



VOJTECH KRAJČOVIČ

Vojtech Krajčovič, born on 4th February 1914 at Klátová Nová Ves in the county of Topoľčany, was the youngest member of the leadership of the Slovak National Bank (SNB). He received a very good education, starting with study at a state grammar school, which he completed in 1934, and ending with graduation from the Law Faculty of Comenius University in Bratislava in 1938. In the years 1937 to 1939, he undertook study visits to the University of Munich, the Diplomatic School in Paris and finally to the Faculty of Economics in London.

At university in Bratislava he studied under Professor Imrich Karvaš, and soon became his assistant in the National Economic Department. Cooperation with Karvaš acquired a new dimension on 16th August 1939, when he became an official in the Study Department of the SNB. He was probably offered employment in the bank by the governor himself, who knew his theoretical knowledge in the area of the national economy and his linguistic knowledge. He could speak English, German, French and Hungarian. Karvaš took an interest in his professional growth, and on his orders, Krajčovič undertook a series of journeys abroad, either for study or for work.

His career developed in a very promising way from the beginning. On 1st March 1940 he was appointed head of the Study Department, and from September of the same year he held the position of head of the National Economic Division of the SNB, where he was directly reporting to the governor. The SNB decided on Karvaš's initiative and following the example of other comparable institutions abroad, to create an institute, which would monitor economic trends, and research them with the aim of regulation and the optimal development of the economy. Therefore, a Department for Research into Prosperity Trends was created in the framework of the SNB on 4th October 1940. Vojtech Krajčovič became its head, and on 1st July 1941 at the age of 27 he was appointed director of this department. He was selected for this post in advance, and directly by governor Karvaš. The department Krajčovič began to build, compiled data and reports of an economic character, not only from Slovakia, but also from abroad, studied them and made them available for academic and practical purposes. His role was also to publish reports, provide information and consultancy activity for



economic, political and academic circles. For this purpose, the bank was authorized to demand from economic entities information concerning their areas of economic activity. Understandably, as the name shows, a further activity was research and monitoring of the developmental waves of the economy.

In parallel with this position, the minister of the interior of Slovakia, on the proposal of the Presidium of the SNB, appointed him on 23rd November 1940, as a promising young person, to the Advisory Committee for essential questions of wages and working conditions. He held the position of director of the Department for Research into Prosperity until autumn 1944. In that year it was separated from the SNB and its name was changed to Institute for Economic Research. He asked governor Kubiš for permission to travel for study abroad. He attempted to travel abroad legally, but when Kubiš already was not authorized to approve this journey, he left for Croatia in November 1944 without official authorization. However, he was arrested with four other persons and accused of attempting to establish contacts with the local resistance movement and with repeated attempts to bribe officials. He said in his testimony that he was in the territory with the aim of studying the local economic situation. However, according to the statements of the Croatian police, his aim was to reach the coast with the help of British officers and travel to Britain. At the beginning of 1945, realizing the seriousness of the situation, the Slovak Embassy in Zagreb attempted to secure the transfer of the prisoners to Slovakia, because the Gestapo was beginning to take an interest in them, and there was a danger they would be executed. The ambassador Dr. Viktor Bečko undertook specific steps for the handing over of these persons to Slovakia, appealing to the Slovak – Croatian treaty on mutual assistance in criminal matters. However, he did not succeed, and after internment in Sarajevo and Zagreb, Krajčovič was finally transferred to Vienna, from where he was deported to Germany. He was condemned to death in Mauthausen concentration camp. Carrying out of the sentence was prevented by liberation of the camp by the Allied army.

Several months of imprisonment worsened his health, so after being liberated he decided to go to France, specifically to Paris for treatment. In letters from the beginning of July or mid November 1945 addressed



to the management of the bank, he explained and justified his absence from work. He also confirmed his interest in the position of director of the Institute for Economic Research, and asked the bank to provide pay to finance his medical treatment. However, the management of the SNB replied that the Institute for Economic Research was merging with the State Statistical and Planning Office, and invited him for personal discussion of the whole matter in Bratislava. Krajčovič notified them that he would return to Bratislava after the completion of his treatment, which would be at the end of 1945.

He was finally discharged from the services of the SNB on 31st July 1945, because of „failure to come to

work up to 20th April 1945“, and failure to explain his not meeting this deadline. After renewal of the activity of the National Bank of Czechoslovakia, a decree of the Commission of the Slovak National Council for Finance from 6th October 1945, also dismissed him for the same reasons, and without any claims on his part.

We have no information about the further destiny of V. Krajčovič. Records of the National Bank of Czechoslovakia from 1950 state that „he fled before the front in 1945, did not return to the service of the bank, and remains abroad.“

Mgr. Miloš Mazúr, Archives of the NBS