

**THE CROATIAN PARTY OF RIGHTS -- HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.
(Extension of Remarks - January 26, 1993)**

[Page: E157]

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

in the House of Representatives

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 1993

- Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following statement by the Croatian Party of Rights to my colleagues for their consideration:
- Croatian Party of Rights,

Zagreb, January 15, 1993.

To the American People and the U.S. Congress.

- We as leaders of the opposition Croatian Party of Rights and members of Croatian Parliament, and respectively as Vice-President of the Parliamentary Committee for Human Rights and President of the Parliamentary Committee for Petitions and Complaints, wish to inform you, the American People and your representatives in the United States Congress of further undemocratic acts being committed by the Government of the Republic of Croatia. This letter is in specific reference to upcoming parliamentary elections scheduled for Sunday, February 7, 1993, called by the Ruling Party and its President, the President of Croatia, strongman Franjo Tudjman. The sole purpose of the forthcoming elections is for the consolidation of the dictatorship President Tudjman has already created together with his henchmen.
- The February 7th elections will elect parliamentary members to a second house of Croatian Parliament. The date of the elections was only made public knowledge one month prior to the election day, leaving little time for opposition parties to organize, properly prepare and successfully get a candidate of their own on the ballot.
- The ruling party in Croatia, the Croatian Democratic Union, wrote the electoral laws governing the elections. Having majority rule in the existing one-house of Croatian Parliament via fraudulent elections held last August, it was able to pass the entire code, refusing all opposition amendments to the code. There are serious breaches of democratic principles in the existing election code, all of which lead our party to protest these elections by boycotting our participation in them.

- Irregularities in the code include: i) refusal to establish multiparty electoral overseeing commissions; ii) using a proportional electoral system (ideal for a political climate in which there are four or more significant political parties in question) under present political circumstances (one can only really speak of two or three main parties), and iii) lack of second round elections in circumstances in which it would be warranted.

Vladimir Seka, Vice-President of the Government of Croatia, recently stated that the Ruling Party has every right to choose whichever kind of election code and system it prefers. The author of the new election code, Professor Smiljko Sokol, now justifies the use of the proportional system of establishing party candidates in these elections, by saying that two parties are enough for the proportional electoral system to be used, despite the fact that he himself wrote a law textbook asserting that at least four parties are necessary to use such a system.

It is unfortunate, but we are compelled to emphasize that the situation in Croatia as regards law and democracy is far from normal, and that lawlessness very often is condoned and even initiated by the Ruling Party, particularly when the victim of this lawlessness and criminal behaviour is/are members or parties of the Opposition. The Croatian Party of Rights has done extensive work in documenting such abuses. Since Mr. Paraga's letter to the United States Congress, documented in the Congressional Record of February 11, 1992, the human rights and democracy situation in Croatia has deteriorated.

In the past year, 26 members of the Croatian Party of Rights were killed in circumstances which were not combat-related and suggest political motives and for which no official police investigations were conducted. For many of these killings, the Croatian Party of Rights has evidence which shows that members of the Croatian Police and Army were involved. In recent days, I, Mr. Paraga, was informed by high level Croatian officials that an assassination attempt against me is under preparation. This is not the first time I have been informed of such news. On September 22, 1991, the then Vice President of the Croatian Party of Rights, Ante Paradzik, was gunned down by machinegun fire in an automobile in which I too was supposed to be travelling and was not only due to a last-minute change in plans. Only days before the murder were we informed that the Government was planning our assassination.

It is the desire of the Croatian Party of Rights to further freedom and democracy in Croatia and to battle all which hinders the same. We call upon you, the American People, to appeal to your duly-elected representatives in Congress to show strength and resolve toward governments, and particularly in this case toward the Croatian Government, in demanding that inalienable democratic principles be upheld throughout the world and that no government be rewarded for using political power for opportunistic gain.

Respectfully yours,
D. PARAGA,