

WHERE THE PROVISIONS OF THE TREATY OF TRIANON DID NOT PREVAIL – THE EVACUATION OF THE YUGOSLAV-OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, 1920-21*

Árpád Hornyák
University of Pécs

The Treaty of Trianon ended Yugoslav territorial claims on Hungary, since it ratified the provisions of the Peace Conference, which were signed by Yugoslavia. Hungary however, could not extend her suzerainty over all the territories left to her for more than a year. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was reluctant to return its troops behind the treaty borders despite ratifying the treaty. Thus even after 4th June 1920, Serbian troops continued to remain on the demarcation line drawn by the Belgrade Military Convention on 13th November 1918 securing the exploitation of the resources of the territories for Yugoslavia. The treaty increased the willingness of the Yugoslav authorities to cooperate with the Hungarian left who was inclined to accept the prolongation of the Serbian occupation and thus by the summer of 1920, an administration came to power in Pécs, which not only did not refuse the prolongation of the occupation but also rather inclined towards it. The prolongation of the withdrawal of the Serbian troops lasted until August 1921 when the acceleration of the events forced Belgrade to make this step – mostly due to the firm actions of the great powers but internal circumstances demanded the swift settlement of the situation, as well.

Keywords: *Baranya, Serbian occupation, Hungary, Svetislav Rajić*

1. Occupation and setting up the Serbian administration

After the ratification of the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary could not immediately take possession of all the territories granted to her as Yugoslav troops still occupied Northern Bačka and Baranya, with no intention whatsoever of returning within their borders. What's more, all measures available were used to permanently annex the region (which at the time had been occupied for more than one and a half year).

* This study was made possible by the support of the MTA BTK Trianon 100 research group.

The Serbian occupation of Baranya and the Bačka was made possible by the Belgrade Military Convention.¹ The relating provisions of the Convention were enforced by the Serbian troops on the day following the ratification of the treaty, which proves that "measures" had been taken beforehand. Surprisingly, the Serbians did not demand the annexation of these territories (Pécs and Southern Baranya) when submitting their official demands at the peace conference despite them being under military occupation.²

As per the Belgrade Military Convention, the Hungarian administration could function in the occupied territories. Initially, the occupant authorities did not interfere with the administration, their activity was limited on keeping public order after Hungarian police and militia activity was banned. Keeping public order soon turned into directing civilian life. On the 25th of November 1918, the assembly – supposed to represent the population of Baranya, Bačka and Banat – declared the accession of the territories to the Kingdom of Serbia in Novi Sad.

The National Directorate (Narodna uprava) was formed at the time of the declaration and started to extend its authority over the territories that were considered to be under it. The Directorate appointed attorney Stjepan Tunić-Vojnić Prefect of Pécs, Baja and the county of Baranya. He was soon followed by Vladislav Pandurović in the beginning of January 1919. The National Directorate in Novi Sad authorised them to suspend officials who were either unreliable or refused to take oaths and substitute them with their own appointees (Gergely, Kőhegyi 1974, 10; Hajdu 1957, 235).

So began the replacement of the local Hungarian administration which, however, was neither an easy nor a short process mainly due to the local

¹ The Serbian troops occupied the entirety of the Baranyavár, Mohács and Siklós districts, the bigger part of the Pécs and Selje districts, some villages in the Sásd district, the districts of Szigetvár and Barcs in Somogy county as well as three municipalities from Tolna county: Bata-szék, Alsónyék and Bába.

² By February 1919 (after serious inner discussions), the Yugoslav delegation reached a decision according to which the demands from Hungary were to be formulated based on ethnic principle rather than strategic. Regarding Baranya, after dismissing the strategic principle the Yugoslavs were inconclusive about their demands given that they did not possess accurate statistics about the ethnic distribution of the populace and they considered the Hungarian statistics to be incorrect. Amongst all the territorial demands the reasoning was the least convincing in this case and the explanation of the claims was short as well as sketchy. All signs point towards the fact that demanding Baranya was only a possibility to have a claim which later (should the need arise) could be revoked. Stressing cultural and ethnic principles the reasoning was the same as for the Backa and Banat (that the Hungarians would move). Baranya being an important link between Slavonia (Osijek) and the Backa (Sombor) was also noted. Due to this inconclusiveness, eventually (as we could see) Pécs, Baja and Szigetvár were not claimed (Mitrović 1975, 74).

opposition to it. Pandurović did not manage to acquire adequate support in Pécs despite his existing contacts after all, his appointment was deemed illegitimate by the local Hungarian population and what is even more important even by the strongest local political power, the Social Democratic Party. It was deemed contrary to the provisions of the Belgrade Military Convention, which it was in fact (Hajdu 1957, 232).

Initially, the military authorities were reserved towards “The Man of Novi Sad” and Pandurović could only start strengthening his position and taking over the administration once his appointment was affirmed by Belgrade.

As a result of the general strike (which started on February 22nd 1919) in all occupied territories the social democrats of Pécs managed to reach an agreement with the Yugoslav headquarters regarding multiple issues amongst which was the issue of restoring the Hungarian administration. This agreement envisaged setting free those arrested because of the strike, the free operation of labour organisations, the free publishing of newspapers after initial censorship as well as the return of Hungarian officials except for the Commissioner who had to be replaced by a new one appointed by the Hungarian government. The Yugoslavs promised not to demand oaths from Hungarian officials and to gradually replace Serbian officials. In exchange they demanded to keep the public order and to restart the work in the mines. However, in case of a new strike or affray the military authorities declare the agreement null and void and (as Baranya is a military area) implement measures according to the state of war (Hajdu 1957, 269).

After the agreement, the Hungarian officials could indeed return to their places. The Yugoslavs removed all their people from the town hall. After the declaration of the Soviet Republic, this process was halted and even turned into a negative direction. The leadership of the city remained in the hands of the Hungarians, but the administration of the county was placed completely under Yugoslav administration led by Svetislav Rajić, former official of the Hungarian Defence Ministry who was later appointed Prefect. Once again, only those Hungarian officials could remain who swore an oath to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Rajić was the man of the National Directorate (Narodna uprava) which was supposed to govern the parts of the territories of Banat, Bačka and Baranya, which were attached to Yugoslavia. His policy was to acquire the territories by all means necessary, so he always had a close connection with the enemies of the prevailing Hungarian system (Hajdu 1957, 315).³

³ Hajdu raised attention over the antagonism between Rajić and the military commander of the county, colonel Vojin Čolak-Antić. According to him, it was noticeable that the commander despises Rajić and the whole Narodna uprava.

2. The Serbian authorities and the Hungarian left

During the Soviet Republic, Pécs was the gathering point of those opposing the regime of Béla Kun. It is no coincidence, that in the delegation of Baranya-Pécs (led by Prefect Pandurović), which appeared in Paris in July, some members of the Hungarian aristocracy participated as well to demonstrate that they are satisfied with the Yugoslav occupation, or at least, they deem it better than the system of the Soviet Republic. Later, after the fall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, the government on Belgrade wanted to secure these territories for the Yugoslav state by attracting the proletariat and the émigrés. This comes to light clearly by the fate of lieutenant colonels Sándor Riffel and István Göllei Inzelt who were "inquiring about local conditions" in Pécs on Horthy's behalf. The two officers agreed with Kosta Vujičić (the city commander) back in 1919 that amongst those communists who fled to Pécs the most dangerous would be transported to the demarcation line and handed over to Hungarian authorities. Another of their associates negotiated with the same commander about overcoming the communist menace and managed to acquire the possibly quite long list of communist miners. In the beginning of 1920, however, the Yugoslav authorities arrested Riffel for espionage and illegal recruitment.

The conduct of the government in Belgrade towards the local labour movement is well-illustrated by the fact that – while in the territory of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes the celebration of 1st May was banned – in Baranya and Pécs the proletariat was permitted to celebrate with parades and a holiday (Szűts 1991, 74). The ratification of the Treaty of Trianon and the official note of the Peace Conference to the government in Belgrade about the evacuation of Serb-Croat-Slovene troops from the occupied territories further increased the willingness of the Yugoslav authorities to cooperate with the left. In the middle of July 1920 the newly-appointed Commissioner/Prefect Rajić informed the residents of Pécs via proclamation, that as per the wishes of the Socialist Party of Pécs which is the largest party of the former National Council, that he permits the re-election of National Council by assembly and this through general election will form the municipal committee to settle the issues of the city. The crowd estimated to be 20,000 large elected the National Council on the 8th August on the Majláth square.⁴ The Council consisted of 34 socialist, 15 civil radical and 3 independent members (Hajdu 1957, 329).

On August 29-30th secret and list elections were held in which all males over 20 were able to take part. As a result of the elections, the socialists gained a majority in the municipal committee which had 100 members. A member of

⁴ Now Kossuth square.

this committee was the aforementioned Glibonjski as well. Provided we can trust his mémoires, he was elected with quite good results since from 12,876 eligible voters 9,144 participated in the election from whom “some five hundred” voted for him.⁵

On September 21th, the general assembly elected Béla Linder mayor who had only recently arrived to Pécs with his Serbian wife, thus he seemed to be the right person in the eyes of the Serbian leadership.⁶ Another right person was János Polácsi, the elected Chief of Police whose election to mayor was initially supported by the Serbian Prefect. In order to propagate Yugoslav influence and accession to Yugoslavia, Rajić used the émigrés as well. The émigré Géza Császár became the editor-in-chief of a newly published newspaper, the «Pécsi Újság». He was a journalist, a former columnist of *Munkás* who became communist from Christian socialist. The Serbian Prefect could also lean on the support of local forces, amongst which Petar Dobrović Serbian painter, the president of the short-lived Serbian-Hungarian Baranya-Baja Republic, which was declared a year later, is worth mentioning.⁷ This way, by the summer of 1920, an administration came to power, which not only did not refuse the prolongation of the occupation but also rather inclined towards it. An administration which – according to the information of the Hungarian General Staff – almost instantly started negotiations with the Serbian government about the establishment of an opposition Hungarian government (Gergely, Kóhegyi 1974, 36). It is an unquestionable fact that there were plans to establish a Pécs-centred opposition government, in which Mihály Károlyi would have an important role. Oszkár Jászi had the following view immediately after the re-election of the National Council of Pécs:

⁵ He forgot to mention however, that these votes were not cast on him but on the list of which he was a part. Apart from Milan Glibonjski, the city council also had two elected Serbian members: Gavro Rašić second clerk and Đorđe Nikolić the head of the chancellery. «Baranjski glasnik», 5th September 1920.

⁶ Linder's wife was Romana Predragović, born in Pressburg, whose father served as a hussar colonel in the army of the late Monarchy. Romana was of Serb origin but – and it was rare even then – Roman Catholic and 14 years younger than Linder, and had a son from a previous marriage.

⁷ It is important to note that although in order for the territory to belong to Yugoslavia there was an agreement between Dobrović and at first Pandurović then Rajić, otherwise there was a strong disagreement between them. Because Dobrović under the alias Baranjac criticised the Serbian authorities in Pécs for their impotence and their cooperation with the Hungarian authorities and the communists. (According to him, about four thousand of them arrived in Baranya and all of them found refuge regardless of their activity during the period of the Soviet Republic. Pandurović refused the accusations on the front page of Baranjski glasnik pointing out that the senseless Šokci crowds are starting to feel and work for Serbian interests. «Baranjski glasnik», 13th November 1919).

Pécs could be the Archimedean point of the situation, as soon as the Little Entente decides to act. (Litván 1978, 667)

The fact that the election of the National Council was allowed, as well as permitting Jászi to travel to Pécs beside the 3 proletar leader indicated that the Yugoslavs «decided to act». According to Jászi – whose travelling to Pécs was asked by Béla Linder as well – both the communists and social democrats viewed the plan to democratise Hungary under the personal leadership of Mihály Károlyi starting from Pécs possible. The telegram sent to Mihály Károlyi on 30th September 1920 by the municipal committee was according to this. The reply of Károlyi was however – due to the changed international situation, by which he meant the Polish-Soviet War – quite non-committal.⁸

3. Obstruction of the evacuation

The Treaty of Trianon ended Yugoslav territorial claims on Hungary, since it ratified the provisions of the Peace Conference, which were signed by Yugoslavia. Hungary however, could not extend her suzerainty over all the territories left to her for more than a year. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was reluctant to return its troops behind the treaty borders despite ratifying the treaty. Thus even after 4th June 1920, Serbian troops continued to remain on the demarcation line drawn by the Belgrade Military Convention on 13th November 1918 securing the exploitation of the resources of the territories for Yugoslavia. The divergence between the state borders laid out by the treaty and the demarcation line were the territories south to the line Barcs-Szigetvár-Pécs-Baja. The Yugoslav state tried to sabotage the handing over of these territories by all means possible, or at the very least attempted to delay their evacuation. Although, the territories of Baranya and

⁸ After the Polish-Soviet War turned in favour of the Polish, the danger of the Hungarians serving the interest of Paris, for which they could expect its gratitude, passed – and the trend in the French foreign policy that wished to create a Hungary-centred Central European unity failed – the successor states abandoned the idea of taking even military actions against Hungary, either alone or together. This was recognised by Károlyi and as a result of this recognition can be his reply to the request of Pécs interpreted: «It is with deep gratitude that I thank you for your comradely trust and remembrance. I as well believe invariably in the final success of our revolutionary work. May your noble struggle be accompanied by my ardent sympathy and felicitations. For the time being, the temporary victory of the international reaction makes the situation impossible for a decisive battle. However, you shall not lose heart, because the day is not far when the Internationale of the proletariat can take up arms again with results for the ideals of social progress. In this final struggle which is the only possibility of saving the torn Hungarians: the peasant people, industrial and intellectual workers of Hungary will find themselves next to each other. Forward for the victory of the rights of the people!» (Litván 1978, I, 700).

Northern Backa had been decided to belong to Hungary in August 1919, a year before the ratification of the Treaty of Trianon, when the great powers disclosed the Northern borders of Yugoslavia in their official manifest and ordained the evacuation of Serbian troops from the occupied territories (Mitrović 1975, 178).

The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes however, did not hurry to with this request an even seized every opportunity to prolong control over the territories. This had mainly an economic reason because the importance of the region was based on the strategic material: coal. Beside the economic reason came the ethnic reason as well, which was employed extensively in order to first acquire the territories, then later to delay the their evacuation. Thus, the wish of the Yugoslav population in the occupied territories to join Yugoslavia was mentioned, since their personal and financial security did not seem to be guaranteed.⁹ The Entente missions in Hungary continued to send their representatives to Baranya repeatedly with little success to convince the Yugoslavs to evacuate the territories.¹⁰ Belgrade directly ordered local authorities to hinder the activity of the Entente missions that were conducting preliminary surveys of the return of Pécs and Baja to Hungary, since Paris had not yet given answers to their new territorial claims (Krizman 1970, 65). Belgrade having given up its initial territorial claims was prepared to settle for a prolonged occupation in order to better exploit the coal mines, however, the great powers were no partners in this. This policy of delay and incomppliance served the endeavor of the local Yugoslav leadership – which was supported by the Belgrade government – to support the enemies of the prevailing Hungarian system in the occupied territories in order to acquire the territories or at least delay the evacuation (Hajdu 1957, 315). This was shown during the Soviet Republic when the supporters of the old regime were given help, then after the collapse of the Soviet system when refuge was granted to communists (a minority) and mainly octobrists. In the spirit of this, founding newspapers, organising trade unions was made possible together with holding the National

⁹ According to them, 30 000 people of Baranya was ready to leave their homes, if the Yugoslav military leaves the occupied territories (Mitrović 1975, 228).

¹⁰ For the Allies to be present in Baranya permanently and supervise the evacuation of the territory, the idea arose back in May 1920 on the Conference of Ambassadors. The Conference decided on 12th June 1920 that it ordains the Allied Military Committee in Budapest (which by the way was the initiator of the whole action) to make the necessary steps to delegate allied officers who would inquire about the situation locally. After this, a subcommittee of the Allied Military Committee in Budapest appears in Pécs, (the members are English and French Majors Forster and Derain and Italian Captain San Martino) however, only the Frenchman Major Raoul Derain stayed in the city on a permanent basis. The Foreign Office deemed it wise for the evacuation to be supervised by an Allied mission, into which all Allied great power delegates a member. Telegram of Curzon to Hohler, 21st May 1921 (TNA FO 371/6131 C 8948).

Council elections. New workplaces were granted to these "émigrés" in Pécs and the occupied territories.

As a result of the elections, in August 1920 the Socialist Party of Pécs took over the leadership of the city with Béla Linder – former Minister of Defence in the Károlyi Administration – as mayor from September 1920 after returning from his emigration in Sombor, Yugoslavia. Svetislav Rajić Commissioner-Prefect, the most important representative of Serbian politics in Baranya provided explicit help to those leaders of the city who supported the annexion of Baranya into Yugoslavia. Rajić left nothing to chance and tried to convince the public about the pertinence of this policy. Nothing shows this better than the fact that the most important Hungarian-speaking mouthpiece of the annexion policy, the recently-founded *Baranyai Magyar Újság* (Hungarian Newspaper of Baranya) had its editorial office in the prefecture building, a few offices away from the office of Rajić (Lőrincz 1962, 292).

4. To leave or to stay?

By summer 1921, the great powers had finally enough about the evacuation of the territories. During the general and high commissioner conference in Budapest, on 2nd July 1921, the tasks of the evacuation and the entering were specified for both parties¹¹ and in order to supervise the fulfilment of the plan, the so-called Baranya-mission was formed under the leadership of the English colonel, Francis William Gosset.¹² The Conference of the Ambassadors on 23th July approved the proposal of the Versailles Supreme War Council about conducting the evacuation and the representatives of the great powers in Budapest decided on the evacuation of Baranya on 9th August. The next day (10th August) colonel Gosset arrived to Pécs to supervise the evacuation and at the same time to prevent excesses, such as requisitions by the Serbian troops.

Even though it was settled issue that the Serbian troops leave the occupied territories in the beginning of August 1921, the uncertainty about the evacuation and about the fate of the local population after the liberation was still general. The Serbian leadership founded «*Baranyai Magyar Újság*» – which enjoyed a high-degree of freedom – as well as the *Ucca* continuously published articles that

¹¹ Both Hungarian and Serb-Croat-Slovene military authorities were involved in the planning (except for a few minor details). Telegram of Athelston Johnson to the Conference of Ambassadors in Paris, 2nd July 1921 (TNA FO371/6132).

¹² The Conference of Ambassadors already authorised the mission of Allied Great Powers by its decision of 23rd July 1921 to commission the military committee in Pécs of the supervision of the evacuation and to elaborate its plan. Telegram of the English Ambassador in Paris, Hardinge to Curzon, 23rd June 1921 (TNA FO371/6132 C13076).

the evacuation is not timely, citing various sources from Paris but mainly from Belgrade. At the same time they did not forget to report on the white terror that had been going on in Hungary and to note the possibility that it would extend to the proletariat of Baranya after the takeover. These combined of course resulted in confusion and uncertainty, which could not be comprehended by the local proletariat with limited access to information; especially, when there were significantly different views in its own party, the Socialist Party of Pécs. The differences were fuelled from one side by the intrigue of the Serbian authorities, from the other side by individual empowerment and influence gathering, which was further strengthened by the circumstances, namely that many Hungarian émigré activists engaged in organising the party thus creating a chance for themselves to get ahead (Hajdu 1957, 381). Under these conditions was the Serbian-Hungarian Baranya-Baja Republic proclaimed four days after the arrival of the Gosset-mission, on 14th August 1921. This way, the local Yugoslav leaders – probably with the consent of military circles both local and in Belgrade – made a desperate attempt, with the help of the manipulated proletariat afraid of the Hungarian system, to keep the territories under Serbian suzerainty.

5. The proclamation of the Serbian-Hungarian Baranya-Baja Republic

Though the proclamation of the “Republic” was a surprise, there were pre-sages. Considering the events after a hundred years, with a bit of exaggeration, it could seem that in the spirit of the annexion policy a straight path led to it. As early as 17th April 1921, Béla Linder presented his motion to the city assembly (without consulting anybody) in which he proposed that the Serbian occupation should last as long as Hungary fulfills the provisions of the treaty or at least, for five years from the ratification. This was demanded by the local Yugoslav population as well from spring 1920, after it became clear that the territories would belong to Hungary. The motion carried and further proposed to demand to accomplish the issues of self-governance, currency and other important measures. All with the reasoning that the difficulties of the territory originated in the fact that there is no economic or fiscal unity with Yugoslavia and that by settling these issues, primarily with the prolongation of the occupation, the premises for a closer relation with the Yugoslav State would be given (Hajdu 1957, 382).

The uncertainty of the political future was topped with the mundane uncertainty of the everyday life: the disorderly currency, the high unemployment rate, etc. Because of this, the socialist party called a congress involving all trade unions for 14th August 1921. At the same time, an assembly would be held which could give weight to the decrees of the congress (Hajdu 1957, 398). The aim was to accept and execute decrees, which are capable of ensuring the welfare

of the workers whilst the assembly can declare the determination of the citizens of Pécs that they do not let the city into the hands of the Horthy regime (Hajdu 1957, 398).

On 14th August (a Sunday) at 10 am the congress started and in parallel the assembly as well. According to period sources and recollections, the crowd numbered about 15 thousand people. The events occurred in parallel. The participants of the congress voted unilaterally that they protest against the evacuation in the name of the proletariat of Pécs and Baranya until

the current Horthy regime in Hungary will be replaced by a regime corresponding to the values of the October Revolution: free of persecution and terroristic tendencies. (Hajdu 1957, 407)

After this, the members of the congress joined the assembly where ardent orators strengthened the decision of the crowd that they would under no circumstances let the extension of the Hungarian terror into their homeland. The more and more ardent and vehement orators who cried for arms to protect themselves were followed by the Serbian painter, Petar Dobrović who also proposed the armed defence of the territory.

Think, the lives of 60 thousand Sokci and 50 thousand workers is on the line. It is about the land where we were born and where we wish to live. The Entente may come: the lives of 100 thousand people cannot be exterminated. The mine is ours, the life is ours, and I feel that the time has come that we utter to the world: we want to decide about our own fate, we proclaim the Serbian-Hungarian Baranya-Baja Republic. («Munkás», 16th August 1921, 3)

His proposal was met with general enthusiasm; the crowd voted for the sovereign Serbian-Hungarian Baranya-Baja Republic and accepted that the fate of Pécs-Baranya would be handled by the executive committee of the Serbian-Hungarian Baranya-Baja Republic.

The Republic – which wanted to place itself under the protection of Belgrade – naturally chose Petar Dobrović as its president. The executive committee started operating immediately. It decided to call Mihály Károlyi to Pécs, informed the government in Belgrade which it seeks its support and approval and visits Prefect Svetislav Rajić to announce him the formation of the republic. Furthermore, it wanted to inform the Entente mission in the city about the decision of the people of Baranya.

In the report of Colonel Gosset, he describes the meeting as a visit from 25 radical persons

*who threatened to blow up the mines and to resist until their last blood and other customary nonsense.*¹³

Although Colonel Gosset did not take the republic seriously, he thought that if the events got out of hand, it could lead to difficulties during and after the evacuation.¹⁴ The Serbian-Hungarian Baranya-Baja Republic (true to its name) tried to extend its legitimacy over territories outside of Pécs. On 15th August, an assembly was held in Mohács, Szigetvár, Siklós and Barcs the participants of which decided to join the republic (Hajdu 1957, 415). People could feel the uncertainty and the question arose: Could the republic count on the help of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes? The delegation sent to clarify the situation was led by Petar Dobrović (Linder had already been there at this time). After considering the circumstances, Belgrade was not willing to risk armed confrontation and as such it could not promise support for the president Petar Dobrović (N. Szabó 1981, 621-622).¹⁵ The fate of the “Republic” was so decided. A decision was made in Belgrade the same day, which was followed swiftly and smoothly.

6. The evacuation

Meanwhile, the local authorities started the de facto preparation of the evacuation. This included the dismantling of railway signaling equipment, transportation of machinery and emptying the warehouses, the transportation of the equipment of the city headquarters and barracks as well as the transportation of the furniture of officers and officials. In their official declarations however, – possibly to calm the home and local population – they denied their intention to evacuate the territories.¹⁶ The prime minister, Nikola Pašić issued a communique in which he explained that the question of Baranya depends on the international peace treaty, but his administration, taking into account the emotions of the populace about the planned evacuation, had already asked for postponing the planned evacuation.

¹³ Telegram of Hohler to Curzon based on Gosset’s report, 19th August 1921. A document is cited in: N. Szabó 1981, 623; the English Ambassador in Belgrade had a similar opinion, according to whom the Serbs would also not be happy about the destruction of the mines.

¹⁴ Ibidem. The Conference of Ambassadors decided on an immediate and forceful action directed at the Yugoslav government in order to evacuate the territory on the 17th August. It authorised the president of the conference to, if it is necessary, issue démarches of similar nature to the government in Belgrade. Harding’s report to Curzon (TNA FO371/6132 C 16595).

¹⁵ Strang’s report to Curzon, 16th August 1921.

¹⁶ Telegram from William Strang from Belgrade, 17th August 1921 (TNA FO 371/6132 C 16620).

The military commander-in-chief appointed by the Serbian government, Colonel Đorđević even made armed resistance into a possibility against entering Hungarian troops. Taking the threat seriously, Colonel Gosset proposed the Allied Military Control Commission on the 18th to postpone the evacuation for 48 hours, which it approved.¹⁷ At the same time, it reminded Belgrade its duty with a forceful manifest. The colonel who now understood the situation well and was quite confident in the field of affairs thought it important – for the smooth execution of the evacuation – that Dobrovic and Linder was not let back from Belgrade. He also deemed the swiftest removal of Prefect Rajić from Baranya desirable (N. Szabó 1981, 623). After the decision of the Yugoslav government, which finally undertook the abolition of the occupation, the preparations of the evacuation accelerated.¹⁸

On 20th August the city and, the next day, the county administration was officially handed over to Gyula Gosztanyi city and Tamás Prakaturcounty Commissioners-Prefects. On 22th August, in the morning, the Hungarian troops led by General Károly Bádoki Soós started to enter Pécs.¹⁹ The communists, the Russian émigrés and those who had reason to be afraid of the regime change had already left the city, while the miners welcomed the takeover.²⁰

In the acceleration of the events, the firm actions of the great powers surely took a great part, which was proportionally perceived by the Yugoslav leadership. Apart from external pressure, internal circumstances demanded the swift settlement of the situation, namely that on the 16th August, King Peter I died and it was impossible to outrule incidental complications around the succession. It is not unthinkable as well; that the willingness of the government in Belgrade to surrender the territories was further increased by the perception the policy supporting the left in Baranya would cause problems in the country in the long run, as it could technically serve as a base of the communist party that had been recently banned in Yugoslavia. These concerns seemed well founded because during the summer a number of movements were made by the communists, which threatened the existence of the state or at least the prevailing system.²¹

¹⁷ Thomas Hohler's report, 18th August 1921 (TNA FO371/6132 C 16708).

¹⁸ In his report of 21th August, Colonel Gosset deemed the activity of Colonel Dordevic the most honest and impartial possible. He also reports that the city is calm and smaller units of the Hungarian Gendarmerie, about a 150 men, entered Pécs, the mines and Pécsvárad the night before (FO 371/6132 C 16921).

¹⁹ In his telegram of the 22th, Gosset reported that the evacuation of the second squad was satisfying and the Serbian troops left Pécs with exemplary behaviour (PRO FO 371/6132 C 16921).

²⁰ Gosset's report of the 26th August (TNA FO 371/6132 C 17180/3655/21).

²¹ On 28th June 1921, the day the constitution was proclaimed, an assassination attempt was made on Crown Prince-Regent Alexander's life. On the 21th July, Minister of the Interior, Milorad

All these circumstances together resulted in Belgrade being so cooperative in the evacuation. Even if the evacuation of the occupied territories did not happen as smoothly as in Pécs. East to the Danube, the Serbs did not reach the determined line at 4 points, claiming that on their maps the line to be evacuated lies more to the North.²² The difference between the maps of the Serbs and those of the great powers was 2-9 kilometres, which Colonel Gosset could clarify during his quick visit in Belgrade.²³ Following this, the final evacuation indeed happened and 14 months after the ratification of the Treaty of Trianon, the Hungarian State finally extended its suzerainty over the whole of the lands of the Délvidék awarded to her.

After this, it was time for the “fine tuning” otherwise known as the local ascertainment of the borderlines, so that the differences from the map with the ratio of 1:1 000 000 are recorded and possible inaccuracies are corrected or to give place to the opinion of the local populace. The Border Delineating Committee started its activity on the Hungarian-Yugoslav borderline, which was divided into six sections in August 1921 and finished going around the border in May 1922. The Committee, which had both a Hungarian and a Yugoslav member beside the delegates of the five great powers, agreed that they would only turn to the League of Nations with their suggestions when both ethnical and economical questions justified a more significant change of the border. On this basis, neither the Hungarian nor the Yugoslav parties had any chance of their claims being debated in Geneva, in the League of Nations. At the same time, intense struggle started between the two parties for minimal territorial gain. Memorandums and brochures were hurled onto the members of the committee; the local population was educated how to answer the questions of the committee, however, the results were meager. The changes during the work of the committee altogether favoured Hungary. According to the finally determined borderline, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were forced to cede 34,000 acres of territory on the Hungarian-Yugoslav border until the end of May 1922 (Suba 1999, 131). The Hungarian-Yugoslav border then reached its – not taking into account the period between 1941-1944 – unchanged form to this day.

Drašković was murdered. AS a result of all this, on the 2nd August the state security decree OBZNA, which was issued in December 1920, was tightened and became a law. Gosset's report of 26th August.

²² Apart from this, the military authorities behaved in a most correct manner possible. Gosset's report of 26th August (TNA FO 371/6132 C 17180/3655/21).

²³ The Yugoslav prime minister, Nikola Pašić promised to settle the issue as soon as possible. The report of the English Ambassador William Strang to Curzon on the 29th August (TNA FO 371/6132).

Bibliography

Gergely, Ferenc és Köhegyi, Mihály 1974. *Pécs-Baranya-Baja háromszög történelmi problémái 1918-1921 között*. Baja.

Hajdu, Gyula 1957. *Harcban elnyomók és megszállók ellen*. Pécs. Pécs M.J. Város Tanácsának kiadása.

Kikiáltja a tömeg a baranyai Magyar-szerb köztársaságot 1921. «Munkás», 16th August 1921.

Krizman, Bogdan 1970. *Zapisnici sa sednica Davidovićeve dve vlade od avgusta 1919. do februara 1920*. In: «Arhivski vjesnik» XIII.

Litván, György 1978. *Károlyi Mihály levelezése I. 1905-1920*. Budapest. Akadémiai Kiadó.

Lőrincz, Péter 1962. *Emberek az embertelenségben I. rész. Válságok és erjedések (1918-1921)*. Novi Sad. Fórum Könyvkiadó.

Mitrović, Andrej 1975. *Razgraničenje Jugoslavije sa Mađarskom i i Rumunijom 1919-1920*. Prilog proučavanju jugoslovenske politike na konferenciji mira u Parizu. Novi Sad Institut za izučavanje istorije Vojvodine.

N. Szabó, Erzsébet 1981. *Angol dokumentumok a Baranya-misszió működéséről*. In: «Történelmi Szemle» 1981/4.

Suba, János 1999. *Magyarország határának kitűzése és felmérése 1921-1925 között. A határmegállapító bizottságok működése*. Budapest. MH Tájékoztatási és Médiaközpont.

Szűts, Emil 1991. *Az elmerült sziget. A Baranyai Szerb-Magyar Köztársaság*. Pécs. Pannonia Könyvek.

Archival sources and document collections

«Baranjski glasnik» (13th November 1919 and 5th September 1920).

TNA FO 371/6131 C 8948 (12th May 1921).

TNA FO371/6132 (2nd July 1921).

TNA FO371/6132 C13076. (23rd Juny 1921).

TNA FO371/6132 C 16595 (17th August, 1921).

TNA FO 371/6132 C 16620 (17th August 1921).

TNA FO371/6132 C 16708 (18th August 1921).

FO 371/6132 C 16921. (21st August 1921).

PRO FO 371/6132 C 16921 (22nd August 1921).

TNA FO 371/6132 C 17180/3655/21 (26th August 1921).