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S I A
D
K
SHS



K



To what extent does the dictatorship express the strength or weakness of the State?

T

The module is about political issues in the Kingdom of SHS during the dictatorship of King Alexander, and influence of political problems on life of ordinary people.

I address influence of political problems on life of ordinary people during the period 1929-1934. I choose this because our textbooks do not treat this issue in this manner, and because some of the problems are similar with the present.

Because the most of 20th century was the period of struggle between the freedom and dictatorship in the whole region.

L

1. The students will recognize the connection between political situation and introduction of dictatorship.

2. The students will analyze historical sources and based on an analysis formulate the conclusions.

3. The students will notice the relations between introducing dictatorship and position of common people.

A

- A critical understanding of the complex nature of the past
- Understanding of the world today
- An international mindedness
- Respect for human rights
- Historical awareness



T

STEP 1: Teacher will read an introduction, then source about the State emblems, flag, national item, map, Constitution, and the question that should lead students generally toward conclusion.

S 2: The teacher divides class in the three groups. The first group is Dictator and administration, second one is Ordinary people, and the third is Foreign representative. The students should be engaged in a role play where each group should report to the representative from the League of Nations who came to enquire about the situation in Yugoslavia.

S 3: Group work

S 4: Discussion

Each group has the same task – to fill the given chart and present the results.

Teacher can, while students are working in groups write down the proposed answers on the blackboard and while students are presenting the results of the group work to write down the results. After that students will answer to the key questions

- To what extent does the dictatorship express the strength or weakness of the State?
- Is there a difference between democracy in the past and nowadays?
- Who bears the burden of the dictatorship?



45
minutes

Step 1

Introduction:

The Kingdom of SHS was formed after the WWI, from the regions which had different heritage, developed though centuries. The differences (national, economic, cultural...) burdened new state to the point when the parliament was not only totally dysfunctional but the place of assassination of political leaders. All of this provoked King's decision to reach for the common solution in that time - the dictatorship. His explanation was that he wants to stop the chaotic situation in the country, but many perceived this decision as pure political violence.

Source 1

N

A

K

God of justice,
You have saved us from
damnation till this day;
Hear our voices from this day,
And from now be our salvation.

Our beautiful homeland,
Dear country glorious and fearful,
Our fathers' old glory,
May you be blessed forever!

Forward, the flags of glory,
To the fight blood of heroes.
For well-being of the Fatherland,
Let the rifles speak.

God save, God protect,
Our King and our people!
King Petar, God protect,*
Praying to You is all our kind!

**The third line of the last verse was
changed to "King Aleksandar, God
protect" during the reign of Alexander
I of Yugoslavia*



National symbols, Mozaik
proslosti, Bigz 2010

Source 2

M

E

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SHS



http://sh.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kraljevina_Jugoslavija, 5.03.2012.

Source 3

T V

C

¹ - A

C

K

¹ It was known under that name since it was brought on the Day of St. Vid – Vidovdan (28th June 1921)

Constitution

Article 46

"The Legislative power lies jointly with the King and the National Assembly"

Article 47

"Administrative power is exercised by the King through appropriate Ministers, as ordered herein".

Article 49

"The King verifies and proclaims the laws, appoints the state servants and assigns military ranks in accordance with the law. The King is the supreme commander of all the military force".

Article 51

"The King represents the state in all the relations with other states. The King proclaims the war and signs the peace".

Article 52

"The King summons the National Assembly (...) The king has the right to dissolve the National Assembly".

Article 55

"The King's person is untouchable. The King may not be held accountable of anything, nor can he be prosecuted. This does not apply for King's private property".

Price iz XX veka, Platoneum, 2002.

Source 1

A - B K SHS

In all the provinces there is a general demand for equality with Serbia. It is quite certain that Belgrade authorities do not have easy time negotiating with irresponsible demagogues who control the Croatian peasant masses, but centralist influences... also did not help in implementing any legislative or practical administrative reforms... and created dissatisfaction that burst out after assassinations in the Parliament last summer.

...There were 25 governments formed in Belgrade over the past 10 years, and all of them dealt with small, local politics, which happened to be the main fun and leisure in the Balkans, rather than to face the urgent problem of taking care of the situation in the country.

Zivko Avramovski, "Britanci u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji", Zagreb, 1988.

Source 2

I (B)

			Read and write			read	illiterate
Province	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	Total
Dravska	94,13%	92,41%	93,23%	1,80%	1,23%	1,23%	5,54%
Drinska	56,37%	18,56%	37,49%	0,32%	0,42%	0,40%	62,11%
Dunavska	82,03%	59,67%	70,52%	0,45%	0,77%	0,61%	28,87%
Moravska	60,76%	16,01%	37,70%	0,41%	0,27%	0,34%	61,96%
Primorska	55,48%	29,37%	42,08%	0,41%	0,51%	0,46%	57,46%
Savska	80,06%	63,78%	71,60%	0,37%	1,07%	0,73%	27,67%
Savska	80,06%	63,78%	71,60%	0,37%	1,07%	0,73%	27,67%
Vardarska	43,89%	14,32%	28,84%	0,41%	0,18%	0,30%	70,86%
Vrbaska	39,73%	13,95%	27,09%	0,38%	0,24%	0,31%	72,60%
Zetska	50,69%	16,69%	33,50%	0,51%	0,41%	0,46%	66,04%
Belgrade	92,66%	84%	88,69%	0,24%	0,68%	0,44%	10,87%
Total	67,31%	42,90%	53,83%				44,51%

Illiteracy, Ljubodrag Dimić, *Kulturna politika Kraljevine Jugoslavije 1918'1941, II, str.192*

Source 3

T K SHS

In some areas illiteracy was higher than 80%, mainly among women.

Only four year primary schools were mandatory according to valid laws

There were only three Universities in the whole state, in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana.

There were single faculties in Skopje and Subotica.

ILLITERATE	
1921	1931
51,5%	44,0%

Illiteracy, Ljubodrag Dimić, *Kulturna politika Kraljevine Jugoslavije 1918'1941, II, str.192*

Source 4

T B A K SHS 1925.

High level of lacking education in the southern provinces is the basic issue that attention is paid to, and primary schools are not opened only through governmental initiative but also by private payments by the peasants. The estimation is that there are twice as many students in schools in Bosnia and Macedonia than 7 years ago...

State initiatives, Živko Avramovski, "Britanci o Kraljevini Jugoslaviji" - godišnji izveštaji britanskog poslanstva u Beogradu- 1986, Arhiv Jugoslavije, Beograd, Globus, Zagreb

Source 5

A
P

That 20 June, 1928, Punisa Racic fired from the parliament speaker stand at: Pavle Radic, Stjepan Radic, Djuro Basaricek, Ivan Grandja and Ivan Pernar. That was the cause for introducing the dictatorship.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stjepan_, 28.03.2012

Source 6

P

D

"... The time has come when there cannot and must not be any mediators between the people and the King" "... Parliamentarism, which remained political mean, as tradition of my unforgotten father and as my ideal, has become an obstacle for any fruitful work in the country due to the abuse by blinded passions (...) Instead strengthening the spirit of national and state unity, the parliamentarism - as it is- encouraged spiritual and national divisions... (...) Therefore, I have decided to abolish the Constitution of the Kingdom SHS of 28 June 1921 (...) The National Assembly (...) is dissolved."

Price iz XX veka, Platoneum 2002.

Q :

1. What are the obstacles to develop democracy in the country with this educational structure?
2. What was the political situation in the Kingdom?
3. What did the King and the administration want to achieve?
4. What was his argument?
5. Could it be possible nowadays to establish this kind of control?

Source 1

R B

Q

Department of Secret police in Sombor

Date: 6 June 1925.

To the HQ of State Secret Police

This Department is honored to inform you the following:

On 27 January this year, on the birthday of Her Majesty the Queen Marija, Ms Roza Budaji who lives at 21 Svetozara Miletica st. refused to put the flag on her house in the name of the Celebration, but the city police, knowing she was not inclined towards Serbs, ordered her to raise the flag on her house immediately. Soon after the police left, Roza said the following: "Any scumbag comes here and we have to honor them and celebrate..."

The police passed the thing over to the State Attorney.

Rozina prica, AJ, fond 37 Milan Stojadinovic, fascikla 4.

Source 3

J

The County Court in Cacak, 31 December 1931 – Explanation of the verdict for accused Milivoje Milovanovic, Jevresin Milovanovic Kosta and Milosava Vujovic, all from Lucani, Dragacevo county.

"They are guilty for ... in intention to cause bad mood against political and social order in the country, they were spreading false claims that His Majesty the King took ten years of sick leave and the Prime-Minister Petar Zivkovic took five years of sick leave, and that both of them have left the country; by doing so they violated the public order in the country punishable according to Article 4 of the Law on protection of public safety and state order. The Court sentences them to 15 days of prison each... Besides the time sentence, there is also a fine in the amount of 100 Dinars, to the benefit of the Fund for construction and maintenance of penitentiaries..."

Explanation of the Sentence:

"For the accused Jevrem: when he was told by the accused Milivoje about HM the King and the P-M, taking the sick leave and leaving the country, he, the accused Jevrem, was not supposed to spread the rumors further but to remain silent, instead, he went to ask about it in the municipal courtroom..."

AJ, 74-12-23.

Source 2

W

Punishment for agitation – transferring, According to the document of the Ministry of Education, Department for Primary Education, 8 Nov. 1931, Belgrade

An officer of the Ministry of Interior sends a letter to the Ministry of Education, 6 Oct 1931

According to the Head of Pec county: "Aco Djukanovic, a teacher in Djumunovo selo and Rajko Jovanovic, a teacher in Vitimirica, Pec county, are not loyal to the regime, they agitate in public to the voters not to go to vote, unless there is an opposition list... I kindly ask these men to be transferred to other places, out of Pec county.

The Ministry of Education solved this problem by transferring these teachers.

According to the document of Ministry of Education, Department for primary schools, 8 Nov. 1931, Belgrade

Source 4

R

K

:

Report to the Ministry of Justice, September 1933, Belgrade "Radulovic Bosko, from Cetinje, was reported on 16 March, in the 6th grade Gymnasium classroom, during the lesson of teacher Blazo Lopivic when he was lecturing about the Sun clock and said it required a wooden stick, to have laughed ironically and showing to the picture of HM the King said: Why should we not use this picture, professor.

The incriminating act was evidenced by a written log into the Class Diary book, but considering that the suspect was punished by expulsion from all gymnasiums for all times, and that he is a minor, he was exempted from any other punishment.

AJ, fond 63, fas.br. 96/1933

Source 5

S

Report of the HQ of Posavski county, 10 Oct. 1933, Umka, to Royal Administration office in Novi Sad

"In the sense of your order of September 11, 1933, it is my honor to reveal the names of state servants who did not vote at municipal elections, or voted for opposition lists:

Katanic Bosko, teacher at primary school in Umka, voted for the opposition although he was discretely told he should help and vote for the national list... Katanic used to be a member of the Communist party and he was strongly monitored ever since...

Petkovic Ljubisa, teacher at primary school in Mislodjin, did not vote at all. During the campaign he actively worked for the opposition list. Petkovic is known to be the opponent of the regime... we ask him to be removed from the county territory...

AJ, fond 66, fas.br. 14, jed. opisa br.37

Source 6

A A T K A D

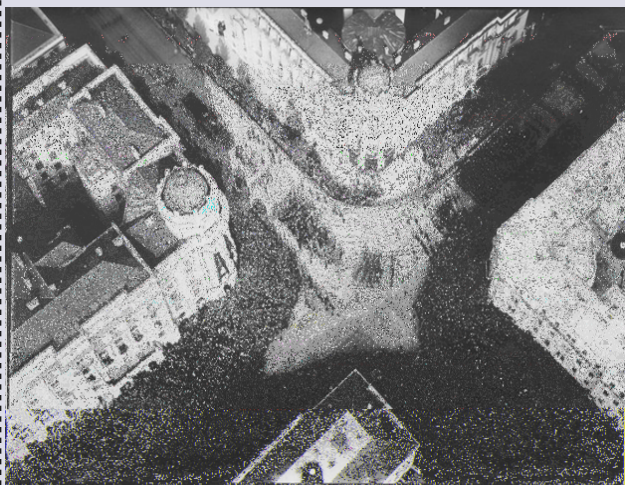
In our neighborhood there was a trader, known as the great fan of HSS (Croat Peasant Party). He often used harsh language against the regime in public. Then he would be taken to the police station, for interrogation and a bit of harassment, and then he would be released. And this repeated every once in a while. He had three sons and a daughter. His third son was born in 1929, after the assassination of Stjepan Radic and introduction of dictatorship of King Alexander.

He named the boy Alexander, to the surprise of all his acquaintances. When they asked why in the world he named his son after the hatred king, he replied simply: "So I can fu.. his mother." (which means to swear in the jargon). So the whole town laughed as he was yelling on his son and swear on him in full name. ,

Testimony of M.J. from Dubrovnik 1930's

Source 7

T F HRMA K



King's funeral, Black-white Belgrade, (5.04.2012).

Source 8

T



<http://www.pogledi.rs/diskusije/viewtopic.php?t=18563&sid=8c22c4cf298f28e689db13bd0c012b4b>

Q :

1. Why Rosa doesn't want to display the State flag?
2. Is the resistance possible if there is no education?
3. What is the position of ordinary people in the dictatorship?
4. Who was resisting?
5. Which freedoms were reduced? How did that influence the people lives?

Source 1

A

1925.

"The administration in this country is inefficient, badly organized and corrupt. While in pre-war Serbia there were 40.000 state servants, their number after the war increased to 280.000 though Yugoslavia has only three times the population of pre-war Serbia... The corruption flourishes from top to bottom level.

Zivko Avramovski, "Britanci u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji", Zagreb, 1988..

Source 2

A

1925, ...There may pass a lot of time before the unhealthy atmosphere in Belgrade vanishes, and we can hardly expect a Balkan country to adopt efficient methods of western civilization, unless there will be gradual strengthening of European culture. However, we can boldly claim that this country is better than its neighbors, both in its international relations and internal situation.

Zivko Avramovski, "Britanci u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji", Zagreb, 1988..

Source 3

E

"Europe between two world wars consisted of a total of 29 states. In 1920 all but three of these could be described as democracies. By the end of 1938, no fewer than 16 of these had had become dictatorships. Their leaders had absolute power which was beyond the constraints of any constitution.

Of the remaining 12 democracies, seven were torn apart between 1939-1940. Thus, by the late 1940, only five democracies remained intact: the United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, and Switzerland".

Dictatorships were introduced in Hungary (1920), Poland (1926), Austria (1932), Lithuania (1926), Latvia (1934), Estonia (1934), Albania (1928), Yugoslavia (1929), Bulgaria (1934), Romania (1938),

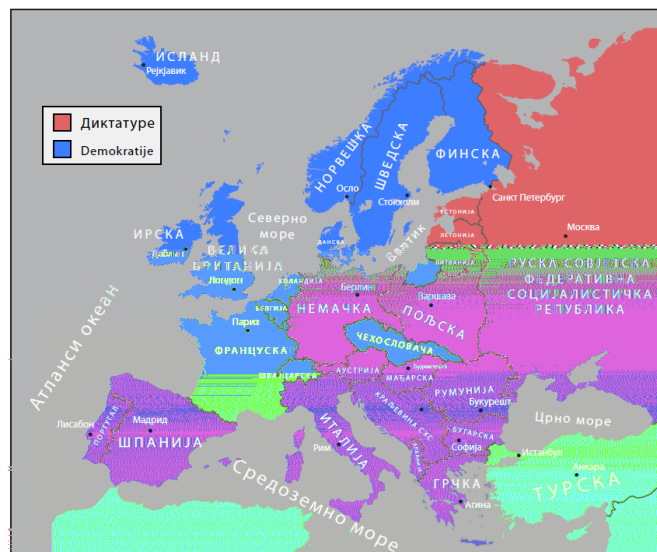
Greece (1936), Spain (1923-1929 and after the civil war), Portugal (1932).

S.J. Lee, The European dictatorship 1918-1945, London 1987, 1-3.

Source 4

T

E



Map legend

Red color shows countries which introduced dictatorship.
Blue color shows countries that remained democracies.

Source 5

R

On 5 January it will be two years since the proclamation of military-fascist dictatorship in Yugoslavia. Two years of administering without 'mediators', of direct and bloody violence of the White hand and the King, of darkness and injustice, oppression and robbing. Two years of horrible military-police terror, mass executions, Serbization and forceful creation of a single nation, denationalization and colonization, robbing of enslaved non-Serb people in Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Croatia and elsewhere... Therefore the 18 years of regime of Belgrade in Macedonia is nothing but a bloody terror of mass killings and national oppression. Thousands of Macedonians fell as victims of the authorities. Tens of thousands were arrested, suffered staged trials and tens of capital punishments against Macedonians. Schools were closed, mother tongue as banned, family names (Macedonian) were turned into Serbian. Terrible corruption and robbing are on the scene in Macedonia...

M c .128 1931, Newspapers published in Vienna by Macedonian emigrants

Q

1. How did the British ambassador see the situation in the Kingdom?
2. Which nowadays problems are similar with the problems in that period?
3. How would you solve these problems (without the dictatorship)?
4. What was the political climate in other European countries?