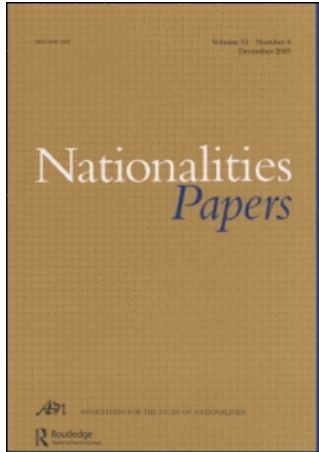


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PRAYERS, PILGRIMAGES AND PETITIONS: THE SECRET CHURCH AND THE GROWTH OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN SLOVAKIA

David Doellinger*

A photograph of Pope John Paul II shaking hands with Ján Čarnogurský, First Deputy Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia, at the Vatican appeared in full color on the cover of the February 1990 issue of *Rodinné spoločenstvo*.¹ Čarnogurský symbolizes the speed of Czechoslovakia's political revolution and the important role that individuals who had gained political experience as dissidents played in Czechoslovakia's post-Communist government. Just 2 months before meeting with the Pope, Čarnogurský, a Roman Catholic activist in Slovakia, had been awaiting trial in Bratislava for editing the Slovak secret church's most politically-oriented *samizdat* periodical.² Hundreds of demonstrators, organized by the Slovak secret church, had already been protesting his arrest for several weeks when the Velvet Revolution began in Prague on 17 November 1989.

The publication of *Rodinné spoločenstvo* preceded the Velvet Revolution as a well-established part of the Slovak secret church's extensive *samizdat* network. Since 1985, its five issues a year contained sermons, spiritual exercises, and articles on church history to promote its readers' spiritual development. Issues also contained uncensored news and information, allowing its readers to learn about the secret church's activities and to form opinion about events. *Samizdat* publications such as this strengthened Slovakia's religious underground by providing a forum for free thought and expression and helped overcome the Communist-imposed atomization of Czechoslovak society.

The Slovak secret church, an underground Catholic community of believers independent of state control, had been organized and developed by religious activists in Slovakia between 1943 and 1989. In the 1980s, members of this secret church became increasingly active in the public sphere and successfully mobilized Slovak Catholics to support demands for greater religious freedom. These activities demonstrated the importance of the secret church's contribution to the emerging civil society in Slovakia. Following the Velvet Revolution, the Slovak secret church's members, networks and experience contributed to the development of Slovakia's new religious and political institutions.

Scholarship on the secret church in Slovakia remains relatively sparse, despite its 40-plus years of existence. Because of the limited access to primary sources, such as religious *samizdat* and personal interviews, references to the secret church prior to 1989 were often vague (in part to protect the identity of its members), sometimes inaccurate, and usually oriented towards activities in the Czech Lands rather than in Slovakia.³ In contrast, scholarship on the subjugation of the Catholic Church by the Communist regime and on church–state relations between 1948 and 1989 is quite strong and extensive. It emphasizes the repressive nature of the Czechoslovak state’s position regarding the Catholic Church, and it is essential for understanding the strategies adopted by the early founders of the secret church and the resources (or absence thereof) that shaped the secret church’s development in the following decades.⁴ Perhaps many scholars overlooked its activities in Slovakia because of its non-political orientation and quiet existence before the 1980s. H. Gordon Skilling, an expert on Charter 77 and Czech dissent, wrote in 1981, “In contrast to Bohemia and Moravia, [in Slovakia] there was an almost total lack of oppositional activity of any kind ... Religious dissent, among a populace much more devout than the Czechs, was surprisingly rare.”⁵ Many scholars instead focused on Czech groups deemed politically significant for their activity in public life and for the moral example they set for the rest of the population, such as Charter 77, the Jazz Section, and the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS). As Slovak participation in these groups was minimal and similar movements did not exist in Slovakia, scholars thus viewed opposition activity as predominantly Czech and involving a very select segment of the population, such as intellectuals and displaced reformers from the Prague Spring.⁶

After 1989, broader scholarship on the Slovak secret church began to develop with the publication of memoirs and participant histories by former members of the Slovak secret church. While these personal accounts provide remarkable insight into the experiences and hopes of the secret church’s founding fathers, few analyze the organization and impact of the secret church. The work of František Mikloško on the secret church, for example, surprisingly provides no information about its organizational structure or *samizdat* network, even though Mikloško coordinated the secret church’s communities among university students in Bratislava in the 1970s and 1980s and edited several religious *samizdat* publications.⁷ Recent volumes exploring religious *samizdat* publishing and secret ordinations in Slovakia by Ján Šimulčík, also a former member of the Slovak secret church, are important exceptions. Šimulčík compiles participant memories to reveal the mechanics and processes behind each of these important arenas of this church’s work.⁸ The increased access to the secret church’s extensive body of *samizdat* literature after 1989, as well as insight from personal interviews with former members, their memoirs, and participant histories, facilitates a more thorough analysis of the Slovak secret church’s history and significance.⁹

The Civil Society Project in East Central Europe

Scholars of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union generally use the term *civil society* to refer to the independent, non-government movements and organized activities that emerged in this region in the 1970s and 1980s. Theorists of civil society define it as “that arena of the polity where self-organizing groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state, attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests.”¹⁰ Although some scholars argue that the emergence of civil societies throughout Eastern Europe was a key domestic factor leading to the collapse of the Communist regimes, others questioned the impact of such independent activity that was not believed to have broad, mass support.¹¹ The Slovak secret church successfully carved out a space where Slovak Catholics could pursue their spiritual development independent of state control or influence. In the 1980s, using its organization and networks, its most active members mobilized support from Catholics, non-Catholics, and even non-Christians in Slovakia to demand religious freedom and greater respect for civil and human rights.

The Communist Party’s policies severely restricted society’s ability to act independently of the state. Although Czechoslovak citizens were denied full civil and political rights in practice, the state provided social rights, such as employment, social welfare, and education. Milan Šimečka, a dissident living in Bratislava, examined how this partial fulfillment of rights encouraged the emergence of what he labels the “*adaptation factor*” during normalization in the 1970s and 1980s to explain citizens’ willingness to accept constraints in life. Šimečka writes,

The state does not require the entire person, just the part that projects above the surface of public life; and that if this part accepts the sole truth [that there is only one party, that everything belongs to the state, which is also the sole employer, *etc.*] then the individual may do what he or she likes in the private sphere.¹²

Dissidents represented the segment of the population not willing to accept this relationship and to adapt. Instead, they demanded greater civil and political rights. After the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, East European dissidents realized that reform of the political system was no longer a reality. Believing that they could find freedom by encouraging morality, ethics and antipolitics within society, several dissidents outlined strategies for increasing the sphere and role of independent activity in society. In his 1976 essay “A New Evolutionism,” Polish dissident Adam Michnik argued that change was possible through an evolutionary, rather than a revolutionary process.¹³ Michnik believed that a space existed within a totalitarian system where independent activity could begin to emerge and develop slowly and gradually. Czech dissident Václav Benda argued that this space should be used to create a completely separate and alternative structure of independent activity he labeled the “parallel *polis*.”¹⁴ Benda pointed out that the program of the “parallel *polis*,” while respecting the realities of the current situation, allowed “political-elites to prepare for future good situations.”¹⁵ Václav Havel insisted instead on the

importance of morality, and argued that only after individuals chose to live within the truth could “something visible,” such as a social movement or a transformation of the social climate, develop.¹⁶ In 1982, Hungarian writer György Konrád outlined a similar strategy of achieving freedom by making changes within society to build civil society that he labeled antipolitics:

Antipolitics neither supports nor opposes governments; it is something different. Its people are fine right where they are; they form a network that keeps watch on political power, exerting pressure on the basis of their cultural and moral stature alone, not through any electoral legitimacy. That is their right and their obligation, but above all it is their self-defense. A rich historical tradition helps them exercise their right.¹⁷

The strategies of these dissidents supported a long-term goal of changing the political system indirectly by making gradual transformations within the structure of society, given society’s cultural and historical traditions. They proposed a means to develop civil society by changing society and subsequently its relationship with the state.

The secret church in Slovakia, although founded several decades before these strategies developed, had already constructed a parallel sphere of religious activity. Through the secret church, the fundamental elements of religious life, such as worship, prayer, education, and publishing, could develop without many of the restrictions that hindered this activity in the official church in Czechoslovakia. The secret church, as argued repeatedly by its leaders, was not separate from the Catholic Church. It adhered to Catholic doctrine, as revealed by the Pope and the Vatican; in fact it drew its strength from its existence as a part of the Catholic Church.¹⁸ Underground religious activity was not the sole reserve of Slovaks in Czechoslovakia, however. A Czech Catholic secret church shared a similar and close history with its Slovak counterpart and distributed many of its *samizdat* periodicals, including *Informace o církví*, in Slovakia. Lutherans and other faiths throughout Czechoslovakia also engaged in underground religious activity. Each successfully overcame the Communist-imposed atomization of Czechoslovak society and religious life and carved out a space for the development of civil society. The Slovak Catholic secret church, however, was particularly strong and vital, as evidenced by its success in establishing a structure of communities and movements designed to meet the spiritual needs of different ages of Slovakia’s Catholics; by its extensive and varied *samizdat* network; and by its ability to mobilize Slovaks to demonstrate their Catholic beliefs and concerns in the public sphere through pilgrimages, signing petitions, and attending a public protest demonstration in Bratislava for greater religious freedom.

The secret church provides an effective case study for the emergence of civil society in Slovakia for several reasons. First, religion represents an important area of distinction between Slovaks and Czechs. Even the state recognized this difference. In a 1988 study by the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, a senior researcher classified the majority of the districts in the Czech Lands as predominantly non-religious and the majority of the districts in Slovakia as religious.¹⁹ Second, in

contrast to Slovakia's environmental movement, political opposition and cultural underground, the secret church involved broader segments of the Slovak population, extending beyond just a select group of activists or dissidents. Finally, although formed without political aims, the secret church developed into a structure of considerable political and social significance by the 1980s. It drew on the strength of Roman Catholicism in Slovakia, declared by 60.3% of the Slovak population in the first post-Communist census, to advance the specific interests of Slovak Catholics as well as the broader political and civil rights of Czechoslovak citizens.²⁰

Tomislav Kolakovič and the *Rodina*

The origins of the Slovak secret church can be traced back to the height of the Second World War with the arrival in Bratislava of a Croatian priest named Tomislav Kolakovič-Pogljajen in the summer of 1943.²¹ Kolakovič brought experience in underground religious activity and an emphasis on the role of lay people to Nazi-friendly Slovakia, thus establishing the seeds of the secret church. Kolakovič probably viewed Slovakia as a stepping-stone toward his goal of traveling to Russia to help re-Christianize that country. His inspiration was the work of Pope Pius XI, who in 1929 had initiated a new religious effort in Soviet Russia by creating the Pontifical Russian College, also known as the Russicum, to train students in the Eastern rite and Russian language for a ministry in Russia.²² In Bratislava, Kolakovič met Vladimír Jukl and Silvester Krčméry, two students also interested in the Russicum ministry.²³ Because of this common calling, Jukl, Krčméry and Kolakovič established a particularly close relationship.²⁴ Kolakovič held such great faith in the possibility of restoring Christianity to Russia because he had evidence, albeit anecdotal, that religious belief had remained an important part of people's lives in Soviet Russia at the private, informal level. In occupied Croatia, Kolakovič had organized an underground Catholic university, demonstrating that spiritual development could continue, despite the emasculating of the Church hierarchy by the occupying German and Italian authorities.

Kolakovič's success in Croatia may account for his emphasis on the role that lay people could play in continuing the Church's apostolic mission. Krčméry explains, "[Kolakovič's] dream was to form a group of people that would be willing, like Christ, to sacrifice everything. It would not be based on traditional structures, such as the clergy or the monastic communities, but rather it would be representative of every social group: youth, adults, lay people, priests, monks and nuns, and single and married people."²⁵ In 1943, Kolakovič, with the help of Jukl and Krčméry, founded this community of believers in Slovakia named the *Rodina* [Family]. Kolakovič describes the careful manner in which the *Rodina* grew:

Our Christian underground began with a dozen men and two young women. One night we would gather on the outskirts of the city [Bratislava] in a secluded mansion owned by one of the outstanding merchants of the country. The next meeting might take place

behind the city's poorest water-front sailors' saloon. We invited to every meeting one or two "outsiders" whom we wished to convince; then, in order that they might not betray us, we always broke up the gathering as if we expected never to meet again. Word of the next meeting was passed around among the most trustworthy members when they briefly met at an appointed spot: a café washroom, a particular row of seats in a motion-picture theater, a newsstand on a busy corner.²⁶

Kolakovič spent considerable time with students, giving lectures on sociology, theology and philosophy, and he used the personal relationships established through this contact to expand the *Rodina's* membership. At first, the *Rodina* consisted primarily of students in Bratislava who met privately for Bible study and prayer every Sunday in an apartment or home. Within a year, the *Rodina* began to expand throughout Slovakia as these students in Bratislava returned to their hometowns and established new communities.

By the time the Communist Party assumed the political leadership of Czechoslovakia in February 1948, Kolakovič's *Rodina* had already been functioning for almost 5 years. Following Kolakovič's emigration to the West in 1946, Jukl and Krčméry took over the leadership of the *Rodina*. A former member of the secret church estimated that 500 people belonged to the *Rodina* in 1945.²⁷ Mikloško's history of the secret church lists the names of 96 of its early members in Slovakia with information about their occupation and place of residence.²⁸ Forty-one priests and monks belonged to the *Rodina*, according to this list, but the 25 lay-people and 30 students reflect Kolakovič's interest in lay people and his use of the university setting to build the foundation of the *Rodina*. Most of the members lived outside of Bratislava in at least 17 different towns and villages throughout Slovakia. Also, four of the lay people and nine of the students from this small sample were women. By 1948, a dedicated network of Christian communities existed secretly throughout Slovakia. Krčméry, describing the importance of the *Rodina*, explained, "It was the main group, one can say, who was very well prepared ... [to survive a period of] persecution."²⁹

Repression of the Catholic Church and Secret Ordinations

Restrictions on the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia preceded the Communist takeover in 1948 by several years, and were instituted primarily in response to the close relationship between church and state during the first Slovak Republic under Monsignor Tiso. Pedro Ramet makes this point by explaining that the provisional government in Czechoslovakia began nationalizing the property of the Catholic Church, including its schools and publishing houses, as early as 1945.³⁰ After 1948, the Communist leadership in Prague, viewing the Vatican as an instrument of world imperialism, implemented its plan to sever the Catholic Church's links with it and place the church under the legal control of the state.³¹ In June 1949, government decrees permitted state representatives to seize the bishops' offices in each diocese

and to censor all church circulars and pastoral letters, and in October of the same year, the Czechoslovak National Assembly created a State Office for Church Affairs to regulate the Church's activities.³² Among the new restrictions, public religious gatherings, such as pilgrimages, required state permission.³³ Next, the state dissolved Czechoslovakia's 258 monastic communities and 750 convents in 1950.³⁴ By 1951, 3,000 of the 6,000–7,000 priests and 8,000 of the 12,500 monks and nuns had been sentenced to prison or labor camps, and only two of 15 seminaries remained open, with the state holding tight control over curriculum and admissions.³⁵ During this period, the state sentenced at least 35 members of the *Rodina*, including Krčméry and Jukl, to prison sentences ranging from 1 to 25 years.³⁶ Bishops were not immune from this repression. Thirteen of Czechoslovakia's 17 bishops were either in prison or under house arrest, two were forbidden to carry out their duties, one was in enforced isolation, and only one auxiliary bishop was still performing episcopal functions.³⁷ As summarized by one scholar, this represented a severe blow to "a church that depends upon a priesthood for three of the seven sacraments (confession, the Mass, anointing of the sick) and on bishops for two (ordination of priests, deacons, and bishops, as well as, in normal circumstances, confirmation)."³⁸ By the end of 1952, the state's attack on Catholicism in Czechoslovakia had succeeded in decapitating the church hierarchy and the religious institutions that sustained it.

A quarter of a century earlier, the Vatican had responded to the elimination of bishops in Soviet Russia by sending a French Jesuit into Russia to secretly consecrate six priests as bishops. Though all had been exposed and eliminated fairly quickly, Pope Pius XII responded to the Communist persecution of the church in Czechoslovakia by returning to this strategy of secret ordinations and consecrations in 1949.³⁹ That year the Vatican's charge d'affaires in Prague traveled the country and vested certain bishops with the "powers to establish a substitute and underground hierarchy."⁴⁰ Some secret bishops eventually emigrated to avoid arrest, and those who remained faced imprisonment upon discovery. The Vatican abandoned its official approval of secretly consecrating bishops in the mid-1950s, but some secret bishops continued to exercise their power of ordination.⁴¹ Secret ordinations of priests, often performed by the secret bishops, continued until 1989.⁴² In addition, a number of students traveled outside of Czechoslovakia to either Poland or East Germany for their ordinations.⁴³

Consolidating the Secret Church

During the political liberalization in the 1960s, many of those sentenced to lengthy prison sentences during the state's repression of the Catholic Church in the early 1950s received early release from prison. Krčméry and Jukl, released in 1964 and 1965, immediately began re-establishing the communities of the *Rodina*.⁴⁴ Religious matters, except for the rehabilitation of the Greek Catholic Church, which was liquidated in 1950, had not been a high priority of the Prague Spring.⁴⁵ However, in

1968, Bishop Ján Korec, one of the few secretly ordained bishops in Slovakia who had refused to emigrate or collaborate with the regime, received early release from a 12-year prison sentence. Krčméry and Jukl soon established contact with Korec.⁴⁶ Korec traveled to Rome in July 1969, and during his 10-day visit, he received a private audience with Pope Paul VI. The Pope hugged Korec and presented him with a gold bishop's ring.⁴⁷ This private audience and the Pope's gift solidified the legitimacy of Korec's secret consecration two decades earlier and gave the new communities of the *Rodina* a powerful spiritual leader whose authority did not depend on the state.

During normalization, the Czechoslovak authorities did not adopt the 1950s-style Stalinist arrests and trials, but they continued to regulate the Church's activities through the Office for Church Affairs and with the creation of an organization for priests called *Pacem in Terris* in 1971. Many priests who had begun or completed their seminary training in the more liberal years of the late 1960s found little room to perform their pastoral activities in the official church of normalized Czechoslovakia, and hundreds lost their pastoral licenses by 1975. One researcher, in his analysis of *Pacem in Terris*, argues that normalization actually fostered opposition to the state. Many in this new generation of priests, while taking up manual work in order to make a living, continued their pastoral duties unofficially.⁴⁸ Working with Krčméry and Jukl's *Rodina* under the leadership of Bishop Korec, these unofficial priests became an important ingredient in the emerging structure of the Slovak secret church in the 1970s.

In the two decades after 1968, the Slovak secret church developed a structure with many different branches or movements that offered Slovak Catholics of all ages and needs different activities and programs for spiritual development that they could not pursue in the official Catholic Church. In the early 1970s, Krčméry and Jukl continued the strategy of forging personal relationships with students studying in Bratislava to build the communities. In addition to meeting for prayers and discussion, Krčméry and Jukl also arranged hiking trips for these students. Prior to their university graduation, Bishop Korec would hold a special mass for them in which he would discuss the importance of carrying on the ministry by establishing new communities in their hometowns. As the number of communities increased in Slovakia, a younger generation of Catholics began helping Krčméry and Jukl develop and organize their communities in 1974, including Rudolf Fiby and Eugen Valovič.⁴⁹ Together, they helped coordinate the communities and divided them into different movements based on age. For example, the Movement of Christian Education for Children consisted of communities of 14–18-year-olds. University-aged Catholics belonged to communities in the Lay Apostle Youth Movement, and parents belonged to the Movement of the Christian Family. Between 10 and 15 people belonged to each community, usually meeting at least once a week in a private apartment or home for Bible study, choir practice, or discussion; the activities varied, depending on the interests and age.⁵⁰ Periodically, several leaders of different communities from

a town or region met with a priest of the secret church to report on the activities, news, and problems of the community. The priest would then help these lay leaders develop spiritual exercises for their community and provide them with books and *samizdat* for distribution.⁵¹ The number of cities and towns in Slovakia holding these central meetings expanded out of Bratislava to 10 in 1980 and 17 by 1989.⁵² In addition to these lay communities, several other specific movements existed that pursued a variety of spiritual programs, such as a prayer ministry, a program for training individuals for the lay ministry, and a movement designed to foster closer cooperation between priests and lay people.⁵³

In 1984, the editor of the religious *samizdat* periodical *Výber* modified Marx's famous slogan and typed it across the bottom of a page in one of its issues: "Christians of the World Unite!" Several pages later, the reader would find two additional messages from the editor: "Spread *Samizdat* Literature! Extend its Horizon!"⁵⁴ These slogans reflect the hope of Slovakia's *samizdat* editors that an uncensored press would help build stronger relationships among fellow Catholics in Slovakia and the world and, by reaching new readers, would help expand the boundaries of the secret church.

Between 1948 and 1989, an increasing number of Slovak Catholics wrote, printed and distributed books on theology, philosophy, catechism, church history, and collections of Papal encyclicals for Slovakia's Catholics in *samizdat* form. In the 1980s, Peter Murdza, a secret priest in Slovakia, helped edit, print and coordinate the distribution of these books from his home in Bratislava, with the help of Jukl. According to Murdza, priests, nuns, and laymen, often using pseudonyms, wrote these books to supplement religious materials smuggled into Slovakia from abroad.⁵⁵ Several of the authors had belonged to the *Rodina* in the late 1940s. Among the most prolific *samizdat* authors, Bishop Korec wrote over 50 *samizdat* books prior to 1989, and 68 volumes called the *Library of Faith*.⁵⁶ The few examples of religious *samizdat* periodicals founded between 1947 and 1973, such as *Vzlet* (1947–1949), *Emanuel* (1970–1971), and *Orientácia* (1973–1985), each had a considerably smaller readership and distribution range than later publications.⁵⁷

In the 1980s, Slovak religious *samizdat* publishing boomed. Slovak Catholics founded over 20 different *samizdat* periodicals during the decade, each targeting the different needs and interests of the secret church's members. Although the total readership of this *samizdat* is unknown, publishing estimates indicate its considerable size. Between 1982 and 1989, the editors of *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť* published four issues a year, and the number of copies of each issue increased from 500 in its first year to 1,000 by 1989. *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, published by the Movement of the Christian Family with five issues a year between 1985 and 1989, increased its initial print run of each issue from 600 to 1,300 by 1989. With two issues a year between 1985 and 1989, the editors of *Myšlienky z večeradla* consistently published 1,200 copies of each issue for priests interested in honoring the Virgin Mary. The youth periodical *ZrNO*, founded in the last year of Communism, published an impressive

3,000 copies of its fall 1989 issue. *Svetlo*, one of the earliest *samizdat* periodicals for youth, only produced 50 copies of its first issue in 1986, but increased production by the time of its final issue in 1989 to 2,000 copies. The editors of the youth periodical *Priloha mladych (NaS)*, though only yielding three issues in 1988, printed and circulated 900 copies of each issue that year. The remaining Slovak religious *samizdat* periodicals generally printed between 200 and 500 copies of each issue: *Bratislavské listy* (1988–1989; five issues); *Hlas Slovensko* (1988–1989; eight issues); *Una Sancta Catholica* (1983–1985; six issues); *Katolícky mesačník* (1988–1989; 18 issues); and *Radosť a Nádej* (1987–1989; 10 issues). Demonstrating the secret church's presence outside of Bratislava, Ivan Polanský, one of the most productive publishers of religious *samizdat*, organized the publication of *Serafínsky svet* (1982–1989, 22 issues), *Pokoj a dobro* (1983 and 1985; five issues), *Výber* (1984–1987, 26 issues) and *Historický zápisník* (1986–1987, three issues) from his hometown of Nove Dubnice in central Slovakia.⁵⁸ Altogether, Slovak Catholics founded 15 religious *samizdat* periodicals beginning in 1985, reflecting the relative strength of independent religious activity in Slovakia, in contrast to Slovakia's political opposition, which only founded three of its four total *samizdat* periodicals after 1985.⁵⁹ Editors of both religious and political *samizdat* in Slovakia attribute this increase after 1985 to a variety of factors, including the weakening of the Communist regime, particularly after the reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union; the availability of better technology, such as mimeograph machines; and an increase in the religious and political awareness of the population.⁶⁰

Religious *samizdat* periodicals became one of the most vibrant features of the secret church in Slovakia, and its content was as important as its production and distribution size. The material in this extensive body of religious *samizdat* promoted the spiritual development of its readers, published news and information relevant to Catholics in Slovakia, and nurtured the political awareness and activism of its readers. Specifically, this included schedules of weekly scripture readings, Papal encyclicals, sermon texts read at pilgrimages, hymns, religious poetry, catechism lessons, as well as games and stories for children. *Una Sancta Catholica*, a periodical published specifically for priests, contained uncensored text of letters from the Pope and Cardinal Tomášek in Prague. Other *samizdat* periodicals published letters between secret church leaders and official representatives of the state and media. One essay in *Rodinné spoločenstvo* even examined how Gorbachev's policy of glasnost apparently did not apply to religion in Czechoslovakia.⁶¹ As the tradition of religious pilgrimages resurfaced as an important feature of religious life in Slovakia in the 1980s, *samizdat* publicized the yearly pilgrimage schedules as well as first hand accounts of different authors' experiences at a particular pilgrimage. *Výber* even occasionally published Radio Free Europe's broadcast schedule for religious programming.⁶² When the secret church became more active in the public sphere in the late 1980s, several *samizdat* editors published the texts of petitions for religious freedom and other demands against the state.

The existence of independent information networks was essential for breaking the state's monopoly on information. In this sense, the very existence of an underground information network was significant regardless of the thematic content. This *samizdat* network reveals the flourishing extent of the secret church's activities in Slovakia. It contributed to the spiritual development of its readers and provided a medium for religious activists to encourage activity in the public sphere. As an information network whose readership and production extended beyond just intellectuals in Bratislava, this *samizdat* network represents a vital element of civil society's development in Slovakia.⁶³ This extensive body of religious *samizdat* also provides an uncensored and reliable view of the secret church from the inside. Analysis of material from its publications reveals how the activists of the secret church mobilized broad segments of the Slovak population to make public demands for greater religious freedom.

The Slovak Secret Church and the Tradition of Religious Pilgrimages

The election of a Pole, Karol Wojtyła, as Pope John Paul II in 1978 inspired a religious revival among Slovakia's Catholics that increased the popularity of the traditional religious pilgrimage. As a fellow Slav and a close friend to many of the Slovak secret church's leaders, his election appears to have given great moral strength and energy. Krčméry, who had first met Cardinal Wojtyła in 1973, described him as a protector for the Slovaks. Emphasizing the importance of their shared experiences under Communism, Krčméry pointed to a bond undoubtedly shared by other Catholics in the Soviet bloc by saying, "he has lived all this persecution of Catholics."⁶⁴

Religious pilgrimages in Slovakia provided a firm and pre-existing space within which activists of the secret church could gain a greater foothold in the public sphere in the 1980s. Pilgrimages had been a traditional part of Slovak religious life since the middle ages, and over 30 pilgrimage sites can be found throughout Slovakia.⁶⁵ The significance of pilgrimages increased significantly after the 1985 pilgrimage to Velehrad, a small village in Moravia. This pilgrimage was to commemorate the 1,100th anniversary of the death of St. Methodius, who along with St. Cyril, had brought the Church and the Slavonic liturgy to the Great Moravian Empire in the ninth century. The Czechoslovak state, hoping to downplay the religious significance of this anniversary, denied Pope John Paul II permission to attend the event. It then organized an official commemoration at which state and party officials, sharing the stage with representatives of the official church hierarchy, could emphasize the cultural significance of Cyril and Methodius.

Several months before the pilgrimage, Catholic activists in both Moravia and Slovakia began organizing an unofficial night program for young people to precede the official event.⁶⁶ On Saturday afternoon, 6 July, the unofficial portion of the Velehrad celebration began with the arrival of an estimated 5,000 young Catholics,

including Bishop Korec.⁶⁷ *Samizdat* reports paint a vivid picture of their activities in the evening and during the night. After attending a mass inside the basilica, the young pilgrims spent the night outside, some in front of the basilica and others in a nearby field. Each group stayed awake the entire night and followed a program of prayer, meditation and singing. Both groups also chanted slogans, such as “We want cloisters,” “Long live Tomášek,” and “Long live the Pope.” The pilgrims also chanted “Let the Pope Come” for about 25 minutes.⁶⁸ The dissatisfaction of the young Catholics who had spent the night at Velehrad carried over into the official celebrations on Sunday attended by an estimated 100,000–250,000 pilgrims.⁶⁹ During the main speech by the minister of culture, the pilgrims broke into chants of “We want the Holy Father,” “We want religious freedom,” and “We want bishops.”⁷⁰ At the 1985 Velehrad pilgrimage, Catholic activists transformed the traditional pilgrimage into a space where Catholics could meet publicly and in large numbers to worship freely and openly. Members of the secret church had organized the night program and promoted it through the *samizdat* network. The relatively large number of Catholic youth that chose to come early and the fact that most were reportedly from Slovakia indicates both the strength of Catholicism in Slovakia and the Slovak secret church’s ability to mobilize its members and influence Catholics not active in the secret church.

After Velehrad, pilgrimage attendance and the number of sites hosting pilgrimages increased significantly between 1986 and 1989.⁷¹ The number of pilgrims to Šaštín, a small village located north of Bratislava near the Moravian border, grew steadily from estimates of 40,000–50,000 in 1986, 60,000 in 1987, to 60,000–70,000 in 1988.⁷² The number of pilgrims to Gaboltov, estimated at 20,000–25,000 in 1985, increased dramatically from estimates of 30,000–50,000 in 1986 to numbers as high as 100,000 in 1987 and 1988.⁷³ Even traditionally less popular pilgrimage sites attracted large numbers of pilgrims. Lutina, an important Greek Catholic pilgrimage site in Eastern Slovakia, received 40,000 pilgrims in 1986 and 50,000 in 1987.⁷⁴ Topol’čany received 25,000 pilgrims in 1988.⁷⁵ Levoča, in Eastern Slovakia, received the largest number of pilgrims, with an estimated 150,000 in 1986, 200,000–230,000 in 1987, and as many as 280,000–300,000 pilgrims in 1988.⁷⁶ Although not an exact count, these estimates are significant as a measure of the increase in multitude of pilgrims attending a particular pilgrimage, an increase the *samizdat* authors were certainly observing. Čarnogurský reported that in 1987, as he became aware of the political significance of the pilgrimages, he began traveling to pilgrimages to estimate their numbers and political potential.⁷⁷

Attendance at night programs at other pilgrimages throughout Slovakia also increased after Velehrad. A *samizdat* article describing the pilgrimage celebrations that had taken place throughout Slovakia in 1986 reported that 40,000–50,000 pilgrims attended that year’s night program at Šaštín. It concluded with a listing of the dates for the following year’s pilgrimages, indicating that night programs had been scheduled in Gaboltov, Úhorná, Levoča, and Šaštín.⁷⁸ In 1988 an estimated

50,000 pilgrims attended the night program at Gaboltov, and 100,000 attended the night program in Levoča.⁷⁹ The development of the night program contributed to the political potential of the pilgrimage. It provided an opportunity for groups of Catholic youth to meet openly and in small groups for song, prayer, or conversation. Father Karel Martinec, one of the local organizers of the 1988 pilgrimage to Šaštín, reported that the young people began the night program by reading aloud 31 demands protesting the state's interference in religious matters, part of a petition circulated by the secret church since 1987.⁸⁰ During the night at Šaštín, the young pilgrims responded with applause to chants of "We Want Religious Freedom!" "We Want the Pope!" "Long Live Father Bishop Korec!" "Long Live Cardinal Tomášek!"⁸¹

Slovak pilgrimages demonstrate a consistent and expanding sphere of independent activity throughout Slovakia. Pilgrimages created a space in society where mainstream religious Catholics could meet and develop ties with Catholics who were involved in the secret church. Such mobilizations of the population did not take place in the Czech Lands until the November 1989 revolution. The authorities, faced with such large numbers, were unable to prevent individuals from attending pilgrimages or prevent pilgrimages from becoming arenas for political discussion.⁸² According to Čarnogurský, "While they last, pilgrimages solve a basic problem of our society—the problem of being outnumbered by the police."⁸³

Petitions

At the same time that pilgrimages gained popularity, Slovakia's Catholics, even those not active in secret church activity, became increasingly willing to sign letters and petitions to the state protesting the absence of religious freedom in Czechoslovakia and other issues. With support from the Slovak secret church's communities and *samizdat* network, activists promoted several petition campaigns in the 1980s, beginning with a letter signed by 87 people in 1983 protesting the arrest of several Slovak Franciscans engaged in secret church activity.⁸⁴ In 1986 the Slovak secret church again mobilized its resources to collect signatures from 6,518 Slovaks to oppose a proposed legal reform that would relax restrictions on abortions.⁸⁵ Two years later, 3,968 Slovaks signed a letter to President Husák, urging him to revoke a lengthy prison sentence given to Ivan Polanský for his *samizdat* publishing activities.⁸⁶

In December 1987, a Moravian Catholic named Augustin Navrátil introduced a 31-point petition for religious freedom that became the largest and most significant petition campaign in Czechoslovakia. The first point reflects the general theme of this petition: "Our fundamental demand is a separation of the Church from the state, which would have the result that the state will not interfere in the organization and activities of the Church. From this fundamental demand the majority of our remaining proposals would be fulfilled."⁸⁷ The other demands focused on specific

aspects of this separation, such as the right of the Vatican to select bishops without needing state approval; an end to state interference in the selection of students and faculty at seminaries; the right of believers to form independent lay associations; the right to produce and distribute religious texts legally and without state interference; and the demand that the jamming of *Vatican Radio* and *Radio Free Europe's* religious broadcasts be stopped. Though Cardinal Tomášek in Prague had taken a relatively passive stance against the regime in the 1970s, his willingness to act independent of the state, probably inspired by Pope John Paul II, had increased steadily throughout the 1980s. In a brief letter issued on 4 January 1988, Cardinal Tomášek offered powerful words of support to this petition action: "The dissemination and signing of this petition is in accord with our constitution ... I remind you that cowardice and fear are not worthy of a true Christian. I am with you in spirit and wholeheartedly bless you."⁸⁸ Following Cardinal Tomášek's appeal for support, the collection of signatures began. Estimates from signature collectors and *samizdat* reports indicate that in the following year, an estimated 600,000 Czechoslovak citizens signed the petition.

In addition to the impressive 600,000 people who signed this petition, there are several particularly interesting and important elements of this petition's success. Foremost is the immediate response of Slovaks to this petition. Although a Moravian Catholic initiated the 31-point petition, activists in the Slovak secret church immediately appropriated the petition as if it were their own, and they did so with great success. One *samizdat* report indicates that in the small Slovak town of Orava, 5,000 signatures were collected in 3 days.⁸⁹ On 16 January 1988, a delegation of Slovak believers delivered the first 18,393 signatures to Cardinal Tomášek in Prague. Two weeks after the signature collection began, an estimated 95,000–100,000 Slovaks had signed the petition.⁹⁰ *Rodinné spoločenstvo* reported that of the 364,000 total signatures collected by the end of February 1988, 289,000 Slovaks had signed the petition, in contrast to 75,000 Czechs and Moravians at that time.⁹¹ Signatures from the Czech Lands eventually caught up, but final counts estimated the total number of signatures from Slovakia at between 300,000 and 400,000.⁹² Mikloško explained that the Slovak secret church collected so many signatures quickly because it had already developed plans on how to implement such a petition campaign:

It was very interesting because we thought about some similar [petition] action here [in Slovakia], and we had prepared the whole structure of the action. When Cardinal Tomášek announced that he supported the whole action, we were prepared. So in two weeks, we had 100,000 signatures. In the Czech Lands, they were absolutely [surprised].⁹³

Mikloško, Krčméry, and Jukl coordinated the resources of the Slovak secret church to collect signatures for the petition, to which Bishop Korec lent his own support as one of the first Slovak signers.⁹⁴ The leaders of the secret church's communities participated in the actual collection. One of the signature collectors, an active member of the Slovak secret church, explained the planned effort:

We collected in front of churches after the services, and that was the main and most effective method ... We distributed the churches and the responsibilities. And then it started to spread out of Bratislava ... After services we just stood in front of the door and had the text of the petition and the signature papers, so people just came and read and signed.⁹⁵

Through this method, Slovak Catholics not involved in the secret church became aware of and signed this petition.⁹⁶ *Samizdat* updates on the progress of the petition reported that Protestants and even atheists had also signed the petition.⁹⁷

Looking back at the success of this petition action, Čarnogurský explained, “it again was proof that the secret church was well organized.”⁹⁸ The large number of signatures collected in a very short time in Slovakia demonstrates the secret church’s capability as a social movement to mobilize its own membership and broader segments of the Slovak population to support demands for greater religious freedom. The secret church’s communities and *samizdat* network made such an effective mobilization possible. Slovakia’s religious revival, particularly the popularity of the pilgrimage tradition, contributed to the willingness of Slovakia’s Catholics to sign this petition demanding greater religious freedom.

25 March 1988: Demonstrating for Religious Freedom

The most open expression of civic initiative among Slovaks took the form of a public demonstration in Bratislava on 25 March 1988. Mikloško and Čarnogurský organized the demonstration, though they both admitted that the original idea came from Marion Št’astný, an active member of the Slovak émigré community in Canada. Št’astný, also a well-known hockey player, wanted Slovak émigrés from all over the world to demonstrate in front of Czechoslovak embassies on 25 March for freedom in Slovakia. He had contacted Čarnogurský about the idea and left the form and content of the demonstration in Bratislava completely up to him.⁹⁹ Čarnogurský and Mikloško planned a half-hour peaceful demonstration that would begin at 6:00 PM in front of the National Theater in Hviezdoslav Square in Bratislava. Čarnogurský, a lawyer by profession, wrote a letter to the local authorities announcing their intent to hold a public demonstration on 25 March and outlining the legal basis for the demonstration (one requirement was such a letter). Only Mikloško signed this letter, because the Slovak secret church, hoping to avoid additional police persecution, maintained a strict policy of not mixing its activities with that of the political opposition. Čarnogurský, a devout Catholic and member of the secret church, had close contacts with members of Charter 77 in Prague and Slovakia’s small political opposition. His signature, therefore, would have attracted unnecessary police attention to the secret church.¹⁰⁰ In this letter, dated 10 March, Mikloško explained their goals: “At the demonstration we want to support the demands: to fill the vacant bishop positions in accordance with the decision of the Holy Father, for greater religious freedom in Czechoslovakia, and for complete adherence to the civil law in

Czechoslovakia.”¹⁰¹ The third point was designed to appeal to those interested simply in greater civil rights within the country. “The demonstration,” explained Čarnogurský, “was an attempt again to meld the religious dissent and civic [dissent].”¹⁰²

Publicizing this demonstration, only 2 weeks away, required the help of foreign broadcast stations and the secret church’s network of communities. Through Mikloško’s contacts abroad, *Voice of America*, *Radio Free Europe*, and *Vatican Radio* filled Czechoslovakia’s airwaves with information about the upcoming demonstration within 2 days.¹⁰³ In Slovakia, announcements were posted on church signboards, instructing Catholics, “We will express our assent with these demands by holding a lit candle during the gathering.”¹⁰⁴ The secret church also promoted the demonstration through the weekly meetings of its communities, encouraging its members to attend and issuing security instructions on what to do if the police detained them. Members were instructed that the best strategy was not to speak at all, but if they did so, they should be careful not to speak about other people and the system of meetings within the secret church. Young people were advised not to be afraid of threats of school expulsion. They were also told that if possible, they should mention contacts abroad that would be able to publicize their case.¹⁰⁵ Though the authorities banned the demonstration, harassed the leaders of the secret church, and hinted at a violent response, organizers did not alter plans for the demonstration. On the day of the event, the police arrested Mikloško in the morning and prevented Krčméry and Korec from reaching the square.¹⁰⁶ Still, approximately 2,000 people came to the square at the designated time.¹⁰⁷ Approximately 10 minutes after it began, the police broke up the demonstration using water cannon, nightsticks, and by driving vehicles through the square.¹⁰⁸

The violent response of the police inspired further expressions of civic initiative in the form of letters and petitions sent to the regime by Slovaks protesting the actions of the police. On 29 March 1988, Bishop Korec sent a letter to Slovak Prime Minister Peter Colotka, protesting the authorities’ response to the demonstration and referring to the event as “Bratislava’s Good Friday.”¹⁰⁹ Subsequent letters, one signed by 512 parishioners of St. Martin’s cathedral in Bratislava and another by 68 priests in Košice, protested the violent police response and supported Korec’s request for an investigation.¹¹⁰ Mikloško, released by the police soon after the demonstration, perhaps out of modesty, writes no more than four sentences about this demonstration in his account, but it was a significant moment for the secret church.¹¹¹ On the day after the demonstration, Čarnogurský told ORF (Austrian Radio-Television) that “the Bratislava demonstration had been a new form of civil protest that had been used for the first time in forty years.”¹¹² The 25 March demonstration in Bratislava, the first independent demonstration in Bratislava since 1968, illustrates the secret church’s ability to mobilize its own members and encourage other segments of the population to publicly express demands against the regime.

From Civil Society to New Political and Religious Institutions

The pilgrimages, the petitions, and the March 1988 demonstration reflected the increasing strength of the Slovak secret church in the 1980s. In the Czech Lands, Charter 77 had emphasized the importance of a moral program, of living in truth, to overcome the Communist-imposed atomization in Czechoslovakia. In Slovakia, the secret church had done this, creating a space where Slovakia's Catholics could practice their faith, free of state control. Following the revolutions of 1989, Western theorists of civil society examining processes of democratic transition and consolidation have emphasized the importance of civil society and its complex relationship with other arenas of development. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan argue that civil society is only one of five interacting arenas necessary for the consolidation of democracy. Identifying the other four arenas as political society, rule of law, economic society, and state bureaucracy, Linz and Stepan explain that civil society can bring about the political change that can facilitate the development of "political parties, elections, electoral rules, political leadership, interparty alliances, and legislatures"—all vital elements of political society.¹¹³ The secret church contributed to the construction of both political society and civil society in Slovakia. Following the Velvet Revolution in 1989, the activists and networks of the Catholic secret church became the foundation for the new religious and political institutions in Slovakia. Members of the Slovak secret church moved into important positions in the post-Communist Catholic Church. They also played an important role in the development of Slovakia's political society and continue to do so.

Čarnogurský's interest in connecting politics to Christian belief preceded the Velvet Revolution and his formal entrance into politics in December 1989. In a March 1989 interview, he described *Bratislavské listy*, the *samizdat* periodical he had founded in the summer of 1988, as having a Christian-Democratic orientation.¹¹⁴ Shortly before he was sworn in as first deputy prime minister in early December 1989, Čarnogurský told an Austrian reporter, "I am a convinced Christian Democrat, but at the moment I do not yet belong to any party."¹¹⁵ Just a few days later, Čarnogurský and several Christian activists introduced the program of a Christian Democratic Movement (KDH) in Slovakia.¹¹⁶ At its founding congress in Nitra, Slovakia, in February 1990, Čarnogurský concluded his address by linking the past activities of the secret church to the future of his new political party:

The past gives us the authority that we are fit to build this movement. We have indeed demonstrated defiance to forty years of the ideological and political Marxist regime. We have taken part in the building and protection of the secret church. We distributed *samizdat* press, and together with our Czech friends we organized the pilgrimage to Velehrad in 1985, as well as the largest petition action for religious freedom in the Communist bloc three years later. In March 1988 we organized the demonstration for religious and civil rights in Bratislava. We apply the experience and strength, which we earned in that absolute struggle, to the creation of our program. If we were successful in the past, why not be the same in the future.¹¹⁷

In addition to drawing on the tradition of activism and defiance demonstrated by the secret church in founding KDH, Čarnogurský also brought several of the secret church's most politically oriented members, such as Mikloško, into KDH's leadership. *Bratislavské listy*, renamed *Listy*, enjoyed official status after 1989 as one of KDH's main publications. The secret church had not only created political elites but also religious leaders, such as bishops, priests, and lay people, who were experienced and prepared to continue their ministry after the revolution. For example, Bishop Korec became a Cardinal in Slovakia. After November 1989, *samizdat* periodicals, such as *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, continued to provide their readers with news and information, but legally and in a much glossier format.

The different directions taken by leading members of the secret church after the Velvet Revolution reveals that two different wings, one political and one religious, had existed within the Slovak secret church's communities. About 15 Christian young people who had been active in the secret church's Movement of Christian Youth in Bratislava reorganized themselves into a new group in December 1989. Andrea Kuhajdová, one of its leaders during this transition, explained that they established contact with similar groups from the secret church in Košice, but differences among its members surfaced in the first few weeks, eventually leading to a split in the spring of 1990. The more politically oriented members founded the Christian-Democratic Youth of Slovakia (KDMS), a movement aligned with KDH and working to coordinate the participation of Catholic youth in local politics. The more religiously oriented members founded the Movement of the Christian Community of Youth (HKSM) to organize sports, hikes and other cultural activities emphasizing Catholic religion and the spiritual development of its members.¹¹⁸

Čarnogurský's KDH continued to play an important role in Slovakia's political development in the 1990s. In 1991, Čarnogurský became the prime minister of the Slovak Republic, the highest office at the state level, but remained in office only briefly because of the rise to power of Vladimír Mečiar in 1992. The KDH continued to work as a leading proponent of the maintenance of democratic ideals and civil rights in Slovakia. In 1997, KDH and four other opposition parties formed the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK).¹¹⁹ The tradition of activism, demonstrated by the Slovak secret church in the 1980s, was called upon by Slovaks protesting Mečiar's increasingly authoritarian rule in the 1990s. On 25 March 1998, the tenth anniversary of the candlelight demonstration for religious freedom in Bratislava, 30,000 people demonstrated in front of the National Theater in Bratislava against the increasingly authoritarian rule of Mečiar. This demonstration also marked the beginning of a petition drive organized by the SDK to gather the 100,000 signatures required for a petition to be submitted to the parliament demanding that the president be elected by direct popular vote. Former Slovak president Michal Kováč, head of the petition drive, told the demonstrators, "We now have freedom of religion and of assembly, but we have to face intolerance and malice [from the current political leadership]."¹²⁰ On 12 May, the organizers of the petition drive submitted the petition and boxes with

over 400,000 signatures to the Slovak Parliament.¹²¹ Mečiar's Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) won the most votes as a single party in the 25–26 September 1998 parliamentary elections, but he did not have enough support to form a new government.¹²² On 30 October, the newly elected parliament appointed Mikuláš Dzurinda, the leader of the SDK and a former member of KDH, as the new prime minister.¹²³ Čarnogurský became the minister of justice in the new government.

In a Communist state with a weak tradition of independent activism, where individuals had every motivation to adapt to state authority and accept limited freedoms in the private sphere, the Slovak secret church's contribution to the growth of civil society was extraordinary. The secret church was established as a movement concerned with society's spiritual development in the private sphere. This factor, combined with the strength of Catholicism in Slovakia, accounts for its ability to gain greater popular support than that attained by Czech opposition movements prior to 1989. As Milan Šimečka argued, just as the regime was willing to overlook certain freedoms in the private sphere, scholars, too, have overlooked the meaning of this different type of independent activity in Slovakia.

NOTES

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1. *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, No. 1, 1990.
2. Čarnogurský had been arrested on 14 August 1989, along with four other Slovak dissidents, for planning to lay flowers the following week at the locations in Bratislava where Slovak students had been killed during the Warsaw Pact invasion in 1968. The police charged him for editing *Bratislavské listy*, a *samizdat* periodical that he had founded in the summer of 1988, instead of this plan to lay flowers.
3. Stehle provides an excellent analysis of the Vatican's policies in Czechoslovakia, but his only paragraph describing secret consecrations in Slovakia contains several inaccuracies. Hansjakob Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican 1917–1979* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1981), p. 274. Alexander Tomsky maintained close contacts with many religious activists in Czechoslovakia during his tenure as a researcher for the Keston College (now named Keston Institute) news and research center in the 1980s. From the Czech-orientation of his reports, most of his contacts apparently lived in the Czech Lands. Alexander Tomsky, "Der Katholizismus in der Tschechoslowakei," in Paul Lendvai, ed. *Religionsfreiheit und Menschenrechte* (Styria: Graz, 1983), pp. 120–149.
4. See Ludvík Nemeč, *Church and State in Czechoslovakia* (New York: Vantage Press, 1955); Karel Kaplan, "Church and State in Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1956—Part I," *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1986, pp. 59–72; Karel Kaplan, "Church and State in Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1956—Part II," *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1986, pp. 180–193; Karel Kaplan, "Church and State in Czechoslovakia from 1948 to 1956—Part III," *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1986, pp. 273–282; Pedro Ramet, *Cross and Commissar* (Bloomington and Indianapolis:

- Indiana University Press, 1987); and Dennison I. Rusinow, "Churches and States in Eastern Europe: A View From Vienna," in *UFSI Reports*, No. 37, 1983, pp. 1–8. Rusinow's typology places the situation of religion in Czechoslovakia as one of the most repressive in East Europe.
5. H. Gordon Skilling, *Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), p. 55.
 6. Sabrina Ramet's 1991 survey of independent activity in Czechoslovakia concludes, "Until the blossoming of democracy in the closing weeks of 1989, independent activism was the preserve of a small minority." Sabrina Ramet, *Social Currents in Eastern Europe* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), p. 112.
 7. František Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môcť rozvrátiť z osudov katolíckej cirkvi na Slovensku v rokoch 1943–89* (Bratislava: Archa, 1991).
 8. Ján Šimulčík, *Svetlo z podzemia: z kroniky katolíckeho samizdatu 1969–1989* (Prešov: Vydavateľstvo Michala Vaška, 1997); Ján Šimulčík, *Zápas o nádej: z kroniky tajných kňazov 1969–1989* (Prešov: Vydavateľstvo Michala Vaška, 2000).
 9. Archives containing religious *samizdat* cited in this paper include: the *samizdat* archive at the Christian Democratic Movement headquarters, Bratislava, Slovakia; the *Libri Prohibiti Samizdat* Archive, Prague, Czech Republic; the Czechoslovak Documentation Center, Dobřichovice (Prague), Czech Republic; the Keston Institute's archive, Oxford, England; and the research archives of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in the Open Society Archives, Budapest, Hungary.
 10. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 7–8.
 11. Árpád Szakolczai and Ágnes Horváth, "The Discourse of Civil Society and the Self-elimination of the Party," in Paul G. Lewis, ed., *Democracy and Civil Society in Eastern Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p. 16. For the argument that independent groups, such as Charter 77 and Solidarity played a leading role in the formation of civil society and contributed to the collapse of Communism, see Vladimír Tismaneanu, *Reinventing Politics* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), pp. 170–174.
 12. Milan Šimečka, "Adaptation," in *The Restoration of Order* (London: Verso, 1984), pp. 139–140.
 13. Adam Michnik, "A New Evolutionism," in *Letters From Prison and Other Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 139.
 14. Václav Benda, "Parallel polis," in H. G. Skilling and Paul Wilson, eds, *Civic Freedom in Central Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), p. 36.
 15. Václav Benda, interview with the author, 24 July 1996, Prague, Czech Republic.
 16. Václav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless," in Paul Wilson, ed., *Open Letters* (New York: Knopf, 1991), pp. 148–151.
 17. György Konrád, *Antipolitics*, translated by Richard E. Allen (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984), p. 70.
 18. Bishop Ján Korec of the secret church in Slovakia repeated this assertion in a 1983 letter to the editors of *Smena* in response to one of its attacks on the secret church. The text of his letter was republished in *samizdat*. See *Una Sancta Catholica*, Advent 1983, p. 25.
 19. The results of this study were republished by *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL)* in 1988 without an explanation of how the researcher defined religiosity. Peter Martin, "Church State Relations," *RFE/RL*, 27 December 1988, pp. 19–24.
 20. Martin Votruba, "The Geography of Slovakia's Religions in the 1991 Census: Maps," manuscript, Slovak Studies Program, University of Pittsburgh, 1995.

21. Kolakovič traveled to the West after the war and told his story to an American, Greta Palmer. These memoirs of his experiences in Croatia, Slovakia and Soviet Russia during and after the Second World War were first published in English in 1949 under the pseudonym “Father George.” See Father George (as told to Greta Palmer), *God’s Underground* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1949).
22. For a description of the Russicum by a graduate who made it into Russia, see Walter J. Ciszek, *With God in Russia* (New York: The American Press, 1964), pp. 9–10. Also see Stehle, *Eastern Politics*, pp. 129–130, and Robert A. Graham, *The Vatican and Communism During World War II* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), pp. 131–139.
23. For a brief description of Krčméry’s first meeting with Kolakovič, see “Dr. Silvester Krčméry 60-ročný,” *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť*, No. 4, 1984, p. 19.
24. Memoir accounts contain much of the information about Kolakovič’s work in Slovakia and the early history of the secret church. See Silvester Krčméry and Vladimír Jukl, *V šl’apajach Kolakoviča* (Bratislava: Charis, 1996). Mikloško interviewed Krčméry and Jukl for his own history of the secret church. Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môct’rozvrátiť*.
25. Krčméry and Jukl, *V šl’apajach Kolakoviča*, p. 12.
26. Palmer, *God’s Underground*, pp. 24–25.
27. Ján Šimulčík, “God’s Underground: Catholic Church in Slovakia, 1943–1989,” Keston Institute archive file (hereafter KI): SL/ROM.
28. A footnote indicates that this appendix is not a complete list of members. Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môct’rozvrátiť*, pp. 159–161.
29. Silvester Krčméry, interview with the author, 3 July 1996, Bratislava, Slovakia.
30. Ramet, *Cross and Commissar*, p. 76.
31. Kaplan, “Church and State—Part I,” pp. 60–69.
32. Kaplan, “Church and State—Part II,” pp. 181–182. Ján Korec, a Jesuit theological student in Slovakia during this period, describes this subjugation of the Catholic Church by the state in his memoirs. Originally written in 1976, they existed in the underground until they were officially published in 1990. Ján Ch. Korec, *Od barbarskej noci* (Bratislava: Lúč, 1990), pp. 55–57. A second volume covers the period from the Prague Spring to 1989. Ján Ch. Korec, *Od barbarskej noci na slobode* (Bratislava: Lúč, 1993).
33. Kaplan, “Church and State—Part I,” p. 69.
34. A *samizdat* article by Dr Karel [last name illegible] describes the secret police’s repression against the Catholic Church between 1948 and 1958, including “Aktion K” in “StB Včera a dnes: procesy s katolíckou Cirkvou,” *Výber*, No. 4, 1984, pp. 27–28. See also Kaplan, “Church and State—Part II,” pp. 185–187.
35. See Korec, *Od barbarskej noci*, p. 48; Tomsy, “Der Katholizismus in der Tschechoslowakei,” p. 125.
36. Krčméry and Jukl, *V šl’apajach Kolakoviča*, pp. 81–93. Mikloško’s appendixes contain an extensive list of priests and laymen arrested and sentenced between 1949 and 1954. A comparison of these names with his list of *Rodina* members indicates that at least 35 were arrested during this time frame. Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môct’rozvrátiť*, pp. 161–178.
37. Kaplan, “Church and State—Part III,” pp. 275–279.
38. Felix Corley, “The Secret Clergy in Communist Czechoslovakia,” *Religion, State and Society*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1993, p. 172.
39. Graham, *The Vatican and Communism*, p. 131. Secret ordinations were most common in Czechoslovakia, but the Vatican also permitted them in Romania. Corley, “The Secret Clergy,” p. 173.
40. Stehle, *Eastern Politics*, p. 273.
41. Some of these later ordinations extended far beyond the scope of what the Vatican had

- originally envisioned. Corley examines the controversy revealed after the Velvet Revolution, when many married secret bishops (at least eight) and even women secretly ordained as bishops, came forward seeking official recognition from the Vatican. Several of these consecrations were the work of secret Bishop Felix Davidek. Before his death in 1988, Davidek secretly ordained hundreds of priests, many of whom had little or no theological training. Corley, "The Secret Clergy," pp. 181–184.
42. In the preface to Šimulčík's study of the secret priests, Korec reported that he secretly ordained about 120 priests up to 1989. Šimulčík, *Zápas o nádej*, p. 9.
 43. Father Tomáš Halík reported that he secretly studied to be a priest in the Czech Lands, but was actually ordained during a visit to Erfurt, East Germany, in the 1970s. In addition to Erfurt, many went to Krakow, where Cardinal Karol Wojtyła ordained them. Tomáš Halík, interview by the author, Pittsburgh, PA, 14 September 1999.
 44. Kréméry and Jukl, *V šl' apajach Kolakoviča*, pp. 93–94.
 45. For more on the situation of the Greek Catholic Church, see Milan J. Reban, "The Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia," in Pedro Ramet, ed., *Catholicism and Politics in Communist Societies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), pp. 150–151; "The Ups and Downs of the Greek Catholic Church," *RFE/RL*, 14 July 1976, pp. 10–12.
 46. Korec, *Od barbarskej noci*, pp. 87–89, 153–163, 216. Korec, in a five-page letter to the Czechoslovak Federal Assembly, recounts his secret ordination and consecration in 1951 and the persecution by the authorities that followed. Bishop Ján Korec to Czechoslovak Federal Assembly, 27 April 1980, KI: CZ ROM 8/2 Korec, Jan.
 47. Korec, *Od barbarskej noci na slobode*, pp. 37–41.
 48. Alexander Tomsy, "'Pacem in Terris' Between Church and State in Czechoslovakia," *Religion in Communist Lands*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1983, p. 277.
 49. Šimulčík, *Zapas o nádej*, p. 54.
 50. Andrea Kuhajdová, a member of the Movement of Christian Education for Children in Bratislava in the late 1980s, explained this division of the communities by age. Andrea Kuhajdová, interview by the author, 2 August 1996, Bratislava, Slovakia.
 51. Šimulčík, "God's Underground."
 52. Ján Šimulčík, lecture text, 19 April 1996, *samizdat* archive, Christian Democratic Movement, Bratislava, Slovakia.
 53. Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môcť rozvrátiť*, pp. 131–136.
 54. *Výber*, No. 2, 1984, pp. 11, 18.
 55. Peter Murdza, lecture text, 19 April 1996, *samizdat* archive, Christian Democratic Movement, Bratislava, Slovakia.
 56. Lesňák briefly describes 452 Slovak *samizdat* books in his catalog. Rudolf Lesňák, *Listy z podzemia: súborná dokumentácia kresťanskej samizdatovej publicistiky na Slovensku v rokoch 1945–1989* (Bratislava: Vydalo Vydavateľstvo USPO, 1988), pp. 218–257.
 57. *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 181–183.
 58. Publishing figures based on Šimulčík's estimates. Šimulčík, *Svetlo z podzemia*, pp. 261–274.
 59. Slovak political *samizdat* periodicals in the late 1980s include *Altamíra* (1985–1987); *K* (1986–1987); and *Fragment* (1987). In 1988, the editors of *K* and *Fragment* combined their efforts to publish *Fragment K. Kontakt*, the other *samizdat* of the political opposition, was published between 1980 and 1983. Jolana Kusá, Raisa Kopsová, František Fundarek, *Život v slove a život slovom: zjavné a skryté súvislosti Slovenského samizdatu* (Bratislava: Nadácia Milana Šimečku, 1995), p. 125; Martin Šimečka, interview by the author, 25 June 1996, Bratislava, Slovakia.
 60. Those involved in *samizdat* production suggested the importance of this combination of

- factors to explain the increase after 1985. Ján Čarnogurský, interview by the author, 16 July 1996, Bratislava, Slovakia; Šimečka, interview by the author.
61. "Glasno—ale nie o Bohu," *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, No. 2, 1988, pp. 33–35.
 62. *Výber*, No. 2, 1984, p. 70.
 63. Skilling argues that *samizdat* helped develop and protect a second or independent culture in Central Europe. H. Gordon Skilling, *Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1989), p. 17.
 64. Krčméry, interview with the author. For a brief description of Krčméry's first meeting with Karol Wojtyła, see Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môcť rozvrátiť*, p. 125.
 65. Slovak religious *samizdat* contained many guides to pilgrimage sites. See for example "Mariánske pútnické miesta na Slovensku," *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť*, No. 1, 1988, pp. 27–29.
 66. *Výber* published an invitation from Moravian Catholics on the back cover of a spring issue. *Výber*, No. 4, 1985. Mikloško, though referring to the Moravian Catholics plan, credits Vladimír Jukl with pushing the idea of a night program at Velehrad. Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môcť rozvrátiť*, pp. 128–130.
 67. "Velehrad '85," *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť*, No. 3, 1985, p. 17.
 68. "Boli sme na Velehrade," *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, No. 5, 1985, pp. 5–6.
 69. Religious *samizdat* periodicals reported this range of pilgrims in attendance. There is no information regarding how many of the pilgrims actively belonged to the secret church. See "Boli sme na Velehrade," p. 8; "Velehrad '85," pp. 17–18; "Velehrad 1985," p. 17; *Vzkříšení*, No. 2, 1985, p. 15; and "Velehrad nas," *Informace o církvi*, No. 10, 1985, p. 6. Photographs of the pilgrims gathered around the Basilica at Velehrad on 7 July indicate that the pilgrims filled every inch of the square and support the magnitude of the size of the crowd reported by religious *samizdat*. KI: photos #1793, #1876.
 70. "Velehrad '85," p. 18.
 71. Attendance at Slovak pilgrimages in 1989 was also quite high, but there is much less information about that year's pilgrimages in *samizdat*. This is probably due to the fact that reports of the summer pilgrimages usually appeared in late fall *samizdat* issues, by which time the Velvet Revolution had already begun.
 72. "Pútné slávnosti na Slovensku v r. 1986," *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť*, No. 1, 1987, pp. 17–19; "Šaštín—September 1987," *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť*, No. 5, 1987, p. 11; "Šaštín—'88," *Katolícky mesačník*, No. 5, 1988, p. 1.
 73. "Gaboltove '85," *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť*, No. 3, 1985, p. 20; "Pútné slávnosti na Slovensku v r. 1986," pp. 17–19; Ján Čarnogurský, "Message from Ján Čarnogurský to Keston College," KI: CZ ROM 7/4 pilgrimages; "Pút' v Gaboltove," *Voice of America (VoA)*, 24 July 1988.
 74. "Pout' Řeckokatolíku v Lutine 1986," *Informace o církvi*, No. 10, 1986, p. 10; also see the figures that Čarnogurský sent to Keston College. Čarnogurský, "Message."
 75. "Pilgrimage at Topol'čany," *Summary of World Broadcasts (SWB)*, 13 September 1988.
 76. "Levoča 1986," *VoA*, 12 July 1986; "Record Numbers Attend Slovak Pilgrimages," *Keston News Service*, No. 280, 23 July 1987, p. 19; Čarnogurský, "Message"; "Levoča pút' 1987," *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť*, No. 4, 1987, p. 7; "Mariánsky rok na Slovensku," *Katolícky mesačník*, No. 4, 1988, p. 1; Peter Martin, "The Pilgrimage to Levoča," *RFE/RL*, 14 July 1988, p. 19; "Myšlienky z Levočskej pute," *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť*, No. 3, 1988, p. 3.
 77. Čarnogurský, interview with the author.
 78. "Pútné slavnosti na Slovensku v r. 1986," pp. 18–19.
 79. "Pút' v Gaboltove"; "Mariánsky rok na Slovensku," p. 1.

80. Father Karel Martinec, interview with the author, 4 July 1996, Senica, Slovakia.
81. "Šaštín—'88," pp. 1–3.
82. Western news organizations reported many unsuccessful police attempts to deter pilgrims, such as blocking roads, turning dogs on pilgrims, and taking pictures of pilgrims. See "Police Break Up Catholic Pilgrim's Rally," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)*, 14 August 1986, p. D3; and "Slovaks Mark End of Marian Year," *Keston News Service*, No. 308, 8 September 1988, p. 7.
83. Ján Čarnogurský, "The Underground Church and Pilgrimages in Slovakia," *Salisbury Review*, June 1988, p. 36.
84. "Open Letter of Slovak Catholics to President Gustav Husák," *FBIS*, 6 June 1983, pp. D1–D2. A Vatican report indicated that this letter was dated and sent to Husák on 15 April 1983. *FBIS*, 6 June 1983, p. D3. Mikloško and Krčméry composed the letter and collected the signatures. Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môcť rozvrátiť*, p. 144.
85. An article about the abortion reform preceded the text of the letter and reported that the Slovak signatures had been collected in only "a couple of days." *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, No. 3, 1986, pp. 18–20. *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť* reported that more than 6,500 Slovaks had signed the letter. *Náboženstvo a súčasnosť*, No. 3, 1986, pp. 21–22.
86. "Podpisy na obranu Ivana Polanského," *Informace o cirkvi*, No. 9, 1988, p. 16.
87. The full text of the petition is six pages in length, and in addition to the 31-points, it briefly explains nine concrete problems of the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia. "Podněty katolíků k řešení situace věřících občanů v ČSR," KI: CD ROM 11/3 Protests, p. 2.
88. "Dopis otce Kardinála Tomáška," *Informace o cirkvi*, No. 2, 1988, p. 7; "Riešiť situáciu veriacich v ČSSR," *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, No. 2, 1988, p. 13. Father Halík, one of Tomášek's advisers in the Czech secret church, cites Tomášek's approval of this petition as evidence of his desire to take a stronger position. Halík, interview by the author.
89. "Podpisová akce věřících," *Informace o cirkvi*, No. 2, 1988, p. 7.
90. *Křest'anske obzory* reports that 95,000 signatures had been collected after 2 weeks. *Křest'anske obzory*, No. 7, 1988, p. 27. Bishop Korec also writes that Slovak Catholics collected up to 100,000 signatures in the first two weeks. Korec, *Od barbarskej noci na slobode*, p. 404.
91. "K podpisom zo Slovenska," *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, No. 2, 1988, p. 16.
92. Krčméry, one of the individuals personally responsible for collecting signatures in Slovakia, reported that more than half of the total came from Slovakia. Krčméry, interview with the author. *Křest'anske obzory*'s tally in the September 1988 issue gave 300,000 of 500,000 total signatures to Slovakia. *Křest'anske obzory*, No. 7, 1988, p. 28.
93. František Mikloško, interview with the author, 16 July 1996, Bratislava, Slovakia.
94. Korec, *Od barbarskej noci na slobode*, p. 403.
95. Juraj Kohutiar, interview with the author, 14 August 1997, Bratislava, Slovakia.
96. Krčméry also reported the success of this strategy of waiting by the doors of churches. Krčméry, interview by the author. One young Catholic teenager from Eastern Slovakia not involved in the secret church remembered that she felt comfortable signing the petition outside the church because so many other people were doing so. L'udmila Buzgová, interview with the author, 6 August 1996, Bratislava, Slovakia.
97. "K podpisom zo Slovenska," p. 16.
98. Čarnogurský, interview with the author. For his earlier analysis of the secret church's organization, see Čarnogurský, "The Underground Church," pp. 34–37. Also see Ján Čarnogurský, "O pútiach a o inom," July 1988, in records of the research institute of RFE/RL, East European Archives, Open Society Archives, Budapest, Hungary, 300,

Czechoslovakian Unit (subfonds 30), subject file: dissent/personalities, Čarnogurskýy.

99. Čarnogurský, interview with the author; Mikloško, interview with the author.
100. Čarnogurský, interview with the author. The Czechoslovak authorities apparently did not take note of this distinction. In a 1989 interview, Vladimír Janků, the Director of the Central Committee for Church Affairs, stated that “this so-called underground church is in reality identical to Charter 77.” *FBIS*, 2 March 1989, p. 12.
101. The text of this letter was republished in *samizdat* “Verejne zhromaždenie,” *Bratislavské listy*, No. 1, 1988, p. 9; and “Výzva k verejnemu zhromaždenia,” *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, No. 2, 1988, p. 42.
102. Čarnogurský, interview with the author.
103. Mikloško, interview with the author. For the 23 March *Vatican Radio* announcement, see *SWB*, 28 March 1988.
104. *Samizdat* editors later published these signboard announcements. “Výzva k účasti na zhromaždení veriacich 25 Marca o 18:00 hod,” *Bratislavské listy*, No. 1, 1988, p. 10.
105. Kohutiar, interview with the author.
106. Korec, *Od barbarskej noci na sloboda*, p. 409; Mikloško, interview with the author; Krčméry reported that the police refused to let him leave his home. Krčméry, interview with the author.
107. Members of the Western press who witnessed the event estimated that 2,000 people attended the demonstration. “Police Break up Bratislava Church Demonstration,” *FBIS*, 28 March 1988, p. 9.
108. Hana Ponická, “Hodina Bratislavy,” 25 March 1988, typed account from the private collection of Vladimír Maňák, Bratislava, Slovakia. For an extensive collection of documents, eyewitness accounts, and photos of this demonstration see J. Ch. Korec, ed. *Bratislavský veľký piatok: zbierka autentických dokumentov o zhromaždení veriacich 25. Marca 1988* (Bratislava: Lúč, 1994). A Slovak documentary film contains footage of this demonstration. Dušan Hanák, director, *Papierové hlavy* (Slovakia: Ales, 1995).
109. “List Otca Biskupa Korca,” *Rodinné spoločenstvo*, No. 3, 1988, pp. 29–30.
110. “Bratislava Believers Protest to Premier Strougal About Police Action,” *SWB*, 13 May 1988; “Košice Priests Protest to Slovak Premier Against Police Attack,” *SWB*, 13 May 1988.
111. Mikloško, *Nebudete ich môcť rozvrátiť*, pp. 148–149.
112. “Police Break Up Bratislava Church Demonstration,” p. 9.
113. They also explain that civil society’s development is encouraged by the legal guarantees established by the rule of law, by a state apparatus that can enforce the rights of civil society, and by an economic society that can support the autonomy needed by civil society. Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition*, p. 14.
114. “O Slovensku a o Slovacich,” *Alternativa*, No. 2, March 1989, p. 46.
115. “Deputy Premier Čarnogurský on Political Position,” *FBIS*, 15 December 1989, p. 25.
116. “Programové vyhlásenie Kresťanskodemokratického Hnutia,” *Kresťanské obzory*, Nos 1–2, 1990, pp. 8–10.
117. “Prejav na zakladajúcom sneme KDĽH,” in Ján Čarnogurský, *Videné od Dunaja* (Bratislava: Kalligram, 1997), p. 220.
118. Kuhajdová, interview with the author. A brochure that HKSM distributed in the mid-1990s described its programs and explained that although the organization had been founded formally in 1990, its work had begun decades earlier through the efforts of Kolakovič, Krčméry, Jukl, and Korec. Brochure, *Hnutie kresťanských spoločenstiev mládeže*, private collection of the author.
119. Sharon Fisher, “The Slovak Democratic Coalition and the 1998 Elections,” paper written

- for the 1998 AAASS annual conference, Boca Raton, FL, 24–27 September 1998.
120. “Kováč to Head Slovak Opposition Petition,” *RFE/RL Newswire*, 24 March 1998; and “Mass Protest Demonstration in Bratislava,” *RFE/RL Newswire*, 26 March 1998.
 121. “Slovak Speaker Refuses to Accept Petition,” *RFE/RL Newswire*, 14 May 1998.
 122. “Slovakia Opts for Political Change,” *RFE/RL Newswire*, 28 September 1998.
 123. “Dzurinda Appointed Slovak Premier,” *RFE/RL Newswire*, 30 October 1998.