

ISSN 2591-1201

LETNIK 9 • 2025 • ŠTEVILKA 1



D i l e m e

Razprave o vprašanjih sodobne slovenske zgodovine

Dileme

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Dileme

Review of Slovene Contemporary History

Izdajatelj in založnik /Published by

Študijski center za narodno spravo

Naslov uredništva /Address of the editorial board

Tivolska 42, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenija

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The articles have been peer-reviewed. The authors are solely responsible for the content of their articles.

Redakcija te številke je bila zaključena 20. 5. 2025.

Publikacija izhaja s finančno podporo Javne agencije za znanstvenoraziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost Republike Slovenije.

Lektoriranje in prevod povzetkov

MODUS TOLLENS, Tadej Todorović s.p. in TransLAB, Andraž Banko s.p.

Oblikovanje in prelom

S. B.

Tisk

Itagraf, d. o. o.

Naklada

100 izvodov

Cena te številke

15 €

ISSN 2591-1201

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R a z p r a v e

Tomislav Kardum^{*}

*Miha Krek's Reports on the Communist
Seizure of Power and Repression in
Yugoslavia (1944–1945)*

Izvleček

V prispevku so preučena poročila Mihe Kreka, vodilnega slovenskega politika Slovenske ljudske stranke med drugo svetovno vojno, ki so ohranjena v osebnem arhivu britanskega obveščevalnega oficirja Stephena Clissolda v knjižnici Bodleian. Krek je v poročilih, spisanih v letih 1944 in 1945, dokumentiral utrditev komunistične oblasti v Jugoslaviji pod Titovimi partizani, s posebnim poudarkom na Sloveniji, ter podrobno opisal sistematično represijo nad katoliškim duhovništvom in protikomunističnimi elementi. Z opiranjem na vire v Sloveniji, na Hrvaškem ter v Bosni in Hercegovini Krek prikaže Osvobodilno fronto, ki so jo vodili komunisti, kot instrument terorja s sovjetsko podporo, usmerjen v vzpostavitev totalitarne oblasti. Njegovi pozivi britanskim oblastem k anglo-ameriški zasedbi Slovenije so odraz njegovega videnja Slovenije kot zahodno usmerjenega katoliškega naroda, ki se upira komunistični prevladi. V študiji so analizirani Krekova protikomunistična retorika, njegovo dokumentiranje pobojev in njegovi predlogi za prihodnost Jugoslavije, pri čemer je poudarjeno, da je prednost dajal slovenskim interesom, čeprav naj bi deloval v jugoslovanskem imenu.

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KLJUČNE BESEDE:: *Miha Krek, druga svetovna vojna, Slovenska ljudska stranka, komunizem, kolaboracija*

Abstract

The paper examines the reports of Miha Krek, a leading Slovenian politician of the Slovenian People's Party during World War II, preserved in the personal archive of British intelligence officer Stephen Clissold at the Bodleian Library. Written between 1944 and 1945, Krek's reports document the communist consolidation of power in Yugoslavia under Tito's Partisans, with a particular focus on Slovenia, and detail the systematic repression of the Catholic clergy and anti-communist elements. Drawing from his sources in Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Krek portrays the communist-led Liberation Front as a Soviet-backed instrument of terror aimed at establishing totalitarian rule. His appeals to British authorities for Anglo-American occupation of Slovenia reflect his vision of Slovenia as a Western, Catholic nation resisting communist domination. The study analyzes Krek's anti-communist rhetoric, his documentation of massacres, and his proposals for Yugoslavia's future, highlighting his prioritization of Slovenian interests despite a nominal Yugoslav outlook.

KEYWORDS: *Miha Krek, World War Two, Slovenian People's Party, Communism, Collaboration*

Introduction¹

Following the defeat of Yugoslavia by the Axis powers in the April War, Miha Krek, a prominent leader of the strongest Slovenian political party – the Slovenian People's Party (SLS) – went into exile. He assumed the role of Minister of Construction and served as Deputy Prime Minister, acting as a *de facto* representative of Slovenian interests within the Yugoslav government-in-exile. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Božidar Purić, the exile government appointed Krek as a delegate to the Allied Advisory

1 The research was conducted as part of the project "Political Atmosphere and Repression in Croatia and Yugoslavia from 1941 to 1995 – Selective Memories and Interpretations," funded by the European Union through the NextGenerationEU program, project number 380-01-02-23-44.

Commission for Italy, leading him to relocate from the government's London headquarters to Naples. He was removed from all government posts in August 1944 due to his opposition to the Tito-Šubašić Agreement.²

After Dr. Josip Smodlaka replaced Krek in that position, in accordance with the changes brought about by the Tito-Šubašić Agreement, Krek's standing vis-à-vis the Western Allies significantly weakened. Boris Mlakar explains: "*From then on, Krek was only a 'former' minister, etc., who did have access to Allied interlocutors, but the weight of his views was decreasing. When he refused to cooperate in the condemnation of and appeal to the Home Guards in August, his reputation with the British plummeted.*"³ In light of such an assessment, one should also consider the influence of Krek's reports to the British authorities, which were issued after he lost his formal position and levers of power and which will be presented in this paper.

A staunch anti-communist, Krek rejected the Tito-Šubašić Agreement, brokered under the auspices of the Western Allies. After his dismissal, he operated from Rome on an anti-communist platform, attempting – albeit unsuccessfully – to sway the Allies, who had recognized the communist-led National Liberation Movement (NOP) under Josip Broz Tito. In Rome, Krek persistently sought to influence the Western Allies and position himself as a collaborative partner, even after they had shifted their support to the communist-led Partisan movement. This shift was driven not only by the Chetniks' discreditation due to their collaboration with Axis powers but also by intelligence reports highlighting the Partisans' greater commitment to fighting the Germans and Tito's apparent success in mitigating Serb-Croat tensions, compared to the persistent discord within Yugoslav exile governments. Nevertheless, Krek extensively cooperated in Rome with prominent Chetnik advocates, such as the Serbian politician Živko Topalović.⁴ Krek and his associates also established the Slovenian National Committee in Rome to promote their political platform.

2 Ivana Božović, "V tujini," *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 54, no. 1 (2014): 303–4.

3 Boris Mlakar, *Slovensko domobranstvo 1943–1945* (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 2003), 446.

4 Kosta Nikolić, "The Yugoslav Anticommunist Forces at the End of the Second World War," *Istorija 20. veka* 28, no. 1 (2010): 115; Mateja Čoh Kladnik, "'Bande' in slovenska emigracija v avstrijskih begunskih taboriščih 1945–1949," *Dve domovini* 41 (2015): 103. After the war, Krek would collaborate with Topalović and other politicians who were fervent supporters of Draža Mihailović; see: Sandi Volk, "Slovenska politična emigracija v Trstu do leta 1954," *Zgodovinski časopis* 52, no. 1 (1998): 97; Mlakar, *Slovensko domobranstvo*, 446–48; Jera Vodušek Starič, *Kako su komunisti osvojili vlast: 1944.–1946.* (Zagreb: P.I.P. Pavičić, 2006), 382–83.

Krek made numerous appeals to British political figures, urging them to intervene and prevent Slovenia from falling under communist control.⁵ Some of his appeals and reports were later published by Slovenian political émigrés in the 1970s.⁶ Among Krek's appeals that have not been widely known until now are several reports preserved in the archive of Stephen Clissold, housed in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Clissold, a British intelligence officer who worked as a press attaché at the British Consulate in Zagreb before the war, was in fact an operative of the Special Operations Executive (SOE).⁷ During the war, he held various roles, including positions at the Yugoslav Partisan headquarters, and was active in Italy, where Krek was also based.⁸ Within Clissold's personal collection at the library of his alma mater, multiple reports by Krek – referred to as "Monsieur Krek" in document headers – are preserved. The circumstances under which these reports came into Clissold's possession remain unclear to me. Krek's reports primarily consist of appeals to the United Kingdom, particularly in late 1944 and 1945, urging intervention to prevent the establishment of communist rule, at least in Slovenia if not across Yugoslavia. A second category of documents, consistent with Krek's background as a politician from the Catholic-aligned SLS, details the persecution of clergy under Tito's Partisans. Krek evidently relied on a network of sources in Slovenia, as well as Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, keeping him well-informed about political and military developments.

The subsequent fate of these text reports (who they were intended for) mostly remains uncertain, with some exceptions. For instance, in May 1945, Krek's report titled "The Massacre of Catholic Clergy in Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina" was forwarded by the British envoy to the Holy

5 Mlakar, *Slovensko domobranstvo 1943–1945*, 446–48.

6 "Dokumenti dr. Krekove delavnosti v emigraciji," *Zbornik Svobodne Slovenije* 1973–1975, 196–219.

7 According to a report by an SOE agent regarding Clissold, whose code names were D/H.SS and later A/H.20, he was "extremely skilled at creating propaganda material that was too provocative to be officially released by the Press department;" Bodleian Library, Oxford (BLO), Archive of Stephen Clissold (ASC), MS. Eng. c. 2683, fol. 19, A.C. Lawrenson (D/H.6.) Report, June 12, 1945.

8 Clissold had a notorious reputation among Croatian émigrés as a communist sympathizer, and they claimed that he played a key role in the arbitrary decisions about whom the British authorities in Italy would hand over to the Yugoslav communist authorities; Marica Karakaš Obradov, "'Depoi špijuna i terorista': Saveznički logori za 'raseljene osobe' u Italiji, Austriji i Njemačkoj," in 1945. *Kraj ili novi početak?*, edited by Zoran Janjetović (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2016), 317.

See to the Foreign Office.⁹ This suggests that Krek's reports, as their content implies, were directed toward British authorities, though they lack explicit recipients. Written and signed by Krek in Rome, these documents identify him as a representative of the so-called "Slovenian Democratic Union," which he claimed united all anti-communist forces in Slovenia. Whether Clissold initially served as a courier for these reports cannot be confirmed, though it is not implausible.

Additionally, two other texts stored in Clissold's archive have been published earlier but do not provide further context for understanding Krek's activities. *Zbornik Svobodne Slovenije* published, in Slovenian, a memorandum titled "Only Anglo-American Occupation Can Save the Slovenian Nation."¹⁰ In this collection it is noted that Ljubljana Bishop Grigorij Rožman, on November 20, 1944, sent a message with this title to Krek, requesting that he forward it to the Holy See. Below Rožman's letter to Krek, the same-titled memorandum by Krek was published. This document, published "*from the archive of Dr. Krek*," bore the header "Woodruff," leading editor Jože Košiček to conclude that Krek, "*simultaneously with submitting Bishop Rožman's official request to the Vatican, launched a political campaign in support of the bishop's plea for Anglo-American occupation of Slovenia*." However, the memorandum I found in Clissold's archive is dated "October 1944," indicating it had been sent before Rožman's message.¹¹ One memorandum addressed "To the Allied Military and Political

9 Blanka Matković, "Zločini postrojbâ VIII. dalmatinskoga korpusa NOVJ-a u Hercegovini početkom 1945. godine," *Hum* 7 (2011): 289–90.

10 Jože Košiček, "Dokumenti iz arhive dr. Kreka," *Zbornik Svobodne Slovenije* 1970, 90–3.

11 Košiček, "Dokumenti iz arhive dr. Kreka," 91. Jerca Vodušek Starič, in her authoritative book on the methods and mechanisms of the communist establishment of power in Yugoslavia, refers to a memorandum sent by Krek on November 17, 1944, to a representative of the American Office of Strategic Services. She cautions, however, that the authenticity of the document could not be verified. The description of this memorandum closely corresponds to the aforementioned memorandum titled "Only Anglo-American Occupation Can Save the Slovenian Nation." Vodušek Starič also cites a passage from this memorandum that matches exactly the one I utilized from Clissold's archive: "*All the leaders of the nation would disappear, only the Communists and pro-Communists would remain. By this cruel massacre, the sovietization of the country would be secured*." The sole difference between this and the quote provided by Vodušek Starič is in the second sentence, which in her version states: "*With that sinister solution (emphasis added) the sovietization of the country would be guaranteed*." Vodušek Starič, *Kako su komunisti osvojili vlast: 1944.–1946.*, 102.; BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fol. 28, Miha Krek, Only Anglo-American Occupation Can Save the Slovenian Nation, October 1944.

Authorities” was published in the second issue of the same émigré publication.¹² Notably, this is the only document by Krek in Clissold’s archive that lacks Krek’s signature.¹³ The analysis and contextualization of Krek’s reports are significant for several reasons. The perspectives of Krek, as the foremost anti-communist Slovenian politician of his time, are inherently valuable, and reconstructing his views offers critical historical insight. His reports provide a window into his thinking and exemplify the mindset of the pro-monarchist, anti-Titoist Slovenian political elite, which by then had largely seen its influence collapse. Nevertheless, as Krek’s writings demonstrate, these figures continued to lobby British governing circles for their cause.¹⁴ The reports also have documentary value with regard to communist atrocities, though verifying all of Krek’s claims remains challenging. They are particularly important for understanding the broader geopolitical picture and the ‘backup’ plans of the anti-communist elite, especially in terms of their appeals for British occupation of at least parts of Yugoslavia.

Reports on the Establishment of Communist Rule

The SLS cultivated a staunch anti-communism in the interwar period, deeply intertwined with a strong strand of political Catholicism.¹⁵ This stance, however, became somewhat obsolete in the context of the wartime alliance between the Western powers, who were patrons of the Yugoslav government-in-exile, and the Soviet Union. The British authorities recognized this tension, noting that Krek’s anti-communism posed a challenge amid the wartime alliance with the Soviets. For instance, Douglas Howard wrote in early April 1942 in a letter to George William Rendel, who was an envoy to the Yugoslav Government in London, that Krek exhibited an

12 “Dokumenti dr. Krekove delavnosti v emigraciji,” 197–98.

13 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fols. 25–26, Miha Krek, To the Allied Military and Political Authorities concerned, May 5, 1945.

14 According to some sources, Krek himself worked for British intelligence; see: Mark Aarons and John Loftus, *Ratlines: How the Vatican’s Nazi Networks Betrayed Western Intelligence to the Soviets* (New York: Vintage, 1991), 58, 127. See also: Marlene Laruelle and Ellen Rivera, *Imagined Geographies of Central and Eastern Europe: The concept of Intermarium* (Washington: Institute for European, Russia, and Eurasian Studies, The George Washington University), 6.

15 See a brief overview of the SLS: Jure Gašparič, “Slovenska ljudska stranka in njena organizacija (1890–1941),” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 57, no. 1 (2017): 25–48.

*“obvious Catholic and anti-Communist bias.”*¹⁶ In personality assessments of the Yugoslav exile government compiled by the Foreign Office, Krek is described with praise for his personal qualities – *“has a high reputation for honesty and straightforwardness, and certainly gives a strong impression of sincerity”* – but is also characterized as *“naturally anti-Communist and anti-Bolshevik, though he realizes the vital necessity of a Russian victory over Germany.”*¹⁷

Krek was undoubtedly well-versed in communist methods and tactics. This background makes his 24-page report, “The Communist Party in Slovenia in the Period 1919–1944,” written in Rome in January 1945, a significant source for studying the Slovenian Communist Party (KPS). Whether viewed as a documentary record or as an insight into the anti-communist perspectives of Slovenian elites, the report reflects Krek’s considerable intellectual sophistication. In it, he provides a detailed analysis of the KPS, tracing its evolution from its post-World War I origins to its dominance during World War II. Combining a historical narrative with a sharp critique of KPS ideology and strategies, Krek aimed to convince British authorities to take action against the communist ascendancy in Slovenia.

Krek traces the KPS’s initial rise after 1918 to post-war chaos coupled with pro-Russian feelings, fueled by resistance to Austro-Hungarian rule and fight *“against the germanic terror in Austro-Hungarian Empire.”* This early growth was stifled by 1924, when the Slovenian authorities suppressed the movement, limiting its influence until its revival in the 1930s.¹⁸ The KPS re-emerged, according to Krek, in 1935 under the leadership of “Moscow youth,” a group of Soviet-trained intellectuals including Edvard Kardelj, Aleksej Baebler, and Lovro Kuhar. Replacing older leaders criticized for ineffective frontal assaults on the bourgeoisie, they introduced covert, sophisticated tactics to expand the party’s influence.¹⁹

Krek identifies five operational principles that enabled the KPS to grow despite operating as a clandestine organization. The first is the *“principle of ‘élites’ – chosen people – ‘selected men’”*. Membership was limited to a battle-tested cadre – arrested communists, survivors of police scrutiny, or

16 The National Archives (TNA), Foreign Office. Political: Post War Problems and Aims, Parts 1 and 2 (FO 536/5/42/3150), R 2153/1719/G, Douglas Howard to G.W. Rendel, April 1, 1942.

17 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2683, fol. 129.

18 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fol. 65, Miha Krek, The Communist Party in Slovenia in the Period 1919–1944, January 1945.

19 Ibid, fol. 66.

proven operatives. These “Partijci,” as Krek calls them, numbered only 800 by 1939, with Krek likely referring to professional revolutionaries.²⁰ Krek identified “conspiracy” as the second principle. A secretive, compartmentalized structure ensured resilience, claimed Krek, describing the party organization as a ship with isolated sections. “*The Party is constructed like a ship with many entirely separated, closed up rooms,*” argued Krek, concluding that “*when the water begins to run into one of them, all others still remain intact and the ship is still able to remain over the water.*”²¹ Penetration is another communist principle. KPS agents infiltrated various organizations – youth organizations such as “Sokol,” labor unions, “*one of the six Catholic University organizations,*” and media such as *Jutro*, to subvert them from within, though they struggled with the peasantry. They also, as Krek argues, “*founded and financed many bookselling shops, printed and edited many pro-Russian, pro-Soviet books and leftish novels.*”²² The last two principles are elasticity and freedom front. The first refers to the fact that communists adapted their propaganda to prevailing public opinion. Krek elaborated on his point:

The leader of the C.P.S. have to know exactly the sentiments, desires and wishes of the people at a given moment and have to use this mental disposition [sic] of the masses in their propaganda-work according to the instructions given. In the technical terminology of the C.P. this changing tactics, this psychological misuse of the mass-feelings and desires is called: ‘Wheeling about from the left to the right.’²³

Communists were able to change “*the slogans, aims and promises according to the dispositions of the masses of the people at a given moment. Doing so it always had in view the last aim: The Soviet Dictatorship in Slovenia.*”²⁴ The last principle, according to Krek, is a strategy to draw in supposed allies under nationalist slogans, only for the KPS to dominate, purge, and absorb them, as seen in the Liberation Front.²⁵ Especially the latter two elements would aid them in their actions after the outbreak of World War II, as they would be able to adapt slogans to public opinion while concealing their in-

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid, fols. 66–67.

23 Ibid, fol. 67.

24 Ibid, fol. 68.

25 Ibid.

tentions. Krek explains that the KPS, which was weak before WW2, gained traction after the Axis occupation in 1941 dismantled anti-communist networks such as the Slovenian People's Party's 82,000-member cultural societies. The Liberation Front, launched with patriotic appeals, masked its communist nature, evolving from a coalition of communists, Christian Socialists, and "Liberal's 'Sokol'" into a KPS monopoly. It banned rival parties such as the SLS, declared itself the sole authority, and used military force to eliminate opposition.²⁶ By April 1943, with a 9,000–10,000-strong army bolstered by the capitulation of Italy, the KPS pursued a social revolution, targeting opposition.²⁷

Krek devotes attention to significant differences in the success of communism depending on the regions he considers Slovenian. In Venezia Giulia, the KPS exploited anti-Fascist sentiment, but many nationalists defected upon recognizing its communist aims. In Carinthia, conservative peasants were not receptive to Partisan appeals. In "Dravska Banovina," pre-war anti-communist efforts limited KPS success until Axis suppression created an opening.²⁸

Krek explains that the National Liberation Army (NOV) is in effect just the KPS's military wing. Starting with 600 men in 1941, it grew to 10,000 by 1943 after Italy's capitulation, when Italian generals supplied arms.²⁹ Krek accuses the NOV of prioritizing civil war against non-communists over resistance, citing attacks on royalist groups, such as the massacre of 262 soldiers at Grčarica and 700 village sentries ("*about 700 armed Slovenian patriots, who offered the Partisans to concentrate both forces against the German*") at Turjak Castle in 1943, over fighting the Germans.³⁰ He defends the Home Guard (Domobranci)³¹ as a legitimate self-defense force against communist terror, permitted by Germans but anti-German in spirit:

26 Ibid, fols. 68–71.

27 Ibid, fols. 71–73.

28 Ibid, fols. 68–69, 75–77.

29 Ibid, fols. 77–78.

30 Ibid.

31 For details on the development of the Slovenian Home Guard as a military formation, see: Peter Papler, Darko Ščavničar, and Tomaž Kladnik, "Razvoj vojaške formacije in vojaškega delovanja Slovenskega domobranstva," *Dileme: razprave o vprašanjih sodobne slovenske zgodovine* 8, no. 2 (2024): 47–79, DOI: 10.55692/D.18564.24.8.

The Homeguard was denounced everywhere as ‘collaboristic [sic] body’. Yes, the German authorities permitted it. But the Communist terror, killing and plundering have caused it. No one in the world is less collaborationistic [sic] and more anti-German than the Slovenian (‘Domo-branci’) Homeguard in spite of the fact that they have to defend their homes with armaments given by the Germans.³²

Krek was generally an advocate of a wait-and-see policy, believing that direct resistance against the Germans was too dangerous for the survival of the Slovenian nation.³³ As early as September 1943, his party colleague in Slovenia, Miloš Stare, informed him that the fundamental goal of the communists was the implementation of a revolution rather than the struggle against the occupiers, making any cooperation with them impossible.³⁴ Krek’s attempt to portray the Home Guard as essentially pro-Western Allies naturally struggled to resonate with British foreign policy goals. After all, members of the Home Guard had twice sworn allegiance to the German Armed Forces – first on April 20, 1944, to mark Hitler’s birthday, and then on January 30, 1945, to celebrate the 12th anniversary of the Nazis coming to power.³⁵ Krek was among those SLS politicians in exile who, in contrast to Alojzij Kuhar and Franc Snoj, opposed the integration of the Home Guard into the Liberation Front.³⁶ This position led him to an increasingly untenable stance, as he “*sought desperately to portray the Home Guard as an anti-occupier and pro-Allied formation.*”³⁷ However, the oath taken by the members of the Home Guard clearly undermined this position. As Boris Mlakar concludes, “*the advocates of the counter-revolutionary side in exile – headed by Dr. Krek – slowly but surely lost moral credit with the Allies.*”³⁸ While Krek could somewhat justify earlier collaboration with the Italian occupation authorities, he

32 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fol. 78, Miha Krek, The Communist Party in Slovenia in the Period 1919–1944, January 1945.

33 Mlakar, *Slovensko domobranstvo* 1943–1945, 106.

34 Ibid, 372.

35 Gregor Joseph Kranjc, *To Walk with the Devil: Slovene Collaboration and Axis Occupation, 1941–1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 147.

36 Vodušek Starič, *Kako su komunisti osvojili vlast: 1944.–1946.*, 96–104.

37 Kranjc, *To Walk with the Devil*, 149. See also: Jozo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941–1945: Occupation and Collaboration* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 771–72; Florian Rulitz, *The Tragedy of Bleiburg and Viktring* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2016), 20.

38 Mlakar, *Slovensko domobranstvo*, 319.

found it nearly impossible to defend the Home Guard's collaboration with Nazi Germany to the British authorities, upon whom he depended, which rendered his position unsustainable.³⁹

Krek claims in his report that Partisan actions against the Axis were militarily insignificant, but they provoked brutal reprisals against the civilian population without strategic gain.⁴⁰ Krek also describes the KPS's systematic "liquidation" of opponents. The process, according to Krek, began with Spanish Civil War veterans training criminals and youth to become "liquidators," tasked with surveillance and assassination of prominent anti-communists. By autumn 1943, the VOS (Security and Intelligence Service), modeled on the Soviet GPU, formalized these efforts.⁴¹ Krek refers to John Marn,⁴² described as "*the former Commandant of a Partisan unit at the H.Q. of the National Army of Liberation*," estimating 3,000 civilian deaths by September 1942, with military courts later sanctioning purges of "Anglophils," "Democrats," and internal dissenters.⁴³ In the final pages of the report, Krek contrasts the KPS's terror with the Slovenian Democratic Union, claiming the latter represents over 80% of Slovenians and seeks a democratic, Western-aligned solution for Slovenia.⁴⁴

Like in his other reports, Krek appeals to the Western character of the Slovenian nation. "*The Slovenian nation has lived since 744, for 1,200 years, within the sphere of Western European Christian civilization*," Krek concluded. He portrayed Slovenia as a 1,200-year-old Christian nation, devastated by Axis deportations of 150,000 Slovenians and now resisting communism.⁴⁵ He concludes with a call for Western occupation to ensure democratic government in Slovenia according to the Atlantic Charter's principles.⁴⁶

39 Ibid, 437.

40 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fols. 78–79, Miha Krek, 'The Communist Party in Slovenia in the Period 1919–1944, January 1945.

41 Ibid, fol. 81. As Gregor Joseph Kranjc concludes, "VOS assassinations removed whatever remaining good will there was between the Liberation Front and non-Communist representatives." (Kranjc, *To Walk with the Devil*, 94).

42 Krek refers to John (Janez) Marn (Črtomir Mrak), a Christian Socialist and former commander of the Lower Carniolan Partisan Detachment. Marn deserted from the Partisans in 1943 and, by 1944, led a Chetnik unit loyal to Draža Mihailović, while also collaborating with German forces.

43 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fol. 83, Miha Krek, 'The Communist Party in Slovenia in the Period 1919–1944, January 1945.

44 Ibid, fol. 84.

45 Ibid, fol. 85.

46 Ibid.

Miha Krek's report "The Register of Death" is centered around the claim that the communists exploited the war not to liberate Slovenia from Axis occupation but to eliminate internal opposition and establish a totalitarian regime. Krek asserts that the Liberation Front's slogan, "*Victims there must be!*" – initially interpreted by Slovenians as a call for sacrifice against the occupiers – masked a sinister intent to target Catholic and democratic elements unwilling to submit to communist dictates. This shift, he claims, became evident by early 1942, when the Liberation Front began murdering "*thousands and thousands of democratic minded Slovenians only because it considered them as possible obstacles to the violent realisation of the Communist regime.*"⁴⁷ The report's centerpiece is the "Register of Death," a list purportedly uncovered on January 1, 1944, in a secret communist headquarters in Ljubljana at the corner of the Erjavčeva Ulica and Gradišče streets. Krek describes it as containing 20,000 names scheduled for execution in Ljubljana, with an additional 20,000 targeted elsewhere. The register, he claims, was part of a broader plan detailed in instructions published by *Slovenski Dom* on November 20, 1943, to be enacted immediately after the German withdrawal. Categories of targets included priests, monks, intellectuals, merchants, and wealthy peasants – groups Krek identifies as the backbone of Slovenian society.⁴⁸ Krek's reliance on *Slovenski Dom*, a newspaper aligned with the collaborationist Home Guard under Axis occupation, is noteworthy, particularly given the pro-British tone of his text. This paradox underscores a strategic tension: while appealing to British authorities for intervention, Krek draws evidence from a source tied to forces that collaborated with the Germans.

Krek estimated that by December 1944, the communists had already killed over 5,000 Slovenians, with the remainder at risk if they seized Ljubljana after the occupation.⁴⁹ This urgency underpins his concluding appeal:

It is to be presumed, that analogous registers have been compiled for the rest of Slovenia, too. By knowing the initially reported general instructions for mass murders at the moment after the withdrawal of the occupier, one can not doubt that the Communist bands would execute this horrible plan, if conditions would be given. So the very substance of the Catholic and democratic Slovenian nation is at stake, if the Western Allies will not occupy Slovenia.⁵⁰

47 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fol. 39, Miha Krek, The Register of Death, December 1944.

48 Ibid, fol. 40.

49 Ibid, fol. 43.

50 Ibid.

This report encapsulates Krek's dual focus: documenting communist repression and leveraging these claims to advocate for Slovenia's protection under Western auspices. In the "Report of the Situation in Liberated Yugoslavia," written in March 1945, Krek extends his analysis of the communist takeover beyond Slovenia, focusing on Serbia following its liberation in 1944. This document reflects Krek's consistent anti-communist position and his support for Draža Mihailović's Chetniks.⁵¹ Krek does not view Yugoslavia's liberation as a domestic process but rather as a Russian occupation enabled by Partisan dominance, further underscoring his appeal for Anglo-American intervention.⁵² Krek frames the post-liberation political conditions in Yugoslavia as a Russian occupation rather than a genuine national liberation, arguing that the Red Army's entry into Serbia in 1944, followed by the Partisans' rise to power, established a communist dictatorship.⁵³ Krek staunchly defends Mihailović's Yugoslav Army in the Homeland, portraying it as a heroic force that enjoys widespread popular support, particularly in Serbia, for its resistance against German, Italian, and Hungarian occupiers. He refutes the claim that Mihailović's forces collaborated with the Axis, stating that it is "*the greatest lie and calumny*."⁵⁴ Krek's denial of Chetnik collaboration with the Axis goes further, as he even claims that:

During the critical time of German retiring of Serbia and during the liberation of Serbia, the partisans acted on exclusively passive roll (sic): the fight against the enemy was more the work of the Russians or in certain parts of Serbia, the effort of Mihajlović's troops. The partisans had on the liberation of the Yugoslav Capital a subordinated roll (sic): the initiative was near completely by the Russians or veritable Yugoslav patriots under the high command of General Mihajlović.⁵⁵

51 Despite the propagandistic tone, Krek was aware of the true nature of the Chetnik movement. In a letter to his ally in mid-1943, he noted: "*When the Partisan resistance emerged alongside Mihailović, he stopped fighting against the Italians and Germans and now fights only against the Partisans, the Ustaše, and the Croats.*" (Mateja Jeraj, Matevž Košir et al., *Dr. Albin Šmajd, Slovenska ljudska stranka – Povezave in nasprotja 1918–1946* (Ljubljana: Arhiv Republike Slovenije, 2024), 359).

52 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fols. 30–38, Miha Krek, Report of the Situation in Liberated Yugoslavia, March 1945.

53 Ibid, fol. 30.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid, fol. 32.

The report details the immediate aftermath of Belgrade's liberation, where Krek claims Partisans initiated a brutal purge of "democratic" elements, murdering hundreds without evidence of their political orientation and imprisoning around 10,000 individuals in the capital alone.⁵⁶ Krek asserts that shortly after the liberation, with Soviet assistance, the communists set out to establish power following the Soviet totalitarian blueprint. "*Their principal aim was not the liberation of the country from the occupant,*" writes Krek, "*but their tendency on this occasion was to liquidate all their opponents, i.e. all defenders (sic) of liberty in political, social and economical life of the nation.*"⁵⁷ He compares the OZNA secret police to the Nazi Gestapo and Soviet GPU, alleging continuity between fascist and communist repression.⁵⁸ Krek asserts that the people, particularly in Serbia and Croatia, despise the Partisans, while public demonstrations of support are staged, and participants are forced to take part, allowing them to maintain power through coercion and terror rather than genuine support.⁵⁹

Krek compared this situation to fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, emphasizing that "*the methods of political formation of the people are the same.*" He highlights, among other things, that "*the greatest attention is paid to the youth.*"⁶⁰ He highlights the population's fear of OZNA reprisals for contacting representatives of Western Allies and their economic hardship, with currency devaluation and poor conditions for Partisan soldiers.⁶¹ The report culminates in a desperate plea to Western democratic Allies to intervene before the Partisans "*liquidate all those, who defend the democracy and liberty of people in Yugoslavia, all those who are the first barriers of Anglo-Saxon political sphere on the Balcan peninsula (sic),*" emphasizing that the communist regime is fundamentally opposed to British interests.⁶²

As early as October 1944, Krek appealed for an Anglo-American occupation of Slovenia to prevent the establishment of communism. In a report titled "Only Anglo-American Occupation Can Save the Slovenian Nation," written in October 1944, Krek warned of the Red Army's advance into Yugoslav territory under agreements with Tito, despite their lack of

56 Ibid, fols. 32–34.

57 Ibid, fol. 32.

58 Ibid, fol. 34.

59 Ibid, fols. 34–35.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid, fols. 36–37.

62 Ibid, fol. 37.

legal basis.⁶³ Highlighting the war's toll on Slovenia, Krek accused the KPS of forming the Liberation Front as a tool for Sovietization. He claimed it murdered over 15,000 "*Slovenian democratic, anti-Communist minded people*" between 1942 and 1944 and prepared lists targeting 106,000 individuals for execution within 48 hours of German withdrawal – 15,000 in Ljubljana and 50,000 in Trieste. "*By this cruel massacre,*" Krek concluded, "*the sovietization of the country would be secured.*"⁶⁴ Krek argued that only Anglo-American occupation of all Slovenian territories – "*not only the Italian part of Slovenia (the Adriatic Littoral) and the Austrian (the Slovenian Carinthia), but also the whole Yugoslav part of Slovenia, that is the whole Yugoslav province 'Dravska banovina'*" – could avert this "slaughter" and secure a democratic administration with local support.⁶⁵

This call for occupation was not a sudden reaction but part of a longer-term strategic vision. As early as 1943, while serving as vice premier in the government-in-exile in London, Krek had begun to, as Jozo Tomasevich puts it, "*doubt the possibility of reconstituting a unified Yugoslav state after the war because of the deepening antagonism between Croatian and Serbian politicians in the government-in-exile.*" In 1943, he toyed with the idea of Slovenia independent from Yugoslavia. He made a proposal to the British envoy George Rendel; as Jozo Tomasevich summarizes it, he "*tried to gauge British reaction to a non-Yugoslav alternative for Slovenia, because the Slovenes wanted to have British backing for any new arrangement. This would be a state embracing territory from Rijeka and Trieste on the Adriatic to the central Danube in the east, in which Slovenia, united with Slovene areas at that time under Italy and Austria, would be a federal unit.*"⁶⁶ During 1944, the SLS, including Krek, also flirted with such ideas in order to keep Slovenia out of the communist sphere.⁶⁷ Krek was a general advocate

63 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fol. 27, Miha Krek, Only Anglo-American Occupation Can Save the Slovenian Nation, October 1944.

64 Ibid, fol. 28.

65 Ibid, fol. 29.

66 Tomasevich, *War and Revolution*, 111.

67 Vodušek Starič, *Kako su komunisti osvojili vlast: 1944.–1946.*, 140–41. While statements made to the secret police during a time of detention should be treated with caution, the 1946 interrogation of Albin Šmajd, an associate of Krek, by the UDB reveals that Krek was still contemplating the idea of a Danubian Confederation in 1946, though he considered it irrelevant at that time. In a letter to Krek in November 1945, Šmajd himself warned that Slovenian anti-communists should not fully align themselves with Yugoslavia, as he doubted the sincerity of British policies supporting Yugoslavia, while also suggesting

for Central European cooperation and, by 1946, became a key proponent of the Intermarium project, which aimed to connect the areas between the Baltic, Adriatic, and Black Seas as a counterweight to Soviet influence. This initiative, emerging under Western intelligence auspices, resonated strongly among Eastern European anti-communist émigré politicians. His vision reflected a belief in Slovenia's cultural and political affinity with Central Europe.⁶⁸

The perception of Slovenia as uniquely threatened by communism is further evident in Krek's later reports, such as one prepared in March 1946 for the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations. In this document, Krek argued that Slovenian communists were the most fanatical in their devotion to communist goals among all Yugoslav communists. "*In Slovenia the situation is worst,*" he wrote, "*because the Slovene communists are the most radical.*"⁶⁹ This assertion underscores his belief in the exceptional severity of the communist threat in Slovenia, reinforcing his earlier appeals for Anglo-American intervention and highlighting his ongoing efforts to alert Western audiences to what he saw as the most extreme elements of Tito's regime.

In his letter addressed "To the Allied Military and Political Authorities," dated May 5, 1945, Krek, writing as the representative of the Slovenian Democratic Union amid the German withdrawal from Slovenia near the war's end, reports that non-communist Slovenian parties have proclaimed the Slovenian Provisional National Government. Supported by approximately 20,000 armed men who "*wish to collaborate in the closest possible contact with the Allied Authorities,*" this government aims to defend Slovenia against Yugoslav Tito troops, deemed "Communist intruders."⁷⁰ He appealed for recognition of this authority due to the communist crimes, "*the*

that a solution in the form of a Danubian Confederation might still be possible. Mateja Jeraj and Matevž Košir, eds., *Dr. Albin Šmajd, dnevnik in dosje 1941–1946* (Ljubljana: Arhiv Republike Slovenije, 2022), 619; Šmajd, *Dr. Albin Šmajd*, 1173.

68 Andrej Rahten, "The Concepts of Central Europe in the Historical Consciousness of the Slovenes," *European Perspectives* 7, no. 2 (13) (2015): 152–53; Andrej Rahten, "Ideja Srednje Evrope u slovenskoj političkoj misli," *Pilar: časopis za društvene i humanističke studije* 1 (2006): 65; Laruelle and Rivera, *Imagined Geographies of Central and Eastern Europe*, 6–8.

69 Lambeth Palace Library (LPL), Relations with Roman Catholics in Individual Countries: Yugoslavia: Reports and correspondence (CFR RC 228), Miha Krek, Reorganization of Kidrič's Government in Slovenia, March 1946.

70 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fol. 25, Miha Krek, To the Allied Military and Political Authorities concerned, May 5, 1945.

profound Croat-Serbian disagreements regarding which there is for the time being no practical possibility of a convenient solution,” and Tito’s communist dictatorship.⁷¹ He urged the Allies to acknowledge the “Slovenian Democratic National Council as the representative of a friendly nation and the Slovenian armed forces as military units of an Allied Nation.” Krek further requested, without success, that Allied forces occupy Slovenian territories.⁷²

Reports on the Persecution of the Catholic Clergy

Krek’s reports also provide an account of the systematic repression of the Catholic clergy during the communist takeover of Yugoslavia between 1944 and 1945. As a member of the Slovenian People’s Party, which was closely connected to the Catholic Church, while he himself had strong ties to the Vatican, Krek’s documentation reflects both his deep personal investment in the Catholic cause and his broader anti-communist agenda. His reports, spanning late 1944 to early 1945, focus heavily on the persecution of priests and religious figures, portraying this violence as a cornerstone of the communist strategy to eliminate opposition and impose a Bolshevik regime. Krek frames this violence as both a religious and political assault, aimed at eradicating Catholic leadership to pave the way for a communist totalitarian dictatorship. A report titled “Massacre of Catholic Clergy in Yugoslavia: Slovenia,” authored in Rome on January 15, 1945, provides an account of communist persecution of the Catholic clergy in Slovenia during World War II. He argued that Slovenia, being an overwhelmingly Catholic nation with strong Central European cultural influences, did not experience the ethnic tensions that led to conflicts in other parts of Yugoslavia during World War II. Instead, he claimed, the communists were responsible for the violence:

Slovenia being a compactly Catholic country with a high centro-european (sic) civilization, where no racial or political circumstances like the Serbo-Croat conflict in the mixed territories between Serbia and Croatia, ever existed nor do exist, the Communists there killed and massacred people just because they were catholic and democratic.⁷³

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid, fol. 26.

73 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fol. 89, Miha Krek, Massacre of Catholic Clergy in Yugoslavia: Slovenia, January 15, 1945.

This, he contends, reflects the “*most extreme Communist ideological and revolutionary principles and methods*,” targeting the clergy as part of a broader “liquidation” of Catholic and democratic leaders to establish totalitarian rule.⁷⁴ Krek dismisses accusations of “fascism” and “collaboration” against Slovenian Catholics as “pure pretexts” for persecution.⁷⁵ To contextualize this claim, Krek contrasts German oppression with communist terror. Following the April 1941 occupation of two-thirds of Slovenia, he notes that the Germans deported “*the totality of the Catholic clergy and lay intellectuals*,” executing or imprisoning several.⁷⁶ On the other hand, in the Italian-occupied Province of Ljubljana, where conditions were initially milder, communist “terrorists” targeted surviving Catholic and democratic figures.⁷⁷ Krek claims that between December 1941 and October 1942, small assassination squads eliminated 49 Slovenians in Ljubljana’s streets – “*some of the best Catholics and democrats*” – while sparing occupiers, which highlights their focus on internal rather than external enemies.⁷⁸ By January 1945, “*some 50 priests and still more laymen*” had been assassinated in Slovenia, Krek claimed.⁷⁹ The report’s key feature is a detailed list of 26 Slovenian priests killed by communists, complete with names, roles, dates, and execution methods.⁸⁰ Among them, Krek particularly highlighted probably the most notable victim, Lambert Ehrlich, whom he described, among other things, as “*a saintly priest*.”⁸¹ In the concluding remarks of the report, Krek reiterated his ominous warning about the persecution that would ensue should the communists seize power: “*If Tito’s Balkan Communist bands will be given Slovenia too, there will most probably occur one of the greatest civil massacres in the present war – if those singled out fail to flee in time towards the Allied front in Northern Italy*.”⁸² Particularly striking is Krek’s contrast, despite his advocacy for a Yugoslav state community, between the “Balkan Communist bands” and the civilized Slovenian democratic elements. This follows his clear affirmation of Slovenians as a Catholic Central European nation. This distinction could be linked to Krek’s flirtation with integrat-

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.

76 Ibid, fol. 90.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid, fol. 91.

80 Ibid, fols. 91–92.

81 Ibid, fol. 90.

82 Ibid, fol. 92.

ing Slovenia into a broader, preferably Central European framework, as opposed to the rest of a communist-dominated Yugoslavia.

His reports reflect a deep personal investment in the Catholic cause and align with his broader anti-communist agenda, emphasizing the clergy's pivotal role in Slovenian society – a role he elaborates on in his report “*The Ecclesiastical Organization and Religious Conditions among the Slovenians*.”⁸³ In this report he provides a comprehensive overview of the Catholic Church's historical and contemporary significance in Slovenia. It is mostly a technical presentation of the history and contemporary state, with numerical and other indicators, a description of Catholic associations, parties, organizations, newspapers, and publishing in general. Particularly interesting in this regard is that Krek refers to his SLS as the “Christian Democratic Party (Slovenian People's Party).”⁸⁴ Even more noteworthy are Krek's views on the importance of Catholicism for Slovenian identity. He particularly emphasizes that in the Slovenian regions occupied by Italy after 1918, there was persecution of Slovenian clergy due to the recognition of their significance for Slovenian identity.⁸⁵ Krek notes the German 1941 occupation of Maribor banished all but 50 elderly priests of 464, and suppressed religious life, while in the Italian occupation zone, Partisans murdered over 50 priests by 1945, even targeting those previously exiled by Nazis.⁸⁶

Krek extends his documentation beyond Slovenia in his report “The Massacre of Catholic Clergy in Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina,” offering a grim overview of communist repression.⁸⁷ Since this report has been published in multiple sources, its detailed analysis is less critical for this study.⁸⁸ However, it clearly links the persecution of the clergy to the elimination of any force that could represent a counter-elite to the emerging communist order. In the report, Krek provides an overview of com-

83 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fols. 51–64, Miha Krek, *The Ecclesiastical Organization and Religious Conditions among the Slovenians*, January 15, 1945.

84 Ibid, fol. 56.

85 Ibid, fols. 60–62.

86 Ibid, fol. 62.

87 BLO, ASC, MS. Eng. c. 2684, fols. 44–50, Miha Krek, *The Massacre of Catholic Clergy in Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina* (During the last six months from October 1944 to March 1945).

88 A translation of Krek's report was published by the Zagreb weekly *Danas* in June 1991, while the same translation was republished in 2023 by the journal *Stopama pobijenih* of the Vice-Postulation for the Martyrdom of the murdered Herzegovinian friars. “Iz britanskih arhiva,” *Stopama pobijenih* 30, no. 1. (2023): 29–32.

munist crimes against the clergy in the Catholic dioceses of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, including the names of individual victims. Perhaps the most significant aspect of his report is the notorious massacre of the clergy in Yugoslavia – the killing of Franciscans in Široki Brijeg – in which Krek explicitly rejects the later communist propaganda claiming that the friars offered military resistance. Krek refutes Partisan claims that these Franciscans died in battle, noting that their deaths occurred more than ten hours after the fighting had ceased.⁸⁹

Conclusion

Krek's reports could not have had a decisive impact. The scope of his work essentially boiled down to an important role in caring for Slovenian anti-communist refugees, but he would not have been able to influence a change in the direction of British policy.⁹⁰ However, these reports remain an historical source for understanding both the mechanisms of communist consolidation of power and the perspectives of the anti-communist Slovenian political elite. His writings, informed by sources across Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, provide valuable documentary evidence on the persecution of the Catholic clergy under the Partisans and the broader dynamics of post-war Yugoslav political struggles.

Krek's reports illustrate the profound dilemma facing Slovenian and broader Yugoslav anti-communist movements. While opposing communism, they found themselves constrained by British policy. Krek found himself in a conundrum between the fact that anti-communists on the ground collaborated with the Axis powers and the desire for an effective anti-communist military force that would prevent the revolution but would ultimately rely on the Western Allies. His appeals to Britain to prevent a communist takeover reflect both a strategic reliance on Western powers and a broader ideological commitment to a non-communist Yugoslavia – though his framing of Slovenia as a Catholic nation hints at possible alternatives beyond Yugoslav unity. Furthermore, Krek's depiction of the Liberation Front as a mere communist tool underscores his perception of the conflict as a battle between ideological camps rather than a struggle for

⁸⁹ Ibid, fol. 49.

⁹⁰ John Corsellis and Marcus Ferrar, *Slovenia 1945: Memories of Death and Survival after World War II* (London/New York: I.B.Tauris, 2005), 126–28, 244–45; Jeraj and Košir, *Dr. Albin Šmajd*, 95–96.

national liberation. His recognition of the Serbian-Croatian antagonism as a key threat to Yugoslav restoration also reveals the fragility of any potential post-war unity.

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Poročila Mihe Kreka
o komunističnem prevzemu oblasti
in represiji v Jugoslaviji (1944–1945)

Izvleček

Miha Krek, pomemben politik Slovenske ljudske stranke v izgnanstvu, je v letih 1944 in 1945 napisal podrobna poročila, ki so zdaj ohranjena v arhivu Stephena Clissolda v knjižnici Bodleian. V teh poročilih, ki jih je naslovil na britanske oblasti, je dokumentiral utrditev komunistične oblasti v Jugoslaviji, s posebnim poudarkom na Sloveniji. Krek, ki je po razrešitvi iz jugoslovanske vlade v izgnanstvu zaradi nasprotovanja sporazumu Tito-Šubašić deloval v Rimu, se je opiral na vire iz Slovenije, Hrvaške ter Bosne in Hercegovine, da je dokumentiral dejanja Titovih partizanov. Osvobodilno fronto pod vodstvom komunistov je prikazal kot silo s sovjetsko podporo, ki je s terorjem odstranjevala opozicijo in vzpostavljala totalitaren režim. Opisal je, kako je OF, ki se je sprva predstavljala kot domoljubna koalicija, prepovedala rivalske skupine ter se usmerila proti katoliškemu duhovništvu, intelektualcem in protikomunističnim Slovencem. V poročilih, kot je „Komunistična partija na Slovenskem v obdobju 1919–1944“, je preučil rast slovenske komunistične partije ter poudaril njeno skrivnostno zgradbo, infiltracijske taktike in propagando, prilagojeno javnemu mnenju. Partizane je obtožil, da državljski vojni proti nekomunistom dajejo prednost pred bojem proti okupatorjem.

Krek je v poročilih poudaril tudi sistematično preganjanje Katoliške cerkve, ki jo je predstavil kot temelj slovenske identitete. V poročilu „Poboj katoliške duhovščine v Jugoslaviji: Slovenija“ je navedel 26 duhovnikov, ki so jih ubili partizani, vključno z vidnejšimi imeni, kot je Lambert Ehrlich. Trdil je, da so bili ti poboji usmerjeni k izkoreninjenju katoliškega vodstva, s čimer bi utrli pot komunistični oblasti. V še enem poročilu, „Poboj

katoliške duhovščine na Hrvaškem, v Dalmaciji, Bosni in Hercegovini“, je podrobno opisal podobne zločine, zlasti zavrnil trditve, da so frančiškani v Širokem Brijegu umrli v bitki.

V poročilih je Krek vseskozi pozival britanske oblasti k anglo-ameriški zasedbi Slovenije, da bi preprečile komunistično prevlado. Zagovarjal je domobrance, kljub kolaboraciji s silami osi, saj da so potreben odgovor na komunistični teror. Nazadnje Krekovi pozivi zaradi britanske podpore Titu in kompromitiranega položaja domobrancev niso imeli večjega učinka. Kljub temu so v njegovih poročilih odstrte dileme protikomunistične slovenske elite, ki je bila ujeta med ideološkim nasprotovanjem komunizmu in opiranjem na zahodne zaveznike, ki so bili sumničavi do njenih povezav s silami osi.