

KOSOVO IN BRIEF

A carefully cultivated perception about Kosovo is that the region is mono-ethnic and is almost exclusively inhabited by Albanians. Albanians are the numerically dominant group there, but other nationalities live there as well. Out of an estimated population of 1.791.200, 75.5%, (or 1.227.424), are of Albanian nationality. The remaining 24.5% are Serbs, Montenegrins, Turks, Moslems, etc. Under the Yugoslav Constitution and laws, all ethnic groups have the same basic rights and duties which cannot be denied by the dominate groups or by well-positioned minorities.

The second perception that needs correction is that all Albanians live in a well-defined territory, Kosovo, the cultural character and political structures of which are somehow threatened by external forces. In fact, more than 800.000 Albanians live and work in areas outside Kosovo and can be found throughout the country. They enjoy the same rights and opportunities as all other people and contribute with their talents and skills to the progress of Yugoslavia as a whole.

The third, equally troublesome, perception, concerns the recent revisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia. Nationalist Albanian advocates in the U.S.A. made a determined effort to present these revisions as attempts to dilute the power of the Provincial authorities and, in so doing, curtail the political rights of ethnic Albanians. Assertions to that effect have no basis in fact.

The legal status and rights of the citizens of the Autonomous provinces of Yugoslavia have been defined and guaranteed by

successive constitutions of post-War Yugoslavia. Article 2 of the Federal Yugoslav Constitution defines the structure of the state (Federal) in such a way that it gives de facto and de jure the autonomous provinces (there are only two) almost identical power and rights enjoyed by the six republics. Article 4 of the Constitution clearly states that in autonomous provinces "nations and nationalities realize their sovereign rights". These "rights" are not empty slogans in Yugoslavia.

The autonomous province of Kosovo, in conformity with the Federal Constitution enacts its own laws and its own Constitution which govern all facets of daily life in the province. Like the American state constitutions, the Kosovo constitution cannot ignore Federalism or the fact that certain areas of public policy, such as foreign policy, national security, defense and the judicial system of the country cannot be exclusively determined by local authorities; they must have a broader, common denominator.

The Kosovo Autonomous Province has absolute control over all budgetary matters, including the manner in which Federal funds are utilized, sources and types of revenues to be raised, and the way in which phase sources are allocated. This allows for uninhibited exercise of power and provides the local authorities with the financial means to maintain and develop their unique culture. In sum, the Kosovo authorities had and have the right to develop their own social plan and economic blueprint, two features that are critical in shaping their culture and political structures. The Albanians of Kosovo, like their fellow citizens in the six Republics and the other autonomous province, Vojvodina, have control over the following structures: the Provincial Assembly; the Provincial Constitutional Court (its judges are selected by the provincial authorities); all provincial administrative bodies; the National Bank of Kosovo; the Provincial Office of Prosecutor. These structures are identical to those of the Republics. They have been in place since 1974 and are being re-enforced by recent revisions of the

Constitution of the Republic of Serbia. None of them have been affected, and none of the powers of Kosovo authorities have been diminished by recent revisions.

It was unclear in the 1974 charter whether citizens of an autonomous province could or could not have access to a judicial review by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Serbia, of which they were also citizens. The Kosovo authorities, who incidentally control their judicial system, interpreted the pertinent amendment of the 1974 charter in a way that denied de facto the citizens of the right to appeal above provincial level. That is a right that every other citizen of Yugoslavia enjoyed and legal scholars as well as politicians thought - and correctly so - that the citizens of Kosovo should enjoy as well, regardless of their nationality.

Because they are numerically smaller than most republics and because they are multi-ethnic in character, autonomous provinces were given proportionately larger representation in legislative, executive and Party bodies. Thus, Serbia with a population of approximately ten million people send thirty Deputies to the Federal Chamber, while Kosovo with less than two million is represented by twenty. In simple terms, the vote of a Serb is one-fifth that of an Albanian from Kosovo. The representation is skewed in favor of Kosovo in order to make Federalism a more meaningful concept, as is the case in the United States where every state, irrespective of size, elects two Senators. However, in the Provincial Parliament of Kosovo, the Albanians control over two-thirds of the seats, thus dominating the legislative process that determines cultural, budgetary/economic, judicial, security, health and other areas of public policy.

The Albanians of Kosovo have been full participants in all other levels of power. Thus, between 1978 and 1988, Albanians have occupied in various instances all top positions in the country, including the Presidency of the Federation, the Party Presidency and the Presidency of the Federal Assembly. During the past ten

years, fifteen Yugoslav Albanian nationals represented Yugoslavia in various parts of the world as Ambassadors. Four Yugoslav Albanians currently hold the rank of General in the Yugoslav military. Furthermore, Yugoslav Albanians hold top executive positions in many republics besides Kosovo. In 1988, for example, thirty-eight Yugoslav Albanians held senior executive positions (i.e. directors of federal agencies) in the Federal government. Similarly, they occupied twenty senior posts in Serbia, eighteen in Macedonia, eleven in Montenegro, and naturally, they dominate in Kosovo with one-hundred-and-seventy-one of the top two hundred positions under their control. By top positions, we mean heads of departments, directors of publishing houses, and business enterprises with branches in many parts of the world. In simple terms, and if we are to use quotas proportionate to the population, the Albanians have a much higher representation in state bodies as compared to any other ethnic group. These figures do not suggest oppression or exclusion.

The assertions concerning the "persecution" of the Albanian nationality are spread by groups of militant Albanian emigres from Albania or Yugoslavia who live in the U.S. and who are openly hostile to Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia is an open country. Many people from abroad have had the opportunity to see for themselves the state of affairs there, including that of Kosovo. The Albanians are treated equally with all other nations and national minorities in Yugoslavia. Our press has been outspoken and our public vocal in expressing our deep concerns about the sectarian conflict in Kosovo.

We have been deeply troubled by the conditions in Kosovo, not because of the mistreatment of the Albanians but because of the militant Albanian separatists' intimidation of their Serbian and Montenegrin neighbors. The militant extremists have been drawing the region into a morass of inter-ethnic violence, rejecting the national policy of ethnic equality, tolerance and reconciliation.

It is just this sort of ethnic exclusivity and hatred, violence and terrorism, that the government has been trying to prevent. Therefore, the issue of the Albanian minority in Yugoslavia is not a case of basic human rights. It is an issue of inter-ethnic and human relationship of utmost sensitivity and complexity. It involves the legacy and the failures of the past as well as deep misconceptions of the present on the part of some Albanian separatists' group in Kosovo and abroad, including in the United States.

There is also intensive, long-term, thoroughly prepared propaganda from Albania. It is aimed at fostering nationalism which suggests that current boundaries of Albania were unjustly defined and that annexation of some parts of Yugoslavia to Albania would be justifiable thus enabling all Albanians to live in one state. The Albanian nationality in Yugoslavia is being encouraged to seek secession from Yugoslavia, and support has been given to "national movement" for an "all Albanian land".

CULTURE;

Since its inception in 1943, the Yugoslav Federation has been sensitive to the cultural needs and aspirations of its peoples. Special attention has been paid to the cultural needs of nationalities (minorities). By "attention", we mean that the Federal government has made genuine efforts to provide to all nationalities the material means and legal tools by which to retain and promote their culture and ethnic identity. No other country in the world has gone to such lengths as modern Yugoslavia has, in order to protect and defend the rights and cultural heritage of its peoples. The Albanian people of Kosovo have benefited from the federal policy of cultural pluralism. The following figures give some indication of the cultural autonomy and growth of the Yugoslav Albanian community in Kosovo.

Under Albanian control and management (and utilizing the Albanian language as a matter of course) hundreds of cultural entities

function and thrive in Kosovo. Among them: four hundred public libraries with total holdings of 3.000.000 volumes, eight museums, two professional theaters, thirty-three cinemas, fifty-four professional publications and newspapers, two major dailies, two weeklies, and thirty periodicals. In addition, there are five amateur theaters, twelve archives, and one major research institute besides the University of Pristina. Kosovo ranks fourth in the world (behind the U.S., Canada and Netherlands) in the growth of University population for the period from 1980 to 1988. The University of Pristina has grown dramatically since its founding in 1969. Today it includes ten major Departments, and seven colleges. Fifty thousand students have graduated since its foundation. Teaching at the University is conducted in Albanian (as is at all levels of education). Serbo-Croatian and Turkish languages are used to accommodate the various ethnic groups and to provide means for social and political integration - a process that no one can dictate or control. The University of Pristina has an enrollment of thirty-nine thousand students, while a total of six hundred thousand students are enrolled in primary and secondary institutions and professional schools. One in a three Yugoslav Albanians is currently enrolled in some type of educational institution, learning and studying in his own language and sharing in the progress of Yugoslavia. It must be noted that educational policies in Kosovo are determined by the Kosovo authorities, in other words, by Yugoslav Albanians. Two Albanian-controlled publishing houses print an impressive number of titles annually. A total of 12 magazines and newspapers are published in Albanian in Kosovo, including children's periodicals. Albanian language newspapers and magazines are also published wherever there is a market for readers. Two such papers are published in Titograd and four in Skopje.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS;

As indicated above, the Federal governments do not and cannot dictate the course of social, economic, and cultural policies in Kosovo. Social issues, economic planning, demographic trends,

local security etc., fall squarely within the jurisdiction of the Kosovo/Albanian authorities. Family planning illustrates the role that ethnic culture and traditions play in Kosovo. Birth rates among Albanians far exceed the national average, being the highest in Europe. This, of course, has a direct impact on the standard of living and on economic development in Kosovo. The high rate of population growth of 24.5 per million in Kosovo, as compared to 3.9 in Croatia and 8.9 over all, effectively cancels out the impact of Federal investments which, per capita, are the highest in the country. Between 1981 and 1985, a total of 105.6 billion dinars in Federal funds have been invested in Kosovo. Currently, an equivalent of U.S. \$ 1,450,000 in Federal funds is being invested every day in the Albanian-inhabited regions. As the statistics show, the growth of the Albanian population in Kosovo exerts a direct influence on the standard of living and can only be explained in cultural terms. In 1921 the Albanian population of Yugoslavia was 3.45% of the total population; in 1948, that ratio had increased to 4.8%; in 1971 the Albanian percentage of the population increased to 7.7% or double the percentage of 1921. It took thirty-eight years for the Albanian population in Yugoslavia to double (1921 - 1959); it doubled again in 22 years and it is expected to double once again in approximately fifteen years.

On the other hand non-Albanian nationalities have been exposed for years to violence and cruel attacks. Their lives and property have been jeopardized constantly. Under such pressure almost fifty thousand Serbs and Montenegrins left their homes and emigrated from Kosovo since 1980. These human tragedies contributed to further changes in demographic structure of the Province.

KOSOVO IN FIGURES

Population of the SAP Kosovo (national make-up):

- Albanians	1.227.424	or	75.5 per cent
- Serbs	209.792	or	13.0 per cent
- Montenegrins	26.875	or	1.7 per cent
- Turks	12.578	or	0.8 per cent
- Moslems	58.948	or	3.7 per cent
- Romanies (Gypsies)	34.731	or	2.2 per cent
- Others	15.787	or	1.1 per cent

Employment

Total number of employed workers (March 31, 1987)	224.527
Workers in productive activities (March 31, 1987)	167.520

Education

Enrolled high school student (1987/88)	84.270
University students enrolled in the academic year 1987/88	38.951

Culture

Museums	8
Professional theaters	2
Archives	12
Libraries	400
Dailies	2
Weeklies	2
Periodicals	30