Nationalities Papers (2025), 53: 3, 619–640
doi:10.1017/nps.2024.29

ARTICLE

The Search for Legitimacy over Yugoslavia: Rudolf Bićanić and the Power of Gold

Nicole Albrecht[1,2,3]

[1]Birkbeck, University of London, UK; [2]John W. Kluge Center at the Library of Congress and [3]Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., USA
Emails: nalbre01@student.bbk.ac.uk; na902@georgetown.edu

Abstract
While historical narratives of the communist legitimation of power in Yugoslavia have often marginalized perspectives of lesser-known civil servants, this study highlights the crucial role of Dr. Rudolf Bićanić, a renowned Yugoslav economist. Departing from the diplomatic, foreign political, and military perspectives when investigating the Yugoslav émigré government actions, this article explores the ideas espoused, networks created, and actions performed by Bićanić across diverse transnational settings. Bićanić's lens as a vice-governor of the Yugoslav National Bank demonstrates that the debates regarding the future social and economic policies shaped the transition process between the two Yugoslav states. Driven by a mission to enhance peasant living conditions in Yugoslavia, Bićanić embarked on a brief yet impactful governmental career from 1941 to 1945. The article posits that Bićanić's anti-government propaganda disseminated through the United Committee of South Slavs and his financial malversations led to the transfer of economic and political legitimacy over Yugoslavia in April 1944 to the National Liberation Council. With this action, Bićanić accelerated the signing of the Tito-Šubašić agreement in June 1944, which empowered him to negotiate the post-war reconstruction aid and loans in Washington, DC, carving a unique path for Yugoslavia between socialism and capitalism.

Keywords: Eastern Europe; Yugoslavia; communism; state formation; economy

1. Introduction

Rudolf Bićanić, an accomplished economist and a member of the Croat Peasant Party (HSS) from 1935 to 1941, held the position of vice-governor of the Royal Yugoslav National Bank during the tumultuous years of the Second World War. Across the former Yugoslav states, his name is intrinsically linked with his seminal work *How the People Live: Life in the Passive Regions*. This work remains an unparalleled socioeconomic study of peasant living conditions in the 1930s. The insightful collection of essays reflects Bićanić's fascination with the living standards of peasants. Furthermore, it showcases his steadfast belief in the intricate links binding social, economic, cultural, and political spheres of life explored in this article.

After spending three years in Mitrovica prison for transporting Svetozar Pribičević's political leaflets from Prague to Yugoslavia under King Alexander's dictatorship (Wild-Bićanić 1999, 112), Bićanić (1981) confessed he "craved human company" but not the "gentlemen's world" he lived in before. In 1935, he embarked on a research journey around Yugoslav "passive regions" conducting surveys that informed him of a chronic lack of food and water and poor housing conditions – a

brutal reality of life faced by millions of Yugoslav peasants. His firsthand accounts of the daily struggles of the Yugoslav population were, for Bićanić, "a precondition of public activity whatever its specific direction" (Bićanić 1981, 29). The impact of WWII on the rural population of Yugoslavia and the improvement of living conditions of peasants in the "reconstruction period" following the war, motivated and directed his short-lived and under-researched governmental career between 1941 and 1945 (Karaula 2016).[1] Scholarship often highlights two critical moments in establishing socialist Yugoslavia: the formation of the Communist-led National Liberation Council in November 1943 and the Tito-Šubašić agreement in June 1944 (Tomaševich 2001; Bilandžić 1985). However, less is known about how this transition of power worked in practice. If the allied support to Tito was critical to his rise to power, why did Western allies accept the National Liberation Council (*Nacionalni komitet oslobođenja Jugoslavije – NKOJ*) as a legitimate representative of the Yugoslav people?

This article demonstrates that the debates regarding the future social and economic policy of Yugoslavia shaped the process of the communist legitimation of power as much as the ethnic, ideological, and military contexts. These latter narratives explore the impact of the National Liberation Army's military victories, the communist solidarity networks, and the paralysis of the Yugoslav émigré government caused by the status of the Chetnik leader – Draža Mihailović – in the Yugoslav government, which exacerbated the ethnic tensions between the ministers (Krizman 1981a; Pavlowitch 1981, 1984, 2011). Rudolf Bićanić's international activity in London and Washington, DC, offers a novel perspective into the events preceding the Tito-Šubašić agreement in June 1944. These events between January and May 1944 paved the way for the formation of the joint Yugoslav government comprised of representatives of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (*Komunistička stranka Jugoslavije* – KPJ) and members of the former exiled cabinet led by Ivan Šubašić. Through the propaganda activity of the United Committee of South Slavs (UCSS), Rudolf Bićanić contributed to detaching the Yugoslav international reputation from the Chetnik regime and reconstructing the allied image of Yugoslavia in line with the NKOJ's federative vision of the country proclaimed in Jajce in November 1943.

Bićanić's support for the NKOJ's socioeconomic program motivated his self-directed, arbitrary, and chaotic process of economic and political legitimation of the NKOJ. With his colleagues in the UCSS in London, Bićanić informed the allied public about the "real" situation in Yugoslavia through radio speeches, personal letters, newspaper reports, and images obtained through the *Jugoslav Information Center* in New York and Swiss newspaper outlets.[1] In the public sector, as a vice-governor of the Royal Yugoslav National Bank (RYNB), he used asset manipulation and subversive political activity against the émigré government to grant, or appear to have granted, Marshal Tito control of the Yugoslav gold reserves and the economic life of the future Yugoslav state. With it, Bićanić contributed to transferring the international legitimacy of Yugoslavia from the émigré government, which "slowly exhausted their moral credit with the British," to the NKOJ and Tito (Pavlowitch 1981, 101). As Tito's only "international representative," Bićanić mediated the Tito-Šubašić agreement, which set in motion the formation of the Provisional Government of Federal Democratic Yugoslavia in March 1945 (Karaula 2016, 221). This process also enabled Bićanić to negotiate the Yugoslav post-war relief and reconstruction loans in Washington, DC, in 1945, where his economic concerns over the livelihoods of the peasant population trumped the ideological consideration over the Yugoslav foreign political orientation.

This article builds on the established historiography of the Yugoslav government in exile. Focusing on the activity of the London-based émigré government, Pavlowitch (1981; 2011) analyzes the lack of consensus among the Yugoslav ministers. Owing to the diminishing prestige of the government in the eyes of the British, brought about by the inclusion of Draža Mihailović in Slobodan Jovanović's and Božidar Purić's cabinets, Pavlowitch (1981; 2011) characterizes the

[1]For understanding Bićanić's role in the Croat Peasant Party, see Karaula 2015 and Šute 2010. For an overview of Bićanić's research into the Croatian countryside, consult Grahovac 1999, 45–64.

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

exiled-government as frozen in "the office without a country," with "no precise information channels," plagued by "impotence" and "disunity." However, the perspective of the leading government ministers in London, such as PM Slobodan Jovanović and foreign minister Momčilo Ninčić (Pavlowitch 1984), does not explain why the Allies turned to Tito to negotiate and discuss the post-war political, economic, and social reconstruction of Yugoslavia as early as spring 1944. Emphasizing the experience of the Yugoslav technocracy or experts – selected as decision-makers in the international cooperation forums because of their expertise in a particular area of scientific and technical knowledge – sheds light onto the transition process between the Royal Yugoslav Government and the Provisional Government established in March 1945.

Through Bićanić's records housed in the Croatian State Archives (HDA) in Zagreb, this article retraces his overseas journey from 1941 to 1945. In doing so, it uncovers the depth and diversity of his international connections alongside his academic, political, and economic ventures in the United Kingdom and the United States. Framed against the backdrop of post-war reconstruction narratives, Bićanić's perspective becomes crucial for detailing the birth of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY) in November 1945. A thorough examination of Bićanić's files reveals the pivotal role played by the social and economic conditions of peasant life alongside the exiled government's support of Mihailović. These factors influenced and shaped the shifting political allegiances of Yugoslav intellectuals and academics residing in Britain and America during WWII. Moreover, Bićanić's correspondence with Yugoslav experts at the Central and Eastern European Planning Board (CEEPB) and the Office for Economic Affairs and Reconstruction in New York between 1941 and 1943 demonstrate that his vision for Yugoslav socioeconomic policy was not an isolated construct.[2] Instead, it was a component of a broader "peasant internationalist" milieu shared by the Yugoslav technocratic experts in the 1940s. This climate set the stage for the unique Yugoslav "third way" in socioeconomic and foreign policy post 1945.[2]

Bićanić's career exemplifies technocrats' increasing role in international governance due to the intertwined nature of diplomacy and technical expertise in the interwar period (Reinisch 2023; Kott 2014). His development model of the "optimal industrialization of the countryside" (Bićanić 2002) played an instrumental role in the post-war planning led by Central-Eastern European specialists in the health, education, economy, and legal sectors. These experts – through their notable contributions to international collaborative ventures in organizations such as the League of Nations and regional technical bodies including the *Little Health Entente* – emerged as the linchpins of post-WWII technical assistance projects within the UN framework (Silverstein 2020 and 2022). A case in point is the Central and Eastern European Planning Board based in New York, which heavily leaned on Bićanić's seminal economic studies detailing the war's impact on the Yugoslav countryside. The Board, among other aims, informed international institutions, such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the International Labor Organization, of the need for a holistic approach to socioeconomic reconstruction after the war's end.[3]

Moving away from ethnic and ideological narratives of the birth of socialist Yugoslavia, the study highlights the necessity to explore how individuals pragmatically navigated World War II's volatile political and military contexts. Tara Zahra's (2010) concept of "national indifference" offers a valuable analytical framework for explaining Bićanić's actions in London. While this article acknowledges the presence of national and ethnic influences in the political decisions of Yugoslav technical experts in exile, it proposes that political loyalties during wartime were not fixed and predetermined by party membership or ethnic identity. They were fluid, constructed, and contested (Brubaker and Cooper 2000, 1). Assuming the state – in this case, the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY) – as a starting point of the historical analysis often conceals the full diversity

[2]The forthcoming project "Peasant Internationalists and the Making of the Yugoslav Third Way, 1920-1956" investigates how the climate of "peasantism" and the instances of peasant international cooperation characterized the Yugoslav international activity.

[3]I explore this argument fully in my project "Peasant Internationalists and the Making of the Yugoslav Third Way, 1920–1956."

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of motivations and reasons for supporting state and nation-building processes. The case of Rudolf Bićanić supports Zahra's claims that national indifference, although challenging to interpret, can only be situationally understood. "It does not belong to Left or Right, to women or men, to cowardly collaborators or a heroic resistance" (Zahra 2010, 113). As Aviel Roshwald (2023, 199) suggests, rather than sticking to a fixed perspective, it is beneficial to consider how changes in context can influence the prioritization and focus of various aspects of a population's identity. This is particularly relevant when competing political factions and military entities strive to associate their identities with their own objectives. By focusing on the ideas espoused, networks created, and actions performed by Bićanić across the multitude of transnational platforms, this article contributes to a broader argument demonstrating that the peasant living conditions significantly influenced Yugoslav international activities from 1920 to 1956. This lived experience and international historical context explain how and why Yugoslavia positioned itself between the East and the West during the Cold War period and shaped the process of the communist legitimation of power.[4]

This article scrutinizes Bićanić's perspective and his incremental contributions to this process in four stages. Initially, it presents the background of Bićanić's appointment as a foreign-trade minister in 1941, elaborating on his visions for the future Yugoslav state as discussed in his academic papers and in correspondence with leading economic experts. Next, it delves into Bićanić's subversive propaganda activities against the émigré government through the UCSS. This activity paralleled the NKOJ Declaration of Jajce in November 1943. In the third stage, the article reconstructs Bićanić's double-agent role: on the one hand, sympathizing with the NKOJ, while on the other, resisting pressure to resign from his position as the vice-governor of the National Bank, as he transferred the bank's assets' legitimacy to Tito. Finally, the piece delineates the significance of Bićanić's actions in establishing the provisional government of Yugoslavia in March 1945 and in his leadership role during the relief and reconstruction loan negotiations that summer.

2. Two Lines of Life

To fully comprehend the spectrum of Bićanić's motivations in London, given the intertwining nature of his political role as vice-governor of the RYNB and his technocratic career as an economist, historians ought to simultaneously analyze Bićanić's "two lines of life."[5] The beginning of his governmental career unfolded against a dramatic backdrop. Two days after the Kingdom of Yugoslavia allied with the Axis Powers on March 25, 1941, a cadre of pro-British military officers carried out a political coup in Belgrade. The coup resulted in the creation of the pro-Western Simović government, which proclaimed Peter II as a Yugoslav monarch. In response to these events, Hitler launched a military attack on Yugoslavia on April 6, 1941. The attack demolished all state and government organs, comprehensively restructuring the nation's political landscape. Amidst this swiftly shifting scenario, the newly formed Simović government, King Peter II, and 15 of the 22 government ministers sworn in on March 27, 1941, escaped the country, taking along the Yugoslav gold reserves from the National Bank in Belgrade (Pavlowitch 1981, 91–92; Goldstein 2008).

Bićanić entered the Yugoslav exiled government as a representative of a split and dysfunctional Croat Peasant Party (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka* – HSS). After the invasion of Yugoslavia, the party splintered into several factions. The right-leaning group of HSS members, including party leader Vladko Maček, who was then under house arrest, remained in the newly established Independent State of Croatia (NDH). Numerous members of this group endorsed the NDH's fascist regime, a

[4]This project expands the normative understanding of "peasantism" associated with either peasant politics (studied through the activities of numerous peasant parties in interwar Yugoslavia) or "agrarianism" (an intellectual movement). Instead, "peasantism" is understood as a climate of opinion shared by various political and professional figures between the 1920s and 1950s. This definition of "peasantism" follows Warinner's (1959) definition in her criticism of the communist political economy and urban/rural planning, which Bićanić shared.

[5]Borrowing the term from Wild-Bićanić (1999).

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

stance that would later serve as a basis for the party's persecution by the communist authorities. The other left-leaning faction opposed Maček's strategy of waiting for the allied liberation of Yugoslavia to delegitimize both the fascist and the communist claim to power and decided to switch their allegiance to the KPJ. Joining the "left-wing" of the HSS under the leadership of Juraj Krnjević, Bićanić arrived in London having spent five years leading the socioeconomic program of the HSS. He directed the activities of Sloga – a cultural, economic, and aid cooperative – and headed the affiliated research center, the Institute for the Study of the Peasant and National Economy (Šute 2010; Grahovac 1999). Bićanić's perspective explored in this article suggests that the socioeconomic program of the KPJ was as significant of a factor in the early support for the communist regime as was the Communist Party's promise of federalism and their "supra-national" conceptualization of Yugoslav culture (Wachtel 1998, 127–172).[6]

Between 1941 and 1943, the Yugoslav government experienced a profound transformation in leadership and structure due to the intricacies of WWII. Although in exile, the government retained a cabinet structure, with individual ministers overseeing different sectors. Decision-making was shared among the King, the Prime Minister, and the cabinet, with the latter instrumental in policy formulation and advising Prime Ministers: Simović, Jovanović, Trifunović, and Purić. However, the constraints of exile, combined with internal rifts among ministers, hindered its efficacy (Pavlowitch 2008, chp. 4).

Disagreements between Serbian and Croatian factions plagued the government, leading to reduced allied support. This decline in support was exacerbated by the government's association with the collaborationist Chetnik regime under Dragoljub (Draža) Mihailović. King Peter II's influence was pivotal, especially as the exiled government aimed to uphold the monarchy. This is exemplified by King Peter II's refusal to heed requests from Churchill and Roosevelt to oust Mihailović from his role as war minister (Roberts 1973, 210–212). The government's detachment from events in Yugoslavia limited its control, making its decisions more symbolic, even as it endeavored to represent Yugoslav interests on the international stage.

Starting in January 1942, Bićanić assumed the role of vice-governor of the Royal Yugoslav National Bank (RYNB). The bank was not an independent financial institution as it was centrally controlled by the Yugoslav government. This jurisdiction also encompassed the nation's monetary policy and, consequently, the operations of the Bank. As per the Bank's revised statutes of September 1940, the Bank's operation required the legal approval of three signatories: the governor of the Bank and two vice-governors. A governor and vice-governors were subjects of the Royal Yugoslav government in Belgrade and were appointed by the Royal Decree on the Proposal of the Minister of Finance and in agreement with the president of the Council of Ministers.[3]

The transfer of Yugoslav gold reserves from Belgrade in the chaotic days of the Nazi takeover in April 1941 highlights the significance of controlling the Bank's assets as they held the key to economic and political legitimacy over the Yugoslav territories. The assets allowed the émigré government in London to access the emergency funds, pay for the salaries of government ministers, conduct operations in foreign currencies, support the in-country resistance movements, and serve as an insurance instrument in loan and credit negotiations.

Based on the financial report by Minister Šutej from February 1942, the Bank's gold reserves were estimated to be 80 tons, out of which 9 tons remained in the country, and the rest was distributed between New York (over half), London, and Brazil. The government also controlled a further 35.5 million dollars worth of assets in the official state bank account, split between New York (over 21 million dollars), Brazil, and Ankara.[4] In the situation of the political vacuum during WWII, with members of the government dispersed across the world, the Council of Ministers passed the

[6]The KPJ supported creation of a new "supranational Yugoslav universal culture," which particularly appealed to left-leaning intellectuals and socioeconomic experts including Bićanić. This overarching ideological conceptualization of Yugoslav culture inherent in the communist slogan of "brotherhood and unity" was fully compatible with the flourishing of individual national cultures in a multi-ethnic and federatively reorganized country (Wachtel 1998, 131).

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

amendments to the statutes of the Bank, which enabled the governor and vice-governors to make executive decisions, deeming them responsible for all financial dealings and damages of the Bank.[5]

In stark contrast to the fragmented and dysfunctional exiled government in London, the National Liberation Movement (*Narodnooslobodilački pokret* – NOP) inside Yugoslavia showcased well-structured organization and decisiveness under the leadership of the KPJ. The Communist Party held a tight grip over the NOP. This dominance was evident as the Central Committee, headed by Josip Broz Tito, was integral in shaping military tactics and overarching policy. The Antifascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (*Antifašističko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Jugoslavije* – AVNOJ) emerged as the NOP's legislative backbone. With the Jajce Declaration in November 1943, AVNOJ was recognized as Yugoslavia's interim governing body. This declaration not only centralized the decision-making process from various local partisan councils within the movement but also unveiled plans for the country's impending socioeconomic transformation anchored in principles of social justice. The Tito-led Central Committee adopted the mantle of a provisional government via AVNOJ (Pavlowitch 2008, 210–212; Tomasevich 2001).

Over the subsequent six months, largely because of Bićanić's efforts in London, both the British and the Americans recognized the NOP not just as a more efficient resistance movement, but as the sole legitimate one. By June 1944, this movement not only held Yugoslavia's political legitimacy but also bore the mantle of international representation – pivotal for post-war negotiations concerning the country's reconstruction. For Bićanić, ensuring timely aid to the Yugoslav countryside was a matter of deep personal commitment.

2.1. Bićanić in London

Between May 1941 and November 1943, Bićanić devoted his efforts in London to investigating the war's impact on the Yugoslav economy and advocating for post-war relief supplies targeted at the country's rural regions. In this timeframe, he ascended to the role of vice-governor of the Royal Yugoslav National Bank and served as a Yugoslav representative of the Inter-Allied Committee on Post-War Requirements. This committee was formed with the objective of compiling estimates on probable needs for relief materials in countries set to be liberated from German occupation (Reinisch 2011, 262; 2013). In his role within this committee, Bićanić relentlessly advocated introducing a critical issue to their agenda: the acute shortage of food and medical supplies experienced by the rural population of Yugoslavia. His actions reflected his ongoing commitment to improving the peasant living conditions.[6]

In September 1943, Bićanić contacted Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, the Chief Economic Adviser to the British Government. Together with his recommendations on the Yugoslav post-war requirements, his letter also featured a photograph of Tito and a succinct summary of the Yugoslav war situation, entitled "Yugoslavia – a post-war problem." This concise review and picture have been disseminated to a wider audience. Bićanić dispatched copies to MP Hugh Dalton, Major Birch of the Army Bureau of Current Affairs, the Yugoslav Society of Great Britain, and Mr. Hubert Jebb from the Economic Research Department in the UK's Foreign Office to harness support for the federative and democratic reorganization of Yugoslavia.[7]

Why did Bićanić, a member of the émigré government, decide to change the course and begin subversive propaganda in support of the National Liberation Movement (NOP) in September 1943, two months before the foundation of the NKOJ in Jajce? To comprehend this pivotal shift in Bićanić's allegiances from the émigré government toward the NOP, we must delve deeper into his aspirations for the future of the Yugoslav state. We also need to contextualize his political and economic philosophy against the actions of the Yugoslav émigré government led by Prime Minister Slobodan Jovanović.

Bićanić's travels, sociological studies, and work with Sloga deeply influenced his worldview. Consequently, he ardently advocated for recognizing the intricate connections between social, cultural, and political life. He believed that "the natural conditions and not the political frontiers

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

must form the basis of our [post-war] planning."[8] In his response to Professor David Mitrany, renowned British sociologist of Romanian roots, he expressed his belief that "the existence of socioeconomic organizations, such as Sloga, would become a foundation for the existence of international peasant corporations necessary for a fairer and more adequate international economic development."[9]

His critically acclaimed academic paper "Agricultural Overpopulation" (2002), presented at the European Agricultural Conference in London in March 1942, similarly argued for the optimal industrialization of the countryside, instead of urbanization and industrialization based on the "Western 19th century model."[10,7] Bićanić's (2002) optimal vision of a future political economy envisaged Central-Eastern Europe and Yugoslavia as supporters of an open global economy focused on agricultural restructuring and improving the lives of peasants based on moral principles of social justice.[8] A small peasant landowner operating in the free economic market system would be supported by targeted state interventions over the critical aspects of social and economic life and cooperative economic enterprises. On the other hand, the government would control crucial industries, such as mining and transport.[11]

Bićanić's understanding of the future political economy aligned with the social and economic program of the KPJ announced in Jajce, the development of local partisan administrative units on the ground in Yugoslavia, and their federative visions of the future state. The NKOJ's proposed state organization of Yugoslavia accounted for differences in state traditions of constitutive parts of Yugoslavia supporting the equality of Yugoslav nationalities and greater socioeconomic justice for all citizens.[12] The peasants in rural regions greatly helped the local partisan administrative units of the NOP, which was in existence before the foundation of the Anti-Fascist Council of Yugoslavia in November 1942.[13] The NKOJ thus pledged to strive towards a more democratic and equitable political system, one that would also extend political decision-making power to the peasants. This sentiment echoed the idea that Bićanić had previously expressed in his correspondence with Mitrany.

Bićanić's shift in allegiance from the émigré-government to the partisan-led NOP was not a hasty move but a result of a yearlong process also motivated by the actions of the leading Yugoslav government ministers. The crimes of the Independent State of Croatia against Jewish and Serb minorities in the Winter of 1942 gave a pretext for an increase in pro-Chetnik and anti-Croatian international representation of Yugoslavia, which Bićanić and non-Serbian ministers found unacceptable. While King Peter II, during his tour of the US and Canada in June 1942, depicted Mihailović as a heroic fighter for the freedom of Yugoslavia, appointing him as the Yugoslav Army General, the news regarding Mihailović's collaboration with the Italians became known to British intelligence.[9] Despite knowing about Mihailović's collaboration with the Fascist "quisling regime," Slobodan Jovanović's cabinet maintained their support for Chetniks in food, munitions, and medicine (Krizman 1981a; Milošević 1982; Petranović 1982). They also continued to lobby for the British support of the Chetnik movement. As news regarding Mihailović's collaboration became public, the emigre government's support for Mihailović turned more problematic and effectively paralyzed their decision-making (Pavlowitch 1981, 108–113). Simultaneously, the proclamation of the AVNOJ as a "true" anti-fascist resistance National Liberation Movement in Yugoslavia began to gather pace with the proclamations and notes sent to Britain, the USA, and the USSR in January and February 1943 (Petranović 1982 in Milošević 1982, 239–240).

[7]For a global contextualization of Bićanić's political economy, see Isao Koshimura (2021, 304–328).

[8]The Jajce Declaration also appealed to Bićanić's belief in democratic federalism and social justice. Social justice was not a new concept. Internationally, it was enshrined as a working goal of the International Labour Organisation, which had since 1919 focused on improving living and working standards, albeit of industrial and trade sectors (Rogers 2009; International Labour Office 1951, 175).

[9]Sir O. Sargent delivered a note to the Yugoslav and allied governments regarding the Partisan military victories in Yugoslavia in December 1942 (Krizman 1981a in Milošević 1982).

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The last straw for Bićanić, and other Yugoslav technocrats in New York, was the choice of Božidar Purić as a new Yugoslav Prime Minister who replaced Miloš Trifunović in August 1943. Contrary to Churchill's wishes, Purić's "non-political working party" was "the most thoroughly committed to Mihailović of all the émigré cabinets" (Pavlowitch 1981, 101). Shortly after his appointment, Purić withdrew the Yugoslav membership at the Central and Eastern European Planning Board in New York, closing the Office for Economic Affairs and Reconstruction – a governmental research institute comprised of economic and social experts in agreement with Bićanić over the future social and economic policy of Yugoslavia. Konstantin Fotić, a Yugoslav ambassador in the USA and a devoted Mihailović supporter, became the only official diplomatic contact with the US government.[14] The controversy over the rightful international representation of Yugoslavia and the disassociation of the exiled government with the country's social and economic problems motivated Bićanić to take the matter into his own hands. Unlike most of the cabinet in London, the discontinued Yugoslav "ministerial mission" in New York, many of whom returned to London, believed that the country's future rested on ensuring the reconstruction of Yugoslav society and economy after the war. These experts, led by Bićanić, understood the necessity of foreign credits and investments from the USA to ensure Yugoslavia's future prosperity.[15]

Within this context, Rudolf Bićanić began more openly discussing his ideas on the political reorganization of post-war Yugoslavia along democratic principles. In his letters to renowned Croatian sociologist, Dinko Tomašić, Bićanić explained his ideas of a "community of peasant nations in Eastern Europe" and "federative Yugoslavia" (Karaula 2016, 216–218). Writing to Peter Young in the Autumn of 1943, Bićanić also noted that: "there is a great political fluidity in Europe, this fluidity means an evolution of social forces and historical processes […] the émigré governments cannot be considered as representative of the state of mind prevailing in Europe which is fighting Hitler."[16] This correspondence marked the next phase of Bićanić's political activity and signaled his defiance of the émigré government through the establishment of the United Committee of South Slavs (UCSS). Months later, he leveraged his position in the RYNB to express open support for NOP and NKOJ. The emphasis on democracy and federalism in the NKOJ's proclamation in Jajce resonated deeply with Bićanić's political orientation. Meanwhile, their approach to liberation, relying on peasant solidarity and direct local governance of freed areas, secured Bićanić's support for this partisan-led movement.

3. The United Committee of South Slavs

While Rudolf Bićanić may have grown disillusioned with the exiled government's capacity to advocate for Yugoslav interests overseas, he did not resign from his post as the vice-governor of the RYNB. Instead, he opted to leverage his position to support NKOJ. His strategy included persuading the British government and its citizens of the strength of NOP's resistance and exposing D. Mihailović's "pro-collaboration" activities.

From November 1943 to May 1944, Bićanić directed a propaganda campaign through the UCSS, which was established in London on November 29, 1943. Serving alongside Boris Furlan and Mihailo Petrović, Bićanić was a key member of the Committee's executive organ based at the University College London. The UCSS constitution, proclaimed on the same day, related the future of Yugoslavia with "the real self-determination of nations proclaimed by the United Nations." The group identified itself as "a mediator of all the war needs, as well as social and economic needs of the people fighting against fascism in Yugoslavia," and endeavored to bolster "the anti-fascist fight by forming a wider anti-fascist democratic coalition" to "unable the collaborators in their practice" and contribute to "territorial integrity of the future Yugoslav state."[17]

The committee used three strategies to achieve their aims: (1) dissemination of messages to the allied governments and the public regarding the activity of the People's Liberation Movement through a series of information leaflets, radio speeches, and lectures;[18] (2) coordination of already existing international efforts regarding the future orientation and organization of Yugoslavia; and

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(3) exposing the collaboration of Chetnik and fascist forces on the ground in Yugoslavia. Between November 1943 and May 1944, the committee contributed to redefining the allied image of Yugoslavia's resistance movement by presenting the NKOJ as the legitimate representative of the Yugoslav people and a member of the "United Nations," countering the persisting British support for the Chetnik movement.

The United Committee's most immediate objective was to enlighten the allied public, politicians, and academics within the Anglophone world about the "situation on the ground in Yugoslavia." They also sought to "make known the wishes of the Croatian, Serbian and Slovenian people regarding the future organization of the Yugoslav state" – a vision aligned with the principles championed by the NKOJ.[19] During its inaugural month, the UCSS disseminated a report entitled "New Yugoslavia," detailing the strategies employed by partisan groups to liberate Yugoslav territories and establish local administrative units. This piece was instrumental in promoting an understanding of the evolving Yugoslav landscape and the effective tactics of its liberation movement. The report communicated that the local population, chiefly comprised of peasants, greeted with enthusiasm for the freedom of election of local administration. However, "as the People's Liberation Army came to control more and more territories, the local administration system was no longer adequate to coordinate the activities of all the local representatives."[20] Consequently, "The Anti-Fascist Council was established, with 65 delegates headed by the chairman Ivan Lola Ribar. The main task of this council was to administer local areas, organize supply for the army and partisan units, and food for the local population."[21]

In his broadcasts to the *BBC*, Bićanić echoed a similar message, linking public support for democracy and federalism in the 1920s to the NOP. He recalled that since 1918, the demands for democratic public opinion, self-administration, and a federal state structure were loud. Yet, "during King Alexander's dictatorship 1929–1934, the country was administratively reorganized, and the officials were transferred to places they knew nothing of habits, customs, laws, and needs of the population."[22] This administrative reconfiguration of the country into nine banovinas after 1929 sharply contradicted Bićanić's principles of "grounding the political activity on the knowledge of social conditions, cultural customs and economic problems of the countryside" as "a precondition of any successful political service."[23]

By tracing the continuity of traditions and values between the 1920s and the actions of the partisans, Bićanić sought to legitimize the NKOJ as the real representatives of the Yugoslav people whose policy was "in line with the policy of the United Nations to entertain sincere relations and friendship with the allies."[24] In Autumn 1943, Bićanić advocated these viewpoints through a series of lectures on the partisan resistance movement in Yugoslavia. These were delivered at British ATS Colleges, Royal Academies, and Societies with the intent of cultivating consensus among politicians, the public, and leading allied military figures regarding the NKOJ's position.[10]

Another important strategy for legitimizing the NKOJ was coordinating the existing émigré Southern Slav initiatives, which supported the federal and democratic reorganization of the country. The UCSS considered itself a link between the political organs of the United Nations and "the people's representatives across the globe." The group reported on the Slavic groups' most essential activities by organizing congresses and meetings of the Yugoslav emigres in the USA, Canada, and South America. For instance, the Congress of American Serbians voiced support for unity among the people and NOP. Likewise, the Slovene Congress, which convened in Cleveland in December 1942, made a powerful declaration: it "demanded the unification of all Slovenian units into a United Slovenia equal to other units in a new federal democratic Yugoslavia."[25] Echoing

[10]In the Autumn of 1943, while working at the Watford station of the ATS college, Sonia Wild organized a seminar on anti-fascist resistance movements, focusing on their socioeconomic backgrounds. She decided to write to Rudolf Bićanić on the advice of Kingsley Martin, then an editor of the *New Statesmen*, and Dorothy Woodman, head of the Union of Democratic Control. Bićanić's lecture turned into a series of seminars at the ATS college across Britain in the fall of 1943 and winter of 1944. Bićanić and Wild became romantically involved during their collaboration before marrying in October 1945 (Wild-Bićanić 1999).

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

similar sentiments, the Congress of the Croatian Americans, held in Chicago in February 1943, made a compelling statement. They expressed hope and expectation that "America and their powerful allies, Great Britain, and Soviet Russia, would do their utmost to ensure to the other Yugoslav people the realization of free and democratic way of life in a federal state in which all peoples have equal rights and obligations."[26]

The last important aspect of the committee's work was to expose the Chetnik movement as a national enemy. Mihailo Petrović, one of the UCSS's founding members, revealed the *Fascist Italian Press*'s "false propaganda." This story was also reported by *Times* and *Reuters* in November of 1943. According to this news, "General Đukanović [who controlled parts of occupied Serbia] died of the wounds received in Montenegro. Yugoslav officials claimed that Đukanović had joined Draža Mihailović circles early and was a keen Anglophile." Petrović argued that the news reports created by *Glas Crnogoraca*, who were under the official control of the *Italian Fascist Press*, aimed to discredit the world of the National Liberation Army and the communist resistance regime by propagating the regime of Mihailović as a Western ally. Petrović argued that there was proof that Đukanović was a part of the Fascist Quisling Organization, similar to the *Ustaša* regime of Ante Pavelić in the Independent State of Croatia. Another disconcerting example of this false propaganda, which the UCSS countered, was a report on the war effort in Western Serbia.[27] Petrović's report was corroborated by Bićanić, who wrote to the *News Chronicle* in London that "government information service reported that general Mihalović had extended his control over Western Serbia. Yugoslav flags were flying from official buildings, and the Yugoslav railway was in full operation." In reality, Bićanić continued, "Germans, as well as Mihalović's Tchetniks and the troops of General Nedić, were defending the approaches to Serbia against the Serbian units of the People's Liberation Army."[28]

But, how successful was the UCSS in convincing the allied governments, led by Winston Churchill, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Stalin, to accept the NKOJ as an allied political group? Judging from the resolution celebrating the third anniversary of anti-fascist resistance in Yugoslavia on March 27, 1944, their efforts paid off. The committee expressed "their warm gratitude to Prime Minister Churchill, who proclaimed the whole truth about the struggle of the people of Yugoslavia officially and paid them high tribute."[29] A significant shift occurred a month earlier, on February 22, 1944, as the UCSS's propaganda activities were ramping up. In a notable speech before the British Parliament, Churchill openly acknowledged the NOP as the legitimate Yugoslav resistance movement, effectively terminating British support for the Chetnik regime (Mirošević 1982, 242). Fitzroy Maclean's mission to the Yugoslav partisans' headquarters in the fall of 1943, which evaluated the partisans' military contributions to the allied cause, also played a substantial role in Churchill's recognition (Maclean 2004). But, despite this shift in the official British foreign policy favoring the NOP, the UCSS was not successful in securing official recognition of the NKOJ as the legitimate representative of the Yugoslav people.

With this end in mind, in March 1944 UCSS appealed "to all United Nations governments to sever all relations with the exiled Yugoslav government which is working against the struggle for liberation and to recognize the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia as the only legitimate Yugoslav authority elected by the people as the only reliable and active ally to the United Nations." The Resolution of the UCSS added that this official recognition "could render common struggle further, while it would be a decisive blow to the enemies whose only hope was to create the differences with their propaganda and exploiting the indeterminate attitude of the Allied Governments towards Yugoslavia."[30]

On the other hand, the British sought a compromise between the London-based cabinet ministers led by Purić and the NKOJ. For Bićanić, the benefits of the compromise were manifold: the compromise would resolve the paralysis of the Yugoslav government-in-exile, bolster the war effort in Yugoslavia, and facilitate the negotiation of military assistance and post-war reconstruction credits and loans by Yugoslav experts. Through his contacts with the Central and Eastern European Planning Board in New York, Bićanić recognized there was a tremendous amount of

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

goodwill to be exploited in Britain and America and appreciated the significance of obtaining international representative legitimacy for the NKOJ. However, what urged the British to accelerate negotiations between Tito and Šubašić? And why did King Peter allow these negotiations to proceed and dismiss Purić's cabinet? Bićanić's technocratic "line of life" as an economic expert and a vice-governor of the RYNB reveals valuable insights into the clandestine proceedings that resulted in the Vis Agreement and the establishment of a joint cabinet consisting of the NKOJ representatives and émigré government ministers.

4. The Power of Gold

In January 1942, Rudolf Bićanić ascended to the role of vice-governor of the RYNB, courtesy of an appointment by the Minister of Finance, Juraj Šutej. From January to June 1944, he strategically leveraged his position to influence banking entities, effectively obstructing the émigré government's access to Yugoslav funds stationed overseas. Notably, the bank's operational capacity was compromised during wartime. While the official statutes signified that the bank's assets were under the stewardship of the governor and two vice-governors, insights from Bićanić's letters to Ambassador Jevtić painted a different picture. Figures such as the Yugoslav Prime Ministers, King Peter, and the Yugoslav Ambassador to the US, Konstantin Fotić, wielded considerable sway over financial decisions. Recognizing the bank's precarious economic landscape, Bićanić astutely navigated the existing power void to his advantage. He wielded the power inherent in his signature to persuade central banks holding these funds to recognize Tito and the NKOJ's control over the Royal Yugoslav National Bank's assets. This shrewd move thwarted Konstantin Fotić in New York from transferring these funds to King Peter's private account in the USA or to D. Mihailović in Serbia.

On November 22, 1943, a week before the UCSS proclamation, Bićanić voiced his concerns over the government's fiscal and monetary policy and Purić's cabinet appointments (Mihailović) in a letter sent to the Yugoslav ambassador in London, Bogoljub Jevtić. As a result of the government's increased expenditures and the direction of trade and reconstruction policy after the closure of the Office for Economic Affairs and Reconstruction in New York, Bićanić resigned from the position of the International Board of Trade and the Inter-Allied Committee of Post-war Requirements. In the same letter to Jevtić, he expressed his concerns over the appointment of Konstantin Fotić as a Yugoslav ambassador to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), contributing to the Pro-Chetnik orientation of Purić's government, which made it "impossible for him to represent this government internationally."[31]

Regarding the Bank, Bićanić conveyed two important arguments: "As a vice governor, he should be at least responsible for maintaining and safeguarding the property of the bank held abroad." However, he was "never given any information where the property was, what it amounts to, and how much was being spent." Bićanić also criticized the government's monetary policy and warned against the overprinting of the notes from emigration, which worsened the hyperinflation of the currency and exacerbated the living conditions in Yugoslavia. Instead, "the bank should be under national control and the board of trustees should decide how much money is being printed and how much is circulating."[32] Just a month later, as Bićanić's activity with the UCSS in Winter 1943–1944 gathered pace, he received the government's letter informing him of his removal from the position of a vice-governor by the Royal Decree of December 23, 1943.[33] Given Bićanić's overt support for the NKOJ, the government's counteraction was a predictable response. If they were to lose Bićanić's signature as one of the two vice-governors of the bank, it would greatly hamper their ability to execute swift economic decisions, thereby contributing to the political deadlock of Purić's cabinet.

4.1. A Double Agent

The subsequent events took an unexpected turn with Bićanić responding defiantly to this decision. During the winter of 1943–1944, Bićanić sought legal advice from the Yugoslav academics based in

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

New York and California.[34] Over a month later, on January 24, 1944, he sent a reply to Ambassador Jevtić, who served as an intermediary in this dispute, refusing to accept his dismissal. Bićanić expressed his concerns that "his sacking did not follow the proposed legal format outlined by the statutes of the bank." Bićanić referred to the Bank's bylaws, which specified that the removal from the position of the governor or vice-governor had to be initiated by the Minister of Finance and approved by the Council of Ministers – legalities that were, according to Bićanić, not met.[35]

Jevtić responded to this statement by writing "that he had received a letter from King Peter II informing him of his removal from the position on December 23, 1943." This letter also included the serial number of the royal decree. "A more legal form than this does not exist," responded the Ambassador. He further warned Bićanić, "I regret to remind you of grave circumstances that the decision of staying in your vice-governor seat would have. I hope you will not put me in a position to undergo such measures as a formal representative of our government in London."[36] This diplomatic row ended with Bićanić's final response on February 11, 1944, in which he stated that he was "not able to vacate the position of the vice-governor" and that he would not respond to the threats sent in the letter.[37] While Jevtić's reply might have been perceived as a veiled threat to Bićanić's political standing, Bićanić remained resolute in maintaining his role as the bank's vice-governor. However, what drove him to risk his career to safeguard a position with which he seemed to be dissatisfied?

Bićanić's concerns revolved around the escalating economic crisis in the country, the government's apathetic stance on post-war reconstruction planning, and a growing distrust in the government's fiscal policy. Building upon the existing studies of the Central and Eastern European Planning Board and the Yugoslav Office for Economic Affairs and Reconstruction, in a paper entitled "The Effects of War on Rural Yugoslavia," Bićanić (1994) evaluated the devastating effect of war on the Yugoslav economy and peasant population. His frustrations arose from the government's insufficient understanding of food provisions, adequate clothing, housing, and infrastructure; the structural issues surrounding agricultural overpopulation; and the lack of proper medical care – all of which necessitated foreign investments and relief. Holding onto his position allowed Bićanić to block the financial transactions of Purić's cabinet and exert influence on allies as economic reconstruction conferences loomed. His aim was to secure recognition for the NKOJ as legitimate representatives of the Yugoslav people, whose socioeconomic program announced in Jajce resonated with Bićanić's own advocacy for social justice, freedom, and democracy in political practice.

Bićanić had to act quickly to prevent Purić's cabinet from accessing the gold reserves. To legitimize Tito's control over the Yugoslav assets, which would have strengthened the NKOJ's position in the power struggle for international representation, Bićanić first had to delegitimize the "Royal Yugoslav National Bank." In late January 1944, Bićanić dispatched telegrams and letters to the headquarters of the national banks where Yugoslav reserves and assets were held: New York, Ankara, and Rio De Janeiro. He warned the treasurers of the banks and foreign ministers of the USA, the UK, and the Soviet Union that the exiled government of Yugoslavia had illegally attempted to obtain control over the banks' assets that belonged to the state and the people of Yugoslavia. On January 28, 1944, he reported that "an attempt made by the Royal Yugoslav Government in Cairo to transfer the gold reserves in the amount of 11 million dollars from London to Rio. The legal procedure for this requires the signatures of the governor and two vice-governors of the bank which he, as an active vice-governor refused to provide," communicated Bićanić. The reason for this refusal lies in the name of the bank in the official fund transfer request quoted as "De Bank Nationale Royaume de Yugoslavie." According to Bićanić, "this bank does not exist and does not have any branches in the country or abroad; there are no officials here authorized by the board of directors to give such a signature to transfer the money from Barclays to another bank."[38]

Based on the government's next steps, Bićanić's bluff paid off, as the government could not transfer the assets.[39] Bićanić's timely actions in blocking the financial transfers had a tremendous impact on the direction of Yugoslav international representation in the coming months. In a special

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

proclamation of March 11, 1944, the NKOJ, acting as a provisional Yugoslav government, officially empowered Bićanić to protect the funds of the National Bank abroad.[40] The Decree of the Reorganization of the National Bank of Yugoslavia, March 17, 1944, granted Bićanić "special powers and status in the newly reconfigured Bank of Yugoslavia."[41] To keep the continuity of his position in the eyes of the allies, Bićanić remained "in the position of the vice-governor with powers to represent the national bank, open accounts in the name of the national bank, enter into agreements or sign documents, take all steps necessary to come into possession to obtain control over the funds and property of the bank outside of Yugoslavia and organize local law branches in England and USA."[42] With this decree, Bićanić became a crucial international agent of Marshal Tito, with the power to direct the economic life of Yugoslavia. While Bićanić lobbied for the transfer of political legitimacy of Yugoslavia to the NKOJ, the émigré government was in a checkmate position, unable to control the state assets.

However, the émigré government did not easily accept defeat. In March 1944, at the twelfth hour, the government attempted to change the Bank's bylaws to enable it to transfer gold reserves from London to New York under Konstantin Fotić's custodianship. Fotić urged Ambassador Jevtić to allow the governor of the Bank (Lazarević) and only one of the acting vice-governors (Mrmolja) to sign the decree to transfer the Yugoslav reserves in the amount of 11 million dollars into Fotić's US account. This change in the bylaws would have resolved a difficult financial situation for the government, as they were unable to pay the salaries of the Yugoslav army stationed in Cairo.[43] Bićanić was aware of this attempt and, on March 22, 1944, dispatched a telegram to Minister Fraser for British War Transport, to postpone any payment to the Royal Yugoslav Government until the Bank legitimacy problem was officially resolved.[44] The British government, however, refused to annul the international obligations and treaties entered by the Royal Yugoslav Government, which was communicated to Bićanić in the letters by Fraser and Howard.[45] Cordell Hull's (American State Secretary) approval of Fotić's actions in transferring parts of Yugoslav assets to his account in New York endangered Bićanić's earlier gains and was another blow to the legitimation process of the NKOJ.[46]

Learning from his past mistakes in targeting the political elites, Bićanić changed his approach and directed his future correspondence exclusively to his colleagues – national bank governors and treasury officers. This instance of technocratic malversation was accompanied by aggressive propaganda through the UCSS outlets informing the major allied newspapers of the partisan's military victories in Yugoslavia.[47] Bićanić's actions aimed to shift public opinion over Yugoslav political representation and convince at least one banking institution of his authority as an acting vice-governor.

Bićanić's change of strategy proved successful. On April 11, 1944, he dispatched a series of informative telegrams to the United States Federal Reserve Bank, the Swiss National Bank, and the National Bank of Brazil.[48] His correspondence was met with confirmative responses. The Swiss National Bank sent a letter on April 17, 1944, verifying their commitment to blocking Yugoslav funds until the country's political turmoil was stabilized.[49] Several months later, a telegram arrived from Rio de Janeiro informing Bićanić of "the bank's refusal to hand nine million dollars of assets to King Peter deposited in Brazil, and subsequent freezing of the Yugoslav account in line with wishes of Marshal Tito."[50] As of April 1944, these significant developments have caught the attention of major newspapers across the United States and Britain. Media outlets – including *Reuters*, *Daily Telegraph*, the *New York Times*, *New York Tribune-Herald*, *Chicago Sun*, and *Daily Sketch* – all reported on the financial blockade and its implications.[51]

Purić's strategy to force King Peter into transferring the gold reserves from Rio back to Serbia, intending to put them under the control of Draža Mihailović, inadvertently aided Bićanić's endeavors. In the spring of 1944, this move was viewed as particularly troublesome by the Allies, as consensus was emerging regarding Mihailović's controversial collaborations.[52] Purić's attempt to reallocate the bank's assets, along with the UCSS's propagandistic campaign in London in March 1944 portraying Mihailović as an adversary of the "United Nations," dealt a fatal blow to the

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

reputation of the exile government. Purić's cabinet, through its continued support for Mihailović, was now deviating from the principles of the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations. This, in turn, swayed the sentiments of allied politicians in favor of NKOJ and Tito.

4.2. The Consequences

In the short term, the shift in economic legitimacy emphasized the necessity for a political compromise between the NKOJ and the Yugoslav émigré government. The British government, with Bićanić as a mediator, took the initiative to facilitate these negotiations. Maclean's mission to Yugoslavia in September 1943, reporting on the Partisan military triumphs and Chetnik defeats in the 4th German offensive, contributed to the British acceptance of the NOP as an allied military force. The importance of Bićanić's actions lies in their timing (Minehan 2006; Roshwald 2023). Growing allied dissatisfaction regarding the Chetnik collaboration with Italian and German occupiers, combined with the UCSS propaganda efforts and Bićanić's economic malfeasance, hastened the process of addressing the question of Yugoslav political representation. This occurred more quickly than Churchill and Roosevelt had anticipated (Roberts 1973, 204–223).

Roberts and Roshwald's analyses of the Axis occupation of Yugoslavia (1941–1945) indicates that Churchill's decision to redirect British support from Mihailović to Tito was primarily a military move. The British revitalized their military interest in Yugoslavia after the meeting between Churchill and Stalin in October 1943. During this meeting, the two leaders agreed that Britain would maintain "ninety percent dominance in Greece" and that they would "go fifty-fifty about Yugoslavia" (Roshwald 2023, 155; Roberts 1973, 267). This decision was a component of the broader British strategy in the Balkans to realign support in Greece from communist to their anti-communist adversaries.

Bićanić's actions in the early Spring of 1944 in London made the British aware of the substantial political ramifications of this military strategy. Supporting partisans militarily opened a question of political legitimacy and international representation of the country, as acknowledged in Roosevelt's letter to King Peter in May 1944 (Roberts 1973, 218–220). Considering Bićanić's malversations thus shifts the timeline of the British attempts to diminish the communist influence over Yugoslavia before Maclean's briefing of Churchill in the Exchequer Office on May 6, 1944 (Roberts 1973, 210–212). The allies failed to grasp that these debates were not only a matter of political orientation and ideology, as Roberts suggests in the case of the USA (1973, 209). Among Yugoslav socioeconomic experts, the questions of economic sovereignty took precedence over political sovereignty – a principle that Bićanić would later impress upon Tito during their loan negotiation talks in Washington, DC.

Developments surrounding the RYNB in March and April accentuated Churchill's inclination to have Ivan Šubašić, the prewar Governor of Croatia, flown to London to lay the groundwork for a new government. This sentiment is manifest in the copious letter exchanges in April 1944 involving the British, Americans, and King Peter II (Roberts 1973, 207–212). The British recognition of Tito's political and economic grip on Yugoslavia, coupled with Bićanić's dialogues with Tito, accelerated the formation of a provisional Yugoslav government – a mission culminating in the signing of the Tito-Šubašić Agreement in June 1944.

In the letter dated May 16, 1944, Bićanić informed Tito that Churchill had given him the green light to engage King Peter in discussions regarding the government's collaboration with the NKOJ. However, Bićanić expressed hesitance in acting as the intermediary in these negotiations, considering that his reputation in "the émigré government was tarnished, which would reflect negatively on the support of these talks by the Serbian population."[53] Consequently, General Velebit, one of Tito's most trusted military advisors, took the helm to lead the preliminary negotiations that paved the way for the Tito-Šubašić Agreement. Bićanić meticulously reported on the initial dialogues between the émigré government, led by Ivan Šubašić, and relayed Šubašić's conditions for a potential coalition government to Tito before their final meetings at Vis in June 1944.[54]

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Bićanić's granular reporting on Šubašić's objectives and stance concerning the nation's political future equipped Tito and the NKOJ with the insights needed to articulate a clear agenda for entering the Vis negotiations. This, in turn, facilitated a political compromise that led to the formation of a provisional government comprising both NKOJ and émigré politicians.[11] Without the recognition of the NKOJ as a legitimate political ally to the "United Nations" – a phrase first used in the Atlantic Charter – and the authorization to establish a provisional Yugoslav government, Bićanić would have been ineligible to participate in the post-war reconstruction talks that got underway in Washington, DC, in the summer of 1944, and unable to improve the dreadful living conditions in the Yugoslav countryside.[12]

It is beyond the scope of this article to fully analyze the medium- and long-term significance of Bićanić's actions that allowed him to negotiate relief aid and reconstruction loans in Washington, DC. Nevertheless, it is crucial to highlight his approach to the reconstruction process. It sheds light on the motivations behind Bićanić's fleeting alliance with the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, with his prime concern being to persuade Tito of the need for proactive lobbying for international reconstruction loans, which would set the foundations for the optimal industrialization of the countryside.[55]

In Washington, DC, Bićanić engaged in a series of confidential meetings with Harry White, the architect of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund. White disclosed to Bićanić that "the budget for both organizations should be passed by the end of 1945 in the amount of 9.1 billion and 8.8 billion dollars, respectively." Bićanić expressed Yugoslavia's interest in obtaining 500–700 million dollars in loans from these institutions over five years. His communications with Tito primarily focused on convincing Tito of the advantages of the World Bank and IMF loans over bilateral loans from American banks.[56] Bićanić was conscious of the foreign political and ideological implications tied to these financial decisions. However, he sought to reassure Tito, noting that "as this is the World Bank our foreign policy and relations with America does not matter as much as we will be a full member of the bank and should therefore be able to use the funds."[57] Yugoslavia was indeed a founding member of the IMF, until its own dissolution, and was the only Eastern European country to maintain continuous membership in the institution (Calori et al. 2019, 11).

Following the establishment of the Yugoslav provisional government in March 1945, Bićanić had a second objective in Washington, DC: to secure his leadership in negotiations with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). He tailored his strategy before the UNRRA Council to emphasize the needs of the peasant population – sufficient food, clothing, and medical supplies – and advocate for more collaborative decision-making tailored to the unique needs of different Yugoslav regions.[58] Bićanić aimed to procure at least 300 million dollars in relief from the organization, forming a coalition with like-minded regional countries – Czechoslovakia, Greece, and Poland. These countries jointly lobbied for the creation of the Sub-Committee on Food Supplies, an approach termed "collaborative internationalism" by Reinisch (2011). This strategy, centered on the needs of the peasant population, sought better allocation of food and clothing supplies in ravaged areas and called for the inclusion of representatives from aid-receiving states in the UNRRA's decision-making process.[59]

In a letter to Tito detailing the developments in Washington, DC, Bićanić relayed American apprehensions about Yugoslavia falling into the "Soviet sphere of influence," a concern that

[11]The Tito-Šubašić agreement initialized the formation of the joint Yugoslav government, completed on November 1, 1944. However, its implementation was delayed by the need to resolve a dispute with King Peter II regarding the appointments to the regency council. Tito eventually became the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Democratic Federal Yugoslavia in March 1945 (Mirošević 1982).

[12]The example of Poland illustrates the importance of forming a provisional government. Poland's question regarding the political representation contested by the émigré government in London and the Lublin Committee in Poland was not resolved until January 1945. The prolonged negotiations resulted in the delay in receiving UNRRA help and forming a clear reconstruction negotiation plan (Reinisch 2008).

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

unfavorably influenced the Yugoslav negotiations with the UNRRA leading to a "discrimination of Yugoslavia in favor of Greece."[60] Simultaneously, Bićanić compiled a comprehensive report about this challenging situation, cautioning Tito that "UNRRA is not popular in America because they are also helping the countries in the Soviet sphere of interest" and recommended that Tito "please be aware of this help needed in your political communication or any reports and news regarding America or UNRRA. Being nice to them would mean another 200 million dollars of help for us."[61]

This pragmatic approach – acknowledging Yugoslavia's ideological alignment with the Soviet Union while recognizing the economic necessity of a US partnership – laid the groundwork for the communist social, economic, and foreign policy of the Yugoslav "third way." The international representation of Yugoslavia, which was driven by the social and economic realities of peasant life in the country (a hallmark of Bićanić's actions in London), paved a way toward an "active coexistence" of Yugoslavia, situated between East and West, capitalism, and socialism (for more information on the Yugoslav "third way," see Jakovina 2017; Previšić 2021; Stubbs 2023).

5. Conclusions

Bićanić's involvement in the UCSS and his role as a vice-governor of the RYNB paint a more complex picture of the communist legitimation of power in the months leading up to the Tito-Šubašić agreement. His actions suggest that the socioeconomic challenges faced by the Yugoslav peasantry influenced the political loyalties of the Yugoslav technocratic elite, on par with the ethnic and ideological debates over the future of the Yugoslav state. The tactical decision to address the Yugoslav "social question" before the war's end – a critique leveled by the émigré government to the Anti-Fascist Council in 1943– was a critical maneuver in winning the support of a large portion of the Yugoslav intelligentsia and left-leaning political figures in exile. This group held the firm belief that resolving the issue of agricultural overpopulation was fundamental to ensuring Yugoslav prosperity and the stability of state structures. The communist program of "social justice for all people," as announced in the Jajce Declaration, resonated with the prevailing opinion on the direction of Yugoslav social policy and political economy in the post-war period, outlined by Bićanić and a group of Yugoslav economic and educational experts at the CEEPB in New York.[13]

Bićanić's lobbying to legitimize the NKOJ as an allied political movement, coupled with his maneuvers to block the émigré government's access to the RYNB assets, played a substantial role in securing British support for reconciliation between the NKOJ and the exiled government. This led to Churchill and Bićanić brokering the agreement between Tito and Šubašić in June 1944, a step that effectively sanctioned the NKOJ politically. Being a leading authority on the Yugoslav economy, Bićanić spearheaded the financial negotiations with the American banks and oversaw the allocation of the Yugoslav UNRRA relief package. As a result, Bićanić was able to secure ample relief provisions for the Yugoslav rural areas. Thanks to his advocacy and compelling arguments from Central-Eastern European countries, these provisions were distributed by national authorities, prioritizing the needs of the local populace.[14]

Upon finalizing the UNRRA negotiations in the fall of 1945, Bićanić unexpectedly decided to withdraw from the political life of FPRY and resign from his role as the foreign trade minister, a position he had occupied since January 1945. Although he never explicitly articulated his reasoning, his wife, Sonya Wild-Bićanić (1999, 93–94), shed some light on his decision. She affirmed that he

[13]The technocratic views over the optimal direction of the Yugoslav political economy, which Bićanić explored in his academic papers in the 1950s and 1960s, could be conceptualized as *Integrative Agrarianism* aiming to achieve the optimal industrialization of the countryside. Optimal industrialization of the countryside promoted the synthesis of economic, social, and cultural reforms. Bićanić foresaw implementation of these reforms on the local, regional, national, and international levels by connecting urban and rural communities through sustainable and mutually reinforcing socioeconomic networks. For an introduction to Bićanić's political thought, see Koshimura (2021).

[14]For the overview of this process, see Reinisch (2008 and 2011). For the introduction to UNRRA's activities in Yugoslavia, consult Aljec (2020).

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

remained in politics long enough to ensure the delivery of UNRRA aid to the starving population and children of the Yugoslav passive region.

In November 1945, upon his return to Yugoslavia, Bićanić accepted a professorship in Political Economy at the University of Zagreb and "unwaveringly from the point of view of a just and more equal democratic society" opposed the communist regime. During the last two decades of his life, Bićanić returned to his first passion – research into the Yugoslav countryside. As an academic, he found himself frustrated with "all the things that were being done wrong" but was unable "to do anything about it except for write articles such as 'How not to Develop a Country'" (Wild-Bićanić 1999, 163). With a body of work exceeding 130 academic papers, Bićanić elaborated models for a more equitable political economy, which he unveiled at leading agricultural and economic conferences across India, the USA, Australia, and Europe.[15] He collaborated with scholars from the "Global South," UNESCO, and FAO, inadvertently contributing to the arguments for the New International Economic Order, which became institutionalized following his unexpected passing in 1968.[16]

Acknowledgments. I am grateful to Prof. Jessica Reinisch and Prof. Dejan Djokić for their valuable comments on the earlier drafts of this manuscript. I would also like to thank the ASN 2023 organizers, the panelists, and the discussant, Prof. Susan L. Woodward, for the opportunity to present this research and for the helpful feedback on this article. Finally, I am also indebted to the Croatian State Archive's staff, who made this research possible.

Financial support. This work was supported by the UBEL DTP (Economic and Social Research Council grant: 2119557) and Birkbeck College (Eric Hobsbawm Research Grant).

Disclosure. None.

Notes

1 The New York Public Library (NYPL), box 9, f. Economic Committee and Sub-committees, *The Second Meeting of the Economic Joint Committee, Antonin Basch and Sava Kosanovich* dialogue.
2 NYPL, Yugoslavia, *Jugoslav Postwar Reconstruction Papers* include over 40 surveys, analytical, and evaluative studies of the Yugoslav social and economic conditions before and during WWII.
3 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *The Statutes of the Royal National Bank.*
4 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Report by Šutej* February 7, 1942.
5 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *The Statutes of the Royal National Bank.*
6 Hrvatski Državni Arhiv (The Croatian State Archives), HR-HDA-1050, box 4, f – X, Bićanić in London.
7 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 15, f-VVIII, *A letter to Leith-Ross* 1942. For an example of Leith-Ross's approach to relief and rehabilitation, see Frederick Leith-Ross, "Opening lecture" in War Organization of the British Red Cross Society and Order of St John of Jerusalem, *Training Course of Pre-Armistice Civilian Relief Overseas*, *Report of Lectures*, January 1943.
8 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 4, f – X, *Letter to Sir John E. Russell*, December 1941.
9 HR-HDA – 1005, *Letter to Mitrany*, February 1942 and *Mrs. Janet Smith's letter*, September 1942. Mrs. Janet Smith commended Bićanić on his paper about the relationships between the population and the means of production in Yugoslavia. She passed on his work to Dr. Notestein and Mr. Loveday, who were "always interested to learn about European agriculture." In his response to Bićanić, Mr. Loveday sent him a copy of his study about the transition from war to peace economy.
10 Bićanić; NYPL, Yugoslavia, *Jugoslav Postwar Reconstruction Papers*, vol. 1–2; also available as an academic paper Rudolf Bićanić, "Agricultural Overpopulation" (2002, 253–276).

[15]For the overview of his academic activity, see Karaula (2016).
[16]For a brief overview of the Yugoslav involvement in this process, see Marie-Janine Calic, *History of Yugoslavia* (2018), and for the Global South perspective, Adom Getachew, "The Welfare World of the New Economic Order" in Getachew (2019).

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

11 Ibid.
12 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, *Memorandum from Jajce*, November 1943; HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f – XL and XIX, *Report New Yugoslavia*, The UCSS disseminated the following message to the allied governments regarding the activities of the NKOJ: "The People's Liberation Movement is under the leadership of the High Command of the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia. It is amongst many of their aims to fight for the people's freedom and social and democratic rights. All people's institutions were to be decided after the war on truly democratic principles and the inviolability of private property. The People's Liberation Movement accords all national rights of the Slovenes, Croats, Serbs, Macedonians, and others alike and guarantees that the national rights would be won for all peoples of Yugoslavia."
13 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f – XL and XIX, *Report New Yugoslavia*, The UCSS.
14 NYPL, The CEEPB, *Kosanovich to Gross*, Overview of the JIC's purpose, activities, and reason for closure, b.7, f. "Yugoslavia," September 1945 and NYPL, Yugoslavia, *Jugoslav Postwar Reconstruction Papers*, vols. 1-4.
15 NYPL, b. 9, f. Economic Committee and Sub-committees, *Minutes of the meetings*, May and June 1942.
16 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 15, f-VVIII, *A letter to Mr. Young*, October 1943.
17 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f-XXV, *The UCSS proclamation.* The UCSS communicated these aims in a six-point action plan as a part of their note sent to the governments of the USA, Australia, and Britain. Many worthy personalities greeted the action plan, such as Vladko Maček (head of the Croat Peasant Party), Professor Seton Watson (a British political activist and a historian who encouraged the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Kingdom during WWI); Louis Adamic (the president of the Committee of South Slavs in the US), Ivan Ribar (the chairman of the National Liberation Council), and Marshal Tito (Commander in chief of the NOP).
18 Between December 1943 and the Spring of 1944, UCSS published and disseminated the following leaflets: "Free Yugoslavia" (which included the foreword by Professor Seton Watson), "The Epic of Yugoslavia," "The Yugoslav Youth Fights Back," and "The Liberation of Yugoslav Litoral." HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f-XXIX. For the transcripts of Bićanić's BBC speeches, see HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 9, f-XXXV, *Bićanić's speeches BBC.*
19 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f-XXV, *The UCSS proclamation.*
20 This administration rested on a widely practiced tradition of the *People's Radical Party* in Serbia at the turn of the century. HR- HD – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f – XXIX, *New Yugoslavia bilten.*
21 Ibid. Ribar was among the leaders of the Yugoslav Partisans, having established the Unified League of Anti-Fascist Youth before his death in November 1943, before the *Jajce Declaration* was signed.
22 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 9, f-XXXV, *Bićanić's speeches BBC.*
23 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 4, f-X, *Bićanić's letter to Mr. Russell*, 1942.
24 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 12, f-XLI, *Bićanić's report summary.*
25 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 12, f-XLI, *Letters received by the UCSS.*
26 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 12, f-XLI, *Letters from the Congress sent to the UCSS.*
27 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 12, f-XLI, *Petrović report.*
28 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 12, f-XLI, *Reports on the war effort.*
29 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 12, f-XLI, 3rd-anniversary *report*, November 1944, the UCSS.
30 Ibid.
31 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *A letter to Jevtić*, November 1943.
32 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *A letter to Jevtić*, November 1943. Konstantin Fotić authorized the transfer of authority in 1941 from the jurisdiction of the National Bank to the "state property" of the government. Bićanić warned, "The bank should be under national

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

control and the board of trustees should decide how much the money is being printed and how much is circulating."

33 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *The Royal Decree of Bićanić's dismissal.*

34 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Bićanić's letter seeking legal advice*, December 1943.

35 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Bićanić's letter to Jevtić*, January 24, 1944. And Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *The Statutes of the National Bank*, February 1942.

36 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Jevtić's letter to Bićanić*, January 29, 1944.

37 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Bićanić's letter to Jevtić*, February 11, 1944.

38 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Letters to the National Banks*, January 28, 1944.

39 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Fotić to Jevtić letter*, March 1944.

40 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *March 11, 1944, proclamation.*

41 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *The Decree of the Re-Organisation of the National Bank of Yugoslavia*, March 17, 1944.

42 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Proclamation regarding the Re-organisation of the Bank.*

43 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Fotić to Jevtić letter*, March 1944.

44 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Bićanić's letter to Mr. Fraser*, March 1944. The Bićanić also sent the letter to the Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov on March 29. The letter read: "The so-called Yugoslav émigré government is deprived of all rights of legal government. It is recommended that the presidium of the Anti-Fascist Liberation Council should re-examine all international treaties and obligations entered by the émigré government. International agreements and obligations entered by the émigré government in the future on behalf of Yugoslavia and her people will not be recognized." HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Bićanić's letter to Molotov*, March 1944.

45 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Mr. Fraser and Mr. Howard's responses*, March 1944.

46 Ibid.

47 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 12, f-XLI, *Newspaper articles and telegrams*, the UCSS. For more on the Partisan victories in the Spring of 1944, see Jozo Tomasevich (2001).

48 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Bićanić's telegrams to Molotov and the National Banks*, March 1944.

49 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *A telegram from The Swiss National Bank to Bićanić.*

50 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *A telegram from Rio de Janeiro to Bićanić.*

51 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Newspaper reports* concerning *The Yugoslav National Bank.*

52 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Telegram regarding Purić's attempt.* The transfer would have been possible due to Purić's changes in the by-laws of the Bank, authorizing himself to make executive decisions over the Bank's assets. The communist successes on the battlefield and Chetnik's failed offensive also contributed to this shift in the attitude of the allied governments Krizman (1981a; 1981b).

53 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Bićanić's letter to Tito*, May 1944.

54 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 11, f-XL, *Bićanić's letters to Tito*, May and June 1944.

55 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f-XVI, *Bićanić to Tito*, June 19, 1945. Bićanić wrote to Tito in this letter: "All the countries are trying to get loans and credits. Because of this difficult and busy situation where everyone is trying to get money, we need to be there on the spot, constantly negotiate, and be on the market. We need to have all the technical material ready so that in case we can get a loan, we can react quickly before the funds run out. Financial help of the US towards Yugoslavia depends not only on the political situation between Yugoslavia and the US but also the Soviet Union and the US. These relations are getting better."

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

56 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f-XVI, *Bićanić's Lend-Lease Memorandum and report to Tito*, July 24, 1945. The bilateral loans with the American banks were called Export-Import loans and came with less favorable financial conditions. Bićanić communicated to Tito that Yugoslavia would sign a deal with big American firms, paying only 10–20% of the value of its products initially and the rest either in Yugoslav goods or as a loan. The loan amounted to 75% of the value of the goods at an interest rate of 4% and duration of 6 months to 15 years. HR- HD – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f-XVI, *Bićanić's report to Tito*, June 19, 1945.

57 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f-XVI, *Bićanić's report to Tito*, June 19, 1945.

58 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 3, f-VII, Bićanić's UNRRA Memorandum, June 1945. In preparation for the UNRRA's Supplies Conference in Rome in June 1945, Bićanić drafted a Yugoslav memorandum to UNRRA entitled "Urgent food needs in Yugoslavia" arguing for the increase in food supplies to the deficiency zone "covered South Croatia, Dalmatia, and Montenegro, with a total population of 7–8 million."

59 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 3, f-VII, Bićanić's 5th report on UNRRA, June 1945.

60 Ibid.

61 HR- HDA – 1005, Bićanić Rudolf, box 8, f-XVI, *Bićanić's report to Tito regarding the situation in Washington*, July 24, 1945. His overview indicated that the Ministry of Finance and Trade and the National Bank needed to start working on the strategy regarding the Bretton Woods agreements, considering the establishment of the World Bank and the IMF. He argued that the National Bank should be asking for a loan of 600 million from the World Bank. Due to the policy and organization of the bank's leadership, Bićanić believed Yugoslavia could receive such a loan. He also recommended that the government formed a commission which would make an investment plan on how the money would be used to stay in line with the laws of the World Bank.

References

Archival sources

Hrvatski Državni Arhiv, Zagreb (HR-HDA).
The New York Public Library, New York (NYPL).
The United Nations Archives, The United Nations Archives and Management Section, New York.

Secondary sources

Ajlec, Kornelija. 2020. "UNRRA and its Arrival to Yugoslavia, 1944–1945." *Istorija* 20. Veka, no. 2: 129–150.

Bićanić, Rudolf. 2002. "Agricultural Overpopulation." *Sociologija i prostor: časopis za istraživanje prostornoga i sociokulturnog razvoja* 40, no. 3/4 (157/158): 253–276.

Bićanić, Rudolf. 1994. "The Effects of War on Rural Yugoslavia." *The Geographical Journal* 103, no. 1/2 (1944): 30–45.

Bićanić, Rudolf, Joel Martin Halpern, Elinor Murray Despalatovic, and Stephen Clissold. 1981. *How the People Live: Life in the Passive Regions (Peasant Life in Southwestern Croatia, Bosnia, and Hercegovina, Yugoslavia in 1935)*. Amherst: Massachusetts University Press.

Bilandžić, Dušan. 1985. *Historija Socijalističke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije: Glavni Procesi 1918–1985*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.

Brubaker, Rogers, and Frederick Cooper. 2000. "Beyond Identity." *Theory and Society* 29, no. 1: 1–47.

Calic, Marie-Janine. 2018. *History of Yugoslavia*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press.

Calori, Anna, Anne-Kristin Hartmetz, Bence Kocsev, and Jan Zofka. 2019. "Alternative Globalization? Spaces of Economic Interaction between the 'Socialist Camp' and the 'Global South.'" In *Between East and South*, edited by Anna Calori, Anne-Kristin Hartmetz, Bence Kocsev, and Jan Zofka, 1–32. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg.

Clavin, Patricia. 2000. *The Great Depression in Europe, 1929–1939*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Djilas, Milovan. 1977. *Wartime*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Djokić, Dejan, and James Ker-Lindsay. 2011. *New Perspectives on Yugoslavia: Key Issues and Controversies*. London: Routledge.

Getachew, Adom. 2019. "The Welfare World of the New International Economic Order." In *Worldmaking after Empire*, 142–175. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Goldstein, Ivo. 2008. *Hrvatska: 1918–2008*. Zagreb: EPH.

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Grahovac, Petar. 1999. "Rudolf Bićanić o Seljaštvu, Selu i Poljoprivredi." *Sociologija i Prostor: Časopis Za Istraživanje Prostornoga i Sociokulturnog Razvoja*, no. 143: 45–64.
International Labour Office. 1951. *Lasting Peace the I.L.O. Way; the Story of the International Labour Organisation*. Geneva: International Labour Office.
Jakovina, Tvrtko. 2017. "Part III Yugoslavia on the international scene: The active coexistence of non-aligned Yugoslavia," *461–514 in Jugoslavija u istorijskoj perspektivi edited by Latinka Perović, Drago Roksandić, Mitja Velikonja, Wolfgang Hoepken and Florian Bieber*. Belgrade: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji.
Karaula, Željko. 2015. "Hrvatska seljačka zaštita u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji." PhD Thesis, University of Zagreb. Department of Croatian Studies.
Karaula, Željko. 2016. "Prilozi za biografiju Rudolfa Bićanića." *Radovi Zavoda za znanstvenoistraživački i umjetnički rad u Bjelovaru* 10: 196–224.
Koshimura, Isao. 2021. "Analysis of the Socioeconomic Works of Rudolf Bićanić from the Perspective of Global History." *Zbornik Janković*, no. 5–6: 304–328.
Kott, Sandrine. 2014. "Fighting the War or Preparing for Peace? The ILO during the Second World War." *Journal of Modern European History* 12, no. 3: 359–376.
Krizman, Bogdan. 1981a. *Jugoslavenske Vlade u Izbjeglištvu 1941–1943: Dokumenti*, vol. 1. Arhiv Jugoslavije.
Krizman, Bogdan. 1981b. *Jugoslavenske Vlade u Izbjeglištvu 1943–1945: Dokumenti*. Vol. 2. Arhiv Jugoslavije.
Maclean, Fitzroy. 2004. *Eastern Approaches*. UK: Penguin.
Minehan, Philip B. 2006. *Civil War and World War in Europe: Spain, Yugoslavia, and Greece, 1936–1949*. Berlin: Springer.
Mirošević, Franko. 1982. "Jugoslavenske Vlade u Izbjeglištvu, 1941–1945," Dokumenti, Arhiv Jugoslavije, Globus," Zagreb: Knjigu 1. Jugoslavenske Vlade u Izbjeglištvu 1941–1943. Priredio Bogdan Krizman; Knjigu 2. Jugoslovenske Vlade u Izbeglištvu 1943–1945 Priredio Branko Petranović. Zagreb: *Časopis Za Suvremenu Povijest* 14, no. 2: 234–244.
Pavlowitch, Stevan K. 2011. "Yugoslavia in Exile." In *New Perspectives on Yugoslavia: Key Issues and Controversies* edited by Dejan Djokić and James Ker-Lindsay, 100–116. London: Routledge.
Pavlowitch, Stevan K. 2008. *Hitler's New Disorder: The Second World War in Yugoslavia*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Pavlowitch, Stevan K. 1984. "Momčilo Ninčić and the European Policy of the Yugoslav Government in Exile, 1941–1943: vol. II." *Slavonic and East European Review* 62, no. 4: 531–551.
Pavlowitch, Stevan K. 1982. "Momčilo Ninčić and the European Policy of the Yugoslav Government in Exile, 1941–1943: vol. I." *The Slavonic and East European Review* 62, no. 3: 400–420.
Pavlowitch, Stevan K. 1981. "Out of Context – The Yugoslav Government in London 1941–1945." *Journal of Contemporary History* 16, no. 1: 89–118.
Previšić, Martin. 2021. *Breaking Down Bipolarity: Yugoslavia's Foreign Relations During the Cold War*, vol. 11. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG.
Pusić, Eugen. 1996. "Rudolf Bićanić Kao Političar." *Sociologija i Prostor: Časopis Za Istraživanje Prostornoga i Sociokulturnog Razvoja*, no. 131–132: 111–113.
Reinisch, Jessica. 2013. "'Auntie UNRRA' at the Crossroads." *Past & Present* 218, no. suppl 8: 70–97.
Reinisch, Jessica. 2011. "Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of UNRRA." *Past & Present* 210, Suppl. 6: 258–289.
Reinisch, Jessica. 2008. "'We Shall Rebuild Anew a Powerful Nation': UNRRA, Internationalism and National Reconstruction in Poland." *Journal of Contemporary History* 43, no. 3: 451–746.
Reinisch, Jessica. 2023. "Technical conferences as a technique of internationalism." *The British Journal for the History of Science*: 1–18.
Roberts, Walter R. 1973. *Tito, Mihailović, and the Allies, 1941-1945*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
Rodgers, Gerry. 2009. *The International Labour Organization and the Quest for Social Justice, 1919-2009*. Geneva: International Labour Office.
Roshwald, Aviel. 2023. *Occupied: European and Asian Responses to Axis Conquest, 1937–1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Silverstein, Sara. 2022. "Doctors and Diplomats: Health Services in the New Europe, 1918–1923." In *A New Europe, 1918–1923*, edited by Bartosz Dziewanowski-Stefańczyk and Jay M. Winter, 142–160. London: Routledge.
Silverstein, Sara. 2020. "Reinventing International Health in East Central Europe: The League of Nations, State Sovereignty, and Universal Health." In *Remaking Central Europe*, edited by Peter Becker and Natasha Wheatley, 71–98. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Stubbs, Paul. 2023. *Socialist Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement: Social, Cultural, Political, and Economic Imaginaries*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press.
Šute, Ivica. 2010. *Slogom Slobodi!: Gospodarska Sloga 1935–1941*. Zagreb: Srednja Europa.
Tomasevich, Jozo. 2001. *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941–1945: Occupation and Collaboration*. Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press.
Triffin, Robert. 2005. "The Myth and Realities of the So-Called Gold Standard." In *Gold Standard In Theory & History* edited by Barry Eichengreen and Marc Flandreau, 101–115. London: Routledge.

https://doi.org/10.1017/nps.2024.29 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Wachtel, Andrew. 1998. *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia*. Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press.
Warriner, Doreen. 1959. "Urban Thinkers and Peasant Policy in Yugoslavia, 1918-59." *Slavonic and East European Review* 38, no. 90: 59–81.
Wild-Bićanić, Sonia. 1999. "Two Lines of Life." *Zagreb*: Durieux, Croatian PEN Centre.
Zahra, Tara. 2010. "Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis." *Slavic Review* 69, no. 1: 93–119.

Cite this article: Albrecht, Nicole. 2025. "The Search for Legitimacy over Yugoslavia: Rudolf Bićanić and the Power of Gold". *Nationalities Papers* 53: 619–640, doi:10.1017/nps.2024.29