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"WE TOLD THE TRUTH ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA …": SLOVENIAN (PARA)DIPLOMATS IN 1990–1992

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ABSTRACT

The article delves into the process of setting up an independent diplomatic apparatus of the Republic of Slovenia. It aims to shed light on the role of Slovenian paradiplomats (particularly business representatives) in the country's independence process, as well as highlight the importance of diplomats who worked in the Yugoslav service and helped lay the foundations for the diplomacy of independent Slovenia. The article brings three findings. First, business representations abroad played an extremely important role in the outset of forming Slovenia's diplomacy. Second, Slovenians in the federal foreign ministry provided great support by working hard to provide Slovenia with as much information as possible for shaping its position in the independence process and the mustering of international support for recognition. Third, the beginning of independent Slovenia's diplomacy required much enthusiasm and diplomatic innovation, which faded into history when they were limited by the framework of the entire system, once the diplomatic apparatus was formed.

Keywords: diplomacy, Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Slovenia, paradiplomacy

"SULLA JUGOSLAVIA DICEVAMO LA VERITÀ …": LA (PARA)DIPLOMAZIA SLOVENA (1990–1992)

SINTESI

L'articolo si occupa della questione dello sviluppo del sistema diplomatico della Repubblica di Slovenia. Scopo principale della ricerca è fare luce sul ruolo svolto dai paradiplomatici sloveni (soprattutto dai rappresentanti del settore industriale) nel processo di indipendenza della Slovenia. L'articolo si propone al contempo di mettere in rilievo il contributo di quei diplomatici sloveni impiegati presso gli uffici federali che, tramite il proprio operato in seno alla compagine federale, hanno concorso alla fondazione delle basi di un apparato diplomatico sloveno che fosse autonomo. Dalla ricerca è emerso quanto segue. In primo luogo è stato riscontrato che nella fase iniziale della formazione della diplomazia slovena, le rappresentanze delle imprese slovene hanno svolto un ruolo di spicco nel modellare una piattaforma propedeutica per lo sviluppo del sistema diplomatico. Dall'analisi è stato possibile inoltre evincere che gli sloveni impiegati presso il Ministero federale per gli Affari Esteri furono forti sostenitori dell'indipendenza e si impegnarono con grande intensità per cercare di garantire alla Slovenia il maggior numero possibile di informazioni che fossero utili al consolidamento delle sue posizioni – sia durante l'indipendenza che nella fase di ricerca dell'appoggio internazionale per ottenerne il riconoscimento. Trova infine conferma la tesi secondo cui dopo la formazione del sistema diplomatico sloveno, il forte entusiasmo, le innovazioni e invenzioni diplomatiche, sorte nella fase embrionale del configurarsi della diplomazia della Slovenia indipendente, furono imbrigliati nell'infrastruttura diplomatica e conseguentemente confinati all'ambito della (sola) memoria storica.

Parole chiave: diplomazia, Repubblica Federativa Socialista di Jugoslavia, Slovenia, paradiplomazia

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

When researching the history of diplomatic activities of representatives of the Republic of Slovenia, we always come across the basic question: when did Slovenia's diplomacy really start?[1] Rupel (2011, 62) points out that the beginnings of official Slovenian diplomacy can be traced to the Brioni Declaration of 7 July 1991. However, Bebler (2011) disagrees, claiming that official Slovenian diplomacy – in the framework of Yugoslav diplomacy, of course – can be observed as early as 1943 and 1944, and especially in the peace talks following WWII, where Slovenian diplomats played a key role. The dilemma between "Slovenian diplomats" and "diplomats of Slovenia" is also opened by Rahten (2011; 2014), who shows in which diplomatic structures (of Austria-Hungary, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, socialist Yugoslavia, and in the end Slovenia) Slovenes took the most responsible diplomatic posts. Regardless of all of this, pinpointing the starting point of the diplomacy of a particular country and of Slovenes is not the only problem facing a researcher in the context of diplomatic studies. Many other questions can be posed, such as what constitutes diplomatic activity (Udovič, 2013; Jazbec, 2011; Pirjevec, Ramšak, 2014), does the fragmentation of diplomatic activity vary according to the size of a state (Jazbec, 2001), where, if at all, is it possible to draw the lines between the tasks of diplomacy, the political and economic system, and international relations and security (Udovič, 2009; 2011; 2016; Ramšak, 2014; 2015), and finally, is it even possible to analyse diplomatic activities comparatively, considering that the political systems and positions of states in international relations differ substantially. All these questions also arise in the context of establishing Slovenia's diplomacy. But no definitive answer has been reached, despite several attempts by various researchers and experts in this field (Rupel, 1992; 1993; 2001; 2011; Čačinovič, 1985; 1994; Kosin, 2000; Kunič, 2004; Cerar, 2000; 2011; Volk, 2013; Grobovšek, 2000; 2007; 2014; Osolnik, 1992; Pirjevec, Ramšak, 2014; Capuder, 1999; Bučar, 1994; 2007; Bonutti, 2015; Žmuc Kušar, Golob, 1992; Jazbec, 2001; 2009; Udovič, Brglez, 2011).

The reasons for this have partly already been listed, but we believe the main reason making it impossible to define the *starting point* (Mal, 2009) is that it always depends on the ideological interpretation of each researcher what this *starting point* actually means. This can be seen very clearly in the example of the Baltic states where the political and ideological postulate is that diplomatic relations were "renewed" after 1990, and only rarely "established".[2] This may be accurate *de iure*,[3] but in practice their renewal of diplomatic relations went through the same process as with newly established states. Unlike the Baltic states, Central European states (Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary) had a different system and their own foreign policy and diplomacy. Although formally independent, they were designed by political decision makers in accordance with the demands of the Soviet Union. For instance, this is confirmed by Czechoslovakia's candidacy for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council against Yugoslavia in 1949, with ardent support of the USSR, which opposed Yugoslavia's bid—mostly by ignoring it at first, but later also by stressing that Yugoslavia's membership of the UNSC would not stand legal scrutiny[4] (Udovič, 2016). Pirjevec (2011, 292–293)[5] likewise confirms that the foreign policies of Central European countries were in line with the Soviet Union, saying that

> *On 28 September 1949, A. A. Gromyko revoked the Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Cooperation, signed by Tito and Molotov in April 1945. End of October* [1949 – A/N] *Yugoslav Ambassador Karlo Mrazović was banished from Moscow for "espionage", followed by the chargé d'affaires a month later, although formally diplomatic relations were not cut. Naturally, all the satellite states followed this example, except for Albania, with which Yugoslavia cut ties itself.*

In this context, these countries gained an independent foreign policy after the collapse of the USSR, but they did not need to establish diplomatic relations from nothing. Consequently, they did not need to face the difficulties of diplomacy beginners, nor questions like that of their diplomacies' *zero hour*.

The countries that emerged from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia faced a different situation. Firstly because most of the influential countries were against the independence aspirations of Slovenia and Croatia, as illustrated by the famous *nyet* of US Secretary of State James Baker (Glaudrić, 2011; Zupančič, 2016; Pirjevec, 1995; 2003; Rupel, 2011); and secondly because the newly established states were not recognised immedi-

1 This research is part of the Slovene Research Agency Programme P5-0177 "Slovenia and its actors in international relations and European integrations".

2 For an illustration of this, see documents of the foreign ministries of Lithuania (2016) and Estonia (2016).

3 The Baltic states consistently claim that they were occupied by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), which means that their statehood ceased to exist due to a foreign force and was simply restored after the USSR collapsed. For more on objections to the legitimacy of Soviet occupation, see Huseynov (2017).

4 According to the USSR, giving Yugoslavia one of the non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council would go against the 1946 gentlemen's agreement on distribution of the rotating seats according to spheres of interest (i.e. geographic regions).

5 For more on selected analyses of foreign policies of communist states, see Andromeit et al. (1979).

ately and had to struggle for almost a year[6] to become full members of the international community.[7] Under these conditions, they resorted to inventing different instruments to justify their right to *be* (part of the international community), and at the same time to be granted all the elements that internationally recognised sovereign states are entitled to. In diplomatic studies, such cases of *interregnum* are often called *paradiplomacy* or unofficial diplomacy (cf. Udovič, 2013; Jazbec, 2011 etc.), because they indicate diplomacy of (unrecognised) entities that do not (yet) have the status of states.[8]

The trouble with states being the main institutions of diplomacy is no new thing. It started in the 17th century with the process of Westphalisation of the international community (Arbeiter, 2016; Benko, 2000a),[9] which is characterised by the merging of all fragmented entities of the international community into unified ones, i.e. states, which became the crucial and only (later just the crucial) players in international relations (Udovič, 2013). The herald of this process of Westphalisation came from no other area than diplomacy itself, with the invention of resident agents to replace *ad hoc* envoys. The first permanent representations were supposedly set up by Luigi Gonzaga, Captain of the People of Mantua, before 1341. Forty years later, the Gonzaga family already had a network of resident agents around the Italian peninsula (Mattingly, 2010, 71–74).[10] This diplomatic innovation was soon adopted by other sovereigns on the peninsula and further,[11] although it should be stressed that it was first approached with great scepticism and little understanding. A century later, the situation was already different. Temporary/*ad hoc* agents were being replaced by permanent ones, but at the same time *ad hoc* envoys were still widely used until the mid-19th century. This is still reflected in the official ambassadorial title – *ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary,* where the term "extraordinary" means an *ad hoc* ambassador, while "plenipotentiary" means a permanent, resident one.

The etatisation of diplomacy continued and evolved through centuries and culminated at the Vienna Congress, where the countries of the Holy Alliance cut the Gordian knot of the precedence of representatives of sovereigns (and sovereign states). The extent of the contribution of the Vienna rules of 1815 is illustrated already by the fact that their framework was fully transferred into the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961/1964), and is still valid today, not only through the provisions of international contract law but also through international common law. The etatisation process continued until the end of WWI, when the League of Nations was established, with the main purpose to set limits and a framework to four rights of any independent state: *ius ad bellum* (the right to declare war); *ius tractandi* or *ius contrahendi* (the right to conclude international agreements); *ius legationis* (the right to legation) and *ius representationis* (the right to establish a representation) (Udovič et al., 2015; Udovič, Brglez, 2016). This limiting of rights meant that states would be free to exercise them as long as they did not conflict with the interests of the international community as a *sui generis* subject (Benko, 2000b). This would give the international community the possibility to limit or even abolish certain rights if states exercised them beyond the set framework.

Two world wars and the creation of the United Nations (Šabič, 2016; Udovič, 2016) cemented the understanding that etatism and the etatisation process were not and could not be unlimited. Although, within the system of the United Nations, states remain the key players, they are no longer the only ones. A completely different definition of the diplomatic development and functioning of states can be found in the *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations*,[12] which states in Article 2 that: "*The establishment of diplomatic relations between States, and of permanent diplomatic missions, takes place by mutual consent*" (Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961/2017). This document,

6 There are a number of theories as to the reasons for the long delay in the recognition of the newly established states. Udovič (2015), for instance, claims that the reason is to be sought in the changes in the international community and the failure of the main actors (including the European Communities) to adapt to the new reality. Others, such as Bebler (2011), explain that the main reason for the delay in recognition and admission into the United Nations was the expectation of the international community that the situation in Yugoslavia would be resolved by itself. The international community arguably only saw in March 1992, when war broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that there was no way of keeping Yugoslavia together. This was ostensibly also the reason that Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina were quickly granted membership in the United Nations on the same day.

7 Full membership in the international community is related to membership in the United Nations. Slovenia became a member on 22 May 1992, which the country celebrates as the Day of Slovenian Diplomacy.

8 The terms paradiplomacy and paradiplomats relate to the activities and diplomats of states or other entities that have not been recognised. For the sake of consistency, this article also uses these terms.

9 The Westphalisation of the international community can also be called the process of etatisation of diplomacy, and it lasted until the end of WWI.

10 A similar exchange of resident agents can be observed in 1425–1432.

11 In 1455, the Duke of Milan had a resident agent in Naples and Genoa, in 1458 in Rome and Venice. The French sent their first resident agents to Florence (1495), Scotland (1498) and Turkey (1536); the Spanish to England (1487), France (1501) and Venice (1512); the Austrians to England (1483), France (1509) and Turkey (1542); and the English introduced their first resident agent almost 50 years after the first recorded Italian one, in 1515 in France (Mitić, 1978, 13; Anderson, 1993, 2–11; Mattingly, 2010, 102–107).

12 The Convention's code is 500 UNTS 95. The *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations* has 60 original signatories, and had 191 parties to the Convention on 25 April 2017.

which (still) shapes the international legal framework for establishing diplomatic relations and diplomatic activities, finally set down the state as *ad fontes* a subject in diplomacy. Although this may not have been the case through history (Udovič, 2013; Mattingly, 2010; Anderson, 1993; Potemkin, 1948; Black, 2010), this is how the international community understands things and functions today.

Taking into account that diplomatic relations are only established between (sovereign and internationally recognised) states, we come to the main research problem we wish to address in this article. It concerns three interrelated questions referring to the independence and international recognition of Slovenia. The first question is how the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (SRS) became a state actor within the diplomatic system of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY).[13] This refers not only to the foreign-policy tradition and the historical independence process, but also the setting up of its own diplomatic apparatus and activities. The second research question refers to the role of Slovenian diplomats at Yugoslav missions, as well as agents of Slovenian companies abroad, in Slovenia's independence process and in the shaping of Slovenia's independent diplomatic system. We find this particularly important from the perspective that today, 25 years later, the independence process is mostly seen as only the activities of the political powers in Ljubljana, while the broader Yugoslav and international picture is neglected. The third question this article attempts to answer focuses especially on the challenges facing Slovenes in federal bodies and those representing Slovenian enterprises abroad. These challenges are all too often overlooked, and what is more, the failure to recognise them blurs the real picture of the processes behind Slovenian independence, and the ups and downs of the political, diplomatic and business elites of the time, which were in a way the protagonists of Slovenia's independence.

We will attempt to answer these research questions using critical analysis of primary and secondary sources, while the gaps in the available information will be filled with the help of four semi-structured interviews: (a) with Dr Boris Frlec, the last Yugoslav Ambassador to Bonn;[14] (b) with Dr Jožef Kunič, a representative of Ljubljanska banka d.d. in Abidjan and later in Tehran;[15] (c) with Borut Meršak, a former correspondent for newspaper Delo and public broadcaster RTVSLO, and later a representative of the company Kovintrade in Slovakia;[16] and (d) Dr Lojze Sočan, the first unofficial Slovenian representative with the European Community.[17] All the acquired information will be compiled to allow new revelations through synthesis.

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE CREATION OF INDEPENDENT SLOVENIAN DIPLOMACY 1990–1992

In independent states, diplomacy is always subject to the same pattern of thinking as the military (or the financial system)—it is an activity that must be subjugated to the central power, and above all synchronised with the wishes of the ruler, and at the same time in the ruler's service. The situation in the SFRY was no different. According to Ramšak (2014, 734), the federation highlighted its primacy in foreign policy in all key constitutional frameworks: in the 1946 Constitution, the 1953 constitutional act, the 1963 Constitution, in the amendments of 1971 and the 1974 Constitution. For example, paragraph 7 of Article 281 of the 1974 Constitution set down the main premises of Yugoslav foreign policy, stating that the federation shall through its agencies

> *determine the foreign policy of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and ensure its implementation; maintain political, economic and other relations with other countries and international organisations; foster cooperation with developing countries and provide the resources for development of economic relations with these countries and for the realisation of solidarity with liberation movements; conclude and ratify international treaties and ensure their implementation; ensure that the international obligations of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are met; protect the citizens of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and their interests, as well as the interests of its legal entities abroad; manage the realisation of international relations; manage the organisation and activities of the federation's foreign services.*

At the same time, the second paragraph of Article 271 of the 1974 Constitution allowed the republics to "*work together with bodies and organisations of other countries and with international organisations within the framework of the adopted foreign policy of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and international treaties*", which meant that the 1974 Constitution also inherently gave the individual republics some foreign-policy and paradiplomatic jurisdiction. Thus, paragraphs 2 and 3 of

13 This article does not deal with the diplomacy of Yugoslavia (regardless of its political forms). For more on this topic, see Selinić (2014); Rahten (2013; 2014); Petrović (2014); Režek (2014); Čavoški (2014); Radić (2014); Nećak (2013; 2014).
14 The interview was conducted on 24 February 2017 in Ljubljana.
15 The interview was conducted on 22 February 2017 in Ljubljana.
16 The interview was conducted on 25 February 2017 in Bratislava.
17 The interview was conducted on 23 February 2017 in Ljubljana.

Article 317 of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (1974) stated:

> *The Socialist Republic of Slovenia may establish, maintain and develop political, economic, cultural and other relations with agencies and organisations of other countries and with international agencies and organisations in accordance with the adopted foreign policy of the of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and international treaties.*
>
> *The Socialist Republic of Slovenia may develop political, economic, cultural and other relations with other countries and international agencies and organisations that are important for the position and development of the Slovene nation, the Italian and Hungarian ethnic minorities and the Slovene communities abroad, and to guarantee the rights and interests of the working people temporarily working abroad and for the expatriates from its territory* (Ustava SRS, 1974).

Both paragraphs therefore allowed the SRS to start engaging in international relations on its own. This was done in two ways. The first was through "engagement for minorities, expatriates and emigrants", where Slovenia – mainly due to its geographic position – had a relatively free hand;[18] while the second was by joining macroeconomic regions (this name was not yet used at the time), where we should highlight the Alps-Adriatic Working Group (Working Community of Cantons, Provinces, Counties, Regions and Republics of East Alpine Region), founded in 1978 (Klabjan, 2013; Jurić Pahor, 2013). The main body in these activities was the State Secretariat for International Cooperation (SSIC),[19] at the heart of which stood Marjan Osolnik (Ramšak, 2014; Pirjevec, Ramšak, 2014). But Osolnik's work for Slovenia's engagement in international relations went even further: as a Slovene, he pushed for delegates of the SRS to chair mixed commissions[20] that dealt with issues concerning Slovenia. As he has said himself,

> *Kraigher also managed to achieve this in most cases through Kardelj. At the very least, we got representatives of the local communities on the commissions. This led the neighbouring countries to also appoint representatives of local government, who were grateful for this* (Pirjevec, Ramšak, 2014, 183).

For five years, the SSIC was independent, but in 1980 it was merged with the State Committee for Economic Cooperation into a new body called the State Committee for International Cooperation (SCIC).[21] Under this name, it remained operational all the way to the plebiscite on Slovenia's independence at the end of 1990 and the adoption of a new (Slovenian) Constitution at the end of 1991.[22]

Along with the official communication channels, Slovenia also worked extensively on unofficial channels, which included the representations of the most important Slovenian companies abroad, such as Ljubljanska banka, Slovenijales, Emona, Iskra, Metalka and Kovintrade. Naturally, their first task was representing the Slovenian economy, but at the same time they were an ideal communication channel for the political powers, which proved to be very welcome in the milestone years 1990–1992. Their rise was made possible by the 1972 federal *Establishment of Companies Abroad Act*[23] and the 1973 *Amendments to the Establishment of Companies Abroad Act,*[24] allowing companies to set up branches in other countries, especially due to Yugoslavia's low foreign currency liquidity. In this context, Slovenian companies, which were the most competitive within the Yugoslav economy, started their process of internationalisation relatively quickly. Particularly noteworthy among them is Ljubljanska banka,[25] which increased the number of its representations abroad between 1977 and 1981 from 13 to 21 (Lazarević, Prinčič, 2000, 404), and thus became an

18 On how Slovenia engaged for its minority in the Austrian province of Carinthia, cf. Mikša (2014).

19 The decree on its establishment can be found in the Uradni list SRS 39/1974. The SSIC became operational in February 1975.

20 Intergovernmental commissions dealing with bilateral issues.

21 Based on the Act on the Organisation and Areas of Work of State Administrative Bodies and State Organisations and Independent Professional Services (Uradni list SFRJ 5/1980).

22 An interesting account of the importance of the SCIC for the DEMOS coalition, which won the first multi-party election in 1990, can be found in Rupel's book *Skrivnost države*. There he explains on page 49 that he expected four DEMOS parties to vie for the position of SCIC president, namely the Slovenian Democratic Union, the Slovenian Christian Democrats, the Social-Democratic Union of Slovenia and the Greens. And on page 51 he writes: "*There was great interest for the position of foreign minister (who was then still the president of the State Committee for International Cooperation). But this was the only position I was willing to accept, although I was also offered culture and the vice-presidency for societal activities. Here, my wife was very clever and decisive: In societal activities you would only make enemies, it is only hard work and never enough money, and so forth. And as for culture, I would prefer to work in it than manage it* […] *Well, foreign affairs intrigued me as a challenge: as the area where we had to start* ab ovo *and where Slovenian statehood would be decided.* […] *Other candidates for this position were (Matjaž)* Šinkovec*, (Leo)* Šešerko *and (Marjan) Majcen* […]" (Rupel, 1992, 48–52).

23 Published in the Uradni list SFRJ 39/1972.

24 Published in the Uradni list DFRJ 17/1973.

25 In 1965 the management of Splošna gospodarska banka established that the bank met the criteria to be transformed into an investment bank, which was done in February 1966. But because this was a time of poor economic conditions in Yugoslavia, the bank's liquidity was low and it could not service the needs of the economy, so the decision was made to increase its solvency by merging it with Kreditna

important platform not only for representing the interests of the Slovenian economy[26] but also for interpreting the events in Yugoslavia after 1980 (Kunič, 2017).[27]

The deterioration of relations within the federation, the clash over the proposed common core curricula in 1984, tensions in Kosovo and above all the rise of nationalisms – set in the context of the collapse of the Eastern bloc and the geopolitical shifts within the international community – allowed Slovenia to consider embarking on its own path within the international community. An additional boost came from the constitutional amendments of 1989 and the first democratic election on 8 April 1990. The election was won by the DEMOS coalition, which formed a government just over a month later and took full power in the state. In the area of foreign policy of what was then still a state without an actual foreign policy, Rupel, as the new president of the SCIC, and later as secretary and later still as foreign minister, made quick and bold steps, especially to obtain as much knowledge about foreign policy as possible.[28] But despite the quick (and audacious) moves, the setting up of Slovenia's foreign policy and diplomacy after 1990 encountered many problems. The first was certainly that Slovenia's aspirations towards greater foreign-policy independence caused tensions between Ljubljana and Belgrade, even to the extent that the Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (FSFA) often made its decisions just to counter proposals from Slovenia. Rupel describes this most vividly:

> *I met with Budimir Lončar in Belgrade, and we stated very clearly what we wanted in the first round. Especially European orientation, meaning, we want diplomatic and representative posts in Europe, and we decline posts in, for example, Peru and the United Arab Emirates. And what happens then? I get a phone call from our secretariat on Friday that the federal government has confirmed Rado Bohinc as Ambassador to the Emirates* […]. *Bohinc spoke to me before that and told me he was not at all interested in the Emirates* […] (Lorenci, 1990, 35ff).

However, the problems were not limited to Slovenian top politicians, but were also encountered by diplomats working in the federal services. Zvone Dragan (n.d.) recalls:

> *The first notable discrepancies in the assessments of the political and economic situation in Yugoslavia started appearing among diplomats already during my term in Beijing* [in 1988—A/N]. *The biggest differences were regarding the situation in Kosovo and the relations in Serbia, the reasons for the economic crisis, the relations between the republics and autonomous provinces, the so-called separatist activities of Slovenia, the relations between the more and the less developed parts of Yugoslavia, the role of the Yugoslav People's Army, etc. I also felt this in the diplomatic staffing of the Embassy in Beijing, which was mostly manned by Serbs, one Hungarian, one Montenegrin and two Slovenes, including me. I encountered differences even more openly, sometimes even sharply and directly, after I returned from Beijing in December 1989. This was the strongest at meetings of the college of the federal secretary and his meetings with the foreign cooperation secretaries of the individual republics*.

This is also confirmed by Cerar (2000, 44), who has the following to say about the attitude towards Slovenes in the FSFA after DEMOS won the election and presented its demands to the federal authorities:

> *At the meeting of the college of the federal secretary, (Zvone) Dragan and (Ivo) Vajgl remain isolated. As usual, Lončar is joggling, theorising and talking to himself. But we all know that the decisions have already been made by the President of the Federal Executive Council, Marković, or by the Chairman of the Presidency, Jović*.

But the clash on what foreign policy should look like and when a state should establish it was not only between Ljubljana and Belgrade, as tensions also often arose within Slovenia itself. Immediately after taking over the SCIC, Rupel formed a *Foreign Policy Council*[29] to provide him with advice and support in taking decisions. As he

banka in hranilnica Ljubljana. Splošna gospodarska banka and Zajednička komercialna banka Novi Sad were merged with Kreditna banka in hranilnica Ljubljana on 31 December 1967. Three years later the merged bank was renamed into Ljubljanska banka (Udovič, 2009, 266).

26 For an insight in socialist banking, which the authorities wanted to implement in Ljubljanska banka to finance above all politically favoured projects, see Kavčič (2001, 233–254).

27 The Annual Report of Ljubljanska banka d.d. for 1990 states that Ljubljanska banka d.d. had 22 representations abroad, six subsidiaries and 14 info offices; in 1991 it had 21 representations, four subsidiaries and ten info offices (Annual Reports of Ljubljanska banka d.d. for 1990 and 1991).

28 According to his own words, his knowledge in this field was limited. As he writes in *Skrivnost države* (1992, 55), the difference between the Council of Europe (an institution in its own right) and the European Council (a political instrument of the European Communities, which only became an institution with the Lisbon Treaty in 2009) was explained to him by his "*college Iztok Simoniti*", who also explained to him the "*difference between the Assembly of European Regions* […] *and its competitor Europe of the Regions* […]".

29 This council was composed of (Rudi) Čačinovič, (Bogdan) Osolnik, Bojko Bučar, (Anton) Bebler, (Vlado) Benko, (Boris) Šnuderl, (Jurij) Gustinčič, (Miran) Mejak and some other foreign desk editors (Rupel, 1992, 59).

himself states, the orientations within this Council were also diverse – some advocated greater integration with the federation, others more independent activities (Rupel, 1992, 59). The next difference was with the appointment of emissaries. Between August 1990 and June 1991, the Executive Council appointed its first envoys abroad, who could represent Slovenia, but not as a country in line with the *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations*. At the same time, the Slovenian authorities maintained that Slovenian ambassadors in the Yugoslav services should stay in their posts and work for the benefit of Slovenia as much as possible (Frlec, 2012; Rupel 1992; MFA, 2000). The first ten emissaries of the Executive Council were Dr Lojze Sočan, the head of Ljubljanska banka's representative office in Brussels;[30] Ivan Gole, the head of Slovenijales in Moscow; Dr Štefan Loncnar, the director of Ljubljanska banka in Prague; Borut Meršak, a representative of Kovintrade in Slovakia; Dr Peter Millonig, an entrepreneur in the US; Dr Karl Smolle, a representative of Slovenes in Vienna; Franc Zlatko Dreu, the head of the Representative Information Bureau in Luxembourg; Dr Jožef Kunič, the head of Ljubljanska banka in Abidjan; Keith Charles Miles, the head of the information office in London; and Dr Štefan Falež, the representative at the Holy See. Along with the emissaries of the Executive Council, the international cooperation secretary (Rupel) also appointed his own representatives: Jožko Štrukelj and Marjan Fratnik (Italy); Herman Rigelnik (Bavaria, Germany), Peter Ilgo (Singapore); Zlatko Aurelius Verbič (Canada); Božidar Fink and Dr Marko Kremžar (Argentina); Milan Smolej (Finland), Anton Kovič (Sweden) and Beno Lukman (France) (MFA, 2000).

Of course, the appointments did not go unnoticed, and above all not without parties jostling.[31] The trouble in appointments arose mainly between Rupel and Prime Minister Lojze Peterle, because each of them had his own vision who would be appropriate for which post. Partly, the discord also came from the tense relations between DEMOS and Milan Kučan, who as Chairman of the Presidency of the SRS surely wanted to know who would represent Slovenia abroad (Rupel, 1992). All this clearly indicates that in the years of designing an independent diplomacy Slovenian politicians worked on several levels. First, Slovenes in Belgrade were ordered to obtain as much information as possible and send it to Ljubljana, and at the same time to persist in federal government positions. Furthermore, representatives of the Executive Council and the international cooperation secretary were appointed, and although they did not officially represent the state, already their presence was often unsettling (Sočan, 2017). Finally, in the desire to set up its own representations but aware of the limitations to the budget of the republic, Slovenian politicians resorted to the existing para-state representations, such as those of Ljubljanska banka d.d. and the Slovenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which were hybrids – on the one hand they were helping Slovenian companies abroad, and at the same time they represented the interests of Slovenia as an emerging state. Together with the representatives of the Executive Council and the SCIC, as well as Slovenes in the FSFA, these were Slovenian paradiplomats in the pivotal years of 1990–1992.

And it was precisely these hybrid forms that were a contentious element of the document *The Foundations of a Strategy for a Foreign Policy of the Republic of Slovenia*, which was discussed by the Sociopolitical Chamber in April 1991. In a relatively lively discussion, deputies Jožef Školč and Peter Reberc objected the plan for Slovenia to open representations together with Ljubljanska banka d.d. and other Slovenian companies, arguing that this would mean "*preferential treatment for Ljubljanska banka, or another selected company in countries where it does not have a representation*" (Reberc), or that "*setting up our representations together with Ljubljanska banka would be very unusual and in a way not serious*" (Školč).[32] This consideration was answered by deputy secretary of the SCIC:

> *Regarding the joint representations with Ljubljanska banka d.d., the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and so forth: it's true that this may be unusual from the abstract perspective, but from the pragmatic point of view it's very useful and quite normal.* […] *Especially in Brussels, for instance, this move has proved to be very good* […]. *But I do agree that the two should be separated as soon as possible, and it'll be possible in a year or two.*[33]

Apart from this dilemma, several other issues were opened regarding what Slovenia's foreign policy should

30 Kirn (2012) notes that the SCIC already started opening representations with European institutions in mid-1989, which Ljubljana argued was possible both under the federal and Slovenian constitutions of 1974. At first, the SCIC managed its relations with Brussels through the office of Ljubljanska banka d.d. in Paris, but the bank later opened an office in Brussels, and Dr Lojze Sočan took over as its head as soon as September 1990.

31 Addressing the Socipolitical Chamber of the tricameral assembly (22 April 1991), Jožef Školč said: "*Here, I simply can't avoid mentioning the infamous complications between Mr Peterle and Mr Rupel concerning the envoys of the Executive Council of the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia in the United States. We may talk here* [referring to a document on the foundations of a foreign policy strategy for Slovenia – A/N] *about – and I find this reasonable – this job* [ambassadorial service – A/N] *normally being performed by Slovenian citizens, but the practice of the Executive Council at the moment is completely different. It is normally performed by Austrian citizens, and this is a big problem* [referring to Millonig in Washington and Smolle in Vienna, both members of the Slovene minority in Austria – A/N]" (Družbenopolitični zbor, 1991, item 4 on the agenda).

32 Družbenopolitični zbor, 1991, item 4 on the agenda.

33 Družbenopolitični zbor, 1991, item 4 on the agenda.

look like. On behalf of the Slovenian Socialist Party, Dušan Semolič demanded that Slovenia declare permanent neutrality. Jože Smole of the League of Communists of Slovenia-the Party of Democratic Reform (ZKS-SDP) backed this, saying that the presented document "*smells of flirting with membership in NATO*", adding that "*Slovenia's foreign policy is not being built from scratch, but can be linked to the positive experience from Yugoslavia's international orientation*". Borut Pahor (ZKS-SDP) stressed that in the document the government "*unacceptably underestimated the economy and the economic dimension of international activities*". Mojmir Ocvirk (Liberal Democratic Party) warned that "*the bill ignored the parliament in foreign policy decisions* […] *in key issues, like opening diplomatic missions and appointing heads of missions*".[34] Peter Reberc (Christian Democrats) responded to the planned integration of Slovenes from the federal foreign services into Slovenian diplomacy,[35] which he opposed in principle.[36] He believed that the same conditions should apply to Slovenian diplomats serving Belgrade as to others who had not held previous diplomatic jobs. This view was against what the Executive Council had been doing, intensively incorporating Slovenian staff in Belgrade in the emerging diplomacy of the state on its way to independence. What is more, in 1990 Dimitrij Rupel appointed Zvone Dragan coordinator of all Slovenian diplomats in the FSFA since, as head of the sector for Western countries, he "*got to see most of the important dispatches from Yugoslav diplomatic and consular missions in Western countries. Even the top secret ones.* [Since] *there was no e-mail then, I would take the most important dispatches to Ljubljana during the weekend, and return them to my safe in Belgrade on Mondays. In Ljubljana, I only showed them to two people, usually at separate meetings, to Milan Kučan and Dimitrij Rupel*" (Dragan, n.d.).

In all this chaos of demands and calls for consideration and independence-related legislation, time started running short for actually setting up a system of Slovenian diplomacy.[37] Adding to this the silent view of many that, as the then Defence Minister Janez Janša told Rupel, "*first there must be independence in the military and economic areas, and only then foreign policy*" (Rupel, 1992, 61), we can see that Slovenian diplomacy was still undeveloped. But above all it depended on the engagement of individuals – in the domestic services, the FSFA and Yugoslav diplomacy, the external services, as well as the economy. All these four levels had a parallel effect on the activities of Slovenian diplomacy, and particularly its formation. And some of the flaws in the process took place mainly because of the pressures on the emerging Slovenian diplomacy from within and without.

Slovenia declared independence on 25 June 1991; three days later, Dimitrij Rupel sent Slovenian diplomats in the FSFA an invitation to join the newly established diplomatic apparatus of independent Slovenia. Archive documents[38] show there were around 60 people working for the federal services, of which 36 were posted abroad just before Slovenia declared independence,[39] while the rest worked internally. Rupel (1992, 142) lists that the ones to join the Slovenian service immediately after the declaration of independence were "*(Zvone) Dragan, (Ivo) Vajgl, (Andrej) Logar, (Mitja)* Štrukelj*, (Božo) Cerar, (Samuel)* Žbogar*, (Ivan) Seničar, (*Štefan*) Cigoj, (Marko) Kosin,* […] *the rest came from abroad. If that was what we agreed, of course. We wanted to leave (Boris) Frlec (Bonn) and (Borut) Bohte (Haag) in their posts as long as possible*". Slovenian foreign policy thus started taking shape. At the end of 1991, the foreign ministry employed 136 people (MFA, 1992), half of which were former employees of the federal Yugoslav diplomacy. Rupel posted these to the most important positions in the new foreign ministry's system; Roman Kirn, Božo Cerar and Zvone Dragan became key advisors as part of political diplomacy, Marko Kosin led the analytical sector, and Ivo Vajgl took over public relations.[40]

All of this shows that the diplomacy of independent Slovenia at zero hour had three characteristics that not only affected its establishment but substantially characterised its development: (a) an explicitly strong economic component, (b) a strong mix between the "old" and "new" staff, and (c) a high level of openness and pragmatism.

THE RELATION BETWEEN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DIPLOMACY

The relation between economic and political diplomacy is a basic issue that anyone exploring the history of a state's diplomatic activities must face. According to Udovič (2013), economic diplomacy was the main

34 Družbenopolitični zbor, 1991, item 4 on the agenda.
35 Reberc also stressed that a Mediterranean dimension should be added to the Slovenian foreign policy (Družbenopolitični zbor, 1991, item 4 on the agenda).
36 Družbenopolitični zbor, 1991, item 4 on the agenda.
37 This lack of time for a constructive debate on what should make the foundations of Slovenian foreign policy and how the diplomatic apparatus should be formed was brought forward by Peter Glavič at a meeting of the Chamber of Municipalities, another of the three chambers of parliament. He pointed out that there was no real discussion on the Foreign Affairs Bill (based on the abovementioned strategic document) because delegates no longer managed to read all the bills (Zbor občin, 1991).
38 AS, AS–2167, 3, 137.
39 Eleven were ambassadors (Mexico, Nicaragua, the Netherlands, Australia, India, the Federal Republic of Germany, Tanzania, Zaire, Libya, Kenia and Portugal), and four were consuls general (Cleveland, Strasbourg, Trieste and Klagenfurt; ibid.).
40 AS, AS–2167, 3, 136.

task of diplomatic activity until the institutionalisation of diplomacy in the 14th century, only then did diplomacy start taking on a political dimension, and it only became a political tool of foreign policy after the French Revolution. A similar example (ibid.) can be identified in the outset of Slovenian diplomacy, when economic diplomacy was an extremely important part of diplomatic activity. In practice, this means that in the first stage Slovenia performed much of its diplomacy in the branches of companies, most commonly Ljubljanska banka d.d., while the symbolical effect was that international cooperation with foreign countries (as economic diplomacy was named at the time) was a constituent part of the foreign ministry from 1980 (when the two secretariats were merged into the SCIC) and all the way to the fragmentation of the system in 1993.[41]

Kunič (2017) confirms that the roles of business representative and representative of the state in the host country often overlapped, saying that he "*was then a representative of Ljubljanska banka d.d., but I was considered* [by Iranians – A/N] *a representative of Slovenia in Iran* [… despite] *only having the authorisation that I already had from before, from Abidjan*". He further comments on the overlapping of political and economic diplomacy: "*This way it was already funny, almost paradoxical that we had a bank in Frankfurt, but at the same time also a representative office of Ljubljanska banka d.d., which served as a representation for the Slovenian economy.*" Meršak (2017), who was a representative for Kovintrade in Bratislava, also confirms this. In the company's premises, Slovenia set up its first embassy in Slovakia in 1993, and he also helped Slovenian diplomats (first Dragan and Kirn in Prague, then Ada Filip Slivnik and Jožef Drofenik in Bratislava) set up contacts with companies and authorities, since he had been in Slovakia since 1988 and had a network covering both politicians and businesses. Yet another to confirm this is Frlec (2017), who explains clearly that economic diplomacy was a key element of diplomacy. He believes political and economic diplomacy cannot be treated separately, so they could also not be separated by the newly emerging Slovenian state. In this respect, he points out that it should not be neglected that the Federal Republic of Germany has always been a specific market for Slovenian companies and the state, so diplomats would also do their best to win deals. However, Sočan (2017) does not agree with this shared view of Kunič, Frlec and Meršak. This can be attributed especially to the fact that the representative office of Ljubljanska banka d.d. with the European Commission was a front for a political mission that hardly dealt with economic issues. Nevertheless, Sočan highlights another component, namely that the office in Brussels allowed Slovenia's view of what was happening in Yugoslavia to also reach countries that were not in the closest network (e.g. Scandinavian countries or Ireland), while precisely these countries could have served as a role model for the development of the Slovenian economy, but this was unfortunately not the case. According to Sočan, the reasons lie in the different political will and the inflexible political processes in Slovenia when the country set out on its path to independence.

THE INTERTWINING AND CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN THE "OLD" (YUGOSLAV) AND "NEW" (SLOVENIAN) DIPLOMACY

It was clear that the established Yugoslav diplomacy would not take the increasing positioning of Slovenian foreign policy easily, particularly since it considered itself the main subject of external sovereignty of the SFRY and would not share this position with anyone. This became even clearer after the first democratic election and when the Slovenian independence process accelerated, which brought tensions on two levels—the federal level (FSFA) and at Yugoslav diplomatic and consular missions. On the federal level, the rift between Slovenes in the FSFA and others in the federal structure reflected mainly in isolation and exclusion of Slovenes from decision making and other federal activities. This point is illustrated colourfully by Dragan (n.d., 98):

> *At meetings of the college of the federal secretary* [Budimir Lončar – A/N] *or his orthodox deputy Milivoj Maksić, discussions on different topics would see ever harsher confrontations* […]. *At college meetings, me and* [Ivo – A/N] *Vajgl would often be outnumbered. And Lončar would, as always, navigate skilfully between different views, make compromise syntheses and postpone conclusions whenever the atmosphere was too hot* […].

A similar experience, only from abroad, is recalled by Boris Frlec (2017), whom intelligence services started monitoring closely a year after he took over as ambassador in Bonn.[42] At his lectures about the developments in Yugoslavia, he was often confronted with provocative questions, such as: "*Why does Slovenia want to break*

41 The organisation chart from 1991 shows that the foreign minister had two deputies, one for political affairs and one for international economic relations. The latter (Vojka Ravbar) was *de facto* extremely independent in her work and only reported to the minister (Udovič, 2009). She managed five sectors (there were also five sectors in the political branch): *the European Economic Integration Sector, the Sector for Relations with International Economic Organisations and Protection Policy, the Sector for Promotion and Higher Forms of Economic Cooperation with Foreign Countries, the Sector for Monitoring and Analysis of Economic Relations with Foreign Countries, and the Sector for Legal Settlement of Economic Relations with Foreign Countries* (AS, AS–2167, 3, 154).

42 He was appointed to the post based on a proposal by the Slovenian leadership in 1989, but he was also backed by the democratically elected government and remained there until 4 November 1991.

away from the SFRY, and what will you do as a Yugoslav ambassador?" He would answer calmly, and above all he would outline the differences emerging in Yugoslavia.

Sočan and Meršak had even more negative experiences with the federal diplomatic missions. Sočan, who was formally head of the office of Ljubljanska banka d.d. in Brussels, was a thorn in the side of the Yugoslav embassy and was seen as competition. This transpired on several occasions, but most radically at a diplomatic reception marking Yugoslavia's Republic Day, 29 November, which he attended together with his spouse. Discussions at the reception were not very constructive. Around 11, when journalist Aćimović arrived at the reception, a Montenegrin diplomat would say to Sočan: "[N]*ow here's another Slovene so it won't be so hard for you, and so you Slovenes can talk to each other*" (Sočan, 2017). This reflects the distinctly negative attitude of the Yugoslav embassy in Brussels towards Slovenian views and activities.

Unlike Sočan, Meršak only had limited contact with the Yugoslav embassy in Prague, related only to his residency in Czechoslovakia. He claims that, although he has no proof of this, he had a feeling he was being watched by the Yugoslav authorities. He recalls there were cases when his son "*was asked where Meršak was staying, where he went and so on*", and that he would often receive warnings to "*be careful where you go and what you do, or phone calls where no one would answer. There was quite a lot of that*" (Meršak, 2017). Frequent threats, especially following the declaration of independence are also confirmed by Frlec, who was instructed by Slovenian authorities to stay in Bonn after independence was declared. Because of the threats, Slovenian authorities sent security experts to his residence in Bonn, and he had an arrangement with LHB representative in Frankfurt Srečko Jamnišek to call him every hour if pressures would become excessive. This way, Jamnišek would know something was wrong in Bonn if he got no call from Frlec. Nevertheless, it is not clear what Jamnišek would do in this case (Frlec, 2012, 2017).

Another question that comes up regarding the establishing of Slovenian diplomacy in the field is how host countries understood Slovenian diplomatic activities or its paradiplomatic missions, and how they viewed the reports on what was going on in Yugoslavia. To this there is no uniform answer (see e.g. Glaurdić, 2011; Radeljić, 2012; Jović, 2003). While some states maintained that the SFRY should be kept in one piece (Petrič, 2012; Rupel, 1992; Kosin, 2000), others had more understanding for the developments in Yugoslavia and for Slovenia's independence aspirations. In this sense, Frlec (2012; 2017) says German authorities showed a favourable attitude towards Slovenia's independence,[43] highlighting the activities that the Federal Republic of Germany undertook to support Slovenia in this process. He recalls German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher inviting him to his home on 24 August 1991 to read him a demarche for the Yugoslav government. After finishing the official message, he added: "*The formal part of this invitation is now over. I'm sorry you have to listen to this shit (Scheisse), because you are a decent and good man, and on top of this you are paid too little* […]" (Frlec, 2012/2017). When Frlec returned to Germany as Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia in 1992, Genscher told him: "*I knew you'd come back!*" The attitude of the German leadership (the foreign minister and the chancellor; see Rupel, 1992) towards the Slovenian paradiplomacy was therefore very favourable.

Meršak (2017) talks of a similar attitude in Czechoslovakia. "*Czechoslovakia was definitely in favour of Slovenia and took its side*",[44] but at the same time there were also important Czechoslovak politicians who would "*appear at the Yugoslav embassy* [in Prague – A/N] *more or less every day, where they would watch what was happening and what Slovenes were doing*" (Meršak, 2017). Czechoslovakia thus greatly supported Slovenia's efforts and understood the Slovenian reality, which – according to Meršak – can be attributed to its own pondering about dissolution and a creation of two separate states. Meršak (2017) finds that also the gradual dissolution of Czechoslovakia can be attributed to the two states' prime ministers Václav Klaus and Vladimír Mečiar, whose strong personalities made it hard for them to work together. Václav Havel, who as a moral authority was predestined for the position of president, did not accept the break-up of the country with open hands. Among other things, this can be seen from his humorous remark to Zvone Dragan when accepting his credentials: "*Your excellency, you tore Yugoslavia apart, now you've come to tear apart Czechoslovakia, too*" (Udovič, n.d.).

A different and less positive attitude towards the establishing of Slovenian diplomacy and Slovenian independence in general was experienced by Sočan in Brussels.[45] In the spring of 1991, he held a lecture at the Centre of European Policy Studies (CEPS) where he ex-

43 It is not quite clear when Germany decided to no longer support the so-called Yugoslav exception (Nećak, 2014), nor what drove it to do so. There are different views, and Conversi (2004) is one of those highlighting the aspect that the unified Germany wanted to position itself in the Balkans. Džananović Miščaršija (2017) begs to differ, claiming that Germany never really understood the Balkans, unlike the English and the French. The only thing that matters to them is who delivers.

44 Meršak (2017) notes that Slovak Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar was reserved about Slovenia's independence at first because he feared that too much violence would break out in the SFRY if the states tried to break away.

45 Sočan (2017) explains that even before he became the official agent for Slovenia in Brussels, he once asked a former permanent representative why Yugoslavia had established a permanent representation in Brussels in the first place. He then said he had been told by his predecessor that it was "*so that things don't go too far*", meaning that the SFRY would not get too close to European integrations.

plained what was going on in the SFRY, and argued from different perspectives that "*this country had actually been falling apart for a long time, and that this was not secession, but a disintegration of the state and a declaration of independence. And the lecture was very well received.*" After each lecture, the institute would usually prepare a resume of conclusions. Sočan received the resume for review only days before it was to be published, and it contained almost none of what he had said. Instead, it contained "[f]*ive or six horrible things, falsified. Especially glorification of the Yugoslav army, and Slovenian leaders being separatists, and things like that.*" Sočan reacted by entering individual corrections to make the resume "*at least bearable*". The event continued to trouble him, so he took a look in the social network of the institute, and found out that "*the director of the institute was from Hungary and was a good friend of the Yugoslav ambassador,* [Mihajlo – A/N] *Crnobrnja*" (Sočan, 2017). Naturally, everything became very clear after this realisation.

Sočan had another "extraordinary" experience in Brussels, this time related to the European Commission and its attitude towards him as an unofficial representative of Slovenia. Also in spring 1991, a secretary of Commission President Jacques Delors distributed a document around the European Commission stating that Lojze Sočan was *de iure* and not *de facto* a representative of Ljubljanska banka d.d., but rather a representative of a republic that *wants to break away from Yugoslavia (Fiugure 1)*. In this memo, the secretary announced that any professional, developmental or economic issues could be discussed with Sočan, while discussions in Brussels on all matters regarding the developments in Yugoslavia were in in the jurisdiction of the permanent representation of the SFRY (Sočan, 2017).[46] But unlike his secretary, Delors himself was in favour of Slovenia and Croatia, particularly after Janez Drnovšek explained to him at a meeting what was happening with the economic development in the SFRY (Sočan, 2017).

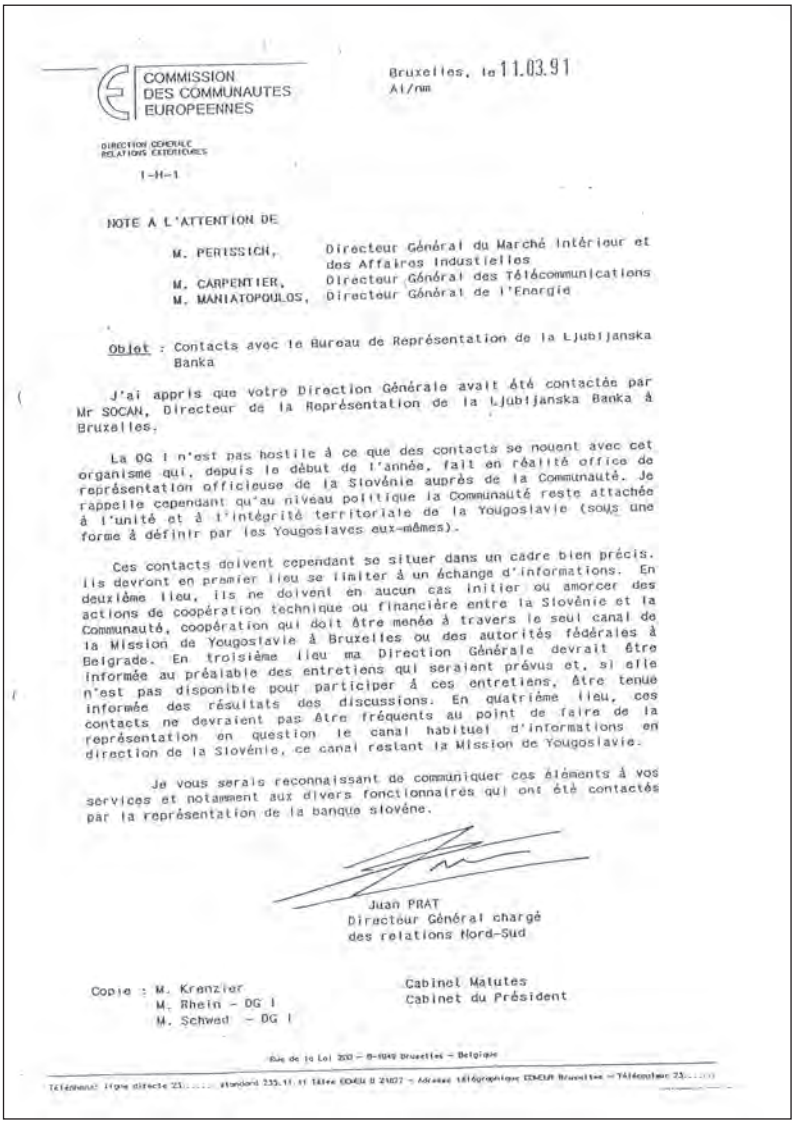
On the other hand, there was little interest for Yugoslavia in Abidjan, which was relatively distant from the events in the SFRY, since ambassadors and others mainly dealt with African issues. But according to Kunič, things were different in Iran, which in principle favoured Bosniaks and was anti-Serbian. Moreover, the Yugoslav embassy in Iran was run by a Macedonian who also intimately favoured Slovenia over federal orders (Kunič, 2017).[47] Although there was interest in Iran for the events in the SFRY, they were not on top of the agenda. The interest was thus more in the sense of being informed than really delving into Yugoslav issues (Kunič, 2017). They had other priorities: Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, America, Russia, China – these were the states that diplomats in Iran mostly dealt with. Nevertheless, despite the modest interest of Iranian diplomats for the Yugoslav issue, Slovenia was relatively popular. This can be attributed to the republic and its policies being seen as supportive of Muslims in Yugoslavia, unlike Serbian anti-Muslim policies (Kunič, 2017).

THE OPENNESS (TO INNOVATION) AND PRAGMATISM OF THE EMERGING SLOVENIAN DIPLOMACY

For emerging diplomacies, a tendency towards innovative approaches is always a precondition for their successful establishment.[48] One of the more notable innovations in the setting up of Slovenian diplomacy was the case of Ignac Golob, a Yugoslav diplomat with a long career who ran the embassy in Mexico until the declaration of independence, upon which he returned to Slovenia. Prior to that, Golob had served as Ambassador to the United Nations. Before Slovenia gained recognition and membership, it could not be present in the United Nations, so this former ambassador offered in October 1991 to go to New York as a reporter for newspaper Dnevnik. He received a press badge and started working in the United Nations. When Yugoslav diplomats saw him there, they were shocked and demanded from the UN staff that Golob be removed. But to no avail, since he was formally accredited as a journalist and no one could touch him (Udovič, 2016, 761ff; Žmuc-Kušar, Golob, 1992, 149ff).

Innovativeness at the outset of Slovenian diplomacy first transpired with the use of offices of Slovenian companies as political representations in countries of strategic interest. Furthermore, diplomatic innovativeness can be seen in the way Slovenian representatives worked: some would send messages home through faxes or through third persons, others would operate in semi-secret ways, with some sort of parallel diplomacy, some would look for niche opportunities for Slovenian diplomacy and politicians to break through with their ideas or to always tell their "truth" about the SFRY in a new way. Extensive information about this can be found in the memoirs of Slovenian diplomats published on the 20th anniversary of the country's international recognition (MFA, 2012). Even more will be revealed in the future in diplomatic archives, when they are open to public. Nevertheless, we already have at least an outline of how diplomatic inventions and pragmatism were formed. Both are reflected in the fact that all of Slovenian diplomacy was distinctly pragmatic at first—from Zvone Dragan carrying documents with him from Belgrade to Ljubljana to deputy minister Zoran Thaler clearly admitting at the

46 Sočan received a copy of the memo as a gift when leaving Brussels in 1996.
47 Kunič (2017) links the ambassador's favourable attitude towards Slovenia to him being married to a Slovene and later even moving to Slovenia, while his daughter now works for the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
48 For more on diplomatic innovations of Slovenes in the Yugoslav diplomatic system, see also Udovič (2016).



COMMISSION
DES COMMUNAUTES
EUROPEENNES

Bruxelles, le 11.03.91
AI/nm

DIRECTION GENERALE
RELATIONS EXTERIEURES

I-H-1

NOTE A L'ATTENTION DE

M. PERISSICH, Directeur Général du Marché Intérieur et des Affaires Industielles
M. CARPENTIER, Directeur Général des Télécommunications
M. MANIATOPOULOS, Directeur Général de l'Energie

Objet : Contacts avec le Bureau de Représentation de la Ljubljanska Banka

J'ai appris que votre Direction Générale avait été contactée par Mr SOCAN, Directeur de la Représentation de la Ljubljanska Banka à Bruxelles.

La DG I n'est pas hostile à ce que des contacts se nouent avec cet organisme qui, depuis le début de l'année, fait en réalité office de représentation officieuse de la Slovénie auprès de la Communauté. Je rappelle cependant qu'au niveau politique la Communauté reste attachée à l'unité et à l'intégrité territoriale de la Yougoslavie (sous une forme à définir par les Yougoslaves eux-mêmes).

Ces contacts doivent cependant se situer dans un cadre bien précis. Ils devront en premier lieu se limiter à un échange d'informations. En deuxième lieu, ils ne doivent en aucun cas initier ou amorcer des actions de coopération technique ou financière entre la Slovénie et la Communauté, coopération qui doit être menée à travers le seul canal de la Mission de Yougoslavie à Bruxelles ou des autorités fédérales à Belgrade. En troisième lieu ma Direction Générale devrait être informée au préalable des entretiens qui seraient prévus et, si elle n'est pas disponible pour participer à ces entretiens, être tenue informée des résultats des discussions. En quatrième lieu, ces contacts ne devraient pas être fréquents au point de faire de la représentation en question le canal habituel d'informations en direction de la Slovénie, ce canal restant la Mission de Yougoslavie.

Je vous serais reconnaissant de communiquer ces éléments à vos services et notamment aux divers fonctionnaires qui ont été contactés par la représentation de la banque slovène.

Juan PRAT
Directeur Général chargé
des relations Nord-Sud

Copie : M. Krenzler
M. Rhein - DG I
M. Schwad - DG I

Cabinet Matutes
Cabinet du Président

Figure 1: A copy of the memo received by Sočan after leaving Brussels in 1996 (Sočan, 2017)

18th sitting of the Sociopolitical Chamber that Slovenian foreign policy must above all be pragmatic. At the time it was not problematic that a representative appointed by the Executive Council would reside and work in the offices of Ljubljanska banka d.d., which is a company and is not supposed to pursue state goals (which, as we know, it did). The pragmatism of foreign policy and the emerging Slovenian diplomacy can further be seen in the choice of staff to head the Slovenian foreign affairs in the milestone years. Taking a look at the trio at the top of the SCIC, we see that it combined extensive experience and knowledge of international economy (Vojka Ravbar), foreign policy expertise, youthful engagement and desire for success (Zoran Thaler) with political skill, vehemence and fervour (Dimitrij Rupel). According to many diplomats, Rupel takes much of the credit for Slovenia's relatively quick international recognition. As two diplomats jokingly told the author in a private conversation, he was "*an elephant in a china store, tactless, pushy, and above all a foreign minister that was needed at the time. Undiplomatic. With gloves on or diplomatically, Rupel would surely achieve much less than he did. We've got to give him that.*"[49] Rupel himself agrees with such a depiction in his memoirs, particularly

49 The author's notes from lunches with two former ambassadors, January 2011 and March 2012. This assessment is also confirmed by Lorenci (1990) and Dragan (2012).

in some of the parts where he describes his discussions with ambassadors or his counterparts.[50]

And finally, with respect to political openness, personal engagement and pragmatism of the emerging Slovenian diplomacy, we should highlight the words of SCIC deputy secretary Vojka Ravbar, who described the beginnings of Slovenian diplomacy as "*interesting, because everything had to be designed anew, since Slovenia had no one to copy from*". In this sense, she found it important to highlight the decisive contribution of "*some Slovenian diplomats (then still in the Yugoslav services)*" to the development of Slovenian (economic) diplomacy who "*knew how to explain to foreign states (and statesmen) what was going on in Slovenia*. […] *It actually happened quite often that we would go negotiate in a particular country even before we were recognised in order to ensure the survival of the Slovenian economy.*" Trust was key, since "*not much was signed, and a lot was agreed. What contributed most to this were the atmosphere in society and the consensus that much needed to be done in unity for the economy to survive, even if views differed.*"[51] The atmosphere in society and the engagement in fact allowed Slovenian diplomacy to evolve from its *ad hoc* beginnings into a serious institution of an independent state. Its peak was reached on 22 May 1992 when Slovenia became the 176th member of the United Nations Organisation.

CONCLUSION

The beginnings of the diplomacy of an independent state cannot be analysed without their historical framework. Although the federal and state constitutions allowed Slovenia to start considering its activities beyond the boundaries of the SFRY in the first place, they also—precisely because of the SFRY's federal set-up – prevented Slovenia from developing its foreign policy and diplomatic missions sooner. Consequently, they started emerging *illegally*, mostly under the umbrella of Ljubljanska banka d.d., which had been capable of seeing beyond (merely) its economic interests already since it was strengthened in the late 1960s (Svetličič, Rojec, 2003; Kavčič, 2001). But the possibility of Slovenian paradiplomacy through the offices of Slovenian companies abroad only existed because the federal authorities gave such activities a silent approval. It would be naïve to think that in a diplomatic system strongly interlinked with secret services (Frlec, 2012; Udovič, n.d.)[52] the federal services would be unaware of the exact activities of international cooperation secretariats of the individual republics and state-owned companies, such as Ljubljanska banka d.d. We could venture to say even more – that Ljubljanska banka d.d. formed its foreign policy platform because this was beneficial for both Slovenian and Yugoslav authorities. This is because the latter, in the need of diversified access to international finance and imported goods, set up a sort of a parallel economy (Bizilj, 2009a; 2009b; 2009c), which allowed the SFRY not only internal political survival, but also gave political elites certain added value. Taking into consideration the development of the SFRY after 1945, and especially its positioning between the two geopolitical blocs, we can conclude that Slovenian paradiplomacy was not created *ab ovo*, but was a result of different forces and processes taking place on several levels within the SFRY. Consequently, it is impossible to determine the starting point of the etatisation of Slovenia's paradiplomacy. However, we can determine that its development accelerated with the liberalisation of international trade in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Svetličič, Rojec, 2003; Jaklič, Svetličič, 2005), and then developed progressively all the way to its institutionalisation on 26 June 1991.

Naturally, the SCIC and Slovenian companies abroad were not the only ones to contribute to the development of Slovenian diplomacy, but largely also Slovenian diplomats in the Yugoslav services, who had an extremely important role already from the establishment of these services. They held the most responsible positions – from foreign ministers to state secretaries, but they also took some of the most exposed postings, such as New York, Vienna or Bonn. Along with representing the interests of federal diplomacy, they would always incorporate Slovenian interests, or as Frlec (2012; 2017) puts it "*the patriotism of Slovenes working for the FSFA at the time is therefore unquestionable: it was perfect*".[53] This, of course, was easier in 1990, and increasingly difficult in 1991. Representatives of Slovenian companies abroad, on the other hand, had no need to beat around the bush or sugar-coat and tone down their messages, and they were able to pass them on directly and clearly. The problems they faced in some cases were lack of interest (Abidjan) or a default negative attitude (Rome, Brussels). However, there were also distinctly positive examples (Bratislava Bonn, and Prague) where their work was met with support and they were even *de facto* treated as political representatives of the newly emerged state – even if they had no formal rights. Some personal ties remained strong also after this period, and contributed greatly to the development of diplomatic and friendly relations with particular states. An illustration of the good and tightly knit relations is that Borut Meršak was the only foreigner who was invited to the 70th birthday of Czechoslovak par-

50 E.g. Rupel's engagement for the recognition by the US and his discussion with the Vatican's Cardinal Secretary of State Angelo Sodano (Rupel, 1992).

51 Udovič (n.d.).

52 In this case the notes were from a conversation on the functioning of the federal intelligence agency in Yugoslav diplomacy.

53 It is interesting that Slokar (2016) does not share this view that Slovenes in the federal services worked primarily for their compatriots, as he describes that, working in Belgrade in those crucial years, he often encountered obstacles set by fellow countrymen.

liamentary speaker Alexander Dubček (Meršak, 2017). In any case, it was these ties and the trust of host countries in Slovenian paradiplomats that contributed to a wide international recognition and acknowledgement of the quality of the emerging Slovenian diplomacy.

The final question, which is rarely presented in diplomatic studies, relates to the personality of diplomats and their role in the processes of implementing a state's diplomacy. Harold Nicolson (in Berridge et al., 2001) once said that an ideal diplomat was characterised by "*truth, accuracy, calm, patience, good temper, modesty and loyalty*". But with newly emerging diplomacies at least one of these is a problem, loyalty. To whom should Slovenian diplomats in the federal services be loyal—the Slovenian or the federal authorities? And if they should be loyal to the Slovenian authorities, does that not conflict with the requirement of being loyal to their employer, the federal services? Or even more, what if – as in the case of Slovenia – the national authorities advise a representative to stay in the federal services in order to better serve the interests of the newly emerging state? Is this not an even clearer violation of loyalty to one's sovereign? These are extremely difficult questions that diplomatic representatives had to face, and above all decide on when the diplomacy of the Republic of Slovenia was being established. And these decisions were not easy, and especially, it is much easier to assess them now than it was to take them in those pivotal times.

"GOVORILI SMO RESNICO O JUGOSLAVIJI …": O SLOVENSKIH (PARA)DIPLOMATIH V LETIH 1990–1992

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POVZETEK

Članek se ukvarja z vprašanjem oblikovanja *paradiplomacije Republike Slovenije in vzpostavljanjem samostojnega diplomatskega aparata Republike Slovenije. Bistvo članka je ugotoviti, kako so delovali posamezniki, ki jih je za to, da bi predstavljali »resnico o dogajanju v Jugoslaviji«, kooptirala slovenska novonastajajoča diplomacija. Med njimi velja izpostaviti tako diplomate, ki so uradno še delovali v zvezni diplomatski službi, kot tudi podjetnike, ki so zastopali interese slovenskega gospodarstva, pa seveda – noviteto v diplomatskih odnosih – predstavnike vlade in ministrstva za zunanje zadeve, ki so svoje naloge vršili ne kot je običajno »v imenu države«, ampak (vsaj pravnoformalno) v imenu »vlade« oz. »ministra za zunanje zadeve«. Članek, poleg osvetlitve diplomatskih momentov 1989–1992 prinaša tri ključne ugotovitve. Prvič, v začetkih snovanja slovenske diplomacije so izjemno pomembno vlogo imela predstavništva slovenskih podjetij, ki so vzpostavljala platformo za oblikovanje diplomacije Slovenije. Drugič, Slovenci v zveznem sekretariatu za zunanje zadeve so bili izjemni podporniki osamosvojitve, tako da so močno delovali tudi v smeri tega, da bi Slovenija imela karseda največ informacij za oblikovanje svojih pozicij ob osamosvojitvi in v času iskanja mednarodne podpore za mednarodno priznanje. Tretjič, v začetkih nastanka diplomacije samostojne slovenske države je bilo potrebnega veliko entuziazma ter diplomatskih invencij in inovacij, ki so potem, ko se je oblikoval diplomatski aparat, bile ukalupljene v celoten sistem in posledično izzvenel v (le) zgodovinski spomin. Vse te ugotovitve pa nismo pomembne same po sebi, ampak nastavljajo zrcalo poznejšim stranpotem vzpostavljanja in oblikovanja diplomacije Republike Slovenije. Zdi se namreč, kar je delno poudarjeno tudi v članku, da se je vsaka faza oblikovanja slovenske diplomacije, oblikovala ab ovo, kar pomeni, da imata slovenska zunanja politika in diplomacija izredno pomanjkljiv zgodovinski spomin. To pa vodi do tega, da stvari lahko postanejo neučinkovite in nejasne ter podvržene vsakemu ministru za zunanje zadeve in njegovim preferencam.*

Ključne besede: diplomacija, Socialistična federativna republika Jugoslavija, Slovenija, paradiplomacija

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