

have only three seats in the Parliament. The relations between this group and the Croatian Block were severed. Mr. Radic publicly accused the Frankists of being under the influence of some Croat emigrants, who are subventioned by the Italians and the Magyars (Hungarians) to work against the integrity of Yugoslavia. It appears that Mr. Radic in his new policy has the strong backing of his peasant masses and has no fear of losing them.

During the Cabinet crisis, Mr. Radic had empowered Mr. Davidovic to count on his seats if he (Mr. Davidovic) were called upon to form the government. This government in the conception of the Croatian Block should have been a government of National concentration as the Croatian Block required that Mr. Protic, with the followers from the Radical party and the Agrarians (Zemljoradnici) should also participate in the new government. In this way the internal quarrels would have been made harmless. In this way the internal quarrels would have been solved by means of a compromise and all the available energies would have been concentrated on the economic reconstruction and a united front would have been offered to foreign interference.

Mr. Pasic has, however, succeeded in obtaining the mandate from the King to form any government he likes. He has done so already. His new government is practically purely Radical.

The point of view taken in Croatia is that perhaps this solution is one of the best. In this way the Serbian element will be grouped around Mr. Pasic after the next elections, in which it is expected that the Democratic Party will be greatly reduced in its numbers. The Croatian elements will be grouped around the Croatian Block.

The Croatian view is that the political issue is now clearly out and that it will be more easy to come to an agreement with a party (The Radical Party now in control) having a definite policy, than with the former Radical-Democratic coalition.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
J. F. McGurk,
American Consul.

800

Jfm/hum.

41. 1923., travanj 3., Izvješće poslanika Henryja Percivala Dodgea State Departmentu o postizbornim koalicijama i stavu Stjepana Radića u kojemu se donosi da je u vrijeme predizborne kampanje u Hrvatskoj stav radikala bio da su Radićevi kandidati zanemarivi te da su učinili sve napore da bi spriječili izbore demokrata zbog čega su „znajući da nemaju nikakvih šansi za izborom radikalskih kandidata, naložili svojim članovima, uključujući sve, od mnogih dužnosnika, radikale, da učine sve napore u korist Radićevih kandidata.“

NARA, M 358, R 3, 860h.00/170

[...] ²¹⁹
 LEGATION OF THE
 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Belgrade, April 3, 1923.

Despatch No. 1872.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The Honorable,

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

Referring to my Despatch No. 1856 of the 22nd ultimo, relative to the recent parliamentary elections in Yugoslavia, I have the honor to inform you that although as soon as the results of the voting began to be known with some certainty the various party leaders commenced to look about them with a view to various combinations and although the new Parliament is to meet on the 16th instant, the political atmosphere remains as obscure as ever.

The most weighty factor in the present situation is the attitude which may be observed by Mr. Raditch's party which as yet appears to be wholly uncertain, notwithstanding a lengthy resolution passed by a meeting of the party held at Zagreb on the 25th ultimo and several declarations to the press made by Mr. Raditch. I enclose translations, made by the Legation, of this resolution and of one of the declarations, both of which will be observed to be written in that ambiguous and prolix style affected by Mr. Raditch. The resolution is mainly a long historical résumé expounding again Mr. Raditch's theory of the sovereignty of the Croatian people which is unaffected by the acts of the "Belgrade Government" and whose representatives are willing to confer with representatives of the Serbian people with a view reaching some agreement whereby both may live together within the internationally recognized frontiers of Yugoslavia. The declaration is also ambiguous and apparently self-contradictory in several points. It states that the Radicals have already definitely decided to conclude an agreement with the Croats and threatens in case an agreement is not reached to start a movement in different parts of country. Regarding the party's intentions as to coming to Belgrade and taking their seats in Parliament, the various statements on this point make any deduction possible. Both documents make reference to the United States, the resolution stating that the efforts of the Croatian Parliament to effect a just agreement with the Serbian people fail, it will demand

²¹⁹ Državni pečat.

the aid of the United States. In the declaration Mr. Raditch states that he “has already wired to President Harding²²⁰ stating the number of Republicans in our country”.

In answer to these resolutions and declarations of Mr. Raditch and his party, the present all-Radical Cabinet has assumed an apparently energetic attitude. The present Minister of Justice, Mr. Lazar Markovitch²²¹, has been chosen as its spokesman and in this capacity he has adopted the somewhat unusual course here of giving frequent interviews to the press. Translations of two of these interviews are enclosed and in them Mr. Markovitch states clearly that the Radical party wholly refuse to recognize or confer with Mr. Raditch and his deputies as the national representation of Croatia. Moreover in Mr. Raditch's declarations Mr. Marcovitch professes to see activities directed against the fundamental liberties and independence of the Yugoslav people and declares that the Radical Government as the responsible guardian of the Constitution which can only be modified according to its own provisions, will follow closely these activities. In one of these interviews Mr. Marcovitch makes possibly a significant allusion to the desires of the Radical party when he declares that with its 52 seats the Democrats constitute a political factor and that in politics there can be no rancor.

I also enclose a translation of an article from the Radical organ, the “Samouprava”, which, alluding to Mr. Raditch's announced activities against the present Constitution, states that these may bring him and his deputies within the provisions of the penal code. While from what precedes the Radical party would appear, as was expected, to have taken up an uncompromising attitude toward Mr. Raditch, the leader of the Slovene and Bosnian autonomist groups, Dr. Korochetz and Dr. Spaho²²², immediately after the election visited Mr. Raditch and are believed to have reached some common understanding regarding their future action. This understanding has been spoken of in the press as amounting to the formation of a “Block”, which would thus include 109 deputies. The better opinion however would appear to be that the different objectives of these three groups would prevent their forming anything like a “Block” but that some loose understanding on certain points of political tactics may have been reached. I enclose in this connection a translation from the Belgrade “Politica” containing an interview with Dr. Korochetz and Dr. Spaho and also the text of a communiqué issued by them and Mr. Raditch at the close of their conferences stating that an agreement regarding the most important questions had been reached. Dr. Korochetz' declarations have caused

²²⁰ Harding, Warren Gamaliel (1865. – 1923.), političar, republikanac, 29. predsjednik SAD-a (1921. – 1923.). Među glavnim obilježjima njegove vlade bili su izolacionizam i protivljenje sudjelovanju SAD-a u Ligi naroda. (*Hrvatska enciklopedija*, sv. 4 Fr-Ht, 2002, 466).

²²¹ Marković, Lazar (1882. – ?) pravnik, političar. Član NRS-a. Bio je ministar za pripremu Ustavotvorne skupštine i izjednačavanje zakona (1920.), pravosuđa (1921. – 1923., 1939. – 1941.), trgovine i industrije (1923.).

²²² Spaho, Mehmed (1883. – 1939.), političar. Bio predsjednik Jugoslavenske muslimanske organizacije (1921. – 1935.), suosnivač Jugoslavenske radikalne zajednice. Bio je povjerenik za trgovinu i obrt, poštu i telegraf u Narodnom vijeću SHS-a za Bosnu i Hercegovinu (1918.). U Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji bio je ministar šuma i ruda (1918. – 1919.), trgovine i industrije (1921. – 1922., 1927. – 1929.), financija (1924.), prometa (1935. – 1939.). (*Hrvatska enciklopedija*, sv. 10, 125)

considerable surprise as showing that he now at all events professes to be closer to Mr. Raditch's views than had been believed and apparently desires a fully autonomous Slovene state within the confines of Yugoslavia. It may be observed that he states, contrary to Dr. Spaho who declares that he will go, that he is not decided whether or not to go to Belgrade, that is whether he will fight for Constitutional revision in or out of Parliament.

I also enclose a number of translations of press articles commenting from various political points of view regarding the results of the elections. It will be noted that one newspaper, the Belgrade "Vreme" which has one of the largest circulations and professes to be independent, openly declares in favor of the "amputation" of the Croats and Slovenes. Its views have found as yet no echo in the rest of the press and are combated by several organs and especially by the Belgrade "Politika", also one of the most important newspapers. It is hardly probable that any considerable fraction of the Serbian desire "amputation" and it may be that in urging it the "Vreme" is really using this as a threat to the Croats and Slovenes, neither of whom desire separation, so as to make them more pliant.

Nothing as yet appears to be definitely known regarding Mr. Pashitch's plans but the possibility of a coalition with the Democrats, notwithstanding the great difficulties in the way, is freely spoken of as the only way out of the political impasse. Such a coalition would include 160 deputies and represent a small majority of Parliament. A good deal is also heard of a dissolution and new elections, which the Radical part would expect to conduct following the meeting of Parliament. The chief difficulty concerning a Radical coalition with the Democrats is that the whole electoral campaign was virtually made between these two parties, the Democratic candidates standing on a platform of annihilation to the Radicals and the Radicals on a similar one as regards the Democrats. A coalition between them would accordingly mean an open breach of election pledges.

It may be asked how a new election could alter the present situation of the parties but it appears to be agreed, at all events by the Radical, Democratic and Socialist leaders with whom I have talked, that a new election would greatly diminish Mr. Raditch's following. It is alleged by these Democrats and Socialists and admitted by Radicals that during the electoral campaign in Croatia Mr. Raditch's prospects were considered as practically negligible while every effort was made by the Radicals to prevent the election of Democrats. In order to do this, as the Radicals knew that they had no chance of electing their own candidates, they instructed their adherents, including all the many Radical office-holders, to throw all their weight in favor of the Raditch candidates. This is not altogether a post-election theory for during the election the Democrats were continually accusing the Radicals of favoring the Raditch party in every way and at their expense. A great deal continues to be heard here concerning the weakness of Raditch prior to the election and it is also stated that he was able to gain considerable strength when the split between the Radicals and Democrats occurred as he made the Croats believe, not without some reason, that he himself had been able to bring about this result.

Finally I enclose a translation of an official statement, which appeared in the press, giving the number of votes cast and deputies elected by all the different parties

according to provinces, the total votes cast and the total votes cast according to parties. Unfortunately this statement is exclusive of Serbia and Montenegro for which no such statistics have yet appeared. A careful examination of these figures is instructive in various ways. A comparison with the figures for the last elections shown that the small parties have polled about as many votes as then but that the increased vote at this election (82% instead of 64% of the registered voters) went almost wholly to the larger parties. I am also told by Democratic leaders that their party did not in effect lose many votes at this election notwithstanding that it elected only half as many deputies.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
 Your obedient servant,
 H. Percival Dodge²²³
 H. Percival Dodge,
 American Minister.

Enclosures:

- 1.- Translation from the "Vreme" of March 28, 1923, containing the resolution of the deputies of the Croatian Republican Peasants Party (Raditch);
- 2.- Translation from the "Politika" of March 23, 1923, containing declarations by Mr. Raditch;
- 3.- Translations from the "Pravda" of March 29th and 30th 1923 containing statements by Dr. Lazar Marcovitch, Minister of Justice;
- 4.- Translation from the "Samouprava" of March 28, 1923, containing a statement regarding the attitude of the Raditch party;
- 5.- Translation from the "Politika" of March 28, 1923, containing an interview with Dr. Korochetz and Dr. Spaho;
- 6.- Summary in translation of article in the "Vreme" advocating "amputation";²²⁴
- 7.- Translations of extracts from newspapers as various political opinions commenting on the elections and the political situation;²²⁵
- 8.- Translation of a statement giving official figures of the voting at the elections for all Yugoslavia except Serbia and Montenegro.²²⁶

File No. 800-D

Copies to Bucharest, Prague and Sofia.

²²³ Vlastoručno.

²²⁴ *Vreme* (Beograd), br. 461, 1. travnja 1923.

²²⁵ *Demokratija* (Beograd), br. 1117, 1. travnja 1923.

²²⁶ Vidi: *Statistika izbora narodnih poslanika Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca održanih 18. marta 1923.* (Beograd: Narodna skupština Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, 1924), XXVI-XXII.