

Since regular courts were only established in the autumn of 1945, in the first months after the war their role was carried out by military courts, which primarily tried civilians and underage members of the Home Guard. At the trials of war criminals and collaborators with the occupiers in Celje, one of the two military courts alone – the Military Court of the City of Celje – had issued several hundred verdicts by mid-July, and more than a thousand by the end of August 1945. These ranged from acquittals to prison sentences, forced labour, property confiscation, expulsion, and the death penalty.

A second type of trial was conducted before the Court of National Honour, which judged individuals who had not committed major crimes but had, through various forms of collaboration or membership in the German Kulturbund, transgressed against Slovenian national honour and dignity. The panel in Celje, responsible for the entire Celje district, handled more than seven hundred cases. Several dozen were dismissed or acquitted due to false accusations, while the rest were punished with the loss of national honour – effectively the loss of all civil and political rights – and in some cases with forced labour and full or partial confiscation of property. With the court's dissolution and a partial amnesty in August 1945, the penalties were limited to the loss of political rights, including the right to vote.

The transition from targeting national to class enemies became apparent in other legal proceedings that took place in the following years, both at the district and regional courts in Celje and elsewhere in Slovenia. These involved groups and individuals whom the new revolutionary authorities and their judiciary considered actual or potential opponents and class enemies.

One of the most notorious was the show trial against Celje merchants, initiated in December 1945 at the Celje Regional Court on charges of alleged speculation and economic sabotage. The trial continued in Ljubljana, culminating in January 1946 with the sentencing and execution of Franc Dobovičnik and Miloš Pšeničnik.

"Dear wife, daughter, and little son!

Since the request for clemency has been denied and no further clemency from our leader, Marshal Tito, is expected, I am still permitted to send my final words before the execution.

Please, dear wife and mother, raise the children in the spirit of the times and do not forget the Highest One above us.

We have been informed that the time of our execution is 11:30, and as stated, the execution will take place this afternoon.

If the authorities allow it, I ask that my body be transferred to Celje and buried there. Since all my property has been confiscated and you, as well as the children Milena and Danilo, are left with nothing, I ask that you appeal to the court for your rights so that you and the children may continue to live.

With heartfelt love, I send my farewell to you and to the children, Milena and Danilo, and may I remain your unforgettable father, Atek (daddy)."

(Farewell letter by Celje merchant Miloš Pšeničnik (1891–1946), written before the execution of his death sentence, 22nd January 1946)