedication failed not only with the youth to bolster Tiso’s prestige. Although Beneš sent a letter of support, Hodža did not attend.⁷⁴ Much of the press was critical. Czech Social Democrats needled Tiso on the irony of a “Magyarone” priest honoring the anti-Catholic father of Slovak nationalism. They quoted the Lutheran Štúr denigrating the church as “an instrument of the Jesuits . . . fossilized, ruined, not having the faith and trust of nations.”⁷⁵ Štúr’s anti-Catholicism indeed might account for the scarcity of prelates at the event as well as Tiso’s participation the next week in memorializing Štúr’s Catholic competitor in codifying Slovak. Among prominent Slovak Lutherans, Tiso drew to the Štúr statue unveiling only Jozef Škultéty, albeit a towering cultural figure.⁷⁶

Tensions between Tiso and the Ľudák radicals sharpened that fall at a party congress in Piešťany, a Slovak spa town. The youth were unusually rebellious.

Sidor invited a reporter from the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the Nazi daily. For some Ludák critics, this was tantamount to inviting Hitler's personal agent. Worse, Šaňo Mach and Ferdinand Ďurčanský (with Sidor's backing) composed a "manifesto" that they then convinced the aged Hlinka to read in public. The statement called for autonomy through federalization, condemned "Judeo-Bolshevik anarchy," and committed the Ludáks to the "anti-communist front on the side of the nations that are guided by Christian principles."⁷⁷ The vague wording raised the possibility of a German-Slovak alliance. As Mach later explained: "We wanted to utilize foreign events . . . on behalf of our domestic program. It seemed to us that the nationalist-fascist wave that was washing across Europe could help Slovaks implement autonomy."⁷⁸ The manifesto overshadowed the party's moderate gestures, such as a telegram to Beneš stressing devotion to the republic. Backed by the presidium, Martin Sokol, the party's moderate (but youthful) general secretary, refused to publish the manifesto in the congress proceedings. Tiso quietly agreed.⁷⁹

In Piešťany, Tiso's efforts to win over the radicals again fizzled. Rather than launch initiatives that might have captured imaginations, the priest lectured the party on discipline and duty, recommending a distaste for "new people, new methods, and new aims." Although he reaffirmed the Ludáks' commitment to the republic, he took no clear stand on internationalizing the Slovak Question. He rejected "alliances with whatever nation or state," but only if they "would mean the ruin of the nation." In the end, he tendered as tactics nothing more than unity, discipline, and Catholic vigilance. His closing remarks devolved into absurd rhetoric: "These bicyclists, who in such beautiful numbers led our procession today, these are our future tanks. The beautiful embroidery on the costumes of our Piešťany women shows that this nation knows how to create more than all of these artists who hang in various galleries in the world a bunch of rubbish. . . . Against such a nation—and against the nation that knows how to fall in line at the call of its leaders—against such a phalanx, Comintern Bolsheviks would attack in vain."⁸⁰

Partly because of his dearth of new ideas, Tiso also made several concessions at the congress to the radicals. First, he hinted that he was against entering the government. The times, according to him, were "deeply abnormal." It was now necessary "to preserve social order from the whirlwind of revolution." Although joining the government would fortify the coalition's non-Socialists, it might also "provoke the envy of the Socialists and dislodge them from the government," thus only strengthening "the subversives." Second, Tiso intimated that he would abandon legality if he viewed it in the interest of the nation. While he condemned party tactics that made a fetish of the new, forgetting the "untouchable" principles that should guide them, he also criticized the opposite approach that clung too tenaciously to principles and so undid itself. His example of the latter trend was Gil Robles. At the time, the Spaniard was in exile, his Catholic movement in

pieces, and much of his radical youth incorporated into the fascist Falange. Many observers blamed Gil Robles himself for this “catastrophic end” (Tiso’s words). The perception was that the Spanish leader had delayed the war to the detriment of his cause. Tiso apparently did not intend to make similar mistakes: “Democracy, so far as it means the entire nation, is a program. So far as it means a system of government and administration, it is only a method, which I will use only so long as it serves the nation. I will not bow to democracy if it could mean the death of the nation.” (The statement echoed Gil Robles’s “accidentalism,” a theory that considered the form of government as secondary to its content.) Finally, in setting tactics for the party, Tiso summed up his call for unity as “one nation, one party, and one leader.”⁸¹ He would argue in his purge trial that the concept predated fascism and that he embraced it as an expression of natural law.⁸² True or not, the slogan evoked Nazi propaganda. Tiso thus signaled his own willingness to exploit the “nationalist-fascist wave.”

Few people were happy with the Piešťany congress. Tiso drew complaints within the party from both radicals and moderates: the former chided him for slighting foreign policy, whereas the latter complained that the Ľudáks should be in the government.⁸³ For the Czechoslovak Left, the congress confirmed the conviction that the Hlinka party was fascist. The events in Piešťany also deeply eroded the trust that Tiso had built with Czechs. *Přítomnost* concluded that the Ľudáks were traveling in one direction, “permanent opposition,” equating Ľudák autonomy with totalitarianism. Yet some non-Ľudák Slovaks remained open to the party’s ideas. For example, *Politika*, the Slovak equivalent of *Přítomnost*, endorsed the Ľudáks’ call to industrialize Slovakia.⁸⁴

In a December speech in parliament, Tiso did little to repair the damage done at Piešťany, describing the party’s autonomist ideology as a “confession” that “we will never renounce.” He complained of “an abyss of distrust that divides us from each other,” also lashing out at critics who wanted “to place us on the same level as Henlein’s separatism.” Elsewhere, he argued that “our democracy has still not matured to the point where it acknowledges the rights of the Slovak nation. . . . However excellent and ideal our electoral system and order is, the so-called electoral arithmetic is such that it actually violates the rights of the Slovak nation.” This appeared to be a clear repudiation of Czechoslovak democracy. But then Tiso began cataloging minor charges of vote fraud, as though this was the sum of his complaint. When speaking about communism, in contrast, he could not have been clearer: “The Slovak nation will never allow its homeland to become a bridge that Asian barbarism can use to attack Christianity and Western Civilization. [Instead,] the nation will do everything [in its power . . .] to immunize [its own] spirit against the infection of international satanism.”⁸⁵ Tiso had not sounded this anti-Communist for nearly two decades. A Czech Social Democratic paper noted its party’s surprise, speculating that Tiso had made the speech under pressure.⁸⁶

Throughout 1937, Sidor moved to supplant Tiso and to escalate the struggle for autonomy. First, the radical pushed back into the headlines Tuka, for whom neither Beneš nor Hodža had secured a pardon. Impatient, Sidor ostentatiously visited Tuka in jail, the first Ľudák leader to do so in years. Hlinka soon followed. Eager to quiet things down, Beneš covertly instructed the Ľudáks to appeal to the justice minister, Ivan Dérer. To their surprise, the Social Democrat was amenable to working out a compromise solution. After a few months, Tuka was released from jail but confined to a Bohemian city.⁸⁷ Second, Sidor turned to antisemitism and foreign policy initiatives. In March, he proposed to stem “the flow of Slovak blood beyond the borders” (emigration) by coercing Jews “to make room for Slovaks.” Czechoslovakia’s “surplus” Jews should “resettle” in Palestine or Birobidzhan, a Siberian district that the Soviet Union had set up as a Socialist Zion.⁸⁸ In another gambit, Sidor took Hlinka on a tour of Poland, where the chairman proclaimed that only through “leaning” on his host country “could Czechs and Slovaks defend themselves against the German *Drang nach Ost*.”⁸⁹ Such comments undercut Czechoslovak policy. The press tore into Sidor’s initiatives while speculating that Hlinka wanted him as his successor. Hlinka did not dispel the impression. When critics charged that Sidor was in the pay of Hungary and Poland (the latter being true), Hlinka staunchly defended his “best pupil.”⁹⁰ *Nástup* hinted that it also preferred Sidor over Tiso, noting that the younger man “speaks our language.”⁹¹

Tiso responded to Sidor’s challenge for the most part quietly. He never addressed his rival’s antisemitism, nor did he energetically try to block Tuka’s release.⁹² Instead, he concentrated on improving his relations with the youth through Ľudák societies for university students. As he remarked in a personal letter: “I enjoy the work of the academics here, and I support their youthful élan. This is the only thing that I do or want to do [these days]—nothing else!”⁹³ Tiso’s work in the societies expanded his influence among young Ľudáks, thus cutting into the radicals’ power base. At the same time, Tiso raised the rhetorical stakes against the Czechs. He complained of “false democracy,” implying that equal electoral weight should be given to the Czech and Slovak nations rather than to Czechoslovak citizens. He challenged the government to hold a plebiscite on autonomy while denouncing fascism as a “centralist trick.” Most significantly, in August 1937, he adopted Hlinka’s “at the price of the republic” slogan.⁹⁴

Tiso radicalized his rhetoric in part because he was leaving Slovakia and wanted to fix his image (rather than Sidor’s) in the public’s mind. In fall 1937, Tiso and four other Ľudák priests toured America on behalf of the St. Vojtech Society, the Catholic literary association. Their mission was to recruit members, to fortify the Catholic press, to raise funds for Catholic academies, and to deepen Slovak and Catholic consciousness among the “American brethren.”⁹⁵ The delegation also had an unofficial Ľudák mission to propagate the autonomy program and to

coordinate with American Slovaks for the twentieth anniversary of the Pittsburgh Agreement. Sidor had convinced them to celebrate the occasion in Slovakia, an invitation that he extended behind the back of party conservatives.⁹⁶

Tiso had not been enthused about the trip to America. He even tried to beg off it, claiming obligations at his Bánovce school.⁹⁷ It might have been better if he had held to this excuse, for the trip marked a personal defeat. For the previous decade, Tiso had resisted internationalizing the Slovak Question, trying to solve it instead within the framework of Czechoslovakia. Although he toyed with Hungarian support in 1935, he had not called openly for foreign assistance since 1924. Now, he was a personal envoy to the American Slovaks, thus facilitating their entry into the domestic struggle. Granted, Tiso here appealed to private (rather than governmental) patrons who did not seek to destroy the republic. In this regard, his actions are not comparable to the radicals' desire to involve Poland or Germany, or to Tuka's service for Hungary. Yet Tiso nonetheless had conceded the main point to the radicals. The questions now were: who would be the patrons, and how much influence would they have?

The Final Drive

Tiso's ship docked in New York City in September 1937. For the next ten weeks, in contrast to his most recent statements at home, he bent over backward to send a pro-Czechoslovak message. This exemplary loyalty was due in part to the delegation having arrived under a Magyarone cloud. Press reports alleged that the head administrator of the St. Vojtech Society, Ján Pöstényi, had traveled with an old Slovak friend turned Hungarian agent. The delegates were determined to dispel the false accusation.⁹⁸ Tiso had a mainly Northeastern itinerary. But he also got to Chicago, where he gave what he considered to be the most successful speech of his life. He claimed to have perceived the American Slovaks as completely united.⁹⁹ They chided him that he was not taking the struggle against the centralists seriously enough. At some point, he also viewed anti-Communist materials on the Spanish Civil War and atrocities in the Soviet Union that made a lasting impression on him.¹⁰⁰ Otherwise, he tended to his official mission: delivering sermons, dutifully visiting the graves of prominent Slovak Americans, and fretting over the assimilative power of American culture. As with the other delegates, he downplayed tensions between Czechs and Slovaks, pointing instead to national progress made within Czechoslovakia—even in the school system—and avoiding any suspicion that he or his party wanted to use international pressure against the republic.¹⁰¹ Yet, despite the accent on loyalty, he met with Pöstényi's irredentist friend (who had come to America on his own) just before sailing home. It was a reckless gesture, most probably motivated by a sense of Christian charity, for neither Tiso nor

Pöstényi was interested in treason. Rather, Tiso “to the best of his abilities tried to persuade [the friend] to abandon his activities that have so damaged the Slovaks’ reputation.”¹⁰²

When Tiso returned home, he brought back better news for the party than he found waiting for himself. He reported that the Americans would bring an original of the Pittsburgh Agreement to Slovakia, presenting it to the “nation” on the compact’s anniversary. He and his colleagues had achieved other goals as well, such as raising over thirty thousand dollars.¹⁰³ But the trip reaped fewer rewards for him in his struggle with Sidor. Tiso could not persuade the Americans to let him carry back the agreement, thus losing a potential propaganda coup.¹⁰⁴ The party also had radicalized more in his absence. In September, Ľudáks noted Masaryk’s death by reasserting the claims of the Pittsburgh Agreement, an act that struck many observers as callous. A few weeks later, Ľudák students took to the streets again, demanding the exclusive use of Slovak in university classes. The party’s caucus, led by the usually moderate Sokol, aggressively backed the students.¹⁰⁵ Tiso’s report to the presidium (as related by the police) encouraged this trend. The priest not only passed on American advice to “sharpen” the struggle, but he also voiced the delegation’s conviction that “the time for solving the Slovak problem is nigh. . . . The foreign situation compels the government to reconcile with Slovaks and to respect their demands.”¹⁰⁶

Days later, Tiso and Sidor joined parliamentary debate on the next year’s budget—in practice, the annual vote of confidence on Czechoslovak governments. As he had every year since 1929, Tiso announced that the Ľudáks would not support the bill. Overall, however, his speech was relatively moderate and modest, covering familiar ground. His only rhetorical innovation was to adopt the American Slovaks as moral authorities, as he claimed to have learned the “original intent” of the signers of the Pittsburgh Agreement. His most radical moment but obliquely endorsed the recent street protests.¹⁰⁷ Compared to Tiso’s speech, Sidor’s was incendiary. Appearing a few days after Tiso, the radical portrayed the republic as a police state and Tuka as its greatest victim. Slovakia, he declared, was the object of a nefarious Czech colonialism. Bedlam broke out in the hall. “Shame on you!” one deputy screamed. “You stand up for Tuka, and then you want to speak in the name of the Slovak nation!”¹⁰⁸ Dérer was so annoyed that he released excerpts from Tuka’s appeal, in which the convict admitted treason.¹⁰⁹ *Lidové noviny* speculated that Sidor’s goal was to “torpedo” Tiso’s renewed negotiations with the government. Sidor was indeed called to account before the Ľudák legislative caucus, but he withstood the attack.¹¹⁰

For most of the next year, 1938, aggressors descended on Czechoslovakia. Looking for allies to invade the republic, Hitler offered Hungary the former Felvidék as spoils. Hungarian right radicals leapt at the bait, pushing through in their country accelerated rearmament and antisemitic legislation. Hungary’s

conservatives, in contrast, were wary, especially after Hitler absorbed Austria in the March *Anschluss*, creating a common German border with Slovakia and Hungary. As a counterweight to Nazi power, the conservatives dusted off plans for a “Third Europe,” a neutral bloc comprised of Poland, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Italy. Although aimed at Germany, the plan was also hostile to Czechoslovakia, calling for a common Hungarian-Polish border that assumed the annexation of at least Subcarpathian Rus’ and even Slovakia.¹¹¹ When Czechoslovakia—acting on bad intelligence—sparked a war scare in May by partially mobilizing, the conservatives gained the upper hand in Hungary and renounced violent border revisions. Enraged, Hitler drew back the *Felvidék* bait. “He who want[s] to sit at [the] table,” he caustically remarked, “must at least help in the kitchen.”¹¹² The dictator meanwhile had accelerated plans “to smash Czechoslovakia by military action.”¹¹³ In September, however, the European Great Powers sidestepped a continental war through the Munich Agreement, coercing the republic into ceding the Sudetenland to Germany.

Tiso and the *Ludáks* chose this grim year for Czechoslovakia as the year for the autonomy movement to prevail. Tiso later identified the twentieth anniversary of the Pittsburgh Agreement as a prime reason for intensifying the struggle. In *Slovák’s* words: “On the Attack in the Jubilee Year!”¹¹⁴ Another driver was Hlinka’s failing health. The chairman wanted to see victory before he died, while the party faced a potentially catastrophic loss in momentum without his charisma. The rivals Tiso and Sidor also could seal their claims to the throne by delivering the key breakthrough. Seemingly every *Ludák* agreed that the time for the final drive had arrived, as pressure from Czechoslovakia’s foreign enemies compelled the centralists to strengthen the common defense by appeasing the autonomists. “If we should squander this moment . . .,” Tiso told an audience in June, “the Slovak nation might have to wait centuries for the wheel of fate to spin again.”¹¹⁵ After nearly a decade in fruitless opposition, *Ludák* leaders like Tiso no doubt also yearned for a decisive battle consistent with their rhetoric and beliefs.

The party’s succession crisis reached its climax in August with the death of Hlinka. Although he never saw Slovak autonomy, he lived long enough to welcome the Pittsburgh Agreement during a huge “Jubilee Rally” in Bratislava—his last triumph. Hlinka had favored Sidor as heir for years, recently selling the party press to him and the *Mederly* brothers, both of whom were also from *Ružomberok*. Tiso, however, still had greater influence in the party. That Sidor would not quickly succeed Hlinka was apparent at the chairman’s funeral, which Tiso dominated.¹¹⁶ At a presidium meeting soon after, he challenged Hlinka’s right to sell the press, claiming that it had been built with party funds. Retreating, Sidor took on Tiso and several other presidium members as shareholders (a concession that merely whetted Tiso’s appetite for seizing the press). But Sidor also secured a one-year moratorium on appointing a new chairman, during which he hoped to

improve his prospects for gaining the post. Tiso was promoted only to acting chairman.¹¹⁷ Even if only provisional, it was still a victory, proving his greater appeal as a moderate and his superior infighting skills.

Throughout his struggles with Sidor and the centralists, Tiso continued to negotiate to join the government—but only on Ľudák terms. If one listened to his assurances that autonomy was in the republic's best interests, the priest indeed sounded like his old self. Yet, in engaging the centralists, one suspects that Tiso again mainly sought moral capital, a chance to show that “our party is responsible to a wider public than just our voters.”¹¹⁸ He was steadfast on the Ľudák demand for the constitutional recognition of the Slovak nation and language, and the establishment of legislative autonomy.¹¹⁹ Compared with the centralists, Tiso now resembled less his allies such as Beneš, who still sought compromise, than entrenched enemies such as Dérer.

Tiso was also tenacious in his refusal to jump on the antisemitic bandwagon. As Romania and Hungary passed antisemitic laws and Germany annexed Austria, for example, many people feared that Czechoslovakia would be overrun with Jewish refugees.¹²⁰ Although Tiso adamantly had opposed harboring Austrian Civil War refugees, whom he had identified implicitly as Jewish, he was silent on this latest immigration threat.¹²¹ Neither did he speak out when attacked for hiring Jews, a charge that arose during polemics between the Ľudáks and Dérer. A Ľudák MP labeled the Social Democrat “the greatest patron of Jews in Slovakia,” alleging that he had helped many Jewish doctors to gain state positions. Dérer's press responded by tallying the Jewish doctors and pharmacists that Tiso had named when he was health minister. While *Slovák* downplayed Tiso's role in these appointments, Tiso himself said nothing.¹²² His silence is striking. Mild Jew baiting could have demonstrated his antisemitic credentials without damaging his standing as a moderate. Although he now occasionally projected an implicit antisemitism—in his most radical statements, threateningly so—he otherwise rarely uttered the word “Jew.” During the Jubilee Rally, for example, he challenged the government to put the autonomy question to Slovakia's voters, excluding “Czechs, Hungarians, and Germans.” It was left to an audience member to cry out “or Jews!”¹²³

At the same time that Tiso eschewed the radicals' antisemitism, however, he moved ever closer to their tactics of allying with the republic's domestic enemies. In February, Sidor had to conceal a meeting between Henleinists and Hlinka lest Tiso's wing “be alarmed.”¹²⁴ In May, Sidor complained that Tiso had “radicalized like mad. He is now for joining [our] fate with Henlein.”¹²⁵ The rivalry with Sidor aside, Tiso's purpose again was not to help the Henleinists (or the Hungarians, in other maneuvers) to destroy the republic but rather to frighten the government with the possibility—a difficult trick to pull off. For example, Tiso used a brief September meeting with the Henleinists to pressure Beneš into seeing him.

Afterward, they announced an agreement with the Ľudáks, a development that *Slovák* seemed to confirm. Even though not the case, the incident—coming as it did shortly before rioting in the Sudetenland—sapped centralist trust in the Ľudáks as negotiating partners.¹²⁶ In other intimidation tactics, Tiso brought the Slovak Question to the attention of Lord Walter Runciman, a British investigator of the Czech-German conflict.¹²⁷ Although such tactics helped the Slovak Question to compete with the Sudeten one, they also served German and Hungarian interests by destabilizing the republic and justifying international intervention.

Along with his rivals, Tiso also contributed to one of the most controversial aspects of Ľudák radicalization: the importation of fascist symbols and structures. At the Jubilee Rally, the party introduced new banners that mimicked Nazi iconography. Paramilitary Hlinka Guard units appeared a few weeks later. Tiso most probably approved the banners, as preparations for the rally reportedly required his consent.¹²⁸ The paramilitary, in contrast, was the brainchild of the radical Šaňo Mach.¹²⁹ But this fact did not mean that Tiso opposed a guard, as the Ľudák presidium (chaired by him) agreed in May to “organize the youth within the framework of the party.”¹³⁰ Although Tiso’s position on the measure is not recorded, he had several reasons to support it. He had long urged inculcating a deeper sense of nationalism in Slovak youth. He shared the radicals’ complaints about the unreliability of Czech gendarmes, which *Slovák* connected with the need to create a guard midway between the presidium meeting and Mach’s initiative.¹³¹ He was also already thinking about security alternatives should Czechoslovakia break up (see below). Finally, the move would bring the youth under the control of his ally Martin Sokol. Within this context, Mach’s initiative appears as a countermove. Both plans, for example, competed for the members of organizations such as Orol. This encroachment of the national on the religious took place despite longstanding opposition from the Catholic Church.¹³²

In his speeches during this period, Tiso always kindled the hopes of both moderates and radicals. The contrast was especially sharp in his Jubilee Rally speech:

We will not flee from the fight for the nation . . . just because someone suggests that nationalism is not compatible with [Church] teachings. . . . We are the Slovak nation, we are nationalists, but we are not Nazis. We are nationalists, and our nationalism is a pure Christian nationalism: Love your neighbor and your mother, love your homeland and the language that your mother taught you. In our land, love for our own is not hatred of another. We love our nation, and we will not let anyone frighten us away from this love of our own. . . .

. . . Our nationalism is creative, heartwarming. . . . Our nationalism, and I say it openly, is not chauvinism of any kind.

Yet despite his professed tolerant aims, Tiso ended his speech with retributive promises:

We declare the totalitarian (*totalitné*) right of the Slovak nation on all of the Slovak lands, and we don't recognize that anyone else has this right. Nations exist, and they are the bearers of all rights. . . .

. . . Hang on, Slovaks, join together and don't weaken. The avalanche has started, and whoever stands in [its] way will be killed. The centralist regime is liquidating. We will be sure that, after [it] vanishes, we will take Slovak rights into our hands. Then we will put everything in order. We will start with these fellows who got the remainder estates, and when we finish, neither they nor their children will have anything left. Next we'll turn to the postwar profiteers, and we'll ask: Did the nation pay for this? Is this all from the Slovak nation? We'll revise [everything] in the Slovak lands, making sure that Slovak rights are in the hands of Slovak nationalists.¹³³

The public tended to hear Tiso's reassurances rather than his promises to punish national enemies. Only a watered-down version of the retributive vision made it into the press, while Agrarian criticism of the speech focused on his threats to ally with the Hungarians.¹³⁴ Many observers probably felt that Tiso was just playing radical in order to secure leadership of the party. But there was more sincerity than spin in the above statements. Even if Tiso indeed "loved this state," as he declared at the Jubilee Rally, he was tired of Czechoslovak democracy. His reassurances that "we are not Nazis" moreover came in the wake of the Vatican's Syllabus on Racism, reported in *Slovák* as a condemnation of National Socialism.¹³⁵ Tiso's purpose was not to redirect Slovak nationalism but rather to insulate it from self-doubt and splits. Finally, his predictions for an autonomous Slovakia fundamentally came true.

As the republic weakened, Tiso prepared fallbacks should she be lost. During the *Anschluss*, he confidentially briefed János Esterházy (the head of the now united Hungarian parties) on plans for a Rome trip to "make inquiries" on how the Italian government saw Czechoslovakia's future.¹³⁶ The disclosure probably was intended to give Budapest a reason to talk to Tiso first, as otherwise he might succeed in undermining Hungary with her Italian patron. Although his plans were quickly reported to Budapest, the trip never happened. Instead, Tiso traveled in May to the Hungarian capital for a Eucharistic congress, during which he secretly met with Hungarian Foreign Minister Kálmán Kánya. The meeting did not go well. Ground, however, was tilled for more negotiations in September, as the republic faced German attack. On the twenty-seventh, Kánya informed his Warsaw embassy of Tiso's conditions for returning Slovakia to Hungary:

(1) A central office with executive power over Slovakia's public administration and the use of Slovak as the official language. (2) A kind of special parliament with legislative powers over their own internal affairs, matters of faith and general education, and juridical matters relating to individuals. (3) Budget quota.

We announced to Tiso that we accept [his] demands, which he received with satisfaction, and he requested that we should not see him as untrustworthy or hesitant because of his links with Beneš. Instead, he aims merely to avoid the charge that he did not use every possibility, as otherwise this might split the Slovak camp.¹³⁷

Kánya's observation that the Ludáks "were playing a double game" gained deeper meaning just two days later, when Tiso and Sidor met with the Polish ambassador in Prague. The two Ludáks asked the Poles to support an "independent Slovak state with a Polish guarantee."¹³⁸ These contacts with Hungary and Poland took place at the same time as Tiso carried on urgent talks with Czechoslovak representatives.¹³⁹

In the days before the Munich Agreement, Tiso continued to push for autonomy while balking at militarily defending the republic. Shortly before the Henlein party was banned, he authored *Slovák's* declaration that "our patience is at an end!" "For twenty years, we constantly warned of the importance of undoing and removing what should have been undone and removed during the first years [of the republic]. . . . As loyal citizens, we exhausted all possible means to drive the authorities to take [appropriate] steps. . . . Further patience has no sense. It would damage us, our nation, our Slovakia, our republic. It would destroy us all."¹⁴⁰ The country prepared for mobilization soon after. Tiso and Sokol wrote Beneš to oppose contesting with arms the 19 September British-French demand for Czechoslovakia to cede the Sudetenland to Germany. (Tiso's position fit with a broader mood; Hodža, for one, had solicited the statement.) Considering Czechoslovakia's international isolation, the Ludáks no doubt worried about Slovakia's vulnerability vis-à-vis Hungary in the event of war. But Tiso's position also implicitly threatened to abandon the Czechs—a far cry from his 1936 blank check that "the safety of the state is the highest law." Sidor, in contrast, accepted a government request to a broadcast designed to strengthen Czech and Slovak solidarity. Mobilization was announced immediately after the speech, a linkage that cost Sidor followers. Yet he nonetheless joined a later initiative for the Ludáks to declare their support for the republic, and *Slovák* also backed the mobilization. When centralists appealed to Tiso to endorse the initiative, he "after long reflection" refused, claiming that he lacked the authority to do so. Slovak recruits, he also noted, "criticize the mobilization, questioning why they should fight for the Czechs."¹⁴¹ In other words, the Sudeten crisis was a Czech rather than Slovak problem. The nation was greater than the state.

On the day of the Munich Conference, Tiso seemed to reemerge as a conciliator. During discussions in Prague with other Slovak parties and separately with Beneš, Tiso proposed a four-point program that would provide de facto autonomy without requiring constitutional revision. He wanted a Slovak parliament with “primary” legislative power, a ministry for the administration of Slovakia, a law that made Slovak its official language, and declarations from the other Slovak parties accepting the individuality of the Slovak nation. The other parties balked only on the issue of the ministry. But, on the next day, Tiso and the Ľudáks learned of the Great Powers’ decision and broke off the talks.¹⁴²

Through the Munich Agreement, Hitler did not destroy Czechoslovakia but merely partitioned it. The republic was nonetheless devastated. Tiso both lost faith in the Czechs’ ability to defend Slovak territory and realized that he now could push for his maximal demands. In *Slovák*, he blamed the Munich catastrophe on the centralists: “For twenty years we unceasingly stressed the need to equalize Slovaks and Czechs and so to strengthen the common force.” Noting again that the Ľudáks had “exhausted all possibilities” searching for a solution, he signaled that his party’s moment had arrived: “Our program remains unchanged. We will do everything in our power to secure the unlimited government of Slovaks in the Slovak lands, the unlimited application of Slovak as the official language of Slovakia, and the unconditional first-order right of the Slovak man to Slovak bread.” Tiso called the party to Žilina, intending to resolve the Slovak Question in its arguable birthplace. His final instructions again mixed pleas for moderation with radical threats: “Let us preserve peace and order so that we do not lose the sympathy of the world! Let’s protect our honor and good name. . . . I firmly believe that we will preserve Slovakia, that we will cleanse the Slovak lands of foreign elements, and that we will strengthen our national sanctuary, so that the Slovak nation can live in satisfaction and develop within it.”¹⁴³

A few days later, representatives from almost every party in Slovakia converged on Žilina. The Ľudáks only seriously negotiated with the Slovak Agrarians sans Hodža, whose government had fallen. General Jan Syrový was now Czechoslovak prime minister. Before the Žilina talks ended the next day, news arrived that Beneš had resigned. Tiso’s prediction that “the centralist regime is liquidating” had come true. At Žilina, the leading Agrarian, Ursíny, had instructions from his party to settle with the Ľudáks even at great disadvantage. Fears ran rampant that the common state might dissolve or be swept by revolution.¹⁴⁴ In addition, Slovaks were painfully aware that a rider attached to the Munich Agreement on the Hungarian and Polish minorities would soon cost them territory. Panic-stricken, Syrový telephoned Tiso in the middle of the talks, acquiescing to Ľudák demands.¹⁴⁵ This atmosphere of desperation made easy Tiso’s remaining task, which was either to form a government with the Slovak Agrarians or to lock them out of power. The priest simply demanded the immediate enactment of the latest Ľudák autonomy

proposal. Published in *Slovák* during the Jubilee celebrations, the plan not only provided for a powerful provincial executive and legislature, but it also called for Slovak regiments in the common army, hiring quotas for Slovaks in the central government, subsidies to Slovakia as economic “reparations,” and a veto for the election of the president and for statewide legislation affecting Slovakia.¹⁴⁶

This was a bitter pill for the Agrarians, but they swallowed it. Wanting to ensure themselves places in the new Slovak government and to reserve the power of naming ministers to the Czechoslovak president, Ursíny and his colleagues drafted a two-paragraph counterproposal that slightly modified the Ľudák demands. The Agrarians also added a sentence that declared Slovakia’s constitutional status “definitively resolved.”¹⁴⁷ As Ursíny later told the tale, he sought out Tiso and handed him the draft, the first one-on-one conversation between the men at Žilina. Tiso had refused to deal with him, preferring instead Pavol Teplanský, a Catholic Agrarian who had defected to the autonomist cause. Despite his distaste for Ursíny, Tiso took the proposal and silently read through it, playing with his pen. When he seemed to hesitate, Ursíny snapped: “For God’s sake . . . , is it still not enough for you? What do you want? Out of the republic?” “Fine,” Tiso said. “I agree.”¹⁴⁸ He signed the badly typed text, now known as the Žilina Agreement, which was then passed around for other Ľudáks, including Sidor, to do the same. The agreement, dated 6 October, entrusted Tiso to form a Slovak government.

The sequence in signing the agreement (Tiso first) and his ability to conclude the deal without consulting his colleagues testify to his power at the moment. On the first day of talks, he had “unified” the party, asserting the moderate preference for an autonomous Slovakia within Czechoslovakia over radical calls for separation (apparently also from Sidor, who otherwise gravitated at Žilina to the role of the moderate). Tiso also gained control of the new government, from which Sidor strategically excluded himself. But Sidor’s preference for other radicals there prevailed. While Tiso claimed the post of premier, the *Nástupist* Ferdinand Ďurčanský won the second Ľudák portfolio—a surprise for many party members. The last Ľudák seat went to Matúš Černák, a “nonpartisan” member of Syrový’s government yet also a Ľudák radical. Just before the Žilina conference, Černák (as instructed by Sidor) ostentatiously resigned over the issue of autonomy.¹⁴⁹ As Agrarian ministers, Tiso accepted Teplanský and Ján Lichner, a Protestant.

Tiso’s weakness (or new affinity) toward the Ľudák radicals was especially evident in the party’s “Manifesto of the Slovak Nation,” released at Žilina. Concerned over the upcoming border negotiations with Hungary, the Hlinka party now openly wooed fascist favor: “We stand by the side of the nations fighting against the Marxist-Jewish ideology of subversion and violence. / We are for the peaceful solution of contested problems in the spirit of the Munich Agreement. / **We protest most decisively against determining Slovak borders without a fully empowered representative of the Slovak nation. We request**

international protection of the Slovak minority in foreign lands.¹⁵⁰ This connection between security, fascist patronage, and antisemitism would be a leitmotif in the months ahead.

The next day, Tiso went to Prague, where his cabinet was confirmed amidst wrangling over the precise meaning of autonomy. At Tiso's request, Syrový also promised to demobilize quickly in order to free up agricultural labor.¹⁵¹ Immediately returning by train to Slovakia, Tiso stopped briefly in the Moravian town of Brno. A delegation of city leaders greeted him from the platform. Reflecting widespread relief over the "happy outcome" of the Žilina conference, their spokesman expressed his gratitude that the Slovaks had decided "to remain faithful to our republic and to work and suffer in common unity. We thank you for your brotherhood and we wish you much success in your work for Slovakia . . . and the Czechoslovak Republic."¹⁵² Touched, Tiso returned the thought. "[I believe] in the success of the Czechoslovak cause and in Czechoslovakia," he said. "The solution of the Slovak Question will yet be to the good and benefit of the republic."¹⁵³

Victories/Defeats

In 1938, Jozef Tiso won his greatest political victories: he took over his party, and he compelled its opponents to accept Slovak autonomy, securing Ľudák hegemony in Slovakia. Both triumphs testify to his tenacity and political skill. It took him two decades to win autonomy and a decade longer than expected to succeed Hlinka. Despite consistently failing to develop tactics that worked for the party, he outmaneuvered the more innovative Sidor, Hlinka's favorite. Despite never representing more than 7 percent of the Czechoslovak electorate, he pushed through a substantial revision of the country's constitution. This latter accomplishment is astonishing. Tiso's party had stagnated for years, during which time centralists had ruled easily without them. Yet, in 1938, Tiso demanded and received the surrender of the organs of state power in Slovakia. These triumphs were also replete with irony. A moderate bested his radical rivals with their own tactics, while a "Magyarone" delivered to the nation what the venerable "old" Slovak, Hlinka, never could.

In 1938, Tiso sustained defeat as well. Slovak autonomy and control of a hegemonic Ľudák party were not his only interwar goals. The priest had also wanted a stable state. But he could push through autonomy only in a demoralized and soon-to-be dismembered republic, shaken by the Munich Agreement. The accompanying loss of security was profound, so much so that Tiso felt compelled to negotiate union with Hungary and Poland. This manifestation of his doctrine of the nation before the state culminated his campaign to prove Ľudák loyalty to the republic. Tiso moreover knew that autonomous Slovakia, predicated as it was on the Munich Agreement, would soon lose substantial territory—adding to the

sense of insecurity. Another victim of Tiso's "final drive" for autonomy was his aspiration for a resurgent Kingdom of Christ. Instead of focusing on the domains of the Lord, Tiso's religious mission became ever more nationalized, raising barriers to the universal aspirations of the kingdom. Slovak autonomy depended on the aggression of the anti-Catholic Hitler, the "small man" whom Tiso had warned to kneel before Rome. As head of the party, Tiso became the church's competitor, setting up Ľudák youth organizations despite hierarchical opposition. To isolate his movement from self-doubt, he even blunted the teachings of the Vicar of Christ, attributing malice to those who reminded the party of papal concerns over racism.

Between 1934 and 1938, the story of incompatibility between the Ľudáks and Czechoslovak politics played out again in a futile encore. Tiso pursued activism through various initiatives, such as his personal politics with Beneš, yet again failed to reconcile the party to the political system. The Ľudáks always wanted more than the centralists were willing to concede. Rather than building trust, Tiso saw it dissipate, with the party ever more unyielding and the centralists ever more willing to conflate it with disloyal opposition. Rather than pursue the constructive work that he preferred, Tiso spent his time trying to accumulate moral and political capital. By 1938, he was not only stymied but also increasingly insulted by Czechoslovak politics. The return of the Magyarone charge was especially hurtful. In 1938, when heckled in parliament for "waiting until 1919," Tiso indirectly yet emotionally responded, "You'd criticize a Slovak who, after going astray, sincerely returns to the nation?"¹⁵⁴ A latecomer to Slovak nationalism, Tiso pursued it with the zeal of the convert. The centralist habit of dredging up his past was meant to humble and neutralize him. Its effect was the opposite, making him more nationalist, rigid, and self-righteous.

Party factionalism meanwhile remained a constant source of annoyance, insecurity, and inspiration for Tiso. His rivals had the tactics that worked for the party; he embarrassingly did not. He wanted to co-opt the radicals, to harness their "youthful élan" to constructive work. Instead, they co-opted him, bringing him onto their project to force autonomy through international pressure. This result was not inevitable. Tiso consistently resisted pressure from the radicals and other Slovak opponents to compete with them on the Jewish Question. His fear of being replaced by Sidor encouraged more than compelled him to radicalize. The emotional impact of Hlinka's preference for Sidor no doubt left Tiso with a need to prove himself. Certainly in the end game for autonomy, Tiso was relentless, while Sidor faltered.

The most decisive context for the outcomes of 1938, however, was the international environment. The anticlerical violence of the Spanish Civil War awakened Tiso's fear of revolution. The aggressive foreign policies of Hungary, Poland, and Germany threatened to destroy his state. From Tiso's point of view, the resulting

instability meant that Slovaks and Catholics could be seduced not only by bolshevism but also fascism. Indeed, the “nationalist-fascist wave” sweeping Europe even turned members of his own party against him. Yet geopolitical instability also aided Tiso. The Munich crisis was “an opportunity to realize our autonomist program.”¹⁵⁵ Most important, the return of revolutionary time let him justify his radicalism as responsible. He had to outflank the radicals not for his own glory but to keep the party in experienced hands. He had to exploit the Munich crisis to solve the Slovak Question because this would make the republic stronger. The international crises let Tiso see both the nation and the church as endangered, thus weakening his duty to the state and his aversion to radical tactics. Other international players, American Slovaks, steered him in the same direction, telling him to push the centralists harder.

In 1938, Czechoslovak, Ludák, and international politics collided. The twentieth anniversary of the Pittsburgh Agreement painfully reminded the Ludáks that they did not fit in Czechoslovak politics and gave them a potent occasion to demand autonomy. Hlinka’s imminent death inspired them to intensify the struggle in his honor and as a test for his successor. Hitler’s decision to force the international system into crisis jeopardized Czechoslovakia while granting the party rare leverage. Any of these events alone would have sufficed to radicalize Tiso.

Emerging from these multiple contexts, Tiso’s actions were driven by a mixture of frustration, ambition, and fear. He was exasperated with Czechoslovak democracy and wanted to change the system. He had served Hlinka long and loyally and had no intention of being passed over as heir. He was scared of revolution and by the prospect that Czechoslovakia would collapse. These motives overlaid each other in a circular dependency: Tiso needed the party to reshape Czechoslovak politics; he needed to reshape Czechoslovak politics to secure the republic; he needed to secure the republic to protect the party.

Tiso had grown addicted to earthly power. Frustration with Czechoslovak politics could have led him to retreat to his parish, as he so often claimed was his preference. He could have confronted his personal ambition as an ascetic frailty, a vainglory that needed disciplined rather than fulfilled. His fear could have led him to cherish the local rather than to play a dangerous game with the international. Yet, in confronting each choice, Tiso always diverged deeper into his “labyrinth of materialism”—secular politics. He succumbed to the lure of the world.



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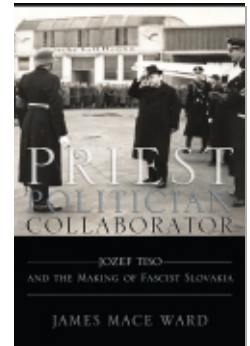
Published by Cornell University Press

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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Standing Up for the Truth, 1938–39

[Tiso] would sail down the swiftest stream
just to keep his hand on the tiller.

—Pavol Čarnogurský, 1993

After the Munich Agreement, Slovakia fell prey to rapacious neighbors. In fall 1938, Hungary annexed much of the south of the province. Poland and Germany took smaller bites from other borders. Four months later, Hitler dismantled the rump republic, setting Slovakia up as a client state and occupying the historic lands. Hungary, eager to regain regions lost as a result of the First World War, conquered Subcarpathian Rus' and briefly attacked Slovakia. The next fall, Hitler invaded Poland through Slovak territory. Working with Josef Stalin, a bitter foe changed into partner, Hitler then destroyed and partitioned Poland.

No Czechoslovak politician had quick or easy solutions for this wretched international environment. Some leaders, such as Edvard Beneš, judged that only force could tame Hitler. Yet, after Munich, Beneš fled abroad rather than fight. The outcome of the war that he correctly predicted, the Second World War, would not be known for years. Those leaders who stayed in Czechoslovakia dealing with the here and now, like Tiso, tended instead to collaborate. In general, they hoped to find a peaceful place in the new European order while repairing damage done to their lands. Many Czech and Slovak leaders also considered a shift to authoritarianism, ultranationalism, and even fascism to be sensible and overdue.

Tiso's leadership of Slovakia in 1938–39 was more radical than one might expect from his interwar reputation. Never an inspired foreign-policy thinker, he let *Realpolitik* lead him into dependence on Nazi Germany. At first, no other state offered him more help against Hungarian irredentism. Later, Hitler used sticks and carrots to convince him to abandon the now renamed Czecho-Slovakia. Tiso placed his hopes for domestic stability, national progress, and social justice in his vision of "New Slovakia," a polity that aimed to unify the nation, to make the

Slovak “the master of his house,” and to return God to public life. Enacting “New Slovakia” often resembled (without always imitating) a Nazi *Gleichschaltung*.

By October 1939, Tiso had risen from prime minister of an autonomous province to president of an independent state. As Slovakia’s leader, he accumulated ever more power, at times acting as though he suffered from a messiah complex. In part, he wanted to keep others from ideologically corrupting his “New Slovakia” or from taking her into (from his viewpoint) senseless conflicts. In part, he simply wanted to rout his rival Sidor. Toward this end, Tiso allied with other Slovak radicals: the *Nástupists* Ferdinand Ďurčanský and Jozef Kirschbaum, more devoted Germanophiles such as Šaňo Mach, and the politically resurrected Vojtech Tuka.

In building the “New Slovakia,” Tiso experienced a conflict between the interests of the nation as he perceived them and the wider interests of the Catholic Church. He often had a hard time squaring his conscience as a priest with his political agendas. Particularly during his subversion of Czecho-Slovakia, he showed an addiction to deniability. He cast himself as an instrument of the nation, sometimes pushing initiative onto others, sometimes waiting fatalistically for them to act. This habit made it easier for Hitler to steer Slovak politics, as he did when drawing Tiso into attacking Catholic Poland. Such subservience prompted Pope Pius XII to oppose Tiso’s presidency. In the most dramatic example of the eclipse of his social-national mission over his ecclesial one, Tiso ignored the pope’s wishes.

“With a Song on Our Lips”

On 8 October 1938, Tiso began governing a Slovakia gripped by insecurity. Some of her inhabitants, for example, feared war or “an invasion of Czechs and Jews from the emptied Sudetenland.”¹ The Munich Agreement, meanwhile, moved the German border through Bratislava’s suburbs to the Danube, right across from Tiso’s new office.² Despite (or because of) the grim times, Tiso was enthusiastically received in Bratislava. He called for order and tolerance, promising that his government would serve collective rather than individual interests. “What is happening today,” he told a crowd, “is really a revolution . . . , the fruit of our national awakens. . . . We cannot let this splendid fruit be desecrated and profaned by anarchy or dissolution. We did not enact our Slovak revolution with bloodletting but rather with a song on our lips. By so doing, we joined the ranks of the most mature nations.” Tiso warned that much hard work lay ahead, requiring sacrifice and diligence. He also stressed that Slovaks desired good relations with minorities. Addressing Germans and Hungarians in these languages, he spoke of the “Christian ideals [of] love and understanding,” offering “full civil and national freedom” in exchange for loyalty. He was less reassuring to Czechs. Even though he thanked those who had “tried to get closer to the Slovak spirit, perform[ing]

valuable services [for us],” he implicitly threatened others with expulsion: “It will be our ambition to remove everything that has spoiled good relations between [our nations].”³ Within two days, Tiso’s government had established offices and announced ministerial portfolios. In addition to prime minister, Tiso became the minister of interior, giving him control of the police. The *Nástupist* Ďurčanský supervised justice, welfare, and health, while the other Ľudák minister, Černák, oversaw schools. The Agrarians Teplanský and Lichner administered the economy (including finances) and communications, respectively.

The most pressing task for Tiso’s government was securing Slovakia’s borders. The Munich Agreement required the “problems of [Czechoslovakia’s] Polish and Hungarian minorities” to be solved within three months (a rider added by Mussolini).⁴ Poland seemed to settle her claim quickly by demanding and receiving Těšín, an important coal district. The Hungarian demands dwarfed this revision. The southern lands held most of the republic’s seven hundred thousand Magyars. Any good-faith acceptance of the Munich Agreement, which equated ethnic borders with just ones, meant that Slovakia would lose much of this land. In addition to being the province’s breadbasket, the area held significant industry and infrastructure, and provided access to the Danube. Alarmed, the Ľudáks demanded a role in the border talks. The overworked Prague government went one better, all but dumping the problem in Tiso’s lap. The Czechoslovak delegation consisted almost exclusively of Slovaks, including Tiso and Ďurčanský, his main advisor. The Czechs, to an extent, thus abandoned the novice Ľudák diplomats. Although Tiso at first instinctively refused the mission, once brought around, he welcomed his task, seeing it as a chance “to save what he could.”⁵

The day after his welcome in Bratislava, and even before his government’s first official session, Tiso had hurried to the border town of Komárno for talks with the Hungarians. These negotiations did not go well. Both sides argued for ethnic justice, but the Hungarians saw the principle as a step toward historic justice, or the return of the *Felvidék*. Far better prepared than the Slovaks, they demanded immediate concessions and quick decisions, hoping to exploit the republic’s demoralization. Adding pressure, Hungarian irregulars fomented unrest in Slovakia, while Budapest newspapers spread the call of “everything back!”⁶ The Hungarian claims were overwhelming: 12,000 square kilometers of territory, over one million inhabitants, and several cities including Bratislava and Košice, Slovakia’s eastern capital. Tiso complained that the Hungarian proposal would leave six hundred thousand Slovaks in Hungary. His team’s best counterproposal (half as much territory, a third of the inhabitants, and no major cities) sought to balance the number of cut-off nationals on either side. Denouncing this offer as “laughable” and a hostage system, the Hungarians broke off the talks, turning instead to international arbitration.⁷ Tiso sincerely wanted compromise at Komárno, but he naïvely believed that the Hungarians would be more accommodating to a Slovak as opposed to

Czechoslovak government. Barely briefed and inexperienced, he was simply out of his depth. Otherwise, he performed relatively well. He was a polite, firm, yet flexible negotiator, more than linguistically up to the task. Accepting ethnicity as a sensible ordering principle, he promised that Slovakia would not oppress her Hungarians, offering them autonomy. Referring to the 1920 treaty that had partitioned Hungary, he even sympathized with her cause: “We understand that Trianon hurt, so none of us wants a new [one].” But the Hungarians were now in the position that Tiso had held the week before: their moment had come. Tiso had no hope of getting them to yield. Nor could he find a way to bend the ethnic principle to serve Slovakia’s economic and strategic needs. Most critically, he failed to set as the basis for putting it into practice a Czechoslovak rather than Hungarian census (both of which, shaped by nationalism, diverged on methods, ethnic categories, and quantitative results).⁸

Panicked, Tiso sought help from Poland and Germany. The radicals became his go-betweens: Sidor with Warsaw, Mach and Ďurčanský with Berlin. Abroad, the Slovaks buttressed high-minded appeals to the ethnic principle with underhanded maneuvers. Tiso and Sidor even offered Subcarpathian Rus’ to Hungary and Poland.⁹ In Berlin, the Ludáks used the bargaining chips of separatism and antisemitism. During a meeting with Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, for instance, Tiso opposed a plebiscite over Košice, arguing that “Jews and Communists would vote against Slovakia.” Later that evening, he told Ribbentrop that “If Prague did not adhere to [its] agreements. . . , complete separation would soon follow.”¹⁰ Such tactics let Tiso show ideological affinity with the Germans while distancing himself from the Czechs, the focus of Nazi hostility. Antisemitism was also handy for claiming disputed territory, as when Mach interpreted “Hungarian islands” sketched on maps as really representing Hungarian Jews.¹¹ (Jews were less likely to appear on the Czechoslovak census as Hungarians.) Tiso, however, had tighter limits than the radicals on currying German favor. Ďurčanský, for example, was frankly separatist and talked about solving the Jewish Question “as in Germany.” Tiso, in contrast, rarely mentioned Jews. Before Ribbentrop, he “elaborated at length his aim of an autonomous Slovakia collaborating with an autonomous [Subcarpathian Rus’] under Prague. . . . [He] thought that he would have to steer developments slowly and methodically.”¹² In truth, Tiso was ambivalent about Nazi patronage. Even if Germany was the region’s major power, he seems to have preferred the patronage of the Poles, having asked them first for “protection.”¹³ To Ribbentrop, Tiso did not even mention Germany as a possible “orientation” for an independent Slovakia.¹⁴ Despite the snub, he seemed to win Ribbentrop over, coming away convinced that the Germans would support Slovak claims on Bratislava and Košice. But Tiso soon lost ground (literally) elsewhere, ceding land to Poland and permitting Germany military control over the strategic point of Devín, a sacred site for Slovak nationalists.¹⁵

Tiso meanwhile reconstructed Slovak politics in ways to please Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, the judges-to-be in the border dispute. He quickly banned the Communist Party and Freemasons, locked Social Democrats out of power, and put the press under a propaganda bureau headed by Mach. Ethnic Germans got a state secretariat and a promise of cultural autonomy. The Slovak government also began revoking Jewish rights and firing Jewish civil servants. Tiso later claimed that such measures were aimed at denying Hitler reason to intervene in Slovakia, but they also reflected Tiso's domestic agendas.¹⁶ A central component of the transformation, for example, was to be a corporate order, a "true" democracy because it would be based on Christianity. "Christianity is love of one's neighbor," Tiso explained, "but [our] Christian regime will also know how to drive away whatever is a danger for the national collective. . . . Whoever wants to live in Slovakia must serve the Slovak nation in the spirit of Christianity. In this spirit, we give our hand to everyone and we call [them] to work." In a pattern typical for his rule, Tiso's veiled threats were clarified by deputies. That same day, Teplanský declared that "if someone eats with ten spoons, [we] will take nine. The Jews must realize that they live from the sweat of the Slovak[s]. . . . Pity the one who opposes the people."¹⁷

Embedded within this *Gleichschaltung* was the power struggle between Tiso and the radicals. Continuing a kind of opposition politics, Sidor took over the Hlinka Guard. Although unarmed, the burgeoning paramilitary vied to replace the army and police, specializing in harassing the regime's enemies. Sidor also gained control of Slovak national councils created to oversee suspect local administrators. Tiso was only partly successful in neutralizing the radical's challenge. After failing to dissolve the guard, he turned it into a pillar of Ľudák power, the only permitted paramilitary in Slovakia. Tiso accepted the councils as "auxiliary organs of authority," but then phased them out after putting cities (and much else) under commissars.¹⁸ He and the radicals split as well over separatism. Sidor hoped to strengthen his power base by expanding the revolution. Worrisomely, Germany seemed to back him. "With Sidor against the Jews" became a slogan on Slovak-language broadcasts from Vienna.¹⁹ Ďurčanský strengthened the separatist cause by securing Tuka's return. According to the terms of the transfer, Tuka was to stay in Piešťany and out of Bratislava and politics. Needing legal expertise, however, Tiso undid the deal by inviting the parolee to the arbitration on the southern lands.²⁰ Tuka, along with Ďurčanský and Sidor, shopped Slovak independence again to the Germans.²¹ Tiso, in contrast, publicly defended Czechoslovakia, arguing in a major speech that separatism was a mistake, as "no one may gamble with the fate of the nation."²² This high-profile defense of the republic, however, mirrored changing Czechoslovak and international dynamics. Czech generals reportedly had demanded that Tiso turn over power to them, while his Agrarian minister Lichner was planning a putsch. Tiso's speech also coincided with a German consensus that Slovakia best served *Reich* interests within a rump republic.²³

On 2 November, Czechoslovak and Hungarian delegations gathered in Vienna for final arguments on the border dispute. The arbiters were Ribbentrop and Count Galeazzo Ciano, the Italian foreign minister. Even though Ciano felt that the Slovak case was stronger, he exploited “Ribbentrop’s unpreparedness” to award the Italian client, Hungary, “pieces of territory which might easily have given rise to much controversial discussion.”²⁴ Ciano, however, was bragging about details, as the big issues had already been settled a few days before. All in all, Hungary received over 10,000 square kilometers with more than 850,000 inhabitants. Slovakia’s losses included around 40 percent of her arable land and some 270,000 “Czechoslovaks” according to the 1930 census. Except for Nitra and Bratislava, the Hungarians also got the cities that they wanted.²⁵ Ribbentrop told Tiso to thank the Munich Agreement that Slovakia had not been dismembered entirely. Ciano blamed the losses on the First Republic’s foreign policy. Tiso came away convinced that his province had fared worse “because they lumped us together with the Czechs.”²⁶

The Vienna Award devastated Tiso. Pavol Čarnogurský, a Sidor protégé, watched the prime minister smolder waiting for the decision. “The Hungarians look at us . . . as if it were still the Vienna of emperors,” Tiso complained. “They are our masters and we are wretched peasants. . . . But the times have changed. We must also settle accounts with them!” Upon hearing the verdict, Tiso was “on the verge of collapse . . . approaching hysteria.” “[He] spoke in stops and starts, loudly, more with the tone of an enraged village farmer. . . . From his behavior, one could see very clearly that he [took] the situation not only as a hard blow to the nation but also as a personal defeat, for which he was unprepared.”²⁷ The Agrarian economist Peter Zaňko recalled that he had never seen Tiso look so defeated. “Will we be able to live?” Tiso asked him. “Can we hold on economically?”²⁸ At some point, Tiso threatened to resign. “We all opposed [it],” Čarnogurský wrote. “His resignation would have created unimaginable chaos. / The one who argued most decisively against [it] was . . . Ďurčanský. [He told] Dr. Tiso that the Vienna Award was only the result of Czechoslovakia’s bad politics before [the] Munich [Agreement]. . . . It was certainly also due to the hostile anti-Slovak position of Jews and of world Jewry, which in this case sided with the Hungarians.” “Los[ing his] nerve and composure,” Tiso vacillated on signing the agreement, taking first Tuka’s advice against it, then caving in before the reproach of Czechoslovak Foreign Minister František Chvalkovský: “At most, you will only show the diplomatic world, to which you have just introduced yourself, that you are still not mature enough to play on the international level.”²⁹

That night in an emotional radio address, Tiso recycled some of the advice that he had received in Vienna. He blamed the disaster on past Czechoslovak governments, describing the award as a diktat, “in which they decided about us like about a defeated enemy, . . . often in conflict with the ethnic principle. The Great Powers

have decided; there is nothing to do but bow our heads and work.” Tiso tried to transform the defeat into a victory for Slovak security, relating Ribbentrop’s salve that at least Slovakia had averted complete partition. Tiso also claimed that Slovak inhabitants now enjoyed guarantees “that their personal and property rights will not in any way be infringed.” “Purged from foreign elements,” he argued, “we will be able to live in our homeland fully according to our customs.” Yet, in a hint that he hoped to revise the decision, Tiso instructed Slovak civil servants and intelligentsia in the lost lands to stay in place and nurture “the torn-off branch,” thus ensuring that “the nation does not perish.”³⁰

Although not in the speech, Tiso suddenly turned on Jews. The Slovak press had made them scapegoats for the disaster. In justifying rioting in Bratislava on the eve of the award, for example, *Slovák* described Jews as “the most impudent supporters of [partitioning] Slovakia.”³¹ (In fact, such disloyalty had no impact on the award and was limited to a demonstration of several hundred “Jewish-Hungarian” students.)³² Now Tiso joined the fray. On the day after the award, Adolf Eichmann, a German expert on the Jewish Question, and Jozef Faláth, a Viennese Slovak, worked out a plan to dump “dangerous” indigent and foreign Jews on the soon-to-be-lost territory, thus letting Hungary “inherit” them.³³ To stem capital flight, wealthy Jews were to be interned. Tiso approved the proposal, making Faláth head of a temporary center for solving the Jewish Question in Slovakia. The Hlinka Guard and Viennese radicals became its shock troops. Faláth instantly kicked off the deportations with a confused order, creating chaos. Izidor Koso, chief of staff for the Slovak Ministry of Interior, sought out Tiso and demanded explanations. Referring to the student demonstration, Tiso reportedly remarked that “if [the Jews’] hearts pull them [to Hungary], let them go [there].” Unimpressed, Koso reminded him that “we [and not Viennese radicals] must make order with our own citizens. There could be international . . . complications.”³⁴ To placate Koso, Tiso issued a new order that exempted some Czechoslovak citizens. Because he failed to apprise Faláth of the change, however, it just created more chaos. Quickly confronted with sobering economic consequences such as capital flight, Tiso canceled the operation three days later. By then, more than 7,500 Jews had been shipped south. While the Slovak regime let most of them soon return, several hundred Jews without citizenship became trapped between borders, languishing in a miserable no-man’s-land for weeks.³⁵

With the border conflict resolved for the time being, Tiso turned to creating the “New Slovakia.” Just days after the deportations, the Ľudáks, Agrarians, and a few other parties merged into a Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party—Party of Slovak National Unity. Tiso characterized it as the culmination of a “thousand-year struggle for Slovak political rights”: “[Dispersing] gloomy reports about the occupation of Slovak lands by foreign soldiers, we bring to the Slovak public a joyous report that beams like the delightful [Star of] Bethlehem: the Slovak nation has

driven from its midst fratricidal struggle, has demolished the party walls that up until now divided it, and has unified in one party.” An accompanying manifesto complemented this affirmative spin with blunt threats: “Whoever takes a stand against or transgresses the united will of the Slovak nation will become its enemy and a traitor, with whom the nation will settle accounts mercilessly.”³⁶ Although there was widespread support throughout the Second Republic for “simplifying” party systems, the Slovak unification was no more voluntary than the Žilina Agreement had been. Intimidation, manipulation, and demoralization ruled the day. Tiso saw the one-party system as “a natural consequence of democratic development.”³⁷ When the Slovak Social Democrats opposed the merger, they were banned, accused of corruption and smuggling Jews from Austria. A similar fate met the Jewish Party and even the Lutheran Nationalists, the oldest Slovak party. But the regime did tolerate German and Hungarian unity parties.³⁸

Another priority for Tiso in the wake of the Vienna Award was to strengthen his government’s legitimacy by turning the Žilina Agreement into constitutional law. The Czechs, in contrast, were more interested in strengthening the *republic’s* legitimacy by filling Beneš’s vacant office. Tiso read this reluctance to deal with the autonomy law first as a tactic for renegeing on promises. He threatened to order elections for a Slovak diet without the law, toying with independence.³⁹ (Such legislative conflicts proved typical for the Second Republic.) Tiso’s fear that the Czechs wanted to roll back Slovak sovereignty, even if shortsighted, was justified. When the law came before the parliament, Czechs indeed tried to expand central authority, Prague hoping to anchor Slovakia better in Czecho-Slovakia by keeping hold of the purse strings. In response, the Slovaks refused to support an act enabling the central government to rule by decree, as they feared that it would let Prague overrule Bratislava on Slovak issues. In the end, a compromise was struck. The Slovaks got the autonomy law first, but without several of their more contentious demands, such as reparations for damages done to Slovakia’s economy during the First Republic, or the right to conclude international agreements.⁴⁰ The country’s leadership also settled on Emil Hácha, a jurist, as president. In November, Tiso helped to install him in an office that could have been his own. The Czechs had offered to choose a Slovak, only to be told that none could be spared.⁴¹ Hácha named a central government under the Agrarian Rudolf Beran, now head of a Czech unity party, one of two in the historic lands. Tiso also rebuilt his cabinet. Most notably, he shifted Ďurčanský into Lichner’s seat, no doubt in response to the Agrarian’s plotting and continuing centralism. Three Slovak state secretaries and Sidor (without portfolio) also joined the central government.⁴²

In the meantime, The Slovak *Gleichschaltung* quickened. The regime shut down most non-Ludák publications, Tiso explaining that “the newspapers poisoned minds.”⁴³ Social, cultural, and economic organizations, including labor unions, were “unified.” Among the killed-off clubs was Tiso’s old favorite, Orol.⁴⁴

Massive rallies celebrating national unification and Guardist marches, replete with fascist ritual, became common. By the end of the year, the guard claimed more than one hundred thousand members, Sidor announcing plans to arm it the next year.⁴⁵ Another side to the *Gleichschaltung* was a drive to Slovakize the province's economy. As Tiso explained, "Our companions bring to [our] new life various economic fortresses. Let no one think that it will be possible for someone to shoot at us from them. . . . What is in Slovakia—national riches, economic treasures, money in banks—all of this must serve the Slovak nation."⁴⁶ Tiso and his government accordingly drafted plans to centralize economic sectors like insurance and to decouple them from Hungarian and Czechoslovak firms, thus forcibly repatriating "national capital."⁴⁷ But because such policies stymied hopes of rebuilding the economy by attracting investment, capturing new markets, and cultivating existing enterprises, few of these initiatives left the drawing board during the Second Republic. The purge of Czechs in the administration, in contrast, moved apace. Ďurčanský and Černák led the charge, while the Hlinka Guard added violent (usually verbal) pressure.⁴⁸ Because the Slovak government still needed Czech economic support and cooperation in the central parliament, Tiso reined in the radicals in December.⁴⁹ At the same time, he struck a deal with the central government to withdraw nine thousand Czech state workers from Slovakia. In addition to wanting to protect Czechs and to project unity toward the Germans, the central government hoped thus to "radically solve" the Slovak Question.⁵⁰ The agreement was a coup for Tiso. It confirmed his sway with Prague while delivering on his promise to redistribute the produce of the Slovak garden. A later, reciprocal transfer of Slovaks strengthened his claim to Catholic justice as epitomized by *suum cuique*—each to their own.⁵¹

Although divided over speed and method, Tiso's regime also was determined to solve the Jewish Question. Ľudák moderates linked it with a moral reconstruction of capitalism that would embed social duties within ownership. According to Karol Mederly, "either the [Jews] will voluntarily join [us in creative economic cooperation], or else they will disappear—there is no third way."⁵² So-called moderates like Mederly favored a gradual, legal solution that limited economic disruptions. To suddenly purge the Jews would court economic collapse in cities, opening up avenues for Germans to grab "national property." As a Slovak official explained, "It would be easier to remove ten Jews than one German."⁵³ Britain also conditioned crucial loans to the Second Republic on a willingness to eschew antisemitic persecution. For these reasons, even the regime's radicals restrained their desire for a sudden, drastic purge of Jews.⁵⁴ After the war, Tiso argued that he had long been for solving the Jewish Question, as "it was not possible to go around this problem if you wanted to consolidate the Slovak economy." But he moved slowly, striving to work in conjunction with Prague.⁵⁵ His few explicit statements on Jews at this time showed him clearly reembracing antisemitism. In connection

with the deportees caught in the no-man's-land, for example, he accused Jews of inspiring an anti-Slovak press campaign abroad. Elsewhere, he argued that "we are beginning with the reeducation of people for business, trade, and commerce. It's necessary to push out the foreign element, to put Slovaks in the place of Jews in business and finance."⁵⁶

In part, Tiso's *Gleichschaltung* responded to Slovakia's troubles. Partition had fractured markets and transportation networks, making some economic "simplification" inevitable. Wanting a stronger ethnic claim to the reclaimed lands, the Hungarian Army drove out Czechoslovak colonists, helping to spark a refugee wave.⁵⁷ One answer to this crisis was to send displaced Czechs "home" or to compensate Slovak refugees by dispossessing and expelling Hungarians. (This tit-for-tat approach was called "reciprocity," a policy of basing Hungarian rights in Slovakia on Slovak rights in Hungary.)⁵⁸ The expansion of the Hlinka Guard profited from a sense that the nation was under assault. Hungary and Poland, for example, sponsored terrorism in the province, killing a few people. In December, Poland annexed an additional small chunk of Slovak territory.⁵⁹ Slovakia's *Volksdeutsche* activists (common usage) were other chronic problems. The regime's state secretary for the German minority, Franz Karmasin, had been a useful ally against Hungary but was also a Nazi agent. He and his followers eyed Slovakia's economic jewels, periodically claiming Bratislava as a German city. Tiso's practice of replacing city councils with commissars kept these activists from conquering city halls.⁶⁰

Even as a response to tough times, however, Tiso's transformation of Slovakia was mainly the fruit of his ideology. Unity, authority, Slovakia to the Slovaks, the common good, the Ľudáks as the only legitimate voice of the nation—he had argued these themes for years. His "New Slovakia" was just his Christian Social/Slovak nationalist politics come to power. He promised that his province would be "social but not Socialist." He wanted to preserve the principles of private property and individual responsibility while providing jobs for all. Capitalists were to be taught "to serve above all Slovakia and the interests of the Slovak nation," learning how to be "satisfied with a decent, bourgeois profit." Working wives were to "return to the family." Parliament was to labor for free.⁶¹ If there was something new here, it was Tiso's interest in a new man. "We want to reeducate Slovaks," he explained. "We want to create a brave, heroic Slovak man, a sacrificing and faithful Slovak woman, a healthy and satisfied Slovak family." Although Tiso readily borrowed fascist methods that suited him, he continued to reject the imperial, totalitarian state, arguing that it was an end in itself, enslaving of both individual and nation. His ideal system was instead Catholic corporatism, such as in Dollfuß's Austria. "Let's work only for God," he told one crowd. "Then the nation will be harmonious and unified." "Love your neighbor" also returned to his discourse, but the balance with self-love had been lost: "Above all," he preached, "love yourself. . . .!"⁶²

The politically resurrected Tuka provided the most influential Ľudák alternative to Tiso's vision. Lacking anyone of greater stature, the Nástupists adopted him as their leader, staging in December his return to Bratislava as "the greatest living Slovak martyr." Tuka used the venue to call for Slovak independence.⁶³ Both he and the Nástupists also pressed for a more doctrinaire totalitarianism, privately lobbying for German and Italian patronage. Tiso, in contrast, preferred to stay within Czecho-Slovakia and to limit Slovakia's dependence on Germany. The prime minister still had no love for Tuka, bluntly calling him a traitor before the radical ministers. Tiso no doubt also wielded the hand that locked Tuka out of the first Slovak parliament.⁶⁴ But Tiso nonetheless continued to exploit Tuka as a go-between. In November, the Slovak government dispatched the radical to Berlin to try to save the Devín territory. Probably with Tiso's approval, he also pitched Slovak-German economic cooperation to Göring.⁶⁵ During the conflict over the autonomy law, Tiso had found it useful to pressure Prague with the threat of separatism. Such tactics undermined his ability to marginalize Tuka. Thus, even though Tiso had "indignantly" opposed Tuka's return to Bratislava, he ultimately not only approved it but also "lent authority" to the separatist cause by appearing at the resulting celebration.⁶⁶

On 18 December, Slovakia voted for her new parliament. Tiso wanted the elections to be a plebiscite on the Ľudák revolution. Earlier, he had told the *Völkischer Beobachter* that there would be but one candidate list with around seventy-five slots. Soon after, he officially announced the elections to lower administrators. While anyone legally could submit a list by the next Sunday, no one did, as the announcement was only published after the deadline. This transparent machination was Tiso's way of getting a single list without violating the law. Ľudáks, of course, dominated the list. Former Agrarians, for example, received only five slots, far below the one-third representation negotiated at Žilina. This also meant that Slovak Protestants were badly underrepresented, a policy that was no happenstance, as the regime mistrusted them as Czechoslovaks. Voters cast ballots according to their nationalities, answering yes or no to a single question: "Do you want a new, free Slovakia?" Guardists often stood nearby to observe who voted how. When such tactics prompted criticism among Czecho-Slovak legislators, Tiso reportedly pounded his desk and swore, "We won't let your fairy tales stand in our way."⁶⁷ Ninety-eight percent of the 1,200,000 voters returned yes ballots. Even if coerced, the results suggested significant support for the regime.

Tiso was now ready for his revolution to end. The period of great danger had passed. However traumatically, the Munich Agreement and Vienna Award had at least established a framework for securing the Second Republic within the international system. No alternative Slovak revolution had emerged in the meantime. Instead, Tiso had pushed through the basis for his "New Slovakia": Ľudáks were to control the province; a unified Slovak nation was to reap first its socioeconomic

benefits; Christians (and especially Catholics) were to experience a religious revival. Tiso remained Slovakia's most powerful and popular man. The Ľudák radicals, in contrast, were weak and divided, less troublesome than useful to him.

Steering Developments Slowly and Methodically

In 1939, Tiso helped Hitler to dismantle Czecho-Slovakia—an ironic outcome in ways. The December before, Tiso had shown a new willingness to suppress Slovak separatism. Although he thus improved his relations with Prague, they soon soured again due to his insistence on expanding Slovak sovereignty, unilaterally if need be. In early 1939, as Tiso confronted a major budget crisis, Nazi Germany turned to the Slovak radicals as tools for subverting the republic. Berlin extended through them an offer of economic aid, linking it to Slovak independence. Tiso initially pursued this offer. Within Czecho-Slovakia, he could use it to coerce Prague into financial concessions and to develop trade with Germany. His decision also kept the radicals working with rather than against him. But, as relations with his Czech partners grew poisoned and pressure from Germany to declare independence more intense, Tiso wavered between supporting and subverting the republic. This indecisiveness stemmed in part from a conflict that he felt between his roles as priest and politician. His final decision for independence came only after Prague briefly replaced him with Sidor as prime minister.

By late 1938, Tiso was losing the trust of his Czech partners. They had ceded to him greater control over Slovakia, yet he had not taken their interests to heart. Slovak radicalism scared away investment and tourists, sapped morale in the common army, and called the entire concept of Czecho-Slovakia into question. Slovak radicals even promoted separatism among Moravian Slovaks as a way to harass Prague. Tiso supposedly wanted nothing to do with the tactic, dismissing these Slovaks as “worse chauvinist [Czechs] than [those] from Bohemia.”⁶⁸ Some Czechs in the central cabinet nonetheless began to suspect that Tiso was playing a double game, acting autonomist in Prague but separatist in Bratislava. The Czechs also knew about contacts between Slovak radicals and high-level Nazis. To pull Tiso back onto the right path, President Háchá decided to holiday with him in Slovakia's Tatra Mountains. The Slovak government gladly hosted the summit, providing plenty of food and drink, and a fraternal atmosphere. The two sides struck a deal on finances, a chronic point of contention. Tiso also promised Háchá to shut down Ľudák separatism. Although pleased with the summit, the president wondered if Tiso could deliver.⁶⁹

Yet, for a time, it seemed as if Tiso indeed would tame the radicals. He began the New Year by making Tuka his errand boy, dispatching him to Vienna to

convince the Slovaks there to tone down their subversive radio broadcasts. In mid-month, moderates dominated the opening of the Slovak parliament. Martin Sokol became its president, while the venerable Jozef Buday gave a prorepublic keynote address. Guests of honor included not only Czech ministers but even old Slovak centralists such as Vavro Šrobár. Tuka, in contrast, was conspicuously absent.⁷⁰ Soon after, Tiso reshuffled his cabinet. The old Ludák Jozef Sivák replaced the radical Černák as minister of education. Rumor had it that Ďurčanský might be exiled to the Vatican. By month's end, Bratislava's German consulate reported that the radicals had suffered "an indubitable setback."⁷¹

Wanting to leave revolutionary time, Tiso stressed domestic stability while struggling to distance Slovakia from Germany. He assured minorities (especially Jews), that "the Slovak nation is resolved to live in peace" with them.⁷² Through back channels, he offered the Hungarian government a summit, a goal of which was to transform "reciprocity" from tit-for-tat reprisals to mutual respect for minority rights. (The offer replaced a noisy Slovak irredentist campaign, launched after Hungarian gendarmes shot dead a few Slovak protesters in the annexed lands.)⁷³ For the Czech and Jewish Questions, Tiso emphasized legal solutions. When antisemitic rioting broke out in western Slovakia, he ordered it suppressed and perpetrators arrested.⁷⁴ Tiso also moved to limit the influence of Slovakia's ethnic Germans, ordering a snap census so Karmasin could not mobilize for it. The tactic returned a low total of 128,000 Germans, letting Tiso justify restricting their share in the economy. Surprisingly, the regime achieved this result in part by trusting Jews, who were allowed to declare a Slovak identity on the census. (Many of them did.)⁷⁵ Tiso was also eager to shed his regime's reputation as a Nazi knockoff. He claimed to a French journalist that his system was "neither dictatorship nor totalitarianism, because we respect individual liberty. [There is no] question of turning the state into a divine entity."⁷⁶ In a major speech, Tiso stressed the importance of Catholicism to Slovak nationalism. To distance Slovakia economically from Germany, the regime also courted American investors. But, as the American diplomat George Kennan wryly noted, Tiso's efforts to keep Berlin at arm's length did not mean much, "when one could look out of his office windows . . . and see considerably more German territory than Czech."⁷⁷ The prospect of German intervention, for example, dissuaded Tiso from subordinating the *Volksdeutsche* activists. The snap census sparked a row with Karmasin, who threatened to ask Hitler for reprisals. Tiso quickly made concessions, agreeing, for instance, to the creation of an arbitration board for German-Slovak disputes. He also recognized Karmasin's paramilitary, the training and arming of which was overseen by the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), the Nazi Party's elite corps. A few days later, Czech ministers watched in surprise as *Volksdeutsche* activists in brown shirts and swastika armbands paraded at the opening of the Slovak parliament.⁷⁸

The next month, February, Tiso wrestled with Slovakia's budget. The projected deficit (over a billion crowns) was so large that he hid it from the public. In addition to recommending "savings down the line," he approved (not unreasonably) asking Prague to lower the Slovak contribution to the central budget and to invest in Slovakia. Demands on the central government, however, were not to stop there. As Tiso explained to the budget committee of the Slovak parliament,

The . . . economic state of our homeland obviously was not caused just by the Vienna Award, but also by the [former] regime through economic and financial errors. . . . We must go to the past and, to a certain degree, undo these damages. . . . This is the issue of reparations. . . . I do not think that they are a closed chapter just because we, in October [and] . . . November [1938], wanted . . . an easier solution to our constitutional relations. If we [gave up reparations], I think that we would really have to answer for it in the future.⁷⁹

Reparations had been one of the most contentious issues during talks on the autonomy law. Tiso's interest in reviving the dispute typified his habit of seeing agreements with the Czechs as provisional.⁸⁰ For Tiso, the budget crisis was also an opportunity to restore Slovak morals. In one committee session, he dedicated all of his remarks to his plan for parliamentarians to work for free. According to him, treating these posts as sinecures contributed to "the general decadence of [the Czechoslovak] parliament." One deputy, unconvinced, warned that the plan could encourage corruption. No pay was also unconstitutional, a fact that seemed to annoy Tiso. On the one hand, this issue was about prestige, Tiso wanting to prove that he stood behind "every slogan and thesis that I declare and preach." On the other hand, he saw "double pay" as a serious vice. "We are building a new world," he explained, a world that required "a complete renewal of thinking": "[It] is not such an easy task, but our generation . . . must commit itself to building this passage [to the new world]. This is our historic mission. . . . This new world is formed . . . by the sacrifices that we bear."⁸¹

As Tiso spoke, Hitler readied Czechoslovakia's death, wanting it presented as a "peaceful action."⁸² At the end of January, the Nazi regime activated the Slovak radicals as a wedge for splitting the republic legally. Tuka traveled to Berlin, probably negotiating at this point the invitation for Slovak-German economic talks.⁸³ Back home, Mach gave a high-profile separatist speech. A Nazi envoy, Edmund Veesenmayer, warned Slovak radicals that they could avert an imminent Hungarian invasion only by declaring independence.⁸⁴ On 12 February, Tuka—who still held no public office—became the first Slovak representative to meet with Hitler. At his sycophantic best, Tuka assured the *Führer* that the Slovaks ached for independence. Hitler complained about the "incurable megalomania" of the Czechs, forecasting "dark days ahead" for Slovaks if they clung to the republic. But "he

could guarantee an independent Slovakia at any time, even today.”⁸⁵ All of the reasons to declare Slovak independence were now on the table. The carrots were national prestige, opportunity for career advancement, guaranteed borders, and economic aid. The sticks were the threats of Hungarian occupation and of sharing in Hitler’s quarrel with the Czechs.

Tiso half-embraced this German initiative. He welcomed the opportunity for economic talks with Germany free of Czech supervision. When the prospect arose, for example, he signed on quickly, entrusting them to Mikuláš Pružinský, an older generation Ľudák, now minister of the economy (a portfolio carved out of Teplanský’s department). “The Czechs thought that I would not find a way to Berlin,” Tiso reportedly remarked, “But I [did].”⁸⁶ In contrast to his eagerness for economic talks, Tiso balked at the German request for Slovak independence. According to Jozef Kirschbaum, Ďurčanský’s secretary, Tiso did not think “that Slovakia was prepared for such a . . . historic step.”⁸⁷ Yet Tiso nonetheless promised Ďurčanský to meet with Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the leading Viennese Nazi and a Catholic. Tiso also did nothing to counter Mach’s separatism or to use the police to block radical access to the Germans. Instead, he complained that “it’s not possible to rely on the gendarmes, because . . . we still have Czech gendarmes, who seem to sabotage our work.”⁸⁸

Tiso later avowed little knowledge of the radicals’ dealings with Germany. Certainly, he did not know everything. By meeting with Hitler, for example, Tuka aimed to steal a march on Tiso by becoming the *Führer’s* pet. After the war, Tuka claimed to have kept Tiso in the dark.⁸⁹ But, in general, Tiso’s ignorance was a choice. According to Ďurčanský, Tiso often noted at this time that, as a priest, he could not engage in subversion: “He saw it as his duty to better the existing system. . . . But if independence should be realized by the people . . . , he was not only prepared to recognize it but also to fight entirely for the interests of the people.”⁹⁰ This desire to be an instrument of the nation rather than an actor would shape Tiso’s behavior profoundly during the coming weeks.

Throughout February, Tiso vacillated on independence. To the central government, he asked for financial concessions lest the Slovak deficit be abused for “unfavorable political theses.”⁹¹ Although the statement suggested that he was fighting separatism, his government program, unveiled on the twenty-first in the Slovak parliament, encouraged the opposite interpretation. “We are building a state,” Tiso declared, “our new state, our Slovak state.”⁹² Nowhere did he explicitly endorse Czecho-Slovakia, as moderates in the Ľudák presidium had asked him to do. “I am also for a Czechoslovak orientation,” he reportedly told Martin Sokol, “but we must show the Czechs that they can’t do with us whatever they want.”⁹³ (Tiso meanwhile took Nástupist advice and fired Sokol as the party’s general secretary, letting him learn of the decision through the press.)⁹⁴ Tiso’s speech especially pleased the radicals. Tuka reported to a German diplomat that “Tiso has . . . for

some time declared himself ready to carry through the complete separation from Prague by the fall. It is only in regard to tempo that he is of a different view."⁹⁵ Yet republicans also could find the speech reassuring. *Politika*, for example, saw it as proof that Tiso and the government rejected separatism, interpreting "Slovak state" to mean only an autonomous Slovakia.⁹⁶

Overall, Tiso's speech strove again to quit revolutionary time. There was no tough talk about national enemies. Rather, Tiso portrayed his state as a pacific utopia, a power "not . . . founded on riches, weapons, or police brutality, but rather on . . . Slovak spiritual values: a simple life, pure morals, the social equality of estates, and justice based on national tolerance." He again rejected the totalitarian label for New Slovakia. His *Gleichschaltung* was merely "removing the worst fruits of democracy." Instead of an all-powerful state, he wanted a lean one—"good, cheap, and quick." The nation, however, remained "total" and ultimately unfettered by constitutionality. Most of the speech recounted his government's progress on conquering the budget, rebuilding infrastructure, and consolidating the political and legal order. As in the past, Tiso urged Slovaks to learn Christian solidarity and entrepreneurship, and to stop looking to the state for handouts. He assured Slovaks yet again that the Jewish Question would be solved soon and legally. On this issue, as in general, Tiso promised that he would be guided above all by "the real interests of the Slovak nation."⁹⁷ This empty formula defined his new ideology. Its purpose was to let him change course at will.

Whatever trust remained between Tiso and his Czech partners now dissipated. Disturbed by intelligence reports on German-Slovak contacts, Czechs in the central government considered overthrowing him. As General Alois Eliáš argued, "If Tiso stays in office, the Ludák radicals, with his tacit support, will move full steam ahead toward independence."⁹⁸ The 21 February speech convinced Czecho-Slovak Prime Minister Beran that Tiso was indeed separatist. On the twenty-eighth, a Slovak delegation led by Pružinský and Ďurčanský left for economic talks in Berlin. In a familiar maneuver, Pružinský announced the trip to the central government by a 24 February letter that did not reach its destination until 1 March. On that same day, Beran convened a meeting of Czech and Slovak ministers for settling "all contested issues."⁹⁹ Tiso did not attend. During the stormy session, the Czechs tried to force the Slovaks either to declare independence or to commit to Czecho-Slovakia. The Slovaks resisted both options, pressing the Czechs for concessions on finances and creating Slovak regiments, another point of chronic tension. Beran instead handed over a list of demands, the first of which was for Tiso to proclaim his loyalty to the republic.¹⁰⁰

With Tiso's tacit support, the Slovak separatists indeed steamed ahead. At the end of February, Mach and Tuka met privately with Ferdinand Čatloš, Tiso's army liaison. Čatloš had the impression that "the talks took place with [Tiso's] full agreement."¹⁰¹ (When confronted by Sidor over the meeting, an evasive Tiso produced

police surveillance on it, also giving Sidor the impression that he “didn’t take the thing very seriously.”¹⁰² In early March, Mach informed a Hungarian diplomat of plans for separation. Mach and Tuka intended to secure internal order through the Hlinka Guard, which would seize arms from the Czecho-Slovak military with the help of Slovak officers. The Slovak government supposedly “did not take part” in these schemes, “but they know about it and tolerate it.”¹⁰³ Mach’s revelations were designed to secure “a precondition” for Slovak independence: a go-ahead from Hungary and Poland. As bait, Mach—like Tiso in the past—offered them a common border, courtesy of Subcarpathian Rus’.

Tiso showed no signs of seriously turning against Slovak separatism until 4 March, when Pružinský and Ďurčanský reported to the Slovak government on the talks with Göring. The Germans’ offer of economic aid was tied to splitting with Prague. As Göring had put it, “Do you want to make yourselves independent? [Or should] I let the Hungarians have you?”¹⁰⁴ Unable to reach a decision on the issue that Saturday, the Slovak government adjourned until Monday. An agitated Tiso prepared to travel to Bánovce for his Sunday duties. First, however, he dispatched Sidor’s protégé, Čarnogurský, on a secret mission to Warsaw. Tiso wanted Čarnogurský to secure for him a visit to Poland in order to dispel the impression that (in Čarnogurský’s words) “the Slovak government does Germanophile politics.”¹⁰⁵ That same day, Tiso wired the *Reich* governor for the former Austria, Seyss-Inquart, asking him to shut down the Slovak propaganda broadcasts from Vienna, as they were “disturbing the consolidation” of Slovakia.¹⁰⁶ When the Slovak leadership reconvened, Tiso reportedly declared himself for Czecho-Slovakia, pounding the table for emphasis. Yet the final decision, proposed by him, favored eventual independence: the representatives unanimously resolved “to keep building the Slovak state by an evolutionary route and to not declare its creation now.”¹⁰⁷ The session also “approved the framework of the [Berlin] agreements.” Tiso, Sidor, and Teplanský were to travel to Prague and to seek “the fulfilling of Slovak demands.”¹⁰⁸ The decisions thus rebuffed both German pressure to declare independence immediately and the Czech demand to commit irrevocably to Czecho-Slovakia.

The next evening, Tiso began dealing directly with the Germans, meeting with Seyss-Inquart at Sidor’s flat. The Nazi emissary pressed the Slovaks to declare independence. Tiso and Sidor refused, arguing that they needed time to consider Slovakia’s economic viability. After Seyss-Inquart departed, Tiso summoned from bed Alexander Hrnčár, the deputy head of Slovak finances. Tiso quizzed him on the province’s ability to mint and manage money. Hrnčár replied that they were capable of both, but that they would have to count on a deficit, the estimated size of which “stunned” his audience.¹⁰⁹ The next morning, instead of going to Prague, Tiso crossed into Germany to meet Seyss-Inquart again. In these talks, Tiso continued to express “doubts [as to] whether an independent Slovakia could exist.”¹¹⁰

At some point, he was similarly evasive with the Nazi envoy Veessenmayer, who proposed that Tiso meet with Hitler and Ribbentrop.¹¹¹

Prague's patience with Tiso now ran out. On 6 March, Hácha reshuffled the Subcarpathian Rus' cabinet, firing a minister who had held unauthorized talks with Berlin. Beran knew that Tiso was up to the same thing. Just hours after Seyss-Inquart left Sidor's flat, the Czech called Sidor, demanding to know what was going on. The next day, Beran informed his Czech colleagues that "it was no longer possible to negotiate amicably with Tiso."¹¹² On 9 March, Hácha replaced Tiso's cabinet with a provisional one under Sivák. The appointment betrayed a failure to prepare Slovak support for the change. Sivák—who at the time was on his way to the coronation of Pius XII—refused the post. The acting premier became Teplanský, who opposed Slovak independence but lacked popularity in Slovakia. Czech security units began to occupy Slovakia, arresting around 250 separatists and Guardists, including Tuka and Mach. Tiso, meanwhile, was quoted in a French interview that "only a few small issues" stood between the Slovaks and Czechs.¹¹³

In fact, Prague's action probably came as no surprise to Tiso. Already on the evening of the ninth, he had received intelligence reports on the unfolding occupation. He claimed to have been confused by them. Unable to get through to Prague (telephone connections had been cut), he retired to the Bratislava Jesuit house where he lodged. Around midnight, Karol Klinovský, his security chief, was so disturbed by similar reports that he rushed to Tiso's spartan room: "Tiso heard out my news lying in bed. Somehow it didn't upset him. He smiled and said: 'They're already up to something again!' / He said that he would have a good sleep and then see how the situation was developing in the morning."¹¹⁴ Klinovský returned to his desk and the reports piling up on it. Fearful for his job lest he not act, he decided to rouse Sokol, who immediately pulled on pants over his pajamas and sped to Tiso's Ministry of Interior. Sokol was "amazed . . . to find not a single member of the Slovak government [there]."¹¹⁵ If Tiso indeed provoked the Czech reaction, as it would appear, he likely got more than he bargained for. By midmorning, when a messenger delivered the decree sacking him, Tiso was "agitated" and "alarmed." He accepted the order but also protested it as an unconstitutional "violation of the rights of the Slovak nation."¹¹⁶

Tiso spent that morning flirting with subversion. He met with Ďurčanský, who had evaded arrest, and Kirschbaum, who headed the Academic Hlinka Guard, a section for university students. Veessenmayer paid a call as well, offering Tiso the services of the *Reich*. Tiso agreed to telegram Hitler for help, but then balked at putting anything in writing. Ďurčanský, meanwhile, apprised Tiso of his plan to escape to Vienna. Tiso did nothing to dissuade him. According to Ďurčanský, Tiso went further, cryptically empowering him to act in his name: "Do what you can square with your conscience."¹¹⁷ Tiso's behavior is telling, considering that

Ďurčanský was one of strongest advocates for a German-sponsored Slovak state and had a reputation as a loose cannon. Hours later, the radical was in Vienna, claiming to be Tiso's plenipotentiary. He wired Hitler, protesting the Czech "putsch" but not explicitly calling for help. Back in Bratislava, Kirschbaum related instructions from Tiso to a rally: "We demand autonomy and independence. Keep calm: let there be no bloodshed. But we will not surrender the rights we have won with our blood and we must demonstrate for them."¹¹⁸ The Czechs, however, had made no move against Slovak autonomy, nor would they.¹¹⁹

After Ďurčanský and Kirschbaum left the Jesuit house that morning, Tiso's anger boiled over. Gejza Medrický, a Ľudák deputy, found him "inflamed" and "indignant." Tiso complained that "Czech politicians and generals burn the bridges between our nations, and Hácha helps them do it!"¹²⁰ Tiso's ire probably was directed as well at Sidor and Sokol, both of whom he suspected of having a hand in his dismissal (and both of whom the central government had turned to for support). Finally, Tiso vented his spleen at the Germans, complaining that he did not want to be his nation's Seyss-Inquart.¹²¹ The reference was to the 1938 *Anschluss*, when Seyss-Inquart, as the last Austrian chancellor, invited in Nazi troops. Later, according to Medrický, Tiso suddenly blew up and stormed out of the house, making for Bánovce. He was probably acting on Teplanský's plea to go home and stay out of politics. But Medrický caught him by the arm: "Mr. Chairman, your departure will be explained as indecisiveness! I understand that you have been insulted, but overcome it, please. . . . In these decisive moments, your place is here." "Touched, with blood vessels standing out on his forehead," the priest relented.¹²²

Tiso now moved onto the high road of responsibility. He transferred his activities to party centers in Bratislava, taking no part in the various protests over his deposal. Later that afternoon, a Ľudák parliamentarian informed the Germans that Tiso in reality had *not* asked for Hitler's help, as he "could not take this step without putting himself in the wrong concerning Prague. Help would, however, in every form be welcomed."¹²³ To Sidor, Tiso claimed that Ďurčanský—who was calling for revolution in Slovakia—was acting on his own in Vienna: "It would be good to get him back."¹²⁴ Tiso also cooperated with Sidor and Sokol on Prague's request to form a new Slovak government. The party presidium met and selected a cabinet of moderates. The majority of the presidium, for prestige reasons, insisted that Tiso be renamed as prime minister, a nomination that he accepted "only after urging."¹²⁵ Sokol, worried that Hácha would object, insisted that Sidor be offered as an alternative. The list was forwarded to Hácha, who chose the Sidor variant. Tiso accepted this decision quietly, retiring to Bánovce. From one viewpoint, he subordinated himself to constitutional authority. From another, he fled German anger over the move to stabilize Czecho-Slovakia. Tiso "went away," Čarnogurský later deposed, ". . . to wait out developments in personal security."¹²⁶

Sidor worked quickly to put Slovakia back on an even keel. To calm passions, for example, he reportedly insisted on the withdrawal of Czech forces and the firing of five thousand more Czech civil servants. Such actions befitted his reputation as a radical. In fact, his politics had moderated during his time in the central government. Accordingly, he challenged the Hlinka Guard to obey only him and to remain peaceful and orderly.¹²⁷ The appeal was critical, as the Germans were supporting Ďurčanský by running arms into Slovakia. Although some Guardsists and *Volksdeutsche* activists subsequently clashed with army and police units, the attempt to foment insurrection fell flat. Overall, the public accepted the new government. The business community was happy with the expertise of the cabinet. Sidor also had a better bargaining position than Tiso vis-à-vis Prague, which was now eager to lend a financial hand.¹²⁸ The main challenge to stabilizing Slovakia, of course, was Hitler. Left in the lurch by Tiso's denial of a "call for help" and Ďurčanský's failure to provide a revolution, the Germans went to work on Sidor. A *Reich* mission, led by Wilhelm Keppler, bullied Sidor to declare independence. Despite fears of an invasion, Sidor steadfastly refused.¹²⁹

Worried that Slovakia might indeed stabilize, the Germans turned back to Tiso in Bánovce. His evening and night of 12 March was interrupted three times by different German intermediaries inviting him to visit Hitler. Even though Tiso treated the offers skeptically, he let the last messengers take him to Bratislava, arriving at Sidor's flat around daybreak. Suspecting (or hoping) that the invitation was bogus, Sidor asked Tiso to confirm its authenticity. A "very nervous" Tiso soon after consulted with the Nazi diplomat Veesenmayer, also finding time to attend a Mass at the Jesuits and confer with their provincial.¹³⁰ At 11:00, the party presidium and the Slovak government assembled with Tiso as their chair. After declaring his support for Sidor's government, Tiso broached the invitation. A German diplomat meanwhile brought word that the offer was valid. The cowed Slovaks quickly agreed to the trip, but pointedly refrained from giving Tiso instructions or a mandate.¹³¹

Leaving immediately for Berlin, Tiso began to display much less concern about permission for his actions. In addition to Germans such as Karmasin, he was accompanied by a Ľudák parliamentarian, Štefan Danihel. Ďurčanský joined them at the Vienna airport. The Slovak presidium had not approved the radical for this mission, yet Tiso took him on as a deputy without reproach. The flight to Berlin was Tiso's first time in an airplane. Upon landing, he was received as a head of state, understandably looking uneasy during the ceremony. Once installed in their hotel, Tiso and Ďurčanský went to see Ribbentrop and Hitler. Danihel, who had been sent to provide another view of the talks for the Slovak government, was left behind.¹³²

Tiso's meetings in the *Reich* capital were the most decisive of his life, a threshold over which he never returned. As a postwar defendant, Tiso provided the

only account of the meeting with Ribbentrop. Tiso claimed to have resisted the German's urging to declare independence, saying that the Slovaks needed more time to produce elites. "You're right," Ribbentrop replied, "but who can guarantee that in several years the political constellation will be as you'd like it? If you miss this opportunity, I don't know . . . if [another] will come along."¹³³ It was familiar logic for Tiso, as he had used similar arguments in the end game for autonomy the year before. Tiso next met with Hitler, who treated him to a cordial and relatively straightforward monologue. The dictator intended to settle the Czech question immediately. The Slovaks could strike out on their own or be taken over by Hungary. To drive home the last point, Hitler reported Hungarian troop movements on the Slovak border. While Tiso toadied a bit to Hitler, assuring him that "he could rely on Slovakia," the priest otherwise said little.¹³⁴ Coming out of the meeting, he again alternated scrupulous regard for authorization with a casual contempt of it. He immediately contacted Sidor and Hácha to convoke a session of the Slovak parliament on the morrow, the understood purpose of which was to settle the issue of independence. As if it were already a certainty, however, Tiso then went into all-night unauthorized talks with Nazi diplomats. In addition to trying to compel him to declare independence there and then, they wanted a formal request for protection from the *Reich*. Tiso pushed back, asking for commitments on economic aid and help in erecting the state. Ďurčanský futilely tried to finesse the request for protection by tinkering with language. According to his account, the Ludáks gave in and signed the request at 2:00 in the morning, albeit with the condition that they could revoke the document until noon the next day (which Ďurčanský also claimed to have then done). Delayed by bad weather, they did not arrive back in Bratislava until 9:00 in the morning.¹³⁵ During the night, German-inspired bombs had exploded near the government building and the Jesuit house, while another was discovered near Sidor's flat.

The emergency session of the Slovak parliament was tense and short. Sidor spoke first, defending his record at the same time as his government stepped down. Tiso's report, which he stylized as a "dry" recitation of facts, was received in near silence. In recounting the Berlin meetings, Tiso stressed territorial threats and the urgency that Hitler demanded, quoting him three times as saying "*Blitzschnell*." The priest also wanted to make it crystal clear that Slovaks were blameless for the imminent failure of Czecho-Slovakia: "I told the German representatives [several times] that we will never initiate the liquidation of the republic. Nonetheless, if it turns out that the course of events should develop in such a way that it will benefit us to do so, we take it as our duty to choose the right moment." Tiso did not mention the preliminary agreement for German protection. When he finished speaking, the stunned deputies failed even to applaud. Martin Sokol soon laid the issue before them: "Let whoever agrees that an independent state should be declared [now] stand."¹³⁶ Sokol thus avoided formally proposing independence. As

he later testified: “No one really wanted to take on the responsibility before history, because who knew . . . what would happen with Slovakia by the afternoon . . . ?”¹³⁷ Heeding Sokol’s challenge, all of the deputies stood and sang the Slovak hymn, “Hail to Slovaks!” The Slovak state was a fact. Among the parliamentarians was Pavol Čarnogurský. “The obligations of natural law,” he later wrote, “manifested themselves very clearly in this professor of moral theology. Tiso as a priest, afraid that he would compromise the Catholic Church, decided to use his abilities and political talents in such a way that he was but an intermediary. He laid out the situation . . . very suggestively, in order to develop the necessary reaction among the citizens. But he himself almost masterfully avoided initiative.”¹³⁸

That night, in Berlin, Hitler bullied Hácha into accepting German occupation. Hungary, with Germany’s consent, annexed Subcarpathian Rus’. Britain, which had guaranteed Czecho-Slovakia’s borders, did virtually nothing in response. The British prime minister, Neville Chamberlain, viewed the Slovak declaration of independence as a voluntary dissolution of the state, thus annulling his country’s obligations under the Munich Agreement. Hitler had gotten his wishes.

Did Tiso also want the republic’s destruction? His critics thought so, accusing him of deliberately “poisoning” Czech-Slovak relations.¹³⁹ Without question, at times during the Second Republic, Tiso looked to separatism as a solution to state crises. Much of his behavior during March 1939 fits a pattern of subversion masked by deniability. On the thirteenth, for example, he carefully sought approval and instructions for his trip to Berlin from the Slovak leadership. Yet he arbitrarily sidelined their other representative on the mission, Danihel, in favor of the separatist Ďurčanský. The priest then negotiated a protection agreement with the Germans behind the back of the Slovak parliament, the supposed body that he served. In light of such duplicity, it is tempting to see Tiso’s earlier conflicts with Czechs as a cagey undermining of the republic. His separatism, however, was always too fluid to be a plan. When Germany seemed to accept the Second Republic in winter 1938–39, Tiso had little interest in independence. The constant in his behavior was instead a search for the best deal. Had the European order hardened around Czecho-Slovakia, one can easily imagine him settling for a reconfigured version of the Austro-Hungarian dual state, especially if it provided military, financial, and ecclesial security.

Indeed, the most striking aspect of Tiso’s behavior in March 1939 is his lack of commitment to either the republic or a Slovak state. Yet he managed to pass as the champion of both. *Nástup* celebrated him as “perhaps the only one of the older generation” who stood beside the radicals during the decisive moments of the independence struggle. Catholic Church circles, in contrast, explained Tiso’s “partial capitulation before Germany” to “the usual terroristic pressure.”¹⁴⁰ It is also striking that Tiso did not accept invitations to visit Berlin until Sidor, his unexpected replacement, had burned his bridges with the Germans. Somewhere

deep within this triangle of idealism, fear, and opportunism lay Tiso's motive for independence.

Construction Work

Between receiving (or alternatively, achieving) national independence in March 1939 and becoming Slovakia's president eight months later, Tiso searched for security: geopolitical, domestic, and moral. His new state was weak, incomplete, and vulnerable, while his regime was fractured and lacked popular support. His actions as a politician called his morality as a priest into question. In the short term, the geopolitical issue sorted itself out when the Germans decided that Slovakia would be a useful client. Domestic security, in turn, meant for Tiso Slovak productivity and more power in his hands. Setting himself as an inspiration for constructing the state, he accelerated the building of "New Slovakia," urging everyone to work. He also rebuilt party and state structures to his advantage, subordinated the guard, co-opted radicals, neutralized Sidor as a rival, and suppressed dissent. In short, he made himself the center of Slovak politics. Achieving moral stability, however, was elusive. Tiso repeatedly felt the need to justify his part in the destruction of Czecho-Slovakia, his alliance with Nazi Germany, and his imposition of authoritarian rule. His arguments were often politically persuasive, but his subservience to Nazi Germany—particularly in his attack on Catholic, Slavic Poland—undermined their moral impact.

On 14 March, in the half-hour after declaring independence, Tiso and his colleagues composed a government, mainly "without discussion."¹⁴¹ He became prime minister. The still incarcerated Tuka was his deputy and a minister without portfolio, while Ďurčanský received the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The other ministers were relative moderates: Sidor at interior, Sivák at education, Pružinský at finance, Július Stano at transportation, Gejza Medrický at economy, and Gejza Fritz at justice. Čatloš, the only Lutheran and non-Ľudák in the cabinet, became minister of defense. The radicals strengthened their influence over the next days. Mach reclaimed the Office of Propaganda and also took over the Hlinka Guard from Sidor, who was *persona non grata* with Hitler for refusing to declare independence. Sidor soon went on health leave, turning his ministry over to Tiso, who let Tuka run it.¹⁴² Tiso also named Ďurčanský's associate, Kirschbaum, as the party's general secretary.

In a broadcast that evening, Tiso declared the state to be the culmination of Slovak national development, an expression of the national will, and a cause for great rejoicing. Many of his listeners no doubt recognized these claims as boilerplate. "A week after the declaration of independence," wrote a British diplomat, "the inhabitants of Bratislava are still unable to show great enthusiasm for the

present state of affairs. The general impression is one of apathy or pessimism.”¹⁴³ In the most interesting part of the speech, Tiso touched on the Jewish and Czech questions, promising again to solve them quickly, justly, and “according to Christian principles.” But, unlike in the past, he threatened to punish “most strictly” anyone who acted illegally against Jews, as had happened recently in Slovakia.¹⁴⁴

Top priority for Tiso was ordering relations with Germany. Ideally, he wanted to carve out space for a demilitarized, neutral Slovakia. Ďurčanský stalled on asking the *Reich* for “protection,” hoping that Hungary and Poland might become alternative guarantors.¹⁴⁵ On the fifteenth, however, Germany occupied the Váh river valley in west Slovakia, apparently planning to annex it. *Volksdeutsche* activists agitated for *Reich* intervention.¹⁴⁶ Tiso claimed that he kept German troops from parading through Bratislava only by threatening to resign. Tuka and Ďurčanský negotiated with the Germans the text of a telegram “submitting” the Slovak state to Hitler’s “protection.” Tiso quickly sent it.¹⁴⁷ In a tense Viennese meeting with Hitler soon after, the Slovaks confronted more demands on their sovereignty. Kick as they might, Tiso and his radical advisors (Tuka, Ďurčanský, and Mach) were again ill positioned to win compromises. The final Protection Agreement included few. Slovakia, as a *Schutzstaat*, received border guarantees, a promise of political independence, much-desired markets and investment, and assistance in setting up a national bank and currency. But the country’s foreign policy and the building of a Slovak Army had to follow *Reich* policy. A “*Schutzzone*” institutionalized the Váh occupation. A secret protocol opened up Slovakia for economic exploitation by the Hitler regime. Although a *Schutzstaat* was a better deal than the Czech protectorate, the agreement made a mockery of the slogan “Slovakia to the Slovaks.”¹⁴⁸

Speaking in Bánovce days later, Tiso stressed Hitler’s promise given in Vienna to “guarantee [Slovakia’s] full independence and borders.”¹⁴⁹ The anecdote expressed Tiso’s decision to develop a trusting, personal relationship with the dictator. Tiso associated guarantees with persons, but lower-level Nazis like Ribbentrop had disappointed during the Vienna Arbitration. Hitler also knew how to handle Tiso, treating him cordially and with respect. The priest, expecting a “rough and furious man,” was surprised by Hitler’s “fine and polished manners.” In addition, Tiso fancied that the “Catholic environment” of Hitler’s upbringing forged a spiritual link between the two men.¹⁵⁰ In his Bánovce speech, Tiso assured the nation that Hitler would “keep his protective hand [on us]. . . . Don’t worry, dear ones, that we are small, that there are few of us. Indeed, there are twenty-seven smaller countries in the world. . . . If God is with us, who can be against us?”¹⁵¹

As if to answer, Germany and Hungary turned on Tiso at the same time. The Germans stalled on closing the *Schutzstaat* deal, debating whether Slovakia was more valuable as a geopolitical pawn. Ribbentrop dropped hints to the Poles about trading her for Danzig.¹⁵² When they rebuffed the swap, Hitler designated Slovakia instead as a staging ground for conquering Poland. On 23 March, Ribbentrop

signed the Protection Agreement. That same day, Hungary attacked her from the east. In fall 1938, Tiso had avoided clarifying the administrative border between Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus' as a way to deflect the latter's territorial claims on his province.¹⁵³ Now Hungary, in control of Subcarpathian Rus', exploited this legal uncertainty to expand west. For Hungary, the action was a border correction, as she had already recognized the new state. But for the Slovaks, the action was an invasion. Although Tiso's regime managed to rally forces to oppose it, Berlin complicated this defense, much to Tiso's frustration. The Germans, for instance, forbade shifting heavy weapons from the *Schutzzone* to the battle line. Rather than ordering Hungary to retreat, Germany pushed both sides to the negotiating table. An April settlement cost Slovakia around 1,900 square kilometers of land with seventy-thousand inhabitants.¹⁵⁴

Needing German protection now more than ever, Tiso tried to trade loyalty for loyalty. Hitler's fiftieth birthday, for example, became a quasi-state holiday in Slovakia. Tiso led a delegation to Berlin, toasting the *Führer* as a "legendary warrior for the national principle" and committing Slovakia to creating "a constructive national socialism."¹⁵⁵ Just before the birthday, Tiso's government also finally issued a legal norm for solving the Jewish Question: Decree 63/39. Tiso characterized it as a precondition for the "new social and economic order." Jews had to be "definitively excluded" from "national life": "[They] were always a subversive element in Slovakia and the most important carriers of Marxist and liberal ideas. All of the public administration [in Slovakia] is almost purged of Jews, while their numbers among lawyers and doctors have been reduced to a minimum and their activities limited only to a Jewish clientele. We will proceed . . . similarly in commerce and industry. In this struggle to de-Jewify our state, neither internal nor external resistance will distract us."¹⁵⁶ It is significant that some of these claims were lip service. The decree, which sought to establish a 4 percent *numerus clausus*, affected mainly lawyers, journalists, and public notaries. Other state employees and doctors were not dealt with until later, and even then Tiso could not afford to purge radically as he lacked qualified Slovak replacements.¹⁵⁷ Tiso's public enthusiasm for Hitler was a similar dissembling, concealing private misgivings. The military parades mounted during the birthday celebration, for example, depressed and intimidated him, prompting him to cut short his trip. "I felt that Hitler wanted to show the world what kind of power his army represents," Tiso later remarked. "I thought to myself, God help us that it doesn't someday roll over us."¹⁵⁸

Although Tiso had long favored solving the Jewish Question legally, the issue posed painful dilemmas for him. How was his regime to create useful legislation without violating Catholic morality? A racial definition of Jews would please the Nazis and Slovak radicals, but Tiso as a priest was obliged to accept baptized Jews as Christians so long as these conversions were spiritually sincere. Tiso characteristically solved this dilemma through compromise: Decree 63 took confession as its

starting point but classified conversions after 1918 as opportunistic—in effect, creating a racial definition, which was then extended to descendants. Tiso later admitted that this mix of racial and confessional approaches was intentional, but because it dealt with the “economic and social significance” of Jews rather than “issues of faith or ethics,” he argued that it did not violate Christian principles.¹⁵⁹ Another dilemma for Tiso was how to expropriate without violating the natural law principle of private property. His solution again leaned on compromises and semantics. He asked Jews themselves to hand over controlling interests in their enterprises to “Aryans,” a coerced process that he could term “voluntary.”¹⁶⁰ His regime justified other expropriation measures as restituting the ill-gotten riches of political opportunists, as compensating Slovak refugees despoiled by the Hungarian government, or as land reform demanded by social justice. According to the draft for one such decree, property should be gained “through work” and not by “violat[ing] the basic rules of morality and the Christian spirit.”¹⁶¹ Although none of these measures yielded significant transfers of property in 1939, one should not confuse results with ambitions. Tiso’s placing of commissars in businesses, for example, suggested a plan for wider expropriation later.¹⁶²

Decree 63 was part of a wave of reprisals and repressions following Slovak independence. On 18 March, Tiso’s government resolved to expel all replaceable Czech state employees. This and earlier decisions resulted in over 17,000 such employees (with their families) being driven out in the first half of 1939. The exodus created a debilitating shortage of qualified personnel in Slovakia, a fact that mainly explains why some 2,700 Czech civil servants were permitted to stay. In the wake of 14 March, Tiso also let Hlinka Guardists serve as a repressive border patrol and security police. They not only harassed, robbed, and beat Czech refugees but also arrested leading opponents of the *Ľudáks*, such as Ján Ursíny.¹⁶³ Tiso again stood not far behind this policy. On the twenty-fourth, he signed a decree that authorized jailing enemies of the state without trial. Ilava prison was transformed into a concentration camp—a glaring turnabout considering that, just two months earlier, Tiso had spoken as though concentration camps were anathema.¹⁶⁴ In the March Affidavit, he characterized the reprisals as a venting of national anger over the Czech “putsch.” But he clearly also wanted to demonstrate that he would countenance no subversion. To show that he preferred to treat his enemies with Christian mercy, he brought about the release of several prominent prisoners on Good Friday 1939.¹⁶⁵

Tiso thus opted for ending reprisals. But to do so, he had to rein in the Hlinka Guard. He had armed and mobilized it during the Hungarian invasion. Despite its minor role in the conflict, the guard boasted of having saved the nation, annoying professional soldiers who had borne the brunt of the fight. Guardists often acted arbitrarily, as when a group in Piešťany arrested twenty Jews just before Hitler’s birthday. Other Guardists attacked former Czechoslovakists, hoping to replace

them in the administration.¹⁶⁶ Eager again to leave revolutionary time, Tiso's priority was to project an image of stability and unity in Slovakia. He had less use for the rebellious and amateurish guard than a disciplined professional army and police. He also was willing to hang on to former Czechoslovak administrators, such as Martin Mičura, or to hire talented Freemasons, such as Imrich Karvaš, the governor of the new Slovak National Bank. Even Tiso's old nemesis Ursíny, once released from prison, returned for a while to a job at a formerly Agrarian, now state-controlled financial union.¹⁶⁷ To bring the guard into line, Tiso relied on the party. His newest radical protégé, General Secretary Kirschbaum, oversaw the introduction of an "authoritarian system," seeking to transform the party into the mediator between nation and state according to "well-tested models in Italy and Germany."¹⁶⁸ The reorganization strengthened Tiso's influence by making lower party positions appointive and steering all interventions in the government through Kirschbaum's secretariat.¹⁶⁹ At the same time, Tiso strove to subordinate the guard to the party. After Guardists assaulted a Lutheran minister in Ružomberok, an incident that brought around eight hundred Protestants onto the streets, Tiso compelled Mach to disarm the paramilitary. An order by Tuka, Tiso's deputy at the Ministry of Interior, forbade Guardists to interfere in the state administration.¹⁷⁰ Soon, the guard even had to seek approval from the party for rallies. Čatloš's army, meanwhile, became the "defender of the homeland."¹⁷¹

Tiso's conflict with the guard was linked to the Sidor "problem." The Germans distrusted Sidor both as a "soldier of Prague" (Hitler's term) and as a Polonophile.¹⁷² Tiso meanwhile continued to harbor suspicions that his dismissal in March had been a Sidor intrigue.¹⁷³ Despite having withdrawn from the Slovak leadership, Sidor still hoped for a political comeback. He let his popularity in Slovakia instead make him a focus for antigovernment, antistate, and anti-German talk and demonstrations.¹⁷⁴ He reportedly conspired with Slovak officers to build an alliance with the Poles. He also created new rivals by asking Tiso to make him either the party's general secretary (Kirschbaum's job) or chief editor of *Slovák* (his old position, now held by Mach). This mix of rivalry, German animosity, and an ideological desire for unified leadership sunk Sidor. In May, Tuka and Tiso (supported by Mach and Ďurčanský) pressured Sidor into accepting the post of ambassador to the Vatican. Tuka told the Germans that the Slovak government was prepared for an "energetic crackdown," including arrest, should Sidor change his mind.¹⁷⁵ Tiso and Mach subsequently reorganized the guard so as to split up Sidor's followers under different commanders. Tiso, meanwhile, pushed through the confiscation of the party press that Hlinka had sold Sidor and the Mederlys.¹⁷⁶

To shore up his state's legitimacy, Tiso vigorously worked to suppress defeatism and dissent. His speeches tirelessly countered rumors that Slovaks were incapable of or did not desire statehood, "whispering propaganda" that he attributed to "enemies" or low Slovak self-esteem: "Our oppressors . . . inculcated

in our souls [the belief] that we are not able to live independently. . . . They raised us as slaves. . . . Weaker Slovaks don't know how to shed [this slavish character]. . . . Rumormongers claim . . . that [Slovakia] is not a viable unit, that she can't stand up economically, that she can't hold up politically. . . . They spread reports . . . that from Berlin will come a telephone order to liquidate everything. And this is all aimed at keeping in us this slavish spirit."¹⁷⁷ Tiso also increased surveillance in Slovakia, ordering state employees to report anyone who spread "alarming or disturbing rumors" and demanding prosecutions.¹⁷⁸ This campaign reflected his state's precarious international status. He did not know yet if he could count on the Protection Agreement. Hungarian irredentists indeed claimed that the state was unviable.¹⁷⁹ Beneš went further, arguing that the German destruction of Czechoslovakia nullified both the Munich Agreement and his "pressured" resignation as president. In other words, the First Republic still legally existed, with him as its head. Such challenges inspired Tiso to coerce popular support for his regime. The Slovak public, for example, had shown little interest in a bond issue floated in February. Although the state had other options for credit, the regime pushed the population to subscribe the loan. Local authorities even compiled lists detailing how much individuals should give. By such methods, Tiso and his government wanted "to document for foreign opinion the economic ability of the new state . . . and also to give citizens faith in [it]."¹⁸⁰ Financial contributions also proved loyalty. In March, Tiso wrote the directors of "industrial enterprises, banks, and factories" in Slovakia, asking them to donate honorariums paid to board members (a position that he considered to be a sinecure). His government labeled firms that "did not show the expected understanding" for the request as "non-Slovak," blacklisting them for state contracts and making them vulnerable to expropriation. Tiso thus quickly raised over two million crowns for a brainchild of his, a "Fund for Building a New Slovakia."¹⁸¹ Such ham-fisted rule provided exile Czechoslovak leaders a steady source of defecting political talent and soldiers, and of subversives at home.¹⁸²

Tiso, however, also sought legitimacy through consent. In March, he unveiled a program to mobilize the nation through inspirational example: "construction work," a modernization vision he later described as "amelioration, canalization, electrification, association-movement work, economic and cultural construction, scientific work."¹⁸³ Tiso argued that this program should deepen and demonstrate national sentiment, on which hung the survival of nation and state: "We were laid on the scales of history, and we were judged as capable of having our own state. . . . Now it is up to us to prove before history that we were worthy of this judgment. . . . If we cannot maintain our state, nothing else remains to us than bondage and national death."¹⁸⁴ Tiso claimed to have been inspired here by a comment from Ribbentrop: "Now that you have independence, prove that you know what to do with it."¹⁸⁵ In this regard, Tiso's desire to cultivate national sentiment

followed the reality of post-Munich Europe, in which borders and security were legitimated by ethnicity. As he once remarked, “Only nations [that . . .] are conscious of their national and state honor impress the Germans.”¹⁸⁶ But Tiso’s desire to strengthen national sentiment also was rooted in his view of nationalism as a kind of spirituality.¹⁸⁷ If properly cultivated, national sentiment, like religious sentiment, inoculated individuals against the false logic of the material world, such as foreign ideologies. “Positive” nationalism gave man direction, discipline, and purpose in life, purifying politics. It also taught sacrifice, securing the Slovak’s labor on behalf of the state and nation.

Tiso made quick progress consolidating Slovakia. The mix of persuasion and coercion delivered ever larger demonstrations in favor of the state.¹⁸⁸ In addition to organizing a Slovak army, Tiso’s government created a foreign service, national bank, and currency. The state launched a drive to build a gold reserve from donated items such as jewelry. The regime also carried through a major administrative reform and limited Karmasin’s secretariat to “advising and initiating functions.”¹⁸⁹ Most important of all, Slovakia gained a constitution.¹⁹⁰ She was declared a republic, retaining structural elements from Czechoslovakia, such as separate legislative, executive, and judicial branches, and a president as head of state. Other elements, such as an estate system, came from the corporatist constitutions of Italy, Portugal, and Austria. The locus of power remained the Hlinka party, declared the single representative of the Slovak nation. According to Tuka, who oversaw its drafting, the constitution was a compromise between democracy and authoritarianism, as “our people [and] our political mentality would not have borne [the] daring jump” to a fully authoritarian system.¹⁹¹ Parliamentary control of legislation, for example, was undercut by the government’s right to issue “decrees with the power of law.” Even if Tiso did not write the constitution, his influence can be felt in it. The preamble, which he approved, spoke in his vocabulary: “natural law,” “a Christian and national community,” “social justice,” “harmonious unity.” God rather than the people became the source of sovereignty. During the drafting of the constitution, Tiso spoke of corporatism as a way to build a “constructive nationalism” by “excluding all politics” from public life. He also endorsed authoritarianism, telling a crowd in August that “we openly admit that we do not take your voices into account.”¹⁹²

Tiso’s efforts to consolidate Slovakia were accompanied by moral justifications for his more controversial policies and actions. The prime minister rejected charges that he had subverted the Second Republic, blaming its death instead on Czech attempts to roll back autonomy. The predatory international environment had left Slovaks no choice but to grasp Germany’s “helping hand.”¹⁹³ Such was not treason, for why should Slovaks “rush to destruction” with the Czechs just to prove “how much we love our brother?”¹⁹⁴ As for his alliance with Hitler, Tiso insisted that internal questions were off the table: “Germany doesn’t involve

itself at all in Slovak politics. . . . We are fully free. . . . We are already building beyond our old Christian nationalism. We haven't adopted anything from German National Socialism because, quite frankly, we don't need to. . . . We've [had] our own program, the program for a Christian Slovak nation, for a long time."¹⁹⁵ Tiso often used the term "our very own" (*svojský*) to deny that his system imitated Nazism or totalitarianism. He also denied that his Jewish policy was un-Christian, defending it as an "inevitable" righting of historic wrongs: economic exploitation and collaboration with Czechs, Hungarians, and Lutherans.¹⁹⁶ Intimations that he had sold out Catholicism especially bothered him. "Oh, come on," he told one reporter. "Do you think that I as a priest would let anyone touch religion?"¹⁹⁷ In another interview, he proudly catalogued his accomplishments for the church:

We're having a great Catholic renaissance in this country. Much has been done to make Catholic life stronger and to [sink] its roots deeper. We have hung crucifixes in all the schools. . . . Religious education [is] . . . mandatory. Soldiers must attend religious exercises. . . . We have introduced regulations on shopping to promote the sanctity of Sunday. . . . That the Hlinka Guard is not a [carbon] copy of the German [brown shirts] . . . can be seen best on Sunday, when the guards . . . attend Holy Mass [*en corps*]. . . . I believe, that nowhere in the [world] . . . can Catholic life develop . . . so freely . . . as in our Slovak state. . . . The press, film, radio, arts and letters, and scholarship: we are on our way to Christianizing them all.¹⁹⁸

Tiso stressed religion in his speeches more so than he had for years. To "construct the new Slovak man," for example, he advised Slovak youth to embrace a quartet of ideals: God, spiritual values, authority, and "the indissoluble, Christian, unified, Slovak family." The project sought to reform souls by fusing love (Slovak nationalism) with truth (Catholicism). The point was not to make the nation the equal of God, but rather to confirm the "genuine Catholic idea" that the spiritual (love of nation, God) is stronger than the material (self-interest). As so often before, Tiso also returned to reconciling nationalism with the commandment "Love your neighbor": "Religion not only teaches who is a friend and who is an enemy, but it also says who is a neighbor and how you should love him: according to the degree that one stands near to you! You will love your own child better than a godchild. You will love a Slovak, who is related to you by blood and speech, better than a brother Czech, who is more distant from you."¹⁹⁹

By summer's end, Tiso had the pleasure of seeing his state stabilizing. In June, word arrived that the Germans now considered Slovakia to be a permanent creation. An ambassador, Hans Bernard, soon followed. Slovakia would be a model state, proof that Germany could treat a small, Slavic, and Catholic country well.²⁰⁰ By summer's end, eighteen states, including Britain and France, had recognized Slovakia either *de facto* or *de jure*. The influential Slovak League in America

meanwhile backed Tiso in opposition to Beneš. Slovakia's economy seemed headed for a turnaround. Tiso even had few problems with Ľudák radicals, who shared his priorities of consolidating the state and taking over Sidor's followers.²⁰¹

Tiso's increased confidence showed in his dealings with Germany. In talks for implementing the Protection Agreement, the Slovaks grew stubborn, pushing the Germans to accept narrow interpretations of the text and dragging out negotiations. Tiso's government, among other things, wanted German troops in Slovakia withdrawn or, at the least, Slovak troops permitted into the *Schutzzone*.²⁰² In one important conflict, Tiso won. The German High Command preferred a wartime Slovak army of only 50,000 men. He held out for three times more. Needing Slovakia as a staging ground for war on Poland, Hitler all but gave in, agreeing to a 125,000-man limit. Otherwise, the High Command got almost all of their demands. In addition, Tiso's regime was browbeaten into creating a Central Security Service.²⁰³

Tiso also agreed to support the attack on Poland. In July, at a German request, his government began adjusting its domestic security and propaganda accordingly. He was unwilling to risk neutrality (as Hungary in effect did), fearing that the conflict could lead to Slovakia being traded back to the Magyars.²⁰⁴ On 24 August, the Germans informed Tiso that Poland was prepared to attack, asking him for control of the Slovak Army and airspace. In exchange for "loyal cooperation," they offered to guarantee Slovakia's border with Hungary and to "work for" returning territory lost to Poland in 1938. They also promised that Slovak troops would not be used outside of Slovakia. Tiso was "obviously extremely satisfied with the proposed guarantee."²⁰⁵ His government quickly approved the deal, meanwhile asking for territory lost to Poland since 1920. On the twenty-seventh, Germany informed Tiso's government that the Slovak Army would partake in the Polish battle. Tiso approved mobilization and placed Čatloš under German command, also instructing Slovak citizens to welcome the advancing Germans.²⁰⁶

On 1 September, the first day of the Second World War, Slovak troops marched alongside German ones into Poland. During the campaign, Slovakia mobilized over 115,000 reservists, placing over 50,000 in operational units. This act of war took place without the approval of the Slovak parliament, as constitutionally required. Tiso later claimed that he had not authorized the invasion, instructing Slovak soldiers instead only "to occupy" the border.²⁰⁷ General Čatloš told a different story, according to which the Germans at the last minute broke their promise to leave Slovak troops behind. Although Čatloš initiated the advance, he sought approval from Tiso, but the president left him hanging until the deed was done.²⁰⁸ Čatloš, like Tiso, was often an unreliable postwar witness. The general had actually been eager for action and gave orders to advance hours earlier than his story allowed. But Tiso also had reasons for wanting to participate in the advance, especially his desire to strengthen the German commitment to Slovakia.²⁰⁹ Even

though the testimony of both men thus must be discounted in part, Čatloš's version fits Tiso's pattern of shifting responsibility onto others while claiming ignorance. The president knew that Hitler often broke promises. Yet Tiso neither sought reassurances that his troops would sit out the invasion nor devised command mechanisms to ensure that they did. Instead, he positioned himself to be surprised and ostensibly subordinated to events.²¹⁰

The Polish campaign plagued Tiso with new instability. During the lead-up to the war, mob violence returned to Slovakia, as when the Hlinka Guard wrecked the Polish chargé d'affaires's apartment. The war also made Tiso need the radicals' labor and political support again. His government expanded the guard's powers, especially in regard to security, while making membership mandatory for Slovak males between eighteen and sixty years of age.²¹¹ Tiso also briefly entrusted the editorship of *Slovák* to one of the most erratic of the radicals, Karol Murgaš, whom he then used to purge the staff of Sidor's remaining followers.²¹² The war itself was unpopular, seriously undermining Tiso's legitimacy. His ambassador to Poland called on other Slovak ambassadors (especially Sidor) to form a government in exile. Although inspired mainly by socioeconomic complaints, at least one thousand soldiers mutinied in a Slovak garrison, some of them crying "Down with Tiso!"²¹³ The prime minister had promised his countrymen a blessed, humble isolation from the "electrically charged" international environment.²¹⁴ He delivered mainly isolation: Britain and France broke off diplomatic relations. Most disturbingly, the Slovak invasion of Poland violated church teachings on just war, a trespass made worse by the victim's status as a Catholic bastion. By occupying territory that Slovaks themselves viewed as ethnically Polish, the invasion even violated Tiso's favorite measure of Catholic justice, *suum cuique* (each to their own).²¹⁵

Tiso turned again to demagogy to repair his tattered legitimacy, manipulating the Germans in the process. The Slovak regime had spun the war as liberating Slovak territory. Even though the Germans had promised only to "work for" returning land lost to Poland in 1938, Tiso announced the de facto return of all such territory lost since 1920.²¹⁶ He also interpreted a minor concession by the German Army to mean its resignation of administrative rights over these areas. Ambassador Bernard quickly straightened him out on both counts. Defending himself, Tiso claimed that Seyss-Inquart's people had brought him a draft law on the border change. Because they said that Hitler had approved it, Tiso accepted it without second thought. He also sped to enact it by proposing that Slovak communities in the territory be instructed to ask for annexation. Seyss-Inquart, in contrast, reported that Tiso prepared the draft law himself while repeatedly promising not to act without Hitler's approval. Tiso placing initiative and blame on others is a familiar pattern in this narrative. But Bernard was familiar with different patterns: the crisscrossed channels of Nazi diplomacy. As the ambassador complained, when

Tiso heard the *Führer's* name, “naturally he must have been twice as convinced of the significance of the . . . measure” attached to it. Bernard went on to credit the “fundamentally loyal” Tiso with keeping the affair from spoiling “friendly cooperation” between the states.²¹⁷ Had Bernard been less patronizing, he might have learned how skeptical Tiso had been the previous March when emissaries threw Hitler’s name around. Although Tiso failed to pull off a *fait accompli*, by playing German diplomats off each other, he did strengthen his claim to the lands.

In addition to the cynical smoke and mirrors of demagogy, Tiso justified the Polish campaign with sincere ideology. First, he saw military action as a test of national maturity, a way “to show the world that we deserve . . . [our] own, independent state”—a constant in his thinking.²¹⁸ Second, he saw German foreign policy as serving the ethnic principle, the cornerstone of his national politics. As he noted on the first day of the war:

We stand before an ordering of central Europe. . . . Would that this ordering be definitive, so that nations could again dedicate themselves to their positive cultural work in the interests of all Europe. . . . The *Völkisch* principle is a Christian principle . . . [that can end] the quarrels and recriminations over injustices committed against members of other nations. . . .

The natural right of every nation to all of its members is so sacred that . . . [it would even be worth] such great sacrifices as the resettlement of inhabitants onto the lands on which their tribal members live compactly.²¹⁹

Rather than pap for the masses, Tiso’s endorsement of population exchanges mirrored the ethnic cleansing that he had practiced since coming to power. Finally, although Tiso understood his earthly politics as constrained by reality, he still firmly believed that he served divine ideals: “We proceed on the way that the eternal wisdom of God has shown us. We are building our life on these eternal principles according to which the Creator determined national life on earth. We do not solve the system ourselves. We do not create the situation with violence. . . . [But], if God created us as a nation, if he gave us this territory, than we will hold on to it, because it is [His] will.”²²⁰

Despite the problems that war with Poland created, Tiso quickly moved again out of revolutionary time. The war, after all, was a short-term victory. In late October, in the Slovak regime’s first foreign policy success, Hitler agreed to hand over the lands that Tiso wanted. The *Führer* praised the Slovaks for “behav[ing] very decently” during the war, “in contrast to another country” (Hungary). “Your conduct has definitely established the Slovak state.”²²¹ Shrewdly, Tiso also had ceded to the Slovak radicals no ground that he could not retake. The same decree that expanded their powers turned them into a mass organization (Tiso’s idea) rather

than an elite. The change denied the guard a claim to privilege, paralyzed it with a flood of new members, and subordinated it to the party while making Tiso its supreme commander.²²²

That October, the Ľudáks gathered in Trenčín for a party congress (as it turned out, their last). Tiso ruled the day. For a year, he had been only the party's acting chairman. Now, on Tuka's nomination and by acclamation, all conditions on his title were removed. His stature was augmented in other ways as well. His preference for a directorate evenly split between radicals (Ďurčanský and Tuka) and moderates (Sokol and Buday) defeated Mach's more radical slate.²²³ Tiso also increased his power as chairman through the passage of a recent law on the party, a measure that was important for his ambition to become president. The architects of the Slovak constitution had anticipated that he would be the first holder of the office and wanted to shield him, as a priest, from the controversies that dog governments. They therefore had limited his powers as president. The new law compensated. Finally, much of the congress was spent celebrating his authority. ("Obedience to Dr. Tiso!" read *Slovák*.)²²⁴

If any obstacle now stood in the way of Tiso becoming president, it was his troubled relations with the Vatican. Pius XII, like his predecessor, feared the damage that political priests could do to the church. Although Pius XI's administration belatedly approved Tiso as prime minister, Pius XII seemed to want to ease Tiso out of office, apparently dispatching an envoy to Slovakia in April to explore this "preventative measure."²²⁵ In addition to being a high-profile political priest, Tiso caused other papal headaches. Pius XII literally began his reign listening to complaints about Tiso's "totalitarian" methods.²²⁶ Ďurčanský bungled the reception of Pius's nuncio, fussing over a phrase in the accreditation letter that presented Slovakia as a continuation of Czecho-Slovakia. More important, the pope was "deeply pained" over Slovakia's attack on Catholic Poland.²²⁷ The Vatican also had institutional concerns. A President Tiso, for example, would collect a loyalty oath from his ecclesial superior, Kmečko. Probably for all of these reasons, the Vatican signaled that Tiso should not become president. To a Slovak bishop, Michal Buzalka, Pius spoke of "secret forces that work against the Church . . . [which] often use regimes [headed by] a priest . . . to attack [her]."²²⁸

Tiso, however, self-righteously refused to step aside. He publicly responded to the pope during the ordination of a new Slovak bishop:

There is no reason to fear . . . that in the case of a political change that the [new regime] would prosecute Catholicism and its representatives. Leading a state in the spirit of Christianity and by representatives of the Catholic worldview has [no] dangers. . . . Catholicism that is creative, correctly understood, and in the service of life and nation will never avoid responsibility for its actions. This Catholicism is

the executor of natural right and justice. And it will never be ashamed of this role. Just the opposite. It will be ready to become a martyr for it.²²⁹

Tiso no doubt saw himself as the first martyr. While one might admire such fervor, it in no way diminishes how audaciously he had just dismissed Pius's concerns. If this conflict troubled him, however, a related controversy let him square his conscience. During the Trenčín Congress, Tiso had expanded his familiar claim that the nation was superior to both party and state: "Everything must serve the nation, even the Church. And the Church up until now only has justified its existence . . . so far as it serves the nation. I know that they wanted to label us for [such] statements as people who have strayed from state and Church dogmas. And we always cleared things up, explaining that the state is not an aim but only a means for the nation. And the Church is the same. . . . The aim is the salvation of people, [their] well-being."²³⁰ Some observers heard if not heresy at least sentiments dangerous for Catholicism. "Knowing [Tiso's] orthodox thinking and theological erudition," Bishop Kmeťko was not among these critics. Yet he carried through a pro forma investigation of his priest, asking Tiso to explain himself. On the most controversial statement—that the church's right to existence depended on national service—Tiso duplicitously implied that he had been misquoted. Otherwise, he merely reiterated the arguments of his speech before laying his cards on the table concerning church approval of his presidency. "I am a Catholic priest and theologian . . .," he wrote. "I will not hesitate even a moment to leave politics and to dedicate myself exclusively to my pastoral calling should Church authorities deem it best." This showdown was a safe one for Tiso. Kmeťko expressed himself "entirely satisfied" with Tiso's answer.²³¹ The pope, if informed of the matter, would have continued his cautious diplomacy. Pius was not interested in ordering Tiso out of politics and thus complicating relations with Slovakia and Germany. Instead, he simply wanted him to take a hint.²³²

On 26 October 1939, shortly after turning fifty-two, Tiso was unanimously elected president by the Slovak parliament. The election was a ritual, the outcome predetermined.²³³ Before the parliament and assembled dignitaries, Tiso swore "on God Almighty and Omniscient . . . that I will be a faithful guard of the constitution and laws, that I will always have before my eyes the moral and material uplifting of the people, and that I will lead the state so that the spirit of Christian love and justice applies."²³⁴ Tiso thus became the only Catholic priest except for popes to head a modern European state. After the ceremony, he rode through Bratislava in an open coach preceded by herald trumpeters. Guardists lined the streets, arms raised in fascist salute. Although few onlookers also saluted, their enthusiasm seemed to be sincere. At his palace, Tiso was greeted by his successor as prime minister, Tuka, who handed him the key to the building. Slovak girls in

peasant garb offered him bread and salt. Tasting the symbolic fruits of nationalism, Tiso entered his house.²³⁵

The Light of Bethlehem

Jozef Tiso took over Slovakia during extraordinarily insecure times. To an extent, this circumstance was his comeuppance. He had helped to create this sense of anxiety, which he then had exploited to take power. He also had believed that a right-wing, nationalist politics was the best course for Czechoslovakia. In fact, the right-wing, nationalist reordering of central Europe left Czechoslovakia destroyed, and Slovakia partitioned and under German suzerainty.

Even if one finds this tale of comeuppance satisfying, there is something pitiful about Tiso's plight. He was a pygmy in the international arena. When he played the game as a cynic, he had little to trade. When he idealistically trusted in the ethnic principle, he found himself disappointed and misused. The international context continually plagued, harassed, and molded him. The problems of translating the ethnic principle into practice worked to shift his policies onto antisemitic, anti-Czech, pro-German, and authoritarian paths. The fiasco of the Vienna Award left him and his government feeling threatened, eager to prove their nationalist credentials, desperate to fit into post-Munich Europe. The Nazi campaigns against Czecho-Slovakia and Poland, combined with the threat of Hungarian irredentism, led Tiso into subversion, dependence, and war.

Tiso's ability to maneuver in this environment was painfully limited. Through diplomacy or tit-for-tat measures, he could shape his day-to-day relations with Hungary or Poland. He could eke out concessions from Hitler, as he did on the size of the Slovak Army. But, beyond this, Tiso was largely irrelevant to the course of events. Had he been less hardheaded and subversive, could Czecho-Slovakia have survived? Given Hitler's determination to destroy the Second Republic, it is hard to imagine how. If Tiso had been more resourceful, could he have found a better foreign policy? In fall 1938, he clearly would have needed less hostile neighbors than Poland and Hungary. Although the former began to come around in early 1939, the latter did not until summer. At that time, Tiso could have adopted neutrality in the German-Polish conflict. But such a course, in addition to being dangerous, would have been only a moral stand. German troops had already secured the invasion route, while the Slovak Army was too weak to contest them. Had the Germans won the Second World War, moreover, neutrality would have been a worse foreign policy for Slovakia. So long as one does not expect Tiso to set a defiant example of resistance or to foresee the war's outcome, where exactly was his fatal foreign policy wrong turn? Yet one can think of many ways in which

Slovaks could have been denied a state in Hitler's Europe. Nazism, after all, was hostile to Slavs, Catholics, and the weak. Even though the anomaly of a Slovak state emerged mainly from German decisions and contingencies, its very existence testified to Tiso's flexibility, firmness of purpose, and ideological vision.

While Tiso as the Slovak premier may not have shaped world events much, no one bested his influence in Slovakia. The *Gleichschaltung*, conflicts with the Czechs over Slovak sovereignty, the Slovak alliance with Germany, the neutralization of Sidor, Tiso's co-opting and outflanking of Slovak radicals—each development increased the priest's personal control over his polity. Tiso rarely made a move that worked in the opposite direction. Even when he did—as during his March 1939 dismissal—he rebounded quickly. He excelled at capturing the middle, at belonging to competing factions, at fitting into prevailing systems. While Sidor bent Nazi noses out of joint, Tiso talked their language, just as he had talked the language of parliamentarianism in the 1930s.

Simply put, Tiso needed power. It was intrinsic to his authoritarian ideology. The international environment also made him fear for the existence of his state (both Czecho-Slovakia and the Slovak Republic). As with many politicians in such circumstances, he equated power with security. He believed that no one else was capable of leading “New Slovakia” except himself. Within the system that he created, it was not an unreasonable conceit. Radical alternatives to him, such as Tuka, were too susceptible to German influence. Moderate alternatives, such as Martin Sokol, lacked popularity. Power also satisfied Tiso's ambition. No one pursues a job for two decades without wanting it. Finally, power was liberating. As a frustrated interwar legislator, Tiso sponsored only eight bills in thirteen years, mostly minor measures.²³⁶ As prime minister, he ruled unhampered, by decree.

As Slovakia's leader, Tiso fundamentally achieved his vision of a “New Slovakia.” From 1918 on, he had labored to make the territory Ľudák, Slovak nationalist, and Christian. Once in power, he did not slide backward on these goals. He either skillfully co-opted non-Ľudáks or drove them out of politics. Slovak nationalism increasingly defined public space, discourse, and policy. The Catholic Church continually regained ground lost during the First Republic. A “New Slovakia” was Tiso's core agenda. Overall, it did not matter to him if he built it within the Second Republic or as an independent state.

Tiso was less efficient in his parallel quest for a stable, productive, and prosperous Slovakia. During 1938–39, the territory was a perpetual crisis zone. Again, one must pity Tiso for the hand dealt him. The Vienna Award and Hitler's war aims made a stable Slovakia nearly impossible. Yet Tiso's ideology also undermined his pragmatic program. The Ľudák drive for hegemony in Slovakia could only alienate the newly disenfranchised. The policy of “Slovakia to the Slovaks” was at heart about expropriating ethnic enemies. Especially after the economic disaster

of the Vienna Award, the program could never meet expectations. There simply was not enough political pork to go around. Tiso's regime tended to compensate by raising the stakes, in the process driving away entrepreneurial and professional talent, capital, and foreign investors. Since prominent ethnic enemies were Czechs, the policy even subverted the idea of a common state. Tiso's drive to Christianize Slovakia, meanwhile, thinly masked a desire to re-Catholicize it, heightening confessional tensions with Protestants.

Of his main agendas, Tiso was least successful in bringing moral clarity to Slovakia's public life. For two decades, he had argued that socialism, liberalism, and Czechoslovakism were false doctrines that confused Slovaks. A polity based on the eternal principles of Catholicism and natural (Slovak) nationalism, in contrast, would lead Slovakia's inhabitants in the right direction. But, in practice, Catholicism and nationalism proved to be in conflict. The nation's highest interests, as Tiso saw them, meant subverting Czecho-Slovakia, allying with Hitler, despoiling and expelling Czechs and Jews, and invading Catholic Poland. The natural law tradition that Tiso claimed to defend talked instead about duties to the state, shunning false prophets, respecting private property, and eschewing violence and aggressive war. Like his teacher Seipel, Tiso saw eternal principles as ideals rather than policies. He always favored political realism, warning against "going about with our heads in the clouds."²³⁷ But never had the gap between idealism and realism been so great for him. To try to close it, he turned to legalistic justifications or to Catholic understandings of the "lesser evil." This combination robbed his moral teachings of simplicity while diluting his natural law mission with utilitarianism.

Tiso's return to antisemitism was a dramatic shift in his politics. For over a decade, the Ľudák had avoided the Jewish Question, invariably taking a moderate, sometimes almost philosemitic position. Yet, within a month of taking power, he was working hand in hand with radicals and the Germans to deport Slovak Jews. In part, he felt the need to capture the middle again. In the wake of the Vienna Award, he was under pressure from radicals like Ďurčanský—his strongest supporter for remaining in office—to shift blame for the disaster onto Jews. The arbitration process also had focused Tiso's attention on Jews as a security liability; they represented unfavorable census data, an object of German hostility, and sometimes open subversives. But, mainly, Tiso reembraced antisemitic politics because of his ideology. With the return to revolutionary time, he abandoned the balance that he had promoted between the teachings of "love your neighbor" and "love yourself." Now, the nation should worry about itself first. His vision of a Ľudák, Slovak nationalist, and Christian "New Slovakia" had little space for Jews. According to his exegesis of *suum cuique*, he was willing to leave them a proportionate share of the pie. Overall, however, Slovaks should replace them. Jewish property, when not reconfigured as national property, must serve the nation. Jewish cultural influence must yield to Slovak and Christian art and science. Jewish practices that offended

Catholics, such as trading on Sunday, must end.²³⁸ This ideological vision implied disenfranchisement, expropriation, and expulsion. Considering that Tiso had for years promised to settle accounts with national enemies, his lack of antisemitic rhetoric in the late 1930s seems more like a maneuver than sincere tolerance.

As prime minister of Slovakia, Tiso defended his moderate profile on the Jewish Question while pragmatically moving its solution forward. Right after the Vienna Award, for example, he made no antisemitic public statements. Yet, he also tried to deport Jews. After criticism from within his own administration and economic realities convinced him to abandon this attempt, he stressed gradual and legal solutions. This approach limited economic disruption, made it harder for Germans to butt in front of Slovaks on Aryanization, and kept open doors to both British and German economic aid. With the establishment of the Slovak state, Tiso quickened the anti-Jewish program. He now had a greater need for radical and German support, while former brakes, such as British loans, had fallen away.

Overall, Tiso was a calm, steady, methodical leader. He did indeed throw himself into “construction work”—un glamorous, laborious, small steps forward for the nation. But, during crises, he could be erratic. His sensitivity to personal insult and wrong could unleash an anger that overwhelmed his judgment, leaving him indecisive and easily swayed by advisors. Tiso’s fear of compromising his church or the priesthood led him into manipulation, chronic deniability, and fatalism. He also gave hints that he had developed a messiah complex, seeing it as his fate to suffer for God and nation, and to save the latter from extinction.

Tiso, his critics claimed, was totalitarian, fascist, and a crude imitator of Nazi methods. He, in contrast, claimed that his politics was uniquely Slovak (*svojský*) and that his program had changed little. Both views are for the most part correct. Tiso fits easily into theories of fascism or totalitarianism. His state shared many traits with Nazi Germany, from one-party rule to an antisemitic, antiliberal, and anti-Marxist worldview. George Kennan described the Slovak greeting adopted in 1938 as “a halfhearted compromise between a friendly wave and a full-fledged fascist salute.”²³⁹ This *svojský* aspect hardly made it original. At the same time, Tiso’s “New Slovakia” drew its ideological roots mainly from Christian socialism turned Slovak nationalist. Relatively speaking, Tiso’s Slovakia lacked the brutality usually associated with fascism and totalitarianism.²⁴⁰ Sidor, for example, was sent off to Rome rather than hauled out of bed and shot. Tiso was always willing to co-opt the methods and rhetoric of prevailing systems without necessarily internalizing them. While this habit might be imitative, it could also produce a defensive and even subversive lip service. And who exactly was he imitating? Many of his *Gleichschaltung* practices—cracking down on the Left, censorship, the purging of state administration along ethnic lines, disenfranchisement, antisemitism, the jailing of representatives of the old regime—were also lessons from Czechoslovak state

building in Nitra. The Jews targeted in his 1938 deportations, for example, were for the most part the same groups targeted for expulsion in 1919.

Another way to understand Tiso is as a religious hypocrite. As the Slovak prime minister, he violated Catholic principles that he claimed to hold dear. Yet, as historian Priya Satia has noted in another context, a charge of hypocrisy, even when entirely justified, does nothing to explain behavior.²⁴¹ I have argued that Tiso developed lifelong dual missions. The first was to defend his church and to regenerate her influence over public life. The second was a mission of social justice, which, between the world wars, changed into a mission of national justice. Once he took control of Slovakia, these missions came into stronger tension than ever before. Nothing illustrates this more clearly than Tiso's conflict with Pius XII over the Slovak presidency. Tiso's hypocrisy was his solution for holding on to both missions. The soldier of God and the moral theologian may have grown corrupt, but they had not been replaced by the politician. Even in his conflict with the pope, Tiso avoided renouncing one mission in favor of the other.

This attempt to hang on to both missions also betrayed a core belief. For twenty years, Tiso had preached that a combination of political Catholicism and Slovak nationalism could purify public life in Slovakia. As he argued in late 1939, "We cannot accept that . . . Christianity is good for private life but that it cannot be the regulator of public life or national, state, and international relations. This consistent rejection of the light of Bethlehem has brought so much bitterness to individuals and nations, causing so many catastrophes and tragedies."²⁴² Tiso did not think that he was building the New Jerusalem. But he did think that, given time, the "New Slovakia" would prove him right on the curative powers of Catholic-Slovak politics. "It is true that we have among ourselves derailed souls . . . , [who] have gotten far off-track from the principles of the light of Bethlehem: that the whole is more than any single part, and that nation and state must come before the individual. . . . [Yet w]hen [this] light penetrates their troubled souls and egotism, they can be cured."²⁴³ The environment of 1938–39 made it hard for this medicine to work. Blows like the Vienna Award, the destruction of Czecho-Slovakia, and the war on Poland introduced a slew of new pathogens into the system. These events shook Tiso's grip on power. The many strains of immorality that he had wanted to drive from public life—opportunism, violence, war—thrived with new vigor. The old strains that he thought he had purged, like Beneš's Czechoslovakism, returned. With each setback, Tiso doubled his efforts to control and build "New Slovakia," in effect doubling the dosage of his cure in a race against time. Should he fall from power, who else could be trusted to show that Catholic-Slovak politics could work? Should the Ludáks be driven out, who knew if the cure would get a second chance? "Therefore in the storms and gales of international and social [crises], we will with vigilance care for and guard the light of Bethlehem, so that it will illuminate us in the further building of the state, so that all of the erring still in

the grips of foreign ideologies will be led to peace, and so that the peace of Christ will govern in the Slovak state and in the spirits of all of its inhabitants.²⁴⁴

Within the contexts of international crises and revolution, this chapter has told the story of Tiso's relentless drive for power, of his ideological subordination of autonomous Slovakia, of his subversion of Czecho-Slovakia, of his opportunistic alliance with Nazi Germany, of his servile participation in aggressive war, and of his audacious defiance of a pope. Yet, in a perverse way, this story was also about Tiso standing up for what he saw as the truth.



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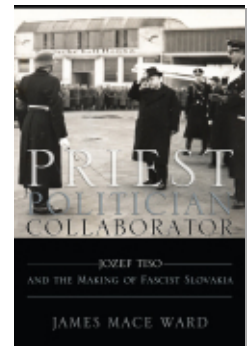
Published by Cornell University Press

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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Sacred Convictions, 1939–44

The love of our own country
seems not to be derived from the love of mankind.

—Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759)

In fall 1940, shortly after arriving in Slovakia, Vatican chargé d'affaires Msgr. Giuseppe Burzio wrote to his superiors:

The question [now] is how long will [Jozef Tiso's] political convictions and especially his conscience as a priest let him march hand in hand with the National Socialist masters. Naturally, he does not like to do it, but is only compelled by circumstances. He is convinced, or at least he hopes, that if he stays in power then he can protect what he can and that, in putting into effect National Socialist methods, it will not come to extreme consequences. Only later will it be possible to judge if he calculated correctly.¹

A year and a half later, a Slovak bishop, Michal Bubnič, reportedly told Tiso roughly the same thing: “History will judge you.”²

While Burzio and Bubnič might seem to have been talking about the same thing, their concerns in fact were very different. Bubnič feared that Tiso's pro-German policies would lead to the subordination and Germanification of Slovaks. “If [your] design is successful,” he told Tiso, “[and leads to] the creation of a truly independent Slovakia . . . , history will immortalize [you] as one of the greatest Slovak patriots. But if [you] do not succeed, and Slovakia, following its present politics, is denationalized . . . , history will remember [you instead] as the grave-digger of the Slovak people.”³ Burzio, in contrast, worried about the damage that Tiso's accommodation to Nazi Germany could do to the Catholic Church. With time, these concerns centered on Tiso's involvement in the radical solution of the Jewish Question in Slovakia.

By Bubnič's standards of progress for the nation, Tiso fared well enough in the eyes of history. Wartime Slovakia was indeed subordinated to Germany and adopted many National Socialist methods, from obligatory fascist greetings such as "*Na stráž!*" (Be on Guard!) to the *Führer* principle. But Tiso and his followers also tenaciously defended domestic autonomy, often undermining or defying German agendas. Cultural gains made by local Germans were dwarfed by the Slovakization of public and private life. As a *Ludák* opponent reported in 1944: "An incontestable reality [of the Slovak state] is the raising of Slovak national self-confidence . . . , [which has been] brought about [by several factors]: the movement of culture, literature, and theater in new directions; new social benefits; and the seemingly relatively good and stable economic position of Slovakia."⁴

The eyes of history that peer into Burzio's reports, in contrast, tend to judge according to human rights. Although Tiso had been understood for most of his life as a priest or national politician, during the Second World War he became identified as a collaborator and war criminal. Since his death, his participation in the Holocaust has been the central issue for interpreting him. To an extent, this approach distorts the historical context. In 1942, the "Holocaust" as we know it did not exist. There was but the mass murder of European Jews, not yet termed genocide. The Slovak deportations are far more important to present-day observers than they were to wartime counterparts. The above quote, for example, came from a report that was unusually thorough for its time and place. Yet it did not mention Jewish persecution. Tiso similarly paid less attention to the Jewish Question during his presidency than to his "construction work" or retaining his hold on power.

This caveat aside, I nonetheless focus in this chapter more on Tiso's complicity in the Holocaust than on his ongoing Catholic and national missions. The latter have already been sufficiently demonstrated; the former (of course) has not. The genocide and the related power struggle with the Slovak radicals provide the best view of the limits of Tiso's presidential power and his priorities for exercising it. Moreover, his participation in the destruction of Slovak Jewry has indeed defined his life, whether appropriately or not.

In 1938, Tiso's realistic politics (collaboration) made possible his idealistic politics (national autonomy and defense of his church). In the 1940s, especially through his involvement in the Jewish Question, Tiso's realistic politics instead made impossible his idealistic politics. During his early presidency, Tiso strove for greater independence from Germany and control over regime radicals such as Vojtech Tuka and Alexander (Šaňo) Mach. After Hitler made them protégés in mid-1940, Tiso engaged them in a two-year power struggle, which he won. In the process, his central agendas increasingly intersected with the Jewish Question. Most of the time, it became a resource for co-opting opponents or for advancing his own programs. Less often, it was a bone of contention on which he had to make concessions, or at least appear to do so.

The Parish Priest of Slovakia

As president, Tiso stepped back from directly running Slovakia, relying now more on his personal influence and party resources. His presidential powers, as noted before, were limited. He convened and dissolved parliament, hired and fired ministers, and signed or returned legislation (a veto overturned by a three-fifths vote in parliament). As commander in chief, he ordered mobilizations and, with parliamentary consent, declared war. He also named and sacked the head of the Hlinka Guard and approved his orders. Although the presidential staff was small, around ten aides, Tiso did not lack bureaucratic support, controlling the entire Ľudák party apparatus—over 2,300 local branches in 1939.⁵ His personality was another hefty instrument of power. As the “leader,” he strove to be a model in everything from piousness to humility. “The President of the Republic,” reads one of his office’s letters, “embodies . . . the greatest justice, perfection, and punctuality.”⁶ Although Tiso initially refused to let streets and schools be named after him, the objection simply confirmed him as the object and co-creator of a cult of personality.⁷ In 1940, for example, *Slovák* recorded the impressions of two visitors who dropped in on him as he prepared for Mass in Bánovce. Receiving them with joy, Tiso bestowed upon one (a priest) the honor of saying Mass in a side chapel, running off himself to gather children for first communion. Soon after, he dramatically entered the church doors, children streaming behind him like pilgrims. After the service, he patiently stood under the parsonage gates, stuffing his pockets with supplications from the downtrodden: “Everyone who has a complaint . . . divulges it here directly to the head of state.”⁸ This cult was not merely an instrument of power. It was also a vehicle through which Tiso and his followers participated in the idea of Slovak independence. His performances in Bánovce in particular evoked the informality of Pius X, the first working-class pope. Unusually involved in Roman pastoral life, Pius styled himself as “the parish priest of Christendom.” Tiso, in effect, became the parish priest of Slovakia. In palace audiences, however, he stood on protocol, thus symbolizing Slovak cultural maturity.⁹

Befitting a self-styled servant of the nation, Tiso devoted a good part of each working day as president to petitions—some twenty-five thousand a year, seeking everything from jobs to revenge. He took an intense interest in many of these requests, often energetically helping supplicants find work or scholarships.¹⁰ Petitioners also often asked Tiso to intervene in government business. Although he denounced such practices as rot from the old regime, they flourished in his office. Tiso thus undid arguable wrongs, such as lowering stiff fines for minor infractions of currency regulations.¹¹ But he also burdened the bureaucracy with petty dramas. His office, for example, issued fifteen letters to get a Ľudák a concession for a tobacco stand while trying to drive his competitor out of business.¹² In gaining Tiso’s backing, it helped to be Ľudák or connected to him. The key issue, however,

was political reliability—a finding that justified leaving Czechs in place while urging the deportation of “anti-Slovak” Catholic priests.¹³ In addition to a system of control and patronage, interventions expressed Tiso’s paternalism. This trait was most visible in his occasional forays into family disputes, as when he sought to transfer a “morally depraved” teacher and intimate of Jews away from a previously model son, into whom she had gotten her claws.¹⁴ Tiso often acted rashly when confronted with such denunciations. In 1940, for instance, he read a semi-literate, anonymous complaint that a Jew was using “a radio and gramophone to lure people” into his tavern. “Forbid it,” Tiso wrote next to the allegation, setting county officials to investigating the case.¹⁵ They discounted the entire letter. Such responses (and complaints from lower offices over wasted time) help to account for Tiso’s lesser interest in pursuing denunciations during the middle years of his presidency.¹⁶

Compared to this heavy involvement with petitions, Tiso took a hands-off approach with the last aspect of presidential routine to be considered here: legislation. He initiated but a handful of laws and hardly ever negotiated a measure himself.¹⁷ Instead, he let his aide Štefan Fordinál work them out with the ministries. In addition to constitutional laws, and bills affecting his own powers, Tiso took an interest mainly in law dealing with the Catholic Church, schools, or social issues such as insurance.¹⁸ Although his office might move to moderate statutes here and there, it overall supported a trend toward a harsher legal code. In 1940, for example, the Slovak Supreme Court strenuously objected to a bill for speeding up judicial proceedings, complaining that it violated basic juridical principles, such as a defendant’s right to present evidence on his own behalf. Despite its reservations about the bill, Tiso’s office recommended abandoning the idea only until “the citizenry is accustomed” to such practices.¹⁹ The case illustrates as well how Tiso was constrained in the legislative process by residual democratic habits. In 1940, the constitution’s limited separation of powers even allowed a temporary equilibrium between Tiso, the parliament, and the government to emerge.²⁰

Tiso installed this Slovak government the day after becoming president, in October 1939. For the most part, the cabinet was a continuation of his own. The choice of Tuka as prime minister nodded to the Hlinka Guard and the Germans, who considered him their “most sincere friend” in the government.²¹ Tiso later claimed that, by giving Tuka the office, he had hoped to draw him away from subversion and toward responsibility and loyalty. The promotion, however, was also a demotion, as Tuka became the only cabinet member without a ministry—“shunted onto a dead track,” in the words of a German analyst.²² Ďurčanský, in contrast, won the Ministry of Interior as a second portfolio, making him the strongest cabinet member. Ironically, he now became the most anti-German, the erosion of Slovak sovereignty under Nazi suzerainty having cooled his attraction to the *Reich*.

Although still pro-German, Tiso also wanted greater independence, a desire that led to a sharp foreign policy turn: *détente* with the Soviet Union. In addition to general issues of sovereignty, the economics of German domination increasingly troubled him. His idea of the state was for “national” property to come into Slovak hands. Instead, German-held shares in Slovakia’s industry exploded to over half in 1942. The *Reich* meanwhile consumed around three-quarters of Slovak exports, paying in devalued credits instead of hard cash.²³ Seeking relief from such economic dependence and exploitation, Ďurčanský as foreign minister looked east. Diplomatic ties with the Communist state offered markets, an ally for revising the Vienna Award, and the prestige of Great Power recognition.²⁴ Despite a lifetime of antibolshevism, Tiso supported the strategy. He later claimed to have welcomed the 1939 Hitler-Stalin Pact, expecting it to facilitate the solution of “European questions” on the basis of the ethnic principle.²⁵ In his first presidential address, he proposed Slovakia as “a mediator . . . between . . . the Slavic and German worlds.”²⁶ Soon, he was courting “extensive economic relations” with the Soviets not only by exchanging ambassadors (sending to Moscow his cousin Fraňo) but even by congratulating Stalin on the anniversary of the October Revolution.²⁷

Domestically, Tiso returned his attention to social agendas now that the state apparatus was in place. In November, he kicked off a charity drive, “Winter Help,” in support of the unemployed. The program’s Nazi namesake had impressed him as “awaken[ing] interest about public works . . . even in the last village.”²⁸ This participatory aspect was key, as he felt that welfare deadened initiative and instilled a slavish spirit in the nation. But he was wary of giving up state control of charity lest competitors use it to capture followers. To solve this dilemma, he made Winter Help a party monopoly—thus, ostensibly outside of the state.²⁹ As part of the reeducation program for creating a new Slovak man, participation in the charity was often coerced, “donations” sometimes deducted from paychecks without consent. Winter Help became a yearly ritual and an important source of public support. By 1943, the program had paid out over 70 million crowns, with an emphasis on workfare and small investments.³⁰ For Tiso, the charity was also part of a moral reform of capitalism. In kicking off the 1939 drive, for example, he complained that commerce “artificially cultivated” poverty and moved the economy away from its “original, natural purpose of serving man.”³¹ In his first presidential address, he proposed cultivating instead national solidarity, enthusiasm, and industry: “We are creating capital not from the exploitation of socially weak classes but from the strong spiritual substance of our national character: not international capital, not depersonalized capital, not capital embodied in idolizing gold; rather, the capital of individuals gladly working in the interests of their nation and state.”³² Tiso thus restated Catholic teachings on the dual nature of property, in which rights carried social duties. More concretely, he pursued social reform through a corporate order, planning for which raised political challenges. Tiso worried, for example, that the

estates might someday rival the party. Finding consensus on the order was also elusive. The regime's attempt to draft the necessary legislation was among its most inclusive, involving over a dozen interest groups. But greater participation brought less agreement. Industrialists, for example, denounced the plan as "revolutionary," while Karmasin's *Volksdeutsche* screamed loss of privilege. Despite such resistance, Tiso pushed ahead, apparently believing the order could end class conflict.³³

Tiso's concentration on these new projects was again broken by the Hlinka Guard. The paramilitary excelled at disruption—constantly preening as a national elite, pushing for purging society, and trespassing on the authority of state officers. Protestants despised the switch to compulsory male membership, as it came attached with Catholic ritual. Lutheran clergy complained to Tiso over the guard "encroaching on individual rights and freedoms" and treating Jews with "plain brutality."³⁴ The guard clashed as well with efforts by Ďurčanský and Tiso to wean the state from dependence on Germany. Fed up, regime conservatives pushed through a law that deprived the guard of police and other powers (leaving it merely the task of civil defense) and cancelled compulsory male membership (a move that the guard welcomed). Tiso no doubt helped to orchestrate this demotion, even though the failure of the previous law was also his, as he had hoped to permanently tame the guard by making it a mass organization. He also failed miserably at convincing Guardists to accept the demotion. From their viewpoint, he had more than just this grievance to address. Tiso had become the staunchest ally of their new *bête noire*, Ďurčanský, giving him and other *Nástupists* the power that the guard craved. Tiso's "gradualist" approach to redistributing wealth also disappointed the radical poor and discontents that the Guardists championed. Yet, after downgrading the guard, Tiso offered it neither compensation nor salve, but rather a narcissistic Christmas sermon on his namesake in the nativity. Joseph was "the personal guard of the Savior. . . . Head of the Holy Family of Nazareth, he holds his protective hand over its treasure and cares about [the family's] everyday sustenance. He is an instrument in divine hands, so that the young, divine life is not smothered by Herod. . . . St. Joseph is the Guardist of Christ, the Guardist of the Holy Family, because he shows here the same service . . . that the guard performs for the Slovak nation! / Let's be Guardists of St. Joseph's type!"³⁵ The plea echoed Tiso's clumsy attempts to foster a "smiling Slovakia" by implanting clerical practices such as spiritual exercises in Slovak political and educational culture. Tiso argued that since these brought happiness to priests (i.e., himself), they were also good for laymen. He accordingly took the government off periodically for such retreats.³⁶

The guard was entirely unimpressed by Tiso's chiding to behave itself. With the turn of the year, Mach raised the old rallying cry of "on the attack," calling for greater loyalty to Germany and an expansion of the revolution through such measures as the expropriation of Jews. At a congress in the spa town of Trenčianske

Teplice, the guard attacked the parliament and Czechoslovakists in the administration, demanding a more authoritarian system.³⁷ There was even talk of a march on Bratislava.³⁸ This offensive threatened Tiso's leadership more than its blustery nature might suggest. Mach was the Hitler regime's new golden boy, whereas its trust in Tiso and Ďurčanský had slipped. The latter, for example, had recently complicated a German takeover of twenty-five factories.³⁹ Tiso could not be sure that the increasingly anticlerical guard would not turn on him. While the congress loudly proclaimed loyalty, it greeted his general secretary, Kirschbaum, with whistles, the Slovak equivalent of booing.⁴⁰ Worse, Čatloš (and thus potentially the army) seemed to back the paramilitary. The general saw Tuka as less bigoted than Tiso toward Lutherans and also as an ally against "clerical extravagances" in army routine.⁴¹

In this latest conflict with the guard, Tiso typically tried to master events by smoothing things over while searching for common antisemitic ground. During the congress, he stroked the collective ego of the Guardists, declaring them "the vehicle of the people's will."⁴² But he returned no powers to them, granting concessions instead on the Jewish Question and land reform. Tiso now declared that these issues demanded "revolutionary methods."⁴³ Soon after, the regime created an Aryanization office under Tuka's control, while the parliament approved a land reform. Tiso also announced one of his rare legislative initiatives: a bill to limit income, "as [indecently high salaries] have a demoralizing effect on the entire public, especially [workers]."⁴⁴ This pattern of dealing with the Guardists repeated itself in February, when rivalry between Mach and Ďurčanský prompted a new crisis, during which Mach ostentatiously resigned. Trying to calm things down again, Tiso refused to accept the resignation or to reconstruct the cabinet, as Mach wanted.⁴⁵ Soon after, Mach toured Germany, meeting with Ribbentrop and the Reich minister of propaganda Joseph Goebbels, the latter of whom "very temperamentally" pushed for "a radical solution of the Jewish Question" in Slovakia.⁴⁶ Tiso seemed to heed these words. His office proposed a bill for compelling Jews who had bought foreclosed lands at auction (purportedly for "ridiculously low prices") to sell them back to their original owners at cost.⁴⁷ Three weeks later, Tiso vetoed a bill on limiting the number of Jews employed in industry and commerce and on compelling Jewish merchants to sell their property to "qualified Christians."⁴⁸ He wanted changes that would speed up the sales while letting poor Slovaks buy on credit. The parliament accepted the changes but denied Tiso's request for a fund to help poor Slovaks gain Jewish property.⁴⁹

A favor that Tiso granted the Hlinka Guard in the meantime reveals much about his evolving position on the Jewish Question. This case centered on a Jewish merchant from Slovakia, Žigmund G., an apparently industrious and law-abiding man. Panicked during the 1939 collapse of Czecho-Slovakia, he had tried to mail his life savings (350,000 crowns plus other valuables) from Bratislava to his home,

also in Slovakia. Guardists had seized the treasure. Knowing this act to be illegal, the merchant appealed to Tiso, who eventually pressed guard leaders to report on the incident. In early 1940, they essentially confirmed Mr. G.'s case, admitting that no government offices backed the confiscation. Restitution, however, would be difficult, as the guard had spent the cash. "In the opinion of [our] headquarters," the report concluded, "the remainder of the money and valuables . . . cannot be taken away from [Mr. G.] legally. / It is possible [however] to compel [him] to give some kind of sum to the guard. [We] will do this, if the president agrees." Tiso did not. With his approval, his office advised the guard confidentially that "It is a matter between [you] and [Mr. G.] if he donates some kind of sum. . . . It is not possible, however, to request the agreement of the president for compelling [him to do so]." ⁵⁰ Tiso thus made it clear that he would tolerate such "excesses" but that the guard should act on its own. His desire to expropriate Mr. G. without taking blame for it is confirmed by subsequent actions by Tiso's office. The president's legislative aide, Fordinál, and a guard representative decided that, since Mr. G. had carried the money from Prague before mailing it, he had violated a 1938 regulation forbidding the import of large sums of Czechoslovak currency into the previous republic. When the guard failed to convince customs officials to pursue this absurd charge, Tiso's office intervened to procure an indictment. In the meantime, Tiso rejected Mr. G.'s request for an audience, claiming that he had no control over the guard.

Despite such favors, Tiso's troubles with the guard drug on. In April, the president seemed to have the upper hand. While he had been plowing common ground with the Guardists, Ďurčanský had laid the weight of the police on them. Mach, in contrast, had failed to exploit the prestige of his German tour. Feeling more secure, Tiso told Ambassador Bernard that a cabinet change invited instability. ⁵¹ The Germans by now were increasingly unhappy with Ďurčanský and wanted to weaken Catholic influence in Slovakia. ⁵² Mach meanwhile refused to come to bay, sparking another crisis in May by demanding the Ministry of Interior. Neither Tiso nor Tuka could get him to back down. Instead, Mach and other guard leaders assembled in Ružomberok, where they condemned Ďurčanský and "the entire system." They also vowed "to do everything to strengthen the German-Slovak community of struggle," including creating a *Freikorps*. ⁵³ This latest escalation pushed Tiso into cracking down. He drew Mach's February resignation out of the drawer and fired him as guard commander. Ďurčanský's police occupied the guard headquarters and (reportedly on Tiso's order) arrested Mach's most troublesome followers. Mach himself was placed under surveillance. ⁵⁴ In addition to concerns over revolt, Tiso's decision was tied to the international situation. War in the West had unleashed fears that Hungary might reclaim Slovakia, inspiring both countries to partially mobilize. Tiso was in no mood to let Mach's often anti-Hungarian agitation provoke an incident. Suppressing the radicals also hedged bets should the German assault on France fail. Finally, the invasion made for good

timing, as the Germans were preoccupied.⁵⁵ Indeed, in the next weeks, Tiso easily asserted the authority of state and party over the guard.

Although the guard offered little resistance to Tiso's onslaught, Tuka was another story. The guard was his power base. In another cult of personality, Guardists had built him up as the nation's greatest martyr and the embodiment of permanent revolution in Slovakia. Mach was also Tuka's closest ally in the government. Until the May crisis, Tuka had taken the same overall line as Tiso, applying (in Bernard's words) the "tested methods" of buying Mach off with "good treatment and vague promises."⁵⁶ This cooperation typified how relatively well Tiso and Tuka had worked together since the state's creation. But, after Tiso sacked Mach (reportedly without first consulting Tuka), relations between the president and prime minister collapsed. Tuka announced his resignation to Tiso, claiming that Čatloš's would follow. The prime minister wanted his constitutional power increased and Mach rehabilitated. Tuka also turned to the Germans, telling Bernard, for example, that "[Tiso] tries to slander his opponents and will not recognize that the matter is about uncompromisingly taking [either] a German or [else] a Czechoslovak line."⁵⁷ When Tiso called a meeting of the party presidium, Tuka "urgently asked" for Berlin's instructions and was told to stall.⁵⁸ Bernard, recalled for consultations, warned Tiso that no reconstruction of the government should happen before his return. "Correctly understanding" the significance of Bernard's departure, Tiso began to compensate: "I personally guarantee a completely pro-German stance for the Slovak state."⁵⁹

The next day, in one of his most resolute performances as president, Tiso knocked heads together in a cabinet meeting. Exercising for the first time his right to attend such sessions, he backed Ďurčanský as unquestionably pro-German and an asset to the Slovak state. Mach, in contrast, "had completely failed in all of his areas of responsibility." Tiso refused to halt the repression of the guard, claiming that the detainees had complicated Slovak-German friendship by spreading misinformation. As a peace offering, however, he argued that "the ministerial council must do everything to bring Mach into the government."⁶⁰ Tiso wanted to make him the minister of labor. The post (half of Stano's portfolio) would keep him busy while offering a chance at redemption. This defense of Ďurčanský showed unusual political courage for Tiso. At the time, Britain was evacuating its forces from the beaches of Dunkirk. Mach, not surprisingly, rejected the peace offer. He and Tuka preferred instead to discuss a cabinet change with Karmasin and Manfred von Killinger, an envoy from the German Foreign Office.⁶¹

Tiso and Ďurčanský waited nearly two months for Bernard to descend the imperial mountain with Berlin's judgment. In the interim, the two Slovak politicians tried to reestablish credibility with the Germans. As the *Wehrmacht* overran Paris, for instance, Tiso pledged to Berlin that he had not let anyone "take the rudder in Slovakia [who could even be] suspected of disloyalty toward the German

cause. He had stuck to what [Ribbentrop] had said to him at their last meeting, namely, that it was his task to build up the Slovak state and to see to its peace and order. . . . [Tiso] would see his place on Germany's side even [in] the absurd and impossible [case] that [she] would be defeated."⁶² But Tiso sabotaged his own case soon after when he urged Slovak Catholic students to defend "spiritual autarky": "We Catholics . . . are not [spiritually] dependent on any kind of import or foreign thinking. Catholicism as a system is so perfect, comprehensive, and rich, that we don't need any contribution from anyone, nor any kind of instruction, be it from a religious, political, or social viewpoint." To remove Catholicism from public life, Tiso argued, was to invite a politics of "gangsterism."⁶³ The German embassy in Bratislava took note, chalking up the speech as another example of unreliable Slovak behavior. Although Tiso in part addressed Berlin here, one should not exaggerate the extent to which he stood up to Hitler. A more pressing concern for Tiso was no doubt the presence of the new Vatican chargé d'affaires, Burzio, on whom he needed to make a good impression if Slovakia were to regain a nuncio.⁶⁴ In related appearances, Tiso was more than willing to promote German-Slovak cooperation and to praise Hitler and his conquest of France. Tiso attributed France's "tragedy," incidentally, to the spiritual decadence of a "sinful, merrymaking life." He accordingly warned Slovaks to drop pastimes such as hiking, outings, dances, and amusement parks in favor of "work and only work."⁶⁵

Despite Tiso's efforts to reassure them, the Germans revamped their policy toward Slovakia. Berlin wanted her (along with the rest of east-central Europe) on a tighter leash. Tiso's state would no longer be a model for collaboration with Germany. Instead, according to Bernard, "the time has come to make it clear that Slovakia lays in our *Lebensraum*, that is, that only our wishes matter."⁶⁶ Ďurčanský's "register of sins" made him irredeemable. Mach and Tuka were to replace him as minister of interior and foreign minister, respectively. German advisors would "watch over" and "influence" an "alignment of Slovak domestic politics, especially social and economic policy."⁶⁷ Tiso was to abandon dreams of a Catholic corporate state, even if Berlin recognized that "carrying through German demands" required his cooperation.⁶⁸

This program was unveiled to Tiso at a late-July summit in Salzburg, to which Tuka and Mach were also invited. The president's first substantive meeting was a private audience with Ribbentrop, during which the German demands were laid out. Tiso later characterized the discussion as fraught with the threat of occupation. But the essential point is that he accepted the changes.⁶⁹ The Slovak delegation then met with Hitler. Tiso was eager to talk, for—as they said in Slovakia—"A mute child is not understood even by its mother. Slovakia, however, was happy under the fatherly care of the *Führer* and therefore wished to express her thanks by doing her modest part in helping to build the new Europe." Having proclaimed loyalty, Tiso patiently sat through a monologue in which Hitler hinted

that uncooperativeness could leave the Slovaks at the mercy of the Hungarians. When finally his turn to speak, Tiso assured Hitler that Slovakia had no “leanings toward Russia in the framework of a Pan-Slavic policy. . . . The leaflets circulated in Slovakia [backing] such . . . were machinations of Jews, Magyars, and Czechs designed to blacken Slovakia in the eyes of Germany.” Tiso turned then to the cause of revising the Vienna Award, as a concession on this issue would help to balance out the defeats that he had just sustained. But, when he “brought up the matter of the four hundred thousand Slovaks . . . living under Hungarian rule, [Ribbentrop] interjected that he had [already] told . . . [him] . . . that at the moment a settlement of this problem was out of the question.”⁷⁰ Tiso might not be a mute child, but he would be shushed like a child if he forgot his place. The deal that he had accepted in 1939—loyal cooperation in exchange for geopolitical security and domestic autonomy—was off.

“Driving One Nail Out with Another”

After the Salzburg summit, a power struggle ensued between Tiso and the Slovak radicals. Tuka and Mach, with German backing, tried to establish a Guardist dictatorship and to disempower the Slovak parliament, political Catholicism, and the Hlinka party. These attempts culminated in an amateurish January 1941 coup plot. In opposition, Tiso clung to his key powers while mobilizing the party and conservatives behind him. Although he quickly reasserted dominance over the regime and in relation to Berlin, he failed to secure German permission to sack his rivals. As an alternative, he turned their national socialist demands against them, making himself the Slovak *Vodca* (leader). He also switched from treating the solution of the Jewish Question as common ground with the radicals to handing it over to them.

Tiso described the Salzburg summit as “the worst box on the ears that I ever received.”⁷¹ His colleagues described him as angry, indignant, humiliated, and dejected.⁷² He threatened to resign. As during past such episodes, Tiso’s allies begged him to stay. In August, for instance, the party presidium “unanimously pronounced its full trust in Dr. Tiso. . . . In all questions, he alone is the decisive and final authority.”⁷³ Tiso later claimed that such displays convinced him to prevent “the worse thing” of Tuka taking over: “I [therefore] overcame my spiritual crisis. . . . In the interest of the nation, I forgot about the wounds that I had suffered.”⁷⁴

Tuka meanwhile took Salzburg as a green light. Right after the summit, he unveiled plans for a “Slovak national socialism . . . according to the German model.” The program overlapped Tiso’s on several points, such as its stress on unity, discipline, and a cult of work. What mainly distinguished it as a new course was Tuka’s contention that Slovaks should “be first” in helping the Nazis reconstruct Europe.

Tuka also promised an administrative shakeup and constitutional change, both of which Tiso opposed.⁷⁵ A few weeks later, in response to complaints from Tiso and other clerics, Tuka promised that the new course would be based on Slovak and Christian (rather than German and Nazi) traditions. He also pledged to accelerate the revolution and turn it to solving social problems. In discussing the party, Tuka seemed to demote Tiso, identifying the nation's "eternal leader" as Hlinka. Tiso was merely one of "the Salzburg triumvirate," along with Tuka and Mach. Referring to criticism of Hlinka from the 1936 Piešťany Congress (which Hlinka then had co-opted), Tuka argued that "Before, [the party] had one leader. In the future, it will have two. People . . . guessed right when they chanted, "Hitler, Hlinka, one link" (*Hitler, Hlinka, jedna linka*). / The party will be led in the Hlinka spirit but will work according to Hitler's methods."⁷⁶ Building up the guard and the state, Tuka sought to subordinate the party through such proposals as making government commissars also leading party officials.⁷⁷

In support of this "new course," the Germans shook up their Bratislava embassy. Bernard was recalled, in part because he had failed to appreciate the delicacies of a priest being president. His replacement as ambassador, Manfred von Killinger, was ill suited to do better. A longtime Nazi, von Killinger had served time for helping to assassinate the German Catholic politician Matthias Erzberger. In addition to being hostile to political Catholicism, von Killinger could not speak Slovak, relying instead on Karmasin's circle for information. The arrogant diplomat believed that he could waltz into Slovakia and quickly knock everyone into proper national socialist shape. A dozen new German advisors with similar grand ambitions stood behind him.⁷⁸

Tiso opposed Tuka's new course for familiar reasons. Tuka's brand of revolution stank of anticlericalism and anarchy. The radical's plan to build up the guard while strengthening the state challenged Tiso's totalizing ambitions for the party.⁷⁹ Tiso was also disturbed by Tuka's willingness to accommodate the German advisors, whom Tiso had good reason to distrust. The SS advisor to the Hlinka Guard, Viktor Naegler, wanted to assimilate Slovaks into Germans. Economic advisors aimed to squeeze Slovakia.⁸⁰ Other advisors, such as at the Hlinka Youth, threatened to capture young minds with foreign ideologies. Finally, this fight was personal: Tiso felt that his rival had stabbed him in the back at Salzburg.⁸¹

In countering the "new course," Tiso strove to posit an alternative while building bridges to his opponents. To the party presidium, he argued that there was no need to imitate National Socialism. For one thing, the Germans themselves said that it was not for export. For another, the *Ľudáks* already were national socialists according to a Christian model. Rather than Slovak national socialism, Tiso argued for constructing "Populist Slovakia" with a "Christian-national-social spirit." Having thus defended the party, the Catholic Church, and the Hlinka program, Tiso sought common ground again with Tuka. In September, the president

implored Slovaks to “not quarrel about names. . . . Everyone can call [the new course] whatever they want, only let it be Christian and Slovak, and let it serve the flowering of the Slovak state and the welfare of the Slovak nation. . . . We will build Populist Slovakia at a national socialist tempo.” Tiso also urged the nation to join their “Christian spirit” to the “social aims” of national socialism and the cleansing stream of Hitler’s war, “a catastrophe for capitalism and everything Bolshevik.”⁸² Tiso’s goal, as during earlier such conflicts, was to use rhetoric to either co-opt or defeat Tuka. In this speech, Tiso inverted Tuka’s slogan “Hitler, Hlinka, one link,” responding with “Tiso, Tuka, one hand” (*Tiso, Tuča, jedna ruka*). The slogan was both a sincere offer for cooperation and a claim for the moral high ground. “I used this phrase,” Tiso later explained, “so that I could act according to scripture: ‘If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off.’”⁸³

In the interim, Tiso unveiled initiatives for building “Populist Slovakia” as a “social state.” He proposed compelling enterprises to reinvest profits over 10 percent on such things as “social facilities for employees.” Another initiative in the same speech aimed at two birds with one stone. Even though the Slovak state had offered twenty-five thousand enterprises for Aryanization, only five thousand individuals had applied for them. The state bureaucracy, meanwhile, was bloated and often underpaid. Tiso proposed turning state workers into Aryanizers, thus building a Slovak middle class. In laying out the program, Tiso paid unusual attention to the Jewish Question:

In many letters . . . , Jews [ask] me if what we are doing is Christian. This gave me pause, and I thought to myself, “You want to teach me about Christianity?” . . . I will not let the nation perish for Jewish society. . . . If I see that the nation could suffer vital damage . . . , I as a Christian say, “first myself, then you.” There is nothing unjust about what we are doing here. We are buying [their property]. For what individuals do, the individuals themselves bear responsibility. For what the state or party does, we guarantee with our conscience, because everything is done according to the principle of justice. . . . Slovak property that was stolen in the past is returning today to Slovak hands. I would like to see yet one more revolution. . . . Just as we brought into force spiritual values without spilling blood, so we are carrying on economically without violating the principle of private property.⁸⁴

The context for these ruminations was a conflict over who would solve the Jewish Question, a right that Tiso ceded to the radicals. Soon after Salzburg, Tuka’s office proposed empowering the prime minister (in agreement with ministers Mach and Medrický) to “undertake all necessary measures” to “exclude Jews from Slovak economic and social life” and to transfer their property to Christians. In evaluating the planned decree, Tiso’s aide Fordinál agreed that “it is certainly necessary to solve the Jewish Question radically, and we ourselves have even

contributed [such] initiatives.” Fordinál nonetheless suspected Tuka of usurping legislative power. The aide suggested redrafting the measure as a constitutional law that would expire after “a certain time.” On the same day that Tiso made the above remarks, Fordinál met with him, and another proposed change emerged: that the entire Slovak government, rather than Tuka alone, would carry out the measures, the most important of which would need Tiso’s approval. At stake was Tiso’s ability to limit the radical expropriation of Jews. An interministerial council the next day “unanimously” endorsed the new revision.⁸⁵ Yet, when the bill reached the parliament a few weeks later, the clause on Tiso’s approval had vanished. Tiso apparently had retreated voluntarily or under minimal pressure. The parliament quickly passed the bill, limiting its applicability to one year.⁸⁶ Tiso signed it into law without comment.

By this time, Tiso had tasted again what association with a radical solution of the Jewish Question meant. In August, he had signed legislation that banned Jews from all schools except Jewish elementary ones. Since the law also affected converts, Catholic circles pushed the government for exemptions. Bishop Kmeňko, among others, personally intervened with Tiso.⁸⁷ The priest-president was caught between his antisemitic policy and church expectations. One apparent reaction for him was to yield the Jewish Question to the radicals. Another was to defend the Christianity of the state’s antisemitic program. In September, he characterized giving Jews higher education as handing them anti-Slovak weapons, again making the issue personal: “they say that [our policy] is not Christian. I say that it is Christian.” He also offered a theological justification for expropriating Jews based on the Old Testament concept of the Jubilee Year, according to which “all shall return to their possessions.”⁸⁸ He would not make another notable statement on Aryanization for months.

Given the ball on the Jewish Question, the radicals ran with it. Mach, for instance, promised a “100 percent” solution, a pointed rejection of Tiso’s *suum cuique* proportionate approach.⁸⁹ In support of the radicals, the Germans supplied the advisor Dieter Wisliceny, a deputy of Eichmann. Wisliceny’s strategy was to impoverish the Slovak Jews, thus creating a social problem that only emigration or deportation could “vent.”⁹⁰ The Slovak government meanwhile created a central office for expropriating Jews headed by Tuka’s protégé Augustín Morávek. Over the next year, decree after decree rolled back Jewish rights.

Tiso also let the radicals partly purge the regime. Tuka demanded that Kirschbaum go as the party’s general secretary. To save face, Tiso instead sent him off to military service as a leave.⁹¹ The ultraradical Karol Murgaš took over the Office of Propaganda. Tuka meanwhile sacked several minor *Nástupist* bureaucrats and pushed to expel more Czech administrators to the Protectorate (the Germans nixing this plan).⁹² Although Tiso was inclined to keep Czech administrators that he trusted, he agreed that all Czech gendarmes should be fired.⁹³ He also pushed

Minister Sivák to be more aggressive in sacking Czechs at the Slovak National Theater, arguing that “Czech actors may not remain here secure in their sense of indispensability. . . . The height of art in every nation represents itself by its own qualities. To preen oneself on someone else’s feathers is an impoverished pride. This ‘unhealthy revolutionarism’ [Sivák’s characterization of a radical sacking of Czechs] will certainly remove this kind of pride everywhere . . . even if for a time a vacuum occurs.”⁹⁴ Otherwise, Tiso refused to purge the administration. His continuing influence over the government especially frustrated Tuka. In October, for example, the government adopted new rules of order so that it could pass “urgent” measures without meeting. Tiso quickly raised constitutional objections that scuttled the change.⁹⁵ Soon after, Tuka requested that Tiso replace Ministers Fritz (justice), Medrický (economy), Sivák (education), and Stano (transportation) with radicals. Tiso reportedly responded that such a shuffle would happen only when Hungarian Regent Horthy was Slovak president.⁹⁶ Tuka and German advisors harassed Tiso for days on the issue, but he refused to budge. Instead, he supposedly threatened to let Hitler annex Slovakia first.⁹⁷

Tiso, of course, did not stand alone in this fight. The radicals were backed by the guard, the German embassy, *Volksdeutsche* activists, and disgruntled Protestants. Tiso had considerable popular support plus the party, the moderate ministers, the parliament, and the *Nástupists*.⁹⁸ He could also count on Catholic churchmen. In September, he became chairman of the newly founded Slovak Catholic Academy, a post thus denied Tuka. Tiso used the occasion to encourage the St. Vojtech Society to keep up the good fight for instilling “eternal” values in the nation.⁹⁹ The society soon began publishing *Catholic News*, a weekly that turned into a thorn in the guard’s side.¹⁰⁰ Tiso’s relationship with the Slovak bishops, meanwhile, was cozy, as he served as their point man in conflicts with the state. In the fall, he also attended several priests’ councils, during which he rallied his brethren while calming fears over the direction of the state and his cooperation with Tuka.¹⁰¹

“Every party member must be active,” Tiso proclaimed in August 1940.¹⁰² He thus mobilized the party, his main weapon in the power struggle. The secretariat launched an organizational bulletin, to which he always contributed a lead article. Branch assemblies became a regular feature of party life, forcing members to set goals for their communities.¹⁰³ Tiso rebuilt party cadres, naming around two thousand new branch chairmen.¹⁰⁴ He also mobilized women, first within Winter Help, then by expanding their party section, the leadership of which was transferred from Tuka’s wife to Sokol’s. Although Tiso still insisted that women belonged at home, he wanted them spending their free time on things like social work.¹⁰⁵ To party functionaries, he stressed selfless service to the nation and moral rectitude. Their “sharp eyes” should report problems, thus really making the party “the oil in the state apparatus.”¹⁰⁶

Tiso's call for a faster pace in building "Populist Slovakia" was not lip service. He pressured the Ministry of Education, for example, into increasing the course load on university students. There is a "[lack] of *well prepared* intelligentsia," his office complained. "These circumstances do not suit the tempo by which it is now necessary to build the state."¹⁰⁷ Tiso demanded a speed-up from the masses as well. "The new tempo of our life must have substance . . .," he told a harvest festival. "We must perform some worthwhile work in every village."¹⁰⁸ One advantage to keeping everyone busy was that it made it harder to organize opposition. Accordingly, Tiso instructed Ľudák branches to concentrate on local concerns rather than national politics. "Activating [these] organizations was intentional," he told the party presidium, "because he who works does not have time for intrigues."¹⁰⁹

As part of this mobilization, Tiso pushed forward the corporate order. He convened a newly established State Council shortly after Salzburg. Even though relatively powerless, the body had moral standing as "an honor guard" for the nation (Tiso's words). The council also was dominated by moderates more or less hand-picked by him.¹¹⁰ In another step toward the order, the parliament empowered the party to form voluntary workers' associations, the Ľudák presidium creating four such in December. It took Tiso over a year to get them up and running, but by then every working Slovak had to belong to one. The associations were thus disguised estates. Since the Germans had forbade Tiso a corporate order within the state, he simply had shifted it into the party. Although the completed "Slovak Working Community" provided a forum for workers to pressure the regime on issues, the system killed Slovakia's last labor union, run by Christian Socialists. Its replacement was mainly a control and indoctrination mechanism, mounting campaigns such as the Nazi-inspired "Joy through Work."¹¹¹

By late 1940, Tiso had the upper hand on what mattered most to him: the party, political Catholicism, the corporate order, and administrative personnel. Radical attempts to depose him, in contrast, had been inept and lacked Berlin's approval.¹¹² Ribbentrop may have sanctioned destroying political Catholicism in Slovakia and removing moderate ministers, yet he also made it clear to von Killinger (and apparently Tuka) that Tiso was essential for the stability of the state.¹¹³ In another seeming gesture of support, the Germans announced the transfer of the proradical von Killinger. Strengthened, Tiso flexed his muscles. Without consulting either Tuka or von Killinger, he named chairmen to the workers' associations while making Medrický the party's general secretary. Mach, who coveted the last post, was so enraged that he censored press reports on the appointments.¹¹⁴

With the New Year, 1941, the radicals toyed with a coup. Tuka sounded the traditional "on the attack," demanding that Tiso sack at least two ministers and implying that the president needed to go as well.¹¹⁵ A "war" broke out between radical and pro-Tiso papers. A Guardist commander, Jozef Lichardus, was brought to Bratislava to lead an uprising. Čatloš later claimed that Tuka and

von Killinger also tried to enlist him. Whether true or not, the general suddenly tendered his resignation, which led to discussions between Tiso and General Paul von Otto, the head of the German Military Mission in Slovakia. Otto proposed replacing Čatloš with Tuka. The prime minister, meanwhile, announced that he would oversee the Ministry of Interior whilst Mach vacationed in the Tatras—an apparently routine transfer of power to which Tiso agreed. In theory, Tuka now controlled the guard and the police, and could at the very least count on a leadership vacuum in the army. He planned to denounce Tiso's intransigence on national socialist reforms at an upcoming Guardist congress, supposedly then launching a putsch.¹¹⁶ But, as usual with Guardist rebellions, the plot lacked substance. No leading radical except Tuka took an exposed role. Instead, success depended on ambivalent Protestants: Čatloš and the undistinguished Lichardus. The guard's plans thus concentrated more on explaining defeat than ensuring victory.

Tiso easily mastered this amateurish and half-hearted conspiracy. First, he refused to meet Tuka's demands, remaining "stubborn and inflexible."¹¹⁷ Second, he seized the national socialist initiative, delivering high-profile speeches that positioned him as the country's *Vodca*. On 15 January, for instance, he laid out a program for "building Populist Slovakia according to the model [rather than just tempo] of national socialism." He also encouraged Slovaks to denounce as traitors "anyone who undermines the unity of the nation."¹¹⁸ Third, he turned to Čatloš for support. The general resigned when Tiso met with junior officers, ostensibly to investigate a denunciation of Čatloš by a disgruntled subordinate, more likely to gauge the loyalty of the army. Tiso, as well, had gotten wind of "loose talk" by the putschist Lichardus. When confronted with the German proposal to award the army to the radicals, Tiso quickly met with Čatloš, won him over, and transferred temporary control of Mach's ministry to the general.¹¹⁹ Whatever remained of the coup plans dissipated, Tuka using the congress only to unveil a program of Slovak national socialism that plowed little new ground.¹²⁰

The main reason the coup attempt failed, however, was that the Germans opposed it. Even though the SS-dominated German embassy had facilitated the radicals' plot, Hitler and Ribbentrop decisively backed Tiso. The Nazis were overall pragmatic, preferring that conservatives run their Danubian allies. A switch to radical leadership threatened to disrupt war production and to neutralize the propaganda value of the *Schutzstaat* concept. At the same time as the Slovak crisis, for example, Hitler encouraged the conservative Romanian leader Ion Antonescu to suppress that country's fascist paramilitary, the Iron Guard, which the general did during three days of bloody fighting in Bucharest. The Germans similarly had kept the Slovak radicals in check. "Tuka and Mach recognize," reported one German advisor, "that disturbances in Slovakia are not desirable for the *Reich*. . . . The [guard] will hold itself ready . . . for a violent conflict with the Tiso line,

but under no circumstances will it act independently, rather only on the instructions, alternatively, in agreement with the German embassy."¹²¹ Any hopes that the guard had for a go-ahead were delusions. Von Killinger's involvement in putsch plans may even account for his transfer. His successor, Hans Elard Ludin, certainly showed less interest in battling political Catholicism. Arriving in Bratislava midcrisis, he had instructions to keep the Tiso-Tuka-Mach triumvirate in place. Tiso would provide stability and legitimacy. Tuka would provide a "corrective against Tiso's possible infidelities." Mach, who had been kept at a distance from the putsch, would serve as a bridge between the two men. Ludin brought Tiso a strong endorsement from Hitler and Ribbentrop, pressuring the Slovak president only "to demonstrate his unconditional loyalty to the *Reich* and his intentions toward national socialist construction work." To Tuka, Ludin related the disappointing news that Berlin was not lining up with him against Tiso. Karmasin meanwhile was told to get used to the Slovak state.¹²²

Angered by the coup attempt, Tiso tried to bury the radicals by using national socialism against them—in his reported words "driving one nail out with another."¹²³ Tuka had long wanted to concentrate power in his hands by adopting the *Führer* principle. Tiso now threatened to do the same. A party ideologist, Fr. Štefan Polakovič, proposed in *Slovák* to fuse the offices of prime minister, president, and party chairman, creating a *Vodca* that also had legislative powers. Tiso tasked Sokol and Tuka with enacting the change.¹²⁴ At the same time, Tiso went after radicals whom he suspected of involvement in the putsch, such as Murgaš. Tuka not only had to retreat on his demands for changing the constitution but also had to call in Ludin for support.¹²⁵ In the months ahead, "driving one nail out with another" would be Tiso's main tactic against the radicals. Polakovič was put to work repackaging Slovak national socialism as Tiso's "Populist Slovakia," while the party built up his cult as *Vodca*.¹²⁶

The Germans, however, denied Tiso the satisfaction of finishing the radicals off. In February, Ludin bluntly told him that "The *Führer* indeed has already assured him . . . of his trust. But should internal political developments take an unpleasant turn, the *Führer* will doubtlessly revise his view. Above all, he would in no way stand by and watch while Tuka's position was shaken." Tiso also was warned not to flirt with defeatism, to heed Vatican advice, or to embarrass the *Volksdeutsche* (as he recently had done in the press). Tiso responded, as usual, by declaring his "unconditionally positive stance toward the *Reich*" and his distance from anti-German circles. He himself "could prove how mistrustful and even hostile the Vatican is to him." The effectiveness of these words was probably stronger than one might think, as Tiso had made an admirer of Ludin. The German keeper sympathetically described his ward as "disappointed, embittered . . . , insecure," and convinced that Germany had plotted against him.¹²⁷ "Tiso wants to remain [in office]," Ludin reported earlier,

less because he enjoys power than from a sense of responsibility. . . . Whatever his faults may be, he is without doubt the craftiest, most powerful, and most level-headed politician in Slovakia. His love of his people is surely strong and genuine. . . . I do not doubt his sincere adoration for the *Führer* or his sincere intentions to live in close fraternity with the *Reich*. . . . Should Germany lose the war, Tiso would have only two possibilities: Czechoslovak imprisonment or Russian bolshevism. I believe that both would be equally unpleasant for [him].¹²⁸

Tuka, who saw the state and Slovak independence “only as pedestals” for his person, in contrast, made a lasting negative impression on Ludin.¹²⁹

Coming out of the coup crisis, Tiso prioritized social reform again. “We had a social program in the past,” he told party secretaries. “Now we will realize it.”¹³⁰ In part, this shift supported a government campaign to calm worker unrest, strikes having recently broken out.¹³¹ But Tiso’s turn to social politics was also a way to endorse national socialism, as Ludin had requested. In February, Tiso celebrated with the Slovak parliament their state’s accession to the Three-Powers Act. In addition to praising Hitler more than usual, Tiso argued that Slovakia would become a “modern state in the spirit of national socialism”:

Because national bondage always began and was maintained through social bondage, the modern Slovak state, bearing in mind [its desire to] strengthen national independence as much as possible, ranks the all-around social elevation of the Slovak man as one of its most important daily tasks. (*Long-lasting, stormy applause.*)

The cultural, economic, and social gains of modern times should become the property of as wide a section of the people as possible. By doing this, an ideal social average will be realized, which will be the substance for the further healthy development of the unified [nation], in which there will not be substantial social differences, there will not be envy and jealousy, but instead there will be a general and equal affection for the national community.

In other venues, Tiso laid out the vague contours of this “social elevation”: affordable new housing, subsidies for families, greater educational opportunities for men, a cultural center in every village, and a general rise in the quality of life due to “construction work.”¹³²

Enacting this program was not easy. True, Slovakia enjoyed a wartime boom, with employment way up. But Tiso’s economic experts nonetheless reported in mid-1941 that “the living standard of Slovak workers is low. From the outbreak of the war, we could not effectively raise it or that of other sections of the population.”¹³³ The regime’s electrification program left over two-thirds of Slovak communities in the dark. Tight finances frustrated Tiso’s vision for housing, letting the regime produce only 1,500 new units by 1943.¹³⁴ Economic and political

considerations undermined land reform. The regime had aimed to redistribute around 44 percent of Slovakia's land; yet, by the time the program collapsed, not even 3 percent had changed hands. Slovak leaders were afraid to parcel up estates, seeing them as essential to economic growth, war production, and political support. Tiso, for his part, pushed to give land to poor farmers, and he reportedly also helped to raise wages for civil servants. As the war expanded, however, he retrenched, telling the nation instead to see work as its own reward.¹³⁵

In the end, the regime's main impact on social policy came via the radical solution of the Jewish Question. By mid-1941, Morávek's Aryanization office had driven out of work thousands of Jewish professionals, employees, and small businessmen. Hundreds of firms were transferred to "Christian hands" through either forced sales at cut-rate prices or the appointment of an administrator. In addition to reshaping the urban middle class dramatically, Aryanization drove the land reform and complemented the efforts to solve the housing crisis. Virtually all of the land redistributed under the Slovak reform had belonged to Jews. Later, as Jews were expelled from cities, their apartments and houses were turned over to Slovaks.¹³⁶

Tiso supported these radical outcomes despite his reputation as a moderate on the Jewish Question. In April 1941, in his first significant statement on the issue in months, he again presented Aryanization as a way to build a Slovak middle class: "Many parents see the ideal [future] for their children . . . as a pencil pusher in an office. . . . But everyone can succeed as a Slovak entrepreneur. It's only necessary to want it. The restructuring of employment goes today at a quick, even revolutionary tempo. So if someone wants to become an entrepreneur, they need to take their place. . . . It will be years before we'll have such favorable conditions for getting ahead as we have today."¹³⁷ Behind the scenes, Tiso sponsored numerous Aryanizers.¹³⁸ He also viewed Jewish property as a public resource for solving social problems. To move a housing project along, for instance, he enthusiastically endorsed compensating expropriated Slovaks with Jewish land.¹³⁹ Tiso supported Aryanization even though it was an economic fiasco, most "Aryanizers" lacking sufficient capital to run their firms.¹⁴⁰ Tiso probably viewed this and related problems as another temporary "vacuum," a "growing pain" on the way to national maturity.

Supporting Aryanization, however, did not mean that Tiso was happy with Morávek's office. Tuka's protégé had a habit of passing over the party's proposed Aryanizers in favor of "undeserving" candidates, including Hungarians and Czechs.¹⁴¹ Tiso reportedly saw him as a soft touch for the *Volksdeutsche*, who had grabbed some plum properties. Morávek's office also was plagued by corruption and nepotism, Morávek himself dispensing choice firms to clients.¹⁴² Tiso often challenged Morávek's decisions and insisted on staff changes within the office. In April 1941, for example, he ordered Morávek to fire an employee that soon after was charged with accepting bribes. A few months later, Tiso aimed higher, unsuccessfully pressuring Tuka to fire Morávek himself.¹⁴³

The German advisor Wisliceny later characterized these conflicts between Tiso, Tuka, and Morávek as squabbles over spoils. According to the German, Tiso jealously oversaw every Aryanization in Bánovce.¹⁴⁴ Was all of the talk about selfless service just for show? To a degree, Tiso did partake in the regime's widespread tendency to use Aryanization to help out friends and relatives. His sister Jozefína and her husband received a lucrative Jewish grocery store in Bratislava. Jozefína and another in-law, Teodor Turček, were also among the regime insiders who profited handsomely from the land reform.¹⁴⁵ Although Tiso may not have directly intervened on behalf of these relatives, he without question sponsored other clients. He helped, for example, a favorite waiter to win a tavern license formerly held by a Jew. In another case, he tried to similarly reward an aspiring artist who "purely from love of the president" had crafted him "a splendid and tasteful leather writing pad."¹⁴⁶ At the same time, there is little evidence that Tiso feathered his own nest. Other than for a few luxuries like a presidential limousine, he had no taste for opulence. Nor did he require a phalanx of servants, limiting himself, for example, to one bodyguard. In contrast, he reportedly donated 500,000 crowns to help educate party functionaries.¹⁴⁷

Rather than robbing the state, Tiso was still focused on building it. The content of the country's schools remained especially important to him. In fall 1940, in a major victory in the overall culture war, he helped to cede to the state's churches over one thousand elementary schools, two-thirds of them to the Catholic Church.¹⁴⁸ Tiso also continued to view the country's schools as a field of struggle for the nationalities. In mid-1941, he pressured both Sivák and Mach to approve funds for the construction of a Roman Catholic high school dormitory in eastern Slovakia, a project designed to strengthen Ľudák influence and Slovak national consciousness in the face of competition from Rusyn and other identities. Tiso so fancied the project that he considered supporting it with his Fund for Building a New Slovakia.¹⁴⁹ Later, he actively rolled back Rusyn education, which he apparently suspected as an instrument of Hungarian foreign policy.¹⁵⁰

In spring 1941, the power struggle with the radicals tipped further in Tiso's favor. His parliamentary allies charged that Murgaš, whom Tiso had wanted to fire for months, had used Slovak radio against the party, supposedly banning on-air references to Tiso as *Vodca*. Murgaš was called before the State Council. Since Tuka and Mach also had issues with him, Mach joined the attack, thus finding "common ground" with Tiso.¹⁵¹ The president neutralized Murgaš with a diplomatic posting to Croatia, a cushy job quickly lost.¹⁵² Tiso's office and the Ministry of Justice meanwhile blocked the radicals from strengthening the Slovak political police. Citing the "militarization of society," Tiso ordered Mach instead to prepare to transfer the gendarme and uniformed police to Čatloš's ministry.¹⁵³

The president was prevented from pressing this advantage by an expansion of the war.¹⁵⁴ In spring 1941, Hitler invaded and dismembered Yugoslavia as a precursor to attacking the Soviet Union. Tiso, of course, did not welcome these

developments, as they heightened the danger of German occupation or of Slovakia becoming a battlefield. Because domestic autonomy was contingent on model loyalty to Germany in foreign affairs, Slovakia would have to support again aggressive war with all of its related costs: worsened international isolation and heavier dependence on Germany.¹⁵⁵ But since Hitler had resolved on war, Tiso had a few compelling reasons to join the march: his desire for Slovakia to prove her national maturity within the European order; his sense that his generation had a mission to carry out in fatal times; and his aversion to bolshevism, which now stood to expand should Germany be defeated.

Tiso probably decided for war well in advance. Under German direction, the Slovak regime had spent months improving communication links in the direction of the Soviet Union. In spring 1941, the work quickened as Slovakia and Germany closed military agreements. Tiso's regime let five German divisions advance to eastern Slovakia, also deploying its own forces in positions and maneuvers. In addition, work began on a bomb shelter at the president's palace.¹⁵⁶ In May, concerned that Hungarian participation in the war would undermine Slovak efforts to revise the Vienna Award, Čatloš informed the Germans that Slovakia would like to take part as well—an offer that most likely represented the position of the Slovak government. By 18 June, Čatloš had detailed information on the upcoming German attack. He later claimed to have warned Tiso, who supposedly refused to believe that war was imminent. If so, the president soon received a clear signal to the contrary. On Saturday the twenty-first, Ludin “in an entirely noncommittal way” approached him and Tuka on the use of the Slovak military “in possible actions.” Ludin's initiative followed Hitler's change-of-mind on leaving Slovaks out of the fight, a flip-flop that replayed the invasion of Poland. Despite this repeat ostensible betrayal, both Tiso and Tuka “unequivocally” agreed to the use of Slovak troops.¹⁵⁷

Germany attacked the Soviet Union the next morning. In Bánovce as usual on Sunday, Tiso quickly learned the news from the radio, while Ludin telephoned midmorning with official notice. If Tiso wanted to keep Slovakia out of the war, he needed to take firm control of the Slovak government, which most sensibly called for an immediate return to Bratislava. Instead, he “went about [his] duties . . . the same as on any other Sunday.”¹⁵⁸ He returned to Bratislava only that evening, whereupon he passively waited for Ludin, Tuka, and Čatloš to contact him. By this time, the Slovak move to war was underway. Most notably, Tuka had severed diplomatic relations with the Soviets while offering the Germans “a suitable contingent” of troops.¹⁵⁹ Tiso's crucial meeting with Tuka and Čatloš occurred the next day. According to Tiso, Tuka announced that “in agreement with the German ambassador, our army advances toward the border.”¹⁶⁰ The prime minister urged Tiso to declare war, following Ludin's advice that Slovakia should do so “before Hungary, as only then can the issue of [Slovaks in Hungary] be solved favorably.”¹⁶¹ Tiso opted instead to send Hitler a telegram: “In this moment, when Slovakia joins with arms in hand the battle of the European community for justice

and the protection of culture, allow me to assure Your Excellency of the loyalty and reliability of the Slovak nation and its government, as also of our unshakeable belief in victory. May God bless our decision.”¹⁶² The vagueness of the statement was again deliberate. As Tiso later explained, “I didn’t want it to look as though we had really declared war.”¹⁶³ He nonetheless ordered Čatloš to mobilize the armed forces, two divisions of which soon invaded the Soviet Union. Tiso later claimed that he sidestepped the parliament out of twin fears: if it resisted, Hitler might occupy Slovakia; if it did not, then Tiso really would have to declare war.¹⁶⁴

The most plausible explanation why Tiso did not rush to Bratislava that Sunday was that he wanted to avoid responsibility for the war. As a priest launching an unprovoked attack on a Slavic neighbor, he once again faced moral and political odium. A handy shield was the increasingly unpopular Tuka, seen by many Slovaks as a German or Hungarian puppet. The premier’s snappy offer of troops was predictable considering that both he and Tiso had already agreed to it in principle. This mobilization “without” Tiso’s consent moreover replayed the supposed mistake of the Polish campaign. By arriving late on the scene in Bratislava, Tiso could point to Tuka’s early decisions on the war as having locked in Slovakia on an invasion course. If memoirs and postwar testimony can be trusted, both Tiso and Čatloš immediately claimed that Tuka “had declared war” on his own, presenting it to them as a “done deed”¹⁶⁵ Such an explanation made it easier to overlook that it was instead Tiso who provided the closest thing to an official declaration of war and who issued the decisive orders for Slovak troops. Rather than pulled into the war by Tuka, Tiso joined it willingly.¹⁶⁶

Since the Salzburg summit, Tiso had defended and even expanded his power. Despite German disapproval, he also had pushed forward his vision of Slovakia. Tiso wanted not to imitate Nazi Germany but to pick and choose her methods and institutions as they suited him. “Driving one nail out with another,” however, meant not just a defense of “our” values but also an accommodation to “theirs.” The shift toward *Vodca* was not merely a cosmetic tactic. It reflected instead a serious erosion of the centrality of the parliament for Slovak sovereignty. In effect, Tiso betrayed his own twenty-year fight to enact the Pittsburgh Agreement. The ease with which he handed the Jewish Question over to the radicals, in contrast, probably displayed less a process of erosion than a lack of original conviction. As with declaring war against the Soviet Union, the handover as well illustrated Tiso’s need to avoid moral responsibility.

The Present That Has Already Become the Past

The war on the Soviet Union fused the fate of the Slovak state with that of Nazi Germany. Tiso now concentrated on demonstrating loyalty to Hitler, on defeat-

ing the radicals, and on keeping Slovaks orderly, productive, and satisfied. These agendas intersected in the solution of the Jewish Question, which culminated in the 1942 deportations. Tiso not only supported but likely also helped to initiate them. He did not decisively turn against them until 1943, and then mainly because of objections from the Slovak hierarchy and “alibiism” in connection to the tide of war. Although Tiso succeeded in retaining German sponsorship against Hungary, in defeating the Slovak radicals, and in keeping Slovakia quiescent, his “realistic” politics of collaboration led to a dead end.

Tiso initially spent little time justifying the June 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union. When he did, he explained it as an unavoidable battle with bolshevism, a prerequisite for the “New Europe” and its “national, religious, and social revival.” On one occasion, he also drew on the experiences of returning soldiers, decrying “the greatest bestiality of which the world has ever heard. Stalin reduced the people to the most horrible slavery. He took away their freedom, their faith. . . . He killed them physically. . . . He destroyed the poor.”¹⁶⁷ News of Bolshevik “bestialities” in fact was common in the situation reports that Tiso read. Slovak troops had encountered, for example, massacres carried out by retreating Soviet forces.¹⁶⁸ Slovakia’s relatively paltry contribution to the invasion, even if a serious effort on the part of the regime, also helped Tiso to skirt the issue of the war. Slovakia, after all, fielded but two divisions, and Slovak soldiers often proved unreliable. By late 1941, the *Wehrmacht* had sent thirty-five thousand of them home, leaving around fifteen thousand in the field. The reduction, however, improved the battle capability of Slovak units, and thus let Slovakia better contribute at the front, an agenda that Tiso shared.¹⁶⁹

Soon after the invasion, the Holocaust in Slovakia reached a turning point. Tiso’s regime embarked on creating ghettos and camps, having already impoverished most of its Jews.¹⁷⁰ The Tuka government also rushed to finish the legal revolution on the Jewish Question before the year-long mandate to solve it by decree expired. In addition to codifying, sharpening, and expanding antisemitic legislation, the radicals and German advisors wanted to adopt a racial basis for defining Jews and to compel them to wear the yellow Star of David. The plan, in short, was to import the Nürnberg Laws. The resulting legislation in Slovakia would be known as the Jewish Code.

Tiso opposed the switch to a racial definition. This fact, however, does not mean that he was immune to modern racism. Although he did not embrace it to the extent of many German theologians, he indeed saw the world in terms of race. Nor did Tiso’s objections to a racial definition mean that he sought to defend Jews. He tended instead to ignore even their most alarming pleas, such as from an old man whom German toughs had beaten bloody on the street.¹⁷¹ The complaints that mattered to Tiso came instead from Vatican chargé d’affaires Burzio and Slovak bishops, who pressed him to protect the few thousand Catholics who stood

to suffer under the code. Even then, Tiso's idea of protection was not what many converts had in mind. For example, when one who had been baptized in 1919 (thus defined by Slovak law as a Jew) petitioned for release from a work camp, Tiso pushed Mach's ministry instead to separate Jews and converts within camps, thus ostensibly sparing converts humiliation and exposure to corruptive Jewish influence.¹⁷² Tiso's intervention against the racial definition nonetheless was his strongest regarding the Jewish Question. In a 20 August letter to Tuka, Tiso challenged the legality of the change, arguing that the 1940 enabling act applied only to legislation concerning Jews as defined at that time. He later claimed to have again threatened to resign, but—as before—this did not seem to mean much.¹⁷³ Three days after the letter, Ludin reported to Berlin: "In terms of foreign politics, perhaps . . . the fact can be emphasized that a state headed by a Catholic clergyman has adopted such a consistent stance [i.e., the code] toward the Jewish Question. I have spoken in detail about this problem with Tiso and have received his full approval."¹⁷⁴ Although Tiso had yielded quickly on the issue, his opposition did produce compromises: plans to dissolve mixed marriages were dropped, while he also won the right to grant exemptions. When the 270-article Jewish Code was issued in September as a decree (thus not requiring his signature), Tiso offered no public criticism of it. He complained instead that the "impudence [of Jews] must be met with the stricter measures."¹⁷⁵ Soon after, additional compromises excluded converts and other groups from such obligations as wearing yellow stars.¹⁷⁶

Tiso's decision to work with the Jewish Code worsened his relationship with the hierarchy. Pius XI had condemned the materialist theory of racism as a dogmatic error, yet the priest Tiso led a state that boasted of the strictest race law in Europe. The Slovak bishops felt compelled to issue a private, if irresolute protest.¹⁷⁷ Vatican officials also considered disciplining Tiso, objecting to a claim of his that "social principles (as interpreted by papal encyclicals) and the principles of national socialism are identical."¹⁷⁸ At the time, Tiso was responding not only to controversy over the Jewish Code but also to resistance from the Christian Socialist labor union over being absorbed into the Slovak corporate order.¹⁷⁹ By "national socialism," Tiso mainly meant the order and a radical equality of duties for every member of the nation, which would then solve the social question as one, big, happy family. But the Vatican heard Tiso equate Catholic and Nazi social doctrines. The pope prepared to strip Tiso of his title as monsignor. With investigation, however, Vatican officials instead accepted Tiso's defense of the speech, perhaps because they had discovered that he had not been a monsignor since 1922. Although they had suspected him of a worse statement than he had made (a pattern), Vatican officials got the essentials right.¹⁸⁰ Tiso continued to imply that Nazism and Catholicism were reconcilable.

Shortly after passage of the Jewish Code, Tiso departed on journeys that brought him into intimate proximity with the planning and reality of genocide. In October, he led a delegation to Hitler's field headquarters in east Prussia. Even though this

summit was mainly a courtesy call, a fateful piece of business took place. During a tea, either Mach or Heinrich Himmler, the head of the SS, raised the possibility of Slovakia deporting Jews to German-occupied Poland. Although Tiso later claimed ignorance of the discussion, he was at the tea.¹⁸¹ Upon returning to Slovakia, Tiso then left again for a week-long tour of Ukraine—his only foreign junket as president other than to the *Reich*. In service of Slovak propaganda, he visited Slovak military graveyards and played tourist at a venerated Orthodox cathedral just hours before it was demolished.¹⁸² He also mixed with his soldiers and locals, gaining firsthand evidence on such Soviet atrocities as the 1932–33 Ukrainian famine. Tiso later claimed that the experience helped to convince him that “the victory of the USSR . . . would mean the end of civilization and Christianity.”¹⁸³ Not surprisingly, the tour also exposed him to Nazi crimes. According to the March Affidavit, Čatloš informed him of “misunderstandings” between the Slovaks and the Germans. “German civil commissars,” Tiso deposed, “wanted to order our soldiers on . . . how they should behave toward civilians. They wanted to use [our troops] for . . . purposes that our soldiers did not consider reconcilable with the laws of war. . . . I then talked about this with Ludin and requested him to announce to Berlin that our soldiers will not accept such instructions.”¹⁸⁴ Although the “purposes” that Tiso referred to here may be obscure, it is clear that his military subordinates had raised concerns over Nazi brutality. The most extreme such example was the extermination of Ukraine’s Jews. On 9 August, for instance, SS and army units in Zhitomir “transformed the public hanging of two Jews into a festive spectacle that was followed by the execution of over 400 Jewish men.”¹⁸⁵ Slovak soldiers knew about such killings; in early 1942, they would even serve as guards on a similar action.¹⁸⁶ In October 1941, Zhitomir became a Slovak garrison headquarters and thus a major tour stop for Tiso. Even if he did not learn at this time of the massacres from his soldiers or locals, both Čatloš and General Jozef Turanec later testified that they had reported mass killings to him by February 1942.¹⁸⁷

After these trips, Tiso seemed to radicalize. In speeches, he noted his horrific impressions of the “Bolshevik paradise” that a “Jewish leadership” had created.¹⁸⁸ He called in an interview for “excising” bolshevism from Europe’s body. He also defended his state’s “rigorous” (racial) approach to the Jewish Question as reconcilable with Christianity, pointing out that love of nation required “combat[ing] all parasites of the national organism.”¹⁸⁹ To Catholic students, he spoke as though something was about to happen that would require new values to comprehend:

We need to understand our age and to love it, not only for the ways that it has gone astray, but indeed in these very ways. . . . There is no question that we find ourselves at the painful beginning of a new world era, and therefore we cannot judge it only according to the past. We must have our eyes fixed on the newborn. The tragic fate of the Church . . . is that yesterday’s Christians judge today according to yesterday’s standards.

. . . Therefore, the Church has to abandon the present, which has already become the past. And it's strange that people [today do not] notice that God's Providence directs the spirit of the Church. . . . It's useless to worry . . . , because everything is guided by God's will.¹⁹⁰

To give Tiso more reason to radicalize, the war expanded again, bringing Slovakia into hostilities with the United States and Great Britain. Tiso later disowned this step as another of Tuka's "done deeds."¹⁹¹ At the time, Tuka indeed bragged that, within minutes of hearing Hitler's declaration of war on the United States, he had fired off a telegram to Berlin making Slovakia the first German ally to join the struggle.¹⁹² Tuka's "confession" aside, Tiso probably had exploited the prime minister's character again to avoid responsibility. Between Pearl Harbor and the German declaration of war, Tiso had several days to coordinate with Tuka and Axis representatives over Slovakia's obligations according to the Three-Powers Pact. Yet, when the moment of truth arrived, the president was out of town again (this time in Javorina, an estate reclaimed from Poland). On 12 December, Tiso apparently consulted with Tuka by telephone on issuing a declaration of war, which was reported in the media as Tiso's decision. Tiso signed the document a few days later, bypassing parliament as before.¹⁹³ Except for its symbolic importance, the declaration of war otherwise had little significance.

"I and the state president simply live in two different worlds, but avoid a conflict [as we] do not want to fight it out now," Tuka confided to Ribbentrop in late 1941.¹⁹⁴ In reality, Tiso was bearing down on his rival, as the president's power and influence grew. That fall, for example, the regime amended the constitution so that Tiso could name eighteen new MPs. The State Council wanted the right to nominate them, but Tiso simply said no. "As one of the most dignified institutions of the state," a council member concluded, "we cannot come into conflict with the president."¹⁹⁵ Tiso meanwhile attacked Tuka through his deputy Morávek. A devastating party report laid bare the Aryanization scandals, while Tiso's office apparently floated a bill to transfer Morávek's department to Medrický's Ministry of Economy. In response, Tuka surrendered the department to an independent investigation, which Tiso then helped to drive forward.¹⁹⁶

Indeed, rather than living in different worlds, Tiso and Tuka still interacted closely. On 7 January 1942, for instance, Tiso treated foreign diplomats in Bratislava to a palace lunch. The new Hungarian ambassador, Lajos Kuhl de Boroshát, shared a table with him, Tuka, and Ludin. Tiso remarked that "The Jews have begun to act arrogantly again. . . . They throw all sorts of big parties, scandalizing the Slovak common people. 'So it seems,' he said, 'that the measures so far taken were not effective enough.'"¹⁹⁷ Tuka chimed in that Czechoslovak broadcasts promising restitution had emboldened the Jews. The month before, not incidentally, the Slovak government had agreed to the deportation of their Jewish

citizens from the *Reich* and the Protectorate. The Slovak negotiators (both moderates) had pushed for and received guarantees that these Jews would not return to Slovakia and that their property would fall to the Slovak state.¹⁹⁸

A few days after the reception, Tiso hosted a week-long retreat in Javorina for the Slovak leadership. In the past, Tuka had begged off similar invitations. But this time he felt compelled to attend.¹⁹⁹ The retreat was held in strict isolation, a veil thickened by rumors apparently leaked for this purpose by the regime. Two of these rumors later were confirmed in part. First, the Slovaks reportedly feared that Ribbentrop was selling them out to the Hungarians at a time when the best Slovak forces were in Ukraine. Second, Tiso supposedly resigned for half a day rather than give the Germans more troops.²⁰⁰ The Slovaks in fact had shifted their focus from fighting the present war to preparing for a postwar conflict with Hungary.²⁰¹ They also were indeed concerned about conserving manpower. Just three days after the retreat ended, the Slovak government turned down a *Reich* request for twenty thousand more workers.²⁰²

Tuka and the German advisor Wisliceny meanwhile negotiated the deportation of Jews from Slovakia. The premier announced the decision at a 3 March ministerial council. Soon after, he reported to the State Council that “The Jewish Question should be solved by gradual deportation . . . to the district of Ukraine. . . . By leaving . . . our state, the Jews will stop to be [Slovak] citizens. . . . The Slovak Republic is responsible to hand over 500 [*Reichsmarks*] with every Jew. The deportation action . . . will begin in March and end perhaps in August 1942. . . . From our side, [it was] stipulated that baptized Jews would be located in . . . separate communities . . . , where they will have their priests and churches.”²⁰³

According to numerous accounts, Tuka thus committed his most infamous “done deed.”²⁰⁴ But the ease with which the Slovak government and Tiso accepted it suggests that the claim is another cover story of sorts. Tuka justified the deportations as a substitute work contingent for Germany. “When Tuka presented the issue thus,” Minister Stano later deposed, “. . . and no one could imagine that the Jews would be destroyed . . . , the government raised no principled objections.”²⁰⁵ In the March Affidavit, Tiso similarly claimed that “at the beginning of 1942, I was informed by government actors that, instead of Slovak workers, they had offered the *Reich* Jewish workers. I agreed with this, and I said that at least by this method, their work contributions will be accounted in our favor, and thus we could more easily resist the raising of the number of Slovak workers in Germany and the size of military contingents.”²⁰⁶ Tiso probably signaled this consent before Tuka’s announcement. To Martin Sokol, Minister Medrický reportedly claimed that Tuka had also announced that Tiso already agreed with the deportations. When Sokol sought confirmation from Tiso, however, the president denied it.²⁰⁷ Rather than a case of lying or misinformation, this discrepancy is best explained as deliberate miscommunication on Tiso’s part. In Tuka’s postwar trial, Tiso described his

consent as “I was inclined to deport the Jews.”²⁰⁸ He favored such ambiguity (as also the “done deed”) when he wanted to take an action without bearing responsibility for it. One can easily imagine him expressing such an “inclination” one-on-one to Tuka at the confidential Javorina retreat. Cutting back on manpower contributions to the *Reich*, after all, was apparently a topic during the retreat and also one of Tiso’s stated reasons for supporting the deportations. In contrast, it is harder to imagine how Tuka could have arranged the deportations without Tiso’s knowledge and against his will.

Although not to the extent later claimed, the deportations immediately drew criticism from Slovak moderates. A member of the State Council, for instance, argued against the plan, pointing out the economic, moral, and legal problems that it would cause. But, as Mach summed up the resulting debate, “every [council] member who has spoken on this issue has said that we should get rid of Jews, just in such a way that we will be able to hold up before history. [That is to say, we should] act according to natural law.”²⁰⁹ Although the council sanctioned the deportations, it asked that “important economic interests” be considered. Such pressures helped to expand a system of exemptions for converts and “economically important” Jews.²¹⁰

The deportations began on 25 March 1942. Quickly claiming six thousand young Jews, the action was then reorganized as “family transports.” In addition to ostensibly honoring natural law by not tearing apart families, the shift solved the problem of providing for the aged and very young in the absence of “work-capable” Jews. Mach’s ministry, the Hlinka Guard, and Karmasin’s *Völkische* mainly carried out the action. The moderate Stano’s ministry, however, supplied the trains.²¹¹ As the “transports” proceeded, even state actors recognized their brutality. According to a June situation report that Tiso read but did not respond to, “The Slovak nation was never a friend of Jews, but it is for the solution of the Jewish Question by humane and mainly Christian methods, and it condemns extreme swings in solving this question. . . . [During the deportations here], several terrible scenes occurred, as crying mothers with small children had to leave their homes, and sixty-to-seventy-year-old people had to march to the concentration centers with knapsacks on their backs.”²¹² There is little evidence that Tiso paid the deportations similar attention. On the day that they began, for example, he was unusually invested in a fight over an unrelated, trivial-in-comparison issue: a bill proposing Good Friday as a state holiday. Tiso vetoed the bill for a second time, complaining that Slovaks already had too many free days. Since Good Friday was known in Slovakia as a Lutheran holiday, Protestants suspected that the rub was really Catholicism. Tiso, after all, had also attempted to coerce them into renouncing divorce.²¹³

For Tiso, the deportations mainly mattered in relation to his fight with Tuka, which had heated up again in mid-March. Before the party leadership, Tiso

implicitly denounced Tuka as a traitor, blaming him for the recent defection to Hungary of Major Anton Snaczky, a codefendant in Tuka's 1929 trial. (Tiso helped the defection along by getting Snaczky recalled from a cushy Rome post that Tuka had secured him.)²¹⁴ Tiso and Tuka also clashed over the Jewish Question, with Tiso insisting that it must be solved without violating natural law. In the view of the Hungarian ambassador Kuhl, both conflicts mainly "served as pretences" for bringing the power struggle to a head.²¹⁵ In April, Ludin advised Berlin to let the now tottering prime minister fall. Tiso was stronger, the rivalry got in the way of more important things, and German restraint would show that Slovak sovereignty was not a farce. Ribbentrop chose instead to enforce the status quo.²¹⁶ Yet Tiso suffered merely a setback. According to Kuhl, the German intervention rebounded negatively on Tuka and Ludin, letting Tiso "emerge from the battle strengthened."²¹⁷

Although a desire for German backing no doubt influenced Tiso, German pressure otherwise does not explain his support for the deportations. First, unlike on retaining Tuka, there is no evidence that the Germans directly pushed the president on the issue. Ludin's report on Tiso's agreement to the "family" transports stressed instead a lack of pressure (albeit in reference to the Slovak government).²¹⁸ Second, there is also little evidence of the Germans *indirectly* pressuring Tiso or of him paying them heed. An arguably blatant such example was a speech that Ludin delivered in east Slovakia right after the start of the deportations. Exceptionally, the ambassador threatened Tiso's position: "I consider it out of the question that one would build here a *Führer* state only to place it in the hands of priests. . . . The *Reich* doesn't care [who] heads the state—Mr. X or Mr. Y—[just so long] as there is no doubt about their friendliness to the *Reich*."²¹⁹ Although Ludin claimed that he aimed only to discipline Tiso on political Catholicism and the rivalry with Tuka, the timing implied a warning on the deportations.²²⁰ How intimidated Tiso was can be judged by a simultaneous conflict over education. On the day of the speech, Minister Sivák refused a *Reich* request to establish schools in Slovakia. Ludin threatened in response to back out of a German-Slovak cultural agreement. When a Slovak Foreign Ministry official asked Tiso to mediate, he refused: "Without [Sivák's] agreement, he would not get involved in the thing, especially not now, after . . . Ludin's speech in the east."²²¹ If the issue was something Tiso deeply cared about, such as schools, threats made him less rather than more willing to serve German interests.²²²

Tiso also resisted substantial pressure to intervene on *behalf* of Jews. Armin Frieder, the head rabbi in Slovakia, handed him a memorandum equating the deportations with "the physical destruction of the Jews in Slovakia." "One would think," Frieder wrote, "that words that come from the heart could also penetrate the heart. But it was not the case."²²³ Another petitioner repeatedly begged Tiso to save the Jews from "a ready-made slaughterhouse." Tiso forwarded three of the

pleas to Mach with no instructions—the lowest form of presidential intervention and the same response made to a request to deport Jews.²²⁴ Bishop Kmeřko claimed to have confronted Tiso with reliable reports about the genocide in Ukraine, also asking him, “‘How can the government allow [the deportations], when it is said that they carry the [Jews] off to their death?’ . . . [Tiso] answered me with something that I could not fully accept: ‘It’s enough for me that I have assurances from the Germans that they treat [the Jews] humanely, that they are used there as workers. For if Slovaks can go to Germany to work, why can’t the [Jews] do the same?’”²²⁵ According to the SS security service, the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD), Burzio (who had received Slovak reports on the genocide in Ukraine since October 1941) even threatened Tiso with interdict. Undersecretary of State Msgr. Domenico Tardini summed up the Vatican’s frustration in a note: “Everyone understands that the Holy See cannot stop Hitler. But who can understand that it does not know how to rein in a priest?”²²⁶

Tiso responded to such pressures with “alibiism” and half-measures. The SD reported that when Mach (who supposedly wanted to lock up intervening bishops) told Tiso that he was intent on carrying through the deportations, Tiso asked Mach “not to report to him about the matter, as he did not want to know about these things. But Tiso raised for the time being no objection against [the deportations]. Being of an autocratic nature, he rejected the bishops’ offensive, [refusing to] yield from the outset when the struggle is conducted thus.”²²⁷ Although Adolf Eichmann’s 1980 “memoir” is a problematic source, its account of a secret meeting between Eichmann and Tiso (probably in April or May 1942) similarly rings true:

[Tiso] emphasized that he was not exactly delighted that he now had to hand over . . . Jews with Slovak citizenship. He made it clear that he [understood] these measures were necessary, but he asked that they be carried through humanely. . . . Above all, he wanted a binding commitment from me that Catholic Jews would stay untouched. . . . I remember how I was surprised . . . with his preparedness to give us the remaining Jews, for Tiso was in a cassock when I met him. At that time, I thought to myself that he was . . . more a national politician than a priest.²²⁸

Tiso’s concern mainly for converts and “useful” Jews is evident in the exemptions from the Jewish Code that he granted. The Slovak president was bombarded by applications for these. With the deportations, the State Council added more pressure by asking him to choose quickly, so local authorities would know which Jews to take.²²⁹ Tiso sped up his methods mainly for rejecting applicants. Although he sometimes granted exemptions for free, he usually charged hefty fees, the money apparently going only to the state treasury.²³⁰ He also sometimes asked government ministries to grant exemptions, perhaps thus limiting his exposure to charges of being soft on Jews.²³¹ By late October 1942, Tiso had granted around

650 exemptions. These dispensations, which also applied to some family members, protected around 1,000 legally defined Jews and a few hundred “half-Jews.” The recipients tended to be longtime converts or Christians from birth, “irreplaceable” individuals (such as engineers), spouses married to Christians, or Jews that had assimilated to Slovak culture. This pattern meant that most of the exempted came from either Bratislava or northern Slovakia. Only a few dozen were from Slovakia’s easternmost, most heavily Jewish county. Poor, rural, and Orthodox, the Jews here were the most vulnerable to deportation. Most of Tiso’s exempted, in contrast, already held other dispensations. The presidential exemption thus was less about saving lives than protecting the material interests of the state, claiming Christian legitimacy, and rewarding “good” Jews.

Tiso also helped to establish a broader system of exemptions, most notably through a May 1942 constitutional law. Although it sanctioned the deportations and tightened exemptions, the measure also gave the latter a stronger legal basis. The legislation was a compromise between the radicals’ plan to deport all Jews and the moderates’ desire to move more slowly in the interests of the economy and converts. Some moderates, such as Sivák, also sincerely desired to protect Jews as a whole.²³² In the most irrefutable example of his complicity in the deportations—but a mark, as well, of his commitment to the policy of exemptions—Tiso signed the law.

In the meantime, the president kept after the radicals. He had already out-organized them, expanding the party to 300,000 members as the guard declined to 56,000.²³³ Although he had failed to sack Tuka, Tiso now succeeded with other radicals, including Morávek.²³⁴ The president also ordered a review of guard membership, creating “enormous work” for an organization already taxed with deportation duties.²³⁵ Ludin felt compelled to prop up the radicals again, giving an “encouraging speech” at the opening of a Guardist officers’ school. To his Hungarian counterpart Kuhl, Ludin reportedly opined that Tiso “would do better to try to win over the guard rather than to cripple [it].” Tiso “followed . . . Ludin’s advice and counsel.”²³⁶ In late July, as Tuka toured the eastern front, Tiso visited the officers’ school. Appealing as usual for national unity, he assured the guard of its right to exist but again limited its role to civil defense. At the same time, he vowed to “destroy . . . whatever damages the nation.”²³⁷

In the same period, the deportations slacked off. Ludin reported in June that “the process of [the] evacuation of Jews from Slovakia is presently at a standstill. Due to the influence of the Church and the corruption of individual officials, approximately 35,000 Jews were given special identification papers. On these grounds, they are not to be evacuated.”²³⁸ In fact, only around 23,000 people had exemptions. But Ludin was right overall: the regime was running out of Jews that it could agree on to deport, the number falling throughout June and July. Tuka asked Berlin for support against Tiso, who was then warned that the exemptions

had raised eyebrows in Germany.²³⁹ The intervention, however, had little impact. In August, the Slovaks deported no Jews. Yet Mach wanted to deport 18,000 more (including converts) by 15 September, a date agreed on with Berlin for finishing the action.²⁴⁰

Two weeks after appearing at the officers' school, Tiso delivered his infamous speech in Holíč (see the Introduction to this book), during which he argued that divine law sanctioned "ridding" Slovakia of the Jews. Lest there be any doubt, he *was* talking about the stalled deportations:

We will continue to make order. Certainly we will preserve human and legal rules, and we will maintain the measure of justice. But what belongs to the Slovak nation, we will not yield it to anyone! And if you think this is something new . . . , you are mistaken. . . . Let's not forget that [old] slogan: "Jews to Birobidzhan". . . . Well, we won't send them [there], as that's a little bit too far. Before the world war, the English promised the Jews everything just to get some money out of them. They promised them an independent state, and yet [the Jews] didn't get anything. And now, you see, Hitler doesn't ask or get anything from the Jews, and yet he gives to them, he gives them a state!²⁴¹

The speech, which answered German displeasure over the exemptions, hit its mark. "It is interesting," Hitler noted, "how this little Catholic priest—Tiso—is sending us the Jews!"²⁴² But Tiso also had other, probably more important motives for his comments. The swipe at Sidor's old Birobidzhan plan suggests one: to compete with radical rivals. Tiso's implicit promise to continue the deportations played to the guard, which he wanted to win over. Again, he hit his mark. "[Now] no one has the right . . . to doubt about the justness of deporting Jews," the daily *Gardista* enthused.²⁴³ From the viewpoint of Kuhl's embassy, Tiso's insistence on the Christianity of Slovak antisemitic policy was "an open apologia addressed to the Vatican," two high-ranking officials of which were visiting Slovakia.²⁴⁴ The speech was also a sermon from the parish priest of Slovakia. "I had circulated a lot among the people," Tiso later explained, "and I heard how they talked especially about Aryanization, that it was the same as in 1918, when [the Jews] were robbed."²⁴⁵ The speech corrected this error.

By the time of the Holíč speech, the Slovak regime held accurate reports on the fate of the deportees. Tiso himself allegedly received such letters from a Polish priest and from a Slovakian deportee who had slipped his captors.²⁴⁶ These reports led the government to propose sending a delegation to check on the Jews, a request that Eichmann refused, as virtually all of them were dead. A Bratislava *Volkssdeutsche* reporter instead was allowed to tour and write about some "Potemkin vil-lages."²⁴⁷ Although Tiso supported sending the fact-finding mission, he otherwise refused to act on reports of extermination, claiming that he did not believe them.²⁴⁸

That fall, Tiso had himself declared party *Vodca* at a “political school” in Sliac, the scene of his greatest triumph as minister of health. In a lecture, he “state[d] with satisfaction that, despite all of the attempts to liquidate the party, we not only preserved it but also advanced it.” Yet he worried that the Ľudáks’ moral capital might dissipate as the regime strayed from such key values as unity, service to the nation, and humility. Another pressing theme was party-state relations. “It was a thing of great self-denial,” he noted, “for the party to leave executive power in the hands of those who performed . . . often directly against [the party’s] express instructions.” It was time for the party to return “political idealism” to the state: “to hold high the idea of Slovak nationalism, ‘for God, for Nation’; to educate people to the service of ideas; to honorably and honestly increase property, the economy, and the social level to the benefit of the nation.”²⁴⁹ On the school’s last day, Martin Sokol introduced a bill adopting the *Führer* principle in the party, a law from 22 October. According to subsequent party instructions: “(1) The will of the *Vodca* is an order, (2) The *Vodca* is always right.”²⁵⁰

Just before passage of the *Vodca* law, Slovakia deported its last Jews for 1942. After reviewing exemptions in September, the Slovaks sent the Germans only 2,800 more Jews, for a total of around 58,000 persons. Perhaps 800 of them survived the war.²⁵¹ These numbers did not always represent faceless entities for Tiso, as neighbors and colleagues were among the murdered. One of them, Fülöp Faith, had written admiringly of Tiso’s 1923 electoral victory: “Individual men make not only civic but also national history. Will the chisel of Dr. Tiso shape Nitra’s next period?” Exactly why the deportations ceased is unclear. There is no direct evidence that Tiso’s victory over the radicals brought it about. Nor did he claim credit for it even as he stood trial for the deportations. Yet the timing between the halt and his victory is nonetheless striking. Another conspicuous correlation is that, by then, the Slovak government knew the whereabouts of only around 2,500 unexempted Jews.²⁵² In that sense, the deportations ended because the compromise reached in May 1942 had found stasis. For the time being, the regime had already deported the Jews that it wanted to.

Tiso the *Vodca* drove his victory over the radicals home during the rest of 1942. In November, he appointed Medrický and Stano to directorate seats long vacated by Buday and Ďurčanský. According to Kuhl, Mach felt injured that he had not been chosen instead and resigned as minister of interior. But Tiso “did not want to release him from his obligations, insisting that [Mach] continue to bear responsibility for the messed-up situation he had created.”²⁵³ In solidarity, Tuka also resigned from the directorate, but Tiso happily replaced him with Karol Mederly. Over the next months, Tuka became sidelined by ill health. Several moderates assumed his duties as minister of foreign affairs, Mach taking up the slack in the prime minister’s office. As part of this transition, Mach (and many of his followers) navigated into Tiso’s camp.²⁵⁴

This shift flowed in part on the tide of war. In early 1943, the Slovak regime learned that the Hungarian Second Army had been “entirely destroyed” in a battle on the River Don.²⁵⁵ A Slovak situation report announced that “in general, it’s said that the Germans will lose the war.”²⁵⁶ This report and others recorded a deepening anti-German mood and a resurgence of Czechoslovak and Communist agitation. Slovaks felt that they had sacrificed much for the regime but received little in return. Instead, Aryanization had “not been carried out as it should have,” while Jews supposedly had regained “self-confidence.”²⁵⁷ By the fourth anniversary of the state, Tiso was absorbed again in refuting enemy propaganda and appealing to Slovaks to support the state, the “highest value of the Slovak nation.”²⁵⁸

For Tiso, the bad news on the war meant new insecurities. In February, for instance, he accepted a formal dinner invitation from Kuhl, an unusual step for both of them. Tiso no doubt was interested in gauging Hungarian irredentist intentions and in exploring regional responses to the looming crisis. When arranging the dinner, he expressed his conviction (or perhaps hope) that neither England nor America “seriously desired” a Soviet victory.²⁵⁹ (He likely soon tried to contact the Western Allies, without success.)²⁶⁰ Kuhl did not have a chance to learn more of Tiso’s thinking, as the death of the president’s father days later scuttled the dinner. The ambassador did learn, however, that the Slovak elite once again feared German occupation, a possibility made more plausible by Ludin’s suspiciously long absence from Bratislava.²⁶¹

In the meantime, two new attempts were launched to ethnically purge Slovakia. In the last of his alleged “done deeds,” Tuka announced in early 1943 that he had finally convinced the Germans to let him deport more Czechs to the Protectorate. According to Mach, the agreement prompted “a huge conflict” between Tuka and Tiso, the latter of whom preferred to conserve any remaining bridges to the Czechs.²⁶² Tuka’s plan crashed on the opposition of the moderates.²⁶³ In the other attempted purge, Mach promised in February to rid Slovakia of its remaining twenty thousand Jews: “March will come, April will come, and the transports will go.”²⁶⁴ As with Tuka’s plan to deport Czechs, the announcement mobilized moderates in opposition.

Most significantly, in March 1943, the Slovak bishops condemned deportations in a pastoral letter. The bishops’ previous letter on the topic, published anonymously the year before, mainly had defended sincere converts. Although it allowed that non-Christian Jews “should be dealt with humanely,” it fundamentally justified their deportation with antisemitic arguments.²⁶⁵ In the 1943 letter, in contrast, the bishops wrote: “We must raise our decisive warning against these mass measures, taken without determining the guilt of each individual, that affect our cobelievers and our other cocitizens. . . . We have in mind Holy Scripture: ‘Do not do unto others what you would not have them do unto you.’”²⁶⁶ The bishops equated deportation with collective guilt, which they condemned as violating the state constitution, natural law, and church teachings.

Two weeks later, Tiso secretly met a member of the Hungarian parliament: Ferenc Ronkay. An old acquaintance and a close relative of one of Tiso's best friends, Ronkay had mediated Tiso's 1938 secret talks with the Hungarian government. Ronkay's apparent present mission was to feel out Tiso on working with Budapest to exit the war.²⁶⁷ Ronkay, for example, bluntly raised concerns about a German occupation of Slovakia. Although Tiso also expressed resentments against the Germans, he displayed more bitterness over past treatment from Hungary than interest in working with her. Ronkay, for instance, asked for goodwill gestures, such as sacking Mach over anti-Hungarian propaganda. "Oh, please, Mach!" Tiso reportedly replied. "How can anyone take his speeches seriously?" Rather than wanting to replace him, Tiso was "of the opinion that Mach should eat the soup that he has cooked."²⁶⁸

The most interesting part of the memorandum that Ronkay composed about this meeting, however, dealt with Tiso's attitude toward the Slovak Jews. "What impact," Ronkay asked, "has the deportations . . . had on economic and state life [in Slovakia]?" Tiso replied:

The best possible effect, because I gave industrial and commercial establishments to Slovak tradesmen for 30–40 percent of their original purchase value, and now [these Slovaks] grow rich, they are satisfied, and they uncomplainingly substitute for the Jews. But I recognize that I made one large mistake. I held back around eighteen thousand Jews by virtue of my right as president—mainly doctors, pharmacists, engineers, some industrial and commercial leading men. Now they sabotage the economy so much that it is my most sacred conviction that I must liberate the country of them as soon as possible.²⁶⁹

The Ronkay memorandum is a rare wartime eyewitness account of Tiso secretly discussing the deportations. The chances that Tiso indulged here in lip service for the Germans seem remote, especially since the meeting was to an extent a conspiracy against them. Tiso's frank criticism of Mach suggests that he was not projecting regime unity before the Hungarians. In addition, the quote displays a pattern for Tiso: when his antisemitic policy was criticized as un-Christian, he defended his position as correct. The Slovak bishops had just condemned deportations. Yet, it was Tiso's "most sacred conviction" that he "must free the country of [Jews] as soon as possible." In an even sharper rejection of the bishops' position, Tiso took the unique step of admitting a mistake on the Jewish Question—namely, his exemptions.

The day after meeting Ronkay, Tiso nonetheless mounted his pulpit in Bánovce and personally read the pastoral letter condemning the deportations. He later testified that he did so "to emphasize that I identified with it."²⁷⁰ Why would Tiso make a public demonstration in favor of something that he apparently resented? First, because it was his duty as a priest. Second, because it fit his policy of

deniability concerning the deportations. Third, because he probably realized that further deportations were a lost cause. The reading of the letter (which happened in Latin) did not stir mass action on behalf of Jews. Situation reports recorded far less support for the letter than apathy or even anger at priests.²⁷¹ But the letter did coincide with increased opposition from the Vatican, the bishops, and Slovak moderates against further deportations. Burzio, for instance, delivered a demarche over them, which Tuka angrily rejected. Tiso, in contrast, quickly apologized to Burzio, also sending to the Vatican “certain confidential statements.” A messenger from Sivák, meanwhile, reported that “all ministers” condemned Tuka for his action, declaring “that they considered the intervention to be honorable. . . . The ministerial council immediately decided to stop the deportation of four thousand Jews, for which the minister of interior had already given instructions.”²⁷²

With Hitler, Tiso used the Jewish Question to undermine the Hungarians. The two leaders met in April 1943 again in Salzburg. Hitler expressed to Tiso his satisfaction with the Slovak war effort, also conditionally promising to refit Slovak divisions. Otherwise, the discussion was devoted to complaining about Hungary. Tiso was angry about Hungarian irredentist propaganda. Hitler liked neither the Hungarian prime minister, Miklós Kállay, nor the permissiveness with which Hungary treated its Jews.²⁷³ Just the week before, Hitler had argued over the latter issue with Regent Horthy, who (according to Goebbels) listed “quite valid humanitarian arguments” against “stronger measures.”²⁷⁴ “No battle fatigue rules [our] troops or the Slovak people,” Tiso assured Hitler in contrast. “[This can be] ascribed above all else to the disappearance of the Jews from Slovakia.” When Hitler complained that Jews were fleeing to Hungary, Tiso told a “joke” about “an old Jewish friend of Hitler’s” who, after an endless search for refuge, now lived in Budapest.²⁷⁵ During the interview, Tiso received multiple assurances that Germany would defend Slovakia against Hungarian attack. The attempt to restart the Slovak deportations helped Tiso to achieve this goal both by demonstrating Slovak antisemitic enthusiasm (increasingly in question) and by sending a wave of Slovak Jews fleeing into Hungary.²⁷⁶

But the security that Germany provided Tiso’s state now continually eroded. By mid-1943, the war had clearly turned against the Axis. Allied bombers had been hitting targets within the *Reich* for months.²⁷⁷ Rome was bombed, to the great indignation of Catholics. Allied aircraft devastated Hamburg, incinerating some forty thousand inhabitants in firestorms. Mussolini meanwhile was deposed; in September, Hitler would restore him as a puppet.

Tiso and Mach in the interim gave completely up on deporting Jews. On 24 July, Tiso reportedly told fishing buddies in Velká Bytča that the Slovak Jews would “in the worst case” be put in camps.²⁷⁸ Four days later, in contrast, Pavol Čarnogurský warned Bishop Škrábik that Mach intended to deport five thousand Jews in a surprise operation. “Our consciences,” Čarnogurský wrote, “are already

burdened enough before the entire world by anti-Jewish measures. Now, as the world situation reaches a decisive stage, we cannot let ourselves commit another crime."²⁷⁹ Both Škrábik and Kmeňko appealed to Tiso to stop the deportations, reminding him of the bishops' public position on them, Škrábik also citing "the fear that similar rash measures threaten even the Slovak nation."²⁸⁰ Tiso forwarded Kmeňko's letter to Mach, who then assured the bishop that the alarm was but a scare. Čarnogurský's and the bishops' reasons for opposing renewed deportations also suggest Tiso's. The 1943 pastoral letter limited the president's ability to move deportations forward without violating his obligations as a priest. The "world situation" also made deporting the remaining Jews less and less in Slovak national interests, as Tiso would have defined them. On 10 August, echoing Tiso, Mach announced to his fellow ministers that "there will be no deportations of Jews, but the unsociable Jewish element will be placed in . . . camps."²⁸¹ Until August 1944, Tiso stuck to this position, even when pressured more strongly than ever by the Germans. In December 1943, for example, he promised the special envoy Veessenmayer that he would concentrate all Slovak Jews in camps, an understood step toward deportation.²⁸² At the time, Ludin correctly assumed that Tiso was bluffing, as "the complaints by church circles against a radical solution were binding."²⁸³

During 1943, Tiso also continued striving to keep his nation productive, happy, and out of trouble. In June, he defended moving paydays from Saturday to mid-week. The idea was to keep workers from drinking their wages. He also called for harsh measures against "dissatisfied," lazy Slovaks: "It is an order of the instinct of national self-preservation that the healthy organism of the nation reacts to such carriers of the bacillus of degeneration by excluding them from its body and isolating them in work camps. And really [this method] acts as medicine on them. . . . Work cures, because it returns joy to life."²⁸⁴ In August, Tiso tried to enthuse the population over the memory of Lt. E. Budinský (a casualty of the eastern front around whom the regime tried to build a cult) and by mounting huge celebrations on the anniversary of the 1933 Nitra demonstrations.²⁸⁵ In the fall, Tiso had the party disband the Hlinka Guard's intelligence service, also taking over the guard's headquarters and press organ, *Gardista*. According to the *SD*, "the last bastion of national socialism [in Slovakia] has fallen."²⁸⁶ The German advisor on the Hlinka party, meanwhile, prepared to leave town, having despaired of making an impact. The case epitomized Tiso's success at frustrating the German advisor system.²⁸⁷

The nearly 3 billion crowns that Germany owed Slovakia at the end of 1942 through the clearing-account system, in contrast, illustrated Tiso's failures.²⁸⁸ Chief among these was the war, not only the economic cost of which Tiso had trouble minimizing. Nervous about Hungary, and addicted to using Hungarian irredentism to build legitimacy, he and the regime pressed the Germans to bring Slovak troops home. That fall, German Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel ruled that the Slovak infantry division was no longer battle worthy. It was transferred to Italy

as an engineering unit. The Slovak motorized division, meanwhile, was mauled by Soviet forces, losing more than 2,200 men to captivity. Čatloš wanted to withdraw the division, now changed into infantry, from the eastern front. But the *Wehrmacht* felt otherwise.²⁸⁹

Tiso's main hope for a miraculous exit from his foreign policy cul-de-sac was to realign with the Czechs. In late 1942, his speeches began to claim that the Ludáks had never aimed for independence nor had they excluded any Czechoslovakist who had been willing to work with them.²⁹⁰ In fall 1943, the test balloons that Tiso floated in Beneš's direction became particularly visible: "[If some country] will be a greater and more sincere friend to our independent Slovak state than the German *Reich*, that much more will every citizen of [our] state owe this new country devotion and loyalty."²⁹¹ But Beneš was done dealing with Tiso. Instead, he closed a treaty with the Soviets, seeing them as a better patron for reconstituted Czechoslovakia than the Western Allies, who had failed at Munich. During talks on the treaty, Beneš argued that the leaders of the Slovak state must be punished as war criminals. Tiso, he bluntly added, "must hang."²⁹² In addition to retribution against the Ludáks, Beneš's program called for the inclusion of the Communists in the postwar government. He also continued to endorse a unitary Czechoslovak nation while opposing Slovak autonomy.²⁹³

Compared to Beneš, the Hungarians were more open to building a new relationship with Tiso. But his distrust of them and his rivalry with Tuka, among other things, interfered. In fall 1943, for instance, the Hungarian prime minister, Kállay, dispatched another unofficial envoy, Gábor Baross, to contact both Slovak leaders. Baross met with Tuka but was refused admission to Tiso's palace. The Slovak police soon after ordered the emissary out of the country. Kuhl speculated that Tiso most likely ordered the expulsion, as Baross had dared to see Tuka first. But "knowing the local situation," Kuhl continued, "one cannot exclude the possibility that Tuka ordered [the expulsion], as he knew Baross wanted to see Tiso."²⁹⁴ Kuhl's embassy noted that, after Italy's fall 1943 surrender, Tiso was more disposed to collaborate with Kállay's government, reportedly even rejecting a German demand for possible common action against Hungary. Yet nothing concrete ever developed, as Tiso was "invariably distrustful toward Hungary."²⁹⁵ As Tiso told Hitler during their last meeting (in May 1944), "Horthy tried to make a connection. . . . But [I] replied that one must first determine the borders between [us]."²⁹⁶ The Vienna Award worked its poison on Tiso in other ways as well. After Italy's surrender, Germany let Croatia reclaim territory formally annexed by her neighbor. Should Hungary also switch sides, Slovakia could hope for a similar windfall. But when Hungarian attempts to exit the war did prompt German occupation in March 1944, no revision of the Slovak border ensued.²⁹⁷

Having no realistic political alternative, Tiso returned to accenting the idealistic. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the party's refounding, he celebrated its

history of following only “divine, unchangeable, and eternal” principles.²⁹⁸ Permanent peace, he argued, could come only from “justice, love, mercifulness, and acknowledging the rights of even the least important [person].”²⁹⁹ As before, he tirelessly pursued “construction work,” national unity, and a stronger national identity. According to Medrický’s memoirs, he hoped to make it harder for Beneš to roll back Slovak nationalism and autonomy later: “Our best calling card for the postwar period,” Tiso claimed, “should be an orderly economy, social progress (removing unemployment, extra pay for the children of workers, building flats for working people, raising wages, and so on), [and a record of] executing state power during a time of war and even during the arrest and condemnation of many people for antistate actions without carrying out a single death penalty.”³⁰⁰ At times, Tiso retreated to the role of a small-town social activist. During a 1943 “Health Week,” for example, he urged members of a women’s club to “clip your nails and keep your fingers clean,” also advising them, “don’t be afraid of water.”³⁰¹

On the fifth anniversary of the state, Tiso and his colleagues tallied their achievements. Above all, they had built a Slovak state, an unprecedented accomplishment for the nation. Spiritually, they had raised Slovak self-confidence and deepened national consciousness, also letting Catholicism flourish. Materially, the economy had done fairly well, unemployment virtually disappearing among Slovaks. They now occupied more prized positions and held more property, while foreigners had been purged. “For the first time in [our] history,” Medrický wrote, “we see a sturdy, healthy, and economically strong middle class forming within the Slovak nation.”³⁰² The regime also could boast of creating cultural and educational institutions, such as the Slovak Academy of Sciences. Much of Tiso’s “construction work” emerged as a recitation of numbers: 132 new “houses of culture,” 9,500 model manure and urine dumps, 45,000 packages sent to frontline Slovak soldiers.³⁰³ This Ľudák defense of the state was reasonable, so long as one accepted that the “gains” were worth the costs. Medrický, for instance, openly linked the construction of the Slovak middle class with the destruction of the Jewish commercial class.

But what neither Tiso nor the regime could reasonably claim was that things would get better. The economy had been in trouble since 1943.³⁰⁴ Popular support for the Ľudáks had steadily declined. The regime could find no foreign policy alternative to German domination. Bratislava would soon suffer aerial bombardment. The Slovak resistance was preparing to revolt.

Moral Orders

Between 1939 and 1944, Jozef Tiso changed from a Catholic, Slovak statesman of the New Europe into a discredited Nazi collaborator facing retribution. The most important cause for this change was Germany’s looming defeat. As one of Hitler’s

most loyal allies, Tiso could not hope to retain power. Beneš's government, for one, was set on punishing him as a traitor. Less decisive for this outcome was Tiso's role in the destruction of the Slovak Jews. But the framework for making this a crime against humanity for which Tiso would answer was in place. As a Vatican diplomat in Washington, DC, reported in early 1944, "The [U.S.] government declares that . . . it will remember well both good and bad treatment of Jews by Tiso."³⁰⁵ Yet even though how people perceived Tiso had changed drastically, he had not changed much at all. His core convictions remained as before. He was convinced of the necessity of national unity and the rightness of Ľudák hegemony. He was committed to Catholic revival and returning God to the public sphere. He also saw it as his job to defend national sovereignty; to preserve peace, order, and authority at home; and to mobilize every Slovak in a selfless march forward.

In the first nine months of his presidency, Tiso came as close as he ever got to his ideal regime. This Slovak government tried to wriggle out of the German orbit and to suppress domestic right radicalism. At the time, Tiso seemed to be more interested in the possibilities of economic growth than the satisfactions of ethnic cleansing. Despite his ingrained antibolshevism, he built bridges to the Soviet Union. Even though he feared upsetting the Germans, he resisted their economic and military demands. It is interesting that 1939–40 was also a time during which Tiso most shared power with other institutions of the Slovak state.

The key question for collaborators, at least in terms of desired results, is with whom do you collaborate and when? Nazi Germany and the Second World War were not good answers for Tiso. The relationship with Hitler secured the state against Hungarian irredentism and provided a more powerful economic patron than the Czechs. But the cost was high. Germany was more interested in exploiting Slovakia than in investing in her. Tiso had to follow Hitler into wars, a constant frustration for the priest's desire to quit revolutionary time. The Germans also used Slovak radicals against Tiso just as they had used him against the Czechs.

How Tiso contested the post-Salzburg program best illustrates the extent of his power. When he stubbornly refused to change government ministers, for example, both the Germans and the radicals had to accept it. Despite von Killinger's involvement in the 1941 coup plot, neither Hitler nor Ribbentrop had an interest in replacing Tiso. The Slovak president was simply too important for his state's legitimacy and stability. The radicals, in turn, never had a viable plan for overthrowing him nor the political will to carry it through. Tiso was always stronger than they, more energetic, and a better tactician. He was most resourceful at getting done what he wanted. For instance, when Tuka named a sadist, Michal Lokšík, as the Slovak head of security, Tiso had Čatloš refuse to discharge him from the army, thus blocking the appointment.³⁰⁶ Yet there was also much that Tiso could not do. He had to fight long and hard to fire Morávek, while Ribbentrop forbade Tiso twice from sacking Tuka. If Tiso had been a more courageous politician, he might have

called Ribbentrop's bluff. It is doubtful that Hitler would have replaced the president or occupied Slovakia in response. But the *Führer* surely would have exacted other punishments by playing the Hungarians against the Slovaks. Occupation, moreover, was nothing to trifle with. A 1941 Serbian revolt inspired Hitler to destroy Yugoslavia. Is it surprising that Tiso erred on the side of caution?

It is harder to fathom how Tiso came to support the deportation of the Slovak Jews. Between 1920 and 1938, after all, he had been one of the least antisemitic *Ludák* politicians. This contrast highlights the main reason why Tiso became involved in mass murder: Hitler had created a Europe in which extermination was not only possible but also a priority. A second reason was Tiso's predisposition for ethnic cleansing. Within democratic Czechoslovakia, he had easily abandoned his antisemitic program of 1918–19. But within New Europe, he had just as easily tacked again. Even though he had learned to disassociate himself from antisemitism, ideologically he still saw Jews as dangerous during times of revolution. Their subordination to Slovaks was a precondition for making the Slovak "the master of the house." Tiso's social politics also had an inertia that led toward genocide. Raising up peasants into middle-class townsmen translated into replacing Jews with Slovaks. The pragmatist Tiso could find ever more reasons after 1938 why persecuting Jews was in the interests of his state, especially as it competed with Hungary for German favor. Catholic religious certainties on the damaging and demoralizing effect of Jews on Christian society helped Tiso to justify his actions. Yet criticism over the conflict between Catholic teachings, especially on converts, and the Slovak state's antisemitic program were among the most important causes for Tiso to abandon the deportations. In that sense, Pius XII and Bishop Kmeňko clearly could have impelled their priest to turn against the expulsions earlier. Although Tiso was willing to defy the wishes of his ecclesial superiors, he would not have defied explicit orders on matters of faith. Whether such a move would have saved the lives of Jews or made their situation worse, however, is an open question.

Tiso's complicity in the destruction of Slovak Jewry, in contrast, is irrefutable. It is true that his public position was for a "gradualist" solution to the Jewish Question that, by honoring natural and divine law, ensured Jews humane treatment according to Christian principles. Even if this program was possible, which I doubt, he demonstrated little commitment to it. When he saw an interest in helping the Hlinka Guard to despoil Mr. G. in 1940, Tiso did so despite an erudite understanding of natural rights to property. Within months, Tiso was routinely participating in the seizing and redistribution of Jewish assets. After the Salzburg summit, the president resigned his rights to defend Jews, leaving them to the mercy of the radicals. He did not reclaim any of these rights until 1941, when the switch to a racial definition of Jews threatened his Christian legitimacy. Even then, he used his power mainly (and often redundantly) to protect converts and Jews who were useful to the state. In 1942, by his own admission, he repeatedly gave permission

for the deportations, again objecting only to the expulsion of converts and “useful” Jews. At the same time, he resisted considerable pressure to intervene against the deportations. He instead sanctioned them through law and public statement. Tiso took these steps despite mounting evidence on the mass murder of Jews. Yet stopping or at least subverting the deportations, if he had chosen to oppose them as he did other German demands, was within his power. The trains, after all, were supplied by a ministry controlled not by a radical or the Germans but by his own man: Stano.

In addition, Tiso probably helped to initiate the deportations. He was present at the first German-Slovak discussion on them. Soon after, he likely received firsthand evidence on the slaughter of Jews in Ukraine. Just before negotiation on the deportations apparently began, he argued that Catholics needed to judge the world with new values, implicitly called for “more effective measures” against the Slovak Jews, and defended as Christian the desire to “combat” them as “parasites of the national organism.” In the same period, he convened the mysterious Javorina retreat—a perfect opportunity for consultations on the issue. When Tuka announced the deportations, he reportedly added that Tiso had already agreed to them. Tiso in his subsequent actions appeared no more opposed to the deportations than he had been to Tuka’s other “done deeds,” such as committing Slovakia to war against the Soviet Union. He supported Tuka’s actions, but not as fully as Tuka desired. In the Ronkay memorandum, Tiso even portrayed himself as a key actor behind the deportations. It was his “sacred conviction” that he must “liberate” Slovakia from Jews as soon as possible. Most tellingly, he made this statement at the same time as he ostensibly embraced the bishops’ decisive turn against the deportations. “Dr. Tiso declared that he is a Catholic priest and that he wanted entirely nothing to do with it,” Eichmann recalled in 1960 over why the Slovak deportations stopped.³⁰⁷ Rather than compelling proof of Tiso’s innocence, I suggest that this statement instead expresses his habits of deniability.

Within the context of winter 1941–42, Tiso would have had several immediate reasons for wanting the deportations. He associated the solution of the Jewish Question with Slovak national and social progress. Such “progress,” however, meant that someone had to care for the now impoverished Jews. There was also the worrisome possibility that, should Germany lose the war, Jews would reclaim their property. Restitution would mean “going backward” in national development, a possibility that Tiso consistently rejected. On top of these concerns was the psychological issue of revolutionary time. War with the Soviet Union helped to radicalize Tiso and to give him a reason to punish Jews as agents of evil. His belief that all actions on earth are the work of Providence made the evolving genocide even more excusable. Then there were security considerations. That winter, the Slovaks had felt newly threatened by Hungary. The deportations, like the declarations of war against the Allied powers, followed the principle of “enlisting” in

German projects before Hungary. Being tougher on the Jews than Horthy was a diplomatic tool for Tiso vis-à-vis Hitler. Finally, one of Tiso's tactics for preempting revolts was to keep potential conspirators too busy for intrigues. The deportations created massive work for the radicals just as Tiso's power struggle with Tuka culminated.

"The tragic fate of the Church . . .," Tiso argued in November 1941, "is that yesterday's Christians judge today according to yesterday's standards. . . . The Church has to abandon the present, which has already become the past."³⁰⁸ Tiso was correct that Europe was on the threshold of adopting a new set of values. He expected the New Order to be the domain of the *Völkisch* principle, by which progress for the nation became the standard of good. As a priest, he moreover hoped that the value of God would govern this temporal moral order, channeling man's activity on earth in eternally positive directions. Tiso misjudged. The moral order that emerged from the catastrophe of the Second World War was built not on the collective but rather on the individual. Nor did it become an opportunity for God to be enshrined amidst the halls of government. Rather, this order found its sacred center in the memory of the Holocaust. For postwar Europe, the murder of Fülöp Faith, an obscure Jew from Nitra, increasingly mattered more than moments of national triumph, such as when a pope for the first time spoke Slovak in public.³⁰⁹ In a sense, this moral shift marked the ultimate internationalization of local politics, for what happened to Faith was now not only an issue for European powers but also for humanity. It is in this context, a present moral order, that one struggles to comprehend the import and resonance at the time of Tiso's "sacred convictions": "For God and for Nation[! Thus] we arrange our political, cultural, social, and economic life according to the modern instructions by which New Europe orders itself."³¹⁰



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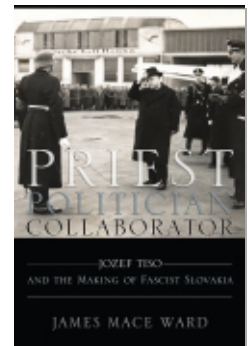
Published by Cornell University Press

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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Losing Battles, 1944–2011

... the good must prevail,
otherwise the world would be subverted.

—Primo Levi, “The Gray Zone” (1986)

From mid-1944 on, Jozef Tiso fought losing battles. First, he battled to save his state in the face of a Slovak revolt and impending German defeat. Second, during his 1946–47 trial, he battled to defend his moral and political record, and his life. Finally, there was a battle carried on in his name: the émigré struggle to reestablish his state and to rehabilitate him as a martyr.

Tiso lost these battles because both collaboration and his Slovak-Catholic politics had become impossible. In 1944, to save his state, he helped the Germans to crush the Slovak insurgents. But, after the war, the revolt became—as the Slovak National Uprising—the vessel of Slovak nationalism. Tiso, in contrast, was part of the fascist legacy that postwar, restored Czechoslovakia intended to purge. With him fell his hard-won beachhead in the overall culture war, the Christian state. No subsequent liberal or Communist Slovak government let it reemerge.

During his purge trial, Tiso fared worse than he might have because he failed to grasp how the European moral order had shifted. His sense of honor called for preserving his personal and priestly dignity, and holding Catholics and Eudáks above reproach. He demanded respect for his achievements and recognition of the difficult circumstances of his rule. The court instead wanted him to confess the bankruptcy of his politics and to apologize for war crimes. On 15 April 1947, the court convicted him as a collaborator, executing him three days later. His death, ironically, was a kind of victory, for it helped to recast him as a Catholic and national martyr. The Communist manipulation of his trial bolstered this claim.

After Tiso’s death, his defenders, mainly Slovak émigrés, strove to clear his name and to renew Slovak independence. With the collapse of Czechoslovak communism in 1989, the émigrés’ moment seemed to have arrived. Slovak nationalists

indeed helped to dissolve Czechoslovakia and to create a Slovak Republic in 1993. Yet, the effort to rehabilitate Tiso mainly pushed him into the consciousness of the West as a symbol of Slovak backwardness, especially in relation to the memory of the Holocaust. Linked to the authoritarianism of Vladimír Mečiar, the controversial three-time prime minister of Slovakia in the 1990s, the campaign became equated with Slovakia's exclusion from the European Union. Slovakia's citizens chose European membership over reviving a compromised historical figure that most of them did not understand or care about. Although the campaign to rehabilitate Tiso continues, it can succeed only in an alternate order from that of the EU. His time, for all intents and purposes, has passed.

Eating the Soup

As in the rest of Europe, the Slovak resistance that launched the 1944 uprising was diverse. The Communists wanted to create a Soviet Slovakia within or in federation with the Soviet Union. The "civic" (non-Communist) groups, often former Agrarians like Vavro Šrobár and Ján Ursíny, wanted instead a democratic Czechoslovakia. Other conspirators had worked for Tiso only to turn against him. Imrich Karvaš, for example, headed the Slovak National Bank. He exploited Tiso's trust in him to funnel monies to the underground. The Slovak Army, led often by Czechoslovaks, was the hotbed of the insurrection. Lt. Col. Ján Golian readied a military revolt in connection with the domestic political resistance and Beneš's government in exile. Even Tiso's minister of defense, Čatloš, schemed to switch sides. Not surprisingly, a disproportionate number of Protestants were active in the resistance, as were outsiders, especially Soviet partisans, who multiplied their ranks severalfold with Slovaks.¹

To an extent, Tiso authored this uprising. His dead-end, pro-German policy made it imperative for Slovaks to get on the winning side of the war. His use of repression produced new enemies while strengthening the hostility of the old. Not only did he let Slovak security forces terrorize the population through tactics such as preemptive raids, for example, but his office also shielded policemen accused of brutality.² Before mid-1944, however, his regime was overall irresolute toward the resistance. Although Slovak courts ordered around 3,600 individuals jailed for political crimes, sentences tended to be mild.³ More surprisingly, Mach released many Communists (sometimes old friends), while his subordinates, probably with his and Tiso's knowledge, ignored key leads to conspiratorial rings.⁴ Tiso himself was ambivalent about crushing the resistance. Even when insisting that his regime must prevail on "the internal front," he openly admitted that, as a priest, he would sign no death order.⁵ Similarly, he probably agreed with Mach's efforts to root out the numerous disloyal employees in the judiciary, yet he let Minister Fritz protect

them. These contradictions did not betray a double game. Tiso simply did not comprehend the significance of the underground.⁶

Rather than Tiso or his regime, the main threat to the resistance was its lack of coordination. In late 1943, the Communists and the “civic” groups had founded a Slovak national council. While it worked with Golian’s circle, other critical links were missing. The conspirators had no agreement with Soviet forces, nor could they get partisans to stop attacking strategic sites and German civilians. (Both the Czechoslovak government in exile and Soviet military leaders preferred that assaults continue.) In addition to destroying targets that were logistically important to the insurgents, the attacks gave the Germans cause to occupy Slovakia before the uprising was prepared and the Soviets in range. Golian and the council also had yet to bring aboard General Augustín Malár, who commanded two new, well-equipped Slovak divisions. Stationed in the east, they were to connect the Soviets to the rest of the Slovak Army.⁷

In mid-1944, Tiso lost control of his state. In July, he gave the German military permission to operate in eastern Slovakia, recognizing it as a coming front. In August, Guardist radicals “exceptionally astounded” and “angered” him with reports of a conspiracy in the Slovak Army.⁸ The Slovak government, faced with mounting partisan attacks, soon after declared martial law. But the regime once again failed to master the resistance. Losing patience, Ludin pushed Tiso to let the Germans do the job, prompting Tiso to stall for a few days before accepting a compromise. The Germans wanted him to sack Čatloš, whom they suspected of double-dealing. Tiso replaced him as head of the army (but not as minister of defense) with General Jozef Turanec, a change that solved nothing.⁹ On 27 August, Slovak insurgents seized Ružomberok. Other rebels meanwhile liquidated a German military mission returning from Romania, which had just switched sides in the war. Ludin the next day informed Tiso that “it was necessary” to bring in German troops, also recommending that unreliable Slovak units be demobilized. Tiso “agreed in principle” with the “proposals.”¹⁰ On the twenty-ninth, Čatloš broadcast a call for Slovaks “to welcome” German troops.¹¹ Tiso delegated this unenviable task to the general in part as a loyalty test and in part because Ludin wanted to undermine rumors of a Slovak Army revolt. After the speech, the preempted Golian launched the uprising.¹²

As German occupation unfolded, Tiso facilitated it. At Ludin’s “urgent recommendation,” he put Čatloš under “honorable arrest,” a measure intended to keep him from defecting but also out of German hands.¹³ Soon after, again fulfilling German wishes while expressing trust in Čatloš, Tiso released him to disarm the Bratislava garrison. The president made his own attitude toward the occupation clear on the evening of the thirtieth. In a broadcast, he declared that “the single aim” of the German troops “was to liquidate the partisan scum in Slovakia.” At the same time, he offered to amnesty any of the nation’s “prodigal sons” who

abandoned the uprising.¹⁴ Tiso ordered Malár, whom he suspected of conspiring against him, to broadcast an appeal to soldiers to shun the revolt. Malár did so, having decided that the uprising was “premature and not thought through.”¹⁵ Unfortunately for him, he said as much in the speech, thus betraying his sympathies for the resistance and prompting his arrest by the Germans.

The uprising shook Tiso’s world. “The president’s bearing, despite the naturally most difficult inner burden,” Ludin reported, “is exemplary,” yet Tiso was also “completely frightened and highly strung.”¹⁶ During the disarming of the Bratislava garrison, which the undermanned Germans feared might also rise up, Tiso took “with downright inner liberation” a German offer to harbor him for the night in Vienna.¹⁷ In the past, Tiso had prided himself that he could move freely among his people. His need for protection now must have been humiliating. According to Čatloš, Tiso was furious about the betrayal of the army. When the president returned from Vienna, he suffered an even harder blow: Čatloš had fled to the rebels.¹⁸ Received as an opportunist, he was consigned to a Soviet prison with Turanec, who had been captured.

His power evaporating, Tiso held his regime together through sheer will. The revolt forced an overdue change in government. Tuka was an invalid. Slovak radicals pushed to sack not only conservatives but also the “sellout” Mach. Stano and Medrický wanted to resign, the latter arguing that otherwise the government would “be sullied by the crudeness and inhumanity of war, which the insurgents brought to Slovakia.”¹⁹ Tiso let Stano, Sivák, and Fritz go, but he insisted that Medrický, Mach, and others man their posts. “Everyone sees,” he reportedly told Medrický, “that [war] is really here and that, because of this unfortunate turn, we . . . don’t have full sovereignty. But if it’s possible to protect something, it’s our duty to do so. We must also maintain statehood.”²⁰ Tiso pushed Tuka’s (and Fritz’s) portfolios on his cousin, the jurist Štefan Tiso. Štefan Haššík, a noted loyalist of the president, replaced Čatloš.

Jozef Tiso now fell under an occupation regime. He had to negotiate the composition of his government with an SS general, Gottlob Berger. The Gestapo and its relatives displaced Slovak security organs.²¹ The advisor system also returned. Tiso was unable even to veto the advisor to the guard, Viktor Naegler. Instead, Berger pressured the president into putting a Naegler protégé, Ottomar Kubala, in charge of the guard and state security (albeit in the latter role under Tiso’s man, Haššík).²² Tiso had earlier purged Kubala as one of the 1940–41 putschists. Kubala’s return epitomized Tiso’s greater willingness to meet German and radical demands. But Tiso hardly did so gladly, seeing Berger’s arrival as a “little Salzburg.”²³ In addition to backing Slovak radicals, the SS general pursued “revolutionary war.” Tiso no doubt welcomed his mysterious September replacement with Hermann Höfle, a less grating SS general of Catholic heritage.²⁴

For a time, the Slovak rebels controlled central Slovakia, including Bánovce. In Banská Bystrica, the Slovak National Council declared itself the government of Slovakia within Czecho-Slovakia. Uprising broadcasts called on Slovaks not

only to battle “the advancing German army” but also “its traitorous domestic assistants.”²⁵ By October, Golian had sixty thousand soldiers supported by eighteen thousand partisans. The uprising’s prospects, however, were dim. The conspirators never gained the crucial eastern Slovak divisions. German troops quickly disarmed about half of these soldiers, also shipping thousands of them to the *Reich* to labor. A Soviet and Czechoslovak offensive to break through from the northeast bogged down in the mountains. Neither the Western Allies nor the Soviets airlifted the rebels more than modest supplies and reinforcements. Rivalries and conflicts between Golian’s army, the partisans, the London government, and the ideologically divided council also undercut the operation. Finally, some rebels morally compromised the movement by committing atrocities on POWs and civilians.²⁶

Wed to the occupation, Tiso worked for its success. He denounced the uprising leaders as “a small clique of traitorous Slovaks,” Bolsheviks, Jews, “and above all Czechs.”²⁷ The Slovak government, no doubt with his agreement, contracted to provision the Germans. Also with Tiso’s approval, the regime scraped together forces for the offensive. Kubala created “emergency” divisions of the Hlinka Guard, so-called POHG. They helped Germans hunt down and sometimes murder on the spot Jews and other “politically unreliaables.” By 1945, four thousand to five thousand Guardists were active in these or similar units. Haššík meanwhile built up a home guard, the Domobrana, fielding a battalion.²⁸ Tiso reportedly claimed that the Germans needed to see that “not all of Slovakia is revolting.” They supposedly also would only intervene where Slovaks had failed “to take sufficient measures.”²⁹ At issue was not just sovereignty but also national pride. Tiso did not want the Germans to “be able to throw it in our face that they restored order [here].”³⁰ He was also set on disciplining his people. “We were . . . accommodating [in the past],” he apparently told the Slovak government. “Now it will be otherwise.”³¹

The occupation unleashed new repression, especially against Jews, whom the Germans wanted to deport rather than to keep in Slovak camps. In October, Štefan Tiso told Ludin that “he had heard that preparations are underway, without the Slovak government having been informed, to transport the Jews from Slovakia. This step . . . would result in diplomatic difficulties, since protests from the papal chargé d’affaires and probably also from Switzerland can be expected.”³² In fact, with Guardist assistance, the Germans had already deported several thousand Jews. A little earlier, the Vatican had urged the Slovak regime to shield its Jews. The Slovaks did verbally protest against the deportations. But Himmler soon after pronounced the final word in the dispute. “It would be better,” he reportedly told Štefan (and Jozef) Tiso during a visit to Bratislava, “if [we] forget about the [protest] and acted as though it had never been written.”³³

The Slovak president again came under pressure to intervene against the deportations—which he did only grudgingly. His private secretary recalled a row

between Tiso and Burzio. When Tiso claimed no knowledge of plans for deportation, Burzio reportedly called him a liar. Insulted, Tiso pounded his desk and, “almost shouting,” threw the *chargé d’affaires* out of his office.³⁴ Burzio returned a few days later, hoping to squeeze out a measure “at least for the baptized.” But, as he reported to Rome, “I did not encounter any understanding . . . or even a word of compassion for the persecuted. Tiso sees in Jews the cause of everything bad and he defends the measures of the Germans as compelled by the highest military interests.”³⁵ During the conflict with Himmler over the verbal note, however, Tiso indeed asked that exemptions be made for baptized Jews and spouses in mixed marriages. Himmler rejected the request “purely for security and pacification reasons,” giving threadbare assurances that the Jews would be treated well. According to Höfle, Tiso “answered in perhaps this sense, that it was not possible to change anything if they supposedly behaved thus.”³⁶ To be sure, Tiso had little influence over these deportations, as the Germans even ignored his exemptions. He now cancelled many of them, later claiming that he hoped thus to restore the dispensation’s credibility. But he was also driven by anger over Jewish participation in the uprising, especially by exemption holders.³⁷

To shore up his power, Tiso turned to the “Young *Ludáks*,” now the dominant radicals in the state. The president reportedly asked Alojz Macek, the head of the Hlinka Youth, to help him combat defeatism and disloyalty.³⁸ Deciding that Tiso wanted a “whip, with which to drive away [the troublemakers], as Christ did the merchants and money changers from the temple,” Macek and Štefan Polakovič plotted a return to the ideals of March 1939.³⁹ The Young *Ludáks* presented Tiso with a memorandum that advised the regime to rely only on “genuinely Slovak” and “state forming” individuals (i.e., longtime separatists). The radicals wanted to squash rebellion and to purge the regime. They also urged a “thorough” implementation of “an authoritarian system” and a “completely consistent” solution of the Jewish and Czech questions.⁴⁰

If Tiso indeed had wanted a “whip,” he was unhappy with the one that the Young *Ludáks* had handed him. The memorandum demanded that he also kick moderates like Medrický out of the party presidium. Tiso instead threatened to put the memorandists before the party’s disciplinary court. He explained why during an October meeting with them and Ďurčanský, who was trying to use the memorandum as a passport back to politics. “If I let [your assertions] stand,” Tiso reportedly said, “I would repudiate my own people . . . , and I would repudiate myself.”⁴¹ Rather than intrigues, recrimination, and criticism from the young, he wanted—as always—harmonious cooperation, selfless industry, and a united front:

You intelligentsia, you bunglers—along with [the uprising], you infect the nation with degeneration and confusion. In this cursed sickness of ours, we have still not

learned to stop soiling our own nest. For five years we didn't know how to praise everything enough. . . . We even amazed ourselves, and both allies and enemies abroad had to objectively acknowledge what we [had accomplished] here. And now, all of a sudden, I can't hear a single good word. [By squabbling rather than standing on our accomplishments,] we mislead this simple nation, which knows the truth and what's what.⁴²

Tiso's temper was at its worst during the meeting. The president beat tables and chair arms, paced nervously, and exploded over comments. He was clearly uneasy about the future. At one point, he seemed to embrace the chimera of German secret weapons winning the war. At another, he laid out a moral strategy for defending Slovak independence in the case of German defeat:

Don't think that anyone will stand by these Germans if they lose. But it's about this: to protect your own cause and to defend yourself from harm, so that we don't . . . destroy everything that we have built up and given the nation with our sweat during our five years of freedom. . . . I am conscious of the consequences. If, despite this, I preach that I must bravely stand by my words, I maintain that I will win everywhere and in every situation with this currency. Everyone must honor integrity in the end. Therefore, I am not afraid about our cause, and I dare to take it before the court of Europe.⁴³

Tiso was deeply pained by the idea that the uprising was aimed against his regime. To the Young Ľudáks, he argued that the target had instead been the Germans: "No one revolted against this state, against themselves. You can't convince me . . . that we are a nation of idiots."⁴⁴ To Höfle, Tiso was more reflective: "He was very sorry that his Slovak soldiers took part in this uprising against the state and against himself. . . . By far the greatest part of [the Slovaks] . . . did not even understand the uprising because they are not interested in politics. They were misled or incited."⁴⁵ Tiso often said that Slovaks had actually revolted over rumors that the Germans had killed or imprisoned him. He also indulged in wishful thinking on how the revolt would end. In Höfle's opinion, he hoped that the rebels would simply tire of battle and go home.⁴⁶

The Germans defeated the rebel army, now commanded by General Rudolf Viest, in October 1944. Even though hopelessly outgunned, Viest refused to surrender. He and his remaining troops withdrew into the mountains around Banská Bystrica. By this time, the Germans had killed perhaps four thousand rebels. Their willingness to fight an occupier contrasts starkly with Tiso's claim that he had no option other than collaboration. Viest, for example, left the relative safety of London to lead the doomed operation. Soon captured along with Golian, he was taken to Germany and executed.⁴⁷

Tiso meanwhile celebrated the uprising's defeat. When Höfle asked him to speak in "liberated" Banská Bystrica, Tiso immediately agreed, adding that he would bring along some ministers. He also ordered his old friend Andrej Škrábik, the local bishop, to celebrate a mass of gratitude.⁴⁸ On 30 October, Tiso began his day in Banská Bystrica saying a similar Mass. He then reviewed POHG and SS units, decorating German soldiers. Taking the tribune, Tiso lamented "all the dead that fell victim to this cowardly attack on our state independence."

[Although we can honor] the dead and fallen, we cannot yet [relieve] our sadness. Coming here, I passed through . . . the front, and I saw the horrible [results] of what our opponents did: demolished bridges, destroyed highways, burnt houses, people tramping along the roads. I see the terrible marks that this promised paradise left in your hearts. What I saw on my way here, I also saw one time in Ukraine. Crowds hopelessly trudging, they knew not where. No smiles on their faces. No trace of self-esteem on their lips. Under the Bolshevik yoke . . . , the Ukrainian people lost their humanity. And Slovaks, you were in this "paradise" for two months. . . . I think all of you . . . have had enough of [it].⁴⁹

After defeating the uprising, the Germans with Slovak help stepped up reprisals and antipartisan warfare. Outside Banská Bystrica, for example, *Einsatzgruppe* and POHG members executed 747 persons, including 58 children. As could be expected, Jews were prime targets. By the time the state fell, some 12,000 more of them had been deported (probably 10,000 of whom died) while perhaps 2,000 had been murdered on Slovak territory. Overall, reprisals claimed some 5,000 lives in Slovakia. These atrocities were part of "securing" the German rear, for which the Slovak regime also mobilized tens of thousands of civilians to work on fortifications.⁵⁰

Tiso's support for such "security" measures far outweighed his efforts to moderate them. He helped to create and legitimated the framework from which the atrocities emerged, even pushing Germans to deport "unreliable" Czechs. Any ignorance that he had of atrocities was again probably by choice. In one instance, his anti-uprising propaganda fomented brutality: "When . . . someone kills and exterminates undisciplined scum [who caused revolution], they do mankind a meritorious service."⁵¹ The best evidence that he worked to limit atrocities was his refusal—despite German pressure—to give the radical Kubala his own ministry. Tiso instead kept the guard under Haššík's military courts, as numerous Guardist "excesses" had created "indignation."⁵² Tiso's efforts to shield captive insurgents were modest, ineffective, and halfhearted. The Slovak government, for example, sometimes indeed forgave rebels. Yet a formal amnesty never emerged.⁵³ Tiso's interventions on behalf of Karvaš (whom Tiso had let the Germans arrest) were denied. As well, Himmler supposedly promised Tiso to repatriate Slovak soldiers

from the disarmed eastern divisions, but never did.⁵⁴ To Höfle, Tiso suggested with a smile that captive Slovak soldiers be allowed to slip away, claiming that they would cause no more trouble. At the same time, he acknowledged the necessity of holding them in the *Reich*, as “peace must finally come here—the sooner the better.”⁵⁵

The façade of Slovak sovereignty in the meantime crumbled. In December, Tiso appealed to Hitler to reduce occupation costs for Slovakia and to stop treating her resources as booty:

From the beginning of the war until August 1944, the small . . . Slovak nation exported to the *Reich* goods and services worth 2 billion *Reichsmarks*. We sent to [Germany] 120,000 workers, whose savings at home [the Slovak state] had to defray from its own [sources] to the amount of 100 million *Reichsmarks*. This and the financial burden of German military production in Slovakia and the already noted costs on provisioning German [troops] has created in Slovakia out-of-control inflation.⁵⁶

Although the Germans thereafter showed more tact, they did not back away from exploiting their client.⁵⁷ Around the same time, Ludin delivered a demarche over the relatively moderate sentences that a Slovak court meted out in absentia against uprising leaders such as the former Agrarian Jozef Lettrich. Ludin demanded death penalties instead and that the responsible judges be jailed. On Tiso’s order, the Slovak government complied.⁵⁸

Tiso’s decision to preserve Slovak formal independence through such subservience further alienated him from the Slovak hierarchy. The president, for example, backed Höfle’s request for a Slovak pastoral letter against bolshevism. But, with the collapse of the wartime state imminent, the bishops had no interest in complicating their postwar situation. (Indeed, Škrábik had already negotiated with the Communists about future church-state relations.)⁵⁹ In late 1944, four Slovak bishops suggested to Tiso that he resign. The Germans had started “evacuating” Slovak civilians from frontline zones to the *Reich*, where the deportees were put to work building fortifications. The bishops feared that the policy would be applied throughout Slovakia. “Since it will mean . . . the destruction of the entire Slovak nation,” Kmeňko claimed to have said, “it would be a shame if it was attributed [to the fact] that the head of state was a priest.”⁶⁰ If Tiso could not prevent the deportations, the bishops wanted him to quit. Tiso instead asked that a “forum” be established that could advise him *exactly* when to leave office. Kmeňko thought that Tiso thus insulted the dignity of the bishops and tried to usurp their right to regulate the political activity of priests. At the same time, since the Germans did not expand the deportations, the bishops saw no reason to push Tiso on the issue.⁶¹

Pius XII, in turn, chastised Tiso for the “injustices committed during his rule,” fundamentally telling him to act like a priest rather than a politician.⁶² In a private, handwritten response, Tiso dismissed the “rumors about cruel measures” as enemy propaganda:

One cannot blame the Slovak government for sending [superfluous] Czechs home and for freeing up Jews for work in Germany—which also happened to a lot of Slovaks.

[We] did not undertake the incriminated actions against the Czechs and Jews because of their nationality or race, but from a duty to defend our nation against enemies that for centuries have operated destructively in our midst. . . .

. . . [The remaining] Czechs and Jews, who lived well [in] the Slovak Republic, at the end of this August joined enemy parachutists . . . and began an open revolt. . . . Small, unexpectedly and unjustly attacked Slovakia, unable to defend herself alone, requested the help of her German protector. Because of this fact, the actions in Slovakia from this time on have had a military, warlike character, taking place beyond the power of the Slovak government and outside of its responsibility. This is proven by the verbal note [protesting the 1944 deportations].

Our guilt lies in our gratefulness and loyalty toward the Germans, who not only acknowledged the existence of our nation and its natural right to independence, but also helped [us] against Czechs and Jews, enemies of our nation. We are entirely certain that this “guilt” is in the eyes of Catholics our greatest merit.⁶³

In a similar letter to the president of the International Red Cross Committee, Tiso also noted that “the solution of the Jewish question in Slovakia came to certain noticeable intrusions into the sphere of the individual. It was the sincere aim of the Slovak government to prevent or to alleviate [these intrusions . . . , but they] were connected with the war, during which problems of an economic, social, and political nature—be they international or domestic—are always confronted more mercilessly than in peacetime.”⁶⁴ Tiso never again came so close to admitting guilt in the destruction of Slovak Jewry. For decades, his allergic reaction to criticism had been to stand on his righteousness and propriety while blaming his mistakes on circumstance and enemies. He now let the habit define him.

Thus Tiso soldiered on. His pastoral ministry was limited largely to his palace, as the Germans vetoed trips to Bánovce as too dangerous. His social agenda and “construction work” were reduced to granting pairs of breeding rabbits to worthy Slovaks. His program of deepening Slovak national consciousness was eclipsed by the need to rally support for the state. In a short late-1944 article by him, the phrase “nation and state” appeared twenty-nine times, “God and nation” not once.⁶⁵ The party, torn apart and paralyzed by the uprising, became the domain of the Young *Ludáks*. They were now his most devoted followers, the conservatives having

deserted him. It was another ironic twist for a man who had built his reputation as a party moderate.⁶⁶

As the front approached, Tiso gave his enemies ever more reasons to dishonor him. He kept the Ľudák propaganda machine busy defending the state and the war. "I believe in victory," he wrote in late 1944, "because I know that I am right. . . . We would lose our reputation as a nation—and I would consider it as limiting every Slovak—if we went directly into the claws of those who want to swallow us. Therefore, if the *Reich* acknowledges and supports us, we will go with them to final victory or we will fall honorably."⁶⁷ In early 1945, Tiso's state mobilized enough men to double the size of the Domobrana to over forty thousand soldiers.⁶⁸ German security forces began purging the Slovak police and, with Tiso's reluctant permission, the judiciary, hauling off alleged saboteurs and opponents. Tiso also agreed to hand over several hundred Slovak political prisoners to the Gestapo, who shipped them mainly to Mauthausen. "At the time," he later claimed, "none of us thought that these prisoners could lose their lives."⁶⁹ Many of the deportees, not surprisingly, were murdered.

Soon after, Tiso fled Slovakia. In March 1945, he marked the sixth anniversary of his state. Even though he admitted that "much of our territory is occupied by a foreign power," he felt that it was still important to celebrate the day, as "we expect from this [act] a contribution to the construction of the spirituality of the Slovak man."⁷⁰ In Tiso's honor, the state issued new postage stamps with his likeness. The Red Army had by then fought its way across half of Slovakia. Preparing for the inevitable, Tiso sent Kmeťko around 2 million crowns in cash and securities, asking him to dedicate it to church aims.⁷¹ In early April, on Ludin's advice, the president and his government crossed over into Germany. "I knew," he later explained, "that it was [no longer] possible to do any sort of substantive work in Slovakia. I also feared for my life."⁷² His first refuge was a Benedictine monastery in Kremsmünster, near Linz. From there, he sent his secretary, Karol Murín, to Munich to seek the protection of Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber, who agreed to shelter Tiso in a Capuchin monastery in Altötting, a Bavarian pilgrimage city. Tiso, meanwhile, put together a defense to present to the Western Allies.⁷³

Before quitting Kremsmünster, Tiso made a final broadcast to the Slovak nation. "The Slovak state [still] exists," he proclaimed, "because its president, government, and organs of state administration [still] live and carry out their functions." In effect, he was now the head of a government in exile, using an argument of legal continuity that imitated Beneš's. The broadcast was most interesting, however, for the ways in which Tiso began to play the martyr. He compared himself to Pope-Saint Gregory VII, who was driven out of Rome in the greatest church-state conflict of the eleventh century. Portraying himself as fleeing a Bolshevik-Czech tide, Tiso found a biblical justification for his actions: "As when . . . St. Joseph was told to flee with the Holy Family . . . to Egypt because Herod [threatened Christ's]

life . . . , [so] we went abroad with the palladium of the Slovak nation—the idea of Slovak statehood—in order to protect it . . . from the jaws of Czech imperialism.”⁷⁴ Tiso thus claimed good standing in a church whose hierarchy he had repeatedly defied on behalf of his state.

Three days after Tiso’s radio speech, Hitler committed suicide in his Berlin bunker. American authorities captured Tiso in June 1945. Later that month, Sidor, who would be the last functioning representative of the Slovak Republic, appealed to Pius XII to intervene on Tiso’s behalf. When reminded by the pope that Tiso had been warned not to become president, Sidor defended him, arguing that Tiso had performed many “meritorious acts” in office and secured a higher quality of life for Slovaks. “And what’s left from all of this?” Pius asked in reply.⁷⁵

Transfiguration

For the rest of his life, Tiso was an object of postwar retribution. In fall 1945, the Americans extradited him to Czechoslovakia, which tried him a year later. This process was supposed to heal the wounds of war by condemning him as a traitor to the common state, to the Slovak nation, to the Slovak resistance, and to mankind. On the one hand, the proceedings built a powerful case on Tiso’s collaboration and crimes against humanity. On the other, political machinations robbed the trial of much legitimacy. With his execution, Tiso was transformed into competing symbols of the Slovak wartime experience: war criminal and Slovak martyr.

As Tiso fled Slovakia in spring 1945, she reverted to Czechoslovakia. In early April, having established himself in Košice, in the east of the renewed state, Beneš appointed a new government. This “National Front” portioned ministries equally to the Czechoslovak resistance parties, which in Slovakia were mainly the Slovak Communist Party and the Democratic Party (built on Agrarian ruins). The government’s program served as a provisional constitution. Relations between Czechs and Slovaks were to be “equal with equal.” The uprising’s Slovak National Council became Slovakia’s executive and legislature. In addition to promising close cooperation with the Soviets, the program resolved to purge “fascist” elements in Czechoslovakia. “Collaborationist” parties were banned, “traitors” were to be punished, and most Germans and Hungarians were to be expelled. Other program planks called for nationalizing industries and expropriating state enemies.⁷⁶

The Košice program thus criminalized Tiso’s policies as it endorsed them. Most notably, it honored his interwar demand for Slovak autonomy. Other planks mirrored his wartime compromises. Czechoslovakia again had a menacing great-power patron, the Soviet Union. This again meant occupation and territorial loss: Subcarpathian Rus’, incorporated into Ukraine.⁷⁷ Czechoslovak sovereignty was infringed in other ways as well. Soviet security forces in Slovakia, for example,

deported perhaps ten thousand local “enemies,” including Martin Sokol.⁷⁸ Finally, the Czechoslovak government pursued ethnic cleansing. Most notably, over three million Sudeten Germans were driven out of the republic, tens (perhaps hundreds) of thousands dying in the process. The moral justification for these acts often followed Tiso’s logic. Msgr. Bohumil Stašek, a Lidák who languished for years in Dachau and for whom Tiso once intervened, argued that “once in a thousand years the time has come to settle accounts with the Germans, who are evil and to whom the commandment to love thy neighbor therefore does not apply.”⁷⁹

In May 1945, the Slovak National Council established a system of retribution for Slovakia. Although the council did so over the objections of centralists (who wanted a statewide approach), a separate Slovak system fulfilled at least one of their desires. As Beneš explained to the Soviets in 1943, the Czechoslovak leadership wished to avoid the perception that “Czechs want to punish Slovaks.”⁸⁰ Having Slovaks condemn Tiso and his colleagues also stressed that Ľudák treason was primarily against the Slovak nation, which supposedly had never renounced union with the Czechs. In its war-crimes decree (33/1945), the Slovak National Council adopted retroactive punishment, in effect outlawing Czechoslovak constitutional changes that occurred between the Munich Conference and the war’s end. The decree categorized main culprits as fascist occupiers (Germans or Hungarians), domestic traitors, collaborators, and traitors of the uprising. A domestic traitor, for instance, was any Slovak who had worked to dismantle the republic’s democracy (as through the Žilina Agreement), had contributed to Slovak independence, or had held significant positions in the Slovak state, among other acts. Domestic treason and betrayal of the uprising carried the death penalty, although having aided the resistance could reduce this punishment.⁸¹ Denied right of appeal, defendants condemned to death had a mere forty-eight hours within which to obtain clemency from the council or (from mid-1946) Beneš. In practice, however, a petitioner might avoid execution for months while Slovak authorities considered his case. They were also much more likely to grant clemency than their Czech counterparts.⁸²

As the Slovak retribution system was being established, its main defendant, Tiso, experienced the degradations of incarceration. Because he had taken refuge in a monastery, his arrest reportedly required delicate negotiations with his Capuchin hosts. But Tiso soon surrendered. He, after all, preferred American captivity to Soviet, especially since a Vatican asylum was not in the cards. Archbishop Faulhaber urged the Americans to confine him to a monastery, but the former president was instead detained in camps, first near Munich at Friesing, where he was interrogated, then south at Garmisch-Partenkirchen.⁸³ At Friesing, he and Medrický argued explosively over Tiso’s insistence that they continue to govern during the uprising. At Garmisch-Partenkirchen, camp guards reportedly whipped his face, threw him into a cramped, lightless lockup for a week, and put

him on a bread-and-water diet.⁸⁴ Tiso, however, never mentioned such maltreatment. His defenders argue that he thus recognized the true spirit of America, the beacon of anticommunism. Such claims fit the cult of a martyr. Yet the story also fits scholarship on the American torture of postwar prisoners.⁸⁵ Whichever the case, the abuse reportedly stopped within a week. Tiso spent the rest of his camp time in tolerable conditions, doing what prisoners do. Kitchen duty, for instance, offered him extra food but blistered his hands, which were apparently unaccustomed to physical labor.⁸⁶

Tiso was back in Slovakia by October 1945. After some haggling with the British, the Americans handed him over to the Czechoslovaks as a “quisling.”⁸⁷ In Bratislava, Tiso’s new captors paraded him and his colleagues before the press in shackles. Haggard after the journey, Tiso’s humiliation was palpable.⁸⁸ Rather than improving morals, the demonstration provoked significant indignation. Catholics and former *Ľudáks* already resented the devaluing of political Catholicism, as expressed, for example, by the resecularization of schools. The occupying Red Army had done considerable raping and looting. The government was also dominated by Communists.⁸⁹ Sympathizers with Tiso applauded his appearance in newsreels, while a Bratislava display on Tiso’s extradition was destroyed by vandals.⁹⁰ To the National Court in Bratislava, this all smacked of a counterrevolutionary conspiracy. To hinder it, the court isolated Tiso, even monitoring his discussions with his lawyers.⁹¹ Except for juridical outings, such as to Tuka’s trial, Tiso spent most of the next year alone in his cell.

As was typical for European retribution, the court that would try Tiso belonged to the resistance. Virtually all of the prosecutors and judges had fought in the uprising or otherwise attempted to subvert the Slovak state. Many of these men, such as the lead prosecutor Ľudovít Rigan, had also sat in *Ľudák* jails. Most of the court officers were either Communists, such as the prosecutor Anton Rašľa, or from their allies the Social Democrats. Even Tiso’s excellent defense lawyer, Ernest Žabkay, was a former Communist.⁹² The only lawyer in the trial with a *Ľudák* reputation quit after alleged police harassment. His replacement became the defense’s token Protestant, compensating for coreligionists on the prosecution, lest Catholics interpret the trial as Protestants condemning a priest.⁹³ As was common for the Slovak resistance, some court officers also had worked for the Slovak state. The president of the National Court and chief justice for the trial, Igor Daxner, had been named by Tiso to the Slovak judiciary.⁹⁴ From a well-known Protestant family, Daxner spent part of 1943 jailed for subversion, joined the Communist Party in 1944, and fought in the uprising.

Daxner was the most controversial court member. Choleric and self-important, he was considered by many observers to be driven by opportunism or a desire for revenge.⁹⁵ (In 1945, with Tiso’s permission, the Germans deported Daxner’s brother to Mauthausen.) The judge was often unprofessional. In mid-1946, for

example, he polled Beneš on his preference for Tiso's sentence. The president replied that Tiso deserved execution. Daxner passed the news around the court, and from there it leaked to the public. Ján Ursíny, now a Democratic minister in the central government, considered the incident disastrous. "You have already condemned Tiso to death," he reproached Beneš.⁹⁶ As if to ensure this result, Daxner packed Tiso's "senate" (the seven judges who determined his verdict and sentence) with Communists and Social Democrats, granting only one seat to the Slovak Democrats.⁹⁷

During Slovakia's first postwar election, held in May 1946, Tiso's trial became a political football. Slovakia's postwar party system offered no natural home for former Lúďák voters. Catholics in particular feared that neither the "Godless" Communists nor the ostensibly Protestant Democrats would defend their interests—among which was leniency for Tiso. Despite past tensions with him, both Pius XII and the Slovak bishops appealed to Czechoslovak authorities to go easy on the defendant. The Democrats won the backing of key Catholics through the 1946 "April Agreement," which made concessions to Catholics in general. The agreement also allegedly included a secret clause obliging the Democrats to shield Tiso from harsh retribution.⁹⁸ Although no such clause existed, widespread belief in it contributed to the Democrats' electoral success. The party polled over 60 percent of the Slovak vote, twice as much as the Communists. (When Tiso and his jail mates surreptitiously learned of the victory, they sang "Hail to the Slovaks," prompting Daxner to tighten their isolation regime.)⁹⁹ Unsettled by the defeat, the Communists looked to drive a wedge between Democrats and Catholics. This wedge was Tiso, whom the Communists were determined to see hang.¹⁰⁰

In November 1946, the National Court issued a massive indictment against Tiso, Mach, and the absent Ďurčanský, who had fled to South America.¹⁰¹ Trying these men together condemned the "moderate" Tiso through association, as Mach and Ďurčanský had been radical firebrands for collaboration and separatism, respectively. Framed as three counts of treason and one of collaboration, the defendants were charged with destroying the First Czechoslovak Republic, collaborating with her enemies, betraying the uprising, and committing crimes against humanity. Although often exaggerating Tiso's volunteerism and enthusiasm for the Nazi program, the charges of collaboration (after 1938) and war crimes were for the most part accurate. Less so was the case for Tiso's betrayal of the uprising, which the indictment alleged he had done "in advance" by inviting in German troops to preempt the revolt. The argument was specious, as the uprising happened in response to German occupation, which Tiso actually had tried to delay.¹⁰² The charge that he deliberately destroyed the First Republic was politically calculated. As Ursíny argued in a meeting of the central government, "Many people in Slovakia are convinced that Tiso faced the alternative of either allowing the partition of Slovakia or else its independence, and that [by choosing the latter] he

protected a lot. His trial must therefore demonstrate that he deliberately prepared his treason in the last years of the republic."¹⁰³ The indictment accordingly portrayed Tiso and the *Ludáks* as both intractably separatist and a Nazi fifth column. Most absurdly, the indictment revived old Magyarone charges against him, claiming that he had always rejected Czechoslovakia.¹⁰⁴

The trial, which opened in December, was Slovakia's premier political theater for the next half-year. Even though most coverage on Tiso was scathing, the government strove to keep it that way. On one occasion, for example, the police confiscated an "anti-fascist" newspaper over a cartoon: Daxner as the butcher and Tiso as the pig. The fugitive *Ďurčanský* orchestrated the distribution of pro-Tiso propaganda and even wrote directly to the National Court, thus apparently validating Communist claims that Tiso led a counterrevolutionary underground.¹⁰⁵ Court proceedings often spilled over into Czechoslovak politics in other ways. Bishop *Kmeťko* testified that Slovaks preferred independence to renewed Czechoslovakia. In response, Beneš demanded a "clear-cut and definite" commitment to the common state from leading Slovaks. He got the desired assurances after threatening to let the Soviet Union annex Slovakia.¹⁰⁶ The trial also featured partisan maneuvers between Democrats and Communists. Daxner embarrassed Ursíny over signing the 1938 *Žilina* Agreement on Slovak autonomy. The Communist *Laco Novomeský*, in turn, had to admit how his old chum *Mach* had protected him during the war.¹⁰⁷ Finally, the trial gave rise to anti-Soviet sentiment. In early 1947, the Soviets handed over *Čatloš* as a surprise witness. Entering the courtroom, he was shaken and disoriented, unsure even who was on trial. His dramatic confrontations with Tiso at one point brought the former general to the verge of tears. Otherwise, *Čatloš* spent two days on the stand demolishing several lines of Tiso's defense. Devastated, Tiso sarcastically speculated that "someone" had drugged the witness.¹⁰⁸ Many Slovaks embraced the theory, blaming the Soviets.¹⁰⁹

Overall, Tiso defended himself with classic justifications for collaboration. He argued that the German diktat and the need to shield the Slovak nation had compelled him to accept the "lesser evil" of collaboration. Sometimes he portrayed himself as playing a double game with the Germans, as when he defeated their post-Salzburg program by exploiting the *Führer* principle. Tiso often stood on the legality of his actions, pointing, for example, to the constitutionality of the *Žilina* Agreement. He reminded the court of his relative powerlessness and the treacherous international environment in which he had to operate. "When the big boys fight," he argued, "children should stay under the table."¹¹⁰ The only classic justification for collaboration that he did not use was the claim that he had been waiting for the right moment to revolt. Instead, he testified that he had expected the war to end in a compromise peace that would leave Slovakia independent but still in the German sphere of influence: "I could not imagine that the Western powers would let bolshevism . . . advance."¹¹¹ His claim is plausible. In May 1944, for instance, at

their last meeting, Tiso encouraged Hitler to make peace with Britain, based on the presumed English understanding of the dangers of bolshevism.¹¹²

During the trial, Tiso also leaned on his habits of deniability. He often claimed to have been in the dark. "I don't know, I don't remember, no one informed me," as one reporter paraphrased him.¹¹³ Tiso blamed his subordinates for acting without his permission or against his will. Ďurčanský became the fall guy for separatism, Tuka for the 1942 deportations, and Kubala for atrocities committed against the uprising.¹¹⁴ An advantage to this defense was that these "loose cannons" were not around to contradict Tiso. Ďurčanský was in exile, while Tuka and Kubala had been executed. A disadvantage to the strategy was that one could not blame Tuka without also blaming Mach, who sat beside Tiso in court. In a 1994 interview, Tiso's lawyer Žabkay claimed that Mach wearied of playing the scapegoat and threatened to turn on Tiso. Worried, Žabkay informed his client. "That little snot!" Tiso replied. On the lawyer's urging, he drew up a document authorizing him to continue as before. When Žabkay showed it to Mach, the radical saluted, sarcastically remarking that soldiers follow orders. But he nonetheless fell in line.¹¹⁵ The ties of Ľudák loyalty apparently still held.

On one level, Tiso's trial was about determining historic truth. For the most part, Tiso could speak freely, letting him refute, for example, attempts to conflate him and the radicals.¹¹⁶ He persuasively described the difficulty of Slovakia's geopolitical position, sandwiched as she was between Nazi Germany and irredentist Hungary. Prosecution witnesses sometimes took his side, as when Ursíny characterized him as a safeguard against a Tuka dictatorship.¹¹⁷ Alternatively, defense witnesses helped to condemn Tiso, as when Kmeňko recounted his stubborn disinterest in the fate of the Slovak Jews. Tiso himself could be surprisingly frank to his own detriment. He admitted agreeing to the 1942 deportations, for instance, and characterized his one-party system as "a natural and very healthy solution" to the crisis of democracy.¹¹⁸ As a result of this sincere desire to investigate the past, the trial record has become an essential source not only on the Slovak state but also Tiso's entire life.

But on another level (again typical for European retribution), Tiso's trial was about creating a "political truth."¹¹⁹ As Rašla wrote privately to Čtloš in 1966, the postwar defendants' guilt demonstrated the nation's innocence. By condemning Tiso, Slovaks ostensibly condemned all things fascist, thus proving themselves worthy of postwar Czechoslovakia. Tiso needed not only to be a traitor to the First Republic but also, more important, to the Slovak nation. Consequently, the indictment and the trial focused more on the suffering of Czechs and Slovaks than of Jews.¹²⁰ The Slovak National Uprising became the new palladium of Slovak nationalism, above reproach. Thus, when Žabkay tried to ask military experts whether the revolt was destined to fail, Daxner heatedly banned the discussion.¹²¹ Daxner's action here was one of several juridical irregularities that undermined

Tiso's defense. More damaging for the court's claim to impartiality, the legislation governing the trial, Decree 33/1945, not only retroactively criminalized Tiso's suppression of the uprising but also mandated the death penalty as punishment. The decree thus amounted to a predetermined verdict and sentence.

Throughout the trial, Daxner tried to discredit Tiso not only politically but also morally. The chief justice wanted to hear him admit to having sinned. Yet Tiso tenaciously defended his record as proper and himself as above reproach. He refused to admit the "crash" of his regime, implying that it was still the legitimate government of Slovakia.¹²² He was especially loath to express remorse over the victims of his policies. To Žabkay, Tiso said that "they would interpret it to mean that they had broken him and that he had acknowledged his guilt. [But] he did not feel responsible for the atrocities committed by the Germans and the Guardists. He maintained that he had had no clue about these events, and he did not hide from us his extreme indignation over what he had learned about them during the trial."¹²³ Tiso no doubt also sought to protect the sacrality of his vocation—no small issue for him, as criticism of the priesthood was seen by many theologians as undermining Catholicism itself. In court, Tiso consequently appeared cold and callous. Mach, in contrast, cut a contrite figure as he took responsibility for the 1942 deportations.¹²⁴ Tiso's refusal to do similarly especially irritated Daxner:

Daxner: Don't you feel any responsibility for [German atrocities during the uprising] as a statesman, or as the head of state?

Tiso: In no way whatsoever. . . .

Daxner: You either have a hard conscience or else no conscience at all.¹²⁵

Again and again, the chief justice and the priest debated the meaning of "love thy neighbor."

Daxner: Does God's commandment say that you should love yourself as much as your neighbor? . . . Is the order to love ourselves?

Tiso: Self-love is embedded in natural law.

Daxner: I really didn't find such perversity even with Hitler. . . .

Tiso (interrupting): I studied theology and I have lived in this theology. My whole life, I understood and taught [this commandment] thus.

Daxner: . . . It is a basic Christian tenet that we love our neighbors. . . .

Tiso (interrupting): How?

Daxner: As ourselves. It means that I must love my neighbor in such a way that, what I wouldn't want to have happen to me, I shouldn't do to him. And you conclude that "I can get rid of. . . ."

Tiso (interrupting): No, not without reasons. But I have a duty to protect myself against evil. . . .

Daxner: God doesn't order this. Christ preached: Love your neighbor. . . .

Tiso (interrupting): I don't know how to say it in any other way.

Daxner: This is perversity.¹²⁶

Tiso no doubt found it galling that Daxner, a Communist and Lutheran convert to Russian Orthodoxy, dared to explain theology to him, a Pázmáneum graduate. These polemics were part of an effort to portray Tiso as a renegade priest who had violated papal encyclicals and other Catholic teachings, and who had defied his hierarchical superiors, especially Pius XII. The effect was to distance Tiso from the church, which the court wanted to avoid offending. As Daxner snapped at Tiso, "Don't drag the church into this!"¹²⁷

Considering this agenda to discredit Tiso as a priest, it is intriguing that the court ignored rumors that he had a daughter: the wife of Anton Vašek, a former protégé and later the corrupt head of the 1942 deportations. Tiso introduced the couple and even wed them in 1933. When they later divorced, he never forgave Vašek, turning against him politically.¹²⁸ Tiso's alleged lover and her husband often entertained the priest in Bánovce, relaxing over such pastimes as cards. With the possible exceptions of two sisters, Tiso was closer to no other woman. When Sivák, for example, wanted to connect Rabbi Frieder with Tiso, he suggested the purported mistress as a go-between. The rumors of a liaison, of course, distressed Tiso. After heatedly arguing with Medrický in the Friesing prison camp, he turned to his secretary Murín, "as if to explain [about the argument . . .]: 'I knew, for example, about the talk . . . about me [and] a certain woman in Bánovce. But I didn't want to radically break off social relations with this family, because from a close relative of this woman I received reports . . . from Hungarian parliamentary circles. This is how I learned, for example, that Mrs. Tuka [drew] support from Hungarian public funds after [her husband] was condemned.'" ¹²⁹ The "close relative" was Ronkay, the Hungarian parliamentarian who interviewed Tiso in 1943. The rumor about Tiso's daughter cannot be verified without invading the privacy of descendents. Whether slander or a brief glimpse into Tiso's sexuality, the anecdote clarifies Tiso's relationship to Ronkay and illustrates the court's sense of limits.

The trial's closing arguments took place in March 1947. Rašla, the last prosecutor to speak, attacked Tiso for leading the first of the servile satellites, faulted him for still rejecting a unified Czechoslovakia, and characterized his anti-uprising propaganda as the "height of his treason." The prosecutor demanded the death penalty on all charges.¹³⁰ Tiso spoke in his own defense for two days. Showing no regret, he declared that, "I did everything according to the best of my knowledge and my conscience and to the benefit of the Slovak nation. Before evil I retreated only when a greater evil threatened."¹³¹ According to Žabkay, the speech "didn't play well. It was unsure, redundant, and ran astray into insignificant details."¹³²

Political conflict over the trial's outcome meanwhile intensified. In Piešťany, about a thousand supporters, mainly women, demonstrated for Tiso's release. Resistance organizations and trade unions—both Communist strongholds—drew ten thousand participants to a counterdemonstration in Bratislava. Although the Democrats took part in this rally, they and the hierarchy pressed Beneš to prevent Tiso's execution. Partly to frustrate these efforts—and partly to avoid comparisons with the outcome of Czech purge trials—the Communists pushed forward the date for Tiso's sentencing.¹³³

The court delivered its verdict on 15 April. In a surprise move, Daxner excluded Mach from the judgment, allegedly because of serious illness. In fact, Daxner and the prosecution exploited Mach's tuberculosis so that they could pass a moderate sentence on him later. (The radical's "decent" behavior in court had won their sympathy.)¹³⁴ The 214-page verdict found Tiso and Ďurčanský guilty on all charges. With few exceptions, the court only convicted Tiso of actions that he had committed. He was cleared, for example, of several alleged acts in connection with the breakup of Czechoslovakia, the most tendentious part of the indictment.¹³⁵ The meaning that the verdict attributed to actions for which it held Tiso rightly accountable, however, was sometimes dubious. His superficial ties to the Henleinists, for instance, were linked to the Czechoslovak decision not to resist the Munich Agreement. The consequences for the world supposedly had been tragic, as the judges held that the republic had been defensible.¹³⁶ In short, they blamed Tiso for the Second World War. They also scapegoated him for the failure of the uprising, laying its ill timing at his rather than the partisans' feet.¹³⁷ But the verdict also rose above such agendas. The section on the destruction of Slovak Jewry, in particular, significantly expanded on the indictment. These crimes were characterized as Tiso's "most immoral, most unchristian, and most inhuman." Tiso "was an initiator, and when not an initiator, then an inciter of the most radical solution of the Jewish question."¹³⁸

Finding no extenuating circumstances, the court sentenced Tiso and Ďurčanský to death.¹³⁹ Although the judges agreed on Tiso's guilt, the sole Slovak Democrat voted for incarceration, in violation of Decree 33/1945. Tiso appealed for clemency, but only out of "moral reasons"—a formulation intended to show that he feared not death and beseeched Beneš for mercy only as a Catholic responsibility. According to Žabkay, Tiso at the time expected to be reprieved.¹⁴⁰ Citing a number of mitigating circumstances, Prosecutor Rigan (and later the commissioner of justice in Slovakia), recommended clemency. The National Court did not. As Daxner wrote,

Tiso never did anything . . . that could cleanse his reputation as an executioner. [He showed] a complete lack of sentiment toward his fellow man . . . [and] indifference

to [his] victims. . . . [He has] a perverse character of such moral insanity that it is not possible with good conscience to recommend clemency. . . .

Nor does he deserve [it] as a priest. . . . He scorned papal encyclicals and the instructions of his highest church representative . . . , identifying with Nazi racist ideology. . . . In referring to his neopagan ally, [he] declared “the devil can drive my cart, so long as he takes me where I want to go.”¹⁴¹

More critically, the presidium of the Slovak National Council failed to take a stand on Tiso’s plea. Even though in the majority, the Democrats were apparently divided among themselves. Beneš meanwhile reaffirmed his stance that he would abide by the central government’s decision, which he expected to go against Tiso. When it did, Beneš mechanically followed suit, over the protests of Slovak Democrats.¹⁴²

On 17 April, Žabkay brought Tiso the news that he would soon die. “Good,” Tiso replied, impressing Žabkay with his composure.¹⁴³ The day before, however, the priest had shown less nerve. Pulled out of a hearing in another trial, he was informed of what was probably the central government’s decision and returned too agitated to finish his deposition.¹⁴⁴ With execution now inevitable, Tiso said goodbye to a few close relatives, thanked Žabkay, and wrapped himself tightly in the martyr’s mantle.¹⁴⁵ He dispatched no less than three last messages to the Slovak nation. In the longest, he reembraced the “for God and Nation” formula, describing himself as “a martyr for the defense of Christianity against bolshevism.” In another, his sacrifice happened on “the altar of your national right for a distinct, Slovak life!”¹⁴⁶ Tiso spent his last night in prayer with a Capuchin father. In the early morning, he was allowed to celebrate Mass in the prison chapel.¹⁴⁷

Žabkay witnessed Tiso’s execution, which he described as botched. The gallows had no trap. Instead, a rope was tied under the obese priest’s armpits and he was hoisted aloft by means of a pulley at the top of the execution post. Another rope, which ran through a pulley at the bottom of the post, gripped his feet. The noose was a third rope. On the command of the hangman, the rope holding Tiso’s weight was dropped, the rope attached to his legs was yanked, while the hangman jerked on the noose. In theory, this technique would snap Tiso’s neck. It did not. He suffocated, convulsing on the rope. A large metal crucifix reportedly slipped from his hands to the concrete floor, “resounding like a bell in the terrible silence.”¹⁴⁸

His body was buried according to Catholic rites in an undisclosed location. A few hundred mourners, taking a fresh grave in a Bratislava cemetery as his, quickly made it into a memorial. Other sympathizers began circulating mimeographed prayers to him.¹⁴⁹ Days after his execution, the National Court in Prague sentenced Rudolf Beran, Tiso’s Czech counterpart in the Second Republic, to twenty years in prison.¹⁵⁰ The next month, the Slovak National Court sentenced Mach to thirty. The contrast with Tiso’s punishment provoked an outcry in Slovakia. For his supporters, Tiso had fallen victim to Czech and Communist juridical

assassins. Although the Democrats in response ousted Daxner from the National Court, the central government quickly overturned the decision, highlighting the Democrats' increasing impotence. In fall 1947, the Communists then began purging and criminalizing their Slovak rivals, centralizing control of Slovakia after the Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia the next year.¹⁵¹

"Blank Pages"

Tiso's memory instantly became a field of struggle. Under Stalinism, Slovakia's domestic historians reduced him to a "clerical fascist," war criminal, and traitor. In opposition, Slovak émigrés glorified him as a Slovak nationalist, anti-Communist, and even saint. In 1989, as domestic historians surveyed the damage done to their credibility through their association with communism, the émigrés brought their version of Tiso "home." The émigrés aimed to fill in the "blank pages," or censored "truth," about Slovak history and to renew Slovak independence. At its worst, the ensuing conflict was fuel for an ultranationalist attempt to reconstruct Slovak society, helping to destabilize Czechoslovakia. At its best, the debate inspired a thoughtful reassessment of Tiso and encouraged Slovaks to grapple with the legacy of collaboration. This second result was in part due to the domestic historians, who regrouped and effectively contested the émigrés' telling of the past.

The immediate postwar histories written by Ľudák opponents relished in denouncing Tiso as a traitor and a fascist. Beneš condemned him for "*stabbing [his] own nation in the back*."¹⁵² The Social Democrat Ivan Dérer hammered on the Magyarone charge, arguing that Tiso could "never get rid of his . . . Tuka-like character."¹⁵³ The Slovak Democrat Jozef Lettrich focused on Tiso's "betrayal" of the uprising, which the author had co-led.¹⁵⁴ As a fascist, Tiso was conflated with the Nazis. A well-circulated image from a Jewish and Marxist publication showed him snapping up an SS-style salute, his face ostensibly smeared with fanaticism. (The image was doctored; in the original, he instead enthusiastically pointed a finger forward.)¹⁵⁵ Stalinist histories characterized him as an "apostle of national socialism," or referred to his regime as "an open fascist dictatorship" that held power only "through terror."¹⁵⁶ "Clerical fascist" became the preferred category for understanding him. Often describing a fusion between fascism and religious politics, it has been used by scholars for decades.¹⁵⁷ In Stalinist Czechoslovakia, however, it justified the persecution of Catholics and Ľudáks. The term "clerofascism," a variant, became pejorative. The postwar dean of Slovak historians, Ľubomír Lipták, likened it to "Judeo-bolshevism," which also aimed "to compromise one [component] with the other and both mutually."¹⁵⁸ An excerpt from the 1951 show trial of Bishop Buzalka succinctly captures the technique in action:

Prosecutor: Who suppressed the Slovak National Uprising?

Buzalka: The Germans.

Prosecutor: Who called in those Germans?

Buzalka: Dr. Tiso.

Prosecutor: On whom did Tiso lean in the first place?

Buzalka: On the high Church hierarchy.¹⁵⁹

In this discourse, the uprising was light to Tiso's dark. For Lettrich, the revolt proved that Slovaks were committed to "Czechoslovakia and Western democratic ideals."¹⁶⁰ For the Communists, the uprising as Marxist revolution legitimated their rule. Glorifying Soviet partisans also repackaged Soviet hegemony as "liberation."¹⁶¹

A *Ludák* diaspora meanwhile cultivated a countermyth of Tiso as a Slovak patriot, a victim of circumstance, and a martyr. This school was founded by Tiso's exiled functionaries: *Ďurčanský* and his protégé *Kirschbaum*, for example, or the *Ludák* propagandist *Konštatín Čulen*.¹⁶² A younger generation, represented by *Milan S. Ďurica* and *František Vnuk*, then came to the fore. The émigrés based their portrait of Tiso on his cult of personality, on his trial defense, and on personal experiences with him. As the Cold War evolved, the émigrés leaned more on anticommunism to sell their cause. *Beneš* became "Stalin's stooge" and Tiso the principled president who supposedly declined a Soviet offer to collaborate.¹⁶³ This literature at times was hagiography: Tiso was "among the bravest, the noblest and [most] morally perfect expressions of human effort for good, for justice, and for right and freedom."¹⁶⁴ More often, the émigrés preferred the form of scholarship. Adapting to the values of the West, a second home for many of them, they began to characterize Tiso as a democrat, both as a genuine leader and as a defender of democratic values and structures.¹⁶⁵ In justifying his alliance with Germany, his authoritarianism, or his role in the Holocaust, the émigrés portrayed him "as a forced or passive participant, more victim than initiator."¹⁶⁶ *Ďurica*, a professor in Italy and a Roman Catholic priest, celebrated Tiso as a Nazi opponent who saved the lives of thirty-five thousand Jews. In this moral order, the uprising was the problem, not Tiso. *Vnuk*, working in Australia, characterized the revolt as a Protestant conspiracy, a collaboration with the Soviets, and a betrayal of the nation.¹⁶⁷

As Czechoslovakia de-Stalinized in the 1960s, historians in Slovakia reevaluated Tiso and his state. At a conference on the twentieth anniversary of the uprising, *Eubomír Lipták* differentiated him from the Slovak radicals. The next year, *Lipták* published an article on the Salzburg summit that made clear Tiso's conflicts with the Germans.¹⁶⁸ The historian also eschewed the term "clerical fascist." *Ivan Kamenec* followed in these footsteps, publishing pathbreaking work on the Holocaust in Slovakia, including an article on the deportations that Tiso ordered in 1938. *Kamenec*, like *Lipták*, recognized the ambivalence of Tiso's relationship

with the Germans. At the same time, Kamenec drew a devastating portrait of a man and a regime set on solving the Jewish Question “according to their own ideas.”¹⁶⁹ During the 1960s, the Holocaust in Slovakia also became a topic of public discussion. The film *The Shop on Main Street*, which won a 1965 Oscar, focused on Slovak guilt in the 1942 deportations. Three years later, the Bratislava journal *Cultural Life* published a rebuttal of sorts. Ladislav Hoffmann, an amateur historian and convert from Judaism, blamed the tragedy instead on the Germans and Slovak radicals. The Slovak Catholic hierarchy and Tiso, in contrast, supposedly had shielded thirty-five thousand Jews. This myth might have prompted prosecution a decade earlier. In the context of liberalization, but also of a shift to official antisemitism after the 1967 Arab-Israeli conflict, it was merely refuted by the Slovak-Israeli historian Yeshayahu A. Jelinek.¹⁷⁰

The 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact armies shut down this reevaluation of Tiso and his state. The invading powers feared that the reform communism of the Prague Spring would “spill over” their borders. Gustav Husák took control of Czechoslovakia, overseeing a repressive period dubbed “normalization.” *Cultural Life* was shut down, *The Shop on Main Street* was banned, and plans for a scholarly conference on Tiso were scuttled. The Husák regime black-listed Lipták as a historian. Kamenec had his dissertation accepted but was unable to get it published. Holocaust scholarship would be neglected in Slovakia for two decades.¹⁷¹ “Normalization” also rolled back interpretive trends on Tiso and the wartime state. A 1983 study on the postwar trials, for example, lumped him, Mach, and Ďurčanský together as having “intensively prepared the breakup of the republic from the beginning of 1938.”¹⁷² Tiso typically became a “clerical fascist” again (although rarely a “traitor” or “Magyarone”). The uprising, which Husák had co-led, became a cornerstone of legitimacy for his regime, the importance of Communist leadership to the revolt exaggerated. Jozef Jablonický, the preeminent expert on the uprising, became a dissident in response.¹⁷³ In the 1980s, however, domestic Slovak historians began to return to the trends of the reform period.¹⁷⁴

In December 1989, Communist rule imploded in Czechoslovakia during the Velvet Revolution, releasing energies for rehabilitating Tiso. The elderly Pavol Čarnogurský created a sensation with a lecture that praised Tiso while criticizing the uprising.¹⁷⁵ More important, Ľudák émigrés, who saw themselves as guardians of Slovak independence, returned.¹⁷⁶ Their exile in the West supposedly had protected them from the denationalizing pressures of totalitarianism, also making them ostensible experts on democracy.¹⁷⁷ Most influential were again Vnuk and Ďurica, both of whom easily gained access to university audiences and mainstream publications. Well funded, they also had a supply of literature ready to fill in the “blank pages” of Slovak history.¹⁷⁸ While some audiences welcomed the émigré message, a prominent April 1990 interview by Vnuk drew widespread condemnation. Vnuk argued that criticism of the Slovak state was a symptom of

brainwashing. He described Tiso's rehabilitation as "just a matter of time" and Slovak independence as "a gold coin" that kept its value even if passed through Hitler's hands. Although Vnuk deplored the destruction of Slovak Jewry, he blamed it exclusively on Hitler. Slovak antisemitism, in turn, stemmed from Jewish hostility to the Slovak nation. Offended readers typically criticized Vnuk's arguments as "racist ideas and infamous Ľudák half-truths."¹⁷⁹

Dynamics of the Velvet Revolution facilitated this drive for Tiso's rehabilitation. The call to purge history books of Communist distortions encouraged revisiting the wartime state.¹⁸⁰ The demand to rehabilitate communism's victims easily expanded from dissidents, to Catholics, to Ľudáks.¹⁸¹ The need for a new constitution revived grievances over Slovak autonomy. The 1968 federalization of the state had created separate Czech and Slovak republics, each with a parliament (national council) that could veto federal legislation. Under communism, this right had been for show. Now, it threatened to make the state dysfunctional.¹⁸² The development of a multiparty system meanwhile created patrons for Tiso's rehabilitation. The largest Slovak party, Public against Violence, had led the Velvet Revolution in Slovakia. Needing more than just a liberal power base, the party brought in former reform Communists, such as Alexander Dubček, the Slovak leader of the Prague Spring. The Christian Democratic Movement—led by the Catholic dissident Ján Čarnogurský, Pavol's son—countered these liberal and Communist influences with Christian (Catholic) politics. Even though the Christian Democrats had a Ľudák wing, the younger Čarnogurský distanced the party from Tiso's regime. So did the Slovak National Party, cofounded by a domestic historian, Anton Hrnko. Yet the party's radical wing positioned itself as Ľudák heirs, already using Tiso as a symbol during the campaign for June 1990 parliamentary elections.¹⁸³

Post-communist Czechoslovak politics nationalized rapidly. Tensions between Czech and Slovak parliamentarians erupted in 1990 over renaming the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. The Czechs mainly wanted to delete the word "Socialist," but the Slovaks also wanted to switch to "Czecho-Slovak." The conflict sparked a parliamentary row ("The Great Hyphen War") and heated demonstrations in Bratislava.¹⁸⁴ Some Czechs wearied of Slovak demands. In May 1990, Ludvík Vaculík, a leading figure of the Prague Spring, published this pointed commentary: "Milan Šimečka [a prominent dissident], my Czech friend in Bratislava, wrote to us that the Slovak younger brother had grown up, wanted his own bed, and the Czech older brother ought to give it to him. But we know this younger brother—he will want his bed by the window in the summer and by the stove in the winter. No bed for you, brother, you have your own house."¹⁸⁵ For Stanislav Křeček, a deputy in the Czech National Council, the demand for Tiso's rehabilitation symbolized the fragility of the common state. In spring 1990, the deputy complained of a well-distributed magazine calling for Tiso's beatification by the Catholic Church. Referring to constitutional negotiations between the two republics, Křeček argued

that “We will . . . [make] the hardest and most difficult concessions, so long as they lead to the unity of this republic. But if they are just the first steps toward the breakup of this state, then I think that they are useless.”¹⁸⁶ Slovak-Hungarian tensions also flared. Slovak nationalists adamantly opposed ethnic Hungarian parties in Slovakia. The Hungarian government, in contrast, championed them, raising the specter of irredentism.¹⁸⁷

Public against Violence and the Christian Democrats won the June 1990 elections in Slovakia. As losers, the Slovak Nationalists fared unexpectedly well, gaining 14 percent of the vote. The two winning parties formed a government headed by Vladimír Mečiar, from Public against Violence. A reform Communist purged in 1968, Mečiar was otherwise a colorless figure. He had worked for years as a private lawyer, reentering politics in 1989 reportedly as Dubček’s protégé. A priority for Mečiar’s government was to win Slovak autonomy within the federation, a program with wide support in Slovakia.¹⁸⁸

Soon after the elections, Tiso became the focus of a national debate. A group in Bánovce dedicated a plaque to him as a local educator and president. The Bishop of Nitra, Ján Korec, attended the ceremony, also ordering a *Te Deum*, or hymn of praise, sung in Tiso’s honor. Czechoslovakia’s leaders, including Mečiar, condemned these events as evoking “brown” totalitarianism. Slovak intellectuals warned that such scandals could block Slovakia’s “return to Europe.”¹⁸⁹ The Slovak Christian Democrats, in contrast, defended the plaque, arguing that Tiso’s contributions to the nation should be separated from his responsibility for the wartime state. The former could be honored; the latter should be “objectively” reevaluated.¹⁹⁰ Public interest in the debate was high. Demands to prosecute the plaque’s sponsors turned into a discussion on the fairness of Tiso’s trial before devolving into a squabble over whether the Allies had officially named Tiso as a war criminal (they had not).¹⁹¹ Korec’s endorsement of the memorial confused many people. As a dissident, the bishop had stressed Slovak guilt in the 1942 deportations, yet he now defended Tiso with émigré arguments. Did this mean that the Slovak hierarchy had yet to disown the Ľudák legacy? Or did Korec speak a suppressed truth?¹⁹² In contrast, it was clear to virtually everyone that the Slovak historical establishment could not be trusted to explain Tiso. The experts consulted on this issue were instead dissidents like Jozef Jablonický, moral authorities like Korec, “witnesses” like the elderly Žabkay, or émigrés. The debate lost steam when Bánovce city authorities, tired of the controversy, removed the plaque after it had been vandalized with red paint.¹⁹³

The cracks in the Czechoslovak polity widened. In talks on the constitution, Mečiar’s Czech partners rejected proposals for a confederation and complained about Slovak separatism. Mečiar, who apparently still supported federation, also distanced himself from independence.¹⁹⁴ The Slovak governing coalition, however, kept losing voters to the Slovak Nationalists, who were polling 20 percent support

in fall 1990 and moving quickly toward open separatism. They and the *Matica slovenská* mobilized followers against the ethnic Hungarian minority. A massive October rally in Bratislava demanded an exclusionary language law.¹⁹⁵ Mečiar increasingly played to such sentiments, talking tough about Hungary, forging ties with the *Matica*, and grandstanding in opposition to Czechs and federalists.¹⁹⁶

Domestic Slovaks now pushed forward Tiso's rehabilitation. Most notably, the journalist Ján Smolec packaged memoirs by Žabkay and Rašla as the first post-Communist book on Tiso. Although it encouraged a useful discussion on the failings of the trial, the book also gave Smolec an opportunity to spread nationalist intolerance. In one article—during an early 1991 political crisis, discussed below—he parroted a Vnuk argument that no one could have stopped Hitler from exterminating Europe's Jews. Compared to the year before, the claim traveled largely unchallenged through the Slovak media.¹⁹⁷ "Let's suppose that Tiso was a criminal," Smolec argued. "Then what was . . . Beneš, who has on [his conscience] the deaths of more than two hundred thousand Germans? When they were expelled from our state—by the way, after the war—even German women and children were cruelly murdered! What kind of criminal was the workers' president [Klement] Gottwald? He sent tens of thousands of innocent people to the gallows and prisons."¹⁹⁸ Such belligerent, hyperbolic relativism characterized the campaign to rehabilitate Tiso. So also did a desire to turn the tables of justice and invert history: Tiso wasn't the war criminal, Beneš was. As nationalist passions grew, turning the tables took on a menacing edge. An early 1991 seminar with Žabkay and Rašla nearly came to violence as young nationalists threatened Tiso's old prosecutor. The frail Žabkay defused the situation by defending him.¹⁹⁹

In 1991, Slovak politics was gripped by constitutional, economic, and partisan crisis. Czechoslovakia had extensively decentralized, but Slovakia still lacked control over economic policy. The central government favored "shock therapy," or a rapid conversion to capitalism. The policy was unattractive in Slovakia, where unemployment was double that in the Czech Republic. In early March, ultranationalists petitioned the Slovak National Council to declare "sovereignty," or—roughly speaking—an aggressively formulated confederation.²⁰⁰ Public against Violence meanwhile came apart at the seams. The party's liberal wing preferred federation, "shock therapy," and a lustration law for purging Communist collaborators. Mečiar's reform Communist wing wanted more decentralization, gradual economic transition, and no lustration. Mečiar's personality was another point of contention. His colleagues criticized him as power hungry and demagogic, accusing him of blackmailing his own ministers with Communist secret police files.²⁰¹ The liberals forced through a party resolution calling for his resignation, but Mečiar refused to go. Enjoying substantial backing within the party and from the Slovak public, he portrayed the conflict as a Prague-backed conspiracy.²⁰² Demonstrators swamped Bratislava, one rally drawing forty thousand Slovaks in support

of “sovereignty.” In response, the prime minister of the Czech Republic announced that “we want a common state, but not at any cost”—a twist on Hlinka’s old slogan.²⁰³ A prominent Czech journalist accused Dubček, a Mečiar backer, of paving the way for national socialism. Such criticism struck even antinationalist Slovaks as chauvinistic.²⁰⁴

This crisis intersected dramatically with the campaign to rehabilitate Tiso. Slovak ultranationalists called a Bratislava rally on 14 March, the anniversary of the Slovak state. The Czech government warned that honoring Tiso’s state “could not but taint our attitude toward Slovak politics.”²⁰⁵ Slovak newspapers meanwhile were filled with premonitions that “our culture, our honor, and possibly also our future” was at stake.²⁰⁶ Worried for the federation, Czechoslovak president Václav Havel, the symbol of the Velvet Revolution, traveled to Bratislava. (Mečiar was away at the time on official business.) Havel addressed Slovaks that evening, advising them that there was no “third way” between “a viable, real, and functioning federation, based on equal partnership” and Slovak independence. He also urged them to follow “the path of law, of a civilized state, and of high political standards.”²⁰⁷ These comments apparently referred to a shocking incident from the ultranationalist rally that afternoon, at which several thousand people had shown up. The protesters, who were disproportionately elderly but included skinheads, often carried portraits of Tiso. The rally’s main speaker, the MP Stanislav Pánis, praised 14 March as “one of the greatest and most holy dates in the history of [our] nation.”²⁰⁸ A poor-quality recording of Tiso’s last broadcast was even played. Without proper security or planning, Havel decided to drop in on this scene. When the demonstrators noticed him, “some three hundred people shouting ‘Judas, Judas,’ ‘Czechs are greedy’ and ‘Havel, Havel,’ and swinging flagpoles lunged towards the presidential group. Several broke through a security cordon, shoving the President hard before he was bundled into a car. The anti-Havel protesters kicked and spat on the vehicle before it drove away.”²⁰⁹

This attack on Havel contributed to the split of Czechoslovakia. Most Slovaks reacted to the incident with shame, outrage, and concern for the federation and their “return to Europe.”²¹⁰ At the same time, Havel was accused of poor judgment and even of staging a provocation aimed at discrediting Slovaks. For Czechs, the incident confirmed a view of Slovakia as immature, irrational, and quasi-fascist. For Slovaks, press coverage of the attack strengthened a belief that the world unfairly saw them as a nationalist backwater.²¹¹ Mečiar immediately seized on these tensions. “[There’s already been] so much talk about Slovak nationalism,” he remarked. “It’s time to start talking also about Czech chauvinism.”²¹² Kicked out of office, he built a new Populist nationalist party, the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, or HZDS, according to its Slovak acronym. In 1992 elections, Mečiar ran as the defender of Slovakia, HZDS winning by a landslide. Reinstated as prime minister, he resumed constitutional negotiations with a new

Czech counterpart, Václav Klaus. HZDS by this time was circulating unworkable schemes for confederation that reportedly borrowed from Tuka's 1921 proposal for Slovak autonomy.²¹³ Klaus's party instead insisted on a functioning federation. The talks quickly deadlocked, and the governments agreed to part ways. Slovakia turned independent on 1 January 1993. In covering the event, Western media often focused on images of Tiso that were displayed during celebrations.²¹⁴

Tiso's return as a symbol of Slovak statehood especially grated on several domestic Slovak historians, mainly from Bratislava's Historical Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (or SAV, according to its Slovak acronym). Moral and political issues aside, the rehabilitation reflected badly on these historians as professionals. After 1989, the Slovak public had ignored their expertise, listening instead to amateurish émigrés and their domestic allies spreading myths about Tiso, such as the claim that rabbis had appealed for him to remain in office. The émigré camp also often impugned the integrity of SAV historians. Vnuk, for example, accused them of speaking "half-truths."²¹⁵ This state of affairs was only partly the émigrés' fault. The deeper cause was that the public associated the Slovak academy with communism.

Well aware of this fact, one of the first steps SAV historians took during the revolution was to make Ľubomír Lipták, a victim of "normalization," the director of the Historical Institute. Soon after taking office, Lipták spoke frankly to his colleagues about their predicament: "I have been leafing through [our work] again. There are thousands of pages there, thousands of facts, the majority of them by themselves true and maybe even important. And yet, the voice of the public is unanimous: Where is our history? Why are you keeping it secret from us? And if you are already writing about it, why are you lying?" In Lipták's view, the domestic historians had been rightly condemned for "the mass of simplification and sometimes outright lies" that they had passed off as scholarship. But the revolution had transformed the historians' shame into a public catastrophe: "[Among the masses] spreads a notion about liberating history as a change of pretexts—what was minus, should be plus, what was praised, should . . . be condemned. The destruction of historical knowledge . . . has gone so far today that there are really no facts . . . that we could assume for uncontested." Lipták challenged his peers to prove that "we are not useless, we are not parasites, we are not liars." His strategy for doing so was simple. Slovak historians needed to organize, revise, and publicize. "If our enemies seem huge," Lipták concluded, "it is only because we are on our knees. / Let's stand up."²¹⁶

Heeding Lipták's call, a group of historians indeed "stood up." The key individuals were from the Historical Institute: Lipták, Kamenec, Dušan Kováč, and Valerián Bystrický. Over the next decade, the larger group (which I will refer to as Academy historians) overhauled Slovak historiography in relation to the Slovak state. Much of this new scholarship emerged from conferences.²¹⁷ Kamenec

and later Eduard Nižňanský, among others, also built an impressive literature on the Holocaust in Slovakia.²¹⁸ The Academy historians tended to be neoempiricist, favoring facts over interpretation, a typical post-Communist approach. Memoirs and document collections, particularly on the Holocaust in Slovakia, flourished for the same reason.²¹⁹ Through newspaper articles, interviews, and the institute's journal for popular history, these historians reestablished credibility with much of the Slovak public. The émigrés and their domestic allies could not compete, despite enjoying the resources of the Matica slovenská and at times the Slovak Ministry of Education. Once the public grew familiar with the émigrés' work, which was increasingly associated with scurrilous publications, this alternate vision of Tiso and the wartime state lost appeal.²²⁰ By 1998—although only in part owing to the Academy historians—the attempt to rehabilitate Tiso and the wartime Slovak state had been contained.

A turning point in this uneven struggle was a 1992 conference on Tiso, organized by the Historical Institute, which brought together the competing camps. The very fact of the conference was a victory for the émigrés, as the Academy historians had wanted to concentrate on other topics.²²¹ During the conference, however, the latter camp triumphed by demonstrating its willingness to reevaluate Tiso critically. Lipták, in his opening address, repudiated both the term “clerical-fascist” and the Dérer tradition of interpreting the Ludáks as a fifth column. Other historians explored the political manipulation of Tiso's trial, debunked myths on his betrayal of the uprising, or reconstructed neglected periods of his life.²²² The émigré camp, in contrast, stuck to its guns. Vnuk, for example, continued to reduce Tiso's trial to “political revenge,” denying it any legitimacy. This camp's most impressive contribution was by a young Catholic intellectual, Róbert Letz, who made a vigorous case for Tiso's early Slovak national consciousness. At the other end of the scholarly spectrum, the amateur historian Gabriel Hoffmann claimed without any evidence that Tiso had saved forty thousand Jews through the presidential exemption. The conference accordingly was criticized for legitimizing myths. At the same time, it revealed the weakness of the émigré case by putting it alongside the academicians'. The first public swayed as a result was the community of Slovak domestic historians themselves, few of whom now saw further use in the émigré vision.²²³

The next year, polemics over the Slovak National Uprising inspired Academy historians to be more assertive. In 1993, the Matica slovenská sponsored an anti-uprising seminar in Bratislava that excluded the academicians. The message of *Dies ater* (black day) was summed up by the cover of the proceedings: a crude drawing of two rifles, one with a swastika and another with the Soviet star, shooting into the bleeding heart of Slovakia. Among the participants was Eva Slavkovská, a former SAV historian noted for doctrinaire Marxist scholarship who was now a radical in the Slovak Nationalists. Ján Bobák, another former Communist historian now

in the Matica slovenská, meanwhile denounced the uprising in another venue as an “August putsch” undertaken by domestic traitors.²²⁴ Such rhetoric did not set well with most Slovaks, who admired the uprising and had few complaints about how the academicians had revised its history.²²⁵ These historians had quickly dropped interpretations of the uprising as Marxist revolution, stressing instead its democratic credentials. In connection with the émigré camp, the Historical Institute also explored the revolt’s uglier features, such as atrocities committed by partisans against German civilians.²²⁶ During a 1994 conference, Academy historians staunchly defended the memory of the uprising. “Despite its imperfections and especially the distortion of its goals in the postwar development of Slovakia,” Kamenec argued, “[the uprising’s] anti-fascist aims, in harmony with resistance throughout Europe, remain the . . . most important criteria for evaluating it.”²²⁷ The combative Jablonický denounced by name pro-Tiso historians, also bitterly noting: “During the *Dies ater* seminar, at the mention of [Tiso], the participants stood up and applauded. How many of them before November 1989 [also] applauded Husák?”²²⁸

This fight over Tiso and the uprising mirrored the polarization of Slovak politics. After returning to office, Mečiar became ever more authoritarian, corrupt, and demagogic. As a result, he began to lose allies. One such, the new republic’s first president, Michal Kováč (the Academy historian Dušan’s brother), soon forced Mečiar out of office again. The Slovak Nationalists meanwhile became extremists. Led now by Ján Slota, they and the Matica slovenská pushed ultranationalism as the model for Slovak society. Their program would eventually call for Tiso’s rehabilitation.²²⁹ Some members of Mečiar’s HZDS (such as Ján Smolec, now a party publicist) took similar positions. Mečiar won another parliamentary election in 1994, forming his third government with the Slovak Nationalists (who barely made it into parliament with 5.4 percent of the vote) and an ephemeral far-left party. He reversed most of the interim government’s reforms, packed the state administration with loyalists, and became fixated with politically destroying Michal Kováč. Most notoriously, the president’s son was kidnapped, transported across the Austrian border, and dumped in front of a police station—a ploy aimed at forcing the younger Kováč’s extradition on an outstanding German warrant in a fraud case. The former deputy director of the Slovak Security Service later admitted involvement in the kidnapping, identifying Mečiar as its “conceptual leader.”²³⁰ Such thuggery led NATO and the EU to exclude Slovakia so long as Mečiar was in power. By 1994, Slovak society had split over him and the key values that his regime represented: nationalism and a lack of accountability.²³¹ His opponents increasingly warned that Slovakia was sliding behind the wrong side of a new European wall.

This debate about “Mečiarism” meshed with the one about Tiso. “I consider it alarming,” Jablonický declared, “when national fundamentalists of a Ľudák

orientation create a net of common interests . . . with national fundamentalists from the ranks of ex-Communists.”²³² Jablonický’s fears were justified. Mečiar chose the Slovak Nationalists’ Eva Slavkovská as minister of education. The decision worsened Slovakia’s reputation in the West. In 1995, for instance, Slavkovská rejected a challenge from the Council of Europe to fight intolerance, xenophobia, racism, and antisemitism, arguing that “such phenomena did not exist in Slovakia.”²³³ She also put a chronology by Ďurica into the curriculum while rejecting a new textbook by Kováč and Kamenec. Around the same time, the government proposed placing the Historical Institute under the *Matica slovenská*. The approaching fiftieth anniversary of Tiso’s execution meanwhile inspired adulatory publications and memorials, from pilgrimages to Altötting, the site of his 1945 capture, to a Bratislava exhibition sponsored by the *Matica*.²³⁴ Going on the counterattack, Academy historians appealed for international support while releasing a damning critique of Ďurica’s chronology.²³⁵ Since EU funds had been used to produce the book, an international scandal followed, which the anti-Mečiar forces superbly exploited. Mečiar, who had never admired Tiso, was increasingly portrayed as his political scion.²³⁶ Such issues helped to galvanize the opposition and led to Mečiar’s 1998 fall.

That same year, Kamenec published the first post-Communist biography of Tiso: *The Tragedy of a Priest, a Politician, and a Man*. The paradigm refers to the author’s belief that Tiso should be neither demonized nor sanctified, and that one must distinguish between moral, political, and legal responsibility. Morally, Kamenec found Tiso’s participation in the Holocaust inexcusable. Legally, he eschewed judgment albeit recognizing the trial’s failings. Politically, he saw Tiso as a talented and enthusiastic advocate for Slovak autonomy, but an intolerant authoritarian, far more victimizer than victim. Although noting Tiso’s opposition to German agendas, Kamenec emphasized his responsibility for helping to form a “totalitarian regime with significant fascist elements.”²³⁷ The book’s epigraph—a line from Caesar to Brutus on mastering fate—implies an understanding of Tiso as a traitor. But the text more often defended him in this regard, especially in connection to his actions during the First Republic. Despite its occasional flaws, this slim biography fulfilled its purpose well: it provided the historical revision demanded by the Velvet Revolution while disproving the émigré’s glorification of Tiso. The Academy’s Historical Institute, in the meantime, continued to produce valuable related scholarship, including Tiso’s collected works.²³⁸

Under the governments of Mikuláš Dzurinda, a liberal Christian Democrat, the émigré camp was pushed to the wall. The textbook scandal led to the creation of another Historical Institute under the *Matica slovenská*. But the *Matica* was soon separated from the Slovak National Library and deprived of much government funding. The Slovak Nationalists were gripped by internal power struggles, while newspapers such as Smolec’s *Slovenská republika* closed. Having lost forums,

money, and political backing, the émigré camp seemed headed for extinction. Their 2001 seminar on Tiso, which again excluded the academicians, produced a short, tired, largely pointless collection of papers.²³⁹ Popular support for Tiso and the state reached new lows. When 14 March 2001 was celebrated in Bratislava, a motley crowd of around three hundred pensioners and skinheads faced protesters (including the chairman of the Slovak parliament) who condemned the date as a “day of shame.”²⁴⁰ Slovak membership in the EU simply did not allow for Tiso’s rehabilitation. Slovak politics now stressed tolerance, repudiating the fascist legacy, and embracing a European identity. The scattered pro-Tiso events in Slovakia, such as a 2000 attempt by Slota to dedicate a plaque to Tiso, stirred storms of condemnation. By 2005, the leading pro-Tiso organizations had turned to celebrating the Slovak state privately.²⁴¹

Yet, after Slovakia joined the EU in May 2004, the debate about Tiso partly revived. On the one hand, Slovaks felt less intimidated by the topic now that EU membership had been settled. Tiso became the subject of an award-winning play, while a premier Slovak journal carried him on its cover as Hamlet contemplating poor Yorrick’s skull.²⁴² These discussions of Tiso were typically ambivalent—never adulatory but also uncertain on how much to condemn him. On the other hand, the revival of the debate marked a comeback for the émigrés. Ďurica retreated to the safer territory of religious rather than nationalist history, becoming a star for the Catholic publishing house *Lúč* (Light). In 2006, it published his magnum opus, the first full-length biography of Tiso in nearly thirty years. In connection with its appearance, Ján Korec, now a cardinal, and Ján Sokol, the archbishop of Trnava, praised Tiso or absolved him of responsibility for the abuses of the wartime state. A search for relics began the next spring when a pro-Tiso organization exhumed a body from his alleged grave. After DNA testing supposedly confirmed this corpse as Tiso’s, part of it was reburied in the bishop’s castle in Nitra.²⁴³ These events again provoked widespread controversy in Slovakia.

Ďurica’s 2006 biography is a defiant refusal to yield in the post-Communist debate. The author portrays Tiso as a Slovak nationalist from an early age, a faultless priest, a fierce defender of the Slovak nation, and a victim of historical circumstance, prejudice, and political revenge. This romantic interpretation offers little for understanding Tiso as a historical actor. Empirically, however, Ďurica has indeed contributed to the study of this life. He was the first historian of the Slovak state, for example, to work in West German archives. As a priest himself, he also brings insight to Tiso’s theology and philosophy. Nonetheless, in the 2006 biography, Ďurica is a master of distortion and omission, often propagating or adapting long-debunked myths.²⁴⁴ “Priest-President Tiso,” Ďurica wrote, “personally did not destroy nor did he allow [others] to destroy even a single life, but protected thousands and thousands, Jews the same as Slovaks and other citizens.”²⁴⁵ “The Catholic faithful,” the book concludes, “. . . know that, if it is God’s will, Tiso will

be . . . canonized. And no one can forbid them from praying for it and . . . expressing their convictions.”²⁴⁶

Tiso’s rehabilitation thus becomes an issue of faith, an interpretation that makes the stubbornness of some of his apologists more comprehensible. Cardinal Korec, for instance, suffered greatly and courageously as a Catholic dissident. Defending the “truth” about Tiso might be a way to honor, memorialize, and continue this life struggle. Archbishop Sokol, in contrast, has faced for years devastating evidence that he collaborated with the Communist secret police. Sokol has denied the charges, appealing to the faithful to regard them as the work of enemies who wished to weaken the Catholic Church in the battle against liberalism.²⁴⁷ Tiso’s defense as an article of faith here arguably becomes a way to strengthen a sense that the church is surrounded by hostile liars and to distract Slovak Catholics from coming to terms with uncomfortable history.

Ďurica’s extreme interpretation of Tiso remains the lodestone for much of the émigré camp, but not all of it. Younger nationalist historians tend to be more critical of Tiso, typically admitting his complicity in the Holocaust while arguing that his contributions to the nation and Catholicism should be better recognized. As Ivan Petranský, a historian of the Catholic Church, remarked about the Slovak state: “That there existed a lot of serious negatives, mistakes, and violations of human rights does not mean that there were not also positives.”²⁴⁸ These historians, among the best of whom remains Róbert Letz, often let Catholic and Slovak nationalist agendas shape their work. Some of them also periodically neglect Slovak involvement in the Holocaust.²⁴⁹ But they are far more willing to recognize past reality, especially in this regard, than is Ďurica. The prolific Martin Lacko has even favored a synthesis of the polar interpretations, following Kamenec on human rights, Ďurica on national progress.²⁵⁰

This younger generation, however, is still dogged by the suspicion that it wants to rehabilitate Tiso. In 2007, for example, Petranský was named head of Bratislava’s Institute of National Memory, which documents the crimes of communism but also of the Slovak state. He gained the job as the candidate of Slota’s Slovak Nationalists, temporarily back in government as junior partners of another Populist Slovak prime minister, Róbert Fico. Much of the contentious debate over the appointment focused on Petranský’s presence at a 2005 private celebration of the Slovak state. Since winning the post, Petranský has built a team of historians that has struck some observers as a neo-Ľudák cabal.²⁵¹ The institute has done a brisk trade in publications on the Slovak state, much of this scholarship being of high quality. Yet the focus on the state seems disproportionate, as the institute’s archive has few relevant holdings.²⁵² Among these publications were Sidor’s diaries, edited by Vnuk. His introduction to the first volume was criticized for ignoring the radical’s antisemitism. Petranský defended the publication as an expression of the “diversity of scientific research and interpretation.”²⁵³

In 2004, on the first All Souls' Night after Slovakia joined the EU, I visited Tiso's grave. At the time, I thought that the debate about his rehabilitation was finished, but I was curious to see if I would find any visitors there. I did not. But, to my surprise, I did discover the gravesite covered with lit candles. Scholarship and public debate does not change the popular memory of Tiso easily. Slovaks, it is true, were less likely to view him favorably in 2005 compared to the previous decade. In 2005, nearly 13 percent of survey respondents looked at him "very unfavorably" while less than 5 percent did so "very favorably." The bulk of the responses to this survey fell in the middle, generally tending toward rejecting him.²⁵⁴ Clearly, Tiso is neither saint nor devil for most Slovaks. But they have yet to sort out exactly what this gray judgment means within the contexts of Catholicism, Slovak nationalism, and human rights.

From Man to Symbols

In 1944, as German forces drove Slovak rebels back toward Banská Bystrica, a Czechoslovak broadcast featured a poem by Janko Jesenský, Tiso's old foe from Bán and Nitra. "He who wants to be an apostle for the nation," the poem read,

cannot be caught in the devil's workshop.

He must have clean thoughts, a clean reputation,
clean speech, clean hands, clean actions!

Falcon, hero, *Vodka*, apostle—

Such titles that you've confiscated for yourself!

But you've only grown fatter than you were before:

Sparrow, weakling, thief, and devil!²⁵⁵

In August 1944, Tiso had a chance to change such judgments. He could not, of course, shed the odium of collaboration or ethnic cleansing. But, in the immediate postwar Slovak environment, it was his betrayal of the Slovak National Uprising that was most unforgivable. Admittedly, it would have been risky to abandon his office rather than work with the Germans to suppress the revolt. If he had joined the rebels, they probably would have arrested him at best, making it likely that he would have ended up either executed by the Germans or imprisoned by the Soviets.²⁵⁶ But what if he instead had fled to a Viennese monastery? The Germans probably would have let him go. He had never really betrayed them, after all. And postwar Slovakia would have been inclined to make accommodations for him as it did for Mach. This result would have been even more likely if Tiso had cooperated with the postwar order and behaved "decently" during his trial, that is, contritely and submissively. What probably would not have changed was the

Communist decision to use his execution as a political weapon against the Slovak Democrats.

Tiso did not walk away from the Slovak presidency for two reasons. First, he was frightened. Initially, he was unsure what was going on in his country. He worried for his personal safety. And he dreaded the prospects of the coming cataclysm of German defeat—best to stave it off and hope for the miracle of a separate peace between Germany and the Western Allies. Second, Tiso could not reconcile himself to the failure of his vision. It was his duty to stay in place, to save what could be saved, to continue to stand up for the truth of Catholic and Slovak nationalist politics. His decision to work with the Germans captures especially well the dual nature of his character. He was indeed an opportunist, willing to “feel every breeze” and “swim in every stream.”²⁵⁷ Yet he was also an idealist. He chose to cling to the state and to the alliance with Germany as a demonstration of his principles and the rightness of his cause. “I am conscious of the consequences,” he told the Young Ludáks in 1944. “If, despite this, I preach that I must bravely stand by my words, I maintain that I will win everywhere and in every situation with this currency. Everyone must honor integrity in the end.”²⁵⁸ Collaboration during the war’s endgame, however, was not prudent. It only led Tiso ever deeper into subordination to the Germans, compromising him in the eyes of the “nation” with ever more contemptible acts.

During his 1946–47 trial, Tiso acted as an obstinate alchemist trying to transmute the lead of collaboration into the gold of resistance. Since 1925, he had for the most part favored collaborating with his enemies, trying to co-opt rather than defeat them. In 1945, he saw nothing more to gain by this strategy. This change reveals much about what was important to him. Cooperating with the National Court, again, might have saved his life. His concern instead was to defend his dignity, authority, and moral legitimacy, as well as that of his movement and church. “They would interpret [my remorse],” he reportedly told his attorney Žabkay, “to mean that they had broken [me] and that [I] had acknowledged [my] guilt.”²⁵⁹ Tiso’s recalcitrance during the trial, I suspect, was less a personal vanity than an ingrained habit of his political culture and clerical training. The “mind,” Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises* advised, should be “prompt to find reasons in . . . defense [of all Church precepts] and in no manner against them.”²⁶⁰ Tiso transferred this practice from faith to politics. To admit guilt was to betray his movement by handing a weapon to an iniquitous enemy. Becoming a martyr, in contrast, strengthened his cause.

Tiso’s trial significantly bolstered his claim to martyrdom. The legislation governing the trial predetermined his guilt and sentence. The indictment ludicrously portrayed him as never having been loyal to Czechoslovakia. Daxner’s unprofessional behavior, especially the packing of the jury with Communists, sapped the court’s claim to impartiality, while Beneš’s personal desire to see Tiso hang reinforced a view of the court as an instrument of Czech vengeance. The inequality

of the punishment meted out to Mach in comparison to Tiso, and the Communist manipulation of the trial and Tiso's execution, added yet more reasons to reject the court's verdict. Slovaks were supposed to believe that Tiso had betrayed them. Yet many felt instead that he had protected their interests. The postwar order thus worked against its own aim: to discredit Tiso and his politics. By engaging in "revolutionary justice," postwar Czechoslovakia created a host of reasons to deny Tiso's guilt, especially for crimes against humanity. At the same time, these failings were simply the nature of European retribution.

Was Tiso's execution a mistake? It is intriguing to imagine the priest finishing his days confined to a monastery. Would he have wasted away into irrelevance, as some Slovak nationalists feared would be the case?²⁶¹ Would this victory for the Slovak Democrats have aided them against the Communists? After the Velvet Revolution, would his less powerful claim to martyrdom have made Slovaks less susceptible to the émigrés' agendas? The postwar and post-Communist struggles about him probably would have been less intense. Yet I doubt that Slovak history would have changed much. Even at the height of the drive to rehabilitate him in the 1990s, he was only important to a fraction of Slovakia's inhabitants.

After his execution, Tiso was remembered as polar, competing symbols. As he would have liked it, the émigrés made his memory their sacred center—just a different version of Lenin's waxy corpse in Red Square. For the Communists, especially during Stalinism, Tiso became the counter pole of progressivism, the epitome of the dangers that lurked within Catholicism and Slovak nationalism. In the 1960s, this paradigm was broken, but less so by the "free" émigrés than by the "enslaved" domestic historians: Lubomír Lipták and his colleagues at the Academy's Historical Institute. During postcommunism, the émigrés' most valuable contribution was to compel the academicians to revise scholarship on Tiso faster.²⁶²

The Academy historians had plenty of reasons to contest the rehabilitation of Tiso and his state. They were mostly liberals. They were to an extent insulted by the influence of émigré amateurs and the aspersions that they cast. It surely also must have insulted the academicians to see their work suppressed by a less talented former colleague, the Slovak Nationalist Slavkovská. But Academy historians were driven mostly by a desire to see Slovak historiography reflect Slovak history more accurately. Even though both sides often claimed objectivity in this fight, Academy historians founded their claims mainly on the historical record, while the émigrés founded theirs more on a "truth" guarded for a half-century in exile.

"The good must prevail," Primo Levi wrote in another context, "or else the world will be subverted." To an extent, Tiso's memory and historiography is indeed a struggle over perceptions of good and evil. In post-Communist Slovakia, he symbolized political and moral orders that revolved on three axes. As a symbol of political Catholicism, he represented the hopes of traditionalist Catholics to defeat liberalism just as they had communism. For other people, reverence for him

raised concerns over resurgent Catholic intolerance. As a symbol of Slovak nationalism, he inspired some Slovaks to seek their own state. For far more Slovaks, his image evoked instead Mečiar's politics, which locked Slovakia out of Europe. Finally, as a symbol of human rights, Tiso embodied the claims of Catholics and Slovak nationalists that they had been oppressed by Czechs and Communists. More often, his visage conjured up instead the Holocaust. Outside of Slovakia, the attempt to rehabilitate him fed a fear that fascism had crawled out from under an Eastern European rock.

Especially in the 1990s, people had difficulty configuring these three sets of polar views of Tiso so that they mirrored past reality. One can make a strong case that Tiso was a remarkably devout priest and contributed much to the nation's progress. How then to align these positive judgments with the negative reality of Tiso's involvement in the Holocaust? One way is to remove the moral conflict by thinking of Tiso in only positive or negative terms on all three axes. If he was a devout priest and a Slovak patriot, then he must have saved thousands of Jews or else been unable to do otherwise because of the Nazis. Alternatively, if Tiso was deeply implicated in the Holocaust, then he must have been a religious hypocrite and a traitor to the nation. In the 1920s, this same phenomenon helped to shape Tiso's life, only according to two axes: Catholicism and progress for the nation. In that instance, in the eyes of his critics, Tiso's opposition to Czechoslovak centralism made him a backward, Magyarone enemy of the First Republic.

In the present European moral order, the claims of human rights trump those of nationalism, just as the latter (as an expression of progress) earlier trumped those of religion. Catholic politics did not flourish in Czechoslovakia until it adapted itself to Slovak nationalism. In the same way, Slovak nationalism only found a place in the EU once it had accommodated itself to the memory of the Holocaust. So long as this hierarchy of values is contested when interpreting Tiso, he will remain controversial in Slovakia—a friction point that challenges European societies (above all, Slovakia) to reassert the importance of human rights. Only in a moral order that devalues them can Tiso triumph as a martyr.



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Priest, Politician, Collaborator

Ward, James Mace

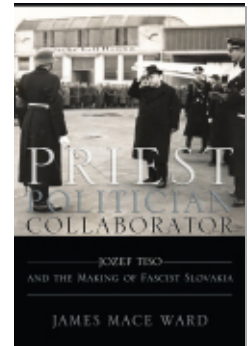
Published by Cornell University Press

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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Conclusion

The Crown of Thorns

The search for complete justice and . . . God's kingdom on earth
is a constant torture for the Catholic politician—
the crown of thorns that usually adorns [his] head.

—Jozef Tiso, 1931

Jozef Tiso's life was a modern, central European story. It began with a culture war, as Catholics contested liberal governments over the content of public life. With the First World War, empires fractured into national states, and identities crystallized along ethnic fault lines. A battle for the soul of Europe broke out between liberalism, fascism, and socialism, culminating in another, more horrendous world war. Life was brutalized and populations homogenized. The state committed itself to securing living standards for its citizens, while local politics became an international affair. Tiso's histories, in turn, were postmodern central European stories: the Cold War, the expansion of the European Union, and the post-Communist struggle to redefine values.

For the most part, Tiso's life rode the currents of the twentieth century. In 1918, he embraced nationalism and the national state, entering politics in part to contest liberalism and socialism. In Versailles Europe, he worked with parliamentary democracy, professing some of its values—tolerance toward minorities, for instance. As right radicalism ascended, he collaborated with fascists, taking his place in Hitler's Europe at the head of the Slovak Republic. Like the time in which he lived, his story is one of moral corruption. His pacifist, Christian ideals did not dissuade him from engaging in conquest, ethnic cleansing, and genocide. Even when swimming against the currents of history, as in his refusal to recognize the moral legitimacy of Bratislava's National Court, he nonetheless moved with this tide as an object of postwar retribution.

Tiso also wanted to go against the modern trend of internationalizing local politics, but he instead succumbed to it. The First World War had destroyed the central and eastern European empires, making the "people" sovereign. But these

sovereigns did not reside comfortably within the borders of their states, rather spilling across them. This tension eroded the distinction that sovereignty previously had sought between foreign and domestic politics.¹ The temptation to intervene on behalf of conationals or other minorities (or for such groups to call for intervention) only increased with the growth of the state, which multiplied the possibilities of interaction. Technological progress meanwhile made it all the easier to exploit them. The telephone and airplane, for example, allowed Tiso's 13 March 1939 trip to Berlin to be accomplished in a matter of hours. The very creation of Czechoslovakia had depended on alliances between Habsburg minorities and Great Power patrons. But, during the First Republic, Tiso had striven to reestablish the firewall between the international and the domestic, arguing that Slovak autonomy should be an exclusively Czechoslovak issue. The long years of frustration that he experienced in republican politics and his inability to compete with Ľudák radicals cured him of this idealism. In 1937, he turned to the American Slovaks, adopting a strategy of applying international pressure to his domestic opponents. The practice culminated in 1939, when Tiso let Hitler use him and the Ľudáks to destroy the republic. Winning in her place an insecure, weak, and incomplete state, Tiso now became the target of such politics. Tuka and Mach became Hitler's protégés. Disgruntled Hungarian and German activists in Slovakia looked to Budapest and Berlin, while the Slovak and Czechoslovak resistance did so to London, Washington, and Moscow. Tiso won a brief victory in these struggles, subordinating the Slovak radicals despite their powerful patron. Yet the internationalization of local politics fundamentally doomed his movement to extinction. He could rely on the Germans to defeat the Slovak National Uprising, but he could find no alternate patron. The war discredited the Ľudák cause. The émigrés could briefly revive it only after 1989. A different understanding of internationalizing the Slovak Question by then prevailed: the conviction that the deportation of Jews from Slovakia was not an issue of progress for the nation but a crime against humanity, and the fear that Tiso's rehabilitation was part of a resurgence of fascism.

The twentieth-century trend of the welfare state engulfed Tiso in a similar way. As a Neo-Thomist, he loathed handouts and dependence on the state. Yet his quest for social and national justice committed him to modernizing Slovakia, to providing its citizens with basic needs, and (less so) to leveling society. He always considered some of these projects, such as electrification, to be the task of the state. Other agendas, such as unemployment relief through workfare, he preferred to push onto the party. In his mind, the distinction between party and state was important, a way to honor Neo-Thomist principles. But the separation in fact was cosmetic, as the party and the state were Siamese twins. During Tiso's life, Slovaks got used to the state providing them educational opportunity (even if through church schools), help against poverty, and the benefits of infrastructure. Social advancement was at the core of Tiso's politics. "Slovakia to the Slovaks" ultimately meant building a

Slovak elite and urban middle class. The Academy historians who contested Tiso's rehabilitation, for example, owed their institutional existence to his regime. His ethnic cleansing helped to reconstitute Bratislava. Between 1930 and 1950, Slovaks grew from perhaps 30 to 90 percent of the city's population, a dramatic change driven in part by Tiso's desire for an irrevocable ethnic claim over the capital.²

Finally, in the grandest of the many ironies of his life, Tiso was partly enveloped by secularization. This "trend" is among the most dubious markers of modernity. The nineteenth century was arguably as much an age of religion as it was of positivism. Globally, faith remains an important source of identity and an inspiration for political action, from American fundamentalism to political Islam. Yet, within twentieth-century Europe, secularization increasingly claimed the public sphere, political Catholics across the continent letting the national override the Catholic. In 1945, with the turn to Christian democracy, they accepted religion as a private affair. By the 1970s, they rarely voted Christian democratic simply because they were Catholic.³ Specifically Catholic politics seeking to restore God in the public sphere would not emerge again in Europe until the fall of communism, and then only in the former East.⁴ On the one hand, Tiso defied this secularization. He was an exceptional political Catholic, winning a culture war for a time and becoming the only Catholic priest besides the pope to head a modern European state. The gains for Slovak Catholicism were far reaching: God returned to the public sphere, churches reclaimed education, citizens were brought under Christian law, as it were.⁵ On the other hand, the struggle to win the culture war secularized Tiso to an extent. He entered politics in part to defend his church, but politics took him over. In 1923, it cost him his brilliant career in the hierarchy. In 1927, he went into government battling mainly for the church. Yet, as a cabinet minister, he tried to avoid criticism that he was mixing religion with politics, instead concentrating on gains for the nation. This trend continued as Tiso became the clerical head of a Christian state. In conflicts with the Vatican and the Slovak hierarchy, he increasingly favored the interests of his regime. In the end, he seems to have grown confused about what the final object of his "exile on earth" was: God or the nation. Tiso's secular policies (collaboration with Hitler and the ethnic cleansing of Slovakia, both of which were driven more by nationalism than Catholicism) ultimately wreaked far worse damage on the Catholic Church than liberal governments ever had. During the Communist regime, his memory became a favored excuse for repressing religion. In postcommunism, the Slovak hierarchy's defense of him again compromised the church, dissipating moral capital built up by years of persecution.

Tiso, of course, did not just float on the tides of history; his legacy is substantial. He helped to create Czechoslovakia, without which there would have been neither the Czech nor Slovak republics of today. He also helped to create the Czechoslovak culture of "mutual betrayal" that made this division possible: Slovak grievances

over “unkept promises” versus Czech bitterness over “stabs in the back.”⁶ His contribution to deepening Slovak national consciousness and stimulating Slovak (or, at least, Ľudák) culture through the experience of statehood is undeniable. The other side of this “achievement” was the destruction of multiculturalism, the impoverishment of central European culture, and genocide.

The century’s world wars gave Tiso’s life its defining shape: four alternating periods of normal and revolutionary time. During the normal periods (1887–1918 and 1919–38), Tiso strove to avoid revolution. During the revolutionary periods (1918–19 and 1938–47), he instead often embraced it. In 1918–19, in addition to war and revolution, Tiso experienced occupation, collaboration, state building, Jewish persecution, Hungarian irredentism, and Communist invasion. He repeated these experiences in 1938–47, applying lessons that he had learned in the earlier period. During revolutionary time, he often employed radical methods as a way to keep the “wrong” people, such as Béla Kun, from capturing the masses. The First Republic tutored him on how to consolidate a state, for instance, by expelling foreign Jews as a security risk. His foray into antisemitic politics in Nitra convinced him that, as a priest, he needed to be a moderate on the issue. Hungary’s 1919 invasion of Czechoslovakia, during which he arguably had to flee for his life, was no doubt a potent memory as he later dealt with Hungarian irredentism and Soviet invasion. Both in 1918–19 and 1938–45, collaboration was his strategy for keeping these and other dangers at bay. The most interesting aspect of this parallel structure is how Tiso’s theology adapted to it. During normal time, he argued that if “love of self” was not balanced with the commandment to “love your neighbor,” it produced an abomination: fascism. During revolutionary time, he insisted instead that “love your neighbor” meant “above all, love yourself.” There is nothing unusual or even necessarily immoral about focusing on self-preservation during dangerous times. But for Tiso, “love of self” justified aggression.

Tiso’s personality was defined by devotion, ambition, and moral certainty. He claimed, not unreasonably, to have lived in service of his church and nation. He was deeply religious, Catholic rituals being the most treasured habits of his life. Tireless, he often toiled at thankless drudgery on behalf of others—tending Bánovce’s finances, for example, when he had more important things to do. Yet his volunteerism was not just about serving but also about winning. He was a political animal, excelling at organizing, infighting, and outflanking. Tiso was a master at capturing the middle, of convincing opposing sides that he belonged to them, and of turning his opponents’ methods against them. The enthusiasm and passion with which he pursued politics was a mark of his ambition. He climbed ladders: educational, hierarchical, and political. In the end, he made himself into the embodiment of Slovak statehood and even vied for the eternal office of martyr. Valuing himself as both a priest and politician, he was touchy about his dignity and authority, given to outbursts when faced with opposition. It is a pity that he

could not converse with his opponents better. Even though fiercely intelligent, Tiso lacked originality and the curiosity of the scholar. Intellectual arguments for him were just tactics for advancing the “truth.” He seemed to think that the solution for Slovaks was simply to be good like him: “Let’s be Guardists of St. Joseph’s type!”⁷ When people failed to follow his model, he understood it as a tragedy of obstinate free will, a turning away from the healing light of Bethlehem.

These contradictions in Tiso’s personality stemmed in part from his predilection for dualism. “The conjunction ‘and’ characterizes us,” the priest-politician wrote in 1932, “God and nation, state and homeland, . . . justice and love, time and eternity.”⁸ Dualism was part of Tiso’s Habsburg heritage: Franz Joseph was emperor and king, literary circles learned for God and homeland, and priests were politicians. Dualism was also an Augustinian inheritance from his teacher Seipel: a view of political Catholicism as an exercise in pursuing the eternal within the confines of the temporal. Catholicism by itself provided other dualities, such as Christ being both God and man.⁹ For Tiso, dualism masked his inability to choose between the conflicting elements of his life, such as his missions of defending the Catholic Church and enacting social (later national) justice. He continually denied the tension between his actions as priest and politician, compartmentalizing his conscience through semantic distinctions and his habits of deniability. In 1939, for example, the Slovak state adopted a *de facto* racial definition of Jews. But, according to Tiso, it did not violate Christian principles because it addressed the “economic and social significance” of Jews rather than “issues of faith or ethics.”¹⁰ Such mechanisms let him not just partake in but also drive along the destruction of Slovak Jewry. Dualism articulated as well Tiso’s aspiration to be the magic conjunction that unified the nation. He was *Vodca* and president—both fascist and republican, radical and moderate.

Overall, Tiso preferred to cooperate with powerful enemies rather than to contest them. His entire life was spent in unsatisfactory relationships with suzerains: the liberal state, Czechoslovak progressives and centralists, Nazi Germany, the postwar National Court. Most of the time, he chose to work with the suzerains, striking the best deals that he could for his movement and himself. He claimed that such compromises pained him, for “the middle point between a truth and a lie is still only a lie.”¹¹ Yet only in the early 1920s and during his trial did he opt for principled resistance. Within the context of democracy, his compromising nature was mainly understood as a good thing. Within the context of fascism, it generally was not.

Many people have preferred to understand Tiso in black-and-white terms. The 1990 plaque in Bánovce, for instance, honored him as “our second head after Svätopluk,” the Great Moravian prince. In 1923, Nitra’s *National Sentinel* described Tiso instead as a second Viching, Svätopluk’s reputed German advisor and secretary, “the greatest and most dangerous intriguer and sower of national and

religious intolerance and hatred.”¹² This desire to reduce Tiso to an archetype was often political—at its simplest, demagoguery before elections. Both in the 1920s and the 1990s, the habit also reflected a complex struggle over defining a polity’s values. I have suggested that the tendency stems as well from the inherent problem of interpreting Tiso in light of the conflicting moral claims of Catholicism, nationalism, and human rights. Another obstacle for comprehending Tiso’s politics is the “moderate” label. From the 1920s on, he made it his own. It complemented his role as a priest and his desire to capture the middle. For this last reason, he never really belonged to the moderates. Instead, he tended to span the distance between them and the radicals. During the revolutionary time of 1938–45, the label lost even more meaning as Slovak politics as a whole radicalized. Tiso’s well-known conflicts with Tuka and Mach especially have distracted people from seeing the extent to which the priest shared policies with the radicals. The scholarly categories of choice today for understanding Tiso (clerical fascist and conservative-authoritarian) further distort his character.¹³ The category “clerical fascist” claims him fundamentally as a modern revolutionary, more interested in creating the “new man” of totalitarianism than of the Bible. As a “conservative-authoritarian,” he appears to be a creature of the nineteenth century, interested in clinging to or reasserting bygone values, structures, and privileges. In fact, Tiso operated between the categories, sometimes embracing revolution, sometimes fleeing it.

I argue that Tiso is best understood as a “Christian-National Socialist,” or a cross between a Christian Social and a generic national socialist. As the former, Tiso was committed to a profound social transformation that based its moral legitimacy not only on the primacy of God but also on notions of progress. But, after the breakup of Austria-Hungary, the actor for bringing about this transformation changed for him from the Christian community to the Slovak nation. Zeev Sternhell has argued that fascism emerged in a similar transformation, when disillusioned Marxists shifted the onus of revolution from the working class to the nation.¹⁴ So long as one thinks more in terms of “profound social transformation” than of “revolution,” Tiso is an example of a Christian Social who increasingly resembled a generic national socialist. But, unlike the German and Italian fascists, he struggled to keep progress from replacing God as the supreme measure of good.

In addition, I suggest that one can profitably understand Tiso’s life and histories as expressions of three “theologies.” The first is a Catholic theology in which vices and virtues are clearly delineated, in which priests function as moral experts, and in which God is the final object of man’s “exile on earth.” The second is a modern vision of morality in which notions of progress supplant religion. Rather than God, the object of man’s activities becomes various understandings of “the people,” be they the nation, the working class, or the electorate. The third is a contemporary moral system in which the Holocaust serves as an icon of evil, a negative goal for man’s activities. Instead of moving toward God or a better future for the collective,

man moves away from the horrific past by salvaging and securing individual dignity. These theologies are not equally influential in regard to public life. During the modern period, progress eclipsed God as a moral standard, while in the post-modern period, the Holocaust did the same to both. This progression is arguably a short history of Western morality, tracing an arc that stretches from the Middle Ages to today. In Tiso's life, this arc is compressed within sixty years. Tiso's historical significance thus serves as an unexpected emblem for Western morality. He is the only Catholic priest to head a national state that willingly participated in the Holocaust.

Jozef Tiso's life is always, on one level or another, a morality tale. His is a story of God. His is a story of progress. His is a story of a "radical evil."¹⁵ The moral poles of my three theologies encircle his memory like sentries: interrogating it, defending it, imprisoning it.



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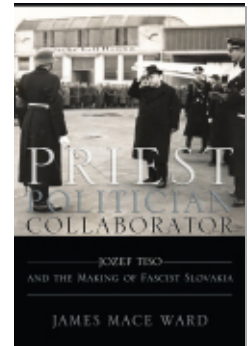
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A Note on Sources

In general, primary sources on Tiso's life are scattered far and wide. The most comprehensive archival collection, both in terms of completeness and relevance for the entire life, is the Národný súd (NS) in Slovenský národný archív (SNA). Tiso's parliamentary career is well documented in the Společná česko-slovenská digitální parlamentní knihovna (SČ-SDPK, at www.psp.cz/eknih). The Historický ústav's (HÚ) project to publish all of his speeches and articles (*Jozef Tiso: Prejavy a články* [3 vols., *PaČ*]) has brought together most such examples. Other collections that I used, in contrast, were incomplete or only tangentially related to Tiso. Virtually all sources produced during the second half of his life were significantly shaped by the polarized understandings of him that is a theme of this work. Evidence of a private nature, such as a diary, is conspicuously missing. During my research, for example, I found few private letters by him, only one of which was substantive. The longest memoir we have by Tiso is his serialized First World War "diary." The closest thing to an autobiography is his 1946 March Affidavit, a document designed to defend rather than reflect. A few key sources, such as his personnel file as a priest or the police file on the 1923 Ludák campaign in Nitra, apparently exist but have gone missing. Files on his 1945 incarceration by the Americans are on nonfunctioning, antiquated electronic databases.

To compensate for these problems in the source base, I strove for as much variety of evidence as possible. There were, however, a few archives that I did not consult. I made no attempt to work in the Vatican. I lacked mastery of Italian and Latin, and doubted that I would obtain access to significant unpublished materials.¹ I also cut my field research off before I had consulted Prague's Archiv Ministerstva zahraničních věcí, Archiv Ústavu T. G. Masaryka, or Archiv Kanceláře presidenta republiky (although I did consult photocopied material from the last in SNA).

I felt that I already had enough primary sources on Tiso's interwar career and his relationship to Beneš and Masaryk. I also found Czechoslovak (as well as American and British) wartime intelligence on Tiso generally unreliable.

I unfortunately had to reconstruct much of the first half of Tiso's life from NS evidence. As he grew into adulthood, however, the contemporary record predictably improved. His school record is in the Piaristi v Nitre collection in the Štátny archív v Nitre (ŠAvN), and in published yearbooks available in Martin's Slovenská národná knižnica (SNK). His seminary record is housed in the archives of the Pázmáneum and the University of Vienna. His most important articles were in *Kresťan*, *Nyitramegyei Szemle* (NySz), and *Papok Közlönye* (PK). Eugen Filkorn's memoir also provided a rare view of the seminary life that Tiso experienced.

Sources on Tiso's political career in Nitra are roughly divided between archival documents and periodical press. Key journals were *Nitra*, *Nyitra*, *Nyitramegyei Szemle*, *Nyitravármegye* (NVM), *Nyitrai lapok* (NL), *Národná stráž* (NSt), *Katolícke noviny* (KN), *Ludová politika*, and *Duchovný pastier* (DP). The Štátny archív v Nitre, pobočka Nitra (ŠAvN-pN) held minutes for Tiso's Christian Social Society (Nitriansky kresťansko–sociálny robotnícky spolok v Nitre [NK-SRSvN]) and the Nitra city council (Mestský úrad v Nitre [MÚ Nitra] and Magistrát mesta Nitry [MMN]). The key documents on the 1918 revolution in Nitra are in MMN as well. ŠAvN's Nitrianska župa collections were also helpful. Tiso's trial records from the 1920s are in Štátny archív v Bytči (ŠAvB), Krajský súd v Trenčíne (KST) and Považská župa. His later career as a Bánovce city father is documented in Štátny archív v Nitre, pobočka Topoľčany (ŠAvN-pT).

As Tiso became a national politician, the quality and diversity of sources again predictably improved. The most important journals for this period are: *Slovák* (SL), *Slovák týždenník* (SIT), *Slovenský deník/denník* (SID), *Robotnícke noviny* (RN), *Lidové noviny* (LN), *Prítomnosť* (Prí), *Slovenské ľudové noviny* (SLN), *Nástup*, and *Politika*. The Ministerstvo zahraničných vecí, výstřížkový archiv (MZV-VA) at the Národní archiv in Prague (ČNA) has two invaluable cartons of press clippings. Extensive police reports on Tiso's public appearances and on the internal workings of the Hlinka party exist in several archives. At SNA, Policajné riaditeľstvo v Bratislave (PR), Krajský úrad v Bratislave I. Prezídium (KÚ), and fond "S" (S-) are especially rich. Their counterparts at ČNA are Presidium Ministerstva vnútra, 1918–44 (PMV, 225–) and Předsednictvo Ministerské rady (PMR). The last collection also contains materials on Tiso's Czechoslovak cabinet careers. ČNA, Ministerstvo veřejného zdravotnictví a tělesné výchovy holds incomplete records on Tiso's tenure as its head. Karol Sidor's journalism and published diary offers an alternate inside view of interwar Ludák politics. In the late 1930s, Tiso also began to appear in Hungarian, German, and Polish intelligence and diplomatic correspondence. See especially Budapest's Magyar Országos Levéltár (MOL), the Külügyminisztérium Levéltár collections (K. 63 and 64).

I reconstructed Tiso's leadership of Slovakia primarily from Slovak government documents, German and Hungarian diplomatic correspondence, memoirs, and postwar trial evidence. Pleas for assistance and files on legislation comprise the bulk of Tiso's presidential papers (SNA, Kancelária prezidenta republiky [KPR]). The best high-level material from this office is in subcollections returned from Prague and Moscow (fond 405 and dodatky [D-], respectively). Within the SNA, the most pertinent other Slovak state collections were: Ministerstvo vnútra (MV), Úrad Predsedníctva vlády (ÚPV), and Snem Slovenskej republiky (SSR). Postwar trial records at SNA and at Štátny archív v Bratislave (ŠAvBra) were similarly invaluable. German documentation for this monograph came mainly from two archives. At the National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP), I worked in the German Foreign Ministry Archives (mf. series T-120) and, less so, in the Records of the Reich Leader of the SS and Chief of the German Police (T-175). At the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), I used microfilmed Bundesarchiv collections, especially Selected Records from Police Departments in the German-Occupied Countries (RG 68.048M). Among the Hungarian sources, political reports from the Bratislava embassy (K. 64, cs. 463–64) were superb. In general, I considered wartime diplomatic correspondence to be more trustworthy than intelligence. Because government control of the press was ubiquitous during the war, I relied on a narrower press spectrum for this period, the most important titles being: *Slovák*, *Gardista*, *Grenzbote*, and *Organizačné zvesti Hlinkovej slovenskej ľudovej strany (OZ HSLS)* (all Bratislava); *Völkischer Beobachter* (Vienna); and *Pester Lloyd* (Budapest). I also drew on published document collections such as: Ivan Kamenec, et al., eds., *Vatikán a Slovenská republika (1939–1945) (VaSR)*; Vilém Prečan, ed., *Slovenské národné povstanie (2 vols., SNP)*; Valerián Bystrický et al., eds., *Vznik Slovenského štátu (2 vols., VSŠ)*; the *Holokaust na Slovensku* series (8 vols., mainly edited by Eduard Nižňanský, *HnS*), and Nižňanský et al., eds., *Slovensko-nemecké vzťahy 1938–1941 (S-nV)*.² The most valuable memoirs for this period were by Pavol Čarnogurský, Ferdinand Ďurčanský, Ladislav Feierabend, Alexander Mach, Gejza Medrický, Karol Sidor, Martin Sokol, and Ján Ursíny. I also used several unpublished memoirs by Ferdinand Čatloš in SNK's Archív literatúry a umenia (ALU).

Documentation for Tiso's trial, of course, relied heavily on the court record. Other SNA collections used for this theme were Úrad Obžalobcu pri Národnom súde (ONS), Úrad Predsedníctva Slovenskej národnej rady (ÚP-SNR), Ústredný výbor Komunistickej strany Slovenska, Generálny tajomník (ÚV-KSS, GT), and Igor Daxner a Národný súd (NS/Dx). *Čas*, *Pravda*, and *Katolícke noviny* (all Bratislava) provided a spectrum of press coverage on the trial. Karel Kaplan's *Dva retribuční procesy* is the best collection of published documents on it. The memoirs of Anton Rašla and Ernest Žabkay are equally valuable.

I would like to emphasize that this discussion has dealt only with the most important archival funds, press, and published document collections for this work. Many of the funds and titles through which I searched during the course of this research produced only one or two pieces of evidence. Often, however, they were crucial.



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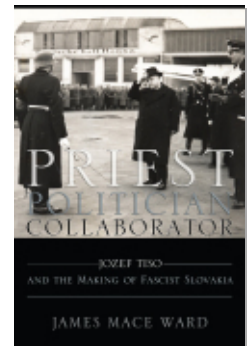
Published by Cornell University Press

Ward, James Mace.

Priest, Politician, Collaborator: Jozef Tiso and the Making of Fascist Slovakia.

1 ed. Cornell University Press, 2013.

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Abbreviations

Journals and Serials

<i>DBFP</i>	<i>Documents on British Foreign Policy</i>
<i>DGFP</i>	<i>Documents on German Foreign Policy</i>
<i>DP</i>	<i>Duchovní pastier</i>
<i>FBIS</i>	<i>Foreign Broadcast Information Service</i>
<i>FRUS</i>	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
<i>HČ</i>	<i>Historický časopis</i>
<i>KN</i>	<i>Katolícke noviny</i>
<i>LN</i>	<i>Lidové noviny</i>
<i>LT</i>	<i>Literárny týždenník</i>
<i>NO</i>	<i>Národná obroda</i>
<i>NSt</i>	<i>Národná stráž</i>
<i>NYT</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>NL</i>	<i>Nyitrai Lapok</i>
<i>NySz</i>	<i>Nyitramegyei Szemle</i>
<i>NVM</i>	<i>Nyitra vármegye</i>
<i>OZ HSLS</i>	<i>Organizačné zvesti Hlinkovej slovenskej ľudovej strany</i>
<i>Pří</i>	<i>Přítomnost</i>
<i>RN</i>	<i>Robotnícke noviny</i>
<i>SL</i>	<i>Slovák</i>
<i>SIT</i>	<i>Slovák týždenník</i>
<i>SLN</i>	<i>Slovenské ľudové noviny</i>
<i>SID</i>	<i>Slovenský deník/denník</i>

VMZd	<i>Věstník Ministerstva veřejného zdravotnictví a tělesné výchovy</i>
VH	<i>Vojenská história</i>

Published Document Collections and Serial Conference Proceedings

<i>HnS</i>	Nižňanský, Eduard, et al., eds. <i>Holoķaust na Slovensķu</i> . 8 vols. Bratislava: Nadácia Milana Šimečku and others, 2001–8.
<i>OMS</i>	Lacko, Martin, et al, eds. <i>Slovensķá republiķa 1939–1945 oĀami mladých historikov</i> . 9 vols. Trnava and Bratislava: Univerzita sv. Cyrila a Metoda, ŰPN, and others, 2002–10.
<i>PaĀ</i>	Fabricius, Miroslav, et al., eds. <i>Jozef Tiso: Prejav y a Ālánky</i> . 3 vols. Bratislava: HŰ SAV and AEP, 2002–10.
<i>SNP</i> , vol. 1	PreĀan, Vilém, ed. <i>Slovensķé národné povstanie</i> . Bratislava: Vydavateľstvo politickej literatŰry, 1965.
<i>SNP</i> , vol. 2	PreĀan, Vilém, ed. <i>Slovensķé národné povstanie: Nemci a Slovensķo 1944</i> . Bratislava: Epoque, 1971.
<i>S-nV</i> , vol. 1	Nižňanský, Eduard, et al., eds. <i>Slovensķo-nemeĀké vzťah y 1938–1941 v dokumentoch I.: Od Mníchova Ā vojne proti ZSSR</i> . Prešov: Univerzum, 2009.
<i>VaSR</i>	Kamenec, Ivan, et al., eds. <i>Vatikán a Slovensķá republiķa (1939–1945)</i> . Bratislava: SAP, 1992.
<i>VŠŠ</i>	Bystrický, Valerián, et al., eds. <i>Vznik Slovensķého štátu</i> . Bratislava: AEP, 2007–8.

Archives, Funds, Institutions, Offices, Etc.

405-	KPR fond 405
aff.	affidavit
AFV	Apostolisches Feldvikariat
AKPR	Archiv Kanceláře presidenta republiky
ASR	Archív Slovensķého rozhlasu
ASsV	Archív Spolku sv. Vojtecha
bd.	<i>Band</i>
BŰ	Biskupský Űrad
c.	carton
ĀNA	Národní archiv, Praha
cs.	<i>csomag</i>
D-	KPR <i>dodatky</i>
DAvN	DiecĀzny archív v Nitre

DG	Deutsche Gesandtschaft
DK	Deutsches Konsulat
f.	folio/frame
fd.	folder
HG	Hlinkova garda
HIA	Hoover Institution Archives
HSĽS	Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana
HŠZ	Hlavné štátne zastupiteľstvo v Bratislave
HÚ	Historický ústav
HV	Hlavné veliteľstvo
i.č.	<i>inventárne číslo</i>
KA	Kriegsarchiv (Vienna)
kn.	<i>knihá</i>
KPR Praha	Kancelář presidenta republiky
KPR	Kancelária prezidenta republiky
KR	<i>korrespondencia riaditeľa</i>
KSB TI	Krajský súd v Bratislave, Tlačové spisy
KST	Krajský súd v Trenčíne
KSvN	Krajský súd v Nitre
KÚ	Krajinský úrad v Bratislave
LS	Ľudový súd
MarAff	The March Affidavit
MBeh	Mittelbehörden
MČSRsPMpS	Minister Československej republiky s plnou mocou pre Slovensko
mf.	microfilm/fiche
MH	Ministerstvo hospodárstva
MKF	Magyar Királyi Főkonzulátus
MKK	Magyar Királyi Konzulátus
MMN	Magistrát mesta Nitry
MOL	Magyar Országos Levéltár
MPs	Ministerstvo pravosúdia
MR protokoly	<i>protokoly ze schůzí</i> Ministerské rady
MÚ	Mestský úrad
MV	Ministerstvo vnútra
MZV	Ministerstvo zahraničných vecí
MZV-VA	Ministerstvo zahraničných vecí, výstřižkový archiv
NACP	National Archives, College Park, Maryland
NCC	Nyitra/Nitra City Council
NDK	Nitrianska diecézna knižnica

NKSE	Nyitrai Keresztény Szociális Egyesület/Nitriansky kresťansko-sociálny spolok
NS	Národný súd
NS/Dx	Igor Daxner a Národný súd
NSRČS	Národní shromáždění republiky Československé
NT	Nemzeti Tanács
NŽ	Nitrianska župa
ObvN	Obvodný notár/Obvodné notárstvo/Obvodný notariát
OkÚ	Okresný úrad
OES	Okresný ľudový súd
ONS	Úrad Obžalobcu pri Národnom súde
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
parl.	parliamentary
PKÚ	Prezídium Krajinského úradu
PMR	Předsednictvo Ministerské rady
PMV	Prezidium Ministerstva vnútra/Prezídium Ministerstva vnútra
PPRvK	Prezídium Policajného riaditeľstva v Košiciach
PR	Policajné riaditeľstvo v Bratislave
PS	Poslanecká sněmovna
PV	Predsedníctvo vlády
PZÚ	Presidium zemského úradu
RG	record group
RKBÚ	Rímskokatolícky biskupský úrad
S-	Fond “S”
SAV	Slovenská akadémia vied
ŠAC	Zbierka novinových článkov k výstavbe sochy Ľudovíta Štúra v Bánovciach nad Bebravou, 1935–38 (Štúr Article Collection)
ŠAvB	Štátny archív v Bytči
ŠAvBra	Štátny archív v Bratislave
ŠAvBra-pT	Štátny archív v Bratislave, pobočka Trenčín
ŠAvN	Štátny archív v Nitre
ŠAvN-pN	Štátny archív v Nitre, pobočka Nitra
ŠAvN-pT	Štátny archív v Nitre, pobočka Topoľčany
sch.	<i>schůze</i>
SČ-SDPK	Společná česko-slovenská digitální parlamentní knihovna
sfd.	subfolder
SFÚ	Slovenský filmový ústav
SNA	Slovenský národný archív
SNK-ALU	Slovenská národná knižnica, Archív literatúry a umenia
sp.	<i>stenoprotokoly</i>
SSR	Snem Slovenskej republiky

T.	<i>T-zprávy (tajné zprávy)</i>
test.	testimony
ÚPN	Ústav pamäti národa
ÚP-SNR	Úrad Predsedníctva Slovenskej národnej rady
ÚPV	Úrad Predsedníctva vlády
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
ZČVpS	Zemské četnické veliteľství pro Slovensko (oddělení/stanice)
ŽÚ	Župný úrad/Župský úrad



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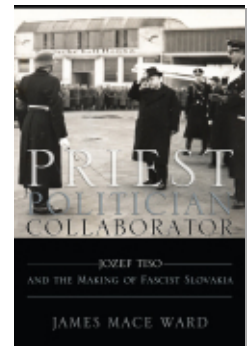
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Notes

Preface

1. Funds for this grant were provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the United States Department of State Title VIII program, and the IREX Scholar Support Fund. None of these (or the other above-mentioned) organizations is responsible for the views expressed in this work.

Introduction

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3. Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Population and Housing Census 2001, table 4, Permanently resident population by religion and by regions and districts, www.infostat.sk/slovakpopin/censusdata.htm (accessed 17 January 2012).
4. "História mesta Bytča," www.bytca.sk/ (accessed 17 January 2012).
5. *Slovák* (hereafter *SL*), 18 August 1942, 4.
6. The most prominent historians following this line are Milan S. Ďurica, František Vnuk, and Róbert Letz. Leading Slovak historians who oppose this interpretation include the late Ľubomír Lipták, Ivan Kameneč, Dušan Kováč, Valerián Bystrický, Eduard Nižňanský, and Katarína Hradská.
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9. Wolfram Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). My thinking on Catholics and modernity has also been shaped by David Blackburn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (New York: Knopf, 1994); Ruth Harris, *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (New York: Viking, 1999); Margaret Lavinia Anderson, *Practicing Democracy: Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser, eds., *Culture Wars: Secular-Catholic Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Brian Porter-Szűcs, *Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); and John Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother: The Revolution in Catholic Teaching on the Jews, 1933–1965* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012).

Chapter 1

1. Gabriel Adriányi and Jerzy Kłoczowski, “Catholic Nationalism in Greater Hungary and Poland,” in *World Christianities c.1815–c.1914*, ed. Sheridan Gilley and Brian Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 260.
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6. Géza Jeszenszky, “Hungary through World War I and the End of the Dual Monarchy,” in *A History of Hungary*, ed. Peter F. Sugar et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 275.
7. Ješajahu Andrej Jelínek, *Židia na Slovensku v 19. a 20. storočí: Zborník statí*, I. časť (Bratislava: Judaica Slovaca, 1999), 51, 64.
8. SNA, NS, tñľud 6/46 (hereafter NS followed by trial number), c. 51, Tiso aff., 8 March 1946 (hereafter MarAff followed by folio), f. 124/43, and c. 53, Rudolf Kubiš aff., 29 April 1946, f. 15/45; SL, 29 January 1939, 5.
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10. Nemes, “Uncivil Origins of Civil Marriage,” 313–35; and Róbert Letz, “Hlinkova Slovenská ľudová strana,” in *Slovenská ľudová strana v dejinách 1905–1945*, ed. Letz et al. (Martin: Matica slovenská, 2006), 13.
11. MarAff 125/43; SL, 27 October 1939, 3, 8; Dušan Halaj, “Hospodársky rozvoj Žiliny a začiatky robotníckeho hnutia” in *Žilina*, ed. Dušan Halaj and Richard Marsina (Martin: Osveta, 1975), 97–98; 1910. *Évi Népszámlálása*, pt. 2: 105, 148; and *A Zsolnai Királyi Katholikus Gymnasium Értésítője*, 1898/99–1901/02.

12. 1910. *Évi Népszámlálása*, pt. 2: 127; and Zdenka Vrábelová, “Nitra – sídlo ústredia maďarského Hornouhorského osvetového spolku (1882–1919),” in *Nitra v slovenských dejinách*, ed. Richard Marsina (Martin: Matica slovenská, 2002), 307.
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15. Stanislav Kaššovic, “Kňazský seminár v Nitre,” in Marsina, *Nitra v slovenských dejinách*, 283.
16. Leo XIII, *Paternae* (1899), in Carlen, *Papal Encyclicals*, 2:466.
17. Eugen Filkorn, *Verný svojmu svedomiu* (Martin: Centrum kultúry a dedičstva kanadských Slovákov, 2004), 65–66.
18. “Seminary,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton, 1912), 695; and Owen Chadwick, “The Seminary,” in *The Ministry: Clerical and Lay*, ed. W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 16.
19. *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola* (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1914), 73–76, 173, 189–90, 192. See also Miroslav Fabricius, Katarína Hradská, and Ladislav Suško, eds., *Jozef Tiso: Prejavy a články* (Bratislava: AEP and HÚ SAV, 2002–10) (hereafter *PaČ*), 3:167–68; and *Čech*, 25 December 1925, 4.
20. Filkorn, *Verný svojmu svedomiu*, 53.
21. NDK, A Nyitrai Püspöki Kisebb Papnevelőintézet Növendékeinek Minősítvény-Táblázata az 1905–6. Tanév Második Feléről.
22. Filkorn, *Verný svojmu svedomiu*, 52–56; Lubomír Lipták, ed., *Politické strany na Slovensku 1860–1989* (Bratislava: Archa, 1992), 89; Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, 28–39; and Rolf Fischer, *Entwicklungsstufen des Antisemitismus in Ungarn 1867–1939: Die Zerstörung der magyarisch-jüdischen Symbiose* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1988), 100–105.
23. Gyula Mérei and Ferenc Pölöskei, eds., *Magyarországi Pártprogramok 1867–1919* (Budapest: ELTE-Eötvös, 2003), 138. Otherwise for paragraph unless otherwise noted, see Petra Rybářová, “Prejavy politického antisemitizmu v nitrianskej župe v osemdesiatych rokoch 19. storočia,” *Historický časopis* (hereafter *HČ*) 53 (2005): 446–65; Robert Nemes, “Hungary’s Antisemitic Provinces: Violence and Ritual Murder in the 1880s,” *Slavic Review* 66 (2007): 29–39; and Janos, *Politics of Backwardness*, 176–77.
24. Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother*, 39.
25. Rybářová, “Prejavy politického antisemitizmu,” 455, 461 (for entire paragraph, see 445–62). The paper is *Nyitrai Lapok* (NL).
26. Filkorn, *Verný svojmu svedomiu*, 66.
27. Joachim von Puttkamer, *Schulalltag und nationale Integration in Ungarn: Slowaken, Rumänen und Siebenbürger Sachsen in der Auseinandersetzung mit der ungarischen Staatsidee 1867–1914* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2003), 138–47; and Scotus Viator [R. W. Seton-Watson], *Racial Problems in Hungary* (London: Archibald Constable, 1908), 325–27.
28. Elena Mannová, “Ideové smery: Kultúrny a spoločenský život,” in *Na začiatku storočia 1901–1914*, ed. Dušan Kováč et al. (Bratislava: Veda, 2004), 233; and Filkorn, *Verný svojmu svedomiu*, 55.
29. MarAff 126–27/43; SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, Randík aff., 15 May 1946, f. 12–13/45, and c. 54, Randík test., 9 January 1945, f. 962–75/45; and SL, 27 October 1939, 9. See also 1910. *Évi Népszámlálása*, pt. 2: 152.
30. SL, 27 October 1939, 9.
31. Seton-Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary*, 213–14. See also MarAff 125/43; Randík aff., f. 12/45; and Konštantín Čulen, *Slovenské študentské tragédie* (Bratislava: Slovenská liga, 1935), 2:147–53.
32. Kubiš aff., f. 16/45.
33. Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-siècle Vienna* (New York: Vintage, 1981).
34. Chadwick, “Seminary,” 5.

35. Margit Beke, "A Pázmáneum Története az Újraindulástól Napjainkig (1803–2002)," in *A Bécsi Pázmáneum*, ed. István Zombori (Budapest: Metem, 2002), 267–70, 287–88.
36. MarAff 126/43.
37. *The Confessions of St. Augustine, Translated by Edward B. Pusey, and The Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis, Translated by William Benham* (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1909), 1-19-4 (book-chapter-paragraph). See also 1-1-3 and 3-48-1.
38. *Ibid.*, 4-3-4. See also 2-12-15, 1-23-6, 1-17-1, 4-18-4, and 3-43-1.
39. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 91, copy of Soznam vecí po Dr. Jozefovi Tisovi, 18 April 1947, f. 733/79.
40. John W. Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna: Christian Socialism in Power, 1897–1918* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 57, 134.
41. Universitätsarchiv (Wien), Nationale, Josef Tiszó (WS 1906/07–SS 1910); *Öffentliche Vorlesungen an der k.k. Universität zu Wien*, Winter-Semester 1906/7–Sommer-Semester 1910 (Vienna: Adolf Holzhausen, 1906–10). Definitions in parentheses from Donald Attwater, ed., *A Catholic Dictionary* (New York: Macmillan, 1943), 30, 140, 192, 240, 249, 520.
42. Walter Lukan, "Jozef Tisos Studienzeit in Wien (1906–1910/11)," *Österreichische Osthefte* 35 (1993): 304; and Joe Holland, *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: The Popes Confront the Industrial Age, 1740–1958* (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), 113.
43. Klemens von Klemperer, *Ignaz Seipel: Christian Statesman in a Time of Crisis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 38. See also *ibid.*, 32, 39–40; Paul Misner, *Social Catholicism in Europe: From the Onset of Industrialization to the First World War* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 202–8; and John W. Boyer, *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna: Origins of the Christian Social Movement, 1848–1897* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 157, 178.
44. Jörg K. Hoensch, "Slovakia: 'One God, One People, One Party!' The Development, Aim, and Failure of Political Catholicism," in *Catholics, the State, and the European Radical Right, 1919–1945*, ed. Richard J. Wolff and Jörg K. Hoensch (Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 1987), 165–66; and MarAff 126–27/43.
45. Schorske, *Fin-de-siècle Vienna*, 116.
46. Richard S. Geehr, ed., "*I Decide Who Is a Jew!*": *The Papers of Dr. Karl Lueger* (Washington: University Press of America, 1982), 325 (emphasis in original).
47. Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis*, 11, 63–65; and Richard S. Geehr, *Karl Lueger: Mayor of Fin de Siècle Vienna* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1990), 143–207. Geehr, however, argues against this interpretation.
48. *Pa Č*, 3:135–36.
49. Holland, *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 202. See also Lukan, "Jozef Tisos Studienzeit in Wien," 301–4.
50. Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes, 1830–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 349.
51. Karl Hausberger, *Herman Schell (1850–1906): Ein Theologenschicksal im Bannkreis der Modernismuskontroverse* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1999), 393–95.
52. MarAff 126–27/43.
53. *Ibid.*; Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Aquinas's Summa: Background, Structure, & Reception* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 31–33; and Jean Porter, "Right Reason and the Love of God": The Parameters of Aquinas' Moral Theology," in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Rik van Nieuwenhove and Joseph Wawrykow (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 171.
54. *The "Summa Theologica" of St. Thomas Aquinas* (London: R. & T. Washbourne, 1911–25), Iib, Q. 44, A. 7.
55. *Ibid.*, Iib, Q. 11, A. 3. Aquinas quotes St. Jerome in the text (italics in original).
56. *Ibid.*, Iib, Q. 10, A. 8. See also Torrell, *Aquinas's Summa*, 31–32.
57. *Summa*, Iib, Q. 10, A. 11. See also *ibid.*, Iib, Q. 10, A. 6; and John Y. B. Hood, *Aquinas and the Jews* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 73–75.
58. MarAff 127/43.
59. Helga Sass, *Recht und Staat bei Viktor Cathrein* (PhD diss., Universität zu Köln, 1966). See also Albert Šimončič and Jozef Polčín, *Dr. Jozef Tiso: Prvý prezident Slovenskej republiky* (Bratislava: Sväz slovenských knihkupcov a nakladateľov, 1941), 21.

60. Beke, "A Pázmáneum Története," 255, 287–88, 299–300.
61. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 41.
62. *Ibid.*, 40–41; Lukan, "Jozef Tisos Studienzeit in Wien," 305–7; and *Nástup* 1997, no. 6: 6.
63. Kubiš aff., f. 15/45. See also Lukan, "Jozef Tisos Studienzeit in Wien," 309; and *Čas*, 14 January 1947, 2.
64. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 50. See also MarAff 125–26/43; Randík aff., f. 12/45.
65. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 52–54.
66. Lukan, "Jozef Tisos Studienzeit in Wien," 309.
67. MarAff 126/43; *SL*, 12 February 1943, 3; *A Magyar Országgyűlés: A Főrendiház és Képviselőház Tagjainak Életrajzi Adatai* (Budapest: Jókai, 1906), 376; and Vladimír Daniš, "Podiel evanjelikov na vzniku Slovenskej ľudovej strany," in Letz et al., *Slovenská ľudová strana*, 122.
68. Kubiš aff. f. 16/45. Cf. Konštantín Čulen, *Po Svätoplukovi druhá naša hlava*, druhé vyd. (Partizánske: Garmond, 1992), 36–37.
69. Daniela Kodajová, "Slovenské národné hnutie a náboženská otázka na prelome 19. a 20. storočia," in *Slovensko na začiatku 20. storočia (spoločnosť, štát a národ v súradniciach doby)*, ed. Milan Podrimavský and Dušan Kováč (Bratislava: HÚ SAV, 1999), 214 (see also 210–13).
70. *Duchovný pastier* (hereafter *DP*), 1 January 1929, 3.
71. *SL*, 2 September 1941, 1. See also Jekelfalussy, *Helységnevtára*, 518–19, 614–15, 636–37; and Milan Šišmiš, ed., *Bánovce nad Bebravou, 1232–2002* (Martin: Osveta, 2002), 133.
72. Elena Jakešová, "Spoločnosť," in *Na začiatku storočia, 1901–1914*, ed. Dušan Kováč (Bratislava: Veda, 2004), 50–51; and Ivan Kamenec, *Tragédia politika, kňaza a človeka (dr. Jozef Tiso, 1887–1947)* (Bratislava: Archa, 1998), 22.
73. *SL*, 2 September 1941, 1; and MarAff 127/43.
74. *Zsolna és Vidéke*, 24 December 1911, 4, and 1 December 1912, 2; *Nyitramegyei Szemle* (hereafter *NySz*), 19 April 1914, 3–4; SNA, NS 6/46, c. 55; Jozef Rybárik aff., 18 June 1946, f. 302/46. The youth circle is A Rajeczi Ifjusági Kör.
75. *Kresťan*, 8 February 1913, 6; 22 February 1913, 6; 15 February 1913, 7; 15 March 1913, 6; and 29 March 1913, 8. The series is reprinted in *PaČ*, 1:7–17. See also MarAff 127/43; and *Zsolna és Vidéke*, 24 December 1911, 4.
76. Roman Holec, "Hospodárstvo," in Kováč, *Na začiatku storočia*, 99. The Union is Az Országos Központi Hitelszövetkezet.
77. The bank was Úverná banka úč. sp., filiálka v Žiline, and the individuals were Andrej Bacher, Imro Rybárik, and Jozef Burian. Vavro Šrobár, *Osvobodene Slovensko: Pamäti z rokov, 1918–1920* (Prague: Čin, 1928), 164, 166; M. Hodža, "Pod vojenskou knutou," in *Služba národu*, ed. Samuel Štefan Osuský (Liptovský sv. Mikuláš: Tranoscius, 1938), 184; and *Slovenský biografický slovník*, 1:103.
78. For example, *Slovenský týždenník*, 29 March 1912, 4.
79. *Zsolna és Felvidék*, 9 February 1913, 4 (see also 13 April 1913, 1–2).
80. Puttkamer, *Schulalltag*, 294–321; Rybárik aff.; and Michal Potemra, "Publicistická a verejná činnosť Jozefa Tisu pred rokom 1918," in *Pokus o politický a osobný profil*, ed. Valerián Bystrický and Štefan Fano (Bratislava: SAP, 1992), 34–35.
81. MarAff 127/43; and Rybárik aff.
82. MarAff 128/43; and Róbert Letz, "Vývin slovenského národného povedomia u Jozefa Tisu do roku 1918," in Bystrický and Fano, *Pokus o politický a osobný profil*, 52.
83. KA, MBeh, AFV, c. 195, Res. 1724, 27 February 1914; Marián Hronský, "Slováci na frontoch prvej svetovej vojny," in Podrimavský and Kováč, *Slovensko na začiatku 20. storočia*, 279.
84. *NySz*, 28 March 1915, 2–3. See also Hronský, "Slováci na frontoch prvej svetovej vojny," 280–81.
85. *NySz*, 5 March 1916, 2–3, and 12 March 1916, 1.
86. *Ibid.*, 9 May 1915, 3.
87. *Ibid.*, 28 November 1915, 3, and 4 July 1915, 2.
88. *Ibid.*, 16 January 1916, 3, and 23 January 1916, 2; Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 74; and KA, MBeh, AFV, c. 196, fd. 1915, copy of Militärkommando Pozsony 1, Nr. 33913, 30 August 1915.
89. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Randík test., 9 January 1947, f. 625/83. See also ŠAvN, Piaristi, c. 63, i.č. 443, KR 1915, spisy 278/15, Batthyány 2139, 17 September 1915; *NySz*, 19 September 1915, 5;

- and ŠAvN, Rímskokatolícky kňazský seminár v Nitre, Divisní nemocnice 1, č. 3856/30, 29 April 1930.
90. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 3 December 1946, f. 38/81. See also MarAff 129/43.
91. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 54, Andrej Škrábik aff., 5 November 1946, f. 1001/45.
92. *NySz*, 12 September 1915, 2; 25 April 1915, 2; and 14 March 1915, 3. See also *PaČ*, 1:22, 46.
93. *NySz*, 23 January 1916, 3. See also *PaČ*, 1:24, 28, 46–47, 50.
94. *NySz*, 31 October 1915, 2 (see also 25 December 1915, 3, and 31 January 1915, 2).
95. *Ibid.*, 1 August 1915, 3, and 4 July 1915, 2. See also MarAff 128/43.
96. *PaČ*, 1:20–21, 30, 49, 56, 59, 69.
97. *NySz*, 6 February 1916, 3, and 30 January 1916, 3. See also *PaČ*, 1:25, 37.
98. *NySz*, 20 February 1916, 3; 6 February 1916, 2; and 25 March 1916, 4.
99. *PaČ*, 1:81.
100. *NySz*, 16 April 1916, 3–4, and 7 May 1916, 5.
101. MarAff 132/43. See also *PaČ*, 3:134–35.
102. A possible exception is a January 1917 film review dripping with Magyar sentiment. Tiso denied writing it, claiming that his editor Franciscy stuck his name on it. This odd explanation at least accounts for why the article is more infused with Magyar nationalism than any other work attributed to Tiso. *PaČ*, 1:98–99; and MarAff 133/43.
103. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 54, Kmetko test., 6 January 1947, f. 693/45. The journals are *Papok Közlönye* and *Duchovný pastier* (*DP*). Kmetko credited Tiso with founding the latter. Earlier evidence, however, does not ascribe Tiso such a role. In a restatement of the double-game defense, Tiso claimed that he had needed the pseudonym as a shield against Batthyány's nationally hostile supervision. But the bishop lent his imprimatur to the project. So exactly how hostile could he have been? Cf. *ibid.*, f. 691–93/45; MarAff 133/43; and *SL*, 5 January 1930, 2, and 5 September 1934, 4.
104. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 54, Randík test., 9 January 1947, f. 973–75/45.
105. *Papok Közlönye*, 15 September 1917, 625, 627, and 15 October 1917, 722. See also Monika Gletlerová, “Slovenská spoločnosť pod vplyvom vojny a militarizácie v rokoch 1914–1918,” in *První světová válka a vztahy mezi Čechy, Slováky a Němci*, ed. Hans Mommsen et al. (Brno: Maticе moravská, 2000), 81.
106. *Papok Közlönye*, 1 March 1917, 195–96.
107. *Ibid.*, 15 September 1917, 627 (see also 1 March 1917, 194–97).
108. *DP* 1 (1917–18): 137–38.
109. *Nyitra vármegye* (hereafter *NVM*), 8 November 1917, 2–3.
110. SNK–ALU, Štefan Drozd (1907–79), 224 B 39, Filkorn to Batthyány, 13 January 1918. See also *ibid.*, 224 B 30, Batthyány to Filkorn, 17 January 1918; and ŠAvN–pN, Nitriansky kresťansko-sociálny robotnícky spolok v Nitre, c. 1, Nyitrai Ker. Munkásegyesület Jegyzőkönyve (henceforth NKSE minutes), 20 January 1918 general assembly. The society is A Nyitrai Keresztény Szociális Egyesület.
111. *NySz*, 8 September 1918, 4; and Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 78.
112. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 3 December 1946, f. 40/81.
113. See especially Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); and Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008). For the recent development of this literature, see *Austrian History Yearbook* 43 (2012).

Chapter 2

1. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 3 December 1946, f. 46–47/81. See also *Nitra*, 8 December 1918, 2. An earlier version of this chapter first appeared as “‘Black Monks’: Jozef Tiso and Antisemitism,” *Kosmas* 14, no. 1 (2000): 29–54.

2. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, Eugen Lelley aff., 12 February 1946, f. 10/48.
3. Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, 65–66.
4. See, for example, ŠAvN-pN, MÚ Nitra, c. 28, i.č. 227, fd. 1938/9016–9506, Písomnosti štátneho prevratu v roku 1919 (hereafter ŠAvN-pN 9506), “Ku každému nie maďarsky. . .”
5. Leslie Laszlo, “The Church in the Storm of the Revolutions of 1918–1919 in Hungary,” in *Revolutions and Interventions in Hungary and Its Neighbor States, 1918–1919*, ed. Peter Pastor (Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 1988), 189–90.
6. *Nyitrai Lapok* (hereafter *NL*), 11 November 1918, 1; and Ján Mrva, *Paberky k dejinám štátneho prevratu v Nitre* (Nitra: Miestny odbor Matice slovenskej, 1933), 21–29, 36.
7. Mrva, *Paberky*, 51–60; and Ismo Nurmi, *Slovakia—A Playground for Nationalism and National Identity: Manifestations of the National Identity of the Slovaks, 1918–1920* (Helsinki: Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1999), 36–43.
8. *NL*, 3 November 1918, 1.
9. ASsV, 148/10c5, Hlinka to Veľadostojný Pane, 10 November 1918. See also Mrva, *Paberky*, 39; and Marián Hronský, *The Struggle for Slovakia and the Treaty of Trianon, 1918–1920* (Bratislava: Veda, 2001), 79.
10. Alena Bartlová, “Programová línia klerikalizmu na Slovensku (1905–1938),” *Historické štúdie* 22 (1977): 78–79; and Mrva, *Paberky*, 66–67.
11. NKSE minutes, 29 June–10 November 1918; Filkorn, *Verný svojmu svedomiu*, 224, 351; and *Nyitra*, 17 November 1918.
12. MarAff 135/43. Filkorn, in contrast, credited Tiso with writing only “a snappy lead article for every issue” (*Verný svojmu svedomiu*, 264). For newspapers, see Univerzitná knižnica (Bratislava), S.A.153 and XXI.AA.216; ŠAvN, ZNC-207-Nitra; and SNA, Vavro Šrobár, c. 34.
13. *Nitra*, 17 November 1918.
14. *Nyitra*, 17 November 1918. See also *NL*, 17 November 1918, 2; and *NySz*, 17 November 1918, 5.
15. *NL*, 24 November 1918, 1–2 (see also 11 November 1918, 1–2, and 17 November 1918, 3).
16. *Nyitra*, 24 November 1918, 1–2.
17. *Nitra*, 24 November 1918, 2. See also *ibid.*, 1 December 1918, 1–2; and ŠAvN-pN, Nitriansky kresťanský sociálny spolok v Nitre 1908–42, c. 2, Rendestagok Névsora 1911–19.
18. *Nitra*, 24 November 1918, 2.
19. *Ibid.*, 1 December 1918, 2; and *Nyitra*, 1 December 1918, 2.
20. Hanebrink, *In Defense of Christian Hungary*, 57.
21. *Nitra*, 24 November 1918, 1, and 1 December 1918, 1; Karol Jedlička, “Vyhlásenie ČSR v Nitre v roku 1918,” *Slavín* 4 (1971): 98; and Ladislav Tajták, “Úsilie maďarských vládnúcich tried o udržanie Slovenska v rámci Maďarska roku 1918,” *HČ* 14 (1966): 576–81.
22. MOL, Országgyűlési levéltár 1867–1945, L./ NT (K. 440), mf. X 1511, reel 6996, cs. 6, cím 14, C/I. Jelentések a helyi közállapotokról, Magyar Nemzeti Tanács Intéző Bizottság to Budapest NT, 24 November 1918, f. 68–69, 71.
23. *NySz*, 1 December 1918, 4; *NVM*, 29 November 1918, 2; and Jedlička, “Vyhlásenie ČSR v Nitre,” 97–98.
24. *Nyitra*, 1 December 1918, 1.
25. *NySz*, 8 December 1918, 3. See also Mrva, *Paberky*, 39–50; and ŠAvN-pN 9506, candidate lists.
26. *Nitra*, 1 December 1918, 1.
27. Mrva, *Paberky*, 41.
28. *NL*, 8 December 1918, 3. Andrej Škrábik later credited Filkorn with informing Tiso that Czechoslovakia was a fact. In response, the three priests supposedly reorganized the Christian Social Society as a revolutionary vehicle, Tiso unsuccessfully approaching a lay Slovak nationalist, Štefan Bertovič, to form a Slovak national council. As later Slovak nationalists dogged by Magyarone pasts, however, the clerics had strong motives to make such claims. Filkorn’s statement in the city council suggests that this version of events is exaggerated. In 1946, Tiso recounted his talks with Bertovič without reference to a Slovak national council. The discussion seemed to hinge instead on founding a Slovak paper, which Tiso did, and Slovak participation in the existing national council, an offer that Bertovič refused. SNA,

- NS 6/46, c. 54, Škrábik aff., 5 November 1946, f. 1001–02/45, and NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 3 December 1946, f. 46/81.
29. *Nitra*, 1 December 1918, 1–2; and *NL*, 8 December 1918, 1–2. See also Mrva, *Paberky*, 37.
30. MarAff 135/43, 281/43. See also Ercé, *Slovenská krv* (Bratislava: Slovenská krv, 1942), 502; ŠAvN-pN, MMN, kn. Nyitra r. t. város képviselőtestületének közgyűléséről felvett jegyzőkönyvek 1916 február 29–1919 júl 5 (hereafter NCC Minutes), 2 December 1918; and *NVM*, 1 November 1918, 1.
31. Mrva, *Paberky*, 79 (see also 60–92).
32. NCC Minutes, 8 December 1918; ŠAvN-pN 9506, *Az Ucca*, 3 December 1932, 3–4; and SNA, NS 6/46, c. 54, Škrábik test., 9 January 1947, f. 1011/45.
33. *Nitra*, 8 December 1918, 2.
34. *Nyitra*, 15 December 1918, 2.
35. Mrva, *Paberky*, 98–101.
36. *NL*, 16 December 1918, 1; and *Nyitra*, 15 December 1918, 1–2.
37. *NySz*, 22 December 1918, 4–5; and *Nitra*, 29 December 1918, 2.
38. Ida Zubácka, *Nitra za prvej Československej republiky* (Nitra: Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa, Falkulta humanitných vied, 1997), 39; [Ludevit] Okánik, *Katolíckym Slovákom* (Bratislava: Slovenská roľnícka strana, 1920), 8; and *Nitra*, 12 January 1919, 1.
39. ŠAvN, NŽ I prez., c. 12, fd. 924, ŽÚ Nitra 824, 25 June 1920.
40. ŠAvN, NŽ I prez. 1919, c. 1, i.č. 3, Slovenská národná rada Nitra 171, 28 December 1918.
41. ŠAvN, NŽ I prez. 2, c. 66, fd. 92/19, Bertovič to Okánik 341, 30 January 1919; and *Nitra*, 29 December 1918, 2.
42. Martin Holák, “Listy Andreja Hlinku z rokov, 1918–1921,” *HČ* 52 (2004): 547.
43. James Ramon Felak, “At the Price of the Republic”: *Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party, 1929–1938* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994), 22–23; Karol Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka (1864–1926)* (Bratislava: Sv. Andrej, 1934), 330; and Clark and Kaiser, *Culture Wars*, 4–7.
44. MarAff 141/43; Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 323; and Emília Hrabovcová, “Obsadenie nitrianskeho biskupského stola v cirkevnepolitickom kontexte rokov 1918–1920,” in Marsina, *Nitra v slovenských dejinách*, 331.
45. Šrobár, *Osvobodené Slovensko*, 402. See also Bartlová, “Programová línia klerikalizmu na Slovensku,” 80–81.
46. ASV, 10/č. 3, Gažík et al. to Hlinka, 9 December 1926; and *SL*, 10 November 1920, 1–2.
47. *Nitra*, 15 December 1918, 2; 29 December 1918, 1; and 12 January 1919, 2; *Nyitra*, 15 December 1918, 2; and NKSE minutes, 29 December 1918 board meeting, 19 January 1919 general assembly.
48. Karol A. Medvecký, *Cirkevné pomery katolíckych Slovákov v niekdajšom Uhorsku* (Ružomberok: Ján Párička, 1920), 152–53; MarAff 137/43; *Nitra*, 12 January 1919, 1; and *NVM*, 14 February 1919, 3.
49. *Nitra*, 15 December 1918, 1; 29 December 1918, 1; 12 January 1919, 1–2; 26 January 1919, 1–2; and 16 February 1919, 1.
50. *Ibid.*, 15 December 1918, 1–2; 26 January 1919, 1; and 22 February 1919, 1–2; and *Nyitra*, 12 January 1919, 1.
51. NKSE minutes, 19 January 1919 general assembly.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Nitra*, 1 March 1919 [misdated 22 February], 1 (see also 2 February 1919, 2, and 16 February 1919, 3).
54. *Nyitra*, 19 January 1919, 1; and NCC Minutes, 25 January 1919.
55. *NL*, 16 December 1918, 1–3, and 22 January 1919, 4.
56. Judit Kubinszky, *Politikai Antiszemitizmus Magyarországon, 1875–1890* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1976), 193.
57. ŠAvN, NŽ I prez 1919, c. 1, i.č. 20, MČSRsPMpS 462, 21 January 1919.
58. *Nitra*, 9 February 1919, 1–2; 2 February 1919, 2; and 1 March 1919 [misdated 22 February], 1.
59. *NL*, 18 February 1919, 1.

60. For quote, see *Nitra*, 15 December 1919, 1. Otherwise, István I. Mócsy, *The Effects of World War I: The Uprooted: Hungarian Refugees and Their Impact on Hungary's Domestic Politics, 1918–1921* (New York: Social Science Monographs, 1983), 44; and *NVM*, 21 March 1919, 1.
61. Zubácka, *Nitra za prvej Československej republiky*, 32; and Mócsy, *The Uprooted*, 54.
62. ŠAvN-pN 9506, Bertovič oznam 540, 8 February 1919; and Ľubomír Lipták, *Changes of Changes: Society and Politics in Slovakia in the 20th Century* (Bratislava: AEP, 2002), 22.
63. *Nitra*, 9 February 1919, 1; 16 February 1919, 2; and 22 February 1919, 1.
64. NKSE minutes, 23 February 1919 board meeting. See also 26 January and 16 February 1919 board meetings; *Nitrianske noviny*, 6 March 1919, 19; and MarAff 136/43.
65. *Nyitra*, 9 March 1919, 1.
66. NKSE minutes, 9 March 1919 board meeting and general assembly.
67. *Nitra*, 9 March 1919, 3, and 15 March 1919, 1. See also *ibid.*, 15 March 1919, 3; *NySz*, 9 March 1919, 3; and *NL*, 12 March 1919, 3.
68. *Nyitra*, 9 March 1919, 1.
69. *NySz*, 30 March 1919, 2. See also Hrabovcová, “Obsadenie nitrianskeho biskupského stolca,” 328–30; SNA, Vavro Šrobár, c. 10, i.č. 613, Memorandum slovenského rímsko-katolíckeho kňazstva, 22 January 1919; and Ferdiš Juriga, *Blahozvešť kriesenia slovenského národa a slovenskej krajiny* (Trnava: Urbánek, 1934), 184–88.
70. MarAff 136/43.
71. SNA, Anton Štefánek, c. 10, fd. Sťahovanie maďarských biskupov, f. 571/10.
72. Béla Bodó, “Father Zadravec and the Failure of Right Radicalism in Hungary, 1919–23,” *East European Quarterly* 40 (2006): 296–97.
73. *Nitra*, 5 April 1919, 1.
74. Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 353. See also *ibid.*, 337–53; Šrobár, *Osvobodené Slovensko*, 429–36; and *SL*, 27 February 1919, 1.
75. Juraj Kramer, *Slovenské autonomistické hnutie v rokoch 1918–1929* (Bratislava: SAV, 1962), 62; *NySz*, 9 March 1919, 2; and *Slovenský denník* (hereafter *SLD*), 4 March 1919, 1.
76. Hrabovcová, “Obsadenie nitrianskeho biskupského stolca,” 331; *Katolícke noviny* (hereafter *KN*), 19 April 1919, 1; and Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 348, 359–60.
77. *Nitra*, 19 April 1919, 1.
78. R. W. Seton-Watson, *The New Slovakia* (Prague: Fr. Borový, 1924), 23–24. See also MarAff 136/43; and *Slovenské ľudové noviny* (hereafter *SLN*), 14 March 1919, 1.
79. *Nitra*, 5 April 1919, 1; 12 April 1919, 1; 19 April 1919, 1; and 10 May 1919, 3.
80. *Ibid.*, 19 April 1919, 1; and *PaČ*, 3:115.
81. *Nitra*, 10 May 1919, 1–2. Other economic proposals in *Nitra* aimed at blunting radicalism, as in an implicit call to expropriate Jewish mines and factories as “medicine against bolshevism” (26 April 1919, 1–2).
82. *Ibid.*, 10 May 1919, 2, and 31 May 1919, 3.
83. *Ibid.*, 9 March 1919, 3; 26 April 1919, 1; and 3 May 1919, 3.
84. ŠAvN-pN, MMN, c. 35, *Testvériség*, 22 March 1919, 1, 5. “Hatred” implicitly referred also to breaking up Hungary.
85. *Nyitra*, 6 April 1919, 1. See also *NySz*, 13 April 1919, 1.
86. *NL*, 26 February 1919, 2, and 26 March 1919, 3; and ŠAvN, Štátne zastupiteľstvo Nitra, c. 100, fd. 707/19.
87. *Nitra*, 3 May 1919, 1. Tiso’s argument was not uncommon for central European Catholics. Cf. Porter-Szűcs, *Faith and Fatherland*, 286–88.
88. ŠAvN, NŽ I prez. 1919, c. 2, i.č. 149, Šrobár telegram to ŽÚ Nitra, 26 March 1919, and c. 4, fd. 625, f. 17, Menoslov dosiaľ internovaných osob z mesta Nitry.
89. *KN*, 3 May 1919, 2, and 24 May 1919, 2–3.
90. *Nitra*, 19 April 1919, 3; 26 April 1919, 3; and 3 May 1919, 3. See also *NySz*, 1 June 1919, 2–3.
91. *Nitra*, 15 June 1919, 1; MarAff 137/43; and *NVM*, 9 December 1921, 1.
92. *Nitra*, 15 June 1919, 2.

93. Ibid., 28 June 1919, 1, 3. See also *PaČ*, 3:115.
 94. See also Yeshayahu Jelinek, “Dr. Jozef Tiso and His Biographers,” *East Central Europe* 6 (1979): 78.

Chapter 3

1. *Robotnícke noviny* (hereafter *RN*), 28 October 1924, 1.
2. *Slovák týždenník* (hereafter *SIT*), 27 April 1924, 1.
3. Carlen, *The Papal Encyclicals*, 2:313.
4. MarAff 140/43. See also *KN*, 16 August 1919, 1.
5. *KN*, 2 August 1919, 1.
6. Felak, “*At the Price*,” 14, 41–42. On the interwar contest between centralists and autonomists, see also Elisabeth Bakke, *Doomed to Failure?: The Czechoslovak Nation Project and the Slovak Autonomist Reaction, 1918–38* (PhD diss., University of Oslo, 1999).
7. Royal Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *The Hungarian Peace Negotiations: An Account of the Work of the Hungarian Peace Delegation at Neuilly s/S from January to March 1920* (Budapest: Victor Hornyánszky, 1921), 1:427; *Občanské noviny*, 23 August 1919, 2–3; Alena Bartlová, *Andrej Hlinka* (Bratislava: Obzor, 1991), 65; and Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 371–72.
8. ŠAvN, NŽ I prez., c. 5, fd. 987, MČSRsPMpS 5490, 19 September 1919; *KN*, 29 November 1919, 3; and Filkorn, *Verný svojmu svedomiu*, 229.
9. *KN*, 6 September 1919, 1; 20 September 1919, 3; 18 October 1919, 2; and 25 October 1919, 1.
10. ŠAvN, NŽ I, fd. 1919/78 prez., Okánik zpráva, 5 September 1919. See also Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 380.
11. ASsV, 276 fol. A, “Jednota duchovenstva na Slovensku.”
12. ŠAvN, NŽ I prez., c. 5, fd. 981, Tiso and Buday to Okánik, 10 September 1919, and Okánik reply, 20 October 1919.
13. NDK, Jednateľská kniha, Telocvičná jednota “Orol” v Nitre (hereafter Orol Minutes), 28 September 1919. See also Claire E. Nolte, *The Sokol in the Czech Lands to 1914: Training for the Nation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 154; and NySz, 21 December 1919, 2.
14. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, poster, f. 6/45, Rozsím aff., 1 February 1946, f. 3/45. See also MarAff 136/43.
15. The party was the Republikánska strana zemedelského a maloroľníckeho ľudu.
16. *SL*, 13 September 1919, 2, and 3 October 1919, 3.
17. *Občanské noviny*, 14 November 1919, 1–2, and 30 November 1919, 1.
18. *KN*, 13 December 1919, 4.
19. ŠAvN, NŽ I prez., c. 6, fd. 1147, Min. poradca vojenský telegram 699, perhaps 11 December 1919 (date unclear), and “Zkazonosná činnosť dr. Tisa Jozefa,” 21 December 1919; ČNA, PMR, c. 1340, sig. 94/581, MČSRsPMpS 72/res., 14 January 1920. See also *Úradné noviny*, 15 December 1919, 8.
20. NySz, 28 December 1919, 2.
21. The decision may explain Šrobár’s sudden desire for a report. Tiso never received an appointment, while the central seminary plan failed. *SL*, 30 March 1930, 3; and Emilia Hrabovec, *Der Heilige Stuhl und die Slowakei, 1918–1922* (Habil.-Schr., University of Vienna, 2001), 395–96.
22. ŠAvN-pN, MMN, Zápisnice správnej komisie mesta Nitry od 19. júla 1919–28. júna 1920 (henceforth NCC Minutes 1919–20), 29 November 1919; and *KN*, 29 November 1919, 3, and 13 December 1919, 2.
23. *Naša Slovenská ľudová strana: Čo ona chce? A za čo bojuje?* (Ružomberok: Leo, 1919), 15. See also *SL*, 4 April 1920, 3; and Natália Krajčovičová, “Začleňovanie Slovenska do Československej republiky (1918–1920),” in *Slovensko v Československu (1918–1939)*, ed. Milan Zemko and Valerián Bystrický (Bratislava: Veda, 2004), 87, 89–90.
24. *KN*, 24 April 1920, 1; and Karol Sidor, *Slovenská politika na pôde pražského snemu (1918–1938)* (Bratislava: Andrej, 1943), 1:123–25, 131–32. The Hungarian party is Az Országos Keresztény Szocialista Párt.

25. Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 425, 429; and Václav L. Beneš, “Czechoslovak Democracy and Its Problems,” in *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1918–1948*, ed. Victor S. Mamatey and Radomír Luža (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 86.
26. *SL*, 28 September 1935, 1 (see also 8 April 1920, 3).
27. *Ibid.*, 27 February 1920, 3.
28. *SEN*, 14 May 1920, 2.
29. *KN*, 17 April 1920, 4.
30. *SL*, 28 March 1920, 2.
31. *SEN*, 30 April 1920, 1; and *Volby do Národního shromáždění v dubnu roku 1920* . . . (Prague: Státní úřad statistický, 1922), tab. 5, p. 20*.
32. *SL*, 28 September 1935, 1; and ASsV, 10/c. 3, Gažík et al. to Hlinka, 9 December 1926.
33. Milan Zemko, “Voličstvo strán národnostných menšín a komunistické strany na Slovensku v parlamentných voľbách za predmníchovskej republiky,” in Zemko and Bystrický, *Slovensko v Československu*, 179; and *Volby do Národního shromáždění v dubnu roku 1920*, tab. 2, p. 28.
34. Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 432. See also Bartlová, “Programová línia klerikalizmu na Slovensku,” 87.
35. See, for example, *SL*, 10 June 1920, 1–2.
36. *Ibid.*, 13 October 1920, 1–2, and 22 October 1920, 1.
37. *Ibid.*, 6 May 1920, 2–3, and 15 May 1920, 2; and *PaČ*, 1:100–102, 104–6.
38. Bartlová, “Jozef Tiso – funkcionár HSEs a poslanec Národného zhromaždenia (1918–1938),” in Bystrický and Fano, *Pokus o politický a osobný profil*, 78.
39. *SL*, 24 October 1920, 1; 10 November 1920, 1–2; and 15 December 1920, 2.
40. *PaČ*, 1:108–10.
41. Rebekah Klein-Pejšová, *Among the Nationalities: Jewish Refugees, Jewish Nationality, and Czechoslovak Statebuilding* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2007). As Tatjana Lichtenstein has pointed out, however, the decision to declare a pro-Czechoslovak identity involved many calculations beyond just loyalty. See her “Racializing Jewishness: Zionist Responses to National Indifference in Interwar Czechoslovakia,” *Austrian History Yearbook* 43 (2012): 78.
42. *DP*, 1 September 1925, 1–2. As with *Nitra*, Tiso would have habitually written lead articles for *Duchovný pastier*, which at this point he edited.
43. MarAff 137/43. See also *SL*, 26 September 1920, 2, and 18 February 1921, 1–2.
44. *České slovo*, 20 February 1921, 2. Cf. *NVM*, 18 February 1921, 1–3.
45. SNA, NS 6/48, c. 54, Kmečko test., 6 January 1947, f. 694–95/45.
46. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 91.
47. ŠAvB, KST, fd. 3421/21, zápisnica of Sedria v Trenčíne, 4 January 1922. See also *Lidové noviny* (hereafter *LN*), 12 June 1921, ráno, 4.
48. *SL*, 1 September 1921, 2–3; Jozef Kašpar, *Apologia katolíckeho náboženstva*, trans. Jozef Tiso (Trnava: Lev, 1921); and Filkorn, *Verný svojmu svedomiu*, 236–39.
49. *DP*, 15 February 1922, 27.
50. *Ludová politika*, 12 March 1922, 2; and Lipták, *Changes of Changes*, 46.
51. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Kmečko test., 6 January 1947, f. 251/83.
52. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 5 January 1922, 31; Kamenec, *Tragédia politika, kňaza a človeka*, 39; and *SL*, 26 April 1922, 3.
53. James Ramon Felak, “Priests in East Central European Politics: Ignaz Seipel, Jan Šrámek, and Andrej Hlinka,” in *Render unto Caesar: The Religious Sphere in World Politics*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet and Donald W. Treadgold (Washington: American University Press, 1995), 277–78; *SL*, 22 January 1922, 2; and Letz, “Karol Kmečko,” 343.
54. Maroš Hertel, “Činnosť profesora Vojtecha Tuku pred jeho vstupom do Slovenskej ľudovej strany roku 1922,” *HČ* 50 (2002): 257–79.
55. Felak, “*At the Price*,” 30–31.
56. Filkorn, *Verný svojmu svedomiu*, 265. See also MarAff 139/43; and *PaČ*, 3:115.
57. ŠAvB, KST, c. 79, fd. B2823/23, Č etnicтво v Bánovciach-12 1033, 12 June 1922. See also same fd., zápisnica of Sedria v Trenčíne, 12 September 1922; and *SL*, 15 June 1922, 3.

58. NCC Minutes 1919–20, 27 December 1919; *NVM*, 2 July 1920, 2; and ŠAvN-pN, MÚ Nitra, kn. 67, Zápisnica finančnej odbornej komisie mesta Nitry 1920–1923.22.IX, 10 September 1920.
59. NCC Minutes 1919–20, 31 March 1920; and *NVM*, 3 March 1922, 1–2.
60. *DP*, 1 February 1922, 3.
61. *Národná stráž* (hereafter *NSr*), 7 August 1921, 1. See also Ferdinand Peroutka, *Budování státu* (Praha: Academia, 2003), 3–4:669.
62. *NVM*, 14 July 1922, 2 (see also 5 May 1922, 1–3, and 7 July 1922, 1–3). *Populist Politics* relentlessly harassed the Czech until he left Nitra. He later unsuccessfully sued Tiso for slander. *Ludová politika*, 8 October 1922, 1–2; and *NySz*, 4 February 1923, 2.
63. *NVM*, 1 December 1922, 2. See also Lipták, *Changes of Changes*, 23.
64. *PaČ*, 1:125.
65. *Ibid.*, 1:127–36.
66. *SL*, 31 May 1923, 5.
67. *NVM*, 28 September 1923, 4.
68. ŠAvB, KST, fd. 3421/21, Nejvyšší soud v Brne KR III 442/22/5, 21 February 1923.
69. *NSr*, 4 March 1923, 1–2.
70. *Československé noviny*, 14 July 1923, 5. See also *LN*, 17 July 1923, ráno, 2–3; and *NSr*, 15 July 1923, 1–2.
71. *RN*, 12 July 1923, 3.
72. *SL*, 19 July 1923, 1.
73. *NySz*, 15 July 1923, 3; and *RN*, 15 July 1923, 2.
74. *NySz*, 29 July 1923, 2. See also *LN*, 15 July 1923, ráno, 2.
75. *SL*, 26 July 1923, 3. Bartlová reports that *Slovák* was ordered to treat Tiso as “a future chairman of the party.” A 1935 party exposé, attributed to the Ludák MP Viktor Ravasz, similarly claims that the presidium confirmed Tiso as Hlinka’s successor in 1923. Bartlová’s evidence, however, does not mention orders. The furious response of leading “old” Ludáks to Tiso’s appointment as Hlinka’s deputy in 1926, in turn, suggests that Ravasz’s claim is exaggerated. Bartlová, “Jozef Tiso – funkcionár HSES,” 79; and *Voláme pred súd národa kľiku, ktorú diktuje v ľudovej strane* (1935), 11.
76. *SL*, 27 July 1923, 4, and 29 July 1923, 2. The translation was P. M. Avancini, *Život a učenie Ježiša Krista: Rozjímanie na všetky dni celého roku* (Trnava: Spolok sv. Vojtecha, 1924).
77. *NVM*, 27 July 1923, 5.
78. *SL*, 1 July 1923, 4.
79. Maroš Hertel, “Dr. Vojtech Tuka – šéfredaktor *Slováka*,” in *Tisk a politické strany. . .*, ed. Pavel Marek (Olomouc: Katedra politologie a evropských studií FF UP, 2001), 176–77.
80. *SL*, 1 January 1922, 5.
81. *LN*, 28 July 1923, ráno, 3.
82. *Ibid.*, 13 August 1923, ráno, 2; *NSr*, 19 August 1923, 2; and DAvN, RKBÚ, *Catalogus* 1923–24, 14 August 1923, entry 1609.
83. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 54, Kmečko test., 6 January 1947, f. 695–99/45.
84. *SL*, 29 August 1923, 1, and 12 September 1923, 1. See also ŠAvB, KST, fd. 3421/21, Beňo and Bartoššik to Masaryk, 22 August 1923; and DAvN, RKBÚ, *Catalogus* 1923–24, 28 August 1923, entry 1711.
85. ŠAvN-pN, OkÚ Nitra, c. 65, fd. Nitra mesto, Zápis o voľbe obecného zastupiteľstva v Nitre, 16 September 1923, and c. 66, fd. 11720/23, zápisnice on 30 September 1923 election, 2 October 1923; and Ladislav Lipscher, *K vývinu politickej správy na Slovensku v rokoch 1918–1938* (Bratislava: SAV, 1966), 111.
86. *LN*, 29 August 1923, ráno, 2; and James A. Rogerson, *Slovak Republicans and Slovak Populists, 1923–1925* (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1980), 17–46.
87. *NVM*, 28 September 1923, 4.
88. DAvN, RKBÚ, *Personalía*, c. 69, fd. Tiso, Jozef; and *SIT*, 13 January 1924, 1.
89. *DP*, 1 December 1923, 265. See also Nataša Krajčovičová, “Publicistika Jozefa Tisu v rokoch 1918–1938,” in Bystrický and Fano, *Pokus o politický a osobný profil*, 91.

90. *SIT*, 27 April 1924, 1; and *PaČ*, 1:164.
91. See, for example, *SIT*, 20 April 1924, 1.
92. See, for example, *SL*, 2 April 1924, 1; and *SIT*, 1 June 1924, 1.
93. *SIT*, 1 January 1924, 2.
94. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-1163-1, ŽÚ Lipt. Sv. Mikuláš 8171, 29 September 1924, f. 55.
95. *SL*, 12 April 1924, 1. See also *SIT*, 10 February 1924, 1.
96. *SIT*, 1 January 1924, 2; *SL*, 1 April 1924, 1–2.
97. *SIT*, 28 September 1924, 1.
98. *Ibid.*, 27 January 1924, 1.
99. *Ibid.*, 2 November 1924, 1.
100. *Ibid.*, 13 January 1924, 1, and 9 November 1924, 2; and *SL*, 2 April 1924, 1.
101. *SIT*, 29 June 1924, 2; 13 July 1924, 1; 21 September 1924, 1; and 16 November 1924, 1.
102. *Ibid.*, 20 April 1924, 1; and ŠAvBra, Bratislava župa II., fd. 5457/24 prez., OkÚ Bratislava 6266, 7 July 1924.
103. *SIT*, 17 February 1924, 1; 2 March 1924, 1–2; 1 June 1924, 1; and 28 September 1924, 1; and *Tatranský orol* 6 (1925): 4, 62–65.
104. ŠAvB, KST, c. 79, fd. B2823/23, Nejvyšší soud v Brne Zm III 386/24/1, 17 June 1924.
105. SNA, PR, c. 225, fd. 225/1168, ČS. stráž bezpečnosti Hlohovec 31 dův., 29 January 1924, and c. 1094, fd. 213-96-45, Dr. Jozef Tiso, copy of ZČVpS Bratislava/Stupava-3 1386, 13 September 1924, f. 6.
106. ŠAvB, KST, fd. 3421/21, OkÚ Nitra 1204, 14 November 1923, and ŽÚ Nitra 11149, 19 November 1923.
107. *Nitra*, 17 November 1923, 3.
108. *NSz*, 24 August 1924, 2.
109. *RN*, 22 October 1924, 3.
110. *SID*, 5 April 1924, 3, and 5 March 1926, 3; and ŠAvBra, KSB TI, fd. 111/24.
111. *SL*, 4 February 1923, 4; and *NL*, 10 February 1923, 1.
112. SNA, NS 6/28, c. 54, Kmetko test., 6 January 1947, f. 695/45.
113. ŠAvB, KST, fd. 3421/21, ZČVpS Nitra/Nitra-1 4022, 25 October 1923.
114. *NSz*, 7 September [misdated August] 1924, 2.
115. DAvN, RKBÚ, 23/10.1924/2165, Protocollum, Cathalogus 1923–24, 8 November 1924, entry 2283.
116. ŠAvN, NŽ II prez., c. 41, fd. 600/24, OkÚ Nitra 1846, 24 November 1924.
117. *DP*, 1 December 1924, 326. The title quoted the Archangel Gabriel's words to the prophet Daniel.
118. *NL*, 3 February 1923, 1; and *NVM*, 14 July 1922, 2.
119. See also Thomas Anselm Lorman, "The Christian Social Roots of Jozef Tiso's Radicalism, 1887–1939," in *In the Shadow of Hitler: Personalities of the Right in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Rebecca Haynes and Martyn Rady (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 245–60.
120. Kamenec, *Tragédia politika, kňaza a človeka*, 36–37.
121. Indeed, the Nitra Agrarians' *Katolícke noviny* and *Národná stráž* strongly followed the antisemitic tradition of Tiso's *Nitra*.
122. *NSz*, 30 September 1923, 2.
123. *Čech*, 25 December 1925, 5.
124. *NSz*, 14 October 1923, 2; and Lipták, *Changes of Changes*, 42.

Chapter 4

1. Bartlová, "Jozef Tiso – funkcionár HSES," 81; and ŠAvB, KST, c. 79, fd. B 2823/23, Obecný úrad Bánovce 3504, 17 August 1925.
2. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 99; and Šišmiš, *Bánovce nad Bebravou*, 163.
3. *SL*, 22 October 1926, 1.

4. ŠAvB, KST, c. 79, fd. B 2823/23, Obecný úrad Bánovce 3504, 17 August 1925; and *PaČ*, 1:203–6, 237–38, 254–57.
5. *PaČ*, 1:203.
6. Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wahnout, eds., *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918–45* (London: Routledge, 2004), 2. See also Michael Gehler and Wolfram Kaiser, eds., *Christian Democracy in Europe since 1945* (London: Routledge, 2004); Tom Buchanan and Martin Conway, eds., *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918–1965* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996); Thomas Kselman and Joseph A. Buttigieg, eds., *European Christian Democracy: Historical Legacies and Comparative Perspectives* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003); and Gerd-Rainer Horn and Emmanuel Gerard, eds., *Left Catholicism, 1943–1955: Catholics and Society in Western Europe at the Point of Liberation* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001).
7. The parties introduced here are Československá národní demokracie and Československá strana socialistická.
8. Andrea Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle: The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe, 1914–1948* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 16–17, 57–61.
9. *Ibid.*, 99.
10. Alena Bartlová, “Návrhy slovenských politických strán na zmenu štátoprávneho usporiadania ČSR v rokoch 1918–1935. . .,” in Zemko and Bystrický, *Slovensko v Československu*, 139.
11. Rogerson, *Slovak Republicans and Slovak Populists*, 304–5; *New York Times* (hereafter *NYT*), 9 July 1925, 3; and Daniel E. Miller, *Forging Political Compromise: Antonín Švehla and the Czechoslovak Republican Party, 1918–1933* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999), 140.
12. *SIT*, 22 March 1925, 1. See also SČ-SDPK, 1920–25 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 336 (21 March 1925), 4.
13. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 55, Prezidium Ministerstva školství a národní osvěty 7230, 4 August 1925, f. 53–54/46. See also *SL*, 28 June 1925, 1.
14. Sidor, *Slovenská politika*, 1:265; and Miller, *Forging Political Compromise*, 57, 164.
15. Kramer, *Slovenské autonomistické hnutie*, 283–303; and Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 533. The party’s new name was Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana (HLSL).
16. ASsV, 10/č. 3, Gažík et al. to Hlinka, 9 December 1926. Cf. *RN*, 21 November 1926, 1. See also Roman Holec, *Coburgovci a Slovensko* (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2010), 278–84.
17. *PaČ*, 1:213.
18. ŠAvN, NŽ II prez., c. 79, fd. 4665/25, OkÚ Bánovce 590, 21 July 1925, and c. 71, fd. 1000/25, OkÚ Bánovce 1210, 31 December 1925.
19. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-659-4, ObvN Slatina 2938, 1 November 1925, f. 178.
20. ŠAvN, KSvN, III m.o., fd. 655/26, Ružík zpráva 2462, 9 November 1925, and ZČVpS 945, 7 November 1925.
21. ŠAvN, KSvN, III m.o., fd. 655/26, copy of Ružík zpráva 2462, 9 November 1925 (different report than above).
22. ŠAvBra-pT, OkÚ Trenčín, fd. 20974/25, V. o. notár 3062, 8 November 1925.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Čech*, 25 December 1925, 5.
25. *DP*, 1 December 1925, 1. For a similar article signed by Tiso, see 1 November 1927, 1–2.
26. *Přítomnost* (hereafter *Př*), 26 November 1925, 722. See also *Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v listopadu 1925* (Prague: Státní úřad statistický, 1926), tab. II., 28–33; Xénia Šuchová, ed., “Politický systém,” in Zemko and Bystrický, *Slovensko v Československu*, 560; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 33.
27. *SL*, 30 August 1935, 4; Kramer, *Slovenské autonomistické hnutie*, 315; and Hertel, “Dr. Vojtech Tuka,” 179, 183.
28. SNA, NS 7/46, c. 101, Tiso aff., 17 April 1946, f. 149/89; and *SZN*, 31 January 1930, 3.
29. ČNA, PMR, c. 24, fd. 12, PMV 25686, 20 November 1925, f. 23. See also Martin Holák, “Vstup Hlinkovej slovenskej ľudovej strany do vládnej koalície,” *Historický zborník* 14, no. 2 (2004): 30; and Bartlová, “Návrhy slovenských politických strán,” 142.
30. SČ-SDPK, 1925–29 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 3 (18 December 1925), 12. See also Sidor, *Slovenská politika*, 1:269–70.

31. For paragraph, unless otherwise noted, see Miller, *Forging Political Compromise*, 148–49; Kramer, *Slovenské autonomistické hnutie*, 329; Holák, “Vstup HSLS,” 34; Bartlová, “Návrhy slovenských politických strán,” 142, 147; Felak, “Priests in East Central European Politics,” 278; and Alena Bartlová, “Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana,” in *Přehled politického stranictví na území Českých zemí a Československa v letech 1861–1998*, ed. Pavel Marek (Olomouc: Katedra politologie a evropských studií FFUP, 2000), 223.
32. *PaČ*, 1:241.
33. *Národné noviny*, 12 March 1926, 1. See also *SL*, 9 March 1926, 1.
34. *PaČ*, 1:239.
35. SNA, HŠZ, c. 132, fd. 1212/28, Hlinka test. in Tuka trial, 24 August 1929, 1478. See also Miller, *Forging Political Compromise*, 154; Bartlová, “Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana,” 223; and Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 545.
36. Dušan Uhlíř, “Republikánská strana lidu zemědělského a malorolnického ve vládě Panské koalice,” *Československý časopis historický* 18 (1970): 204–5; Antonín Klimek, *Boj o hrad* (Prague: Panevropa, 1996–98), 2:22, 91–92; Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle*, 99–101, 114–15; David Kelly, “The Would-Be Führer: General Radola Gajda of Czechoslovakia,” *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 12 (1999): 167–68; and Victor S. Mamatey, “The Development of Czechoslovak Democracy,” in Mamatey and Luža, *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic*, 133
37. *PaČ*, 1:248.
38. Hertel, “Dr. Vojtech Tuka,” 179; and Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle*, 99.
39. *Slovenský národ*, 21 May 1926, 3; and *Slovenská otčina*, 16 June 1926, 2–3.
40. *DP*, 1 August 1926, 7–8. See also ŠAvB, Považská župa, c. 131, fd. 6936/26, ZČVpS Trenčín/Bošáca 1324, 16 August 1926. For an instance of Tiso playing to the guard, see ČNA, PMV, 225-471-7, copy of OkÚ Topolčany, 23 August 1926, f. 10.
41. Miller, *Forging Political Compromise*, 154–55; and Alena Bartlová, “Vzájomné vzťahy medzi Československou lidovou stranou a HSLS v rokoch 1918–1938,” in *Jan Šrámek: Kněz, státník, politik*, ed. Pavel Marek (Olomouc: Katedra politologie a historie FFUP v Olomouci, 2004), 151.
42. Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 551. See also SČ-SDPK, 1925–29 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 36 (19 June 1926), 7; *DP*, 1 September 1926, 1–2; and *NYT*, 10 June 1926, 4.
43. *SLN*, 28 May 1926, 2. See also Sidor, *Andrej Hlinka*, 550–51.
44. *SL*, 8 October 1926, 1; and *Trenčian*, 9 October 1926, 1.
45. *SL*, 22 October 1926, 1–2; and *RN*, 22 October 1926, 1.
46. *PaČ*, 1:269–70. See also Bartlová, “Jozef Tiso – funkcionár HSLS,” 81. Socialists have traditionally called the government the “Gentlemen’s Coalition” (Panská koalícia).
47. *SL*, 28 November 1926, 1. See also Matthew, 13:31–32.
48. SČ-SDPK, 1925–29 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 52 (24 November 1926), 4; Bartlová, “Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana,” 223; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 34–35.
49. *LN*, 14 October 1926, ráno, 2; and *SID*, 9 November 1926, 1.
50. ASsV, 10/c. 3, Gažík et al. to Hlinka, 9 December 1926.
51. *LN*, 16 January 1927, ráno, 1.
52. SČ-SDPK, 1925–29 NSRČS-PS, tisk 1224; and *Pří*, 24 December 1925, 786–87.
53. SNA, fond “S” (hereafter listed only as folder signature), fd. S-424-1, KPR Praha, T. 47, 17 January 1927; and Bartlová, “Návrhy slovenských politických strán,” 151. More magnanimously, Masaryk cleared up Tiso’s legal problems. SNA, fd. S-424-2, T. 133, 8 February 1927, f. 110–13.
54. SNA, HŠZ, c. 132, fd. 1212/28, Hlinka test. in Tuka trial, 24 August 1929, 1495; and MarAff 146/43. See also SNA, NS 6/46, c. 55, ŽÚ Nitra 1921, 30 March 1925, f. 50/46.
55. ASsV, Lad I/f.8/22, Hlinka to Buday, 11 August 1928. See also Dušan Uhlíř, “Konec vlády panské koalice a republikánská strana v roce 1929,” *Československý časopis historický* 18 (1970): 560; and Miller, *Forging Political Compromise*, 159–60.
56. Miller, *Forging Political Compromise*, 158–78.
57. ČNA, PMR, c. 4386, Protokoly ze schůzí Ministerské rady (hereafter MR protokoly), sch. 60 (28 June 1928), f. 14; Věra Helešicová, ed., *Z protokolů schůzí 9. Československé vlády*. . . :

- Édice vybraných pasáží* (Prague: Státní ústřední archiv, 1995), 65–86, 110–15, 145, 150–55; and Raisa Machatková and Jaroslava Milotová, *Katalog a rejstříky k protokolům schůzí vlád z fondu předsednictva ministerské rady, 9. československá vláda . . .* (Prague: Státní ústřední archiv, 1955), foldout chart.
58. *Deutsche Presse*, 22 January 1927, 1; and *PaČ*, 1:271; *SL*, 12 March 1927, 3, and 17 April 1927, 5.
59. See, for example, *SL*, 8 July 1927, 1.
60. *Deutsche Presse*, 22 January 1927, 1.
61. *Věstník Ministerstva veřejného zdravotnictví a tělesné výchovy* (hereafter *VMZd*) 9 (1927): 165–73. See also *SL*, 18 March 1927, 1; and Melissa Feinberg, *Elusive Equality: Gender, Citizenship, and the Limits of Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1918–1950* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006), 131–38.
62. *VMZd* 9 (1927): 171–72.
63. *SL*, 1 April 1927, 3.
64. *Ibid.*, 17 April 1927, 5. See also *ibid.*, 10 April 1927, 1; and *Trenčan*, 16 April 1927, 2, and 19 March 1927, 1–2.
65. *SL*, 11 February 1927, 1, and 3 May 1927, 1.
66. Kramer, *Slovenské autonomistické hnutie*, 393–94. See also Hertel, “Dr. Vojtech Tuka,” 180.
67. *Autonomia*, 13 November 1927, 5.
68. *SL*, 13 May 1927, 1. See also Miller, *Forging Political Compromise*, 162.
69. Jaroslav Pecháček, *Masaryk, Beneš, Hrad: Masarykovy dopisy Benešovi* (Munich: České slovo, 1984), 56.
70. SNA, PR, c. 226, fd. Mat 148/13, copy of Slavíček 29627, 18 August 1927, f. 732; *SL*, 19 August 1927, 1; and Miroslav Michela, “Reakcie slovenských politických kruhov a tlače na Rothermerovu akciu (1927–1928),” *HČ* 52 (2004): 513.
71. ČNA, Ministerstvo veřejného zdravotnictví a tělesné výchovy (fond 622), c. 16, fd. XV/Č/6/114, Presidium ministerstva veřejného zdravotnictví a tělesné výchovy 1057, 30 June 1927.
72. Sidor, *Slovenská politika*, 1:300–314; Xénia Šuchová, “Problémy organizácie politickej správy na Slovensku v predmnichovskej republike,” in Zemko and Bystrický, *Slovensko v Československu*, 109–12; and Kramer, *Slovenské autonomistické hnutie*, 377.
73. ČNA, PMR, c. 4385, MR protokoly, sch. 27 (10 June 1927), 16; and Helešicová, *Z protokolů schůzí 9. Československé vlády*, 54–55.
74. *Z Tater a našich hor a lázní*, 22 December 1927, and 24 March 1928; *LN*, 5 February 1928, ráno, 12; *RN*, 13 April 1928, 1; and *SID*, 11 April 1928, 1.
75. *Z Tater a našich hor a lázní*, 7 June 1928, 80; 17 January 1929, 1–3; and 31 January 1929, 1–2.
76. *SL*, 1 January 1928, 3–4.
77. Milan Ivanka, *Proti tajné iredente* (Bratislava: Universum, 1928); and SČ-SDPK, 1925–29 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 120 (17 January 1928), 4–5.
78. *RN*, 13 January 1928, 1; and *SL*, 14 January 1928, 1.
79. Bartlová, “Návrhy slovenských politických strán,” 155; and Michal Lukeš, “Vojenská zpravodajská služba a pozadí Tukova procesu,” *Historie a vojenství* 46, no. 4 (1997): 33.
80. *Deutsche Presse*, 11 March 1928, 2.
81. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-475-1, copy of Belanský to Vyšetrujúca komisia, 23 April 1928, f. 138.
82. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-475-1, letter to Vrchní odborový rada, 13 July 1928, f. 56.
83. *SID*, 22 April 1928, 1.
84. *Slovenské hlasy* (supplement to *Národní osvobození*), 24 May 1928, 1.
85. See, for example, ČNA, MZV-VA, c. 4040, fd. Dr. Jozef Tiso 1923–38, *Československá republika*, 22 February 1928; and *VMZd* 10 (1928): 596–99.
86. *PaČ*, 1:289–92.
87. *Národní práce*, 9 November 1928, 6. See also SČ-SDPK, 1925–29 NSRČS-PS, tisk 1994.
88. *LN*, 11 November 1928, 5. See also *Věstník českých lékařů*, 8 December 1928, 870–72.
89. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-472-1, T. 245, 23 October 1928, f. 77.
90. ČNA, PMR, c. 4386, MR protokoly, sch. 71 (29 November 1928), f. 12; and *Volby do zemských zastupitelstev roku 1928* (Prague: Státní úřad statistický, 1929), tab. II, 38–41.

91. Felak, "At the Price," 56; Kramer, *Slovenské autonomistické hnutie*, 420; and SNA, PR, c. 2189, T. 348, 16 January 1929.
92. *SID*, 21 November 1928, 3; *SEN*, 8 February 1929, 1–4; and *SL*, 19 February 1929, 1.
93. Uhlíř, "Republikánská strana lidu," 228–30.
94. Lukeš, "Vojenská zpravodajská služba," 34–37.
95. Klimek, *Boj o hrad*, 2:218. See also *SL*, 28 August 1929, 2–3; and SNA, NS 7/46, c. 10, Tiso aff., 17 April 1946, f. 149–50/89.
96. SNA, PR, c. 2190, T. 652, 17 September 1929.
97. Pecháček, *Masaryk, Beneš, Hrad*, 101. See also Felak, "At the Price," 56–57; Uhlíř, "Konec vlády panské koalice," 572–77; and Bartlová, "Návrhy slovenských politických strán," 154–55.
98. SNA, PR, c. 2190, T. 703, 8 October 1929. See also Klimek, *Boj o hrad*, 2:219.
99. *LN*, 9 October 1929, ráno, 1.
100. Bartlová, "Návrhy slovenských politických strán," 153; and ČNA, PMR, c. 1287–88. The two most important of Tiso's laws, on physicians, were controversial. Czech doctors felt that the legislation insulted their honor, while Tiso considered his own besmirched in return. The conflict was resolved by other MPs and the Osmička. Tiso came off as the petty loser. See *Věstník českých lékařů* 41 (1929): 402–11; and *LN*, 5 June 1929, ráno, 2.
101. Johnson, *Slovaquia, 1918–1938*, 300; and Bartlová, "Návrhy slovenských politických strán," 152.
102. Valerián Bystrický, *Od autonomie k vzniku Slovenského štátu* (Bratislava: HÚ SAV, 2008), 187. Johnson argues that the lack of Slovaks in the central ministries was due in part to a Slovak preference for provincial jobs (*Slovaquia 1918–1938*, 301–3).
103. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-670-9, zpráva on 10 October 1929 HSES rally, f. 90–91.
104. *SL*, 12 October 1929, 2.
105. *Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v říjnu 1929* (Prague: Státní úřad statistický, 1930), tab. II, 28–33.
106. *Trenčan*, 23 November 1929, 1. See also Sidor, *Slovenská politika*, 2:11; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Martin Sokol test., 12 February 1947, f. 417/86.
107. *SL*, 4 December 1928, 1.
108. Milan Katuninec, "Slovák – ústřední tlačový orgán Ludovej strany," in Marek, *Tisk a politické strany*, 167. Otherwise, see Felak, "At the Price," 66–67.
109. Sidor, *Slovenská politika*, 2:83.
110. *DP*, 1 January 1925, 1, and 1 January 1928, 1.
111. *Ibid.*, 1 December 1928, 2; and *SL*, 12 January 1930, 5.
112. *DP*, 1 February 1928, 2.
113. *LN*, 7 January 1930, 2; and *SEN*, 17 January 1930, 1. Mičurovci claimed that Tiso had been editor only in name for some time, a plausibility considering his cabinet career. I believe, however, that he continued to contribute lead articles to the journal. *Ludová politika*, 11 January 1930, 1.
114. Holland, *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 202–4; Conway, *Catholic Politics in Europe*, 41; and *Příj*, 19 July 1928, 433.
115. *DP*, 1 March 1928, 1–3.
116. *PaČ*, 1: 299–300; *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 25 December 1929, 3; Felak, "At the Price," 72–75; and Pavel Marek, "Politické strany maďarské menšiny," in Marek, *Přehled politického stranictví*, 925.
117. SČ-SDPK, 1929–35 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 17 (18 February 1930), 17.
118. MarAff 145/43.
119. ČNA, MZV-VA, c. 4040, *Role*, 22 February 1930.
120. SNA, PR, c. 239, fd. Mat 67/1, draft of Vládný radca to PKÚ, 27 March 1931, f. 45–46.
121. Felak, "At the Price," 79–80; and ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-910-5, copy of Dolejš to PZÚ, 9 June 1931, f. 152. The right radicals were Gajda's fascists and Stříbrný's National League (Národní liga).
122. Ludovít Hallon, "Příčiny, priebeh a dôsledky štruktúrálnych zmien v hospodárstve medzivojnového Slovenska," in Zemko and Bystrický, *Slovensko v Československu*, 326; and Dušan Kováč, *Dejiny Slovenska*, dr. vyd. (Prague: Lidové noviny, 2002), 200.
123. *PaČ*, 1:298–99.

124. Felak, "At the Price," 76; and *Trenčan*, 21 February 1931, 1–2. During the collapse of the Civic Coalition, Tiso reportedly even considered trading his Agrarian coalition partners for Social Democrats. See Klimek, *Boj o hrad*, 2:210.
125. SČ-SDPK, 1929–35 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 101 (5 February 1931), 10; sch. 113 (20 March 1931), 1; and sch. 147 (25 November 1931), 7; and *SL*, 5 February 1931, 1.
126. 20 March 1931 parl. speech.
127. 25 November 1931 parl. speech.
128. *PaČ*, 1:333.
129. Felak, "At the Price," 86; and Bartlová, "Návrhy slovenských politických strán," 157.
130. *Přít*, 29 December 1934, 824.
131. Jozef Tiso, *Ideológia slovenskej ľudovej strany* (Prague: Tiskový odbor ÚSČS, 1930).
132. *SL*, 25 December 1930, 2.
133. *PaČ*, 1:335. See also ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-910-5, copy of Dolejš to PZÚ, 9 June 1931, f. 152.
134. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-946-4, PKÚ 1/1908, 25 February 1932.
135. 25 November 1931 parl. speech; and ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-946-4, Štefánik 18145, 20 November 1931, f. 8–9.
136. *PaČ*, 1:352–53. See also Porter-Szücs, *Faith and Fatherland*, 43–45.
137. *PaČ*, 1:356.
138. *Trenčan*, 6 February 1932, 1.
139. *PaČ*, 1:356–57.
140. *SL*, 31 March 1932, 2.
141. Felak, "At the Price," 87–90; and *LN*, 29 June 1932, ráno, 3.
142. *SL*, 14 May 1932, 1; *RN*, 29 June 1932, 2; and James Felak, "The Congress of the Young Slovak Intelligentsia, June 1932: Its Context, Course, and Consequences," *Nationalities Papers* 21 (1993): 117, 120.
143. SNA, PR, c. 226, fd. HSEŠ 226/1, copy of PPRvK 5166, 19 April 1932, f. 175–78; MOL, Külügyminisztérium Levéltár: Politikai osztály 1918–44 (hereafter K 63), cs. 49, tétel 7/43/1933, MKK Pozsony 281, 31 December 1932, f. 254–55; ČNA, PMR, c. 107, S 166/1, T. 47, 24 November 1932, f. 2; and *Národní politika*, 21 January 1933, 2.
144. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, Stano aff., 19 February 1946, f. 54/45.
145. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Martin Sokol test., 12 February 1947, f. 469–70/86.
146. *Prágai Magyar Hírlap*, 28 August 1932, 5.
147. Felak, "At the Price," 93.
148. *Ibid.*, 64, 84; and Karol Sidor, *Denníky 1930–1939* (Bratislava: ÚPN, 2010), 36–38.
149. Felak, "Congress of the Young Slovak Intelligentsia," 116.
150. SNA, PR, c. 226, fd. HSEŠ 226/1, copy of PPRvK 5166, 19 April 1932, f. 176; and Felak, "At the Price," 84.
151. *PaČ*, 1:359; and ŠAvN-pT, OkÚ Bánovce, c. 196, fd. 10068/33, zpráva on 21 August 1932 rally.
152. *SL*, 21 October 1932, 1.
153. *PaČ*, 1:421.
154. SČ-SDPK, 1929–35 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 243 (3 February 1933), 1.
155. MarAff 149/43. In general, the Ludáks opposed Beneš's pro-French policy, favored ties with right-wing states such as Austria, Italy, and Poland, and rejected border revisions. Felak, "At the Price," 53–54.
156. MOL, K 63, cs. 49, tétel 7/43/1933, MKK Pozsony 281, 31 December 1932, f. 255.
157. *SL*, 19 May 1933, 1; and *Trenčan*, 22 April 1933, 1.
158. *LN*, 11 January 1933, ráno, 3.
159. 3 February 1933 parl. speech.
160. See, for example, *NySz*, 15 January 1933, 1.
161. *SL*, 30 December 1932, 1.
162. Katuninec, "Slovák," 168; and *LN*, 17 June 1934, ráno, 5.
163. Felak, "At the Price," 100–101.
164. *LN*, 4 February 1933, ráno, 2; SČ-SDPK, 1929–35 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 275 (30 May 1933), 1; and *Nástup*, 1 June 1933, 46.

165. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-910-3, PKÚ 28651, 16 June 1933, f. 20. See also 3 February 1933 parl. speech; and MarAff 148/43.
166. *PaČ*, 1:386–88; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 98.
167. *SID*, 5 March 1933, 2.
168. *RN*, 15 March 1933, 2.
169. ŠAvB, KST, c. 471, fd. VI 15/33; and *Bánovské noviny*, 18 March 1933, 2.
170. SČ-SDPK, 1929–35 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 296 (20 October 1933), 2.
171. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-1151-2, Zemské četnícke veliteľstvo v Bratislave, Nitra/Bánovce 1890, 10 September 1933, f. 12. For entire discussion, unless otherwise noted, see f. 8–23; ŠAvN, KSvN, III m.o., c. 1220, fd. 6-56/34; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 102–5.
172. *SL*, 17 August 1933, 2; *LN*, 20 August 1933, ráno, 2; and *Bánovské noviny*, 12 August 1933, 4.
173. ŠAvN-pN, OkÚ Nitra, c. 27, fd. 44/36, sfđ. 25/34, copy of Vopáľenský zápisnica, 22 August 1933, f. 9.
174. *SL*, 15 August 1933, 5.
175. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-911-2, PKÚ 45536, 23 September 1933, f. 236, 239. See also ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-1151-1, Výkaz administratívnych trestov, f. 4–5; Katuninec, “Slovák,” 168; and *Sbírka zákonů a nařízenů státu československého*, Zákon 201/33.
176. 20 October 1933 parl. speech.
177. Felak, “*At the Price*,” 109, 111; ČNA, PMV, c. 295, fd. VI M 4; and Bartlová, “Návrhy slovenských politických strán,” 162–63.
178. For this argument in detail, see Felak “*At the Price*.” Further for Czechoslovakia as a dysfunctional polity, see Mary Heimann, *Czechoslovakia: The State that Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

Chapter 5

1. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1889–1936: Hubris* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000), 63; Tatjana Tönsmeier, *Das Dritte Reich und die Slowakei, 1939–1945: Politischer Alltag zwischen Kooperation und Eigensinn* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2003), 40–43; and Karen Henderson, *Slovakia: The Escape from Invisibility* (London: Routledge, 2002), xv.
2. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations, 1932–1945* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1992), 2:968.
3. Edvard Beneš, *Mnichovské dny: Paměti* (Prague: Svoboda, 1968), 16–17.
4. Martin Holák, “Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana a snahy o vytvorenie katolíckeho bloku . . .,” *HČ* 54 (2006): 82–87; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 113–18.
5. *SL*, 1 April 1934, 3; and ČNA, PMR, c. 107, fd. S 166/1, PMV 5697, 30 March 1934, f. 3, and PMV, fd. 225-911-2, PKÚ 17210, 11 April 1934, f. 179. Press and police reports attributed the interview to Tiso. *Nástup*’s claim to the contrary was probably a tactic in its opposition to the bloc. *Nástup*, 15 April 1934, 285; SNA, PR, c. 223, fd. Mat 45/2, hlásenie, 7 April 1934, f. 219; and *Ľudová politika*, 6 April 1934, 1.
6. SNA, PR, c. 223, fd. Mat 45/2, report on Catholic bloc, 1 October 1934, f. 428. See also ČNA, PMR, c. 107, fd. S 166/1, PMV 11365, 25 June 1934, f. 3.
7. *SL*, 21 April 1934, 3.
8. *LN*, 23 April 1934, ráno, 1. See also *ibid.*, 20 April 1934, ráno, 2; *Pří*, 25 April 1934, 261; ČNA, MZV-VA, c. 4040, *Venkov*, 20 April 1934, *Lidové listy*, 19 April 1934, and *Právo lidu*, 20 April 1934.
9. *SL*, 30 September 1934, 4 (see also 27 November 1934, 1).
10. SČ-SDPK, 1929–35 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 349 (28 November 1934), 11; and *SL*, 1 January 1934, 1.
11. SNA, PR, c. 223, fd. Mat 48/1, zpráva of polic. konc., 13 February 1934, f. 916.
12. ČNA, PMV, fd. 255-911-2, copy of Štefánik 5122, 16 April 1934, f. 174.
13. SNA, KÚ, c. 69, fd. P IV-HSES 1934, sfđ. 37211/34 prez, Notársky úrad Divín 104, 31 July 1934, f. 33.

14. ŠAvN-pT, OkÚ Bánovce, c. 205, fd. 5166/34, zpráva on 3 June 1934 rally in Horňany; and *PaČ*, 1:422–23.
15. *Lidové listy*, 7 June 1934, 4.
16. SNA, KÚ, c. 134, fd. 4639/34, OkÚ Trnava 26748, 26 October 1934, f. 66–69.
17. *Ibid.*, f. 72–73.
18. *SL*, 10 April 1927, 1; Bartlová, “Návrhy slovenských politických strán,” 153; SNA, NS 6/46, c. 55, “Tiso nariadil židov,” n.d., f. 277/46.
19. *SL*, 11 February 1934, 4; and *Nástup*, 1 February 1934, 232.
20. *PaČ*, 1:431. See also SNA, KÚ, c. 69, fd. P IV-HSES 1934, sfd. 2297/34, zpráva of komisár pol. správy, 23 September 1934, f. 68.
21. *LN*, 4 September 1934, ráno, 2.
22. ČNA, PMR, c. 107, fd. 166/1, sfd. 3, PMV 20293, 29 November 1934; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 126–28.
23. *PaČ*, 1:448, 450. See also *Nástup*, 15 January 1935; and *LN*, 7 February 1935, ráno, 2.
24. *Příj*, 20 February 1935, 100; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 135–37.
25. *PaČ*, 1:449.
26. MOL, Külügyminisztérium Levéltár: Politikai osztály rezervált iratai (hereafter K 64), cs. 62, tétel 7/1935, fd. 98, “Esetleges félreértések elkerülése végett. . .,” 1 February 1935, f. 8. See also same folder, MKK Pozsony 3/főn., 18 January 1935, f. 12–13, fd. 231, and MKK Pozsony 21/főn., 5 April 1935, f. 1–2. It is not clear what changes to the proposal, if any, resulted. For Hungarian and Polish policies, see Ladislav Deák, *Hva o Slovensko: Slovensko v politike Madarska a Polska v rokoach 1933–1939* (Bratislava: Veda, 1991).
27. MOL, K 64, cs. 62, tétel 7/1935, fd. 119, MKK Pozsony 8/főn., 18 February 1935, f. 2. See also Klimek, *Boj o hrad*, 2:161; and Sidor, *Denníky*, 115, 178, 199.
28. Bystrický, *Od autonómie*, 146; MOL, K 64, cs. 62, tétel 7/1935, fd. 231, MKK Pozsony 21/főn., 5 April 1935, f. 1; and *SL*, 17 April 1935, 1.
29. *SL*, 10 March 1935, 1.
30. *PaČ*, 1:450.
31. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-911-5, zpráva on HSES meeting in Veľké Uherce, 25 March 1935, f. 66, 68.
32. *SL*, 5 March 1935, 3. See also SNA, AKPR, inventár D, c. 75, i.č. 762, fd. D 1358/34, copy of Medvecký to Masaryk, 11 February 1934; and SNA, fd. S-424-1, KPR Praha, č. T. 602, 8 July 1934.
33. *RN*, “Volebná politika v obrázkoch,” 28 April 1935; and *SID*, 14 March 1935, 3.
34. Šuchová, “Politický systém,” 569–70.
35. Hugh LeCaine Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2004), 195–96; and MarAff 150/43.
36. SČ-SDPK, 1935–38 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 5 (25 June 1935), 13; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 146–48.
37. Klimek, *Boj o hrad*, 2:407.
38. *Ibid.*; Sidor, *Slovenská politika*, 2:165–66; Felak, “*At the Price*,” 144–45, 149; and SNA, PR, c. 226, fd. HSES, copy of PPRvK 13213, 9 September 1935, f. 325.
39. *Příj*, 14 August 1935, 498. See also *Nástup*, 15 April 1934, 276.
40. SNA, PR, c. 226, fd. HSES, copy of PPRvK 13213, 9 September 1935, f. 325.
41. *LN*, 22 June 1935, ráno, 2.
42. Samuel Cambel, *Štátnik a národohospodár Milan Hodža, 1878–1944* (Bratislava: Veda, 2001), 191–93; Ján Ursíny, *Z môjho života* (Martin: Matica slovenská, 2000), 52–56; Felak, “*At the Price*,” 151; and *SL*, 4 March 1936, 1.
43. Bartlová, “HSES v roku 1935,” 647; MarAff 152/43; and Bartlová, “Jozef Tiso,” 86.
44. SNA, S-424-1, Rückl to Šámal, 16 December 1935. See also same folder, Rückl report T. 1001, 10 December 1935; Bartlová, “HSES v roku 1935,” 642–46, 649; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 153.
45. *SL*, 20 December 1935, 1 (see also 22 December 1935, 1).
46. Bartlová, “HSES v roku 1935,” 650; Felak, “*At the Price*,” 160; and MarAff 151/43.
47. Bystrický, *Od autonómie*, 261–62. Despite later Ľudák claims, Beneš did not promise to enact autonomy in Slovakia, nor did Tiso understand him as doing so. See *ibid.*, 147.

48. MarAff 152/43; and Jozef Sivák, *Z mojich pamätí* (Martin: Matica slovenská, 2003), 315.
49. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Sokol test., 12 February 1947, f. 471/86; and Zbyněk Zeman and Antonín Klimek, *The Life of Edvard Beneš, 1884–1948* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 116. See also Sidor, *Denníky*, 223–26. For further on election, see Martin Holák, “Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana počas parlamentných a prezidentských volieb roku 1935,” in Letz et al., *Slovenská ľudová strana v dejinách*, 202–13; and Róbert Arpáš, *Autonómia: Víťazstvo alebo prehra?* (Bratislava: Veda, 2011), 17–34.
50. *LN*, 2 February 1936, ráno, 2, and 28 February 1936, ráno, 2. See also Valerián Bystrický et al., eds., *Vznik Slovenského štátu* (Bratislava: AEP, 2007–8) (hereafter *VŠŠ*), 2:158.
51. *SL*, 4 March 1936, 1; and *Pří*, 15 April 1936, 227.
52. Sidor, *Denníky*, 234, 238–43.
53. Andrej Nemlaha and Milan Laurinec, eds., *Pamätnica Rímskokatolíckeho mužského učiteľského ústavu (akadémie) v Bánovciach nad Bebravou, 1934–1945* (Bratislava: SAP, 1996), 24. See also *ibid.*, 23, 60–61; ŠAvN-pT, Učiteľská akadémia v Bánovciach nad Bebravou; and ČNA, Ministerstvo školství a kultury, Praha, osobní, c. 247, fd. Tiso, Jozef, Ministerstvo školství a národní osvěty 33673, 20 November 1935.
54. *SL*, 15 April 1936, 3.
55. José M. Sánchez, *The Spanish Civil War as a Religious Tragedy* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 1. See also Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union, and Communism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).
56. *Pří*, 6 May 1936, 277. See also Šuchová, “Politický systém,” 565; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 158.
57. SČ-SDPK (Slovak version), 1935–38 NSRČS-PS, tisk 422.
58. Felak, “*At the Price*,” 160–62.
59. SNA, PR, c. 223, fd. Mat 48/1, copy of Vládný radca 6933, 24 June 1936, f. 923.
60. *RN*, 28 April 1936, 1; and *LN*, 28 April 1935, ráno, 2.
61. *Politika*, 1 May 1936, 87.
62. SČ-SDPK, 1935–38 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 40 (29 April 1936), 7. Tiso’s claim on Kun was due to false press reports.
63. SČ-SDPK (Slovak version), 1935–38 NSRČS-PS, tisky 422 and 430; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 162.
64. 29 April 1936 parl. speech.
65. *Ibid.*
66. ŠAvN-pT, OkÚ Bánovce, c. 214, zpráva on HSEŠ rally in Dolné Maštice, 1 April 1935. See also *SID*, 11 December 1934, 3.
67. Cambel, *Štátnik a národnohospodár Milan Hodža*, 170–72; ŠAvN-pT, OkÚ Bánovce, c. 216, zpráva on HSEŠ rally in Jastrabie, 15 May 1935; and *SID*, 11 December 1934, 3.
68. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Ursíny test., 13 January 1947, f. 65–66/84.
69. *Pří*, 29 April 1936, 260, and 3 June 1936, 343.
70. *SL*, 26 August 1936, 2.
71. *Pří*, 9 September 1936, 563.
72. ŠAvN-pT, ŠAC, *Náš svet*, 24 April 1936, and *Slovenský hlásnik* (Pittsburgh), 19 January 1937; and *SL*, 21 May 1936, 1.
73. *SL*, 30 August 1936, 1, and 1 Sept. 1936, 1–2.
74. *RN*, 1 September 1936, 1–2; and *SL*, 1 September 1936, 1.
75. ŠAvN-pT, ŠAC, *Právo ľudu*, 29 August 1936.
76. *PaČ*, 1:502; and ŠAvN-pT, ŠAC, *Slovenská Pravda*, 1 September 1936.
77. Felak, “*At the Price*,” 165–66.
78. SNA, ONS, c. 20, t. 61/46, fd. 2/1, Mach aff., 21 May 1947.
79. *SL*, 20 September 1936, 2; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Sokol test., 12 February 1947, f. 387–90/86.
80. *PaČ*, 1:503; and *SL*, 27 September 1936, 4–5.
81. *SL*, 27 September 1936, 4–5. See also Paul Preston, *The Coming of the Spanish Civil War: Reform, Reaction, and Revolution in the Second Republic*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1994), 40, 281. Gil Robles in fact facilitated the military revolt.
82. *PaČ*, 3:168–69.
83. MarAff 154/43; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 164–67.

84. *Pří*, 23 September 1936, 597; and *Politika*, 1 October 1936, 197. For congress in general, see Arpáš, *Autonómia*, 35–52.
85. SČ–SDPK, 1935–38 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 68 (1 December 1936), 15–16.
86. *Právo lidu*, 9 December 1936, 3.
87. Sidor, *Slovenská politika*, 2:204–6; and Bartlová, “HSES v roku 1935,” 650. For case in general, see Michal Lukeš, “Cesta k amnestii Vojtecha Tuky,” *HČ* 46 (1998): 663–72.
88. *SL*, 12 March 1937, 3–4.
89. *LN*, 20 August 1937, ráno, 2.
90. SNA, KÚ, c. 251, fd. 3185/38, PPRvK 9606, 7 July 1937, f. 51. See also *Rudé právo*, 13 March 1937, 2; *RN*, 21 March 1937, 1; and *LN*, 12 August 1937, ráno, 2.
91. *Nástup*, 15 March 1937, 71.
92. *SL*, 23 January 1937, 1; and SNA, KÚ, c. 251, fd. 3185/38, PPRvK 4007, 25 March 1937, f. 26.
93. ASsV, 86 F 15, Tiso to Pöstényi[?], 8 March 1937. See also *SL*, 13 October 1937, 1.
94. *PaČ*, 1:518, 523; ČNA, PMV, fd. 225–1163-4, zpráva for HSES rally, 22 August 1937, f. 21; and ŠAvN-pT, OkÚ Bánovce, c. 282, fd. 713/38, zpráva for 29 August 1937 HSES rally.
95. *SL*, 19 May 1937, 1.
96. Letz, “Hlinkova Slovenská ľudová strana,” 59.
97. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 55, OkÚ Bánovce 752, 23 August 1937, f. 112/46.
98. *RN*, 25 August 1937, 1; and MOL, K 64, cs. 70, tétel 10/1937, MKF New York 30, 2 December 1937, f. 180.
99. ASsV, 303 c 27 c, schedules; MarAff 149/43; and ASR, AF 1591 (11 December 1938 speech).
100. *Jednota* (Middletown), 7 June 1939, 1; and MarAff 255–56/43.
101. *Slovenská obrana* (Scranton), 17 September 1937, 5; 12 October 1937, 3; and 15 October 1937, 5; and *New Yorkský denník*, 10 November 1937, 2.
102. MOL, K 64, cs. 70, tétel 10/1937, MKF New York 30, 2 December 1937, f. 182.
103. ASVS, 303 c 38, Výkaz príjmov a výdajov svätovojtešskej misie v Amerike, 3 January 1938.
104. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 3 December 1946, f. 69/81; and Karol Körper, *Z Bratislavy do Chicaga* (Trnava: Spolok sv. Vojtecha, 1941), 389–90.
105. *Politika*, 1 March 1938, 37; *SL*, 11 November 1937, 1; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 170–71.
106. SNA, KÚ, c. 251, fd. 3185/38, PPRvK 17780, 2 December 1937, f. 87–88.
107. SČ–SDPK, 1935–38 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 117 (30 November 1937), 10–11.
108. *Ibid.*, sch. 119 (2 December 1937), 11.
109. *Ibid.*, sch. 122 (4 December 1937), 3.
110. *LN*, 8 December 1937, ráno, 2; and Sidor, *Denníky*, 301.
111. Thomas L. Sakmyster, “Hungary and the Munich Crisis: The Revisionist Dilemma,” and Betty Jo Winchester, “Hungary and the ‘Third Europe’ in 1938,” *Slavic Review* 32 (1973): 725–56.
112. *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918–1945* (hereafter *DGFP*), ser. D, 2:611. See also Igor Lukes, “The Czechoslovak Partial Mobilization in May 1938: A Mystery (Almost) Solved,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 31 (1996): 669–720.
113. Domarus, *Hitler*, 2:1114.
114. *SL*, 18 January 1938, 1. See also MarAff 163/43.
115. SNA, PR, c. 228, fd. Mat 54/1, stenographic report of HSES rally in Bratislava, 5 June 1938, f. 581. See also SNA, KÚ, c. 251, fd. 3185/38, PPRvK 1650, 31 January 1938, f. 94.
116. SNA, KÚ, c. 251, fd. 533/38, PPRvK 14837, 24 August 1938, f. 101.
117. Sidor, *Denníky*, 373–75; and *Národné noviny*, 3 September 1938, 3.
118. SČ–SDPK, 1935–38 NSRČS-PS, sp., sch. 131 (23 February 1938), 1.
119. For the last stages of autonomy movement, see Felak, “*At the Price*”; Arpáš, *Autonómia*; Dorothea H. El Mallakh, *The Slovak Autonomy Movement, 1935–1939: A Study in Unrelenting Nationalism* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1979); and Jörg K. Hoensch, *Die Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik: Hlinkas slowakische Volkspartei zwischen Autonomie und Separation, 1938/1939* (Köln: Böhlau, 1965).
120. See, for example, *Pří*, 19 January 1938, 34.
121. *Lidové listy*, 7 June 1934, 4.

122. *SL*, 12 February 1938, 3, and 20 February 1938, 3; and *RN*, 13 February 1939, 2.
123. SNA, PR, c. 228, fd. Mat 54/1, stenographic report of rally, 5 June 1938, f. 584. See also ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-1164-3, zpráva of ObvN Dežerice, 20 May 1938, f. 24.
124. *DGFP*, ser. D, 2:125.
125. Sidor, *Denníky*, 347.
126. SNA, fd. S-501-4, apparent Mach manuscript, bod 1.b; Felak, “*At the Price*,” 197–98; SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Karl Hermann Frank aff., 17 January 1947, f. 544/84; and *Př*, 14 September 1938, 580–81.
127. MarAff 165/43; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 195.
128. SNA, PR, c. 228, f. 629; and SNA, KÚ, c. 251, fd. 3185/38, PPRvK 2852, 21 February 1938, f. 100.
129. *LN*, 13 August 1938, ráno, 2–3; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Sokol test., 13 February 1947, f. 570/86.
130. SNA, KÚ, c. 251, fd. 3185/38, PPRvK 8331, 19 May 1938, f. 91. “Youth” in Ludák usage stretched into one’s thirties.
131. ČNA, PMV, fd. 225-1164-3, zpráva of ObvN Dežerice, 20 May 1938, f. 24; and ŠAvBra, KSB Tl, fd. 418/38, *SL*, 1 June 1938, 2.
132. Yeshayahu Jelinek, “Storm-Troopers in Slovakia: The Rodobrana and the Hlinka Guard,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 6, no. 3 (1971): 103; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 185.
133. SNA, PR, c. 228, fd. Mat 54/1, stenographic report of rally, 5 June 1938, f. 585–87.
134. *SID*, 11 June 1938, 1. Cf. also *ibid.*, 24 February 1938, 1; and 23 February 1938 parl. speech, noting the failure to report Tiso’s criticism of Czechoslovak democracy.
135. *SL*, 13 May 1938, 3.
136. MOL, K 64, cs. 79, tétel 65/1938, fd. 179, “A legutóbb szóbelileg . . .” [c. March 1938], f. 47. See also MOL, K 63, cs. 68, tétel 7/43/1938, MKK Pozsony 36, 31 March 1938, f. 418.
137. Magda Ádám, ed., *A Müncheni Egyezmény Létrejötte és Magyarország Külpolitikája, 1936–1938* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1965), 665–66. See also Loránt Tilkovszky, *Revízió és Nemzetiségpolitika Magyarországon (1938–1941)* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1967), 22.
138. Zbigniew Landau and Jerzy Tomaszewski, eds., *Monachium 1938: Polskie dokumenty dyplomatyczne* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1985), 486. I thank Paweł Pachuta for translating this and other Polish sources. See also Karol Sidor, *Vatikánský denník I* (Bratislava: ÚPN, 2011), 133.
139. Bystrický, *Od autonómie*, 112.
140. *PaČ*, 1:554–55.
141. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Ján Lichner and Michal Korman test., 4 January 1947, f. 114–16/83. See also Bystrický, *Od autonómie*, 168–72, 270; Róbert Letz, “Politické aktivity Karola Sidora od septembra 1938 do júla 1939,” *Historický zborník* 9 (1999): 73; and Hoensch, *Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik*, 93, 99.
142. Bystrický, *Od autonómie*, 176–77, 272.
143. *SL*, 2 October 1938, 1.
144. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Ursíny test., 13 January 1947, f. 87/84; and *Čas*, 11 January 1947, 1.
145. *VŠŠ*, 2:308; and Bystrický, *Od autonómie*, 288–89.
146. *SL*, 5 June 1938, 2; and Felak, “*At the Price*,” 191–92.
147. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Ursíny test., 13 January 1947, f. 87/84; and Bystrický, *Od autonómie*, 297–98.
148. Ján Ursíny, *Spomienky na Slovenské národné povstanie* (Liptovský Mikuláš: Tranoscius, 1994), 18–19.
149. Felak, “*At the Price*,” 206; Sidor, *Denníky*, 385–86; Milan Katuninec, “Dilemy Karola Sidora (1938–39),” *HČ* 48 (2000): 638; and SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, Stano aff., 19 February 1946, f. 54/45.
150. *SL*, 7 October 1938, 1 (bold in original).
151. *VŠŠ*, 1:181; and ČNA, PMR, c. 4396, MR Protokoly, sch. 6 (7 October 1938), f. 3.
152. *LN*, 7 October 1938, ráno, 2, and 9 October 1938, ráno, 2. See also MarAff 172/43.
153. *Národní osvobození*, 9 October 1938, 2.
154. 23 February 1938 parl. speech.
155. MarAff 179/43.

Chapter 6

1. ŠAvBra-pT, OkÚ Nové Mesto, fd. 2520/38, OkÚ Nové Mesto 2520, 5 October 1938.
2. *SID*, 8 October 1938, 3.
3. *Národné noviny*, 11 October 1938, 1–2; and *SL*, 11 October 1938, 3.
4. Mónica Curtis, ed., *Documents on International Affairs, 1938* (London: Oxford University Press, 1942–43), 2:290.
5. MarAff 172–73/43. See also Ladislav Deák, *Viedenská arbitráž: 2. november 1938* (Martin: Matice slovenská, 2002–3), 1:10–11, 69; and Valerián Bystrický, “Vnútropolitický ohlas na zmeny hraníc v roku 1938,” in *Viedenská arbitráž v roku 1938 a jej európske súvislosti*, ed. Daniel Šmihula (Bratislava: Úrad vlády Slovenskej republiky, 2008), 38.
6. *Pester Lloyd*, 13 October 1938, Abend, 1.
7. Magda Ádám, “The Munich Crisis and Hungary: The Fall of the Versailles Settlement in Central Europe,” in *The Munich Crisis, 1938: Prelude to World War II*, ed. Igor Lukes and Erik Goldstein (London: Frank Cass, 1999), 106; and Deák, *Viedenská arbitráž*, 1:13–16, 72–75, 113, 122, 128.
8. Bystrický, “Vnútropolitický ohlas,” 38–39; and Deák, *Viedenská arbitráž*, 1:83–84, 91, 117.
9. HIA, Poland, Poselstwo (Hungary), c. 1, fd. 1.2, Papée telegram to Poselstwa, 7 October 1938, f. 135.
10. *DGFP*, ser. D, 4:89, 92.
11. SNA, NS 7/46, c. 102, Mach test., 5 August 1946, f. 444/90.
12. *DGFP*, ser. D, 4:82, 92.
13. Papée telegram, as above.
14. Ladislav Suško, “Miesto autonómneho Slovenska v politike Nemeckej ríše (september 1938–marec 1939),” *HČ* 47 (1999): 430.
15. Deák, *Viedenská arbitráž*, 1:160–61; Deák, *Hra o Slovensko*, 208; and NACP, mf. T-120, reel 154, Druffel telegram 87, 31 October 1938, f. 76087.
16. *SL*, 30 October 1938, 3; Eduard Nižňanský, *Židovská komunita na Slovensku medzi československou parlamentnou demokraciou a Slovenským štátom v stredoeurópskom kontexte* (Prešov: Universum, 1999), 20, 104, 106, 112; and MarAff 208–9/43.
17. *SL*, 25 October 1938, 2, 5.
18. Eduard Nižňanský, “Dvojnásobné zmocnenie sa vlády na Slovensku v rokoch 1938/39. . . ,” in *Nacionálno-socialistický systém vlády: Ríšska župa Sudety, Protektorát Čechy a Morava, Slovensko*, ed. Monika Glettler et al. (Bratislava: AEP, 2002), 192–96. See also Peter Sokolovič, *Hlinkova Garda, 1938–1945* (Bratislava: ÚPN, 2009), 86; and Sidor, *Denníky*, 388.
19. *SL*, 30 October 1938, 1; *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–1939* (hereafter *DBFP*), 3rd ser., 3:217; and MarAff 181/43.
20. Ladislav Karel Feierabend, *Politické vzpomínky* (Brno: Atlantis, 1994), 1:46; SNA, NS 7/46, c. 101, Tiso aff., 17 April 1946, f. 150/89; and Čarnogurský, 6. október 1938, 264–65.
21. Records of the United States Nuernberg War Crimes Trials: United States of America v. Ernst von Weizsaecker et al. (Case XI) . . . (NARA microcopy M-897), reel 58, pros. evid. bk. 3b, 259–60; and Eduard Nižňanský et al., eds., *Slovensko-nemecké vzťahy 1938–1941 v dokumentoch I.: Od Mníchova k vojne proti ZSSR* (Prešov: Universum, 2009) (hereafter *S-nV*, vol. 1), 179.
22. *SL*, 1 November 1938, 1.
23. Jan Gebhart and Jan Kuklík, *Druhá republika, 1938–1939: Svár demokracie a totality v politickém, spoločenském a kultúrnm životé* (Prague: Paseka, 2004), 85–86; and *S-nV*, 1:179.
24. *Ciano’s Hidden Diary, 1937–1938*, trans. Andreas Mayor (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1953), 189.
25. Sallai Gergely, *Az Első Bécsi Döntés* (Budapest: Osiris, 2002), 146; Loránt Tilkovszky, *Južné Slovensko v rokoch 1938–1945* (Bratislava: SAV, 1972), 49; and Ádám, “The Munich Crisis and Hungary,” 111.
26. MarAff 177/43. See also Deák, *Viedenská arbitráž*, 1:207.
27. Čarnogurský, 6. október 1938, 241, 266–67.

28. *VŠŠ*, 2:312.
29. Čarnogurský, *6. október 1938*, 241, 268.
30. *SL*, 4 November 1938, 1.
31. *Ibid.*, 4.
32. Eduard Nižňanský, ed., *Hološauat na Slovensku: Obdobie autonómie (6.10.1938–14.3.1939)* (Bratislava: Nadácia Milana Šimečku, 2001) (hereafter *HnS*, vol. 1), 226–27. See also Nižňanský, *Židovská komunita na Slovensku*, 31.
33. *HnS*, 1:243.
34. ŠAvBra, ES Bratislava 13/48 (Izidor Koso), fd. Konstitát, Koso aff., 18 August 1946, f. 45.
35. Ivan Kameneč, “Židovská otázka a spôsoby jej riešenia v čase autonómie Slovenska,” *Nové obzory* 10 (1968): 155–80; and Nižňanský, *Židovská komunita na Slovensku*, 24–102.
36. *SL*, 10 November 1938, 1–2. The party reverted to its old name in 1940.
37. MarAff 181/43.
38. *RN*, 11 November 1938, 1; *SL*, 23 November 1938, 3; and Jaroslava Roguľová, “Likvidácia Slovenskej národnej strany,” in *Slovensko a druhá svetová vojna*, ed. František Cséfalvay and Miloslav Púčik (Bratislava: Vojenský HÚ, 2000), 96–104.
39. *SL*, 13 November 1938, 1; and Michal Schvarc et al., eds., “*Tretia ríša*” a vznik Slovenského štátu (Bratislava: ÚPN, 2008–2010), 1:343.
40. Jan Rychlík, *Češi a Slováci ve 20. století: Česko-slovenské vzťahy, 1914–1945* (Bratislava: AEP, 1997), 150. In general, see Gebhart and Kuklík, *Druhá republika*, 86–95.
41. Sidor, *Slovenská politika*, 2:269–70.
42. *VŠŠ*, 1:274; and Gebhart and Kuklík, *Druhá republika*, 93–99.
43. Nižňanský, “Dvojnásobné zmocnenie,” 193.
44. Valerián Bystrický and Ladislav Deák, “Od Mníchova k rozbitiu Česko-Slovenska,” in Zemko and Bystrický, *Slovensko v Československu*, 221, 223.
45. *SL*, 17 November 1938, 1, and 13 December 1938, 1; and *Národné noviny*, 6 December 1938, 1.
46. *SL*, 25 October 1938, 1.
47. ŠAvBra, ES Bratislava 270/48 (Jozef Müller), Müller aff., 8 September 1945; and Miroslav Fabricius et al., *150 rokov slovenského družstevníctva: Víťazstvá a prehry* (Bratislava: Družstevná únia Slovenskej republiky, 1995), 113.
48. *VŠŠ*, 1:36; and Jan Rychlík, “K otázke postavenia českého obyvatelstva na Slovensku v rokoch 1938–1945,” *HC* 37 (1989): 406.
49. Hoensch, *Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik*, 121.
50. Feierabend, *Politické vzpomínky*, 1:86–90. See also NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1141, Hencke telegram 790, 13 December 1938, f. 442365.
51. SNA, MH, c. 5, PMR 1733 m.r., 21 January 1939. Otherwise for deal, see Bystrický, *Od autonómie*, 189–96.
52. SČ-SDPK, 1935–38 NSRČS-Senáť, sp., sch. 127 (15 December 1938), 3.
53. SNA, KÚ, c. 309, fd. 69987/38, Prezídium Policajného riaditeľstva v Bratislave 21079, 5 November 1938.
54. Gebhart and Kuklík, *Druhá republika*, 168; and *SL*, 3 December 1938, 4.
55. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 19 December 1946, f. 468/82.
56. *PaČ*, 2:31. See also Nižňanský, *Židovská komunita na Slovensku*, 52. Posters for the elections to the Slovak parliament recalled Tiso’s rhetoric from 1918–19: “Slovaks! Christians. / For ages the Jews have been your exploiters. Today all of us non-Jews must create a united anti-Jewish block. Don’t buy from Jews! . . . Don’t trust them! Don’t let yourself be lied to anymore!” The poster was issued by Mach’s Office of Propaganda but attributed to Tiso. A later version was ascribed only to the Hlinka Guard. Eduard Nižňanský, “Voľby do snemu Slovenskej krajiny v roku 1938,” *Studia Historica Nitriensia* 7 (1998): 176; and *Magyar Nemzet*, 5 February 1939, 3.
57. Martin Hetényi argues that the number of refugees was as low as ten thousand. Earlier scholarship reported around ten times more. Martin Hetényi, *Slovensko-maďarské pomedzie v rokoch 1938–1945* (Nitra: Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa, 2008), 99; and Martin Victor, *Dejiny okupácie južného Slovenska, 1938–1945* (Bratislava: SAV, 1968), 42–43. For economic disruption, see

- Tilkovszky, *Južné Slovensko*, 50; and the economic articles (especially by Ľudovít Hallon) in *Juh Slovenska po Viedenskej arbitráži, 1938–1945*, ed. Ján Mitač (Bratislava: ÚPN, 2011).
58. *SL*, 23 November 1938, 2; and *MOL*, c. 64, cs. 79, tétel 7/1939, fd. 461, MKK Pozsony 93/res., 31 January 1939, f. 119–23. Further for “reciprocity,” see Case, *Between States*, 121–23.
59. Ladislav Suško, “Hlinkova garda od svojho vzniku až po salzburské rokovania (1938–1940),” *Zborník Múzea Slovenského národného povstania 2* (1969): 192–93; and Miloslav Čaplovič, “Československá armáda a Slovensko v rokoch 1918–1939,” in Zemko and Bystrický, *Slovensko v Československu*, 274.
60. Dušan Kováč, *Nemecko a nemecká menšina na Slovensku (1871–1945)* (Bratislava: VEDA, 1991), 131–41; and Ján Balko, *Desať rokov v slovenskej politike* (Prešov: Michal Vašek, 2005), 27–28.
61. *SL*, 22 November 1938, 3; and *SIT*, 27 November 1938, 1.
62. *SL*, 22 November 1938, 3; 30 November 1938, 1; 13 December 1938, 1; and 25 December 1938, 1.
63. *SIT*, 11 December 1938, 6.
64. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Teplanský test., 9 January 1947, f. 507/83; Suško, “Hlinkova garda,” 194–95; and MarAff 186/43.
65. *SIT*, 11 December 1938, 6; and SNA, NS 7/46, c. 102, Tiso test., 1 August 1946, f. 387–88/90, and NS 8/46, c. 95, Teplanský test., 9 January 1947, f. 513/83. See also Johann Kaiser, *Die Politik des Dritten Reiches gegenüber der Slowakei, 1939–1945* (PhD diss., Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 1969), 18–19; and Milan Krajčovič, *Medzinárodné súvislosti slovenskej otázky 1927/1936–1940/1944: Maďarské dokumenty v porovnaní s dokumentmi v Bonne, Bukurešti, Viedni a Prahe* (Bratislava: SAP, 2008), 241.
66. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Teplanský test., 9 January 1947, f. 507/83; and *NYT*, 11 December 1938, 50.
67. Nižňanský, “Voľby do snemu,” 171. Otherwise for paragraph, see *ibid.*, 180–87; *Prager Presse*, 7 December 1938, 4; and Igor Baka, *Politický systém a režim Slovenskej republiky v rokoch 1939–1940* (Bratislava: Vojenský HÚ, 2010), 128.
68. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1141, DK Bratislava 484, 12 November 1938, f. 442363. See also Jan Rychlík, “Pokusy o pripojení Slovácka ke Slovensku v letech 1938–1941,” *HČ* 40 (1992): 69–87.
69. Feierabend, *Politické vzpomínky*, 1:47, 90–98.
70. Henry Delfiner, *Vienna Broadcasts to Slovakia, 1938–1939: A Case Study in Subversion* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1974), 32–33; *Tesnopisecká správa*, Snem Slovenskej krajiny, sch. I (18 January 1939), 3; *SL*, 19 January 1939, 1; and *Völkischer Beobachter* (Vienna), 19 January 1939, 5.
71. *S-nV*, 1:213. See also George F. Kennan, *From Prague after Munich: Diplomatic Papers, 1938–1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 18.
72. *PaČ*, 2:46.
73. *MOL*, K 64, cs. 79, tétel 7/1939, fd. 461, MKK Pozsony 93/res., 31 January 1939, f. 119–23; and *SL*, 29 December 1939, 1. The Hungarian government turned Tiso down, in part because he wanted to use the summit to encourage Slovak nationalism in the annexed lands. Tilkovszky, *Južné Slovensko*, 144–46.
74. *PaČ*, 2:46, 56; and *HnS*, 1:218–19.
75. MarAff 185/43; and *Územie a obyvateľstvo Slovenskej republiky a prehľad obcí a okresov odstúpených Nemecku, Maďarsku a Poľsku* (Bratislava: Štátny štatistický úrad, 1939), 7, 16–17.
76. *La Croix*, 1 February 1939, 5. I thank Linda Bernard and Svatava Šimková for translation.
77. Kennan, *From Prague after Munich*, 17. See also *ibid.*, 24–25; and *SL*, 3 February 1939, 3.
78. Kováč, *Nemecko a nemecká menšina*, 146; Hoensch, *Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik*, 187; and *S-nV*, 1:213.
79. SNA, SSR, c. 2, i.č. 46, minutes of budget committee meeting, 6 February 1939, f. 37 (see also f. 9–10, 18–19, 40). I have translated the original typescript rather than the handwritten changes, which strike me as editing. For Bratislava’s financial frustrations with Prague, see Peter Mičko, *Hospodárska politika Slovenského štátu. Kapitoly z hospodárskych dejín Slovenska v rokoch 1938–1945* (Cracow: Spolok Slovákov v Poľsku, 2010), 13–35.
80. See, for example, Feierabend, *Politické vzpomínky*, 1:90, 116.
81. SNA, SSR, c. 2, i.č. 46, minutes of budget committee meeting, 7 February 1939, valček (val.) 5, f. 2–val. 7, f. 6 (see also val. 8, f. 3). Tiso’s plan won out. *SL*, 25 December 1940, 3.
82. *DGFP*, ser. D, 4:186.

83. Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 30–40; Milan Stanislav Ďurica, *La Slovacchia e le sue relazioni politiche con la Germania, 1938–1945* (Padova: Marsilio, 1964), 150.
84. *SL*, 7 February 1939, 4; and Jozef M. Kirschbaum, “Dr. Ferdinand Ďurčanský a jeho zahraničná politika v rokoch 1939–1940,” in *Ferdinand Ďurčanský (1906–1974)*, ed. Štefan Baranovič ([Martin]: Matica slovenská, 1998), 34–35.
85. *DGFP*, ser. D, 4:209–13.
86. SNA, NS 9/46, c. 43, Pružinský aff., 13 February 1946, f. 488/37. See also SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Teplanský test., 9 January 1947, f. 513/83; and *PaČ*, 2: 168.
87. Kirschbaum, “Dr. Ferdinand Ďurčanský,” 35.
88. SNA, SSR, c. 3, i.č. 46, budget committee meeting, 10 February 1939, “Časť rokovanie Rozpočtového výboru . . . dňa 10 februára 1939.” See also *Politika*, 15 February 1939, 27; and Hoensch, *Slovaĕei und Hitlers Ostpolitik*, 225–26.
89. SNA, NS 7/46, c. 102, Tuka test., 1 August 1946, f. 395/90. At the same time, Tiso even officially met with Tuka just before the latter left for Germany, thus granting the radical through publicity a kind of accreditation. *SL*, 2 February 1939, 1; and Alexander Mach, *Z ďalekých ciest* (Martin: Matica slovenská, 2008), 135–36.
90. Ferdinand Ďurčanský, “Mit Tiso bei Hitler: Die Entstehung der Slowakischen Republic 1939,” *Politische Studien* 7, no. 80 (1956): 5. See also *PaČ*, 3:146.
91. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 56, copy of MR protokol, 16 February 1939, f. 61/47.
92. *SL*, 22 February 1939, 1.
93. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Sokol test., 12 February 1946, f. 413/86.
94. *Ibid.*, f. 410–11/86; and *Nástup*, 15 February 1939, 42.
95. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1141, DK 90, 23 February 1939, f. 442243.
96. *Politika*, 1 March 1939, 37.
97. *SL*, 22 February 1939.
98. Feierabend, *Politické vzpomínky*, 1:113 (see also 111–16).
99. *Ibid.*, 1:117. See also SNA, NS 9/46, c. 43, Pružinský aff., 13 February 1946, f. 487–88/37.
100. Hoensch, *Slovaĕei und Hitlers Ostpolitik*, 240–42; SNA, 405-1-1, T. 430/39, f. 146; and Ďurica, *Slovacchia*, 159.
101. Karol Sidor, *Takto vznikol Slovenský štát*, [ed. František Vnuk] (Bratislava: Odkaz, 1991), 59.
102. *Ibid.*
103. MOL, K 64, cs. 84, tétel 65/1939, MKK Pozsony 30, 3 March 1939, f. 24.
104. SNA, NS 9/46, c. 43, Pružinský aff., 13 February 1946, f. 488/37.
105. Pavol Čarnogurský, *14. marec 1939* (Bratislava: Veda, 1992), 167.
106. Schvarc, “*Tretia ríša*” a vznik Slovenského štátu, 2:475.
107. Karol Sidor, “Ako došlo k vyhláseniu Slovenskej republiky,” in *Slovenská republika, 1939–1949* (Scranton: Obrana, 1949), 46. See also SNA, NS 8/46, c. 100, Jozef Sivák test., 1 March 1947, f. 8/88.
108. *SL*, 8 March 1939, 1.
109. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, Hrnčár aff., 27 November 1946, f. 296/45.
110. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, Seyss-Inquart aff., 1 June 1946, f. 163/45.
111. Records of the Department of State Special Interrogation Mission to Germany 1945–46, NARA microcopy 679 (Washington: National Archives, 1967), Veesenmayer interrogation, 21–27 September 1945, 5.
112. Feierabend, *Politické vzpomínky*, 1:118. See also *NYT*, 7 March 1939, 13; and *VŠŠ*, 1:303.
113. *La Temps*, 9 March 1939, 8. See also Bystrický and Deák, “Od Mníchova k rozbitiu Česko-Slovenska,” 233.
114. Čarnogurský, *14. marec 1939*, 186–87. See also *MarAff* 194/43.
115. *VŠŠ*, 2:141.
116. Sidor, *Takto vznikol Slovenský štát*, 93; *SL*, 11 March 1939, 1; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 5 December 1946, f. 218/81. Although Prague’s intervention was of questionable legality, so also was the autonomy law on which this claim was based. Rychlík, *Češi a Slováci*, 150–51; Ivan Kamenec, *Slovenský štát* (Prague: Anomal, 1992), 19; and Hoensch, *Slovaĕei und Hitlers Ostpolitik*, 256.

117. Sidor, *Takto vznikol Slovenský štát*, 105. See also Joseph M. Kirschaum, *Slovakia: Nation at the Crossroads of Central Europe* (New York: Robert Speller & Sons, 1960), 125; NACP, mf. T-120, reel 154, Druffel telegram 16, 10 March 1939, f. 213527; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 5 December 1946, f. 227/81.
118. NYT, 11 March 1939, 9. See also Ďurica, *Slovacchia*, 161.
119. Bystrický and Deák, “Od Mníchova k rozbitiu Česko-Slovenska,” 233.
120. VSS, 2:17–18.
121. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Stano test., 8 January 1947, f. 384/83.
122. VSS, 2:18–19. See also SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Teplanský test., 9 January 1947, f. 547/83.
123. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 283, Druffel telegram 18, 10 March 1939, f. 213510.
124. Sidor, *Takto vznikol Slovenský štát*, 97.
125. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Stano test., 8 January 1947, f. 384/83.
126. ŠAvBra, LS Bratislava 355/48 (Pavol Čarnogurský), Čarnogurský aff., 11 July 1945, f. 040. See also VSS, 2:143–44.
127. Sidor, *Takto vznikol Slovenský štát*, 98; and SL, 12 March 1939, 4. See also Letz, “Politické aktivity Karola Sidora,” 77–78.
128. Suško, “Hlinkova garda,” 220–22; Bystrický and Deák, “Od Mníchova k rozbitiu Česko-Slovenska,” 235–36; and Hoensch, *Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik*, 266.
129. VSS, 2:321–22.
130. SNA, NS 7/46, c. 101, Veessenmayer aff., 30 April 1946, f. 172/89. See also Bystrický, *Od autonómie*, 255–56; NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1141, Druffel telegram 22, 13 March 1939, f. 442261; Sidor, *Takto vznikol Slovenský štát*, 141; MarAff 340/43; and Walter Brandmüller, *Holocaust in der Slowakei und katholische Kirche* (Neustadt an der Aisch: Ph. C. W. Schmidt, 2003), 129.
131. VSS, 2:129, 145; and SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, Hrnčár aff., 27 November 1946, f. 298/45.
132. VSS, 2:146, 325–27; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 5 December 1946, f. 227/81.
133. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 5 December 1946, f. 235/81.
134. DGFP, ser. D, 4:245.
135. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 5 December 1946, f. 235–37/81; NACP, OSS, RG 226, entry 19, box 316, XL22953, report on interrogations of Wilhelm Keppler by the State Department Special Interrogation Mission, 23 October 1945, 17; and Ferdinand Ďurčanský, *Právo Slovákov na samostatnosť vo svetle dokumentov* (hereafter *Biela kniha*) (Buenos Aires: Slovenský oslobodzovací výbor, 1954), 192–93.
136. For session and quotes, see Valerián Bystrický, “Zasadnutie Slovenského snemu 14. marca 1939,” *HČ* 47 (1999): 109–10, 112. Otherwise, see VSS, 2:326–27.
137. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Sokol test., 13 February 1947, f. 532/86. Sokol had wanted Tiso to give the proposal, but Tiso had “decisively refused.” VSS, 2:146.
138. Čarnogurský, *14. marec 1939*, 254.
139. Feierabend, *Politické vzpomínky*, 1:90.
140. *Nástup*, 15 March 1939, 73; and Brandmüller, *Holocaust in der Slowakei*, 129.
141. VSS, 2:327. See also SNA, SSR, c. 46, i.č. 205, zápisnica of 1st session of parl. presidium, 14 March 1939.
142. Sidor, *Takto vznikol Slovenský štát*, 166–67; and *Völkischer Beobachter*, 19 April 1939, 5.
143. DBFP, 3rd ser., 4:408.
144. *PaČ*, 2:101; and Nižňanský, *Židovská komunita na Slovensku*, 124, 131–32.
145. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 13 December 1946, f. 30/82; Ďurica, *Slovacchia*, 193, 196; and Deák, *Hra o Slovensko*, 188, 227.
146. Suško, “Hlinkova garda,” 229; and Kováč, *Nemecko a nemecká menšina*, 152.
147. SL, 18 March 1939, 1. See also VSS, 2:35; Ďurčanský, *Biela kniha*, 193. The threat to march may have been a later incident, the significance of which Tiso exaggerated. *S-nV*, 1:384.
148. Cf. *S-nV*, 1:276–77, 304–9. See also Hoensch, *Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik*, 343–46; Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 68–72; and MarAff 209–10/43.
149. *PaČ*, 2:103.
150. MarAff 298–99/43. See also Gejza Medrický, *Minister spomína* (Bratislava: Litera, 1993), 109–11. Tiso was not alarmed by *Mein Kampf*, which he apparently did not read until 1942.

- At the same time, the SD reported in late 1940 that Tiso kept closely informed on Nazi literature dealing with religious questions, seeing National Socialism as “a kind of religion, and therefore anti-Catholic in its consequences.” *S-nV*, 1:989. See also SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 17 December 1946, f. 264–65/82.
151. *PaČ*, 2:103.
 152. Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 75–91; and *DGFP*, ser. D, 6:72.
 153. Paul Robert Magocsi, *The Rusyns of Slovakia: An Historical Survey* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1993), 89.
 154. *S-nV*, 1:314; and *Malá vojna (vojenský konflikt medzi Maďarskom a Slovenskom v marci 1939)*, ed. Ladislav Deák, 2nd ed. (Bratislava: Stála konferencia slovenskej inteligencie, 1993).
 155. *PaČ*, 2:112; *Europäische Revue* 15 (1939): 332. See also SNA, MV, c. 34, fd. 1286/39, telefonogram PMV 4429, 18 April 1939.
 156. *PaČ*, 2:114.
 157. Ivan Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie* (Bratislava: Archa, 1991), 48–49.
 158. MarAff 298/43. See also *VŠŠ*, 2:205.
 159. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 19 December 1946, f. 478/82.
 160. *PaČ*, 3:211. Tiso may have been inspired here by the request of the Jewish owners of the Piešťany spa to nationalize it, a preemptive tactic that retained them as managers. Ľudovít Winter, *Kúpele Piešťany v pamätiach Ľudovíta Wintera* (Bratislava: Slovenské národné múzeum, 1999), 81.
 161. SNA, MH, c. 86, fd. Prez-L-1617, dôvodová zpráva for draft of decree. See also *SL*, 23 June 1939, 4.
 162. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 56–57.
 163. Rychlík, *Češi a Slováci*, 192–94; and Suško, “Hlinkova garda,” 227.
 164. Jozef Lettrich, *History of Modern Slovakia* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1955), 144, 300–301; and *La Croix*, 1 February 1939, 5.
 165. MarAff 282/43; *SL*, 9 April 1939, 1; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 99. Gejza Medrický test., 21 February 1947, f. 394/87.
 166. Suško, “Hlinkova garda,” 230–32; and SNA, KÚ, c. 298, fd. 4139/39, Okresné četnícke veliteľstvo Piešťany 124 dov., 19 April 1939, f. 75–76. Tiso even briefly jailed ten Piešťany radicals for antisemitic actions. Sokolovič, *Hlinkova garda*, 169.
 167. Imrich Karvaš, *Moje pamäti (v pazúroch gestapa)* (Bratislava: NVK International, 1994), 94; Yeshayahu Jelinek, *The Parish Republic: Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, 1939–1945* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1976), 66–67; and Baka, *Politický systém a režim Slovenskej republiky*, 105–6.
 168. *SL*, 14 April 1939, 1.
 169. *Ibid.*, 25 April 1939, 1.
 170. Suško, “Hlinkova garda,” 237; and SNA, MPs, c. 31, fd. 9179/39–8, PMV Bratislava 4703, 25 April 1939.
 171. *SL*, 16 May 1939, 1, and 8 June 1939, 3.
 172. *DGFP*, ser. D, 4:245; NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1094, Woermann memo, 4 May 1939, f. 447385.
 173. SNA, ONS 61/46, c. 20, fd. 2/1, Mach aff., 21 May 1946.
 174. For example, SNA, PR, c. 818, fd. 22995, hlásenie of výk. nadporučík, 2 May 1939.
 175. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1141, Druffel telegram 100, 18 May 1939, f. 442396. See also Dušan Segeš, “Vojensko-politické aktivity Karola Sidora od 14. marca do 1. septembra 1939 . . .,” *Vojenská história* (hereafter *VH*) 9, no. 1 (2005): 15–16; and František Vnuk, *Mať svoj štát znamená žiť: Politická biografija Alexandra Macha* (Bratislava: Odkaz, 1991), 198.
 176. Suško, “Hlinkova garda,” 243; Anton Hrnko, “Fašizácia slovenského štátu do leta roku 1940,” *HČ* 33 (1985): 534; and Sidor, *Denníky*, 426, 443–45.
 177. *PaČ*, 2:119.
 178. SNA, MZV, c. 112, fd. 444/39, PV 3163, 15 April 1939.
 179. Anton Hrnko, *Politický vývin a protifašistický odboj na Slovensku (1939–1941)* (Bratislava: Veda, 1988), 25; and *Pester Lloyd*, 31 May 1939, 3 (ŠAvBra, KSB TI, fd. 138/39).
 180. Nižňanský, “Dvojnásobné zmocnenie,” 209.

181. SNA, MH, c. 12, fd. Prez./Pdôv.-111, PV 3979, 25 May 1939; and Baka, *Politický systém a režim Slovenskej republiky*, 115.
182. Lubomír Lipták, "Slovakia in the Twentieth Century," in *A Concise History of Slovakia*, ed. Elena Mannová (Bratislava: HÚ SAV, 2000), 266–67.
183. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 51, "Z niektorých otázok dňa 4. nov. 1945," f. 97/43.
184. *PaČ*, 2:105–6.
185. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 13 December 1946, f. 20/82.
186. *SL*, 9 April 1939, 1.
187. See, for example, *La Croix*, 1 February 1939, 5.
188. See, for example, *SL*, 15 August 1939, 5.
189. Lubomír Lipták, "Príprava a priebeh salzburských rokovaní roku 1940 medzi predstaviteľmi Nemecka a slovenského štátu," *HČ* 13 (1965): 335. See also *Grenzbote* (Pressburg), 21 July 1939, 3.
190. *Slovenský zákonník*, 185/39. See also Nižňanský, "Dvojnásobné zmocnenie," 207–8.
191. *Tesnopisecká zpráva*, SSR, sch. 6, 21 July 1939, 20.
192. *SL*, 18 May 1939, 2, and 15 August 1939, 5. See also MarAff 315/43.
193. *PaČ*, 2:155–56.
194. *SL*, 7 July 1939, 1.
195. *De Maasbode*, 13 April 1939, 2, trans. Noah Millstone.
196. *PaČ*, 2:140–45; and Brandmüller, *Holocaust in der Slowakei*, 127.
197. *La Croix*, 1 February 1939, 5.
198. *De Maasbode*, 13 April 1939, 2.
199. *SL*, 27 June 1939, 1; 7 July 1939, 1; and 18 August 1939, 3.
200. SNA, MZV, c. 112, fd. 2796/39, Černák tajná zpráva, 7 June 1939; and *SL*, 15 August 1939, 5.
201. Ďurčanský, *Biela kniha*, 249; *SL*, 14 June 1939, 1, and 21 June 1939, 1; and Sokolovič, *Hlinkova garda*, 193–206.
202. See, for example, *DGFP*, ser. D, 6:755–62.
203. *S-nV*, 1:525, 554; Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 96, 104–9. In Slovak, the service is Ústredňa štátnej bezpečnosti.
204. SNA, S-454-5, Zápis o výsledku zasadania, 17 July 1939, f. 1–2; *Grenzbote*, 21 July 1939, 3; and Igor Baka, "Slovensko vo vojne proti Poľsku v roku 1939," *VH* 9, no. 3 (2005): 28–29.
205. *DGFP*, ser. D, 7:229–30, 252–53.
206. Segeš, "Vojensko-politické activity Karola Sidora," 19; SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 16 December 1946, f. 187/82; Václav Štefanský, *Generál Ferdinand Čatloš (Biografický nárt)* (Bratislava: Ministerstvo obrany Slovenskej republiky, 1998), 40–41; and *SL*, 30 August 1939, 1.
207. MarAff 238–39/43. See also Baka, "Slovensko vo vojne proti Poľsku," 36, 44.
208. Václav Štefanský, "Jozef Tiso očami Ferdinanda Čatloša," in Bystrický and Fano, *Pokus o politický a osobný profil*, 225; and SNK-ALU, 129 E 2, Čatloš memoir, 260–61.
209. Igor Baka, "K vstupu Slovenskej republiky do vojny proti Poľsku v roku 1939 a ZSSR v roku 1941," in *Okupace, kolaborace, retribuice*, ed. Ivo Pejčoch and Jiří Plachý (Prague: Vojenský HÚ, 2010), 220–25.
210. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 16 December 1946, f. 187–88/82.
211. Baka, "Slovensko vo vojne proti Poľsku," 32, 41–42.
212. Miroslav Michela, "Miesto a úloha Karola Murgaša . . .," in *Slovenská republika 1939–1945 očami mladých historikov I*, ed. Martin Lacko (Trnava: Katedra histórie FF Univerzity sv. Cyrila a Metoda, 2002) (hereafter *OMH*, vol. 1), 87.
213. Jozef Jablonický, *Z ilegality do povstania (kapitoly z občianskeho odboja)* (Bratislava: Epoch, 1969), 17–18; Baka, "Slovensko vo vojne proti Poľsku," 42; and SNA, MV, c. 22, fd. 12304, Krajské veliteľstvo četníctva Bratislava 358 dôv., 21 September 1939.
214. *SL*, 8 August 1939, 1.
215. For this reason, Tiso apparently rejected a German offer to share in the spoils. *S-nV*, 1:677–78.
216. Igor Baka, "Návrat odtrhnutých bratov: Protipoľská propaganda roku 1939," in *Storočie propagandy: Slovensko v osídľach ideológií*, ed. Valerián Bystrický and Jaroslava Roguľová (Bratislava: AEP, 2005), 132–39; and *Grenzbote*, 6 September 1939, 4.

217. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 277, DG 58, 6 September 1939, f. 202067–68. See also *S-nV*, 1:626–27; and Igor Baka, *Slovenská republika a nacistická agresia proti Poľsku* (Bratislava: Vojenský HÚ, 2006), 162–65.
218. *SL*, 27 September 1939, 3.
219. *Ibid.*, 1 September 1939, 1.
220. *Ibid.*, 9 September 1939, 2.
221. *DGFP*, ser. D, 8:326.
222. Sokolovič, *Hlinkova garda*, 212–22.
223. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1141, memo to Woermann, 3 October 1939, f. 442406. Otherwise for paragraph, see Letz, “Slovenská ľudová strana v dejinách,” 71–72, 76–77.
224. *SL*, 3 October 1939, 1. See also Ivan Kameneč, “Jozef Tiso vo funkcii predsedu Hlinkovej slovenskej ľudovej strany v rokoch 1939–1945,” in Bystrický and Fano, *Pokus o politický a osobný profil*, 157–58.
225. Brandmüller, *Holocaust in der Slowakei*, 128. The envoy concluded that Tiso, “inspired by the best intentions,” was momentarily irreplaceable. See also DAVn, RKBÚ Nitra, 24.01.1939/336, Pontificio Collegio Nepomuceno, 564/39, 19 January 1939.
226. Feierabend, *Politické vzpomínky*, 1:132.
227. *Čas*, 1 February 1947, 3. See also Karol Sidor, *Šesť rokov pri Vatikáne* (Scranton: Obrana, 1947), 9–13.
228. Róbert Letz, “Biskup Michal Buzalka a politický život,” in *Biskup Michal Buzalka*, ed. Róbert Letz and Ivan A. Petranský (Bratislava: Lúč, 2002), 94. See also, Sidor, *Vatikánsky denník I*, 82–84.
229. *SL*, 19 September 1939, 2. See also Sidor, *Vatikánsky denník I*, 99, 109, 168.
230. ASR, AF 1723 (old AF 794).
231. DAVn, RKBÚ Nitra, 5.10.1939/3684, draft Kmeťko to Tiso, 5 October 1939, 11.10.1939/3684, Tiso to Kmeťko, n.d., and 12.10.1939/3684, Kmeťko to Tiso, 12 October 1939.
232. Although Pius congratulated Tiso on becoming president, he also let his displeasure be known. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 419–22; and *NYT*, 27 October 1939, 1.
233. *S-nV*, 1:652.
234. *SL*, 27 October 1939, 6.
235. SFÚ, “Nástup” newsreel, KK 53-1939. Ignaz Scipel, in contrast, headed a government.
236. SČ-SDPK, NSRČS, 1925–38, jmenný rejstřík for Tiso.
237. *SL*, 9 September 1939, 1.
238. Nižňanský, *Židovská komunita na Slovensku*, 104–6.
239. Kennan, *From Prague after Munich*, 16.
240. Jan Rychlík interprets the “liberal” quality of Tiso’s regime as an institutional holdover from the First Republic. Christian ethics, however, was another moderating influence. Jan Rychlík, “Perzekúcia odporcov režimu na Slovensku, 1938–1945. . .,” in *Slovenská republika 1939–1945 očami mladých historikov IV*, ed. Michal Šmigel and Peter Mičko (Banská Bystrica: Katedra histórie FHV UMB, 2005) (hereafter *OMH*, vol. 4), 134. See also Porter-Szűcs, *Faith and Fatherland*, 308–16.
241. Priya Satia, “The Defense of Inhumanity: Air Control and the British Idea of Arabia,” *American Historical Review* 111 (2006): 50.
242. *SL*, 25 December 1939, 1.
243. *Ibid.*
244. *Ibid.*

Chapter 7

1. Ivan Kameneč et al., eds., *Vatikán a Slovenská republika (1939–1945)* (Bratislava: SAP, 1992) (hereafter *VaSR*), 49.
2. MOI, K 64, cs. 97, tétel 65/1942, fd. 147, MKK Pozsony 67, 20 April 1942, f. 2.

3. Ibid.
4. Vilém Prečan, ed., *Slovenské národné povstanie* (Bratislava: Vydavateľstvo politickej literatúry, 1965) (hereafter *SNP*, vol. 1), 181–82.
5. *Slovenský zákonník*, 185/39, §§ 26, 38, 220/39, §§ 6, 7; SNA, 405–2–5, fd. 2111/41, Rozvrh práce, 15 July 1941, f. 60–61; and Letz, *Slovenská ľudová strana v dejinách*, 375.
6. SNA, KPR, c. 51, fd. 395/40, draft of KPR 5506/voj., 25 April 1940.
7. SNA, KPR, c. 1, fd. 67/39, PV 11081, 2 November 1939; and Yves Cohen, “The Cult of Number One in an Age of Leaders,” *Kritika* 8 (2007): 598–600.
8. *SL*, 4 April 1940, 5.
9. See, for example, *ibid.*, 15 November 1939, 2.
10. *Ibid.*, 14 March 1944, 7–10.
11. *Ibid.*, 8 March 1940, 1; and SNA, KPR, c. 29, fd. 5867/40.
12. SNA, KPR, c. 114, fd. 1977/42.
13. SNA, KPR, c. 11, fd. 8393/40, and c. 44, fd. 2253/40, draft of KPR 928, 25 November 1939.
14. SNA, KPR, c. 10, fd. 12899/40.
15. SNA, KPR, c. 45, fd. 2857.
16. For example, SNA, KPR, c. 14, fd. 13723, OkÚ Trstená 1899, 20 November 1940.
17. For example, SNA, KPR, c. 18, fd. 2934/40, c. 22, and fd. 7947/40, Vyhľadka draft.
18. For example, SNA, KPR, c. 72, fd. 1908/41, KPR 1777/39, and c. 70, fd. 379/41, KPR 490, 19 January 1940.
19. SNA, KPR, c. 18, fd. 2809/40, Prez. Slovenského najvyššieho súdu 391, 9 March 1940, and draft of KPR 2809, 8 March 1940.
20. See, for example, the compromises made by all three sides in SNA, KPR, c. 189, fd. 7733/43, Tuka to Tiso, 1 April 1940; and SNA, SSR, c. 16, i.č. 93, sign. II-1/37, 37th zasad. SSR, 5 June 1940, f. 42–51. Overall, however, the government dominated the parliament. See Baka, *Politický systém a režim Slovenskej republiky*, 49–58.
21. USHMM, RG-68.048M, reel 3, bd. 25, Dr.Chl/Tr., 30 October 1939, f. 113.
22. *S-nV*, 1:681. See also SNA, NS 7/46, c. 10, Tiso aff., 17 April 1946, f. 151/89.
23. Ľubomier Lipták, *Ovládnutie slovenského priemyslu nemeckým kapitálom (1939–1945)* (Bratislava: SAV, 1960), 89; Mičko, *Hospodárska politika Slovenského štátu*, 134. Most of these exports went to the Protectorate.
24. Dagmar Čierna-Lantayová, “Predstavy slovenskej politiky a realita vo vzťahu so Sovietskym zväzom (január–júl 1940),” *HČ* 45 (1997): 249–53.
25. MarAff 236/43.
26. *SL*, 1 November 1939, 1.
27. Dagmar Čierna-Lantayová, “Slovenské záujmy v oficiálnych kontaktoch medzi Bratislavou a Moskvou (1940–1941),” *HČ* 46 (1998): 43; and MarAff 336/43.
28. MarAff 334/43.
29. *Ibid.*; and *PaČ*, 2:185–89.
30. Igor Baka, “Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana od 6. októbra do salzburských rokovanií . . .,” in *Slovenská republika 1939–1945 očami mladých historikov II*, ed. Martin Lacko (Trnava: M. Lacko, 2003) (hereafter *OMH*, vol. 2), 35–36; and SNA, KPR, c. 174, fd. 2463 kab./43, VZP-HSLS grafické znázornenie, 1 October 1943.
31. *PaČ*, 2:186–87.
32. *SL*, 1 November 1939, 2.
33. SNA, KPR, c. 75, fd. 6313/41, summary of pripomienky, KPR 2111, 29 December 1939; and Letz, “Slovenská ľudová strana v dejinách,” 80.
34. Suško, “Hlinkova garda,” 250.
35. *PaČ*, 2:191–92. See also Sokolovič, *Hlinkova garda*, 212–22; and Jelinek, “Storm-Troopers in Slovakia,” 108.
36. *SL*, 19 March 1940, 3.
37. *SL*, 31 December 1939, 2; and *Gardista*, 6 January 1940, 8.
38. SNA, KPR, c. 5, fd. 153/40 kab., PMV 1225, 23 January 1940.

39. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1037, Wüster Bericht, 22 January 1940, f. 489800, and reel 746, DG Militärrattaché 253, 10 January 1940, f. 338199; and Eduard Nižňanský and Jana Tulkisová, "Príprava a podpísanie Slovensko-nemeckej zmluvy o vojnovom hospodárstve z 30.I.1940," *VH* 10, no. 4 (2006): 123–24.
40. Hrnko, "Fašizácia slovenského štátu," 544–45; and Sokolovič, *Hlinkova garda*, 240–42.
41. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Čatloš test., 14 January 1947, f. 229–30/84; and Štefanský, *Generál Ferdinand Čatloš*, 42.
42. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 6 January 1940, 3.
43. *SL*, 26 January 1940, 3.
44. SNA, KPR, c. 70, fd. 69/41, draft of KPR 5550, 23 April 1940. See also Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 61–62.
45. SNA, S-424-7, fd. 13, Mach to Tiso, 24 May 1940, f. 14–15; and Sokolovič, *Hlinkova garda*, 244–46.
46. SNA, MZV, c. 180, fd. Berlin 1939–44, Slo. vyslanectvo Berlin P 20, 5 March 1940.
47. SNA, KPR, c. 71, fd. 952/41, draft of KPR 3111, 7 March 1940.
48. *Slovenský zákonník*, 113/40, § 4 (2).
49. SNA, SSR, c. 48, i.č. 308 (303), 21st session of Národohospodársky výbor, 11 April 1940, and copy of Tiso to Predseda snemu, 29 March 1940, discussion, 2–5; and Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 65–67.
50. SNA, 405-1-3, fd. 261/40, HV HG 550/HŠ HG, 31 January 1940, f. 91, and draft of KPR 261/kab., 13 February 1940.
51. Suško, "Hlinkova garda," 256–57; and *S-nV*, 1:763, 775.
52. Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 294–307; and Lipták, "Príprava a priebeh salzburských rokovanií," 342.
53. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1037, DG 192, 9 May 1940, f. 489813, and Frauenfeld Aufzeichnung, 20 May 1940, f. 489821–23.
54. SNA, S-424-7, fd. 13, Tiso to Mach, 21 May 1940, f. 13; Lipták, "Príprava a priebeh salzburských rokovanií," 347–48; and *S-nV*, 1:811.
55. Ľubomír Lipták, "Maďarsko v politike Slovenského štátu v rokoch 1939–1943," *HČ* 15 (1967): 9; MarAff 213/43; and Hrnko, "Fašizácia slovenského štátu," 548–49.
56. *S-nV*, 1:775.
57. *Ibid.*, 1:789–90. See also NACP, mf. T-120, reel 757, copy of Im Vorzimmer, 22 May 1940, f. 341547.
58. *S-nV*, 1:798–800.
59. *Ibid.*, 1:804, 856.
60. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 280, copy of Vorgänge in der Slowakei, perhaps 30 May 1940 (date unclear), f. 208138.
61. Sokolovič, *Hlinkova garda*, 262; and *DGFP*, ser. D, 9:537–40.
62. *S-nV*, 1:844.
63. *SL*, 2 July 1940, 1.
64. *S-nV*, 1:877; and *SL*, 9 June 1940, 3. Tiso's hope was in vain, as the Germans insisted on their ambassador as dean of Bratislava's diplomats. Since this honor traditionally went to the nuncio, the Vatican declined to make Burzio one. *VaSR*, 46–48, 51.
65. *PaČ*, 2:237–38.
66. *S-nV*, 1:854.
67. *Ibid.*, 1:854, 878.
68. *Ibid.*, 1:857.
69. SNA, NS 7/46, c. 102, Tiso test., 1 August 1946, f. 400/90.
70. *DGFP*, ser. D, 10:345–48.
71. MarAff 219/43.
72. See, for example, SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Sokol test., 13 February 1947, f. 562–63/86.
73. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 1037, P XII to Schrem, 9 August 1940, f. 489923.
74. MarAff 220/43.

75. *SL*, 1 August 1940, 1–2.
76. *Ibid.*, 27 August 1940, 2. See also *ibid.*, 10 August 1940, 1; and MOL, K 63, cs. 458, tétel 65/1/1940, MKK Pozsony 191, 27 August 1940, f. 159.
77. Martin Vietor, “Príspevok k objasneniu fašistického charakteru tzv. slovenského štátu,” *HČ* 8 (1960): 496–97.
78. Katarína Hradská, *Prípád Dieter Wisliceny (Nacistický poradcovia a židovská otázka na Slovensku)* (Bratislava: AEP, 1999), 23; Jelinek, *Parish Republic*, 71; and Tönsmeier, *Dritte Reich und die Slowakei*, 67–68.
79. MarAff 218/43, 225/43.
80. Ladislav Suško, “Systém poradcov v nacistickom ovládaní Slovenska v rokoch 1939–1941,” *Historické štúdie* 23 (1979): 16–18; and Tönsmeier, *Dritte Reich und die Slowakei*, 240–41.
81. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Sokol test., 12 February 1947, f. 434/86.
82. For above quotes, see *SL*, 7 August 1940, 1–2, and 3 September 1940, 1–2.
83. MarAff 222/43.
84. *SL*, 10 August 1940, 1.
85. SNA, KPR, c. 23, fd. 9880/40, PV 8412/5b, 6 August 1940, KPR 9880, 9 August 1940, and KPR 10078, 10 August 1940.
86. Eduard Nižňanský and Ivan Kamenec, eds., *Hološaukt na Slovensku 2.: Prezident, vláda, Snem SR a Štátna rada o židovskej otázke (1939–1945)* (Bratislava: Nádacia Milana Šimečku, 2003) (hereafter *HnS*, vol. 2), 85–102.
87. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 86–87; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Škrábik test., 9 January 1947, f. 558–59/83.
88. *PaČ*, 2:277.
89. *SL*, 15 August 1940, 4.
90. Ladislav Hubenák, ed., *Riešenie židovskej otázky na Slovensku (1939–1945)* (Bratislava: Edícia Judaica Slovaca, 1994–2000), 3:212.
91. Jozef M. Kirschbaum, “O Salzburgu bez resentmentov,” *Literárny týždenník* (hereafter *LT*), 1 August 1992, 13.
92. Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 363–64; NACP, mf. T-120, reel 336, Wörmann Stellungnahme, 21 November 1940, f. 248810; and Rychlík, “K otázke postavenia českého obyvatelstva,” 412.
93. SNA, KPR, c. 11, fd. 9600/40, PMV 28577, 28 September 1940.
94. SNA, KPR, c. 183, fd. 1879/40, draft of KPR 1841/kab., 16 September 1940.
95. SNA, KPR, c. 83, fd. 4625/41, usnesenie, 4 October 1940, draft of KPR 12320, 12 October 1940, and PV 12783/5b, 15 November 1940.
96. SNA, NS/Dx, fd. 11, copy of Tuka to Tiso, 19 October 1940, f. 11, and NS 8/46, c. 100, Sivák test., 1 March 1947, f. 13/88.
97. *S-nV*, 1:936.
98. MarAff 224/43; Ondrej Podolec, “Postavenie a činnosť Snemu Slovenskej republiky v prvej etape štátnej samostatnosti,” in *OMH*, 2:43; and *SNP*, 1:51–52.
99. *SL*, 17 September 1940, 1. See also Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 452; and Milan Katuninec, “Slovenská katolícka akadémia pri Spolku svätého Vojtecha,” *HČ* 51 (2003): 631–32.
100. Ivan A. Petranský, “Katolícka cirkev v období prvej Slovenskej republiky,” in *OMH*, 1:44–45. The weekly is *Katolícke noviny*.
101. SNA, KPR, c. 13, fd. 7410/40, bishops to Tiso, 5 March 1940; and *SL*, 12 October 1940, 3.
102. *SL*, 30 August 1940, 1.
103. *Organizačné zvesti Hlinkovej slovenskej ľudovej strany* (hereafter *OZ HSLS*), October 1940, 2, and February 1942, 2–6.
104. *Ibid.*, December 1940, 3–6; January 1941, 4–8; and February 1941, 4–8.
105. Yeshayahu A. Jelinek, “On the Condition of Women in Wartime Slovakia and Croatia,” in *Labyrinth of Nationalism: Complexities of Diplomacy*, ed. Richard Frucht (Columbus: Slavica, 1992), 199–200; and *SL*, 19 October 1940, 3.
106. *Gardista*, 18 February 1941, 1. See also *Trenčan*, 8 March 1941, 2.

107. SNA, ÚPV, c. 152, fd. 9005/40, KPR 9256, 21 August 1940 (emphasis in original).
108. *SL*, 10 September 1940, 1.
109. *Ibid.*, 1 November 1940, 3. See also *OZ HSEŠ*, December 1940, 1.
110. SNA, ÚPV, c. 242, unmarked fd., zápisnica of Štátna rada, 6 August 1940, 2.
111. Letz, “Slovenská ľudová strana v dejinách,” 80–81, 88–89; *Gardista*, 28 November 1942, 3; and *S-nV*, 1:934. The community is Slovenská pracujúca pospolitosť.
112. See, for example, Michela, “Miesto a úloha Karola Murgaša,” 100–101.
113. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 336, Woermann Aufzeichnung, 21 November 1940, f. 248816; and *DGFP*, ser. D, 11:697.
114. Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 452–453; and MOL, K 63, cs. 461, tétel 65/1/1941, fd. B, MKK Pozsony 5, 14 January 1941, f. 162.
115. *Gardista*, 1 January 1940, 1; and USHMM, RG-68.048M, reel 3, bd. 25, Hahn to Heydrich, 9 January 1941, f. 159.
116. SNA, NS 13/46, c. 103, aff. of Otomar Kubala, 31 May 1946, pp. 15–17, and NS 7/46, c. 101, Tiso aff., 17 April 1946, f. 152/89; Igor Baka, “Pozadie neprijatej demisie ministra národnej obrany gen. I. tr. Ferdinanda Čatloša v januári 1941,” *VH* 13, no. 3 (2009): 5, 9–10; and *S-nV*, 1:1005–7.
117. *S-nV*, 1:1001.
118. *SL*, 16 January 1941, 1–2.
119. USHMM, RG 68.048M, reel 3, bd. 25, Wisliceny to Heydrich, 13 January 1941, f. 162; SNA, NS 13/46, c. 103, Kubala aff., 31 May 1946, p. 16; and Baka, “Pozadie neprijatej demisie . . . Čatloša,” 10–14.
120. *Gardista*, 23 January 1941, 2.
121. USHMM, RG 68.048M, reel 3, bd. 25, Hahn to Heydrich, 11 January 1941, f. 161.
122. For quotes, see *S-nV*, 1:1014, 1020. Otherwise, see *ibid.*, 1009; and Jelinek, *Parish Republic*, 71–72.
123. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 100, Sivák test., 1 March 1947, f. 13/88.
124. *SL*, 26 January 1941, 1, and 1 February 1941, 3; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98, Sokol test., 13 February 1947, f. 497/86ff.
125. *S-nV*, 1:1032–33.
126. See, for example, Štefan Polakovič, *Slovenský národný socializmus* (Bratislava: Generálny sekretariát HSEŠ, 1941); and Štefan Polakovič, *Tisova náuka* (Bratislava: HSEŠ, 1941). See also Anton Hruboš, “K problematike ideológie slovenského národného socializmu,” in *Od Salzburgu do vypuknutia Povstania: Slovenská republika 1939–1945 očami mladých historikov VIII*, ed. Peter Sokolovič (Bratislava: ÚPN, 2009) (hereafter *OMH*, vol. 8), 18–30.
127. *S-nV*, 1:1034–35.
128. *Ibid.*, 1:1017.
129. *Dr. Jozef Tiso, Dr. Ferdinand Ďurčanský a Alexander Mach pred súdom národa* (hereafter *Pred súdom národa*) (Bratislava: Poverenictvo informácií, 1947), 2:285.
130. *SL*, 21 January 1941, 1.
131. *Dejiny Slovenska V (1918–1945)* (Bratislava: Veda, 1985), 398.
132. *Pa Č.*, 2:327–28. See also *ibid.*, following pages, and *SL*, 1 February 1941, 1.
133. SNA, KPR, c. 99, fd. 4030/41, dobrozdanie Ústavu pre výskum konjunktúry, 9 May 1941, p. 5. See also Kováč, *Dejiny Slovenska*, 224.
134. *SL*, 12 February 1941, 4, and 14 March 1944, 27; and SNA, KPR, c. 259, fd. 316/45.
135. Samuel Cambel, “Arizácia a ďalšie zmeny v pozemkovej držbe na Slovensku do leta 1944,” *HČ* 43 (1995): 69, 78–83; and *SL*, 15 February 1941, 1, and 8 May 1941, 1.
136. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 102–12; Cambel, “Arizácia a ďalšie zmeny,” 82; and SNA, KPR, c. 69, fd. 9906/41, PV 13231/1, 3 September 1941.
137. *SL*, 30 April 1941, 3.
138. See, for example, SNA, KPR, c. 114, fd. 2160/42.
139. SNA, KPR, c. 115, fd. 8477/42, ústredný tajomník hlásenie, 8 July 1941, and draft of KPR 7977/41, 8 July 1941.

140. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 103–8.
141. SNA, 405-2-4, fd. 1175/41 kab., list of 23 cases, n.d., f. 23–27, and KPR, c. 97, fd. 8145/41, KPR 8145, 16 July 1941.
142. NACP, T-175, reel 546, Wisliceny Bericht, 24 July 1941, f. 9432494; Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 111–12; Eduard Nižňanský, ed., *Hološauka na Slovensku 4: Došumeny nemeškej proveniencie (1939–1945)* (Bratislava: Nadácia Milana Šimečku, 2003) (hereafter *HnS*, vol. 4), 97. In fact, Morávek tended to pass over German applicants for Aryanzization in favor of Slovak ones. In general, he was caught between competing organizations such as the party and the guard without being able to satisfy them all. Ľudovít Hallon et al., “Pozícia Ústredného hospodárskeho úradu v politickom, hospodárskom a spoločenskom živote Slovenska v rokoch 1940–1942,” in *Arizácie*, ed. Eduard Nižňanský and Ján Hlavinka (Bratislava: Dokumentačné stredisko holokaustu, 2010), 45, 62.
143. Wisliceny Bericht, as above; SNA, 405-6-6, fd. 1461 kab./44, draft of KPR 1216, 7 April 1941, f. 68, and Ústredňa štátnej bezpečnosti 11717/3a, 28 April 1941, f. 64–66; and SNA, 405-2-5, fd. 2176/41 kab., draft of KPR 2176/kab., 22 July 1941, f. 92. For further on Morávek’s office, see Ján Hlavinka, “Vznik Ústredného hospodárskeho úradu a určenie jeho kompetencií do leta 1942,” in *OMH*, 8:63–92.
144. Hubená, *Riešenie židovskej otázky*, 3:213.
145. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 113; ŠAvBra, OES Bratislava 980/47 (Alexander Dobiáš), Ofud 827/47/5, 30 December 1947; and Cambel, “Arizácia a ďalšie zmeny,” 83. Tiso did implicitly intervene on Turček’s behalf. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 81, copy of KPR 1249 kab., 31 July 1944, f. 783/70.
146. SNA, KPR, c. 97, fd. 506/41, c. 99, fd. 3228/41, ObvN Piešťany 82, 16 March 1940, and draft of KPR 3912, 28 March 1940.
147. SNA, KPR, c. 173, fd. 2104 kab./43, draft of KPR 2754/kab.42, 21 January 1943, and D-5, unmarked fd., list of 39 employees; and *SL*, 1 February 1941, I. KPR’s financial records, however, include suspicious transactions. In 1943, for example, Tiso donated a 70,000-crown budget surplus to a “Fund for the Construction of a Teacher’s Academy in Bánovce.” Most likely, the example illustrates patronage rather than embezzlement. See KPR 2754/kab.42 above.
148. SNA, KPR, c. 241, fd. 5253/44; and *Päť rokov slovenského školstva* (Bratislava: Štátne nakladateľstvo, 1944), 80–81.
149. SNA, KPR, c. 100, fd. 9412/41, draft of KPR 6834, 9 June 1941.
150. SNA, KPR, c. 172, fd. 1217/43, D-4, fd. 10580/42, copy of “biskup” (Gojdič) to Tiso, 24 June 1942, and D-27, Gojdič to Tiso, 15 August 1942.
151. MOL, K 63, cs. 461, tétel 65/1/1941, fd. B, MKK Pozsony 56, 5 May 1941, f. 134. See also Michela, “Miesto a úloha Karola Murgaša,” 96; SNA, S-102-7, Murgaš report, 25 April 1941, f. 71–72; and Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 363.
152. Miroslav Michela, “Vznik slovenského vyslanectva v Chorvátsku a činnosť Karola Murgaša, chargé d’affaires v Záhrebe v roku 1941,” in *OMH*, 2:99; and *S-nV*, 1:1017.
153. SNA, KPR, c. 71, fd. 1422/41, KPR 2134, 6 March 1941, and KPR 14041, 19 November 1940; and SNA, ÚPV, c. 167, fd. 90/43, copy of KPR 1344 kab., 29 April 1941.
154. SNA, ÚPV, c. 167, fd. 90/43, PMV 15622/3, 23 July 1941. Tiso would try it again later, only to be blocked by a German veto. Hoensch, “Slovakia: ‘One God, One People, One Party!’” 177.
155. Tiso’s frustrations over isolation are evident in two initiatives on the war’s eve. In late May, he quietly met with Bulgaria’s Tsar Boris. On the day of the invasion, he also courted American Slovaks. The contacts with Boris inspired rumors that the Slovak regime was considering adopting a Coburg as monarch. While Tiso indeed assured Ľudin that he was amenable to such a change, the statement was no doubt bluff. Holec, *Coburgovci a Slovensko*, 301–3; NACP, mf. T-120, reel 336, Ľudin telegram 615, 20 June 1941, f. 248621; and *SL*, 22 June 1941, 1.
156. Pavel Mičianik, “Vstup Slovenskej republiky do vojny proti Sovietskemu zväzu,” *Slovenský prehled* 90 (2004): 223–24; Zoltán Katreba, “Poznámky k vojenským opatreniam Slovenskej republiky pred vypuknutím vojny so Sovietskym zväzom,” in Cséfalvay and Púčik, *Slovensko a druhá svetová vojna*, 226–32; and SNA, KPR, D-5, fd. 8544, zápisnica, 16 June 1941.

157. *DGFP*, ser. D, 12:1059–60. See also Igor Baka, “Účasť Slovenskej republiky v prvej fáze vojny proti ZSSR z pohľadu nemeckých vojenských orgánov,” *VH* 12, no. 3 (2008): 49–50; Katreba, “Poznámky k vojenským opatreniam,” 228; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Čatloš test., 14 January 1947, f. 242/84.
158. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 17 December 1946, f. 208/82. See also NS 6/46, c. 51, Tiso unsigned aff., 21 November 1945, f. 96/43.
159. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 336, Ludin telegram 624, 22 June 1941, f. 248627.
160. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 17 December 1946, f. 209/82.
161. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Čatloš test., 14 January 1947, f. 247/84. See also ŠAvBra, ES 10/48 (Dieter Wisliceny), Ludin aff., 10 December 1946, f. 504–5.
162. *SL*, 25 June 1941, 1.
163. MarAff 251/43.
164. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 17 December 1946, 209–10/82. See also Mičianik, “Vstup Slovenskej republiky,” 234–35.
165. Balko, *Desať rokov v slovenskej politike*, 142–43; and SNA, NS 7/46, c. 102, Štefan Tatarko test., 5 August 1946, f. 463/90.
166. See also Baka, “K vstupu Slovenskej republiky do vojny,” 226–28.
167. *PaČ*, 2:397, 400.
168. See, for example, SNA, 405-2-6, fd. 2393/41 kab., ÚŠB 26828/3b, 18 August 1941, f. 12. See also Pavel Mičianik, *Slovenská armáda v ťažení proti Sovietskému zväzu 1. (1941–1944): V operácii Barbarossa* (Banská Bystrica: Dali-BB, 2007), 156–58.
169. Zoltán Katreba, “‘Skrýta’ mobilizácia na Slovensku v roku 1941,” in *VH* 4, nos. 3–4 (2000): 96; Jozef Bystrický, “Pozemné vojská slovenskej armády na východnom fronte, 1941–1945,” in Cséfalvay and Púčík, *Slovensko a druhá svetová vojna*, 193; and Baka, “Účasť Slovenskej republiky v prvej fáze vojny,” 53–54.
170. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 147–49. Similar plans targeted Roma. Although Tiso supported such measures, he rarely spoke of the Roma and never with the venom that he directed at Jews or Czechs. Instead, he accepted assimilated Roma even in the Hlinka Guard. *SL*, 13 February 1941, 4; and SNA, KPR, c. 61, fd. 4226/41, HSEŠ Župný sekretariát Trenčín 2687/J, 2 April 1941. See also Ingrid Vagačová and Martin Fotta, eds., *Rómovia a Druhá svetová vojna: Čítanka* (Bratislava: Nadácia Milana Šimečku, 2006).
171. Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother*, 63–93; and SNA, KPR, c. 82, fd. 7329/41, anonymous to Tiso, 20 June 1941.
172. *HnS*, 2:127–28. See also *VaSR*, 59.
173. *HnS*, 2:128–29; and MarAff 287/43.
174. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 2198, copy of DG 203, 23 August 1941, f. E085951.
175. *SL*, 18 September 1941, 3. See also *VaSR*, 60.
176. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 143.
177. *Ibid.*, 127; and *VaSR*, 62–66.
178. *SL*, 10 September 1941, 2.
179. SNA, KPR, c. 119, fd. 917/42, Čavojský to Tiso, 28 June 1941; and Ján Pleva and Miloš Tichý, *Kresťanské odbory na Slovensku* (Bratislava: Práca, 1967), 159.
180. *VaSR*, 66–67, 75–76. Cf. *ibid.*, 48–49; and *SL*, 3 September 1940, 2.
181. Katarína Hradská, “Jozef Tiso v Hitlerovom hlavnom stane a na Ukrajine roku 1941 vo svetle nemeckých dokumentov,” *HČ* 51 (2003): 686–91; Peter Witte et al., eds., *Der Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1941/42* (Hamburg: Christians, 1999), 241; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 17 December 1946, f. 242–43/83. Mach claimed that he and Tuka discussed the proposal before other delegation members on the return trip, making it less likely that Tiso could have been in the dark. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Mach test., 20 December 1946, f. 676–77/82.
182. Mičianik, *Slovenská armáda*, 250–53. Two hours after Tiso’s visit, the Germans blew up the cathedral rather than let it serve as a pilgrimage site. Tiso’s defenders (including Mičianik) often spin the event as a German or Soviet assassination attempt. Hradská provides a persuasive rebuttal (“Jozef Tiso v Hitlerovom hlavnom stane,” 692–94). See also *Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers*, 230.

183. MarAff 256/43. See also SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 17 December 1946, f. 227–30/82.
184. MarAff 252–53/43.
185. Jürgen Matthäus, “Operation Barbarossa and the Onset of the Holocaust, June–December 1941,” in *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939–March 1942*, by Christopher R. Browning with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 291. See also *ibid.*, 292–93; and Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 78–81. Most of the city’s remaining 3,300 Jews died in September.
186. USHMM, RG-57.004M, Selected Records of Trials of the National Court of Slovakia, reel 80 Jozef Turanec aff., 5 February 1947, f. 770–73 (SNA f. 50–53/124), and reel 81, Turanec diaries, entries for 10 and 23 September 1941, f. 320, 389 (SNA f. 627/124, 704/124); *VaSR*, 71, 81; and Matej Medvecký, “Represie príslušníkov Zaisťovacej divízie voči civilnému obyvateľstvu na obsadenom území ZSSR,” in *OMH*, 1:162.
187. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Čatloš test., 14 January 1947, f. 264/84, and c. 99, Turanec test., 19 February 1947, f. 173/87. In August 1941, Turanec also instructed subordinates to take Jewish civilians hostage and execute them if need be in the fight against partisans. Oldřich Pejs, “Váleční zajatci, partyzáni a civilní obyvatelstvo ve vybraných rozkazech slovenských velitelů na Východní frontě (1941–1943),” *VH* 13, no. 1 (2009): 83.
188. *PaČ*, 2:410, 417–18.
189. *Neue Ordnung* (Zagreb), 6 December 1941, 1–2.
190. *PaČ*, 2:413. Tiso’s language here might seem to evoke the Catholic code phrase of “birth pangs” for the end of the time. The passage, however, is firmly anchored in temporal politics rather than theological anticipations of the Messianic age. The Nazi persecution of Jews, however, was understood by many Catholic theologians (and perhaps also Tiso) as both a precursor to the Apocalypse and providentially determined. Connelly, *From Enemy to Brother*, 147–52.
191. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 100, Tiso test., 6 March 1947, f. 309/88.
192. SNA, S-99-5, stenografická zpráva of State Council session, 17 December 1941, f. 48–49.
193. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 59, MZV 34970/I, 13 December 1941, and related documents, f. 5–20/50.
194. *DGFP*, ser. D, 13:825. I have changed the quote from reported to direct speech.
195. SNA, ÚPV, c. 242, zápis of State Council session, 29 October 1941, p. 4. See also *OZ HSLŠ*, November 1941, 2.
196. SNA, fond 609—HSLŠ, 609-1-6, Hlásenie Dôvernícky sbor HSLŠ, 27 October 1941, f. 46; SNA, KPR, c. 109, fd. 170 kab./42, PV 18523/5, 19 December 1941, KPR 170 kab., 19 February 1942, and copy of PV 493/I rez., 23 January 1942; and Stanislav Mičev, *Augustín Morávek: Od arizácií k deportáciám* (Banská Bystrica: Museum SNP, 2010), 105–9.
197. MOL, K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1942, copy of MKK Pozsony, 5, 8 January 1942, f. 14.
198. *HnS*, 4:110–11. The negotiators were Jozef Mračna and Štefan Polyák. For their status as moderates, see Ján Korček, *Slovenská republika, 1943–1945: K pôsobeniu mocensko-represívneho aparátu a režimu* (Bratislava: Ministerstvo obrany Slovenskej republiky, 1999), 28.
199. MOL, K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1942, copy of MKK Pozsony 10, 19 January 1942, f. 32. See also *SL*, 18 January 1942, 3.
200. USHMM, RG 68.048M, reel 3, Hayde Vermerk, 19 January 1942, f. 172–73, Hermann Vermerk, perhaps 23 January 1942 (date unclear), f. 179; and MOL, K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1942, copy of MKK Pozsony 17, 30 January 1942, f. 45.
201. Lipták, “Maďarsko v politike Slovenského štátu,” 23.
202. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 392; and Ladislav Lipscher, *Die Juden im Slowakischen Staat, 1939–1945* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1980), 100.
203. SNA, ÚPV, c. 242, zápisnica of State Council session, 6 March 1942, 6. See also Eduard Nižňanský, ed., *Holožka na Slovensku 6.: Deportácie v roku 1942* (Bratislava: Nadácia Milana Šimečku, 2005) (hereafter *HnS*, vol. 6), 13–19. The question of who initiated the deal is contested but also largely pointless, as both sides welcomed it.
204. See, for example, Medrický, *Minister spomína*, 178–79.
205. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, copy of Stano aff., 19 February 1946, f. 59/45.
206. MarAff 288/43.

207. *HnS*, 6:19.
208. SNA, NS 7/46, c. 10, Tiso aff., 17 April 1946, f. 153/89.
209. *HnS*, 4:171. See also SNA, S-102-7, Balko návrh, 20 March 1942, f. 91.
210. *HnS*, 4:178–79; and James Mace Ward, “People Who Deserve It: Jozef Tiso and the Presidential Exemption,” *Nationalities Papers* 30 (2002): 578.
211. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 170–80; and Hubená, *Riešenie Židovskej otázky*, 3:219.
212. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 81, ÚŠB 19.644/3-42, Všeobecná politická zpráva, 10 July 1942, f. 24/70. For further on view through situation reports, see Hana Klamková, “Nálady a postoje slovenskej spoločnosti k tzv. židovskej otázke v rokoch 1940–1943,” in *OMH*, 8:93–110.
213. SNA, SSR, c. 47, fd. 271 (old 266), Tiso to Sokol, 25 March 1942; *VŠŠ*, 2:331; and SNA, ÚPV, c. 19, fd. 1346/44, copy of KPR 5623, 14 June 1940.
214. Jelinek, *Parish Republic*, 75–76; USHMM, RG 14.015M, bd. 3843, Regierungskrise in der Slowakei, 10 April 1942, f. 1; MOL, K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1942, copy of MKK Pozsony 31, 27 February 1942, f. 126; and SNA, NS 7/46, c. 10, Tiso aff., 17 April 1946, f. 157/89, and c. 102, Tuka test., 30 July 1946, f. 299/90. See also Petr Kubík, *Slovensko-talianske vzťahy, 1939–1945* (Bratislava: ÚPN, 2010), 38–42.
215. MOL, K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1942, copy of MKK Pozsony 62, 11 April 1942, f. 204. See also NACP, mf. T-120, reel 2198, Auszug of Tuka speech, 9 April 1942, f. 085885.
216. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 2198, copy of DG 130, 4 April 1942, f. E085903–7, and copy of Ludin to Tiso, 8 April 1942, f. E085873–75. John S. Conway, “The Churches, the Slovak State, and the Jews, 1939–1945,” *Slavonic and East European Review* 52 (1974): 88.
217. MOL, K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1942, copy of MKK Pozsony 62, 11 April 1942, f. 206.
218. *HnS*, 4:127.
219. *Grenzbote*, 31 March 1942, 1.
220. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 154, Ludin telegram 503, 1 April 1942, f. 249543–44.
221. SNA, KPR, D-12, fd. 996/42 kab., copy of Mračna úradný záznam, 11 April 1942. For further on cultural agreement, see Michal Schvarc and Ľudovít Hallon, “Nemecká kultúrna politika na Slovensku v rokoch 1939–1945,” in *Život v Slovenskej republike: Slovenská republika 1939–1945 očami mladých historikov IX*, ed. Peter Sokolovič (Bratislava: ÚPN, 2010), 264–65.
222. See also SNA, KPR, D-12, fd. 136/43, draft of KPR 1683, 23 July 1942; and Christof Nikolaus Morrissey, *National Socialism and Dissent among the Ethnic Germans of Slovakia and Croatia, 1938–1945* (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2006), 75.
223. *HnS*, 6:119; and Armin Frieder diary, 3:17. See also SNA, NS 17/46, c. 110, Frieder aff., 3 April 1946. I thank Gideon Frieder for a digital copy of the diary. See also Emanuel Frieder, *To Deliver Their Souls: The Struggle of a Young Rabbi during the Holocaust* (New York: Holocaust Library, 1987), 66–69. Rabbi Frieder was a member of the Working Group, a Jewish circle that tried to ransom Europe’s Jews and that perhaps futilely contacted Tiso once more. Katarína Hradská, ed., *Holokaust na Slovensku 8: Ústredňa Židov (1940–1944)* (Bratislava: Dokumentačné stredisko holokaustu, 2008) (hereafter *HnS*, vol. 8), 38–40. Hradská also addresses Jelinek’s unconvincing claim that Tiso negotiated bribes with the group.
224. SNA, KPR, c. 147, fd. 4369/42, Jozef M. to Tiso, 7 March 1942; and USHMM, RG 57.001M, reel 37, fd. 8654/42, KPR 8838, 8 June 1942, f. 463.
225. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Kmeťko test., 6 January 1947, f. 237/83, 239/83.
226. *VaSR*, 117. See also NACP, mf. T-175, reel 514, Ur./Zi., 25 March 1942, f. 9380794. At the same time, the Vatican was hardly forceful with Tiso. Michael Phayer, *The Catholic Church and the Holocaust, 1930–1965* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 87–90. Just how critical or supportive the Vatican actually was of Tiso, however, cannot be determined fully until all of the Vatican papers from Pius XII’s pontificate are opened.
227. NACP, mf. T-175, reel 514, Ur./Zi., 25 March 1942, f. 9380795.
228. Rudolf Aschenauer, ed., *Ich, Adolf Eichmann: Ein historischer Zeugenbericht* (Leoni am Starnberger See: Druffel, 1980), 254–55. For problems with this evidence, see Christopher R. Browning, *Collected Memories: Holocaust History and Postwar Testimony* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), 5–6.
229. *HnS*, 2:178.

230. USHMM, RG-57.001M, reel 372 (KPR, c. 252), fd. 9181/44. Tiso also ordered the arrest of a lawyer who reportedly profited handsomely from the process. ŠAvBra, OES Bratislava 459/46 (Anton Neumann), Tiso aff., 18 May 1946, f. 64; and *Gardista*, 6 August 1942, 3.
231. SNA, SSR, c. 23, fd. Prez.-P-dôv.910, KPR 11689, 24 July 1942. In general for exemptions, see Ward, “People Who Deserve It.”
232. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 86, 187–90.
233. Tönsmeier, *Dritte Reich und die Slowakei*, 186–87.
234. NACP, mf. T-175, reel 517, In Kampfe, 15 May 1942, f. 9384304; and Mičev, *Augustín Morávek*, 109.
235. SNA, 405-4-2, fd. 2806/42, HV HG Náčelník štábu 821, 22 December 1942, f. 46.
236. MOL, K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1942, copy of MKK Pozsony 132, 8 August 1942, f. 376–77.
237. *PaČ*, 2:485–86. See also *Gardista*, 4 August 1942, 1.
238. Milan S. Ďurica, *The Slovak Involvement in the Tragedy of the European Jews* (Abano Terme: Piovan Editore, 1989), 13.
239. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 154, copy of Weizsäcker to Ludin, 29 June 1942, f. 249624. See also Ward, “People Who Deserve It,” 581.
240. Ward, “People Who Deserve It,” 579; and SNA, MH, c. 23, fd. Prez.-P-dôv. 910/26/41, MV 3086, 6 August 1942.
241. *SL*, 18 August 1942, 4.
242. Werner Jochmann, ed., *Adolf Hitler: Monologe im Führerhauptquartier, 1941–1944* (Hamburg: Albrecht Knaus, 1980), 377.
243. *Gardista*, 18 August 1942, 1.
244. MOL, K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1942, copy of MKK Pozsony 138, 19 August 1942, f. 390. See also same cs., copy of MKK Pozsony 134, 15 August 1942, f. 381–83.
245. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 110, Tiso test., 10 March 1947, f. 380/88.
246. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 191; and *VaSR*, 126.
247. *SL*, 7 November 1942, 5.
248. ŠAvBra, ES Bratislava 13/48 (Izidor Koso), fd. Konstitút, copy of Tibor Kováč aff., 21 February 1946, f. 24.
249. *SL*, 30 September 1942, 1–3.
250. *OZ HSEŠ*, September 1942, 7. See also *Slovenský zákonník*, 215/42.
251. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 195–96.
252. Ward, “People Who Deserve It,” 581. For arguments on stopping deportations, see *HnS*, 8:39–40.
253. MOL, K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1942, copy of MKK Pozsony 220, 21 December 1942, f. 614.
254. *SL*, 13 January 1943, 1; and Korček, *Slovenská republika*, 28–29.
255. SNA, MZV, c. 41, MZV 75104, 22 January 1943.
256. SNA, 405-6-2, fd. 134 kab./44, January 1943 HSEŠ Situačné zprávy, Bratislava Župa, f. 86.
257. *Ibid.*, f. 88, and same folder, January 1943 HSEŠ Situačné zprávy, Trenčín Župa, f. 97.
258. *SL*, 14 March 1943, 1.
259. MOL, K 64, cs. 100, tétel 65/1943, fd. 27, MKK Pozsony 24/fön., 3 February 1943, f. 2.
260. USHMM, RG 68.048M, reel 18, bd. 60, copy of Ludin 752, perhaps 5 Oct. 1944 (date unclear), f. 413–14.
261. MOL, K 64, cs. 100, tétel 65/1943, fd. 47, copy of MKK Pozsony 34/fön., 17 February 1943, f. 6–8, and K 63, cs. 463, tétel 65/1/1943, copy of MKK Pozsony 40, 19 February 1943, f. 149–51.
262. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Mach test., 20 December 1946, f. 631/82. See also SNA, S-101-2, PV 5/13e-1943, 16 March 1943, f. 102–3.
263. See, for example, SNA, NS 8/46, c. 99, Medrický test., 21 February 1947, f. 406/87; and SNA, S-101-2, draft of Štátna rada 91/3, 24 March 1943, f. 90.
264. Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie*, 226.
265. *KN*, 26 April 1942, 1.
266. Ješajahu Andrej Jelinek, “Pastiersky list slovenského episkopátu z 8. marca 1943,” *Acta Judaica Slovaca* 13 (2007): 21.

267. István Janek, “Pokus ministerského predsedu Miklósa Kállaya o zorganizovanie spoločného vystúpenia z vojny s vedúcimi predstaviteľmi Slovenska v roku 1943,” in *Slovenská republika 1939–1945 očami mladých historikov V.: Slovenská republika medzi Povstaním a zánikom 1944–1945*, ed. Michal Šmigel et al. (Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu UMB, 2006) (hereafter *OMH*, vol. 5), 246–49. Ronkay belonged to the radical-right Hungarian Unity Party (A Nemzeti Egység Pártja) before joining the Party of Hungarian Life (Magyar Élet Pártja), which included radical and conservative wings. István Haeffler, ed., *Országgyűlési Almanach: Az 1939–44. Évi Országgyűlésről* (Budapest: István Haeffler, 1940), 297–98; and Janos, *Politics of Backwardness*, 288–90, 299.
268. MOL, K 64, cs. 100, tétel 65/1943, fd. 99, Ronkay to Kállay, 22 March 1943, f. 29–32.
269. *Ibid.*, f. 29. The memorandum is published in András Joó, “Tiso Elnök és Egy Magyar Országgyűlési Képviselő Politikai Természetű Magánbeszélgetése 1943 Tavaszán,” *Fórum: Társadalomtudományi Szemle* 7, no. 2 (2005): 179–82. Tiso credited himself here with all exemptions rather than just presidential ones.
270. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 54, Tiso test., 9 January 1947, f. 1072/45. According to the *SD*, Tiso had his assistant priest read the letter. NACP, mf. T-175, reel 514, “Betr. Hirtenbrief,” 2 April 1943, f. 9380825. When Mach tried to ban the reading, Tiso probably intervened in the bishops’ favor. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Kmeřko test., 6 January 1947, f. 272–73/83; and *VaSR*, 139.
271. See, for example, SNA, 405-6-4, fd. 992/43 kab., March 1943 HSLS Situačné zprávy, Trenčín župa, f. 59.
272. *VaSR*, 133–36, 143.
273. Andreas Hillgruber, ed., *Staatsmänner und Diplomaten bei Hitler: Vertrauliche Aufzeichnungen über Unterredungen mit Vertretern des Auslandes, 1942–1944* (Frankfurt am Main: Bernard & Graf, 1970), 2:265–66.
274. Domarus, *Hitler*, 4:2779.
275. Hillgruber, *Staatsmänner*, 2:267–68.
276. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 81, ÚŠB 8062/3, 17 March 1943, f. 320/70, 323/70, 327/70. Sidor’s alleged 1943 diary supports this interpretation. In May, Sidor intervened with Tiso over the deportations. Tiso assured him that “it is in the interest of the state to scare the Jews a bit. And who supposedly knows better how to do this than Šaňo Mach?” HÚ, Sidor diary, 5 May 1943 entry.
277. When the cathedral in Köln fell victim to such a raid, Tiso gladly issued a statement for German newspapers denouncing the bombing as an act of “boundless cynicism” aimed against “culture and religion.” *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, 3 July 1943, Abend, 1. See also SNA, KPR, c. 173, fd. 1578/43 kab.
278. USHMM, RG 68.048M, reel 6, bd. 36, PA SA 263, 20 August 1943, f. 0994.
279. ŠAvBra, LS Bratislava 355/48 (Pavol Čarnogurský), Čarnogurský to Škrábik, 28 July 1943, f. 162.
280. Same folder as above, copy of BÚ Nitra 403/XIII, 30 July 1943, f. 164, and Škrábik to Tiso, 1 August 1943, f. 165.
281. *HnS*, 2:277.
282. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 2677, copy of Veessenmayer report, 22 December 1943, f. E402531; and Igor-Philip Matić, *Edmund Veessenmayer: Agent und Diplomat der nationalsozialistischen Expansionspolitik* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 2002), 180–81.
283. ŠAvBra, LS 10/48 (Dieter Wisliceny), Ludin aff., 23 October 1946, f. 510.
284. *OZ HSLS*, June 1943, 1. See also *SL*, 1 June 1943, 1.
285. *SL*, 10 August 1943, 1–3, and 17 August 1943, 1–3.
286. NACP, mf. T-175, reel 517, VA 31 SA 14, 27 October 1943, f. 9384495.
287. Tönsmeier, *Dritte Reich und die Slowakei*, 249.
288. Ludovít Hallon and Miroslav Sabol, “Zlaté roky hospodárskeho vývoja Slovenskej republiky 1940–1943,” in *OMH*, 8:423.
289. Lipták, “Maďarsko v politike Slovenského štátu,” 31–33; and Bystrický, “Pozemné vojská slovenskej armády,” 197–203.
290. *PaČ*, 3:521. See also SNA, NS 6/46, c. 54, Randík test., 9 January 1947, f. 969/45.

291. *SL*, 7 September 1943, 2.
292. Jan Němeček et al., eds., *Československo-sovětské vztahy v diplomatických jednáních, 1939–1945: Dokumenty, díl 2 (červenec 1943–březen 1945)* (Prague: Státní ústřední archiv, 1999), 151.
293. *SNP*, 1:239; and Zeman and Klimek, *Life of Edvard Beneš*, 211.
294. MOL, K 63, cs. 100, tétel 65/1943, fd. 99, MKK Pozsony 179, 17 September 1943, f. 14.
295. MOL, K 63, cs. 464, tétel 65/1/1944, MKK Pozsony 17, 17 January 1944, f. 73. See also Janek, “Pokus ministerského predsedu Miklósa Kállaya,” 250, 257.
296. Hillgruber, *Staatsmänner*, 2:444.
297. Tillkovszky, *Južné Slovensko*, 189; and NACP, mf. T-120, reel 2682, Ludin telegram 494, 30 March 1944, f. E399866.
298. *PaČ*, 2:643–44.
299. *SL*, 25 December 1943, 1.
300. Medrický, *Minister spomína*, 274.
301. *SL*, 30 September 1943, 3.
302. *Ibid.*, 14 March 1944, 14.
303. *Ibid.*, 7–8.
304. Miroslav Fabricius, “Hospodársky stav Slovenska na konci druhej svetovej vojny,” in *Slovensko na konci druhej svetovej vojny (stav, východiská a perspektívy)*, ed. Valerián Bystrický and Štefan Fano (Bratislava: [HÚ SAV], 1994), 52.
305. *VaSR*, 178.
306. SNA, NS 7/46, c. 10, Tiso aff., 17 April 1946, f. 157/89; Medvecký, “Represie príslušníkov Zaisťovacej divízie,” 158–59; and Matej Medvecký, *Spravodajské eso Slovenského štátu: Kauza Imrich Sucký* (Bratislava: ÚPN, 2007), 49.
307. *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann* (Jerusalem: State of Israel, Ministry of Justice, 1995), 7:207–8.
308. *PaČ*, 2:413.
309. Sidor, *Šesť rokov pri Vatikáne*, 25–44.
310. *PaČ*, 2:496.

Chapter 8

1. In general for resistance, see Jan Rychlík, “The Slovak Question and the Resistance Movement during the Second World War,” in *Slovakia in History*, ed. Mikuláš Teich et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 193–205. See also Daniela Baranová, “Evanjelickí antifašisti v odbojových skupinách,” in *Slovenské národné povstanie 1944: Súčasná európskej antifašistickej rezistencie v rokoch druhej svetovej vojny*, ed. Miroslav Pekník (Bratislava: Ústav politických vied SAV, 2009), 105–14.
2. Korček, *Slovenská republika*, 53–54, 61.
3. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 51, copy of Vagač 17927, 5 August 1946, f. 73/43; and *SNP*, 1:184.
4. Medvecký, *Kauza Imrich Sucký*, 152–65; and MarAff 260/43.
5. *SL*, 11 March 1944, 1–2. Tiso did not sign death orders but merely decided on clemency. He also never confronted this decision as president. Rychlík, “Perzekúcia odporcov režimu na Slovensku,” 129–30.
6. Korček, *Slovenská republika*, 59; and MarAff 260/43.
7. *SNP*, 1:308–9, 964; and Jozef Jablonický, *Povstanie bez legiend: Dvadsať kapitol o príprave a začiatku Slovenského národného povstania* (Bratislava: Obzor, 1990), 16, 146–47. In general, see Vilém Prečan, “The Slovak National Uprising,” in Teich, *Slovakia in History*, 206–28.
8. Vilém Prečan, ed., *Slovenské národné povstanie: Nemci a Slovensko 1944* (Bratislava: Epoque, 1971) (hereafter *SNP*, vol. 2), 135. See also *SNP*, 1:256.
9. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 779, Ludin telegram 1278, 24 August 1944, f. 372491, and Ludin telegram 1299, 27 August 1944, f. 372488.
10. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 779, Ludin telegram 1304, 28 August 1944, f. 372486.
11. *SL*, 31 August 1944, 2.

12. SNP, 1:357, 1124; and NACP, mf. T-120, reel 779, Ludin telegram 1307, 29 August 1944, f. 372483.
13. Ludin telegram 1307, as above.
14. *SL*, 31 August 1944, 1. See also Jablonický, *Z ilegality do povstania*, 431–32.
15. SNP, 1:373, 1124–25.
16. Ludin telegram 1307, as above.
17. USHMM, RG 14.015M, bd. 1847, Berger to Himmler, 2 September 1944, f. 27.
18. SNP, 1:1124; and Jablonický, *Povstanie bez legend*, 254.
19. Murín, *Spomienky a svedectvo*, 202. Overall for change in government, see Ondrej Podolec, “Až do poslednej chvíle . . . (činnosť vlády Štefana Tisu),” in *OMH*, 5:16–19; and Korček, *Slovenská republika*, 115.
20. Medrický, *Minister spomína*, 279. See also SNA, S-428-4, [Jozef Kosorín], “Za život národa, za trvanie štátu,” 14 January 1946 (hereafter Kosorín memoir), f. 32.
21. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 779, Ludin telegram 1343, 5 September 1944, f. 372470; and Ján Stanislav and Stanislav Mičev, “The Anti-Jewish Reprisals in the [sic] Slovakia from September 1944 to April 1945,” in *The Tragedy of Slovak Jews*, ed. Dezider Tóth (Banská Bystrica: Datei, 1992), 205–6.
22. SNA, S-424-3, copy of Tiso to Ludin, 8 September 1944, f. 75; Tönsmeier, *Dritte Reich und die Slowakei*, 187; and SNP, 1:488.
23. *Pred súdom národa*, 1:146.
24. USHMM, RG 14.015M, bd. 1847, Berger to Himmler, 2 September 1944, f. 26; and MarAff 263–67/43.
25. SNP, 1:365.
26. Anna Josko, “The Slovak Resistance Movement,” in Mamatey and Luža, *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic*, 379–82; Halaj, *Fašistické represálie na Slovensku*, 21; SNP, 2:200–201; Lip-ták, “Slovakia in the Twentieth Century,” 269; and Peter A. Toma and Dušan Kováč, *Slovakia: From Samo to Dzurinda* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2001), 139–43.
27. *SL*, 22 October 1944, 1.
28. SNP, 2:337–39; Igor Daxner, *Ludáctvo pred Národným súdom, 1945–1947* (Bratislava: SAV, 1961), 217–18; and Stanislav and Mičev, “Anti-Jewish Reprisals,” 206; and [Jozef] Jablonický and [Miroslav] Kropilák, *Slovník Slovenského národného povstania*, druhé vyd. (Bratislava: Epocha, 1970), 57.
29. SNA, NS 13/46, c. 103, Kubala aff., 31 May 1946, pp. 23–24.
30. MarAff 269/43.
31. HIA, Štefan Tiso, diary entry for 2 September 1944.
32. *HnS*, 4:274–75.
33. SNP, 1:1093. See also Stanislav and Mičev, “Anti-Jewish Reprisals,” 233; SNP, 2:583; and *VaSR*, 192–93.
34. Murín, *Spomienky a svedectvo*, 76.
35. *VaSR*, 196–97.
36. SNP, 1:1094.
37. ŠAvBra, OES Bratislava 459/46 (Antonín Neumann), KPR 1816 kab., 24 October 1944, and Tiso aff., 15 October 1945, f. 65; and *HnS*, 4:273.
38. Tiso also named Macek as head of the Slovak Labor Service (Slovenská pracovná služba), another instance in which the president “snubbed” German wishes, this time at the cost of a demarche. NACP, mf. T-120, reel 154, Ludin telegram 1828, 23 October 1942, f. 249707.
39. Kosorín memoir, f. 17–18.
40. SNP, 1:541–42.
41. Kosorín memoir, f. 32. See also Letz, “Slovenská ľudová strana v dejinách,” 103.
42. Kosorín memoir, f. 34.
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Ibid.*, f. 35.
45. SNP, 1:1107.

46. Ibid.; and Kosorín memoir, f. 34.
47. Toma and Kováč, *Slovačija: From Samo to Dzurinda*, 144–45; and SNP, 1:813.
48. SNP, 1:817, 1108.
49. SL, 1 November 1944, 1. Although the Germans developed drafts for this speech, Tiso clearly spoke his own mind. SNP, 1:706–7, 779–81.
50. Vojtech Kárpáty, “Pohotovostné oddiely Hlinkovej gardy, 1944–1945 (organizácia a aktivity),” *VH* 9, no. 4 (2005): 55; Ján Mlynárik, *Dějiny židů na Slovensku* (Prague: Academia, 2005), 283–86; Ján Stanislav, “Poznámky k represáliám na Slovensku koncom druhej svetovej vojny,” in Bystrický and Fano, *Slovensko na konci druhej svetovej vojny*, 207–20; and Igor Baka, “Nasadenie civilného obyvateľstva na Slovensku na opevňovacie práce v rokoch 1944–1945,” *VH* 11, no. 1 (2007): 70–84.
51. *Domobrana*, 4 November 1944, 2. See also SNP, 2:435.
52. SNP, 2:471.
53. SNA, 405-7-1, Oblastné žandárske veliteľstvo Zlaté Moravce 382-2 dôv., 9 December, 1944, f. 122; and SNA, MPs, c. 133, fd. 735/45-14, i.č. 70, sf. 396/45-24, draft of MPs 396, 9 January 1945.
54. SNP, 2:242, 384; and ŠAvBra, ES Bratislava 14/48 (Tido J. Gašpar), c. 25, Tiso aff., 16 April 1947, f. 55.
55. SNP, 1:1107.
56. SNA, NS 10/46, c. 44, Tiso to Hitler, December 1944, f. 525/38; and SNP, 2:451.
57. SNP, 2:468–69, 474–75.
58. SNP, 1:916–17; and SNA, NS 8/46, c. 99, Štefan Tiso test., 17 February 1947, f. 94–95/87. The uprising leaders stayed at large, while the judges went to a Slovak prison.
59. SNP, 2:366, 403; and SNA, NS 6/46, c. 54, Škrábik test., 9 January 1947, f. 1075–76/45.
60. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 95, Kmeťko test., 6 January 1947, f. 241/83. See also SNA, NS 6/46, c. 59, BÚ Nitra 803, 18 July 1946, f. 623/50.
61. DAvN, Curia episcopatio Nitriae, Tiso to Kmeťko, 8 December 1944; and Kmeťko test. as above, f. 243–44/83.
62. *VaSR*, 204.
63. The original letter is in Latin. I have worked from German and Slovak translations. Brandmüller, *Holocaust in der Slowakei*, 197–203; and *VaSR*, 207–8.
64. USHMM, Selected Records from the International Committee of the Red Cross . . . , RG-19.045M, reel 6, fd. G 59/4–85.05, Tiso to Huber, 10 January 1945.
65. *HSLS OZ* 5 (1944): 97–99. See also SNP, 2:447; and SNA, KPR, D-1, fd. 228 kab./1944, HSLS Generálny sekretariát 17444, 17 October 1944.
66. Jelinek, *Parish Republic*, 125.
67. SL, 10 December 1944, 1.
68. Jablonický and Kropilák, *Slovník Slovenského národného povstania*, 57. Two-thirds of the domobrana, however, were used only for fortification work.
69. ŠAvBra, ES Bratislava 14/48 (Tido J. Gašpar), c. 25, Tiso aff., 16 April 1947, f. 54. See also Korček, *Slovenská republika*, 122, 186; and Halaj, *Fašistické represálie na Slovensku*, 95–96.
70. SL, 14 March 1945, 1.
71. Ibid., 10 March 1945, 3; and ŠAvBra, Štátny súd v Bratislave 1948–52, Hp 4/48a, fd. B (Ján Kempný), Kmeťko aff., 19 January 1948, f. 721. The money was supposedly (and plausibly) Tiso’s rather than the state’s.
72. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 18 December 1946, f. 435/82.
73. Murín, *Spomienky a svedectvo*, 155–57, 390–99.
74. Ibid., 386–87.
75. Sidor, *Šesť rokov pri Vatikáne*, 274.
76. For program, see *Za svobodu českého a slovenského národa* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství politické literatury, 1956), 368–91.
77. See also Michal Barnovský, *Na ceste k monopolu moci: Mocenskopolitické zápasy na Slovensku v rokoch 1945–1948* (Bratislava: Archa, 1993), 24–27.
78. Róbert Letz, “Činnosť sovietskych orgánov NKVD na Slovensku v rokoch 1944 a 1945,” in Bystrický and Fano, *Slovensko na konci druhej svetovej vojny*, 110–11.

79. Norman M. Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 115. See also *ibid.*, 119–20; and SNA, 405-3-4, fd. 118 kab./42, draft of KPR 118/kab., 6 February 1942. For expulsions in Slovakia, see Štefan Šutaj, “The Magyar Minority in Slovakia before and after the Second World War,” in Teich, *Slovakia in History*, 273–81.
80. Němeček, *Československo-sovětské vztahy*, 151. See also Benjamin Frommer, *National Cleansing: Retribution against Nazi Collaborators in Postwar Czechoslovakia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 75–77.
81. *Sbierka nariadení Slovenskej národnej rady*, 33/1945.
82. SNA, ÚP-SNR, Second Prague Agreement, 11 April 1946, c. 19, fd. 3, f. 287; and Frommer, *National Cleansing*, 90–92.
83. *LT*, 5 September 1992, 10; Tomáš Klubert, “Politické pozadie a bezpečnostné aspekty procesu s Dr. Jozefom Tisom a spol.,” *Pamäť národa* 7, no. 1 (2011): 30; and SNA, NS 6/46, c. 60, Faulhaber to Alliierte Militärregierung, 9 June 1945, f. 544/51.
84. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, Ivan Murín aff., 4 March 1946, f. 386/45; and Murín, *Spomienky a svedectvo*, 201–2, 204–17.
85. Čulen, *Po Svätoplukovi druhá naša hlava*, 267–68; James R. Felak, rev. of Murín, *Spomienky a svedectvo*, in *East Central Europe* 18, no. 1 (1991): 82; and Giles MacDonogh, *After the Reich: The Brutal History of the Allied Occupation* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 397–407.
86. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 53, Ivan Murín aff., 4 March 1946, f. 386/45.
87. *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter *FRUS*) 1945, 4:527–30.
88. SFÚ, “Týždeň vo filme,” 25/1945.
89. Barnovský, *Na ceste k monopolu moci*, 32, 41, 53; and NACP, RG 226, entry 108, box 169, fd. LC-100, OSS LC-133, 24 July 1945.
90. James Ramon Felak, *After Hitler, Before Stalin: Catholics, Communists, and Democrats in Slovakia, 1945–1948* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 38.
91. SNA, ÚP-SNR pred., c. 441, Prez 155, 31 May 1946; and SNA, NS/Dx, fd. 72, reports on conversations between Tiso and his lawyers, 18 Nov.–21 Dec. 1946, f. 3–10.
92. Anton Rašla and Ernest Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom: Spomienky* (Bratislava: Tatrapress, 1990), 19, 45, 92–93; and SNA, ÚP-SNR pred., c. 422, Prez. 61, 17 April 1947.
93. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 51, Rigan report, 9 August 1946, f. 74/43, and Lojek and Žabkay complaint, 12 August 1946, f. 80/43; and Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 43.
94. SNA, KPR, c. 10, fd. 15576/40, draft of KPR 15576, 30 December 1940.
95. See, for example, Karel Kaplan, *Dva retribuční procesy: Komentované dokumenty (1946–1947)* (Prague: Ústav pro soudobé dějiny ČSAV, 1992), 152.
96. Ján Rychlík, “Z neznámych pamätí Jána Ursínyho (Spomienky na proces s dr. Jozefom Tisom),” in *HČ* 40 (1992): 241. See also Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 35–36; and Kaplan, *Dva retribuční procesy*, 152–53.
97. SNA, ÚP-SNR pred., c. 441, fd. Sostavenie senátov Nár. s., Prez 339, 13 November 1946; and SNA, Ústredný výbor Komunistickej strany Slovenska, Generálny tajomník, 1945–51, c. 2156, i. č. 236/3, biographies of judges.
98. Kaplan, *Dva retribuční procesy*, 132–33, 136–39, 180; and František Vnuk, *Do dokumenty o postavení katolíckej cirkvi na Slovensku v rokoch 1945–1948* (Martin: Matica slovenská, 1998), 93–95.
99. SNA, ÚP-SNR pred., c. 441, Prez. 155, 31 May 1946.
100. Felak, *After Hitler, Before Stalin*, 37–38, 88–90. For political context of trial, see also Bradley Abrams, “The Politics of Retribution: The Trial of Jozef Tiso in the Czechoslovak Environment,” in *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and Its Aftermath*, ed. István Deák et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 252–89; Barnovský, *Na ceste k monopolu moci*, 120–45; and Jan Rychlík, “Proces s Jozefem Tisem v roce 1947,” *Český časopis historický* 96 (1998): 574–601.
101. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 83, indictment of Tiso, Ďurčanský, and Mach, 11 November 1946 (hereafter Indictment), f. 19–231/72. For edited version, see *Dr. Jozef Tiso, Dr. Ferdinand Ďurčanský a Alexander Mach pred súdom národa, diel I: Obžaloba* (Bratislava: Poverenictvo informácií, 1947).

102. Indictment, f. 55/72; and Ján Korček, “Jozef Tiso a otázka ‘povolania Nemcov na Slovensko’ v auguste 1944,” in Bystrický and Fano, *Pokus o politický a osobný profil*, 237–40.
103. Kaplan, *Dva retribuční procesy*, 134.
104. Indictment, f. 20–21/72, 73/72, 96/72.
105. SNA, AKPR, fond T, sign. 50/45 (SNA 173/50), MV Zb-334, 14 December 1946; Václav Vondrášek, “Ludácka emigrácia a kontrarevolučné podzemie na Slovensku v rokoch 1945–1947,” *HČ* 30 (1982): 826; SNA, NS/Dx, fd. 84, Ďurčanský to Daxner, 27 November 1946, f. 23; and Kaplan, *Dva retribuční procesy*, 139.
106. NYT, 17 February 1947, 10. See also SNA, AKPR, fond T, sign. 921/47 (SNA i.č. 243, c. 54), BÚ Nitra 84, 20 February 1947.
107. *Čas*, 15 January 1947, 2, and 20 February 1947, 3; and *Pravda*, 5 January 1947, 3, and 14 January 1947, 2.
108. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Tiso test., 14–15 January 1947, f. 202–09/84, 446–47/84. See also *Čas*, 16 January 1947, 1–2.
109. Kaplan, *Dva retribuční procesy*, 190.
110. *Čas*, 18 December 1946, 1. See also SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 4 December 1946, f. 123/81.
111. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 98. Tiso test., 7 February 1947, f. 196/86. My “classic” defenses generally follow Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940–1944*, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), xi.
112. Hillgruber, *Staatsmänner*, 2:447.
113. *Čas*, 19 December 1946, 1.
114. MarAff 173–74/43; SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 19 December 1946, f. 502–03/82; and *Pred súdom národa*, 1:147.
115. ASR, AFR 9 266/1-1, Žabkay interview, 15 July 1994. See also Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 41.
116. Cf., for example, SNA, NS 8/46, c. 91, judgment on Tiso and Ďurčanský, 15 April 1947 [hereafter Judgment], f. 5/79; and Indictment, f. 22/72.
117. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, Ursíny test., 13 January 1947, f. 142–43/84.
118. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 93, Tiso test., 4 December 1946, f. 125/81.
119. SNK-ALU, 129 B 20, Rašla to Čatloš, 24 June 1966.
120. In describing the 1944 deportations, for example, the indictment failed to note the high percentage of Jews among the deportees while pointing out that Slavic deportees had faced “certain death.” Indictment, f. 66–67/72.
121. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 100, court proceedings, 13 March 1947, f. 570/88.
122. *Čas*, 20 December 1946, 2; and *Pravda*, 19 December 1946, 2.
123. Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 110.
124. *Ibid.*, 38; *Čas*, 2 July 1946, 3; and Porter-Szűcs, *Faith and Fatherland*, 29–32.
125. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 99, court proceedings, 25 February 1947, f. 489/87.
126. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 100, Tiso test., 10 March 1947, f. 387–88/88.
127. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 96, court proceedings, 16 January 1947, f. 537/84. See also *Catholic Herald*, 3 April 1947, 1; NYT, 1 March 1947, 4; *Pravda*, 10 January 1947, 2; and *Čas*, 1 February 1947, 3.
128. SNA, NS 17/46, c. 111, Vašek test., 24 June 1946, f. 71/98; and *SL*, 5 September 1933, 4. See also Hubenák, *Riešenie židovskej otázky na Slovensku*, 3:224; and SNA, NS 17/46, c. 111, František Štefanec test., 12 July 1946, f. 561/98.
129. Murín, *Spomienky a svedectvo*, 202–3. See also *ibid.*, 30, 32; and Diary of Armin Frieder, 3:11, 14.
130. Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 81.
131. *Čas*, 19 March 1947, 3.
132. Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 102.
133. Kaplan, *Dva retribuční procesy*, 199–203; Abrams, “Politics of Retribution,” 269; and Bar-novský, *Na ceste k monopolu moci*, 126–28.
134. Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 53.
135. Cf., for example, Indictment, f. 21/72; and Judgment, f. 5/79.

136. Judgment, 6/79, 86/79, 90/79, 95–99/79.
137. *Ibid.*, f. 134–36/79, 143–44/79.
138. *Ibid.*, f. 162/79, 171/79.
139. *Ibid.*, f. 213/79.
140. SNA, NS 6/46, c. 91, zápisnica, 15 April 1947, f. 693/79; *Pravda*, 17 April 1947, 2; and Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 104.
141. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 91, Národný súd . . . v trestnej veci proti . . . Tisovi, 15 April 1947, f. 694–96/79. Tiso's statement that "the devil can drive my cart" referred not to Hitler but to the Henlein party. *Pravda*, 4 December 1946, 1.
142. Felak, *After Hitler, Before Stalin*, 109–23.
143. Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 104.
144. ŠAvBra, ES Bratislava 14/48 (Tido J. Gašpar), c. 25, Tiso aff., 16 April 1947, f. 56.
145. Murín, *Spomienky a svedectvo*, 287; and Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 106.
146. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 519–21, 523.
147. Murín, *Spomienky a svedectvo*, 306–8.
148. Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 107–8; and Vnuk, *Dokumenty o postavení katolíckej cirkvi*, 123–24.
149. Vnuk, *Dokumenty o postavení katolíckej cirkvi*, 126–29; and SNK-ALU, fond Jozef Tiso (30003/92), *Vo svojich ťažkostiach sa modlí*.
150. Beran's verdict *was* harsh, considering his circumstances. Frommer, *National Cleansing*, 295.
151. Barnovský, *Na ceste k monopolu moci*, 134–35; Felak, *After Hitler, Before Stalin*, 132–41; and Abrams, "Politics of Retribution," 277.
152. Eduard Beneš, *Memoirs of Dr. Eduard Beneš: From Munich to New War and New Victory* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954), 59. Emphasis in original.
153. Ivan Dérer, *Slovenský vývoj a ľudácká zrada: Fakta, vzpomínky a úvahy* (Prague: Kvasnička a Hampl, 1946), 145.
154. Lettrich, *History of Modern Slovakia*, 221.
155. *Tragédia slovenských židov* (Bratislava: Ústredný sväz židovských náboženských obcí na Slovensku, 1949).
156. Imrich Stanek, *Zrada a pád: Hlinkovští separatisté a tak zvaný slovenský štát* (Prague: Státní nakladatelství politické literatury, 1958), 223; and Ladislav Lipscher, *Ľudácka autonómia – ilúzie a skutočnosť* (Bratislava: Slovenské vydavateľstvo politickej literatúry, 1957), 147–48. Lipscher's book, however, has many merits.
157. See, for example, Jelinek, *Parish Republic*; and Matthew Feldman et al., eds., *Clerical Fascism in Interwar Europe* (London: Routledge, 2008). For an excellent overview of the various uses of the term, see Roger Griffen, "The 'Holy Storm': 'Clerical Fascism' through the Lens of Modernism," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8 (2007): 213–15.
158. Lubomír Lipták, "Jozef Tiso – problém slovenskej politiky a slovenskej historiografie," in Bystrický and Fano, *Počas o politický a osobný profil*, 18.
159. *The Trial of the Treasonable Slovak Bishops: Ján Vojaššák, Michal Buzalka, Pavol Gojdič* (Prague: Orbis, 1951), 109.
160. Lettrich, *History of Modern Slovakia*, 194.
161. Jozef Jablonický, *Glosy o historiografii SNP: Zneužívanie a falšovanie dejín SNP*, druhé vyd. (Bratislava: NVK Int., 1994).
162. Čulen wrote Tiso's second biography, *Po Svätoplukovi druhá naša hlava* (1947) mainly to refute the postwar trial. Tiso's first biography was also propaganda: Šimončíč and Polčín, *Dr. Jozef Tiso* (1941). The only English-language full-length biography is Anthony X. Sutherland, *Dr. Jozef Tiso and Modern Slovakia* (Cleveland: First Catholic Slovak Union, 1978). Sutherland's work is influenced by the émigrés but provides useful analysis of Tiso as an ideologist. For an overview of the émigrés' work (and that of their opponents in exile), see M. Mark Stolarik, "Slovak Historians in Exile in North America, 1945–1992," *Human Affairs* 6 (1996): 34–44.
163. *Slovakia* (Slovak League of America) 2, no. 3 (1952); and J[ozef] M. Kirschbaum, "My Last Diplomatic Report to the President of Slovakia," *Annual Furdek* (Middletown) 11 (1972): 85.

164. Joseph Ciekier, "The First President of the Slovak Republic," *Slovakia* 2, no. 1 (1952): 2–3.
165. See, for example, Joseph Paučo, "Dr. Joseph Tiso: Christian Democrat," *Slovakia* 7, no. 2 (1957): 37–50. Cf. Joseph A. Mikus [Jozef Mikuš], *Slovakia: A Political History, 1918–1950* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1963), 91–94, 119–24.
166. Lipták, "Jozef Tiso – problém slovenskej politiky," 15.
167. Milan S. Ďurica, "Dr. Joseph Tiso and the Jewish Problem in Slovakia," *Slovakia* 7, nos. 3–4 (1957): 1–22; František Vnuk, *Neuveriteľné sprisahanie: Vojské a politické akcie proti Slovenskej republike v roku 1944* (Middletown: Literárny almanach Slovákia v Amerike, 1964). Valuable, however, are Ďurica, *Slovacchia*; Vnuk, "Slovakia's Six Eventful Months" (both 1964); and Jozef Paučo, ed. *Dr. Jozef Tiso o sebe* (Passaic: Slovenský Katolícky Sokol, 1952).
168. Lubomír Lipták, "Politický režim na Slovensku v rokoch 1939–1945," in *Slovenské národné povstanie roku 1944*, ed. Ľudovít Holotík and Miroslav Kropilák (Bratislava: SAV, 1965), 20–49; and Lipták, "Príprava a priebeh salzburských rokovaní," 329–64.
169. Kamenec, "Židovská otázka," 172. Other important Slovak scholarship from the 1960s include Suško, "Hlinkova garda" (1969); and Jablonický, *Z ilegality do povstania* (1969).
170. *Obchod na korze* (1965), a film by Ján Kadár and Elmar Klos; *Kultúrny život*, 7 June 1968; and Gabriel and Ladislav Hoffmann, *Katolícka cirkev a tragédia slovenských židov v dokumentoch* (Partizánske: G-print, 1994), 211–12. Of scholars working outside Slovakia, Jelinek, Jörg Höensch, Johann Kaiser, and Ladislav Lipscher were the best analysts of the Slovak state before 1989. Above all, see Jelinek, *Parish Republic* (1976); Hoensch, *Slowakei und Hitlers Ostpolitik* (1965); Kaiser, *Politik des Dritten Reiches* (1969); and Lipscher, *Juden im Slowakischen Staat* (1980).
171. *Kultúrny život a slovenská jar 60. rokov* (Bratislava: Národné literárne centrum, 1998), 30; Shari J. Cohen, *Politics without a Past: The Absence of History in Postcommunist Nationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 106; and Lipták, "Jozef Tiso – problém slovenskej politiky," 17. Accurate accounts of the Holocaust in Slovakia, however, remained standard in encyclopedias and synthetic histories. See, for example, *Dejiny Slovenska V*, 369–70.
172. Pavel Mates, "K procesu retribuice v Československu v letech 1945–1947," *HČ* 31 (1983): 71.
173. Jozef Lenárt, "Leninism and the Lessons of the Slovak Uprising," *World Marxist Review* 17, no. 8 (1974): 20–29; Jablonický, *Glosy o historiografii SNP*, 36–38, 83–110; and Juraj Marušák, "Verný vlastnému presvedčeniu," *Kritika & kontext* 5, no. 1 (2000): 49–51. In fact, the revolt was rehabilitated, Husák having sat in Stalinist jails earlier for leading it.
174. *Dejiny Slovenska V* (1985); Jozef Klimko, *Tretia ríša a ľudácky režim na Slovensku* (Bratislava: Obzor, 1986); and Hrnko, *Politický vývin* (1988).
175. Yeshayahu A. Jelinek, "Slovaks and the Holocaust: An End to Reconciliation?" *East European Jewish Affairs* 22, no. 1 (1992): 9; *Bojovník*, 17 March 1990, 6; and *LT*, 2 January 1993, 2.
176. *Slovenský život v Argentíne*, January–March 1990, 1–2; and Jozef Špetko, "Slovenská exilová a emigrantská politika v rokoch 1945–1989," *HČ* 39 (1991): 258.
177. ČTK (Prague), 13 February 1990, Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Review* (Eastern Europe) (hereafter FBIS), 16 February 1990, 25; and *LT*, 21 June 1991, 2.
178. See, for example, *Slovenské národné noviny*, 5 June 1990, 11.
179. *LT*, 20 April 1990, 11, and 1 June 1990, 16. The rehabilitation attempt was also a legal challenge of Tiso's trial. See František Vnuk, "Podnet na revíziu procesu s dr. Jozefom Tisom," in *Dr. Jozef Tiso: Zborník z vedeckého seminára . . .*, ed. Stanislav Májek (Bratislava: SAH, 2002), 101–8.
180. *Smena*, 19 December 1989, 1.
181. *Práca*, 21 December 1989, 1–2, and 30 December 1989, 2; *LT*, 16 February 1990, 2; and *KN*, 28 January 1990, 3, and 21 April 1990, 5.
182. Paul Sigurd Hilde, "Slovak Nationalism and the Breakup of Czechoslovakia," *Europe-Asia Studies* 51 (1999): 648.
183. *Politics without a Past*, 124–27; Miroslav Kusý, "Slovak Exceptionalism," in *The End of Czechoslovakia*, ed. Jiří Musil (Budapest: CEU Press, 1995), 147; *Smena*, 11 May 1992, 3; Jan Rychlík, *Rozpad Československa: Česko-slovenské vztahy, 1989–1992* (Bratislava: AEP, 2002), 269; and *Slovenské národné listy*, 23 April 1990, 1. In Slovak, the parties are Verejnosť proti násiliu, Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie, and Slovenská národná strana.

184. *Smena*, 31 March 1990, 1–2. As a compromise, the country became the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic.
185. Carol Skalnik Leff, “Czech and Slovak Nationalism in the Twentieth Century,” in *Eastern European Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter F. Sugar (Washington: American University Press, 1995), 111.
186. SČ-SDPK, 1986–90 Česká národní rada, sp., sch. 25 (29 March 1990), 20. The magazine, titled 23:55 (14 March 1990 issue) featured articles by Vnuk and Ďurica.
187. *Pravda*, 23 February 1990, 5; Leff, *Czech and Slovak Republics*, 163; and *The Washington Post*, 9 April 1990, 14.
188. Lipták, “Slovakia in the Twentieth Century,” 299; and Cohen, *Politics without a Past*, 226.
189. *Smena*, 14 July 1990, 2, and 12 July 1990, 2; *Pravda*, 10 July 1990, 3; and *NO*, 14 July 1990, 3.
190. *SID*, 16 July 1990, 1.
191. SČ-SDPK, 1990–92, Federální shromáždění České a Slovenské Federativní republiky, společné sch. Sněmovna lidu a Sněmovna národů, sp., sch. 5 (20 July 1990), 27; *NO*, 10 August 1990, 1–2; and *Zmena* 1990, 49: 4–5.
192. *Pravda*, 19 July 1990, 7; “Deportations of Jews from Slovakia,” *Cross Currents* 9 (1990): 269–70; *Pravda*, 21 July 1990, 3, and 30 July 1990, 3; and *LN*, 13 July 1990, 1, 8.
193. Rychlík, *Rozpad Československa*, 266–70.
194. Dušan Kováč et al., *Kronika Slovenska* (Bratislava: Fortuna Print, 1998–99), 2:514; “Za naše Slovensko” (insert), *Smena*, 25 August 1990, 2–4.
195. Martin Bútorá et al., “The Hard Birth of Democracy in Slovakia: The Eighteen Months Following the ‘Tender’ Revolution,” *The Journal of Communist Studies* 7 (1991): 442; *Smena*, 6 October 1990, 1; and Kováč, *Kronika Slovenska*, 2:515.
196. *SID*, 14 August 1990, 2; *Smena*, 14 August 1990, 1; and Rychlík, *Rozpad Československa*, 159–60.
197. See, for example, *Slovenský východ*, 18 April 1991, 4. The book is Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*.
198. *Slovenské národné noviny*, 8 March 1991, 12. Cf. *LT*, 20 April 1990, 11.
199. *NO*, 12 March 1993, 3.
200. *Smena*, 2 March 1991, 4.
201. *LN*, 14 March 1991, 1, 3; and *Smena*, 6 March 1991, 2.
202. *Pravda*, 7 March 1991, 1–2.
203. Prague Domestic Service in Czech, 12 March 1991, FBIS, 13 March 1991, 21. See also *Smena*, 12 March 1991, 1.
204. *LN*, 8 March 1991, 1; and *NO*, 12 March 1993, 3.
205. *NO*, 14 March 1991, 1.
206. *Smena*, 14 March 1991, 1.
207. *SID*, 15 March 1991, 4.
208. *NO*, 15 March 1991, 2.
209. *The Guardian*, 15 March 1991, 10. See also František Mikloško, *Čas stretnutí* (Bratislava: Kalligram, 1996), 50–51.
210. *NO*, 15 March 1991, 1; *Verejnosc*, 15 March 1991, 1, 3; *SID*, 15 March 1991, 1; and Zora Bútorová et al., *Slovensko – marec 1991 (sociologická momentka)* (Bratislava: Ústav pre sociálnu analýzu Univerzity Komenského, 1991), 15.
211. See, for example, *Pravda*, 15 March 1991, 1–2; and *SID*, 16 March 1991, 1–2.
212. *Smena*, 16 March 1991, 1.
213. Rychlík, *Rozpad Československa*, 282. In Slovak, the party is Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko.
214. See, for example, *Business Week*, 1 February 1993, Industrial/Technology ed., 20.
215. Rychlík, *Rozpad Československa*, 269; and *LT*, 20 April 1990, 11. The Institute is the Historický ústav at the Slovenská akadémia vied.
216. Lubomír Lipták, “Poznámky o historiografii nových dejín,” *HČ* 38 (1990): 690–92.
217. For example, see Valerián Bystrický, ed., *Slovensko v rokoch druhej svetovej vojny* (Bratislava: HÚ SAV, 1991); and Cséfalvay and Púčík, *Slovensko a druhá svetová vojna* (2000).

218. For overview, see Eduard Nižňanský, “Slovenská historiografia v 90. rokoch v 20. storočia o holokauste,” *HČ* 52 (2004): 317–30.
219. The *Holokaust na Slovensku (HnS)* series, mainly edited by Nižňanský, is the premier example.
220. See, for example, *Zamlčaná pravda o Slovensku, I. a II. diel* (Topoľčany: Priatelia prezidenta Tisu, 1996). Stanislav Kirschbaum’s popular *A History of Slovakia: The Struggle for Survival*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) also often follows the émigré line.
221. Ústredný archív SAV, Historický ústav, 1990, Kľúčové problémy dejín Slovenska v 20. storočí. The conference also allowed Čarnogurský’s Christian Democrats, then in power, to pass the buck on Tiso to the historians. Rychlík, *Rozpad Československa*, 270.
222. Lipták, “Jozef Tiso – problém slovenskej politiky,” 14–19; Barnovský, “K niektorým otázkam súdneho procesu s Jozefom Tisom,” 308–20; Korček, “Jozef Tiso a otázka ‘povolania Nemcov na Slovensko,’” 237–41; and Bartlová, “Jozef Tiso – funkcionár HSES,” 76–88. All articles are in Bystrický and Fano, *Pokus o politický a osobný profil*.
223. František Vnuk, “Retribučné súdnictvo a proces s Jozefom Tisom,” 292; Letz, “Vývin slovenského národného povedomia u Jozefa Tisu,” 44–61; Hoffmann, “O živote a práci prvého prezidenta slovenského štátu Jozefa Tisu,” 351; and Rychlík, *Rozpad Československa*, 270. All articles are in Bystrický and Fano, *Pokus o politický a osobný profil*.
224. Peter Bielik et al., eds., *Dies Ater: Nešťastný deň* (Bratislava: ERBO, 1994); Eva Slavkovská, “Vzťah štátu k cirkvám v prvých rokoch výstavby socializmu na Slovensku,” *HČ* 30 (1982): 223–47; and *LT*, 23 July 1993, 13. Kamenec, however, also published Marxist studies.
225. Zora Bútorová and Martin Bútor, “Events and Personalities in Slovakia’s History,” in *Democracy and Discontent in Slovakia: A Public Opinion Profile of a Country in Transition*, ed. Zora Bútorová (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 1998), 194–95.
226. Jablonický’s *samizdat* work, for example, was one of the first histories to be published in post-Communist Slovakia. Jablonický, *Povstanie bez legend* (1990). See also Bystrický and Fano, *Slovensko na konci druhej svetovej vojny* (1994).
227. Ivan Kamenec, “Koncepce a ciele protifašistického odboja na Slovensku,” in *SNP v pamäti národa*, ed. Július Lipták (Bratislava: NVK Int., 1994), 138.
228. Jozef Jablonický, “Slovenské národné povstanie v historiografii v rokoch totality,” in Lipták, *SNP v pamäti národa*, 94.
229. *Program Slovenskej národnej strany* (Bratislava: Slovenská národná strana, 1998), 7.
230. Grigorij Mesežnikov, “Domestic Politics,” in *Slovakia 2000: A Global Report on the State of Society*, ed. Grigorij Mesežnikov et al. (Bratislava: Institute for Public Affairs, 2001), 72.
231. Kevin Deegan-Krause, “Slovakia,” in *Handbook of Political Change in Eastern Europe*, ed. Sten Berglund et al., 2nd ed. (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2004), 264. See also Henderson, *Escape from Invisibility*, 44–49.
232. Jablonický, “Slovenské národné povstanie v historiografii v rokoch totality,” 97.
233. Susannah Fried, “Ultra-nationalism in Slovak Life,” *East European Jewish Affairs* 27, no. 2 (1997): 107.
234. Ďurica, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov* (1995); *Prague Post*, 1–7 May 1996, 1; *Sme*, 16 July 1996, 3; *Vojnový sločinec alebo svätec, Svedectvá pravdy*, II. diel (Topoľčany: Priatelia prezidenta Tisu, 1998), 635–37; and *Bojovník*, 20 April 1995, 2.
235. Historický ústav, office correspondence, fd. Kauza Matica, “The Freedom of Research in Slovakia is Threatened”; and *Kritika & kontext* 2, nos. 2–3 (1997): 34–40.
236. See, for example, *Domino fórum*, 10–16 December 1998, 7.
237. Kamenec, *Tragédia politika, kňaza a človeka*, 83.
238. See, for example, Glettler, *Nacionálno-socialistický systém vlády* (2002); and Zemko and Bystrický, *Slovensko v Československu* (2004). Note also the work sponsored by the Vojenský HÚ, for example, Baka, *Politický systém a režim Slovenskej republiky* (2010).
239. Májek, *Dr. Jozef Tiso* (2002). More useful was Ján Bobák, ed., *Slovenská republika (1939–1945)* (Martin: Matica slovenská, 2000).
240. *NO*, 15 March 2001, 2.
241. “From the Slovak Press,” ČTK National News Wire, 23 February 2000, on LexisNexis, accessed 5 May 2008; and *Sme*, 24 March 2005, 4.

242. *Tiso*, a play by Rastislav Ballek (2005); and *Týždeň*, 29 August 2005.
243. *Pravda*, 27 April 2007 (spravy.pravda.sk/po-sokolovi-poburil-zidov-aj-korec-dtn-/sk_domace.asp?c=A070427_192708_sk_domace_p12), accessed 4 January 2012; and *Pravda*, 10 November 2008, 1.
244. Cf. for example, Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 376–77; Ďurica, *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov*, 159; and *Kritika & kontext* 2, nos. 2–3 (1997): 34–40.
245. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 410.
246. *Ibid.*, 558. The campaign to beatify Tiso peaked in the 1980s, when a subordinate to Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York briefly approved a prayer for it. In 2006, even as the Slovak hierarchy defended Tiso, they distanced themselves from his beatification. The next year, Korec's successor as the bishop of Nitra, Vilém Judák, stressed that Tiso bore responsibility for the Slovak persecution of the Jews. Ďurica, *Životopisný profil*, 552–55; *Pravda*, 13 October 2006, 4; and *Sme*, 18 April 2007 (www.sme.sk/c/3252873/na-duchovnom-seminari-sa-diskutovalo-otisovi.html), accessed 4 January 2012.
247. *Pravda*, 5 April 2007 (spravy.pravda.sk/sokol-nech-vas-nemylia-liberalne-prudy-dyi-/sk_domace.asp?c=A070405_152459_sk_domace_p12), accessed 4 January 2012). The Vatican retired Sokol in 2009 at the age of seventy-five.
248. *Sme*, 1 February 2007, 3. These historians often publish in *Historický zborník* and *Pamät' národa*.
249. Letz's 2006 history of the Ľudáks ("Slovenská ľudová strana v dejinách"), for example, paid little attention to the party's antisemitism or its despoiling of Slovak Jews.
250. Martin Lacko, *Slovenská republika, 1939–1945* (Bratislava: Perfekt, 2008).
251. *Sme*, 1 February 2007, 2, and 6 September 2007, 2. The institute is the Ústav pamäti národa (ÚPN). Fico, however, also condemned Tiso, holding him responsible for the Slovak deportations. Slota later regretted backing Petranský, as the historian oversaw the release of documents on Slota's apparent past as a common thief. *Sme*, 8 January 2007, 2, and 26 April 2008, 1.
252. See especially Sidor, *Denníky* (2010) and *Vatikánsky denník I* (2011); and Sokolovič, *Hlinkova garda* (2009). ÚPN has also become the publisher of the *Slovenská republika 1939–1945 očami mladých historikov (OMH, 2002–)* series, the proceedings of annual conferences of younger generation Slovak historians from both camps. The project, interestingly, has yet to produce a contribution focused sharply on Tiso.
253. *Sme*, 4 September 2010 (www.sme.sk/c/5320397/upn-o-sidorovom-antisemitizme-pomlcal.html), accessed 4 January 2012.
254. *Sme*, 21 March 2005, 1.
255. ASR, AFR 11266, Bášníčka o dr. Jozefovi Tisovi, 13 October 1944; and Janko Jesenský, *Čierne dni* (Liptovský sv. Mikuláš: Tranoscius, 1945), 146.
256. Jablonický, *Povstanie bez legend*, 224; and Kamenec, *Tragédia politika, kňaza a človeka*, 105–6.
257. *PaČ*, 1:353.
258. SNA, Kosorín memoir, f. 34.
259. Rašla and Žabkay, *Proces s dr. J. Tisom*, 110.
260. *Spiritual Exercises*, 189–90.
261. Kamenec, *Tragédia politika, kňaza a človeka*, 142.
262. See, for example, Jozef Jablonický, *Fragment o histórii: Výber z diela 1989–2009* (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2009), 29.

Conclusion

1. James J. Sheehan, "The Problem of Sovereignty in European History," *American Historical Review* 111 (2006): 1–15.
2. The 30 percent figure is calculated from retrospective data by the Slovak state. Interwar Czechoslovak statistics did not distinguish between Czechs and Slovaks. *SL*, 16 April 1941, 4; and Peter Salner, *Premeny Bratislavy, 1939–1993: Etnologické aspekty sociálnych procesov v mestskom prostredí* (Bratislava: Veda, 1998), 116.

3. Martin Conway, "Introduction," in *Political Catholicism in Europe, 1918–1965*, ed. Tom Buchanan and Martin Conway (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 2.
4. An example would be the linkage in Poland between the Radio Maryja network and the Law and Justice party. Porter-Szűcs, *Faith and Fatherland*, 201–2.
5. For more detail, see Petranský, "Katólicka cirkev," 33–52.
6. Leff, "Czech and Slovak Nationalism," 148–49.
7. *PaČ*, 2:192.
8. *Ibid.*, 1:353.
9. Klemperer, *Ignaz Seipel*, 38–39.
10. SNA, NS 8/46, c. 94, Tiso test., 19 December 1939, f. 478/82.
11. *PaČ*, 1:334.
12. *NSr*, 12 March 1922, 1. Wiching (Viching), the first Bishop of Nitra, suppressed the liturgical use of Old Church Slavonic by expelling Methodius's followers. R. A. Fletcher, *The Conversion of Europe: From Paganism to Christianity, 371–1386 AD* (London: HarperCollins, 1997), 360.
13. Cf., for example, Walter Laqueur, *Fascism: Past, Present, Future* (London: Oxford University Press, 1996), 148; and Chip Berlet, "Christian Identity: The Apocalyptic Style, Political Religion, Palingenesis, and Neo-Fascism," in *Fascism, Totalitarianism, and Political Religion*, ed. Roger Griffen (London: Routledge, 2005), 195. Griffen has argued for restricting "clerical fascism" to clerics who range from tactically supporting fascism to internalizing its values. While a welcome intervention for bringing analytical clarity to the concept, Griffen's approach to my mind still fails to capture Tiso's characteristically ambivalent relationship with revolution. Griffen, "Holy Storm," 217.
14. Zeev Sternhell, *Neither Right nor Left: Fascist Ideology in France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).
15. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, new ed. (San Diego: Harcourt, 1973), 459.

A Note on Sources

1. In 2012, however, I did take part in a USHMM workshop on the Roman Catholic Church and the Holocaust that allowed me to survey the museum's materials from Pius XI's pontificate.
2. I obtained access to Ladislav Suško, ed., *Das Deutsche Reich und die Slowakische Republik 1938–1945*, 2 vols. (Bratislava: Lúč, 2008) too late to include it in my research.



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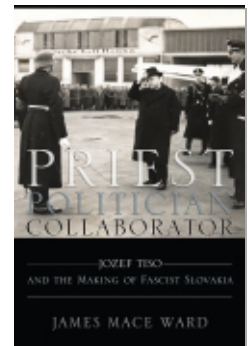
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