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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF John Robert Oreskovich for
the Master of Arts in History presented November 8, 1983.

Title: American-Yugoslav Relations, 1941-1946.

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This thesis deals with the diplomatic relations between Yugoslavia and the United States through the Second World War and the first few months following the end of the War. It follows in chronological order the events influencing American-Yugoslav relations. Emphasis is placed on the development of Yugoslav internal events and their political implications.

The United States, after some initial enthusiasm for Yugoslavia, remained on the periphery of Yugoslav affairs, but stayed in diplomatic contact with the Yugoslav government. The American ability to remain outside of Yugoslav events lessened as the war progressed. The Partisan movement and its leader, Tito, changed the political situation within Yugoslavia. This fact created a different set of values in American dealings with Yugoslavia and eventually led to the American recognition of a totally new type of government in Yugoslavia.

Diplomatic relations between the United States and Yugoslavia throughout the war were kept on a formal basis. The United States kept its sight on what it deemed to be its global responsibilities and needs and was sympathetic, but not very helpful, to the Yugoslavs. America had maintained relations with Yugoslavia for about twenty years when the war broke out, but relations--both political and economic--were not important between the two nations. Neither country knew much about the other and, though the war would change this parochial attitude to some degree, relations with Yugoslavia remained at best of secondary importance for the United States, as they were for Yugoslavia.

The American presence in Yugoslavia during the war was minimal, with only a handful of mostly military personnel taking part. Furthermore, until quite late in the

conflict, the American mission to the country subordinated itself to the British. The American policy was to keep out of Yugoslavia and Yugoslav affairs as much as possible. The changing political realities in Yugoslavia finally brought more American attention there, but it remained a minor part of America's greater international goals.

The Tito movement caused consternation and study by the American government. The United States remained in contact with the Yugoslav monarchy to a much greater degree than the British, for example, and came only slowly to accept Tito. American officials wished for the Yugoslavs to enjoy the freedom of Western democracies, but would learn of the repressive actions of Tito and recognize his government in any case. This recognition of Tito was made after America was assured that he would recognize prior American and international claims against the previous Yugoslav governments. America, to the end, wished to husband her resources and give as few to Yugoslavia as possible, especially after the face of the Tito regime became more familiar.

The material for this thesis came from official American diplomatic papers, predominantly Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers. Where possible, autobiographies were used, but for the most part they concentrated to only a minor degree, if at all, on American-Yugoslav relations. Periodicals were used, with the

greatest help coming from The New York Times. Secondary literature was used, but in most instances was of less value than the diplomatic and autobiographical sources used.

AMERICAN-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS,
1941-1946

by
JOHN ROBERT ORESKOVICH

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I INTRODUCTION	1
II 1941	17
III 1942	41
IV 1943	53
V 1944	71
VI 1945 and 1946	101
VII CONCLUSION	130
VIII BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY	134
END NOTES	159
BIBLIOGRAPHY	171
APPENDIX	177

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The United States was the first major power to establish formal diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia (then called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). It did so on February 6, 1919. No break in these relations was to occur, although American diplomatic representatives left the country after Yugoslavia's defeat in April 1941. The United States had maintained an embassy at the Yugoslav capitol at Belgrade. There also was an American consulate located in Zagreb. The Yugoslavs maintained an embassy in Washington, D.C. and several other offices in areas of large, Yugoslav-American populations. These cities included Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland. Yugoslavia also maintained an information and tourist office in New York.

Although the American government maintained proper relations with the Yugoslav government, it played an insignificant role in matters pertaining to Yugoslavia. The most important political action, after recognition, was performed in Congress. This, of course, was the immigration laws passed in 1921 and 1924. These laws greatly restricted

immigration from Yugoslavia and basically halted the most important contract between the two countries--the emigration of Yugoslavs to the United States. These laws, coupled with American isolationist feelings and the depression, greatly limited American-Yugoslav interaction.

There was, however, commerce carried on between the two nations throughout the inter-war period. The United States was one of Yugoslavia's major trading partners. It ranked sixth in volume and seventh in value in Yugoslavia's trade relations. The United States consumed 6.02% of all Yugoslav exports, which, for the most part, consisted of raw materials.

The most important American imports were copper, hops, haricot beans, chrome ore and cement. America, in turn, was responsible for 5.07% of Yugoslav imports.¹ The United States sent Yugoslavia raw cotton, vehicles, machinery and instruments, leather, electrical equipment, and crude naptha (petroleum). This interaction was much more important to Yugoslavia than to the United States.* It showed how

* Yugoslavia's largest and by far most important trading partner during the period was Germany. Germany was responsible for 35.94% of Yugoslav exports and for 32.52% of Yugoslavia's imports. The trade relationship with Germany, as it was with all of Yugoslavia's trading partners was that of a supplier of foodstuffs and raw materials which Yugoslavia would exchange for finished goods. Germany was followed in importance by Czechoslovakia (10.65% imports and 7.89% exports), Italy (8.94% imports and 6.42% exports) Great Britain (8.67% imports and 9.61% exports) and Austria (6.88% imports and 6.06% exports.)²

Yugoslavia was receiving for the most part finished goods and exporting lower value raw materials--a classic example of trade from a less developed country to a more advanced one.

Yugoslavia's trade was largely conducted with Germany and her future territories and Italy, Germany's most important ally after 1936. This fact plus Yugoslavia's geographic isolation from the United States left America with very little economic leverage when dealing with Yugoslavia.

As previously stated, one of the main points of contact between the United States and Yugoslavia had been the influx of immigrants to the United States. However, immigration from Yugoslav areas was much smaller and developed later than from northern and western Europe. Until the end of the 19th century, this immigration had been a trickle and never reached the size and importance of the Irish, for example. In many cases, people of Yugoslav extraction were not even recognized by their proper nationalities. Examples abound of Yugoslavs being listed as Austrians, Hungarians, and Italians. This is understandable since the greatest influx of Yugoslav peoples occurred before a Yugoslav state or nationality existed and before anyone identified themselves as Yugoslav.

Another problem of recognition for Yugoslav

contributions in America was the changing of surnames. For example, it was a Croatian named Antonije Lučić, born in Split³, who was the geologist who discovered ore in Texas. His name is known as Anthony F. Lucas, and his ancestry is for the most part unknown. This, of course, applies to most Slavic people whose names were "strange" and who lived under foreign domination. By 1940, it was estimated that there were 1,000,000 Yugoslavs in the United States, including both native and foreign born (500,000 Croatsians, 300,000 Slovenes, and 200,000 Serbs).⁴

The influence of these 1,000,000 people within the United States was scant. They represented less than 1% of the total population, and many were not citizens, nor could they speak English. Economically, they were poor and worked in the most menial and poorly-paid positions. They tended to be miners, farm laborers, and steelworkers and for the most part lived tucked away in their own non-English speaking portions of the community out of sight and out of the way. The greatest numbers of Yugoslavs lived near Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago, New Orleans, the mining areas of Montana, and various fishing communities such as San Pedro, California and Astoria, Oregon.

There were, of course, exceptions to this status, but even here they received far less credit than they deserved. For example, Nikola Tesla, a Serb born in Lika, Croatia, was

5

the inventor of alternating current and the radio among his many contributions to electrical engineering. He did the vast majority of his work in the United States, and its universal importance cannot be disclaimed. Yet few people have even heard of him. He, like his fellow Yugoslav immigrants, was far too busy working to enter the mainstream of American life.

The lone shining light in America before the Second World War was Louis Adamic. Adamic was born in Laibach, Austria (today Ljubljana, Slovenia). He immigrated to the United States at the age of fourteen, where he began to work and study in the publishing industry. He became a writer and had many articles and books published and distributed throughout the United States. His most famous work was the book Native's Return, published in New York in 1934. This book described the life of the peasant and his problems under the dictatorship in Yugoslavia. It gave America a glimpse of land little known and made the author famous.

Adamic was very active throughout the United States trying to help the immigrant to assimilate, but his greatest influence came during World War II. He would be invited to the White House where he had dinner with President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. In the final stages of the war, he worked hard for the recognition of Tito and his

Communists.*

This lack of knowledge by the American public of Yugoslavia and her people was in sharp contrast to American knowledge of Czechoslovakia and Poland. Although the Yugoslavs had set up a committee in London during the First World War like the others and had become independent at the same time, they enjoyed far less prestige. Yugoslavia had no one of the national reknown of Poland's Ignace Jan Paderewski or Czechoslovakia's Thomas Masaryk and Edward Beneš. These men brought a recognition and status to their countries that the nameless members of the Serbian Army, however legendary their valor, could not bring for the future state of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was not to have such a man until after the Second World War.

American officials and the public knew even less about the internal political situation in Yugoslavia in 1940

* Adamic, who died an apparent suicide at Riegelsville, New Jersey, on September 4, 1951, was a prolific writer. He started his career by translating stories from Slovenian, Croatian, and Serbian into English. He wrote many books, two of which have already been mentioned. The complete list includes: Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence in America (published 1931); Laughing in the Jungle (1932, an autobiographical volume); Grandsons (published 1935) and Cradle of Life (published 1936), both of which dealt with immigrant life; My America, 1928-1938 (published 1938) and From Many Lands (published 1940), both of which were additional autobiographical volumes; Two-Way Passage (published 1941), which was a study of America's future role in Europe and was the reason he was invited to the White House. His final volume, published after his death, was The Eagle and the Roots (published 1952), a pseudo-biography of Tito.

than they did about the hardy Yugoslav immigrant now working diligently in American industry. Yugoslavia was a Balkan country, and, as such, it carried a stigma for Americans. The Balkan countries seemed to be places where wars were started and politics made little if any sense to the outsider. This American understanding of Yugoslavia was limited and its politics considered far too troublesome to create a field of study in the United States. It would take a crash course in relations between the two countries during the War before the United States would begin to understand Yugoslavia.

The major concern for anyone who wished to understand internal Yugoslav politics was the ethnic issue. The ethnic issue was dominated by a lack of understanding between Yugoslavia's two largest ethnic groups, the Serbs and the Croats. The Serbs, who were of the Orthodox faith, were 51% of the population and dominated Yugoslavia. The Croats, who were Roman Catholic, were 31% of the population and resented Serbian domination.

Serbia (including Montenegro) was the only portion of Yugoslavia to have been independent before the First World War, and naturally the Serbs considered themselves the nucleus for an expanded Serbian/Yugoslav state. The Croats, on the other hand, had not been truly independent since 1102. The Croats also had been part of the Austrian Empire,

against whom the Serbs had just completed a devastating war. Although these two peoples spoke virtually the same language and had much the same cultural-historical heritage, they did not share a common religion. In Yugoslavia, one was most commonly identified by his religion, and this fact colored all decisions.

Distrust of Catholicism, tied up in their minds with the hereditary enemies Austria, Hungary and Italy, is deeply rooted in the Serbs. Moreover, the Orthodox Church, which normally plays little part in politics but comes to the front when the nation is in danger, commands profound loyalty.⁶

It must be added that the Croats felt no less attached to the Catholic church, which they believed nurtured their cultural identity. The feelings of linguistic togetherness could never make up or even help to cover the prejudices of the two groups for each other's religion.

The two peoples also differed on their views on establishing the new country. The Croats wished Yugoslavia to be a federal state, while the Serbs sought and gained a centralized and Serb-dominated administration.

Demands to become 'Yugoslav' were felt by Croats as demands that they should throw over their whole historical heritage and national consciousness, cease to be Croats and become Serbs, citizens of a centralized Serbian State.⁷

The Serbs dominated virtually all phases of the Yugoslav government. The Serbs, proud of their military

tradition, dominated the military. "Of the 105 generals in active service in 1938, 101 were Serbs, 2 were Croats*, and 2 were Slovenes."⁸ Even in Croatia itself, the Serbs dominated the civil service. The Croats began to resent the Serb-dominated police.

The gendarmerie, which was composed almost exclusively of Serbs, was increased in number and often behaved not only tactlessly but cruelly. Croatian peasants were terrorized and robbed.⁹

The politics and the political parties, as might be expected, reflected this situation. Only one political party in Yugoslavia was popular in all parts of the country. This was the Communist party, which was outlawed in August of 1921, even after finishing a strong third in the national elections of 1920. The Communists were

the only major party whose appeal transcended ethnic and regional particularism. They alone affirmed the existence of a Yugoslav nation at a time when official nomenclature was still committed to the distinctiveness of its Serbian, Croatian, and Slovene parts.¹⁰

The party would not die, but would not surface publicly again until Yugoslavia was overrun and subjected to a brutal occupation.

The political differences surfaced almost immediately

* The German Army could claim as many generals of Croatian descent, including Commander-in-Chief of the German Army Walter von Brauchitsch and General Lothar Rendulic.

in the new country. After the initial elections, the Croats felt powerless and the "Yugoslav" constitution was ratified without Croatian participation. The constitution

emerged as a predominantly Serbian document, democratic in the sense that it provided for a single chamber elected by manhood suffrage and guaranteed ministerial responsibility but strongly centralist in character.¹¹

The Serbs "did not trust the Croats and treated them as a potentially hostile people"¹², and therefore all phases of the Yugoslav government were kept under the firm control of the Serbs. The Constitution was ratified in 1921, but it was not until 1925 that the Croats sent their first representatives to the national assembly ("Škupština"). The Croats remained as participants for only a year and then again refused to participate.

The Croats were led by Stjepan Radić, who was the head of the Croatian Peasant Party. The Croatian Peasant Party was for years the sole political voice of the Croats in Yugoslavia. It had originally stood for political reform and economic emancipation of the peasant masses. However, with its total domination of Croatian politics, it reflected the entire political spectrum. The Party was held together by its struggle against the Serbs.* The main role of the party

* For a brief explanation of the Croatian Peasant Party, see Hugh Seton-Watson's Eastern Europe Between the Wars, 1918-1941, pp 227-230.

was to better the Croatian position within Yugoslavia. It dealt with several Serbian parties and was considered by the Serbs as an obstructionist force, detailing matters of importance to the Yugoslav state.

The politics became so heated between the Croats and the Serbs that on June 20, 1928, a Serbian politician shot Radić and four other Croatian deputies in the "Škupština." Radić's death led to the implementation of a Yugoslav dictatorship in 1929. The country was now run by King Alexander, who tried to avert any further conflicts. The King himself was a Serb and therefore a strong supporter of the status quo (i.e., Serbian domination of Yugoslav affairs).

The announcement of the dictatorship caused many Croats to lose hope in the Yugoslav concept. Led by Dr. Ante Pavelić, they formed a separatist movement called the "Uštasa,"*. The Uštasa was formed from the right of the Croatian political movement and took members away from the Croatian Peasant Party. It would rule the Axis-dominated (puppet) state of Croatia during the war. It was interested in obtaining Croat independence by any means, and would work with anyone who would further this goal. Its main support

* "Uštasa", plural "Uštase" or "Ušterše Pokret" (Uštase movement). Refers to the Croatian separatists or Fascists. Literally translated, "Uštase" means insurgent or rebel. Under Axis tutelage, the Uštase would rule the "Independent State of Croatia" during World War II.

outside the country came from Italy and Hungary, two nations which covered large portions of Yugoslav territory. The Uštasa was responsible in 1934 for the assassination of King Alexander during his state visit to France.

The Yugoslav government now passed to the control of Prince Paul, who was named regent until the Crown Prince was old enough to rule. Prince Paul would remain Head of State until he was overthrown by a coup d'etat in late March 1941. He was a Serb, but not considered to be as dedicated to the Serb cause as the Late King was. His ascendancy was looked upon with hope by the Croatian population. However, after calling new elections, Yugoslav politics again settled into the pattern of Serb domination and Croat passivity.

Yugoslavia was of course required to maintain foreign relations during this period. The main issue for Yugoslavia was to maintain her borders, and thus security was the major force in foreign affairs. The Yugoslavs were surrounded by nations seeking partitions of its territory. Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria were the main threats. To counter this, Yugoslavia "had pursued an apparently successful foreign policy of anchoring Yugoslav security in the complementary Little Entente and French alliance systems."¹³ However, Yugoslav policy began to change as Europe headed toward war. Milan Stojadinović, Yugoslav Prime Minister from 1935 to 1939, was the individual most responsible for this. He

slowly brought Yugoslav policy more in line with the aims of Germany and Italy.

He realized that after the Munich Crises, Yugoslav security could not rest on its former pro-French bases. The Little Entente was dead. He also realized that Yugoslav trade was becoming more and more dominated by Germany. Stojadinović had tried to counter this growing German trade monopoly by appealing to both Italy and Great Britain; however, he was unsuccessful. Great Britain was still caught up in her own economic problems, and Italy needed little of what Yugoslavia had to offer. The United States was too far away and too disinterested to create much interest from the Yugoslavs. Some benefits were gained by Yugoslavia during this time, but most came from Italy and Germany. The Italians had kept the Uštāša bottled up on Sardinia, and the Germans were paying top prices for Yugoslav exports. However, Yugoslavia had to give Italian claims of preeminence in Albania leeway.

In January of 1939, the Croatian Peasant Party, under its leader Dr. Vlado Maček, met with all Croatian political groups (excluding the Uštāša) in Zagreb. The Croats were again absent from Belgrade. Maček announced at this meeting that the Croats had not been given their rights and thus felt no commitments towards Yugoslav policy. He "concluded with the ominous 'hope' that the Croats would not be 'forced' to resort to revolt and civil war in order to

realize their due rights." ¹⁴ This meeting was followed in February by the sacking of Stojadinović and the imposition of a new government by Prince Paul.

Prince Paul appointed Dragiša Cvetković as the head of the government and Aleksandar Cincar-Marković as foreign minister. This government was given the task by Prince Paul of bringing the Croats back into the political flow of Yugoslav affairs. Paul saw internal stability both as a problem and as a necessity for his country. This new government quickly signed the "Sporazum" (Compromise) with Maček and the Croats. This returned the Croats to Belgrade and to complete participation in the government. Although the Sporazum brought the Croats back into the government, it did very little to actually unite the country.

With the country at least superficially united, the Yugoslavs faced the task of determining their political future within Europe. Yugoslavia was, except in the South, now completely surrounded by Axis powers--which were, for the most part, unfriendly. Yugoslavia had also been witness to sweeping German victories in Poland and France. The Yugoslav government knew that its army, even if fully united (which it was not), had no chance against Germany. The Yugoslavs were now faced with a choice as to whether to join the Tripartite Pact or not.

This crisis in Yugoslav foreign policy finally drew the

attention of the two remaining great Western powers, Great Britain and the United States. They worked together with Great Britain taking the lead, but the United States no less concerned, in trying to prevent Yugoslavia's signing of the Tripartite Pact. This was the beginning of American involvement in Yugoslavia (see Chapter II) during the Second World War. The United States would remain in contact with the Yugoslav government in varying degrees throughout the remainder of the War.

American policy would develop first as an adjunct of the British and finally as a response to American needs. The United States was diplomatically active in Yugoslavia before the latter was overthrown. It would be less active after Yugoslavia's defeat, but would always encourage Yugoslav resistance. The United States would have little contact with Yugoslavia until late 1943, when America again began to study the Yugoslav situation. The United States would follow the British example and make contacts with the Yugoslavs. Unfortunately, by this time even the limited amount of pre-War knowledge the United States had obtained was worthless. Yugoslavia was changing, and the United States had to come to terms with a different and dynamic situation.

The United States maintained diplomatic relations with the Yugoslav government in exile, but was also very concerned with the events then occurring inside Yugoslavia.

The emergence/discovery of the Yugoslav civil war and of the two main resistance movements within the country were new factors with which the United States had to come to grips. The problems of a Serb resistance movement under Draža Mihailović and a communist movement under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito created much discussion within the U. S. government. The eventual emergence of Tito as ruler and leader of Yugoslavia was a problem for the United States, one with which it had trouble dealing.

The United States would eventually recognize the Tito regime, but only after it was determined to be the actual power within the country. Even then debate was strong about attempting to change the situation. But American war aims in the Pacific and the reluctance to become involved in the Balkans created the acceptance of the new Yugoslavia.

CHAPTER 2

1941

In early 1941, Yugoslavia found itself in a very hostile environment. The Germans were victorious throughout Europe, Austria, Czechoslovakia, western Poland, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France--all were made a part of Hitler's empire. Yugoslavia's neighbors were allied to Germany through various pacts. Austria to the north was an integral part of the German nation and no longer existed independently; Bulgaria and Hungary were both members of the Tripartite Pact and, along with western neighbor Italy, were glancing at Yugoslavia with expectations of future acquisitions. Italy had already made itself ruler of Albania and confronted Yugoslavia in both the far north and the southwest, not to mention the Italian cities on the Dalmatian coast of Yugoslavia. Rumania, a former Yugoslav ally, had also become a member of the Tripartite Pact. Only Greece, Yugoslavia's neighbor to the south, was not a member of the pact, nor could it be expected to attack Yugoslavia.

The two remaining Western powers, Great Britain and the

United States, were now anxious to help Yugoslavia. The United States was at this time not directly involved in the war, but ties with Great Britain were becoming much stronger. The American government had no illusions about Hitler and was working, however cautiously, for a German defeat. Great Britain had already seen considerable action against the Germans and was looking to gain any type of advantage it could against Germany. Thus, British hopes turned to the Balkans as Great Britain tried to ally itself¹ with Greece, Yugoslavia, and Turkey.

The Yugoslav government and its leader Prince Paul were under great pressure. The Germans were beginning to become adamant about Yugoslavia's accession to the Tripartite Pact. On the other hand, Great Britain, with active American support, was trying to prevent any type of Yugoslav-German agreement. The Yugoslavs had declared their neutrality when the war finally broke out on September 3. This was viewed differently by the two camps competing for Yugoslavia's favor.

To the Western Allies this was represented as a temporary expedient, necessitated by the country's military unpreparedness and exposed position, but not the product of any doubts as to the outcome of the war, while to the Axis powers it was portrayed as the best guarantee of their preeminent economic and political interests in the region--to the former, neutrality with a mask; to the latter as a neutrality with a tilt.²

Both sides had advantages in gaining Yugoslavia's favor. The strongest position belonged to the Germans. Germany had been Yugoslavia's largest trading partner for years, and German armies had swept all foes before them. This, of course, included the British, whose prestige had naturally suffered in Yugoslavia because of its failure to halt the German drives in France and Poland. The British and the Americans were, on the other hand, viewed as Yugoslavia's natural allies. The United States was known by many Yugoslavs as a home for its people. These Yugoslavs, regardless of ethnic background, put pressure on their former homeland.

Hundreds of telegrams were sent to the Yugoslav government from Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes from throughout the United States and Canada urging Yugoslavia to stand firm against German demands. It was reported that groups representing over 300,000 Yugoslavs in America were urgently requesting Yugoslavia to stand fast. The President of the Supreme Council of the Serb National Federation, Simo Werlinich, had written Prince Paul and Cvetković³ urging Yugoslavia to stand against the barbarians and once again to defend their land in the name of freedom.

Winston Churchill, although heavily involved, realized the position of Prince Paul. He wrote somewhat sympathetically:

In the face of it, Prince Paul's attitude looks like that of an unfortunate man in a cage with a tiger [Hitler], hoping not to provoke him while steadily dinner-time approaches.⁴

Arthur Bliss Lane also showed his understanding of the Yugoslav situation. He wrote to the Secretary of State from Belgrade on February 14, 1941:

As to Yugoslavia and Turkey he [Prince Paul] said that we do not intend to enter war, yet unofficially we advise small countries to resist. I replied that if the United States were threatened with invasion, we would certainly resist and that we are not suggesting to Yugoslavia or any other country to take offensive action.⁵

Yugoslavia was also at this time of considerable importance to the press. The fighting in January, 1941 had slowed considerably as Germany was consolidating and preparing for future moves. This brought the focus of the press on Yugoslavia and Greece, the most logical places for Germany's next move. The press wrote at some length about internal Yugoslav politics. It was pointed out on many occasions that Yugoslavia, though united for the moment, suffered from internal ethnic frictions. Yugoslavia was reported as the "Sweden of southeastern Europe."⁶ The New York Times put much emphasis on a speech given by German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop.

Yugoslavia always will be a neighbor of the Reich, and she will therefore always remain economically tied to Germany. From that, political cooperation must inevitably follow.⁷

As can be seen from the above, Yugoslavia's position was realized, if not appreciated, in the West. Regardless, the United States and Great Britain began an intensive campaign to keep Yugoslavia out of the German camp. This campaign was carried on through normal diplomatic channels, but enlisted, as the need arose, the highest personages in both Great Britain and the United States. The British, who had entered the war and were still involved in almost daily combat with the Germans were the first to become actively involved with the Yugoslavs. Great Britain established the Special Operations Executive (SOE) in July of 1940. Its aim was to aid British foreign policy through covert activities. Recognizing the importance of Serbia within Yugoslavia, the SOE spent most of its energy in that part of the country. It did, however, maintain contacts throughout Yugoslavia. Mark Wheeler described the purpose of the SOE as a secret service

designed to reinforce the work of diplomats, creating by the use of subsidies, bribes, and propaganda, a pro-British climate of opinion in Yugoslavia (and especially in Serbia) that would make it difficult for Prince Paul and his ministers to knuckle under to the Axis.⁸

The British would spare no efforts in trying to prevent

Yugoslavia's joining of the Tripartite Pact.

The British felt that Prince Paul would be very susceptible to their blandishments. He was fluent in English and had received his college training in England at Oxford. He had also been known for his pro-British views within Yugoslavia. He had sought British economic and diplomatic aid for Yugoslavia in the mid-Thirties, but was now in a much different position due to Germany's present strength.

The British were husbanding their military resources very closely and were unable to give any military aid to Yugoslavia. They did, however, try to encourage the Yugoslavs by other means. King George VI wrote Prince Paul encouraging his anti-German sympathies for the first time on July 3, 1940. The King would later follow with additional correspondence, but never was able to offer Prince Paul anything concrete. British policy was aimed at impressing the Yugoslavs with her growing strength and absolute faith in an ultimate victory for Great Britain.

The British by March 1941 had committed combat units in Greece and were in a frantic search to bolster their position. The British position depended on Yugoslavia agreeing to fight the Germans. "The whole defense of⁹ Salonika depended on their [Yugoslavia's] coming in." The British, and Churchill in particular, put great credence in

Yugoslav arms. The Serb army in the First World War had fought brilliantly, and a repeat was expected in 1941. The British expected Yugoslavia to help stabilize and support them in Greece, but saw other immediate missions for the Yugoslav Army. Churchill wrote that an attack by Yugoslavia on the Italians could ". . . produce an Italian disaster of the first magnitude, possibly decisive on the whole Balkan situation."¹⁰

The British position became even more frantic when it learned of Germany's ultimatum to Prince Paul on March 26, 1941. Churchill instructed the British minister in Belgrade, Ronald Ian Campbell thusly:

Do not let any gap grow up between you and Prince Paul or ministers. Continue to pester, nag, and bite. Demand audiences. Don't take No for an answer. Cling on them, pointing out Germans are already taking the subjugation of the country for granted. This is not time for reproaches or dignified farewells. Meanwhile, at the same time, do not neglect any alternative to which we may have to resort if we find present Governments have gone beyond recall.¹¹

Churchill had previously telegraphed Cvetković, but believed now that it was too late to expect the Yugoslav government not to sign the Pact.

The British government had decided earlier that although it could not materially aid Yugoslavia in its present situation, it could offer other inducements.

Despite Britain's (and America's) express policy of not discussing postwar territorial settlements, the War Cabinet considered that 'the decision of the Yugoslav government at the present juncture is of such importance that it would be worthwhile to disregard this rule on this occasion if by doing so we could induce Yugoslavia to intervene forcibly on behalf of Greece.' The Foreign Secretary was authorized on 3 March to open to the Yugoslavs the prospect of territorial revisions if this appeared likely to encourage them 'to throw in their lot with us'.¹²

The British had by now seen little prospect in changing Yugoslavia's course and began to seriously think of other possibilities. ". . . SOE's objective 'inevitably changed from that of endeavoring to influence the government to that of endeavoring to bring down the government'.¹³" Anthony Eden, British Foreign Secretary, telegraphed Campbell in Belgrade on March 24:

. . . 'Prince Paul's attitude shows such a hopeless sense of unreality that there is nothing to be expected of him.' He empowered the Minister 'now to proceed at your own discretion by any means at your disposal to move leaders and public opinion to understanding realities and to action to meet the situation. . . . You have my full authority for any such measures that you think it right to take to further change of government or regime, even by coup d'etat.'

The next day, Yugoslavia signed the Tripartite Pact.

The United States during this time frame was also diplomatically active in Yugoslavia. Although not actively engaged in the war like the British, the Americans had a very similar policy. This, of course, was to prevent

Yugoslav accession to the Tripartite Pact. American activities and actions were closely parallel and complementary to those of the British. However, only Britain was at war with Germany and only Britain had combat troops in the Balkans.

President Roosevelt's fireside chat of December 29 1940 is a good starting point to trace American relations with Yugoslavia. This speech declared that the United States would become the "arsenal of democracy" and that America would stand beside its British ally. The speech was discussed in Yugoslavia and gave the American and British position some additional weight. It is of course even more important to notice that the entire speech was not published in the Yugoslav press. ". . . [Yugoslav] Foreign Office had eliminated passages which they thought might be offensive to Hitler."¹⁵

It was the American policy to keep the Yugoslavs from signing the Tripartite Pact with Germany. Lane, the American Minister in Belgrade, was the individual most responsible for pressing American positions and beliefs on the Yugoslav government. He was assisted in January 1941 by a visit of Colonel William J. Donovan.

He explained to them the established United States policy of giving every possible assistance short of war to countries willing to fight for their independence.¹⁶

Donovan was on a special mission for Roosevelt trying to ascertain Yugoslavia's position. The United States was now¹⁷ watching Yugoslav developments "with great concern."

Lane explained the American attitude towards Yugoslav accession to the Tripartite Pact to Yugoslav Foreign Minister Alexander Cincar-Marković on February 9:

I expressed my personal opinion that countries that do not resist aggression are not worthy of independence and need not count on our support when political and geographic readjustments are made after the war. . . that we are committed to full support of all people who resist aggression. I believe even at this late hour in present critical situations in Balkans the result would be salutary.¹⁸

A week after Lane's meeting with Cincar-Marković, he wrote Washington about his discussion on February 18 with Prince Paul. Prince Paul again outlined Yugoslavia's position in Europe and the great strength of Germany.

He said even if the United States helped him Yugoslavia would be finished before our assistance arrived and the country would be destroyed in the meantime.¹⁹

Regardless of these opinions, pressure continued to be placed on Prince Paul.

The United States, like Great Britain, was not above having the Chief of State send personal messages to the Yugoslav Head of State. Roosevelt sent a personal message to Prince Paul on February 22.

I am addressing this message to Your Royal Highness with a view to emphasizing the interest of the United States in the outcome of the war. I fully appreciate the difficult and vital problems facing you and the Yugoslav government, but I most earnestly wish to point out that the United States is looking not merely to the present but to the future. I wish to convey to you my feeling that the world in general regards with very real sympathy any nation which resists attack, both military or diplomatic, by the predatory powers.²⁰

The Yugoslav internal situation was by now being closely watched in the press. Yugoslavia was described by The New York Times on January 18, 1941 as Germany's debtor. The Yugoslav government had been purchasing huge amounts of war materials, and her balance of trade with Germany was deeply out of balance. The ability to pay for this debt was viewed as dim at best. This was a change in Yugoslav economic relations vis-a-vis Germany, which had since 1934 always showed a surplus in favor of Yugoslavia. As previously mentioned, this gave the Germans added confidence in their dealings with Yugoslavia.

The Yugoslavs had also been described as indebted to the Germans for helping keep Yugoslav resistance/separatist movements under some control. Now, however, the press was describing more fully Yugoslav government actions against Croat separatists and terrorists. Yugoslavia was shown to be deeply divided, and for the first time, in economic jeopardy to a foreign power. Also by this time Yugoslavia's

geographic isolation was fully appreciated by even the most casual observer of Yugoslav events.

By March 1941, it had become apparent to both the United States government and the press that events would soon take their own course in Yugoslavia. Secretary of State Cordell Hull wrote Roosevelt concerning events in Yugoslavia on March 12, 1941. He reminded the President that the American government had been in almost constant touch with the nonaligned Balkan states. Hull stated that the United States had made its position on aiding Britain and any other nation resisting foreign domination. It was stressed time and again that the "vast resources" of the United States would be used to supply these nations. Hull believed that he and his representatives had done everything in their power to bolster the morale of the Balkan nations (Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia). He was able to point out that he had constantly sought out suggestions from these lands as to how the United States could best support them. Hull remarked that the representatives only requested one additional thing and that was the actual stationing of large numbers of combat troops with sufficient material aid to help stop any German
21
thrust.

Even before Hull's message to the President, events in Yugoslavia were beginning to move even faster. The New York Times reported on March 5 that Yugoslavia had ordered full

mobilization. It was stated that Yugoslavia would have²² 1,000,000 men in the field by March 21. Opposition leaders in Yugoslavia were also reported to have decided that "any kind of paper with Germany will mean the immediate downfall of the [Yugoslav] government, revolt in the army and spontaneous rebellion throughout the country. . . ." The article added ". . . such declaration must be naturally²³ viewed with extreme caution." The paper was also describing the activities of Lane at this moment as²⁴ "extraordinarily active."

On March 14, the National Bank of Yugoslavia sent a request to the American Secretary of the Treasury, that Yugoslav gold reserves in the United States be removed from the United States. This amounted to \$22 million, and the request was immediately sent over to the Secretary of State. Hull saw no valid reasons for the Yugoslav request and delayed any answer. However, the funds would remain where they were. The opinion of Hull was that the funds were already in a safe place and that the United States would use²⁵ them only to further Yugoslav interests.

Lane telegraphed Washington twice, once on March 16 and again on March 19, warning the State Department that Yugoslavia was about to sign the Tripartite Pact. These notes prompted a meeting between Sumner Welles, Acting Secretary of State, and Constantine Fotić,¹ Yugoslav Minister

to the United States. Welles explained to Fotic' that if Yugoslavia signed the Pact, public opinion in the United States would be outraged and all Yugoslav assets in this country would be frozen as well as the chance for any American aid for Yugoslavia.²⁴ Welles followed this meeting by sending instructions to Lane for transmittal of this message to the Yugoslav government.

Lane met Prince Paul on the 20th of March and outlined the American position. He told the Prince of Italy's poor position in Albania, British naval successes against Italy in the Adriatic and Mediterranean and of British landings and troop reinforcements on the Greek mainland. He again told him of America's and President Roosevelt's wish for Yugoslavia to remain outside the Tripartite Pact.

The United States, as long as Yugoslavia retains her entire independence and freedom of action in defense of her own territory, is prepared to offer all facilities under the Lend-Lease Bill which is now law, and finally in accordance with the terms of the message recently sent you in that regard, those Yugoslav assets which are now on deposit in the United States will remain at her disposal as long as in the interpretation of this government Yugoslavia remains a free and independent country.²⁷

Lane sent a message to the Secretary of State in which he described Prince Paul as unswayed by the American agreement.

Lane would meet frequently for the next couple of days the Yugoslav government officials trying to sway them away from signing the Tripartite Pact. He met Cvetkovic' on the

22nd of March, who said that Yugoslavia would soon sign the pact. Cvetković termed Lane's arguments as

not very strong. He lamely explained that Yugoslavia's adherence should not be regarded as a move against us or Britain. The Pact is purely political, not military. I said [Lane], I am sure action would have most unfavorable effect in United States where Yugoslav courage has been a tradition.²⁸

On March 23, 1941, The New York Times revealed that

The Yugoslav government committed itself tonight to enter the Axis orbit despite grave fears that the step might cause civil war. Mass resignations of high officials opposed to the alliance and uneasy friction in the army ranks were grave manifestations of the violent and growing internal descent.²⁹

In spite of all efforts by British and American officials, the Yugoslavs signed the Tripartite Pact on the 25th of March. The signing of the Pact set off a chain reaction. The American and British governments were very upset at the news, and the press termed Yugoslavia's signing of the Pact as "surrender and capitulation." The next day, the United States government through an Executive Order froze all Yugoslav assets. Sumner Welles at a press conference announced that the United States had been working for weeks trying to prevent Yugoslavia's signature. He also explained why Yugoslav assets had been frozen

. . . since the primary purpose of this government was to preserve the assets held in the United States for the peoples of the countries that had fallen into the Nazi orbit. That was the basis on which steps were taken in every instance.³⁰

Events in Yugoslavia took another turn on the 27th of March. A coup d'etat in Belgrade overthrew the government of Prince Paul and the Regency. The coup led by Air Force General Dušan Simović immediately placed King Peter on the throne but did not repudiate the signing of the Tripartite Pact with Germany. The coup was viewed with instantaneous approval, both in the United States and especially in Great Britain.

The coup in Belgrade was basically a Serbian affair. Although both the Americans and the British were against the Pact and worked accordingly, their influence was nominal. There have been some arguments by British historians about SOE's importance or lack of importance in helping to create the coup. However, available evidence indicates that it was an internal Yugoslav event, led almost entirely by Serbs. No realistic Yugoslav could have really expected much aid from either of the democracies, although some did expect it. There is no doubt that most Yugoslavs found it much easier to be aligned with the United States and Great Britain, but that the efforts of these two countries had only nominal effect on the actions of the Yugoslav officers.

Churchill was elated by the news of the coup and

exclaimed that the Yugoslav nation "had found her soul." He wrote that "The news of the revolution in Belgrade naturally gave us great satisfaction."³¹ He immediately wished to send the Foreign Secretary to Belgrade for talks, but this request was refused by the Yugoslavs, who did not wish to offend Hitler. However, Field Marshall John Dill, Commander of the Imperial General Staff, was sent to Belgrade.

Dill arrived in Belgrade to try to coordinate the movements of the Yugoslav and Greek armies. He also pushed for an immediate Yugoslav attack on the Italian positions in Albania. Dill was disappointed in his discussions in Belgrade and believed the Yugoslavs showed ". . . failure to appreciate the immediacy of his [Simovic's] country's peril."³² The Yugoslavs in turn were very surprised at the lack of British power in Greece.

The United States reacted differently from the British; and direct military discussions, such as those Dill attempted with Simović, did not come into question. The Acting Secretary of State, Welles, instructed Lane to meet with the new Yugoslav government as soon as possible.

. . . and state in the name of your government that the news which has reached this country of the constitution of the new government under the King and General Simovic has created the immediate popular reaction that this event constitutes a matter of self-congratulation for every liberty-loving man and woman.

You are further authorized to state that in accordance with the provisions of the Lend-Lease Bill, the President, in the interest of the national defense of the United States, is enabled to provide assistance to Yugoslavia, like all others nations which are seeking to maintain their independence and integrity and to repel aggression.³³

President Roosevelt on the next day (March 28) sent a telegram to King Peter. This was a personal message to the young King offering support and best wishes from the President.

Lane was informed from Washington on March 28, that the United States government had never withdrawn recognition from the monarchy and that nothing was required now to recognize the new Yugoslav Government.³⁴ Lane met with General Simović on March 28 and explained to him that America

. . . had never urged on previous governments such a move [offensive action against Germany] and my efforts had been solely to prevent Yugoslavia from relinquishing her independence.³⁵

The next day, Lane met with the new Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Momčilo Ninčić, who requested that Yugoslav assets in the United States be frozen. Moreover, events would again direct the American response, and Ninčić's question went unanswered.

The reaction by the general public in the United States had been very favorable to the Yugoslav coup. The New York

Times was very strong in its praise for the Yugoslav action. The paper printed a long editorial in the March 28th edition, praising Yugoslavia. The sensational coup was compared to a lightening flash against a dark horizon. The Yugoslavs were well organized and were the first to show the world what the peoples of Europe really thought of Hitler. The King was described as riding through the streets of Belgrade as the populace rose up in wild celebration and the army prepared for the defense of the border. The paper termed the coup as "epoch-making" and was probably organized and abetted with British help. The Yugoslavs were described as ready to defend their land to the end and the paper said that the nation's true feelings were out in the open for all to see. It spoke of the Americans of Yugoslav descent who³⁶ had been relieved and overjoyed by Yugoslavia's action.

The reactions were unanimously favorable in both Britain and the United States; however, with these reactions came heightened expectations of Yugoslav action. As already mentioned, the British had sent General Dill to Belgrade for military talks with Yugoslavia. The British officer left frustrated and disappointed, but this was not known by the press. C. L. Sulzberger wrote that "overnight the Balkan balance has been astonishingly changed by the dramatic Yugoslav coup, which reinforces Allied positions on the³⁷ Continent." The papers were full of articles describing Yugoslavia's million man army and the country's long history

of military battles. Yugoslav soldiers were described as³⁸
 having "the reputation of being the best in the world."

The population was described as "bellicose" and "committed³⁹
 to war."

The New York Times was consistent in its praises for the Yugoslav army, usually, as seen above, sparing no adjectives in its descriptions. Articles pointed out that Yugoslav terrain was ideal for a prolonged resistance. Yugoslavia was described as having approximately 18 first-line divisions and a total army of 32 divisions. These divisions, although short in artillery, were expected to accomplish much and soon. The paper wrote on a couple of occasions that it expected Yugoslavia to attack the Italians in Albania and gain easy victories there (March 31 and April 1).

Even Lane's reports seemed more optimistic than before. He described his March 31 meeting with King Peter very favorably. He wrote the Secretary of State: "His show of moral courage . . . and his evident desire to rely on the United States give me great hope for his future and for that⁴⁰
 of his country."

Yugoslavia was invaded on April 6 , 1941 by Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria. The reaction in Great Britain and the United States was swift. Both countries deplored this action of Nazi aggression. Cordell Hull stated:

The barbaric invasion of Yugoslavia and the attempt to annihilate that country by brute force is but another chapter in the present planned movement of attempted world conquest . . . 41

The Secretary of State added in a message delivered in Belgrade by Lane to the Yugoslav government:

The American people have the greatest sympathy for the nation which has been so outrageously attacked, and we follow closely the valiant struggle the Yugoslav people are making to protect their homes and preserve their liberty.

This government, with its policy of helping those who are defending themselves against would-be conquerors, is now proceeding as speedily as possible to send military and other supplies to Yugoslavia.42

This message was followed on April 8 by a personal message from Roosevelt to King Peter encouraging Yugoslav resistance. Roosevelt sent "his most earnest hopes for a successful resistance to this criminal assault upon the independence and integrity of your country."⁴³

Attempts on the part of private individuals and associations to aid Yugoslavia were not slow in developing. The American Red Cross announced on April 7 that it was prepared to send \$1,000,000 in medical and relief supplies to Yugoslavia immediately. Prominent members of New York business and society also announced efforts to assist Yugoslavia. This last group would later develop into the Organization of the American Friends of Yugoslavia.

However, it soon became apparent that the Yugoslav Army was in desperate trouble, and aid from any outside source would not reach Yugoslavia for months.

Roosevelt applied the Neutrality Act to Yugoslavia on April 12, 1941, effectively stifling all American aid to Yugoslavia. The Neutrality Act of 1939 was established to prevent the United States from becoming involved in conflict. It was noted, however, that Roosevelt did not apply the Neutrality Act to Yugoslavia until it was obvious⁴⁴ that Yugoslavia could not resist much longer. Yugoslavia collapsed on April 17, 1941, and surrendered to the Germans.

With the defeat, Yugoslavia was immediately divided by the victors. Serbia was greatly reduced and placed under rigid German control. Croatia was elevated to an independent country by both the Germans and the Italians and was governed by Dr. Ante Pavelić and his Uštase upon their return to the country, with the invaders. Slovenia was incorporated directly into Germany and Italy and was therefore given no status at all. Yugoslavia was also faced with occupation armies from Hungary in the north and Bulgaria in the Macedonian region.

The quick and easy defeat of Yugoslavia came as a shock to both the United States and Great Britain, but the immediate public reaction came from the press. Yugoslavia was once described as a military power, but was now described as being disunited and militarily unprepared to

meet the invasion. Yugoslavia was not slow to take a back seat in the minds of Americans. It would never again achieve the status with either the American government or the people that it had enjoyed following the coup.

For the remainder of 1941, the American government would have limited contact with the Yugoslav government. Lane, the last American representative in Yugoslavia, left the country on May 16. There were, however, several meetings in Washington between the State Department and the Yugoslav Ambassador Fotić. Fotić protested on several occasions about the dismemberment of Yugoslavia and was assured by the American government that the partitions of Yugoslavia were not recognized by the United States. The American entrance into the war on December 7, 1941, would place Yugoslav issues far back on the scale of priorities for the United States. It would be many months before the United States would begin to be active in Yugoslav affairs.

The previously-mentioned Organization of the American Friends of Yugoslavia was founded on May 21, 1942, and it did keep the issue of Yugoslavia in the public eye from time to time. This group included the Governor of New York, Wendell L. Wilkie; the Presidents of Yale, Johns Hopkins, and Occidental College (Hamilton Fish Armstrong); and the Presidents of the Chase Manhattan Bank and International Business Machines (IBM). This organization would not act

independently, but turn over its fund to the Red Cross for distribution in Yugoslavia. The organization was declared to be ". . . a tangible demonstration of the affection and esteem which the American nation has for the Yugoslav⁴⁵ people."

Organization of the American Friends of Yugoslavia held a "gala" affair in New York on September 6, 1941. Speeches were made over a national radio hook-up on the CBS Radio Network. King Peter and General Simović spoke via short wave radio to this group (and to the entire nation) from London. The Yugoslavs were again cited for their courage, and a message from Roosevelt to King Peter was read.

CHAPTER 3

1942

Events in Yugoslavia were unknown to the outside world for months after German forces overran the country. However, activity was not slow in developing outside and within the country. Survivors of the Yugoslav Army went into the hills with their weapons and began to plan a resistance movement against the invaders. Outside the country, members of the Yugoslav government led by the King reestablished their government. The groups inside the country would be led by a former member of the Yugoslav General Staff, Colonel Draža Mihailović. Mihailović and his group, who were predominantly Serbian, began coordinating resistance efforts in Bosnia and Serbia by the middle of May 1941. This group was soon labelled the Četniks, a term used by Serbian resistance fighters since their struggles for¹ independence against Turkey in the early 19th century. The Četniks would remain the official Yugoslav military representatives in the country for the future and would attempt to stay in contact with the Yugoslav government in exile.

The second resistance group was slower in entering the war but did so in July of 1941. This group was called the Partisans and was led by Josip Broz (Tito). Tito was head of the Yugoslav Communist Party, and the most important Partisan leadership was Communist. Tito himself had been placed at the head of the Yugoslav Communist Party in 1939 by Moscow, which he visited on a few occasions during the period between the two world wars. The Communist Party had been outlawed in Yugoslavia since August 9, 1921. This created a very small and close-knit organization that was used to functioning under clerks. It was, however, not without experienced military leaders, as many Yugoslav Communists had fought in the Spanish Civil War. The Partisans, like the Četniks, went into the mountainous areas of Bosnia.

Initially, there was some minor cooperation between the two resistance groups, and Tito and Mihailović did meet twice during October 1941. The last formal meeting between the two groups was on November 19, 1941, but neither Mihailović nor Tito participated in that gathering. The two groups developed different beliefs regarding the best way to defend Yugoslavia. The Četniks thought it best to organize and prepare for the eventual defeat of Germany and spare the country the massive reprisals of the Germans. Tito's followers were more interested in attacking and fighting the Germans.

The two movements also had different political aims. The Četniks were, for the most part, loyal members of the Yugoslav Army and wished to preserve the pre-war Yugoslavia. This was not the case with the Partisans, who were considered outlaws and part of an illegal organization. Their goal was to create a socialist Yugoslavia, and they had no wish to preserve the pre-war Yugoslavia.

The Partisans were revolutionaries, the Cetniks were for the restoration of the status quo. The Partisans appealed to the broad masses of all Yugoslavia, but the Cetniks restricted their appeal, with minor exceptions, to the Serbs.²

These different political aims quickly caused the two groups to become suspicious of each other; and by 1941, they would, in fact, be in many instances more interested in fighting each other than in fighting their country's invaders.

The existence of resistance within Yugoslavia became known to the United States and Great Britain by the summer of 1941. However, the actual conditions within the country were unknown, and any discussion of the resistance by either the United States or Great Britain naturally would be centered on the Četniks. This was normal, as the Četniks represented the Yugoslav government, which by January 11, 1942 was led by then-Brigadier General Mihailović, who was appointed Yugoslav Minister of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Tito and the Communists, on the other hand, were

virtually unknown and controlled no sources of power or persuasion outside of Yugoslavia. Although fragile, Yugoslav resistance to Nazi domination attracted British and later American interest.

The first Allied mission arrived in Yugoslavia on September 20, 1941. This was a four-man group led by British Captain D. T. (Bill) Hudson, who parachuted into Montenegro (Crna Gora) with a radio and three Montenegrin soldiers. Hudson's mission was "to contact, investigate and report on all groups offering resistance to the enemy,³ regardless of race, creed, or political persuasion." Hudson would meet both Tito and Mihailović while in Yugoslavia, but for the most part he spent his time alone. Hudson was soon followed by other British missions, but information was still very scarce on actual events within Yugoslavia.

During the next several months, the intermittent nature of communications with Mihailovic, the failure to establish other intelligence missions . . . and the absence of any overwhelming military interest caused the British to relegate Yugoslav resistance to a very secondary importance.⁴

It is important to note that the British began sending missions into Yugoslavia with Hudson in September of 1941, but the Americans did not send their first mission into the country until August of 1943, and then only as a part of the larger British mission already established. There was,

however, contact between the American and Yugoslav governments continuously during this time frame. But any American knowledge of events in Yugoslavia had to come from non-American sources. For the most part, American information and interaction with Yugoslavia came from the Yugoslav Minister in Washington, Fotić.

Fotić himself became a source of some problems for the American government.* He was, however, reaffirmed as the recognized representative of the Royal Yugoslav government on February 13, 1942. A message from Sumner Welles also reiterated American recognition of the Yugoslav government. The United States sent Fotić another note on April 22, 1942 in response to Yugoslav descriptions of events in Yugoslavia.

The government and people of the United States have watched with admiration the resourceful and heroic operations of General Mihajlovic [Mihailovic] and his men and are proud to acknowledge the contribution of Yugoslav patriots in the common struggle against the forces bent on the destruction of free nations throughout the world.⁶

The most important event in Yugoslav-American relations during 1942 took place from June 22 to July 29 when King Peter visited the United States. The King was accompanied by the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Momčilo Ninčić. He

* Fotić was a strong supporter of Serbia and was extremely anti-Communist and, to a lesser extent, anti-Croat. His reports to the American government were colored by his "Pan Serb" beliefs.

received all the honors of a visiting head of state when Secretary of State Cordell Hull escorted him from Washington's Union Station to the White House where he spent the night of June 24, 1942. Here conversations were held with Roosevelt and other members of the American government as well as with Churchill, who was also a guest in Washington at this time.

The King described his conversation as follows:

Our discussion that evening mainly concerned the extent to which the United States could help Yugoslavia in sending supplies to Mihailovich [Mihailovic] and his Chetniks [Cetniks]. Roosevelt pointed out that he was severely pressed just then Nevertheless the President stressed his sympathy for the Yugoslav patriots. . . .7

The King spent a total of seven days in Washington on his "official" visit and met most of the senior members of the United States government. He spoke on June 25 to a joint session of Congress and later that day visited the American Red Cross Headquarters and the National Press Club.

The King also met with members of Yugoslav organizations in the United States and attended luncheons by the Organization of American Friends of Yugoslavia in both Washington and New York. In New York, he also spoke over the NBC Radio Network to the entire American nation. The King also toured the American heavy industry belt from Detroit to Buffalo before returning to Washington on July 24.

He again held meetings with Roosevelt, and they issued a joint statement which read in part:

We are in complete accord on the fundamental principle that all our resources of the two nations should be devoted to the vigorous prosecution of the war; that like the fine achievement of General Mihailovich [Mihailovic] and his daring men, an example of spontaneous and unselfish will to victory, our common effort shall seek every means to defeat the enemies of all free nations.⁸

The King left the country with more than feelings of good will. The United States and Yugoslavia signed a Lend-Lease Agreement on July 24. The King wrote "So everything was cordial when, in July of 1942, I left the White House in Washington after conferring with President Roosevelt . . ."⁹ On August 3, Roosevelt wrote the King a personal note wherein he also was very positive about the visit.

Your Majesty's visit was a personal pleasure which I shall long remember. It gave also to the American people an opportunity to do honor to the valiant Yugoslav people in their noble and unceasing fight for the liberation of their country.¹⁰

Following the King's visit, the United States began to receive more information on events within Yugoslavia. This information would create the atmosphere for Yugoslav-American relations for months in the future. The primary source for American knowledge of internal affairs in Yugoslavia came from Yugoslav sources, again primarily Ambassador Fotic' and Foreign Minister Ninčić.

For the most part, official Yugoslav sources were telling the American government that events in Yugoslavia were very confused. However, they always stressed the accomplishments of Mihailović, both political and military, and described the atrocities and terrorist methods of the Partisans/Communists, as well as the number of Serbs being butchered by the Uštasa in Croatia. Ninčić said that by September 1942, over 600,000 Serbs had been murdered and over 300,000 had fled the Uštasa. He also was bitter about the press in the United States which seemed to lack proper knowledge of Mihailović's valiant efforts. Ninčić (as well as other members of the Yugoslav government--Fotić in particular) described the Partisans as "a collection of international criminals, most of them brought in from abroad."¹² The Communists were usually described as doing virtually no fighting compared with Mihailović's ceaseless efforts against the invaders.

The various Serb, Croat, and Slovene periodicals in the United States began to write articles about events in Yugoslavia. The Serbs were accusing the Croats of atrocities, and the Croats were calling the Serbs liars. This issue prompted Assistant Secretary of State Adolf A. Berle, Jr. to speak before the editors of the Yugoslav foreign language press in America. He made statements to the group concerning the Yugoslav issues to the effect

that we had no interest in these various controversies since we believed that the war had to be won by united American effort, and that these people ought to get together as Americans and leave their European differences over.

He also said

that while we had no interest in the politics of General Mihailovic [Mihailović], so long as he was fighting the Germans we were for him, and that up to that date we had no information leading us to believe that he was doing anything but fight[ing] Germans.¹³

Later, Berle would call this squabble in the Yugoslav press¹⁴ in America "a danger to the American war effort."

It should be stated that the American government also was receiving some information about Yugoslavia from other sources and these seemed to contradict the stories of Communist atrocities and Mihailović's reputation as a crusading warrior. Sumner Welles wrote to Ambassador Fotić (the Yugoslav mission was raised to the status of an Embassy on September 29, 1942):

Reports indicate that the conflict between Mihajlovic [Mihailović] forces and the Communist partisans in Yugoslavia may become a matter of serious concern

He added that:

. . . certain British circles have become mistrustful of Mihajlovic [Mihailović] and tolerant of the partisan faction.¹⁵

The British had by the summer of 1942 begun to reevaluate Mihailović. They had not dropped their support for him, but began to gather evidence about his inactivity and political leanings. These have been accurately described as "Pan Serb." From inside Yugoslavia, Hudson sent a message to the Foreign Office on September 6, 1942, stating that Mihailović had not fought the Germans since December 1941 and that it appeared that the Partisans were far more important in the war effort in Yugoslavia.¹⁶ The British had also noticed through their study of Axis press releases the paucity of information on Mihailovic compared with frequent mention of Communist activities. However, Francis Biddle, Ambassador to the Yugoslav Government in Exile, sent a telegram to the Secretary of State on October 7, 1942, writing that

neither Yugoslav circles nor I know of any British circles who have become either tolerant of the 'Partisan' faction or mistrustful of Mihailovic.¹⁷

Biddle also wrote messages describing the lack of unity in the Yugoslav Government in Exile. He was worried about the internal frictions that were expanding between the

Croats and Serbs.* He believed that post-war unity was in jeopardy and felt that the Serbs could not liberalize their views and create a Yugoslavia of equal opportunity for all ethnic groups.¹⁸ Biddle became increasingly concerned about Yugoslav politics and described the King as being surrounded by politicians from a different world who allowed the King¹⁹ very little leeway in liberalizing Yugoslav polity.

The Secretary of State instructed Biddle on December 30, 1942, that he should continue to encourage unity within the Yugoslav government. Hull wrote that "The disputes between the Serb and Croatian elements in the United States have had a deplorable effect on our national unity."²⁰ He was worried because the issue had begun to spread from just the Yugoslav-Americans to the general public. The feeling at the State Department was that the Yugoslav Government in Exile and its Minister in the United States, Fotic', were increasing these problems through lack of a firm and well-understood policy. The Secretary placed special emphasis on Fotic's role as he gained support from the Pan Serb

* Pre-war Serb-Croat internal problems became worse during the war. Croatia was now dominant in Yugoslavia and had infuriated the Serbs through a policy of terrorism inside the country. Serbia was subject to a very harsh German rule, and the Government in Exile was dominated by the Serbs. These Serbs were sure of the Croatian atrocities and considered most Croats traitors. The Croats in the Government in Exile thought Serbian charges were greatly exaggerated and fought as before the war to secure more freedom/power for Croatia.

elements. The fact that this had stirred up controversy in the American press was also upsetting.

Regardless of American misgivings, on December 31, 1942, the State Department sent Ambassador Fotic a message, signed by Sumner Welles, which once again reaffirmed official American support for Mihailović. It described Mihailović as a skillful and energetic Yugoslav patriot who continued the "noble struggle" against Yugoslavia's
21
oppressors.

Walter Roberts summed up the American position in Yugoslavia at the end of 1942 in a very succinct manner.

For the United States, Yugoslavia was at that time a distant country, the geography of which had only a limited significance in the pursuit of the war. America regretted the existence of a civil war, and since it recognized the Yugoslav-Government-in-Exile as the only legal government, it felt duly bound to support it and its commander in Yugoslavia, General Mihailovic.²²

CHAPTER IV

1943

On January 1, 1943, the United States government, through its European Field Commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, sent a note to General Mihailović. This note followed a recommendation sent by the Secretary of State to Henry L. Stimson, the Secretary of War.* In it, Eisenhower congratulated and praised Mihailović and called Mihailović's soldiers "immortal warriors" who "serve the common cause of the United Nations." He also wished his Yugoslav comrades in arms "every success."¹ This was the first direct message between the American government and Mihailović.²

Although the United States government started 1943 by its direct recognition of Mihailović, American actions in Yugoslavia continued on their rather silent course as established in 1942. The United States continued to learn or hear of events inside Yugoslavia from secondary sources,

* Hull requested that this be done because the United States had never directly recognized Mihailović. They felt it would be most appropriate if it were handled through military channels, especially since the British had already accomplished this. See FRUS '41, vol II, p.840.

as before these sources were the British and the Yugoslav governments. The State Department was concerned with what the British were doing in Yugoslavia, and the Department became increasingly concerned about the Yugoslav civil war. Yugoslav events became better known in general in the United States, and this created controversy regarding the actual leaders of the resistance in Yugoslavia. The Partisans became more important, and support for them and critiques of Mihailović flared up in the American press. The press became more literate about events in Yugoslavia, and papers like the Daily Worker became impressed with the Partisans. The most significant American move came in the summer of 1943 when American liaison officers were sent to both the [✓]Cetniks (August 18) and the Partisans (August 22). Thus, direct American involvement in Yugoslavia was established for the first time since May 16, 1941.

The importance of British policy in Yugoslavia cannot be underrated, especially compared with American lack of activity. First, as previously described, the British began to lose enthusiasm for Mihailović as they gained respect for the Partisans. The British missions in the field had relayed as frequently as possible their findings to London. Wheeler wrote: "During the first third of 1943, the Partisans won the Yugoslav civil war and the British decided to contact and assist them."³

Churchill himself began to get reinvolved in Yugoslav affairs at this time. He held a dinner party for King Peter and his mother in December of 1942, and matters concerning the resistance of Yugoslavia were discussed. Two days later Eden would dine with the King and the Queen mother, and direct hints about Mihailović's failures were brought forth.⁴ This led, on January 3, 1943, the Yugoslav Prime Minister, who was changing his cabinet, to ask the British whether they still supported Mihailović. Slobodan Jovanović, Yugoslav Premier, was told that there was at this time no reason to remove Mihailović.⁵

The British decided in February to send their first missions to the Partisans. These missions parachuted into areas of suspected Partisan activity, and on May 28, 1943, Captain F. W. Deakin was taken to Partisan headquarters where he met Tito. Deakin's mission, codenamed "Typical," was the most important. He was a personal friend of Churchill, and his reports would carry great weight in London. His arrival during heavy fighting between the Partisans and the Germans led Deakin to assert firmly that the Partisans were a centrally-organized and well-led force which should be deemed worthy of British support.⁶

Deakin, himself, wrote in The Embattled Mountain that by July 1943, the Prime Minister had

by personal intervention . . . determined . . . the forces of Tito now emerged as the leading movement of resistance in an area in which he was acquiring an immediate and strategic interest."⁷

Churchill wrote:

There was much to be said for supporting Tito, who was holding a number of German divisions and doing much more for the Allied cause than the Chetniks [Cetniks] under Mihailovic.⁸

The Chiefs of Staff reported to Churchill on June 6, 1943, that Mihailović had been "hopelessly compromised." They stated that clear information to the War Office (from the growing number of British soldiers within Yugoslavia) had shown Mihailović to be a collaborationist in both Hercegovinia and Montenegro. There was no question that it was the Partisans and not the Četniks who had been occupying the activities of the Axis.⁹ The Foreign Office also determined that Mihailović was too "anti-Communist, anti-Moslem, and anti-Croat" to be of any use in helping settle political issues in postwar Yugoslavia.¹⁰ Churchill termed Mihailović a "major obstacle" and was determined to persuade the King to remove him as Minister of War. Churchill ordered the withdrawal of his missions operating in Mihailović's territory and the removal of official support for him by the British government in December of 1943.¹¹

Churchill wrote that it had become apparent that the Partisans were the future rulers of Yugoslavia.¹² He

therefore sent a message to the Foreign Secretary on December 9, 1943, outlining British policy for Yugoslavia.

He wanted first

the immediate repudiation of Mihailovic by His Majesty's government and if possible King Peter . . . and to explore what advantage may be gained for the King from the new situation that will be created upon his dismissal of Mihailovic.¹³

Churchill concluded that the King's chances of retaining his throne were greatly enhanced by having Mihailović removed.

To almost all of these events the American government was little more than a concerned observer. Even when American liaison officers were finally in the field " . . . it was clear, however, that the British were the senior partners in this enterprise."¹⁴ Regardless of this situation, the United States became more involved in Yugoslavia throughout 1943.

The immediate concerns of the State Department in January of 1943 were the problems of one Yugoslav government and of the growing civil war within the country. Biddle wrote the Secretary of State several times in January describing his discussions with various Yugoslav politicians. Biddle stated that the Yugoslav cabinet was in a crisis over the political direction or lack of direction it gave Mihailović. He also was quick to point out that Croat/Uštāša atrocities against the Serbs allowed for little

flexibility among the various factions of the Yugoslav government.¹⁵ This inflexibility led to Ninčić's removal as Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister's assuming this role also.

On January 2, 1943, Jovanovic and Biddle discussed Yugoslav-American relations, and Biddle told ". . . that the most important point to stress, both for the government here [London] and for the Embassy in the United States, was the establishment of unity."¹⁶ Biddle also told Jovanović that there was nothing the American government could do concerning the growing attacks against Mihailović by various sectors of the American press.

H. Freeman Matthews, American Chargé in the United Kingdom, wrote the Secretary of State on February 24, 1943, from London concerning British policy in Yugoslavia. Matthews reiterated the British support for Mihailović; however, he also pointed out some of the British government's misgivings. He reported that the British had, in fact, sent very little aid to Mihailović and that their agents inside Yugoslavia had reported Mihailović's lack of aggressiveness against his country's invaders. Matthews also reported that the Četniks were reported to have attacked the Partisans, and finally that the British government had decided to contact the Partisans. This was in line with the British policy of aiding anyone willing to fight the Axis.¹⁷

By the end of March 1943, the American government received a clear indication of growing British uneasiness with Mihailović. The Foreign Office showed Biddle a note it was sending to the Yugoslav government concerning Mihailović. The British had been offended by a recent speech of Mihailović's, which accused them of holding the Yugoslav government prisoner. He also said that he would fight the Germans but not until he had dealt with the Uštase, Croats, and Moslems. The Americans also wrote that the Yugoslav government was now split among the two Serbian factions: Pan Serb and and Pan Yugoslav. It was hoped again that the Yugoslavs would soon form a united front. 18

On April 16, 1943, the Yugoslav Embassy sent a long message to the State Department. This was another in a series of messages in which the Yugoslav Government in Exile defended itself and the actions of General Mihailović. It was a brief historical sketch of events in war-ravaged Yugoslavia and an attack against the Communists within the country. It is most interesting because it is the first time the name Tito is found in State Department records. He is described by the Yugoslav government as "purely or partly foreign." 19 Thus, the name Tito is introduced in State

*Tito was, in fact, born in Croatia to a Croatian father and a Slovenian mother. His real name was Josip Broz, but Tito became recognized as part of his name. He was officially known as Josip Broz Tito.

Department files by a foreign-authored note months after British representatives had held face-to-face talks with him.

Yugoslavia was not a topic of much discussion in the popular press, although as previously mentioned, it became a heated topic in various ethnic newspapers within the United States. By early 1943, the Yugoslav civil war had made its appearance in the mainstream press, and issues concerning Yugoslavia gained some importance. C. L. Sulzberger wrote about "the necessity of cleaning up the dreary Yugoslav situation as soon as possible."²⁰ The New York Times published an editorial on February 5, 1943, discussing the increasing resistance efforts inside Yugoslavia. It termed Yugoslavia the most "open" and "dangerous" of Hitler's territories. The paper was distressed by Yugoslavia's lack of internal cohesion and wrote that the two resistance groups were receiving support from different groups. It was stated that the Russians were supporting the Partisans, and the Yugoslav Government in Exile the C^vetniks.

New York City once again began holding events of importance in support of Yugoslavia. Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia, a former American Consul in Yugoslavia, headed a major event sponsored to bring about Yugoslav unity. Held at the Metropolitan Opera House, it featured Zinka Kunc Milanov, a Croat, in the leading role of Aida. Milanov was married to a Serb, and a Yugoslav Victory Rally was held at

intermission and broadcast over a nationwide radio network. Other events including inter-faith religious services were also held throughout the country in honor of Yugoslavia's resistance.

Ambassador Fotić met with President Roosevelt on May 5, 1943, after his return from London. Fotić wrote that Roosevelt said he had not been influenced by anti-Mihailović propaganda and wanted to know what he could do to help Yugoslavia and prevent the spread of the Yugoslav civil war. The President was reported to be excited about Italy's approaching defeat and the growing importance of the guerrilla activity in Yugoslavia. Fotić wrote that he felt the United States should send officers into Yugoslavia to observe events there for themselves.

Roosevelt has been quoted during the early part of 1943 as wondering whether Yugoslavia should return to its pre-war boundaries following the war's conclusion. He speculated to Fotić that if the Croats would be retained in Yugoslavia after the war, ". . . the Croats had taken a way different from that of the Serbs, and their future appeared to him to be 'cloudy'." Roberts stated that Roosevelt had expressed much the same thought to British Foreign Secretary Eden on March 14, 1943.

. . . The President expressed his oft-repeated opinion that the Croats and Serbs had nothing in common and that it is ridiculous to try to force two such antagonistic peoples to live together

23

under one government.

The State Department appeared not to put much credence in Roosevelt's pronouncements, and these statements were not found in the Foreign Relations of the United States. The Department did write a long memorandum on Yugoslav affairs on May 1. Its author was Cavendish W. Cannon, Head of the Division of European Affairs. Cannon covered what he believed to be a summation of American knowledge of Yugoslavia at this time. His first few points were regarding Mihailović, whose exploits he termed as greatly exaggerated. He also remarked that he had, in fact, been doing very little fighting and probably had been cooperating with the Italians against the Partisans, but that there was no concrete evidence of collaboration with the Germans. The memorandum stated that the British officers with Mihailović were at odds with him and probably were not objective in their reports. It was also noted that Britain controlled Mihailović's communications and that he had received very few supplies from them.

The Partisans, Cannon wrote, had been having a tough time recently and were probably not as dominated by the Communists as the State Department previously thought. He also reported that the Soviet government was still denying any influence or control of the Partisans, that Partisan attempts at forming governments had been a failure and that

Mihailović must also have political elements with him, but these were unknown (although he wrote that they must have²⁴ been established to counter the Partisans).

The State Department was asked by the British in mid-May whether the United States would be interested in sending American officers into Yugoslavia. Cannon wrote that the Department had not been interested when Fotić had suggested this, but it might be different now. However, the Department recommended against sending any Americans at that time. Cannon believed advantages could be gained by this move, but²⁵ that the United States should wait. It was believed that Americans in Yugoslavia would enable the State Department to more efficiently interpret Yugoslav events.

On July 6, 1943, the British Embassy in Washington sent an "Aide Memoire" to the Department of State. This was an official announcement that the British had decided to give qualified aid to the Partisans as well as its continuation to General Mihailović.

The summer of 1943 brought two important events in American consideration of Yugoslavia. The first was the arrival of American liaison officers in Yugoslavia in August. An American officer was attached to Mihailović on August 18, and four days later an American officer reached Partisan headquarters. The United States had its first official representatives in Yugoslavia since May 1941. The second event was the surrender of Italy on September 8,

1943.

The Italian surrender had been expected by both sides and led to actions by all the parties within Yugoslavia. The Partisans and Četniks^v disarmed as many Italian soldiers as possible, with the Partisans gaining substantial material reinforcements and territorial gains. The Germans were forced to send additional troops into Yugoslavia to try to fill the gap left by the Italians. The Germans spent the next several months recapturing the Adriatic coast from the Partisans, but the number of Axis troops and their effectiveness were not as great as before the Italian surrender.

The major diplomatic question concerning the Italian defeat had already been broached by the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Milan Grol, in July. Grol requested that Yugoslavia be allowed to incorporate former Italian enclaves²⁶ on the Yugoslav Adriatic coast into Yugoslavia. The State Department took note of this request, but maintained the American policy of not giving territorial concessions until after the end of hostilities.

In October 1943, the first American correspondent reached Yugoslavia. This was Associated Press' Daniel De Luce, who was quick to report on American aid being shipped into Yugoslavia from Italy. He reported direct American involvement as well as the treatment of thousands of²⁷ Partisan wounded in American hospitals in Italy.

The fall of 1943 saw Yugoslavia return as an important topic in the American press. Papers were now more familiar with the Yugoslav civil war, and Tito began to supplant Mihailović as the most frequently cited and important leader of the resistance in Yugoslavia. De Luce reported on October 9 that he "found not one scrap of evidence of Partisan terror."²⁸ The New York Times wrote that the fighting was very confused but that the civil war was not as serious as previously thought.²⁹ This paper, in an editorial on October 20, asked the development of an American policy for Yugoslavia and wrote about the necessity³⁰ for unifying the resistance movements there. Tito was cited by The New York Times for his heavy fighting and contrasted with the lack of effort made by Mihailović.³¹ Mihailović's activity was termed as "somewhat puzzling."

C. L. Sulzberger wrote that Mihailović had reported capturing the southern Yugoslav part of Boka Kotorska. He also reported that he had been unable to find anything to substantiate Mihailović's claim. This report was one of the first written by a non-ethnic writer in America questioning the abilities and accomplishments of Mihailović. Sulzberger also wrote that the Yugoslav civil war between Mihailović³² and Tito was "expanding."

As previously stated, the American military was now becoming active in Yugoslavia. The Office of Strategic

Services (OSS) had started shipping large quantities of supplies from Bari, Italy into Yugoslavia over the Adriatic on October 15. It shipped over 6,000 tons of supplies and brought over 12,000 Partisan wounded to hospitals in Italy during October.³³ This support would continue for the remainder of the war.

Major Linn M. Farish, United States Army, sent his first report as American Liaison Officer to the Partisans out of the country on October 29, 1943. His report was the first from an American in an official position in Yugoslavia in over two years. Farish wrote that "the Partisan movement is of far greater military and political importance than is commonly realized in the outside world." He also wrote that the Partisans had created their position with virtually no outside assistance and that, although Communist-led, it was not totally dominated by them. Farish believed that all members of the Partisans should be allowed to express their views and that it was a democratic organization. He wrote that he had seen with his own eyes Četnik attacks on the Partisans and was very adamant in considering Mihailović politically and militarily irresponsible. Finally, Farish asked for much greater aid for the Partisans, whom he characterized as carrying on a struggle "at times beyond³⁴ imagination."

Two political events of major importance to Yugoslavia occurred in November. The first was the Tehran

Conference of November 27 through December 2, 1943. This meeting of Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin was to establish strategic plans for the defeat of Germany; and Yugoslavia was not infrequently mentioned. Although not of much significance in the global context, the "Big Three" had decided to give additional support to the Balkans. Stalin stated that he believed too much emphasis was being placed on Yugoslavia and that the number of Axis divisions being tied up by Yugoslav guerillas was greatly exaggerated. He also said of Yugoslavia "the Soviets do not think, however,³⁵ that this is an important matter."

The second major political event was held by the Partisans inside Yugoslavia at Jajce on November 29. This conference outlined Partisan political views and goals. The most important of these were: the unilateral transfer of power from the Yugoslav Government in Exile to the National Committee of Liberation (the political arm of the Partisans); the exclusion of King Peter from Yugoslavia until the people expressed their wishes; and the appointment of Tito as Marshal of Yugoslavia. No American was present at this meeting, and it would be some time before it was to create a stir in Yugoslavia's international position.

The United States learned of the events in Jajce from its Ambassador in the Soviet Union, W. Averill Harriman, who sent an outline of events to the Secretary of State on December 14. Harriman received his information from a

Soviet government agency, which also announced that the Soviet Union would soon be sending a military mission to Partisan headquarters.³⁶ A more complete description of the "Jajce Declaration" was sent by the new Ambassador to the Yugoslav Government in Exile, Lincoln MacVeagh (appointed on November 12) on December 28, 1943. The American Ambassador in the United Kingdom, John G. Winant, reported that the British government had now put a halt to any policy decisions regarding Yugoslavia as a direct result of the Jajce Declaration.³⁷ The British were about ready to ask King Peter to drop Mihailović from his cabinet, but this was now temporarily blocked.

The Secretary of State gave MacVeagh instructions regarding how he should handle the events following the Jayce Declaration. Hull wrote that the resistance movements were of "undoubled military value", that they should continue to expand their energies in the war against the Germans, and that the United States would not enter into any political discussions with them. He finished his instructions by writing "In line with our consistent policy, we consider that political arrangements are primarily a matter for future choice of the Yugoslav people."³⁸ These statements of Hull's were also published in the American press.

Louis Adamic, leader of the United Committee of South Slavic Americans and a member of the American Slav Congress,

came out publicly for strong support by the United States for Tito. He asked for immediate recognition of Tito's provisional government.³⁹ He also reported that he believed that the Government in Exile was pro-Fascist and did not deserve American support. For these statements, Adamic and the organizations he represented were labeled Communist fronts.⁴⁰ Events that were previously reserved for the Yugoslav foreign language press within the United States had been entering the popular press for months. Ruth Mitchell, sister of Air Force General William "Billy" Mitchell, had written in July about the anti-Serb and Mihailovic press. She wrote that it was the Communists and Croats who were defaming Mihailović and his efforts.⁴¹

1943 ended with the Americans once again involved with Yugoslavia. Although the United States was not as active as Great Britain, it did begin to learn first-hand about Yugoslav events. The American people also began to read and hear about events in Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was once again described as fighting in the mainstream of the war. Tito and his Partisans were described most favorably on December 22, 1943, in an editorial in The New York Times.

It is an epic deal of heroism and daring, of sacrifice, suffering and death, which place it on a level with the most heroic chapters of this war.⁴²

The United States had sent its first liaison mission into Yugoslavia during 1943 and had also recognized the

importance of Tito and the Partisans. The United States would help Tito for military reasons, but would not discuss any political relationships in Yugoslavia until the end of the war.

CHAPTER V

1944

1944 was much like 1943 in that events concerning Yugoslavia were dominated by the British. The British led sometimes with Russian concurrence, and the Americans formulated their stance on Yugoslav issues by the actions of the other powers, but usually in reaction to the British. However, American knowledge of Yugoslav events was greater now; and through the press, the American public was kept constantly informed of British machinations regarding Yugoslav politics. The three most important events in Yugoslav affairs at this time, outside the military sphere, were dominated by the British.

The first event was the return of King Peter and his Government in Exile from Cairo to London. It was also responsible for the eventual dismissal of the Puric' government (along with its Minister of Defense Mihailović) and the establishment of the new government headed by the former Ban of Croatia, Dr Ivan Šubašić. The second event was the removal of military missions from Mihailović, both British and American. The third event was the Tito-Šubašić

Agreement of November 1. The United States played little role in events one and three, and simply followed the British military mission out of Mihailović's headquarters. The United States would, however, keep an American officer with Mihailović, but only as an intelligence mission and not an official military representative of the American government.

Churchill himself wrote Tito in response to a get-well message he had received from him. Churchill had been cautioned by the Foreign Office, and Eden in particular, that personal correspondence with Tito might not be a good idea, but Churchill's first letter to Tito was sent on January 8, 1944. In response to Eden's caution, Churchill wrote:

I have been convinced by the arguments of men I know and trust Mihailovic ['] is a millstone tied around the neck of the little King, and he has no chance till he gets rid of him.¹

Churchill wrote Tito that

I am resolved that the British government shall give no further military support to Mihailovic ['] and will only give help to you.²

He also wrote that he considered it a good idea for the Royal Yugoslav government to dismiss Mihailović from its Cabinet. Churchill wrote favorably about the King and stated that British relations with him would be maintained.

Churchill, of course, flattered Tito on his "valiant effort" and the hope that all the resistance forces in Yugoslavia would soon be united. The Prime Minister added that his son would soon be joining Tito in the field.

The King, who had been staying with his government, flew back to London in early March for a series of meetings and political discussions with the British. Churchill had by this time continued his correspondence with Tito. He wrote him again on February 5. He told Tito that he could understand his lack of enthusiasm for the King, but that he was personally responsible and wished to have the King dismiss Mihailović from his government. Churchill also wanted to know what effect the King's dismissal of Mihailović and his possible return to his homeland would have on Tito. Churchill acknowledged that he realized the final determination of the monarchy would not be done until the final liberation of the country. The Prime Minister also wrote that a working arrangement between the King and Tito could have significant benefit for Tito and would allow the country to speak with a united voice. Churchill ended his letter by stating that it was his Britannic Majesty's government's desire to unite all patriotic forces behind Tito and to help in forming a united and federative
3
democracy in Yugoslavia.

Tito replied to Churchill as in the first letter--with very guarded words. Tito would not commit himself to any

actions. Churchill again wrote Tito on February 25 and repeated his wish for the King to dismiss Mihailović and, if possible, return to Yugoslavia.

Churchill also went before the House of Commons on February 22 and spoke about the general war situation and also about Yugoslavia in particular. During this speech he publicly gave his support to Tito and berated Mihailović for "being left alone in certain mountain areas and in return doing nothing or very little against the enemy." ⁴ He contrasted Mihailović with the Partisan's continuous struggles against the Germans and told how the Partisans were made up of all Yugoslav ethnic groups, unlike the Serb Četniks. He stated "Of course the Partisans of Marshal Tito are the only people doing any effective fighting against the Germans now." Churchill also said that every effort was being made to aid Tito. In reference to the King, he commented: "We cannot dis-associate ourselves in any way from him," although he suffers in the eyes of the Partisans because of his association with Mihailović. ⁵

The State Department closely followed British actions in Yugoslavia. However, America remained a bystander and waited to see how events would turn. Still much information was discussed in relation to American policy towards Yugoslavia, but most of it was in response to British initiatives. By January 17, 1944, the State Department had

been informed of the Foreign Office's wish to have⁶ Mihailović removed from the Yugoslav government. The Americans realized that this would strengthen the King vis-a-vis his relations with Tito and the Partisans.

The United States never interfered with British moves, but remained cautious and somewhat cynical of them. British policy towards Yugoslavia was termed "trial and error," and the United States should "not want to commit ourselves to a definite stand on the British, at least until we know Tito's⁷ reaction to the Churchill letter." This came from a State Department memorandum of January 19, 1944. This memorandum continued at length discussing British reasons for dropping support for Mihailović. It also brought into focus the probability of the downfall of the Puric government that would be caused by the King's removal of Mihailović.

The memorandum stated:

. . . it would be unfortunate and dangerous for this government to become politically involved otherwise than in rather general terms with an internal situation as difficult as this.

It continued by pointing out that the United States must act in concert with both the British and the Soviets. It stated that the Royal Yugoslav governments were dominated by Pan-Serb "intransigence" and that unless the United States had a policy which it wished to work very hard to support, it would ". . . be best to throw our weight in the direction of the

moderate and democratically-minded elements who look to the future rather than the past," the conclusion being that continued support for Serb-dominated governments appeared fruitless, but that there might be other choices than to support Tito.

Ambassador MacVeagh wrote the Secretary of State about Churchill's letter to Tito and emphasized Churchill's wish for Mihailović's removal. MacVeagh also hinted for continued American support for Mihailović. MacVeagh again wrote the Secretary of State on February 21, telling him that the British would soon remove their liaison officers from Mihailović and that it was recommended that the American liaison officers be removed at the same time. At this time, the American military mission to Mihailović consisted of three officers, with only the most junior, Lt. Muselin, still remaining with Mihailović. The British were asking that he be removed as an act of joint British-American military policy. Muselin would remain with Mihailović, but the other officers were permanently pulled out under orders from British General Maitland Wilson,⁸ Allied Supreme Commander in the Mediterranean. Muselin's mission, however, was changed; he was no longer a liaison officer, but an intelligence officer of "an independent, purely intelligence mission composed of a single American officer."⁹ This action was approved by the State Department on March 2, 1944.

The Soviet Union began to draw attention to itself with respect to Yugoslavia. The Soviets refused to sign a treaty with the Royal Yugoslav Government during January 1944. The New York Times wrote on February 6, that the Soviet Union favored Tito and the National Liberation Movement. It also wrote that Mihailović was termed a "pro-Fascist" by the Soviets. They printed the Soviet response to the proposed treaty with Yugoslavia. The Soviets stated that ". . . the uncertainty of the situation in Yugoslavia" prevented them from signing any treaty. The Soviet Military Mission finally arrived at Tito's headquarters on February 23, 1944. The Soviets had announced at the Tehran Conference that they would be sending such a mission. The Russian mission was much larger than the British and American missions combined and carried a more prestigious officer at its head, Lt. General N. V. Korneyev.

Stettinius wrote a memorandum from London in which he placed much emphasis on the Russians. He wrote:

The important factor in the Yugoslav situation today is not so much the Tito-Mihailovic-Cairo conflict as the interplay of Soviet and British policy in question.¹⁰

He wrote that the Soviet Union had continued to attack Mihailović and was openly pro-Tito. However, it was maintaining proper relations with respect to the King. He was also pointed out that Tito had received no military aid

from the Soviets that the Americans knew of. Stettinius ended his brief discussion of the Soviets by adding that they "have thus far kept formally correct relations with the Government in Exile."¹¹

The American Ambassador to Yugoslavia, MacVeagh, had already termed Churchill's policy as "pro-Tito"¹². Stettinius wrote from London about what he thought the British were trying to accomplish in their current talks with the King and Prime Minister Puric'. He wrote that Churchill had added his "immense personal prestige" to the side of Tito. He pointed out how he was corresponding with him directly; he also pointed out the fact that his son was now assigned to Tito's headquarters. Stettinius wrote that the political discussions then occurring in London were to change the makeup of the Yugoslav government--that the King would still be its leader, but that Mihailovic' and Puric' would be dropped to allow elements of the Partisans to form a united government. He also accused the British of competing with the Russians for Yugoslavia's favor while describing the Russians as only mildly interested in Yugoslav events.

In closing, Stettinius summarized the official American position vis-a-vis Yugoslavia. He indicated that America would continue to send aid to Tito for military purposes and that our rcognition of the Government in Exile would

continue, although he noted its weaknesses. He said that we would maintain a liaison mission with Tito and a single-member intelligence mission with Mihailović. He also said that Tito was trying to acquire the frozen Yugoslav assets in America, which would not be available to him without political recognition. He concluded that the United States would continue to deal with any orderly, established
13
Yugoslav government.

News of America's lack of activity in Yugoslavia was published in The New York Times editorial of May 1, 1944. The paper described American policy as adhering to the Atlantic Charter, while leaving policy determination in the Balkans to the British. The editorial accused the British of creating a political vacuum and of aiding the rise of Marshal Tito. C. L. Sulzberger, a writer for The New York Times and son of the publisher, wrote that "the State Department has made it clear more than once that in any type of active diplomacy, the Eastern Mediterranean remain
14
essentially a British sphere of interest."

Regardless of American activity or lack of it, the King and his Prime Minister, Purić, were still in London holding meetings with Churchill and lesser members of the British government. The King was being urged to form a new government, one that would give him some leeway with the Partisans. Churchill was losing patience as both Purić and the King refused to dismiss Mihailović and form a new

government. Churchill wrote Eden "Unless he [King Peter] acts promptly, as the sense of your minutes indicates, his chance of regaining his throne, in my opinion, will be lost."¹⁵ King Peter wrote that he had tried to convince Churchill that to support Tito would mean a Communist Yugoslavia. Peter wrote that Churchill was only interested in defeating the "Hun." He stated that he was being pushed to the utmost limit to remove the Puric' government. Peter reported that he was being pushed by Churchill to accept Dr. Ivan Šubašić as his new Prime Minister, a man he was assured by Churchill would be loyal to him. The King wrote Roosevelt in hopes of obtaining American assistance for his position, but Roosevelt made no attempt to aid him.¹⁶

The American Ambassador to Great Britain, John. G. Winant, wrote the Secretary of State. He described the tremendous pressure being applied to Peter to rid himself of his government. He discussed Britain's policy as coming for the short run military victory and therefore unable to support Mihailović. He finished by saying that the new government would be a "stop-gap" arrangement for the period of the war.¹⁷

Roosevelt's reply to the above-mentioned request for assistance from the King was sent on May 12. Roosevelt wrote that he found that the King's advisers were not telling him of the true nature of events in Yugoslavia:

that the Royal Government was not popular and was becoming less so as time went on. He also suggested that Mihailović should be removed from the government for political reasons, but should be allowed to remain as a soldier in the field. Roosevelt also pointed out that contrary to what he had been told, the Partisans had larger forces and far greater strength in the country than the King's ministers led him to believe.¹⁸ It is interesting to note that within a few days of the above-mentioned letter Roosevelt actually wrote a letter to Tito, but it is unknown whether this letter was sent and it was not sent in any case as a direct message between Roosevelt and Tito.¹⁹

The Yugoslav government of Prime Minister Puric' was dismissed by the King on May 24. This event had been previously announced by Churchill in a letter to Tito written on May 17.²⁰ Tito received the following message from Churchill on May 24:

The King has sacked Puric and Company, and I think the Ban of Croatia [Subasic] will rally a certain force round him. My idea is that this government should lie quiet for a bit and let events flow on their course. This, I think, was rather in accord with your idea in the first telegrams exchanged.²¹

Both King Peter in his memoirs A King's Heritage²² and Constantin Fotić in his book The War We Lost²³ attributed the downfall of the Puric' government to the British, and to Churchill in particular.

A new government was appointed by King Peter on June 1. The head of this government was Dr Ivan Šubašić, former "Ban" (Governor) of Croatia and the number two man in the Croatian Peasant Party, behind Vlado Maček. Šubašić had been living in the United States since November 1941 and was called to London by the King at the urging of Churchill. Šubašić had spoken out in the United States against Mihailović and the Government in Exile and for Marshal Tito.²⁴ Although a Croat, he was not alone in these pronouncements. General Dušan Simović, leader of the Yugoslav coup d'etat had also publicly renounced the Royal Government and endorsed Tito.²⁵

Cavendish Cannon, Assistant Chief, Division of Southern Europe Affairs, summarized American policy towards Yugoslavia on May 19, 1944. He opined that Yugoslavia should be maintained in its entirety. He stressed that the United States would not interfere in internal Yugoslav affairs and had no special interests in Yugoslavia. He also wrote that there was no resistance group within Yugoslavia that represented all the people and that the United States would not form a policy to work with any particular group. He also stressed that both Great Britain and the Soviet Union had special interests in the area. He stated that those governments' interests were being "implemented so dynamically that the effect is hardly consistent with our doctrine of non-intervention." He concluded by adding that

Yugoslav-Americans would help Yugoslavia rebuild, but were²⁶
not spokesmen for American opinion on Yugoslav issues.

The spring and summer of 1944 showed vividly the changes that had occurred in Europe since Germany's successes of the early war period. The British and Americans had cleared North Africa of the Germans; their armies were advancing north in Italy, capturing Rome on June 4; and the Allied second front had been established in northwest Europe on June 6 in Normandy, France. The Soviets had pushed the German armies hundreds of miles westward and would enter Poland in August. It had become apparent that Germany would be defeated.

To a lesser extent, events in Yugoslavia were no less dynamic. Although Yugoslavia had quickly succumbed to Germany, it was not slow in organizing resistance against its foreign occupiers. By the summer of 1944, Tito and the Partisans had been recognized as the main resistance elements in the country, and the Tehran Conference aid had been given almost exclusively to them. Political events had also reached a stage where the main players were now recognized and in position to complete a new regime in Yugoslavia.

The United States had recognized its lack of major interest in Yugoslavia and had also admitted that Great Britain and the Soviet Union had important stakes in

Yugoslavia and the eastern Mediterranean. American policy had almost always followed the British lead. The Americans moved in their liaison missions to Tito and Mihailović after the British, but did leave an intelligence mission with Mihailović after both liaison missions had been removed, again after the British lead. The British had handled the majority of the political actions with the Government in Exile, and it would be very hard to argue with Churchill when he wrote Roosevelt on June 23, 1943 that Britain had ". . . informed the United States at every stage of how we are bearing this heavy burden [Yugoslavia] which at present rests mainly on us."²⁷

In June 1944, the British presented a plan for uniting all the nationalist factions in Yugoslavia. The British sponsored a meeting between Tito and the Yugoslav Premier in London, Šubašić. The United States was not participating in the British proposals and was waiting on the sidelines to try to judge how the political situation would develop. On June 17, 1944, the Secretary of State wrote that the State Department had no direct contact with Šubašić and that virtually all his information came from British sources. He believed that extreme caution was necessary when viewing any information from non-American sources, that neither the Department nor the OSS had any fresh information about²⁸ political or military happenings in Yugoslavia.

The New York Times was quicker to judge the events then occurring. C. Daniel, on June 2, 1944, wrote a story in the paper that this was perhaps the last chance the King had for saving his throne. He wrote that the King wished to have all discussions of the continuation of the monarchy held in abeyance until after the liberation of the country.²⁹ In effect, however, the King seemed quite clear that he would abide by the wishes of his countrymen.

³⁰
11 The Secretary of State received a message dated June which described what the Americans then knew about the British plan. He was told that Tito would become the military commander of all Yugoslav forces and that Šubašić would have the political and civil authority. The Americans believed that because the discussion would take place on the Adriatic island of Vis, which was under British control, the time seemed excellent for the British to obtain the best bargain possible from Tito. The bargain was to be the consolidation of the Yugoslav forces to be followed by more specific talks on military, economic, and financial matters if successful.

The meeting was already in session when the Secretary of State finally received direct information about the talks. This information came from the American Consul General in Naples, George L. Brandt, who again used Murphy's reports and was dispatched June 18, 1944. On June 15, Tito was given a letter written by Churchill

emphasizing the importance of the various Yugoslav factions working together, in particular those represented by the King and Tito. Tito was in fact talking directly with Šubašić, covering the broad spectrum of Yugoslav political affairs, but little of substance was discussed in their initial conversations. There was great confidence in the belief that Tito and Šubašić would come to some political understanding, but the subject of the King was ignored by Tito. Murphy concluded in his message, sent to the Secretary of State from Naples on June 18, that the British were confident that cooperation would be achieved between Tito and Šubašić.³¹

Churchill wrote Roosevelt on June 23 concerning the Tito-Šubašić talks. He wrote that

I have also taken action to try to bring together a union of the Tito forces with those in Serbia, and with all adhering to the Royal Yugoslav Government, which we both have recognized.

Churchill also wrote that he could not give up on the King, but was still supporting his position in Yugoslavia. He finished his letter by stating "You have been informed at every stage of how we are bearing this heavy burden."³³

After these initial discussions were completed, Tito was urged to go on to Italy and confer in person with the King, and this subject was dropped. It must be pointed out that Tito and the King were never to meet. Finally Brandt

wrote again that Tito would not meet the King and that consideration of the monarchy would be deferred until Yugoslavia's liberation. It was also stated that the King was expected to approve the Tito Šubašić talks, regardless of the fact that the King believed that one of Tito's primary goals was to end the monarchy.

Arthur H. F. Schoenfeld, Charge to the Yugoslav Government in Exile, summarized the situation by once again emphasizing that the subject of the King and Monarchy would wait, as well as the final organization of the Yugoslav State. He also wrote of several other topics. These included Tito's command of the Yugoslav Navy and his requests for supplies and for a permanent military mission in Italy.

The American position on these talks was finally clarified by the Department of State in a message dated July 4, 1944, addressed to Schoenfeld. He wrote that

The final goal is to further the cause of national unity. No action should be initiated which would commit us to recognition of any claims to the revision of pre-war frontiers. Such questions must be held in abeyance for settlement at the peace conference. This means in Yugoslavia that we should provide the fullest aid to Tito's Partisans. . . . We must not become involved in or a party to purely internal conflicts or domestic issues in Yugoslavia.³⁴

The Secretary of State received his first concrete information on the Tito-Šubašić talks from Schoenfeld, on

July 5. This note was a copy of a report given to Churchill by Šubašić. Following are the key excerpts from this communication:

Subasic states that before reaching their conclusions, Tito and he agreed to divide their future into two phases, the first preparatory and the second final. . . . He thinks there will be time enough to improve the position of the King, and the new government shows themselves [sic] prepared to do everything in their power actively to help the people and the resisters. Tito will then be more outspoken on the matter. . . . Subasic adds that the recently-concluded agreement has the following significance for the King and the Government: It signifies first of all recognition by Tito and his anti-Fascist and executive councils of the legitimate representatives of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. This recognition is demonstrated by the fact that Tito and his national committee have discussed and concluded an agreement with the Royal Government of Yugoslavia. In addition, Tito and his men agree to delegate two persons to the Royal Government.³⁵

According to Schoenfeld, the value of this document to Tito and the Partisans was that the King accepted the principle of a democratic and federal organization structure for the post-war state.

America agreed with the British objective to aid Yugoslav resistance elements, to avoid a civil war, and to achieve Yugoslav national unity. The British policy and the American policy were virtually identical. However, Hull did not agree with all the means by which this "accord" was to be implemented. His main argument against it was that it was basically an agreement between the British and Tito,

with Šubašić acting as a go-between. He viewed it as an almost unconditional approval of Partisan demands that would most probably be forced on the King.

It was, however, believed that the appointment of Šubašić to replace Mihailović as Minister of War paved the way for negotiations leading to a reasonable arrangement between the various Yugoslav factions. Hull also was upset at what he termed the exclusion of Serbian interests in the negotiations between Tito and Šubašić. He stated that the Department was firmly against giving Tito and/or the Partisans a free hand in Serbia, and he resented the Allies' lack of knowledge concerning the events within Serbia.³⁶

The King somewhat unhappily described Churchill's reactions to these talks as " . . . content and pleased that Tito recognized my government and showed willingness to cooperate."³⁷

Following Šubašić's return to London, the King formed a new government, to which Tito sent his personal representative. The members of the new government were divided equally among the three largest Yugoslav groups--the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes--causing Fotić to complain about the lack of Serbian representation. The head of the OSS, William Donovan, wrote to the Director of the Office of European Affairs, James C. Dunn, describing a discussion between Tito and Time/Life correspondent Pribičević. In

this article, to which Donovan appeared to give credence, Pribičević described why the Partisans had carried on the discussions between Tito and Šubašić. The Partisans and Tito believed it was necessary to take these steps to obtain the necessary international recognition. The steps were unfortunate, but necessary to allow them to change the political recognition regarding their status in international affairs.

It was only a few days after the United States learned of the substance of the Tito-Šubašić accords that the National Committee of Liberation renounced the Communist representatives sent to London and the Royal Yugoslav Government. They did not consider themselves "officially" represented in London. H. Freeman Matthews, Deputy Director of the Office of European Affairs, wrote to the Secretary of State regarding the comments of the National Committee of Liberation. In it he pointed out that Tito had shown bad faith by announcing the terms of the secret agreement and then by allowing almost the entire text to be read on "Free Yugoslavia," a radio station in Russia. It was also considered poor that after he had named representatives to the Royal Yugoslav Government, the National Committee of Liberation later repudiated them. Matthews once again stressed the Department's belief that Tito should not be strengthened at the expense of the Serbs and finally that American arms were being used by Tito in the Yugoslav Civil

39

War. Perhaps the final word concerning American participation during the recent talks is best summed up by Robert Murphy:

The conversations at Bair and Vis were restricted to an Anglo-Yugoslav basis without American participation, and no invitation to participate was extended to us.⁴⁰

Churchill, after corresponding with Tito, met him face to face in Italy. Their meeting took place on August 12, 1949, and Churchill felt that he had an excellent opportunity to influence Tito. Churchill hoped to increase the cooperation between Tito and Šubašić and the King. Churchill wrote that at his meeting, "Tito assured me that, as he had stated publicly, he had no desire to introduce the Communist system into Yugoslavia."⁴¹ Churchill, however, was not able to receive any commitments from Tito, but once again took the lead in dealing with him. Churchill did cable Roosevelt of his talks, but the United States had little to do with Tito's stay in Italy.

As early as August, 1944, American officials were already concerning themselves with possible Yugoslav post-war claims. These, of course, concerned the regions bordering Yugoslavia on the north and northwest, including Venezia, Giulia, Trieste, Gorizia, and the Istrian Peninsula. Secretary of State Hull pointed out the American position regarding border claims in a note sent to Murphy on August

26, 1944. In the note, Hull pointed out that it was not the policy of the government to recognize any claims, especially⁴² at this time.

On September 12, 1944, the same day the American Army entered Germany, King Peter issued a communique via radio giving his views on the recent Tito-Šubašić accords. In this talk, he urged all Yugoslavs to rally to the National Liberation Army under Tito, and he also affirmed his support for the talks. Eight days later, the United States appointed Richard C. Patterson as the new American Ambassador to the Yugoslav Government in Exile. Patterson remained the American Ambassador until the end of the war and became the first American Ambassador to the new Yugoslavia.

Alexander C. Kirk, U. S. Political Advisor on the staff of the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean Theater (SACMED), wrote to Washington in late September, 1944, concerning the restrictions on American military personnel within Partisan-held Yugoslavia. He wrote that this was because Tito did not wish the American or British representatives to recognize or report on any of the events in the Yugoslav civil war. Tito was, in fact, consolidating his power at this time.

Because the war was nearing its conclusion, Tito and his supporters were more sure of themselves. Their grip on

the country was becoming more firmly established, and Tito was using all his influence to channel Western aid to Yugoslavia. Tito realized that after the Germans began evacuating Greece, which they did on October 7, 1944, Yugoslavia's turn was approaching. It also became known that Tito had left Yugoslavia and flew secretly to Moscow. There he coordinated the activities of the Soviet Army with his Partisans for the upcoming sweep through Yugoslavia. This trip irritated Churchill, who described the British as Tito's protectors. He was particularly upset at not being notified in advance of the trip.⁴³ Tito, by this time, openly considered the American intelligence mission at his headquarters an abomination.

An announcement by Dr. Ivan Ribnikar, President of AVNOJ*, was reported immediately by Kirk to Washington. Ribnikar was reported as saying that a new federal Yugoslavia already existed, both "defacto" and "dejure," which had been established the previous November in the Jajce Declarations proclaiming AVNOJ. He also reported that Ribnikar had said that the Partisans would allow others to make peace with them, but no one would be allowed to deny them the fruits of their victory.

* AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist Council for the Liberation of Yugoslavia) was established by Tito in Jajce during November 1943. It was to establish and carry out political goals for the hitherto military Partisan movement.

This report was viewed with alarm in Washington, because it showed how far Tito wanted to take his power in Yugoslavia, and it led American observers to question what type of arrangements could be made with him in the future. Churchill again became actively involved in Yugoslav affairs.

In a visit to Moscow, October 9-22, 1944, Yugoslavia was discussed with Stalin. They divided the Balkans into spheres of influence with each country having a 50/50 influence in Yugoslavia. The United States was not a participant in these talks and, as Churchill wrote Roosevelt, "You may be sure we shall handle everything so as not to commit you."⁴⁴ Churchill indicated that these were only preliminary discussions and that no firm commitments would be made. He wrote:

Concerning Yugoslavia, the numerical symbol 50-50 is intended to be the foundation of joint action and an agreed policy between the two Powers [Great Britain and the Soviet Union] now closely involved, so as to favor the creation of a united Yugoslavia after all elements there have been joined together to the utmost in driving out the Nazi invaders. It is intended to prevent, for instance, armed strife between the Croats and Slovenes on the one side and powerful and numerous elements in Serbia on the other . . .⁴⁵

Churchill also believed that this arrangement afforded the British to remain on equal footing with the Russians in Yugoslavia.

The Americans, as previously mentioned, saw this area as one of unique importance to the two powers and reacted calmly. Roosevelt had been kept updated by both Ambassador Harriman and Churchill of the proceedings in Moscow and apparently made little of them.

On October 27, 1944, Churchill again brought the subject of Yugoslavia up in a speech before the House of Commons. Churchill was acting again to bring Tito and Šubašić together to effect changes in the situation between the Royal Yugoslav Government and Tito in Yugoslavia. He mentioned that the Russians were joining the British in support of these talks, while the Americans once again remained on the sidelines.

Major Charles W. Thayer of the Independent American Military Mission to Tito wrote from Belgrade on November 4, 1944, concerning the Tito-Šubašić talks and their agreements. This report was of paramount importance because it commented on the internal policies that would be followed by the two major Yugoslav factions, Marshal Tito's National Liberation Front and King Peter's Royal Government. The fulfillment of these agreements was to stabilize the situation and eventually lead to a permanent Yugoslav government, one which the United States must either work with or against if it were to deal with post-World War II Yugoslavia (see Appendix I for a full copy and attached subagreements of the Tito Šubašić Agreement, dated November

1, 1944). Thayer pointed out the major weakness of the plan--the Regents named by the King must be approved by Tito and the new combined cabinet would have a preponderance of Tito's people over Šubašić's by a 2:1 ratio.

Before his departure, Maclean stated that he felt it was the best that could be hoped for, though he readily admitted to its shortcomings, which he said he would have to point out to his Prime Minister. Since he did not believe anything Great Britain or the United States could do would result in a more satisfactory document, he was determined to try to obtain quick approval by his authorities and King Peter.

Thayer continued in the same correspondence:

Furthermore, Tito is today the only leader with any real power within the country. His following, whatever its relative size in proportion to the population, is the only organized, armed and active group in Yugoslavia. Thus, the new agreement only legalized his position as the supreme authority in the country. It is believed that he intends to set up the sort of government desired by the Anti-Fascist Council and that the plebiscite will in all probability be a 'take it or leave it' proposition with no alternative but to express acceptance or rejection of the Council's platform. Under these conditions, the results are a foregone conclusion.⁴⁶

Reactions to the Tito-Šubašić Agreement were not slow in forming. Perhaps the most realistic and sanguine response to these talks came from Kirk. He saw the agreement as a move necessary for Tito and his followers to gain international recognition.

. . . Tito had given barely enough to secure continuity and recognition. He would be Prime Minister and Subasic merely a subservient link with the outside world.⁴⁷

The New York Times November 19, 1944, summed up the Tito-Šubašić Agreement. The paper wrote that this agreement between Tito and Šubašić was greatly assisted by Britain and the USSR and finally cleared up years of political turmoil. It suggested that Britain was backing the King and would be pleased to see him return to the country, while the Soviets backed Tito. The King was quoted as saying that he would wait for the call of his people before returning.⁴⁸

The King reacted much differently in private as reported by Ambassador Patterson:

The King replied that he would not sign the agreement, for it is tantamount to abdication. The King said regency was only a form to gain recognition by the United States and Britain. The King also made comments about the possibility of reorganizing his government and removing himself from both Churchill's and Subasic's influence.⁴⁹

Tito continued to consolidate and broaden his powers in Yugoslavia after the agreement. He announced a full general amnesty to the supporters of Mihailović and to members of the Regular Croatian Army ("Domobrani"). He also published the political make-up of the postwar Yugoslavia. It would be a federal state with six republics--Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, and Montenegro.

It was stated that each republic would have its own assembly elected by the people following the complete liberation of the country.

Churchill also reacted to this agreement, which he was greatly responsible for helping to enact. His infatuation with Tito and the Partisans became far less intense, but he nevertheless continued to support the Tito-Šubašić Agreement.

The new Secretary of State, Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., finally outlined the official American policy to the Tito-Šubašić Agreement in a telegram to Ambassador Patterson in London, dated December 23, 1944. Patterson was told that he could tell both Šubašić and the King that the Department had reviewed the documents and concluded that they held in form with the principles expressed by the Royal Yugoslav Government, both in its political and its war aims. However, Stettinius added that the American government would have to reserve opinion on the ability of this agreement to be fully implemented. It was believed that the implementation depended upon the cooperation and respect of the Yugoslav two factions for each other. Patterson was also told to emphasize that the American government had always defended the rights of the Yugoslav peoples to form their own government without the suppression of any group within the country, and in particular without any foreign influence.

After saying that the agreement was perhaps too general and that knowledge of pertinent subtleties in Yugoslav law was not at hand, Stettinius continued:

For your guidance, it may be added that in the event of the King's acceptance of this or any compromise agreement, the question of 'recognition' by this Government would not arise. Our formal relations would not be determined by our appraisal of the merits of the arrangement. Should the King reject whatever terms may be arrived at, we consider it probable that Marshal Tito would formally repudiate the Government-in-Exile and request recognition of his organization as the responsible government. In such circumstances, our decision concerning recognition would depend on a re-examination of the situation within Yugoslavia, followed probably with consultation with other governments with regard to the situation then prevailing.⁵⁰

1944 came to an end with the political situation in Yugoslavia becoming more clear. Tito had continued to consolidate his political strength and had been recognized by the King as the military leader for the entire country. The Tito-Šubašić Agreement of November 1, 1944, had given both Tito and the Royal Yugoslav Government a chance to work together to form a united Yugoslav government. The Agreement had tacitly recognized both the power of Tito and his followers and their acceptance, at least for the time being, of the existence of the monarchy.

The United States still maintained its ambassador in London (Patterson) to the Yugoslav Government in Exile (The Royal Yugoslav Government), but had also established direct

contacts within Yugoslavia. The American Military Mission had arrived in Yugoslavia in August 1943, and by August 1944, was stationed at Partisan Headquarters at Vis. By October, elements of the military mission were over much of the country, including Serbia. Stettinius had made it clear that the American government found nothing incompatible in the points made in the Tito-Šubašić Agreement, but had been sure to point out that its implementation might not be very easy. This latter point would be brought into sharp focus throughout 1945. First, the King would balk at the implementation as he realized what it did to his position. And second, it became increasingly difficult to compromise with Tito. The American government and members of the U.S. press corps in Europe continually pointed out the lack of democracy and the growth of a Communist dictatorship in Yugoslavia. The face of internal events in Yugoslavia did play an increasingly important role in how outsiders and particularly the United States viewed Yugoslavia. The internal events in Yugoslavia created problems for the American government, causing a long delay in its recognition of the Yugoslav government.

CHAPTER VI

1945 AND 1946

The position of the King vis-a-vis Tito within Yugoslavia became much more crucial after the King learned of the Tito-Šubašić Agreement. King Peter was described by both American and British diplomats as being very apprehensive concerning his future position. The King was very suspicious of AVNOJ and considered it illegal. His natural tendencies and those of his advisors were to ignore the affairs and to push for the royal powers regardless of the position of Tito and his supporters in Yugoslavia. Once again the British were dominant in dealing with the situation and urged the monarch to come to grips with the reality of his position.

Patterson, in a message to the Secretary of State on January 12, 1945, wrote that the King and his Prime Minister were at complete odds concerning the Tito-Šubašić Agreement and that the Prime Minister had almost resigned from the government for what he considered to be the King's unconstitutional behavior. The King did, however, agree to some of the terms in the Agreement, but wished to clarify

his position. The King was in search of a compromise that would not allow his fate to be determined almost solely by men not in his confidence.

The King's position was perhaps most accurately described in the press. The King was originally against the Regency, as he found no constitutional grounds for it under current conditions. He was described as not totally opposed to the idea of a regency, but wished to add qualifiers to its implementation before he would accept it. He had three conditions for approving the Regency: first, that he would name the regents; second, that the legislative powers of the new government be limited until after a constituent assembly could be elected; and third, that he, himself, be allowed to return.

The King began to search for a solution to his problems; that is, a Regency picked and approved by him and the chance to save his throne, as outlined in the Tito-Šubašić Agreement. The Secretary of State once again reaffirmed the American position, which was that the Yugoslavs should be allowed to choose their own political fate and that all elements in the country should work together to achieve that goal. He also hinted that it would be best if the Yugoslav government could soon be reestablished in Belgrade and that Western ambassadors could be sent there as representatives to a unified Yugoslav

government. He felt that the presence of Allied (Western) representatives to a unified Yugoslav government could help settle affairs in the country and lessen the increasing¹ totalitarian nature of the Yugoslav regime

The King's hesitation to accept the Tito-Šubašić Agreement created problems for him that he could not control. His remarks were seen as threatening a very promising chance for establishing a united post-war government. Tito's faction called the King's protest unconstitutional and threatened to use it as a pretext for ending the monarchy once and for all. Churchill, in a speech to the House of Commons on January 18, 1945, said of the King's hesitancy:

It is a matter of days within which a decision must be reached upon these matters, and if we were so unfortunate as not to be able to obtain the consent of King Peter, the matter, in fact, would have to go ahead, his assent being presumed.²

The United States replied that it had not participated in the Tito-Šubašić talks and had only approved of their broad outline--that they favored the return of the Yugoslav Government in Exile, but that even if it returned to Yugoslavia, the United States could offer nothing beyond provisional representation at Belgrade.

In a message from the Acting Secretary of State to Ambassador Harriman, U. S. envoy to the Soviet Union, the

outline of a message received from Stalin via the British was sent. Stalin was reported to have favored immediate acceptance by all major powers of the Tito-Šubašić Agreement and considered U.S. reservations on the subject as an encouragement to the King and a possible stumbling block to inter-Allied cooperation. He saw the issue as dividing the Americans from their British and Soviet partners.

Ambassador Patterson received a message from the Acting Secretary of State outlining the American position on the situation on January 29, 1945. He said that America had come a long way towards muting the British position, but would wait for further clarification from the Yugoslavs themselves.

We understand from the agreement between Marshal Tito and Dr. Subasic that the proposed United Government of Yugoslavia is to be set up for the interim or transitional period pending the holding of national elections in which the will of the people may be freely expressed. We would be prepared to accredit our Ambassador to a government set up in Yugoslavia on this basis.³

In a memorandum written by the Chief of the Division of Southern European affairs, Cavendish W. Cannon, the situation in Yugoslavia was discussed from the perspective of Soviet intentions. Cannon divided his memorandum into seven parts. The first five discussed internal Yugoslav relationships. He remarked that Serbian support for Tito now seemed strong, but that Croatian opinion was divided

between Tito and the leaders of the Croatian Peasant Party. Tito was described as being very much against the Croatian Peasant Party.

The Soviet government has shown no particular interest in learning what the United States thinks about the Yugoslav situation. It frankly has not asked for a common policy. It has its plans and is willing to go ahead. The British are trying to keep even with the Russians, and one cannot but feel their anxiety to have us go along is in large part a design to prepare a facade of Allied action to cover the interplay of British and Soviet political forces in the Balkans and distribute the responsibility when the general public later learns of the real conditions within Yugoslavia and the type of administration the Army expects to set up.⁴

Cannon wrote about the impossibility of the Allies being on an equal basis in Yugoslavia. He pointed out the presence of Soviet troops in the country and Tito's acceptance and growing use of Communism in Yugoslavia. He wrote that neither Britain nor the Soviet Union had any wish to help the Yugoslav people, but were only interested in carrying out their political roles in the Balkans.

Developments in Yugoslavia and with the King in London were beginning to affect the situation. It appeared that Šubašić and members of the Cabinet were preparing to go back to Yugoslavia regardless of the King's actions or pronouncements. The British had asked the Americans to treat the Šubašić government the same in Belgrade as they did in London, if it would finally take residence there.

The Secretary of State received a message sent by Kirk on February 2, 1954, disclaiming Tito's need to compromise on the situation. Tito's position was now considered so strong within Yugoslavia that he would not relax his growing stranglehold on the country for the benefit of external recognition.

In February, the King finally announced the three men he wished to represent him as the Regency Council and to deal on his behalf with Tito inside Yugoslavia. However, Tito was quick to denounce two of these individuals, and affairs appeared to have come to an impasse. Tito thought the King was unreasonable and was simply trying to prevent the implementation of the Agreement. Tito now threatened to try the King for his "crimes;" and the King, for his part, stated that he would disavow his entire Cabinet if they went to Belgrade.

Regardless of the actions taken by both the King and Tito, the Regents were on their way to Yugoslavia on the 13th of January. Plans for enlarging AVNOJ and the moderation of Yugoslav politics could perhaps begin immediately according to reports sent back to the State Department. The United States made an official announcement concerning events in Yugoslavia (and liberated Europe) on February 26, 1945, following discussions at the Crimean Conference.

In the Crimean Declaration of February 11, Roosevelt,

Stalin, and Churchill agreed to recommend to Tito and Šubašić that the agreement between them should be put into effect immediately and that a new government should be formed on the basis of that agreement. At the same time, a declaration of liberated Europe was published in which Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill agreed to coordinate the policies of their governments to assist liberated peoples to solve by democratic means their pressing political and economic problems. Among the situations in which this assistance would be applicable would be cases where, in the judgment of the principal Allies, the conditions within a liberated state required that interim governmental authorities be formed which would be broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of governments responsible to the will of the people.

Accordingly, the United States government would like to see Subasic and Marshal Tito reach an early agreement in accordance with these principles and in a spirit of mutual understanding in the negotiations now taking place in Belgrade.⁵

Still, problems remained with the Yugoslavs themselves. The King's nominees to the Regency Council were not acceptable to the members of AVNOJ, and the Agreement might also have collapsed because of the King's wishes to have the complete determination of who was to represent him.

Šubašić, who remained in contact with the British, began to transmit worried messages about the ability of the Tito-Šubašić Agreement to withstand the King's intransigence, especially in view of Tito's growing impatience. The American government retained its previous policy of not forcing the King to act.

On March 21, James C. Dunn, acting for the Secretary of State, sent a message to the Yugoslav Charge, Frangeš, acknowledging the formation of the Regency Council on March 4, 1946 by King Peter. The Regents were Dr. Srdjan Budisavljević, Dr. Ante Mandić, and Dušan Sernec. It also acknowledged the formation of a new and united government in Yugoslavia with Tito as Acting President and Šubašić as Acting Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. This note also hinted at sending Ambassador Patterson and his staff to Belgrade in the near future.

American interest in the personal freedoms of the Yugoslav population began to be stimulated in 1945. Reports and discussions of the feelings of the general populace were beginning to be heard. The facade of complete agreement between Tito and his National Liberation Front and the majority of the Yugoslav population became less secure. A report from Europe by American representatives began to tell different stories:

In general, the present regime is referred to by the people as 'those people' and it seems evident that when the government is established a great deal will be expected of it. That it will be the same thing as at present under different color is realized only by a relative few.⁷

Messages now began to flood Washington outlining the internal situation in Yugoslavia. The Partisans were granted influence and some degree of popularity for their prosecution of the war, but nowhere could it be determined that they were universally popular. It became increasingly evident that they were more feared than trusted. In fact, terrorism was a term gaining currency for many observers of Yugoslav internal affairs.

The new government was not believed to have much power, and the growing strength of the Tito element was evident in all areas of the country's life. Kirk described the power as being held by Tito, Kardelj, Hubrang, and Djilas, among others, all of whom, he was quick to point out, were Moscow-⁸trained and oriented.

In April, Tito requested American aid from Ambassador Patterson. In that meeting, the Americans were also informed that Tito would visit the Soviet Union to discuss matters with the top members of the Soviet Government. Averill Harriman, American Ambassador to the Soviet Union, could only speculate in a message to Washington what had occurred between Tito and his Soviet hosts. He speculated,

however, on a possible alliance between the two countries and that any concrete policy decisions would have to wait the test of time to see whether the Yugoslavs and the Soviets would work in greater coordination.

Ambassador Patterson relayed the views of Milan Grol, a member of the new government and an important pre-war Serbian politician. He described the situation in Yugoslavia as growing dimmer daily as Communists increasingly took hold of virtually all the political and administrative posts. Šubašić was described as a virtual prisoner, while acting as Yugoslav Foreign Minister, and there was almost no one in the government who could argue for greater democratization of the Yugoslav society. It was also suggested that Tito was a Soviet puppet.

Carl F. Norton of the Division of Southern European Affairs, sent a memorandum to Washington discussing the internal affairs in Yugoslavia as he perceived that the Partisans viewed them. Edward Kardelj, perhaps the number two or three man in the Partisan movement, was interviewed. He, as could be expected, supported the actions of AVNOJ and Tito. He explained that most members of the pre-war political elite had disgraced themselves by their actions during the war and could not be allowed to participate in the new government. Kardelj also contrasted the Yugoslav experience with the United States. He remarked that long periods of dictatorship and falsified elections had ill-

prepared the Yugoslavs for a democracy in the American mold. He stated that Yugoslavia must make its own road, and, unlike America, it had many traitors and war criminals to deal with. It can be assumed that these views were at least semi-official and contrasted greatly with those of Grol, who, unlike Kardelj, was in no position to do anything about it.¹⁰

The Soviet Union and the Regency Council of Yugoslavia signed a Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Aid, and Postwar Cooperation in Moscow on April 11, 1945. When Harriman reported the event to Washington on April 13, 1945, he mentioned that the treaty was almost identical to the one signed between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. However, there was one exception that Harriman noted:

Article 3, which declares that the contracting parties would participate in a spirit of the most sincere cooperation in all international activities directed to secure peace and security"11

American-Yugoslav difficulties began to increase as Yugoslav soldiers pushed outside their borders into Austria and Italy. American and British troops were in a virtual race to liberate Trieste before the Partisans could capture the city. Both the Yugoslavs and the Western Allies wished to control Trieste for its geographical and economic importance. To Yugoslavia, it represented a far larger and more modern port than anything then or in the foreseeable

future available in Yugoslavia. It also would be a feather in the cap of Socialist Yugoslavia, aiding Socialists in other countries, in particular, Italy. The British and Americans saw it as the southern gateway into Austria, the logical port for Austrian commerce. It was also of political significance because they wished to prevent Yugoslav/Russian presence in the territory. The Western Allies feared that Yugoslavs in Trieste would strengthen and aid the growing Italian Socialist movement, and neither power wished to see Italy become a Socialist state.

During the problems in Trieste, Churchill and Harry S. Truman, Roosevelt's successor, kept a running correspondence concerning Yugoslav actions. Both leaders considered Tito to be backed by the Soviet Union. Truman cited a message he received from Stalin on May 23. Truman wrote: "The Russian Premier backed Tito in his claims and hoped that the conflict would be terminated by "our acceptance of the Yugoslav position."¹² Churchill wrote that

In order to avoid leading Tito or the Yugoslav commanders into any temptation, it would be wise to have a solid mass of troops in this area, with a great superiority of modern weapons. . . . 13

Truman cabled Churchill stating that he was "increasingly concerned over the implications of Tito's actions in Venezia Giulia. . . . "¹⁴ He wrote that Tito's forces must immediately submit themselves to the authority

of the Allied Commander. Churchill termed Truman's message
 "a most welcome and strong message."¹⁵ The two Western
 Allies now pushed in large numbers of troops under British
 command and caused the eventual evacuation of Yugoslav
 forces from Trieste. The Soviets protested but did little
 else, and Truman was relieved that no fighting had occurred
 so that he could concentrate on ending the war in the
 Pacific. Churchill was happy to be able to confront Stalin
 with a combined effort against Tito and hoped it might carry
 into other diplomatic problems. He wrote: "I need not say
 how relieved I was to receive this invaluable support from
 my new companion."¹⁶ Truman summarized his feelings on
 Venezia Giulia thusly: "The American government never for a
 moment considered that Trieste should go to Yugoslavia.
 That was Roosevelt's position, and it was mine."¹⁷

The American and British opposition to the occupation
 of Trieste provoked General Jovanović, Chief of Staff of the
 Yugoslav Army, who "rudely requested British and American
 military missions in Belgrade (and their field
 representatives) to leave Yugoslavia."¹⁸

The United States had, however, indicated that certain
 border corrections might be made along the old Yugoslav-
 Italian border, but that any such move must wait for the
 appropriate peace treaty. In May, Secretary of State
 Stettinius and Yugoslav Foreign Minister Šubašić held a

meeting in San Francisco in which Šubašić requested lend-lease aid. Šubašić was rebuked for the Yugoslav attitude concerning Venezia Giulia and Carinthia. Stettinius saw no chance of aiding Yugoslavia until its attitude softened.

On his way back to Belgrade, Šubašić stopped in Washington and continued his high-level talks with members of the State Department. There he once again put forth Yugoslav claims to be a part of the administration of Venezia Giulia. He was told that Marshal Alexander was the primary authority in the area and that any Yugoslav actions would have to be subordinated to his wishes. When discussion turned to the Yalta formulas, Šubašić had been¹⁹ defensive in his response, "progress has been slow."

Upon arriving in Belgrade, Šubašić held talks with the American Ambassador, who once again cautioned him to stop Yugoslav actions in the Venezia Giulia area. The Ambassador warned of Yugoslav problems with American public opinion, which now considered Yugoslavia a virtual Communist dictatorship on the Russian model. As the American government began to receive further information on Yugoslav developments, their scepticism of Tito's aims grew. The fulfillment of the Yalta Declaration on Yugoslavia became increasingly in doubt.* The State Department began

* This is in reference to a freely-chosen government and freedom of speech and press.

receiving messages from its representatives throughout Europe regarding the events within Yugoslavia. These reports, which became redundant, told of the political killings of opponents of the Partisans, persecution of the clergy, and the nationalization of private industry, including the property of American nationals and corporations.

The American press printed many articles containing criticism of Yugoslavia. The press described Yugoslavia as a dictatorship growing daily in its ability to stifle thought and opposition within the country. Sam Pope Brewer of The New York Times wrote that civil rights, as understood in America, did not exist in Yugoslavia and that all forms of censorship were being increasingly foisted upon Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia today is a striking picture of conflict between the high democratic ideals repeatedly proclaimed by her leaders and oppressive strong armed methods in running the Government. It is a tyranny exercised in the name of the people by a minority too well organized and too heavily armed to be disputed.²⁰

The American Ambassador to France, Lafferty, described²¹ Yugoslavia as a "Communist dictatorship." The State Department again had more harsh words to describe the attitude of the Yugoslav government to the Yalta Declaration. It called Yugoslavia's attempt at implementing

the accords "a farce and a mockery."²² In the same piece, the State Department quoted a speech given by Tito in Serbia on June 17, 1945. In his speech, Tito mentioned the great help Yugoslavia had received from the Soviet Union. The State Department pointed out that "no mention has been made throughout the speech of any help coming during or after the war from any of the Western Allies."²³

The American Charge in Yugoslavia, Harold Shantz, stated:

I am convinced that there is no hope of free democracy here and that the new laws will be window dressing for totalitarian communist regime.²⁴

The situation in Yugoslavia was not lost to the King, who also understood its implications for him. He stated publicly and later wrote in his autobiography that Tito had repudiated the Tito-Šubašić Agreement and was not living up to the Yalta recommendations and that he must also repudiate the Tito-Šubašić Agreement. King Peter announced once again that he was sole arbiter of the royal prerogative within Yugoslavia and the Regents were discharged from their responsibilities.²⁵ His pronouncements met with only limited response as his position was almost hopeless without massive support from both Great Britain and the United States.

In an unofficial meeting with Tito, the American Ambassador Patterson reported to President Truman

. . . I told Tito that without the authority of my government and unofficially, he could expect no economic help from my country whatsoever unless he carried out his solemn commitments made at Yalta and upon which we recognized him. The President replied, 'You did the right thing.'²⁶

The United States and Great Britain were becoming very upset by events in Eastern Europe at this time. The Western Allies felt that the Yalta Declarations on freedom of choice and the establishments of democratic governments were being ignored by the Soviet Union. The Soviet ability to transform governments into a socialist form was troublesome and occurred without consulting Western viewpoints. Yugoslavia was considered a prime example, but events along these lines were happening in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria at this time. The Western Allies began to view Eastern Europe as a Soviet colony with Yugoslavia perhaps working under orders direct from Moscow, and they resented Soviet domination.

Milovan Djilas, a leading Partisan intellectual and political leader, in a speech reported by Shantz to Washington, discussed the Partisan viewpoint on the upcoming elections. His remarks were seen as a blatant example of the Tito regime's confidence in its position within Yugoslavia. The remarks did nothing to calm American apprehensions, but only added fuel to the American belief that Yugoslavia would go her own way regardless of Yalta.

The Secretary of State held a discussion with King Peter in London on September 13, 1945. The two men discussed the internal situation in Yugoslavia and the upcoming elections.

King Peter said that the four freedoms guaranteed by the Allies did not exist in Yugoslavia and that Marshal Tito had violated all his promises to the Allies in that he had ignored his commitments outlined in the Tito-Subasic Agreement, to which the Secretary replied, in essence, that he had been informed of this Peter said, 'If you permit the elections to be held now, and they are not free, then you will be forced not to recognize the government which results from such elections!' To this, Secretary Byrnes indicated that was a possibility.

The King made one last point at this meeting:

King Peter then said 'we have had many nice words and promises from the Allies, but no action.' The Secretary replied . . . that on that point many people agreed.²⁷

The State Department received a message from a representative in Yugoslavia on September 15, 1945. It reported that the opposition candidates had removed themselves from the election lists because they considered the forthcoming elections to be neither democratic nor representative of the political will of the people.

On September 27, 1945, Harold Shantz, State Department Representative in Yugoslavia, wrote a long report to the State Department concerning his views on the internal
28
affairs in Yugoslavia. His report was very representative

of the mainstream of American thoughts on Yugoslavia at this time. He reported that the elections to be held on November 11, 1945, could not express the free will of the people and should be postponed. He later wrote in this report that democracy in Yugoslavia had disappeared and the country was being governed by external forces. He wrote, "Yet a relatively small group of Communists inspired and directed by Moscow, has succeeded in fostering a ruthless totalitarian police regime on the Yugoslavs." He added later that "The regime and its chief public agency, the National Front, are in effect tools of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Tito is an agent of Moscow."²⁹

Schantz ended his report by writing that Yugoslavia was a country living in fear and that the United States could do nothing but use moral force to help the people.

Patterson reported to the Secretary of State on October 10, 1945, of the resignations from the Yugoslav Government of Grol, Sutej, Šubašić, and Junaković' (the Vice President of the Yugoslav National Bank). Šubašić' said that his agreements with Tito had not been carried out and that he owed it to the people to resign.

Tito spoke with a touring group of American congressmen, and he expressed surprise at the resignations. He stated that there were no differences and that the opposition leaders were wrong in their views of the Yugoslav

political scene. Tito was quoted by Patterson on this occasion, after announcing that 200,000 Yugoslavs had been demobilized: "He said demobilization for Yugoslavia is a social as well as a military problem since many soldiers have no home or livelihood to return to." Later in the same report, Patterson noted

Congressmen upon leaving the airport today said Tito's presentation was to them unconvincing and it had hedged on important questions of large army and plight of opposition.³⁰

Patterson also talked to Šubašić about recent developments. Šubašić confirmed that Tito had accepted his resignation, but stated that he would not announce it publicly for fear of its effect on Big Power relations. Šubašić stated that he believed that Tito was not the supreme power in the country, but shared it with Kardelj and Ranković. Šubašić said that he had already been accused of being an agent for Great Britain and the United States. He also reported that leaders of the Croatian Peasant Party were now more than ever behind Vlado Maček (the Party leader).

Patterson received a message from the Secretary of State in reference to an August 29, 1945 loan request from the Yugoslavs.

In view of the political situation in Yugoslavia, S. E. feels that the United States should be cool toward a loan to Yugoslavia at the present time. The Export Import Bank is not contemplating any action on the request until questions of policy are settled by the Department. It is generally agreed that the figure of \$300 million is entirely too large.³¹

More internal problems arose after Grol held a meeting with touring American congressmen, who reported that the reason he removed himself from the election was that he feared to appear in public for his own safety and could not ask his followers to expose themselves to similar dangers.

Religious leaders in Yugoslavia were also very much against the regime. Archbishop Stepinac and other Catholic leaders published many charges against the regime's brutal and undemocratic conduct.³²

James Reston wrote in The New York Times on October 12, 1945 about the political situation in Yugoslavia. He stated the usual attacks against the growth of totalitarianism in the country and also the lack of follow-through on the part of Tito and his followers regarding the Yalta Declarations. More importantly, he wrote publicly about the dilemma now facing the American government--how to handle the problem of recognizing the Tito regime when the regents and almost all members of the old pre-war political parties had resigned and refused to participate in the forthcoming elections.

As expected, the State Department also began exploring

its relationship with Yugoslavia. The Crimea Conference influenced the American attitudes on Yugoslavia to the Tito-Šubašić Agreement, but with Šubašić's resignation, the State Department believed that the Agreement lost its validity. How could the Yugoslav government now be considered a "proper instrument" if only one side was now represented in the government? The American government sought the help of the Soviet Union and Great Britain in bringing about a reconciliation between Tito and Šubašić. In lieu of this, the State Department sent messages to Moscow and London asking those governments to urge Tito to postpone the coming elections.

Patterson held discussions with Tito in Belgrade on American-Yugoslav relations in which he stated the American position about the abrogation of the Yalta Declaration by Yugoslavia and the concern for the internal repression in Yugoslavia. He brought up in particular the lack of a free press and the lack of meaning a one-party election would have. Tito replied that Yugoslavia had met her obligations as discussed at Yalta and that laws had been passed guaranteeing freedom of the press and free elections.

The American government was quick to receive the British and Soviet responses to its request to have Tito postpone the elections. The Russians stated that there were no grounds to interfere in Yugoslavia and that the present Yugoslav government (Tito's) should be allowed to set its

own date for the election. The British, although more sympathetic than the Russians, also believed it better to stay out of internal Yugoslav affairs and let the elections go as scheduled. It seemed that the British had recognized Tito's future success and did not wish to antagonize him, which might result in repercussions later.

Ambassador Patterson sent a recapitulation of the American position vis-vis Yugoslavia to the Yugoslav Minister for Foreign Affairs (Tito) on November 6, 1945. Patterson told Tito that the United States viewed the upcoming election as unrepresentative of the Yugoslav people. He also stressed that it was so set up that the opposition leaders had felt it necessary to remain away from this contest. He said that these circumstances had brought the very validity of the elections into question and without the guarantees outlined in the Tito-Šubašić Agreement being met, the prestige of the Yugoslav government and confidence in it abroad would suffer.

The Yugoslavs held the election on schedule. Patterson sent a report back to Washington in which he described the elections as fairly quiet. He said by this time no "terroristic" methods were needed and the population was well behaved. The results were reported as 83.2% for the Front and 16.8% for the Opposition.

Because of the regime subsequently installed in

Yugoslavia, much debate went on within the American government as to what status it should give former members of the old Yugoslav regime whom the Tito government demanded be returned to face trial. Patterson wrote that categories defined by the Yugoslav government were so nebulous as to allow for any interpretation deemed appropriate by Yugoslav authorities. Therefore, America must be careful to avoid sending innocent people back to the country. Patterson believed that individuals returned to the country had already been judged and were most probably already condemned.

Tito responded to Ambassador Patterson's fears on November 19, 1945. Tito said that the recommendations of the Yalta Conference had been fully carried out and that any objections to this fact could have no real substance. He wrote that Yugoslavia could now consider all her obligations to the Allied governments as carried out. The people had responded on November 11, 1945, by their vast support for the government in the election. Tito also discussed the King, whom he said had no place in the country, because the people no longer recognized or wanted him.

The British and the Russians had made no protests over the elections and instantly recognized the results. The United States, on the other hand, was not sure it would recognize the election.

A memorandum prepared by the Acting Chief, Division of

Southern European Affairs, Samuel Reber, was sent to the Secretary of State on November 24, 1945. This memorandum discussed recent events in Yugoslavia, including the election and Tito's message in which he declared the fulfillment of Yugoslavia's obligations as set forth in the Yalta Declaration. He wrote at length about reaccrediting Ambassador Patterson to the new Yugoslav government. He pointed out that he was still accredited to the now non-existent Royal government. He wrote that there were obviously grounds for the American government to withhold such recognition, but saw no valid reason to do so. He recommended that the United States bite the bullet and recognize the Tito regime. However, he was adamant in refusing any economic assistance to Yugoslavia. He felt that aid could perhaps give the United States some leverage in lessening the "terrorism" within Yugoslavia.

Ambassador Patterson began, by late 1945, to send more frequent examples of Yugoslavia's increasingly anti-Western stance. He cited the fact that radio stations and publishing houses had been restricted from using American or British news sources. On November 29, 1945, Patterson wrote the Secretary of State and asked that the U.S. withhold recognition of the Tito regime. He also stated that Belgrade was, in foreign policy terms, a "Soviet Republic," that the regime was hostile to America and Britain and could

35

not stand on its own without Soviet support.

Ambassador Patterson believed, like the British, that the Yugoslav majority was anti-Communist, that in a free election Communist representation would all but disappear. He, like Peter, believed that if left to its own political devices, the Tito regime would slowly liberalize the country and bring it into closer alignment with the United States and Britain. He stated that at present, however, "the U.S. has no influence on this regime and cannot have as long as normal recognition is extended."³⁶

The Ambassador summed up the financial situation of the Yugoslavs thusly:

Economically, people are rapidly being stripped of their possessions. Before long, private capital and business will have disappeared, even if some business continues to be done in some private firms. Government gives lip service to private trade hoping to gain our economic support while concealing its ultimate objectives.³⁷

December 1, 1945, the abolition of the monarchy was announced, and the Federative National Republic of Yugoslavia was established. Acting Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, notified the Secretary of State in Moscow of the latest messages received from Ambassador Patterson in Yugoslavia. With the impending British recognition of the new Yugoslav government, (Britain recognized the new government on December 15, 1945), a possible presidential response was sent to Byrnes. It stated first that the

United States was still very concerned about the personal freedoms of the Yugoslav peoples; secondly, that the situation had not changed since the election; and, thirdly, that if the U. S. government recognized the new Yugoslav government, this would by no means be considered as an acceptance of internal Yugoslav policies.

38

The American attitude toward Yugoslavia changed little in 1945. The United States government knew who held the power and ran Yugoslavia, but was as yet not ready to change its diplomatic stance.

Early in 1946, the problem of granting Tito permission to come to the United States was again brought to the fore. Tito wanted to come for an official visit to the United States to increase his and his regime's prestige and if possible to secure American economic aid for Yugoslavia. Patterson received a message from the Acting Secretary of State concerning Tito's request for a visit to the United States, which stated that the U. S. could see no good coming from a visit by Tito. Such a visit could create trouble within the American-Yugoslav community as it might be construed as an acceptance or an approval of Tito's methods and actions within Yugoslavia. The Acting Secretary also reiterated the fact that under present political circumstances, the United States was not ready to discuss aid for Yugoslavia. Patterson was instructed to relay these

39

views semi-officially to the Yugoslavs.

Yugoslavia became more interested in receiving U. S. economic aid to help in its postwar economic development. However, American responses to these inquiries were consistently negative. The United States was worried about Yugoslav claims to parts of Austria and Italy and was even more concerned about a possible abrogation of previous Yugoslav government economic and financial agreements.

At the same time as these discussions were being carried out within the State Department, the Secretary of State publicly defined the current status of American recognition of Yugoslavia. Byrnes pointed out that the United States had never completed its recognition of Tito. He also reminded his listeners that Ambassador Patterson was still accredited to the King and was an interim representative in Belgrade. He said that the United States was waiting to see whether Yugoslavia would observe its obligations under the "existing treaties of amity and
40
commerce."

It had become apparent that the status quo between the United States and Yugoslavia could not be maintained indefinitely. The Secretary of State held another news conference in Washington on March 12, 1946, in which he again pointed out the difficulty in fully recognizing the regime in Yugoslavia. He again stated that the United States was waiting for Yugoslavia to accept its

international obligations. He also added that the United States wished to see personal freedoms and a free election held in Yugoslavia.

Secretary of State Byrnes sent President Truman a memorandum on April 9, 1946, in which he recommended the recognition by the United States of the current government in Yugoslavia, as well as the accreditation of Kosanovic' as the Yugoslav Ambassador to the United States. He stated that Yugoslavia had finally agreed to accept its international obligations and responsibilities. He ended his memorandum by suggesting that the United States fully accredit Ambassador Patterson to the present Yugoslav
41
regime.

On April 16, 1946, the United States government delivered a message to the Yugoslav Charge d'Affairs offering a formal recognition of the Yugoslav government.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The United States' first involvement in Yugoslavia was to try to prevent the country from joining the Tripartite Pact and then to encourage Yugoslav resistance to the expected German invasion. These American moves mirrored closely the British actions of the time. The United States would follow or react to British initiatives throughout World War II regarding Yugoslavia. The United States, after its initial enthusiasm for Yugoslavia following the coup in 1941, retreated from any major actions concerning that country for months and left the British to do as they wished in Yugoslavia.

Churchill, more than any American leader, was responsible for dividing Western actions in Yugoslavia. Although America became directly involved in Yugoslavia, it was usually as a response to some event that had already been carried out, for example the Tito-Šubašić Agreement or the outlawing of the monarchy by the Tito regime. The United States recognized that the British and the Soviets had special interests in the area and wished to remain free

of these powers and deal with Yugoslavia on strictly American terms.

Because the United States had no special interests in Yugoslavia, it thought to prevent any major assistance, either military or political to Yugoslavia. This was to allow America to use its resources in more important areas of the war. America was far more engaged in the Pacific War than were either the British or the Soviets, and the Americans never let themselves become too involved in Yugoslavia or the Balkans because of it.

The American policy during the war was to maintain proper diplomatic relations with the Yugoslav government, but not to commit itself to any substantial degree. When the United States once again returned to Yugoslav soil, it was only on a very limited basis. The American military mission and later political representatives allowed the United States to form its own opinions on the war in Yugoslavia. This brought American knowledge of internal Yugoslav affairs to a level higher than it had been for years, but still allowed the United States to limit its response to Yugoslav issues.

The United States became aware of the Yugoslav civil war and wished it to cease, but no American initiatives were brought forward to help end it. The United States insisted that its aid in Yugoslavia be used in eliminating the external foe and not be used against domestic opponents.

The United States would recognize Tito's position and even credited him with a degree of popularity in the country, but was unhappy with his political tone and ever-increasing totalitarianism, i.e., Soviet measures within the country. Tito held power; the Americans knew it and finally accepted it. They realized that any serious attempt to try to influence the Yugoslav domestic situation could be both expensive and time-consuming, using resources earmarked for other, more important areas.

The American government lost almost no troops on Yugoslav soil, and its economic commitment during the war was insignificant, as it was to remain until 1948. Yugoslavia was never treated as a major theater for American actions, nor was it ever seriously considered for such a role regardless of British and/or Yugoslav government (Royal) hopes. The American policy of non-intervention was successfully followed and, even after the recognition of the new Yugoslav situation, the United States remained only passively interested in that country. American aid for Tito came years after the war and then only after he had reacted against Soviet pressure. The King, although not speaking just about the Americans, remarked bitterly about his government's treatment by the Western Allies.

I most certainly feel that no act of mine was or could have been responsible for the vile treatment I and my government received so unexpectedly and unjustly.¹

President Truman characterized his policy in Yugoslavia as keeping America out of any Balkan imbroglio and concluded that events in Yugoslavia were carried forward by their own momentum:

I was trying to be extremely careful not to get us mixed up in a Balkan turmoil. The Balkans had long been a source of trouble and war. I believed that if the political situation in the Balkans could be adjusted so that Hungary, Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Bulgaria, as well as Poland and Austria could all have governments of their own people's choosing with no outside influence, this would help us in our own plans for peace.

I did not want to become involved in the Balkans in a way that would lead us into another world conflict. In any case, I was anxious to get the Russians into the war against Japan as soon as possible, thus saving countless Americans.

CHAPTER VIII

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

The secondary works used in this study were written from many different perspectives and for many different reasons. The majority of works to be discussed here cover Yugoslavia only as a small part of a large and complex problem. Authors such as Herbert Feis and Gabriel Kolko are among this group. There were also books which dealt directly with Yugoslavia and which were much more restrictive in their subject matter. This bibliographical essay is concerned with both types of works and will begin with material which is specific to Yugoslavia.

Walter Roberts' Tito, Mihailovic and the Allies was written by an American diplomat who had worked and spent much time in Yugoslavia. He reviewed his work as a broad general outline of wartime events in Yugoslavia. In the introduction, he states that he wished to clarify and correct many misconceptions about Yugoslavia. He tried to cover the topic from a neutral perspective, attempting to refrain from being overly enthusiastic about either of the

two main characters in Yugoslavia during the war--Dražā Mihailović and the Četniks and Josip Broz Tito and the Partisans. It must be admitted that he succeeded in comparison to works such as Constantin Fotić's (Ambassador to the United States from Yugoslavia during the war) The War We Lost, or Vladimir Dedijer's (who participated at the pinnacle of Partisan leadership and planning) Tito. Men such as these have been too closely involved and tried only to embellish their side's collective accomplishments, while conversely assailing their opponents at will and with little regard for accuracy. However, the reader must be cautioned about being too optimistic regarding Roberts, as his sources are weighted heavily on the Partisan (Communist) side. Although this is understandable, the former Partisans now control the literature and sources on this topic in Yugoslavia, so the material is biased. Even today, Yugoslavia still worries about the legitimization of its Communist takeover.

Roberts also used many primary sources from British authors. Since his book covers a much broader topic than this paper, most British material cannot be accurately discussed. This author agrees with Roberts that it was written, as almost all books are, to substantiate the feelings and experiences of the author. (e.g., Fitzroy Maclean's Disputed Barricade).

To be more specific, Roberts wrote about the war in

Yugoslavia from 1941 to 1945, while this paper is more closely limited to American-Yugoslav relations from 1941 to 1946. He wrote about all phases of the conflict, spending a great deal of time on the fighting itself--a topic that is discussed only in passing in this paper, as it, in most cases, did not greatly affect American diplomatic responses nor did it hasten or impede America's final diplomatic recognition of the Tito regime. Nevertheless, this author did use a great many of the same sources, including the Foreign Relations of the United States and several autobiographies.

Roberts must also be compared to the authors discussed later, including Feis, whom Roberts mentions in his bibliography and who closely resembles his approach to the problems, except that Roberts, like this author, spent proportionately far less time on Venezia Giulia than does Feis. Feis discussed the Venezia Giulia situation in great depth because of its broader outlines. This was a small part of the story for both this author and for Roberts. Venezia Guila had important implications in the beginnings of the Cold War, but for this paper, it is less important than it was for either Feis or Kolko. The situation in Venezia Giulia was not finally settled until approximately a decade after America recognized Yugoslavia. It was also, in this author's opinion, overblown in importance as Yugoslavia

would, in 1948, break with the Soviet Union; and the area would help isolate Yugoslavia from both the East and the West.

Roberts, and Kolko in The Politics of War, were in agreement in only a few places; overall they differed far more than they agreed. They concurred in describing Tito's disagreements and misunderstandings with the Soviets during the war. Kolko, however, was much more adamant in seeing anti-Soviet beliefs and feelings than was Roberts. Roberts, whose perspective on the matter is similar to that of this author, saw the Partisans as working for an independent and Socialist Yugoslavia after the war. They could not understand Soviet broader perspectives and were by no means anti-Soviet. In this latter belief, Roberts and this author come very close to Vojtech Mastny's description of the Yugoslav-Russian situation in Russia's Road to the Cold War Diplomacy, Warfare and the Politics of Communism, 1941-1945.

Unlike Kolko, however, Roberts' treatment of the American involvement in Yugoslavia during the war parallels Feis and this author in asserting that American influence was by design limited and not intended, as Kolko asserted, to be a deciding factor in Yugoslav-Balkan affairs.

To this writer, Roberts' book was very helpful in providing a general outline and a start for researching and understanding the broad outlines of this topic. Below, some of the material covered by Roberts is discussed in more

detail, and comments have been added where pertinent.

Roberts, as stated, traced American involvement in Yugoslavia during the war. This, of course, was at first limited to military liaison officers and only at the very end of the war by any foreign service officers. He discussed how the Americans joined the British missions already in the field. "From the very beginning, it was clear, however, that the British were the senior partners in this enterprise."¹

Summing up American actions in the Balkans at the end of 1942, he said:

For the United States, Yugoslavia was at that time a distant country, the geography of which had only a limited significance in the pursuit of the war. America regretted the existence of a civil war and since it recognized the Yugoslav Government-in-Exile as the only legal government, it felt duty-bound to support it and its Commander in Yugoslavia, General Mihailovic.

Roberts spent much time showing how the forces of Tito and Mihailović reacted to each other and the total war situation in Yugoslavia. He summed up the American actions in Yugoslavia at the end of 1943 as pragmatic in their willingness to help all parties fighting the Germans.

The United States had only military and strategic considerations in mind in the Balkans. It is believed that if Tito was fighting and Mihailovic was not, then Tito should be supported; but this support should be modest and in no way detract from the pursuit of a grand strategy in which Balkan affairs did not figure. Hence, U. S. interest in the Balkans was limited. In the U. S. view, to aid Tito did not mean that the political support of the Yugoslav Government-In-Exile should not continue.³

Roberts also summed up the military situation in Yugoslavia at this time. The Italians had surrendered, and the ability of the Allies to defeat Germany was no longer questioned by the author. Tito's Partisans had been recognized by the Big Three, and the Partisans were well on the way to winning the Yugoslav civil war. Still, Roberts commented that this did not lead to any American political posturing caused by the changing events within Yugoslavia.

The United States did begin to play a more active role in Yugoslavia in 1944. American policy was no longer in agreement with Britain, nor did American military missions continue to subordinate themselves to the British. In August of 1944, the Americans set up an independent mission at the Partisan headquarters on Vis, after the British and Soviets had already done so. Roberts described Robert D. Murphy's mission to Tito as in no way giving the impression of any political recognition.

Roberts wrote at length of the Tito-^YSubašić meetings

and agreements. He summed up the American role in these activities as "Once again, the United States refused to become involved in Yugoslav political matters, thus leaving the field entirely to the British and the Russians.²

Roberts summed up the American attitude at the end of 1944:

American leaders were not greatly surprised to learn of Tito's aims and aspirations. The U. S. supported the Royal Government-In-Exile and saw no reason to deviate from this support even though it was at the same time giving military assistance to Tito because he was resisting the Germans. Since the American military interest in the Balkans was peripheral, it took the U. S. government a long time--until late 1944--to become involved in the political situation in Yugoslavia, and then only because of British pressure.⁵

Roberts wrote that America finally became aware of Tito's aspirations by the end of 1944, but did little to elaborate on this topic. He did write that Yugoslavia was hardly mentioned at Yalta and other conferences, which has been denied by very few writers, including this author. Unlike Roberts, and, for that matter, the remainder of the authors to be discussed, this paper continues after most of them have finished; and its topic is narrower. This author spent a great deal of time discussing Yugoslav internal politics and how they fit into America's position in the post-war world.

Harry M. Chase, Jr.'s book, American-Yugoslav

Relations, 1945-1966; A Study in the Motivation of U.S. Foreign Policy, was written from his doctoral dissertation. It is a case study of how American foreign policy is formulated and put into motion. Unfortunately, the majority of this book covered an era outside the scope of this paper. In the corresponding section of Chase's book, his and this author's bibliographies closely parallel one another, with one notable exception. Chase used the Congressional Record, a source which neither this author nor any of the others mentioned in this paper used to any extent. He also used the Department of State's Bulletin more than this author did; this author found the Bulletin to be of limited use and not specific enough for his topic. Chase wrote his dissertation before the Foreign Relations of the United States volumes had been published covering the time frame of his and this paper. Regardless of this, he would have found little to have helped his writing.

The Foreign Relations of the United States spent very little time discussing Congress and only devoted a few pages to discussing individual congressmen. This author's findings on the topic of Yugoslav-American relations showed that Congress had, overall, very little importance and was not considered by the State Department when formulating policy in Yugoslavia. There are, of course, valid reasons for this, the most important being that Yugoslavia was of

little importance to the United States, both before and during the war--a fact that Chase stressed on more than one occasion. Also, Congress had virtually no access to the political events within Yugoslavia during this period and, with the lack of large numbers of Yugoslav immigrants in the United States, had little reason to concern itself anyway. In defense of Chase, Congress did play a more active role in Yugoslav matters after the Yugoslav-Russian break in 1948, but again, this is beyond the scope of this paper.

Chase sums up pre-war American-Yugoslav relations as ". . . characterized by the lack of any real significance for either nation."⁶ During the war years, he stated that Churchill led the policy decisions on Yugoslavia and that American relations ". . . did not possess any intrinsic closeness throughout the war; that is, they were not important in and of themselves, but were merely a minor issue in the total picture of the war effort and its major feature:⁷ the necessity of defeating Germany."

Chase differed little from the others mentioned in this respect and can again be found in general agreement as he characterized American concerns with Yugoslavia at Potsdam and Yalta as minimal at best. He was interested in Congressional response to Yugoslav matters which separated him from the other authors, as none of them addressed this topic in their works. He wrote concerning this issue:

Legislative attitudes toward Yugoslavia present some lack of any definitive policy, or basis for policy, which we have also seen as characteristic of the Executive Branch of government, especially during the months of 1945. Indeed, the few references to Yugoslavia present a picture of changing sentiment toward Yugoslavia, but no hint of any formulated ideas about policy to be pursued.⁸

Gabriel Kolko's The Politics of War: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1939-1945 was written from a perspective different from any of the other works studied on this topic. His position, simply stated, was that the United States were interested in preventing any large-scale penetration of Yugoslavia by either the Soviet Union or, in particular, by Great Britain. He wrote that the United States was incompetent and psychologically ill-prepared to deal with the left-leaning governments of Europe--Tito and Yugoslavia in particular. Kolko's research is based on familiar territory. He used State Department documents (Foreign Relations of the United States), Truman's Memoirs, Churchill's Closing the Ring and Triumph and Tragedy, Joseph Grew's Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945, Volume II, and various Yugoslav sources, including Milovan Djilas and Vladimir Velebit. This author found that his research led him to far different conclusions and that Kolko contradicted himself in several respects.

Kolko wrote:

The consideration which entered State Department discussions more often than Russian domination or an undemocratic state after the war was the danger of the preeminent role of Britain in shaping Yugoslavia and South Balkan Affairs.⁹

This author cannot judge how Kolko came to this conclusion. The State Department papers spent a great deal of time dealing solely with the growing totalitarian state in Yugoslavia and how agreements made to insure the democratic freedoms for all of liberated Europe were being ignored at worst or simply being paid lip service in Yugoslavia. To be sure, the Americans did not fully agree with British policy in Yugoslavia and the Balkans because they judged this area to be of secondary importance and felt that it would lead to the use of war materials needed in more pressing areas. The State Department did follow Britain's activities here with interest, but was never greatly worried about British domination.

Kolko described the British evacuation of Tito from the Yugoslav mainland to the Adriatic island of Vis as an attempt by the British to force political concessions on him. It can be argued that they tried to influence Tito, but found him a very hard man to coax. Kolko wrote that Tito was forced to negotiate with Šubašić, but in light of the eventual outcome of these negotiations, Tito could only be delighted. It was odd that Tito could be forced to deal with Šubašić, but under far more promising circumstances on

the Italian mainland, the British were unable to start any negotiations at all between Tito and the Yugoslav King.

The American policy of giving support to Mihailović was described by Kolko as "absurd." He seemed to forget or ignore the services provided by the Četniks. Throughout most of the war, the Četniks rescued and returned downed American airmen at some considerable risk to themselves. Kolko wrote, "In practice, consistent opposition to the only plausible alternatives left in Yugoslavia, rather than positive proposals, characterized American policy."¹⁰

Kolko, by his statement, seems to believe that Yugoslavia had no other option than to accept Tito and his Partisans as leaders of that country. It was obviously the eventual outcome, but was surely not the only alternative. In particular, the United States or Great Britain could have forced the King to return, or Yugoslavia could have been divided up into the separate republics of Serbia, Croatia, etc.

In discussing Tito's relations with the Soviet Union, Kolko wrote:

Tito went to Moscow because his relations with the Russians were also in disarray. . . . In reality, his relations with the Soviet Union had never been cordial, and nothing in the unequal character of Yugoslav Communism was intended to endear it to Moscow.¹¹

These contentions ring hollow to this author. First, Tito

had spent years in the Soviet Union and was, in fact, placed at the head of the Yugoslav Communist Party by the Russians. It must also be pointed out that Tito and the Yugoslav Communists did not take to the field against their country's occupiers until after the Soviet Union was invaded and Moscow put out a call for all Communists to come to the aid of the Soviet Union. It should also be pointed out that while in Moscow, Tito helped arrange for the smooth penetration of the Soviet forces into Yugoslavia and their handing over of liberated Yugoslav territory to Tito and his Partisans. Later in 1948, Tito would not go to Moscow because of his fear of the Russians, but in 1944, he felt no compulsion and went to ask for military aid, which was granted him.

Kolko also wrote that the Soviets "instantly recognized Tito as a challenge to whatever position, passive or dominant, they would define for themselves in the area."¹² He also wrote that by 1944 the Soviets viewed Tito as a "major threat" and that the United States should have been able to anticipate the Yugoslav-Russian break of 1948. This author finds the above points very hard to understand: first, that Tito apparently viewed the British as no threat at all in the area, after the British had many times stated their intention of dominating Yugoslavia and the Balkans; and second, that the Soviet Union and Stalin believed that

they would have little problem in influencing Yugoslav politics to their ends. The Russians would learn of the fallacies of their arguments in 1948, but one could not expect the United States to be able to interpret events it knew little about when even the Russians, who were involved first-hand, could not properly anticipate Yugoslav-Russian political problems to come years later.

In discussing the Tito-Šubašić Agreement, Kolko once again drew strange conclusions. He stated that because of this Agreement "The United States lost its veto power over Yugoslav politics" ¹³ This writer does not comprehend the meaning of this statement. Nowhere has he found where the United States held any "veto" over Yugoslav politics. Later on the same page, Kolko said that the Americans first supported Mihailović and later switched their support to the King. Had Kolko forgotten that Mihailović was never independent of the King; that he had led the Četniks under his commission as an officer in the Royal Army; that Mihailović worked for the return of the monarchy to Yugoslavia and was even a member of the King's war cabinet? Nowhere has this author found that Mihailović was other than a servant to his King.

Finally in this section, Kolko wrote of Tito: " . . . But to the Americans he stood for foreign influences of the Left, and Washington never critically questioned the nature of America's opposition to Yugoslav desires." ¹⁴ This

author can agree that the Americans saw Tito as a foreign influence in Yugoslavia and that he was recognized as popular by a large segment of the Yugoslav populace, but the State Department devoted both time and effort to determining Tito's actual standing in Yugoslavia. The American Government became disillusioned by Tito because of his methods and ruthless consolidation of power. It was continually appalled at the lack of influence by pre-war politicians and at the subjugation of any political dissent in Yugoslavia. Most Americans at this time (Joseph Grew, an American diplomat included), looked upon Tito as a Russian puppet who did their bidding in the Balkans. Grew wrote "that Tito was not only proceeding to dominate the entire region which he admitted he intended to keep under the Peace Treaty, that Russia was undoubtedly behind Tito's move"¹⁵

On page 345, Kolko made the following statements:

Yugoslavia represented the Eastern European future the Americans most feared, for here the Russians, British and Yugoslav Communists collaborated to exclude American influence altogether. . . . However, a synthesis of Communism and nationalism was a subtle concept with no place in Washington's definition of the Left in Europe or anywhere else for that matter. ¹⁶

Again Kolko contradicts himself. He continually stresses Tito and the Yugoslav Communists' independence of both Britain and the Soviet Union, but here he stated that they "collaborated." It seemed then, according to Kolko, that

Tito both worked with the Russians, apparently for mutual benefit, and he was also feared by the Russians for his independence. This author hates to be repetitive, but again, the Americans were not interested in Yugoslavia.

Later, Kolko discussed the Tito-Šubašić Agreement, explaining how it was set up by the British to insure their position to oversee Yugoslav internal affairs. The British never did oversee Yugoslav affairs--again Kolko stretched the point. Finally, he explained how the Americans and British reacted to Yugoslavia in the Trieste-Venezia Giulia region.

Kolko wrote that it was because of American influence that the British agreed to pressure to give the Allied Commander in the area the option of using force, but this was after much pressure from Britain, as pointed out in Foreign Relations of the United States and Grew's The Turbulent Era, both sources Kolko said he used and quoted in his book.

Kolko used the same source material as this author, but seemed to give America a strong-willed policy to change the course of internal events in Yugoslavia. This author grants him that American was not happy about the eventual outcome in that country, but nowhere can he find concrete evidence of American pressure and a strong-willed policy for that country. Robert Murphy wrote in Diplomat Among Warriors, for example, that Roosevelt and America never had any firm

policy for Yugoslavia, and this was another source that Kolko cited. Kolko contradicted himself as this author points out above and seemed to read his source material differently than this author or a historian such as Herbert Feis.

Parallel in time and research material with Kolko were the works of Herbert Feis: From Trust to Terror, The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1952, Between War and Peace, The Potsdam Conference, and Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin, The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought. Kolko and Feis wrote extensively on the diplomatic history of World War II and the status quo in international relations following that war. However, their works do not say the same thing. Kolko takes a revisionist's view of these events and interprets them under an eye that was trained to judge from a far more questioning, or at least a less pro-Western, bias. On the other hand, Feis was a member of the State Department and wrote from the perspective of one who dealt with these issues and saw little reason to question the motives behind American policy.

Although these men tend to disagree over most issues, they do agree on one not insubstantial issue: both found Tito to be independent and to work with the Soviet Union only inasmuch as it would benefit Yugoslavia. However, as this author has discussed above, Kolko contradicts himself on his issue. Feis described Tito as "too independent"

as he summed up Stalin's view of this Balkan leader. He also wrote of him as a man who considered himself the equal of Stalin.

Regardless of these two men's views, which this author believes to be colored with the knowledge of the Yugoslav-Soviet break of 1948, this author found little evidence to back Feis up. Murphy hinted at Tito's independence, but little concrete evidence was brought out during the period covered by this paper.

Feis, on more than one occasion, described American hesitancy in dealing with Tito and Yugoslavia as being due to the unknown quality of Russian support. He understood that there was always the possibility of the State Department underestimating Tito's relationship with the Russians. In Chapter 6 of Between War and Peace, The Potsdam Conference, Feis discussed the problems of Yugoslavia's border claims, but he could never tear himself away from the fear of large Russian intervention on the side of Tito. It appeared that Tito, although an independent, still must have at least a measure of Russian support. The Foreign Relations of the United States cited many examples of American hesitancy and need for views of Russian thinking towards Yugoslavia. The diplomatic papers discussed and gave examples of American correspondence sent to the Russians. The United States requested Russian aid in

encouraging Tito to live up to the Yalta Declaration and even printed the Russian refusal and belief that regarding Yugoslavia the Yalta accords had been carried out. They also showed American requests for Russian assistance in dealing with Tito's moves into Austria and Trieste. The Foreign Relations of the United States published Russian requests for a Yugoslav zone of occupation in Austria, as well as other Russian replies which seemed to fully back Tito.

When Feis wrote about the events in Trieste and Venezia Giulia, he described a much different situation than did Kolko. He also wrote at complete odds with Kolko concerning American attempts at changing the internal events in Yugoslavia. Feis wrote that the Americans were concerned with Great Britain, not because of their fear of British domination in Yugoslavia (as Kolko wrote), but because the United States wished to stay as far away from Yugoslav affairs as practical. Feis wrote that America wanted Central and Eastern Europe to remain free of spheres of influence and any tampering with internal affairs of these countries (Yugoslavia included). He wrote "that it [the American government] did not want to become involved at that time in decisions about frontiers or the internal affairs of these countries."¹⁸

Feis also pointed out that he doubted even joint American-British military action in the Balkans could be

substantial enough to dissolve Russian power and influence, had they chosen such a route. He pointed out in both Between War and Peace, The Potsdam Conference and Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought that America was always worried about any lessening of American war efforts in other theaters of operation--that those war efforts would lessen if America were to strengthen efforts in the Balkans. He particularly pointed out how senior members of the American government and military were against war efforts in the Balkans, including General George S. Marshall, Admiral William Leahy, and President Truman.

Feis wrote of the State Department's response to the Tito-Šubašić Agreement from a different angle than Kolko. He described British support for this agreement, not as a chance to increase their influence in Yugoslavia, but as an attempt to break up the dam in Yugoslav politics. He correctly described the State Department's response to the Tito-Šubašić Agreement. He wrote that the State Department recognized that this agreement would greatly favor one of the elements in Yugoslavia (Tito) and was judged to be a play at obtaining international recognition of Tito's emerging government in Yugoslavia. Other than pointing out its news on the matter to the British after they requested American support, the government did nothing. This is a significant departure from Kolko's description; he viewed it

as a failure of the American government to recognize the status quo in Yugoslavia and as a step by the British to greatly enhance their prestige in Yugoslavia at the expense of a nervous America. Once again, in contrast to Kolko's claims, America did not act and stayed out of internal Yugoslav affairs. At Yalta, Feis described a joint communique from Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill as urging the Yugoslavs to implement this agreement. Hostility, it was felt, was never publicly announced by the Americans; they, in fact, urged, rather than rejected, the implementation of this agreement, according to Feis.

Another area in which Feis and Kolko disagree is in the interpretation of American action vis-vis the Yugoslavs in Trieste and in Venezia Giulia. Here again, this writer agrees with Feis, as pointed out earlier; Kolko contradicted his own sources, while Feis wrote his narrative from basically identical evidence. Grew's Turbulent Era, a Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1944, Volume II was a major source for Kolko's writing; Kolko wrote as though he were in agreement with Grew's work, but his conclusions actually were in disagreement with what Grew had said. This was particularly true in the area which dealt with the United States' reaction to Tito. That is, although the United States finally stood up to Tito, it was at the urging of Churchill and the British and not over their objections,

as Kolko said. The British were in constant contact with the Americans concerning Yugoslavia's thrust into this area. The Allied forces were under British command, and it was only after insistent British diplomatic pressure that America realized the situation and finally accepted the British view, which was full support for possible military action.

In this author's research, much evidence was found to support the work of Feis, but little to support that of Kolko. Regardless of the similarity of source material, Kolko's views and beliefs can only be explained by his pro-Soviet position. He wrote consistently of America's and Great Britain's anti-Yugoslav/Russian position. According to Kolko, the problems at the end of World War II were caused by Western capitalistic greed and intrasigency, while he depicted the Soviet Union as victimized and innocent.

Three foreign books shed a somewhat different light on these issues as compared with the Feis or Kolko works. Roy Douglas, a British writer, said in From War to Cold War, 1942-1948 that it was the British who were responsible for Tito's eventual success in Yugoslavia. He wrote that "The responsibility for Yugoslavia on a course towards communism rests with Churchill and his advisors, not with the Russians."¹⁹ He described how the British led the way toward Tito's recognition and support by the Allies during the war. The second book, also written by a British author,

Mark C. Wheeler's Britain and the War for Yugoslavia, 1940-1943, agrees fully with Douglas' view. Wheeler wrote in many instances as if the United States did not exist when writing about relations with Yugoslavia. The third book, Yugoslavia in the Second World War, was written and published by three Yugoslavs in Yugoslavia. It can be legitimately assumed, although not absolutely verified, that this book, published in 1967 in Belgrade, conformed to the views of the Yugoslav government.

The authors, Žarko Atanacković, Ahmet Donlagić,, and Dušan Plenča, argued that the American government was a hinderance to the new Yugoslavia " and continually raised problms to thwart its establishment." They called the United States ". . . one of the greatest obstacles to the international recognition of the new Yugoslavia." ²⁰ They also pointed out, as the other authors did, that it was Britain and not the United States which led in diplomatic dealings with Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavs wrote very favorably concerning the help they received from the Soviet Union during the war, although mentioning substantial assistance from the United States and Great Britain. They cited the Soviet Union for its moral assistance and greater understanding of the events in Yugoslavia.

As the Americans looked to the problems of Trieste as an attempt by Yugoslavia to illegally claim territory that

did not belong to it, the Yugoslavs viewed the Americans and the British as provocateurs who had no right or need to interfere in this situation. They also wrote that the Tito-Šubašić Agreement " . . . was a major political victory for the new Yugoslavia." ²¹ This is not surprising because it allowed the present Yugoslav government to evolve and eventually to formalize the "new Yugoslavia."

In this context of the Tito-Šubašić Agreement, the United States was ignored. This last book was written in a tone that contradicts both Feis and Kolko on Yugoslavia's relations with the Soviet Union. The authors wrote from the perspective that relations with the Russians were close and that no substantial problems arose between the two countries during the war.

Vojtech Mastny's Russia's Road to the Cold War Diplomacy, Warfare, and the Politics of Communism, 1941-1945, was published in 1979, years after any of the previously-mentioned studies. He wrote after substantially all the Western diplomatic sources had been made public and, by his own admission, in response to what he called the "fallacies of the revisionist historians." He wrote only indirectly about Yugoslav-American relations, but does discuss Yugoslav-Russian relations during the war.

He wrote much about how Yugoslav Communist actions disturbed Stalin and his plans for the war. Stalin saw Tito as too independent and perhaps dangerous in maintaining

close and profitable relations with the Western Allies. He returned to this premise on other occasions. Mastny wrote that Stalin was flabbergasted at the Jajce Declaration and only acquiesced when no protests were forthcoming from the West. In these remarks, Mastny closely parallels Kolko's projection of Yugoslavia as a thorn in the Russian's side, but he was in disagreement with Kolko in other areas of Yugoslav-Russian relations.

Whereas Kolko wrote that Tito acted almost totally independently of the Soviet Union on the matter of Venezia Giulia, Mastny wrote that Churchill received a message from Stalin that gratuitously aggravated the situation in support of the Yugoslavs. Mastny also wrote, in complete contradiction to Kolko, that Moscow was drawn into Balkan affairs by "Communist action and Western inaction."

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APPENDIX

TEXT OF THE TITO-SUBASIC AGREEMENT

Agreement

between the President of the National Committee of Liberation of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito, and the Prime Minister of the Royal Yugoslav Government, Dr. Ivan Subasic.

In compliance with the principle of the continuity of the Yugoslav State from the point of view of international law, and the clearly expressed will of all Yugoslav nations, demonstrated by their four year's struggle for a new, independent and federal State, built up on the principles of democracy, we desire and make every effort for the people's will to be respected at every step and by everybody, both with regard to the internal organization of the State and to the form of government, and therefore intend to comply with the fundamental and general principles of constitutional government proper to all truly democratic States.

Yugoslavia being acknowledged among the United Nations in its established form, and functioning as such, we shall continue to represent our country abroad and in all acts pertaining to foreign policy in the same way, up to the time

when our State, the democratic, federative Yugoslavia of the future, assumes, by a free decision of the people, the definite form of its government.

In order to avoid any possible tension of relations in the country, we have agreed that King Peter II shall not return to the country until the people have pronounced their decision in this respect, and that in his absence the Royal Power should be wielded by a Regency Council.

The Regency Council will be appointed by a constitutional act of the King, on the proposal of the Royal Government, and in agreement with the President of the National Committee of Liberation of Yugoslavia, Marshal J. B. Tito, and the President of the Royal Government, Dr. Ivan Subasic. The Regency Council take their oath to the King, while the Government take their oath to to people.

The President of the National Committee of Liberation of Yugoslavia, Marshal Josip Broz Tito, and the President of the Royal Yugoslav Government, Dr. Subasic, with the full concurrence of the Anti-Fascist Council of Liberation of Yugoslavia, agree that the Government be formed as follows:

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Minister of Foreign Affairs
4. Minister of the Interior
5. Minister of National Defense
6. Minister of Justice
7. Minister of Education
8. Minister of Finance
9. Minister of Trade and Industry
10. Minister of Communications
11. Minister of Post, Telegraphs and Telephone
12. Minister of Forests
13. Minister of Mines
14. Minister of Agriculture
15. Minister of Social Welfare
16. Minister of National Health
17. Minister of Public Works
18. Minister of Reconstruction
19. Minister of Food
20. Minister of Information
21. Minister for Colonization
22. Minister for the Constituent Assembly
23. Minister of State for Serbia
24. Minister of State for Croatia
25. Minister of State for Slovenia
26. Minister of State for Montenegro
27. Minister of State for Macedonia
28. Minister of State for Bosnia-Herzegovina

This form of government in Yugoslavia shall remain in force up to the decision of the Constituent Assembly, i.e., until the final constitutional organization of the State will be established.

The new government will publish a declaration proclaiming the fundamental principles of the democratic liberties and guaranteeing their application. Personal freedom, freedom from fear, freedom of worship, liberty of conscience, freedom of speech, liberty of the press, freedom of assembly and association will be specifically emphasized

and guaranteed; and, in the same way, the right or property and private initiative. The sovereignty of the national individualities within the State and their equal rights will be respected and safeguarded, as decided at the Second Session of the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia. Any predominance of one nation over another will be excluded.

November 1, 1944

The President of the Royal
Yugoslav Government
Dr. Ivan Subasic

The President of the National
Committee of the Liberation
of Yugoslavia
J. B. Tito