

# Genocide in Satellite Croatia Chapter I. The International Conspiracy Against Yugoslavia



Continued from [Genocide in Satellite Croatia 1941-1945 by Edmond Paris](#).

THE founding of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918 aroused considerable jealousy among some of the neighboring countries. All the old motives for envy were sharpened as the government faced the difficulties of internal policy in the founding of a really national state. Hungary, thenceforward separated from Austria, coveted the fertile land of the Vojvodina to the North of Belgrade; Bulgaria continued to revindicate Macedonia in Southern Serbia; while Fascist Italy dreamed of increasing her "vital living space" by annexing Dalmatia, once ruled over by Venice.

Rome was the center where all these ambitious aims converged. It was there that all the maneuvers for breaking up the Little Entente and preparing the encirclement of Yugoslavia were undertaken. Needless to say all these projects won the favor of Germany, just beginning to stir from the torpor of her defeat and echoed in the rantings of Adolph Hitler. With the rebirth of Pan-Germanism she began once again to look toward the East and counted on profiting from the insatiable appetites of her neighbors to assure her own expansion onto Slavic territory.

In the meanwhile, the Vatican placed all its hope on the Croatian nationalist movement which had taken up the fight against Yugoslavia. In April 1919, Cardinal Gasparri, Vatican Secretary of State, made a statement to the correspondent of the newspaper, *Petit Parisien*, in favor of Slovene and Croatian independence with republican governments.<sup>1</sup> According to the French journalist, Maurice Prax, Cardinal Gasparri on this occasion expressed his regret that Austria-Hungary had been destroyed, because it had formed a barrier against the Orient.

<sup>1</sup> This declaration was reprinted by the Italian historian, Luigi Salvatorelli in his book, *La Politica della Santa Sede* (Milan, 1987), p. 77.

In 1982, a well-known English journalist, Wickham Steed, disclosed the Italo-Germanic and Hungarian plan which aimed to dismember Yugoslavia and to create a Balkan federation under Italian control:

Meanwhile, there is much talk in various European capitals of the "Europe Congress" which has been meeting in Rome during the past week under the auspices of the Italian Royal Academy.

The recent visit of the Hungarian Prime Minister, Mr. Gombos, to Signor Mussolini, is understood to have been connected with the real, though not perhaps the ostensible purpose of this Congress. The presence in Rome of German representatives like Dr. Schacht, the former Governor of the Reichbank, and, for a time, of prominent Hitlerites like Herren Rosenberg and Goering, is thought to be significant.

Features of the programs of this "Europe Congress" are:

Eventual curtailment of Roumanian Unity, taking account of Russian aims for the recovery of Bessarabia.

The inclusion of Transylvania, with the Bukovina and parts of Yugoslavia, in a Danubian confederation under German and Hungarian leadership.

Into this confederation Hungary, with somewhat increased territory, would enter, together with Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and part of Slovenia, after Yugoslavia should have been broken up.

A Customs Union, or preferential tariff arrangement would be established between this new Danubian confederation, Germany, Austria and Italy. Sooner or later Czechoslovakia would find herself compelled to join it.

Trieste and Fiume would remain under Italian rule, though Germany and Austria would enjoy special privileges in the Port of Trieste, and in the new Danubian confederation similar privileges in the Port of Fiume.

The old Kingdom of Rumania, with Serbia, Bulgaria, Albania, and Greece, would be formed, under Italian influence, into a Balkan federation,

These, according to my information, are the main lines of the conception that has been secretly discussed at Rome. How far agreement has been reached upon any or all of them is uncertain, for they appear in German eyes, to be less favorable to German than to Italian aspirations.

(*Sunday Times* (London), November 20, 1932.)

Albert Mousset also concluded that at this time Yugoslavia became the victim of a vast conspiracy and a disgraceful connivance instigated by her neighbors. (See *Europe Nouvelle*, October 22, 1932.)

After the breaking up of Austria-Hungary, Italy tried to become the protectress of Catholicism in central Europe and the Balkans, where she tried to impose her sovereignty.

Count Bethlen, a Hungarian, has clearly analyzed the motives of this imperialism:

Italy's greatest objective, as well as her historical law is to prevent the union of the Northern Slavs with the Southern Slavs. If she fails, a Slav supremacy will automatically take place in the Balkans. In this case Italy's ideal location on the Adriatic Sea and on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean will be compromised.

This is a question of creating a counterbalance to the hegemony that France is exerting in the basin of the Danube with the help of the Little Entente, for if, in one way, this hegemony is not counterbalanced France will have a free reign in many other localities, and in another way, French policy in the Orient will have a pro-Slav tendency, dating from the time of the Franco-Russian alliance.

Italy's interest coincides with that of Germany. (Lecture at the Association for German Cultural Propaganda, Berlin, March 9, 1933.)

When this revisionist movement began, its allies in Yugoslavia were in certain discontented groups that included former functionaries who had been in the service of Austria-Hungary and whose careers had been broken. Above all, there were officers who had been obliged to retire, for instance, General Sarkotic and Colonels Percevic and Dujic, all of Croatian origin. The Croat super-nationalists were soon to join this group, with Ante Pavelic, a former lawyer from Zagreb, as their leader. He envisioned a "pure and Catholic Croatia which should never, in any way, become a part of the Yugoslav federation," and he repudiated any association with the Slovenes, with those "dirty dogs" the Serbs, and above all he would not tolerate the "dirty" Jews. "This idea was not new. . . . It was the fruit of the cogitations of an agitator named Ante Starcevic, who was the ideological father of the terrorist sect known as the Ustashi." (Jean-Marc Sabathier In the Magazine *PARIS-MATCH*, May 28, 1957, p. 21.) Under Pavelic, the Ustashi became the Croat equivalent of the Nazi Storm Troopers. Originally, they were organized abroad with the help of Italy and Hungary. "Its personnel was recruited from the most viciously anti-Serb and most depraved and sadistic elements in Croatia. Imbued with the Nazi concept of 'racial' superiority, and with the Nazi approach to the problem of ethnic minorities, they coldbloodedly adopted a program calling for the liquidation of the Serb community in Pavelic's Croatia." (David Martin, *Ally Betrayed* (New York, 1948), p. 48.)

The intellectual youth of Croatia, for whom there were insufficient positions, and who held the government responsible for this situation, also added its contingent of adepts to the movement.

It is difficult to understand why all these chauvinistic patriots adhered enthusiastically to projects of upheaval in the Balkans which were bound to be at the expense of the Croats themselves. Doubtless it was a case of blind passion with some of them, but this excuse is not valid for those who, like Pavelic and his acolytes, were quite aware of the Italo-Germanic plan, yet ready to sell themselves, body and soul, to those who were seeking the dismemberment of their country of Croatia.

In 1929, when King Alexander promulgated the law for the protection of the

state, Pavelic hastened to leave Yugoslavia. He went first to Austria where a few of the other notable "suspects" joined him, namely Bраниmir Jelic, Andrija Artukovic, Marko Dosen, Nadan Ruski, Gustav Percec, Mile Budak, Mladen Lorkovic, Eugen Kvaternik-Dido, et al., the greater part of whom, a few years later, became ignominiously celebrated by the blood-thirsty regime which they set up, worthy of Hitler's.

Thus came into being the two famous organizations known as the Ustashi (Insurgents) and the IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization). The latter's headquarters were at Sofia. This veritable "gang," composed of tried bandits, carried on in Serbia, especially in the Southern part, criminal attacks and murders, under pretext of protesting against the Treaty of Neuilly, which had given to Serbia the Macedonian territories freed from the Turks in 1913, and reconquered in 1918 by the Serbian armies.<sup>7</sup> Ivan Karadjoff, Strahil Razvigoroff and Boris Buneff were among the most renowned terrorist leaders, but every one of them was eclipsed by Ivan Mihailoff, known as Vantcha, a former law student of abnormal savagery whose very physical appearance bore the stigma of a degenerate criminal.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> These territories formed the very core of the national medieval Serbian empire before the Turkish occupation of the 15th century.

<sup>8</sup> At the request of Belgrade he had been outlawed by the Bulgarian government since 1922, a measure that was not enforced, for he circulated freely in well as in Austria, Hungary, and Italy.

It was with this sinister character—birds of a feather flock together—that Ante Pavelic, accompanied by Percec, concluded the agreement of the Ustashi with the IMRO on April 20, 1929 in the surroundings of Sofia; an agreement which had already been outlined in Vienna through an intermediary, Naum Tomalevski. Mihailoff, better known as Vantcha, in the paid service of Mussolini (that year the IMRO received 44 million liras from the Duce), took charge of the fate of his new allies by giving them access to the *Pactole* (symbol of riches). Apparently he capped their political education by a few good lessons in practical terrorism, which took place in a nice little farmhouse that looked innocently bucolic but which was filled, like an arsenal, with firearms and bombs. It was there, in those peaceful fields, that the men of the IMRO kept up their training as they drilled new recruits in the technical skills of the master.

Once initiated into the "right method," Pavelic went to Rome with an introduction from Mihailoff to Mussolini. He was entertained at the Villa Torlonia where the Duce and the ex-lawyer chatted together about important political questions, and of terrorism and finances. They got along so well that at the end of the conference an agreement was concluded and Pavelic found himself in possession of 25 million liras for initial expenses with the promise of additional liberal sums that would eventually follow. (Herve' Lauriere, *Assassians au Nom de Dim* (Paris, 1959), p. 17.)

It did not take the Belgrade government very long to get wind of this transaction, so on July 17th of the same year (1929) it condemned Ante Pavelic to death for acts of high treason. So the leader of the Ustashi left Rome for Vienna, where his collaborators, who were professional adventurers

and former Austro-Hungarian officers of Croat origin, were awaiting him.

In order to show the "Big Boss" that he had spent the liras wisely, they began by firing a few bombs onto Yugoslav territory, until one fine day Belgrade sent a vehement protest, almost an ultimatum, to Vienna, obliging the police to intervene. Pavelic was arrested but fled to the German frontier, from where he was able to reach Italy.

All this happened at a time when two of the maddest megalomaniacs of all history were arousing the admiration of their compatriots, brainwashed by intensive propaganda. These "supermen" tried to outdo each other in grandiose projects; one dreamed of resuscitating the German Holy Roman Empire, and the other the Imperium of the Caesars. And what was most remarkable, these two got on very well together, although their respective projects seemed hardly conciliatory from the standpoint of common sense, but such a thing was an absent quantity at that time.

The Duce, who was the reincarnation of Augustus of ancient times, considered that the Adriatic, like the Mediterranean, could be nothing but Roman: *mare nostrum*; (our sea – the Mediterranean to the ancient Romans) and his idea was that even Dalmatia should return to the tutelage of the Roman she-wolf. But Yugoslavia had a strong army, under the command of the king who was ready to defend the country at all costs. By daring to rise up against the authority of Rome, this intrepid king had sealed his fate. He was to be sacrificed. This was the way stubborn monarchs were treated in the good old days of Neron and Caracallas!

The Duce did not hedge at committing crimes any more than did his illustrious predecessors. It might have been, too, that he had been given advice by his old "pal" Hitler, who was a partisan of "final solutions." In any case, Ante Pavelic, the Yugoslav fugitive, was a man who was ready for anything; he seemed like the right man for bringing this affair to a successful conclusion at the first favorable occasion.

While biding his time, he was given every facility for organizing terrorist groups on Italian territory. A villa was placed at his disposal at Pessaro, and when it had become too small to house the new recruits, he led his small, ever increasing band to the Fascist military camp of Borgotaro, near Bologne. He had agents who took charge of enlistments among the emigrant Croats in Italy, Germany, Belgium, and even in South America, where Branimir Jelic, one of his most devoted factotums was working for him.

Better yet! A brigade of agents from Ovra (Fascist secret police) assisted the Croats or, more exactly, were placed at their disposal. Its chief, Ercole Luigi Conti, was charged with safeguarding Pavelic and with supplying his men in arms and ammunition, as well as with false identification papers. All these activities were certainly carried on at a tremendous price, but the game was worth the cost. They invented a very ingenious procedure which would recoup a part of the liras destined to finance the Ustashi and at the same time strike a destructive blow to the currency of the adversary. Many of them had practiced more risky professions before going in for revolvers and bombs. Once in possession of the necessary utensils they could counterfeit Yugoslav

currency to perfection. This counterfeit money was expedited in packages, and when all the forged "dinars" circulated throughout the country from Belgrade to Zagreb, not even the police could trace their origin to the Ustashi camp at Borgotaro.

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When Pavelic had his final interview with Mihailoff near Sofia, he was accompanied by Percec. The latter had, in turn, been expelled from Vienna and had served as an officer in the Hungarian army. But Pavelic had not forgotten his devoted second. He had even boasted of his talents so eloquently to Mussolini that Percec obtained from Admiral Horthy, at that time Regent of Hungary, his reintegration, whereupon this brilliant individual continued to carry on his subversive activities. However, it had not seemed wise, as the proverb says "to put all eggs in the same basket." So Percec, instead of joining his boss in Italy, was kept in Hungary, where he could be useful to the associations who also carried on clandestine activities against the bordering states, and where there was a special committee of "Awakened Hungarians" consecrated to the "liberation" of Croatia.

Lieutenant Pavelic was therefore discreetly installed a few kilometers from the Yugoslav frontier at the farm of Yanka Puszta, whose name was to become famous all over the world at the time of the trial of King Alexander's assassins. There, as at Borgotaro, were congregated, not always of their own free will, tramps, vagabonds and ruffians of Croatian origin, as well as some Bulgarians who had become indoctrinated with terrorist ideas. At times, however, there were some recruits who rose up in revolt, but the Hungarian police took charge of either getting them back into line or else liquidating them altogether.

The head-instructors at Yanka Puszta were Hungarian officers: Marton, Mecger, Klar, and later on, Balenovicz.

This was a strange sort of farm where there was not the slightest sign of clover, wheat, barley or cattle, and no farming implements of any kind, but where, instead, the cellars and attics were overflowing with arms and ammunition, equipment, bombs and, in general, everything that was needed for exterminating the neighbors, either individually or collectively. There were classes in target practice, and the peasants in the surrounding countryside could hear the cracking of machine guns and parabellums all day long. It was reported that the riddled targets represented an effigy of Alexander of Yugoslavia. It was Vlado Georgieff, known as Cernozemski, the most skillful of the sharp-shooters, who was chosen to be the King's assassin.

The Yugoslav government protested, but in answering *note verbale* of 26 April, 1934, the Hungarian government said:

The most careful examination of the fact adduced by the Royal Yugoslav Legation has not brought anything to light which can serve as justification for such a charge. The Royal Hungarian Ministry does not question that incidents may have occurred from time to time, which were in reality due to the fact that the Hungarian Government agents against

whom the conduct referred to is alleged were merely the dupes of the different malefactors in question—which is not surprising having regard to the well-known nefarious practices of the latter.

At the same time, the Yugoslav Government was informed that some considerable time before the receipt of the *note verbale* from the Legation, the Hungarian Government had taken the necessary steps for the evacuation of Yugoslav political refugees from Yanka Puszta, a farm leased by them some time before.

The existence of such a foyer of terrorism, so close to the frontier, incited Yugoslavia to send notes of protest to the Hungarian government several different times. The answer was invariably courteous and evasive: "After having scrupulously examined all the facts," so said the reply, "everything pointed to the complete innocence of the Hungarian functionaries who, it must be acknowledged, might have been duped by ill-omened methods." In a last reply, contained in the verbal note, No. 1211/ pol. 1984 of April 26, 1934, Budapest acknowledged having "taken the necessary steps to force the political refugees and Yugoslav emigrants out of Yanka Puszta . . ." (*Survey of International Affairs*, 1934 (Oxford, 1935) pp. 546-47)

If these alleged steps were really taken, it was indeed time, for six months later Alexander was assassinated with a revolver fired by the former champion of this noted lair at Yanka Puszta.

Borgotaro in Italy and Yanka Puszta in Hungary are particularly well known because of the important part they played in terroristic actions, but there existed in Europe many other Croatian clandestine organizations.

In Berlin, a group of refugees spread false news in the *Croatia Press* and the *Nezavisna Drzava Hrvatska* (The Independent State of Croatia).

In Belgium, at Seraing, the "Hrvatski Savez" (The Croatian Alliance) pursued similar methods and also recruited emigrants for the camp at Yanka Puszta.

At the doors of Yugoslavia, Trieste, Rijeka and Zadar were equally important centers of Ustashi activities, financed by Italian funds for the purpose of sabotage and issuing false papers and false currency.

The Ustashi circulated throughout Yugoslavia, dressed in clerical robes, while organizing their separatist movement and their terroristic conspiracy. The following constitutes a report of Mile Budak, one of Pavelic's first collaborators, who said in his speech of June 15, 1941 at Slavonski Brod: "Perhaps you have not exactly understood what really happened. The Ustashi came into the villages and towns, disguised in Franciscan clerical robes, bringing with them all that was needed for preparing the population. We had spread the spirit of Ustashi hatred in Croatia, and when the time came, our German and Italian friends found us not only organized, but also liberated." (Novi List (Zagreb), June 16, 1941.)

Those who tried to destroy the efforts of Alexander by a propaganda of direct action had to struggle even harder, for the King, in spite of internal

difficulties, had succeeded in consolidating the state on the international level. Since 1927, when a friendship treaty had been concluded with France, the relationship between the two countries had become more and more cordial. The Balkan Entente, created by the King, was also developing. On February 9, 1934 Yugoslavia, Greece, Roumania and Turkey mutually guaranteed the security of their respective frontiers by the pact of Athens. Thus a stronger and stronger barrier was raised against Germano-Italian expansion in central Europe and the Balkans, and it was possible that even Bulgaria might eventually adhere to this defensive pact. It was then that Rome and Berlin decided that the time had come for immediate action.

It should be mentioned that there had been previous attempts to get rid of Alexander the year before. In December, 1933 an attack had been perpetrated against him in Zegreb. But the man appointed to carry it out, Peter Oreb, an Ustashi who was to receive 500,000 liras for his exploit, never succeeded in his plans.

This failure was keenly regretted at the Palace Venezia, so the Duce personally entrusted his son-in-law, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Galeazzo Ciano, with the responsibility of the next attempt, to be sure of crowning it with success.

Count Ciano, who presided over the foreign relations of Mussolini's Italy, consulted all the necessary experts. Thus it was that Senator Bocini, head of the Ovla, and Antonio Cortese, director of the political department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, lent a hand for this patriotic undertaking. Besides all the prestige and advantages of their positions, they had large sums of money at their disposal. All that remained was to await just the right occasion.

They did not have long to wait. At the end of the summer of 1934 it was rumored that King Alexander was ready to undertake a diplomatic trip. He would go first to Bulgaria and then to France. Decidedly this would be the time to act. A secret conference united the Fascist organizers and the heads of specialized workers and accomplices, such as Pavelic and Vantcha Mihailoff, at Ciano's Ministry. All the details of the next criminal attempt were hotly debated, first of all the right place. Mihailoff proposed Sofia. But Ciano, as well as Bocini and Cortese, feared that King Boris (son-in-law of the King of Italy and an ally of Mussolini) would also risk being killed as he sat beside King Alexander in the same car.

Pavelic insisted that France was the right place and he was backed by the Italians, who thought that if the deed were accomplished there the murder would take on much more significance.

Already, for months, a violent campaign against French-Yugoslav friendship had been carried on in the Italian press. France would naturally have to contradict the gossip so characteristic of trans-alpine journalists, and what the *Giornale d'Italia* called "the bellicose preparations of Serbia," clearly meaning the barrier behind which defenses were being raised to thwart the ambitions of Rome and Berlin. The two capitals had no illusions as to the success of intimidating maneuvers. France evidently would not have the



slightest desire to disavow the action of her dear and faithful ally. Therefore the occasion should be seized. The confident friendship that reigned between the two countries could be broken by assassinating Alexander on French territory. According to the old adage, it would be "like killing two birds with one stone."

Once the principle of the agreement was adopted, the conspirators were summoned to the Villa Torlonia by Mussolini, and were given the final instructions by this infallible genius— "Il Duce a sempre ragione" (The Duce is always right)—as could be read in Italy in gigantic letters on all the walls. According to the plan, conceived by this great man, the King's assassination would be followed by a revolt in Croatia, fomented by Pavelic's friends and followers, and by an uprising of the "comitadjis" of Mihailoff in Macedonia.

With all these connivances of "high politics" in the country of Machiavelli, Mussolini was sure that in such a game the Roman would prove equal to the illustrious Florentine.

Once assembled at the Continental Hotel in Rome, the murderers chose their parts. The "leader" ordered to shoot the King after his landing at Marseille, was the Bulgarian Vlada Georgieff, known as Cernozemski, the ex-champion of Yanka Puszta, who had already proved what he could do by killing two members of parliament at Sofia. Eugen Kvaternik-Dido, the accomplice of Pavelic, was to be with him, just before the attack only, although he had not as yet been able to record a murder on his slate, but who within a few years, as Head of the Police Department at Zagreb in the Independent State of Croatia, would not be able to count the number of his victims. Three other Ustashi—Kralj, Pospisil and Raic—were to be members of the party.

Since Alexander was to go to London after his visit to Paris, precautions were taken to have a second team on the alert. Therefore Andrija Artukovic, with a few of his acolytes, would go there and be ready for the assassination in case Cernozemski, in France, had missed his aim.

Naturally, all the conspirators were to travel with false identification papers and spurious passports furnished by Luigi Conti of the Ovra. Cernozemski even had two, one Czech, in the name of Suck, and the other Hungarian, in the name of Keleman. Raic, for this occasion, was rebaptized Benes. In this way the French would be inclined to think that the King's assassin was a relative of the President of the Czechoslovak Republic.

Ample provided with liras and francs, the band, in order to cover up their tracks, went by way of Austria, then Switzerland to Paris. Because the Gare de Lyon was being strictly guarded because of the arrival of Alexander, the Ustashi avoided it by getting off at Fontainebleau and taking another road to Paris.

On October 6th they all met for the last time in a small neighborhood restaurant. The team from then on was subdivided. Pospisil and Raic stayed in Paris, held, as it were, "in reserve" in case the assassination failed at Marseille. They were to aim at the King during his visit to the Palace at

Versailles. Cernozemski, Kvaternik, Mijo Kralj, and Stana Godina (who had come from Bologna and who had joined the group at Lausanne) took the train that same night for Aix-en-Provence, just 18 kilometers from Marseille. Equipped with revolvers, machine guns, ammunition and grenades by a mysterious blond woman, they spent two nights there in the Modern Hotel. The woman, by the name of Stana, pretended to be Czech but no trace of her in the subsequent inquest was ever discovered. All was now in readiness. Kvaternik and Godina, leaving their two accomplices there, went on to Turin where, with Pavelic, they were to await the outcome.

On October 9, 1934, the Yugoslav destroyer "*Dubrovnik*" anchored in the Vieux Port of Marseille. Louis Barthou, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, accompanied by the local authorities, had come to the Quai des Belges to welcome the sovereign-friend, acclaimed by a dense crowd held back by a cordon of police which, however, seemed somewhat small considering the importance of the occasion. The Yugoslav police, who had preceded their King by several days, had even expressed their anxiety upon his arrival. They went so far as to advise him not to disembark. But Alexander paid no heed and decided to take the risk. After the royal launch had drawn up to the wharf the procession started to form in line. The King and Louis Barthou took their places side by side in a car preceded by guards on horseback. Scarcely had they reached the Boulevard of the Cannebiere when a man broke through the crowds shouting: "Vive le Roi," (Long live the King) while firing four pistol shots at Alexander and the Minister. Beaten down by the sword of Colonel Piollet, who was riding beside the car, the assassin was immediately trampled to death by the crowds. Pavelic had indeed chosen the right man for the killing; the King and Louis Barthou were mortally wounded. The news was announced to the masses standing before the City Hall with the flag at half mast.

Seeing that the fate of Cernozemski had been sealed on the spot, his accomplice, Kralj, ran back in haste to his hotel, and abandoning his machine gun and the grenades which were found soon after, he fled by train to Fontainebleau. The police and the secret service, however, had been alerted throughout France. Kralj had to show his papers and then his false Czech passport. All of a sudden, seized with fear, he lost his head and tried to hide in the forest. Two days later he was arrested at Melun. Pospisil and Raic, in Paris, met the same fate.

All three were condemned to life imprisonment for complicity in the assassination, but when the Germans entered France in 1940 they hurried to release them. The judicial proceedings which followed clearly proved the culpability of Pavelic and Dido Kvaternik, son of Slavko, as organizers of the criminal attack, while they prudently awaited the verdict at Turino. They were condemned to capital punishment. But when the French government demanded their extradition, Mussolini naturally refused. He affected being offended and even had the audacity to warn the Belgrade government that he considered any reference to Italy concerning this affair as a *casus belli* (war accident).

The crime, however, failed to produce the desired effect which the Duce, Regent Horthy, and the Croatian terrorists were waiting for. The King's

"enemies, as well as his friends in Yugoslavia, were ready to regard his *post mortem*, as a martyr of his political faith. . . . The reactions to King Alexander's death in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana, testified to the reality of Yugoslav national sentiment." (Survey of International Affairs (Oxford, 1934), p. 550.)

The second objective at which the instigators were aiming by committing this assassination was not attained either. The friendship between Yugoslavia and France was not altered by the tragedy at Marseille. Both countries remained faithful to the alliance forged on the battlefield of the First World War; an alliance which threats from the Axis against European peace rendered even more necessary than before.

These threats were already such that the League of Nations, on receiving the complaints of Yugoslavia, by unanimous resolution condemned international terrorism as a threat to peace and security, but failed to hold the Hungarian government responsible for the preparation of the criminal attack. Budapest got out of it by acknowledging that its functionaries might have been guilty of certain "negligences" concerning the control of the Croatian emigrants and that disciplinary sanctions had been taken.

This unhappy compromise was to be followed by many others, and peace could not be saved.

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