

vists in Russia. Although the Italians are not known to have sent money they have sent agitators to promote communism. This action is taken from political and not for communistic reasons. The Hungarians for the same purpose have sent money. This movement is headed at Budapest by the leader of the Hapsburg group, Lt. Colonel Duich⁸⁹, Terez Ut. 9, Budapest, and is supported by the clericals in Italy. There are about 20,000 organized members of the communist party including women and children in Croatia and Slovenia. They cast 7,000 of the 21,000 votes in the recent elections in Zagreb, in spite of the fact that the communists themselves expected but 4000 votes, which number will probably more than account for the real communists, the balance of 3000 votes being cast by disaffected but not real communist elements. The movement in Croatia is purely national. The communists won many votes from the Radic Party which is believed to be greatly weakened. It is known that d'Annuncio⁹⁰ has dreams about freeing Croatia from Serb domination, and that communist ideas are prevalent in Fiume, but it is not believed that d'Annuncio is at heart communist but rather that he must submit to the demands of the Arditi⁹¹ who are ex-criminals and upon whom the post is dependent. The post's activities in this direction are not taken seriously. But the efforts of Hungary and Italy to undermine SHS by introducing communism is a greater danger.

Croatia as well as Slovenia has taken repressive measures against Communism. These have been dealt with in another report.

12. 1920., svibanj 27., Izvješće br. 104 američkoga djelatnika ARA-e DuBoisa američkom poslanstvu u Kraljevstvu SHS o „stanju u Hrvatskoj i Sloveniji“.

NARA, M 358, R 2, 860H.00/39

No. 105 – DuBois

Vienna, Austria
May 27, 1920

(References: reports numbered 42, 43, dated December 18, 1919.)

⁸⁹ Misli se na Stjepana Duića (1877. – 1934.), pukovnika. U Prvome svjetskom ratu bio je na sjeveroistočnom bojištu, poglavar stožera 42. hrvatske domobranske divizije, zapovjednik Orijent-zbora, posebne postrojbe austro-ugarske vojske za potporu turskoj vojsci u Siriji koja je sudjelovala u završnim bitkama u Srbiji i Albaniji. Nakon Prvoga svjetskog rata optirao je za Austriju, 1921. preselio se u Graz. Pridružio se ustaškoj organizaciji nakon 1929., umro od posljedica atentata jugoslavenske tajne službe. (*HBL*, 3 Č-Đ, 668-669.)

⁹⁰ D'Annunzio, Gabriele (1863. – 1938.), pjesnik, političar. Zagovarao ulazak Italije u Prvi svjetski rat. Okupirao Rijeku 1919. gdje je vladao diktatorski dok ga 1920. nije uklonila talijanska vlada. (*The Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia*, 251-252).

⁹¹ Arditi, vojna postrojba sastavljena od oko dvije tisuće dezertera iz talijanske vojske pod vodstvom d'Annunzia. Kasnije se razvili u vojno krilo fašističke organizacije. (Dahlia S. Elazar, *The Making of Fascism. Class, State and Counter-Revolution, Italy 1919-1922* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 75.).

The purpose of this report is to set forth the political situation existing in Croatia and Slovenia at this time and to briefly review the changes since December 1919 when the writer made a report on the same subject. Although the fundamental conditions and political tendencies have not change since that time, there have been radical changes in administration, and the investigations made during this recent trip indicate that certain important tendencies, especially the republican sentiment were not sufficiently emphasized in the former reports.

The material for this report was obtained during a visit to Slovenia and Croatia, May 14th to 22nd, and is based largely on statements made by various people among whom were Dr. Brejc, President for Slovenia, Dr. Laginja⁹², Banus for Croatia, Dr. Zoricic, secretary of the Government of the Croatia, Dr. Lorkovic⁹³, member of parliament and leader of the Narodna Klub, various officials at Marburg, Ferlach, officers, leading business men and peasants in various parts of the country.

The process of political evolution or revolution in the SHS has brought about several radical changes in administration since December last, when the Democratic-Socialist coalition – the centralist group – was as the helm. In February a change of government was brought about which placed the Radicals and autonomists in control. this new government was similarly handicapped by Parliament and failed to bring about any constructive work. With the greatest difficulty a concentration (coalition) cabinet has just been formed which includes both centralists and autonomists but leaves out the socialists who virtually as a party went over to the communists. Thus far the Right Party in Croatia and Peoples or Clerical Party in Slovenia have been left in those respective countries. Both are strongly autonomist. The Radical Party of Serbia, which is a member of the so-called Parliamentary Union, although it is allied with the Croatian and Slovenian autonomist parties, is not believed to sincerely favor autonomy but is using this union of political parties to further its own interests. Since neither the centralist nor the autonomist elements were represented in the nominated parliament in sufficient strength to carry out a program the only solution was the building of a concentration cabinet. The differences on such important questions as the elections to the constituent assembly, the framing of the constitution, the land reform, the form of the new state, and, above all, the

⁹² Laginja, Matko (1852. – 1930.), pisac, odvjetnik, političar. Do 1915. djelovao je u Istri zagovarajući pravaški program utemeljen na hrvatskome državnom i prirodnom pravu. Sudjelovao je u donošenju Svi-banjske deklaracije 1917. kao član Jugoslavenskoga kluba u Carevinskom vijeću. Bio povjerenik za Istru Narodnoga vijeća SHS-a, u Kraljevini SHS član Privremenoga narodnog predstavnništva. Predsjednik Hrvatske zajednice od 1919., kratko je obnašao i dužnost hrvatskoga bana (1920.), protiveći se nametnutom centralizmu Vidovdanskoga ustava napustio je Narodnu skupštinu 1921. (*HBL*, 8 Kr-Li (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2013), 522-523).

⁹³ Lorković, Ivan (1876. – 1926.), političar. Utemeljitelj Hrvatske napredne stranke koja je 1905. pristupila Hrvatsko-srpskoj koaliciji. Zbog sukoba s politikom centralizacije Svetozara Pribičevića istupio iz Hrvatsko-srpske koalicije 1918. Zastupao federalistički program ustrojstva Kraljevine SHS. Bio jedan od prvaka Hrvatske zajednice, pristupio Hrvatskom bloku 1921., prihvatio republikanski program Stjepana Radića. Osnovao je s Antom Trumbićem Hrvatsku federalističku seljačku stranku 1926. (*Hrvatska enciklopedija*, sv. 6 Kn-Mak (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2004), 645).

question of autonomy are so great that the new government will find it exceedingly difficult, in spite of the concentration, to develop and carry out a program.

Of these questions probably the most vital to the new state is that of autonomy. At the present time Slovenia and Croatia enjoy a fairly wide autonomy, one with which conservative autonomists would be satisfied as a permanent institution. The Slovenes are completely autonomous in matters of justice, interior affairs, religion and education, social welfare, public works, and agriculture. The heads of these departments have ministerial powers and are completely independent of Belgrade, being responsible alone to the president of Slovenia. The sub-secretaries for finance, commerce, agrarian reform, and transportation located at Ljubljana (Laibach) are under the ministries at Belgrade but responsible to the President of Slovenia, who in these cases is responsible to Belgrade. War and foreign affairs are completely centralized and Belgrade and no authority in these matters is vested in the local Slovenian government. The autonomists of Slovenia are well satisfied with the arrangement and demand that it be retained.

The Croatians, under Hungary enjoyed autonomy in matters of interior, justice, education and religion. The Right Party which stands for autonomy is in control at Agram (Zagreb), and the Croats like the Slovenes enjoy autonomy in matters essential in local government.

There can be no doubt as to that the (the) autonomist parties, the Right Party in Croatia and the Peoples Party in Slovenia, represent a strong majority in these respective states. At the recent community elections in Croatia the Right Party showed far greater strength than the Democrats, the latter receiving only about 400 mandates out of a total of 4200. While in the old Austrian Parliament Slovenia was represented by the Peoples Party with 19 members as against two for the liberals and one non-partisan. The President for Slovenia claims that the strength of the Democratic – centralistic – Party in Slovenia lies only in the minds of its leaders.

The strength of the centralists is largely in Serbia. They desire to melt into one the Serbs, the Croats, and the Slovenes, as well as the other peoples of the kingdom, and, furthermore, it is in their program to break down the 1000 year old boundaries and replace the present political divisions with twelve entirely new entities, and according to the autonomists to establish Serbian hegemony over the whole state. It is the fear of Serbian domination which causes the Croats and Slovenes to call for a wide autonomy in order that they may be politically in position to safeguard their civilization which they claim to be centuries ahead of that of Serbia.

The Serbs as represented by the Radical Party in the years preceding the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire contended for the union of all Serbs, but did not include Croats and Slovenes. In Croatia, on the other hand, was promoted the movement for a union of Slovenia, Croatia, the Serbs and the Bulgars. Not having planned on the gaining of so much territory their program (...) ⁹⁴ had been restricted to

⁹⁴ Nečitko.

them (...) ⁹⁵ and having no other plan they have stretched the unification idea to (...) ⁹⁶ all the peoples of the new state. And this (...) ⁹⁷ (...) ⁹⁸ (...) ⁹⁹ against by a large element in both Slovenia and Croatia.

The Slovenes claim that they have inherited from the Austrian Government a smooth working administrative machine and that the autonomous departments of the government function incomparably better than those directed from Belgrade. They therefore do not want to exchange this system for (...) ¹⁰⁰ one, in which they have very little faith.

Like the Slovenes, the Croats deem themselves centuries in advance of the Serbs and they fear that Serbian hegemony will drag Croatia down culturally and economically and will throw the burden of Serbia's war debt and her reconstruction upon Croatia and upon Slovenia.

Leading Croats and Slovenes frankly state that they belong to a western civilization as opposed to the Serbian orientalism, and that, although they are of the same race and of closely related tongue the actual differences due to centuries of opposing civilizations are very great. While the Slovene has but 14 % illiterates, and the Croat 40 %, the Serb has from 80 to 90 %. Other differences existing between these peoples have been frequently described and require no reiteration here, but they are of great importance in (...) ¹⁰¹ the political tendencies in the South Slav State. It is largely due to these differences that (...) ¹⁰² elements in Croatia and Slovenia have turned to republicanism because monarchism is represented by Serbian hegemony. It must be added that the republican idea (...) ¹⁰³ existed among the South Slavs as a protest against the old Hapsburg monarchy.

Dr. Lorkovic, head of the Right Party in Croatia, stated that although the sentiment for a republic was strong, out of respect for Serbia, due to what (...) ¹⁰⁴, and the regent had done during the war in behalf of the liberation of Croatia and Slovenia, the decision as to whether the future government should be republican or monarchist would be left for Serbia to decide. The Banus, the head of the Croatian Government, stated that he is of the same mind as Dr. Lorkovic, but added that, although the Serbs tolerate the republican idea in Serbia they (...) ¹⁰⁵ in Croatia and Slovenia.

The Croats and Slovenes fear so much the influence of the Serbs because the latter have a population of a six million as against a bare million of Slovenes and three and

⁹⁵ Nečitko.

⁹⁶ Nečitko.

⁹⁷ Nečitko.

⁹⁸ Nečitko.

⁹⁹ Nečitko.

¹⁰⁰ Nečitko.

¹⁰¹ Nečitko.

¹⁰² Nečitko.

¹⁰³ Nečitko.

¹⁰⁴ Nečitko.

¹⁰⁵ Nečitko.

a half million Croats. Without a vote it is impossible to state whether the country taken as a whole will show a majority for or against centralization. Elections will probably not be held before next winter.

An indication of the seriousness of the economist movement in Croatia and Slovenia is the fact that the Right Party of Croatia, which represents the cultured and liberal elements, has joined hands in the movement with the Peoples Party of Slovenia which represents the clericals and reactionaries. When two such opposite poles are brought together on a question the driving motive must be a powerful one. It behooves great caution on the part of the Serbs if they wish to avoid serious troubles in the building and holding together of the new state.

The burning question is the election of the constituent assembly whose duty it will be to lay the foundation for the form of the new state. According to the President of Slovenia, the leader of the centralists wants to control the elections by applying "Hungarian" methods but due to his rapid loss of power he will not be able to do this.

Dr. Lorkovic and the Banus of Croatia expressed no hatred or contempt for Radic, the notorious leader of the peasants party, who has been arrested by the SHS government as a traitor. Both men stated that the Radic Party, which desires independence, is still strong and a factor.

As elsewhere in Central Europe there is much discontentment in Croatia and Slovenia. Among the peasants there¹⁰⁶ are some who desire to see the return of the Hapsburg Monarchy under which they enjoyed better times. The discontentment was made patent by the unlooked for strength displayed by the communists in the recent community elections, when the party (...) ¹⁰⁷ obtained victories (...) ¹⁰⁸ in purely agricultural regions and in a country not naturally communistic. The business men are discontented with the present government (...) ¹⁰⁹ of its inefficiency, graft, and restrictions placed upon trade and commerce. For example there are over 60,000 letters lying in the Zagreb post-office awaiting the military censorship. According to some reason for these condition as the fact that the Serb has predominately a soldier mind and not a constructive one.

The experience of the American Relief Administration is proof of the inefficiency and inabilities of the Serbian Government. Everything indicates that the Serbians are splendid fighters but rotten administrators. If the Serbs would content themselves with running the SHS army and turn over to the Croats and Slovenes the civil administration the South Slav state might be far better off, but unfortunately and just like their northern brothers, the Czechs, the Serbs want to run the 'whole show'.

¹⁰⁶ Dopisano rukopisom.

¹⁰⁷ Nečitko.

¹⁰⁸ Nečitko.

¹⁰⁹ Nečitko.