

THE *PROSVETA* ENGLISH LANGUAGE SECTION:  
CERTAINLY NOT HARD NEWS,  
AND NEVER INTENDED TO BE

H e n r y   A .   C h r i s t i a n

The Slovene language newspaper *Prosveta* opened what we might here call its news doors to the United States and the world in general on July 1, 1916.<sup>1</sup> The front page banner announced that this paper - *The Enlightenment* - was the Organ of the Slovenic National Benefit Society, but of course readers were told that in Slovene - *Prosveta: Glasilo Narodne Podporne Jednote*. The top of page 1 also provided the dateline Chicago, Illinois; the word for Saturday in Slovene (Sobota); July in Slovene (Julij) followed by the English word July in parenthesis. On the same line, at the left and right respectively, by apposition one also saw the "Leto-Year" was Roman numeral IX and the "Štev.-Number" was arabic 27. In boxes framing the banner was the information, in Slovene at left and in English at right, that the paper was "Issued daily except Sundays and Holidays". There was too the usual Federal Post Office statement "Entered as second-class matter...". On page 2 in the masthead box much of the foregoing information was repeated in Slovene and in English, and here one also learned that *Prosveta* was located at 3019 So. Crawford Avenue in Chicago, that "Advertising rates" were "on agreement", and that yearly subscriptions cost \$3 for addresses in the United States and Canada with the exception of Chicago itself, which along with foreign country addresses cost \$4.50. Aside from these items, the remainder of *Prosveta* for that issue and for subsequent issues every publishing day for the next decade was printed in the Slovene language, for readers of the Slovene language. There might be, as there was in this issue, photographs of events like the Mexican War, with English captions - sometimes - credited to the American Press Association; and works like Emile Zola's story *Denar* in serial translation by "M-K" might at times appear. By 1918, the four page paper might be eight pages

on sreda - Wednesday - and be serializing Ivan Cankar's *Monna Lisa*; but *Prosveta* was still a domestic foreign language American newspaper.

On Wednesday, the sixth of January in 1926, however, on the *Prosveta* page 6 something happened. The first three and a half columns that day were in English, four items under the heading "*The Young S.N.P.J.: Stop, Look and Read: All ye, Brothers and Sisters!*" The first item noted Lodge No. 559, Chicago, was holding its January 15 meeting at the S.N.P.J. Hall, 1657-59 So. Lawendale Ave. "*That night, Lodge No. 559, shall initiate another class of about ten new candidates*", the text said, making a total membership of more than sixty. The lodge needed to meet as well to get acquainted, select a name, and prepare social and educational programs. A second sub-heading announced "*More News About the Young S.N.P.J. of Detroit*" as if this were ongoing news. In fact, this lodge had first met only three days earlier; using the aid of senior lodge No. 121, it had named itself The Young American S.N.P.J. and decided to hold a dance at which "*Casy Gash and his original 'Riviera Ramblers'*" would perform. "*Now watch our smoke*", commented correspondent Paul Selisnik, who added "*The progress of our lodge is spreading like a bonifire. We have several new members on the list ... and many, who are not able to speak Slovenian well, are transferring from the senior lodge. So I appeal to all Slovenians, who are not able to express themselves well in their native tounge, to join in with us.*" Under the third sub-heading, Anton P. Jurca, Jr. was more direct:

*"There are many young men and women in our Jednota; but I have noticed that very few of them attend our monthly meetings, because they think to themselves, 'Well, I guess, I won't go to the meeting; about all they do is talk politics, and everything is said in Slovenian, which I don't understand so well; so all I do is pay my dues and go to a dance.' This is a fact, and I don't blame a young fellow who is full of pep, not to stay at the meeting; for as I think, it is no use for a fellow to warm a chair and muse in it just because he does not know what is going on, when he can go out and have a good time.*

*As I have said before, these lodges are chiefly for the benefit of the younger folks. If a person is born and rai-*

sed in a country and mingles with the people of that country, he can't help but become as one of that country, and as in our case, we are becoming Americanized. Why you can't tune in on your radio without getting a bit of jazz music; and the sensation, which you get from this music, causes you the dance, which everybody likes, young or old. The meetings of these lodges will be held . . . in the English language . . . we will not discuss politics, but we'll discuss our baseball, football or any team which the individual lodge will care to draw up."

The final, longest portion of these English columns contributed by Chicagoan Richard Zavertnik, who noted *"The discussion, whether the S.N.P.J. shall publish an English organ, gave birth to this new movement which shall enlighten and emancipate the American speaking Yugoslavs of America."* To foster that movement, Zavertnik offered some guidance to those forming new lodges:

*"The primary object of organizing American-speaking subordinate lodges of the S.N.P.J. is to make the American-speaking members of the S.N.P.J. who are now members of some Slovenian speaking lodge, interested in lodge work, thereby making them active members. The method through which this is accomplished is by holding all business and social meetings in the American language, in a language they can understand, comprehend, and express their own views and ideas. Any person between the ages of 16 and 55 . . . and who speaks the American language fluently should become a member of an American-speaking subordinate lodge."* (Zavertnik clearly had an affection for repetition.) *"Into the Juvenile branch, persons between ages of 1 to 16 are eligible for membership."*

New leaders of any lodge needed to acquaint themselves with the S.N.P.J. By-laws, which were available in English, Slovene, and Croatian. Once there were ten members together, new or from existing lodges, the group could apply for a charter. Zavertnik cautioned that a good president and secretary were most important, and suggested that appointed committees worked better with the president than elected groups. "Never", he added, "appoint a person just because he may be a member of the clique that is in power." Nor should a group elect "all your best thinkers and reasoners as officers, because a good thinker is

always needed on the floor to analyze motions and suggestions that are advanced by immatured (sic) and inexperienced members." In a spirited conclusion to the piece, the author exhorted "*when the spirit to fight is aroused among the American-speaking members of the S.N.P.J., only then there is hope for the American Yugoslav to free himself from the tyranny of mental and industrial slavery.*" Even sixty-five years later I can recognize the "industrial slavery" and somehow expected a concluding "*Workers of the world unite ...*" which didn't emerge; but I of course do also wonder whether the "mental" slavery was the older lodges.

Whatever the case, in the next weeks news from various cities appeared Wednesdays on page 6 under the Young S.N.P.J. title. Just seven days later, for example, a Cleveland group announced a dance at the Slovenian National Home; not surprisingly, the first name on the organizing committee list was Vatroslav Grill. By January 27 the title of the column, bracketed by the S.N.P.J. logo, was enclosed in its own heading box. Slowly the number of items in English spread across the page until on March 10 everything but the ads in all six columns was in English. During this progression Richard Zavertnik had become something of a regular contributor, producing a series titled *The Psychology of Freethinking*; and the page also began to carry fillers such as the Laurence Todd, Federated Press story *Did American Ambassador "Make" Mussolini?*<sup>2</sup> On April 7, signing himself simply *The Editor*, Jože Zavertnik wrote warmly of the new members: "*English speaking members of our Society who obviously did not read the 'Prosveta' before - and that much less wrote for it - are now warmly engaged in this new movement, and they contribute their personal views to our page. ... Thus the new sympathetic co-operation of the young members is appreciated by the editor, whose desire it is to satisfy the young Brothers and Sisters by allowing them the greatest possible amount of space.*" But, he added, the Supreme Board "*allowed only one page in English*"; therefore, smaller type would be used to provide more words to the page.<sup>3</sup> In late Spring, page 6 began to carry Louis Adamic's translation of Ivan Cankar's *Yerney's Justice*, joined later by installments of Upton Sinclair's *The Spokesman's Secretary*.<sup>4</sup> And Richard Zavertnik's freethought plowed on. By midyear, issues dropped the Slovene day in the date and printed simply "Wednesday, June 23". By Autumn, material in

English had begun to crowd over into portions of other pages of the paper; and when Pioneer Lodge No. 559 of Chicago was to hold its "First Big Novelty Dance" - "For One Night Only: Slovenia transferred to Chicago" - the announcement was a banner spread right across the top of page 6.<sup>5</sup>

It is not my intention here to summarize the history of the youth movement in the S.N.P.J., nor to perform a similar service concerning *Prosveta*. But I do want to recreate in part the arrival and first steps of English language material. I recalled Louis Adamic's excellent chapter titled The Immigrant Press in *My America* (1938), which begins:

*"Riding in street cars, subways, and elevated trains, old-stock Americans as well as Americans whose background in the United States is a matter of but three or four generations, are wont to feel vaguely uneasy when they see a person next to them reading . . . any of the . . . 1,076 foreign-language newspapers and magazines which" (in 1938) "are published in the country in thirty-eight different languages. They are wont to give the reader of such a publication a suspicious glance."*<sup>6</sup>

I imagined myself a worker, riding home with a fellow worker of Slovene background, who might leave behind his *Prosveta* on the Chicago streetcar. I had less difficulty imagining myself unable to read Slovene. But once the paper began to print in English, I might perhaps be able to do more than just wonder about my Slovene friend(s). I would now and then take a peek at the Wednesday paper, just a peek, now and then, just this peek today.

Between 1926 and 1929 I learned there were many, many dances, and many, many meetings, and that Louis Adamic and others had translated literature by Slovene, Croatian, and other authors. I was regularly exhorted to "Secure New Subscribers for the 'PROSVETA'", for as Managing Editor Philip Godina explained: each adult member's dues provided a subscription to the paper; the By-laws explained ones duty to "*forward the names and addresses of . . . members to the newspaper department*" (the juvenile members to receive *Mladinski list*); "*you cannot be sure that you are reaching your members*" if they don't get the paper.<sup>7</sup> Nor, I suppose, could the insurance premiums of the Society be otherwise guaranteed or double checked. I saw *Prosveta* book reviews in English had a liberal touch to them. Robert W.

Dunn's review of *Men, Money, and Motors* by MacManus and Beasley called the book "a loud hymn of tribute to the powerful motor manufacturers, and incidently" (it) "lay a good deal of stress on the modern method of 'selling' the human touch in order to make the gods move. . . . The book is of little use to any worker, being much like the stuff retailed in success periodicals".<sup>8</sup> I was sometimes told too - again by the Federated Press - that 48 women unionists and 57 non-unionists workers were enrolled in the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women, where "Will the job in the factory be mine again at the end of August?" is a question somewhere in the background for each student-worker".<sup>9</sup>

But I was just as likely to notice - by volume if by nothing else - the wonderfully named lodges - Stalwarts, Columbus Park, Sunflower, Pioneer, Beacons, Railsplitters, Linconites, Mohawks, Zippers - and I became appropriately excited by this kind of news: "The Old Maids are vacationing on Jone's Island in the new summer cottage, so we take great pleasure in introducing ourselves as the 'Badgar Bonnies', who are substituting for station B.P.W. . . . My goodness, Strugglers, keep your eye on 'Lindy', or he'll fly away for good some day. . . . we girls think he'd make a wonderful traveling salesman".<sup>10</sup> All this by 1929 not just on page 6, but spread now to pages 7 and 8. On August 7, 1929, these expanded pages took on a new banner, reading from left to right: "The Society shall insure to its members freedom of religious, philosophical, ethical, and political creeds. Declaration of Principles, SNPJ By-laws". In the middle was "PROSVETA" and below "ENGLISH SECTION" and below "For Members of Slovene National Benefit Society and American Slovenes". To the right was printed "That writer does the most who gives his readers the most knowledge, and takes from him the least time. Colton." That reminded me I had learned, again, pretty much what Adamic could tell me: "Some of the foreign-language papers have become English-language. Others have merged with regular American papers. Several hundred have English columns, or sections. This is especially true of the organs of fraternal societies, which are practically cooperative insurance companies and, as such, eager to draw to themselves the immigrants' American-born children who know only English. In a few (too few) instances, these English pages and sections are well written and edited, and help New Americans to acquire some sense of their

background. None, however, have as yet begun to sink their teeth into the second-generation problem." <sup>11</sup> I noted with interest that the advent of the logo "ENGLISH SECTION" brought one response along the lines of the freedoms insured by the Society. An Editorial note to accompany the new banner remarked that *Prosveta* had acquired "a permanent and fitting title. ... to keep the identity of the organ intact and ... serve the purpose of its mission." <sup>12</sup> There was nevertheless a complaint in the "Voice of Members" column that the subordinate lodges were first called "American speaking"; the English Section ought therefore be the American Section because "the members who are proud of their adopted or native nationality are not as bigoted as the apologetic Americans who are ashamed of their American identity and hence ashamed to call the language as she is spoken in America as the American language".<sup>13</sup> It sounded like an argument in a great many American university English departments a few years later, and the voice was a "second-generation problem" answering an editorial staff and an ownership which greeted the new logo truly but in the same column also wrote "There are many who do not realize the great opportunity that the SNPJ provides until it is too late. Why not insure your family and yourself. ... We should not consider the few" (summer days) "that we have an excuse and neglect the Society. Young people are susceptible for new ideas at any time. Get your friends into your lodge now".<sup>14</sup> Although the remainder of 1929 encompassed the October 29th beginning of the Depression, the *Prosveta* English Section reached the end of the year in general calm. Lodges reported, engagements were noted, some ads were printed in English, and Richard Zavertnik produced a column "Topics of the Week". His December 24 items recognized five-day week problems, job losses among female cotton workers, large whole year profits for companies, unemployment and wage problems throughout the world, and the need for workers to be organized at both the job and politics. Perhaps the biggest *Prosveta* event was in autumn fine print concerning a dispute between S.N.P.J. President Cainkar and the newly deceased Jože Zavertnik, exchanges into which even the name of *Prosveta's* new editor Ivan Molek was drawn. But whether facing national economic disaster or Chicago and Society matters, the English Section reader seemed to know much less than the Slovene pages reported. If this year ended badly, the most meaningful material in English was



probably reflected by a Cankar work *"Freely translated from the Slovenian by A(damic)"* titled *"Discontent"*<sup>15</sup>

The 1930 English pages proved very much a continuation of earlier years. The banner changed in that a rather industrial design as background for the words English Section was removed, thus lightening the top of page 6. The right box quotation was also changed to a "Ben Franklin, Motto to Historical Review" quote: *"Those who would give up essential liberty to produce a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety"*.<sup>16</sup> There was winter discussion of how 1929 had brought 35 new lodges and 6716 new members. By June the Juvenile groups were reported to number 20.000 members, each now with juvenile insurance; and neighbouring legislation now allowed the S.N.P.J. to spread into Canada. By 1933 the look of the English Section had changed a bit. Mixed with the news of lodges was reprintings of serious comment about serious times. A Union Advocate excerpt, for example, noted how *"the great industrialists, the chain banks, the capitalists and the National Association of Manufacturers"* had *"exhausted every recourse to block the enactment of the Industrial Recovery Act"*.<sup>17</sup> Editorial comment in the July 19 issue blandly pointed out that fraternal societies had continued to carry out their work in the interest of their memberships without government aid while the *"federal reconstruction finance corporation came to the assistance of the old-line commercial-private-insurance companies to the tune of more than eighty-two million dollars since ... February, 1932"*. Nevertheless, the Society had added to its By-laws a membership category called "passive", necessitated perhaps by conditions captured in the title and content of a nearby article - Big Business Cheats The Code - which complained *"employers had discharged skilled workers a few days prior to the adoption of the blanket (industrial) codes. These discharged workers, all of them unorganized, are now rehired as 'beginners, learners, and apprentices' to escape the minimum wage scale"*.<sup>18</sup> Little wonder, then that the July 19 editorial had already urged *"we should see the members who became passive or suspended during the past two years because they were unable to meet their obligations. Invite them to come back"*. The filler below that comment noted, *"It may be pleasant to have an artistic temperament but you'll be more likely to succeed if you know how to handle a hammer and sa."* But for both the English Section and the Slovene language pa-



ges of *Prosveta* in 1933 it was an artistic temperament which created a major interest. In July 26 letter, Louis Adamic alluded to his recent year long stay in Yugoslavia and announced a series of articles "about Yugoslavia for various American magazines. . . . this will be the first attempt on the part of a writer of whatever nationality to capture on paper the entire Yugoslavia geographically, politically, economically, socially, culturally." *Prosveta* had been carrying Adamic's translations for a number of years, and Editor Molek had also even printed Adamic's English language work in Slovene translation. Here Adamic was of course referring to all aspects of what in 1934 would become *The Native's Return*; and with memory of earlier tempests, he added "Some of my articles as they appear ... may be considered by some Yugoslav immigrants ... as 'unfavorable' to Yugoslavia, and they may be inclined to condemn me for writing such things for the American public. As members of a small nation, they are unduly sensitive and afraid of what other nations will learn and think about them." <sup>19</sup>

Once Adamic's articles began to appear, he proved to be more than correct. On October 4 Adamic was using the English Section to defend his September 20 *New Republic* article against the editorial anger of the Serb newspaper in Pittsburgh.<sup>20</sup> It was but the first of many such moments. Yet in November a piece titled Louis Adamic, datelined New York and looking suspiciously like a press release, appeared in the English Section directly under the Franklin "liberty" quote. The prose spoke of an Adamic article - An Immigrant in America - which was to appear in *The American Magazine*, which was said to be read by 7 million people. After detailing the important treatment Adamic's article gave "the life and works of Slovene, Serb, Croat and other Slavic immigrants in America", the column touted the author's forthcoming book and noted many other large readerships Adamic would reach. "It is estimated", the piece ended, "that by the end of this year about 30 million Americans will read about Yugoslavia - some of them for the first time - in Mr. Adamic's articles." <sup>21</sup> That of course proved to be true for not only 1933 but the remainder of Adamic's life. It was he who put South Slavs on the maps of America, so to speak, just as he brought attention to all ethnic questions and attention to the children and grandchildren of all immigrants. As noted earlier, some of the immigrant press, according to Adamic, helped people know

their background but did little about the second generation. So it was to Adamic that even this peek into *Prosveta* had eventually to turn for more information. *Prosveta's* English Section was begun as a response to the second generation to keep that generation in the S.N.P.J. *Prosveta's* English Section grew, but it was no more created to do Adamic's job that it was created to present itself as a full scale news paper. So the last 1933 issue of the *Prosveta* English Section began with an editorial hope that progressive workers "*must fight for the creation of a brotherhood of men . . . if civilization is to survive*", followed by the news that Adamic's book would be out February 1, as a Book-of-the-Month Club selection.<sup>22</sup>

Subsequent American-language-only glimpses into the *Prosveta* indicate only slight variations in the established format. *The Native's Return* generated its fair share of prose in 1934, and Adamic's success with that work was probably aided in great part by *Prosveta's* serializing a Slovene translation of *Laughing in the Jungle*. Early in the year the column About This and That had interesting comment on how and why Slovenes were called "Granish", especially in Pennsylvania.<sup>23</sup> In April the Anniversary Number noted the S.N.P.J. was "*the largest of all our societies*" and between its organization on April 9, 1904 and December 31, 1933, had admitted 86,856 adult and 36,860 juvenile members and paid out during that time various benefits worth more than 14 million dollars. The boxes to the left and right of the page 6 banner now read Our Society's 30th Anniversary Year and Solicit Your Friends for SNPJ Membership.<sup>24</sup>

Portions of 1936 issues seen through the titles of original and reprinted pieces speak to the consistency of the English Section, now by the way again placed on the industrial design background: Gowanda Boosters, SNPJ Day!, June 41! Idora Park!, The following Cash Awards Are Offered to Proposers and Agitators, Secure New Subscribers for the 'Prosveta', Sacrificing America's Children, One-Sixth on Relief, and Why I Wrote the 'Cradle of Life'. Many issues also now carried the detailed and well captioned Harold Magic comic strip titled The John Smiths, the story line of which dealt with men who snooped on fellow workers, bosses who cheated workers and other bosses, and that good family unit of organized workers who tried to survive the system. Pointing directly at the obvious continued gap between English and Slovene in *Prosveta* was an article titled The Question

of An SNPJ School in which editor Molek discussed a possible "SNPJ free-thought school. . . based on the free consent of the parents . . . institution . . . either in Slovene or English. . . The idea has been originated; it awaits development". But Molek made clear the idea "has been debated in the Slovene section of the *Prosveta* for the last two months. Today we are introducing the idea to the membership of the ESL".<sup>26</sup> A more positive sign for *Prosveta*, however, was the appearance of a column titled Women's Round Table to which Mary Jugg or Anna P. Krasna or both at once were early contributors.<sup>27</sup> And late in the year, on the matter of small changes, along with news of the Spanish Civil War on *Prosveta's* Slovene page 1 there appeared a cartoon showing labor holding "abundance" while the World Welfare globe said - in English - "my big job is to find a more efficient and just method of distributing this stuff".<sup>28</sup>

By 1940, World Welfare was facing fascist armies, and *Prosveta's* English titles typically read Hysteria and Alien-Baiters and The SNPJ - Democracy in Practice.<sup>29</sup> But just how much the world now truly fit on the English pages regardless of what was being printed elsewhere in *Prosveta* is seen in this moving comment in Editor Louis Beneger's column My Week for July 10: "There will come a day in the near future when the now 'victorious' dictators will have to fold up, and fold up fast. Democracy may be weak and awkward in meeting the onslaught of the aggressors, but history proves that this is the best device for civilized peoples yet conceived".<sup>30</sup> But 1940 was also the fifteenth anniversary of the English speaking lodges and the English Section of the paper. Here *Prosveta* explained itself: "Although the first regular English Section in *Prosveta* under the heading 'The Young S.N.P.J.' did not appear until in late 1925, occasionally English articles found their way into *Prosveta's* columns even before the eighth convention of that year. It seems, however, that the convention placed greater importance on the question of whether the Society should first issue a separate English weekly or a monthly for its young members, than whether to establish English speaking branches. . . the Supreme Board . . . went of record confirming the already established English Page . . . and enlarging the Daily and Weekly *Prosveta* by one column.

The one-page . . . continued until the time of the 1929 convention when . . . two additional pages were voted for. . .

*We can safely say that Prosveta's English Section for members and American Slovenes in general has accomplished much toward awakening our youth to the SNPJ cause, and that it has given them an opportunity for self-expression. It has made them conscious of their mission as workers toward their fellow men and has shown them that as human beings they belong to a small but sturdy nationality which is equal in its possibilities to any large or small".*<sup>31</sup>

Well, who am I to argue; perhaps one had to be a Slovene to have the English Section accomplish all that spiritual magic. But simply reading it in English produced a somewhat lower level vibration. Case in point: The April 7, 1941 Prosveta announced in bold letters: "Jugoslavija Invadirana!" and there was much written about Cordell Hull, Washington, Beograd, Kairo, and the like. The April 9, Wednesday English page response to invasion was limited to a page 7 half column - a sad half column to be shure - by the editor. On April 16, however, there was a appeal for aid for war victims in Yugoslavia; and on July 2 editor Molek did discuss America's trials in the Revolution and Civil War and continued: "*Brothers and sisters. ... We, too, belong to this great people that is being tested for the third time; we, too, are Americans; we, too, are a part of the great American democracy. We, too, with all the others, are being tested.*

*It is well at a time like the present to remember the great truth that without American democracy which has opened its doors to your fathers and mothers and gave them freedom besides an opportunity to earn dollars, you would never have been born here, and today you would live, if you were still living, in the war-torn and blood-spattered old country as Hitler's slaves!"*<sup>32</sup>

All right! That is the American language as the American-only reader of the English page knows it; these Slovenes are okay! And in November, as if in anticipation of my peeking this far along fifty years later, Editor Molek, while asking contributors to shorten their letters to the paper, stated bluntly: "*The English Section of the official organ is devoted exclusively to lodge, federation, cultural, social and informative reading matter. It goes without saying that all lodge and federation news receives first consideration, because it is of primary importance to the organization as well as its branches. Therefore, all other material is of secondary importance. . . .*"<sup>33</sup> Unless, of course, it was "Japonska napadla Ameriko!"<sup>34</sup> That could not be secon-

dary, and on Wednesday December 10, editor Molek's center page editorial began "America is at war!"<sup>35</sup> Although June of 1941 had been the twenty-fifth anniversary of the S.N.P.J., the celebration lasted barely six months. The next few years were war time: Louis Beneger's "My week" column was retitled "Our Front"; articles like "Comrades' Note Book" spoke of soldiers, losses to families, War Loan Drives; news reports of the Partizans were reprinted from New York's newspaper *P.M.*; and Adamic, now as President of the Slovene American National Council and first President of the United Committee of South-Slavic Americans, delivered his message to the Partizans on the occasion of the liberation of Belgrade.<sup>36</sup> On October 11, 1944, the Minutes of the Supreme Board of the S.N.P.J. meeting in April were printed - in English. But already, after only a short time of fusion, history now tells us that the English pages were, after the lodge news, telling but a part of a story which was going on in Slovene, much like the seeming sameness yet differences of the Yugoslav Relief Committee, Slovene Section, and the Slovene American National Council.

My last peek was into 1946, and I want simply to note that as the year began the English page banner had been simplified; the 20th anniversary of "the SNPJ English Speaking Lodge Movement" had been celebrated, in conjunction with a membership drive; Beneger's column was now titled "Our Times"; the SNPJ was against compulsory military service; and in Indiana the "Hoosier Pals" lodge had enjoyed a great party. Absolutely everything had changed and everything was still the same and you could or could not tell that from the *Prosveta* English Section.

At this point I sat back from my peeking and imagined this moment in Maribor. I suddenly recalled that had I continued to peek into *Prosveta* I would eventually have found myself. The paper had recorded my visit to Chicago, had reviewed my books, had reprinted my speech to the American Slovenian Heritage Club of Forest City, Pennsylvania.<sup>37</sup> Even I was an English page item, in 1986. But these Wednesday *Prosvetas* were quite different. With editorial offices in Burr Ridge and mailed from Minnsdale, Illinois, these papers consisted of seven pages in English and that one special sheet - page 4 - printed in Slovene. The second, the third, the fourth - so many generations since the first; perhaps so few who now spoke Slovene. I thought of the old

papers, a Cleveland paper, a meeting with Vatroslav's wonderful, energy-filled sister Mary Grill Ivanich. I recalled too standing two decades ago with the officers of the S.N.P.J. while they mused about the Saturday language schools: at the beginning how important it was to initiate and perpetuate those classes; and now that they were gone, what doubts about the decision to abolish them. But most of all I remember Lawndale Avenue - sitting in the old building, taking down large volume upon volume of the *Enlightenment*, scanning the very print, carefully turning the real pages, today turned so old that they must be, can only be, read in microfilm offered by curators like Joel Wurl at the Immigration History Research Center in Minnesota. My work there was in the late 1960s, and around the newspaper offices was an urban waste land. I was working late, the staff left me, showing me how to lock up and suggesting I call a taxi to make my return to central Chicago. I did. The regular taxi drivers were on strike; my replacement driver was an educated, clever, decent young man. He suggested the striking drivers simply wanted bigger boats on the lake than they already owned. We laughed. "But you", he said, "being out here, you must be a member of the proletariat, coming from the paper and all". I smiled and thought of the *Prosveta* how near to or far from socialism it seemed; how near to or far from the proletariat it was or each of us has ever been or will be. I thought of my immigrant grandparents and how for all my education I was after all still but a worker. I looked at my driver's cocked ear, awaiting my answer. I remember I said, "I don't know much about belonging to the proletariat as such, but I was out here at the *Prosveta* trying to find out about some people. You see, some of my best friends have turned out to be Slovene."

## FOOTNOTES

- 1 Our Tenth Anniversary, Prosveta, 30 June, 1926, p. 6.
- 2 17 March, 1926, p. 6.
- 3 To Our Contributors, 7 April, 1926, p. 6.
- 4 16 June, 1926, begins the Sinclair serial.
- 5 29 September, 1926.
- 6 New York: Harper, p. 238.
- 7 "To The Secretaries of The English Speaking Lodges", 23 June, 1926, p. 6.
- 8 "Ballyhooing Bosses", 17 July, 1929, p. 8.
- 9 "Woman Unionists at Summer School", 24 July, 1929, p. 8.
- 10 "Badgerland Buzz!", 7 August, 1929, p. 8.
- 11 "My America", p. 244.
- 12 "Editorial Notes", 7 August, 1929, p. 6.
- 13 14 August, 1929, p. 8.
- 14 "Editorial Notes", 7 August, 1929, p. 6.
- 15 18 December, 1929, p. 6.
- 16 "For example", 29 January, 1930.
- 17 "Labor and the Dictatorship", 12 July, 1933, p. 6.
- 18 23 August, 1933, p. 6.
- 19 "A Letter from Louis Adamic", p. 6.
- 20 "A Letter from Louis Adamic", p. 8.
- 21 22 November, 1933, p. 6.
- 22 "The End of the Year" and "Adamic's Book Out" Feb. 1, 27 December, p. 6.
- 23 17 January, 1934, p. 8.
- 24 4 April, 1934, p. 6.
- 25 8 January, p. 6; 13 May, p. 6; 3 June, p. 6; 15 July, p. 6; 4 November, p. 7.
- 26 8 January, 1936.
- 27 See for example 30 September, 1936, p. 8.
- 28 21 December, 1936.
- 29 5 June, p. 6; 10 April, p. 6.
- 30 10 July, 1940, p. 7.
- 31 7 February, 1940, p. 6.
- 32 "The Third Trial of Free America", p. 6.
- 33 "Our Prosveta and Its Contributors", 5 November, 1941, p. 6.
- 34 8 Decembra, 1941, p. 1.
- 35 "A Serious Word in Serious Times,"
- 36 12 July, 1944, p. 7, 8.
- 37 5 March, 1986, p. 6; 12 March, p. 2; 19 March, p. 7; 16 April, p. 7.



## POVZETEK

ANGLEŠKI DEL PROSVETE: SPLOH NE "UDARNE"  
NOVICE IN NIKOLI S TAKIM NAMENOM

Henry A. Christian

V začetku leta 1926 je deset let star slovenski čičaški časopis Prosveta - "ki izhaja vsak dan razen ob nedeljah in praznikih" - pričel izdajati eno stran v časopisu v angleškem jeziku, "namenjen mladim ljudem slovenskega izvora, ki govorijo ameriški jezik". Namen te strani je bil pritegniti ljudi k članstvu v Slovensko narodno podporno jednoto, organizacijo, ki je izdajala Prosveto Skozi leta je angleška stran prinašala novice o delovanju jednot, plesih, slovenski literaturi v prevajanju, zgodbah Louisa Adamiča in vzhajajoči zvezdi, delavsko-upravljaljskih problemih med veliko gospodarsko krizo, napadu na Jugoslavijo 1941. Sicer pa ta stran ni prinašala pomembnih novic iz sveta, le-te so se našle na slovenskih straneh časopisa.

Neslovenski, angleško govoreči izobraženec tako iz te angleške priloge ni izvedel praktično ničesar o dejanskem značaju svojih sosedov, ameriških Slovencev.

Tak način urejanja angleške priloge (strani) je bil morda velika - izgubljena - priložnost, za katero pa je Prosveta očitno smatrala, da je ne potrebuje. ABSTRACT