

Yugoslav Premier Ousted in Vote Led by Serbian Chief's Supporters

By CHUCK SUDETIC

Special to The New York Times

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia, Dec. 29 — Communists and nationalists combined forces in the federal Parliament today to oust Prime Minister Milan Panic. The move apparently ended the short but highly unusual political career of Mr. Panic, an American citizen who many in the West had hoped would somehow take power and end the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The overwhelming no-confidence vote in the Parliament followed the election of Dec. 20, when Mr. Panic, a Serbian-American millionaire from California, failed in his effort to unseat Yugoslavia's most powerful political leader, President Slobodan Milosevic of the Serbian republic. He was in fact routed by Mr. Milosevic in the elections.

It is one of the paradoxes that Mr. Milosevic originally supported Mr. Panic's premiership, and encouraged him to move from California, where he ran a pharmaceutical company, clearly hoping Mr. Panic, with his American ties, would persuade the United Nations Security Council to lift economic sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia in May for supporting Serbian attacks in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

But during his six-month tenure, the 63-year-old Mr. Panic consistently attacked Mr. Milosevic and other mili-

tant Serbian nationalists, calling for peace and compromise solutions to the war in Bosnia and the greater Yugoslav crisis.

At first, Mr. Panic's attacks were regarded with skepticism in the West by those who thought they were orchestrated by Mr. Milosevic. But eventually, he was taken seriously, and Washington made it clear in the last month that it was backing Mr. Panic's efforts.

Late today, Parliament voted to name Radoje Kotic, a Deputy Prime Minister in Mr. Panic's administration,

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ment and human-rights groups as a suspected war criminal.

Western diplomats said Mr. Milosevic's Socialists and the Radicals undertook Mr. Panic's ouster in an attempt to quash any possibility that the former Prime Minister might become a rallying point for people opposed to the nationalists ruling Yugoslavia.

"It cuts Panic to the ground and encourages him to move out of Yugoslavia," a diplomat said. "It also puts the icing on the cake of Milosevic's victory and takes a step toward preventing Milan Panic from becoming a rallying point for the Serbian opposition."

The successful no-confidence vote was the third serious attempt by Radical Party members to oust Mr. Panic.

Mr. Panic, who reportedly over the weekend sent home virtually his entire Serbian-American staff, traveled the

world for months lobbying for the lifting of the economic sanctions against Serbia, arguing that the former Yugoslavia's largest republic has been unfairly singled out as the guilty party in the Bosnian war and that the economic embargo is punishing everyday people instead of the Milosevic government.

The ebullient former bicycle racer, whose off-beat style and sharp humor brought smiles even to his opponents, rankled Mr. Seselj and other Serbian nationalists by becoming the first Serbian official in years to meet with the leaders of the majority ethnic-Albanian community of Kosovo, a tense region in southern Serbia whose postwar autonomy was quashed by Mr. Milosevic and his supporters.

Mr. Panic also irritated the nationalists by signaling that his Government might recognize Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina within their present

borders, a move that would create international frontiers between Serbia and the large Serbian populations in the other former Yugoslav republics.

Backed by the Yugoslav Army, Croatia's and Bosnia and Herzegovina's Serbs went to war rather than acquiesce to becoming minorities in the two countries.



Yugoslav Premier Is Ousted in Serb-Led Vote

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to head an interim Yugoslav Government.

Mr. Panic told Western reporters after the vote today that he would stay in Yugoslavia to organize intellectuals and students opposed to Mr. Milosevic and the other nationalist leaders, who have brought this country international isolation, economic chaos and threats of military intervention.

"I still have responsibility toward the country," Mr. Panic said. "We are headed toward disaster if we do not correct this."

"The country desperately needs help to reach political maturity," the former Prime Minister said. "I am planning to assist in that."

"I am going to try very hard to organize the Yugoslav intellectuals and students," he said before lashing out at parliamentary representatives from the Socialist Party of Serbia and the nationalist Serbian Radical Party, who ended his premiership in lopsided votes in both houses of Parliament today.

"The total responsibility for the failure of Panic's Government is on that Parliament," Mr. Panic said, accusing Socialists and Radicals of shackling the Government's hands. "This group

is trying to put the responsibility on me."

In a speech to Parliament's upper house today, the Radicals' leader, Vojislav Seselj, said Mr. Panic was a foreign agent who should be jailed for embezzlement and for acting against the interests of the Serbian people.

"We are convinced Mr. Panic will end up in jail," Mr. Seselj said. "Some Government members are honorable and honest, but there are also traitors, especially Milan Panic."

Encouraging Panic to Leave

Mr. Seselj, who commands a party militia that has fought in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been named by the United States Govern-