

80. 1926., ožujak 17., Izvješće poslanika Henryja Percivala Dodgea State Departmentu o raspravama o proračunu u Narodnoj skupštini, HSS-u, kraljevoj politici i njegovom neslaganju s Nikolom Pašićem.

NARA, M 358, R 4, 860H.00/278

[...] <sup>457</sup>

LEGATION OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Belgrade, March 17, 1926.

Despatch No. 3019

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Sir:

Referring to my Despatch No. 3994 (860h.00/276) of the 1st instant, relative to the internal political situation, I have the honor to inform you that since the date of my Despatch Parliament has continued to occupy itself with debates on the budgets of the various Ministries included in the Budget Bill. During these debates only a small number of deputies have usually been present but this has not prevented a continual flow of oratory since there are few deputies who do not wish to be heard on the Budget Bill. This is generally not because orators expect to bring about any modification of the Bill, which is hardly possible in view of the Government's substantial majority, but merely because they wish to impress their constituents. Moreover with a few exceptions speeches delivered by deputies are poorly considered and intended more for harassing the Government than for bringing about any legislative improvement.

During the debate on the Budget of the Ministry of Justice, on the 28th ultimo, the Minister of Justice, Mr. Djurichitch<sup>458</sup>, declared that during the present session Bills would be introduced regulating the status of the magistracy, the organization of the Courts, and of the District Attorneys. Later a Bill for reforming the Police Code, which would form a portion of the Penal Code now in preparation, a Bill regulating the status of lawyers and another regulating Civil Procedure would be presented. The Minister added that it was not yet possible to say when the Government would be able to submit

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<sup>457</sup> Državni pečat.

<sup>458</sup> Đuričić, Marko.

the Bill providing a new Civil Code but the portions of it relating to bills of exchange and cheques and to contracts were already drawn. The Budget of the Ministry of Justice was disposed of on the 28th ultimo without much criticism from the Opposition and by the usual strictly Government majority.

On the 28th ultimo as well as the 1st and 2nd instants, followed the debate on the Budget of the Ministry of Public Instruction, the Department of Mr. Stjepan Raditch. This Budget naturally afforded the occasion for especially heated altercations and on several occasions members almost came to blows. Mr. Raditch was criticised for not having made, like the other ministers, an exposé on introducing his Bill, for the arbitrary dismissal of professors and teachers for political reasons, for neglecting the schools of Montenegro and in fact of most of the non-Croatian portions of the country, for providing insufficient schools for the various language minorities, etc. Mr. Raditch made three long speeches in attempt to justify himself, the substance of which amounted to categorical denials of complaints and that lack of funds prevented the construction of more schools.

On the 3rd instant the Budget of Public Worship was introduced by the Minister, Mr. Misha Trifunovitch<sup>459</sup>, in a speech in which he furnished interesting details regarding the policy of the Government towards the various religious bodies of which thirteen are now recognized. Owing to the interest of this statement, I have reported upon it separately in my Despatch No. 2998 of the 4th instant. Criticisms against this Budget came chiefly from the Slovene Populist (Roman Catholic) deputies who complained as to the unjust treatment and miserable subventions granted to Roman Catholic Schools. The Minister replied complaining of the violent tone adopted by these deputies and their many incorrect statements. To this a Populist deputy replied that his party were sitting in Parliament "by order of the Vatican and of the Bishops". On the 4th instant this Budget was also voted by a strict party vote.

On the 4th instant the debate opened on the Budget of the Ministry of the Interior, always the Ministry most detested by the Opposition on account of its control of the local authorities and gendarmerie which it exercises trimly at elections. Criticisms of this Budget were long and acrimonious. The Minister, Mr. Maximovitch, in his introduction, declared that very shortly elections will take place in the several Departments which would solve the long pending question relative to the application of the departmental autonomies provided by the Constitution. It will be remembered that although the Constitution has now been in effect for nearly five years, no steps have hitherto been taken to apply these provisions. Mr. Maximovitch also declared that although the Government realized that its officials were not all that they should be, it was doing its best to improve them and whenever an official was complained about, an investigation was made. The

<sup>459</sup> Trifunović, Miloš (1871. – 1957.), političar. Bio je član NRS-a, zastupnik u Narodnoj skupštini, ministar prosvjete (1920., 1922. – 1924., 1925. – 1927., 1941.), graditeljstva (1924.), vjera (1924. – 1925., 1925. – 1926.).

Minister then read figures showing the number of officials and gendarmes who had been retired or dismissed on complaints. He further stated that a Bill on the organization of the Communes, the smallest administrative divisions of the State, was being prepared as well as a Bill on Nationality. In connection with the latter, I may refer to my Despatch No. 2203 of February 19, 1924, and preceding Despatches, in regard to the desired negotiation of a Naturalization Convention between the United States and Yugoslavia which the Yugoslav Government declared would not be possible pending the vote by Parliament of a Naturalization Law.

Mr. Tchirkovitch<sup>460</sup>, Radical from Nish, criticised the small amount awarded to South Serbia in the Budget and declared that the Government should realize that all parts of the country could not be treated alike. He did not believe that the days of brigandage or of Comitadjis were passed but he admitted great improvement. All further activities of the Macedonian Committee would be in vain as soon as its emissaries discovered no support from within. The border peasants already no longer wanted to hear of incursions. Mr. Tchirkovitch added: "I know Mr. Liaptchev<sup>461</sup> well and I do not believe that he would do anything to injure our relations with his country. The Macedonian Committee has nothing further to do but write its memoirs."

A number of Opposition deputies made complaints against persecutions of the agents of the Ministry of the Interior. Mr. Moser<sup>462</sup> (German Party, Banat) complained that meetings held by the minorities did not enjoy lawful liberty. Mr. Demovitch (Democrat) admitted that public security in Montenegro and in Southern Serbia had greatly improved but declared that the administration of the country was as bad as ever and should be removed from politics. Many other Opposition deputies criticized the pressure exercised by public officials during the parliamentary elections in the Spring of 1925, the character of many officials and deficiencies in public security. The majority even of the Opposition however admitted that public security in Southern Serbia and Montenegro had considerably improved. The Government was taunted with supporting the nationalist organization, the "Orjuna"<sup>463</sup>, which often committed assaults against its political enemies. The Budget of the Ministry of the Interior was finally adopted without change on the 8th instant by the usual strictly party vote, most of the Opposition leaving the Chamber to avoid voting. Nevertheless it would appear that Mr. Maximovitch made a good impression upon the Opposition and it is undeniable that criminality has dimin-

<sup>460</sup> Ćirković, Jovan, političar. Bio je zastupnik NRS-a, član udruženja četnika. Vidi više: Vladan Jovanović, *Jugoslovenska država i južna Srbija 1918-1929. Makedonija, Sandžak, Kosovo i Metohija u Kraljevini SHS* (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2002).

<sup>461</sup> Liapčev, Andrej (1866. – 1933.), predsjednik vlade Bugarske 1926. – 1931.

<sup>462</sup> Moser, Hans (1889.-?), odvjetnik, političar. Član Stranke Nijemaca u Kraljevini Nijemaca, zastupnik u Narodnoj skupštini. (*Ko je ko u Jugoslaviji*, 102).

<sup>463</sup> Organizacija jugoslavenskih nacionalista, Orjuna. Teroristička organizacija osnovana nakon donošenja Obznane 1921. u krilu JDS-a s ciljem borbe protiv komunista i separatizma, posebice hrvatskoga nacionalnog pokreta. Nakon raskola JDS-a postaje organizacija SDS-a Svetozara Pribičevića. (*Hrvatska enciklopedija*, sv. 8 O – Pre (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2006), 137.).

ished in Southern Serbia and Montenegro and that the border militia have proved extremely successful as a protection against the Comitadji raids.

On the 5th instant at a meeting of the Radical deputies, Mr. Ljuba Jifkovitch, the President of the Radical Party admonished the deputies that they must sustain more heartily the Government's Budget Bill. Mr. Ljuba Yovanovitch, leader of the more liberal faction of the party, replied recalling the criticism which he had formerly made regarding the size and ill-considered dispositions of the Budget Bill, which he declared he maintained especially if the government intended to offer amendments demanding 830 million dinars additional credits. Mr. Jifkovitch made the further interesting announcement that the Ministry of Commerce had prepared a Bill organizing the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Trades and also a Bill creating an Economic Council which would soon be submitted to Parliament. It will be remembered that Article 44 of the Constitution provides that "An Economic Council is instituted to elaborate social and economic legislation. A Law will determine detailed provisions relative to the composition and competence of this Council." Although the Constitution was adopted in 1921, no effort appears hitherto to have been made to carry this provision into effect.

On the 10th instant the Minister of War and of the Navy, General Trifunovitch, introduced the War and Navy credits in a long exposé in which he stated that this Budget had been greatly reduced and now amounted to 2,413 million dinars, being thus inferior to the Budgets of other similarly conditioned countries and inferior to the Serbian military Budget during the ten years before the war. There were only one-half the officers required by the units. The effectives were somewhat over 5000 officers and 102,000 privates and non-commissioned officers. For economy last year all men of military age had not been called but a selective draft had been introduced. The question of military factories however had been settled and before the end of the present budgetary year the country would be able to manufacture all its rifles, infantry and artillery ammunition and powder. Great applause greeted this statement.

General Trifunovitch stated that aviation was one of the weak points of the Budget, the consequences of which would be very serious as might be imagined because of the reduction of the aviation credits from 224 to 112 million dinars. Yugoslavia gave from three to five times less attention to aviation than other countries and "woe to the people that neglected its aviation". He stated that credits for 150 new aeroplanes were absolutely needed.

The Minister then proceeded to the Navy credits which he described as another weak point of the Budget since they had been reduced from 433 to 150 million dinars. He said that the Government were not thinking of building Dreadnoughts or large or even small cruisers but merely sufficient submarines, torpedo-boats and hydroplanes for the defense of the coast.

The Minister concluded by requesting supplementary credits of 430 million dinars – 130 with which to build military buildings, chiefly barracks, since a large portion of the troops were now lodged in sheds, 100 million dinars for aviation and 200

million dinars for the Navy. Most of the Opposition deputies in their speeches expressed their confidence in the Army and many of them, among them one of their most brilliant leaders, Mr. Voja Marinkovitch, Democrat, expressed the opinion that the military credits in the Budget were not sufficient. A Croatian Federalist deputy spoke in favor of increased naval defences and another Democrat for a 10 to 15 year naval programme. The Minister replied that a well-elaborated naval programme already existed. Some Croatian deputies complained that the Croat and Slovene soldiers were sent to Southern Serbia and Macedonia. The Minister denied that any difference was made between them and the Serbian soldiers. Finally on the 10th instant, after only one day of debate, this, the largest Budget of all, was adopted.

Following the adoption of the War and Navy Budget, the Budget of Public Health was debated and voted within a short session, the principal complaints being the lack of physicians and of hospitals. During his exposé of his Budget, the Minister of Public Health, Mr. Miletitch<sup>464</sup>, took occasion to express the Government's thanks for the benefits received by it from the Rockefeller Foundation. I have already reported this in my Despatch No. 3009 of the 11th instant.

On the 11th instant, the Budget of the Ministry of Public Works was discussed, one of the principal criticisms being that of the total credits of 436 million dinars over one-quarter was to be expended on personnel. Further the terrible condition of the roads and the lack of bridges was denounced, the Minister, Mr. Uzunovitch, however replying that to put the roads in condition would require 1,400 million dinars.

On the 12th instant the Budget of the Ministry of Communications was examined. The Minister, Mr. Krsta Miletitch<sup>465</sup>, announced that the transportation rates were too high and would be lowered. Economies were to be made by reorganizing and diminishing the personnel. The present and next years however would be hard ones as German reparations receipts would be smaller and more repair to the rolling-stock would have to be made. Dr. Ante Trumbitch, Federalist, requested the hastening of the completion of the line from Slovenia to Zagreb and Fiume so as to diminish the gravitation of Slovene products towards Trieste. The Minister declared the need of many railroads, including a new line to the Adriatic but stated that these were only possible through a large loan. He mentioned however a number of short lines which his Ministry was about to construct out of current receipts.

On the 15th instant, the Budget for the Ministry of Agriculture was presented by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Vasa Yovanovitch, who drew attention to the importance of his Budget owing to the fact that 80% of the entire population were occupied with agriculture. One of the chief difficulties was the enormous difference in the degree of the

<sup>464</sup> Miletić, Slavko S. (1869.-?), liječnik, političar. Bio predsjednik Narodne skupštine Vojvodine 1918., ministar narodnoga zdravlja (1920., 1922. – 1927.), pošta i telegrafa (1921.). (*Ko je ko u Jugoslaviji*, 96).

<sup>465</sup> Miletić, Krsta Lj., političar. Bio je član NRS-a, ministar agrarne reforme (1921. – 1922.), poljoprivrede i voda (1922. – 1926.), agrarne reforme (1923. – 1924.), prometa (1926.), šuma i rudnika (1927.). (*Ko je ko u Jugoslaviji*, 96).

development of agriculture in different portions of the Kingdom, ranging from steam power in some portions to wooden plows in others. After the war the live stock of all Yugoslavia had been reduced to less than one-half that of Serbia before the war. Production per Ha was unsatisfactorily low as it averaged 9.2 quintals as compared with 29 quintals per Ha in Denmark. Yugoslavia's markets were changing since America was becoming a more and more formidable competitor. The Government would do everything possible to stimulate agriculture and took special interest in the establishment of agricultural Colleges and special schools. The Minister also spoke of the important work done by agricultural co-operative institutions and mentioned the vast extent of marsh land still to be drained. Finally this Budget adopted on the following day without much debate.

Owing to the approaching end, on the 31st instant, of the Fiscal year, and the coming Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Mohamedan holidays, the President of Parliament has endeavored to reach some agreement between the party leaders for the vote of the Budget on the third reading on March 30th and then for an adjournment over the Holidays. This agreement however failed owing to the opposition of Mr. Pribitchevitch, the leader of the Independent Democrats, but it is nevertheless likely to be carried out in practice. The next credits to be considered should be those of the Foreign Office but the Foreign Minister, D. Nintchitch, who is now at Geneva, has requested that their consideration may be postponed pending his return. Several interpellations have been addressed to the Government on its foreign policy and especially on Dr. Nintchitch's conversations at Rome and Paris (Despatch No. 2999 of March 5th, last). Many complaints have also been made, even among Radical deputies, that the Government does not keep Parliament sufficiently informed regarding its foreign policy. Upon his return Dr. Nintchitch will accordingly presumably make an exposé on this subject.

Rumors of possible Cabinet changes and even of the possible retirement of Mr. Pashitch continue. It should however be remembered that it is rare when such rumors are not current. In the present instance the more likely of these rumors still take the form of a possible re-organisation of the Cabinet through the admission of the Democrats to the Government coalition, as already reported in my Despatch No. 2994, above referred to. Meanwhile Mr. Raditch has made up his quarrel with the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Maximovitch, whose administration he declared to be bad in some of his Dalmation speeches. It will be remembered (Despatch No. 2974 of February 18th, last) that Mr. Raditch is even reported to have declared that if Mr. Maximovitch did not dismiss within twenty-four hours of Mr. Raditch's return to Belgrade such officials as he pointed out to him, the Budget of the Interior would be disapproved and Mr. Maximovitch would have to resign. Although no officials are known to have been dismissed, the Budget of the Interior has now been successfully passed. The manner in which the quarrel was made up was simple and characteristically Yugoslav for it consisted merely in both opponents being invited by common friends to meet at a popular in (cafana) here where they drank together until their hearts again warmed towards each other. Both statesmen are inclined to such forms of entertainment. Mr. Raditch accordingly now has only one Cabinet

Colleague to make up with, namely Mr. Stojadinovitch, the Minister of Finance, who he accused of being a gambler (Despatch No. 2974 above referred to). Altogether, Mr. Raditch has conducted himself admirably since he last made his peace with Mr. Pashitch and the accord between his party and the Radicals appears to be enjoying a period of idyllic tranquility.

I mentioned above the reported intention of the Cabinet to propose amendments in the Budget increasing its credits by about 830 million dinars, 430 million dinars of which would be for military and naval purposes, as above mentioned, and the remainder to be chiefly for railway construction and various other public works. This proposal was recently debated in the Radical Club and produced a sensation, practically all the members speaking strongly against it. It appears also that Dr. Stojadinovitch is opposed to it, although he appears to be showing signs of yielding to Mr. Pashitch upon whom he is politically dependent. Any such increases will be extremely unpopular since as has already been reported, the present Budget is generally declared to represent somewhat more than the maximum which the country can stand at present. Increases for military and naval expenditure would not be unpopular provided they involved no increase in the total of the Budget.

The Raditch Party has now dismissed all intentions of holding up the Budget in order to extort concessions from the Radicals. However it is reported to be intending to Apply its former budgetary tactics to the Treaty of Commerce with Italy and the Nettuno Conventions<sup>466</sup> which Mr. Pashitch wishes to bring before Parliament at this session for ratification. This may possibly explain the delay in submitting these Conventions to Parliament which were signed in the Spring of 1925.

A good deal is now heard again of the approaching Coronation of the King. My French Colleague informs me that he has heard from a good source that the King does not wish to be crowned so long as Mr. Pashitch remains Prime Minister and is waiting until after April 1st when Mr. Pashitch would retire. It is undoubtedly true that the King finds Mr. Pashitch often somewhat dictatorial but the real reason of the postponement of the Coronation would appear to be the King's desire to reach before this date an accord between the principal Serb, Croat and Slovene Parties. This accord has already been reached between the two Parties first named but there is little sign as yet of the leading Slovene Party, the Popular Slovene (Roman Catholic) Party's joining this accord.

However if the King's coronation seems likely to be put off for some time, Mr. Pashitch is declared by the Opposition to be preparing his own "Coronation" for next May. Mr. Pashitch is generally said not to know his own age as all record of his birth has been lost. He is probably about eighty-four but his Party is now engaged in elaborate

<sup>466</sup> Nettunske konvencije. Tekst konvencija sklopljen između Kraljevine Italije i Kraljevine SHS 20. srpnja 1925. Regulirale su pitanja Rijeke i susjednih općina, državljanstva, poreza, isplate štete, optanata, mirovina, sudbene vlasti, carinskoga nadzora, privatno-pravnih odnosa. Bile su na korist Kraljevine Italije što je uzrokovalo snažan otpor u javnosti i Narodnoj skupštini zbog čega su bile ratificirane 13. kolovoza 1928. (*Hrvatska enciklopedija*, sv. 7 Mal-Nj, 2005, 644).

preparations to celebrate throughout the Kingdom about the middle of May his eightieth birthday. This celebration will undoubtedly reach magnificent proportions and form the apotheosis of a life which whatever his political enemies may say and whatever its many defects, has brought wonderful advantages to his country.

In closing this Despatch, which is already too long, I enclose summaries in translation of two speeches which were delivered at political meetings on last Sunday, the 14th instant, by Mr. Raditch, at Broad in Croatia, and by Mr. Voja Marinkovitch, at Zagreb. The former is in Mr. Raditch's somewhat naive style and purports to describe the foreign and internal policy of the Cabinet, the latter especially from the point of view which Mr. Raditch would like to have generally believed. Mr. Marinkovitch's speech is of another order and without going into much detail gives some general appreciations on Yugoslav political life which should be heard oftener by his compatriots and are entirely true. It is hardly too much to say that Mr. Marinkovitch's political intelligence and statesmanlike breadth of view are far above those of probably all of his compatriots in public life.

I have the honor to be, Sir,  
 Your obedient servant,  
 H. Percival Dodge<sup>467</sup>  
 H. Percival Dodge,  
 American Minister.

Enclosures:

1. Summary in translation of speech made by Mr. Raditch on March 14, 1926;<sup>468</sup>
2. Same of speech made by Mr. Voja Marinkovitch on the same date.<sup>469</sup>

File No. 800-Quintuplicate

Copy to E. I. C., Paris.

**81.** 1926., travanj 25., Izvješće privremenoga otpravnika poslova Gordona Paddocka State Departmentu o Radićevim kritikama rada vlade zbog kojih ga je Uzunović prisilio na ostavku u vladi, pojavi frakcija unutar HSS-a zbog „Radićeva autoritarnog vođenja stranačke politike“, Radićevim potezima protiv disidenata, uvjerenju vlade u Beogradu da je Radić, s Vladkom Mačekom i Josipom Predavcom još uvijek pod velikim utjecajem sovjetskih vlasti u Moskvi.

NARA, M 358, R 4, 860h.00/281

<sup>467</sup> Vlastoručno.

<sup>468</sup> Sažetak „iz beogradskih novina od 15. ožujka 1926.“ Vidi: „G. St. Radić u agitaciji“, Politika (Beograd), 15. ožujka 1926., 3-4.

<sup>469</sup> *Pravda* (Beograd), 15. ožujak 1926.