

THE CROATIAN CONTRIBUTION TO PLANS FOR REVISION OF THE YUGOSLAV- HUNGARIAN BORDER IN 1945-1946

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The Border Commission attached to the Presidency of the Government of the Federal State of Croatia prepared plans to revise the Yugoslav-Hungarian border during the period from the end of the Second World War to the Paris Peace Conference. This work introduces the Commission's staff and presents its operating methods and the results of its work, as well as its relations with federal institutions in Belgrade.

Key words: Federal state of Croatia, Democratic Federal Yugoslavia, Hungary, Baja Triangle, Border Commission, alteration of borders.

Introduction

At the end of the Second World War in Europe, preparations commenced for a peace conference that would determine the peace conditions for the defeated states. The status of the defeated states was influenced by various factors: the time of their transfer to the Allied side, their armed contribution to the Allied victory or the number and strength of the victorious states which had territorial demands against their territories. The Democratic Federal, or Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia came out of the war as a victor and as the legal successor to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. This meant that it could place before Hungary the matter of Hungarian occupation of territories such as Prekomurje, Međimurje, Baranja and Bačka during the Second World War and seek material and territorial compensation.

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Croatia, like the other federal units, organized its own border commission. In setting its priorities and operating methods, the “Border Commission attached to the Presidency of the Government of the Federal State of Croatia” was autonomous, although ultimately federal interests – as formulated by the Institute for the Study of International Issues under the Foreign Affairs Ministry in Belgrade – proved crucial. The Commission’s work reflected the aspirations of Croatian academic circles, from among whose ranks its leading members and associates, who compiled studies for the Commission’s need, were appointed.

The Croatian Border Commission

The Border Commission attached to the Government of the Federal State of Croatia was established in 1945 for the purpose of preparing the borderline between Croatia and the remaining federal units inside the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia of the time and the borderline between its sections of Yugoslavia’s border and neighbouring countries (Italy, Hungary).¹

As part of preparations for the establishment of the border between Croatia itself and the aforementioned states, the Croatian Commission prepared materials for the borders between Yugoslavia and Hungary not only along the Croatian-Hungarian border but also for the area of the Baja Triangle, a territory in Hungary in the vicinity of the town of Baja, in today’s county of Bács-Kiskun (Bač-Mala Kumanija).²

Hungary bordered three Yugoslav federal units: Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia (in the latter case, through Vojvodina, an autonomous province of Serbia). The work of the border commissions attached to the governments of the federal units was coordinated by the Institute for the Study of International Issues, a body of the Foreign Affairs Ministry in Belgrade.³

The first attempts to establish the Border Commission under the Presidency of the Government of the Federal State of Croatia commenced in April 1945. At the time, the government was seated in Šibenik, because Zagreb was still under the control of the pro-Axis government of the Independent State of

¹ Egon Kraljević, *Analitički inventar arhivskog fonda HR HDA 1166 – Komisija za razgraničenje pri Predsjedništvu Vlade Narodne Republike Hrvatske* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2006), p. 6; Croatian State Archives (HR-HDA), Border Commission (1166), box 1, signature I, point 2. Outline for the work of the Border Commission 12 June 1945.

² The Baja Triangle encompasses these settlements: Bácsalmás, Bácsbokod, Bácsborsod, Bácsszentgyörgy, Madaras, Bátmonostor, Baja, Csátalja, Csávoly, Csikéria, Dávod, Felsőszentiván, Gara, Hercegszántó, Katymár, Kelebia, Kusbaja, Mátételke, Mélykút, Nagybaracska, Szeremle, Tataháza, Tompa, Vaskút. The names of the settlements are cited in Hungarian because they are today in Hungary, while the Croatian forms of their names are not uniform.

³ Egon Kraljević, *Analitički inventar arhivskog fonda HR HDA 1166...*, p. 7.

Croatia (NDH). An obstacle confronting its formation was the lack of a professional staff, which is reflected in the correspondence between state bodies concerning candidates for work in the future Commission, and this was exacerbated by the fact that only Croatian university was in Zagreb. Some of the candidates were overburdened by duties in state and other agencies. The Commission was finally formed from persons who lived in Zagreb and were inaccessible to the authorities of the Federal State of Croatia in April.

The Commission was established on 1 June 1945. The written evidence of its work can be found from the beginning of that month. One of the first ambiguities that the Government had to resolve was how to establish the border commission. The documentation indicates that at first there were plans to have one commission for the "external" borders, which were Yugoslavia's borders with Italy, Hungary and Austria, and another commission that would deal with setting the "internal" borders with Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia and Serbia.⁴

The first challenges to setting the borders came from Vojvodina. Work on this border showed that a single consolidated commission was necessary, because the outcome of setting the border between Croatia and Vojvodina depended on the outcome of setting the border between Yugoslavia and Hungary.⁵

The Croatian contribution to the plans for revision of the Yugoslav-Hungarian border is the subject of this work.

Two principles for setting borders were instituted, and they applied to neighbouring federal units and neighbouring states such as Italy and Hungary. The first principle was ethnic, whereby the ethnic majority of the population was supposed to serve as the deciding factor. But this was modified by the second principle: economic factors and transport gravitation, which was meant to serve as a corrective factor.⁶ Above these principles was the fact that Yugoslavia was a victor, while Hungary a defeated country in the Second World War, which put Yugoslavia in a more advantageous position than Hungary.

⁴ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, Presidency of the Government of the People's Republic of Croatia, box 1, signature I, point 1. Correspondence from Justice Ministry of Federal Democratic Croatia to District People's Liberation Committee of Dalmatia, court section, of 26 April 1945.

⁵ HR HDA 1166, Border Commission, Presidency of the Government of the People's Republic of Croatia, box 16, signature 3.2.2., point 1. On the demarcation of Vojvodina, a study submitted by the Ministry for Croatia in the Government of Democratic Federal Yugoslavia to the Presidency of the People's Government of Croatia.

⁶ HR HDA 1166, Border Commission, Presidency of the Government of the People's Republic of Croatia, box 1, signature I, point 2. Outline for the work of the Border Commission 12 June 1945.

Staff of the Border Commission

The principle underlying the recruitment to the Commission was: the individuals must be experts, but also politically reliable. The fact that many members of the Commission spent the war either in the civil or public service of the Independent State of Croatia and published scholarly works during that time aroused suspicions of “the crime of cultural cooperation with the enemy”. Nonetheless, since their expertise was needed, the authorities overlooked these misgivings.

The members of the “northern border group”, a body within the Border Commission charged with drafting a proposal for the border with Hungary, were Josip Roglić, Vinko Žganec, Juraj Andrassy, Milovan Zoričić, Rudolf Maixner and Krešimir Filić. Among the Commission’s associates in individual task forces were Kamilo Firinger, Josip Bösendorfer, Jerko Zlatarić and Blaško Rajić.

Most members of the Commission in the “northern border group” were exemplars of the Zagreb, or rather, northern Croatian academic elite.⁷ Indeed, three (Zoričić, Andrassy and Maixner) were leaders of the pre-war Friends of France Society (*Cercle Français de Zagreb*).

At first, the acting chief official and chairman of the Commission, Josip Roglić, originally from Dalmatia, was the sole exception in terms of geographic origin and the fact that he studied and earned his doctorate in Belgrade, where he also worked in the local secondary schools, whence he moved to Zagreb in May 1941. Even in Zagreb he continued to work in the secondary school system, and he secretly collaborated with the Partisans in the Zagreb eighth district of the Unified People’s Liberation Front (JNOF: *Jedinstvena narodno-oslobodilačka fronta*).⁸ He established contacts with many future members of the Commission during the war itself, and using pseudonyms, they wrote texts which Ivan Meštrović managed to publish through the University of Lausanne in Switzerland.⁹

A member of the northern border group was Vinko Žganec Ph.D., from Vratišinec in Međimurje, who was a governmental commissioner in Međimurje in 1925/26. He learned Hungarian in primary school, which was deemed a rare skill.¹⁰

Dr. Juraj Andrassy was a university law professor from Zagreb, a professor at the International Law Academy in The Hague prior to World War II, the

⁷ HR HDA 1166, Border Commission,, Presidency of the Government of the People’s Republic of Croatia, box 1, signature I, point 1, unit: Lists of Commission experts, List of Commission members.

⁸ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 1, signature I, point 1. Lists of Commission experts; *Hrvatski leksikon*, vol. II, L-Ž, (Zagreb, 1997), p. 374.

⁹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission,, box 1, signature I, point 2. Outline for the work of the Border Commission 12 June 1945; Exhibit A.

¹⁰ *Hrvatski leksikon*, vol. II, pp. 728-729.

secretary of the Friends of France Society, and a winner of the Legion of Honour in 1937.¹¹

Milovan Zoričić, Ph.D. was a justice in the Supreme Court of Croatia and served as a member of the government of the Saarland in 1932-35 in charge of the judiciary, religion and education. (The Saar [Territory of the Saar Basin, or Saargebiet] was a region in western Germany under a League of Nations mandate pursuant to the Treaty of Versailles). He served as president of the Friends of France Society, president of the Hunting Federation (the Federation of Hunting Associations of Croatia and Slavonia since 1925) and president of the Football Federation (Football Sub-committee of the Croatian Sports Federation, 1912-1914).¹²

Rudolf Maixner Ph.D. was born in Varaždin, studied in Paris, and earned a doctorate in history at the University of Zagreb. Prior to the war, he worked as a correspondent from Paris and Geneva for the newspaper *Obzor*, of which he eventually became editor. He was a member of board of the Friends of France Society.¹³

Krešimir Filić, was born in Bjelovar, but he spent his entire life in Varaždin, where he lectured in history and geography at the classics gymnasium, and was the *spiritus movens* of the city's cultural life. He established and presided over the mountaineering association, the museum society, the choir society, etc.¹⁴

Among the members of the sub-group was Kamilo Firingner, born in Daruvar, who headed the Archives of Slavonia in Osijek. He studied the Hungarian language at the University of Zagreb. He earned a doctorate in law. Prior to the war he was active in the Croatian Popular Party. He established the Archaeology Society in Osijek. He also encouraged skiing and hiking in Slavonia.

Firingner was recommended to head the Archives of Slavonia by Josip Bösendorfer, Ph.D., the director of the Museum of Slavonia in Osijek, also one of the Commission's associates, who was born in Lukač, near Virovitica, and earned his doctorate in Zagreb.¹⁵

¹¹ *Ko je ko u Jugoslaviji, biografski podaci o jugoslovenskim savremenicima* (Belgrade, 1957), p. 18; *Hrvatski leksikon*, vol. I, p. 15.

¹² Maria Zenner, *Parteien und Politik im Saargebiet unter dem Völkerbundsregime 1920-1935* (Minerva-Verlag Thinner und Nolte, 1966), p. 423; *Hrvatski leksikon*, vol. II, p. 717.

¹³ Josip Horvat, *Živjeti u Hrvatskoj, Zapisci iz nepovrata 1900.-1941.* (Zagreb: Sveučilišna naklada Liber, 1984), pp. 239, 251; *Hrvatski leksikon*, vol. II, p. 52.

¹⁴ Mladen Vezmarović, "Krešimir Filić (1891.-1972.) život i djelo" in *800 godina slobodnog kraljevskog grada Varaždina: 1209.-2009.: zbornik radova s međunarodnog znanstvenog skupa održanog 3. i 4. prosinca 2009. godine u Varaždinu* (Zagreb; Varaždin: Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, Zavod za znanstveni rad u Varaždinu: Grad Varaždin, Varaždinska županija, 2009), pp. 871-873.

¹⁵ <http://essekeri.hr/bio/70-kamilo-firingner>. (Accessed on 12 July 2012); *Hrvatski leksikon*, vol I, pp. 130, 351.

Jerko Zlatarić, a peasant from Gajić in Baranja, was the politically highest-ranking Croat from Baranja who participated in setting the border as a member of the “Commission of the AVNOJ¹⁶ Presidency to Draft the Proposal for the Border Between the Territories of Vojvodina and Croatia” (the so-called Đilas Commission), which set an interim border between Croatia and Serbia (Vojvodina). Prior to the war, he was a deputy senator of the Croatian Peasant Party (HSS). He was a member of the Executive Committee of the Croatian Republican Peasant Party [IO HRSS] as of 29 June 1945, and a member of the Interim People’s Assembly [*Privremena narodna skupština* – PNS]. His support of Imre Filaković in 1946 showed that he was parting ways with the pro-communist leadership of the IO HRSS. Due to this opposition to the establishment of peasant labour cooperatives, he was expelled from the People’s Front [*Narodna fronta* – NF]. In 1950, he was sentenced to eight years in prison, and released after serving two years.¹⁷

Blaško Rajić, a priest and an exceptionally important Croatian national activist in the preceding decades, and politician Grga Skenderović, both from Subotica, also worked with the Commission.¹⁸

Individual collaborators were given different assignments. Juraj Andrassy’s letter to Josip Roglić on 22 March 1946 shows that cartographers [Vojislav] Rubin and Ivan Kreuziger were engaged, that Vaso Bogdanov was preparing a report on war crimes, and Ivan Esih was working on a critique of Hungarian official statistics.¹⁹ Stjepan ‘Stevo’ Šaravanja, according to that same letter, was doing field work.²⁰ A receipt signed by Rudolf Maixner indicates that Šaravanja spent 34 days in the field, from 5 March to 8 April 1946, and that he travelled along this route: Belgrade – Novi Sad – Osijek – Sombor – Osijek – Varaždin

¹⁶ Antifaštičko vijeće narodnog oslobođenja Jugoslavije – Anti-fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia.

¹⁷ Zdenko Radelić, *Hrvatska seljačka stranka 1941.-1950.* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 1996), p. 189.

¹⁸ *Hrvatski leksikon*, vol. II, 1997, p. 346.

¹⁹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, Presidency of the Government of the People’s Republic of Croatia, box 1, signature I, point 1, unit: Lists of Commission experts, List of Commission members; “Esih, Dr. Ivan: Official of Group V – Born in Ljubuški on 7 Aug. 1898. Doctorate in Slavic linguistics, 1923, passed professorial examination in 1927. Began teaching at the 1st Men’s General Gymnasium in 1923, and after specialization at Jagiellonian University in Krakow he assumed post of secretary in the staff of the Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Science in Zagreb in 1928, where he remained until 1940, when he joined the staff of the Education Department of the Banovina of Croatia. During the N.D.H. he worked as a clerk in the Education Ministry. After liberation he transferred from the Education Ministry to the Border Commission on 24 June 1945. He has served 26 years in the civil service”.

²⁰ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.6. Correspondence, 1. Letters point 4. Andrassy’s letter to Roglić of 22 March 1946.

– Kotoriba – Maribor – Osijek – Beli Manastir – Ljubljana – Varaždin – Čakovec – Kotoriba – Osijek – Sombor – Virovitica – Kotoriba.²¹

The importance of knowing the Hungarian language was emphasized on a number of occasions. This is why on 8 January 1946, permission was sought from the 2nd Classics Gymnasium in Zagreb for Vaso Bogdanov to travel to Vojvodina, because he was “well versed in recent Hungarian history and the language”.²²

In a letter to the Justice Ministry of the People’s Government of Croatia, the District People’s Committee for Slavonia proposed seven experts for work on determining the border with Hungary, of whom two (Jerko Zlatarić and Slavko Beležlin) were recommended as good speakers of the Hungarian language, while a third candidate, Valent Šokec, in fact mentioned that Hungarian speakers must be found for such work.²³

Principles of the Commission’s work

On 12 June 1945, the Commission compiled its Draft Operations.²⁴

At a meeting of Commission members with Rade Pribičević, the deputy prime minister of the Government of the Federal State of Croatia, held on 1 August 1945 at the initiative of then acting Commission chief and later chairman Josip Roglić, Pribičević laid out the following political guideline on how to approach the requests for revision of the border with Hungary: “On the matter of our northern border [with Hungary], we must be guided by objective demands that will not be saturated in chauvinism”.²⁵

Maixner asserted that the Commission had no idea what the Hungarians were doing, but that they were certainly doing a great deal, Andrassy stressed the importance of gathering data on cross-border owners, while Filić submitted a more extensive report.

²¹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.6. Correspondence, 2. Letters point 12. Field work expenses of S. Šaravanja.

²² HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.6. Correspondence, 2. Letters point 12. Josip Roglić on 8 January 1946 to secretary general of the Government’s Presidency, associate Vasa Bogdanov.

²³ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.6. Correspondence, 2. Letters point 8. Letter no. 400/45 of 13 August 1945. District People’s Committee to the People’s Government of Croatia, Justice Ministry. Subject: Experts – persons knowledgeable in ethnographic data, collection of names.

²⁴ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 1, signature I, point 2. Outline for the work of the Border Commission 12 June 1945.

²⁵ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 1, signature I, point 3. Border Commission’s operating plan, 13. Minutes to the 1st session of Commission members and associates on 1 August 1945.

Filić's report illustrated the perceptions of the border problem held by the Commission a month after its establishment. The secretary recorded:

“Prof. Filić presented the issue of the northern border, beginning with Prekomurje and going all the way below Segedin on the Tisa River. The question of Medjimurje for us is outside of any discussion, but all of the material must nonetheless be compiled so that at a given moment we can stand in defence of this region of ours. We must nonetheless think about how to secure for us those Croatian villages that are across the Mura River, at the nearer side of Velika Kanjiža, such as Molnari, Semyénháza, Fityeház, Bajcsa, Murakerztúr and others. The border was furthermore supposed to be corrected such that Belezna belongs to us, and descend to Gyékényes and continue to that side of the Podravina rail line so that the entire left bank of the Drava River would remain in our hands. All Croatian villages should be rounded off above Barcs, going along the border north-east of Siklós to Harsány, encompassing all Croatian and Serbian settlements below Pécs and Pécsudvard, so that Szomberek and Dunaszekcső remain ours. The border would continue along the main Danube riverbed, next to István above Baja and run almost in a straight line toward Subotica, encompassing the entire Baja Triangle, in which 35-40,000 Croats /Bunjevci/ live”.²⁶

Andrassy submitted a report with the following guidelines for the Commission's work:

- “1.) The request to change the border should be justified. The national aspect today comes into consideration as the principle justification: we may demand regions which are inhabited by our populations and in which our people have an overriding interest. This circumstance is proven by demographic/statistical data.
- “2.) The aspect of gain here should not be considered in the material sense, but rather in the sense of every advantage which comes to the fore in a given area. (...)

“Once we decide to place our demands for certain tracts on the basis of the national aspect, we will only then acquire data which will seem necessary to us and which will particularly encompass these points:

- a) Land based on cultivation types (...)
- b) Other natural wealth (...)
- c) Nature of human settlements and occupations of their inhabitants
- d) Since these are areas on a river – fishing and its prospects
- e) The interests of our border population from our side in that area /e.g. fishing on the opposite bank, the vineyards of Đelekovac and other villages across the Drava/, cross-border ownership of land, etc.

²⁶ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 1, signature I, point 3. Border Commission's operating plan, 13. Minutes to the 1st session of Commission members and associates on 1 August 1945.

- f) The transit value of the area – transportation routes which exist or may be opened.
- g) Industrial importance: the possibility of creating new industries in this area or subsidizing our industry with raw materials from this zone.²⁷

The relationship between Zagreb and Belgrade

Andrassy, in his report to the Border Commission in Zagreb on the meeting at the Institute for the Study of International Issues held in Belgrade on 18 December 1945 (where he represented the Croatian side), listed its participants: Institute secretary Sreten Draškić, its director Vasilije Jovanović, its president Aleksandar Belić (a member of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Science), members Prof. Petar Jovanović, Prof. Balugdžić, and Dr. Jože Vilfan.²⁸ He wrote:

“With reference to our demands, there is a great discrepancy between the Institute’s views and our commission’s views. The Institute has established the principle to everywhere seek a sound natural boundary. This is why, besides the Baja Triangle, it is also seeking a large portion of Baranja from Mecsek and with Pecs, and a larger sector at Nagykanizsa that would encompass many settlements south of Kanizsa together with known significant petroleum sources. These demands are being supplemented [*this word was misspelled in the original document*] with demands for some triangle at Segedin and in the area of the Rába Slovenes. I am unaware of the extent of these territories. By contrast, the Institute is not proffering any demands for the villages on the left bank of the Drava River, because this demand would not be covered by the principle of sound boundaries. My comment that in part these are not our national regions received the response that there are Germans there who are now moving out, so that our present ethnic element together with those who would replace the Germans would create a majority. Facts which demonstrate the inhumane conduct of the Hungarians during the occupation serve as further grounds for our demands, so that it would be just for our state to receive some compensation in territory for the bloodshed perpetrated by the Hungarians. At the session, I declared that I could not share this opinion, neither in principle nor in terms of the extent of the demands.²⁹ Our commission was

²⁷ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5., point 2. Dr. J. Andrassy: Border of Yugoslavia with Hungary at the Mura-Drava section, pp. 1-4.

²⁸ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 14, signature 2.3.1.1. Border Commission reports, point 1. Report of Juraj Andrassy to the Border Commission on his travel to Belgrade, 22 December 1945, p. 1.

²⁹ Stricken from the record: “I could not share this opinion, neither in principle nor in terms of the extent of the demands”.

guided strictly by the principle of nationality in its work. I used my cartographic sketches to prove that outside of that sphere which our commission processed, there were none of our people even in the distant past. With reference to sites on the left bank of the Drava, I stated our wish that this matter be studied from the standpoint of the costs of regulating the Drava, for perhaps the scope of these costs would not allow us to put forth this demand, since the state would incur disproportionately high costs that would not correspond to the small profit derived from these few villages”.³⁰

The Institute for International Issues at the Foreign Affairs Ministry in Belgrade also had at its disposal considerably greater resources than the Commission. Andrassy noted:

“The Institute does not have sufficient information on the current situation in the Triangle and in Baranja and on the status of schooling (for minorities) in post-Trianon Hungary. They would gladly receive this information from our commission, at which point I noticed that the Institute’s resources are much greater than the commission’s, both in terms of staff and in terms of documentation /the archives and library of the foreign affairs ministry/, so when the Institute [*misspelled as Ijstitut in the original document*] cannot find a way to do this, the commission in Zagreb can do even less”.³¹

In the report from the next meeting, held in Belgrade on 6 March 1945, Andrassy noted that the discussion was opened by the president of the Institute for International Issues, Academy-member Aleksandar Belić:

“The discussion was opened by comrade Belić with an exhaustive report on the criminal acts perpetrated by the Hungarian occupiers in Vojvodina. He maintained that this report provided a strong argument in favour of our demands, which he narrowed down to these points: 1/ Full compensation of all damages perpetrated by the Hungarian people 2/ Complete expulsion of all Hungarian inhabitants from our regions and from those regions which we would obtain by correction of the borders”.³²

This meeting as well, held in the office of the deputy foreign affairs minister, [Aleš] Bebler, on 6 March 1946, was attended by Institute president Aleksandar Belić, Pera Jovanović, the senior official in charge of the Hungarian border, Stevo Šaravanja and Juraj Andrassy. Differences and discrepancies between the plans of the Zagreb Commission and the Belgrade Institute became apparent, as noted by Andrassy:

³⁰ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 14, signature 2.3.1.1. Border Commission reports, point 1. Report of Juraj Andrassy to the Border Commission on his travel to Belgrade, 22 December 1945, p. 2.

³¹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 14, signature 2.3.1.1. Border Commission reports, point 1. Report of Juraj Andrassy to the Border Commission on his travel to Belgrade, 22 December 1945, p. 2.

³² HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 14, signature 2.3.1.1. Border Commission reports, point 1. Dr. Juraj Andrassy, Report on travel to Belgrade, 9 March 1946, p. 1.

“As to Baranja, comrade Jovanović drew the line so that it crossed the Danube north of Baja and continued diagonally along the Mecsek Range all the way to the outskirts of Pécs, and then ran down south to the Harsányi Hills, then bending to reach the Drava at precisely the same place as the Zagreb proposal. (...) Then the discussion immediately turned to Prekomurje. I asked why the Drava sector was not mentioned, to which Jovanović responded that it had been decided to refrain from including this sector in the demands. When I noted that nothing of this was known in Zagreb and that this is why – pointlessly it seemed – work on sector Drava was continuing, comrade Jovanović said that the matter had not yet been definitively decided, but he did not explain who made the aforementioned decision and why”.³³

Andrassy was soon given the opportunity to present the Croatian Commission’s accomplishments:

“The settlements south of Kanizsa were presented briefly on the basis of the Zagreb document. Since comrade Bebler observed that there were not many of our people there, he was surprised when I mentioned that these villages were entirely Croatian. The question of the Rába River zone was also mentioned, so I noted that the Yugoslav border would then be in the immediate vicinity of the Burgenland Croats, so that we could then also demand the southern part of Burgenland with the Croatian villages in the border area which were still in Hungary. To this Bebler remarked that he had not known that this area was so close, and that the question had already been resolved in London whereby we would seek migration, that is, population exchanges”.³⁴

Andrassy conveyed the Croatian complaints in an informal conversation with Aleš Bebler after the conference:

“After the conference concluded, comrade Bebler expressed the desire to hear from me any remarks on those points made during the conference, and I particularly emphasized the need to approach the study of moving populations even if there is only a small chance that this matter is broached during peace talks. This issue is very complex and its resolution requires the participation of economics and social policy experts. I also felt it was my duty to express my opinion that all of these vital matters had to be discussed on the broadest possible platform by the largest groups of experts”.³⁵

Andrassy once more stressed the focus of the Ministry’s attention:

“In completing this report, I must point out that in the ministry the most attention is accorded to the question of Baranja and the Baja Triangle, while it

³³ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 14, signature 2.3.1.1. Border Commission reports, point 1. Dr. Juraj Andrassy, Report on travel to Belgrade, 9 March 1946, pp. 2-3.

³⁴ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 14, signature 2.3.1.1. Border Commission reports, point 1. Dr. Juraj Andrassy, Report on travel to Belgrade, 9 March 1946, p. 3.

³⁵ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 14, signature 2.3.1.1. Border Commission reports, point 1. Dr. Juraj Andrassy, Report on travel to Belgrade, 9 March 1946, p. 4.

would appear that the demand for the Drava sector and Prekomurje are not deemed acceptable”.³⁶

The Commission's work

In an undated report, Andrassy provided an overview of what had been done:

“The Border Commission (...) right at the beginning of its work took into consideration the matter of the border with Hungary. Besides Commission member Prof. Filić, this issue was also handled by Dr. Vinko Žganec and Prof. Andrassy as outside associates. The former thoroughly processed the statistics from the censuses from the years 1880 to 1910, while Žganec gathered considerable historical data and collected reports during his travels along the border of Međimurje. Since both were called to other posts, Andrassy remained in the commission as a permanent expert associate, who as time passed delivered a considerable number of papers on the issue of the Yugoslav-Hungarian border, from the historical, ethnographic and, to a certain extent, economic standpoints. These papers were forwarded to the foreign affairs ministry, or rather the Institute for International Issues, which had the task of preparing the materials for peace negotiations. Beside the general issue of borders, the official of the Zagreb commission covered these sections of the border: Prekomurje /the area south of Kanizsa/, the Drava sector /from Gyékényes to Sztára, north of Slatina/, Upper Baranja, and the Baja Triangle. Various cartographic sketches are attached to these papers.

“The Border Commission's research and proposals set forth from the standpoint of strict adherence to the ethnic principle. For this purpose, the commission wanted to obtain realistic data from the field that would provide a picture of the present situation with all changes that occurred in the past few years. In this, an ideal that presented itself was the national cadastre, like the one compiled for the Julian March.³⁷ However, in the case of the northern border this could not be implemented in the same manner, because these are tracts under the authority of a foreign state. Here the commission received assistance precisely at the right moment from the top leadership such that field contacts were established through comrades Biber and Šaravanja, and the commission already received and began to process the first such data and it drafted comments on that data, which can then be re-examined in the field, thus securing new data with maximum assurance of their reliability”.³⁸

³⁶ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 14, signature 2.3.1.1. Border Commission reports, point 1. Dr. Juraj Andrassy, Report on travel to Belgrade, 9 March 1946, p. 5.

³⁷ *Cadastre National de l'Istrie (d'après le Recensement du 1^{er} Octobre 1945)* (Sušak: Edition de l'Institut adriatique, 1946)

³⁸ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 14, signature 2.3.1.1. Border Commission reports, point 1. Dr. Juraj Andrassy, Short report on work on the border with Hungary, p.1.

Referring to the written sources with which the Commission wanted to prove the unreliability of Hungarian official statistics to the detriment of the Croats, Andrassy asserted:

“The untrustworthiness of Hungarian ethnic statistics has been emphasized sufficiently enough. We have allies on this among all of Hungary’s neighbours, especially the Czechs, Slovaks, Romanians and even Germans.”³⁹

As a major work which proves the bias of Hungarian statistics, he cited Adolf Rieth: *Die geographische Verbreitung des Deutschtums in Rumpfungarn...*, Stuttgart, 1927. Particularly valuable were those works that provided data from the eighteenth century, e.g. [Johann Matthias] Korabinsky: *Geographisch-historisches und Produkten-Lexikon von Ungarn*, 1786, and [Ignác] Acsády: *Magyarország népessége a Pragmatica Sanctio korában 1720-1721*, Budapest, 1896.⁴⁰ Church censuses and school reports also came into consideration. Some works, however, such as one by Aleksandar Belić and Stevan Mihaldžić, *De la statistique de la Baranya*, he assessed as insufficiently convincing.⁴¹ He expressed admiration for the famed map by Count Teleki and stressed the need for the creation of a map which would resemble the map by Károly Kogutowicz: *Magyarország néprajzi térképe, Ethnographical Map of Hungary* at scale of 1:1,000,000, from 1927.⁴²

Međimurje and Croatian Prekomurje Task Force

Individual sections of the border were assigned to smaller sub-groups. The task force for Međimurje, consisting of Žganec, Filić and Andrassy, was dedicated to gathering data on cross-border owners, people who owned property in Croatia and in Hungary, as well as compiling documentation on changes in Croatian surnames to Hungarian counterparts, e.g. Kos into Rigó, Režek into Murai, etc.

In a report dated 29 September 1945, Vinko Žganec proffered the opinion that the border should be the Donja Lendava-Nagykanizsa road, while across the road the villages of Murarátka (Ratkovica), Ratkovička Gora and Stara

³⁹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 2. Dr. J. Andrassy: Border of Yugoslavia with Hungary at the Mura-Drava section, p. 6.

⁴⁰ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 2. Dr. J. Andrassy: Border of Yugoslavia with Hungary at the Mura-Drava section, p. 6; Korabinsky: *Geographisch-historisches und Produkten-Lexikon von Ungarn*, 1786; Most likely, since the book was not explicitly mentioned: Acsády Ignác(z), *Magyarország népessége a Pragmatica Sanctio korában 1720-1721*, Budapest: Athaenaeum, 1896.

⁴¹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 2. Dr. J. Andrassy: Border of Yugoslavia with Hungary at the Mura-Drava section, p. 9.

⁴² HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 2. Dr. J. Andrassy: Border of Yugoslavia with Hungary at the Mura-Drava section, p. 8.

Gora should be sought. Below the road, the following villages were to be sought: Tótszerdahely, Molnari, Semyénháza (Pustara), Fityeház, Murakeresztúr, Tótszentmárton, Petrivente (Petriba), Szentmiklós, Bajcsa, Belezna, Tilos, Zákány (Zakon), Szepetnek, and Sormás. He noted that signatures for annexation to Yugoslavia were collected in Sormás, Szepetnek, Mlinarci (Molnari), and Tótszerdahely and that they were being held by the People's Protection Department [Odjeljenje zaštite naroda – OZNA] in Prelog. He also proposed the annexation of the municipalities of Vöröcsök (Žofija), Felsőszemenye, Szentmargit and Murarátka, although only Murarátka had a Croatian majority population. He proposed the rest due to cross-border ownership.⁴³

Particularly high numbers of cross-border owners were found under the jurisdiction of the people's committees in Podturen, Dekanovec, Goričan and Kotoriba. The municipality of Legrad (which came under the District People's Committee in Koprivnica) was in a similar situation as Kotoriba, Žganec recalled the 1920s, when he was the chief administrator in Međimurje, although he did not reach Legrad on his inspection tour in September 1945.⁴⁴

Annex D, besides Žganec's report, also contains the minutes to a meeting which Žganec held in the Kotoriba People's Committee on 21 September 1945, which mention that a delegation came to Prelog from villages in Prekomurje [the trans-Mura zone] – Mlinarci, Tótszerdahely, Szepetnek and Sormás – in May 1945 for the first great people's assembly, asking the army to occupy these villages and annex them to Yugoslavia.⁴⁵ In Annex B, this statement is clearly delineated in the minutes to the meeting between Žganec and the People's Liberation Committee in Donji Vidovec:

“In the month of May, during the meeting in Prelog, a deputation of people from villages across the Mura in Hungary came, led by a local peasant Stjepan Salaj and sought the annexation of those villages to Yugoslavia.”⁴⁶

The participants in the meeting in Kotoriba said of the character of the population:

⁴³ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Report of Dr. Vinko Žganec to the Border Commission on the status of cross-border owners and cross-border property of Međimurje residents in Hungary, along the Mura, 29 September 1945, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁴ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Report of Dr. Vinko Žganec to the Border Commission on the status of cross-border owners and cross-border property of Međimurje residents in Hungary, along the Mura, 29 September 1945, p. 4.

⁴⁵ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Report of Dr. Vinko Žganec to the Border Commission on the status of cross-border owners and cross-border property of Međimurje residents in Hungary, along the Mura, 29 September 1945, Exhibit D.

⁴⁶ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Report of Dr. Vinko Žganec to the Border Commission on the status of cross-border owners and cross-border property of Međimurje residents in Hungary, along the Mura, 29 September 1945, Exhibit B.

“Those present are aware that across the Mura, that is, across the current border, lie the following villages: Tótszerdahely, Mlinarci, Semyénháza / Pustara/, Fityeház, Murakeresztúr, Totszentmárton, Petriba and Szt. Miklos at Nagykaniza, Bajcsa, Belezna, Tilos, Zakon /Zákány/ which are purely Croatian villages, there are Croats in them as indigenous inhabitants, who speak the same dialect as the people of Međimurje, who completely retained their Croatian language, folk customs, folk songs, and the Hungarians call them Croats. It is true that as a result of Hungarian schooling some of the youth have learned something of the Hungarian language, but at home they speak their Croatian mother tongue, and there are certainly 90 percent of them who do not speak and do not understand Hungarian”.

The minutes further contain this statement:

“In the case of the municipality of Mlinarci we know that they collected signatures there and also for the municipality of Tot Serdahelj, with which they sought annexation to Yugoslavia. Sometime in the month of May 1945, delegates of the people from Mlinarci came here to our municipality, and we heard that they went to the OZNA in Kotoriba, and they asked for people from Kotoriba to come, with whom they would liberate these municipalities with our authorities. (...) [T]hose attending believe that the most favourable border would be one that runs from Donja Lendava along the road – the main road to Nagykanizsa, so that the road would remain in Yugoslavia, whereby all Croatian villages would be a part of Yugoslavia. Those attending⁴⁷ believe that in Velika Kaniža [Nagykanizsa], in case of a plebiscite, a majority would vote in favour of Yugoslavia, even though there are few Croats there, and especially in the so-called area of Mala Kaniža [Kiskanizsa]. They – the Hungarians – believe, according to those attending, that they would prosper more in Yugoslavia, for if the upper Croatian villages were annexed from Kanizsa and they are also left without Međimurje, than Kanizsa would lose its economic hinterland, and be condemned to decline and stagnation, which most of the Hungarians see for themselves”⁴⁸

The conclusion made in Kotoriba was met with approval in Donja Dubrava on 27 September 1945:

“The best border with Hungary would therefore be one that would run from Gyekenyes along the main road to Nagykanizsa, so that all Croatian villages

⁴⁷ Vinko Žganec, Ph.D., the Border Commission's envoy, and Josip Šalamon, the chairman of the Kotoriba People's Liberation Committee, committee member Franjo Radmanić, secretary Ignac Markač, chief-of-staff Ivan Matjanec, and cantor Vinko Balog. HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Report of Dr. Vinko Žganec to the Border Commission on the status of cross-border owners and cross-border property of Međimurje residents in Hungary, along the Mura, 29 September 1945, Prilog D.

⁴⁸ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Report of Dr. Vinko Žganec to the Border Commission on the status of cross-border owners and cross-border property of Međimurje residents in Hungary, along the Mura, 29 September 1945, Exhibit D.

would go to Yugoslavia. As to Nagykanizsa itself, once the Croatian villages are annexed it would gravitate to Yugoslavia. One of the many proofs that there are many Croatian inhabitants there is the example of the cemetery in Nagykanizsa in which 60% of the tomb inscriptions show that Croats are buried there.”⁴⁹

The parish priest in Vratišinec presented a circular from the Spiritual Desk [of the Zagreb Archdiocese] which calls upon parishioners to provide data on cross-border owners.⁵⁰ With regard to the mood of clerical circles, it is worthwhile mentioning the letter from catechism teacher Andrija Dolencić.⁵¹ He wrote an entire study on his stay in Međimurje in 1943 and what he learned then about Prekomurje, including notes on the mood of the inhabitants, the religious education of the Prekomurje Croats, etc. He mentioned that in 1943 the Prekomurje Croats came to Kotoriba for confession, because it was important to them to give confession in the Croatian language:

“...[I] took advantage of the Kotoriba Holy Cross parish fair, to which people from all Prekomurje villages came. By asking around, I learned that the Prekomurje Croats are unusually pleased and happy that they can again come into contact with their own people, and especially to have the opportunity to have their confession heard and listen to sermons in Croatian. This is precisely the reason why so many people from Prekomurje came to the parish fair that they could not even have their confession heard due to the small number of priests, weeping as they went home, saying: “We’ve waited for this for years and years, for we have not properly confessed in years, but we already have to leave without having our confession heard in Croatian.”⁵²

He described the Hungarian pressure on the Croats there:

“The Hungarian authorities greatly fear that this populace could seek annexation to Croatia /Yugoslavia/. During the N.D.H. [Independent State of Croatia] they scared people by saying that they would all go to Bosnia, and now they frighten them that there is ‘communism’ here.”⁵³

⁴⁹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Report of Dr. Vinko Žganec to the Border Commission on the status of cross-border owners and cross-border property of Međimurje residents in Hungary, along the Mura, 29 September 1945, Exhibit A.

⁵⁰ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Report of Dr. Vinko Žganec to the Border Commission on the status of cross-border owners and cross-border property of Međimurje residents in Hungary, along the Mura, 29 September 1945, p. 4.

⁵¹ Andrija Dolencić (Kotoriba, 1909-1983), religious instructor, priest and collector of folk materials who recorded folk customs and beliefs; Marija Novak, “Uloga Vinka Žganca u poslijeratnom razvoju narodnih plesova u Međimurju”, *Narodna umjetnost*, P.I.3, (1991): 133-142, p. 136; Suzana Marjanić, “Dragon and Hero or How to Kill a Dragon – on the Example of the Legends of Međimurje about the Grabancijaš and the Dragon”, *Studia mythologica slavica*, XIII (2010): 127-150, p. 129, footnote 6.

⁵² HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 5. Andrija Dolencić, Report on Prekomurje, p. 1.

⁵³ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 5. Andrija Dolencić, Report on Prekomurje, pp. 3-4.

He also mentioned how important the Croatian language was for Prekomurje residents subjected to Magyarization, citing some of the people with whom he spoke in Prekomurje:

“It’s difficult for those of us not allowed to speak Croatian and who have difficulty understanding Hungarian sermons /this is especially true for older residents – not so much for the younger people!/ We would request that they do something so that we can speak Croatian again, and listen to Croatian sermons. We would kindly ask, that they be told that we want a Croat parish priest. We constantly complain that they separated us from the Croats and Medjimorje [*sic*] by force”.⁵⁴

Dolenčić asserted that the Prekomurje Croats were averse to the standard Croatian Shtokavian dialect, which they called ‘Vlach’ and Orthodox:

“Despite intense Magyarization, even today the population does not have a proper knowledge of Hungarian. When questioning them, it is worthwhile to adopt a cautious approach, for if they respond to unpleasant questions that it is all the same which language they speak, since they know both for everyday use. It is particularly important to exercise caution with regard to the Shtokavian dialect, because they have a certain aversion toward it because they cannot understand individual words, to some extent exhibiting the same attitude as the natives of Međimurje in 1918. They consider the Shtokavian dialect a ‘Vlach,’ ‘Orthodox’ language”.⁵⁵

An unidentified Commission associate said that the Prekomurje villages of Molnari, Fityeház, Tótszentmarton and Murakeresztúr were the “most Croatian”, while he noted that the villages of Fityeház and Molnari were commended by [Mátyás] Rákosi personally, because they voted for the Hungarian Communist Party in a higher percentage than any others throughout Transdanubia:

“Additionally, the Croatian villages in this region are rather progressive in the political sense. They give considerable support to the democratic forces of Hungary, as opposed to the villages of the Baja Triangle, which did not comport themselves in the best way. So, for example, Fityeház and Molnari both received commendations from Rákosi because in all of the Transdanubia they voted for the MKP [Hungarian Communist Party] in the highest percentage”.⁵⁶

The following were cited as Croatian villages in Prekomurje: Fityeház, Molnari, Tótszerdahely, Tótszentmarton, Semjénháza, Bajcsa, Murakeresztúr,

⁵⁴ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 5. Andrija Dolenčić, Report on Prekomurje, p. 3.

⁵⁵ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 5. Andrija Dolenčić, Report on Prekomurje, p. 3.

⁵⁶ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 1. Croatian Prekomurje [Trans-Mura zone]; Transdanubia is the term for Hungary west of the Danube, Dunántúl in Hungarian.

Kolocsek, Petrivente, Becsehely, Szepetnek (the only one with less than a 50% share; to be exact 35% Croats, but with some Germans), Szentmiklós, Belezna, Zákány, Örtilos and Berzence. For Berzence, Zákány and Becsehely there was no estimate of the percentage of Croats. The note for Becsehely states that a negligible number of Croats live in it.⁵⁷

From the standpoint of the territorial demands pertaining to the territory for which this task force was responsible, the need arose for the revision of the border in the territory of the Croatian Prekomurje, so that the ten villages inhabited by Croats in Zala County would go to Croatia. Until spring 1946, after numerous investigations into the status on the Hungarian side of the border by commissioners, associates, people's committee members in the border zone, etc., the settlements to which Croatia was claiming a right were finally defined, and Yugoslavia was expected to pose this question at the upcoming peace conference in Paris. This were settlements in the Letenye District: Molnari, Murarátka, Petrivente, Semjénháza, Tótszentmárton and Tótszerdahely; and in the Nagykanizsa District: Bajcsa, Fityeház, Murakeresztúr and Szepetnek.⁵⁸ Proposals motivated solely by economic benefit, such as the annexation of the Krka (Kerka) River Valley with the main Hungarian oil fields, did not receive the green light, even though their importance and potential economic benefits were elaborated:

“...sources of petroleum which yield over a million tons annually or over three quarters of Hungarian production, and much more than our annual production.

“This is the valley of the Kerka River /from Lendvaújfalu to Kutfej/ and the settlements of Lispe and Budafapuszta (...) ... from Murarátka, which we could seek nationally, approximately 10 km. This would only be about 70 square kilometres of territory, if we would want to encompass all of those wells, while for wells in the Kerka Valley it would be barely 20km²”⁵⁹

Vinko Žganec, in his paper called “Comments by Dr. V. Žganec of 18 March 1946 on the Paper by Dr. Andrássy on the Croatian Prekomurje” dedicated his attention to an explanation of reserve options, minimum demands, and seeking only the former tracts of the Međimurje municipalities which remained on the Hungarian side due to changes in the course of the Mura River.

Žganec meticulously explicated the reasons for obtaining land under cross-border ownership across the Mura, the former municipal tracts of Međimurje which remained in Hungary due to changes in the course of the Drava River,

⁵⁷ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 1. Croatian Prekomurje.

⁵⁸ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 4. Dr. Vinko Žganec to Border Commission: Comments on Dr. Andrássy's paper on the Croatian Prekomurje, 18 March 1946.

⁵⁹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 2. Dr. J. Andrássy: Border of Yugoslavia with Hungary at the Mura-Drava section, p. 5.

wherein part of the land farther from the border would be compensated by Hungarian state-owned land or landed estates along the border itself.⁶⁰

Table 1. Cross-border ownership in Međimurje

Settlement (municipality)	No. of CRO cross-border owners	Property across the border	No. of Hung. cross-border owners	Source
Mursko Središće	3			
Gardinovec (Belica)	15-16			
Vratišinec (Vratišinec)	No cross-border owners			
Peklenica (Vratišinec)	No cross-border owners			
Križovec (Vratišinec)	Several			
Po(d)turen (Podturen)	ca. 300			
Other settlements in Podturen Municipality	ca. 500			
Novakovec (Dekanovec)		127 c.j. and 1170 sq. hv. of vineyards; 42 c.j. and 1091 sq. hv. of pastures, 1 c.j. of ploughfields and 300 sq. hv. of forest		
Turčišće (Dekanovec)		15 c.j. of vineyard		
Dekanovec (Dekanovec)	111	80 c.j. and 900 sq. hv. of vineyards + recently alienated (sold) 9 c.j. and 350 sq. hv. of vineyards		
Domašinec (Domašinec)	As in Dekanovec Municipality, estimate			
Goričan	272	Over 100 c.j., mostly vineyards, some ploughfields and pastures; local community holds over 200 c.j. of forest, fields and pastures		Annex C

⁶⁰ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 4. Dr. Vinko Žganec to Border Commission: Comments on Dr. Andrassy's paper on the Croatian Prekomurje, 18 March 1946.

Settlement (municipality)	No. of CRO cross-border owners	Property across the border	No. of Hung. cross-border owners	Source
Kotoriba	Over 450: a) vineyard owners with scattered properties b) ca. 450 for whom the border traversed the municipal land; 322 registered	a) 400 c.j. of vineyards, scattered b) 1100 c.j. of fields, pastures and forest		
Donji Vidovec	34	37 c.j. in fields, pastures, forests and vineyards		Annex B
Dolnja Dubrava	382	120 c.j. of fields, pastures, and forests + 30 c.j. of local PC in Dolnja Dubrava which holds them as tax municipality (of this 9 c.j. of forest)		Annex A
Abbreviations: c.j. = cadastral <i>jutro</i> (a <i>jutro</i> , approximately 5,754.64 square meters, is analogous to an acre) sq.hv. = square <i>hvat</i> (a <i>hvat</i> , a unit of length, 1.896 m, is roughly equivalent to a fathom)				

Source: HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Cross-border Ownership, Report of Vinko Žganec.

Drava River Zone (Drava Sector) Task Force

The Internal Affairs Ministry [*Ministarstvo unutrašnjih poslova* – MUP] of Federal Croatia sent a letter to the District People's Committee [*Okružni narodni odbor* – ONO] in Bjelovar, with which it forwarded the list of the Local People's Committee [*Mjesni narodni odbor* – MNO] in Gola, in which annexation of the train station and Lecko Forest (with a size of 150 *jutra* or 300 *rali* [a *ral* is a half-*jutro*, roughly analogous to a half-acre]) to Croatia was sought.⁶¹

⁶¹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. point 3. Letter from MUP of Federal Croatia to Border Commission of the Presidency of the People's Government of Croatia, no. 4234/45, Subject: state borders, correction at rail station at Gola, 17 August 1945; HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 7. Data on border question, letter from ONO in Bjelovar to the Border Commission with data on the number of Croats on the Hungarian side of the border, 19 April 1946, 2; Abbreviations: MUP [Internal Affairs Ministry], ONO [District People's Committee], MNO [Local People's Committee].

Although the Bjelovar ONO had already sent the first data on the situation at the Hungarian border facing its territory on 26 September 1945, it was only on 19 April 1946 that it sent revised data in which it cited that Brežnica (Hun. Berzence) was in first place in terms of size and percentage of Croats, and that next to the village of Belezna (Cro. Blizna) there is a village called Porrogszentkirály, in which there is a Croatian-Hungarian boundary stone in front of the church sacristy door, which came there from the so-called Crni jarak (Fekete Viz – ‘Black Ditch’), the old border between Hungary and Croatia. The village of Sveti Mihalj is described as inhabited by Croats, and it is noted that Legrad lost the forests of Szent Háromság (Holy Trinity), covering a surface of roughly 1200 *rali*, and Gjurgjanec, with roughly 800 *rali*, after the First World War. The attachments also contain the number of cross-border owners, Croatian and Hungarian citizens from the territory of the Bjelovar District.⁶²

Table 2. Number of Hungarian cross-border owners and surface area of their properties in Croatia in the territory of the Bjelovar ONO

No.	Home settlements of Hungarian cross-border owners	Number of cross-border owners	Total area of cross-border owner properties in <i>rali</i>	Where these properties lie
1.	Gyékényes, Zákány	40	52	In the Ervenj section below village of Gotalovo and in Hintovo below Gola
2.	Sveti Mihalj, Zákány, Murakeresztúr, etc..	76	46	In Legrad t.m.
3.	Gyékényes, Zákány, Csurgó	90	50	In Drnje t.m. next to rail bridge on Drava
4.	Babócsa and various other places	168	473	In Virje t.m. and Ferdinándovac
5.	Total	374	621	
Abbreviations: t.m. = tax municipality				

Source: HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 7. Letter from the District People's Committee in Bjelovar to the Border Commission: Statement on the number of Hungarian cross-border owners and surface area of their cross-border property, 19 April 1946.

Cross-border ownership was so important because the number of cross-border owners from Croatia was palpably higher than the number of cross-border owners from Hungary, as illustrated by the table below:

⁶² HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 7. Data on border question, letter from ONO in Bjelovar to the Border Commission with data on the number of Croats on the Hungarian side of the border, 19 April 1946, 1-3 and Statements on the number of cross-border owners and surface area of cross-border property, 19 April 1946.

Table 3. Evidence of the number of Croatian cross-border owners from the territory of the Bjelovar ONO and the surface area of their properties in Hungary

No.	Home settlements of the Croatian cross-border owners	Number of cross-border owners	Total area of cross-border owner properties in rali	Where these properties lie
	Legrad	371	1571	Őrtilos, Murakeresztúr and Belezna
	Gjelekovac	112	193	Őrtilos and Zákány
	Ždala	1	1	Udvarhely
	Gola and Gotalovo	190	230	Gyékényes, Zákány, Lecka
	Ferdinandovac and Novo Virje	98	263	At Vízvár and Belavár
	Podr. Sesvete	29	33	-
	Križnica	1	1	-
		802	2292	

Source: HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 7. Letter from District People's Committee in Bjelovar to the Border Commission: Statement on the number of our cross-border owners and surface area of cross-border property, 19 April 1946.

A list of surnames of Croats on the Hungarian side of the border was also sent from Bjelovar:

Table 4. Surnames by settlements on the Hungarian side of the border

No.	Settlement	Surnames	Note
1.	Brežnica (Berzence)	Maronić, Grotić, Husić	
2.	Csurgó		
3.	Đikiniš (Gyékényes)		
4.	Zákány (Žakanj)	Navračić, Brodarić and Sekovanić	
5.	Tiloš (Őrtilos)	Ivančić, Navračić	
6.	Belezna (Blizna)	Župek, Slavec, Andrić, Bednjak, Habijanec	
7.	Porrogszentkirály		
8.	Ćićov (Somogyicsicsó)		
9.	Sveti Mihalj	Čižmešija, Vinci, Burković, Belušić, Deždjek, Novak	
10.	Fityeház	Matuš, Zadravec	Greet each other with phrase <i>Hvaljen budi Jezuš</i> ('Praise be to Jesus')
11.	Kalacek and Murakeresztúr	Tišljer, Plavić, Jadan, Jasek, Kiš, Béli, Kalinić, Radanović, Perušić, Gjurmanec and Jakupanec	

No.	Settlement	Surnames	Note
12.	Surda		
13.	Szent Miklós		
14.	Feketesár		
15.	Janka Puszta		
16.	Bajča (Babócsa)		
17.	Mlinarci (Molnari)		
18.	Szepetnek		
19.	Letina (Letenye)		
20.	Dvorišće (Udvarhely)	Bošnjak, Kovaček, Grčić	
21.	Tarany		
22.	Nagyatád (Fatac)	Gašparović, Vindić, Mihoković, Putić	
23.	Nagy Belavár (Veliki Belovar)		
24.	Vízvár		
25.	Babócsa (Bobovec)		
26.	Rasinja		
27.	Bolhó		
28.	Kis Belavár (Mali Belovar)		
29.	Lakócsa		

Source: HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.2. point 7. Data on border question, letter from District People's Committee in Bjelovar to the Border Commission with data on the number of Croats on the Hungarian side of the border, 1-3.

The proposed border at the Drava sector was compiled by Krešimir Filić:

"...we have the right to also seek the left bank of the Drava and the railway that runs from Murakeresztúr somewhat along the (lower) Mura River, and thence continues its way down the Drava Valley to Gyékényes, Berzencze, Belavár, Babócsa and Barcs. (...) And it was precisely below Barč that compact Croatian settlements were located along the left bank of the Drava ... (...) We are seeking the correction of this [Drava] border precisely on the basis of ethnic data, as well as economic, transport, and commercial reasons, which complement the former entirely. The Hungarians have no rights to this bank, except to refer, based on old customs, to the rights of the Crown of St. Stephen, which has already exasperated everyone. One state finally has to hold both banks of the Drava River, and that can only be Yugoslavia, and regulate it so that transit can flourish on it, which will be of great and inestimable value to the people"⁶³

⁶³ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 3. Krešimir Filić: Proposed border from Bajča below Nagy-Kanizsa to Sara on the Drava (securing the Drava, so it remains inside our borders), pp. 1-2.

Filić explained the northern part of the Drava sector in greater detail:

“Below Zákány and past the train stations of Zákány and Gyékényes, the border would run to the end of Gyékényes close to the Podravina railway, whence next to Lomkócz it would cross the Dombo Canal, and then around Berzence, which is particularly interesting to us. (...) Our state must also include 5) Somogyudvarhely (...) Because of this, for this settlement is almost entirely Hungarian, it could be set aside and the border could be drawn right at the train station, but this would have to be carefully considered. Approximately 2,000 Hungarians would fall out as a result. In the desire to separate as many Hungarians as possible, the border could also be drawn from Lankócza across the railway in the direction above Ždala and below Somogyudvarhely coming out again on the Podravina railway. Thus would leave out Gyékényes, Berzencze and Somogyudvarhely, while on our side, in this case we would have to build a part of the railway above Gola across Ždala and below Somogyudvarhely, - only about 12-13 km. (...) [I]nside our border, we must certainly leave Tarany, where according to Hungarian statistics there was a large Croatian majority in 1900... Even today, this settlement is certainly 2/3 Croatian, so we certainly cannot, and will not forsake it”⁶⁴

Furthermore, he sought the following Croatian settlements: Vizvár, Keresznye, Aracs, Babócsa, Bolhó, and Peterhida. He left some places out:

“We left out the settlements of Komlósd and Szentes, because they exhibit a high majority of Hungarians, so it would be better not to burden ourselves with too many foreign elements”⁶⁵

But he sought Barcs and Dráva Tamási, which seemed necessary to him to ensure control of both banks of the Drava.

“East of Dráva Tamási, more distant from the Drava (...) is Gardony... This settlement would be difficult to exclude due to the need to secure the Drava River. Next to Gardony there is the already mentioned Croatian village of Potony”⁶⁶ (...)

From Potony, he cited an entire series of Croatian villages: Tótujfalu (Slov. Novo selo), Lakócsa, Szent-Borbás, Dráva Szent-Márton, Dráva Keresztúr, Révfalu and Sztára.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 3. Krešimir Filić: Proposed border from Bajča below Nagy-Kanizsa to Sara on the Drava (securing the Drava, so it remains inside our borders), pp. 4-9.

⁶⁵ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 3. Krešimir Filić: Proposed border from Bajča below Nagy-Kanizsa to Sara on the Drava (securing the Drava, so it remains inside our borders), p. 12.

⁶⁶ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 3. Krešimir Filić: Proposed border from Bajča below Nagy-Kanizsa to Sara on the Drava (securing the Drava, so it remains inside our borders), pp. 13-14.

⁶⁷ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 3. Krešimir Filić: Proposed border from Bajča below Nagy-Kanizsa to Sara on the Drava (securing the Drava, so it remains inside our borders), pp. 12-17.

“Further along the Drava River from the last mentioned Croatian settlement of Sztára (Stara) to Also Szent Márton, we have a length of about 40 kilometres, which we are demanding right along the Drava River only between 2 to 9 km wide. We propose a boundary that separates all settlements that are Hungarian, and leaving us with only individual abandoned marshy lands and parts of the old Drava spurs, where there are only larger homesteads with few settlements, having 1,000-2,000 people at most, if that much. (...) We took territory along the Drava only so much as to secure it for our state, to which it must certainly belong. The border from Stara would run like this: From the settlement of Sztára it descends below Erzsébet puszta, crossing the railway, which runs across the Drava to Podravska Slatina, and continuing below the settlement of Zalata along the road and below Zala puszta, separating the settlements: Vejtí, Czún, Szaporcza (coming to an elevation of 94 m), then continuing from that (Hungarian side) settlement: Csehi, Dráva Palkonya, Szabolcs, Gordisa and Matty (Haraszti), while after Matty it would encircle Dravski Sveti Martin, a fully Croatian settlement and below Old it would ascend north-west above Beremend. Although it may appear odd that we are seeking such a narrow belt on that side of the Drava River, we have nonetheless secured the entire course of this large river for Yugoslavia in this manner, and this means a great deal in every sense. We have justified our demands with accurate ethnographic data, which cannot be refuted, for it is generally based on unreliable Hungarian statistics”⁶⁸

Baranja Task Force

The task force dedicated to Baranja had the most members (J. Andrassy, V. Bogdanov, J. Bösendorfer, K. Filić, K. Firinger, J. Zlatarić and M. Zoričić), and it only completed its work at the end of May 1946. It collected data on cross-border owners and examined the territory on the Hungarian side of the border through a network of informants, focusing on the territory’s ethnic composition, the population’s political views, etc. In an undated letter to Roglić, an unidentified Commission associate said:

“One paper deals with general matters, while the remaining 4 individually cover 4 border sectors, as follows: Prekomurje, Drava sector, Baranja and the Baja Triangle. The paper on Baranja is incomplete. I compiled it in a hurry, since you have not yet received the study by Professor Bösendorfer”⁶⁹

⁶⁸ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.5. point 3. Krešimir Filić: Proposed border from Bajča below Nagy-Kanizsa to Sara on the Drava (securing the Drava, so it remains inside our borders), pp. 23-25.

⁶⁹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, sig. 2.3.1.6. point 1. Letter 5 to Josip Roglić, undated.

At the very beginning of their work, Krešimir Filić gave Josip Bösendorfer instructions on how to write a commissioned brochure, which clearly show where attention was to be accorded and what was to be expected from the Hungarians:

“We request most cordially that when preparing brochures you accord the utmost importance to the ethnic approach, which is the most convincing, and then emphasize natural, economic and commercial links. Only thereafter include some history, of which the Hungarians will make abundant use, so it would not be advisable for us to offer them an opportunity for unwanted debates. Make it as concise and clear as possible, because this works best and is actually read.”⁷⁰

Nothing was left to chance, so Filić also drafted an overview of the population along the Drava in Croatia-Slavonia in which there was a certain percentage of Hungarians and Germans, which encompassed data for 26 municipalities: Gola, Molve, Virje, Ferdinandovac, Sesvete, Pitomača, Špišić-Bukovica, Lukač, Gradina, Sopje, Podravska Moslavina, Viljevo, Donji Miholjac, Podravske Podgajci, Vanjsko Valpovo, Valpovo, Petrijevci, Retfala, Osijek, Sarvaš, Bijelo Brdo, Aljmaš, Erdut, Dalj and Borovo.⁷¹

On 12 January 1946, the Border Commission received a letter from Sreten Draškić, the Institute’s secretary, in which he wrote:

“The Institute for the Study of International Issues at the Foreign Affairs Ministry, in its session held on 18 December 1945 (...) reached the conclusion that ethnic research be conducted in Baranja at the suggestion of Prof. An-drassy. (...) The Institute would have the honour of asking the border commission to immediately initiate an investigation into the ethnic status in Baranja through trusted and suitable individuals on site.”⁷²

Cross-border ownership was investigated all along the border, and generally the situation found in Međimurje and Podravina also applied in Baranja: there were more cross-border owners from Croatia with property in Hungary than cross-border owners from Hungary with property in Croatia. While the district of Darda (which is in Croatia) had nine villages with cross-border owners, on the Hungarian side of the border there were only three villages with cross-border owners, with a considerably smaller number of cross-border owners than on the Croatian side of the border.⁷³

⁷⁰ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, sig. 2.3.2.3.1. point 4. Letter from Krešimir Filić to Josip Bösendorfer, 25 Aug. 1945.

⁷¹ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.3.1. point 4. Statistics from municipalities along the Drava River in the territory of former Croatia and Slavonia where there is a certain percentage of Hungarians and Germans.

⁷² HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.6., 2. Letters point 3. Correspondence of Foreign Affairs Ministry, Belgrade, Letter from Sreten Draškić to Border Commission in Zagreb of 12 January 1946.

⁷³ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. point 1. Statement on cross-border owner passes in the Darda district, 6 Oct. 1945.

Table 5. Evidence of issued cross-border owner passes in the Darda district

No.	Settlement	Number		Land (in c.j.) held by owners for whom passes were approved
		of cross-border owners	persons crossing over	
1	Baranjsko Petrovo Selo	30	79	56 c.j. 614 sq.hv.
2	Beli Manastir	5	17	20 c.j.
3	Bolman	3	8	13 c.j.
4	Jagodnjak	2	13	10 c.j. 597 sq.hv.
5	Kamenac	1	3	3 c.j.
6	Karanac	3	9	27 c.j. 1,100 sq.hv.
7	Luč	96	235	300 c.j. 907 sq.hv.
8	Petlovac	1	4	4 c.j.
9	Torjanci	21	59	42 c.j. 17 sq.hv.
Total		162	427	477 c.j. 35 sq.hv.
Evidence of Hungarian citizen cross-border owners, who cross into our district to work their land				
No.	Settlement	Number		Land (in c.j.) held by owners for whom passes were approved
		of cross-border owners	persons crossing over	
1	Beremend	7	12	25 c.j. 13 sq.hv.
2	Siklós	3	-	1 c.j. 1500 sq.hv.
3	Kásád	4	11	15 c.j. 200 sq.hv.
Total		14	23	42 c.j. 113 sq.hv.
Abbreviations: c.j. = cadastral <i>jutro</i> sq. hv. = square <i>hvati</i>				

Source: HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.1. Međimurje, point 1. Cross-border ownership, other; Statement of issued cross-border owner passes in the Darda district

After the conferral of two districts in Baranja (Batina and Darda) to Croatia, Baranja was the topic of reports at sessions of the Croatian Communist Party's Central Committee (CK KPH) on several occasions.

Thus, on 11 September 1945, Moša Pijade, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party (CK KPJ), intentionally or not, cited Baranja as part of Vojvodina, although it had already been allotted to Croatia:

“Čiča Janko [Moša Pijade]: noted that the Agrarian Advisory Council was formed in Belgrade.

We wanted a considerable number of people transferred to Vojvodina.

There were plans to have 9 thousand families of veterans from Croatia settle in Vojvodina. Of these 9 thousand, one thousand families will be settled in

Baranja. Some will be settled in Srem, around the villages of Lovas, Sotin and Berak, and the rest in Bačka.

How many veterans' families, and from which regions they want to move to Vojvodina must be sent to me as soon as possible.

There are plans for roughly 5,500 Croatian families, and 3,500 Serbian families from Croatia to come to Vojvodina. You should also consider this and make proposals".⁷⁴

Baja Triangle Task Force

The Croatian Commission formed a task force for the Baja Triangle, consisting of Andrassy, Rajić and Žganec, in connection with the decision of the "Commission of the AVNOJ Presidency on Preparation of the Proposed Border between the Territory of Vojvodina and Croatia" (the so-called Đilas Commission),⁷⁵ which the AVNOJ Presidency established on 19 June 1945.⁷⁶ Its members were Milovan Đilas, its chairman and the minister in charge of Montenegro in the federal government, Vicko Krstulović, the internal affairs minister of Croatia, Milentije Popović, the internal affairs minister of Serbia, Jovan "Žarko" Veselinov, the secretary of the Vojvodina Unified People's Liberation Front (JNOF), and Jerko Zlatarić, the deputy chair of the County People's Committee in Sombor.⁷⁷ The territory along the Hungarian border on which the AVNOJ Presidency was deciding in June 1945 encompassed six districts, two in Baranja (Batina and Darda) and four in Bačka (Apatin, Odžaci, Sombor and Subotica), as well as the border in Srijem.

Since the district of Sombor – which extends between Baranja, conferred to Croatia, and Subotica, with its Croat majority – had a Serb majority, and given the views and mood of the Yugoslav Communist Party leadership, the only way for Croatia to receive Subotica with its large Croat population would be the annexation of the Baja Triangle to Yugoslavia.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ *Zapisnici Politbiroa Centralnog komiteta Komunističke partije Hrvatske 1945-1952.*, vol. 1. 1945-1948. (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2005), "Zapisnik sa sjednice CK KPH održane dana 11. rujna 1945. godine u Zagrebu", p. 111.

⁷⁵ The Commission appeared under several names: Commission of the AVNOJ Presidency on the Border between Croatia and Vojvodina, Commission on the Interim Border between Croatia and Vojvodina.

⁷⁶ Miodrag Zečević, Bogdan Lekić, *Granice i unutrašnja teritorijalna podela Jugoslavije* (Belgrade: Građevinska knjiga, 1991), p. 27; Archives of Yugoslavia, Central Komitee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (Communist Party of Yugoslavia) (CK SKJ (KPJ)), X-2-I/1.

⁷⁷ Mario Bara, "Đilasova komisija i sudbina bačkih Hrvata", *Pro tempore - časopis studenata povijesti*, IV (2007), no. 4: 47-58; Interview with Jerko Zlatarić.

⁷⁸ Zečević, Lekić, *Granice i unutrašnja teritorijalna podela Jugoslavije*, p. 129.

At a session of the CK SKJ Politburo held in Belgrade on 26 June 1945, the report of the "Commission of the AVNOJ Presidency on Preparation of the Proposed Border between the Territory of Vojvodina and Croatia" was approved. On the same day, Commission member Vicko Krstulović submitted a report compiled at a session of the Croatian Communist Party's Central Committee (CK KPH) held in Zagreb on 26 June 1945:

"Comrade Vicko [Krstulović]: During work in the commission on delineating the border between federal Serbia and Croatia, greater chauvinism was observed in Sylvania. Vojvodina residents launched elections for the People's Liberation Committee with a slogan calling for a greater Vojvodina. Insofar as there are any points of contention between Vojvodina and Croatia, they refuse to negotiate and come to terms with our comrades from Slavonia, rather they say they have their sole and central authority in Belgrade (Dr. [Aleksandar] Moč).

"In the course of setting the border, the Serbs are endeavouring to remain in Vojvodina. In the course of these struggles, there was no brotherhood nor unity in the party organization in the army nor in the field. I heard one District Committee secretary who said: 'We Serbs and Hungarians form a majority'. They add that the Serbs fought and they have a right to rule. The People's Liberation Committee does not have the corresponding percentage of Croats. Houses are being repaired for Serbs, but not for Croats. Subotica is 65 percent Croat. Dejection and insecurity has beset the Croats. In Osijek they are doing good things. Vukovar's population is approximately 60 percent Serb. The chauvinism which developed in Sylvania was such that some of our soldiers and masses killed [Croatian] Home Guard prisoners, while they even gave German prisoners water. They purposely identify Croats with the Ustasha. Serbs are joining with the Slovaks and Rusyns (who conducted themselves poorly during the occupation) in activity and work against Croats.

"With reference to the border between federal Serbia and Croatia, the decision was made that the border be the Danube (i.e. that Baranja goes to Croatia), while in Sylvania the border would run so that Vukovar and Borovo belong to Croatia, while Ilok and Šid would go to Serbia. The final decision will be made subsequently."⁷⁹

The AVNOJ Presidency's Commission completed its work on 1 July 1945 and submitted a report to the AVNOJ Presidency, which forwarded it to the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia's Ministerial Council on 10 July 1945.⁸⁰ The close link between the fate of the Baja Triangle and the demarcation of the border between Croatia and Serbia (Vojvodina) in Bačka was underscored in the Commission's report to the AVNOJ Presidency:

⁷⁹ *Zapisnici Politburoa Centralnog komiteta Komunističke partije Hrvatske 1945-1952.*, "Zapisnik sa sastanka CK KPH održanog 26. jula [sic!] 1945. god. u Zagrebu", p. 76. Editor Branislava Vojnović assumed that the meeting was held on 26 June 1945, i.e., that this was an error (footnote 244, p. 75 op. cit.).

⁸⁰ Zečević, Lekić, *Granice i unutrašnja teritorijalna podela Jugoslavije*, p. 28.

“Even though the district of Subotica is settled by a compact Croat population in an absolute [*this word misspelled in original text*] majority, the commission could not come to the conclusion that a belt could be set aside north of the city of Sombor which would, together with Subotica, belong to Croatia. This belt would be an unnatural formation, which, in order to have an enormous Croat majority, would not be comprehensively linked, while Subotica, as a major economic and cultural [*this word misspelled in original text*] centre, would become a peripheral city, with communications and its entire economic life flowing south, rather than westward. Incorporation of all aforementioned districts into Croatia cannot even be considered for the simple reason that in some of these districts the Serbs have a relative (among the Slav inhabitants) majority. This is why the commission believed that this entire territory must remain in Vojvodina. To be sure, if this territory expanded northward over the old Yugoslav-Hungarian border and encompassed the Croats in the Baja zone now in Hungary, this matter would once more have to come under consideration. Thus, the question of the border in the territory is, among other things, closely tied to the question of the definite establishment of the border of Yugoslavia at peace and other conferences [*this word misspelled in original text*]”⁸¹

The question of the Baja Triangle and Subotica was considered at a session of the CK KPH bureau held on 14 December 1945:

“Comrade Vlado [Bakarić]: [Antun] Karagić from the Banja [Baja] Triangle was here, and he sought assistance in his work. I asked him who he was, Kardelj said that this same man headed the Front and that he had worked with us, and told us to give him the most possible assistance and that we manage the political campaign in the Baja Triangle, since most people there are Croats, and to help them be as vocal as possible in their demand for annexation to Yugoslavia.

“Comrade Stevo [Ivan Krajačić]: The Croats in Subotica have been neglected, I believe that we should look into this, that is, that we send someone there and then forward the results to higher instances. We should also dedicate more attention to the Burgenland Croats, to enable them to have their own press and so forth.

“Comrade Vicko [Krstulović]: When Pajo [Pavle Gregorić] was in Subotica, he spoke there, but the Subotica press did not carry anything, even though he is the minister for Croatia in the Federal Government.

“Comrade Stevo [Ivan Krajačić]: The only solution for Subotica and its surroundings would be to attach this area to Croatia. Since there is a Croat majority there and the relationship to them is unfair, when the Red Army withdraws from Hungary, if matters are not settled first the local malcontents could find support in Hungary, such as Janka Pusta for example”⁸²

⁸¹ IBID. p. 129.

⁸² *Zapisnici Politbiroa Centralnog komiteta Komunističke partije Hrvatske 1945-1952.*, “Zapisnik sa sjednice biroa CK KPH održanog 14.XII.1945. god. u Zagrebu”, p. 155; Janka Puzsta: an agri-

In a study on “The Croats of Bačka and Baranja in the light of statistics”, Juraj Andrassy presented his views on the reliability of earlier official statistics:

“Based on these numerical results, which are based on official data, either Hungarian (from the time prior to Yugoslavia) or Serbian (and it is certain, that neither the former nor latter were compiled to the benefit of the Croats, rather the opposite...)...”⁸³

He also specified the reasons why the Baja Triangle was not given to Yugoslavia under the Treaty of Trianon in 1920:

“In this triangle, whose annexation Yugoslavia also sought at the peace conference after the First World War (we did not get it through the fault of [then Serbian Prime Minister Nikola] Pašić, because he said he did not need that many ‘Latins’, so he much rather advocated for some Serbian villages in the Tisa River zone)...”⁸⁴

The presidency of the government of the People’s Republic of Croatia received a telegram from Sreten Draškić of the Institute for International Relations in Belgrade on 27 February 1946:

“...we believe that you should look after the question of Baranja, while we will take over the matter of the Baja Triangle”⁸⁵

On 1 May 1946, Vladimir Bakarić informed the CK KPH:

“Comrade Vlado [Bakarić]: It appears as though we will not even proffer a demand for the Baja Triangle”⁸⁶

After this, the Baja Triangle only appeared in the context of aid to Croatian national minorities along the border at a session of the CK KPH Plenum held on 27 December 1946:

“...The press department also instituted control over the import of hostile foreign and émigré newspapers. It was assigned with organizing agitation and

cultural estate near Nagykanizsa in Hungary and a training camp for members of the Ustasha movement in the 1930s.

⁸³ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.3.1. point 6. Croats of Bačka and Baranja in the light of numbers, p. 4; HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 16, signature 3.2.1. point 8. Croats of Bačka and Baranja in the light of statistics, p. 4.

⁸⁴ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.2.3.1. point 6. Croats of Bačka and Baranja in the light of numbers, p. 2.

⁸⁵ HR-HDA-1166, Border Commission, box 15, signature 2.3.1.6., 2. Letters point 3. Letters of Foreign Affairs Ministry, Belgrade, letter from secretary in Foreign Affairs Ministry to the Border Commission in Zagreb of 27 February 1946.

⁸⁶ *Zapisnici Politbiroa Centralnog komiteta Komunističke partije Hrvatske 1945-1952.*, vol. 1. 1945-1948., “Zapisnik sa sjednice biroa CK KPH održanog 1. maja 1946. godine u Zagrebu”, p. 212.

propaganda for our emigrants, particularly for Croats in Gradište [Gradišće - Burgenland] and the Baja Triangle. A calendar was prepared for this purpose, and there are also plans for other publications”⁸⁷

Conclusion

The work of the Commission on the border with Hungary can be followed from the summer of 1945 to July 1946. During this period, numerous studies and papers were compiled, and a broad array of respected lawyers, historians, geographers and other members of the academic community were charged with preparing them. These studies and papers remained unused due to the decision to refrain from launching a revision of the border, made at higher levels. However, their content provides valuable insight into the atmosphere of the time and a picture of the situation in the 1945/46 period where this concerns cross-border ownership.

Kroatischer Beitrag zu den Plänen für die Revision der jugoslawisch-ungarischen Grenze 1945-1946

Zusammenfassung

Die Abgrenzungskommission bei dem Vorsitz der Regierung der Föderativen Republik Kroatien bereitete Pläne für die Revision der jugoslawisch-ungarischen Grenze in der Zeit vom Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges bis zur Pariser Friedenskonferenz vor. In diesem Aufsatz werden die Mitglieder dieser Kommission, Methoden und Resultate ihrer Tätigkeit sowie ihre Beziehungen zu den föderalen Institutionen in Belgrad dargestellt. Die Tätigkeit der Kommission für die Abgrenzung mit Ungarn kann man vom Sommer 1945 bis zum Juli 1946 verfolgen. In diesem Zeitraum wurden zahlreiche Studien, Elaborate usw. verfasst und für ihre Ausarbeitung wurden manche angesehenen Juristen, Historiker, Geographen und andere Mitglieder der akademischen Gemeinschaft engagiert. Die genannten Studien und Elaborate wurden aber nicht ausgeführt wegen der auf höheren Machtebenen getroffenen Entscheidung, den Prozess der Revision der Grenze nicht in Gang zu setzen. Inhalt dieser Elaborate bietet einen wertvollen Einblick in die Atmosphäre jener Zeit und kann auch als ein Bild der Verhältnisse betreffend der Doppeljurisdiktion in den Jahren 1945-1946 fungieren.

⁸⁷ IBID., “Zapisnik sa sjednice plenuma CK KPH održane 27. XII. 1946. u 16 sati u Zagrebu”, p. 291.