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Limits of Germandom: Resistance to the Nazi Annexation of Slovenia

TIM KIRK

WHEN the spoils of the defeated Kingdom of Yugoslavia were divided in 1941, the Nazis annexed the former Habsburg territories of Upper Carniola and Lower Styria to the Reich. Ostensibly this was an extension of the Anschluß of March 1938. The territories in question had been part of the Austrian half of the dual monarchy, and while they were not ethnically German their 'historical associations' with the Habsburgs were deemed sufficient for a reunion. Their annexation was to be consolidated by a policy of Germanization. More importantly, perhaps, the territories had a relatively well-developed industrial base which might usefully be incorporated into the German war economy.

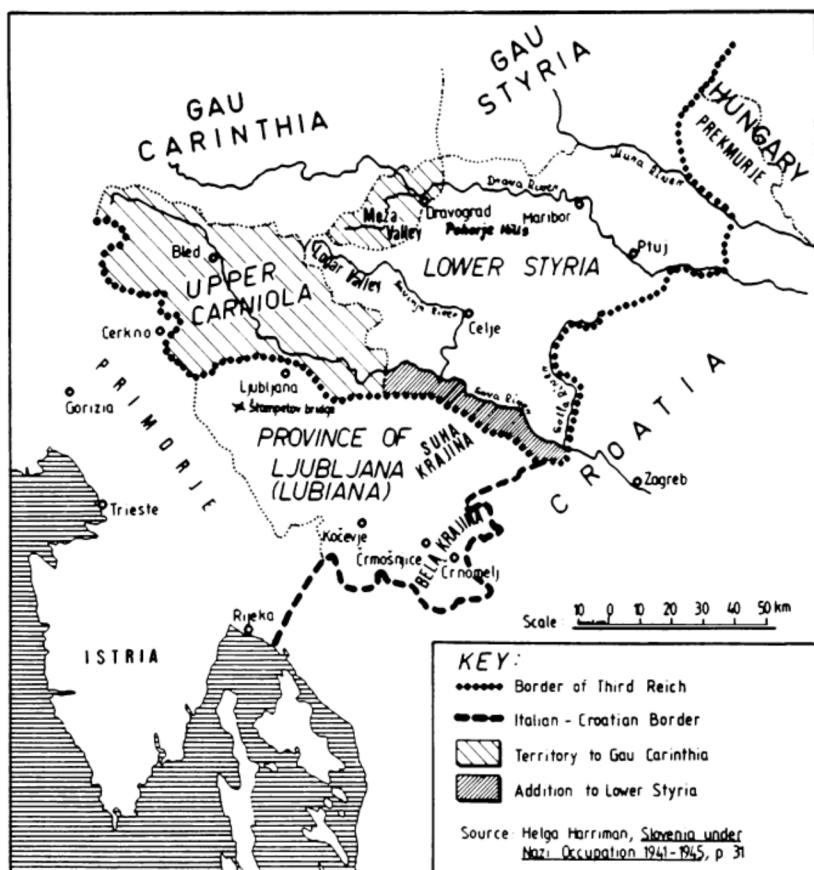
The Nazis met with resistance almost immediately, however; militant partisans — for the most part Slovene, whether from within the old borders or from the annexed areas themselves — succeeded in mounting a campaign of sabotage and disruption which presented the local authorities with problems of a different order from those in other parts of the 'Greater German Reich'. There was partisan resistance in much of the territory occupied by the Nazis, and particularly in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, but guerilla warfare within the borders of the Reich itself was rare.

The activities of the so-called 'gangs' (*Banden*) were largely restricted to the annexed areas of Slovenia, but incursions were made into areas within Austria's 1919 border as well. While partisan activities did not become the overriding concern of the local authorities, they presented a problem sufficient to merit particular attention in almost every report on the war economy by the Defence Economy Inspectorate (Wehrwirtschaftsinspektion) of Defence Area (*Wehrkreis*) XVIII.¹

The threat from the guerillas was not to be underestimated. The nature of the campaign disrupted the local economy in a number of ways.

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¹ Based in Salzburg, Defence Area XVIII covered four *Gaue*: Salzburg, Tirol, Carinthia and Styria — including the important industrial belt of Upper Styria.



The Partition of Slovenia, 1941

It aggravated the labour shortage through the 'forced recruitment' (*Zwangskreutierungen*) of local men. Farms, shops and offices were plundered and factories, power lines and other installations attacked. In short, it undermined the economic rationale of the annexation. Like their comrades further south, the Slovene partisans might eventually come to threaten vital supply lines carrying minerals from Turkey and the Balkans to the Reich.² In addition, they also threatened the stability of Carinthia and Styria proper. Many partisans were refugees

² Germany relied on the Balkans for all its chrome, 60 per cent of its bauxite, half its oil supplies and substantial proportions of its antimony and copper. Paul N. Hehn, *The German Struggle against Yugoslav Guerrillas in World War II. German Counter-insurgency in Yugoslavia 1941–1943*, New York, 1979, p. 4.

from Slovene communities, mainly south of the River Drau/Drava, in Austrian Carinthia. These had fled to Yugoslavia between 1938 and 1941, and vociferously supported the partisans' declared aim of the 're-unification of Slovenia',³ a reassertion of Slovene and Yugoslav claims to the Klagenfurt basin.⁴

Others were Austrian Communists and Socialists. The Austrian Communist Party (KPÖ) was based in Vienna, but activity in Styria and Carinthia was more often than not directed from Belgrade or Ljubljana, and there was already a strong association with the Communist-dominated Slovene Liberation Front (Osvobodilna fronta, [OF]). There was always a threat that partisan insurgency might spread into occupied Austria, and, indeed, during the last months of the war small groups of guerillas began to operate successfully in Styria and the Salzkammergut.⁵

On the whole, though, Communist agitation was much less successful in pre-war Austrian territory, even in industrial Upper Styria. This was highlighted in a report of August 1941 which contrasted the minimal Communist agitation in other parts of Styria and Carinthia with the unrest in the South-East: 'only in the newly incorporated areas of South Styria and Carniola has there recently been considerable unrest and acts of sabotage from Slovene-Communist circles'.⁶

The purpose of the following discussion is not to analyse the organization and tactics of the partisan movement or its relations with Allied secret agents; it is concerned not so much with the *intentions* of the partisans as with the effects of their campaign on the Nazi administration of the territories and the functioning of the economy there. By annexing territory whose population was ethnically non-German, and attempting to incorporate them into the 'Greater German Reich' which was at the centre of their new European order, the Nazis found themselves faced with opposition more powerful than any they had hitherto encountered within the borders of the Reich. In short, the consolidation of 'Germandom' had overreached its limits. Despite the organizational network and political will of the Communist movement

³ Josef Rausch, *Der Partisanenkampf in Kärnten im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Vienna, 1979, p. 6.

⁴ The linguistically mixed Klagenfurt basin had gone to Austria in the Treaty of St Germain, and this decision had been confirmed by plebiscite in 1921. See Thomas M. Barker, *The Slovene Minority of Carinthia*, New York, 1972, pp. 95–171.

⁵ Little has been written on partisan resistance in Austria. The most comprehensive study is Willibald Ingo Holzer, *Die Österreichischen Bataillone im Verband der NOV I POJ. Die Kampfgruppe Avantgarde/Steiermark. Die Partisanengruppe Leoben-Donawitz. Die Kommunistische Partei Österreichs im militärischen Widerstand*, D. Phil. Diss., Vienna, 1971. See also: by the same author, 'Am Beispiel der Kampfgruppe Avantgarde/Steiermark (1944–1945)' in G. Botz et al., *Bewegung und Klasse. Studien zur Österreichischen Arbeitergeschichte*, Vienna, 1978; Max Muchitsch, *Die Partisanengruppe Leoben-Donawitz*, Vienna, 1966; Radomir Luža, *The Resistance in Austria, 1938–1945*, Minneapolis, 1984, pp. 193–209.

⁶ Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv (BA/MA) Freiburg, Rüstungswirtschaft (RW) 20–18/28 (15 August 1941).

both in Germany and, after the Anschluß, in Austria, there was no comparable resistance in the Reich itself because the vital ingredient of a separate national consciousness was lacking. The Nazi authorities took great pains to monitor both the running of the war economy and popular opinion for signs of opposition from the industrial workforce. Neither the reports of the armaments inspectorates (*Rüstungsinspektionen*), nor those of the Sicherheitsdienst (SD) on the 'popular mood' contain much evidence of opposition on a scale sufficient to cause the Nazi authorities any real concern, either within the Germany of 1937 (the 'Altreich'), or in Nazi-annexed Austria. In the annexed territories of Slovenia, however, the situation was very different: incidents of industrial sabotage or acts of resistance were reported daily, and since the following discussion is concerned with the frustration of Nazi policy in the area rather than with the aspirations of the partisan movement itself, it is based exclusively on such reports, which necessarily and intentionally reflect the German perspective.

The issue of the Austro-Yugoslav border after World War I was unsettled for some time. It was complicated by the claims of Austria and the counter-claims of Yugoslavia to the linguistically mixed area of the Klagenfurt basin. While in the province as a whole Slovenes accounted for only 18 per cent of the population, here they comprised well over half (69 per cent), and there were armed incursions from Yugoslavia into Carinthia, resulting in the occupation of disputed territory by the Yugoslavs.⁷

Definitions of nationality and interpretation of statistics are difficult, however, and are often related to the political or national sympathies of the individual historian. The Austrian census of 1910 gives 66,463 Slovene speakers in the whole province, and 99,006 people of *Slovene origin* in the linguistically mixed area, an indication of the extent of Germanization in the province. A private Slovene census counted 115,808.⁸

The solution decided at Paris was a plebiscite in the disputed area, the outcome of which was a victory for the pro-Austrian camp. The results of this plebiscite are interesting from the point of view of Slovene national consciousness: of 22,025 votes cast for Austria (59 per cent of valid votes) only about 12,000 were cast by German Austrians, the rest by Slovenes. In fact it was only to the south of the River Drava (Drau), along the border of Yugoslav Slovenia, that the pro-Yugoslav camp could scrape a majority. In the Völkermarkt district, a centre of German nationalism, the pro-Austrian vote (77 per cent) was out of all proportion to the ethnically German population (59 per cent).⁹

⁷ See Barker, op. cit., pp. 105–10; F. L. Carsten, *The First Austrian Republic 1918–1938. A Study based on British and Austrian Documents*, Aldershot, 1986, p. 9.

⁸ Barker, op. cit., pp. 87 ff.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 164–65.

Despite Yugoslav complaints of irregularities, it seems that voting took place under relatively peaceful conditions and without intimidation. The implication is that, despite the mood of ethnic nationalism prevalent in Central and Eastern Europe, sufficient numbers of Slovenes in communities where they were the minority population felt a strong enough identification with that community to overcome any feelings of Slovene national consciousness or solidarity with other Yugoslavs. Not all Carinthian Slovenes were nationalists by any means.

Active or passive Germanization of the Slovene population of Carinthia had been in progress for centuries and continued under the First Austrian Republic, with the abolition of Slovene as an official language, the disappearance of bilingual signs, and so on. After the Anschluß this process became active government policy, and a number of anti-Slovene measures were instituted: the use of the language was forbidden, nationalist agitators were transferred, arrested or went into exile, there was an economic boycott of Slovene shopkeepers, and the civil rights of the minority were curtailed.

After April 1941 these policies were extended to the occupied territories, where a greater degree of resistance might be expected. The use of German was enforced in schools and churches, and steps were taken to prevent Slovene-speaking pupils from using their 'Wendish dialect' in the playground, normally a stronghold of dialect usage. This process was, however, being held up in a number of ways. The transfer of German-speaking teachers to Upper Carniola, in addition to the call-up of a number of such teachers, meant that there were fewer teachers in the Slovene districts of Carinthia proper. Similarly, the drafting of workers from Upper Carniola into Carinthia led to a discernible increase in the speaking of Slovene in those towns where such workers ('among whom, furthermore, a Communist outlook [could] often be observed') had arrived to take up jobs.¹⁰

For example in Villach, a railway town on the Italian border, a strong increase in the speaking of Slovene was reported following the arrival of fifty workers from Upper Carniola.¹¹ In the public houses of the bilingual districts of Carinthia the speaking of Slovene was increasing daily, and the German-speaking population reacted by demanding that Slovene speakers should not be employed in the area, and that there should be a general ban on using the language.¹² Ethnic Germans in Carinthia perceived a failure on the part of the authorities to take sufficiently strong measures, and the result had been an upsurge in 'the

¹⁰ Heinz Boberach (ed.), *Meldungen aus dem Reich Die geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS 1938–1945*, Herrsching, 1984, vol. 9, pp. 3156ff. (12 January 1942).

¹¹ *Meldungen*, vol. 9, pp. 3305ff. (12 February 1942).

¹² *Ibid.*

'will to resist' (*Widerstandswillen*) and 'anti-German attitudes' and an 'extremely unfavourable racial-political situation'.¹³

A determining factor in the attitudes of Slovene speakers in Styria and Carinthia was the German invasion of the Soviet Union. On the whole the Slovene minority took little interest in the affairs of the Reich, foreign policy or the course of the war. Yet, as was the case with other Slavonic minorities — notably the Czechs and the Poles¹⁴ — war with the Soviet Union seemed to spark off latent feelings of Slavonic or Communist solidarity in the occupied areas. Certainly, there was a discernibly increased interest in military events, and it was reported that in working-class circles there was a feeling that it was no longer necessary to learn German, because the Russians would settle the war in the interests of all Slavonic peoples.¹⁵ SD reporters noted that Pan-Slav and Communist sympathies were often mixed and that alongside 'Communists in working class circles, a sort of romantic Communism [was] emerging among young Slovenes, whose roots lay in Panslavism'.¹⁶

The regime was quite aware of the possibilities afforded by the war with the Soviet Union to oppositional circles, and, in particular, the adoption of Panslavism by Communists in the region. Although Berlin tended to look on all guerilla activity as rebellion and made little distinction between Communists and nationalists in the Yugoslav resistance, local German commanders were aware of the hostility between the two camps.¹⁷ SD reports underline the strong local awareness of the possibility of a common Pan-Slav front between Communists and anti-Communists such as the Chetniks.¹⁸

The activities of the resistance were similar to those elsewhere in many respects. Leaflets were distributed 'by unemployed Slovenes or work-shy individuals' calling for passive resistance and sabotage. Initially, at least, such appeals seem to have been no more successful than in the Reich, but the germ of *national* resistance in, for example, the appeal to peasants not to deliver grain to the Germans, was also the basis of what later became a persistent and disruptive partisan campaign.

Although the appeal to sabotage seems to have met with little response from the population, the Communist resistance itself stepped up its sabotage activity at the beginning of the Russian campaign, setting fire to a freight wagon with aeroplane parts and setting explosives on a bridge and a railway line.¹⁹

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *Meldungen*, vol. 7, pp. 2474–75 (3 July 1941).

¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 2475–76.

¹⁶ *Meldungen*, vol. 8, p. 2742 (8 September 1941).

¹⁷ Cf. Paul Hehn, op. cit., p. 2.

¹⁸ *Meldungen*, vol. 7, p. 2652 (14 August 1941).

¹⁹ Ibid.

In 'South Carinthia' (Carniola) the increased Communist activity in the summer of 1941 was deemed to be the principal determinant of the popular mood. In the area around Stein (Kamnik) several telegraph poles were felled and small bridges destroyed, and there were already armed clashes between security organs and Communist partisans.²⁰ Such incidents are perhaps trivial in the overall context of the Second World War, but they indicate a qualitatively different type of confrontation between regime and resistance from that in most of Austria. Further, the pattern of petty sabotage set immediately after the occupation was to continue throughout the war, and become more and more intense.

It was also a resistance which, unlike that in Germany, found some response from the local population. Despite the conclusion of SD reporters that Communist sabotage was generally condemned by the population, albeit through fear of further resettlement measures, they noted a receptiveness among working-class Slovenes.²¹

Despite the reverses of the Red Army and the 'mighty successes' of the Germans on the Eastern Front, together with the inevitable impact of the military situation on the otherwise relatively indifferent Slovenes, the assertion of Slovene nationality continued, with the demonstrative use of the language, even by employees of the German administration, and the singing of Slovene national songs by gangs of young people in the Marburg (Maribor) area.²²

Nevertheless, continuing German successes in the Soviet Union and the continued threat of compulsory resettlement, based on rumours which had circulated in Carinthia since 1939, dampened the mood of the Slovenes and did much to dispel incipient Panslavism, and to promote at least an outward appearance of loyalty. It was reported from Carinthia that Germanization measures, in particular those regarding the use of German in churches and schools, had been partially successful. The superficiality of this development was evident, however, from the immediate resurgence of the speaking of Slovene whenever imported labour from the occupied areas arrived in the *Altreich*.²³

In addition to the increased use of the Slovene language in such cases, the authorities discerned a tendency for immigrant Slovene labourers to use public houses staffed by Slovenes. At such gatherings there was evidence of Communist sympathies, and of Slovene nationalism or Panslavism, which was otherwise waning. At the same time the

²⁰ *Meldungen*, vol. 8, p. 2664 (18 August 1941).

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Meldungen*, vol. 8, p. 2935 (30 October 1941).

²³ *Altreich* was used to refer to Germany within its pre-1938 borders immediately after the Anschluß, but was now also being used to refer to the 'Greater German Reich', including Austria. In this case it refers to the border areas of Carinthia.

progress that was being made in schools was threatened by the call-up of German-speaking teachers to the forces.²⁴

The German-speaking population within Carinthia proper hoped that resettlement 'of the most incorrigible elements' would resolve the tensions between the two nationalities, and reports from the area consistently mention German resentment, and even outrage, arising from the abrasive relations between the two communities. The hostility of German speakers was sufficient to exert extra pressure on the authorities to take measures against nationalist Slovenes.²⁵ The pressure became greater and the demands clearer: no employment of Slovenes in the 'endangered' linguistically mixed areas of Carinthia; and a general ban on the use of the Slovene language in the same area.²⁶ SD reporters confirmed that there had in fact been an upsurge in anti-German attitudes and 'the will to resist' among Slovenes in Carinthia during the winter, fed by rumours from Upper Carniola.²⁷

Resettlement

Slovene workers from Carinthia were transferred to the Reich before April 1941, and German workers were imported into the area, but despite rumours there was no general resettlement programme. Resettlement began in earnest after the annexation of the occupied territories. Troublesome Slovene nationalists in particular were expropriated and expelled, either to the Reich, as forced labour, or to Serbia or Croatia. Their land and property, for which they received no compensation, went to German settlers.²⁸ The families of functionaries in Slovene cultural and social associations were often chosen for resettlement, as were those of known partisans.²⁹ Often the size of a farm and its convenience for the relocation of a German family were the deciding factors.

Resettlement measures began during the first year of occupation.³⁰ In August 1941 the war diary of the Rüstungskommando in Graz records the conclusions of a discussion about the uneasy situation which had developed in Lower Styria, 'in view of the increasing acts of sabotage and attacks by wandering bands of Communists'. A more effective and reliable *Werkschutz* system was required, but to ease the

²⁴ *Meldungen*, vol. 9, p. 3156 (12 January 1942).

²⁵ *Meldungen*, vol. 9, pp. 3156–57 (12 January 1942).

²⁶ *Meldungen*, vol. 9, p. 3305 (12 February 1942).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3306.

²⁸ Rausch, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

²⁹ Arnold Suppan, *Die österreichischen Volksgruppen. Tendenzen ihrer gesellschaftlichen Entwicklung im 20. Jahrhundert*, Munich, 1983, pp. 173–74.

³⁰ The resettlement programme never took place on the scale planned: of the 70,000 Germans expected to be resettled in the area only some 17,000 arrived. See Tone Ferenc, 'The Austrians and Slovenia during the Second World War', in F. Parkinson (ed.), *Conquering the Past. Austrian Nazism Yesterday and Today*, Detroit, Michigan, 1989, pp. 207–23 (p. 216).

general situation a termination of resettlement measures was recommended. The evacuation of the south Sava area, which was already planned, would take place anyway 'but not, as originally foreseen, by evicting people without their property, but in formal treks so that people can take their belongings with them'.³¹

Similarly, the Krainische Industriegesellschaft (KIG) in Assling (Jesenice), which experienced a number of industrial relations problems in the first few months of occupation, reported a spate of unrest in October 1941, stemming from local attempts at resettlement (*Aussiedlungsmaßnahmen*).³² (The KIG was one of the largest heavy industrial works in the region, an arms manufacturer and one of the major employers of industrial labour in Carniola.) The following February skilled workers from the company were requesting resettlement to Italian-occupied Ljubljana (Laibach), presumably thinking they would be better off there.³³

In October the authorities in Lower Styria reported 'the third wave of a resettlement project [*Aussiedlungsaktion*] in the southernmost border area of Lower Styria'. It encompassed 55,000 people and affected 'those capable of Germanization as well as the Slavonic population', all of whom were to be resettled in Lower Silesia. The evacuees were allowed to take any belongings other than cattle, agricultural equipment and furniture, and the land was to be resettled by 20,000 Germans from Italy, at the insistence of the Italians. It was hoped that the resettlement would defuse the situation in Lower Styria.³⁴ In an interesting epilogue a fortnight later it was noted by the same authorities that the evacuation had made necessary the recruitment of labour from Marburg (Maribor), which might otherwise have been used on construction sites, to attend to the vacant farmsteads.³⁵ It was, however, noted that if there was resentment at the resettlement measures among those who had been driven off their land, those who had no land were often willing to go and work in the Reich.³⁶

The first major resettlement operation within the old Austrian border took place in April 1942, when 171 families were evicted from their homes and villages and interned at Klagenfurt before being sent on to Franconia and Brandenburg.³⁷ Further resettlements took place later.³⁸

These measures had a considerable impact on the local population and were often associated with labour unrest and resistance: 'the mood of

³¹ BA/MA, RW 21–24/10 (20 August 1941).

³² BA/MA, RW 21–33/3 KTB Klagenfurt (28 October 1941).

³³ BA/MA, RW 21–33/4 KTB Klagenfurt (1–10 February 1942).

³⁴ BA/MA, RW 21–24/11 (31 October 1941).

³⁵ BA/MA, RW 21–24/11 (10 November 1941).

³⁶ BA/MA, RW 21–24/12 (20 February 1942).

³⁷ Barker, op. cit., pp. 195–96.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 195 ff. Barker's references are to the Klagenfurt basin.

the Lower Styrian workforce has deteriorated in the last few days, because there are alleged to be plans for new resettlement measures'.³⁹

Resettlement and other Germanization measures were aspects of the occupation particularly resented by the Slovenes. From the start, tension between Germans and Slovenes was based on nationality, and it was the regime's racist policies which provoked the quickest and clearest responses. Resistance to the regime in the occupied areas and, to a large extent, in the linguistically mixed Klagenfurt basin, was the national resistance of the Slovene population to a German occupation force. This national resistance was, however, closely tied to the Communist party and found its most forceful expression in the partisan movement, which was Communist dominated. There was also an economic dimension to the opposition, reflected in industrial relations problems. While some labour unrest was attributable to economic discontent, it was for the most part clearly a direct response to resettlement measures and associated rumours.

Industrial Unrest in the Occupied Areas

The problems of industry in the occupied areas reflected those in the Reich. Above all there were shortages of materials and labour; but the occupied areas had experienced the added dimension of nationalist resentment against the Germans. These were areas where there might be memories of Habsburg rule, but most of the people were not German speakers being brought 'back into the Reich'. They were largely indifferent, rather than overtly hostile, to the fortunes of the Reich until they were annexed, after the fall of Yugoslavia, and treated badly and provocatively by German administrators. Increasingly, their indifference turned to hostility and, after the invasion of the Soviet Union, to sympathy with Russia.

One of the first reports of industrial unrest in the area came shortly after the beginning of the Russian campaign, in June 1941. In a report to the Reich Security Head Office (RSHA) in Berlin it was implicitly linked with Communist agitation. Flysheets had been distributed in Carniola pointing out the superiority of Soviet tanks to those of the Reich. On 25 June 300 workers in the industrial town of Neumarkt (Novy Trg) began a strike in support of higher wages. In the usual way the leaders were arrested and the matter was resolved by a political commissar.⁴⁰ Early in the new year a further thirty-seven workers in Assling (Jesenice) were arrested for sabotage and Communist activities.⁴¹

³⁹ BA/MA, RW 21-24/12 (20 February 1942).

⁴⁰ *Meldungen*, vol. 7, p. 2476 (3 July 1941).

⁴¹ BA/MA, RW 21-33/5.

Wages in the occupied areas did not keep pace with the increase in the cost of living, and there were constant complaints about the situation. At the KIG the situation was particularly sensitive. There had already been a spate of absenteeism, which was reported to the Rüstungskommando in Klagenfurt in December, with the observation that the problem seemed to have been overcome, and there had been no serious effects on production.⁴² The major problem seemed to be the discrepancy between the rapid cost of living rises and low wage increases: 'The workers are not unaware of what wages their colleagues in the Reich earn. *Their dissatisfaction is increasing daily and their mood has reached a critical point.*'⁴³ There had been a 40 per cent increase in the cost of living against a 13 per cent increase in wages. (As an interim measure the wages of unskilled workers had been raised by RM [Reichmarks] 0.05 per hour to RM 0.55, and those of skilled workers by the same amount to RM 0.75.) Similar reports were received from other parts of the area, and employers seemed to be in agreement that the restoration of living standards would stem the increasing receptiveness of the workforce to 'enemy propaganda' and have such an effect on work discipline and performance that the extra cost would be compensated by greater productivity.⁴⁴

There was no doubt about the hardship endured by industrial workers in the area, who were increasingly presenting themselves to the local authorities in the hope of a supplement to their incomes. Nor was the connection between low wages and sympathy for the partisan movement lost on the German authorities, or on the local German-speaking population who frequently pointed out that it was 'especially among the industrial workforce that those elements were to be found who ... [were] not unsympathetic to the partisans' (*Bandenunwesen*), and it had been observed that many of those joining the partisans (*Überläufer*) were industrial workers. It was surely not perverse to suggest a connection between this disaffection and wage levels.⁴⁵

In June 1942 industrial sabotage was reported in the cokeworks of KIG, where screws, scrap metal and other objects had been used to sabotage machinery — almost literally a case of a spanner in the works. In this case, unusually, the authorities were able to report clear evidence of sabotage and the arrest of a suspect by the Gestapo.⁴⁶

Most sabotage directed at industry came from outside the workforce, however, from the Partisan movement, and Partisan activity increased

⁴² BA/MA, RW 21–33/3. There had also been unrest after resettlement measures in the area. See above pp. 653–55.

⁴³ *Meldungen*, vol. 9, p. 3304 (12 February 1942). Italics in original text.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Meldungen*, vol. 11, p. 3996 (23 July 1942).

⁴⁶ BA/MA, RW 20–18/15 (18 June 1942).

after the resettlement measures of 1941 and 1942.⁴⁷ By March 1943 comprehensive measures to protect industrial buildings and plants were being taken throughout the region, not just in the occupied areas. Although not all of these measures were a response to the threat specifically from the Partisan movement, they were nevertheless an indication of the growing threat to industry from external and internal saboteurs.⁴⁸

Apart from clearly defined acts of opposition such as sabotage, and vague references to 'labour unrest' in security reports, other developments such as those in labour discipline reflect similar trends in other parts of Austria. As Stefan Karner has argued, such infringements of labour discipline can by no means automatically be regarded as evidence of opposition to the regime.⁴⁹

Karner's other findings indicate that patterns of behaviour and the reasons for indiscipline were little different, even in occupied Lower Styria, from those in Austria and Germany: a high proportion of absence, sickness and unpunctuality on Saturdays and Mondays, and after holidays, in the tradition of 'Blauer Montag', and a higher incidence of such behaviour among women workers, who were less used to industrial discipline in any case, and had to deal with considerably greater domestic demands on their time than men.

Karner also notes that there is little correlation between indiscipline and more political forms of resistance. In his case study there was no discernible increase in 'breach of contract' cases when partisan activity intensified in Lower Styria in 1944. Finally, the response of the authorities to 'breaches of contract', by the imposition of light punishments, indicates for Karner the absence of a political threat in the 'workers' behaviour. He argues that instances of indiscipline were often simply cases of unpunctuality, and recognized as such; they were 'breaches of contract' by default, lapses in the considerably greater degree of discipline demanded under the Nazi regime than previously.⁵⁰

In the context of Styria and Carinthia and the Partisan activity, minor infringements of labour made even less impact on the local authorities than elsewhere. Yet there is evidence that 'unrest among the workforce' was not always structurally determined, whether by the demands of agriculture or by gender. The authorities themselves were quick to point out unrest in response to specific government measures, in this case above all to the resettlement of Slovenes. Not the least

⁴⁷ Cf. Barker, op. cit., p. 198.

⁴⁸ See the report on *Werkschutz* measures in BA/MA, RW 21–24/16 (March 1943).

⁴⁹ Karner, 'Arbeitsvertragsbrüche als Verletzung der Arbeitspflicht im Dritten Reich, Darstellung und EDV-Analyse am Beispiel der untersteirischen UDM-Luftfahrtwerkes Marburg/Maribor', in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, xxi, 1982, pp. 269–328 (p. 322).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

important type of indiscipline in this area was desertion to the partisans, and the loss of labour was always a prime concern of the authorities.

The Partisan Campaign

The Partisans of the borders of Carinthia and Styria were a mixture of Slovenes (an estimated 80 per cent), Austrian Germans, Carniolans and others.⁵¹ Most of the Austrians were Socialists from Carinthia and Styria, and although national resentment was probably the most important motivation for Slovene partisans, a great many of them were Communists too. The origins of the movement lay with Tito's Slovenian Liberation Front and the young Carinthian Slovenes who fled to join it after the Nazi occupation of Austria in 1938, and Partisan activities were for the most part under Communist control of some sort.⁵²

The number of people involved in the Partisan movement is impossible to calculate. Thomas Barker quotes an estimated total of about 3,500 operating on Carinthian soil, of whom 1,080 were killed and 1,027 wounded. German losses on the other hand were much higher: nearly four thousand dead (including civilians), 1,936 wounded and 3,335 captured.⁵³ The Partisans formed units of varying size, and more detailed histories of some of these, and their connections with Yugoslav and Austrian resistance groups are known.⁵⁴

Early attacks on Reich property, usually communication lines, installations, offices or personnel of the security forces or occupation administration, were reported in detail by both the War Economy Inspectors and the SD. Slovene Partisans began their activities in June 1941, and by the end of July there was an effective armed and organized resistance in Carniola.⁵⁵

Oskar von Kaltenegger, a Nazi official critical of official policy, noted in July 1941 that there was already an increase in pro-Yugoslav sentiment in Upper Carniola of a sort which Serbia had been unable to effect in twenty-three years, and which the Reich had achieved, despite an initial lack of hostility, in a couple of months.⁵⁶

In August the SD reported that despite the execution of ten active Communists there had been an increase in disruption, terror and sabotage within a few days. Four buildings were set on fire in two nights

⁵¹ Barker, op. cit. (note 5), p. 199.

⁵² Luža, *Resistance in Austria*, p. 193.

⁵³ Barker, op. cit. (note 5), p. 199. The Carinthia of the pre-1938 border is meant.

⁵⁴ See Luža, *Resistance in Austria*, chapter 18, pp. 193–206.

⁵⁵ Holzer (note 6), pp. 95–100. See also Karl Pušnik-Gašper, *Gamsi na plazu*, Ljubljana, 1958; this account of the Slovene resistance, written by a former partisan, was also published in German translation, as *Gemsen auf der Lawine*, 1980.

⁵⁶ T77-R739 KTB/Rü-In, xviii, 1 April 1940–30 September 1941, quoted in Karner, *Kärntens Wirtschaft 1938–1945*, Klagenfurt, 1976, p. 38.

(4 and 5 September). It was thought that the object of the arson was to destroy the confiscated property of Slovene expellees — in this case fodder and grain stores — which the Germans intended to distribute to incoming German settlers. The reporter noted that word had come from Laibach (Ljubljana) that all confiscated Slovene property was to be burnt before Germans could get their hands on it.⁵⁷

Investigations by the German authorities had thrown some light on the political nature of the campaign, which seemed to rest on a combination of Communist organization and outraged national feelings ('communist and Pan-Slav ideas are often mixed together').

Partisan attacks were directed not only at Reich property and personnel, but also at Slovenes known or suspected to be collaborators and their property. Following the murder of a pro-German Slovene farmer in August, a note was found which carried the inscription 'Death to the traitors of the Slovene nation. Partizani'.⁵⁸

When Slovene farmers were evicted, their property, which was to be handed over to resettled ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*), was often attacked and destroyed by the partisans rather than surrendered to the enemy. According to the SD reporter, such attacks made a negative impression on many Slovene people, who were alienated above all by the seemingly wanton destruction of food, and were afraid that they would be the first to suffer from the resulting shortages.⁵⁹

A further instrument in the containment of popular support for the partisan campaign was the threat of reprisals. By October 1941 the authorities were able to report a relaxation of the situation, and noted an increased willingness of many people to support the security forces.⁶⁰ The winter saw something of a lull in partisan activity, which was attributed to the success of the counter-measures taken by the security forces.

The partisans were not entirely inactive during the winter, however. There were attacks on the security forces, and road and rail traffic was disrupted. No action had been taken against armaments factories,⁶¹ but the Abwehrstelle of Defence Area XVIII feared further unrest in the spring and attacks on the KIG in Assling (Jesenice) especially were expected. It was noted that the Reichstatthalter and the Rüstungskommando in Klagenfurt did not share these anxieties.⁶²

Security reports from the summer indicate that the expected upsurge in activity did take place,⁶³ and cases of sabotage of machinery were

⁵⁷ *Meldungen*, vol. 8, p. 2742 (8 September 1941).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ *Meldungen*, vol. 8, p. 2889 (20 October 1941).

⁶¹ BA/MA, RW 21-33/3 (22 December 1941).

⁶² BA/MA, RW 21-33/4 (11 February 1942).

⁶³ BA/MA, RW 20-18/15 (18 June 1942).

reported from the KIG in Assling. A member of the workforce was placed under surveillance and eventually arrested by the Gestapo. There were broadly two aims in the partisan attacks. They were primarily interested in disrupting the war machine and the apparatus of occupation, and most attacks were on the security forces and communications, such as ambush of a post bus, derailment, cutting a telephone line. There was often an exchange of fire and a number of dead and wounded, and in such cases firearms and ammunition were also taken, where possible. Other operations were primarily to gain supplies. In June, for example, a group of fifty partisans raided the hospital in Assling shortly before midnight and took food, bedding, crockery and medical instruments. They also presented the medical staff with prescriptions for drugs, leading the authorities to believe that there was a qualified doctor among them. Before they left they cut the telephone wire and distributed leaflets to the patients.⁶⁴

The pattern of Partisan activity established itself fairly rapidly. Week in, week out, similar reports came from both 'Lower Styria' and 'South Carinthia' or Upper Carniola, although more activity was reported from the latter, which covered a larger area and was more important in terms of industry. The scale of activity increased relentlessly. In February 1942 it was reported from Carniola that:

Police conflicts with gangs in Upper Carniola have increased considerably. The police (6th Battalion) has lost 100 in dead alone. The available Wehrmacht units are only in a few cases requested by the police and deployed.

The report added, however, that so far there had been no serious damage to business interests from the partisans.⁶⁵

There was rarely anything new in security reports during the summer of 1942, and the main development seems to have been the increase in the resistance and its effectiveness. In the early hours of 16 July two successful explosive attacks were carried out on a coalmine, and, although some work was able to continue, productivity was impaired by the loss of transport facilities.⁶⁶ It is notable that during the course of the summer there was not only a rise in the absolute number of individual attacks, but also a qualitative change in the type of attacks reported. The plundering of farmhouses for food and compulsory recruitment from the civilian population to the partisan groups assumed less importance in the face of the growing number of increasingly successful attacks on industrial and security installations.

⁶⁴ BA/MA, RW 20-18/15 (25 June 1942).

⁶⁵ BA/MA, RW 21-24/2 (15 February 1942).

⁶⁶ BA/MA, RW 20-18/15 (16 July 1942).

Anti-partisan measures and reprisals were stepped up correspondingly. In a summary of partisan activity at the end of July it was reported that eighty-three men and seventeen women had been executed on 22 July in Cilli (Celje) following a relatively successful campaign against the Partisans, and that a large number of arrests had been made the previous week, including the capture of some seventy-two members, many of them Communists.⁶⁷

It is difficult to say how many were involved in partisan activity in the area at this time. A so-called 'compulsory recruit' who escaped from the Partisans in June reported five companies in the Stein (Kamnik) neighbourhood, with a total of over 500 members.⁶⁸ The execution of at least a hundred Partisans in July and a further ninety-five in September, along with losses to their units in conflicts with the security forces (estimated at seventy-six in September) seems to have made little impact on the level of activity:

In spite of increased police measures, unrest and bandit attacks persist. There are continual reports of bridges being destroyed, telephone and telegraph wires being cut, and attacks on isolated farms for food. Even attacks on administrative offices [*Gemeindeämter*], small industrial installations, and arson attacks on saw-mills are no longer unusual.⁶⁹

While most of the Partisan activity was restricted to the occupied areas, this was by no means always the case. In March 1943 it was reported from Klagenfurt that Partisan activity had spilled over into Carinthia proper (das Altgebiet Kärntens). Armed bands up to thirty strong had been observed around a number of villages. In the same area a Partisan group of about one hundred men had been observed and a farmer and his son, a captain in the Luftwaffe, had been murdered.

Earlier reports of sporadic attacks on industrial installations and communications networks often pointed out that little impact had been made on production. This began to change as attacks on industry became both more frequent and more serious. On 2 November 1943 there was an explosion at the KIG and a range of machinery and equipment was either destroyed or put out of action. The cost of material damage was RM 4,000; the cost through loss in productivity had not yet been estimated at the time of the report. Four days later a machine mechanic from the same company was murdered at his home. On 6 November sabotage was reported at the Mitteleuropäisches Bergwerk AG in Mies (Mežica), and ten days later about 600 Partisans attacked a textile factory in Domschale (Domžale).⁷⁰ Nor were these

⁶⁷ BA/MA, RW 20-18/15 (31 July 1942).

⁶⁸ BA/MA, RW 20-18/15 (25 June 1942).

⁶⁹ BA/MA, RW 20-18/15 (30 September 1942).

⁷⁰ BA/MA, RW 21-33/11, Anlage (Appendix) 22, undated report for November 1943. A similar report was filed for Stein (Kamnik) in December: ibid., Anlage 37.

the only events of the first fortnight of November. The attacks on industry took place against a background of other murders, severed communication lines and attacks on the security forces; one report from the KIG commented 'As usual the bandits were able to escape unrecognized'.⁷¹

A summary report for the last quarter of 1943 spoke of a deteriorating security situation, particularly in Upper Carniola, so that a number of local arms factories were in danger of attack by the Partisans 'at any moment'.⁷² As a result productivity had been severely disrupted, particularly at a factory manufacturing aircraft parts which had been attacked by Partisans shortly before Christmas.⁷³

In the Mießtal (Meža Valley) the situation was not quite as tense, but still 'continue[d] to be serious'.⁷⁴ By the end of January there were reports of serious incursions into 'South Carinthia — the former plebiscite zone'.

The new year (1944) started with an unsuccessful sabotage attack on an HEP station belonging to the KIG on 10 January, and a massive explosion at the gunpowder works (Pulverfabrik) in Stein (Kamnik) the following day, resulting in material damage of between RM 120,000 and RM 150,000. Productivity was reduced by half.⁷⁵ The Rüstungskommando in Klagenfurt listed a further separate fifteen incidents of sabotage and partisan activity in January where 'war works were directly or indirectly affected'.⁷⁶

A report from Lower Styria of July reflects the increased intensity and success of the partisan campaign: 'Undiminished Partisan activity [*Bandentätigkeit*] in Lower Styria has directly affected arms production through attacks on the works of Zugmayer and Gruber ... and indirectly through explosives attacks on railway lines and property, interference with electric cables, "forced recruitments" and losses in coal production.' Damage amounting to two and a half million Reichsmarks had been caused by the destruction of a textile factory supplying the forces. A month later the Partisan problem seems to have been almost beyond the control of the forces at the disposal of the local authorities. The report for August speaks of Partisans operating 'in groups of up to three thousand', and 'effectively unhindered' by the inadequate security forces. Partisan operations, it was added, now extended over the 1919 border.⁷⁷

⁷¹ BA/MA, RW 21–33/11, Anlage 30, KIG report to RüIn xviii, Salzburg (6 December 1943).

⁷² BA/MA, RW 21–33/11.

⁷³ BA/MA, RW 21–33/12, Anlage 2.

⁷⁴ BA/MA, RW 21–33/11.

⁷⁵ BA/MA, RW 21–33/12.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ BA/MA, RW 21–24/22.

Material damage to bridges and so on was now less of a problem than 'forced' conscription by the Partisan groups. The drain of workers was less direct in its impact than material sabotage, but in the long term probably more disruptive. Regime reports frequently referred to conscription to the Partisans as *Zwangskräftigung*, that is to say 'forced recruitment', but the above report is understandably sceptical about the alleged use of force, and where the term is used it is accompanied by the interjection 'often without force' ('oft ohne Zwang'). This scepticism seems to be justified by the tendency of reports to categorize all recruitment to the Partisans as forced, giving the impression that voluntary recruits — 3,000 in June 1943, of whom six or seven hundred were of conscription age — were numerically more important only earlier in the Partisan campaign, when 'forced recruitments' were negligible in comparison.⁷⁸ It can only be assumed that the authorities were often unsure whether force had been used, or what exactly was the nature of relations between the Partisans and the local population, and used the term to cover all recruitment, especially after Partisan raids.

As the tide of the war turned, reports of 'Zwangskräftigung' became more frequent. One such report also contains an interesting description of the Partisans:

On the 24th at 9.45 p.m. a large troop of partisans entered the village of Karner-Vellach (Borough of Assling) and took more forced recruits. The partisans were very systematic, surrounded individual houses with ten or twelve men, searched them and took the men in question with them. According to witnesses the partisans were wearing spotless grey green uniforms, and carrying arms, revolvers and hand grenades. On their caps they wore both the Yugoslav tricolour and the Soviet star. Fathers of families with several children were spared... The searches lasted from 9.45 until 2.00... Afterwards the whole village was surrounded and villagers were unable to notify the authorities. After their disgraceful behaviour they returned, in formation, to the woods.

Twenty-two workers from the KIG alone were taken, and a further ten subsequently failed to turn up for work.⁷⁹

Occasional incidents of 'forced recruitment' were now reported with increasing frequency, and were viewed by the authorities and employers with correspondingly increasing concern. The gunpowder factory in Stein (Kamnik) reported in January 1944 that 'in recent weeks' the number of such recruitments had increased so dramatically in the Littai area that the greater part of the male working population was simply gone, and added that women and girls had been taken too.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ BA/MA, RW 20-18/19 (12 July 1943).

⁷⁹ BA/MA, RW 20-18/19 (28 June 1943).

⁸⁰ BA/MA, RW 21-33/12, Anlage 1.

Shortly afterwards, in February 1944, a company in Krainburg (Kranska Gora), Luftfahrtgerätewerke Hakenfelde GmbH, submitted a seven-page memorandum to the Rüstungskommando in Klagenfurt concerning the effects of Partisan activity on production. Clearly the most pressing problem was 'forced recruitment'. Skilled workers were being recruited systematically one after the other, and there was no reason to suppose all of them were going of their own free will. The company had been barely touched by Partisan activity until the massive increase in 'forced recruitment' in the spring of 1943, and sixty-three workers had been lost in the first six weeks of 1944 alone. The report cited local rumours that the Partisans were deliberately aiming to sabotage production by recruiting as many skilled workers from industry as possible. In the case of Hakenfelde this seemed to be true: those skilled workers in reserved occupations who had not been enlisted by the Wehrmacht had been recruited by the Partisans, and the disruptive effect was doubled by the necessity of not only replacing them, but also training largely unskilled labour. The firm forecast that there would be a 15–20 per cent loss in production in March and that the loss of the workers who had already gone would continue to be felt in April and May.

In conclusion the report makes one or two general points about the overall situation, popular opinion and morale. There was a widespread feeling that nothing effective was being done to combat the Partisans, and even that 'the Germans are afraid of the bandits'. The Partisans themselves had now moved down from their camps and were ensconced in villages, from which they operated; their total strength in Upper Carniola was estimated at 2,500–3,000; they were sending out recruitment notices to the local Slovene population, including those in Reich service; and extrapolating from recent events, the company feared that the town of Krainburg (Kranska Gora) might be occupied by the Partisans in the near future if no decisive counter-measures were taken.⁸¹

Material provided by Hakenfelde, which accompanied the security forces' monthly report to Klagenfurt at the end of February, listed a total of twenty-eight 'forced recruits' in 1943 and a further fifteen in January and February 1944.⁸² On 3 March the company reported the loss of three to four workers daily, most of whom were skilled,⁸³ and at that time the number of forced recruits in Upper Carniola was reported to be one hundred to two hundred daily.⁸⁴

⁸¹ BA/MA, RW 21–33/12, Anlage 36. The estimate of the total number of partisans seems modest, given reports from Lower Styria of 'bands' of up to 3,000 and the reported voluntary recruitment of 3,000 men in June 1943 alone. See pp. 663–64.

⁸² Ibid., Anlage 43.

⁸³ Ibid., Anlage 69.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Recruits to the Partisans from Important War Works, April–Aug. 1944

	APR.	MAY	JUN.	JUL.	AUG.	TOT.
KIG (Assling)	220	171	38	157	91	677
Hakenfelde (Krainburg)	66	38	16	18	23	161
Schubert (Krainburg)	14	8	21	2	2	47
Gunpowder works (Stein)	35	1	1	1	1	39
Streiteben Steelworks (Gutenstein)	22	64	25	25	45	181
Bergwerk AG (Mieß)	105	58	37	85	45	330

Source: RW 21–33/14 Anlage 20

Losses in the first half of 1944 in the area under Klagenfurt totalled 2,509, 1,200 of them from the KIG alone — a quarter of the workforce. Production losses ranged from 10 per cent to 40 per cent.⁸⁵ The degree of compulsion necessary in the ‘Zwangsrekrutierungen’ is again occasionally questioned in reports, and there are many instances of workers going over to the Partisans voluntarily, sometimes *en masse*: ‘on 1 March, 23 workers from the Laibach [Ljubljana] area all left their jobs in the Schubert works in Krainburg Wart and went over to the Partisans’.⁸⁶

Increasingly, also, there were armed conflicts between partisans and security forces. The Styrian gendarmerie reported an apparently successful battle in Poessnitztal in August 1941, which lasted two and a half hours, and resulted in the deaths of five Partisans (one of them in hospital, after the event), and the capture of another three.⁸⁷ No mention was made of losses to the police. In a similar report of March 1943, however, a policeman was killed and machine pistols, ammunition, clothes and boots were carried off by the Partisans, who suffered no losses.⁸⁸

As with other types of Partisan activity, the number and intensity of armed conflicts increased in 1944. In August of that year, for example, there was a clash between Styrian security forces and an armed group of Partisans estimated to be some 2,000 strong, following which many of the group’s members moved into the Mieß (Meža) Valley, where there were then four such clashes within little more than a week. In one instance the security forces repelled an attack by Partisans by using a tank. The events took place against a background of concerted distribution of leaflets by Communists urging the local workers, for the most part miners, to destroy the mines, ignore call-up papers to the

⁸⁵ BA/MA, RW 21–33/14, Anlage 20.⁸⁶ BA/MA, RW 21–33/12, Anlage 69.⁸⁷ DÖW 12,932, pp. 75–76.⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 78.

Wehrmacht and join the liberation army; the now successful sabotage of communications by the bombing of bridges, roads and railways; and the continued kidnapping or defection of workers.⁸⁹

Partisan activities also became increasingly common to the north of the 1919 border during the latter years of the war: one source speaks of a retreat before superior Partisan forces at Deutschlandsberg in Styria in November 1944.⁹⁰ Attempts were also made in 1944 by Austrian Communists working with Tito and the Soviets to develop a broad-based popular resistance movement among the German Austrian population, the Österreichische Freiheitsfront (ÖFF). Little support was forthcoming in Styria and Carinthia, where the organization hoped to attract support in the wake of the successful Partisan campaign.⁹¹ The industrial area of Upper Styria, where perhaps most support might have been expected, was separated from the turbulent border areas by a swathe of countryside dotted with small towns, traditionally conservative, and/or German nationalist and difficult for Communists and Slovene nationalists to penetrate. In any event there is no substantial evidence of widespread active support for the resistance in Styria from any source, although of course documentation for the last months of the war is sporadic.

By the spring of 1945 Styria and Carinthia had become the scene of regular army operations as Group E of the German army retreated from the South-East. By then the local Partisans, along with other Partisan groups advancing from Yugoslavia, had passed from sabotage of military strategic and industrial targets and skirmishes with the local security forces to harassment of the regular troops of the retreating German army, in support of Tito's advance.⁹²

The Partisan campaign, in so far as it affected the Nazi authorities, was largely restricted to those areas of Yugoslavia occupied by Germany during the Balkan campaign and integrated into the Greater German Reich. It rarely extended into Austria proper. Where the Partisans successfully penetrated Styria and Carinthia (that is to say, where they crossed the borders set in 1919 by the Treaty of St Germain and the subsequent plebiscite), that penetration was restricted to the linguistically mixed area along the border. The Partisans themselves were overwhelmingly Slovene speakers.

The impact of Partisan activity was considerably greater than that of any other form of opposition in any other part of occupied Austria or even the Greater German Reich. Real material damage was caused to industry, and the persistence of the campaign both drained industrial

⁸⁹ BA/MA, RW 21–33/14, Anlage 20.

⁹⁰ DOW 12,932.

⁹¹ Luža, *Resistance in Austria*, pp. 197–98.

⁹² Barker, op. cit., pp. 199ff.

labour and diverted the energies of the security forces. Whereas elsewhere the Defence Economy Inspectors were chiefly preoccupied with problems of labour and of the supply of raw materials, these problems were overshadowed in Styria and Carinthia by the sustained campaign of terror, sabotage and disruption along their borders. The activities of the Partisans on (nominally) Reich territory serve above all to indicate the weakness of the mainstream organized resistance both in Germany itself and in occupied Austria, and the sporadic nature of other forms of opposition. The Partisans were more of an extension of the Yugoslav resistance, which was much stronger.

Slovene resistance leaders had certain advantages over their German Austrian fellows in mobilizing support. Above all, the sense of separate Slovene nationality was incomparably greater than the national consciousness of Austrians. The importance of national consciousness was acknowledged above all by Communists, both in Yugoslavia, where the mixture of nationalism and Communism created a powerful and successful resistance force, and in Austria, where national independence was a major plank of the policy of the KPÖ. Furthermore, while the regime did all it could to make Austrians identify with the Reich and to increase their feelings of German nationality, its policy towards the Slovenes could only alienate them further. The first Partisans fled from occupied Austria to Yugoslavia in 1938 in the wake of Nazi discrimination and persecution, and future policy was characterized by crass attempts at Germanization (to the point of pedantic discussions about the changing of place names), resettlement and reprisals.

The case of the Slovene Partisan campaign serves to underline a number of points. Firstly, that resistance and opposition were responses to hardship and persecution, which affected most Germans and Austrians to a far lesser degree than either racial and political minorities within the Reich or the people of occupied Europe. Secondly, that national consciousness was a greater motivation in resistance than the class consciousness which found uneven expression in industrial unrest and indiscipline or a broader political consciousness which failed, in the adjacent Austrian territory which had been annexed by Germany in 1938, to achieve a breakthrough outside a circle of committed political activists. Thirdly, that even given an ethnic minority suffering discrimination and attendant economic hardship, successful resistance relied heavily on the proximity and support of a powerful, organized and sympathetic force external to the situation (in this case the Yugoslav Communists and Tito's Partisans). Where such support was absent, other persecuted minorities and isolated opposition movements (for example, the Burgenland Croats, foreign workers, the Jewish community or the Austrian Communist Party) were unable to mount a successful resistance.