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Yugoslavia-Uruguay Relations: Diplomacy, Trade, and Emigration (1946–1955)*

Abstract: The article analyzes socialist Yugoslavia's stance towards Uruguay in the decade following the Second World War, using archival materials, relevant scholarship, and contemporary newspaper reporting. The introduction outlines diplomatic ties, beginning with Uruguay's recognition of communist Yugoslavia and ending with the FNRJ embassy's *de facto* independence in Montevideo. The section on economic cooperation examines trade exchanges over the entire period, focusing on existing contracts and trade volume. The final section explores Yugoslav emigrants' activities in Uruguay, including their organization and connections to their homeland.

Keywords: Yugoslavia, Uruguay, diplomacy, economy, emigration

In addition to the sole embassy in Buenos Aires, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (renamed Yugoslavia in 1929) established a network of consulates throughout South America during the 1920s, with the last consulate opening in Montevideo in 1930. Honorary consulates were responsible for monitoring and reporting on political opponents, organizing emigration, and propaganda efforts due to their remote location from the embas-

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sy.¹ The first Honorary Consul in Montevideo was Uruguayan journalist Juan V. Despósito, whose residence was an address at 2023 Calle Hocquart.² Since 1937, priest David Doktorić served as honorary consul until Mirko Šorš succeeded him, continuing the role after the formation of socialist Yugoslavia, with the consulate headquartered at Šorš's home in the capital's Positos area.³

During the interwar period, trade between the two countries was minimal, with Uruguay noted as an exporter of wool, accounting for roughly a fifth of all imports of that raw material in the Kingdom's 1938 statistics.⁴ One country remained outside the Second World War, focused on its own progress and issues, while the other was occupied, devastated by the war, and burdened by a civil war.

*Diplomatic cooperation between the Federal People's
Republic of Yugoslavia and the Eastern Republic of Uruguay*

Following the Second World War, Yugoslavia and Uruguay differed greatly, with both having republican systems, but Uruguay enjoyed democratic arrangements and political liberties, while Yugoslavia's democracy was more declarative, drifting toward a one-party system.⁵ Although there was no significant mutual interest during the 1940s, Uruguay was the first Latin American country to recognize the newly formed Yugoslavia.

On April 24, 1946, Uruguayan President Juan José de Amézaga, with Foreign Minister Aurelián Rodríguez Larreta, decreed that diplomatic and consular relations with Yugoslavia would continue with the new authorities of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FNRJ). Furthermore, the new government, along with the election process on November 11, 1945, were regarded as legal, and Yugoslav emigration affected this decision.⁶

In October 1946, General Ljubo Ilić visited Montevideo as part of his South American diplomatic mission. He met with Uruguay's Minister of For-

1 Благоје Исаиловић, „Посланство Краљевине Југославије у Аргентини – Буенос Аирес 1928–1945.“, *Архив* 1/2000, 77.

2 Hrvatski državni arhiv (HDA), fond Savska banovina, f. 93/151, Odeljenje za trgovinu i industriju VIII, 1935, Spisak kraljevskih predstavništava u inostranstvu od 7. 11. 1935.

3 Eduardo R. Antonich, *Hrvatska i Hrvati u Urugvaju*, (Zagreb: AGM, 2021), 202.

4 *Statistički godišnjak 1938–1939*, Knjiga IX, (Beograd: Državna štamparija, 1939), 263.

5 For more on Uruguay during that period, see: German D'Elia, *El Uruguay neobatllista, 1946–1958*, (Montevideo: EBO, 1986), 37–113; *The Cambridge History of Latin America, Vol. VIII, Latin America since 1930: Spanish South America*, ed. Leslie Bethell, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 202–209.

6 Antonich, *Hrvatska i Hrvati u Urugvaju*, 150.

eign Affairs and Yugoslav emigration representatives, emphasizing that key Yugoslav activities should center in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro and advocating for FNRJ embassies there. However, the visit to Uruguay yielded no concrete results beyond general statements about the importance of diplomatic, cultural, and economic connections.⁷

During the first decade following the Second World War, the FNRJ and Uruguay cooperated sporadically in international bodies. In 1947, the Yugoslav delegation proposed extending debate rights to other Palestinian representatives, a proposal supported by Argentina, Chile, Belarus, and Uruguay and accepted by the UN General Assembly.⁸

Uruguay was the first South American country to recognize the FNRJ, though diplomatic relations were not established until early 1951. In October 1947, Uruguay refused to accept Franz Pirz as the FNRJ representative in Buenos Aires due to concerns about his simultaneous accreditation in neighboring countries.⁹ Talks on a comparable course were held in 1950, but Uruguay refused to accept the same person as Yugoslavia's diplomatic representation due to strained relations with Argentina. Ambassador Marijan Stilinović presented credentials to the President of Uruguay on May 3, 1951, in Buenos Aires.¹⁰ The FNRJ consulate in Montevideo was opened with Yugoslav vice consul Vojislav Đukić working there and accompanying Stilinović at official ceremonies.¹¹ Ivanka Gomez, who served as the honorary Uruguayan consul in Belgrade since the Kingdom period, is mentioned as having been married to a Yugoslav citizen and living at Takovska Street in Belgrade, according to an older record.¹²

7 For more information about General Ilić's diplomatic mission, see: Бојан Симић, „Социјалистичка Југославије и државе Јужне Америке (1946–1950) – успостављање дипломатских и економских односа“, *Токови историје* 2/2022, 75–80.

8 Jadranka Jovanović, *Jugoslavija u Organizaciji ujedinjenih nacija (1945–1953)*, (Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 1985), 120.

9 Diplomatski arhiv Ministarstva spoljnih poslova Republike Srbije (DAMSP), Politička arhiva (PA), 1950, Razne zemlje, fascikla 106, dosije 28, signatura 413070, „Zabeleška po pitanju našeg predstavnštva u Urugvaju“.

10 The newspaper *Matica*, published by the Register of Emigrants of Croatia, featured a letter from correspondent Marko Cetinić, who emphasized that Stilinović “enhanced the reputation of our old homeland during his brief stay and left a lasting memory in our colony.” *Matica*, travanj 1953, br. 4, 75.

11 DAMSP, PA, 1951, Razne zemlje, f. 72, d. 22, s. 47016, „Predaja kredencijala druga Stilinovića u Urugvaju“, od 21. 5. 1951.

12 DAMSP, PA, 1947, Razno, f. 124, d. 3, s. 410212, Prepis iz izveštaja generala Ilića pov. 4552 od 14. 1. 1947.

She was withdrawn in 1951, when Uruguay temporarily closed its consulate in Yugoslavia and transferred its responsibilities to the consulate in Geneva.¹³

Shortly after handing over credentials in Montevideo, Ambassador Stilinović asked the ministry to withdraw Vice-Consul Đukić due to his inability to perform genuine diplomatic duties.¹⁴ Superseded by Predrag Grabovac, Mihailo Mayer temporarily took over, while Mirčeta Čvorović, an economist who arrived in Montevideo at the end of 1954, achieved significant improvements in interstate ties.

The concept of having an embassy in Montevideo was first proposed in early 1952, when Yugoslavia's representative in Buenos Aires, Mišo Pavićević, informed the Uruguayan embassy in Argentina's capital.¹⁵ Assistant Minister Leo Mates emphasized that the issue remains unaddressed and that Uruguay's previous year's decision to close its consulate does not support establishing the embassy.¹⁶

In mid-1953, unofficial reports suggested Uruguay planned to nominate Carlos Fleurquin, the former chargé d'affaires in Prague, as chargé d'affaires and consul in Belgrade.¹⁷ Belgrade officials opted to wait and see how the situation progressed. After a brief delay, Fleurquin was named chargé d'affaires of the FNRJ in early 1954, and, during a formal visit to State Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs Aleš Bebler, he highlighted that he was the first Uruguayan diplomat accredited in Yugoslavia since the Second World War and the first "since Yugoslavia existed."¹⁸ Like some other diplomats, he had his temporary offices in the Majestic Hotel.

Flerkin's appointment as chargé d'affaires in Belgrade increased pressure on the Yugoslav government. Meanwhile, the Uruguayan side criticized the prospect of the chargé d'affaires in Montevideo being someone subservient

13 DAMSP, PA, 1951, Razne zemlje, f. 72, d. 23, s. 417337, Šifrovano pismo pomoćnika ministra inostranih poslova Veljka Vlahovića upućeno poslanstvu u Buenos Ajresu od 26. 11. 1951.

14 DAMSP, PA, 1951, Razne zemlje, f. 72, d. 22, s. 47241, Pismo ambasadora Stilinovića Ministarstvu inostranih poslova od 18. maja 1951.

15 DAMSP, PA, 1952, Razne zemlje, f. 71, d. 25, s. 47607, Šifrovano pismo poslanika Pavićevića Ministarstvu inostranih poslova od 29. 5. 1952.

16 DAMSP, PA, 1952, Razne zemlje, f. 71, d. 25, s. 47607, Šifrovano pismo pomoćnika ministra Matesa upućeno poslanstvu FNRJ u Buenos Ajresu od 9. 6. 1952.

17 DAMSP, PA, 1953, Razne zemlje, f. 72, d. 16, s. 411904, Telegram pov. 326 poslanstva u Buenos Ajresu upućen DSIP-u od 31. 8. 1953.

18 DAMSP, PA, 1954, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 3, s. 47068, Zabeleška o razgovoru Drž. Potsekretara Dr Beblera sa urugvajskim otpravnikom poslova g. Carlos Hounie Fleurquin-om, dana 31 maja 1954.

to the FNRJ embassy in Buenos Aires, creating tensions felt during Flerquin's reception at DSIP in November 1954.¹⁹ A few days after the meeting, Belgrade officials wrote to the embassy in Argentina to notify the Uruguayan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) about Čvorović's appointment as soon as possible, stating that it should be viewed as "a further step in the independence of our mission in Uruguay".²⁰ This met Uruguay's expectations of appointing an FNRJ representation in their capital, although technically linked to Buenos Aires, and emphasized the desire to strengthen bilateral cooperation. On January 5, 1955, Mirčeta Čvorović and the ambassador to Argentina, Slavoljub Petrović, officially notified the Uruguayan Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the FNRJ Embassy's inauguration in Montevideo.²¹

Until early 1957, the FNRJ representative office in Montevideo was overseen by the embassy in Buenos Aires. The DSIP appointed Čvorović as the embassy's chargé d'affaires and recalled Ambassador Petrović from his position as Uruguay's envoy in Buenos Aires, all through certain administrative procedures in the first half of that year.²²

Veljko Vlahović, a representative of the Socialist Union of the Working People of Yugoslavia (SSRNJ), traveled to Uruguay in the first decade after WWII. During his visit in late 1954, he met with socialists and the Federation of Uruguayan Students, finding a strong interest in Yugoslavia and its administrative structure. He described the few young Uruguayans who had visited Yugoslavia as true ambassadors who "even exaggerated in praising Yugoslavia" and also visited Argentina, Brazil, and Chile.²³

The FNRJ Embassy in Montevideo was opened in late 1954 and formally in 1957 with a chargé d'affaires, but it remained without a presence until 1962. During that time, it had a modest number of employees. In mid-1956,

19 DAMSP, PA, 1954, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 4, s. 414475, Zabeleška o razgovoru savetnika P. Šegvića sa otpravnikom poslova Urugvaja g. Fleurkuinom 5 novembra 1954 godine.

20 DAMSP, PA, 1954, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 4, s. 414475, Šifrovano pismo Trećeg odeljenja DSIP-a upućeno poslanstvu FNRJ u Buenos Ajresu od 13. 11. 1954.

21 DAMSP, PA, 1957, f. 86, d. 24, s. 49352, Neka pitanja i podaci iz jugoslovensko-urugvajski odnosa od 20. 12. 1956.

22 DAMSP, PA, 1956, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 12, s. 420275, Osamostaljenje našeg poslanstva u Urugvaju, od 17. 1. 1957.

23 Arhiv Jugoslavije (AJ), fond 507, Savez komunista Jugoslavije, Komisija za međunarodne odnose i veze IX, 21/III-13, Čile, f. 4, „Zabeleška sa sastanka Komisije za međunarodne veze SSRNJ na kome je drug Veljko Vlahović podneo izveštaj sa svog puta po Latinskoj Americi“, sa početka 1955.

the embassy had five employees, three of whom were party members, with the most experienced being second secretary Čvorović, a member since 1945.²⁴

*Economic relations between Yugoslavia and Uruguay
in the decade after WWII*

With the restoration of diplomatic relations, the need for immediate economic interaction with South American countries became apparent. The Yugoslav commercial team, directed by Boško Đorđević, the FNRJ's senior official at the Ministry of Foreign Trade, traveled South America from May to October 1947. In addition to government representatives, members of "Jugodrvvo" and "Centroprom" visited Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. This trip yielded disappointing results, with only Argentina producing a draft agreement that was ultimately postponed.²⁵

The Yugoslav delegation's visit to Uruguay was unsuccessful, as the other side showed no particular interest in reaching a trade agreement. However, a new option emerged with an arrangement between two national banks. The National Bank of Uruguay signed the agreement on July 7, 1948, in Montevideo, and it went into effect immediately, with Karl Žagar, the Yugoslav trade envoy in Buenos Aires, overseeing the signing by the FNRJ's National Bank. The payment agreement between the two national banks included 11 provisions, and the Yugoslav side regarded it as a comprehensive trade agreement since no alternative contract could be established.²⁶ Under the arrangement, 85% of the foreign currency was allocated for purchasing items from the FNRJ, while the remaining 15% was freely accessible to the Bank of Uruguay. Following a meeting in Belgrade with representatives from the Ministry of Finance, National Bank, and Ministry of Foreign Trade, the suggested agreement was accepted, along with a fence for Žagar to try "without particular insistence" to level.²⁷ The Uruguayans did not agree to the adjustments, so the deal was signed as

24 Сlobодан Селинић, *Партија и дипломатија у Југославији 1945–1952*, (Београд: Институт за новију историју Србије, 2013), 104.

25 DAMSP, PA, 1947, Argentina, f. 9, d. 24, s. 421547, Izveštaj o radu trg. delegacije u Juž. Americi; Beleška o trgovinskim pregovorima u Buenos Airesu od 17 septembra do oktobra.

26 DAMSP, PA, 1948, Male zemlje, f. 160, d. 17, s. 422380, Objašnjenje uz Sporazum o plaćanju sa Bankom Urugvaja.

27 AJ, fond 836, Kabinet maršala Jugoslavije (KMJ), I–3–b/861, Informacija (Srđe Price) o pitanjima vezanim za zaključenje platnog aranžmana između Narodne banke FNRJ i Urugvajске nacionalne banke, Beograd, 26. V 1948.

originally planned, but since the contract was only valid for one year, it needed to be renegotiated by the summer of 1949.

In 1949, Minister Plenipotentiary Nikola Popović led a trade team to South America and initiated negotiations with Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Mexico.²⁸ The negotiations resulted in significant gains, beginning with a pact signed with Uruguay on January 4 that ensured most favored nation status by addressing duties, customs, taxes, and regulations governing the ships and navigation of both countries. The Yugoslavs intended to export lead, copper, zinc, mercury, lumber, and tobacco, while Uruguay planned to sell wool, leather, linseed oil, and industrial tallow. The contract was valid for two years and would be automatically renewed for an additional year if neither party cancelled it three months before it expired.²⁹ There was also an extension of the payment arrangement agreed in 1948 between the National Bank of the FNRJ and the Bank of the Republic of Uruguay, with one significant difference. The ratio was previously 100:85 in favor of Uruguay, but the revised agreement signed on February 18 changed it to 100:100.³⁰ The Uruguayan list was dominated by wool and leather, whereas the Yugoslav list included a wider range of products such as ore, timber, metals, and food.³¹

Jakov Blažević, a member of the Federal Executive Council, led the most significant business delegation to Uruguay in 1954, which also visited Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Paraguay.³² Before embarking on the four-month journey, Blažević addressed journalists, noting a “certain complementarity” between the economies, with Yugoslavia as a consumer of raw materials and an exporter of electrical, mechanical, and food industry products. Regarding Uruguay, he mentioned an “arrangement to conclude some agreements”, although details remained unclear.³³

In July 1954, the delegation was in Uruguay, where Croatian emigrants protested Jakov Blažević’s role as prosecutor in the Stepinac trial, with marches also sponsored by Uruguayan Catholic groups. This led to Uruguayan business-

28 *Борба*, 27. 8. 1949, 4.

29 DAMSP, PA, 1950, Razne zemlje, f. 106, d. 14, s. 414573, Trgovinski sporazum sa Urugvajem, 1-2.

30 DAMSP, PA, 1950, Razne zemlje, f. 106, d. 28, s. 413272, Produženje Sporazuma o plaćanju Narodne banke FNRJ i Banke R. Urugvaja, od 14. 4. 1950.

31 DAMSP, PA, 1950, Razne zemlje, f. 48, d. 9, s. 42695, Trgovinski sporazumi sa Argentinom, Urugvajem i Paragvajem.

32 Along with Blažević, the delegation included Aleksa Đomparin, adviser at the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, Petar Petijević, adviser at the National Bank, and Samuilo Protić, attaché at the State Secretariat for Foreign Affairs.

33 *Политика*, 18. 4. 1954, 2.

men being “lukewarm and even disinterested” during the Yugoslav economic mission’s visit. As a result, Yugoslav diplomacy issued an official protest.³⁴ Uruguay’s foreign ministry denied any official involvement in the demonstrations and stated that the group was given “the utmost personal security”.³⁵ According to MP Petrović, he and Blažević were surrounded by protestors but managed to slip through discreetly.³⁶

In July 1954, Tanjug reported that a new trade deal had been struck with Uruguay, emphasizing it was “of a general character with the most favorable clause and does not contain contingent lists”.³⁷ Both sides addressed concrete concerns, with Mirčeta Čvorović showing notable agility. The Uruguayan government did not accept draft texts of the Trade and Payment Agreement from August 1954 until April 15, 1955, but an agreement was reached two months later. Ratified by the Uruguayan parliament and senate in late June 1955,³⁸ the deal encountered issues when Uruguay stopped it the following year due to complications caused by some Yugoslav enterprises re-exporting Uruguayan products.

During the first half of the 1950s, Uruguay and Yugoslavia were minor trading partners, as evidenced by their official export and import numbers.

*Trade between Yugoslavia and Uruguay (1950–1954) in US dollars*³⁹

Year	Exported from FNRJ	Imported to FNRJ
1950	232.760	520
1951	53.740	-
1952	19.453	255.136
1953	23	186.953
1954	55.625	385.903

34 DAMSP, PA, 1954, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 3, s. 411218, Izveštaj poslanstva FNRJ u Buenos Ajresu upućen DSIP-u od 13. 8. 1954.

35 DAMSP, PA, 1954, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 4, s. 412296, Prevod note urugvajskog ministarstva spoljnih poslova od 2. 9. 1954.

36 Slavoljub Đera Petrović, *Sećanja i zapisi borca i diplomate*, (Beograd: DTA, 2012), 272–273.

37 *Борба*, 18. 7. 1954, 1; *Политика*, 18. 7. 1954, 5.

38 DAMSP, PA, 1956, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 10, s. 41679, Jugoslovensko urugvajski ekonomski odnosi, 14.

39 DAMSP, PA, 1955, Razne zemlje, f. 51, d. 36, s. 45573, Aide memoire od 13. maja 1955, 1.

Uruguayan imports constituted only a minor portion of FNRJ's overall imports, at 0.11% in 1954 and 0.73% in 1955. Exports from FNRJ to Uruguay were even lower, at 0.11% in 1954 and barely 0.03% the following year. Despite this, Uruguay was the primary source of imported wool and wool products, while Yugoslavia exported minor amounts of timber, chemical industry products, metals and nonmetals, medicinal products, dried fruits, and liqueurs.⁴⁰

According to representatives from the DSIP, the main factors limiting exchange between the two nations included lower prices leading to an unsettled contractual situation for Yugoslav products in the Uruguayan market and insufficient interest in Yugoslav goods among Uruguayan companies, difficult visits by Yugoslav representatives from Argentina to Uruguay, and a lack of understanding of the needs and potential of the FNRJ economy.⁴¹

However, a change occurred as trade volume significantly increased to 8.6 million dollars despite challenges with ratification and re-export during 1955 and early 1956.⁴² To address this, the Yugoslav side accepted a prohibition on re-export in August 1956, even though it accounted for about 60% of their income, to avoid disrupting the growing trade exchange. Despite a decrease in trade without re-export, it remained higher than before the 1955 agreement,⁴³ and the opening of the embassy in Montevideo, led by economist Čvorović, improved commercial connections between the two countries in the mid-1950s.⁴⁴

Yugoslav diplomacy and emigrants in Uruguay

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the immigration from South Slavic regions to Uruguay was minimal, with the majority being sailors who swiftly adapted and lost touch with their homeland.⁴⁵ According to the Emigrants' Commissariat in Zagreb, significant emigration from Yugoslavia to Uruguay happened only between both World Wars, with 6,645 persons mov-

40 *Statistika spoljne trgovine FNR Jugoslavije za 1955 godinu*, (Beograd: FNRJ Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1956), 16-17, 210.

41 DAMSP, PA, 1955, *Razne zemlje*, f. 51, d. 36, s. 45573, Aide memoire od 13. maja 1955, 1.

42 DAMSP, PA, 1956, *Razne zemlje*, f. 77, d. 10, s. 47558, Šifrovano pismo DSIP upućeno ambasadi FNRJ u Buenos Ajresu od 18. 5. 1956.

43 In 1956, Yugoslav exports to Uruguay totaled \$1,950,000. DAMSP, PA, 1957, f. 86, d. 25, s. 422955, *Teškoće urugvajске spoljne trgovine i stanje jugoslovensko-urugvajске robne razmene*, 5.

44 In his memoirs, Slavoljub Petrović, the ambassador to Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay, notes that Čvorović, as an experienced economist, played a significant role in enhancing economic relations by successfully attracting Yugoslav merchants to the "picky Uruguayan market." Petrović, *Sećanja borca i diplomate*, 272.

45 Ljubomir Antić, *Hrvati u Južnoj Americi do 1914*, (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1991), 329-332.

ing there and 1,200 returning.⁴⁶ These figures were much lower than those for Argentina and Brazil, which had 44,522 and 23,877 immigrants, respectively, but they were greater than Chile's 2,812 and other South American countries.⁴⁷

According to the Emigrants' Commission in Zagreb, 234,000 Yugoslav emigrants lived in South America in 1939, including 150,000 in Argentina, 50,000 in Brazil, 2,000 in Bolivia, 20,000 in Chile, 1,000 in Peru, 10,000 in Uruguay, 500 in Paraguay, 200 in Ecuador, 100 in Colombia, and 200 in Venezuela.⁴⁸ Although the estimates for the two major countries, Argentina and Brazil, vary greatly from source to source,⁴⁹ the figure of 10,000 for Uruguay can also be found after the Second World War.

In later years, the number of Yugoslav emigrants in Uruguay decreased due to relocations to other South American countries, the exclusion of national minorities no longer considered Yugoslav citizens, and the *ius soli* rule granting Uruguayan citizenship to children born there. By the mid-1950s, the FNRJ delegation was dealing with about 5,000–6,000 Yugoslav emigrants. While exact national structures are difficult to ascertain, data from the FNRJ embassy during that period indicated that most personnel were Croats from Dalmatia and Herzegovina, followed by Slovenes, with smaller groups of Slavs and Serbs from Montenegro and Macedonia.⁵⁰

Emigrants from Uruguay also assisted the FNRJ in the years immediately following the completion of the work. According to Yugoslav Red Cross records from 1945–1949, the aid received from Uruguay in clothing and shoes was assessed at 690,000 dinars.⁵¹ Compared to some other larger South American countries, it was minimal assistance, but it was also expected given that, according to Yugoslav diplomacy data, emigrants in Uruguay were primarily farmers, builders, or employees in huge meat coolers.⁵²

One of the priorities of the new Yugoslav government was the repatriation of emigrants, prisoners of war, and refugees, both those who fled as a result

46 Vesela Šegvić, *Povratak jugoslovenske ekonomske emigracije 1945–1951*, (Beograd: Rad, 1953), 9.

47 DAMSP, PA, 1949, Argentina, f. 6, d. 9, s. 49700, Referat o jugoslovenskim iseljenicima u Južnoj Americi, 16–17.

48 Marjanka Varžić, „Naši iseljenici u zemljama Južne Amerike“, *Naše teme*, Zagreb 1966, 298.

49 Симић, *Југославија и Аргентина*, 119–124; Бојан Симић, „Бразил у политици социјалистичке Југославије (1946–1952)“, *Токови историје* 3/2023, 140.

50 DAMSP, PA, 1956, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 10, s. 48021, Izveštaj o našoj koloniji u Urugvaju, 2.

51 Šegvić, *Povratak jugoslovenske ekonomske emigracije*, 64.

52 DAMSP, PA, 1948, Argentina, f. 19, d. 28, s. 432236, Naši iseljenici u Latinskoj Americi, 2.

of military activities and those who emigrated earlier for economic reasons.⁵³ Following the Second World War, the FNRJ coordinated repatriation efforts in South America, mainly Argentina, with two ocean-going ships named “Partizanka” and “Radnik,” which made six and four round journeys, respectively. The primary focus was on Argentine emigrants, who constituted the majority of the returnees.⁵⁴ The “Partizanka” repatriated 93, 39, and 9 emigrants from Uruguay on departures on April 24, June 18, and August 10, 1948.⁵⁵

Following the Second World War, *Hrvatski dom*, *Prvo slovensko prekomursko društvo*, *Jugoslovensko republikansko udruženje “Bratstvo,” “Naša Tamburica”* and *Hrvatska katolička zajednica* were the most significant emigrant societies in Uruguay. Their activity was almost entirely concentrated on Montevideo, which was the core of Yugoslav emigration, encompassing around four-fifths of all emigrants.⁵⁶

Hrvatski dom (Croatian Home, or Hogar Croata) was created in 1928 by former Yugoslav House members following a shooting in the National Assembly in Belgrade. Despite the clear national sign, the society ardently backed the declaration of the Second Yugoslavia and pressured the Uruguayan government to expedite its recognition. On May 16, 1946, President Amezaga and Minister of Foreign Affairs Rodríguez Lareta welcomed a delegation from the FNRJ to congratulate them on the establishment of the new state.⁵⁷ According to the embassy’s estimation in the mid-fifties, they had roughly 100 regular members but could accommodate 200-250 people for larger gatherings. In the same report, the organization emphasized its goal to position itself as the only true representative of the colony, striving to be the first to meet a representative of Yugoslavia arriving or passing through Uruguay at every opportunity.⁵⁸ The author of the history of the Croatian community in Uruguay, lawyer Eduardo Antoniĉ, draws the conclusion that the Croatian House accepted

53 More in: Darija Hofgräf, Marina Selnik, „Iseljenički režim socijalistiĉke Jugoslavije/Hrvatske 1945.–1973.“, *Ĉasopis za suvremenu povijest* 1/2021, 103–107; Ulf Brunnbauer, *Globaliziranje Jugoistoĉke Europe. Iseljenici, Amerika i dr̄žava od kraja 19. stoljeća*, (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2019), 239–252.

54 More in: Bojan Simiĉ, „Dug put kući – povratak jugoslavenskih iseljenika iz Argentine (1946.–1951.)“, *Ĉasopis za suvremenu povijest* 3/2020, 791–812.

55 Œegviĉ, *Povratak jugoslovenske ekonomske emigracije*, 27.

56 DAMSP, PA, 1956, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 10, s. 48021, Izveštaj o našoj koloniji u Urugvaju, 2–3. The report was incorrectly dated 1/10/1955; however, an analysis of its contents and the receipt date (2/7/1956) clearly indicates it should have been dated 1/10/1956.

57 Antonich, *Hrvatska i Hrvati u Urugvaju*, 150.

58 DAMSP, PA, 1956, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 10, s. 48021, Izveštaj o našoj koloniji u Urugvaju, 2.

the “political reality of that moment” by recognizing Tito’s Yugoslavia, and that this acceptance shaped the community’s stance up until the 1990s.⁵⁹

The Yugoslav republican society was established in 1936 as the Educational Society Brotherhood of Emigrants from Yugoslavia (*Prosvjetno društvo Bratstvo iseljenika iz Jugoslavije*). Data from 1947 showed that Croats made up the bulk of the membership, followed by a lesser number of Slovenes from Julian Krajina and the “prečani” Serbs, i.e. those located across (*preko*) the Danube, Sava, and Drina rivers.⁶⁰ Approximately 500 people belonged to this association, making it the largest expatriate group in Uruguay following the Second World War. Despite its attempts to establish itself as a leader by imposing on other associations, the others chose to maintain their independence.

Bratstvo defended the IB resolution and harshly criticized the Yugoslav government. A letter to Josip Broz was discovered in the Marshal of Yugoslavia’s cabinet, expressing disapproval of the terror against People’s Liberation War leaders and demanding the immediate removal of Gestapo, imperialist agents, and Soviet Union enemies from the Yugoslav government, labeling them as enemies of Yugoslavia.⁶¹ Passivization and loss of membership resulted from this mentality and the devotion to the Union Eslava organization, which the Uruguayan authorities saw as communist.

Primarily composed of Slovenian emigrants with a minor proportion of Hungarians and Croats, *Prvo slovensko prekomursko društvo* was created in 1935 and had 94 members, including 30 youth members, by 1948.⁶² The association tried to avoid politics, even putting up a sign on the property prohibiting political discussions. However, it was seen as aligned with the official state border because it supported the FNRJ government and helped organize Republic Day celebrations.

A group of around fifteen younger people congregated around the organization “Naša tamburica,” established in 1953 following a generational dispute inside the Croatian House, making it the youngest association listed. Its formal Yugoslavian identity was intended, and it maintained a good working

59 Antonich, *Hrvatska i Hrvati u Urugvaju*, 150.

60 DAMSP, PA, 1947, Argentina, f. 9, d. 16, s. 427509, Izvještaj o stanju i radu jugoslovenskih iseljeničkih organizacija u Argentini sa kratkim pregledom iselj. organizacija u Urugvaju, Čileu, Boliviji i Brazilu, 44.

61 AJ, KMJ, I–3–b/862, Pismo Jugoslovenskog republikanskog udruženja „Bratstvo“ – maršalu Jugoslavije Josipu Brozu Titu kojim izražavaju protest povodom hapšenja jugoslovenskih rodoljuba, prijatelja SSSR-a, Montevideo, 8. IX 1949.

62 HDA, fond 1614, Matica iseljenika Hrvatske, f. 142, Naša naseobina u Urugvaju, 6. Izvještaj konzulata FNRJ u Urugvaju poslat 6. 3. 1951.

relationship with Matica iseljenika Hrvatske, founded in 1951.⁶³ The association wrote in one of its letters about “bringing our people abroad together through the music, songs, and plays of our beloved homeland”.⁶⁴

Established in 1936, the Croatian Catholic community (*Hrvatska katolička zajednica*) gathered clerical components and, apart from its religious aspect, engaged in anti-Yugoslav emigrant organizations and published periodicals and bulletins criticizing the Yugoslavian government.⁶⁵ Based on data from the embassy, it had 32 registered members in 1948, of whom 26 were considered active.⁶⁶ The Yugoslav authorities viewed this group as the hub for Uruguayan Ustasha immigrants, while Jakov Blažević’s reception at the Croatian Home during his stay intensified negative sentiments and provoked “fierce resistance” from the Croatian Catholic community.⁶⁷

Vice-consul Vojislav Đukić and some emigrants attempted to integrate all societies, but were unsuccessful. During Ambassador Stilinović’s visit, it was emphasized that instead of building a new society, it would be beneficial to strengthen the current ones, such as “Croats in the Croatian Home and Slovenes in the Prekomursko društvo”.⁶⁸ The Committee of Yugoslav Immigrants (Comite de los Inmigrados Yugoelavos), founded in 1952 by president Ivan Čizmić and secretary Marko Cetinić, advocated for Yugoslav rights in Istria and sent protest notes to the US and UK foreign ministries during the Trieste crisis.⁶⁹

In 1955, improved Yugoslavia-USSR relations led the “Bratstvo” to collaborate with the Croatian House and First Prekomurski društvo, forming a Coordination Board with three members from each society the following year.⁷⁰ The association “Naša Tamburica” soon joined, strengthening Yugoslav diplomacy’s positive view of the situation in the Uruguay colony in the

63 In a letter published in the February 1954 issue, representatives of “Naša Tamburica” reported nine subscribers to *Matica* and expressed their gratitude for the musical material provided. *Matica*, veljača 1954, br. 2, 44.

64 HDA, 1614–60, Pismo „Naše tamburice“ upućeno Matici iseljenika Hrvatske primljeno 29. 1. 1954.

65 DAMSP, PA, 1956, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 10, s. 48021, Izveštaj o našoj koloniji u Urugvaju, 3.

66 HDA, 1614–142, Uruguay, 8. Izveštaj iz 1948. godine.

67 Antonich, *Hrvatska i Hrvati u Urugvaju*, 221.

68 DAMSP, PA, 1951, Razne zemlje, f. 72, d. 22, s. 47016, Predaja kredencijala druga Stilinovića u Urugvaju, od 21. 5. 1951.

69 *Matica*, svibanj 1954, br. 5, Jugoslavenski iseljenici u Uruguayu, 103.

70 DAMSP, PA, 1956, Razne zemlje, f. 77, d. 10, s. 48021, Dodatak uz izveštaj o našoj koloniji u Urugvaju od 30. 4. 1956.

mid-1950s.⁷¹ Therefore, the celebration on November 29, 1955, marked the first time in many years that all major emigrant organizations participated.⁷² The Yugoslav Embassy in Montevideo, unable to forget the “Bratstvo” attacks during the crisis in relations with the USSR, insisted on openly separating society from the politics of the period, and in February 1959, the local newspaper *Jugoslavenski vjesnik* published one of these statements.⁷³

Pre-war political parties from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia operated to some extent in Uruguay, with the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) establishing “Stjepan Radić” in Montevideo in 1935. Following the Second World War, this organization was more active in Uruguay than in Brazil or Chile, although it remained insignificant compared to those in Western Europe and North America.⁷⁴

Former NDH head Ante Pavelić, a well-known fugitive from Yugoslav authorities in South America, posed a challenge for both Yugoslav and Uruguayan police at one point, as Pavelić and the authorities in Argentina indicated he was in Uruguay. In a conversation on January 20, 1953, Yugoslav deputy Pavićević and Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs secretary Robert Belache discussed Ustasha leader Ante Pavelić, with Belache denying Pavelić was in Argentina and claiming he was in Uruguay based on information from a Yugoslavian engineer. Pavićević expressed hope that Argentina would resolve the issue, citing Pavelić as a “stumbling stone” in bilateral relations, and also denied that Pavelić was currently in Uruguay.⁷⁵

The study of the sources reveals that the Argentine authorities’ strategy was to create the appearance that he had relocated to Uruguay, as suggested by his radio message to Montevideo and an interview in which he was reportedly present.⁷⁶ The FNRJ Prime Minister Josip Broz, in an interview with a Brazilian journalist, addressed a direct question about Pavelić’s whereabouts and said that although he may have moved to Uruguay now, he was originally

71 DAMSP, PA, 1956, *Razne zemlje*, f. 77, d. 11, s. 414787, Izveštaj ambasadora Petrovića upućen DSIP-u od 20. 8. 1956, 7–8.

72 In an article published in *Matica*, a correspondent from Uruguay remarked that “for the first time in the history of our emigration here, almost all of our colony participated.” *Matica*, ožujak 1956, br. 3, 58

73 Antonich, *Hrvatska i Hrvati u Urugvaju*, 186.

74 More in: Ivan Tepeš, *Hrvatska politička emigracija – HSS*, (Zagreb: AGM, 2021), 358–367.

75 DAMSP, PA, 1953, Argentina, f. 2, d. 12, s. 42769, Zabeleška o razgovoru vođenom 20. 1. 1953.

76 Bogdan Krizman, *Pavelić u bjekstvu*, (Zagreb: Globus, 1986), 196–197.

from Argentina. This interview further confirms that there was at one point a confusion about whether Pavelić was actually in Uruguay.⁷⁷

In February 1953, MP Pavićević discussed Pavelić's stay in Uruguay with Uruguay's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fructuoso Pittaluga, but received no specific response.⁷⁸ Although Yugoslav diplomacy knew Pavelić was not in Uruguay, they sought an official denial due to the lack of one from Uruguay; detailed "evidence" of Pavelić's presence, including an article in Hrvatska, a radio address in Montevideo, and reports in the Italian newspaper Epoca, was outlined in the aide-memoire delivered to the Uruguayan government on February 15, 1953.⁷⁹ Due to the compelling evidence that Pavelić was hiding in Argentina, the Yugoslav side chose not to pursue further accountability from the Uruguayan authorities.

Additional forms of bilateral cooperation

As previously stated, cooperation between students of the two countries, established during Veljko Vlahović's stay in Uruguay, led to two delegates from a similar Uruguayan group and one representative of the Argentine FUA traveling to Yugoslavia for the Fourth International Student Conference in March 1954.⁸⁰ SSJ also received information about the situation in Argentina from student organizations in Chile and Uruguay.⁸¹ This was specifically in reference to the previously described circumstances at the close of 1954, when Argentine colleagues made a call for solidarity and writings about the actions of Uruguayan students in this regard were also published.⁸²

One area of cooperation between the two nations was in sports, particularly football. During the early 1950s, there were numerous intense visits by top Yugoslav clubs, with Dinamo Zagreb first visiting Montevideo in 1952,

77 AJ, KMJ, IV-1-a/84, Intervju maršala Tita dopisniku Brazilijanskog ilustrovanog lista „Kruzeiro“ Lucianu Carneiru, 28. XI 1952.

78 DAMSP, PA, 1953, Razne zemlje, f. 72, d. 16, s. 42374, Šifrovano pismo Poslanstva FNRI u Buenos Ajresu upućeno Ministarstvu inostranih poslova od 11. 2. 1953.

79 DAMSP, PA, 1953, Jugoslavija, f. 47, d. 10, s. 42859, Aide-memoire upućen vladi Urugvaja od 15. 2. 1953.

80 AJ, fond 145, Savez studenata Jugoslavije, f. 47, l. 143, Pismo Centralnog odbora SSJ upućeno DSIP-u od 25. 10. 1954.

81 AJ, 145-47-135/138, Izveštaj delegacije Federation de Etudiantes Universitarios del Uruguay y de la Confederacion de Etudiantes Universitarios de Chile koja je posetila Buenos Ajres 25-31 januara 1955. The document mentions 253 imprisoned students, with 178 located in the capital of Argentina.

82 *Студент*, 24. 11. 1954, 2.

followed by Partizan and Crvena zvezda in 1954 and early 1955. These trips were part of longer tours throughout South America, organized and authorized at the state level. For instance, Josip Broz Tito personally decided⁸³ to postpone Hajduk's South American tour by six months, and Edvard Kardelj later approved an extended stay for the group.⁸⁴

During performances in South America, football players and club management met with representatives from the Yugoslav colony in Uruguay, with 250-300 immigrants greeting Dinamo representatives at the airport and a banquet with dancing held in their honor by the Croatian Home and the First Slovenian Prekomurski Society. Vice-Consul Đukić praised Dinamo's visit to Uruguay as "a great benefit to both the colony and the local public in general."⁸⁵ Despite only having a few days in Montevideo, the Red Star footballers were constantly surrounded by Yugoslav emigrants.⁸⁶

The first decade of relations between FNR Yugoslavia and Uruguay laid the foundation for increased contact and improved mutual relationships in subsequent years. In 1957, a new trade and payment arrangement was established, followed by a Yugoslav commerce delegation's visit to Uruguay in 1958 and an invitation for a Uruguayan group of cultural institutions to Yugoslavia by the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. Additionally, a Yugoslav parliamentary delegation traveled to Uruguay in 1958 at the congress's request, with similar exchanges continuing in the years that followed.⁸⁷

Summary

The Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and the Eastern Republic of Uruguay established relations in April 1946 when the Uruguayan side issued a decree recognizing the new Yugoslav authorities as legitimate. Despite this, the diplomatic representation in Montevideo only began operations in 1951. The representative in Buenos Aires was also accredited to Uruguay, and Vice Consul Vojislav Đukić stayed in Montevideo at the beginning. In late 1954, economist

83 Milan Terzić, *Titova vještina vladanja. Maršal i Maršalat 1944–1953*, (Podgorica: Pobjeda, 2005), 265.

84 Nikola Mijatov, *Sport u službi socijalizma: Jugoslovensko iskustvo 1945–1953*, (Beograd: Čigoja; Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2020), 459.

85 DAMSP, PA, 1953, Razne zemlje, f. 72, d. 16, s. 42782, Boravak N.K., „Dinamo“ u Montevideu, od 24. 2. 1953.

86 Рајко Митић, *Буенос Аирес, Монтевидео – Рио. Са фудбалерима Црвене Звезде но Јужној Америци*, (Београд: Ревизија, 1955), 19–22, 26–28.

87 „Pregled diplomatskih, političkih i drugih veza između Jugoslavije i zemalja Latinske Amerike“. *Naše teme*, 1966, 327–329.

Mirčeta Čvorović was dispatched to Uruguay as a chargé d'affaires to foster cooperation, leading to the creation of the Yugoslav embassy in Uruguay, which was officially separated from the mission in Buenos Aires in 1957. Among the notable Yugoslav officials who visited Uruguay during this period was Veljko Vlahović, a representative of the Socialist Union of the Working People of Yugoslavia. Economic ties between the two countries were limited due to mutual ignorance of each other's markets and economic conditions, a lack of interest from certain businesses, and long periods without formal agreements. However, in the decade following World War II, two commercial agreements were signed with Uruguay's National Bank, and it was not until the mid-1950s, with the establishment of an embassy in Montevideo and the re-export of Uruguayan products by the Yugoslav side, that bilateral trade, particularly wool exports to FNRJ, began to grow. Between 5,000 and 10,000 Yugoslav emigrants resided in Uruguay, with most based in Montevideo. Prominent emigrant associations during this period included the Croatian Home, the First Slovenian Prekomursko društvo, the Yugoslav Republican Association "Bratstvo," "Naša Tamburica," and the Croatian Catholic Community. Most of these organizations primarily collaborated with the FNRJ embassy in Argentina and later with the representative office in Uruguay, while striving to preserve their internal autonomy.

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Резиме

Бојан Симић

ОДНОСИ ЈУГОСЛАВИЈЕ И УРУГВАЈА: ДИПЛОМАТИЈА, ТРГОВИНА И ЕМИГРАЦИЈА 1946–1955.

Апстракт: У чланку се на основу архивске грађе, релевантне литературе и оновремене штампе анализира политика социјалистичке Југославије према Уругвају у првој деценији након Другог светског рата. У уводном делу обрађени су дипломатски односи, од признања социјалистичке Југославије од стране Уругваја до фактичког осамостаљивања посланства ФНРЈ у Монтевидеу. Део посвећен економској сарадњи два земље анализира трговинску размену у обрађеном периоду, а посебно важеће уговоре и обим трговине. Трећи део обухвата анализу деловања југословенског исељеништва у Уругвају, његову организацију и везе са матицом.

Кључне речи: Југославија, Уругвај, дипломатија, економија, исељеништво

Односи између Федеративне Народне Републике Југославије и Источне Републике Уругвај успостављени су априла 1946. указом уругвајске стране, којим су нове власти у Југославији признате као легитимне. И поред тога, до отварања дипломатског представништва у Монтевидеу дошло је тек 1951. године: посланик у Буенос Ајресу био је акредитован и за Уругвај, док је у Монтевидеу у почетку боравио вицеконзул Војислав Ђукић. Крајем 1954, ради унапређења сарадње, у престоницу Уругваја послат је економиста Мирчета Чворовић у рангу отправника послова, чиме је фактички дошло до отварања југословенског посланства у Уругвају, формализованог одвајањем од амбасаде у Буенос Ајресу 1957. године. Од посета високих југословенских званичника Уругвају у овом периоду бележимо боравак Вељка Влаховића у својству представника Социјалистичког савеза радног народа Југославије. Економски односи између две земље били су неразвијени услед узајамне необавештености о тржиштима и економској ситуацији, незаинтересованости одређених предузећа и дугих периода без уговорног стања. Током прве деценије након Другог светског рата потписана су два споразума са Уругвајском националном банком ради регулисања робног промета. Тек средином педесетих година дошло је до повећања билатералне трговинске размене (нарочито извоза вуне у ФНРЈ), чему су допринели отварање посланства у Монте-

видеу и чињеница да је југословенска страна реекспортирала уругвајску робу. У Уругвају је живело између 5.000 и 10.000 југословенских исељеника, од којих је већина била стационирана у Монтевидеу. Најзначајнија исељеничка удружења која су деловала у овом периоду била су Хрватски дом, Прво Словенско Прекомурско друштво, Југословенско републиканско удружење „Братство“, „Наша тамбурица“ и Хрватска католичка заједница. Већина ових удружења сарађивала је са посланством ФНРЈ у Аргентини, а касније са представништвом у Уругвају, иако се трудила да очува своју унутрашњу самосталност.