

YUGOSLAV PREMIER CONCEDES TO RIVAL

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Congratulates Hard-Line Serb on a Victory After Days of Asserting Voter Fraud

By **CHUCK SUDETIC**

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BELGRADE, Yugoslavia, Dec. 26 — After arguing for days that Serbian presidential elections held last Sunday should be voided because of fraud, Yugoslavia's Prime Minister today congratulated his opponent, Serbia's incumbent President, Slobodan Milosevic, on his overwhelming victory.

"I am convinced that the democratic process, so strongly expressed in these elections, will never be halted by anything and that it will further develop and strengthen for the benefit of the people of Serbia and Yugoslavia," the Yugoslav Prime Minister, Milan Panic, said in a telegram to Mr. Milosevic.

It was an abrupt departure from his recent tone toward Mr. Milosevic, a hard-line Serbian nationalist whom Mr. Panic assailed in the campaign as the figure bearing the bulk of responsibility for the violent break up of Yugoslavia.

The election commission in Serbia, the dominant partner in what remains of Yugoslavia, announced the final results of its presidential election late Friday, five days after the polls closed. The figures indicated that Mr. Milosevic retook the presidency with about 56 percent of the vote while Mr. Panic received 34 percent.

New Serbian Government

Opposition political leaders and Western election observers have said that fraud may have given Mr. Milosevic as much as 15 percent of his vote total. The allegations could not be independently confirmed.

Mr. Panic, a Yugoslav native who emigrated to the United States and made a fortune as a pharmaceutical magnate in California, returned to Belgrade this year at the invitation of Yugoslav lawmakers to accept the Prime Minister's post.

News reports said that Mr. Milosevic held talks on forming a new Serbian Government on Friday with Vojislav Seselj, leader of a nationalist party and militia that has forcibly deported non-Serbs from Serbia as well as Serbian-held regions of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

100 P.O.W.'s Reported Missing

ZAGREB, Croatia, Dec. 26 (Reuters) — More than 100 prisoners who were supposed to have been released this month from a notorious detention camp run by Serbs in western Bosnia and Herzegovina are still missing, Red Cross officials said today.

More than 2,000 Muslims and Croats were freed from the camp at Manjaca last week in an operation supervised by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Aid workers said at the time that 529 of the prisoners were missing. Pierre-André Conod, who directs the Red Cross in Zagreb, said today that his office had tracked down 401 of those men, to a Serbian-run camp near Bijeljina in eastern Bosnia.

In a news conference this week, Radovan Karadzic, nominal leader of the Serbian forces nationalist that now control 70 percent of Bosnia and Herzegovina, said all the missing Manjaca prisoners were still in Serbian custody.