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YUGOSLAVIA
The Uncertain Future of Central Europe's Most Diverse Country

On June 25, 1991, Croatia and Slovenia, two of the six federal republics of Yugoslavia, declared themselves independent. Their action was immediately denounced by federal authorities, who called on the army to intervene. Until a cease-fire was declared on July 7, 1991, fierce fighting claimed the lives of a number of people as the Serbian-dominated federal Yugoslav army struggled to regain control of Slovenia. (See the Republican Policy Committee "Issue Alert" of June 25, 1991, for details.)

While a fragile European Community-brokered peace currently holds, and the federal army has been returned to its barracks, scattered ethnic violence continues.

This latest crisis involves complex political, ethnic, historical, and religious factors that joined to create Yugoslavia in 1918— and which may destroy it in 1991. This Policy Analysis will go beyond the headlines to examine these factors and the possible impact on the region.

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Introduction

During the period known as the "Revolution of 1989," all of the countries of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact saw the collapse of old-style communist regimes. The former East Germany is now part of the Federal Republic of Germany. In Poland, Solidarity's Lech Walesa, imprisoned by the communists in 1981, is now the country's president. In Czechoslovakia, playwright Vaclav Havel became president only a few months after his release from jail for his anti-communist activities. The Hungarian Democratic Forum took power after elections in March 1990. In Bulgaria, democrats and reform communists coexist in an uneasy coalition, with a non-communist president. And in Romania, dictator Nicolae Ceausescu went before a firing squad in December 1989 and was replaced with reform communist Ion Iliescu [ee-ON ee-lee-ESS-koo] — with the strength of the democratic opposition continuing to build. On April 1, 1991, the Warsaw Pact ceased to exist as a military alliance, and its formal dissolution as a political organization was announced July 1.

Not a member of the Warsaw pact, Yugoslavia's independent communist course has been a linchpin of U.S. policy in the region since Yugoslavia's late dictator, Josip Broz Tito, broke with Stalin in 1948. Yugoslavia was supported by the United States for strategic reasons as a counterweight to the Warsaw Pact. With the spread of democracy through Eastern Europe, the strategic situation changed.

The spread of democracy in Yugoslavia, however, has been uneven. In the republics of Slovenia and Croatia, free elections were held in the spring of 1990. In both republics, the communists lost overwhelmingly to noncommunist parties with platforms supporting democracy and free market economics. Noncommunist democratic governments were also elected in the fall of 1990 in the republics of Bosnia-Hercegovina and Macedonia. In December 1990, elections were held in the republics of Serbia and Montenegro; in those two republics, hardline communists renamed "socialists" held on to power (the elections in Serbia did not live up to international standards of free and fair elections; see *The 1990 Elections in the Republics of Yugoslavia*, the National Republican Institute's reports of the election observer delegations to Yugoslavia). Moreover, because of differences between the republics on the future of Yugoslavia, elections were not held at the federal level. While there are reformers in the central government, the continued presence of communists in the bureaucracy has limited its effectiveness. Thus, severe political divisions are woven into the vast ethnic, cultural and religious differences that we see in Yugoslavia.

Events of recent weeks in Yugoslavia reflect this struggle between democratic forces and communist hardliners. Since the 1990 elections in Yugoslavia there has been a political tug-of-war between the four democratic republics and the two communist republics. On the matter of Yugoslavia's future the republics have negotiated since the fall of 1990; the four democratic republics have sought, to varying degrees, to move away from the centralized federal arrangement that exists today and toward greater decision making power at the republic level. These negotiations have yielded no results as the government of Serbia has refused to compromise on its position in favor of greater centralization at the federal level. To strengthen its position in these negotiations, for six weeks, beginning last May 15, Serbia blocked the rotation of the federal Presidency to the next representative in line for the chairmanship — a noncommunist. As a result of this impasse, the republics of Slovenia and Croatia made plans to move toward independence in response to earlier referendums on sovereignty which were supported by a 9-1 margin. On June 25, 1991, Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence and the Yugoslav Army responded using force.

This political struggle is superimposed on a history of ethnic tensions and conflict between the largest group, the Serbs, and the Croatians, as well as the two million Albanians in the province of Kosovo. While ethnic tensions were more repressed under the rule of late communist dictator Josip Broz Tito and the communist regime that followed Tito and ruled until the 1990 elections, today we see open conflict in Croatia, where a part of the Serb minority has armed itself and declared itself independent from rule by the Croatian government, and in Kosovo, where Serbian domination over the majority Albanian population has been established via police state rule by communist Serb authorities.

Yugoslavia And Its Collapsing Federal System

Country Description

Yugoslavia is the largest country by area in the Balkan Peninsula, occupying 99,000 square miles, about the size of Wyoming. Its population of approximately 24 million makes it the second most populous country in Central Europe, after Poland (38 million) and before Romania (23 million).

The Balkan Peninsula lies in the southeast of Europe, bounded by the Black, Aegean, and Adriatic Seas; it includes the states of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia, plus the European portion of Turkey. Located across the Adriatic Sea from Italy, Yugoslavia borders on seven countries (listed clockwise, starting in the northwest): Italy, Austria, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Albania.

Yugoslavia's capital is Belgrade [BELL-grad], also the capital of Serbia, with 1.7 million inhabitants. Other major cities include Zagreb [ZAH-greb; capital of Croatia, population 700,000], Skopje [SCOPE-yeh; capital of Macedonia; 500,000], Sarajevo [sah-rah-YEH-vo; capital of Basnia-Hercegovina; 400,000], and Ljubljana [lyoob-LYAH-nah; capital of Slovenia, 300,000].

Yugoslavia's official name is the "Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia." The name "Yugoslavia" itself means "Land of the South Slavs," from the Serbo-Croatian word *jug* [YOOG], meaning "south." With the exception of the Albanians, all the major Yugoslav ethnic groups are Slavs. Slavic is a group in the Indo-European language family, which also includes the Germanic group (English, German, Swedish, etc.) and the Romance group (Italian, Spanish, Romanian, etc.). Linguistically, the Yugoslavs are most closely related to the Bulgarians, who are also South Slavs, as well as to the West Slav nationalities (Poles, Czechs) and East Slavs (Russians, Ukrainians).

Yugoslavia was founded in December 1918 as the "Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes," from a union of the previously independent state of Serbia with the Slav-inhabited parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The country was renamed "Kingdom of Yugoslavia" in 1929, and was reorganized as a federal republic after the World War II communist takeover.

A Multi-Ethnic Federal State

Yugoslavia is organized as a federal state, which is described below as it existed at the time of Slovenia's and Croatia's June 25 declarations. The federal subdivisions (republics and autonomous provinces) are drawn roughly according to ethnicity, with several notable exceptions. Yugoslavia

has often been summed up as a country consisting of six republics, five nationalities, four languages, three religions, two alphabets, and one political party. While the actual situation is far more complex, these elements provide a convenient starting point for a basic understanding of Yugoslav diversity.

The Six Federal Republics

The six federal republics are Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Slovenia, Macedonia, and Montenegro. As noted earlier, two of these republics, Slovenia and Croatia, declared their independence on June 25, 1991.

There are, in addition, two autonomous provinces, Kosovo (called Kosova by the Albanians) and Vojvodina. Each of the six republics and two autonomous provinces has a seat in the Yugoslav collective presidency. Officially part of the Serbian republic, the two provinces were created as autonomous areas for two non-Serbian groups, the Albanians in Kosovo (who now make up about 90 percent of the province's population) and the Hungarians in Vojvodina (who constitute over 20 percent of the province's population, which is more than 50 percent Serbian). However, the autonomous status of the provinces was ended by the Serbian republic in 1990, with both now under the direct rule of Belgrade.

The Five Major Nationalities

The five major nationalities are the Serbs (41 percent of Yugoslavia's total population), the Croats (20 percent), the Slovenes (8 percent), the Macedonians (6 percent), and the Albanians (8 percent).

The Montenegrins, who have their own republic, are ethnic Serbs. Also, since 1969 Muslims in the central region of Bosnia have been considered a separate nationality, constituting about 9 percent of Yugoslavia's population. However, except for their religion they are ethnically indistinguishable from Serbs or Croats, who tend to claim them, respectively, as Muslim Serbs or Muslim Croats.

In general, the major ethnic groups are concentrated in their own republics: Serbs in Serbia, Croats in Croatia, etc. However, there are significant minorities scattered around the country, which would make any future partition difficult. For example, Serbs make up about 12 percent of Croatia's population, Montenegro is about 20 percent Albanian and Bosnian Muslim, and well over 20 percent of Macedonia is ethnically Albanian. The province of Kosovo is 90 percent Albanian. In the republic of Bosnia-Hercegovina, no single group predominates, with the population about 40 percent Bosnian Muslim, 32 percent Serbian, and 18 percent Croatian.

In addition, Yugoslavia encompasses smaller groups of Hungarians, Gypsies, Turks, Slovaks, Romanians, Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Italians, and Germans. About 5 percent of the population, including some of mixed ethnic background, identifies itself simply as Yugoslav.

The Four Languages

The four major languages are Serbo-Croatian, Slovenian, Macedonian, and Albanian. Serbs (including Montenegrins), Croats, and Bosnian Muslims speak Serbo-Croatian, the main vehicle of communication; it is often referred to simply as Serbian or Croatian depending on the nationality of the speaker.

Slovenes speak Slovenian, a language closely related to Serbo-Croatian. Macedonians speak Macedonian, which has similarities to both Bulgarian and Serbo-Croatian. Albanians speak Albanian, a non-Slavic Indo-European language. Thus, Serbs, Croats, and Bosnian Muslims can communicate with one another in their own language; Slovenes and Macedonians can communicate with Serbo-Croatian speakers only with some difficulty. Of the major Yugoslav languages, only Albanian is sufficiently foreign so as to be completely unintelligible to speakers of the other major tongues.

The Three Religions

The three religions are Orthodox Christian (about 40 percent of the population), Roman Catholic (30 percent), and Muslim (20 percent). Despite almost a half century of communist rule, religion remains strong among all groups, both in belief and as a focus of social and ethnic identification. Serbs (including Montenegrins) and Macedonians are Orthodox Christians (i.e., also called Eastern Orthodox, such as Bulgarians, Greeks, etc.). Croats and Slovenes are Roman Catholics. Bosnian Muslims and almost all the Albanians adhere to the Islamic faith.

The Two Alphabets

The two alphabets in wide use are Cyrillic and Latin. Generally speaking, Serbs (including Montenegrins) write Serbo-Croatian in the Cyrillic alphabet, similar to that used to write Russian and Bulgarian. Croats write Serbo-Croatian in the Latin alphabet (i.e., same as that used to write English). Macedonian is written in a variant of Cyrillic, similar to those of Serbian and Bulgarian. Slovenian and Albanian are written in Latin script. In addition, there has reportedly begun an effort among Bosnian Muslims to revive use of Arabic script, which was used under the Ottoman Empire, as a symbol of their Islamic identity.

The Political Party

The one legal political party, until its fragmentation in 1990, was the communist party. Since then, numerous parties have sprung up, many of them representing ethnic or regional interests, and covering the full political spectrum.

The Federal Structure

The Yugoslav federal system, like that of the Soviet Union, is based on overlapping federal and republic structures designed as a front for the real power: a unified, country-wide communist party. In Yugoslavia, the communist party was in turn completely dominated from World War II until his death in 1980 by dictator Josip Broz Tito.

With Tito's death came full implementation of a revised constitution, adopted in 1974, granting greater powers to the six republics at the expense of the federal government. In addition, the 1974 constitution raised Serbia's two autonomous provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina, to a status comparable to that of the republics, although Serbia now exercises direct rule over both. After 1980, federal institutions became progressively enfeebled, with power devolving to the eight subdivisions.

Disintegration of the Ruling Communist Party

Breakdown of the federal government has gone hand-in-hand with a parallel and mutually debilitating process in the ruling communist party, whose official title was the "League of Communists of Yugoslavia" (LCY). The LCY, a national aggregation of nine constituent parties (for the eight republics and autonomous provinces, plus the armed forces, each of which had its own communist party), deteriorated throughout the 1980s, leading to final disintegration in January 1990 after its final national congress. Each republic's party became independent of the others, and some (like the communist party of Serbia, which remains the most powerful) have changed their names to "socialist" in an effort to compete with the emerging noncommunist parties.

The Economy: Socialist Malaise Plus Inter-Republic Conflict

As both the federal government and the LCY have fallen apart, each of the eight federal subdivisions has implemented its own economic policy, often waging what amounts to trade wars with the others. Thus, in addition to the socialist malaise familiar in Eastern Europe, the Yugoslav economy has suffered from civil war in the economic sphere. Yugoslavia is a country of wide income disparity; per capita income in Slovenia, for example, is roughly seven times that of such impoverished areas as Kosovo, Montenegro, or Macedonia.

Ironically, as recently as last year, Yugoslavia appeared one of the more promising economic cases in the region. Based on the federal government's plan, inflation fell from an annual rate of 2,665 percent in December 1989 to two-tenths of one percent in June 1990. The Yugoslav dinar was made freely convertible into Western currency. In comparison to other countries in the region, Yugoslavia had both a healthy export market and an income level capable of supporting the domestic market. [*The New York Times*, 4/20/91, p. 33]

But as the republics went their own way on economic policy, progress reversed. Dinar convertibility was withdrawn and the currency has been repeatedly devalued in 1991. Hundreds of thousand of workers have not been paid (particularly in Serbia), unemployment is over 15 percent, strikes are endemic, and industrial output, which dropped 18.2 percent in 1990, continues downward. [*NYT*, 4/20/91, p. 33] The economic decline can be expected to accelerate with the initiation of military hostilities.

The federal authorities have primarily blamed the republics of Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Slovenia for undermining its economic program by pursuing independent economical policies. Serbia's president campaigned in 1990 on a platform of preserving jobs and opposing privatization. Croatia, whose government is committed to a free market, has nonetheless nationalized key industries in the republic as a temporary measure.

The Serbian economy is near collapse, with industrial production dropping 21 percent in the first three months of 1991. Serbia has led the inter-republic trade war, boycotting goods from Slovenia and imposing punitive taxes on goods from both Slovenia and Croatia.

Croatia's industrial production fell 28 percent from June 1990 to June 1991 [*The Washington Post*, 6/15/91, p. A17]. Tourism on Croatia's Adriatic coast, which accounts for some 80 percent of Yugoslavia's tourist earnings, is nearly dead, with foreigners staying away for fear of violence and Serbs boycotting the area. For their part, the Croats have slapped a punitive tax on Serbian vacation property in Croatia.

In short, Yugoslav federalism was once a facade for Tito's communist dictatorship. Now, it has become the decrepit framework of a country sinking into political and economic ruins. The secession of Slovenia and Croatia may mark the final phase of the system's breakdown.

A Presidency But No President

Formally, Yugoslavia is headed by a unique eight-member collective presidency, in which representatives of the six republics and two autonomous regions rotate a one-year chairmanship as head of state. The office has become increasingly dysfunctional, reflecting disagreements among the federal subdivisions. The presidential office fell into complete chaos in 1991 with the resignation on March 15 of then-chairman Borisav Jovic [BOR-ee-sahv YO-veech] of the Serbian republic, over his colleagues' refusal to declare martial law to repress Croatia and Slovenia. He was supported by Slobodan Miloševic [SLOW-bo-dan mee-LOH-sheh-veech], president of the Serbian republic and leader of forces trying to perpetuate Yugoslavia as a communist-led federation, who said he no longer recognized the authority of the federal presidency. [*The Wall Street Journal*, 3/18/91 p. A1]

However, after several days Jovic withdrew his resignation, and the presidency — such as it was — limped along until Jovic's term expired on May 15. Then, Jovic and Miloševic, with the help of the representatives of ally Montenegro and puppets Kosovo and Vojvodina, blocked the scheduled installation of Croatia's representative, Stipe Mesic [STEE-peh MEH-seech], who would have been Yugoslavia's first noncommunist president. Thus, from mid-May through June, nobody was president. However, on July 1, Mesic was finally installed as chairman.

The Army: Spearhead for Repression

The Slovenian and Croatian declarations of independence prompted immediate calls for intervention by the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA), which engaged in combat with Slovenian militia on June 27. One effect of the May-June disarray in the federal presidency was to further cloud the YPA's role, since constitutionally the eight-member presidency is the collective commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The YPA, consisting of about 180,000 men (of whom over 100,000 are conscripts) has been an increasingly visible element in Yugoslav politics, taking its political line from Miloševic in favor of continued tight federalism under communist control.

While the YPA officially depoliticized itself in December 1990 by disbanding the armed forces branch of the LCY, a successor party called the League of Communists-Movement for Yugoslavia (LC-MY) was founded the same month. Unlike the LCY, the LC-MY stresses that it is a voluntary organization. It is closely allied to Miloševic's Socialist Party of Serbia. On the other hand, four republics (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, and Macedonia) have favored completely prohibiting politics in the YPA, including a ban on political organizations such as the LC-MY.

Earlier in 1991, the YPA appeared ready to assume the lead role in suppressing Slovenia and Croatia, issuing ultimata for the disarming of republic militias and arresting a number of Croatian officials for non-compliance. However, in recent months the YPA had seemed less eager to actively intervene in politics, although that has apparently changed in light of the June 25 declarations. This may reflect in part problems in the YPA itself. It is often stressed that some 70 percent of the YPA's commissioned and noncommissioned officers are ethnic Serbs. But the ranks reflect the country's diversity, leading to some questions about the army's reliability in quelling ethnic movements. For example, ethnic Albanians are particularly numerous in the YPA, which could make the army of dubious utility against Albanians in Kosovo province.

Throughout the crisis, control of the YPA has been in question. Seemingly independent of civilian control, the army has taken a harder line toward the Slovenes and Croats. Army Chief of Staff General Blagoje Adzic [BLAH-go-yeh AH-jeech], an ethnic Serb, is widely regarded as the YPA's key hardliner.

Other Elements in the Federal System

In addition to the presidency, the government is headed by a prime minister and council of ministers, responsible to a bicameral federal assembly, which is still subject to strong communist control. The unelected LCY-appointed head of the current government is Prime Minister Ante Markovic [AHN-teh MAR-koh-veech], an ethnic Croat who has been an advocate of market reforms while preserving Yugoslavia as a federation.

Finally, the six federal republics and two autonomous provinces, each with its own state president, legislature, and administrative apparatus, for most purposes act independently of the federal government. As the federal government has degenerated, the republics have moved to center stage.

The Six Republics: Three Views of Yugoslavia's Future

During 1990, all six republics held elections, contested by a variety of parties. Governments with three distinct political views emerged, pairing (1) noncommunist governments in Slovenia and Croatia as advocates of a looser, confederal system; (2) communist governments in Serbia and Montenegro as advocates of a continued close federation; and (3) noncommunist governments in Macedonia and Bosnia-Hercegovina as advocates of a middle-of-the-road course. Each of these is examined in greater detail below.

Slovenia and Croatia: For a Looser Confederation

In Slovenia and Croatia, parties advocating democracy and free market principles received the strongest support in the 1990 elections. These republics have demanded the conversion of Yugoslavia from a federal state into a looser confederation of sovereign states, more similar to a Balkan version of the European Community or the Benelux union (Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg) than a single country. Despite their June 25 independence declarations, both republics have emphasized their continued willingness to negotiate a confederal relationship with the other republics.

Previously, each republic had set a date (Slovenia on June 26, and Croatia on June 30, 1991) upon which it would secede from Yugoslavia unless a satisfactory arrangement were reached with the other republics. Observers believe the secession date was advanced to June 25 in part to catch Serbia and the federal authorities off guard. Overwhelming majorities in both Croatia and Slovenia had approved "sovereignty" for their republics in referenda. In addition, both republics consider the existing republic borders to be permanent and not subject to revision.

The leading figure in Croatia is President Franjo Tudjman [FRAHN-yo TOOJ-mahn], a former general and associate of Tito until the 1970s, when he was arrested and jailed for political dissent. He is leader of the center-right Croatian Democratic Union, the largest political party. Croatian President Tudjman offered a vice presidential slot to the head of the largest Serbian party, but this offer was rejected. At present, only some of the Serbian representatives to the Croatian parliament

are participatory. After a year in office, Tudjman has a mixed record on media liberalization and privatization of the economy.

The most prominent figure in Slovenia is President Milan Kucan [MEE-lahn KOOCH-ahn] of the renamed republic branch of the LCY, the League of Communists-Party of Democratic Reform, who first called for elections while he was in the LCY. The Slovenian Prime Minister, Lojze Peterle [LOZH-eh PEH-ter-leh], represents the largest political group, the Democratic-United Opposition of Slovenia (DEMOS).

Serbia and Montenegro: For Continued Federation

In the 1990 elections, Serbia and Montenegro returned the communist party to power. Election observers in Serbia expressed concern that the campaign environment, especially media coverage, was controlled by the communists, renamed the "Socialist Party of Serbia." A delegation from the National Republican Institute for International Affairs concluded that "the campaign environment could not be characterized as either fully free or fair." [See *The 1990 Elections in the Republics of Yugoslavia*, National Republican Institute for International Affairs, pp. iii, 7-25.] In a June 24 letter, Secretary Baker noted "serious flaws" in the Serbian electoral process, citing the expenditure of an estimated $1.8 billion in public funds to help the Socialists' electoral position.

Through his adroit manipulation of Serbian ethnic concerns, Serbian president Miloševic was able to garner a 65 percent majority in a crowded field. This was significantly larger than the 48 percent share won by Socialist candidates for the legislature, where the opposition parties collectively tallied a slim majority of votes cast. However, due to the number of parties and an election boycott by Albanian voters in Kosovo, the Socialists won 194 seats in the 250-seat legislature.

In Montenegro, the League of Communists, which is closely tied to the Serbian Socialists, won handily. Both Serbia and Montenegro take the view that Yugoslavia should be preserved roughly in its pre-June 25 form. However, if the federation is ultimately dissolved, both republics have insisted on the need to redraw the current borders so that the large Serbian population in Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina will be in Serbia, not under Croatian or Muslim rule.

Hard-line leader of the renamed communist party, Miloševic is the key figure in Serbia. He initiated policies of repression in Kosovo, and has advocated martial law as a response to Croatian/Slovenian moves. There is no one of comparable stature in Montenegro, whose president is Monir Bulatovic [MOM-eer boo-LAH-toe-veech].

Macedonia and Bosnia-Hercegovina: For Compromise

Macedonia and Bosnia-Hercegovina elected governments dominated by non-communists, which have advocated a position between a loose alliance of sovereign states and a tight federation. The two republics' willingness to compromise tends towards agreement with the Croatian and Slovenian position, as represented by a June 6 joint proposal by Macedonia and Bosnia-Hercegovina for "a loose confederation of independent republics." [*WP*, 6/7/91] Their caution reflects the unique circumstances in each republic.

For example, in Bosnia-Hercegovina's 240-seat legislature, a party representing Muslim interests won the most seats (86), with a pro-Serbian party second (72), and a pro-Croatian party third (44); all three favor a free-market economy and democracy. A division of Yugoslavia,

especially one resulting in conflict between Serbia and Croatia, could turn Bosnia-Hercegovina into a battleground; there have reportedly been suggestions by both Serbs and Croats to divide Bosnia-Hercegovina into ethnic districts or "cantons." However, the official policy of the Tudjman government is that present republic borders should be maintained. In any case, there is little popular support in the republic for continued communist rule.

In Macedonia's 120-seat legislature, the parliamentary division reflects the republic's ethnic divisions. The largest share (37 seats) was won by a Macedonian ethnic party advocating a sovereign Macedonia in a possible association with historically Macedonian areas of neighboring Greece and Bulgaria. However, reform communists advocating continuation of the Yugoslav federation garnered 31 seats, and a party representing ethnic Albanians filled 25 seats.

While there is a strong support for a sovereign or even independent Macedonia, Serbia would object and Macedonia could become the subject of claims by Greece and Bulgaria. On the other hand, both Macedonians and Albanians object to continued central rule from Belgrade, especially by a communist government. And in general, the majority Slavic, Christian population, whether holding Macedonian nationalist or pro-Serbian political views, is increasingly concerned about the growing Albanian Muslim population.

No single figure in either Bosnia-Hercegovina or Macedonia stands out like Serbia's Miloševic, Croatia's Tudjman, or Slovenia's Kucan. The president of Bosnia-Hercegovina is Alija Izetbegovic [ah-LEE-yah ee-zet-BEH-go-veech]. The president of Macedonia is Kiro Gligorov [KEE-ro GLEE-gore-ov].

The Province of Kosovo

About two million Albanians and 200,000 Serbs reside in the Province of Kosovo. The capital of Kosovo is Pristina. Kosovo's economy is largely rural.

Events in the Province of Kosovo brought Yugoslavia into the news headlines in 1989. In 1989, the Milosevic government began its brutal crackdown against the two million Albanians in Kosovo which resulted in the deaths of over 30 people in January 1990 alone (see Human Rights section, p. 12) and the imposition of martial law. Key Albanian human rights activists are Veton Suroi and Azem Vlassi — both of whom have been arrested and imprisoned on several occasions over the past two years.

One of the largest democratic opposition parties in Yugoslavia is the Democratic Alliance of Kosovo led by Dr. Ibrahim Rugova [EEB-rah-heem roo-GO-vah]. The Democratic Alliance advocates non-violent means of protest and has as its major political objective the achievement of republic status for Kosovo. In July 1990 the Assembly of Kosovo was suspended, effectively eliminating the self-rule that the province enjoyed until that point under the 1974 Yugoslav constitution. This was one of the factors underlying the Albanian boycott of the December 1990 Serbian elections. Moreover, with the suspension of the Kosovo Assembly, the Serbian Assembly elected the Kosovo representative to the federal presidency, and thus Albanian input has been eliminated from the federal process. In addition, since the negotiations on the future structure of Yugoslavia have been among the republics, the Albanians are not represented there either.

The Complicated Interplay Among the Republics

Superficially, the political lineup by republic breaks down into a "2+2+2" standoff. However, the real power wielded by each grouping is uneven, owing to complicating factors.

Possible Turmoil in the Two "Neutral" Republics

Even though Bosnia-Hercegovina and Macedonia have occupied a compromise position between advocates of confederation (Slovenia and Croatia) and federation (Serbia and Montenegro), their future course is uncertain. With secession by Croatia and Slovenia, there could be an effort to forge an alliance between Bosnia-Hercegovina's Muslims and Croats, an alignment that had already emerged in the republic's legislature. Similarly, if the Yugoslav federation comes apart completely in the wake of the Slovenian and Croatian independence declarations, Macedonian nationalists might push harder for independence, with possible far-reaching consequences. (See Regional Impact of the Yugoslav Crisis, p. 22.)

Milošević's Influence in the Collective Presidency

By 1990, the Serbian communists led by Milošević had cemented effective control over the republic of Montenegro, as well as the formerly autonomous provinces, Vojvodina and Kosovo, which are officially part of Serbia. Previously, under the 1974 constitution, these latter two entities enjoyed republic-like control over their internal affairs, and participated in federal institutions, such as the eight-member presidency.

Now, as illustrated by the blocking of Mesic's accession to the presidency chairmanship on May 15, Milošević can command four votes — not only Serbia's, but those of Montenegro, Vojvodina, and Kosovo as well. But Bosnia-Hercegovina and Macedonia vote with Croatia and Slovenia in the presidency. The result of the 4-to-4 lineup has been deadlock.

Milošević's Uncertain Future as Serbian President

Finally, Slobodan Milošević's future as Serbia's leader is far from certain. In many respects, Milošević's communist government has been the major roadblock to finding a workable arrangement among the various Yugoslav nationalities. Because communism (or "socialism") otherwise has little attraction, Milošević has been able to garner significant support in Serbia mainly through his exploitation of historic Serbian resentments and fears.

Milošević's rise to prominence and power in the late 1980s was directly linked to his nationalist appeal. His abolition of autonomy in Kosovo, regarded by Serbs as their nation's historic heartland, was genuinely popular among Serbs. If, however, a permanent, workable arrangement were reached among the various Yugoslav nationalities, Milošević's main issue would be gone, as would his ability to distract attention from the practical results of four decades of communism and socialism, especially notable with the collapsing Serbian economy.

In short, Milošević has strong reason for not wanting to achieve a solution; conversely, with a noncommunist government in Belgrade, prospects for a peaceful outcome could improve, although the noncommunist opposition in Serbia also wants continued federation.

Serbian Opposition to Miloševic

It is difficult to see how Miloševic would be forced to yield power in the short term. Observers differ on the extent to which he was damaged by the massive anti-communist demonstrations staged in Belgrade in March 1991, organized by two opposition parties, the center-right Serbian Renewal Movement (SRM), which is led by former communist and best-selling author Vuk Draškovic [VOOK DRAHSH-ko-veech], and the centrist Democratic Party of Serbia, led by Dragoljub Micunovic [DRAH-gol-yoob mee-CHOO-no-veech]. Up to 100,000 demonstrators, mostly students, denounced Miloševic ("Slobo is Saddam" and "Slobo = Stalin" were prominent slogans) and demanded new elections and the resignation of five pro-Miloševic television directors, whom they accused of propagandistic news programs. Two persons were killed (one a policeman) and the army was called in before Miloševic gave in, firing the directors and releasing arrested demonstrators, including Draškovic. Support demonstrations were staged in several cities in Serbia and Montenegro. Deploying the army in Belgrade hurt the image both of the collective presidency (which ordered the move) and Miloševic (who requested it).

The demonstrations marked the degree of disaffection among intellectuals and students. In addition, discontent among workers and farmers is building as the economy's downward slide accelerates.

No violence was reported against an opposition rally in Belgrade on June 9, where some 20,000 people denounced "the Serbian Bolshevik regime," blamed the Socialists for the economic situation, and demanded new elections. The demonstrators also blamed Miloševic for aggravating Serbia's conflicts with other nations: "The authorities, against whose incompetence and despotism we protest today, merely produce enemies of Serbia. Not a single democracy in the world wants to talk with this regime," Draškovic told the crowd. [*The Associated Press*, 6/9/91] But it is an open question whether Serbia will have new leadership in time to avert large-scale violence between the republics.

In any case, new leadership did not come soon enough to prevent Slovenia and Croatia from declaring independence. The effect on Miloševic's standing is uncertain. On the one hand, the fact that his obduracy may have destroyed Yugoslavia once and for all and brought Serbia and Croatia to the brink of war may impel the Serbs to finally get rid of him. On the other hand, secession and the threat of war may inspire a Serbian "rally 'round the flag" mentality of national unity, which then could be exploited by Miloševic.

Yugoslavia's Internal Problems

Human Rights Violations

A major focus of American and international concern about the Yugoslav situation is human rights. (See Bush Administration Policy on Yugoslavia, p. 19, and Recent Congressional Action, p. 20). With the accession to power of democratic governments in four of Yugoslavia's republics following the 1990 election, there were "significant advances in human rights" in most of the country. [State Department *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1990*, p. 1342] However, this improvement did not extend to the Serbian province of Kosovo, where ethnic Albanians constitute 90 percent of the population:

> "In the province of Kosovo, Serbian authorities continued and intensified repressive measures that featured in 1990 thousands of political arrests, tens of thousands of politically motivated job dismissals, and widespread police violence against ethnic Albanians. This violence included the use of excessive force by the police to disperse peaceful demonstrators, including random and at times unprovoked shooting by the police, resulting in at least 30 deaths and hundreds of injured." [State Department *CRHR* 1990, p. 1342]

Other observers have put the toll even higher. For example, according to the New York-based human rights organization Helsinki Watch, repression of ethnic Albanians by Serbian authorities resulted in the deaths of over 50 persons in 1990. [HW Executive Director Jeri Laber, statement submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 2/21/91] Below follows a summary of the human rights reports of the Department of State, Helsinki Watch and Amnesty International.

State Department 1990 Report

The Department of State has documented serious human rights violations in a number of areas by Yugoslav authorities, almost all of them concerning Kosovo. Among them were: beatings and mistreatment of arrested persons; arbitrary arrest and incarceration, including routine 30- to 60-day summary jail terms for vague charges of "disturbing public order"; denial of fair public trial, such as restrictions on time for defense presentation at trial, poor record-keeping, and ethnic bias against Albanians, who constitute the vast majority of political prisoners still held in Yugoslavia; routine violations of home and privacy, such as searches of Albanian homes without warrants, and confiscation of valuables (there have also been reports of warrantless searches of Serbian homes in Croatia); use of excessive force (including lethal gunfire), such as random shootings by police from vehicles at passers-by, which are generally followed by "whitewash" police investigations; closure and harrassment of independent media in Belgrade, as well as Albanian media in Kosovo broadly classed as "nationalist" or "separatist"; elimination of local self-government in Kosovo by Serbia; ethnic discrimination against Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia (Serbs, particularly clergy, complain of harassment in both Kosovo and Croatia); and repression of Albanian labor activists in Kosovo.

Helsinki Watch

On August 10, 1990, Helsinki Watch Executive Director Jeri Laber wrote to Yugoslav Prime Minister Markovic to express "grave concern at the worsening human rights situation in Kosovo" including "arrests and detentions without proper legal foundation, searches of houses without proper authorization, and the *de facto* suspension of various rights of assembly and expression." Among other charges were "beatings and other violent abuses by police and military forces in Kosovo."

Ms. Laber expanded upon these points in February 1991 testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, stating that "treatment by the Serbian government of ethnic Albanians in the province of Kosovo constitutes one of the most severe situations of human rights abuse in Europe today." Among the specifics: "ethnic Albanians are being arrested, beaten and in some instances tortured in prison, and subjected to mass firings from their jobs solely on account of ethnicity"; "Serbian police units have repeatedly used excessive force in confronting ethnic Albanian demonstrators, killing more than fifty people in 1990 alone"; the Serbian government "has embarked

on a program to disenfranchise and marginalize the ethnic Albanian population in ways constituting racism"; and in October 1990, in the village of Polat in Kosovo, Serbian police indiscriminately sprayed houses with gunfire, killing two people, in "an attempt to intimidate the Albanian rural population."

Amnesty International

The human rights group Amnesty International specializes in seeking the release of "prisoners of conscience" (i.e., persons held for their political views); it also opposes the death penalty under all circumstances. The summary of the 1991 Amnesty International section on Yugoslavia, covering the period January to December 1990, follows:

> "Over 1,000 ethnic Albanians were imprisoned in Kosovo province for up to 60 days for going on strike or for peacefully expressing nationalist sentiments. The number of prisoners of conscience serving long terms of imprisonment decreased significantly as a result of pardons, early releases and acquittals: by the end of the year they numbered some 35. At least 30 ethnic Albanian demonstrators or onlookers were killed and several hundred others wounded during clashes between demonstrators and police. It was alleged that the police had used excessive and indiscriminate force. There were many allegations that police had beaten and otherwise ill-treated people under arrest. Conditions in some prisons were said to be harsh. At least four people were sentenced to death for murder, but no executions were reported." [*Amnesty International 1991 Report*, pp. 251-252]

The Major Ethnic Conflicts

In addition to human rights, tension between ethnic groups is a major component of Yugoslavia's current crisis. Even without the aggravating factor of communist governments in Serbia and at the federal level, grievances exist among a number of the Yugoslav groups, with each seeing itself as the innocent party. Going back decades or even centuries, these grievances provide the backdrop for the current crisis in Yugoslavia, which will be difficult to solve even with the best of intentions.

There are two major historical conflicts which have again resulted in violence and threatened to escalate into full-scale war:

- Between the two largest groups, the Serbs and Croats (p. 15); and
- Between the Serbs and ethnic Albanians in Kosovo province (p. 17).

To an extent, both conflicts are symptoms of a broader failure of Yugoslavia to achieve an equilibrium between the Serbs, who constitute some 40 percent of the total population, and the others. This failure has plagued Yugoslavia since its inception in December 1918, when independent Serbia provided the nucleus for a unified South Slav state, which had been a common, longstanding aspiration.

Historical Background

Indeed, at its founding, prospects for the "Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes" looked quite promising. Over 90 percent of the new state's population were speakers of closely related tongues (Serbo-Croatian, Slovenian, Macedonian), and the liberation of Slavs formerly living under Austrian and Hungarian rule removed a constant source of agitation and terrorism. In fact, the Slovenes and Croats, now the most independence-minded of Yugoslavia's ethnic groups, in 1918 were the most insistent in creating the country in the first place. In the wake of World War I, they particularly hoped to escape from the dying Austro-Hungarian empire, one of the losers in the war. The victorious Serbs, on the other hand, were relatively cool to the idea; they had just succeeded in annexing Montenegro and Bosnia-Hercegovina, uniting most Serbs in a single country for the first time since the 14th century, satisfying their immediate national goals. [See "The Serbs and Croats: So Much in Common, Including Hate" by David Binder, *The New York Times*, 5/16/91, p. A14; and "Ancient Divisions, Modern Quarrels" by David Frum, *The Wall Street Journal*, 6/19/91, p. A12]

Almost from the start, tensions began. To the Serbs, whose country, capital, and monarchy were the basis for the new state, a centralized arrangement seemed most reasonable; and the Serbs' leading role was a natural reflection both of their numbers and their having liberated their Slav brethren from servitude to the Germans and Magyars. On the other hand, the others, particularly the Croats, soon came to resent what seemed to them a subordinate role in a "Greater Serbia," and demanded autonomy. These tensions rocked Yugoslavia from its birth, and set the stage for horrendous intercommunal violence during World War II and its aftermath.

The Conflict Between the Serbs and the Croats

The Serbs and Croats, once closely related peoples, in the 7th century fell into the respective cultural orbits of the Byzantine East and the Latin West. For much of their history, both groups were under the domination of foreigners: Germans, Hungarians, Italians, and Turks in the case of the Croats, and Turks in the case of the Serbs. Thus, despite their common origins, the two peoples represent distinct, mutually alien cultures. Since 1918, the Serb/Croat "marriage" has been a turbulent one, often violent, with "divorce" now looking very likely.

The Serb/Croat enmity, like those existing elsewhere in Eastern and Central Europe, was muted during the post-World War II era of communist domination, but it did not disappear. Indeed, as elsewhere, communism has become part of the litany of accusation, with each party charging the other with having been responsible for communist misrule.

With the elections of 1990, following the dissolution of Yugoslavia's countrywide communist party, particular national concerns have come to the fore. Croatia has a government dedicated to national sovereignty, either within a Yugoslav confederation or in the form of an independent state. The Serbian political situation is more complex, with the Socialist Party (formerly the League of Communists of Serbia), led by Slobodan Miloševic, holding onto power largely through the exploitation of national concerns but mainly trying to preserve the federation in its current form.

With respect to Croatia, Serbian anxieties center around the Serb minority in Croatia, which numbers about 600,000 and constitutes some 12 percent of Croatia's population. Opposing Croatian plans for independence, Serbs in the part of Croatia bordering on Bosnia-Hercegovina (but not contiguous to Serbia) in December 1990 proclaimed a "Serbian Autonomous Region" not recognized by Croatia. Over the past few months, more than 20 people have been killed in clashes between Croatian police and armed Serbian civilians. Intervention by the Yugoslav army to disarm

the Croats has been threatened repeatedly by Miloševic and federal authorities aligned with him. Now that Croatia has declared its independence from Yugoslavia, and the level of violence has increased, full-scale war could erupt between militant Serbs and Croat authorities. The Croatian government has purchased weapons abroad, notably from Hungary as has the Slovenian governmnet in the event of an army crackdown [*WP*, 3/2/91, p. A7], and Serbia has armed Serbs in Croatia.

From the Croatian viewpoint, the problem is fairly simple: Croatia, under a freely-elected democratic government, wants to exercise its right to national self-determination, but the communist government of Serbia stands in the way. Croats believe they have every right to defend themselves against the communist Serb government and Serb hardliners. In the Croatian view, the Serbs have always understood Yugoslavia as "Greater Serbia," and with the heavy Serbian representation at the upper levels of the League of Communists and federal institutions, especially the army, communism has been a vehicle for Serbian domination. Miloševic's communist regime in Serbia is infected with a "virus of conquest," according to the Croatian representative to and chairman of the federal presidency, Stipe Mesic: "In Yugoslavia, there is no danger of a civil war, there is only the danger of the war which would be . . . the attempt on the part of Miloševic to conquer other territories in Yugoslavia. And actually, he only survives [as a political leader] because of this illusion he has given Serbs of creating [an expanded] Great Serbia." [*WP*, 6/8/91, p. A15-16, bracketed text in original]

As a democratic country, Croatia asserts that minorities, including Serbs, have equal rights under the republic's new constitution (Article 15), including the "freedom to express their nationality, freedom to use their language and script, and cultural autonomy." Their presence in Croatia is not a justification for revising borders. Miloševic's calls to protect Croatia's Serbian minority is only a pretext for aggression against Croatia. Just because Serbs live in Croatia, that does not give them a right to be part of Serbia; there are Croats living in Serbia's Vojvodina province, but Croatia does not use them as an excuse to lay claim to Serbian territory.

In short, Croats see their country as a democracy that simply wants the right to order its own affairs in peace with its neighbors. They continue to leave open the option of a confederal arrangement with the rest of Yugoslavia. Their movement toward implementing independence is on a slower track than that of Slovenia. If necessary, they will fight for their freedom. Still, Croatia remains willing to negotiate with the other republics on a confederation.

The Serbian perspective is somewhat more complex owing to the discord between the Miloševic government, which claims to be "socialist," and the opposition, which denounces Miloševic as a communist under a new name. Nonetheless, there is broad agreement among Serbs on the need for continued centralized federation to protect Serbian interests, which they feel are threatened by the Croats.

Even apart from the Miloševic government's efforts to exacerbate tensions, many Serbs express concern for their Serbian compatriots in Croatia if Yugoslavia were to break up. These concerns, they say, are based largely on the World War II government of the *Ustaša* [OO-stah-shah, "insurgent"] party, which in 1941 created the German- and Italian-sponsored "Independent State of Croatia" on the territory of the current republics of Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina. Hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews, and Gypsies were massacred. The Belgrade press has characterized German and Austrian responses to the Slovenian and Croatian declaration of independence as attempts to create a "Fourth Reich." The Vatican is often mentioned as a co-conspirator. [*NYT*, 7/9; *WP*, 7/8]

Serbs reject the notion that communist-controlled federalism in Yugoslavia has served the interests of "Greater Serbia." On the contrary, they point out, the system was devised by Tito, an ethnic Croat, in a manner to keep the Serbs, who form the largest component of the population, divided and under control. Tito carved up historically Serbian territory into three republics (Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia) and two autonomous regions (Kosovo and Vojvodina), not to mention the large number of Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina. No comparable divisions were made in Croatia or the other republics.

Serbs generally do not believe the current borders of the Yugoslav republics, which were created by Tito, should be maintained. The borders, which Serbs consider "artificial," in part reflect historical circumstances, such as the one-time frontier between the former Austrian and Turkish empires. Serbs see the borders as having little value now, especially since they leave large numbers of Serbs in non-Serbian republics. Because of the complex distribution of ethnic groups, partition of Yugoslavia along ethnic lines would be difficult. Accordingly, most Serbs would prefer to see the country stay together in some form; but if it doesn't, they would insist on border revision.

The Conflict Between the Serbs and the Albanians

To a certain extent, the Serb/Albanian conflict parallels the Serb/Croat conflict, in that Miloševic has adroitly used the issue to appeal to Serbian nationalism. However, it appears to be even more intractable, in that even if Miloševic were removed from the scene, long-term prospects for a peaceful and equitable settlement would likely remain dim. Most Serb opposition parties agree that Kosovo should remain a part of Serbia and under Serbian control.

During the period of Ottoman rule, large numbers of mostly Muslim Albanians began to settle in Kosovo, while many Christian Serbs emigrated to other parts of Serbia. During the past century, the Albanians have increased as a percentage of the population and the Serbs have decreased. Today, Albanians constitute over 90 percent of the population of the province, which borders Albania.

From the 15th century until Serbia recovered Kosovo from the Ottoman Empire in 1912, the Muslim Albanians joined the Turks in oppressing the Christian Serbs. Then, during World War II Kosovo was annexed by Italian-occupied Albania; Serbs fled the province, while Albanian Muslims were settled there. Finally, after the war, Serbs contend, the communists permitted Albanian newcomers to stay and prevented native Serbs from returning.

As part of Tito's plan to divide power among the ethnic groups in Yugoslavia, local Albanians gained control of the Kosovo government under the 1974 constitution. Serbs fled and the province's Slavic population steadily fell, decreasing by 35 percent between 1971 and 1981. [*Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1991, p. 19]

The communists openly favored the Albanians in Kosovo, not only by neglecting to protect the Serbs, but by providing Kosovo with generous subsidies. In the 1970s, "Tito had hoped to use the province . . . as a means of showing the superiority of Yugoslav socialism in overcoming nationalism and underdevelopment." [*Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1991, p. 18] "Kosovo — initially the poorest and most deprived of [Yugolavia's underdeveloped regions] — gets more than one-third of all the aid put up by Slovenia, Croatia, and Serbia. In the last 10 years [i.e., 1971 to 1981, when the Serbian population in the province was plummeting], at least $2 billion was pumped into Kosovo. Official statistics hailed the development there as 'spectacular' and labeled the province a showpiece of equality in multinational Yugoslavia." [*The Christian Science Monitor*, 5/21/81, p. 6]

Yugoslavia's decentralization under the 1974 constitution heightened a growing Albanian nationalism and demands for political rights and self rule. "[T]he Kosovo leadership, as in other republics, was instilling a sense of ethnic pride that came to undermine Tito's vision of a harmonious 'community' of Yugoslav peoples. By March 1981, rising ethnic Albanian demands for self-determination and improved living standards erupted into demonstrations and violent riots, as well as calls for a fully autonomous Kosovo republic. These demands created fears among Serbs that Kosovo would seek to link itself with neighboring Albania." ["Yugoslavia: Prospects for Stability" by V.P. Gagnon, Jr., *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1991, p. 19] Also, evidence of rising ethnic tension was seen in 1981 when the ancient patriarchate of the Serbian Church located in the City of Pec [PETCH] was burned down.

The declining Serbian population and authority in Kosovo was a major element in Miloševic's rise to power in the late 1980s. Promising to take decisive action against the Albanians, he extended Serbian control over Kosovo, placing it under de facto martial law in 1989 which remains the case today. The province's autonomous legal status within Serbia was abolished on July 5, 1990. Kosovo's assembly has been abolished and its representative to the Yugoslav presidency was appointed by the Serbian parliament. The Serbian government has employed massive (critics charge brutal) force to repress Albanian cultural and political rights. (See Human Rights Violations, p. 12) Partly in response to abolition of Kosovo's autonomy, Albanian voters in Serbia boycotted December 1990 elections.

The political objectives of the ethnic Albanians in Kosova (as the Albanians refer to Kosovo) are:

- A sovereign republic, independent of Serbia and equal to the other federal republics in Yugoslavia. [Kosovars (i.e., ethnic Albanians in Kosova) make up the only major ethnic group in Yugoslavia that does not have its own republic.] See "Petition for Recognition" submitted to the United Nations by the Albanian League of Prizren, 3/11/91.

- An end to the massive human rights violations committed by Serbs against Kosovars. A sovereign republic of Kosovo would guarantee human rights.

Even though Albanians are not Slavs, they have been a major presence in Yugoslavia since its founding. Nevertheless, they don't have a republic "home," even though they are more numerous than either Macedonians or Montenegrins, both of whom have republics.

Finally, Kosovars look with apprehension at the prospect of a breakup of Yugoslavia that leaves them in Serbia. If things are this bad now, they would only get worse if there were no other non-Serbs in the country to act as a brake on Serbian repression. Accordingly, Albanians not only insist on republic status within Yugoslavia but also the "capacity for self-determination."

The Serbian position on Kosovo as articulated by the Miloševic government and other Serbian leaders is that Kosovo is Serbian territory — part of Serbia — and as such, while Albanians are a majority in Kosovo, they are not in Serbia. Miloševic also claims that there are no human rights problems in Kosovo, but that his authories are only preventing secession by the Albanians.

In recent years, international human rights groups have documented repression of Kosovo's Albanian "majority," but Serbs charge that previous human rights abuses against them went unnoticed.

Ramifications of Yugoslav Disintegration

Bush Administration Policy on Yugoslavia

On June 21, 1991, U.S. Secretary of State James A. Baker III arrived in Belgrade, the Yugoslav capital, in an effort to encourage a solution that would keep the country together. He reiterated longstanding American policy toward the prospect of Yugoslav dissolution:

> "Mr. Baker told the Presidents of the republics of Slovenia and Croatia . . . that the United States and its European allies would not recognize them if they were to unilaterally break away from Yugoslavia and that they should not expect any economic assistance. . . .
>
> "Mr. Baker . . . said that though the United States wanted to see Yugoslavia's territorial integrity preserved, it would welcome any federal restructuring agreed to by the republics.
>
> "American diplomats [in Belgrade] said that since all the republics contain large minorities of people who identify culturally and linguistically with other republics, some form of federal arrangement is preferable to separation." [*NYT*, 6/22/91, p. 4]

Secretary Baker's statements in Belgrade reflect the fuller outline of Administration policy submitted to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in February 1991: "United States policy toward Yugoslavia is founded on support for the interrelated objectives of unity, independence, territorial integrity, democracy, dialogue, human rights, and market reform." [Deputy Assistant Secretary of State James F. Dobbins, testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 2/21/91]

Mr. Dobbins expanded upon each of these points [from 2/21/91 testimony]:

- "By unity, we mean the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, within its present borders. We will not encourage or reward separatism or secession."
- "By democracy, we mean that citizens of Yugoslavia should enjoy democratic rights and civil liberties, based on freely and fairly elected representatives."
- "By dialogue, we mean that disputes between republics, ethnic groups, or individuals should be resolved only through peaceful means. We call upon all parties in Yugoslavia to avoid violence, provocations, or intimidation."
- "By human rights, we mean the standards of behavior laid down in international commitments to which Yugoslavia is a party, including the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent CSCE [Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe] documents. We attach particular importance to the provisions relating to the treatment of minorities and urge all citizens of Yugoslavia to address their mutual relations in a spirit of respect and tolerance."
- "By market reforms, we mean that we support Yugoslavia's transition to a full market economy, open to private ownership and investment."

However, on July 2, following a week of clashes between Slovenian and Yugoslav federal forces, the Administration took a position widely interpreted as a major policy shift. In a letter to federal presidency chairman Mesic, President Bush urged him not to use force against Slovenia and Croatia. Avoiding use of the term "territorial integrity," previously a key element of U.S. policy, Administration officials indicated a willingness to accept Croatian and Slovenian independence if achieved peacefully. "We must not support the use of force to preserve Yugoslavia's unity. . . . We support whatever the Yugoslavian people decide the Yugoslavian people want for themselves." [State Department spokesman Margaret Tutwiler, Daily Briefing transcript, 7/2/91 12:45 EDT]

Recent Congressional Action

Initiatives from the Congress currently impacting on the Yugoslav situation include the following:

Senate Resolution in Support of Democratization

On July 11, 1991, the Senate passed by voice vote a resolution (S.Res. 153) sponsored by Republican Leader Bob Dole, which (1) supported the principles of democratization and self-determination in the six republics and two provinces; (2) urged that United States leadership be used to to ensure that concerns regarding political stability not preclude the chief objective of promoting and securing democracy and self-determination; (3) condemned use of force by Yugoslav authorities against civilians; (4) urged peaceful resolution of political differences in Yugoslavia and the inclusion of Kosova and Vojvodina in that process; (5) called on the Yugoslav army to cease obstructing the democratic governments of Slovenia and Croatia and called on the Serbian government to cease using force against the Albanian population of Kosova; (6) called for free and fair elections in Kosova and Vojvodina; (7) urged the President to explore means of increasing ties with Slovenia and Croatia; (8) urged the State Department to expand contacts with the democratic opposition in Kosova and Vojvodina; and (9) recommended that the administration shape its assistance programs to support Croatia and Slovenia and the other democratic republics in Yugoslavia, and to encourage democracy in the rest of Yugoslavia.

Senate Resolution Condemning Use of Force

On June 27, 1991, the Senate passed by voice vote a resolution (S. Res. 147) sponsored by Senator Dole, which (1) condemned the "use of force to resolve political differences within Yugoslavia"; (2) called on "the Yugoslav central government to cease using the Yugoslav army to address the current crisis" and instead urged the government "to respond positively and immediately to domestic and international calls for negotiations leading to a peaceful settlement"; and (3) called on the Serbian government "to stop blocking the rotation of the Yugoslav Presidency."

Senate Resolution in Support of Democracy and Human Rights

On April 18, 1991, the Senate passed by voice vote a resolution (S. Res. 106) sponsored by Senator Dole, which (1) stated that democracy and human rights should be the first objective of U.S. policy on Yugoslavia; (2) called on Serbian President Miloševic to cease all repressive policies against the Albanian population of Kosovo; (3) called on Yugoslav President Jovic and the army to refrain from the use of coercion and force against democratic republic governments; and (4) called

on President Bush to immediately suspend all aid and technical benefits in the event of a military crackdown or imposition of martial law.

The Nickles Amendment

Section 599A of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Act for fiscal year 1991 (P.L. 101-513), introduced by Senator Don Nickles (R-OK) and enacted in November 1990, forced a cutoff of U.S. assistance to Yugoslavia on May 5, 1991. The cutoff would have been avoided by the holding of "free and fair elections" by all six republics and the end of "a pattern of systematic gross violations of human rights" within six months of enactment of the Nickles Amendment.

The Administration reinstated the aid on May 23, through a clause in the amendment permitting restoration of aid upon the Secretary of State's certification that Yugoslavia "is making significant strides toward complying with the obligations of the Helsinki Accords and is encouraging any Republic which has not held free and fair multiparty elections to do so."

In addition, the Secretary noted that he invoked the Nickles Amendment certification language because of "serious flaws" in the 1990 Serbian elections. He also criticized "... the Serbian Republic leadership's repressive actions against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo Province."

The assistance to Yugoslavia temporarily cut off by the Nickles Amendment consisted of $4.3 million directed mostly toward market reform.

Direct Aid to Democratic Republics

S. 9, a bill introduced in January 1991 by Senator Bob Dole (R-KS), would permit direct aid to Yugoslav republics with democratic governments, bypassing the federal authorities. S. 9 would also apply to democratic republics of the Soviet Union. A similar measure (H.R. 1080), introduced by Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA) with 82 cosponsors, is pending in the House of Representatives.

The European Community and CSCE

Efforts to defuse the Yugoslav crisis have involved two overlapping institutions, the European Community (EC) and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The primary focus of not only economic but political unity of the European democracies, the 12-country EC — first known as the European Economic Community (EEC) or the "Common Market" — was founded in 1957 as a customs agreement between Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the Federal Republic of Germany; it has since been joined by Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Full economic union by the EC countries is scheduled by the end of 1992, and a number of countries, including many in Eastern and Central Europe, are eager to join what will become the world's largest and richest trade bloc.

CSCE, as suggested by the name, is a security and cooperation mechanism based on the "Helsinki Final Act" signed in 1975, under which the Soviet Union and its allies sought to ratify their post-World War II territorial gains and the West hoped to impose human rights standards on the communist countries. Since Albania joined earlier in 1991, CSCE now includes all 33 European states, East and West, plus the United States and Canada.

The European Community Initiative of June 28-29: After hostilities broke out on June 27 between the Yugoslav army and Slovenia, the EC sent the foreign ministers of Luxembourg, Italy, and the Netherlands to Belgrade to help achieve a ceasefire. The EC initiative proposed a three-month moratorium of further movement toward independence by Slovenia and Croatia (but not suspension of their independence declarations), Serbia's agreement to stop blocking Mesic's chairmanship of the federal presidency, and a return of forces to their barracks. The EC has agreed to proide ceasefire monitors.

At a meeting of EC leaders on June 29, it was decided that a previously announced suspension of nearly $1 billion in aid to Yugoslavia would not be invoked unless fighting continued. EC leaders seemed somewhat divided, with Germany, which has many Croatian and Slovenian guest workers, taking a stong position of support. France, on the other hand, has stressed the issue of preserving Yugoslavia's "territorial integrity."

The EC's speedy response to the Yugoslav crisis contrasted sharply to its approach to last year's Persian Gulf crisis. But unlike the Gulf, where the United States took the lead, EC is not able to avoid responsibility for the first major security crisis in the post-Cold War era, especially as the countries of formerly communist Eastern and Central Europe seek to share in an integrated future.

The CSCE Conflict Resolution Center: The Yugoslav crisis has provided the first test of the CSCE Conflict Resolution Center (CRC), in Vienna, Austria, which was created in 1990 to provide a mediation mechanism for conflicts in Europe. The CRC was convened for the first time on July 1, ironically at the request of host Austria over violation of its own borders by Yugoslav forces. The Austrians strengthened their border forces with 5,000 soldiers, as well as with tanks, helicopters, and interceptor aircraft, after Yugoslav bombers penetrated Austrian airspace on June 27; three armed Yugoslav soldiers were taken into custody in Austria on July 1.

The initial convening of the CRC was the first step to a mechanism agreed upon in Berlin at a June foreign ministerial meeting; the July 1 Vienna meeting was supposed to clarify "unusual military activities" in CSCE member states. If after 48 hours the matter is not resolved, the second step is the holding of an CSCE emergency session, which occurred in Prague, Czechoslovakia, on July 3. A major sticking point in CSCE's ability to address the Yugoslav crisis is the disagreement of several countries, especially the Soviet Union, on what constitutes an "internal" matter, outside of CSCE's purview.

Regional Impact of the Yugoslav Crisis

During Secretary Baker's trip to Yugoslavia on June 21, he attempted "to persuade the feuding leaders of Yugoslavia's six republics not to let their country break up into six separate states, but said his appeal got nowhere and that Yugoslavia could be headed for 'disintegration.'" He warned that "the situation is very serious. We worry about history repeating itself. Frankly, we don't want to see that and I don't think anyone in the international community wants to see that." [*NYT*, 6/22/91, p. 1]

Secretary Baker's choice of words is a clear allusion to the feud between Serbia and Austria-Hungary, which eventally touched off World War I. The specific incident was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, by a Serbian nationalist. The killing took place in Sarajevo, the capital of the current Yugoslav republic of Bosnia-Hercegovina. It set into motion a chain of alliances between the Great Powers, pitting

Britain, France, and Russia against Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey. A local conflict rapidly became a general conflagration.

Yugoslavia's Neighbors: Keeping Close Watch

The likelihood that a violent disintegration of Yugoslavia could result in a world war is admittedly small. With the cordial state of U.S./Soviet relations and the USSR's internal difficulties, superpower conflict over Yugoslavia is unlikely. Nor is it probable that war between the Yugoslav republics would directly involve neighboring countries in military action. However, each will watch the unfolding crisis with keen interest:

Italy: Italy's interest in Yugoslavia is twofold. First, the Italian city of Trieste borders on Yugoslavia at the northern end of the Adriatic Sea and is one of Italy's major ports. Second, there is a substantial Italian minority in the Istrian peninsula, a triangular piece of land jutting out into the Adriatic near Slovenia's border with Italy. Divided between the republics of Croatia and Slovenia, Istria was annexed by Yugoslavia only after World War II. Italy would want to remain on good terms with both Slovenia and Croatia in the event of Yugoslavia's breakup, but no direct involvement is likely.

Austria: Austria has a substantial Slovene minority, and has taken a sympathetic attitude toward Slovene national aspirations. The Austrians have been at the forefront of EC and CSCE efforts to mediate the current crisis. Austria reinforced its border and stepped up military flights after Yugoslav bombers violated its airspace while attacking Slovenia on June 28. [*WP*, 6/29/91, p. A18]

Romania and Hungary: Romania and Hungary are paired in this analysis because of the impact their relationship has on their differing perspectives of the Yugoslav situation. Neither country is likely to intervene in an intra-Yugoslav conflict with direct military force. However, Hungary has sold weapons to Croatia, and the Croats have accused Serbia of using Romanian agents to provoke violence in Croatia. Some continuing involvement by both countries is likely.

Romania's Iliescu and Serbia's Miloševic are the last communist strongmen to stay in power following elections, since the collapse of the Albanian government in early June. This may in part explain their cordial relationship, in addition to their mutual hostility toward Hungary.

Hungary's major foreign policy concern is the large Hungarian minority in the Romanian region of Transylvania. There is also, however, a substantial (over 20 percent of the population) Hungarian population in the Serbian autonomous province of Vojvodina. Both Transylvania and Vojvodina were part of Hungary during World War II, when Hungary was allied to Germany, and before World War I, as part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. While Hungary is unlikely to have revanchist designs on either area, ensuring the rights of ethnic Hungarians is a priority.

Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Albania: Despite their historic memberships, respectively, in NATO and the Warsaw Pact, Greece and Bulgaria forged a close security relationship in the late 1980s. The "Athens-Sofia Axis" is concerned, first of all, about Turkey. Anti-Turkish sentiment is based on fears of Turkish support for the increasingly restive Turkish minorities in both countries, as well as the memory of several centuries of oppression by the Ottoman Empire.

In addition, Greece and Bulgaria share a mutual interest in seeing that no independent Macedonia comes into being in the event of Yugoslavia's demise. Historically, Macedonia has been divided among Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia. An independent Macedonia based in the current

Yugoslav republic would likely seek to annex adjoining areas of Greece and Bulgaria; Greek Macedonia includes Greece's second-largest city, Thessalonika. Accordingly, Athens (and possibly Sofia) can be expected to support any future effort by Belgrade to abolish the concept of a separate Macedonian identity and reabsorb the "South Serbs," as Yugoslavia's Macedonians were called before World War II. On the other hand, there is strong anti-Serbian sentiment among Bulgarians, who regard Macedonians as ethnic Bulgarians. [For more on the volatility of the Macedonian problem, see "History's Cauldron" by Robert D. Kaplan, *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 267, No. 6, June 1991, p. 93]

Finally, Greece has historically claimed the ethnically Greek region of southern Albania, which the Greeks call "northern Epirus." Accordingly, the Greeks and Bulgarians would be likely to support Serbia against an Albanian attempt to annex Kosovo. In fact, Serbian opposition leader Vuk Draškovic has called for an implicitly anti-Muslim alliance of the three Orthodox Christian nations. For complementary reasons, a very cordial relationship between Albania and Turkey can be expected.

"The Balkan Tinderbox"?

The Balkan peninsula has the unfortunate distinction of having given its name to a phenomenon every other region of the world seeks to avoid. "*Balkanize*: To divide (a region or territory) into small, often hostile, units. [From the division of the Balkan countries by the Great Powers in the early 20th century.]" [*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, bracketed text in original] Not only were the states small and hostile, they each contained minorities that invited irredentist claims and Great Power meddling.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Balkan region was considered a "tinderbox" that threatened to blow up the whole European house. After a hiatus of eight decades, the Balkans look remarkably like they did before 1914, but what is missing is Great Power involvement.

The post-World War II era involved essentially only two powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. The main U.S. interest in the Balkans, as elsewhere, was the containment of Soviet power. Yugoslavia (along with Albania) was not liberated from the Germans by Soviet forces, and its communist government was not set up by the Soviets. In 1948, a rift developed between Yugoslavia's Tito and and the Soviet dictator, Josef Stalin. Since that time, the concept of Yugoslavia as a counterweight to Soviet influence in the region has been a foundation of U.S. policy in the region. Yugoslavia was the only communist country from which Most-Favored-Nation trade status was not withdrawn under the Trade Agreement Extension Act of 1951.

However, with the death of Tito in 1980, fears were raised that in the event of turmoil in Yugoslavia — roughly along the lines of the current crisis — the Soviet Union would take the opportunity to reassert its interests. Possibly, it was felt, the Soviets would support a pro-Moscow faction in the League of Communists, with the aim of drawing Yugoslavia into the Warsaw Pact, and giving Moscow access to the Adriatic Sea. Ironically, the Yugoslav crisis appears to have ended up among the final acts of a larger crisis in the entire communist world. While it would be naive to assume that Moscow is entirely oblivious to the prospect of Yugoslav collapse, it is unlikely that the Soviets will devote much attention to the Yugoslav problem, given their own internal difficulties.

In short, Yugoslavia might in 1991, as in 1914, provide a "spark" — but the resulting fires and explosions, if any, will almost certainly be confined to the region. Nonetheless, a bloody disintegration of Yugoslavia, especially one that draws in other countries, could presage a new post-communist order in Europe that is less stable and less peaceful than was hoped for during the "Revolution of 1989."

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