

American Diplomacy and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1918–1929): the context of document creation and interpretation¹

Storages and Frames

The documents set forth here are part of the correspondence of the U.S. diplomatic service in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SHS) and the Department of State of the United States of America (USA) between 1918 and early 1929. That correspondence mostly consisted of weekly reports by U.S. ministers in Belgrade and consuls in Belgrade and Zagreb, as well as occasional reports or letters from their various associates or interested parties on the issues of U.S.-Yugoslav foreign affairs relations. These documents are stored in the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, i.e. in its research building in College Park, Maryland, near Washington, DC. The documents are part of the Record Group No. 59, General Records of the Department of State, dating from 1756 to 1993. The Department of State documents are also the key and most important documents in the study of U.S. foreign policy relations with other countries. Consequently, they are also very useful for exploring different events in countries where the U.S. diplomatic service operated.

Already from the name of the records group, and even more its time frame (1756–1993), it is evident that this is an extremely extensive collection. At the same time, it is also the largest fund created by the Department of State. Its internal structure is therefore very complex and it has been modified several times in terms of a better use of materials after being processed by the Department of State Registry.

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration was founded only in 1934 (before there had only been the National Archives) with the sole task of selecting and designating documents resulting from the activities of the federal administrative bodies (ministries) in order to keep them permanently. By that time, it had already become apparent that the documents created by various ministries were unnecessarily duplicated on several levels. The federal government of the United States had therefore established an institution that was supposed to competently balance the existing situation by creating much-needed archivally evaluated extraction lists. The Archives had maintained federal documents through records extraction processes until 1947 when President Harry S. Truman expanded the authority of the Archives to the level of the overall

¹This is the translated and revised chapter titled “Američka diplomacija i Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca (1918.-1929.): kontekst stvaranja i čitanja dokumenata” in: Hrvoje Čapo, ed., *Hrvatska u diplomatskim izvješćima Sjedinjenih Američkih Država 1918.-1929.*, (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2018), pp. 21-55.

management of the records administration of federal agencies and ministries and turned the Archives into the National Archives and Records Administration. In this way, it was ensured that the documents of the records' creators, in this case, the Department of State, were prepared in the records of the Ministry for their taking over for permanent keeping in the Archives, this way without any additional archivist intervention and thus available for unhindered research purpose.

During the First World War, the Department of State for the first time encountered an immense inflow of materials/documents, for which a completely new file storage classification system had to be developed. It was a decimal system, which was in use until January 1963, and encompassed the complete records of the Department of State created after 1910, ending in January 1963.² This system enabled a simpler classification and acceptance of records in the archives. Records were then stored according to a predetermined decimal system into the primary nine classes divided into different topics that were then associated with states in which U.S. diplomacy has already been operating. These nine classes were: 0 (General, Miscellaneous), 1 (Administration), 2 (Extradition), 3 (Protection of Interest), 4 (Claims), 5 (International Congresses and Conferences), 6 (Commerce), 7 (Political Relations of State) and 8 (Internal Affairs of States). The documents that are brought here are part of class 8 (Internal Affairs of States) documents, in the fond further divided into ten targets/themes: 00 (Political Affairs), 10 (Public order, safety, health, works. Charities and philanthropic organizations), 20 (Military Affairs), 30 (Naval Affairs), 40 (Social Matters), 50 (Economic Matters), 60 (Industrial Matters), 70 (Communication and Transportation), 80 (Navigation), 90 (Other internal affairs). Set forth here are the documents labeled 00 (Political Affairs). Within the Department of State, the decimal file that was allocated to the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia was 60h.³ Accordingly, most of the documents that are presented here were documents marked with file number 860h.00, outlining the following: 8 (Internal Affairs of States), 60h (Yugoslavia), 00 (Political Affairs).

2 The Department of State stored its material in different systems at different times. From 1789 to 1906, the material was archivally arranged chronologically, according to series. From 1906 to 1910, the material was arranged according to 'Numerical' and 'Minor' items. <https://www.archives.gov/files/research/foreign-policy/state-dept/finding-aids/state-dept-consolidated.pdf>

3 The Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia was part of the group of states under the basic number 60 (Continental Eastern Europe). This group, in addition to Yugoslavia (60h), also consisted of: 60a San Marino, 60b Liechtenstein, 60c Poland, 60d Finland (including Åland Islands), 60e Ukraine, 60f Czechoslovakia, 60g Georgia, 60i Estonia, 60j Armenia, 60k Free City of Danzig, 60m Lithuania, 60n Baltic Provinces, 60p Latvia, 60q Rijeka, 60r Transcaucasia - Vitanvalia.

To have such documents, immensely important for the study of U.S. foreign policy, as well as various topics from the history of the states in which American diplomacy operated, permanently preserved, and further protected, the National Archives began microfilming them in 1941. The documents presented here were microfilmed during 1961 when they were also declassified. What this microfilming further enabled was easier manipulation with documents and their duplication to a large number of researchers. The General Records of the Department of State, being one of its most important fonds, were also microfilmed. The microfilms of this Record Group were then divided into two categories marked with two marks - M and T. The main difference between these microfilms is that M microfilms were made by filming the whole series of documents (*in extenso*) of the highest importance for researchers, whereas T microfilms contain only partially filmed documents of certain series, most often selected by content (pertinence).

Microfilms relating to the internal political relations of the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia carry the very M mark, which means that there are whole series of documents filmed on them. These documents are contained in two microfilm publications labeled M 358 and M 1203. The Department of State documents, which originated from 1910 to 1929, which are set forth here, are found in microfilms M 358. Microfilms M 1203 cover the period of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1929 to 1941. The M 358 microfilm publication consists of a total of 27 scrolls of microfilms covering the aforementioned ten topics/targets by which the Department of State filed documents in the records.⁴ The documents referring

4 Roll (hereinafter, R) 1 (860h.00-860h.927, Documents descriptions), R2 (860h.00/0-159, June 1919 - December 1922), R3 (860h.00/160-264, December 1922 - October 1925), R4 (860h.00/265-435, November 1925 - December 1929), R5 (860h.00B/0-24, Bolshevism; 860h.001A12-860h.0011/13, Alexander I; 860h.002(0-89, Cabinet), R6 (860h.01/0-264, Government), R7 (860h.01B11/0-13, Agents 1918-19; 860h.011/0-19, Constitution; 860h.012/0-14, Citizenship; 860h.0128-860h.0177, Passport tax, Vexillology, Anthem, Public service – payments, e.t.c.; 860h.02-860h.021/2, Executive Department; 860h.03-860h.032/21, Legislative Branch; 860h.044-860h.0492/1, Justice Department), R8 (860h.101-860h.156, Public order and safety, Public health, Charities and Philanthropic Organizations, Public works), R9 (860h.20-860h.345, Military Affairs and the Army), R10 (860h.401-860h.44, Social matters), R11 (860h.461-860h.468, Entertainment, Calamities and Disasters), R12 (860h.50-860h.5071/3, Economic matters), R13 (860h.51/0-55, Financial conditions), R14 (860h.51/56-140, Financial conditions), R15 (860h.51/141-290, Financial conditions), R16 (860h.51/291-430, Financial conditions), R17 (860h.51/431-500, Financial conditions), R18 (860h.51/501-600, Financial conditions), R19 (860h.51/601-650, Financial conditions), R20 (860h.51/651-735, Financial conditions), R21-R23 (860h.51B41-860h.6159, Taxation, Monetary system, Banks and banking, Lands, Intellectual and industrial property, Immigration, Emigration, Industrial matters, Agriculture), R24 (860h.6171-860h.659, Animal husbandry, Mines and mining, Engineering, Manufactures and manufacturing), R25 (860h.70-860h.7961, Communication and transportation, Post, Telegraph, Cable, Wireless telegraph, Telephone, Wireless telephone, Railway, Street railway, Other means of communication and transportation), R26 (860h.801-860h.865, Navigation), R27 (860h.911-860h.927, Other

to the target 00 (Yugoslav Political Affairs) which are also set forth here, are located on the first four rolls of microfilm M 358.

Even such a brief overview of the Department of State's archival material on the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia reveals an enormous amount of documents created by the activities of the U.S. diplomatic service in that state, which are undoubtedly important in adding another view to its history and also to that of Croatia between the two world wars. The value of U.S. diplomatic reports derives from their uncensored content, continuity, and amount of events followed by U.S. diplomats in the Kingdom of SHS. Their reports were often written immediately after the event, sometimes just a few hours later, which increases the value of these documents as historical sources, as the effect of "hindsight" was thus significantly reduced.⁵ The reports of American diplomats, even while inevitably reflecting also their impressions, as such offer one of the views of the Kingdom of SHS, whereas opinions of local political actors, Croat or Serb, opposition or ruling, again in their way contributing to yet another view of the historical processes, represent their important content. These documents primarily refer to the interior political issues of the Kingdom of SHS, which means that they cast a new light on the history of the monarchical Yugoslavia, too. The purpose of this collection of documents is to provide additional sources for historiographical research of Croatian history, and hence those documents that are mostly related to Croatian political issues in the Kingdom of SHS are highlighted.

internal affairs, newspapers, Science), *Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Yugoslavia, 1910-1929* (Washington: National Archives and Records Service, 1973), pp. 5-22.

5 This characteristic, as well as the importance of American diplomatic reports, has already been pointed out by Christof Strupp, speaking of American diplomatic sources on Germany 1933-1941, (Cristof Strupp, "Observing a Dictatorship: American Consular Reporting on Germany", 1933-1941, *GHI Bulletin*, (2006), no. 39: 79-98, 80). Wanting to open new sources to researchers that will give a new, and thus complete view of German society under Nazi rule, the German Research Center for Contemporary History (Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte) in Hamburg has been collaborating with the German Historical Institute in Washington since 2006. Until 2008, he carried out the project "Foreign Views on the "Third Reich", whose task was to research and publish selected documents from twelve countries. The U.S. sources used in this project were those from the Record Group 59, the Department of State Central Records, which further speaks to the breadth of their use, as well as the justification of the position assumed by the National Archives and Records Administration. The importance of American documents for Croatian interwar history was especially emphasized by Mario Jareb. See: Mario Jareb, "Američka diplomacija i Kraljevina Jugoslavija uoči i nakon Travanjskoga rata" In: Dragan Aleksić, ed. *Srbi i rat u Jugoslaviji 1941. godine. Tematski zbornik radova*, (Belgrade: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Muzej žrtava genocida, Institut za slavistiku Ruske akademije znanosti, 2014), pp. 195-230.

Divisions and Efforts

The political history of the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia, complex in its entirety, is most commonly divided into the time before and after the introduction of the dictatorship of King Aleksandar Karađorđević on January 6, 1929. The event immediately preceding the final introduction of the king's "personal regime" was an assassination of Croatian parliamentarians at the National Assembly on June 20, 1928, when two were killed and three Croatian representatives from the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) were wounded. Stjepan Radić, the party's champion, succumbed to his wounds on August 8 of the same year.⁶ The role that Radić, as well as HSS, had in the Croatian political life in the Kingdom of SHS was immeasurable, so his, as well as the death of his political associates, had far-reaching consequences on the history and destiny of First Yugoslavia. All that happened after that summer of 1928 derived from this assassination and Croatian victims who were regarded as martyrs in the Croatian political identity. The killed and wounded Croatian MPs became the personification of Croats who perceived and experienced state centralism of the authoritarian regime as an open denial of Croatian national and political particularities.

Silence instigated in the political arena by the king's dictatorship, as the National Assembly was dissolved and all parties were banned, thus divided the history of the Kingdom of SHS, thereafter called Yugoslavia. Even more

⁶ Stjepan Radić (1871 - 1928) was a dynamic and layered political figure. Although American diplomats did not initially perceive him as such, he was, as the leader of the H(P)(R)SS, a key political figure in Croatian politics towards the regime in Belgrade. In his work, he very often changed tactics or opinion, adapting to the political situations that arose, so he knew how to be a supporter of the government in Belgrade (1925-1927) from a fierce opposition politician. Such pragmatism caused fierce and frequent attacks on his personality. This layering was excellently summarized by Ivo Banac: "He was called a demagogue, yet his speeches were delivered in almost a whisper. He filled his newspapers with his own articles and wrote five sociological and political monographs, yet he was so shortsighted that he had to hold the printed sheet inches from his eyes to read. He was born in a village, enjoyed singing folksongs accompanied by a tamburitza, and gloried in arcadian feasts in vinedressers' huts, where the slightly sour white wines of northern Croatia flowed with magnificent fowl, yet he had a laureat from Paris. He was profoundly devout, yet he opened his rallies with the invocation "Praise be to Jesus and Mary, down with the priests!" He believed in the superiority of native soil, showering often undeserved praise on everything that was Croat and Slavic, yet he frequently – and always without results – expressed an almost childlike faith in Western culture and fairness. His enemies called him a separatist, yet he wrote whole letters in Serbian Cyrillic to his Czech wife, obliging her to learn the scriptory medium of the Serbs. Croat purists considered him an unstable ally, an "aviator" apt to go in zigzags, yet he once said to a cellmate in one of Khuen Héderváry jails that he "only wished that as many Croats as possible would come to love him, as he had come to love the whole Croat people.", Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Croatia. Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984), pp. 227, 229.

pronounced state repression resulted, ultimately, in the death of King Aleksandar in the assassination in Marseilles in October 1934 and the arrival of his cousin, Prince Pavle Karađorđević, on the political scene. The first elections after the death of king Aleksandar Karađorđević, those of May 5, 1935, showed that Radić's HSS, now headed by Vladko Maček, not only survived the ban and state oppression but emerged with even stronger, now more diversified political action (in the sense of organizations such as *Gospodarska sloga (Economic Fellowship)*, *Hrvatska žena (Croatian Woman)* or the establishment of *Hrvatska seljačka zaštita (Croatian Association for the Protection of Peasants)* and *Hrvatska građanska zaštita (Croatian Association for Civil Protection)*).

Such was the influence of the dictatorship on the internal political scene. On the foreign political scene, King Aleksandar Karađorđević, just before his proclamation, justified his future move to the allies, most notably the French. However, Czechoslovakians were worried because it became apparent that a member state of the Little Entente was abandoning democracy, whatever its form and the current U.S. minister to Belgrade John Dyneley Prince (1926 – 1933) increasingly wrote about explicit state repression against political and civil liberties. However, while European representatives of democracy expressed their mistrust, their American counterparts saw dictatorship differently. Namely, it seemed that part of U.S. investors/consumers accepted the king's dictatorship with relief. Moreover, they seem to have been relieved by the introduction of such, at its core authoritarian, regime. U.S. investments were safer in, they considered, a finally calmer society free of previous frequent political disturbances. Inspired by the Americans' lack of fear that they might get accidentally caught up in some revolution, a naturalized Yugoslavian, then an employee of the Yugoslav Legation in Washington, Gordon Gordon-Smith saw the perfect opportunity for the development of tourism.⁷

Thus, the history of interwar Yugoslavia was strongly marked and changed after 1929. Following such development of historical processes, the U.S. diplomatic sources on Croatia in the Kingdom of SHS are therefore presented here until and

7 Gordon Gordon-Smith thus planned the tourist expansion: "If several thousand Americans visited the Kingdom each year, not only would they leave millions of dollars behind them, but they would have their present idea that the inhabitants of the Balkan Peninsula are semi-barbarous and that life and property is not safe, completely changed." However, tourism has not developed in the desired sense. The Kingdom still needed to work hard on its reputation, the infrastructure (hotel, traffic and human) was underdeveloped and insufficient to attract more American tourists, mostly geared towards cruises. In accordance with these efforts, in 1930 the Trade and Tourism Office of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was established in New York (Linda Killen, *Testing the peripheries: US – Yugoslav economic relations in the interwar years* (Boulder, Colorado; New York: Distributed by Columbia University Press, 1994), 110, 112).

including January 3, 1929. The Kingdom of SHS had until then developed, at least formally, in parliamentary and multiparty conditions and had undergone processes of strong political struggles between centralists and their antipodes, anticentralists, of whom Stjepan Radić gradually became their leading representative in Croatia.

The title of this collection also includes Croatia, which can be understood as a state-law term. Anachronism here logically appearing was deliberately selected. Croatia is a term that is unquestionably found in American diplomatic reports of that period. It was undefined, but it represented those areas that could be so identified. Hence, Croatia from the title refers to Croatian lands in the monarchist Yugoslavia.

Department of State's documents on international relations of the United States, which also concern interwar Yugoslavia, were firstly published by the U.S. government in its famous issues of *Papers to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS). In the volumes of FRUS the documents under decimal file 711 and 860.51 were published, that is those concerning the inter-state relations between the United States and Yugoslavia (711) and those from the domain of economic topics (860.51), but not the ones brought here. The documents relating to Yugoslavia in the period observed here, 1918–1928, were published in six volumes of FRUS (for 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1925, and 1927), while those published for the years 1923, 1924, 1926, and 1928, did not contain separate documents on Yugoslavia. American documents on Croatia in the period under review here were published on two occasions by Jere (Jerome) Jareb in 1960 and 1963. Jareb published reports by LeRoy King and Sherman Miles from the former Austro-Hungarian territories, two members of the American expert commission for assistance at the Paris Peace Conference under the leadership of Harvard professor Archibald Cary Coolidge (Coolidge's mission).⁸ LeRoy King's reports mostly speak of his impressions from Zagreb. Those of Sherman Miles talk about his impressions of the events in Rijeka and Dalmatia and are largely concerned with Adriatic issues.

8 Out of a total of 31 reports sent by LeRoy King to the Coolidge Commission, four of those ('1st, 2nd, 11th and partially 29th') were published in the collection of American documents on the Paris Peace Conference, *Paris Peace Conference 1919. Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. XII., (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942-1947), according to Jere Jareb, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike. Povodom Mačekove autobiografije* (Zagreb: Institut za suvremenu povijest, 1995), (reprint of the edition published in Buenos Aires, 1960), 24., Footnote No. 23. See: Jere Jareb, "LeRoy King's Reports from Croatia March to May 1919", *Journal of Croatian Studies* (New York), I (1960.): 75-168., Ibid., "Sherman Miles' Reports from Croatia March to April 1919", *Journal of Croatian Studies* (New York), III.-IV. (1962.-1963.): 121-165.

American documents have also been used for several books on interwar Yugoslavia. Only those documents directly concerning the period from 1918 to 1929 and in which U.S. documents were used more extensively will be highlighted here.⁹ In the 1950s, Victor Mamatey used American documents in several of his works on U.S. relations towards Eastern Europe and the Adriatic issue after the First World War, and also to Yugoslavia.¹⁰ Alan Fogelquist received his doctorate in 1990 from the University of California, working on Yugoslav economic policy from 1918 to 1929.¹¹ In 1994 Linda Killen also published a book from the area of historic economic relations of the United States and Yugoslavia between 1918–1941, which directly revealed the core of U.S. - Yugoslav relations essentially based on economic expectations and their (non)fulfillment.¹² In his book published in 2015, Vjekoslav Perica abundantly used American documents on the United States peacekeeping mission in Split from 1919 to 1921.¹³ Here referenced reports of U.S. diplomats, which mostly talk about American impressions of Yugoslav state authoritarian regime were used in my book on the repressive apparatus of the monarchist Yugoslavia published in 2015.¹⁴ That same year the Archives of Yugoslavia in Belgrade published a collection of documents on Yugoslav-American relations from 1918 to 1945.¹⁵ Although the documents presented there are stored

9 In contrast to this period, American documents were nevertheless used more in historiographical works on the history of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia after 1929. See more: Branko Pešelj, “Serbo-Croat Agreement of 1939 and American Foreign Policy”, *Journal of Croatian Studies* (New York), XI-XII (1970-71): 3-83., Vladimir Petrov, *A Study in Diplomacy. The Story of Arthur Bliss Lane*, (Chicago, 1971), Ivo Banac, “Arthur Bliss Lane and American Foreign Service”, *Journal of Croatian Studies* (New York) 31 (1990): 120-129.) and Ivo Tasovac, *American Foreign Policy and Yugoslavia, 1939-1941* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999). A review of the literature based on American documents about the period after 1929 was explained in detail by Mario Jareb in the above mentioned article. “Američka diplomacija i Kraljevina Jugoslavije uoči i nakon Travanjskoga rata”.

10 Victor S. Mamatey, “The United States and the dissolution of Austria-Hungary”, s.a., overprint from: *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 10, no. 3, October 1950., Ibid., “The United States and the origins of the Adriatic question (1918), Florida State University Studies”, no. 4 (1951), Ibid., *The United States and East Central Europe 1914-1918. A study in Wilsonian diplomacy and propaganda*, (Princeton, 1957).

11 This dissertation was published only in 2011: Alan Fogelquist, *Politics and Economic Policy in Yugoslavia, 1918-1929*, (Lulu.com, 2011).

12 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*.

13 Vjekoslav Perica, *Pax Americana na Jadranu i Balkanu. Mirovne misije SAD-a prema međunarodnoj historiografiji; popularnoj kulturi i kulturi sjećanja 1919. – 2014.* (Zagreb: Algoritam, 2015).

14 Hrvoje Čapo, *Kraljevina čuvara. Represivni aparat monarhističke Jugoslavije na području hrvatskih zemalja 1918. – 1941.* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2015).

15 Миладин Милошевић, ed., *Југословесно-амерички односи 1918-1945. Зборник докумената* (Београд: Архив Југославије, 2015).

in the Archives of Yugoslavia, they represent a significant contribution to the research of this problem.

Contacts and influences

As much as the relationship between the United States and the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia seemed modest in the interwar period, one American president had his place in Croatian urban toponymy, and by that, of course, in the collective consciousness. He had it through the names of two squares in the center of Zagreb. At first, until 1927, on the location of the former National Land Theater (today the Croatian National Theater), and then from 1927 to 1941, one hundred meters south, in front of the high school complex.¹⁶ Both places bore the name of President Woodrow Wilson who led the USA in and out of the First World War. His presence in the collective memory was a direct echo of Wilsonism, almost fanatical adoration of this President by the end of WWI and the Paris Peace Conference, which was especially evident among nations that collectively experienced any form of political subordination. No wonder, therefore, that the Wilson Square had such a grave position in the Croatian capital, exactly on the place where the National Theater was located. Also, it is no surprise that in years after that Wilsonism of 1918/1919 had calmed, it was however located somewhat southward, on a location devoted to education, while the most prestigious venue in front of the theater was conceded to King Aleksandar of the ruling Serbian Karađorđević dynasty. Yet, how Croats, among others, viewed President Wilson, and through him the United States, was obvious. Benevolently, yet banally, only “theoretically” as explained by LeRoy King, but still enough so that the enthusiasm for the United States be guaranteed even before the arrival of the first consumerist reports on a high American standard of living that paved the way for future perceptions of Americans.¹⁷ If one adds to that the message of the U.S. government from October 1918, when Croats were still part of Austria-Hungary, to end the “artificial Austrian empire”, the enthusiasm for the USA was endless.¹⁸

The concept of self-determination of peoples was repeated like a mantra all over the world from January 1918 when Wilson introduced it into the global consciousness through his *Fourteen Points*, preparing for the world that was

16 Nataša Jovičić, “Simbolizam vode i oblikovanje zagrebačkih fontana”, *Život umjetnosti*, (1991): 5-19, 12. Jelena Stanić, Laura Šakaja, Lana Slavuj, “Preimenovanja zagrebačkih ulica i trgova”, *Migracijske i etničke teme*, 25 (2009.), 1-2: 89-124., 120.

17 Jere Jareb, “LeRoy King's Reports from Croatia March to May 1919”, Report No. 2 from March 3, 1919; Albert Bing, *Amerika: zemlja nemogućih mogućnosti. Percepcija Amerike u Hrvatskoj: Američki način života u zagrebačkom dnevnom listu Obzor 1929. - 1933. godine* (Zagreb: Naklada Jesenski i Turk, 2003).

18 Norka Machiedo Mladinić, “Prilog proučavanju djelovanja Ivana Meštrovića”, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* (Zagreb), 39 (2007): 133-156, 152.

supposed to exist after the World War.¹⁹ Slavic peoples of Austria-Hungary were no exception, they were, moreover, a direct object of American interests (in the sense of breaking up “Austria”), and having the support of the latest superpower, given the unbridled momentum to the elites that developed such a, suddenly widespread, model of self-determination of peoples. Through President Wilson, the United States consequently received an aura of the patron of small nations, and the Slavs in Austria-Hungary certainly felt that way.

Wilson's role at the Peace Conference in Paris, more specifically his siding against the possibility of realizing the London Treaty (according to which the Italian army began to occupy the East Adriatic Coast immediately after signing the truce with Austria-Hungary on November 3, 1918), made him among Croats, of all South Slavic nations, one of the most adored allies.²⁰ Felt as being oppressed in the newly created South Slavic kingdom, Radić's HPSS, urgently wanted to reach President Wilson at the Paris Peace Conference. Already in February 1919, they wanted to hand him a Memorandum describing the state of state repression in Croatia and the wishes of Croats for self-determination and their parliament, that would yet decide on joining the federation with Serbia. They were so eager to reach Wilson in Paris that they even sought mediation assistance from an Italian mission.²¹ Although this attempt failed, Wilson did get the information on the

19 The global scale of Wilsonism is evidenced by the fact that, for example, in June 1919 in Paris, believing in his messages of self-determination, then 28-year-old Parisian assistant chef Nguyen Tat Thanh from French Indochina, or Ho Chi Minh as he became known later, tried to hand over the “The Claims of the People of Annam” to Woodrow Wilson. The meeting did not take place, and the question is whether Wilson managed to see the said request. Not even a year later Nguyen Tat Thanh “adopted Bolshevism as his new creed, and Lenin replaced Wilson as his inspiration”, (Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment. Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford, 2007), 3-4).

20 Woodrow Wilson was the only Allied leader to have a street named after himself in Zagreb. Of the foreign statesmen, it was only Tomas Massaryk, but he cannot be counted among the allies of the above kind. Unlike Zagreb, the toponymy of Belgrade's streets, although there was Američka Street and Wilson Square, largely showed an alliance with France ‘as the first-class protector of Yugoslavia’. (Vladimir Dulović, “Nazivi beogradskih trgova i ulica kao ogledalo ideologija vladajućih sistema (1848-1903)” In: Vladimir Pavičević, ed., *Zbornik Belgradeske otvorene škole, Radovi studenata generacija 2002/2003.*, (Belgrade, 2004.): 63-86.). Belgrade's toponymy thus unquestionably continued the tradition of the Kingdom of Serbia (Balkan Wars, World War I, Chetnik dukes, Radical Party politicians), so the undisputed ally was France, but not the United States, whose role in the Adriatic issue and state recognition was in many ways more pronounced.

21 A young French-speaking priest, Ljudevit Kežman, was selected to undertake the delivery of the Memorandum, compiled by Stjepan Radić. Through the 'Italian mission' in Ljubljana, he came into contact with an Italian officer, Lieutenant Colonel Finzi (Cesare Pettoirelli Lalat), who approached the relationship with Kežman and the HPSS Memorandum favorably, but only to fulfill Italy's territorial claims. Namely, he asked Kežman to sign a 'Pact' before his trip to Paris, which would confirm that Italy “1) (...) undertakes that the Entente authorities will support the desire of the Croatian people for a special, independent peasant republic 2) The HP(R)SS therefore

basic intentions of this Memorandum. First through Radić's telegram of February 8, 1919,²² and then a month later, as a formalized request with a series of addenda and even 166,667 signatures of support.²³ However, the reply signed from Arthur Hugh Frazier, a counselor to the American embassy in Paris, to Radić (wrongly referred to as Rafić) dated on February 17, 1919, actually summed up the American attitude towards new self-determination requirements within the state that was recognized by the United States only ten days earlier: "The President has directed me to (...) inform you that it will be referred to the proper authorities for consideration".²⁴ As for this issue, it seems that President Wilson no longer considered himself responsible, although according to David Hunter Miller, one of the key members of the "Inquiry",²⁵ even on January 31, 1919, Wilson was ready to accept two or even three Yugoslav states into the League of nations.²⁶

However, while members of the HPSS were looking for a way to reach President Wilson, they did not seem to know that exactly in that period (from the

undertakes not to interfere in the issue of Rijeka and the London Pact 3) Cro[atian] Republic shall take all measures of economic and social order suitable to establish a friendly and neighborly relationship between the two (Cro[atian] and Ita[lian]) peoples.", (Zlatko Matijević, "Prilozi za političku biografiju dr. Ljudevita Kežmana: od Memoranduma za Mirovnu konferenciju u Parizu do odlaska u Sjedinjenje Američke Države (1919. – 1922.)", *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* (Zagreb), 38 (2006), No. 3: 757-778., 762-764.). Kežman refused to sign such a 'Pact' and returned to Zagreb, where he was immediately arrested with two other party leaders, Vladko Maček and Josip Predavac. Stjepan Radić was already in prison at the time.

22 Wilson, Woodrow. Woodrow Wilson Papers: Series 5: Peace Conference Correspondence and Documents, 1914-1921; Subseries D: Unofficial Correspondence, 1915-1919; 1919, 9 February 1919, Manuscript/Mixed Materials. https://www.loc.gov/resource/mss46029.mss46029-431_0018_1057/?sp=90, Accessed in February, 2021.

23 Stjepan Radić, *Put k seljačkoj republici* (Zagreb: Naklada Radićeve sveslavenske knjižare, 1923), 15.

24 Wilson, Woodrow. Woodrow Wilson Papers: Series 5: Peace Conference Correspondence and Documents, 1914-1921; Subseries D: Unofficial Correspondence, 1915-1919; 1919, 9 February 1919. Manuscript/Mixed Materials. <https://loc.gov/item/mss4602900688/>, Accessed in July, 2018.

25 'Inquiry' was founded in the fall of 1917 and operated as an independent body until December 1918, when it was included in the Division of Territorial, Economic and Political Intelligence of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace. It had a maximum of 126 members in its operation, while Wilson was joined at the Peace Conference by 23 members. The expert groups produced a total of about 2,000 reports and 1,000 maps. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/10511440>, Accessed in July, 2018.

26 This information was pointed out by Jere (Jerome) Jareb, who suggests that Wilson's interest in the South Slav question was much greater, (Jareb, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike*, 23-24., footnote no. 22 as by David Hunter Miller, *My Diary at the Conference of Paris with Documents* (New York: Printed for the Author by the Appeal Printing Company of forty sets only, 1924-1928), vol. IV, Documents 216-304, Document No. 268, "Notes of a conversation between President Wilson, Signor Orlando, Colonel House and Signor Scialoja, held on January 30, 1919").

end of February to May 1919), the above mentioned American representative of Coolidge's mission, LeRoy King, was in Zagreb with a task to send information to Paris.²⁷ Radić and his associates seemed crucial to reach Wilson, and since they could not count on Ante Trumbić's help who was then within the Serbian/Yugoslav delegation at the Peace Conference and who further defamed them, Radić tried different paths, but not through American rapporteur on the field. On the other hand, neither did the American rapporteur come into contact with Radić and his associates but rather sent estimations that Croatian dissatisfaction most likely grew under the influence of Hungary and Italy.²⁸ This additionally speaks of the relation of the American representative in Zagreb who, often relying on the opinions of representatives or sympathizers of the government in Belgrade, was presented with information completely ignored of the Croatian opposition. He made reports about them, diminished their importance, but he did not meet them.

American preparations for the forthcoming peace conference began in 1917 when the before mentioned advisory group of the U.S. president known as the "Inquiry" was founded, instigated by Wilson's adviser Edward M. House.²⁹ In the overall cacophony from the end of the First World War, it was undoubtedly instructive to draw as much attention to themselves, especially if someone was willing to listen, and the USA did intend to listen, but the question is to what extent they managed to do so. Looking at the southeast of Europe, the USA viewed the problem twofold, as an Austro-Hungarian and a Balkan issue. In Austria-Hungary, these issues were represented by the central European peoples under Austria and Hungary, while in the Balkan states the issue represented several predominantly border issues inherited from the Balkan Wars (1912-1913).³⁰

The work of the "Inquiry" is, in fact, an excellent example of how U.S. foreign policy wanted to address issues. Shortly put, an analytical view of the problem was conceived as the foundation of their judgment. A detailed collection of data from different sources and different perspectives was present in all issues related to the preparation of the future peace conference. Moreover, the U.S. estimated that they could not rely even on the information provided by the allies, the British, the French, and the Italians, especially in matters of direct personal interest. This is why at the Paris Peace Conference President Wilson added the basic advisory commission led by Edward M. House as his advisors. Indeed,

27 Jareb, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike*, 24.

28 Jareb, "LeRoy King's Reports", Report No. 86 from February 17, 1919.

29 The Texan Edward M. House, always referred to by journalists as a colonel, although he had no formal or practical military experience, was President Wilson's closest associate from 1912 until the end of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. After that, they completely cut off communication due to differences of opinion regarding Peace Conference.

30 FRUS, *Paris Peace Conference*, 1919, vol. I, pp. 36-38, 50-52. passim.

Americans came to Paris prepared better than others. On the other hand, Edward M. House was provided with information on all other issues from various rapporteurs. For the Austro-Hungarian and neighboring countries, this was the already mentioned Coolidge's mission based in Vienna, and his associates had to send reports from Prague, Zagreb, Budapest, Lviv, and Warsaw.³¹

The enthusiasm about a powerful ally viewed as a protective "older brother", was growing alongside increasingly aggressive advances of Italy on Dalmatian and Adriatic areas. And indeed, the Adriatic question attracted the attention of the U.S. long before the end of the war. Finally, the Adriatic question was the one by which President Wilson, a "forgotten president" in the USA, remained remembered among Croatians. Appropriately, the Croatian emigration in the United States posthumously said about Wilson: "Croatia is laying a wreath of flowers upon his tomb thanking him for goodwill."³²

President Woodrow Wilson certainly did not lack goodwill. Although at the beginning of his presidency he continued the path of conservative American isolationism. His democratic orientation, and certainly his character determination as to the son of a Presbyterian priest, had by the end of the First World War shaped him as a leader of the new world order. On the other hand, his new global portrait was exactly like that, worldwide, too broad for a single man. As he chronically refused to rely on the help of others, even when it comes to writing his speeches, Wilson became overburdened.³³ Adding to that, having heard his message of self-determination, hundreds or more likely thousands of voices were trying to reach his ears. One can hardly expect that it was even possible to capture the essence of all the requests and messages, let alone analyze them thoroughly.

And so President Wilson, and consequently the American administration, made his diplomatic moves cautiously having "higher interests" in mind. His effort to maximally shorten the war by depriving Germany of its logistics brought him to Austria-Hungary. When he opened that option in October 1917, he was overtaken by a heterogeneous national question. He encountered an unresolved Slavic self-determination issue, the activation of which seemed crucial to the dissolution of "Austria".³⁴ Another issue was, however, a decision by the U.S. about whether or not to break up Austria-Hungary at all. The Allies, and even the

31 FRUS, *Paris Peace Conference*, 1919, vol. II, p. 218.

32 Ivo Tasovac, *American Foreign Policy and Yugoslavia, 1939-1941* (Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 1999), p. 21.

33 Victor Mamatey, *The United States and the East Central Europe*, p. 79.

34 Almost as a rule, the name used in U.S. diplomatic reports when referring to Austria-Hungary was, "Austria".

Americans, were not sure about that until October 1918, a month before the end of the war.³⁵ The Austro-Hungarian Emperor and King Charles I was also eagerly expecting the American final decision. In fact, through the development of Austro-Hungarian - American diplomatic relations, he realized that the inevitable end of the Monarchy would largely depend on the American will.³⁶

All the above-mentioned drew American attention to the South Slavic question in Austria-Hungary. Just as they referred to Austria-Hungary as Austria, Americans referred to South Slavs just as Yugoslavs. While the names of Croats or Slovenes came up in high circles around the President, the Yugoslav Committee, as well as the Serbian mission were in Washington to point them towards their goals of a common state.³⁷

The Paris Peace Conference that began at the end of January 1919 slowly started revealing the outlines of actual positions. As a newly established but internationally unrecognized state, the Kingdom of SHS did not even get their

35 In mid-January 1918, President Woodrow Wilson addressed the world public with, probably his most famous, fourteen-point speech in which he, as Ivo Banac described, “promised autonomy, but not independence, to the peoples of Austria-Hungary” while “three days earlier Prime Minister David Lloyd George had stated that the dissolution of the Monarchy was not a war aim of the Allies.”, (Ivo Banac, *National Question*, 126).

36 For a description of the dramatic moments of Charles I's diplomatic efforts to uncover Wilson's intentions, see: Mamatey, *The United States and the East Central Europe*, 318-323., 334.-339.

37 The Yugoslav Committee was founded by Croatian, Slovenian and Serbian politicians from Austria-Hungary who emigrated during the World War I. The committee was formally established in 1915 in Paris, and its headquarters were in London. It had offices in London, Paris, St. Petersburg and Geneva. The committee advocated the unification of the southern Slavs from Austria-Hungary into one state with the kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro. The Serbian legation in Washington and minister Ljubomir Mihailović publicly agreed with the Yugoslav committee. A good example of propaganda on this track occurred on July 4, 1918 in Washington, when on American Independence Day, representatives of the three nations of the future common state of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes with the participation of White House officials and a ceremonial program hoisted a symbolic common flag of the future state. The program was marked by speeches of the Serbian minister in the U.S.A, the Montenegrin minister in the U.S.A, representatives of the Yugoslav Committee and the Croatian Federation society. The three nations were represented by three children in national costumes of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, who were joined by the daughter of U.S. Secretary of War Newton Baker. Four children around the common flag symbolically brought to life “the unity of the three nations and America”, “Unity to save Serbia”, “Motto of New Nation”, *The Washington Herald*, July 5, 1918., p. 3. Somewhat later, on July 28, 1918, on the fourth anniversary of the outbreak of the war in Washington, Serbian Day was marked. Secretary of State Robert Lansing issued a proclamation calling on Americans of all faiths to pray and sympathize with Serbia in their churches, stressing the U.S. commitment “that it is the right of the people of all the nations, small as well as great, to live their own lives and choose their own Government (...)”, “Appeals to Americans to pray for Serbians”, *New York Times* (New York), July 27, 1918, p. 4.

permanent representatives at the Conference.³⁸ Their interests were represented by a delegation, the members of which could not agree on much themselves, and at the beginning of the Conference, it was merely known as a delegation of Serbia.³⁹ A plethora of global problems slowly came up to the surface and Slavic dissatisfaction was just a drop in the sea. However, even though the Italians left the conference, Wilson did contribute to keeping much of the Adriatic coast in the hands of the new state, but he certainly was not too concerned with their issues.⁴⁰ The creation of the new global map was, of course, more important. Besides, he did not see the South Slavs as serious enough to bear any greater responsibilities in European terms. He was neither willing to give them a strong navy “to run amuck with”.⁴¹

On the other hand, foreign relations did not tolerate complete break-ups. Although in 1919 a program of the new world was being created, a connection with the trodden paths was needed to continue the journey. Regarding the newly established Kingdom of SHS, that trodden path was Serbia. Just like its power was copied into the internal politics of the new country, its foreign relations with the U.S. were bound in those old relations between the Kingdom of Serbia and the U.S. And that was where the story of self-determination initiated by the American part ended. The created South Slavic kingdom was considered a done deal, and all disputes over its regime became the internal affair of the new state, even though the European Allies opposed it.⁴²

38 In order not to prejudge the recognition of the new state, the first delegation at the beginning of the Peace Conference was appointed as a delegation of the Kingdom of Serbia. (Bogdan Krizman, *Vanjska politika jugoslavenske države 1918-1941* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1975).

39 Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919. Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House Trade Paperback, 2003), p. 110.

40 Wilson was no longer President of the United States at a time when negotiations between the Italian and Yugoslav governments were taking place in Rapallo, which gave the Italians more than they had ever asked for in mutual negotiations, (Krizman, *Vanjska politika jugoslavenske države*, p. 29).

41 MacMillan, *Mirotvorci*, 152., according to Arthur S. Link, ed.; Woodrow Wilson, *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, vol. 54: January 11 – February 7, 1919, p. 149.

42 On November 16, 1918, the American ambassador to Paris, William G. Sharp, sent an urgent telegram to the Secretary of State in Washington informing him that he had been informed by the British Foreign Office. that “chiefs of the Allied governments have decided to (...) in relation to the complete execution of the conditions of the armistice concluded with Austria Hungary before making concerted decision with regard to the recognition of the Jugo Slav state”, adding the quotation from the note received “Your Excellency must be aware that it has not be possible to arrive at an agreement up to the present between the representatives of the different Serbian Slovene and Croatian population as to the constitution of a Jugo Slav state. It appears desirable to delay official recognition of the existence of the Jugo Slav state until such time as an understanding is reached in this regard between the population concerned”. (National Archives

Thus, the first state that recognized the Kingdom of SHS was the United States on February 7, 1919.⁴³ That recognition was undoubtedly immense support to the newly created state, but also the gesture had a strong symbolic value, primarily demonstrating Wilson's global self-determination idea. However, it did not prejudge the solution to the problem that was yet to be found, concerning mostly the Adriatic issue with one of the main negotiators, Italy. Until that time, in all newly established/emerging states, including the new South Slavic one, Wilsonism had already assumed mythic proportions.

At home, in the USA, Wilson did not enjoy nearly that much enthusiasm, influence, or significance. When he returned from Paris, he was welcomed by resignation in Congress. Among the Republicans, of course. They had been electrified by the idea of the League of Nations. While in Paris he was warned of their negative opinion of it in an open letter from Senator Henry Cabot Lodge co-signed by thirty-nine Republican senators, just enough to block the ratification of the Convention.⁴⁴ This dissatisfaction President Wilson failed to appease, although he had the support of the public. Ultimately, the United States did not join the League of Nations, and the new era of American diplomacy was announced.

The American elections of 1920 contributed to the realization of these announcements. Democrats went to the polls with a plan to take advantage of the victorious sense of a nation that ended WWI and secured global popularity on Wilson's shoulders. Republicans, on the other hand, did not go with denying Wilson's merits or campaigning negatively. They offered, in fact, normalization. Republican candidate Warren G. Harding said in one of his most famous speeches during the campaign: "America's present need is not heroics, but healing; not nostrums, but normalcy; not revolution, but restoration; not agitation, but adjustment; not surgery, but serenity; not the dramatic, but the dispassionate; not experiment, but equipoise; not submergence in internationality, but sustainment

and Records Administration (NARA), Microfilm (M) 358, Role (R) 6, Document No. 860h.01/4). Namely, France and Great Britain were against the international recognition of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes until the representatives of all nations agreed on the final organization of the state.

⁴³ Bogdan Krizman stated that "the conversation that Trumbić had with US Secretary of State R. Lansing on February 1, 1919 contributed to this", (Bogdan Krizman, *Vanjska politika jugoslavenske države*, pp. 14-15).

⁴⁴ Mario Di Nunzio, ed., *Woodrow Wilson: Essential writings and Speeches of the Scholar President* (New York, 2006), 37.

in triumphant nationality.”⁴⁵ Normalization led the United States back to isolationism.

However, recognized and in its first steps, pushed by the USA, the Kingdom of SHS did not immediately feel the slow American departure from global politics. More precisely, the government in Belgrade gathered around the Palace of the Karađorđević dynasty did not feel it. It was felt more by nations that, surprisingly, so it might seem from an American perspective, were still seeking their self-determination.⁴⁶ In the new South Slavic state under Serbian domination, Croats, as non-Serb people, were certainly one of them. That's why they were looking for and waiting for someone to “take up and carry on the Wilsonian banner”.⁴⁷ The Croats were looking for Americans during the negotiations in Rapallo in 1920 or at the Genoa Conference in 1923, they were looking for them in the League of Nations, they were relying on the American representatives in the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia.⁴⁸

45 Warren G. Harding, “Returning to Normalcy” (1920), <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/22-the-new-era/warren-g-harding-and-the-return-to-normalcy-1920/>, (accessed in April 2017). Warren G. Harding, “National Ideals and Policies”, *The Protectionist* (May, 1920): 71-81.

46 Miro Kovač uses the term “frustrated peoples”. Speaking about France's attitude towards the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia, Kovač concluded that “Paris relied almost exclusively on the Serbian political and military elite and did not take into account the need to satisfy the Kingdom's 'frustrated peoples', primarily Croats.”, (Miro Kovač, *Francuska i hrvatsko pitanje 1914. – 1929.* (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2005), p. 9).

47 Tasovac, *American Foreign Policy*, p. 19.

48 At the initiative of the British government, an international conference was convened in Genoa in 1922, which was primarily intended to facilitate the economic reconstruction of Central and Eastern Europe, and to improve Soviet Russia's ties with the rest of Europe. However, Radić, at the time within the Croatian Bloc, saw the conference as a new opportunity to express Croatian dissatisfaction within the Kingdom or the 'internationally recognized territory of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes' as the Kingdom of SHS was called in the Croatian Bloc Monument / Memorandum. The text of this Memorandum did not reach the conference. The texts of the Memorandum of the Croatian Bloc eventually became only a means of internal political struggle, due to which the Croatian Bloc was ultimately accused of anti-state activities, (Hrvoje Matković, “Stjepan Radić i Hrvatski blok”, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* (Zagreb), 32-33 (1999–2000): 267-276, 271-272). For example, during King Aleksandar Karađorđević's dictatorship, one of the American Croat representatives, Ivan Stipanović, a pastor in Youngstown, Ohio, asked the U.S. Department of State for a diplomatic passport so he could testify before the League of Nations in Geneva about Croatia's experiences under the king's dictatorship. He also requested a meeting with President Roosevelt. None of his demands were met, (Tasovac, *American Foreign Policy*, 21).

Diplomats

American diplomatic activity experienced an unprecedented expansion during the First World War. Foreign affairs became a preoccupation for President Wilson, and the Department of State an essential tool of his policy. A tool first and foremost, but not a partner. Although the Department of State expanded in terms of both personnel and infrastructure at the time, its expenditures increased from 4.9 million dollars in 1910 to 1.6 million dollars in 1920. The number of employees in the Department has also increased from 234 persons in 1910 to 708 in 1920.⁴⁹ However, the impact on President Wilson was not proportionate to these indicators. He sought his advisers elsewhere. Edward M. House who did not belong to the Department of State's structures is the best example of this. One reason may have been that the Department of State still nurtured slow diplomacy unaccustomed to military issues, as opposed to the tense, rapidly changing conditions of World War I.⁵⁰ This problem was already noticeable during the war, and intensive work began on its solution in the 1920s. Robert Lansing, then U.S. Secretary of State, began this process during the war, emphasizing that the U.S. Foreign Service needed a fundamental change.⁵¹

After the war, the American diplomatic service also changed. The role of diplomacy in the new environment became increasingly necessary, and the development of the American diplomatic service became a question of the realization of American interests. The beginning of the transformation of the American diplomatic service began in 1920, and already in the second half of that decade, its' changed structure came to light.⁵² Some of these changes were also

49 David Frederic Trask, *A Short History of the U. S. Department of State, 1781-1981* (Washington D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1981), p. 23.

50 Trask, *A Short History of the U. S. Department of State*, p. 24.

51 Until the outbreak of World War I, the Department of State paid little or no attention to the security of the diplomatic service (and its officials). To prevent possible German-Austrian espionage, Robert Lansing was the first to change such a relationship. He introduced mandatory photo passes, as well as restricted movement through Department of State buildings. He introduced the 'secret service' into the international diplomatic service, placing Leland Harris at the head of the department in charge of 'collecting and verifying all information of a secret nature.' The Department of State began working more closely with the U.S. Secret Service, and later the British. Messages from U.S. diplomats were delivered to Washington, D.C. by military couriers or means of communication, often encrypted. The State Special Agents Service was also established to guard foreign diplomatic missions in the United States. (Mark T. Hove, *History of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security of the United States Department of State* (electronic resource) (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Global Publishing Solutions, 2011), pp. 4-10.).

52 These were the consequences of the Rogers Act of 1924, which, for the first time, equated consular representatives in advance, in part, with the highest diplomatic representatives (ambassadors or deputies) held until then by the 'elites'.

affected by the relations of Eastern European countries, mostly newly created, with the American Legations present there. Namely, in the area of Central and Eastern European countries, American legations then used domestic postal companies to send their reports. But warnings from U.S. diplomats of suspected security breaches of diplomatic mail were becoming more frequent, and from 1922 the Department of State had rebuilt the diplomatic courier service through its military channels.⁵³ The minister in the Kingdom of SHS Henry Percival Dodge (1919-1926), wrote about the suspicions of monitoring diplomatic correspondence to the Department of State, as well. The authoritarian Yugoslav regime, which built the repressive system at its core (and thus the intelligence surveillance of foreign missions), certainly indirectly contributed to the strengthening of American security protocols in international diplomacy. The American mission in Belgrade thus went through similar experiences and complained about similar problems such as wiretapping or surveillance as in other Eastern European countries.⁵⁴

The first envoy (extraordinary envoy and plenipotentiary minister) of the United States to the Kingdom of SHS was the aforementioned Henry Percival Dodge. He had been the U.S. Special Representative to the Kingdom of Serbia from

53 The courier service established during the First World War continued to operate until the end of the Paris Peace Conference. With the coming to power of Republican President Harding in 1921, the courier service in Europe was abolished due to excessive expenses, (Hove, *History of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security of the United States Department of State*, 16.).

54 For example, in November 1920, the U.S. government, through its Belgrade mission to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, sent a protest note complaining about the 'very bad transmission of telegrams' received and sent from Belgrade. (Archives of Yugoslavia (AJ), RG 334, Poslanstvo SAD-a u Kraljevini SHS-a, [U.S. Legation to the Kingdom of SHS], box 101, Document No. 707) Also, at the end of 1921, the U.S. Legation in Belgrade sent a complaint to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which then requested a response from the Yugoslav Ministry of the Interior for harassing the "service of the Secretary of the American Legation" by Yugoslav police agents. From the response of the Ministry of the Interior's State Protection Department from December 21, 1921, it can be concluded that the Yugoslav authorities did indeed monitor persons around private apartments of employees and officials of the American Legation. Belgrade City Administration, whose police agent was supervising the properties, rejected the American allegations of "harassment of servants" because "the agent is one of the more intelligent people.", (AJ-334-101-786). The U.S. consul in Belgrade and trade attaché Kenneth S. Patton also complained with the Yugoslav gendarmes. Namely, on July 31, 1923, he and his company were returning to Belgrade by a passenger ship from a trip to Pančevo. After entering the passenger compartment from the passenger deck and through the window, allegedly due to extreme crowds, the ship's captain fined him. Consul Patton, however, complained about the captain's attitude towards him because, at the moment when the American diplomat handed him the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' ID in English, captain replied "that he does not recognize the ID of the Ministry of Foreign affairs because it was written in "Turkish"". Moreover, by his arrival in Belgrade, Patton was handed over to three gendarmes who "in the rudest way" took him to the Commissariat of Sava River, leaving him with "scars from gendarme constriction when taken". (AJ-334-101-894/895).

June 1917 and took over the Serbian affairs of Charles Joseph Vopicka, who was U.S. envoy to Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia. Due to the obvious impossibility of performing diplomatic duties from Bucharest, where Vopicka was located, Dodge was the American representative to the government of the Kingdom of Serbia, with the proviso that he often had contacts with the Yugoslav Committee, especially in Corfu. Henry Percival Dodge was a classic American diplomat of the time when most were coming from the New England (Massachusetts) area and with a degree from one of the Ivy League universities.⁵⁵ Dodge was born in Boston in 1870, where he also graduated in law from Harvard University.⁵⁶ After being further educated in Europe, he was soon employed in the U.S. Embassy in Berlin (1899 – 1906), where he was promoted from the position of the Third secretary to the Secretary of the embassy.⁵⁷ Until 1913, when he was retired from the diplomatic service, he served as Secretary of the Embassy in Tokyo (1906), Envoy to El Salvador (1908), Honduras (1909), Morocco (1909), and Panama (1911). However, the following year after his retirement, the U.S. government appointed him, in May 1914, Secretary of the Special Commission at the Niagara Falls Mediation Conference in Niagara Falls, Canada, and after the outbreak of World War I, he was sent to Europe. From August 1914, he served as a special envoy of the Department of State in Paris, and from June 28, 1917, he was sent to Serbia on the same assignment, as a special envoy. At this position, Dodge greeted the creation of the Kingdom of SHS, and in July 1919 he was appointed as U.S. envoy to Belgrade.

Although the Kingdom of SHS was a new state in Southeast Europe, the United States, and of course minister Dodge, understood it only as a continuation of Serbian statehood. After all, it seems to have been a logical move, because, since 1917, Dodge has relied mostly on the Serbian government, directly concerning the Yugoslav Committee in Corfu. On the other hand, all ties with Austria-Hungary were formally severed in April 1917, when the United States severed diplomatic ties with Austria-Hungary and withdrew its diplomatic staff, including those from its former consulate in Rijeka. The continuation of diplomatic relations on these foundations could not have been expected.⁵⁸

Thus, for the first time, the United States established a separate legation based in Belgrade in 1919, so Henry P. Dodge also dealt with organizational

55 Strupp, "Observing the Dictatorship", 82-83.

56 *Register of the Department of State*. May 1, 1922., (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922.), 110.

57 *Register of the Department of State*, 1922, 111.

58 Ervin Dubrović, *Merika. Iseljavanje iz Srednje Europe u Ameriku* (Rijeka: Muzej grada Rijeka, 2008), 108, 109. The U.S. General Consulate in Austria-Hungary in charge of Croatia was the one in Budapest.

matters related to its structure. In addition to the legation, one of the two American consulates was located in Belgrade, while the other was located in Zagreb. The staff of these diplomatic stations changed frequently, as by a rule they performed several duties at once, i.e. their number was not in full. However, the American consulate in Belgrade had a longer tradition because it had been operating from 1882, so it is not surprising that the American consul in the Kingdom of SHS was appointed before the envoy. Thus, from May 1919, Kenneth S. Patton was the first American diplomat appointed to the government of the new state. In addition to his duties as consul, Patton also served as a commercial attaché, and in addition to the necessary support staff, he did not receive his first diplomatic assistant until November 1919, when Henry R. Brown was appointed vice-consul.⁵⁹ Brown remained only until May 1920 when he was replaced by Don S. Haven who was again replaced at the end of April 1921 by Brigg A. Perkins. Perkins was in the Belgrade consulate until February 1924, when he was transferred to Zagreb as vice-consul to consul Leslie A. Davis.⁶⁰

Minister Henry P. Dodge was not in a better position either. He did not get his diplomatic assistant as the second secretary of the mission until December 6, 1920, when Pierre de L. Boal was appointed to that position.⁶¹ The Third secretary of the mission, W. Roswell Barker, was appointed in late October 1922, while Dodge waited for the first secretary until mid-November 1922 when Gordon Paddock was sent to the position.⁶² In the early 1920s, the military attaché to the

⁵⁹ *Register of the Department of State*, 1922., 71.

⁶⁰ *Register of the Department of State*, January 1, 1925 (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1925), 179.

⁶¹ *Register of the Department of State*, 1922, 41.

⁶² Gordon Paddock's path (1865-1932) to Belgrade is very interesting. Paddock was admitted to the American diplomatic service in 1901 when he was appointed consular duty in Korea, then Manchuria (1909), and from 1910 he was appointed consul in Tabriz, Persia. During the turbulent events after World War I in June 1919, he pulled a group of American Presbyterian missionaries and about six hundred Christians from a Kurdish attack on the city of Urmia. After twenty years of absence from the United States, Paddock returned to Washington in February 1922. News of his venture in Urmia reached the Department of State even before him through praising reports of humanitarian organizations. Finally, President Warren G. Harding inquired about his promotion in May 1922, but the Department of State's response was that it was difficult to expect his advancement in the near future unless his consular skills and activities were significantly improved. The Department of State replied that Paddock "is regarded as possessing good political and diplomatic ability but that he has poor ability as an executive and on commercial and general consular work. His rating for efficiency as a consular officer upon all phases of his work is 'fair' and in the order of relative efficiency to the other officers of Class VI of consuls he is numbered 81 in a total of 95", (David D. Newsom, "Rescue at Urmia", *Foreign Service Journal*, November (2005): 63). However, because of his laudable role in protecting American missionaries and interests in Persia, President Harding was proposed to promote Paddock from a consular to a diplomatic service (these two services were equated only by the Rogers Act in 1924). Although Paddock repeatedly asked for

Kingdom of SHS was Major Martin C. Shallenberger, who was replaced at the end of 1924 by Lieutenant Colonel William F. H. Godson, who simultaneously served as military attaché in Belgrade and Athens.⁶³

The consulate in Zagreb was not in function until July 1920 when Alfred R. Thomson was appointed there as consul on July 1, 1920. Vice-Consul Carroll H. Megill joined Thomson only in March 1922.⁶⁴ Thomson remained in Zagreb for a little over two years, when he was replaced in August 1922 by Joseph M. McGurk.⁶⁵ The consulate was changed again in 1924, when, as already mentioned, Andrew Brigg Perkins was transferred from Belgrade in early February, and a new consul, Leslie A. Davies, arrived in early September. By 1929, another change occurred when, in mid-1928, Vice-Consul Brigg Perkins was replaced by Walter L. Lowrie.⁶⁶

The American diplomatic service in the Kingdom of SHS was undersized. In addition to the envoy, there were usually two or three secretaries at most, a military attaché who was in charge of several states at the same time, and several staff members who performed translation, typing, and other administrative tasks. At the same time, the consulate in Belgrade consisted of three, the one in Zagreb was headed by two personnel officers. However, Vladimir Petrov concluded that “This staff, (however), was sufficient to attend to American interests in Yugoslavia which (...) did not amount to much”.⁶⁷

After World War I, the United States had fifty-three diplomatic missions in the world in the rank of embassies and legations, depending on the importance of the mission. Representation in the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia was in the lower rank of the legation throughout the existence of that state. The main tasks of the missions were communication between the U.S. government and the recipient countries, protection of the lives and property of American citizens abroad, monitoring the political situation in the host countries, and protection of American general and economic interests.⁶⁸ The tasks of the American embassy in the Kingdom of SHS did not differ from these general principles. “Listening posts” was the shortest description of American diplomatic missions in Europe after World

an appointment to Paris, he was sent to Belgrade at the end of 1922. After Belgrade, he was briefly in Copenhagen, being appointed to Paris as the First secretary of the embassy only in 1930, where he retired at the end of the same year. (Newsom, “Rescue at Urmia”, 56-65.).

63 *Register of the Department of State*, 1925., p. 42.

64 *Register of the Department of State*, 1922, p. 71.

65 *Register of the Department of State*, 1924, p. 74.

66 *Register of the Department of State* 1929, p. 65.

67 Vladimir Petrov, *A Study in Diplomacy. The Story of Arthur Bliss Lane*, (Chicago, 1971), p. 104.

68 *Register of the Department of State*, 1929, p. 259.

War I. This characteristic was in direct correlation with American foreign policy, which after Wilson, then in republican hands, went towards isolationism. Precisely, the policy of non-interference in the internal relations of European states.

Although the beginning of the new South Slavic state was under the direct American presence and even its political shaping, this influence did not continue in the future. Of course, Yugoslavia's political orientation toward European allies (mostly France) during the 1920s did not go in favor of dynamic relations with the United States.⁶⁹ On the other hand, the United States under Republican presidents Warren G. Harding (1920–1923) and Calvin Coolidge (1923–1929) found no direct interests in Yugoslavia. Although U.S. diplomatic representatives on the ground warned of favorable opportunities for economic ties with the new state, they did not occur, especially not during the 1920s. As early as 1919, minister Dodge wrote to the Department of State: “Although embarrassed in present, Yugoslavia has great and almost untouched resources... Once the country is put on its feet by American loans, I believe that not only will large markets be opened here for our goods, but that a great field for American enterprise will be created”.⁷⁰ Henry P. Dodge, representing American economic interests, also advocated what the Yugoslav authorities had hoped for, American investment and aid. And Belgrade still relied on two sources, the universality of Wilsonism and the associated generous post-war lending, as well as a broad base of south Slavic emigration to the United States. But American economic conservatism, which tried to curb unemployment and avoid an economic crisis after the war, turned American investors home, and the return wave of immigrants did not grip the new state. Moreover, because Serbia did not repay its war debts, the Kingdom of SHS was financially blacklisted by the United States.

For example, after the U.S. Congress established the World War Foreign Debt Commission (WWFDC) in 1922 with the task of negotiating with U.S. war

69 The common opinion on France as the closest Yugoslav (more precisely Serbian) ally is very widespread. Such an assessment can be maintained, especially if viewed through the paradigm of the history of emotions or cultural-intellectual relationships. On the other hand, if it is viewed through economic-financial relations, a difference can be noticed. Stanislav Sretenović concluded that France had little or, at most, very limited ability to exercise any economic influence in the Kingdom of SHS beside the military industry. In this respect, German influence on the Kingdom of SHS was already much stronger and more widespread during the 1920s, (Stanislav Sretenović, *Francuska i Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca 1918-1929*, (Belgrade: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2008), pp. 476-478). See also: Živko Avramovski, *Britanci o Kraljevini Jugoslaviji. Godišnji izveštaji Britanskog poslanstva u Belgradeu 1921-1938, Knjiga Prva (1921-1930)* (Belgrade, Zagreb: Arhiv Jugoslavije, Globus, 1986), p. 19.

70 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 18, according to report of minister Henry Percival Dodge to the Secretary of the State from November 21, 1919, 860H.51/20.

debtors and finally agreeing to repay debts within 25 years with no lower interest rates of 4.5%, the Yugoslav side still expected that the Americans (moreover, that they would have to do so) would either drastically reduce their claims or even cancel them.⁷¹ Procrastination, a favorite tactic of interwar Yugoslavia that did not change despite so frequent changes of government in Belgrade, was also used in the event of U.S. debt repayment. It took the Yugoslav side as many as four years only to enter into negotiations with the WWFDC, after the Americans, meanwhile, had already completed negotiations with eleven countries.⁷² Finally, on May 3, 1926, the Kingdom of SHS, with Milan Stojadinović as chief negotiator, recognized a war debt to the United States of \$ 62.85 million with a payment deadline until 1988.⁷³

Although the Yugoslav state's inherited Serbian war debt to the United States was significantly less than it was to France (\$ 297 million) or the United Kingdom (\$ 91 million), U.S. economic authorities saw no interest in dealing with Yugoslav financial desires.⁷⁴ And that fact greatly affected American-Yugoslav relations. These relationships were normal, one might say only polite, but nothing more than that. This is evidenced by the fact that the Kingdom of SHS and the United States did not conclude any economic-political international agreement, but continued to comply, only formally, with the only one they had, the one concluded with the Kingdom of Serbia back in 1881.

However, in 1926, the American side initiated negotiations with the government of the Kingdom of SHS to replace the aforementioned Treaty of October 14, 1881. This treaty proposal was a classic American Agreement on trade based on the rights of a "privileged nation", regulation of the rights of citizens of both parties, protection of their property, as well as the rights and immunities of consular representatives, and was largely identical to those signed by the United States a few years before with Germany or Hungary.⁷⁵ In September 1926, the Yugoslav side accepted these negotiations and received a draft treaty through the U.S. Legation in Belgrade. They responded in late October of the same year. The response was filled with remarks, and the deletion of four of the first six articles

71 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, pp. 73, 75.

72 Ibid., p. 79

73 Dragana Gnjatović, "Dužnički teret Kraljevine Jugoslavije u vreme Velike svetske ekonomske krize", *Megatrend revija*, vol. 13 (2016), No. 13: 21-44, 34; Avramovski, *Britanci o Kraljevini*, book 1, p. 59. Linda Killen states that it was 32% of the total debt with an interest rate of 1%. Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 89. Ivan M. Becić, "Ratni dugovi Kraljevine Srbije u svetlu politike", *Istorija 20. veka*, 3(2010): 56., nevertheless states that the war debt of the Kingdom of Serbia transferred to the new state was not significant at all because the means of war compensation far exceeded the expenditures of the debt.

74 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 73.

75 *FRUS 1927*, vol III, p. 828.

of the Treaty was requested. And those very first six articles were largely dealing with civil rights. Through the Yugoslav response, one could see into their view of foreign policy relations, their attitude towards civil rights and freedoms, but also their view of the United States.

The Yugoslav response presupposed the deletion of part of Article I, and the entire Article II, III, and V on the ground that the provisions set out therein were already contained in the 1921 Yugoslav Constitution. But what upset the Yugoslav government? Part of Article I as well as the entire Article V concerned freedom of religious expression where it stated that “The nationals of each of the High Contracting Parties in the exercise of the right of freedom of worship, within the territories of the other, as hereinabove provided, may, without annoyance or molestation of any kind because of their religious belief or otherwise, conduct services either within their own houses or within any appropriate buildings which they may be at liberty to erect and maintain inconvenient situations, provided their teachings or practices are not contrary to public morals (...)”.⁷⁶ Namely, the Yugoslav authoritarian state regime had already shown by example that it did not understand religious freedoms at all in this sense, let alone defending them. Indeed, the 1921 Constitution (“Vidovdan Constitution”) guaranteed “freedom of religion and conscience”, but only to those recognized by law, with the addition that “no one can be relieved of his civil and military duties and obligations by invoking the precepts of his faith”.⁷⁷ The religious community of the Yugoslav Nazarenes was an example of a belief not recognized by the state, and they also opposed military service. Therefore, as deserters, they were tried by military courts, and in 1929, talks were held even to relocate this community of about 25,000 members to Chile and Brazil.⁷⁸ The Vidovdan constitution also implied “inviolability of the apartment” in the sense that “the government may not undertake any search or investigation in the apartment of citizens, except in cases provided by law and in the manner prescribed by law”.⁷⁹ Although the same was implied by Article III of the American proposal (only in more detail, citing search objects or research objects as “books, documents or invoices”), the Yugoslav side demanded its deletion, with the already mentioned justification that it was already stated in the Constitution. To the American remark that the Constitution did not state the key difference between a citizen as a 'resident' (which would include American citizens) and a citizen as a 'subject' (Yugoslav citizens), a

76 *FRUS, 1927*, vol. III, pp. 845-846.

77 *Ustav Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca [The Constitution of the Kingdom of SHS]* (Belgrade: Državna štamparija Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, 1921), Article 12.

78 Čapo, *Kraljevina čuvara*, p. 174.

79 *Ustav Kraljevine SHS-a*, 1921, Article 11.

representative of the Yugoslav legal team of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied that they were aware of such a terminological omission of the Constitution, but that the term 'citizen' (understood as 'resident') is understood in all cases except in Article 10 of the Constitution ("no citizen may be expelled from the state") in which case the term would be understood as "subject".⁸⁰

Among other remarks, the key message of these negotiations seems to have been Yugoslav Foreign Minister Marinković's statement to U.S. minister in Belgrade John Dyneley Prince that the Kingdom of SHS could no longer guarantee respect for the "privileged nation" rights given to the Americans in the Treaty of 1881.⁸¹ Since the protection of American interests was the primary task of the Department of State, such a message could hardly have been interpreted as a benevolent intent despite Marinković's apologetic statement in the same conversation that "this was not due to any intention to restrict the rights now enjoyed by American citizens in this Kingdom, but because, under the most-favored-nation clause, other states could claim the same rights, which the Kingdom of SHS was loath to concede to subjects of certain neighboring states."⁸² In short, after these Yugoslav remarks, the new Treaty was never signed, and this fact consequently affected the level of relations between the United States and the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia, which consequently could not even be raised to a higher level.

With the enthusiasm and support of Minister Henry P. Dodge, the beginning of these relations was more optimistic. Immediately after the signing of the Paris Peace Treaty, the Yugoslav government sent a request to the U.S. Treasury Department for a \$ 5 million loan. Dodge again carried on the tempting idea of opening the Yugoslav market to American products, but he completely misjudged Wilson's policies after the Paris Conference, which were taken over by the Republicans throughout the 1920s. Namely, the U.S. government tried to stop its intervention in the economy, which was so present during the war, as soon as possible. Private entrepreneurs and investors needed the government to implement a "national" policy.⁸³ Following such an economic view and the new conditions after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919, the U.S. Treasury Department flatly rejected the Yugoslav request for \$ 5 million. The Department of State considered such an amount exaggerated, and to avoid

80 *FRUS, 1927*, vol. 2, p. 860. Minister John Dyneley Prince to Secretary of the State on December 22, 1927, document no. 711.60h 2/9.

81 *FRUS, 1927*, vol. 2, p. 861, Minister John Dyneley Prince to Secretary of the State on December 22, 1927, document no. 711.60h 2/9.

82 This primarily referred to Bulgaria, Hungary and Italy. (*FRUS 1927*, vol. III, p. 861. Minister John Dyneley Prince to Secretary of the State on December 22, 1927, document no. 711.60h 2/9.)

83 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 46.

confusion in assessing such attempts, the U.S. Department of State's recommendation was that "any investment in the "present Balkan unrest" would be too risky to warrant official encouragement".⁸⁴

One of the indirect ways for American money to enter the Kingdom of SHS was then attempted through a direct agreement of some city authorities with American creditors. Thus, in 1920 Zagreb tried to obtain a loan of one million dollars in the USA. The Department of State did not oppose this way of lending, but mostly because it accurately predicted that the proposed 8% interest rate would simply be too high for the city budget and shut down this transaction on a financial basis.⁸⁵ Interest rates of 8% were crucial for the realization of the Collins Group's intended loan of 15 to 20 million dollars. The realization of this loan, which the Collins Group tried to obtain with the capital of South Slavic emigration in the U.S.A, was mostly due to the commitment of the already mentioned employee of the Yugoslav embassy in Washington, Gordon Gordon-Smith. By 1921, he was arranging two possible transactions of an American loan to Yugoslavia. The first failed with the withdrawal of American creditors, and the second Collins' action was opposed by Yugoslav Prime Minister Pašić again with high-interest rates on the loan.⁸⁶ However, the interest rate of 8% passed with the so-called Blair's loan, the first foreign loan from the United States. The loan was approved by the National Assembly on July 22, 1922, and was nominally forty years \$ 100 million in value.⁸⁷ The main purpose of the loan was to build a railway from Belgrade to the Adriatic Sea and to build the port of Bar, while just 30% of the loan could be used for the state budget. It was included in the contract that "for the procurement of equipment, preference will be given to manufacturers of the country in which the loan was concluded (USA) for 70% of all equipment. American equipment can be, if it is provided of the same quality, up to 5% more expensive (...)"⁸⁸ However, the railway was not built, the loan was not paid in full, and Yugoslavia did not honor the agreements. The first installment of a loan of \$ 15.25 million in gold with a repayment period of forty years was disbursement immediately upon conclusion of the contract, the second installment of \$ 30 million in gold with a repayment period of twenty-five years was disbursement in 1927 after the Kingdom of SHS regulated the problem of war debt with the United States.⁸⁹ After

84 Ibid., p. 46.

85 Ibid., p. 47.

86 See more in: G. G.-Smith, "Political Developments in the Balkans", *World Affairs*, 97 (1934), no. 1: 36-38.

87 Avramovski, *Britanci o Jugoslaviji*, bk. 1, p. 127.

88 Ibid., p. 128.

89 Gnjatović, "Dužnički teret Kraljevine Jugoslavije ...": 37.

the Kingdom stopped repaying the war debt in 1932, there was never any further realization of Blair's loan.⁹⁰

American aid was primarily pointed to humanitarian purposes. The American charity organization of the Red Cross, the Rockefeller Foundation, or the American Relief Administration (ARA) also raised American awareness of Southeast Europe and certainly brought some American “know-how” to the new state, which contributed to improving living conditions.⁹¹ There was no strong push for a weak Yugoslav economy, although there was no shortage of American initiative in the early 1920s.

The members of the ARA technical commission studied the railway network and mines of the Kingdom of SHS for a year, and then proposed the necessary modifications, only to finally be able to report on their almost insignificant adoption.⁹² Traffic infrastructure seemed to be the backbone of the Yugoslav

90 Ibid., 37.

91 This mostly refers to the development of public health under the influence of Andrija Štampar and the Rockefeller Foundation. The Rockefeller Foundation was founded in the United States in 1913 as a philanthropic organization that, along with the League of Nations Health Organization, represented a significant and influential institution in the development and promotion of international health care. It did not associate itself with official U.S. policy nor did it present itself as representative of the U.S. government. In the territory of the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia, the Foundation was active (more precisely, had contacts) from 1920. It had the closest cooperation with Dr. Andrija Štampar, a leading health worker of the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia. By 1937, the Rockefeller Foundation had invested about \$ 393,600 in the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia. Undoubtedly, the greatest successes of the Foundation's activities included the financing of the building of the School of Public Health in Zagreb, which has since become the leading Croatian public health institution. An additional contribution to the development of the public health service in the Kingdom of SHS was provided by numerous scholarships to doctors, medical staff or medical students, which ensured the permanent professionalization of the health service. However, the stated amount that the Foundation invested in the Kingdom was significantly less than those amounts directed to other European countries. Željko Dugac, who studied the Archives of the Rockefeller Foundation in the United States, concluded that the Foundation approached the Kingdom of SHS with certain reservations precisely because of the unstable political situation, (Željko Dugac, *Protiv bolesti i neznanja. Rockefellerova fondacija u međuratnoj Jugoslaviji* (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2005). Its representatives could notice that most obviously this in the nationalistic attitude from Belgrade towards a Croat, Dr. Andrija Štampar, whom they accused, as Dugac reports on page 134, among other things of “not giving Serbia even a hundredth part of what he gave to Croatia”. The Foundation’s approach to the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia changed especially after the assassination of Croatian MPs on June 20, 1928, when finally “Belgrade ruling circles during 1930s, closing within its narrow national interests, and contrary to contemporary trends in internationalization of public health, closed the door to further Collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation and the benefits it provided.”, (Ibid., p. 136.).

92 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 22.

economy start-up, but all efforts to start it were “frustratingly slow”.⁹³ During 1920, the much-needed locomotives were offered to the Kingdom of SHS by the American company Baldwin Locomotive Works at \$ 55,000, payable in grain. However, although the Yugoslav Ministry of Food at that time had the necessary surplus grain to repay these locomotives, the entire offer was slowed down, and ultimately unfulfilled.⁹⁴ The Kingdom of SHS was aware of its (mostly Serbian) pre-war and war debts. The government acknowledged, but also completely ignored them, what was a major problem in any significant money lending by the U.S. government or banks. From the American point of view, Yugoslavia not only ignored its pre-war and war debts but also did not fulfill its newly assumed obligations.

One of the first, but few, American companies to enter the new state market was the New York-based Standard Oil Company. This company had already operated in the Kingdom of Serbia before World War I, so now it expanded its activities by establishing a representative office in Zagreb. Moreover, it was the company that was the first to make a sale to the Kingdom of SHS State monopolies.⁹⁵ However, even though the company already had an experience of working in Belgrade, and consequently probably familiarity with local ways of working, by the end of 1919 the Yugoslav government already owed Standard Oil \$ 1.5 million.⁹⁶ New companies in the Yugoslav market went through a similar process. In 1919, the New York-based Allied Foreign Trade Corporation also supplied \$ 350,000 worth of goods to the Yugoslav government. The government had not paid for the goods for three years.⁹⁷ Such examples not only cut off business with certain companies but also brought disbelief into the business of any American company with those who were supposed to be the guarantor of economic stability, the Yugoslav government.⁹⁸

After the lightning-fast beginning of interstate relations based on Wilsonism, the post-war reality was a dull sobering-up of any enthusiasm that the fruitful ties of the United States and the new Kingdom of SHS were possible. The post-war reality revealed insurmountable differences, psychological and cultural, between the two countries on different continents. First of all, in the economic field, hardly any serious connections could have been made. Yugoslavia's chronic shortage of money, along with irritating ignorance of commitments, quickly

93 Ibid., p. 22.

94 Ibid., pp. 22-23.

95 Ibid., p. 28.

96 Ibid., p. 28.

97 Ibid., pp. 28-29.

98 Ibid., p. 29. And while a number of American companies were present at the Yugoslav market often temporarily, only Standard Oil Company was constantly maintained there.

alienated American investors who were already looking for wider and, perhaps more importantly, places that were more in line with their economic mentality. It is therefore not surprising that a 1922 U.S. Department of Commerce report on U.S.-Yugoslav trade relations concluded that “the trade... is so small that... it scarcely require[s] comment”.⁹⁹

However, intellectual-cultural ties developed more under the influence of American humanitarian organizations, the activities of emigrants, or bilateral American-Yugoslav associations. Locally, the presence of the U.S.S. “Olympia” in Split as part of the peace mission from 1919 to 1921 left an immense impact.¹⁰⁰ But the economy, more precisely American technological progress, was the foundation of the image of a progressive America. Among the few American products that could be bought in the Kingdom of SHS, agricultural machines and cars were the leading ones, mostly because of the trust in the quality of the products. The image of the United States in Croatia was very favorable. The most developed areas of the new state were Croatian and Slovenian lands, i.e. those that had developed under Austria-Hungary. Although the core of the Kingdom's industrial and financial power was in these areas, U.S. official policy nevertheless chose to communicate only with the new center of the centralized state, Belgrade. The broader compatibility of Croatian conception of the economy, which in the state saw the weight and burden, unlike the Serbian one, which comprehended the state as the leader and manager, and was expecting all the stimulus from the state in managing the economy, did not help in mutual economical relations.¹⁰¹

Until the inherited Yugoslav debt was settled in 1926, the U.S. government did not support private, let alone government-led investors/creditors in doing business with the Kingdom of SHS. After agreeing to repay it, that relationship changed. From then, the Department of State did not have such a strict view on financial activities with the Kingdom of SHS, so lending to cater for Yugoslav needs became possible thus allowing the Kingdom of SHS “a few good years”.¹⁰²

99 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 29. The Kingdom of SHS initially imported cars, typewriters, mineral oils, cotton and tires from the United States. The value of imported materials and goods was (in millions of dollars): 4.1 (1920), 4 (1921), 5.1 (1922), 5.5 (1923). By 1926, imports had grown to \$ 9.2 million. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

100 See more in: Vjekoslav Perica, *Pax Americana*, *Ibid.*, “Međunarodna mirovna misija u Splitu nakon Prvog svjetskog rata (1918.-1921.) prema arhivu Ratne mornarice SAD-a i drugim izvorima”, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* (Zagreb), (2010), No. 1: 127-156.

101 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 25.

102 Linda Killen named one of the chapters in her book “A Few Good Years: Loans, Direct Investments, and Trade, 1927-31”, pp. 97- 117.). According to her research, the Kingdom of SHS entered into much more favorable economic and political relations with the United States after the completion of negotiations on the repayment of pre-war debt. In this sense, the American initiative to sign a new Treaty of Friendship, Trade and Consular Missions can also be seen.

Therefore, immediately before the introduction of the king's dictatorship, but also without expecting a “great depression”, it was expected that the economic-financial Yugoslav-American relations could still develop more strongly. It was not quite the way minister Henry P. Dodge envisioned it in early 1919, but with American investments/lending of about \$ 70 million (through various forms) by 1929 it was not insignificant, after all.¹⁰³ Interestingly, King Aleksandar Karađorević announced his dictatorship to minister John Dyneley Prince in a conversation on US-Yugoslav economic ties. When, in October 1928, Prince told the king that the economy would also improve when Yugoslavia showed political stability and strength of internal administration, the king replied to him “That is precisely what I am working for and hope to attain it soon, although you must know it is a hard task to reconcile all the contending elements of this state”.¹⁰⁴

However, as early as 1928, the American consulate in Belgrade no longer believed in the significant arrival of American companies in the Kingdom of SHS.¹⁰⁵ The development of real business ties, however, was a constant victim of the bad “economic climate” that Yugoslav Foreign Minister Vojislav Marinković was aware of: “A foreigner comes here, glances around, and goes away. He is not allowed to build a factory without the permission of one ministry, nor may he verify the statutes of company without the permission of another ministry. He can obtain permission to bring money into the country but he is never certain that he will be able to take it out again... We can point to no foreign enterprise working successfully in our country, so it is not surprising that other enterprises do no[t] come”.¹⁰⁶

Impressions

The governments of the USA, Wilson’s as well as the upcoming Republican ones, saw the Kingdom of SHS only as a continuation and expansion of the Kingdom of Serbia. On this basis, they looked at developing relations with the new South Slavic state. Although they were aware of ethnic differences, official American policy approached the Kingdom of SHS as the state of a new nation, the Yugoslavs. And by this, its policy differed greatly from the opinions and

103 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 117.

104 NARA, M 358, R4, Document No. 860h.00/371, October 18, 1928, Report of John Dyneley Prince to the Secretary of the State on the conversation with King Aleksandar Karađorđević. See Document No. 114 in this collection.

105 Until 1929, the following major American companies operated in the Kingdom of SHS: Socony, Standard Oil, and Corn Products Refining Company (Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 103.).

106 According to Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 103.

impressions of American representatives in the Kingdom of SHS. Wilson's possible plans to allow the creation of two or three states in the South Slavic area were never included in official policy and future U.S. governments simply treated the new South Slavic state exactly as the Department of State's Office of the Solicitor concluded in 1921: "it may properly be said that Serbia absorbed the territories which came to her as a result of the war and that these territories can properly, from the standpoint of our law, be regarded as covered by our treaties with Serbia".¹⁰⁷

Among American observers, assessments of the identity of the nations that made up the Kingdom of SHS can be traced back to its beginnings. With observers who were not part of the U.S. diplomatic service, but submitted reports for its needs, the general assessments of the cultural and identity differences between Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes were noticed much earlier. A series of reports signed by Arthur Wood DuBois in Vienna in December 1919 and sent to the Department of State (firstly to Henry Percival Dodge in Belgrade), stand out. These, very detailed reports were created by field research, mostly in Slovenia and Zagreb area. Arthur Wood DuBois was a Special Representative of the Department of State for duty in Central Europe, and most probably someone involved in the work of the ARA, an American organization that was primarily a humanitarian organization which, under the leadership of Herbert Hoover, organized the delivery of much-needed food to Eastern and Southeastern Europe.¹⁰⁸

Just like LeRoy King's, DuBois's reports also showed considerable sensitivity to the ethnonational differences of the nations that made up the Kingdom of SHS. Also, DuBois had most of his interlocutors in Slovenia and Croatia, and not exclusively in government representatives in Belgrade. This, of course, gave a different tone to his reports. DuBois reconciled such findings with his own experiences, confirming their reliability. What was emphasized in his reports, which was the common position of all future American reports, was the difference between Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Serbia was described as "an oriental country, drained by many years of war, whose influence will only retard progress in Croatia and Slovenia, countries which culturally stand much higher."¹⁰⁹ Slovenians were described as "very clerical, and the Croats are Roman Catholics, and they fear a weakening of the position of the clergy, a separation of state and church, and a possible encouragement of orthodoxy to their

107 NARA, M362, R1, Document No. 711.60h/s.n., May 31, 1921.

108 Hrvoje Čapo, "Slovenija i Hrvatska u izvješćima Arthura Wooda DuBoisa iz 1919. i 1920. godine", *Dileme. Rasprave o vprašanjih sodobne slovenske zgodovine*, 5 (2021), no. 2: 29-59.

109 NARA, M358, R2, Document No. 860H.00/29, 1919, December 29., Report No. 44, Arthur Wood DuBois to the U.S. Legation in the Kingdom of SHS.

detriment”.¹¹⁰ In short, DuBois wanted to confirm in the reports that “there do exist great differences between peoples of Slovenia, Croatia, and Serbia, and one might add of Bosnia and Montenegro; differences in religion, in culture, and the conception of political life. Possibly an even more pronounced but temporary difference is that of spirit, the difference between the victorious Serb and the conquered Croat and Slovene.”¹¹¹

After a series of reports, DuBois agreed with the ratings he received from his interlocutors, saying that “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’”.¹¹² Diplomatic reports also pointed out that Croats were by no means a violent nation (“race”), and that the basic characteristic that influenced national identity was Roman Catholicism, which consequently placed them in opposition to Orthodox Serbs.¹¹³

American diplomats used a network of personal contacts from the ranks of the political, intellectual, or economic elites in the recipient countries as sources of their information. The orientation of American foreign policy towards isolationism in a way freed American diplomats from additional pressure or “diplomacy” in such talks. On the other hand, their interlocutors were freer in conversations with American diplomats, knowing that American high politics was uninterested in the Kingdom of SHS. Since American diplomats on the field were not allowed to influence or give the impression that they wanted to influence the domestic internal policy of the Kingdom of SHS, and that one of their tasks was to “listen”, the sources of their information were diverse and numerous.

A large number of reports were created based on newspaper articles. However, it should be noted that American diplomatic representatives always tried to weigh what kind of and whose views were reflected in certain newspapers. According to a 1925 report by Gordon Paddock “practically all newspapers in this

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid.

112 NARA, M358, R2, 192, Document No. 860H.00/39, 1920, May 27, Report No. 105, Arthur Wood DuBois to the U.S. Legation in the Kingdom of SHS.

113 NARA M358, R2, Document No. 860H.00/150, July 16, 1922, Reply of minister Henry Percival Dodge to the Department of the State.

country are founded for the purpose of promoting particular political interests.”¹¹⁴ Also, the American diplomats considered the newspapers in the Kingdom of SHS ready to publish articles that opposed their articulated past policy just for the right price. In this regard, the writing of the newspaper *Vreme*, which, although pro-American, nevertheless wrote against Blair's loan, was particularly noteworthy, which the Americans interpreted as supporting anti-American interests.¹¹⁵ The Americans presented the Belgrade daily *Vreme (Times)* as a newspaper of the radical politician Momčilo Ninčić, then Minister of Foreign Affairs and one of the shareholders of the company and the newspaper in which president of the government Pašić and future minister of Foreign Affairs Marinković were also involved.¹¹⁶ With a circulation of 50,000 copies, the Belgrade daily *Politika (Politics)* was the largest Yugoslav newspaper. *Politika* was described as the “most prosperous newspaper” in the Kingdom. Their foreign policy orientation was generally assessed as pro-Allied, although during the anti-French writing of *Politika*, as well as in the case of writing of *Vreme*, Paddock started to doubt paid political advertising.¹¹⁷

As the best source of information in the Kingdom of SHS, “exceptionally well informed on foreign affairs”, Paddock singled out the Zagreb daily *Obzor (Review)*.¹¹⁸ Although it had a circulation of only 4,000 copies, it was distributed in Zagreb and Belgrade, and the Americans saw it as a bulletin of “Intelligentsia’ and Croatian Free Masons”. In terms of domestic policy, *Obzor* was seen as a promoter of Croatian-Serbian unity, but completely “opposed to a Great-Serbia

114 NARA, M358, R27, Document No. 860h.911/10., March 22, 1925, Report of Chargé d'Affaires Gordon Paddock to the Secretary of the State.

115 The Belgrade daily *Vreme*, for example, reported rumors that Blair's loan was voted in the Assembly because “a certain part of the deputies was bribed by Blair's group”, (“Jedna burna sednica Skupštine”, *Vreme (Belgrade)*, July 23, 1922, p. 3).

116 NARA, M358, R27, Document No. 860h.911/10., March 22, 1925, Report of Chargé d'Affaires Gordon Paddock to the Secretary of the State. The daily *Vreme* was directly associated with the NRS. It was founded by the publishing company *Vreme*, whose ownership structure included Nikola Pašić, Milan Stojadinović and Momčilo Ninčić, all influential Radical politicians. Politically, the daily *Vreme* belonged to a 'radical-court' provenance.

117 NARA, M358, R27, Document No. 860h.911/10., March 22, 1925, Report of Chargé d'Affaires Gordon Paddock to the Secretary of the State. The Belgrade daily *Politika* was founded in 1904 in Belgrade by Vladislav Ribinkar and during interwar period it was owned by the same family that founded the publishing company *Politika*. The daily formally belonged to liberal political provenance.

118 The Zagreb daily *Obzor* was founded in Zagreb in 1860. In 1905, the editorial board was taken over by Milivoj Dežman, a Croatian journalist, physician and writer (1873–1940). Under his editorship, the paper progressed professionally and informatively, politically belonging to the provenance of *Hrvatska zajednica (Croatian Union)* and *Hrvatski blok (Croatian Bloc)* on Croatian state-building programs.

policy”, and writing about the USA was perceived as a contribution to American interests.¹¹⁹

During the interwar period, the two largest newspaper publishing companies in Croatia were *Tipografija d.d.* and *Jugoštampa d.d.* [Yugoslav Press] with their most prominent representatives Milivoj Dežman of *Tipografija* (from 1926 when he took over the directorship) and Antun Toni Schlegel of *Jugoštampa*. Both printing and publishing companies were founded in 1920. *Tipografija d.d.* was created by merging several smaller printing houses, and *Jugoštampa d.d.* was created on the foundations of *Hrvatska tiskara d.d.* [Croatian printing house] and *Hrvatski štamparski zavod* [Croatian Printing Institute]. The flagships of *Jugoštampa d.d.* were the newspaper *Novosti* (founded in 1907), and *Riječ*, the newspaper of the Democratic Party (DS). Schlegel supported Svetozar Pribićević until the split of the DS and the founding of his own Independent Democratic Party (Samostalna demokratska stranka, SDS). After the DS split, Schlegel changed the political orientation of the newspaper and directed it towards the policy of the People's Radical Party (Narodna radikalna stranka, NRS) and King Aleksandar Karađorđević directly.¹²⁰

Tipografija d.d. was managed by Eugen Demetrović, and the printing house published and printed *Obzor*, *Večer*, and *Jutarnji list*, among others. The daily *Jutarnji list* (*Morning Newspaper*) (founded in 1912) was singled out by American sources, along with *Politika*, as a very promising and successful newspaper. They considered the realization of significant marketing revenues to be particularly successful, as well as its high circulation (an average of 20,000 copies).¹²¹ The

119 NARA, M358, R27, Document No. 860h.911/10, March 22, 1925, Report of Chargé d'Affaires Gordon Paddock to the Secretary of the State.

120 Božidar Novak, *Hrvatsko novinarstvo u 20. stoljeću*, (Zagreb: Golden marketing-Tehnička knjiga, 2005), 142. On Antun Tony Schlegel see more in: Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević, *Skrivene biografije nekih Nijemaca i Austrijanaca u Hrvatskoj 19. i 20. stoljeća* (Osijek: Njemačka narodnosna zajednica – Zemaljska udruga Podunavskih Švaba u Hrvatskoj, 2001), pp. 235-268.

121 The commercialization of the Zagreb daily *Jutarnji list* was most pronounced during the editorial board of Eugen Demetrović, a Croatian politician, publisher and journalist (1880–1934), founder and director of *Tipografija d.d.* The basis of the characteristics of such an approach was to adapt the news to the taste of the reader, e.g. reporting on trials or crime, and the introduction of new sections, such as sports. He tried to maintain the political and business orientation of the newspaper alongside the ruling parties, which may explain his support for Radić during his negotiations with Belgrade. In 1926 he left *Tipografija d.d.*, and with the support of Antun Tony Schlegel from the rival company of *Jugoštampa* he became a co-owner of the newspapers *Morgenblatt* and *Jugoslavenski Lloyd*. With his departure, Milivoj Dežman, the editor of *Obzor*, took over the management of *Tipografija d.d.*, while the editorial board of *Jutarnji list* was taken over by the Croatian journalist and historian Josip Horvat (1896-1964), who brought *Jutarnji list* completely to the line of Radić and the HSS. Cf. “Demetrović, Eugen” In: Trpimir Macan, ed.

presentation of domestic politics was accurately presented by Paddock as favoring Stjepan Radić and the HRSS.¹²² Explaining the distinctly pro-British foreign policy stance of the newspapers, U.S. sources linked a financial owner of *Tipografija d.d.*, *Eskomptna banka* and its foreign partner, the *Anglo-Austrian Bank of Vienna*.¹²³

On the other hand, the publications of *Jugoštampa d.d.* under the leadership of Antun Schlegel, American representative did not consider as very reliable. Their highest-circulation newspaper was Zagreb-based *Novosti*, with a daily distribution of 30,000 copies.¹²⁴ The Americans also perceived *Jugoštampa's* domestic political writing as anti-Radić.¹²⁵ They also held that *Slavenska banka*, with 80,000 dinars monthly, directly financed the SDS newspaper of Svetozar Pribićević *Riječ*, which, just like other *Jugoštampa's* editions, was in a position close to the NRS, with whom the SDS was in a coalition (1924/1925), as well as in opposition and conflict with every Croatian newspaper that had supported Radić.¹²⁶

The HRSS newspaper *Slobodni dom* was perceived by the Americans only as a newspaper of the named party whose main task was to promote Radić's policies while emphasizing that the newspapers were filled with "somewhat

Hrvatski biografski leksikon, vol. III (Č-Đ) (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 1993); Novak, *Hrvatsko novinarstvo u 20. stoljeću*, pp. 137, 138.

122 NARA, M358, R27, Document No. 860h.911/10, Report of Chargé d'Affaires Gordon Paddock to the Secretary of the State.

123 The Anglo-Austrian Bank in Vienna was founded in 1864. It was considered an intermediary bank of the Bank of England as it was used by the British government as an intermediary in the payments to the Austrian government, (R. S. Sayers, *The Bank of England, 1864-1944.*, vol. I, (Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 165-166). Cf.: Novak, *Hrvatsko novinarstvo u 20. stoljeću*, p. 138.

124 The Zagreb daily *Novosti* was founded in Zagreb in 1907 and was operating until 1941. From 1908, it strongly supported the policy of the Croatian-Serbian coalition, and after moving to *Jugoštampa* portfolio, *Novosti* acquired a distinctly pro-regime character. Although the editorial board declared itself as independent, Gordon Paddock portrayed it as the newspaper of Serbian Radical politician Ljubomir Jovanović.

125 NARA, M358, R27, Document No. 860h.911/10, Report of Chargé d'Affaires Gordon Paddock to the Secretary of the State.

126 Ibid. Alen Fogelquist primarily linked the financing of Pribićević's *Riječ* to the capital of Zagreb's industrialists, Vladimir and Branko Arko, as well as bankers and importers of Belgian cars, bicycles and motorcycles, the Turković brothers, (Fogelquist, *US-Yugoslav Economic relations*, 131. and Siniša Lajnert, "Banka braće Turković d. d. (1919.–1948.)", *Arhivski vjesnik* (Zagreb), 56 (2016): 223-274, 243).

violent speeches by Mr. Raditch attacking the Radical and Independent Democratic Party".¹²⁷

The change of epochal proportions in American diplomatic reports occurred after the arrival of the above-mentioned John Dyneley Prince to the position of American envoy to Belgrade. According to his biography, he belonged to the classic American diplomats but was quite different from the established matrix of elitist diplomacy. He was born in New York in 1868, where he graduated in 1888 from Columbia University. He defended his doctorate at John Hopkins University in 1892, after which he became a professor of Semitic languages at New York University, when from 1902 finally being transferred to Columbia University.¹²⁸ After the outbreak of World War I, he began teaching the Russian language at the Columbia University, and very soon, during 1915, he was appointed professor of Slavic languages (Russian). Ten years earlier, as a Republican, he entered the political life of New Jersey, where he was a senator, and for a short time (1912) the Acting governor of the state.¹²⁹ In 1921, President Harding appointed him an envoy to Denmark, and since he successfully translated his polyglot skills into a diplomatic career.

During one evening he was accustomed to give speeches in five or six languages, and after which sang some folk songs of those in whose company he was.¹³⁰ Already as a boy, he learned the language of the Eastern Algonquins, he discovered the Slavic languages with Slovak, then Russian. He spoke (and always distinguished) Croatian, Slovenian and Serbian, he knew Romani and spoke Danish, French, Italian, and Hungarian in different accents.¹³¹ At his home university, Columbia, he fought against the Pan-Slavists, who thought that it was enough to have only one department, the Russian language department. Immediately upon his return from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1933, he organized the Department of Eastern European Languages. He wrote several grammars; Assyrian, Russian, Latvian. His Serbo-Croatian grammar was published in 1943, two years before his death. He came to the Kingdom of SHS in 1926 by a decision of President Coolidge.¹³²

After seven years of gathering and accepting opinions from only one source, the governmental one, Prince began the pattern of creating an image based on his observations. The circle of his sources became wider than it was before, much more

127 NARA, M358, R27, Document No. 860h.911/10, Report of Chargé d'Affaires Gordon Paddock to the Secretary of the State.

128 Clarence A. Manning, "Memoir: John Dynely Prince", *The American Slavic and European Review*, vol. 4 (December 1945), No. 3/4: 223-226., 223.

129 Manning, "Memoir (...)", 223.

130 Ibid., 224.

131 Ibid., 224.

132 Ibid., 223.

beyond newspaper articles and statements of government officials. John Dyneley Prince was the first to notice the lack of information from different sources, not just those aligned with the official ones. He expressed dissatisfaction with the work of Leslie Davies, the American consul in Zagreb, who according to him, could not comprehend at all, nor did he understand the seriousness of the 'Croatian question' and did not show the ability to come into contact with "underground rumblings".¹³³ Also, Prince took as a serious shortcoming the fact that Consul Davies did not speak Croatian, nor did he want to use the two Croats employed at the consulate to gather better information. What Prince noticed about Davies can be extended to Consul Alfred Thomson's actions, which was their mutual reliance on government's pieces of information only what, almost predictably, had always made their reports on the situation in Croatia and on Croatian politicians negatively.

One of the main elements of such reports was Stjepan Radić, leader of the most important Croatian parties, H(R)SS. The opinion of American diplomats about Stjepan Radić was similar to the opinion of his newspaper *Slobodni dom*. Alfred Thomson, Zagreb's consul from 1920, shortly after taking office called Radić in his report as "notorious", and later referred to him as a "local demagogue"¹³⁴, assessing his operations as dangerous for the survival of the new state. Moreover, the American consul compared Radić and his policy to the policy and actions of Alexander Kerensky, the president of the Provisional Government of Tsarist Russia in 1917, estimating that Radić could lead the Kingdom of SHS into "ruin, chaos and Bolshevism".¹³⁵ Consul Thomson considered the elected representatives of the HRSS in the elections for the National Assembly in 1920 to be uneducated, stubborn people who, because of that, were pliable to radical politicians and adventurers as he considered Radić. Government officials of the Kingdom of SHS often approached American diplomats in the widespread and mutual fear of Bolshevism, explaining them as being anti-Bolshevik all those measures that the Americans could have interpreted as being too repressive or undemocratic. Internment camps for Bolshevik suspects, banning the Communist party in 1920, or even measures against Stjepan Radić and his party were all explained in this manner. In his report from June 8, 1922 consul Thomson named Radić as Ivan and not Stjepan, which means that it was not entirely clear to him who he was

133 NARA, M358, R4, Document No. 860h.00/404, April 23, 1929, Report of Minister John Dyneley Prince to the Secretary of the State.

134 NARA, M 358, R2, Document No. 860h.00/146, June 8, 1922, Report of Consul Alfred Thompson to the Minister Henry Percival Dodge on two demonstrations in Zagreb on the evening of King Aleksandar's wedding day.

¹³⁵ NARA, M 358, R2, Document No. 860H.00/93, December 9, 1920, Report of the Consul in Zagreb Alfred Thompson to the Minister Henry Percival Dodge.

writing about. Strong, irreconcilable attitudes, on the other hand, would suggest to the reader that consul Thomson was a complete connoisseur of the subject. However, it seems that the consul's views were just a transferred copy of what political opponents thought about Radić. American diplomats created their circle from which to obtain information in the Kingdom of SHS. Their breadth depended on the personal efforts of each of the diplomats, and, certainly, Thomson could not develop an overly wide circle until a few months after he arrived in Zagreb, at least not beyond the representatives of the authorities who were at his service 'ex officio'. The pattern of work of the American consuls in Zagreb was the same throughout the period in question.

The Department of State expressed interest in Radić for the first time only in the second half of 1922, when, prompted by constant reports of announcements of Croatian independence, they asked minister Dodge for Radić's biography, as well as an opinion on his character.¹³⁶ In his answer, minister Dodge did not deviate from Thomson's thoughts, more precisely from the image that the representatives of the authorities from Belgrade had of Radić. Like consul Thomson, minister Dodge saw Radić as a "shrewd demagogue" who often changed his views, only because of self-interest or personal ambition. His popularity among the peasantry minister Dodge, like consul Thomson, saw in their political ignorance. According to minister Dodge, Radić as an eloquent speaker, skilfully exploited their ignorance by adapting himself, "chameleon-wise", to his supporters in giving them all the promises they wanted to hear, without thinking whether they could be realistically fulfilled.¹³⁷

Negative opinion on Radić continued and was repeated among American diplomats in the Kingdom of SHS. A certain climax was presented in the report of Carl A. Fisher, the Chargé d'Affaires of the American Legation in Belgrade from December 1926. Chargé d'Affaires Fisher thus stated that Radić "is nearly so much interested in local autonomous administration for his people as he is in maintaining his influence and prestige among Croats. In other words, I should say that he is less a "Croatian patriot", as he chooses to call himself, than an extremely ambitious and selfish demagogue desirous of being known as the soul and spirit of Croatia. His chameleonic character is typically evidenced by his over-night change

136 The Department of State rarely asked for any feedback from the Belgrade Legation. Vladimir Petrov explained this by their attitude towards reports that were only "filed with duty by appropriate officials who rarely tried to draw the attention of senior officials to information whose importance they were unable to assess.", (Vladimir Petrov, *A Study in Diplomacy*, p. 104).

137 NARA, M358, R2, Document No. 860h.00/140, February 22, 1922, Report of Henry Percival Dodge to the Secretary of the State; NARA, M358, R2, Document No. 860h.00/150, July 17, 1922, Reply of the Minister Henry Percival Dodge to the Department of the State.

from the head of his mythical “Neutral Peasants' Republic”, to ‘His Majesty's best servant’”.¹³⁸

Then, on July 13, 1927, for the very first time, one American diplomat talked to Stjepan Radić. Minister John Dyneley Prince managed to spend a day in Bled in the company of Radić, while in the residence of a politician and former Austro-Hungarian diplomat in the USA and Radić's close friend Ivan Krizostom Schwegel.¹³⁹ Although minister Prince did not state exactly where the meeting was held, it can be assumed that it was in Schwegel's castle (Grimšce), which he renamed as Wilsonia in 1919, on the wave of the aforementioned Wilsonism. Seeing Radić as an “erratic”, a talented leader of the strongest opposition force in the Kingdom of SHS, John Dyneley Prince experienced Radić as follows: “I find that Radić has a certain amount of personal magnetism, as he speaks with great force and fixes his hearers with an earnest eye. He grinds his teeth while talking in a manner very similar to the style of the late President Roosevelt. Radić's ideas, on the other hand, are far more like those of Mr. William J. Bryan¹⁴⁰, as professed worldwide pacifism and a belief in the brotherhood of all races are his central themes. Radić is clearly a poseur of the first rank. It is difficult to realise whether he is actually sincere in his utterances, especially when he is extolling the farmer as the sole kernel of the state. Possibly he persuades himself that he really means what he says. At any rate, his history shows that one may rely on literally nothing which he says or promises. (...) Radić's whole being seems wrapped up in, only one thing: Croatia, whose autonomy he openly desires, at present under the existing state and undoubtedly in the future as a separate governmental entity. (...) He is really a phenomenon”.¹⁴¹ Prince's view of Radić was changing depending on the situation, so by the end of 1927, he began to think that not resolving the Croatian-

138 NARA, M358, R4, Document No. 860h.00/302, December 4, 1926, Report of the Chargé d'affaires ad interim Carl Fisher to the Secretary of the State.

139 Ivan Chrysostom Schwegel (1875 - 1962) was the Austro-Hungarian consular representative in the USA, Canada, Switzerland and South Africa. He was a member of the Yugoslav delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, and during 1926 a member of the negotiating team on war debts with the United States. In 1927, he was elected the only non-Croat on the HSS list as a member of the Assembly. During King Aleksandar's dictatorship, he was a member of the government led by Petar Živković, and then the ambassador of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in Buenos Aires from 1931 to 1933, when he retired. Cf. Alfonz Gspan et al., ed., *Slovenski biografski leksikon*, vol. 11, (Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, 1971).

¹⁴⁰ Bryan, William Jennings (1860–1925), U.S. lawyer, and politician. He was a member of the Democratic Party. He unsuccessfully ran for U.S. president three times. He was the U.S. Secretary of State (1912-1915), considered as a successful orator and pacifist, supported the interests of farmers. (*The Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia*, p. 151).

141 NARA, M358, R4, Document No. 860h.00/321, July 16, 1927, Report of Minister John Dyneley Prince to the Secretary of the State.

Serbian dispute was more to blame on Radić's stubbornness than the phlegmatic and lazy Serbian politicians.¹⁴²

Prince's knowledge of Croatian, Slovene, and Serbian language seemed to be crucial in his work.¹⁴³ He was able to express and receive respect, he gave a rigid "diplomatic" duty a human face after he just needed to listen. Thus, the breadth of his sources of information became unlimited. For this reason, his view of the Croatian question, and consequently on Stjepan Radić, could be formed based on his judgments, and not only second-hand opinions, as was the case until then.

Like Henry Percival Dodge, minister Prince advocated improving U.S. economic ties with the Kingdom of SHS, too. He saw the king's dictatorship as welcomed progress that was supposed to have a positive effect on U.S.-Yugoslav economic relations. However, he also witnessed the frequent abandonment of investing in the Kingdom of SHS by the American companies what left him only to report Washington, DC on the "frustrating granite wall of stupid Serbian misunderstanding".¹⁴⁴ On the other hand, due to the modest economic and political Yugoslav-American relations, Prince was able to pay more attention to observing and listening to the internal political situation in the Kingdom of SHS. Since he arrived in 1926, American diplomatic reports on the Kingdom of SHS/Yugoslavia included, for the first time, reflections of the opposition on the government. Prince demanded the same approach from his consuls in Zagreb because he wanted to hear all those voices of disagreement with the ruling regime in Belgrade. The network of his interlocutors became very branched, and by his position, he remained a frequent guest of the highest state officials. His conversations with King Aleksandar Karađorđević were not uncommon, while for example with foreign ministers he was in almost daily communication. His reports, like those of his predecessor Henry Percival Dodge or consuls in Zagreb, were also filled with personal impressions but enriched by a much wider range of information.

Because of the American foreign policy direction, according to which the legation in Belgrade was primarily just a "listening post", the reports of American diplomats from the Kingdom of SHS represent rich and significant archival source that directly or indirectly speak on significant phenomenons in Croatian political

142 NARA, M358, R4, Document No. 860h.00/336, December 4, 1927, Report of Minister John Dyneley Prince to the Secretary of the State.

143 John Dyneley Prince also gave several public lectures in Zagreb. Thus, at the People's University in Zagreb in March 1928, he spoke about American education, after which the HSS newspaper *Narodni val* emphasized that he "spoke in beautiful Croatian", (*Narodni val*, 2/1928, 69: 15-16).

144 Killen, *Testing the Peripheries*, p. 104.

and social life during the interwar period. Yet another view on this issue is undoubtedly useful.¹⁴⁵

145 Tomislav Jonjić asserted well: “(...) Diplomatic reports can usually only serve as a guide in further research, so they need critical judgment and further confirmation”, (Tomislav Jonjić, “O pokušaju osnivanja Hrvatskog komiteta u Švicarskoj 1943. godine: diplomatska izvješća Senjanina Ivana Milkovića”, *Senjski zbornik*, 38 (2012): 249).