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**Blind Ambitions or British Intelligence Input?: the 27 March 1941
Coup d'état in Belgrade and Yugoslav Army Officers**

The coup d'état in Belgrade carried out by the Army of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was a significant event in the development of military situation in the Balkans during the Second World War. It dragged Yugoslavia out of her neutrality as Hitler perceived it as a personal affront and the adherence of that country to the British camp and immediately ordered military invasion. This attack was carried out simultaneously with the German conquest of Greece in order to reverse the failure of Fascist Italy and to secure the southern flank of the Wehrmacht before the operation Barbarossa against the Soviet Union. Much has been written about the 27 March coup and most of it reflected the opposed views of those who took part in the military overthrow and justified their actions and those who condemned it as a foolish act that amounted to no more than national suicide. And yet, despite all the voluminous writings, including the more sober scholarly analyses, the essential question has remained obscure: what were the exact motives and considerations that propelled the senior Yugoslav officers to their fateful action? Although the ringleaders – Generals Dušan Simović and Borivoje Mirković of the Air Force – are well known as well as the manner in which the coup was executed, the knowledge about the 27 March will remain inadequate without further research into the motives and thinking of the key participants. This is exactly what this paper proposes to do. It focuses on the relations between the Serbian generals and British intelligence services which were, as has been long established, active in preparing the ground for the coup, at least as far as civil sector was concerned. Without an access to still classified British documents, based on the more careful analysis of the existing material, this paper examines the interplay between British intelligence services and Yugoslav officers in the run-up to the 27 March coup. It argues that the information fed by British agents to certain important Yugoslav officers might have influenced the army to overthrow the civilian government.