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## M E M O R A N D U M

FROM: Helen Delich Bentley  
RE: Background on Yugoslavia  
DATE: October 3, 1990

In view of the critical events developing in Yugoslavia, these are the points we must consider:

Prior to WWII more than half of the population in Kosovo was Serbian. These people were descendants of the original settlers dating back to the Ninth Century (authenticated by monasteries, cemeteries, and other historical markers).

During WWII and in the years immediately following, Tito invited Albanians to enter Kosovo, settle there, and drive out the Serbs using rape, arson, looting, and other tactics to accomplish the goal.

In recent years, the Serbs in Kosovo have fled for their lives in the wake of repeated beatings, rapes, destruction of farms, and desecration of churches. Much of this damage can be attributed to militant Albanian youths.

Albanians have destroyed numerous ancient and historical churches that are Serbian. This has been done in order to dilute the claim that Kosovo is Serbian.

The Serbians and Montenegrins were the only Southern Slavs to side with the Allies and the United States in both WWI and WWII. Serbia sacrificed more than one million people in WWII. Meanwhile the Albanians were allied with the Axis powers until the last events of WWII.

The Serbian people experienced a wretched time during WWII when Nazi Germany conquered the Yugoslavs. German overlords propped up an independent Croatia national state. Atrocities committed against the Serbs by the fascist Croatia Ustashi were numerous, (including the murder of as many as one million out of the pre-war population of eight million Serbs), It can be said that the Serbian Holocaust is among the worst genocides in history.

Serbia is the only Republic of Yugoslavia that had two autonomous regions carved out of it by the Yugoslav Constitution of 1974. Tito spared Croatia from the carving out of an autonomous region of Lika to recognize the large Serbian minority living there, or an autonomous region of Istria to recognize the large Italian minority living there.

It should be noted that in the Republic of Croatia, Serbs are denied the use of their Cyrillic alphabet, a full education, and other cultural benefits.

The Toronto Star has stated that Croatia's first democratically elected government intends to employ secretly trained Croatian units to terrorize certain members of their community.

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In the Kosovo Province, a high birthrate among the mostly Moslem Albanians and a mass exodus of Serbs have created an Albanian majority.

There are almost as many Albanians living in Yugoslavia as in Albania, and 90% of the Albanians in Yugoslavia are Moslems who are able to practice their religion freely in Yugoslavia but not in Albania.

Albanians in Yugoslavia enjoy the same civil and human rights as all other Yugoslavs and have infinitely more freedom in Yugoslavia than the Albanians in Albania, the last Stalinist state in Europe.

The largest and most modern library and repository of Albanian literature and culture is in Pristina, Yugoslavia, not in Albania.

Albanian is a legal language in the Kosovo Province, and all Albanian children there attend Albanian language schools through university. Pristina is one of the largest universities by population in all of Europe.

An Albanian has served as President of Yugoslavia. There are twenty Albanian generals in the Yugoslav army and fifteen Albanian ambassadors in the Yugoslav diplomatic corps.

The Yugoslav Federal Government requested ethnic Albanians to declare themselves in favor of the integrity of Serbia and of Yugoslavia and to endorse the Government's policy of free market economy and multiparty democracy. Instead, the Albanians declared secession of Kosovo from the Republic of Serbia, rejected the registration of their new parties within Serbia and registered them at the Federal level.

We Members of Congress and Senators need to agree whether Yugoslavia should remain united and if so, must work to support the territorial integrity of the region.

We must maintain the mutual friendship between the U.S. and Yugoslavia, whereby not fostering any notions of separatism.

We must use extreme caution to avoid the appearance of tilting for or against any ethnic group and look at human rights abuses in Yugoslavia as a whole.