

DOKUMENTI

Enclosures:

- 1.- Illustrations from the Belgrade "Balkan im bild" of January 18, 1925:<sup>357</sup>
- 2.- Translation of article from the Belgrade "Samouprava" of January 13, 1925, entitled "Hungary and the plots of Mr. Raditch";
- 3.- Translation from the Belgrade "Vreme" of January 13, 1925, containing the text of the decision of the Zagreb court of first instance regarding the Raditch leaders;
- 4.- Translation of article from the Belgrade press of January 9, 1925, containing the text of the protest of the Opposition Block.<sup>358</sup>

File No. 800-Quintuplicate.

Copy to E.I.C., Paris.

63. 1925., siječanj 28., Izvješće poslanika Henryja Percivala Dodgea State Departmentu o sudskom procesu i optužbama protiv Stjepana Radića.

NARA, M 358, R 3, 860H.00/230

[...]<sup>359</sup>

LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Belgrade, January 28, 1925.

Despatch No. 2555

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Sir:

Referring to my Despatch No. 2548 (860h.00/228) of the 19th instant, relative to the internal political situation, I have the honor to inform you that on the 22nd instant the decision was published of the "Table of the Ban", the court of highest appeal in

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<sup>357</sup> Vidi sliku 5.

<sup>358</sup> Sažetak „iz beogradskih novina od 9. siječnja 1925.“ Vidi: „Blok o Obznani“, *Politika* (Beograd), 9. siječnja 1925.

<sup>359</sup> Državni pečat.

Croatia, to which, as reported in my Despatch above referred to, the Public Prosecutor had appealed the judgment of the court of first instance quashing all the indictments against the leaders of the Raditch Party, except that against Mr. Raditch himself. This decision, of which I enclose a translation of the substantial portion and a summary of the remainder, sustains the decision of the lower court to the effect that the Law for the Protection of the State is not applicable to the case but holds, in view of the further evidence submitted by the Government, that the proceedings must be re-opened against the accused. However the decision adds that as the offense with which the prisoners are charged does not involve more than two years' imprisonment and as there is no danger of their escape or of their influencing witnesses, the prisoners shall be released. In accordance with this judgment, the prisoners were released but a few moments later they were re-arrested by the police and charged under an Hungarian law still in force in Croatia with threatening a disturbance of public order. It may be noted that this law was passed some forty years ago through the influence of count Khuen-Hedervary<sup>360</sup>, who was at that time Ban of Croatia, and was then decried by the Serbs as the most tyrannical law of the many such brought into existence by this most hated representative of Hungarian power. The purpose of the Government in making use of this law is undoubtedly to prevent Dr. Macek and his companions from escaping from the country and also from causing popular agitation, pending the completion of the preparation of further evidence against them intended to sustain charges of high treason.

Meanwhile the examination of Mr. Raditch by the court of first instance is continuing and is stated to be prolonged interminably by the insistence of Mr. Raditch to give the judges the fullest details of his life. Dr. Nintchitch, the Foreign Minister, informs me that he fully expects the court to sustain the Government's charges against Mr. Raditch since the documents submitted to the court by the Government, which were found insufficient by it against Dr. Macek and his companions, referred especially to Mr. Raditch and only incidentally to his associates.

My Despatch No. 2548 (860h.00/228), above referred to, mentioned several documents as having been found when Mr. Raditch was arrested. Another such document, which is now apparently considered by the Government as possibly the most important evidence against Mr. Raditch and which is claimed to have been found in the pocket of his coat, is a report on conditions in Yugoslavia and in Europe generally which purports to have been written by him for the information of the Soviet Government during his visit to Moscow.

<sup>360</sup> Khuen-Héderváry, Dragutin Karoly (1849. – 1918.), političar. Obnašao dužnost hrvatskoga bana (1883. – 1903.), ugarskoga ministra predsjednika (1903., 1910. – 1912.), predsjednik Stranke narodnoga rada, zastupnik u ugarskom parlamentu (1913. – 1918.). Karakteristike upravljanja Hrvatskom za vrijeme njegova banovanja bile su ukidanje liberalnoga zakonodavstva, ograničenje slobode tiska, mađarizacija, regionalni separatizam, zabilježen je i gospodarski rast, modernizacija poljoprivrede, urbanizacija Zagreba, povećanje zaposlenih u obrtima, povećanje broja banaka i štedionica. (*HBL*, 7 Kam – Ko, 288-289).

I enclose translations made by the Legation of three extracts from this report which have been published.

It will be observed that the first of these extracts purports to give a summary of the political history of Yugoslavia during the past year and especially the action taken by the Raditch Party. This account is obviously colored and endeavors to show that the present political contest in Yugoslavia is between the proletariat, i.e., the peasants and workmen, and the bourgeoisie. No such struggle in fact exists. The second extract endeavors to show what the Soviet Government can do for the assistance of the Raditch movement in Croatia. The third extract, which is the most important for the judicial proceedings against Mr. Raditch, describes the military organisation which it states has been created in Croatia, portions of Dalmatia of Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere by the Central Committee of the Raditch Party for the purpose of "assuming power" in case the elections to Parliament should be effected in Croatia by the use of force and their result should therefore not correspond to the free will of the people." This organisation was previously practically unknown to the Yugoslav authorities if it actually exists. The three extracts however will be seen to be extremely compromising to Mr. Raditch and to show clearly his separatist and Bolchevistic intensions.

The publication of the full text of this report is announced and will be forwarded when it appears. Certain passages of it are said to refer to conditions in England, France and other countries and in view of this, Dr. Nintchitch called the British and French Ministers to the Foreign Office and furnished them with copies of the passages referring to their respective countries. He did not however inquire whether their Governments would have any objection to the publication of these passages but simply informed my Colleagues that his Government would publish them. My British and French Colleagues inform me that the passages in question appear to be of slight interest although numerous statements in them are incorrect. My British colleague informs me that Mr. Raditch declares that he was invited by the British Government to visit England, the invitation being conveyed by two British officers. My Colleague says that the two officers in question were on their way to British East Africa and in passing through Zagreb incautiously called on Mr. Raditch out of mere curiosity. Mr. Raditch subsequently published a purported account of their interview with him which came to the attention of the British War Office and resulted in the two officers being severely reprimanded.

My Despatch No. 2548, above referred to, also mentioned the discovery of what purports to be an unsigned draft of a treaty between Mr. Raditch as "President of the Croatian National and State Body, representing the Croatian People" and "The Representative of the Hungarian Government". It now appears that this document was also found in Mr. Raditch's pocket when he was arrested and that upon being then asked whether it was a treaty, he replied that it was a draft for a treaty. My Despatch above mentioned indicated the substance of this alleged draft treaty and stated that the Hungarian Government had denied having had anything to do with Mr. Raditch. I now enclose a translation of this document from the alleged text as published in the Belgrade "Politika"

of the 23rd instant. As indicative of the tone of the comments of the Government press regarding this document, I enclose a translation of an article which appeared in the Belgrade "Vreme" of the 24th instant.

The authorities are also stated to have seized two letters addressed secretly by Mr. Raditch to Dr. Trumbitch, one requesting him to go to the Soviet Legation at Vienna and present a full power previously given to him to organise some concerted action and the other letter advising all Croats to abstain from voting in the coming election. In connection with the Soviet Legation at Vienna, I may mention that the press has published the text of several letters found among Mr. Raditch's papers, addressed to him by this Legation and showing apparently the existence of intimate relations between the Soviet Representative and the Croatian leader. A letter has also been published dated September 24, 1924, addressed to Mr. Raditch by the Vienna Representative of the Peasants' International, Mr. O. J. Krasanij, informing him that this International had decided soon to hold a meeting of representatives of all Balkan countries which Mr. Raditch was to prepare.

In addition to the documents mentioned, numerous other documents are stated to have been found which are alleged fully to sustain a charge against Mr. Raditch and his party leaders of high treason not only through their dealings with the Hungarian Government, the Soviet Government and the Third International but with the Macedonian Comitadji leaders. All these are stated now to have been submitted to the court which is examining Mr. Raditch. In further explanation of the failure of the lower court at Zagreb to sustain the charges of the Public Prosecutor against Dr. Macek and his companions, it is now admitted that all the evidence was not submitted to this court and that a number of documents were submitted only in copy and one important document in Russian without a translation. The court refused to consider the translations and declared that it could not take cognisance of the Russian document as it had no means for having it translated.

Dr. Trumbitch, the leading counsel for Dr. Macek and his companions, following the re-arrest of his clients, petitioned the court of first instance to declare their arrest invalid in view of the court's decision releasing the accused. The court has now decided in favor of this petition and the public Prosecutor has appealed against this decision to the court of appeal, the table of the Ban.

My Despatch no. 2548 also mentioned the offer made by Mr. Thomas Dombal, Secretary of the Peasants' International, to come to Zagreb to testify in favor of Mr. Raditch and his companions. The Government has now decided to refuse him permission to enter the country on the ground that his mission would actually be for the purpose of spreading Bolchevist propaganda.

The dissensions in the Cabinet, which I mentioned in my Despatch no. 2548, above referred to, have been settled at least until after the elections. The Independent Democratic Ministers, and especially Mr. Pribitchevitch and Mr. Lukinitch, have assured the Croatian Ministers, Dr. Drinkovitch and Mr. Surmin, that it was not their intention to molest Croats or any one opposed politically to the Government and that any such molestations as had occurred had been the work of over-zealous officials who would be

duly punished. This has apparently satisfied the Croatian Ministers, and a circular is said to have been addressed to the provincial authorities calling upon them to stop all interference with opposition voters. In speaking of this to me Dr. Nintchitch emphasised that the Government only wished to proceed against the Raditch party leaders and considered the followers of the Raditch party to be loyal but misguided persons.

Notwithstanding this circular reports from all parts of the country make it evident that the utmost pressure is being applied by all provincial officials to frustrate the opposition parties in their electoral activities. A meeting of the Croatian Union was lately forbidden in Zagreb. Meetings of the Bosnian Mohammedan, Socialist and other smaller parties have also been forbidden or broken up by the "Orjuna" and "Srnao" nationalistic societies which are believed to be under the orders of Mr. Pribitchevitch. Opposition candidates have also been arrested on charges brought by the authorities or so severely mauled by Orjuna and other roughs as to be placed hors de combat for many weeks. An example of the former is the arrest of Ferad Beg Draga<sup>361</sup>, the leader of the Djemiet (Turkish) Party who has been arrested nominally on some complaint made by members of the Radical Party. An example of serious injury inflicted upon a candidate is the attack by an "Orjuna" band on Dr. Kraft<sup>362</sup> and two other leaders of the German Party. This is the incident which led to the protest of the German minister, Mr. Olshausen, which is described in my despatch no.<sup>363</sup> of the 29th instant. The circumstances appear to be that an electoral meeting of the German Party was to be held at Sivac near Novi Sad in the Batschka. Dr. Kraft, who was to address the meeting, and his secretary, were delayed by an automobile accident so that after some waiting the chairman of the meeting decided to dismiss the approximately two thousand Germans who had assembled. Hardly had he done so when police officials invited him to come to the station house and as he approached this office, a band of roughs fell upon him and beat him into insensibility. An hour later, Dr. Kraft and his secretary arrived and hearing what had happened, called at the house to which the chairman had been taken. Hardly had they approached this house than they too were fallen upon and so savagely beaten that Dr. Kraft's skull was broken. The authorities apparently remained inactive and now although orders for a thorough investigation of the incident have been given, no one of the perpetrators have been arrested. Dr. Kraft after lying dangerously ill for several days, is now out of danger. His associates are also recovering.

In speaking of this incident to Dr. Nintchitch, who is one of the moderates of the Cabinet, he expressed little regret but declared that as the German Party had openly allied itself with the Raditch Party they could hardly have expected other treatment from

<sup>361</sup> Draga, Ferhad-beg.

<sup>362</sup> Kraft, Stefan (1884. – 1959.), političar, diplomat. Bio član Stranke Nijemaca, zastupnik u Narodnoj skupštini (1923. – 1938.), do 1939. visoki dužnosnik Kulturbunda („Udruga za očuvanje i širenje njemačke kulture“). Bio konzul NDH u Münchenu, kasnije ravnatelj Glavnoga ravnateljstva za prehranu u Ministarstvu gospodarstva NDH. Prije kraja Drugoga svjetskog rata emigrirao u Njemačku. (*Hrvatska enciklopedija*, sv. 6 Kn-Mak, 2004, 219).

<sup>363</sup> Broj nije naveden.

the patriotic people of the Voivodina. He added that such incidents were constantly happening in other parts of the country, due to electoral excitement, and that their victims were as often Radicals as members of other parties. This last statement appears however to be untrue for among the many cases of attacks on candidates reported by the Government as well as the Opposition press, there is scarcely one of an attack on a Radical or Independent Democratic candidate. The inspirer of these drastic methods is undoubtedly Mr. Pribitchevitch who a few days ago admitted to me that in politics there was nothing but the strong hand that counted.

The best informed persons appear to believe that the Government's tactics against Mr. Raditch have in no way affected his popularity and that if voters are permitted to vote for his candidates, he will have as many or more deputies than in the last Parliament. They also believe that this might have been different if the Government had used more tact and that in this case the dissidents from the Raditch Party who at one time were going over in considerable numbers to the party founded by Mr. Lovrekovitch<sup>364</sup> might have formed a very considerable group. However the Government's action was such as to bring this movement to a rapid standstill and it is now admitted, even by Radicals, that the Lovrekovitch movement is a failure. The same can be said of Dr. Surmin's activities in the recent foundation of the National Croatian Party. The view of the Croats appears to be that Mr. Raditch, as bad and Bolchevistic as he may be, is their only hope against Serbian oppression and consequently that they must vote for him.

My former despatches have mentioned the existence in various districts, including that of Mr. Nintchitch, of dissident Radical lists of candidates. There is a report now current that many of these lists are secretly supported by Mr. Pashitch who has taken this means to rid himself of candidates disagreeable to him. This is stated to be particularly the case in Mr. Nintchitch's district since it is well-known that for some years now Mr. Pashitch has desired to get rid of his present Foreign Minister.

Both the Government and Opposition parties appear ostensibly to be optimistic as to the results of the elections, leaders of the former declaring that the Government parties will elect from 160 to 180 deputies, that is a clear majority of the House. Opposition leaders claim similar gains but apparently with less assurance.

The whole country is now filled with political "spell-binders" and meetings are constantly being held. The Opposition parties have recently issued their electoral proclamation; of which I enclose a summary in translation. On the 1<sup>st</sup> proximo, they are to have an important meeting in Zagreb.

In reply to my request I have received a report from the Consul at Zagreb on the Political situation in his district which I enclose herewith. While portions of it are somewhat general in character, it will be found of interest.

<sup>364</sup> Lovreković, Vinko (1887. – 1937.), političar. Bliski suradnik Stjepana Radića, potpredsjednik HPSS-a. Zbog neslaganja s Radićevom politikom (1924. – 1925.) napustio HSS i osnovao neutjecajnu Hrvatsku samostalnu seljačku stranku 1925. godine.

## DOKUMENTI

I have the honor to be, Sir,  
Your obedient servant  
H. Percival Dodge<sup>365</sup>  
H. Percival Dodge,  
American Minister.

Enclosures:

- 1.- Translation of article from the Belgrade "Pravda" of January 22, 1925, entitled "The Sanctions against the P.P.R.C.";
- 2.- Translation of article from the Belgrade "Politika" of January 22, 1925, regarding arrest of Mr. Raditch;<sup>366</sup>
- 3.- Translation of article from the Belgrade "Politika" of January 23, 1925, regarding Mr. Raditch's relations with Hungary;<sup>367</sup>
- 5.- Translation of 1<sup>st</sup> portion of Mr. Raditch's Report to Moscow, from Belgrade "Politika", January 25, 1925;<sup>368</sup>
- 6.- Translation of 2<sup>nd</sup> portion of Mr. Raditch's report to Moscow, from Belgrade "Politika", January 26, 1925;<sup>369</sup>
- 7.- Translation of 3<sup>rd</sup> portion of Mr. Raditch's report to Moscow, from Belgrade "Politika", January 29, 1925;<sup>370</sup>
- 8.- Translation of the Electoral Proclamation of the Democratic Party, from Belgrade "Pravda", January 22, 1925;
9. Political report dated January 20, 1925 from the American Consul, Zagreb, to American Minister, Belgrade.

File No. 800-Quintuplicate.

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<sup>365</sup> Vlastoručno.

<sup>366</sup> Komentar članka „Odluka Banskog Stola“, *Politika* (Beograd), 22. siječnja 1925.: „The new arrest of the accused by the police is explained by the fact that besides the accusation based on the Law for the Protection of Public Safety and Order of the State, a new charge against Mr. Raditch and his co-defendants of high treason (Article 87 of the Penal Code) demands their being arrested.....The action against Raditch thus enters upon a new phase.“

<sup>367</sup> „Radićev ugovor s Mađarskom“, *Politika* (Beograd), 23. siječnja 1925., 1.

<sup>368</sup> „Radićev referat Moskvi“, *Politika* (Beograd), 25. siječnja 1925., 3.

<sup>369</sup> „Još iz Radićeva referata Moskvi“, *Politika* (Beograd), 26. siječnja 1925., 1.

<sup>370</sup> „Radić je organizovao vojne odrede“, *Politika* (Beograd), 29. siječnja 1925., 1.

DOKUMENTI

Dodatak br. 9: Izvješće konzula u Zagrebu Leslija A. Davisa poslaniku Henryju Percivalu Dodgeu.

AMERICAN CONSULATE

Zagreb, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes,  
January 20, 1925.

The Honorable

H. Percival Dodge,  
American Minister,  
Belgrade.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit to the Legation the following resumé of the political situation in Croatia (including a brief preliminary summary of the general political situation in Yugoslavia), as gathered from the local press and interviews with different individuals:

Preliminary Statement.

The internal political struggle in Yugoslavia continues to center around the rival policies of centralism, and is therefore similar to the struggle which went on in the United States under the name of Federalism and States' Rights.

The chief proponent of the doctrine of centralism, as is well known, is the veteran politician, Nikola Pasic, leader of the Radical Party, who for a half century has been a dominant figure in Serbian politics and is the most astute "practical" politician at the present time in Yugoslavia. Mr. Pasic is known not by the speeches which he makes nor the doctrines he defends but by the political results which he obtains. And he has, through securing the adoption of the present constitution, not only formed a very highly centralized government (modeled on the French system) but is considered in Croatia to have made a "Greater Serbia" rather than a Yugoslavia, all of the new territory being regarded here as practically annexed to Serbia for the greater glory of that Kingdom.

The Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins, etc., was conceived the idea of joining with the Serbians, on coequal terms, in the formation of a new kingdom representing all of the South Slavic peoples, were greatly disappointed at the "Greater Serbia" achieved by Mr. Pasic and there has been no lack of active opposition to the Government. The foremost of the opponents is the brilliant but erratic Croatian leader, Mr. Radic, whose political party is known as the "Croatian Peasants' Republican Party."

In the political duel between Mr. Pasic and Mr. Radic, the latter has wielded a more brilliant pen, but Mr. Pasic, through his control of the army and the gendarmerie, has wielded a more forceful sword.

Occupying a middle ground between Mr. Pasic and Mr. Radic is the leader of the Democratic Party, Mr. Ljubomir Davidovic. Although himself a Serbian, Mr. Davidovic is said to recognize the rights of the other Slavic peoples and to be desirous of ending the internal struggle, which so greatly hinders the development and progress of Yugoslavia.

The internal friction between the various political parties has naturally interfered with governmental machinery. The past four months especially have witnessed a long chronic crisis. The Pasic Radical Party fell last September and Mr. Davidovic was called upon to form a Coalition Government, excluding the Radicals. This he was able to do through the support of the Radic Croat delegates to the Skupstina (Parliament). Shortly after this, however, Mr. Radic made an uncompromising speech before his party in which he demanded a general election conducted by the Coalition Government, excluding the Radicals, to decide upon further organization of the State of Yugoslavia – - in other words to alter the Constitution. This speech caused a split in the coalition and the Davidovic Government fell.

Mr. Pasic was recalled to power to form a “working government” to control internal matters during the interval before the coming elections, which are called for February of this year. In view of Mr. Pasic’s well-known ability as a daring and astute practical politician, most of the people here say that the election will be “made to order.”

#### Other Political Parties.

A new political party under the name of the “Croatian Peasant Party” was formed in November by Mr. Lovrekovic<sup>371</sup>, deputy and former member of the Radic party, to combat Mr. Radic and the other leaders of that party because of their having joined the International Peasant Union in Moscow and because of their opposition to the monarchy. Mr. Lovrekovic was one of the three founders of the Croatian peasant party of before the war in which he collaborated from the beginning with Mr. Radic. He is a peasant, well situated and very intelligent, and has more or less influences with the peasants. His aim is to revive the old Croatian peasant party, and he reproaches the Radic party with having not a peasant policy but only a policy for a few leaders. The leaders of the new party state that they will adopt as the basis principles of its policy the same principles that were expressed six years ago by all Croatian parties in their agreement with Serbia and that the new party will enter the elections on this platform. Owing to the short time before the elections, it is not thought that Mr. Lovrekovic will accomplish any appreciable results at these elections but it is quite possible, if he continues as energetically as he has begun, that he may be an important factor among the Croatian peasants and a serious menace to Mr. Radic at the following elections. It is difficult at this time to

<sup>371</sup> Hrvatska samostalna seljačka stranka.

tell what effect the arrest of Mr. Radic may have upon the success of this new monarchical peasant party.

On the other hand, the Croatian Union under the leadership of Dr. Trumbic, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Lorkovic, and others, who formerly favored the monarchy, has declared itself republican, and at a meeting held in November 25<sup>th</sup> declared that it would not put up any candidates of its own but would work and vote for the candidates of the Croatian Republican Peasant Party. The Slovenian Popular Party under the leadership of Dr. Korosec has also declared itself opposed to the policy of centralism and in favor of autonomy of Slovenia.

#### Dissolution of the Croatian Peasant Republican Party and Arrest of Mr. Radic.

A number of limitations and restrictions have been placed on candidates and electors throughout the country, but the crowning stroke was achieved when Mr. Pasic, acting as he says under the authority of a law known as the "Law for the Protection of the State," dissolved the Croatian Peasant Republican Party and placed Mr. Radic and others of its leaders under arrest. All this was accomplished with dramatic effect. Mr. Radic was charged with being a traitor, on the ground that he had allied his part with "Peasants' International" at Moscow, which was said to be the same as the III International and a communistic organization, and of having entered into relations with a reactionary organization in Hungary and with another in Macedonia for the purpose of receiving foreign assistance for a revolutionary movement in Croatia.

The preliminary hearing of the arrested Croatian leaders was held in the local Police Court. Dr. Trumbic, a former premier and one of the foremost Yugoslav lawyers, was retained to defend the case, and his defense was so brilliant that the Court dismissed the case, so far as it concerned all the leaders except Radic, the Court holding that material evidence had not been submitted by the Government to substantiate the charges made against the Croatian leaders. Radic, however, refused at first to answer questions on the ground that the Government was in error in subjecting him to arrest and had thus violated the right to immunity guaranteed by the Constitution to members of the Skupstina, but now he is answering the questions asked him.

The decision of the Court of first instance that there are no grounds to proceed against Mr. Radic and other chiefs of the Croatian Republican Peasant Party has been received without such excitement among the Croat population, as the Croats generally believed from the very beginning that the Government had no proofs of his having acted in any way contrary to the fundamental laws of the country. The Croat politicians and the public at large expect confidently that the Court of Appeal will affirm the finding and decisions of the lower court and that Mr. Radic will be set free, the Government then being able to proceed against him only for possible press offences.

Both sides, however, are determined to secure a complete victory. One side will exhaust its supply of persuasive eloquence, while it is said that the other side will not hesitate to avail itself of every phase of "pressure" it is capable of applying.

The first event which indicates the tactics that will be employed by both sides in the coming fight before the higher court occurred in connection with Dr. Trumbic, attorney for Mr. Radic. Dr. Trumbic applied for a passport stating that he wished to visit Budapest and Moscow in order to investigate the charges made against Radic and obtained definite and authentic proofs as to what connections he may have formed, if any, with foreign organizations. The passport was granted him, but later it was, without explanation, forcefully taken from him by the police.

Mr. Radic and his party are endeavoring to fight the case through to a successful finish before the elections so that the order dissolving the Croatian Peasant Republican Party may be withdrawn and delegates from that party may be elected to the Skupstina. The Government (which means Pasic) is endeavoring to delay the case until after the elections. What the outcome will be is still highly problematical. The Croats here maintain that there were not sufficient grounds for the arrest of Mr. Radic and that his arrest under the circumstances will only embarrass the Government at the coming election. They say that as long as the fiction of him having joined the Communist party could be maintained there was a considerable part of the population which would have supported the Government, but that according to the decision of the Court this fiction, as well as the alleged agreement that he made with a similar party in Hungary, have now fallen to the ground.

The Croats, however, believe that in spite of all this the Government is likely to use force to prevent the Radic party from participating at the elections if they do not succeed in preventing the Courts from arriving at a definite decision before the elections.

The Croats further believe that this is the moment when the King should intervene, as it is to their mind a disgrace to the country that a Government which has been so badly blamed by the Courts should still be in power without bearing the consequences. They say that the King should force the Government composed of neutral, i.e., non-party personalities.

The sympathies aroused by this struggle are largely local. Probably 90 per cent of the Serbians regard Mr. Radic as a traitor, or if not a traitor, at any rate as an intolerable mischief maker. But it is no less certain that 90 per cent of the Croats regard him as a patriot and the principal defenders of their rights. It is this localization of political party struggles that gives chief concern to those who have the best interests of Yugoslavia at heart and who wish to see the establishment of a stable and chiefly Government.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Leslie A. Davis<sup>372</sup>

Leslie A. Davis

American Consul

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<sup>372</sup> Vlastoručno.