

Summary: Priest and politician Juraj Tomac (1866 – 1930)

Juraj Tomac was born in 1866 in Molve in Podravina, and died in the Vojni Križ in Moslavina in 1930. After completing public school, Juraj Tomac completed six grades of high school in Varaždin, and spent the last two grades of high school in the Archbishop's High School in Zagreb. After that, in 1885, he enrolled in the Faculty of Theology in Zagreb, which he completed in 1889, when he was ordained in July of that year. It is known that at the latest in his student days he accepted the national-political idea of the Party of Rights. He did not belong to the oldest generation of this party, which gathered around Ante Starčević, but entered the political scene in the first half of the 1890s, shortly before Starčević's death. At that time, within the Party of Rights, there was a dispute over the future leadership and the future political direction of the party, which culminated in a split in the party in 1895. After a brief reflection, Tomac decided in this party dispute to support the Pure Party of Rights, which was founded by Ante Starčević before his death, and which was historically stamped by Zagreb lawyer Josip Frank.

Tomac was one of the few Catholic priests in this party, which, along with the Croatian national-political program, was distinguished by a liberal worldview. That's why this party wasn't a completely natural environment for him. However, in contrast to the Pure Party of Rights, the Croatian political parties stood, which, in addition to the conciliatory political program, also conceived some of the variants of the Yugoslav national program, so Tomac sacrificed his Catholic worldview on the altar of the Croatian national-political program. Because of this, he was in the disfavor of the Yugoslav-oriented Church top of the Zagreb Archdiocese, and for twenty years as a chaplain or parish administrator he wandered the Zagreb Archdiocese without his own parish. It was not until 1908 that he was installed as a parish priest in Čuntić, and the following year, during the short-lived reception of his party at the

mercy of the regime, Tomac was given somewhat better service in the Vojni Križ, where he remained as a parish priest until his death.

With the end of the First World War, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the triumph of the Yugoslav national-political idea, Tomac became close to the Croatian Republican Peasant Party of Stjepan Radić. However, he did not leave the Croatian Party of Rights, whose program of an independent Croatian state suffered a historic defeat and which, without wider popular support, had a somewhat stronger influence only in Zagreb. At that time, the leadership of the Croatian national movement was taken over by the Croatian Republican Peasant Party, whose political program moved from a confederative to a federal arrangement of the Yugoslav state, with the Yugoslav framework for Stjepan Radić being irrefutable. Juraj Tomac also accepted this program and was politically persecuted and imprisoned in the Yugoslav state for political action on the basis of this program. After Radić's capitulation to the Belgrade regime in 1925, Tomac, disappointed, began to return to the program of the Croatian Party of Rights. In Vojni Križ, an environment that at that time, despite all of Radić's political backlashes, still simply supported Radić's party, Tomac became a political outcast. To his last rest, however, he was accompanied with the honor of a great mass of people, who remembered him as an old lawman, who once, like Peter of Amiens, enthused the people with his enthusiasm for the idea of the Party of Right.

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