

DECLARATION OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE ANTI-FASCIST COUNCIL OF THE PEOPLES' LIBERATION OF YUGOSLAVIA (NOVEMBER 29, 1943)

In the course of two and a half years of continuous peoples' liberation struggle against the occupier and his collaborators, the peoples of Yugoslavia have achieved big and decisive successes, both in internal and in foreign policy affairs. After each attempt of the enemy to atomize our Peoples' Liberation Army, the military strength of our Army has increased, consolidated its ranks and raised them to a higher military and technical level. The more pressure the enemy put in an effort to suppress the liberation movement of our peoples, the closer became the ranks of the people in this movement around the Supreme Headquarters and Comrade Tito, the celebrated leader of the people, around the Anti-Fascist Council of the Peoples' Liberation of Yugoslavia and around the national political representatives of the individual nations of Yugoslavia. Our liberated territory has steadily increased, our material reserves and sources of supply of our Peoples' Liberation Army and the population have increased also.

Simultaneously, organs of peoples' authority and various economic and management organs in service of this authority have developed.

The recognition of the big successes of our Peoples' Liberation War abroad on the one side and the complete unmasking of the role and high treason of the Yugoslavia "government"-in-exile on the other side have set entirely new tasks before the leading organs of our peoples' liberation movement. It was necessary systematically to consolidate all these successes and to exploit them for a further successful continuation of our Peoples' Liberation War.

In view of these facts, the Anti-Fascist Council of the Peoples' Liberation of Yugoslavia at its Second Session, held on November 29, 1943,

ESTABLISHES:

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1. The two and a half years of our Peoples' Liberation War have offered proof to the whole world that the peoples of Yugoslavia have set off, firmly and with determination, on a path of armed resistance to the occupier, on a path indicated to our peoples by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, which all truly patriotic forces and political groups of our peoples have been pursuing with it. The enormous majority of the peoples of Yugoslavia have joined the ranks of the liberation movement, and extended active support to its Peoples' Liberation Army. Also all patriotic and honest functionaries from all political parties, groups and patriotic organizations, have, together with the people, actively participated in the peoples' liberation movement. All this is equally true of all the Yugoslav nations. By their activity in the peoples' liberation movement, the peoples of Yugoslavia have spoken up publicly in protest against the traitors, reactionaries and speculators in the country and abroad who stayed in power in old Yugoslavia by means of violence and deceit and are now once again trying – by depending on the most reactionary circles – to regain power with the help of treason, deceit and speculation. But all these endeavors cannot conceal the fact that an entirely new relation of political forces has been created in our country during the Peoples' Liberation War and that this new relation must be adequately expressed also in its management and state leadership.

2. One of the principal sources of power of our liberation struggle is the fact that the united peoples' liberation movement of the peoples of Yugoslavia and its Peoples' Liberation Army have grown from the liberation movement of all our nations. The Peoples of Yugoslavia did not need any previous agreements on equality, etc., in order to fight against the occupier. They took up arms, began to liberate their country and thus not only gained but also secured the right to self-determination, including the right of secession from or unification with other peoples. All forces which are participating in the peoples' liberation movement recognize all these rights to our nations from the very first day. And, for this very reason, the peoples of Yugoslavia have become even more closely united in their common struggle. In the course of the two years and a half of heroic struggle against the occupier and his collaborators among the people of Yugoslavia, vestiges of the great-Serbia hegemonist policy have been crushed and so were attempts at sowing mutual hatred and disunity among our nations. Simultaneously, the vestiges of reactionary separatism have been defeated too. In this way not only material and general political but also all moral conditions have been secured for creating the future fraternal, democratic federative community of our nations. Today, when they are about to expel the occupier from their country for good, the peoples of Yugoslavia justifiably demand that the country be run by a leadership which will guarantee, both by its composition and by its programme, that true equality will be really secured to all nations of Yugoslavia in Federative Yugoslavia.

3. The achievements in our Peoples' Liberation War have passed the glory of our people all over the world, scattering the false ideas sown by the enemies of our people, and have firmly consolidated the international political positions of Yugoslavia and her nations. The great contribution of our peoples in the general struggle against the fascist conquerors today is already recognized on the part of all forces of the anti-Hitlerite bloc. But this is not enough. The peoples of Yugoslavia justifiably demand that the Allies and all their friends recognize not only their struggle against the occupier but also their free democratic will. The peoples of Yugoslavia justifiably demand the abolition of whatever support foreign countries are still extending to the Yugoslav traitor "government" in exile and the clique around it. Simultaneously, the peoples of Yugoslavia justifiably demand that the organs of their peoples' authority, the fruit of this struggle, be recognized and respected also abroad.

4. While the peoples of Yugoslavia were soaking the soil of their homeland in their own blood in the effort to liberate it from the hateful conquerors, the reactionary clique in exile, which calls itself the "Yugoslav government," did its best in order to snatch the arms from our people. With lies and slanders it was deceiving the world abroad, trying to conceal the real will and wish of the people of Yugoslavia, trying to prevent our peoples from receiving any assistance of freedom-loving countries. With lies and slanders it tried to divert our peoples from their path of creating a new, fraternal community of their own. With the help of its agents, first of all Draza Mihajlovic, this government systematically organized a fratricidal war in all lands of Yugoslavia, only to put the blame for this, in its slanderous way, on the peoples' liberation movement. This "government" bears full responsibility for the bloodshed and crimes which were, and are still being committed by the Chetnik gangs, which formally bear the name of "Yugoslav army in the Homeland." Simultaneously, it was engaged in making ill blood between the nations of Yugoslavia, in egging them on against one another. The so-called army of this "government" – Mihajlovic's Chetniks – linked itself to the occupier in life and death, and became the principal stronghold of the fascist conquerors in the struggle against our peoples. This "government" was in a process of continuous disintegration. In its present composition, it includes the most fanatical

elements of great-Serbian hegemony, headed by Draza Mihajlovic and Petar Zivkovic, although he is formally not a member of the Cabinet, This is a government of overt fratricidal war and chauvinist terror, a government in the service of the fascist occupiers, an outspokenly anti-democratic government which works deliberately at undermining and splitting Yugoslavia. The peoples of Yugoslavia are therefore justifiably coming forth with the demand for this Yugoslav "government" in exile to be also formally denied the right to represent them.

5. Responsibility for the treacherous policy aimed against the elementary interests of the peoples of Yugoslavia is borne, as well as the Government, also by the reactionary monarchist clique. Acting on behalf of King Peter and the monarchy, the great-Serbia and other reactionary cliques organized and committed the most base crimes against their own people. Throughout this period of two and a half years King Peter backed the treacherous and criminal activity of the traitors with his whole authority. This is an unprecedented case of treason in history: the King is the Supreme Commander of the Chetnik gangs and traitors of Draza Mihajlovic, which are an integral part of the occupation army which our peoples are fighting in a war that is for them a matter of life or death. Now that all the antagonistic undertakings of the reactionary elements and traitors have proved a failure, the King and the monarchy have remained the last shelter, the center of all anti-national forces. Under the flag of the King and the monarchy the most abominable kind of high treason is taking place and the most cruel crimes being committed against the people. It is therefore necessary, as is demanded by the peoples of Yugoslavia, to undertake measures also with respect to the King and the monarchy which will be in accordance with their attitude towards the Peoples' Liberation War.

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The Anti-Fascist Council of Peoples' Liberation of Yugoslavia expresses on behalf of all peoples of Yugoslavia whom it represents as their supreme legislative representative organ, warm feelings of friendship which the peoples of Yugoslavia foster for the peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Great Britain and the United States of America, along with feelings of admiration and recognition for the heroic struggle and glorious victories of the Red Army on the Eastern Front and of the Allied land, naval, and air forces over the fascist conquerors.

The peoples of Yugoslavia appreciate all signs which are showing that the struggle which our peoples have been pursuing for two years and a half and the role which belongs to it in the joint struggle of freedom-loving nations against the fascist plague are being more and more correctly evaluated in the Allied countries.

The peoples of Yugoslavia welcome and accept with pleasure the decisions of the Moscow Conference of the Representatives of the Governments of the USSR, Great Britain and the U.S. which secure to all nations the right to resolve the question of their respective internal state system freely, in accordance with their own freely declared wish. These decisions are of greatest importance also for the peoples of Yugoslavia, who have shown by their persistent liberation struggle their determination and readiness to build up their common homeland all by themselves, on new foundations of true democracy and equality among the nations.

The peoples of Yugoslavia will carry on and further intensify their struggle for final and complete victory over the fascist conquerors and will carry out their obligation which they feel towards the common cause for which all freedom-loving nations all over the world are

fighting. They therefore expect that their efforts and the contribution they are making by their struggle and sacrifices to this common cause will be correctly evaluated in every respect, and that the Allied Governments will by their decisions and bearing in mind the interests of the common cause make it easier for the peoples of Yugoslavia to carry out their obligations which they voluntarily decided to fulfill, right to the end.

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Bearing in mind all these facts, the Anti-Fascist Council of the Peoples' Liberation of Yugoslavia, which is the supreme and only true representation of the will and feelings of all the peoples of Yugoslavia,

DECIDES:

1. To constitute the Anti-Fascist Council of the Peoples' Liberation of Yugoslavia as the supreme legislative and executive representative organ of Yugoslavia, as the supreme representative of the sovereignty of the peoples and state of Yugoslavia as a whole, and to set up a National Committee of the Liberation of Yugoslavia as an organ with all the characteristics of a peoples' government, through which the Anti-Fascist Council of the Peoples' Liberation of Yugoslavia will exercise its executive function.
2. To deprive the Yugoslav traitor "government" in exile of all the rights of a legal government of Yugoslavia and especially of the right to represent the peoples of Yugoslavia – anywhere and before anyone.

[Quelle: Blaustein, Albert P./ Sigler, Jay A./ Beede, Benjamin R.: Independence documents of the world, o.O. 1977, S.784-790.]