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State secrets and public information in Slovenia

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Slovenia's aim to join NATO in the last years and months produced very intense debate about role of media in public debates concerning »military« matters. Politicians in Slovenia have already decided that the country has no other choice but NATO and EU being a part of enlargement, although public opinion polls showed that a very poor majority of Slovenes supported such efforts. Slovene minister of foreign affairs, dr. Dimitrij Rupel, claimed media were to blame for that. But despite such claims, in-deep analysis proves, that many of tensions between recent Slovenian government and »civil society« groups has very deep roots. Motives for opposing Slovenia joining NATO are various - from traditionally very »pacifistic« public environment in Slovenia (in 1991 even former president Kucan and an certain number of politicians signed declaration demanding complete demilitarization of Slovenia) to the wrong state propaganda campaign »for« NATO and very inadequate answers concerning NATO, which state authorities are providing to the public. One of the problems is also the fact, that in the process of joining NATO government is adopting new laws which are putting new restrictions in the field of defining and access to »state secrets« and that on the other side journalists and public in positive Slovene legislation have not important »counter-weapons« in the form of similar in western democracies »normal« rights, for example the right to hide the sources of their secret and confident information's.

Cases: Prosecution or protection?

In mid-July 1997, Jadran Vatovec, a journalist, was served a court summons. The Defense Ministry requested him to be interrogated and charged with disclosing military or official secret, which is punishable by a three to five year of imprisonment sentence under the law, and if he thereby compromised the national defense capacities, by as much as ten years of prison. Naturally, Vatovec appeared at the hearing in the company of his counsel and did not plead guilty to any of the charges brought against him (by a member of the intelligence service of the Defense Ministry and a "regular" member of the civilian judiciary), returned to his editorial office and is now waiting for the Prosecutor's decision on (not) indicting him.

What did Vatovec write and in which way has he, in the opinion of the Defense Ministry or some of its officials, compromised the state's defense capacity?

He wrote nothing more than what every schoolboy knows in Ljubljana - he wrote about shady deals regarding the procurement of Israeli howitzers and mortars and in order to prove that there was truly something fishy in these deals and that at least two defense ministers should answer for that, he quoted parts from the report of the Intelligence Service of the Defense Ministry which stated that arms were bought without undergoing final testing, that used rather than new arms were in question, that the serial numbers had obviously been tampered with, in other words that underhand deals were in question. The Defense Ministry or some of its big shots concluded that the journalist has published data eroding the state's defense capacities and is now demanding from the court to imprison that journalistic traitor for at least three or five years, and, if there is justice, for as long as ten years.

Vatovec is not the only journalist whom the Army tried to silence. Another example is the case of Bojan Budja, a journalist from Novo Mesto, who published some information on the sale of arms which clearly show that individual high officials of the Defense Ministry charged hefty commissions on the sale of these arms to Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Members of the "authorities" burst into Budja's flat and in front of his children and wife ransacked it and took away documentation which contained nothing supportive of the charges the Army wanted foist on him.

In fact, at these hearings both Budja and Vatovec were asked to disclose the names of the people from whom they got the documents proving that some high-placed defense officials cared more for their own (material) security, than that of the state, which is their job which they do for a fat bundle and not for the love of that same state. And that is the "catch" - to find the "leak", that is, if there does exist a "leak", to find a way to prevent this information, which is normally interesting for all those who pay taxes and thereby finance defense too, from reaching the public.

One of the last major similar events happened to Maribor Vecer's journalist Blaz Zgaga. In June 2000 members of criminal police entered his flat (covered with court warrant) in search for »military document.« Journalist gave them alone what they needed. It was an copy of the document which proved, that Slovene and American military secret services have cooperate in the »Sava« operation in which Slovene authorities provided American side information's and prognosis about events in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The main problem was in the fact, that this cooperation was hidden from National Security Board and even the chief of Slovene military intelligence (OVS). Prosecution has put heavy charges against the journalist, claiming that he »jeopardized the state security« and that that could have »heavy consequences« for national security because newspapers revealed state secrets.

Not only in the time when socialism in Slovenia was well and alive, state's authorities tried to stop the avalanche of leaks also with some other, non-judicial measures in last decade. In six cases in the nineties journalists have been invited to so called »informative talks« to the Ministry of Interior. Police tried to find out, how journalists and editors became highly classified information's. And, surprisingly, on this »hearings« journalists, beside the fact, that in Slovenia no special »shield laws« for journalists exist, have defend themselves with referring to their »right to protect their sources.«

Such situation in Slovenia soon sparked on-going public discussion, how to resolve the conflict between the state's right to protect their secrets and public's right to be well informed. The dilemma is of course not a new one, but is new for all post -socialist states. How should the press balance the interests of the nation against its own duty in an open society to report what it knows? And when, if ever, does the press have an obligation to suppress information that it has obtained through official or unofficial channels?

The lack of special »shield laws« for journalists on one side and new restrictions in the field of defining state secrets could lead to the legal praxis, which is not obvious and normal from the view of modern European and American standards. Slovenian Penal code, for example, defines, that "military or other person, who informs or gives information to unauthorized person should be punished with up to five years

jail.« But the same punishment is defined also for other persons, especially for revealing of state secrets. The problem is in improper laws; in Slovenia - and also in some other states journalists do not have, as for example in USA the explicit right to protect their sources. The Slovenian Penal code is in the field of revealing the state and military secrets in principle headed against state officials, but also allows punishment of journalists and editors.

Opponents of journalists' right to shield the source of information argue, that state's interests are above this right. They say, *»that in extreme cases the journalists claim for themselves the rights and privileges of a secret intelligence agency; total protection of sources and methods, a unilateral right to decide whether to pay for information and when and whether to release it.«* They argue that journalists' right to shield the source of information on other side undermines state's policy. Secrecy is important in the free flow of ideas, both within and among governments and it is absolute vital in the area of intelligence, because people are not willing to cooperate with agency if their names could be published because of the leaks. If a government cannot keep secrets and stop a trend of leaks other governments could withhold a lot of sensitive and important information to such a country.

Lack of Shield laws

Journalists in Slovenia disagree with above mentioned solutions. What they want is shield legislation for journalists, so that they could not be punished by fines or imprisonment when they refuse to identify their sources. They are convinced that *»journalist cannot be a betrayer.«* The reasons for such formulation are well-known. As journalists stated in several occasions, for journalist the most crucial kind of confidence is the identity of a source of information. To betray a confidential source would mean, to dry up many future sources for many future reporters. Without right of journalists to protect their sources state authorities could simply *»annex the news media as an investigative arm of government«* and because of that the reporters and the news would be the immediate losers. Even more, if journalists would be often required to identify their sources there would undoubtedly be a shortage of inside sources. At the end, the free flow of information, one of the fundamental conditions of an open society would be threatened.

Because of that the Slovenian journalists are convinced, that the national interest of the state is best served, when the government and the press each attend to their own traditionally defined roles and responsibilities. Speaking openly; the presumed duty of the government is to govern and presumed duty of the press is to publish. In accordance with this opinion Slovenian Journalists organization also presented an draft proposal of a new Freedom of Information Act. In this proposal the third paragraph suggests following formulation; *»Journalist is in court obliged to reveal the essence of gathered information and is not obliged to disclose the source of information. The appointed states' representatives are obliged to protect secret information's and the journalist should not be judged for publishing confident information's.«*

The problem is, that such formulation was never adopted. Firstly, protection of sources of information -- which for journalists is of the utmost importance -- has again been avoided, despite the fact that it was a

subject of many debates over the past decade. The new law says that "*editors, journalists and authors of articles are not obliged to reveal their source of information, unless the penal code requires that they do so.*" Given that the penal code does not recognize any special rights of journalists (whereas it honors the right of physicians, lawyers and priests not to reveal what they know), journalists are obliged to reveal everything they know in court.

Practice outside Slovenian borders is quite different, and the rights of journalists in Western Europe and the U.S. are defined more precisely. This Orwellian characteristic is all but accidental -- it is quite similar to what existed in the laws of General Franco's Spain about half a century ago. Because of that, journalist could be easily forced to disclose the source of information. As remedy journalist has constitutional right to deny answer on the court. But the court has still the right to punish a witness (with prison sentence or fine) for such non-cooperation. Slovene journalists – at the moment – have the right to protect their sources, but defined only from the European legislation, which is valid in Slovenia. But not in the form of specific Slovenian laws. And this could cause some problems, especially in the transitional period to the full membership of Slovenia in EU.

On the other hand, the front of »secrecy« is getting better. Because of the pressures from new Slovene allies the new law on »Secret Information's« was adopted; officials who are dealing with secret materials (and even their families) are now been »screened« on very wide range and possibilities, that public could be informed about some dangerous mistakes or consequences of policy which is covered with veil of »secrecy« - are better then ever.

Another similar problem is ignorance of state authorities to made available demanded information. Popular government without popular information is a contradiction. And because of that new Slovenian Media Law gives journalists, formally, effective weapons for acquiring of information's. Slovene legislation defines in several articles that state, local and similar authorities have duty to inform the public with complete and true information from the activities of their working field. The law also defines, that "*journalists have the right to gather information under the same conditions,*" and that refusing of providing information to journalist is possible only in cases, when such information will be labelled as state, military or business secret.

In reality, journalists often do not get information they acquired, even if they are not labeled as secrets. State authorities simply ignore demands. Last case – minister of foreign affairs Dimitrij Rupel argued (in public debate with one columnist) that Slovene press is leading »anti-NATO campaign.« As an proof he cited an »internal« (but not »secret«) study of ministry. When asked to reveal this study, his ministry (and this was obvious breach of positive Slovene law) refused to provide study with copies of »anti-NATO« articles to several journalists. Despite this measure newspapers (Mladina and Dnevnik) got the »forbidden« copy of the »study«. Analysis proved, that study was completely false and misleading, because articles have been descried as »anti-NATO« headed in all cases in which computer programme »Infoclip«

recognized the word »NATO« in the articles. Because of that, even cartoons (with jokes on actual minister Rupel) and neutral information's from press agencies were described as »anti-NATO propaganda«

NATO membership discussion

This leads us to the next important topic – interaction between media and especially journalists and military and government in the case of public debate about Slovenia joining the NATO.

It is well known that public debate in Slovenia about NATO is (from the standpoint of the supporters of Slovenia's accession to NATO) is not going well. The number of Slovenians in favour of joining NATO has dropped to under 50 percent for times in 2001 and was under 50 percent in the whole 2002. This sounded the alarm for government officials and marked the beginning of a fierce media campaign against critics of NATO membership. A fierce government campaign was launched in Slovenia aimed at convincing the domestic and foreign public that Ljubljana should join NATO as soon as possible. A decision to act in this direction by Slovenia's cabinet and parliament was made several years ago, and now in addition to Slovenia, Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania and Slovakia are also lined up in front of NATO's doors.

In order to keep pace with its competitors, the Slovenian Parliament recently granted additional funding to the Defense Ministry, allegedly for the purpose of modernization. Thus, by the end of the decade the military budget will grow to 1.87-2.3 percent of GDP. To gain wide public support the complete abolishing of conscript army (and establishing professional army in 2004) was offered to the public, with warning, that conscription army would be reinvented in the case that Slovenia fail to join the NATO. Much less but not at all insignificant money has been invested in preparing the domestic public for the move. Officials are using all available means, mostly the Internet. A special Web site called Slovenia & NATO was created (<http://nato.gov.si>), and the cabinet earmarked a rather large sum for "informing the public." In addition to this site the government information established »NATOFON« (Nato-phone), answering service to advise the people on "how Slovenia is being included in NATO."

Then everything has gone from bad to worse. In an polemic in the Delo newspaper last year opponents of the official views regarding joining NATO fiercely accused few opponents of the government plan, describing them as communists, liars, ignorant and suspicious people and even because of "their family ties with Serbia," this immediately disqualifying them from discussing "a topic of such importance to the state." Minister Dimitrij Rupel (in charge of foreign affairs to the extent allowed by Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek) and Anton Bebler, chairman of the Atlantic Council in Slovenia, have been at the forefront. The latter has a long history of being in the right place at the right time, and was during the socialist era one of the key promoters of the former Yugoslavia's system of national and social self-defense, and recently, promoting the non-toxic, almost healing effects of depleted uranium.

The bellicose and racist vocabulary of advocates of Slovenia's NATO membership has taken by surprise only that part of the liberal public that believed that such verbal attacks should be expected from rightists and clerics. "Once they were all for socialism and Yugoslavia, and today for Euro-Atlantic integration," author Peter Kovacic Persin summed it up in an essay in the Delo paper. Persin added that the current euphoria in promoting Slovenia's membership recalls the rhetoric of the past when socialism, self-management and the non-aligned movement were considered projects of the future, which could only be doubted by class enemies. *"These ever more nervous attacks by the promoters of Slovenia's NATO membership are very hard to understand because the government project is currently being criticized only by a handful of people and a group of university students from the Neutro organization."*

Public opinion polls have revealed the reasons for this growing nervousness -- there are now more opponents of NATO membership than those supporting it. The drop in support has been particularly noticed over the past months, when the number went below the 50-percent mark. According to a Polibarometar survey, commissioned by the Drnovsek cabinet and taken by the Center for Public Research and Mass Communications with the Ljubljana-based Faculty of Social Studies, at the beginning of the survey, in January 1997, 61.3 percent were for NATO membership and only 20.5 percent were against. In the following years the ratio continued to change to the detriment of NATO membership backers. The survey showed that the major drops (called "oscillations" by the defense ministry) occurred at times of crisis, such as in May 1999, when the intervention in Yugoslavia was in progress, or at the beginning of the year, when debates on the damaging effects of depleted uranium began. Until 2000, the number of supporters varied between 50.9 and 58.7 percent, but in 2001, the red light lit up. In January, April and September, the number of supporters dropped for the first time below 50 percent, and the last three months have shown that "oscillations" have become a trend. The last results of Politbarometer are better – above 50 percent for joining NATO – but intervention against Iraq could have cause a drop in public opinion support. Exactly in the moment when Slovenians have to decide on referendum – on 26 of March – to join or not to join the NATO and European Union. Famous CATI parallel elections in last November proved that 39 percent of asked were against and 38 percent for Slovenia joining NATO.

Reasons for lack of support for Slovenia joining NATO

Where are the reasons for such lack of public support of Slovenia joining the NATO? Reasons for that are several and are hard to describe them in few words. Some of them have historical background. To be in army for Slovenes often in history meant that they have to fight for some foreign interests in foreign lands. The two real wars for freedom were fight with »territorial« armies, based on the theory of »total defense« (partisans in II world war and short war for independence in 1991) Because of the new demands in changing world – and because of NATO, as seen from Slovenia -, is now abolishing this concept. Peace activism in Slovenia was very important during eighties. The fear from Russians is not exactly what Slovenians were feeling in last decades. The state was under Soviet pressure in the time of Stalin after 1948

but this is long history. Russians and Soviets were even allies in wars in which Slovenia became autonomous province in SHE Kingdom 1918 and liberated one third of its present territory in 1945. And Slovenia was, not to forget, a part of non-alignment Yugoslavia. Many Slovenes are not happy when CNN is now informing the world, that »seven ex-Soviet republic« (and between them Slovenia) are joining the NATO. For Slovenia year 2002 is because of that also the year, as dr.Jože Mencinger, famous economist and the rector of Ljubljana University stated, *»the year in which Slovenia joined the East.«*

In fact, Slovenia is also the best example which proves, that thesis some famous scientists have defended so often (you can find them also on the Web) that public support for NATO is *»higher in the countries which are more democratic, with higher standards of living etc.«* is wrong. In one such analysis we can read, that *«individuals from countries with stronger access of the ex-Communist party to power will be less supportive of their country's membership in NATO«,* that *»pro-integrationists are more likely to support NATO membership«,* that *»better educated individuals...residents of urban areas and younger individuals are expected to be more supportive of NATO.«* In Slovenia public support for EU remains very high for more than decade, but educated people, residents of urban areas and students are predominantly against Slovenia joining NATO. A lot of them do not want »militaristic«, »unilateralist« future, the world in which bigger countries are using double standard in foreign policy, such as USA under present government is offering now, but simply something different, some »better world.« And Slovenia is, without doubt, the most advanced country in comparison with others in the last group of states, invited in NATO.

One of the main reason for lack in public support for NATO is also on the side of Slovenian Government. The reason that media doubted political decision on joining NATO is primarily complete lack of public debate on the issue. There was actually no arguments presented on why Slovenia shouldn't join the alliance and on the other hand there was a strong political will expressed on joining it. TV Slovenia was, for example, being accused of being selective, because it ended transmission of parliamentary public debate on NATO as soon as politicians ended their speeches on why we should join NATO and the opposition begun presenting counter arguments, a.go.

Because public television served as *»an information servant of authority.«* (Finance, 18. 1. 2002) a funny thing happened. The newspapers assumed a new role, since there was no publicly expressed arguments against NATO, journalist felt they should fill in the blanks. And they did. Because the politicians were so eager on presenting arguments for NATO, journalist presented counter arguments. The question, if media advocate pro or contra standpoints or should they simply present all arguments and pass no judgments arose only for short time. General impression was, that politicians were guilty of misleading the public, since they refused to tell the exact costs of joining the alliance.

Slovene government made also several other mistakes. Without debating much, Drnovsek's cabinet approved of a new financial injection for the army worth 533 million German marks, and moreover included a new airplane for the Government on the list of military equipment. *»If we do not make up our minds we will lose credibility in international relations and become one of the states that the Americans*

call 'failed countries'. They are the countries which are not capable of providing for their own national security". With these words Slovenian defense minister Anton Grizold explained the new national investment immediately after the government session at which additional 60 billion tolar (or 533 million German marks) were allocated for the equipment for Slovenian army.

Public is also unsatisfied with government's answers on questions about future military spending. Apart from the regular funds allocated from the state cashbox; in 1994, along with the regular budget, Slovenian parliament allocated "extra" funds amounting to 511 million Euros. According to the official explanation, the expenditure was necessary because Slovenia (despite the fact that from the former Yugoslav army it had inherited more than 80 tanks, tens of combat vehicles, complete infantry armament and similar) was "building an army from scratch". The half of sum was spent on the equipment for the 10th motorized battalion (the predecessor of the forces for swift operations) and similar units. Opinions in Slovenia vary whether the increase of expenditures for the army is at the time of increasingly obvious recession a truly wise move. Economists warn that the state should increase public expenditures, but entrepreneurs do not see a particular benefit for themselves in spending money on military equipment. This is especially true because the obligation of "counter-purchase" regulated by law is rarely fulfilled.

Among other, the new financial aid to the army causes numerous doubts because of omissions during previous purchases of military equipment. For example, the army bought 50 Puch field vehicles for the needs of communication units, and then after mounting them determined that they could not bear the burden and purchased 50 new trucks. Nobody answered for the "oversight". The purchase of Pilatus PC-9 airplanes was no less "misfortunate". These are training propeller-driven airplanes with electronic equipment of super-sonic air-planes that were intended to enable Slovenian pilots who used to fly MIG planes in the former Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) to stay "in touch". Nowadays, however, the usability of these planes is highly questionable. Then 155 mm howitzers were bought in Israel that proved to be too heavy for rough or wet ground. A new problem arose after reconstruction of 30 T-55 tanks – the Ministry of Defense interrupted reconstruction of another 15 tanks proclaiming the project "uneconomical". Special radar was also bought from separately allocated funds. It was planned to set the radar on Menina mountain, but the project went to the dogs when the local population protested because they had not been informed about this move, but heard that the radar could be the cause of various diseases... The radar has remained in a storehouse for more than five years, and Slovenia still has no radar coverage of the territory to the east of Ljubljana.

State's »propaganda efforts« in several occasion also proved to be very improper.

Only some examples should be mentioned:

- The ministry of foreign affairs again hired Bob Dole to lobby for the speediest possible admission of Slovenia to NATO, despite warnings from critics that such spending of tax payers' money could be considered undemocratic. In addition to large sums spent by the Drnovsek cabinet on "informing the public" about NATO activities, it is paying great attention to international power centers. Because of

that Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel signed a one-year contract with the Washington-based Verner, Liipfert, Bernhardt, McPherson & Hand company to lobby in favor of Slovenia's NATO membership. Critics stated that *»Slovenia will use taxpayer money to pay lobbyists to promote a plan people do not like, although politicians from various groups claim everybody is in favor of that.«*

- Slovenia changed its new Naval Law, (after few months in effect), so that vessels with nuclear engines (and weaponry) could enter Slovene territorial waters.
- Slovene Ministry of Foreign Affairs assured Slovene public, that nuclear submarines and other vessels entering Piran bay are not carrying nuclear weapons. Newspapers on the other side proved, that several secret contract between NATO states are not open to candidate countries and that, in the fact, no Slovene authority knows what nuclear submarines are actually carrying on the board.
- Port of Koper was chosen for NATO logistic center. Local communities are not happy because of that. Mayor of Izola Breda Pecan realizes that the "logistic center in the port of Koper is a business deal won by Copra at the market", but she fears that during negotiations about the conditions the port "did not pay attention to others" and that the activities with the helicopters will "essentially affect tourism".
- Papers with »Nato confidential« marks, revealed and published in Slovene newspapers proved, that new NATO member states will probably not be treated »as equals« in Nato-Russia and several other forums.
- Minister of foreign affairs was in several occasions speaking untrue stories; once he was denying that he ever said (in interview for an German radio station) that he is afraid that Slovenia could be target for terrorists »with bombs in suitcases« if not joining NATO. Audio recording proved that minister lied.
- Slovenia is providing »humanitarian help« in form of mortars, guns and ammunitions to Afghanistan government. Civil society groups are criticizing this policy as immoral, because of human right abuses of Afghan military.
- Purchasing military equipment – often without effective counter-agreements for exporting Slovenian goods – rises public attention. Despite the insurances that *"NATO membership cannot be bought by purchasing weapons systems from certain NATO countries, but by credibility based on the long-term GDP stability necessary to finance these defense systems... and by fulfilling all obligations within the membership action plan..."* the early history of NATO's expansion still confirms what some have claimed: that enlargement is major business and that the purchase of Western, primarily U.S. military equipment, opens wide the door to membership. There are many examples. In fact, Slovenia itself is an excellent example. Until recently it used to purchase military equipment in Israel, because of which it was criticized and maybe also left out of the Alliance in 1997 enlargement. Now, Slovenia is buying predominantly American equipment (Humvees, helicopters etc.) and is invited.
- Plans for transformation of army are badly explained. Even some experts feared that, if Slovenia should abolish its air force, and forget about tanks, heavy artillery, and other such things (because NATO will

take care of that) country will lose its ability to defend its own territory. Even worse, some claims that since the mid-1990s, and especially after 1999, NATO has been an offensive organization which makes its own rules and determines the conditions and the areas of intervention.

- Slovene ministries for foreign affairs and defense and governments Information Office produced internal »expertise's« in which authors and journalists in Slovenia are divided in groups of authors with »anti-NATO« or »«Nato Skeptic« attitudes. Papers were revealed and public support for NATO felled for several points (at last 5 %).
- Slovenia did not resolved questions concerning thousands of (contrary to law, as even Constitutional Court of Slovenia stated) »erased« permanent residents of Slovenia. Some even high ranked officers of Slovene army could not (as others) buy the flats from government and some others are with their families threatened to be kicked out of the flats. This leads to opposition against process of the reform of the army in army itself.
- Slovene authorities did not gave an adequate answer to criticism of nowadays process of transformation of army which provides unimportant, but risky jobs for Slovene military in near future. *»Therefore it is clear that the Slovenian army will play a marginal role in joint operations, and will probably never take action independently. This has already been the case in certain peacekeeping missions: a detachment of the Slovenian army in Cyprus was part of an Austrian battalion, and a military police platoon in Bosnia-Herzegovina was included in an Italian battalion. Which, historically speaking is interesting for all those who keep asking why Slovenian army units cannot make it with U.S. forces...U.S. military experts last year thoroughly examined and assessed the conditions in the Slovenian army and suggested what should be done to improve it. They proposed that the air force, armoured and mechanized units be disbanded, that heavy artillery be reduced and infantry units trained for combat in mountains be increased. The Americans (from NATO) noticed that Slovenia lack the money necessary to equip its army with modern NATO technology, and saw fit that its army undertake tasks in which NATO doctrine and troops failed to succeed despite an incredible technical advantage. Fighting and marching through the heavy mountains of south-eastern Europe or the Caucasus require strong and tough soldiers. The training of soldiers for such tasks costs little, and it appears that Slovenians, as good skiers, are practically predestined for such service. The U.S. analysis clearly shows what the Slovenian army would be expected to do if used in combat as part of NATO,«* stated retired colonel of Slovene Army, Milan Gorjanc.
- »Natofon«, »Natopis« (government's pro-NATO brochure) are founded on public funds, but they are providing only arguments »for« NATO and not »against.« This is publicly seen as misuse of power. Peace Institute Slovenia and some other organizations are on the other hand publishing documents with arguments »for« and »against.«

Conclusion:

There is, of course, also an »sunny« side of this story from *»sunny side of the Alps«* as Slovenia was described in some past juristic slogans. It is obviously, that media and journalists in Slovenia – despite all obstacles – today work professionally without thinking, as in decades before, on *»state's interests.«* And this is really important. Because *»when the press starts thinking in terms of the government's obligation or the government starts thinking in terms of the press necessities«,* as Alexander Bickel, American constitutional scholar declared in the Pentagon Papers case, *»you've got real problems.«*

And why? *»Because there are societies in which the press constantly thinks in terms of what's good for the government and the country, and they publish newspapers such as Pravda.«* Slovenia is, without doubt and despite government's mistakes concerning relations between media and military, not more part of this sad story.
