



16 August 2021

Your Grace, esteemed Bishop Andrej,
Distinguished State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic,
Your Excelency, Prof. Dr. Babić,
Dear Mayor of Veľký Meder, Mr. Holényi,
Respected Doctor Sobola and all members of the Servare et Manere Association,
Dear all,

It is with great honor and joy that I accepted to be the patron of this part of the international project "Tree of peace" in which we are remembering my great-grandfather, King Peter I and all those brave soldiers who gave their life for the ideals of freedom and justice. Unfortunately I am not able to be there with you today, due to the fact that we are also paying respect to my ancestor, King Liberator, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his death, but I am very happy that he is remembered and honored in Slovakia as well.

Guided by the idea of liberation and unification of the Serbian people, he was leading the army of the Kingdom of Serbia in its most glorious and heroic days. The remembrance of that heroism is testified even today. Until the last hour, he was faithful to his army, even when, already old and ill, he stayed with his soldiers in the most difficult times, during the Albanian golgoth in World War one, when entire army whidrew from Serbia to Greece to form a new front – Thesalloniki front. The breakthrough of this front brought victory to Allied forces and pease to the Europe and entire world.

But it was not just Serbs who were part of the army of Kingdom of Serbia. Many brave Slovaks and Chechs left the Austrian – Hungarian troops and joined the army led by my great-grandfathger and by my grandfather, King Alexander I, forming the Volunteer Division that was important part of final victory in World War 1. Good connections and great friendship between our nations continued after the war, during the time of my grandfather, King Alexander I and my father King Peter II, when Checoslovakia was considered to be a true friend and a great ally of Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

– 1 –

King Peter I addressed his soldiers with the words "my children". He shared with them fears, hopes, challenges, victories. He was able to encourage and motivate them. The relationship between King Peter I and his people was special. It was a fatherly, caring relationship because of which he is, event today, 100 years after his death, present in the heart of the Serbs all over the world. We are all remembering him by the nickname given to him by the people - "Uncle Pete".

My grandfather, King Peter I was not only the King Liberator, who brought us great victories in war. He was also the first constitutional ruler, who is remembered as a European liberal, with a democratic view of the world. Equality of all, justice and rule of law were the ideals and principlpes that led him.

He was loyal to his country, his roots, heritage and, above all, to the people. He is not just a memory of a part of our glorious past. He is our inspiration for a better future. I am proud every time when I say his name and every time when I think about him.

Once again I am very gratefull to organizers of this magnificent event, for charishing the memory of my grandfather, of thousands of soldiers of Kingdom of Serbia and Kingdom of Montenegro, who fell duing the fight for freedom, and who found their eternal peace at the soil of Slovakia, but also of the great friendship between our nations.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alex", with a horizontal line underneath the final letter.

HRH Crown Prince Alexander