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July 14, 1993

The Honorable Franjo Tudjman
President, Republic of Croatia
in c/o the Embassy of the Republic
of Croatia
236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear President Tudjman:

I have taken note of some questionable occurrences that have transpired since Mr. Dobroslav Paraga returned to Croatia to appear before the military tribunal on charges of forming a paramilitary organization to overthrow the government.


It has come to my attention that Mr. Paraga was additionally charged with high treason for expressing disagreement with your Administration's policies to members of the U.S. Congress. Moreover, Mr. Paraga was stripped of his title of vice-president of the Parliamentary Committee for Human Rights and the offices of his party headquarters were taken over by government forces.

I urge you to cease and desist from the course of action you have chosen concerning Mr. Paraga. The charges he now must answer to before the military tribunal are similar to the charges he was acquitted of in 1991.

I understand that Croatia is a young nation and, as a result, must overcome several hurdles to become truly democratic. If you would like the world's positive perception of Croatia to continue, your Administration must learn to practice tolerance of the political opposition in your country. Mr. Paraga is a human rights activist who spent years in prison for his beliefs. No amount of negative publicity or political labelling can erase that underlying truth.

Therefore, once again I ask that you suspend the course of action you have chosen for Mr. Paraga. In order to demonstrate a true commitment to democracy, you and your Administration should afford Mr. Paraga the courtesy of examining his political concerns, not attempting to bury them. As a democratically-elected member of Parliament, Mr. Paraga deserves no less.

Respectfully,


James A. Traficant, Jr.
Member of Congress

cc: members of the Croatian Parliament